Desk Study: Main Trends and Analysis on Out of School Children in the Middle East and North Africa Region

2015 - 2020

QUICK REFERENCE GUIDE

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Desk Study: Main Trends and Analysis on Out of School Children in the Middle East and North Africa Region

This guide provides a

Snapshot of the study

Profile of suggested readers

Roadmap of the components of the study

List of acronyms

List of terms and concepts

List of Findings, Conclusions, and Recommendations

Snapshot of the study

The study...

01 was co-commisioned by Save the Children, UNICEF, and the World Food Programme

02 covers **2015-2020**

03 focuses on **invisible OOSC** and the **formal education** system

04 covers **Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon, Libya, Palestine,* Turkey, and Yemen**

05 is desk-based

06 is Part I of an envisioned two part study

The study has four focus areas

out of school children
a presentation of out-of-school children figures and profiles

barriers and motivating factors
an analysis of the barriers and motivating factors that school-age children face to sustained (re)engagement in education

policies and programmes
an analysis of the policies and programmes currently in place that affect out-of-school children
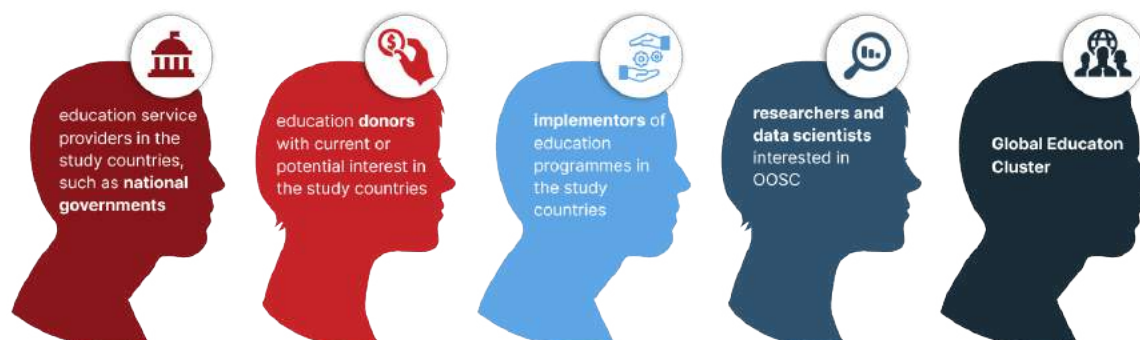
recommendations
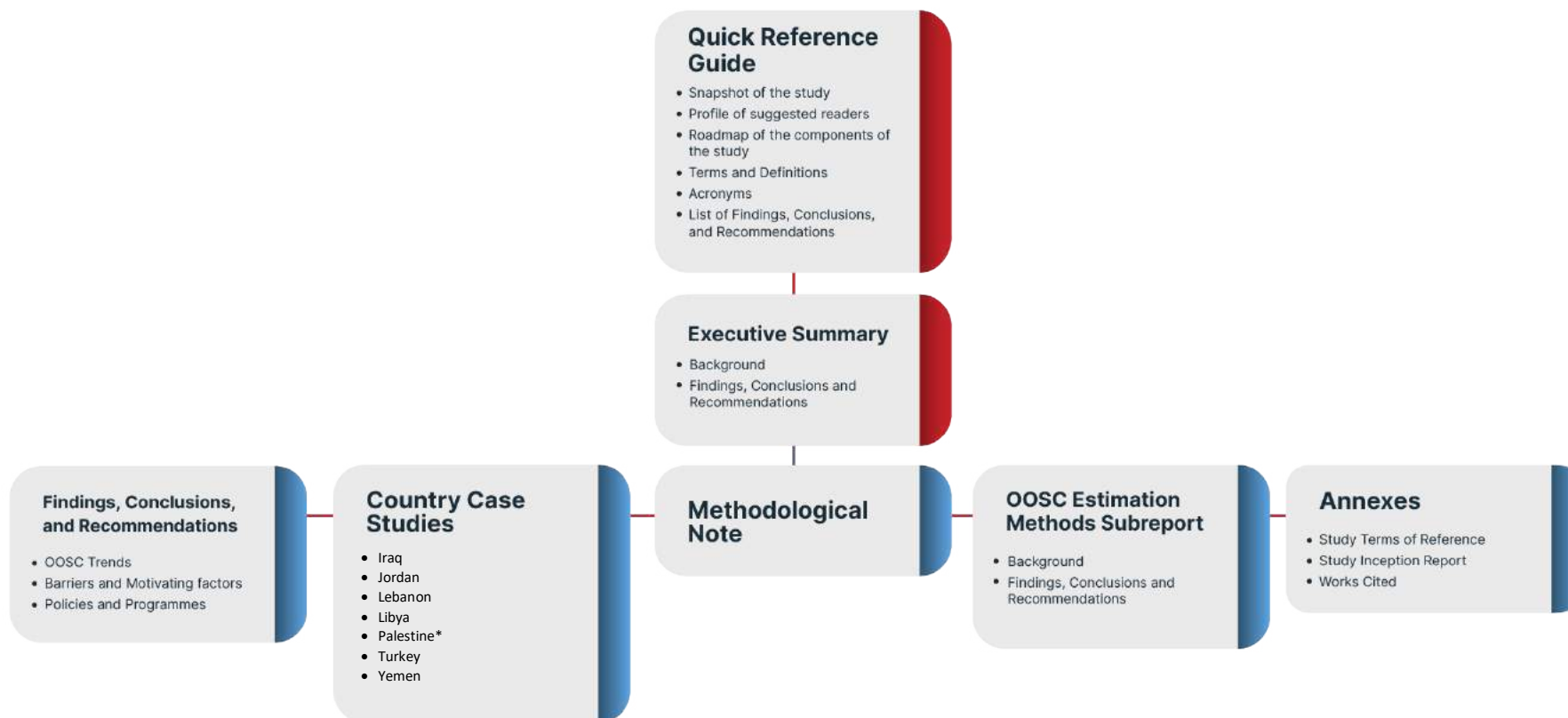to address the findings and for further research

Profile of suggested readers

The primary readers are envisioned as follows. The report is organised with them in mind.

education service providers in the study countries, such as **national governments**

education **donors** with current or potential interest in the study countries

implementors of education programmes in the study countries

researchers and data scientists interested in OOSC

Global Educaton Cluster

Roadmap of the components of the study

The outcomes of the study are organised into the following components. This roadmap serves as a guide to readers, noting that not all components will be relevant to all readers, given the geographic scope of the study and some technical sub-components of it. We suggest that all readers keep the Quick Reference Guide to hand and read or skim the Executive Summary.

Quick Reference Guide
- Snapshot of the study
- Profile of suggested readers
- Roadmap of the components of the study
- Terms and Definitions
- Acronyms
- List of Findings, Conclusions, and Recommendations

Executive Summary
- Background
- Findings, Conclusions and Recommendations

Findings, Conclusions, and Recommendations
- OOSC Trends
- Barriers and Motivating factors
- Policies and Programmes

Country Case Studies
- Iraq
- Jordan
- Lebanon
- Libya
- Palestine*
- Turkey
- Yemen

Methodological Note

OOSC Estimation Methods Subreport
- Background
- Findings, Conclusions and Recommendations

Annexes
- Study Terms of Reference
- Study Inception Report
- Works Cited

The commissioning agencies use the term Palestine for the purpose of this study, recognising that different nomenclatures exist.

List of Acronyms

Acronym	Definition
3RP	Regional Refugee and Resilience Plan
5DE	Five Dimensions of Exclusion
7DE	Seven Dimensions of Exclusion
AAI	Accelerating Access Initiative
AGPI	Adjusted Gender Parity Index
AGTC	Abu Ghazaleh Translation Company
AI	Artificial Intelligence
ALP	Accelerated Learning Programme
AOI	Area of Inquiry
BLN	Basic Literacy and Numeracy
CAC	Crisis-affected Contexts
CCT	Conditional cash transfers
CRODO	(children at) risk of dropout
CLWD	Children Living with Disabilities
COVID-19	Coronavirus Disease-2019
CRS	Catholic Relief Services
CSO	Civil Society Organisation
CV	Curriculum Vitae
D6/D7	Dimension 6 and Dimension 7
DFID	Department for International Development
DPFP	Data Protection Focal Point
EAC	Educate a Child
EC	European Commission
ECHO	European Commission Humanitarian Organisation
ECCD	Early Childhood Care and Development
ECW	Education Cannot Wait
EFA	Education For All
EICC	Education in Crisis Contexts
EMIS	Education Management Information Services
EU	European Union
FCDO	Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office
FE	Formal Education
GDPR	General Data Protection Regulation
GEC	Global Education Cluster
GEM	Global Education Monitoring
GPE	Global Partnership for Education
GPI	Gender Parity Index
GPIA	Gender Parity Index-Adjusted

IDP	Internally Displaced Person
IFPRI	International Food Policy Research Institute
ILO	International Labour Organisation
IMF	International Monetary Fund
IMO	Information Management Officers
INEE	Inter-agency Network for Education in Emergencies
INGO	International Non-governmental Organisation
IOCC	International Orthodox Christian Charities
IOM	International Organisation for Migration
IR	Internationally recognised
IRC	International Rescue Committee
IRG	Internationally Recognised Government
IS	Islamic State
ISCED	International Standard Classification of Education
ISIS	Islamic State of Iraq and Syria
JENA	Joint Education Needs Assessment
KI	Key Informant
KII	Key Informant Interview
KRI	Kurdish Region of Iraq
L3	Level 3
LP	Lebanese Pounds
MDG	Millennium Development Goal
MEHE	Ministry of Education and Higher Education
MENA	Middle East and North Africa
MENARO	Middle East and North Africa Regional Office
MHPSS	Mental Health and Psychosocial Support
MICS	Multi-indicator Cluster Survey
MOE	Ministry of Education
MOH	Ministry of Health
MONE	Ministry of National Education
NEET	Not Enrolled in Education or Training
NER	Net Enrolment Rate
NFE	Non-formal Education
NGO	Non-governmental Organisation
NLG	No Lost Generation
NRC	Norwegian Refugee Council
OCHA	Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
OECD	Organisation of Economic Cooperation and Development
OFDA	Office of Foreign Disaster Assistance
OOS	Out of School

OOSC	Out of School Child(ren)
OOSCI	Out-of-School Children Initiative
PNA	Palestinian National Authority
PPE	Personal Protective Equipment
PSS	Psychosocial Support
PTSD	Post-traumatic Stress Disorder
Q1/Q2/Q4	Quarter 1, Quarter 2, Quarter 4
RACE	Reaching All Children with Education
RCT	Randomised Controlled Trial
REACH	REACH is a leading humanitarian initiative
RODO	Risk of dropout
ROI	Return on Investment
SBM	School-based Management
SDG	Sustainable Development Goals
SFP	School Feeding Programme
STACO	Sheik Taher Azzawi Charity Organization
SUTP	Syrians Under Temporary Protection
SWOT	Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats
TBC	To Be Confirmed
TOR	Terms of Reference
UCT	Unconditional Cash Transfer
UIS	UNESCO Institute for Statistics
UK	United Kingdom
UN	United Nations
UNDESA	United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organisation
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UNRWA	United Nations Refugee Works Association
UPE	Universal Primary Education
US	United States
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
UTP	Under Temporary Protection
WB	World Bank
WFP	World Food Programme
WHO	World Health Organisation

Terms and concepts

The following section defines key terms and concepts used frequently throughout the report. It also provides background on how some aspects of the OOSC experience are classified and why.

Child labour

The International Labour Organisation (ILO)[i] defines child labour as happening when children (anyone under the age of 18) are engaged in work that deprives them of their right to a childhood, dignity, potential, and an education. Depending on the context, child labour could be both a cause of poor engagement in education (demand-side factors such as impoverishment/low household income and socio-cultural traditions) and the result of poor-quality education and resultant dropout (actual or perceived low value of education, unsafe learning environments, etc.).

Child marriage

The UN Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights[ii] (UN Human Rights) defines child marriage as any marriage where at least one of the parties is under the age of 18. Depending on the context, child marriage could be both a cause of poor engagement in education (demand-side factors such as socio-cultural values) and the result of poor-quality education and resultant dropout (actual or perceived low value of education, unsafe learning environments, etc.)

Continuum of exclusion

This term encompasses all characteristics of children who are currently out of school (OOS) or at risk of dropout (RODO). The continuum includes the nature of their visibility, the school cycle to which they would be affiliated based on their age and compulsory education policies within their country. Visibility refers to the ease or feasibility of identifying or otherwise estimating OOSC. This concept is explored in some depth at the end of this section. The continuum of exclusion includes the Five Dimensions of Exclusion (5DE). It also consists of the envisioned expansion in 2022 to include upper secondary school via a new Seven Dimensions of Exclusions (7DE) model proposed under current UNICEF-led OOSC estimation methodological protocol revisions. The report uses the phrase "a child's exclusion or at-risk status" occasionally as shorthand for the various points along this continuum. CRODO are within the red circle in the graphic presented here. Visible CRODO are the farthest to the left in the visual, within the red circle. Invisible CRODO are closer to the edge of the red circle, moving right toward visible OOSC. From there, OOSC are presented as visible, semi-visible, and invisible. The graphic shows that the more visible an OOSC is the more likely they are to be closer to the school community, more likely to engage in formal schooling with support, and more likely to be countable. These likelihoods decrease moving to the right toward invisible OOSC.

Country context

When assessing the connection between barriers or motivating factors and specific aspects of the country context, the study team used the following classifications to code data: a) area of control; b) conflict-affected status; c) nature of crisis; d) connection to crisis; e) Syria-crisis-affected status (where context-relevant), and f) other.

COVID-19
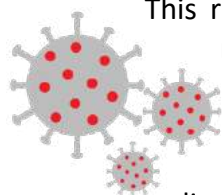
This report's references to COVID-19 encapsulate the pandemic itself and the related prevention and response measures that affected all aspects of children's lives. This range of factors includes school closures, economic contraction, and health issues. Significantly the ability of data sources to accurately profile the impact of COVID-19 on various aspects of education is limited at the time of this study. Moreover, given the unprecedented nature of the crisis and related impact, the most valid information about the relationship between COVID-19 and children on the continuum of exclusion is not yet available.

Cycle

A cycle is a component of education defined by a starting and ending grade. Cycles are usually defined as pre-primary, primary, (lower or upper) secondary. The primary cycle is the only cycle that is compulsory across all seven study countries. Lower secondary is a compulsory cycle in all but one of the seven study countries-Iraq. Upper secondary is only compulsory in Turkey. It was possible to split out secondary data into lower and upper secondary in some cases, but these cases were rare. Where available, most data is classified separately for pre-primary and primary data. Pre-primary education is any classification of formal education before the first grade of compulsory primary education.

Demand-side (barriers or motivating factors)

Demand-side barriers or motivating factors are those outside the control of the education system, though the education sector can influence them. An example of a barrier would be the household income of a school-age child's family or the household decision makers' ability to pay for costs associated with education. When classified as both demand and supply side, a factor is both within and outside of the purview of the education system. An example might be the low payment of teachers. From the demand side, a barrier might exist where a population's economic and socio-cultural nature might influence the amount of funds available for the education sector and influence the amount a teacher's time is valued. From a supply side, it is the ministry of education's responsibility to source and pays teachers.

Disability

The ILO defines disability[iii] as any of a range of physical, psychosocial, sensory, or intellectual impairments that may or may not affect a person's abilities to carry out their day to day activities. Thus, disability is both a supply-side and demand-side barrier. On the supply side, an example would be when measures are not put in place to make education available or accessible to children living with disabilities

(CLWD). At the same time, it can be a demand-side barrier driven by socio-cultural or socioeconomic factors that might limit a household's interest in or ability to support the additional effort and cost to sustain a CLWD's engagement in education.

Economic barriers

Economic barriers can be both supply and demand-side barriers. For example, the education services made available due to budgetary allocations can be a supply-side barrier if they are insufficient quantity (not enough textbooks) or quality (outdated textbooks). On the other hand, the extent to which low-income households can afford the direct (school fees), indirect (the cost of pencils, paper, etc.), and opportunity costs (the cost of giving up an opportunity to work) of education would be a demand-side barrier. When "resource limitations" is mentioned in the report, it refers specifically to internet connectivity issues that limited engagement in learning during COVID-19-related school closures.

Formal education

(Internationally recognised) state agencies provide formal education. It is defined first by policy documents or decrees specific to each county and classified by UNESCO's International Standard Classification of Education (ISCED).

Gender
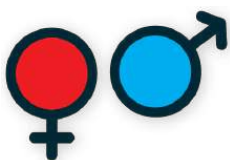
In these contexts, *gender* is a societal attribution of socially constructed norms that correlate one gender identity and one sex. Children born biologically female are classified as girls; those born biologically male are classified as boys. The study uses this construct, but recognises that gender and sex are not always correlated as such in other contexts.

Identity-related characteristics

This term is used to classify aspects of a child's physical, social, cognitive, emotional, legal, or economic status that comprise their identity within broadly accepted socio-cultural norms. These characteristics can include gender, ethnicity, displacement status, and disability profile. They are often critical components of barriers to education for those OOS. They also contribute to a child's vulnerability status. For example, a child with the following characteristics is less likely to be characterised as vulnerable: high functioning as defined by the socio-cultural norms of their context has a solid social network, has legal status, and is from an upper-middle-income household. Conversely, a child with the following characteristics are more likely to be characterised as vulnerable: physical or cognitive limitations, a weak social support system, refugee status, and in a low-income household.

Middle East and North Africa

Characterised as "Northern Africa and Western Asia" by UNESCO before 2020, the referencing became "Arab States." Turkey is not included in the Arab States classification. It is also not included as part of UNICEF's MENA Regional Office remit. Because of these shifts in the category, regional comparisons of OOSC figures are not appropriate.

Out of School

The simplest way to define being out of school is *children of school age who cannot be accounted for as enrolled in or attending schools that are recognised by the ministry mandated with providing education within an internationally recognised state.* The simplicity of this definition, while helpful for basic framing, could be considered the tip of the iceberg when it comes to how OOS can be defined according to agency, timeframe, and context. The OOSC Estimation Methods Sub-report explores these points in some depth. As a simple example, the complications can begin when looking at even the most essential aspects of this formula. For example, the school-age population might be defined by only that which is compulsory or anything that is pre-tertiary level. The population data used to determine the exact figures within the chosen construct could be national-level statistics or UN statistics). The topic could become even more complicated through the COVID-19 lens: how helpful is it to define all children disconnected from formal/traditional schools as OOS during the pandemic versus a more refined classification within the COVID-19 context. For example, one that looks at definitions based on a period of time, the degree to which a learner was connected to remote learning options, etc.

Out of School Children

"Children" are defined by the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (The United Nations, 1989) as the cohort between the ages of 0-18. This definition of children also includes sub-groups characterised by various UN and other international agencies as "adolescents" and "youth." The UN does not have a formal definition of adolescence but usually uses the 10-19 years age group for this cohort.[iv] The UN further defines youth as those persons between the ages of 15 and 24.[v] Notably, many persons who are OOS fall into the adolescent and youth cohorts. In this report, the term OOSC refers to children, adolescents, and youth.

Participation

For this study, participation is defined by a child's enrolment and attendance. However, the study team notes that participation can be characterised and measured in several ways.

(The) perceived value of (and low returns from) education

These perceptions could be realistic (based on data about returns on investment). At the same time, socio-cultural or historical perspectives could influence them without evidence to back them up. Supply-side factors internal to the education sector or demand-side factors can drive them. As a result, these types of barriers or motivating factors require thoughtful, sometimes targeted and sometimes balanced policy and programming efforts to be effectively addressed.

Policies and programmes

A policy is a set of rules, regulations, or guidelines that frame the work of an organisation and those persons who work for it. A programme operationalises a policy or is a stand-alone effort, perhaps by a(n) (international) non-governmental organisation ((I)NGO), aiming to support a policy of a host government or other education service delivery entity.

(The weight of the number of) policies or programmes in place

Higher numbers of policies or programmes do not necessarily correlate with a more robust, nor with a more fragmented, policy or programming environment.

For example an integrated cross-ministry policy addressing OOSC issues might be highly detailed and appropriate in intent and extremely difficult to implement. On the other hand, a package of MOE-specific policies may be exceptionally well conceptualised and well-executed but only address the supply side elements of OOSC-related barriers and motivating factors. Similar statements can be made for programmes.

For example umbrella programmes are becoming more common in Lebanon under the RACES I and II programmes or in Jordan with the Accelerating Access Initiative (AAI). Theoretically, they should allow for better integrated and well-coordinated programming. One might argue they are in part an answer to the problems that surfaced during the response to the 1994 Rwandan genocide in which uncoordinated activities led to duplication of effort and poor programming, and thus the development of the humanitarian cluster system. Direct budget support and grants from entities like the No Lost Generation (NLG) initiative and the Education Cannot Wait (ECW) fund enable large sums of money to be funnelled into one programme.

It is essential to situate any data and findings within this construct to clearly understand their value and not be unduly influenced by frequency counts.

Quality of education

Quality of education is often (logically) perceived as internal to the sector. Standard, evidence-based concepts of what internal factors influence the quality of education were used for this study. These include factors such as teacher skill, ratios of resources to students, teacher support, and appropriateness of curriculum). However, the quality of education is naturally influenced by external factors as well. These factors include low socio-cultural appreciation for investment in

education at the state level and socio-political priorities for short-term returns on political investments. Many data sources referred to "quality and inclusive education;" this study defines quality education as that which is inclusive.

Retention

For this study, retention is defined by a child's progression through education and across cycles. However, the study team recognises that retention can be characterised and measured in several ways.

Secondary

Secondary education usually encompasses lower secondary and upper secondary levels and often comprises grades 9-12. Some OOSC data is classified as lower or upper secondary, and some are classified as secondary. The report uses the term secondary to encompass both, but that information is presented where data for just lower secondary cohorts was available. Of the study countries, only Turkey requires a complete upper and lower secondary education.

School certificates

Documents provided to a student upon completion (of a grade or cycle) are school certificates. The use and availability of school certificates could be a supply-side barrier in circumstances where they are (the only or part of a package of) required documentation for (re)enrolment. The use and availability of school certificates could also be a demand-side barrier when households cannot supply them for their children (often due to displacement issues and sometimes due to certification or accreditation recognition issues).

School year

The school year in Iraq, Jordan, Libya, Palestine,[1] and Turkey is scheduled to last September through June. Lebanon's is from October through June, and Yemen's is from September through May. School closures and the blurring of lines between official in-person schooling, distance learning, and hybrid models resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic have influenced these dates.

Specific crisis-affected aspects of the context

This phrase relates to an analysis of the crisis-affected nature of the country and or regions therein. Classification options were

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[1] The commissioning agencies use the term Palestine for the purpose of this study, recognising that different nomenclatures exist.
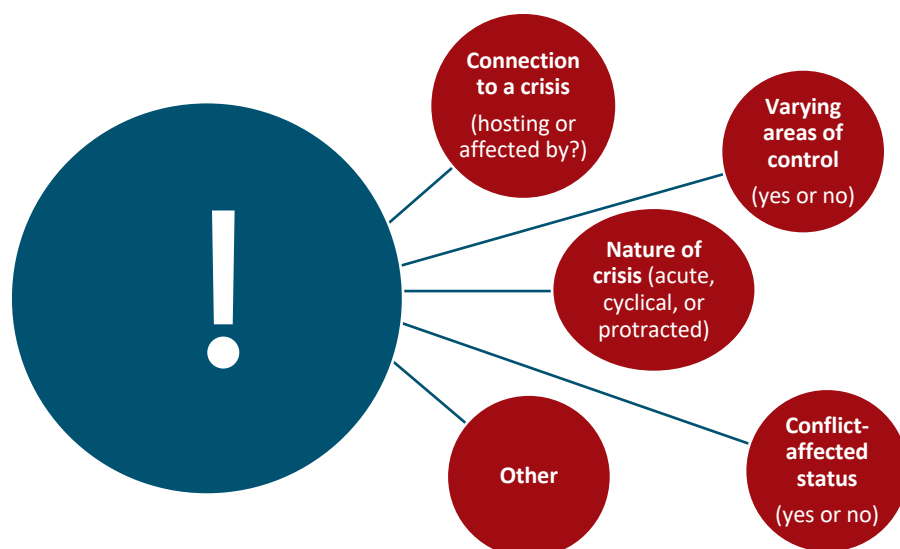
Supply-side (barriers or motivating factors)

Supply-side barriers and motivating factors are those for which the education system has responsibility. An example would be the number of teachers, textbooks, or chairs available in a learning space. If a school has insufficient teachers, textbooks, or chairs available, this might be a barrier and decrease demand for education. On the other hand, having (more than) a sufficient amount of such inputs could motivate and increase demand for education. Where a motivating factor is classified as both a demand and supply-side factor, it means that the factor is both within and outside the education system's purview. Cash transfer programmes would be an example where the education system could determine programme eligibility and address barriers households face in accessing education.

(Sustained) (re)engagement in education

The study defines being out of school as disengaging from education, where the goal for school-age children is to have sustained (re) engagement in education. In other words, children enrol in school and consistently attend school regularly and progress through school by completing at least the compulsory grades. Therefore, this full-term and concept of (sustained) (re)engagement in education are to be assumed whenever the report references the goal of children's connection to education.

Violence and safety issues

From a supply-side perspective, violence and safety issues can influence the physical supply of accessible education and the safety of learning spaces (such as via the use of schools for military purposes or through limited means for education officials to support the maintenance of the spaces. In these cases, they might be viewed as external to the sector. However, they can also influence the quality of education supplied, such as via the impact of toxic stress or PTSD on teachers, school personnel, and students, making the learning space unsafe regarding interpersonal interaction. In such cases, theoretically, they can be considered factors

internal to the sector given the presumption of mandates in place by education service providers to provide safe learning spaces and the resources to facilitate them, such as teacher support. Finally, from a demand-side perspective, violence and safety issues can also limit the ability of households to access available learning spaces. This barrier could take the form of physical safety concerns, the multiplier effects of violence and safety such as socio-cultural, socio-political, or socioeconomic shifts. In these cases, violence and safety issues would also be external to the sector.

(The) visibility model

In essence, visible OOSC are those who are relatively easy to identify. This study technically presents figures of invisible OOSC, but because they are estimable (subtracting enrolment from known school age population estimates), the study presents them as visible. This approach contrasts with official definitions. The study does not report on figures of CRODO. The OOSCI[vi], [vii] defines visible, invisible, and semi-visible OOSC and CRODO as follows:

- **Visible OOSC:** "school age children who are not attending school but are registered in education databases; these are generally children who dropped out of school."
- **Invisible OOSC:** "school age children who have never attended school and are not recorded in any government database" (such as undocumented migrants).
- **Semi-invisible OOSC:** "Unidentified out of school children, who could be identified through an examination of government or school records."
- **Visible children at risk of dropout (CRODO):** "school age children who are in school, but identified as being at risk of dropping out" (such as a student whose school record indicates they are a child labourer).
- **Invisible CRODO:** "school age children who are in school and at risk of dropping out, but have not been identified as at risk" (such as a student whose disability is not noted in the school record).
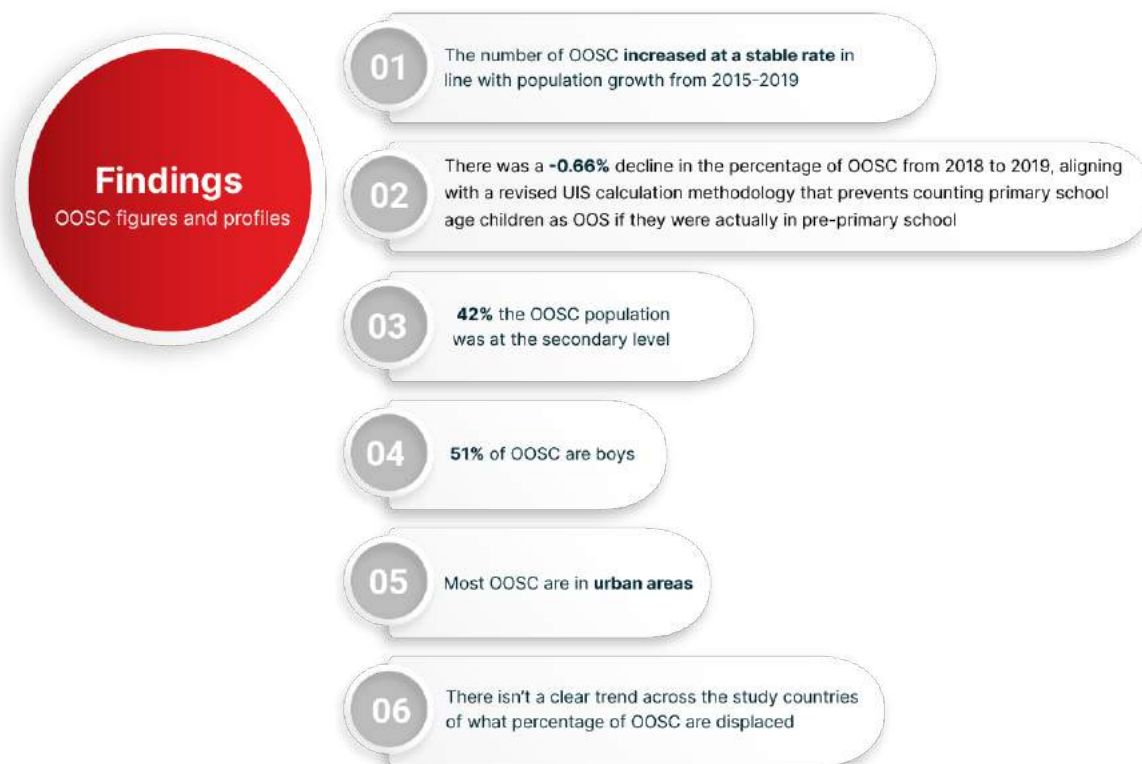
These definitions could be characterised differently, and especially so in COVID-19-affected contexts, and have limitations. As noted above, visible OOSC could include children who are not enrolled in school. Furthermore, as detailed in a 2019 Educate A Child Occasional Paper,[viii] even technological advancements that facilitate better data capture don't ensure that all OOSC are counted. "…OOSC as a special interest group still face(s) the eminent challenge of invisibility. This invisibility mainly manifests in the form of:

- OOSC data either not being comprehensively mapped, monitored and included in the official counts and national statistics; or
- OOSC data are included in the aggregated estimates and generalised statistics. This exposes OOSC to the risk of losing accurate reporting of individual status and by extension, dedicated attention as a special category of children."
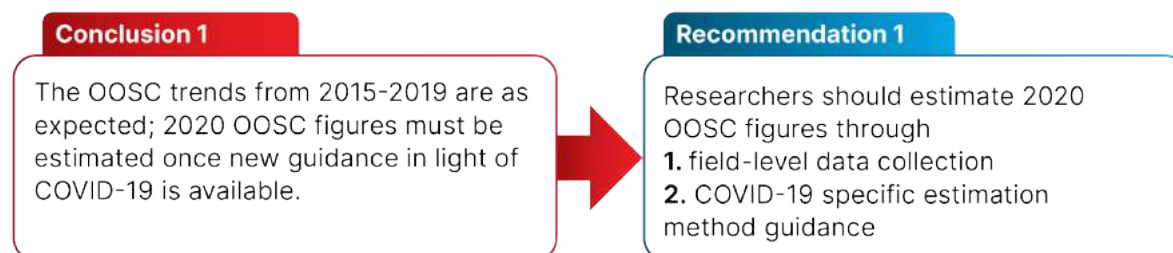
List of Findings, Conclusions, and Recommendations
Findings, Conclusions and Recommendations
OOSC Figures and Profiles

Findings
OOSC figures and profiles

01 The number of OOSC **increased at a stable rate** in line with population growth from 2015-2019

02 There was a **-0.66%** decline in the percentage of OOSC from 2018 to 2019, aligning with a revised UIS calculation methodology that prevents counting primary school age children as OOS if they were actually in pre-primary school

03 **42%** the OOSC population was at the secondary level

04 **51%** of OOSC are boys

05 Most OOSC are in **urban areas**

06 There isn't a clear trend across the study countries of what percentage of OOSC are displaced

Conclusions and Recommendations OOSC figure and profiles

Conclusion 1

The OOSC trends from 2015-2019 are as expected; 2020 OOSC figures must be estimated once new guidance in light of COVID-19 is available.

Recommendation 1

Researchers should estimate 2020 OOSC figures through
1. field-level data collection
2. COVID-19 specific estimation method guidance

Findings, Conclusions and Recommendations
Factors that influence children's (sustained) (re)engagement in education

Findings

Barriers to children's (sustained) (re)engagement in education

07 The **top five barriers** were 1) Economic barriers; 2) Quality of education; 3) School capacity to host new students; 4) Resource limitations specifically related to engaging in learning, such as internet connectivity issues; and 5) Conflict

08 Most barriers come from both within and outside the education sector

09 Most barriers were influential both before and after the start of COVID-19

10 The degree of **influence barriers had on OOSC was stable** from 2015-2019

11 Most barriers were **most influential at the compulsory levels**

12 More barriers were perceived to **impact OOSC more than CRODO**

13 **Gender and other identifying characteristics were not perceived to be particularly relevant** to any of the barriers

14 Most barriers were **as impactful on participation as they were on retention**

Conclusions and Recommendations Area 2.1-2.2
Barriers to children's (sustained) (re)engagement in education

Conclusion 2.1 The primary barriers to participation and retention from the demand-side were economic; the primary barriers from the supply-side were education availability and quality

Recommendation 2.1.1 Advocacy organisations should develop an advocacy campaign for integrated policy solutions to economic and quality of education-related barriers

Recommendation 2.1.2 Donors and (I)NGOs should revise programme strategies and proposals to prioritise integrated programming solutions that address the interrelationship between the demand and supply side barriers that affect OOSC.

Conclusion 2.1

The primary barriers to participation and retention from the demand-side were economic; the primary barriers from the supply-side were education availability and quality.

Recommendation 2.1.1

Advocacy organisations should develop an advocacy campaign for integrated policy solutions to economic and quality of education-related barriers.

Recommendation 2.1.2

Donors and (I)NGOs should revise programme strategies and proposals to prioritise integrated programming solutions that address the interrelationship between the demand and supply side barriers that affect OOSC.

Conclusion 2.2

The primary barriers affect OOSC more so than CRODO

Recommendation 2.2

Researchers should review whether prioritising the barriers that primarily affect OOSC over CRODO is still ethically relevant in the "post" COVID-19 era
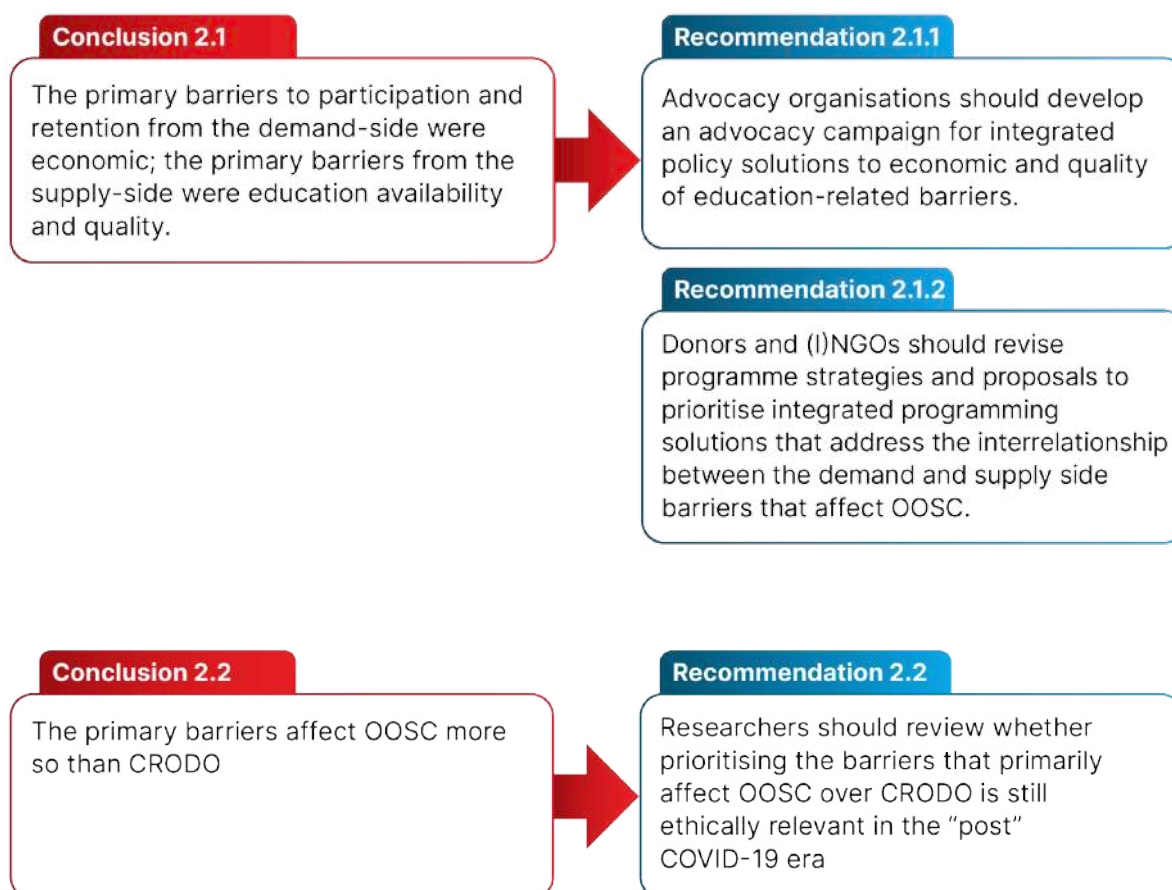
Findings
Motivating factors for children's (sustained) (re)engagement in education

Findings
Motivating factors to children's (sustained) (re)engagement in education

15 The top motivating factors are correlated with the barriers: 1) Quality education; 2) Parents with sufficient income; 3) Cash transfer programmes; 4) Community engagement; 5) Safe access to schools

16 The majority of motivating factors come from within the education sector

17 Most motivating factors were influential before and after the start of COVID-19

18 Most motivating factors had the most influence at compulsory levels

19 Most motivating factors were as influential on participation as on retention

20 It is not clear how influential motivating factors were on OOSC versus CRODO

21 Most motivating factors were not classified as correlated with a child's gender or other identifying characteristics

Conclusions and Recommendations Area 2.3-2.4
Motivating factors to children's (sustained) (re)engagement in education

Conclusion 2.3
The degree to which motivating factors influence OOSC versus CRODO remains unclear

Recommendation 2.3
Researchers should assess the degree to which certain motivating factors are or are not more influential to OOSC or CRODO cohorts

Conclusion 2.4
Factors within the education sector's remit play the most significant role in motivating investment in education

Recommendation 2.4.1
Donors should invest in evidence-based supply side activities

Recommendation 2.4.2
(I)NGOs should encourage donors to invest in evidence-based supply-side activities

Conclusions and Recommendations Area 2.5-2.7
Barriers and motivating factors to children's (sustained) (re)engagement in education

Conclusion 2.5

Barriers and motivating factors relevant before COVID-19 remained relevant-if not more relevant-during the pandemic

Recommendation 2.5.1

(I)NGOs should argue for programme design that addresses the barriers and motivating factors relevant before and during COVID-19

Recommendation 2.5.2

(I)NGOs should elevate the lessons well learnt in some crisis-affected contexts about effective community-based education and alternative forms of learning that address multiple intelligences

Recommendation 2.5.3

Researchers should research the extent to which COVID-19 will impact existing barriers and motivating factors or contribute to new ones

Recommendation 2.5.4

Researchers should assess any COVID-19-related economic impact on education budgets

Conclusion 2.6

Compulsory education is most influenced by and relevant to the main barriers and motivating factors

Recommendation 2.6

Researchers should assess the appropriateness of continuing to invest in compulsory level programming

Conclusion 2.7

Neither the main barriers nor the primary motivating factors correlated to gender, participation, or retention factors

Recommendation 2.7

Researchers should undertake further research regarding the individual connections between 1) gender, 2) participation, 3) retention and the main barriers and motivating factors

Findings, Conclusions, and Recommendations
Policies and programmes affecting OOSC

Findings Policies and programmes affecting OOSC

Findings
Policies and programmes affecting OOSC

22 Access to quality basic education is a specific goal, outcome, or result of MOE policies

23 Most programmes affecting OOSC are implemented in partnership

24 Most policies and programmes **did not target beneficiaries based on gender** and were gender and protection-sensitive

25 Most policies and programmes **did not target beneficiaries based on their exclusion status** and could improve how inclusive they are of OOSC

26 Most policies and programmes **were in place before COVID-19**, and were perceived to be **crisis-sensitive, but could be more COVID-19 responsive**

27 Most policies and programmes **do not explicitly target beneficiaries based on their impoverishment status**

28 Most policies and programmes **target the primary cohort**

29 Many policies and programmes **did not have a specific geographic sub-focus**

30 School feeding programmes are a valuable pull factor for OOSC

Conclusions and Recommendations Area 3.1-3.2
Policies that affect OOSC

Conclusion 3.1

The appropriateness of national policies that affect OOSC is unclear in most of the study countries

Recommendation 3.1

Researchers should review the ministry of education and other relevant ministry policies that affect OOSC in each study country

Conclusion 3.2

The degree of coherence between national policies that affect OOSC and their implementation is unclear

Recommendation 3.2

Researchers should assess the degree of coherence between policy intent and policy implementation related to OOSC in each study country

Conclusions and Recommendations Area 3.3-3.4
Programmes that affect OOSC

Conclusion 3.3

Programmes that affect OOSC are not effectively targeting them

Recommendation 3.3

(I)NGOs should advocate for programmes that are better targeted, more contextually relevant, and based on the available evidence

Conclusion 3.4

The means for reaching the most vulnerable OOSC with (school-based) feeding programmes is unclear.

Recommendation 3.4

Researchers should assess innovative means for reaching the most vulnerable children via (school-based) feeding programmes in the seven study countries

[i] International Labour Organisation. (n.d.) *Child Labour: What is child labour?* Accessed via: https://libguides.ilo.org/child-labour-en

[ii] United Nations Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (UN Human Rights). (n.d.) Child, early and forced marriage, including in humanitarian settings. Accessed via: https://www.ohchr.org/en/issues/women/wrgs/pages/childmarriage.aspx

[iii] International Labour Organisation. (2015.) *Reporting on disability: guidelines for the media*. Accessed via: https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---ed_emp/---ifp_skills/documents/publication/wcms_127002.pdf

[iv] UNFPA. (n.d.) *Adolescent And Youth Demographics: A Brief Overview.*

[v] United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Population Division (2019). *World Population Prospects 2019*, Online Edition. Rev. 1.

[vi] UNICEF and UIS. (2016) T*he visibility model of out-of-school children and children at risk of dropping out.* Accessed via http://uis.unesco.org/sites/default/files/documents/rws_windhoek2016_10._uis_oosci_qt-and-selected-indicators.pdf.

[vii] UNICEF and UIS (2016). *Monitoring Education Participation: Framework for Monitoring Children and Adolescents who are Out of School or at Risk of Dropping Out.* UNICEF Series on Education Participation and Dropout Prevention, Vol I. Geneva: UNICEF Regional Office for Central and Eastern Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent States.

[viii] Education Above All Foundation. (2019). *Occasional Paper #5, June 2019: INCLUSION: Counting and Accounting for Out-Of-School Children*

Desk Study: Main Trends and Analysis on
Out of School Children in the Middle
East and North Africa Region

2015 - 2020

REPORT SUMMARY

equitas education   Save the Children   World Food Programme   unicef

Context

Children living in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region face various challenges that jeopardise their opportunities for healthy physical, social, emotional, and cognitive development and well-being. These challenges range from poverty to different types of violence. Moreover, while protracted crises have become increasingly common globally, the region hosts one of the longest-running modern-day displacement crises-that of the Palestinians-which has affected children's ability to engage in school since 1948 sustainably.

Today, the region hosts two of the most impactful protracted crises of modern time- those emanating out of Syria and Yemen. These crises have ripple effects; they cross internationally recognised as well as disputed borders. They affect generations and deplete human and other resources needed for healthy development. For example, the No Lost Generation (NLG) initiative highlighted the risk of the longitudinal impact on individuals and societies of lost schooling resulting from the Syria crisis. This type of impact is not unique to the Syria crisis.

UNICEF and UNESCO started the Out-of-School Initiative (OOSCI-alternately known as "All In School: The Global Initiative on Out-of-School Children") in 2010. The last published report for the MENA region was in 2014 (though a regional factsheet was produced in 2018).[i] By 2015, the initiative had achieved the following:[1]

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[1] An analysis of the outcomes of the OOSCI to the end of its initial funding period were out of scope of this study, and thus just the relevant outputs are shared.

30 country studies	7 regional reports
1 global report	20 planned studies

Compulsory education

In all study countries, compulsory education begins with primary school. It covers primary school and lower secondary school for all countries, except Turkey, which includes upper secondary school

6 The official age to start compulsory education is six in all study countries but Turkey and Palestine. [2,ii]

5.75 In Turkey, the official starting age is 5.75.[iii]

5.8 In Palestine, the official starting age is 5.8 years.[iv]

The number of years of compulsory schooling differs across the seven countries, as follows:

6 years in Iraq

9 years in Libya and Yemen

10 years in Lebanon, Jordan, and Palestine

12 years in Turkey

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[2] The commissioning agencies use the term Palestine for the purpose of this study, recognising that different nomenclatures exist.
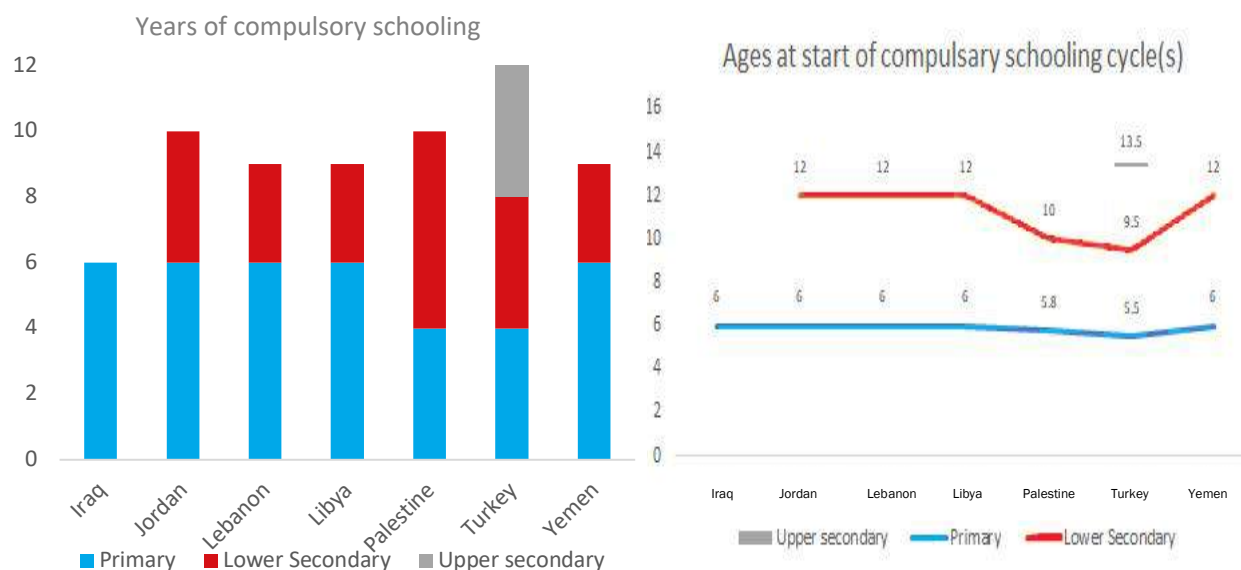
OOSC

The available data suggests that many children were *negatively affected by COVID-19* in terms of their ability to sustainably engage in education, including those who were already out-of-school (OOS), those who were at risk of dropout (RODO), and those who fell into neither category. Data on the *number of out-of-school children (OOSC)* in 2020 is not available at the time of the study. This is because UIS OOSC methodology "is not adapted to account for the impact of major crisis like COVID-19 in the short term, because it imputes missing data using historical figures. As such UIS regional estimates of OOSC for 2019 and 2020 should not be interpreted as reflecting the impact of COVID-19."[3v]

Figures of children estimated to be *OOS or otherwise disconnected from learning* decreased from April to December 2020. The decline in these COVID-19-affected figures between April 2020 and December 2020 is as notable as the initial spike. However, vulnerable children affected by school closures are undoubtedly more vulnerable now than before the pandemic. Moreover, the data tells us that those marginalised before crises are likely to be even further marginalised because of them.[vi]

The 2020 figures should be reviewed in light of ongoing discussions regarding how to capture the *impact of COVID-19 on children's engagement in learning* during 2020 and beyond. In mid-2021, the impact of COVID-19 on children's ability to engage in education was no longer presented by UIS in its COVID-19 specific education updates as numbers of children OOS, but rather as the number of schools closed. UIS "maintains the measurement and dissemination of the national, regional and global number of OOS. Regional and global figurers are always updated in the September release."[vii]

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[3]All documents used for OOSC estimation are listed in Annex 3. Any presentation of OOSC figures in the context section of this report are sourced from the UIS data centre or dashboards published to track COVID-19 related impact on education engagement. The data for 2018 comes from the UIS data centre and is for primary and lower secondary levels. The data for 2020 comes from UIS estimates of the total number of all children disconnected from learning as a result of COVID-19; it is not official UIS data centre data, which is reported annually.

The number of OOSC (2018) and school-age children affected by COVID-19-related school closures (2020), global
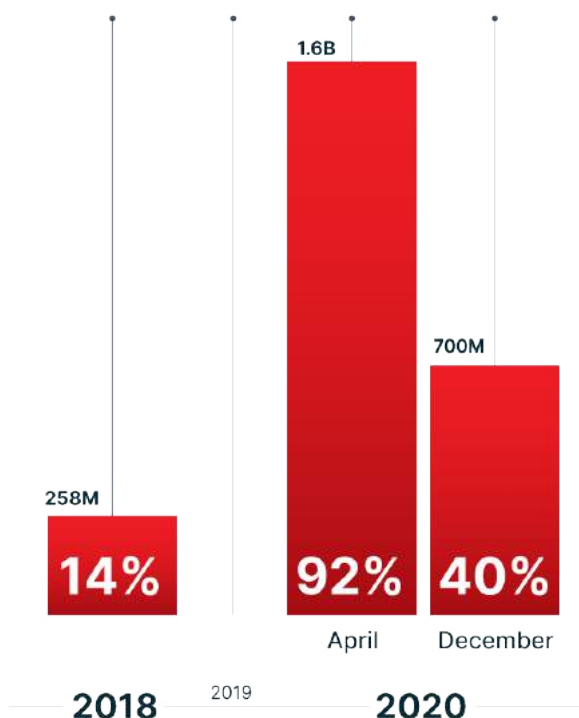
The number of OOSC (2018) and school-age children affected by COVID-19-related school closures (2020), MENA[4]

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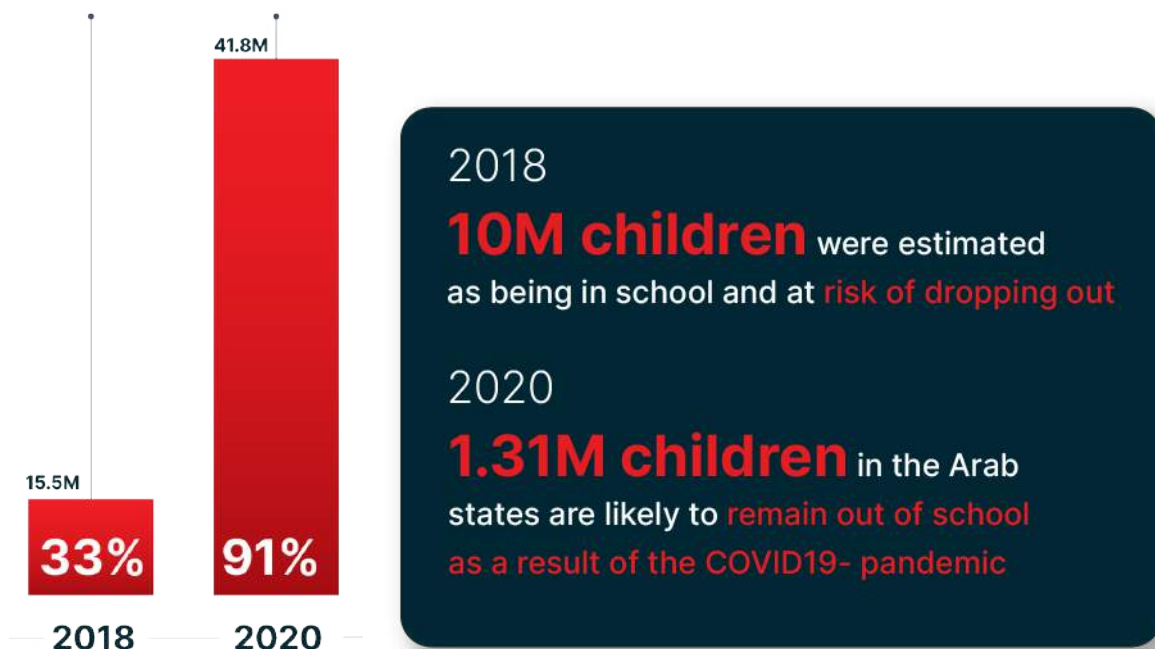
[4] What is often called the MENA region was characterised as "Northern Africa and Western Asia" by UNESCO before 2020, at which point the referencing became "Arab States." Turkey is not included in the Arab States classification. It is also not included as part of UNICEF's MENA Regional Office remit. As such perfect comparability from 2018 to 2020 is not possible, nor are figures from Turkey included in them.

Study Overview

Rationale

An updated regional overview of OOSC was necessary because of the following.

Shifts in

- socio-political and economic contexts in the region
- OOSC estimation methods

+

COVID-19

- the unprecedented impact on the number of children disconnected from education
- a need to review policies and programmatic interventions

Need for an updated regional overview of OOSC
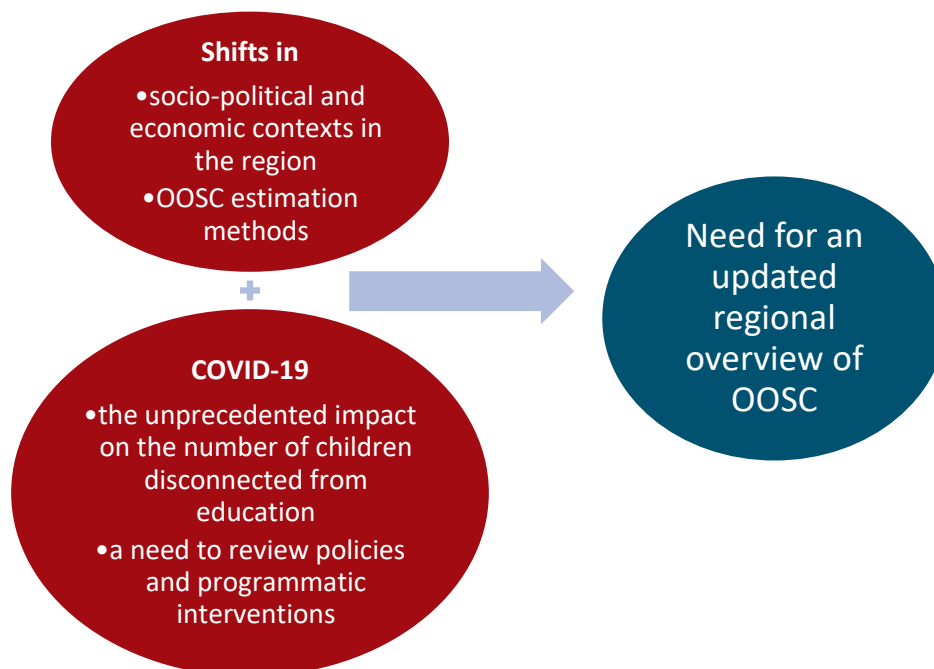
Vision

The study is Part I of a planned two-part effort. Part I relied on secondary data, with some primary data from key stakeholders. It focused on visible OOSC. Part II is envisioned to rely on primary data collected from the study countries. It will validate Part I findings and add additional data collection priorities for semi-visible and invisible OOSC and children at risk of dropout (CRODO).

Part I

o rely on secondary data (reports, UIS data, etc.)
o use some primary data from key stakeholders
o focus on visible OOSC

Part II

o rely on primary data collection in the countries covered by the study
o validate findings from Part I
o focus on
  o semi-visible OOSC
  o invisible OOSC children
  o CRODO.
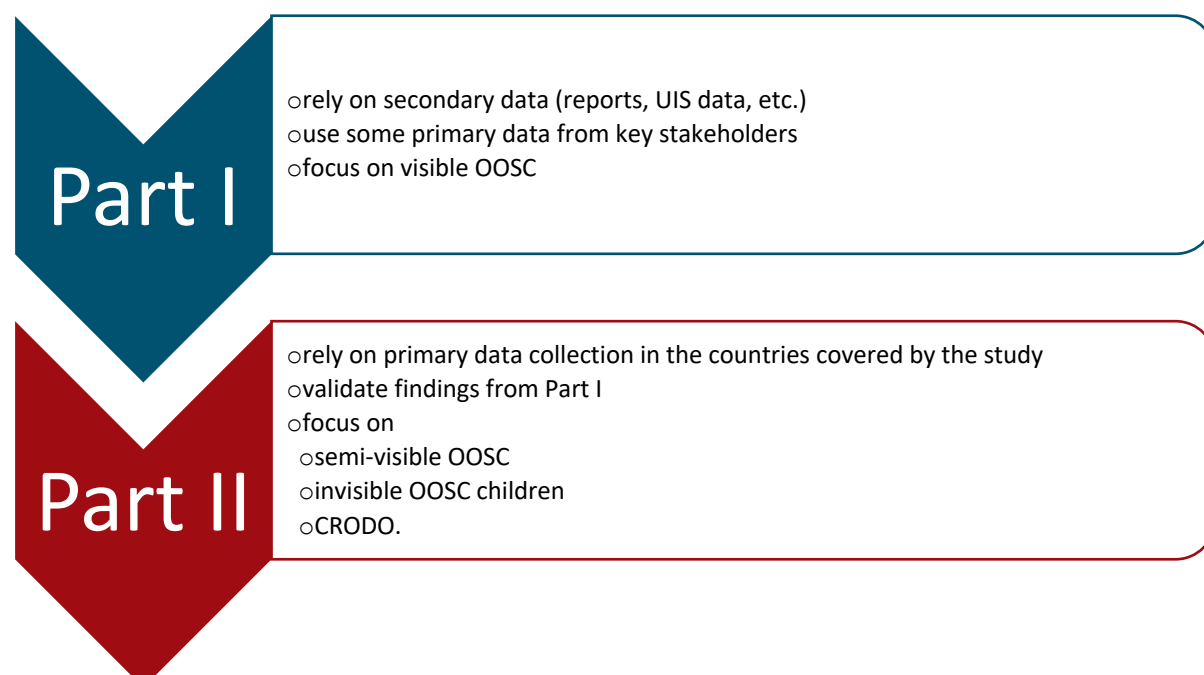
Timeframe

The study covers the 2015-2020 calendar year period, including the 2014-2015 school year but not the 2020-2021 school year.

Geographic Coverage

The study aimed to provide an updated OOSC profile for each of seven countries across the region, selected due to their strategic importance across the regional portfolios of Save the Children, UNICEF, and the World Food Programme. These countries are Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon, Libya, Palestine, Turkey, and Yemen.

Consideration of COVID-19

The study provides analysis through pre-and post-COVID-19 lenses. It does not, however, provide estimates for OOSC in 2020, nor does it try to capture figures for children out of learning because of or otherwise affected by COVID-19. Given the unprecedented nature of the crisis and related school closures, how entities collecting information classified whether a student was in school or not might vary based on several factors. These could include political influence, how engaging in remote learning was characterised, and how the risk of dropping out was classified. COVID-19-related changes to OOSC estimation methods are expected to be ready by 2022; accurately estimating the number of children OOS versus affected by COVID-19-related school closures should be possible then. As such, 2020 OOSC figures are likely to be most valid and best understood longitudinally once calculation methods are somewhat universally agreed upon and applied. The report focuses only on visible OOSC between 2015 and 2019. It uses the existing OOSC calculation methodology, last modified by UNESCO Institute for Statistics (UIS) in 2018.

Importantly, however, qualitative data suggests that barriers and motivating factors were essentially the same before and after COVID-19. The impact that COVID-19 had on these factors in the medium- to long-term should be assessed in later studies. It is likely that some of them will be more impactful than before. For example, this study's findings indicate that factors such as safe access to safe schools became a more important motivating factor, and poor internet connectivity became a more notable barrier, as a result of COVID-19.

Barriers and motivating factors to education

Policies and programmes that affect OOSC
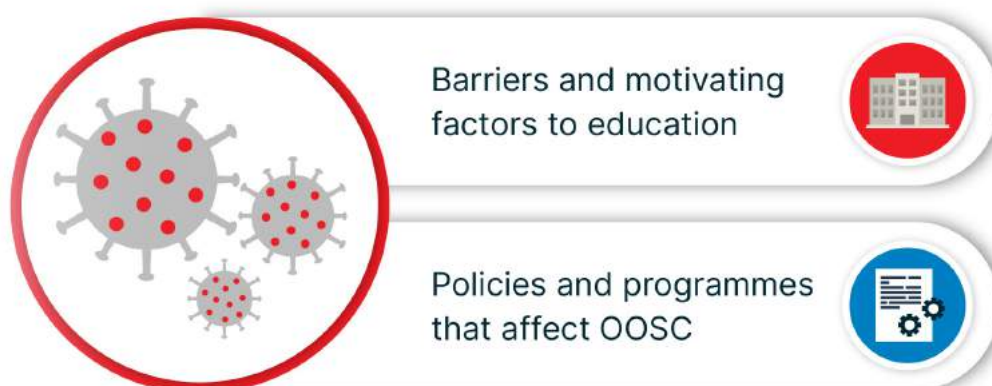
Cohort

The study focused on children out of formal education (FE) in their (host) country. This group is estimated to be in the 5-17 age range. However, age is only one factor identifying OOSC, as OOSC are often overage. The primary factor leading to a classification as OOSC is that a child or youth is not enrolled in formal education.

Areas of Inquiry

The study focused on four specific areas of inquiry.

Out-of-school children trends

The study documented the numbers and profiles of visible OOSC from 2015-2019. In addition, it classified OOSC according to factors such as their age and/or last International Standard Classification of Education (ISCED) cycle or grade, their legal status, sex, and, where possible, their vulnerability status.

Barriers and motivating factors

The study analysed the barriers and motivating factors that prevent and/or facilitate children's participation and/or retention in education.

Policies and programmes

The study assessed the scope, scale, and appropriateness of policies and programmes in the study areas that target OOSC. In addition, it analysed the relationship between current policies and programmes (their intent, coverage, outcomes, etc.) and the trends and analysis surfaced in the areas of inquiry focused on out of school children and the barriers and motivating factors that influence them to engage in school.

Recommendations

The study identified what remaining areas of inquiry exist and made recommendations for further study. It also identified potential responses to the findings and conclusions, such as possible programmatic approaches and policy advocacy focus areas.

Methodology

The desk study relied primarily on secondary data sources, with a small number of primary data sources (key informants-KI).

700 documents were identified for review

30 of these persons were reached as KI and survey respondents

225 potential primary sources were identified

650 of these documents were reviewed for relevance

562 were cited and/ or used for OOSC population calculation purposes.

Key Findings

Out of School Children Figures and Profiles

Finding 1 The number of OOSC increased at a stable rate in line with population growth from 2015-2019[5] In 2015, 10 million children were estimated to be OOS across the seven study countries. In 2019, this figure increased to 14 million.[6]

2019

- Iraq   6.0M
- Jordan   .5M
- Lebanon   .6M
- Libya   .3M
- Palestine   .4M
- Turkey   2.1M
- Yemen   4.0M

2015

- Iraq   2.0M
- Jordan   .9M
- Lebanon   .3M
- Libya   .3M
- Palestine   .4M
- Turkey   1.8M
- Yemen   4.0M
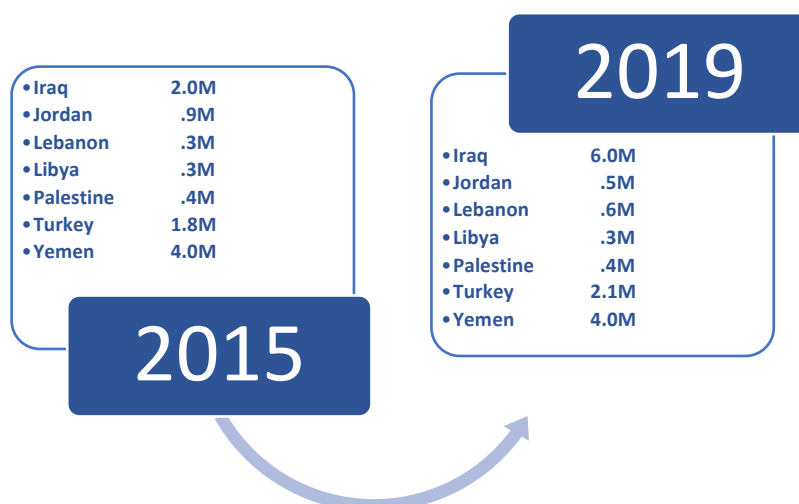
Finding 2 There was a -0.66% decline in the percentage of OOSC from 2018 to 2019 This decline aligns with a revised UIS calculation methodology that prevents counting primary school-age children as OOS if they were actually in pre- primary school.

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[5] Approximately 650 sources were used to identify the OOSC estimates. The types and methods used are detailed in the Methodological Note and the OOSC Estimation Methods Sub-report. The Works Cited annex also includes the documents used for sourcing.

[6] The rationale for the changes (or lack thereof) in OOSC figures by year are detailed further in the Methodological Note, the OOSC Estimation Methods Sub-report, and each of the country case studies.

Finding 3 42% the OOSC population was at the secondary level
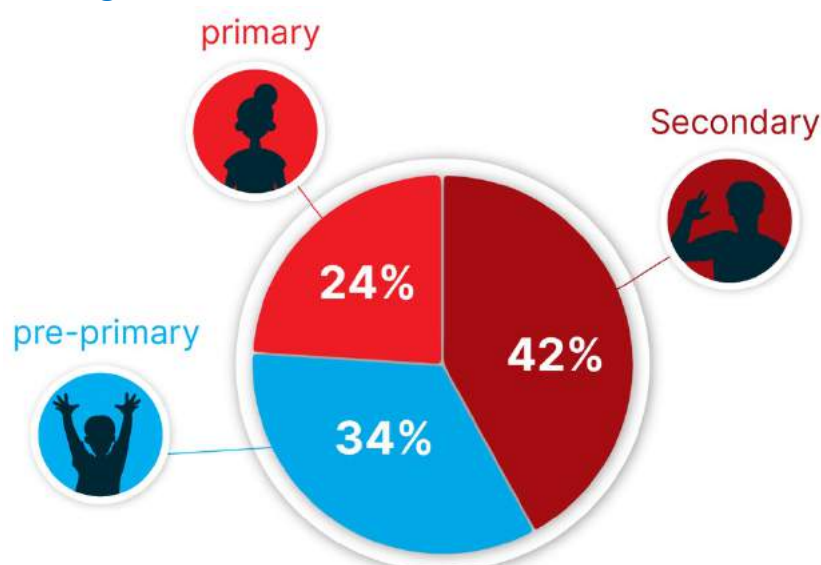
These percentages are not surprising due to several factors

Secondary education

- Upper secondary education is only compulsory in Turkey.
- Lower secondary education is not compulsory in Iraq.
- Sociocultural and socioeconomic barriers often limit engagement in secondary education. Families may prioritise the income-generating potential of their children (usually boys) and/or the unremunerated domestic labour their children (often girls) may provide.

Pre-primary education

- Is not compulsory in any of the seven countries.
- Sociocultural and socioeconomic barriers often limit engagement in pre-primary education:
- Knowledge, attitude, and investment in pre-primary education remain low in many crisis-affected contexts.
- It is often costly and only available through private providers.

Primary education

remains the only compulsory level across all seven countries.

The cycle in each country with the largest percentage of OOSC is presented below.
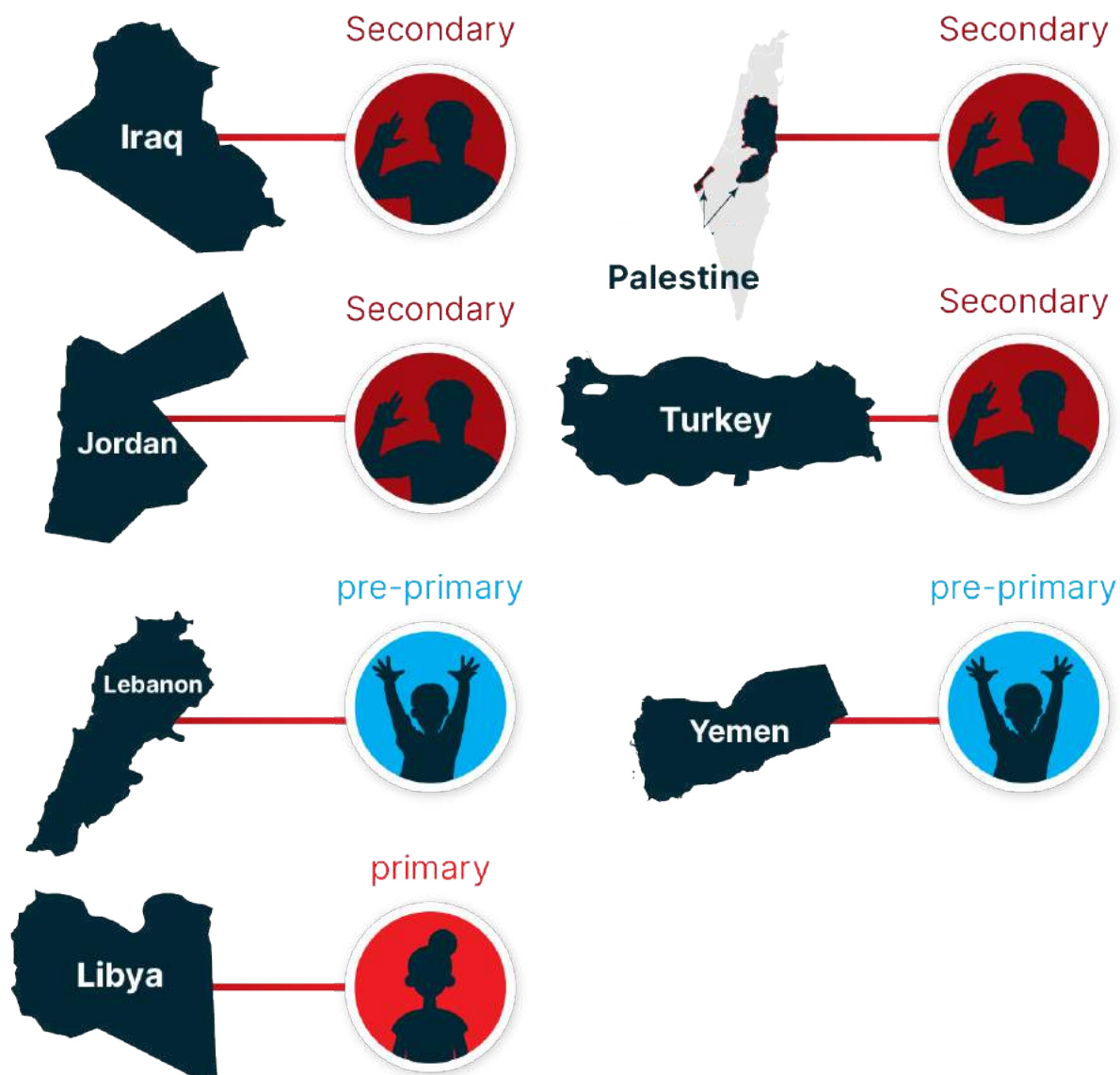
Finding 4 51% of OOSC are boys
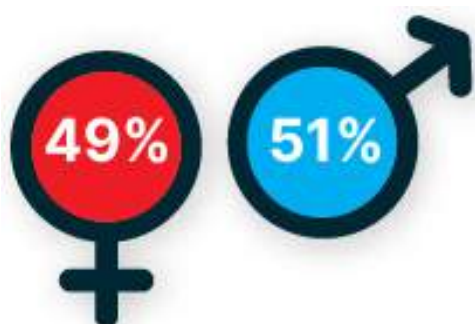
The gender of OOSC differs across the seven countries. In some cases, the total figure for girls who are OOS is higher. This finding is common both within and outside of the MENA region. It is especially so at the secondary levels, where girls' engagement in education tends to drop off. The only notable variance for this study is for Palestine. In Palestine, more adolescent males are OOS in later grades than girls and are working.

Iraq 56% female
Lebanon 51% female

Jordan 66% male
Libya 51% male
Palestine 72% male
Turkey 57% male
Yemen 51% male

Finding 5 Most OOSC are in urban areas

The global evidence of urbanisation is strong. This trend is evident in the seven study countries as well, where there was a:

3% average increase in the percentage of the population-based in urban settings between 2015 and 2020

The notable exceptions are

Yemen, where there was an

8% increase in the percentage of the population based in urban settings between 2015 and 2020, but which is still a rural society, where

65% of the population was rural in 2015, and **62%** was rural in 2018.

Lebanon, where there was a

0.6% decline in the percentage of the population based in urban settings between 2015 and 2020

Many displaced populations are also now found in urban areas. Again, this finding is the case for the study countries.

80% of displaced populations in 2020 **in Jordan, Lebanon, and Turkey** were in **urban areas**

The exception is the Palestinian refugee population in Lebanon
45% of the Palestinian refugee population is in camps
33% of the Palestinian refugee population is in rural areas

The impact of urbanisation on OOSC is notable, particularly for policy and programming purposes. Historically:

High numbers of OOSC have not been in urban areas. One factor influencing high rural OOSC figures has been the limited availability of secondary schools in those areas.

The international community has been accustomed to reaching beneficiaries in camp-like settings. However, more extended periods of displacement have become the norm for conflict- and climate-affected populations. Moreover, this change has happened in parallel with urbanisation trends (some may argue that these trends are positively correlated).
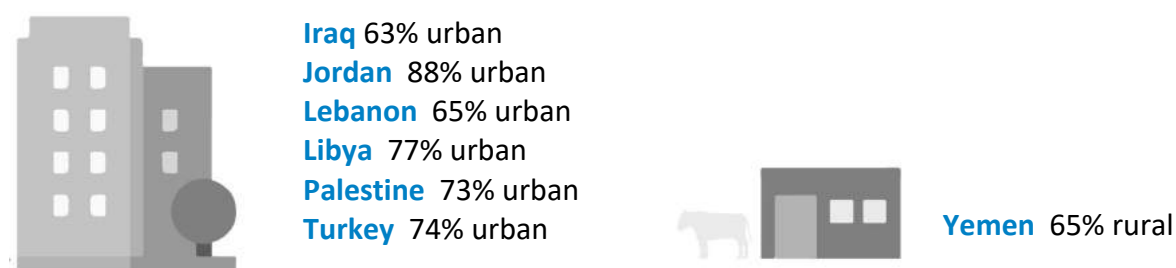
Iraq 63% urban
Jordan 88% urban
Lebanon 65% urban
Libya 77% urban
Palestine 73% urban
Turkey 74% urban

Yemen 65% rural

Finding 6 There isn't a clear trend across the study countries of what percentage of OOSC are displaced

The percentage of the OOSC population comprised of refugees or other displaced persons varied by country.

Iraq

In Iraq, most OOSC in 2019[7] were Iraqis who were not displaced.

4%   1%

95%

■ Non-displaced OOSC ■ Syrian refugee OOSC

■ Iraqi IDP OOSC
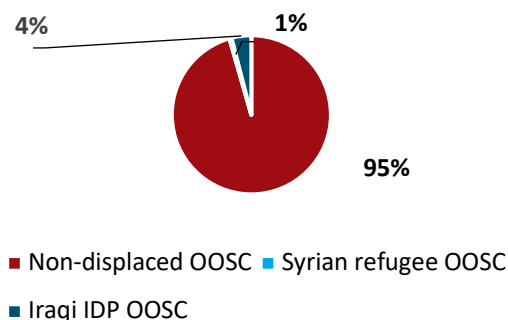
95% of OOSC were not classified as displaced

4% of OOSC were Internally Displaced Persons (IDP)

1% of OOSC were Syrian refugees

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[7] The only figures available are for 2019.

Lebanon

In Lebanon, the majority of OOSC between 2015 and 2019[8] were non-Lebanese.

- Lebanese ■ Syrian ■ Non-Lebanese, non-Syrian
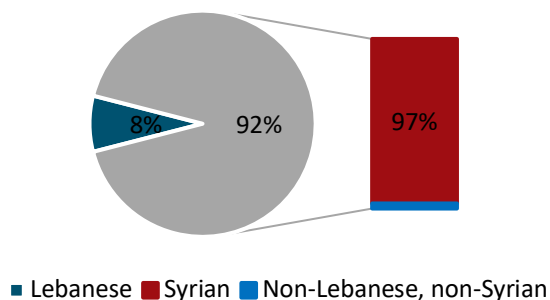
8% of OOSC was Lebanese

92% of OOSC was non-Lebanese

97% of the non-Lebanese OOSC population was Syrian

Turkey

2015

39%

61%

■ Non-Turkish
■ Turkish

2019

19%

81%

■ Non-Turkish
■ Turkish
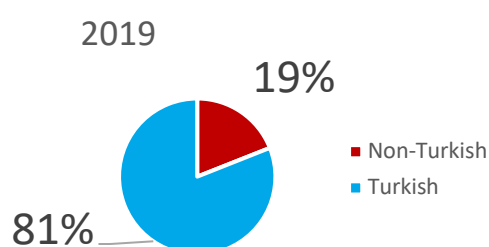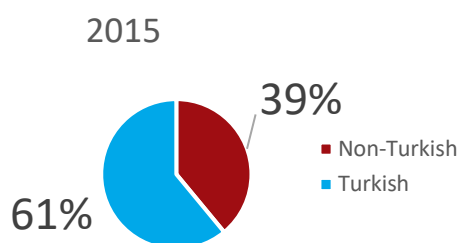
39% of the OOSC population was comprised of refugees and/or Syrians under temporary protection (SUTP) in 2015, compared to

19% in 2019,[9] a decrease attributed to the improved integration of SUTP into formal Turkish schools

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[8] Data was not available for 2020.

[9] Data was not available for 2020.

Factors that influence children's participation and retention in education
Barriers to (sustained) (re)engagement in education

Finding 7 The top five barriers were identified as 1) economic barriers; 2) quality of education; 3) school capacity to host new students; 4) resource limitations; and 5) conflict.

| Economic barriers | Quality of education | School capacity to host new students | Resource Limitations | Conflict |
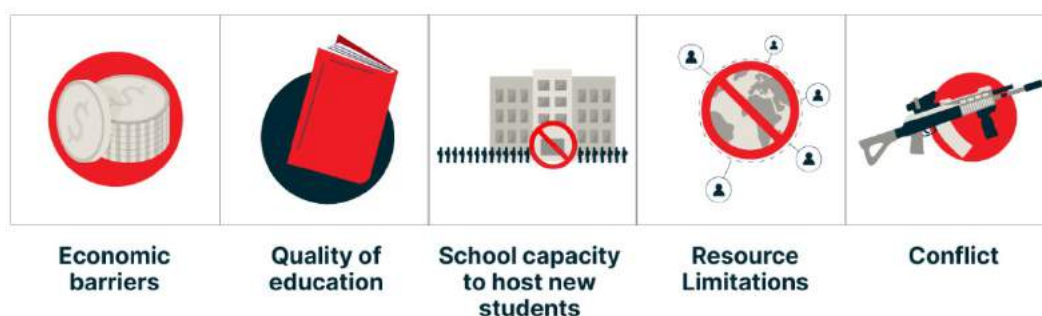
Finding 8 Most barriers come from both within and outside the education sector

80% of the barriers were related to both the sector itself and factors outside the sector. This finding highlights the critical interplay between the education sector and other forces, such as market factors and socioeconomic status, on demand for education.

For example, the top barriers outside the influence of the education sector related to economic issues, including

- child labour
- early (child) marriage
- limited resources to support (such as internet connectivity)
- a belief in the low rates of return to education

Finding 9 Most barriers were influential both before and after the start of COVID-19
This finding is significant.

1 First, it signals the need to foster resilience to future shocks that limit engagement in face-to-face instruction

2 Secondly, it suggests that many factors that affect OOSC were already in place before the pandemic and were made more impactful because of it

64% of data sources identified a lack of resources (such as teaching and learning materials and/or internet connectivity issues) influenced by COVID-19

Finding 10 The degree of influence barriers had on OOSC was stable from 2015-2019
The influence of the barriers across the study period was relatively stable year on year until 2020. The shifts in 2020 were minor and were primarily related to COVID-19.

1 Low quality of education as a barrier declined slightly in 2020

2 Access-related barriers such as economic challenges and internet connectivity increased in 2020

3 Safe access to school remained a stable issue, though in 2020 protection from COVID-19 in school spaces was included as part of the definition of school safety

Finding 11 Most barriers were most influential at the compulsory levels

This finding is logical since primary education is compulsory in all study countries, and lower secondary education is compulsory in most. The barriers that were most influential at other levels were

1 Lack of resources/internet connectivity, which was identified as most influential at the upper secondary level

2 Conflict, which was identified as most influential at the lower secondary level

Finding 12 More barriers were perceived to impact OOSC more than CRODO

35% of the barriers were identified as affecting both OOSC and CRODO equally.

Finding 13 Gender and other identifying characteristics were not perceived to be particularly relevant to any of the barriers[10] [viii]

Surprisingly, neither a child's gender nor other aspects of their identity correlated to any barriers. However:

17% of data sources identified economic barriers as more relevant to boys than girls

10% of data sources identified economic barriers as more relevant to girls than boys

Finding 14 Most barriers were as impactful on participation as they were on retention

73% of barriers were as impactful on participation as they were on retention. The exceptions:

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[10] This finding was surprising, and challenging to present, for a number of reasons. First, there is always a risk of misrepresenting nuance when aggregating information. For example, the variances amongst countries in which gender comprised the majority of OOSC, detailed in Finding 4, suggest that country-specific factors influence whether boys or girls are more likely to be out of school. The high percentage of boys OOSC in Palestine and reasons behind this trend provide another example of the influence of gender on school engagement. A 2021 UNICEF study on progression rates found variances between boys and girls, suggesting again that gender does influence engagement. Secondly, the methodology of this desk study does not facilitate the surfacing of nuance that gender and other identity factors have on school engagement. Gender-related correlations with barriers and motivating factors are best informed through primary data collection at the field level that includes qualitative data capture. Third, the different experiences of girls and boys vary by cycle and other identity-related factors, which cannot be presented clearly in the aggregate.

The following barriers were more impactful on retention
Supply-side school-based violence, quality of education, and school policy-related issues.

The demand-side child labour

The following barriers were more impactful on participation
Supply-side a school's capacity to host new students
Demand-side economic barriers, and lack of resources/internet connectivity issues were identified as more influential on participation.

Motivating factors to (sustained) (re)engagement in education

Finding 15 The top motivating factors are correlated with the barriers: 1) quality education; 2) parents with sufficient income; 3) cash transfer programme; 4) community engagement; and 5) safe access to schools.

Quality Education	Parents with sufficient income	Cash transfer programme	Community engagement	Safe access to schools
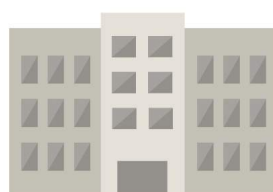
Finding 16 The majority of motivating factors come from within the education sector

64% of the motivating factors were supply-side factors related to education service delivery. The connection between education service provision (supply) and consumption of education services (demand) is evident with the barriers. For example, when there is an insufficient supply of quality education, it is a barrier to participation. When there is a sufficient supply of quality education, it is a motivating factor to participation.
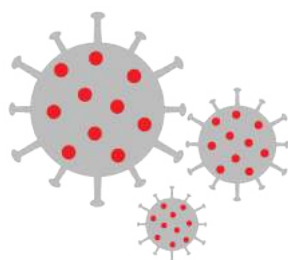
Finding 17 Most motivating factors were influential before and after the start of COVID-19

22% of motivating factors were specific to COVID-19, meaning that most motivating factors were influential before and after COVID-19.

The main motivating factor influenced by COVID-19 was safe access to schools. Its importance increased as a result.

43% of data sources identified safe access to schools as being influenced by COVID-19

40% of data sources classified safe access to school as being important across 2015-2019

70% of data sources classified safe access to school as being important in 2020

Finding 18 Most motivating factors had the most influence at compulsory levels

As with the barriers, data sources identified the motivating factors to be more influential to the primary and lower secondary cycles, characterised in most study countries as compulsory education and less so for pre-primary and upper secondary levels.

Finding 19 Most motivating factors were as influential on participation as on retention
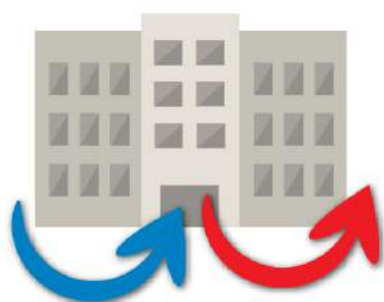
84% of motivating factors were influential to participation and retention.

12% of motivating factors were more influential on participation than on retention

3% of motivating factors were more influential on retention than on participation

Finding 20 It is not clear how influential motivating factors were on OOSC versus CRODO

The degree to which motivating factors were connected to OOSC and/or CRODO was unclear. Therefore, further research is required to enable appropriately targeted programming.

Finding 21 Most motivating factors were not classified as correlated with a child's gender or other identifying characteristics

This finding is surprising; it goes against the empirical evidence and requires further research. See footnote six on page 17 for more details.

Policies and programmes that affect OOSC
Overview
Access to policy data was limited, but primary data provided a profile of (primarily) Ministry of Education (MOE) policies that affect OOSC. These findings are below. Further data collection is required to strengthen the validity of the findings.

Finding 22 Access to quality basic education is specified as a goal, outcome, or result of MOE policies
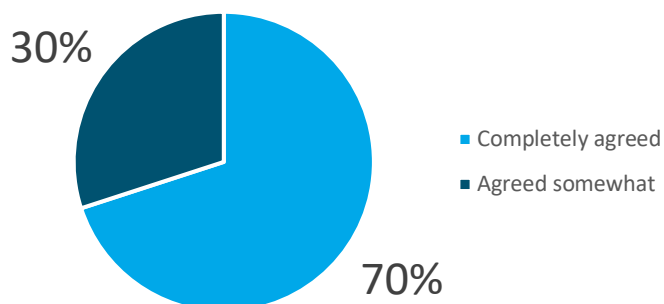
70% of primary data sources agreed somewhat that access to quality basic education is a goal, outcome, or result of the MOE policies with which they were aware

30% of primary data sources completely agreed that access to quality basic education was a goal, outcome, or result of the MOE policies with which they were aware

Finding 23 Most programmes affecting OOSC are implemented in partnership
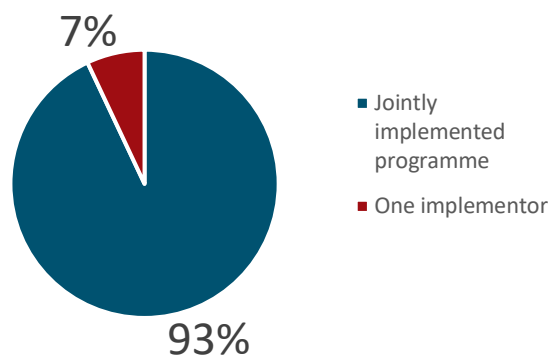
The primary stakeholders and/or partners mentioned were UNICEF and its implementing partners, international non-governmental organisations (NGO) (notably Save the Children), World Food Programme (WFP), MOE and their colleagues at the district level, the European Commission's Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations directorate (ECHO), and national NGOs. Other ministries of relevance included those responsible for youth, sports, and labour. Secondary stakeholders were characterised as primarily school and community leadership.

93% of the programmes assessed were jointly implemented amongst partners

7% of the programmes assessed were implemented by one actor

Purposeful targeting of beneficiaries by policies or programmes affecting OOSC

Targeting policy and/or programme beneficiaries is not well defined or based on empirical or context-specific evidence.

Finding 24 Most policies and programmes did not target beneficiaries based on gender and were gender and protection-sensitive

However, it's important to remember that most barriers and/or motivating factors were not particularly relevant to one gender or the other *and* that many policies and programmes did not explicitly target boys or girls.

82% of the policies and programmes reviewed did not explicitly target boys or girls.

73% of primary data sources agreed somewhat that existing programmes integrated gender and protection-related considerations

18% of primary data sources completely agreed that existing programmes integrated gender and protection-related considerations

Finding 25 Most policies and programmes did not target beneficiaries based on their exclusion status and could improve how inclusive they are of OOSC

Despite the classification of OOSC as being more at risk than those CRODO, explicit targeting of OOSC was not as expected.

36% of the policies and programmes reviewed did not clearly define whether targeted beneficiaries were OOSC and/or CRODO

27% of the policies and programmes reviewed targeted CRODO

Primary data sources confirmed these findings:

40% of primary data sources disagreed somewhat that existing policies addressed out of school children in an inclusive way

30% of primary data sources agreed somewhat that current policies addressed out of school children in an inclusive way

Finding 26 Most policies and programmes were in place before COVID-19, and were perceived to be crisis-sensitive, but could be more COVID-19 responsive

67% of policies and programmes were in place before COVID-19

2020

33% were put in place after and/or in response to it.
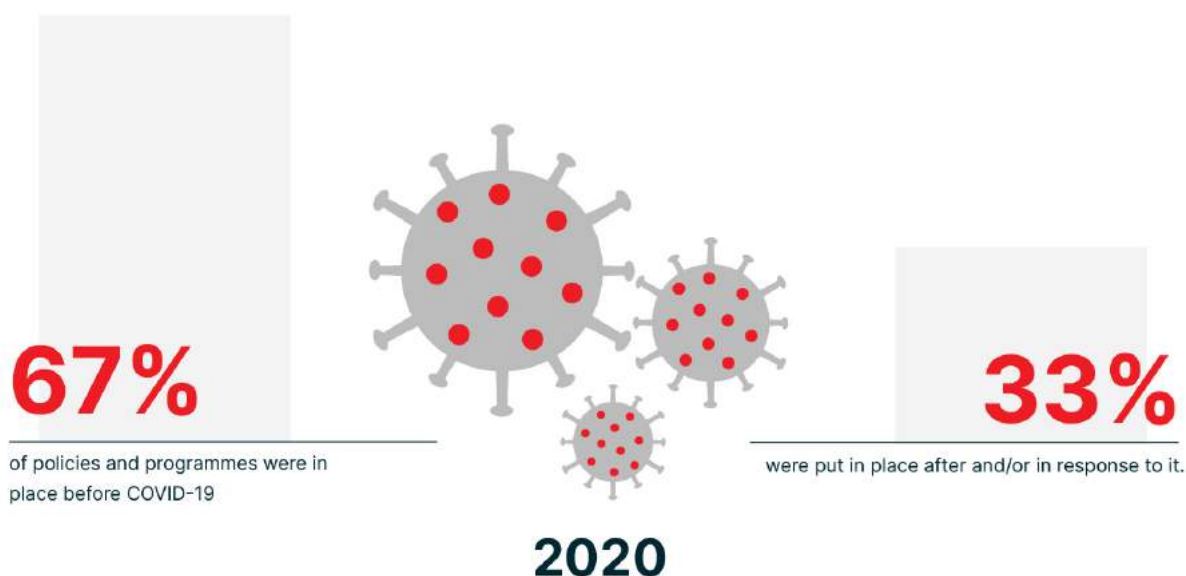
Primary data suggested that existing programmes were appropriate to crisis settings and that they could be more responsive to COVID-19. These beliefs seem to correlate with the finding that many barriers and motivating factors were not COVID-19 specific, except for safe access to schools and the availability of resources/internet connectivity.

82% of primary data sources agreed somewhat that current programmes are appropriate in crisis settings.

55% of primary data sources agreed somewhat that existing programmes were relevant to the COVID-19 crisis

36% of primary data sources disagreed somewhat that existing programmes were relevant to the COVID-19 crisis

Finding 27 Most policies and programmes do not explicitly target beneficiaries based on their impoverishment status

24% of policies and programmes reviewed explicitly targeted beneficiaries based on their impoverishment status. This finding is disappointing, considering how essential economic barriers such as impoverishment and motivating factors such as sufficient parental income were to the experiences of OOSC.

Finding 28 Most policies and programmes target the primary cohort

It was not surprising that most policies and programmes targeted the primary cohort, due to its central role in compulsory education in all study countries. It was also not surprising that only

6% of policies and programmes targeted pre-primary education

It was surprising, however, that

37% of policies and programmes targeted upper secondary education

22% targeted lower secondary education.

The small percentage of policies and programmes targeting lower secondary education compared to upper secondary education is notable. This is because many of the countries in the study have (somewhat recently) made lower secondary education part of compulsory education, whereas only one country (Turkey) requires upper secondary level completion. Therefore, logic suggests that more programmes would target compulsory lower secondary education.

Finding 29 Many policies and programmes did not have a specific geographic sub-focus

This finding is discouraging, considering the evidence that more OOSC are in urban areas.

44% of policies and programmes reviewed did not have a specific geographic sub-focus (urban over rural, for example).

6% of the policies and programmes had an urban focus

Finding 30 Finding 30 School feeding programmes are a valuable pull factor for OOSC

Empirical studies and randomised controlled trials have found school feeding to be a social safety net. For example, there are strong links between school feeding programmes and enrolment, at least in the short term. There is also a positive correlation between the appropriate utilisation of food (as facilitated by thoughtfully designed school feeding programmes), improved nutrition, and improved engagement in learning. However, a low number of vulnerable school age children are reached via school feeding programmes.

Conclusions and Recommendations

The conclusions and recommendations that follow are based on the findings. The study authors are aware of related reports and recommendations not yet released at the time of its publication, particularly relevant to the OOSC figures and trends methodology and recommendations; those are not included here but attention to them when released will be critical. The conclusions and recommendations presented here are relevant to all of the countries under the study, unless stated otherwise. They are organised according to the primary interests of the study's main stakeholders. They are coded by the study's three main areas of inquiry, priority, responsible stakeholder(s), and recommendation type. Each recommendation also has a specific action and a lead stakeholder for that action.
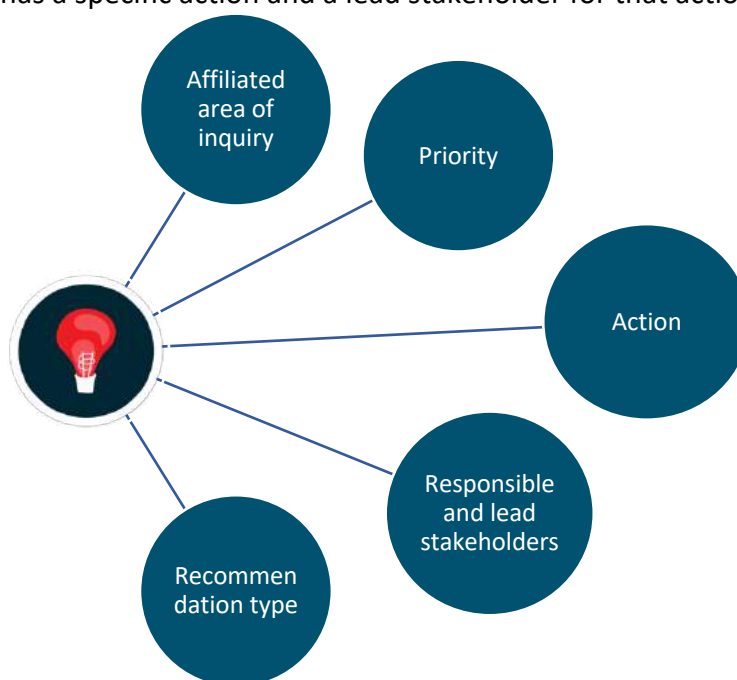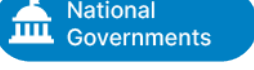
The recommendations have three priority levels:

Priority 1
Action recommendation immediately

Priority 2
Action recommendation during further studies

Priority 3
Action recommendation based on findings of related studies
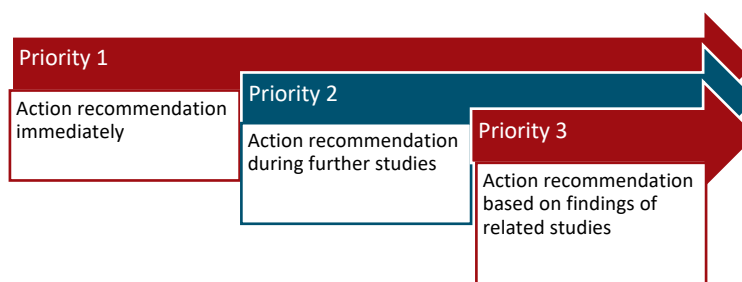
The recommendations identify the actors to whom they are most relevant

Donors

researchers or data scientists

(I)NGOs

National Governments

Global Education Cluster

Recommendations OOSC figures and trends	Most relevant stakeholder(s)
Recommendation 1.1.1 Donors, national governments, and OOSC data scientists should agree to place value on and use "good enough" data.	Donors · National Governments · Researchers or Data Scientists
Recommendation 1.1.2 Researchers should explore innovations in data collection methods that will secure good enough data in a cost effective and efficient way	Researchers or Data Scientists
Recommendation 1.1.3 Donors and national governments should expand and improve collaboration amongst the actors involved, including partners from other sectors such as the child protection area of responsibility and ministries responsible for social welfare and refugees	Donors · National Governments
Recommendation 1.1.4 (I)NGOs should promote data collection practices that expand open source-based, light touch access to data collection tools and management systems that can be used by a variety of stakeholders	(I)NGOs
Recommendation 1.2 Researchers should estimate 2020 OOSC figures through field-level data collection and COVID-19 specific estimation method guidance	Researchers or Data Scientists

Recommendations Barriers and motivating factors	Most relevant stakeholder
Recommendation 2.1.1 (I)NGOs should develop advocacy campaigns for integrated policy solutions to economic and quality of education-related barriers	(I)NGOs
Recommendation 2.1.2 Donors and (I)NGOs should revise programme strategies and proposals to prioritise integrated programming solutions that address the interrelationship between the demand and supply-side barriers that affect	Donors (I)NGOs
Recommendation 2.2 Researchers should review whether prioritising the barriers that primarily affect OOSC over CRODO is still ethically relevant in the "post" COVID-19 era	Researchers or Data Scientists
Recommendation 2.3 Researchers should assess the degree to which certain motivating factors are or are not more influential to OOSC or CRODO cohorts	Researchers or Data Scientists
Recommendation 2.4.1 Donors and national governments should invest in evidence-based supply side activities	Donors National Governments
Recommendation 2.4.2 (I)NGOs should encourage donors to invest in evidence-based supply-side activities	(I)NGOs
Recommendation 2.5.1 (I)NGOs should argue for programme design that addresses the barriers and motivating factors relevant before and during COVID-19	(I)NGOs
Recommendation 2.5.2 (I)NGOs should elevate the lessons well learnt in some crisis-affected contexts about effective community-based education and alternative forms of learning that address multiple intelligences	(I)NGOs
Recommendation 2.5.3 Researchers should research the extent to which COVID-19 will impact existing barriers and motivating factors or contribute to new ones	Researchers or Data Scientists

Recommendations Barriers and motivating factors	Most relevant stakeholder
Recommendation 2.5.4 Researchers should assess any COVID-19-related economic impact on education budgets	Researchers or Data Scientists
Recommendation 2.6 Researchers should assess the appropriateness of continuing to invest in compulsory level programming	Researchers or Data Scientists
Recommendation 2.7 Researchers should undertake further research regarding the individual connections between 1) gender, 2) participation, 3) retention and the main barriers and motivating	Researchers or Data Scientists

Recommendations Policies and programmes	Most relevant stakeholder
Recommendation 3.1 Researchers should review the ministry of education and other relevant ministry policies that affect OOSC in each study country	Researchers or Data Scientists
Recommendation 3.2 Researchers should assess the degree of coherence between policy intent and policy implementation related to OOSC in each study country	Researchers or Data Scientists
Recommendation 3.3 (I)NGOs should advocate for programmes that are better targeted, more contextually relevant, and based on the available evidence	(I)NGOs
Recommendation 3.4 Researchers should assess innovative means for reaching the most vulnerable children via (school-based) feeding programmes in the seven study countries	Researchers or Data Scientists

Conclusion Area 1 Estimating the number of OOSC

Conclusion 1.1 Estimating visible OOSC figures is very difficult; identifying less visible populations is even harder

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Priority 1

Recommendation 1.1.1 Donors, national governments, and OOSC data scientists should agree to place value on and use "good enough" data

Affiliated area of inquiry The number and profile of out of school children

Recommendation(s) most relevant to

 Donors   National Governments   Researchers or Data Scientists

Example(s) of most relevant stakeholder(s) UNICEF, Foreign and Commonwealth Development Office (FCDO), US Agency for International Development (USAID), UIS, Inter-agency Network for Education in Emergencies (INEE) Data Reference Group for Education in Emergencies, Education Cannot Wait (ECW)

Action type Commitments and agreements

Action 1.1.1 Include this commitment and list of criteria in the updated OOSC estimation protocol expected to be released by the Out-of-School Children Initiative in 2022.

</div>

Priority 2

Recommendation 1.1.2 Researchers should explore innovations in data collection methods that will secure good enough data in a cost effective and efficient way

Affiliated area of inquiry The number and profile of out of school children

Recommendation(s) most relevant to

Researchers or Data Scientists

Recommendation(s) also relevant to

Donors   National Governments

Example(s) of most relevant stakeholder(s) UNICEF, UIS, INEE Data Reference Group for Education in Emergencies

Action type Research

Action 1.1.2 Undertake a micro-study. Learn about and from the practices of the UN Global Pulse lab through a desk review and KII. Research the feasibility of expanding the sources of such data. While exploring innovations, maintain the commitment to rigor and to expanding the means of identifying "good enough" data.

Priority 2

Recommendation 1.1.3 Donors and national governments should expand and improve collaboration amongst the actors involved, including partners from other sectors such as the child protection area of responsibility and ministries responsible for social welfare and refugees

Affiliated area of inquiry The number and profile of out of school children

Recommendation(s) most relevant to

Donors   National Governments

Recommendation(s) also relevant to

Researchers or Data Scientists

Action type Research

Action 1.1.3 Researchers should undertake a donor-funded stakeholder mapping exercise for each study country to identify which offices and representatives outside of the education sector should be part of the data sourcing effort.

<div style="border:1px solid">

Priority 2

Recommendation 1.1.4 (I)NGOs should promote data collection practices that expand open source-based, light touch access to data collection tools and management systems that can be used by a variety of stakeholders

Affiliated area of inquiry The number and profile of out of school children

Recommendation(s) most relevant to

(I)NGOs

Recommendation(s) also relevant to

Donors National Governments

Example(s) of most relevant stakeholder(s) UNICEF, UIS, INEE Data Reference Group for Education in Emergencies

Action type Research

Action 1.1.4 Researchers should undertake a data capture and management study to learn about cutting edge methods and platforms that can build from and traditional systems, such as EMIS. Learn about and from the practices of the UN Global Pulse lab through a desk review and KII.

</div>

Conclusion 1.2 The OOSC trends from 2015-2019 are as expected; 2020 OOSC figures must be estimated once new guidance in light of COVID-19 is available.

Priority 2

Recommendation 1.2 Researchers should estimate the 2020 OOSC figures both through field-level data collection as well as through COVID-19-specific revisions to the specific estimation method guidance

Affiliated area of inquiry The number and profile of out of school children

Recommendation(s) most relevant to

 Researchers or Data Scientists

Recommendation(s) also relevant to

 Donors   National Governments

Example(s) of most relevant stakeholder(s) UNICEF, UIS, INEE Data Reference Group for Education in Emergencies, ECW

Action type Research

Action 1.2 Use guidance from the updated OOSC estimation protocol expected to be released by the Out-of-School Children Initiative in 2022 to revisit what profiles to include in OOSC calculations.

Conclusion Area 2 Factors that influence (sustained) (re)engagement in education

Conclusion 2.1 The primary barriers to participation and retention from the demand-side were economic; the primary barriers from the supply-side were education availability and quality

---

Priority 1

Recommendation 2.1.1 Advocacy organisations should develop an advocacy campaign for integrated policy solutions to economic and quality of education-related barriers

Affiliated area of inquiry Barriers to (sustained) (re)engagement in education

Recommendation(s) most relevant to

(I)NGOs

Example(s) of most relevant stakeholder(s) Save the Children

Action type Advocacy

Action 2.1.1 Develop simple, high impact advocacy pieces based on the findings of this study. Use them as part of a campaign to encourage donors and host country governments to modify and/or create policies that affect OOSC. Encourage changes that will better target the barriers that OOSC face. Encourage shifts in design and implementation protocol that facilitate easier cross-sectoral/integrated programming.

Priority 1

Recommendation 2.1.2 Donors and (I)NGOs should revise programme strategies and proposals to prioritise integrated programming solutions that address the interrelationship between the demand and supply side barriers that affect OOSC.

Affiliated area of inquiry Barriers to (sustained) (re)engagement in education

Recommendation(s) most relevant to

Donors   (I)NGOs

Recommendation(s) also relevant to

National Governments

Example(s) of most relevant stakeholder(s) UNICEF, USAID, FCDO, ECHO, ECW, Save the Children

Action type Implementation

Action 2.1.2 Develop guidance on what better integrated programming would look like. Solicit proposals that align with this guidance. Elevate the value of address the demand-side economic barriers to education that traditionally fall under the responsibility of livelihoods actors. Incentivise the use of cash transfer programmes; unconditional for short-term programmes aimed at securing improved enrolment, and conditional for longer-term programmes aimed at promoting retention.

Conclusion 2.2 The primary barriers affect OOSC more so than CRODO

Priority 2

Recommendation 2.2 Researchers should review whether prioritising the barriers that primarily affect OOSC over CRODO is still ethically relevant in the "post" COVID-19 era

Affiliated area of inquiry Barriers to (sustained) (re)engagement in education

Recommendation(s) most relevant to

Researchers or Data Scientists

Recommendation(s) also relevant to

(I)NGOs

Donors

National Governments
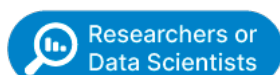
Example(s) of most relevant stakeholder(s) Save the Children

Action type Advocacy and research

Action 2.2.1 (I)NGO advocacy efforts should include asks to donors to make funding available for further research. Include as part of further research primary data collection using mixed methods.

Action 2.2.2 Researchers should review the experiences of OOSC and CRODO specifically in relation to the changing nature of education in light of the COVID-19 closures and other prevention protocol. Focus should be on the extent to which the pandemic will impact existing and/or contribute to new barriers and/or motivating factors that need to be addressed.

Conclusion 2.3 The degree to which motivating factors influence OOSC and/or CRODO remains unclear

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Priority 2

Recommendation 2.3 Researchers should assess the degree to which certain motivating factors are or are not more influential to OOSC or CRODO cohorts

Affiliated area of inquiry Motivating factors supporting (sustained) (re)engagement in education

Recommendation(s) most relevant to

Researchers or Data Scientists

Recommendation(s) also relevant to

(I)NGOs   Donors   National Governments

Example(s) of most relevant stakeholder(s) Save the Children

Action type Advocacy and research

Action 2.3 Advocacy efforts should include asks to donors to make funding available for further research. Include as part of further research primary data collection using mixed methods. Researchers should review the experiences of OOSC and CRODO specifically in relation to what factors are more relevant to one cohort than the other, if at all.

Conclusion 2.4 Factors within the responsibility of the education sector play the greatest role in motivating investment in education

---

Priority 1

Recommendation 2.4.1 Donors and national governments should invest in evidence-based supply side activities

Affiliated area of inquiry Motivating factors to (sustained) (re)engagement in education

Recommendation most relevant to

Donors   National Governments

Recommendation(s) also relevant to

(I)NGOs

Example(s) of most relevant stakeholder(s) UNICEF, USAID, FCDO, ECHO, ECW, ministries of education of the study countries

Action type Strategic planning

Action 2.4.1 In all cases, but particularly in those contexts where the demand side barriers are less significant than supply side barriers, prioritise supply side investment in enhancing the quality of education.

Priority 1

Recommendation 2.4.2 Advocacy organisations should encourage donors to invest in evidence-based supply side activities

Affiliated area of inquiry Motivating factors to (sustained) (re)engagement in education

Recommendation(s) most relevant to

National Governments

Example(s) of most relevant stakeholder(s) Save the Children, Plan International

Action type Advocacy

Action 2.4.2 Develop an advocacy campaign based on this study focusing on highlighting the evidence-based supply side investments known to sustainably and measurably improve the quality of education. Messaging should note that, in all cases, but particularly in those contexts where the demand side barriers are less significant than supply side barriers, donors should prioritise supply side investment in enhancing the quality of education.

Conclusion 2.5 Barriers and motivating factors relevant before COVID-19 remained relevant-if not more relevant-during the pandemic.

Priority 1

Recommendation 2.5.1 Advocacy organisations should argue for programme design toward the barriers and motivating factors that were relevant before, during, and in the COVID-19 recovery phase.

Affiliated area of inquiry Barriers to and motivating factors of (sustained) (re)engagement in education

Recommendation(s) most relevant to

National Governments

Example(s) of most relevant stakeholder(s) Save the Children

Action type Advocacy

Action 2.5.1 Develop simple, high impact advocacy pieces based on the findings of this study. Use them as part of a campaign to encourage donors and host country governments to modify and/or create policies that affect OOSC. Encourage changes that will better target the barriers and motivating factors that influence OOSC. Encourage shifts in design and implementation protocol that facilitate easier cross-sectoral/integrated programming.

Priority 1

Recommendation 2.5.2 Advocacy organisations should elevate the lessons well learnt in some crisis-affected contexts about effective community-based education and alternative forms of learning that address multiple intelligences

Affiliated area of inquiry Barriers to and motivating factors of (sustained) (re)engagement in education

Recommendation(s) most relevant to

National Governments

Example(s) of most relevant stakeholder(s) Save the Children

Action type Advocacy

Action 2.5.2 Develop simple, high impact advocacy pieces based on the research produced by Dr. Dana Burde as well as any relevant research that surfaces specifically to home-based learning during COVID-19-related closures. Use them as part of a campaign to encourage donors and host country governments to modify and/or create policies that affect OOSC.

<div>

Priority 2

Recommendation 2.5.3 Researchers should research the extent to which COVID-19 will impact existing barriers and motivating factors and/or contribute to new ones

Affiliated area of inquiry Barriers to and motivating factors of (sustained) (re)engagement in education

Recommendation(s) most relevant to

Recommendation(s) also relevant to

Example(s) of most relevant stakeholder(s) Save the Children

Action type Research

Action 2.5.3.1 Donors should make funding available for further multi-stage research, both immediate and longitudinal in nature.

Action 2.5.3.2 Researchers should assess if and to what extent the barriers and motivating factors in place before COVID-19 affected (sustained) (re)engagement in education as a result of it. They should also look at any new or modified barriers and motivating factors, and address them in order to facilitate the resilience of the education sector and education service delivery in light of crises such as pandemics.

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<p align="center">**Priority 2**</p>

Recommendation 2.5.4 Researchers should assess any COVID-19-related impact on education budgets

Affiliated area of inquiry Barriers to and motivating factors of (sustained) (re)engagement in education

Recommendation(s) most relevant to

Recommendation(s) also relevant to

Example(s) of most relevant stakeholder(s) Save the Children

Action type Research

Action 2.5.4 Undertake research. In looking at these budgetary value and allocation projections, propose priorities for investment areas that are most impactful on OOSC and elevate these to advocacy partners.

</div>

Conclusion 2.6 Compulsory education is most influenced by and relevant to the main barriers and motivating factors

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Priority 2

Recommendation 2.6 Researchers should assess the appropriateness of continuing to invest in compulsory level programming

Affiliated area of inquiry Barriers and motivating factors to (sustained) (re)engagement in education

Recommendation(s) most relevant to

 Researchers or Data Scientists

Recommendation(s) also relevant to

 Donors   National Governments

Example(s) of most relevant stakeholder(s) Save the Children

Action type Research

Action 2.6 Research if it is appropriate to continue investing primarily at the compulsory level. Explore if investments to support (sustained) (re)engagement at the pre-primary to primary and the primary to lower secondary levels transitions are important in areas where both primary and lower secondary are compulsory.

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Conclusion 2.7 Neither the main barriers nor the primary motivating factors appeared to be correlated to gender, participation, and/or retention factors

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Priority 2

Recommendation 2.7 Researchers should undertake further research regarding the individual connections between 1) gender; 2) participation; 3) retention and the main barriers and motivating factors

Affiliated area of inquiry Barriers to and motivating factors supporting (sustained) (re)engagement in education

Recommendation(s) most relevant to

Recommendation(s) also relevant to

Example(s) of most relevant stakeholder(s) Save the Children

Action type Research

Action 2.7 Include as part of further research primary data collection using mixed methods that aims to surface particularly nuanced connections, if any, between and amongst the main barriers and identifying characteristics of children. Use the same methods to explore the correlation, if any, between and amongst the barriers and their influence on participation and/or retention in education.

</div>

Conclusion Area 3 Policies and programmes that affect OOSC

Conclusion 3.1 The appropriateness of national policies that affect OOSC is unclear in most of the study countries

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Priority 2

Recommendation 3.1 Researchers should review the ministry of education as well as other relevant ministry policies that affect OOSC in each study country

Affiliated area of inquiry Policies and programmes that effect OOSC

Recommendation(s) most relevant to

Researchers or Data Scientists

Recommendation(s) also relevant to

Donors   National Governments   (I)NGOs

Example(s) of most relevant stakeholder(s) Save the Children

Action type Research

Action 3.1 Include as part of further research primary data collection using mixed methods that aims to surface particularly nuanced connections, if any, between and amongst the main barriers and identifying characteristics of children. Use the same methods to explore the correlation, if any, between and amongst the barriers and their influence on participation and/or retention in education.

Conclusion 3.2 The degree of coherence between national policies that affect OOSC and their implementation is unclear

<div style="border:1px solid #2a7de1; padding:1em;">

<p style="text-align:center;color:#c00000;">Priority 2</p>

Recommendation 3.2 Researchers should assess the degree of coherence between policy intent and policy implementation as they relate to OOSC

Affiliated area of inquiry Policies and programmes that effect OOSC

Recommendation(s) most relevant to

Researchers or Data Scientists

Recommendation(s) also relevant to

Donors

National Governments

(I)NGOs

Example(s) of most relevant stakeholder(s) Save the Children

Action type Research

Action 3.2 Include as part of further research primary data collection using mixed methods to explore the correlation between policy intent and policy implementation.

</div>

Conclusion 3.3 Programmes that affect OOSC are not effectively targeting them

<div style="border:1px solid">

Priority 1

Recommendation 3.3 Advocacy organisations should advocate for programmes that are better targeted, more contextually relevant, and based on the available evidence

Affiliated area of inquiry Policies and programmes that that an OOSC

Recommendation(s) most relevant to

(I)NGOs

Recommendation(s) also relevant to

Donors   National Governments

Example(s) of most relevant stakeholder(s) Save the Children

Action type Advocacy

Action 3.3.1 Advocate for integrated programming that recognise the economic and quality of education-related factors that affect participation and retention

Action 3.3.2 Put in place-and/or seek implementing partner support for-programme actions that respond to economic and quality of education-related barriers and motivating factors. Specifically, pivot toward cash transfer programming to help address demand-side economic barriers, focusing on unconditional cash transfers for OOSC and conditional cash transfers for CRODO.

Action 3.3.3 Produce and publicise evidence-based integrated programming solutions that address the interrelationship between economic and quality of education-related factors

Action 3.3.4 Advocate for programmes that address the whole child, as well as for funding and reporting mechanisms that allow for such a shift away from sector specific funding

Action 3.3.5 Advocate for-and contribute to dialogue about-realistic shifts in programme funding methods that elevate results-based financing while also facilitating continued localisation of aid

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Conclusion 3.4 Further research is needed on the means for reaching the most vulnerable OOSC with (school-based) feeding programmes

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Priority 3

Recommendation 3.4 Researchers should assess innovative means for reaching the most vulnerable children via (school-based) feeding programmes in the seven countries of study

Affiliated area of inquiry Policies and programmes that affect OOSC

Recommendation(s) most relevant to

🔍 Researchers or Data Scientists

Recommendation(s) also relevant to

💲 Donors   🏛 National Governments   🤲 (I)NGOs   🌐 Global Education Cluster

Example(s) of most relevant stakeholder(s) World Food Programme, School Meals Coalition partners, Catholic Relief Services (CRS), ministries of education and other social services in the study countries

Action type Research

🔍

Action 3.4 Include WFP and non-WFP feeding programmes in further research. Focus on the continuum of current and potential options for reaching the most vulnerable, including through non-formal education spaces and with cash as well as in-kind food transfers.

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[i] UNICEF. (2018a). Regional Factsheet on Out of School Children in the Middle East And North Africa.

[ii] UNESCO. (2011a). ISCED Iraq *Mapping*; UNESCO. (2011b). *ISCED Jordan Mapping*; UNESCO. (2011c). *ISCED Lebanon Mapping;* UNESCO. (2011d). *ISCED Libya Mapping*; and UNESCO. (2011f). *ISCED Yemen Mapping*.

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[iv] UNESCO. (2011g). ISCED *State of Palestine Mapping.*

[v] Personal communication, 2021.

[vi] ELHRA. (n.d.). *Humanitarian Innovation Guide.*

[vii] Personal communication, 2021.

[viii] UNICEF. (2021). *How are Children Progressing through School?: An Education Pathway Analysis.*

Desk Study: Main Trends and Analysis on
Out of School Children in the Middle
East and North Africa Region

2015 - 2020

FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS,
AND RECOMMENDATIONS

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FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS
Desk Study: Main Trends and Analysis on Out of School Children in the Middle East and North Africa Region

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Out of School Children Trends

Findings

Finding 1 The number of OOSC increased at a stable rate in line with population growth or shifts in the various contexts from 2015-2019

This finding is discouraging in light of efforts to reduce OOSC populations. The total OOSC figures increased from 2015 through 2019 in line with inflation or alignment with changes in country contexts. In 2015, the total estimate of OOSC was 14 million across the seven countries, and in 2019 it was 14 million.

Figure 1 shows the OOSC figures by sex and per year across all study countries.[1]

Figure 1: Total OOSC figures, 2015-2019, by country and by year

Iraq	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
Total	2,053,229	2,113,164	5,502,461	5,631,524	5,759,907
Females	1,232,748	1,268,732	3,034,857	3,106,041	3,176,850
Males	820,481	844,432	2,467,604	2,525,483	2,583,057

Jordan	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
Total	870,910	1,136,432	877,299	918,540	456,820
Females	-	-	93710*	89705*	172504*
Males	-	-	102471*	141875*	359837*

Lebanon	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
Total	328,793	303,793	568,383	530,422	557,928
Females	167,684	154,934	289,875	270,515	284,543
Males	161,109	148,859	278,508	259,907	273,385

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[1] Please see the methodology section for a detailed description of how the following figures were captured, the section on the background to OOSC calculation methodologies for information on the challenges facing such capture and estimation, and the limitations section for specific data-related challenges that affected these findings. Noting that figures presented in the aggregate hide critical nuance, we reaffirm that cross comparison at a detailed level is not appropriate for this study, and further that such detailed information is available in each of the country-specific sections.

Libya		2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
	Total	279,000	279,000	244,500	260,000	358,800
	Females	136,710	136,710	119,805	127,400	175,812
	Males	142,290	142,290	124,695	132,600	182,988

Palestine		2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
	Total	345,708	353,836	362,353	371,188	380,229
	Females	96,183	98,445	100,814	103,272	137,869
	Males	265,609	271,854	278,397	285,185	241,735

Turkey		2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
	Total	1,849,588	1,978,008	2,063,292	2,116,162	2,121,026
	Females	804233*	792228*	828758*	831091*	832,274
	Males	804233*	851097*	874093*	875330*	887,333

Yemen		2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
	Total	3,992,794	4,093,800	4,194,247	4,294,280	4,394,220
	Females	1,957,284	2,006,797	2,056,037	2,105,074	2,154,064
	Males	2,035,510	2,087,003	2,138,210	2,189,207	2,240,155

Finding 2 There was a -0.66% decline in the percentage of OOSC from 2018 to 2019, aligning with a revised UIS calculation methodology that prevents counting primary school-age children as OOS if they were actually in pre-primary school

The slight decline in the figures noted for 2019 compared to 2018 stands out amongst the trend lines. This decline occurred when UIS introduced the revised calculation methodology to prevent counting primary school-age children as out-of-school if they were actually in pre-primary school. Whereas percentage change figures between years would naturally be positive, that for 2019 is -.66%.

Finding 3 42% of the OOSC population was at the secondary level
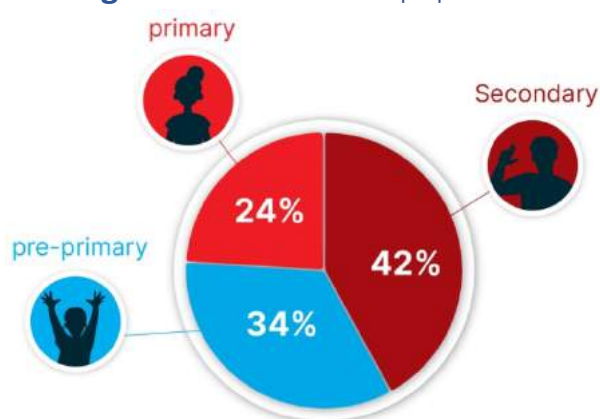
These percentages are not surprising due to some factors, namely

1 Upper secondary education is only compulsory in Turkey. Furthermore, sociocultural and socioeconomic barriers often limit engagement in upper secondary education. This limitation can happen when families prioritise the income-generating potential of their children (usually boys) or the unremunerated domestic labour of their children (often girls). The section on barriers explores these points in depth.

2 Pre-primary education is not compulsory in any of the seven countries. Furthermore, knowledge, attitude, and practices regarding the value of investing in pre-primary remain low in many crisis-affected contexts, and the costs for accessing pre-primary are often high.

3 Primary education remains the only compulsory level across all seven countries.

Finding 4 51% of OOSC are boys

The gender-disaggregated profile differs across the seven countries, but slightly more boys than girls are OOS. In some cases, the total figure for girls who are out of school is higher. This finding is common amongst OOSC cohorts globally. As noted above, and especially at the secondary levels, girls' engagement in education tends to drop off. There are notable exceptions, however.

In **Palestine**,[2] the figure for males is higher at the secondary level. This figure is in line with trends going back at least ten years. Although Palestinian society values education regardless of gender, it is common for secondary-school age boys to leave school early. This practice is especially true in East Jerusalem; adolescent males can earn a good wage in West Jerusalem, compared to that available to them in areas of the West Bank and if they complete their education.

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[2] The commissioning agencies use the term Palestine for the purpose of this study, recognising that different nomenclatures exist.

Libya and **Yemen** also have higher OOS rates for boys (though not significantly), perhaps because Libya and Yemen remain in active conflict. Boys tend to leave school in such environments.

Turkey's rate is also higher, perhaps because of the high percentage of Syrians under temporary protection (UTP) and refugees Turkey hosts. In addition, the (slight) majority are often male.

Figure 2 shows the average annual OOSC figure by sex.

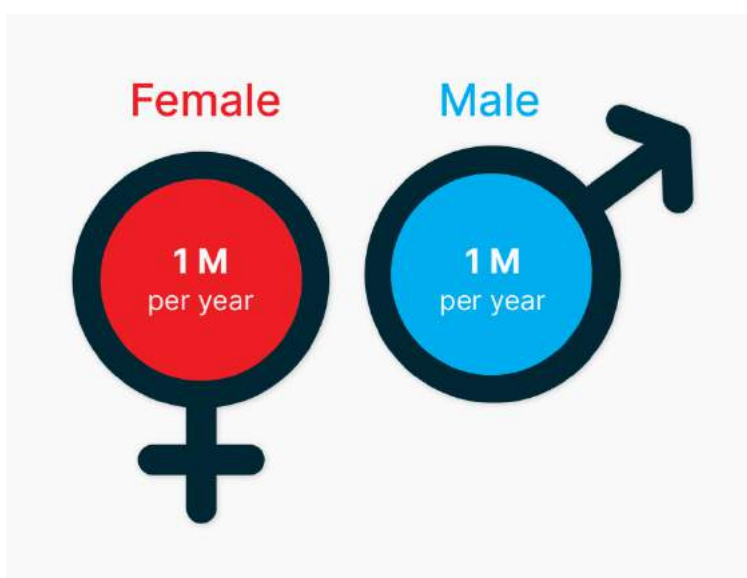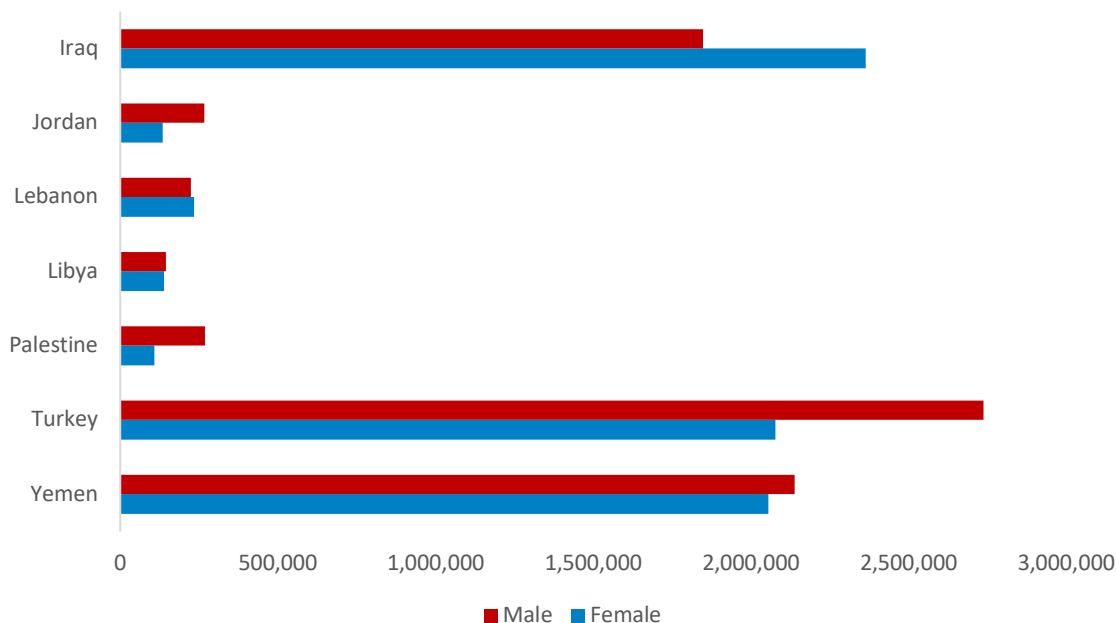*Figure 2: Average annual OOSC figures, 2015-2019, by sex*

Figure 3 shows the average annual OOSC figures by sex and country.

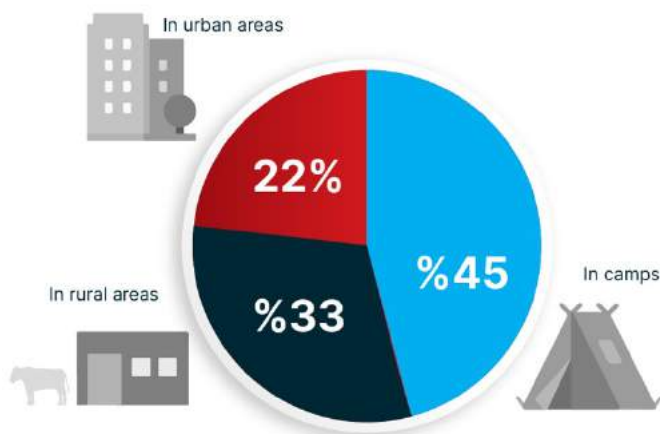*Figure 3: Average annual OOSC figures by sex and country*

Finding 5 Most OOSC are in urban areas

68% Most refugee or otherwise displaced populations (68%) were in urban areas.

The exception is the Palestinian refugee population in Lebanon, as follows

73%[3] In the urbanised study countries (all but Yemen), OOSC living in urban areas accounted for 73% of the total OOSC population from 2015-2019. In Yemen, the figure was 35%.

Urbanisation has been an evidence-supported trend for some time. However, it is notable mainly for policy and programming purposes.

1 because policies and programmes have historically focused on rural areas.[4]

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[3] Iraq: 68%, Jordan: 82%, Lebanon: 62%, Libya: 77%, Palestine: 75%, Turkey: 76%, and Yemen: 35%.

2 because the international community has historically supported displaced populations in camp-like settings.

However, more extended periods of displacement have become the norm for conflict-affected (and some might argue climate-affected) populations and have been happening in parallel with urbanisation trends.

3% Across the seven countries, the average increase in the population based in urban settings between 2015 and 2020 was 3%. The notable exceptions are:

8.8% Yemen is still predominantly a rural society and saw an 8.8% increase between 2015 and 2020.

65% of the Yemeni population was in rural areas in 2015

62% of the Yemeni population was in rural areas in 2018),

-.6% Lebanon, which saw a decline.6% decline between 2015 and 2020.

Finding 6 There isn't a clear trend across the study countries of what percentage displaced population are of OOSC

The percentage of the OOSC population comprised of refugees or other displaced persons varied by country.

In Iraq

4% of the OOSC population in 2019 was IDPs

1% of the OOSC population in 2019 was Syrian

In Lebanon

92% of the OOSC population was non-Lebanese before COVID-19, of which

97% were Syrian

In Turkey

39% of the OOSC population was a refugee in 2015, compared with

19% in 2019

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[4] The availability of secondary school spaces in rural areas is usually insufficient for school-age populations there.

Conclusions and Recommendations

Unless stated otherwise, the following conclusions and recommendations are relevant to all countries under the study. Each of the country case studies has its own conclusions and recommendations.

Conclusion 1.2[5] The OOSC trends from 2015-2019 are as expected; 2020 OOSC figures must be estimated once new guidance in light of COVID-19 is available.

Summary The figures increased in line with population growth or changes to the contexts in each study country. There was a slight decline in the total number of OOSC in 2019 compared to 2018; this decline resulted from a change in the UIS' calculation methods. The gender-disaggregated profile differs across the seven countries. The percentage of the OOSC population comprised of refugees or other displaced persons varied by country. The figures for 2020 need to be assessed once estimation methods are modified. These changes are appropriate given the unprecedented nature of the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on school closures.

Recommendation 1.2 Researchers should estimate the 2020 OOSC figures through field-level data collection and the COVID-19 specific estimation method guidance

Priority 2

Action type Research

Recommendation(s) most relevant to

Researchers or Data Scientists

Recommendation(s) also relevant to

Donors   National Governments   (I)NGOs

Examples of most relevant stakeholder(s) UNICEF, UIS, INEE Data Reference Group for Education in Emergencies, ECW

Action 1.2 Use guidance from the updated OOSC estimation protocol to revisit what profiles to include in OOSC calculations. The Out-of-School Children Initiative is expected to release this guidance in 2022.

Rationale Given the unprecedented nature of the crisis and related school closures, how entities collecting information classified whether a student was in school or not might vary based on several factors. These could include political influence, how engaging in remote learning was characterised, and how the risk of dropping out was classified. COVID-19-related changes to OOSC estimation methods are expected to be ready by 2022; accurately estimating the number of children OOS versus affected by COVID-19-related school closures

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[5] Recommendation 1.1 relates to OOSC estimation methods and is detailed in the OOSC Estimation Methods Sub-report.

should be possible then. As such, 2020 OOSC figures are likely to be most valid and best understood longitudinally once calculation methods are somewhat universally agreed upon and applied.

Importantly, however, qualitative data suggests that barriers and motivating factors were essentially the same before and after COVID-19. The impact that COVID-19 had on these factors in the medium- to long-term should be assessed in later studies. It is likely that some of them will be more impactful than before. For example, this study's findings indicate that factors such as safe access to safe schools became a more important motivating factor, and poor internet connectivity became a more notable barrier, as a result of COVID-19.

Factors that influence children's participation and retention in education

While this study did not aim to aggregate or compare the OOSC figures across the seven countries of the study, it did identify commonalities amongst the factors that influence children's participation and retention in education. As such, the following section presents this information in the aggregate, except in cases where clear outlier(s) exist that are important to highlight. In addition, each case study includes greater context-specific detail.

Findings Barriers

Finding 7 The top five barriers were: 1) Economic/impoverishment-related; 2) Quality of education; 3) School capacity to host new students; 4) Resource limitations specifically related to engaging in learning, such as internet connectivity issues; and 5) Conflict

| Economic barriers | Quality of education | School capacity to host new students | Resource Limitations | Conflict |
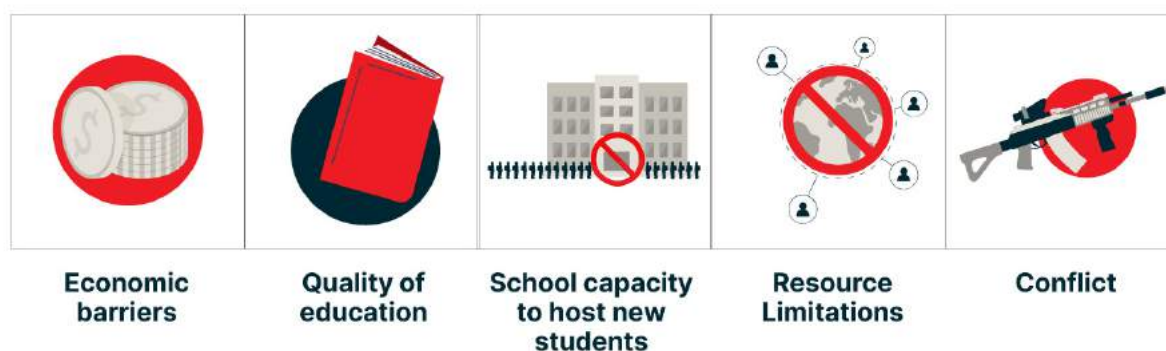
The top five barriers across all countries are as follows. They are ranked by frequency count and the number of sources mentioning them.
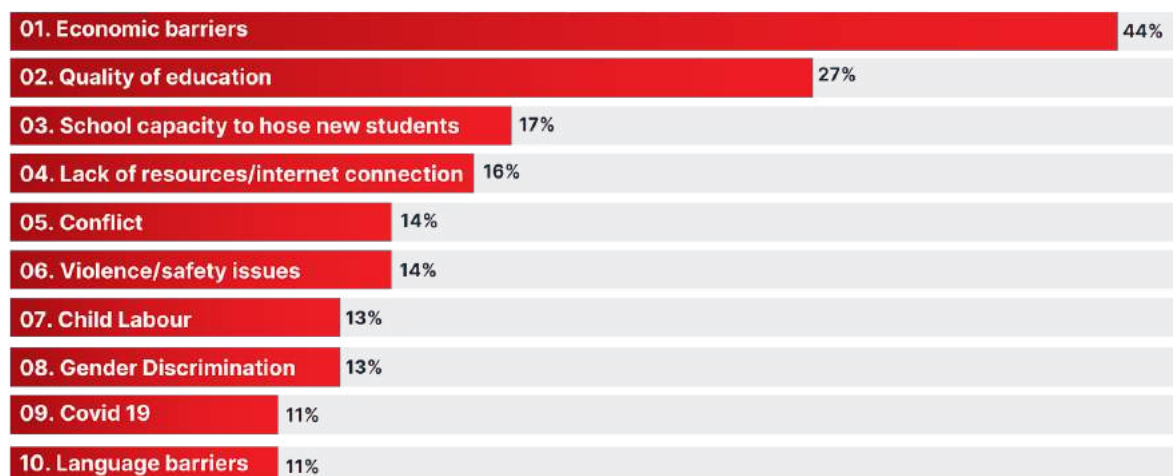
1 **Economic/impoverishment-related**
2 **Quality of education**
3 **School capacity to host new students**
4 **Resource limitations** specifically related to engaging in learning, such as internet connectivity issues
5 **Conflict**

The top barriers include
- violence and other safety-related issues in the school space or along the way to school
- child labour (connected to the top issue-economic barriers)
- gender discrimination
- COVID-19
- education data/information collection issues (such as EMIS-related issues).

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Figure 4 shows the top ten barriers ranked by frequency count and the number of sources mentioning them. Again, there were no notable exceptions to this ranking/prioritisation through the following lenses when reviewed through the source type (KI, survey, literature).

Figure 4: Top ten barriers

Barrier	%
01. Economic barriers	44%
02. Quality of education	27%
03. School capacity to hose new students	17%
04. Lack of resources/internet connection	16%
05. Conflict	14%
06. Violence/safety issues	14%
07. Child Labour	13%
08. Gender Discrimination	13%
09. Covid 19	11%
10. Language barriers	11%

The following section summarises the nature of the connection between the barriers and various lenses of inquiry.

Finding 8 Most barriers come from both within and outside the education sector
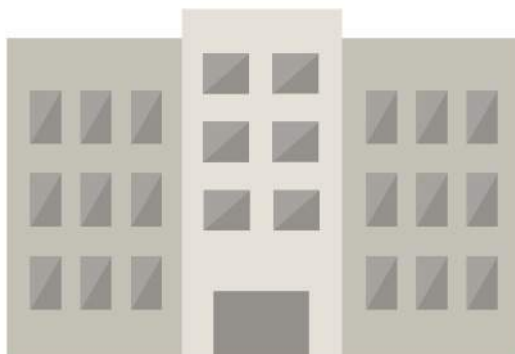
80% of data sources said the barriers were related to the sector itself and factors outside of the sector.

63% of the remaining 20% of data sources, the majority (63%) identified the barriers as being solely internal to the sector, with

36% identifying barriers external exclusively to the sector.

Understandably, barriers identified as internal to the sector were also primarily identified as supply-side barriers. As would be expected, the **top demand-side barriers related to**

- economic issues, including the perceived need for
    - child labour
    - early (child) marriage
- limited resources (such as internet connectivity)
- the perceived low rates of return to education.

The top supply-side barriers were

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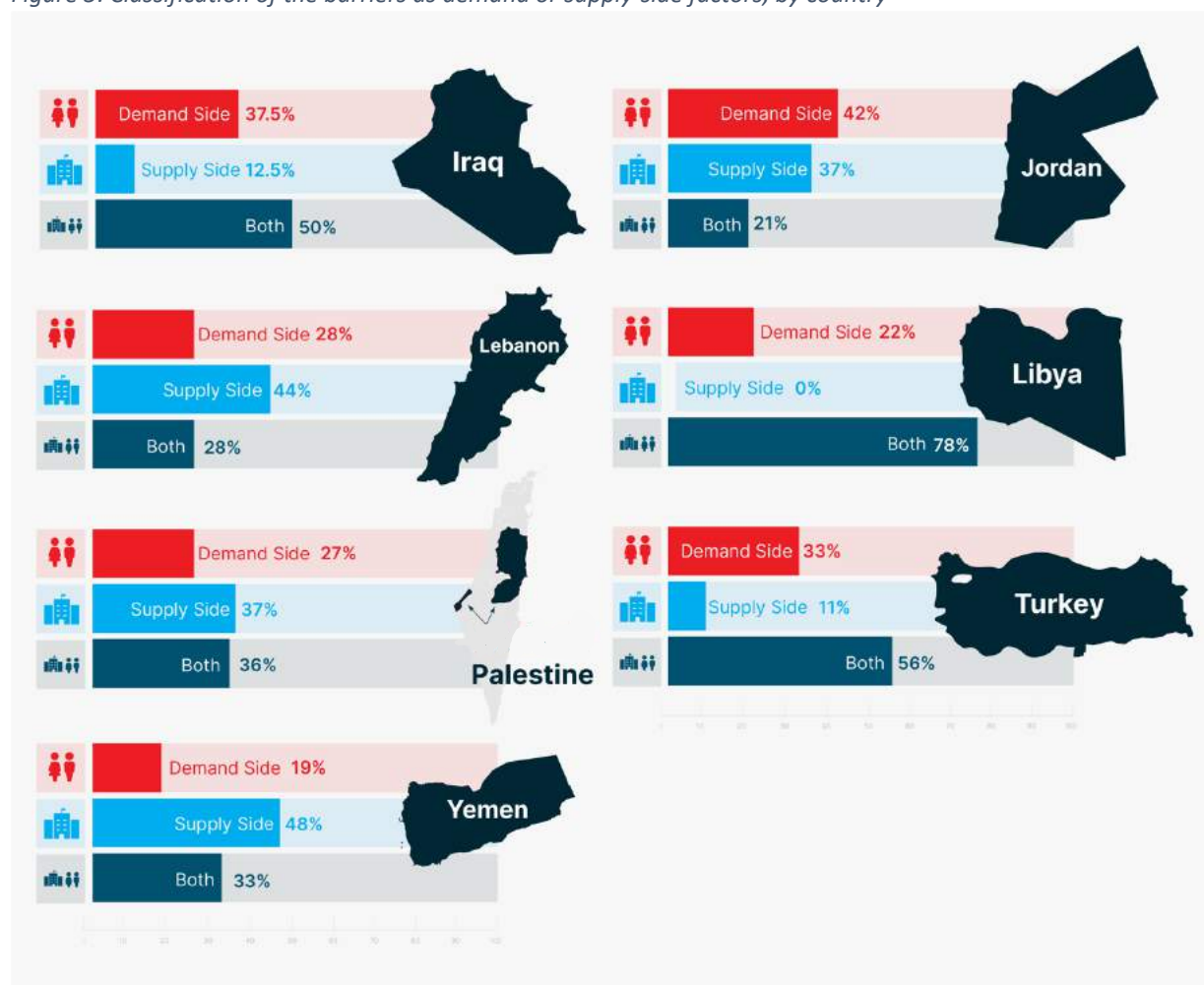Findings: Barriers to (sustained) (re)engagement in education

- quality of education
- infrastructure, and other resourcing constraints such as the
- school's location
- a school's capacity to host new students
- the capacity of school staff and personnel.

In addition, the **top barriers related to both supply and demand-sides of the education equation** were

- COVID-19
- conflict and violence.

Figure 5 summarises the findings of how the barrier related to supply or demand-side factors by country.

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*Figure 5: Classification of the barriers as demand or supply-side factors, by country*

Finding 9 Most barriers were influential both before and after the start of COVID-19

72% of data sources did not believe that most of the top five barriers were related to COVID-19.

64% of data sources did identify the lack of resources/internet connectivity issues as the exception, saying there was a direct connection between the impact of the barrier and COVID-19. This finding is particularly salient for two reasons:

1 in terms of what is needed to foster resilience to future shocks that limit face-to-face instruction

2 because it highlights that most barriers were already in place before the pandemic and were made more influential because of it.

Figure 6 provides the details of the connection between the barriers and COVID-19

Figure 6: The connection between the barriers and COVID-19
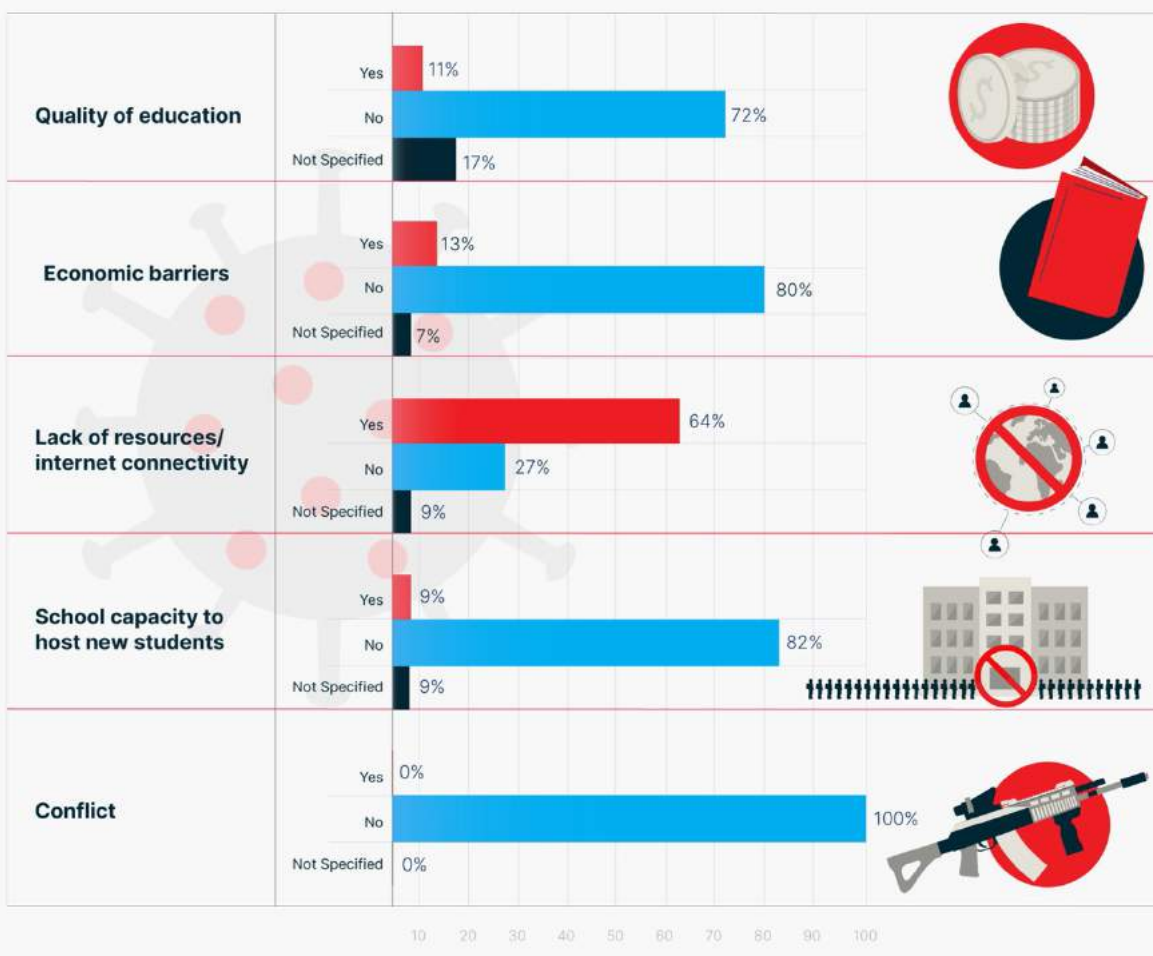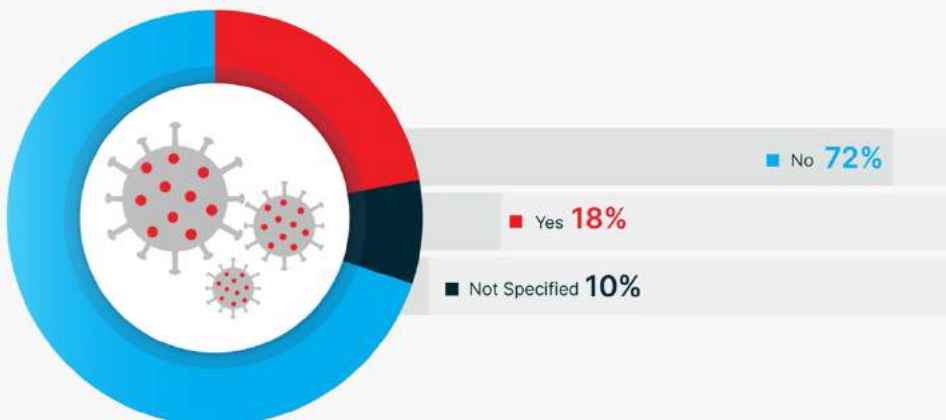
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No	**72%**
Yes	**18%**
Not Specified	**10%**

Quality of education
- Yes 11%
- No 72%
- Not Specified 17%

Economic barriers
- Yes 13%
- No 80%
- Not Specified 7%

Lack of resources/ internet connectivity
- Yes 64%
- No 27%
- Not Specified 9%

School capacity to host new students
- Yes 9%
- No 82%
- Not Specified 9%

Conflict
- Yes 0%
- No 100%
- Not Specified 0%

10 20 30 40 50 60 70 80 90 100

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Finding 10 The degree of influence barriers had on OOSC was stable from 2015-2019

The notable trends include:

The quality of education remained relatively stable across the years, though it dipped slightly in 2020 when access-related barriers such as economic challenges and internet connectivity increased.

80% of data sources identified lack of resources/internet connectivity as the most critical issue in 2020.

Similarly, school capacity to host new students was more of an issue before COVID-19 closed many if not most spaces and correlates to some degree with conflict trends across the years.

Figure 7 summarises the influence of the top five barriers by year. It also shows the major crisis flashpoints.

*Figure 7: Influence of the top five barriers, by year*
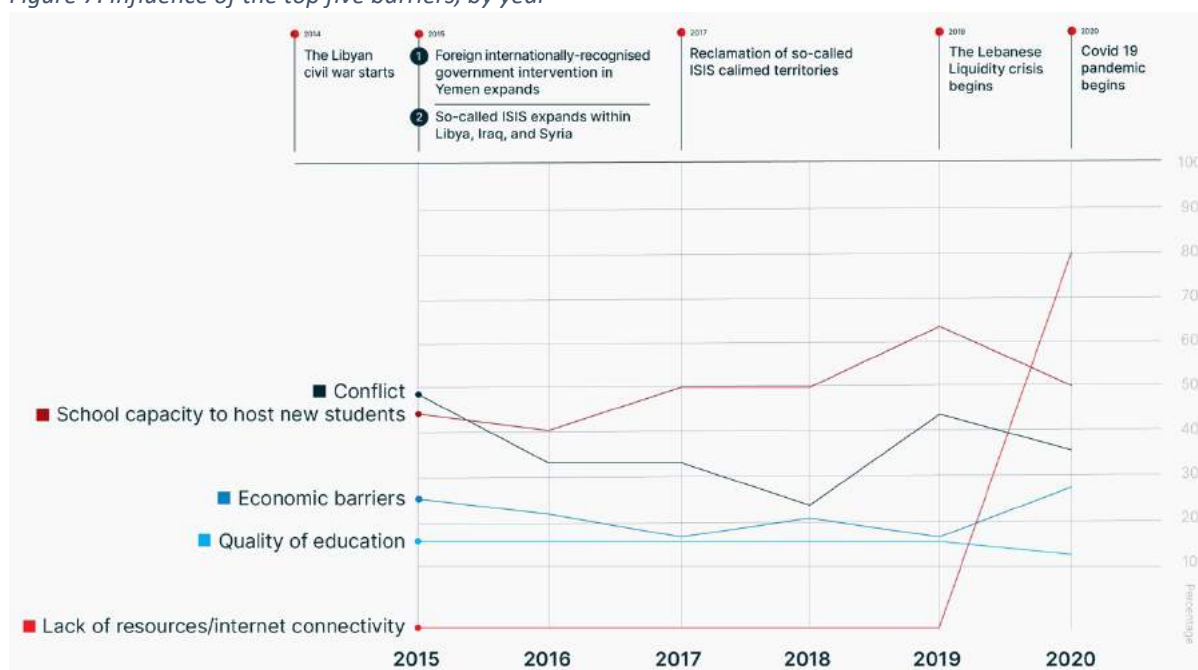
Finding 11 Most barriers were most influential at the compulsory levels

Unsurprisingly, data sources identified barriers as more influential during the compulsory cycles than pre-primary or upper secondary school.

73% of data sources said the barriers were most influential at the primary level

72% of data sources said the barriers were most significant at the lower secondary level

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Figure 8 shows the connection between the barriers and each of the education cycles.
Figure 8: The connection between barriers and education cycles
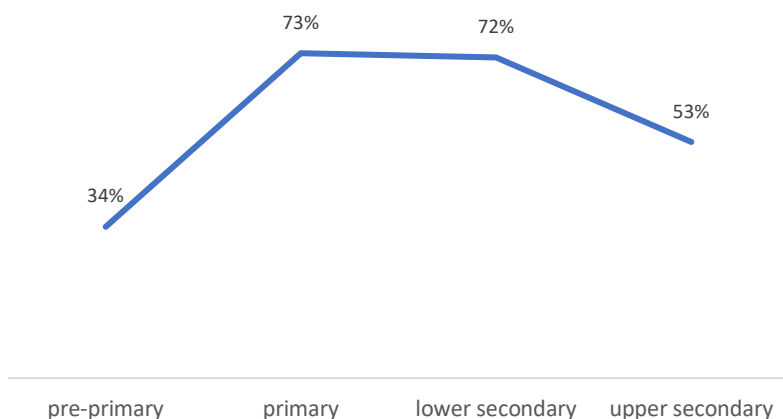
Amongst the top five barriers, economic barriers appear to be increasingly impactful over a child's life. They ranked lowest at the pre-primary level, and their influence increased from primary to lower secondary. Finally, it drops at the upper secondary level. This drop could appear counterintuitive considering the market pull families often feel when their children reach their later teenage years. However, the perception may be that economic barriers do not burden those in upper secondary.

The majority of barriers appear to be nearly equally correlated in terms of the degree of their connection to the primary level. For example, lack of resources/internet connectivity is logically perceived as more impactful at the upper secondary level but less impactful at the lower secondary level than in primary, which is an unclear finding. So too is the finding that conflict is more impactful on students of lower secondary age than amongst other cohorts.

Among the top ten barriers, language barriers were more of an issue for the primary and lower secondary cycles. Gender discrimination and other household/demand-side issues (such as parental preference for education investment and household needs) became more notable for the lower secondary and upper secondary levels.

Figure 9 summarises the connections between the top five barriers and each of the education cycles.

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Figure 9: The connection between the top five barriers and each of the education cycles
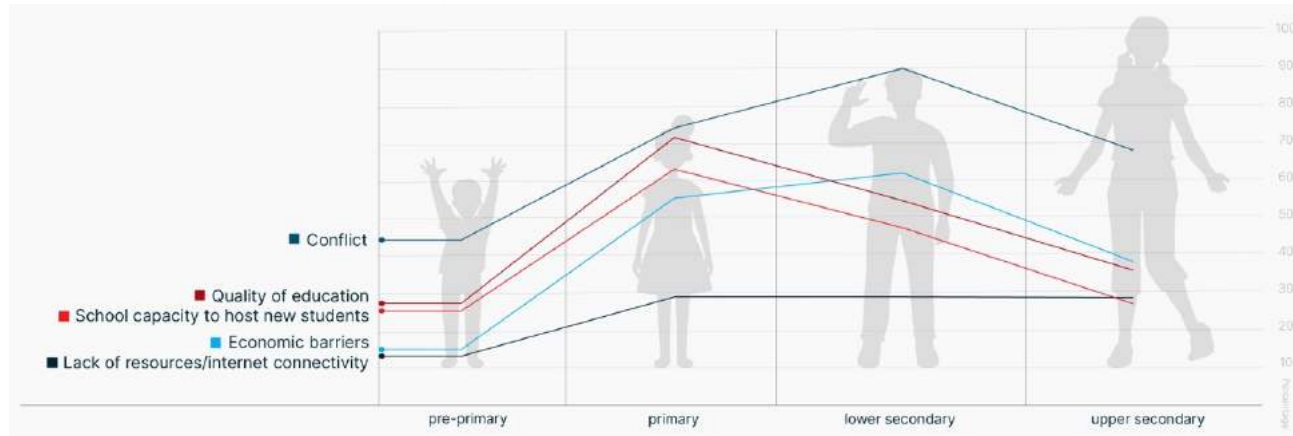
Finding 12 More barriers were perceived to impact OOSC than CRODO

35% of data sources characterised the barriers as affecting both OOSC and those at risk of dropping out

31% of data sources believed they primarily affected OOSC

18% of data sources believed they primarily affected those in school and at risk of dropping out. The following figure summarises this finding.

Amongst the top five barriers identified:

Economic barriers

35% of data sources believed economic barriers were equally impactful on OOSC and CRODO amongst of data sources

35% of data sources thought economic barriers were more impactful on OOSC

19% of data sources identified economic barriers as more impactful on CRODO.

Quality of education

40% of data sources believed the quality of education was more of an issue for CRODO

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School capacity to host new students

Interestingly, a school's (limited) capacity to host new students was identified as affecting children fairly equally regardless of their status.[6]

Resource limitations specifically related to engaging in learning, such as internet connectivity issues

75% of data sources said resource limitations were more of a problem for out-of-school children. This finding links to the COVID-19 pandemic's impact on school closures and attempts to provide education services remotely.

Conflict

75% of data sources believed conflict-affected both OOSC and CRODO in the same way 25% noted it to be more impactful on CRODO

Figure 10 shows the connection between each of the top five barriers and a child's exclusion or at-risk status.

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[6] 20% of data sources did not specify the nature of the connection between school capacity to host new students and a child's exclusion or at-risk status.

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Figure 10: The connection between each of the top five barriers and a child's exclusion or at-risk status

Legend:
- Out of School - **31%**
- In School - **18%**
- Both - **35%**
- Not Specified - **16%**

Economic barriers
- Both: 35%
- Out of School: 35%
- In School: 19%
- Not Specified: 12%

Quality of education
- Both: 25%
- Out of School: 10%
- In School: 40%
- Not Specified: 25%

Lack of resources/ internet connectivity
- Both: 25%
- Out of School: 75%
- In School: 0%
- Not Specified: 0%

School capacity to host new students
- Both: 20%
- Out of School: 30%
- In School: 30%
- Not Specified: 20%

Conflict
- Both: 75%
- Out of School: 0%
- In School: 25%
- Not Specified: 0%
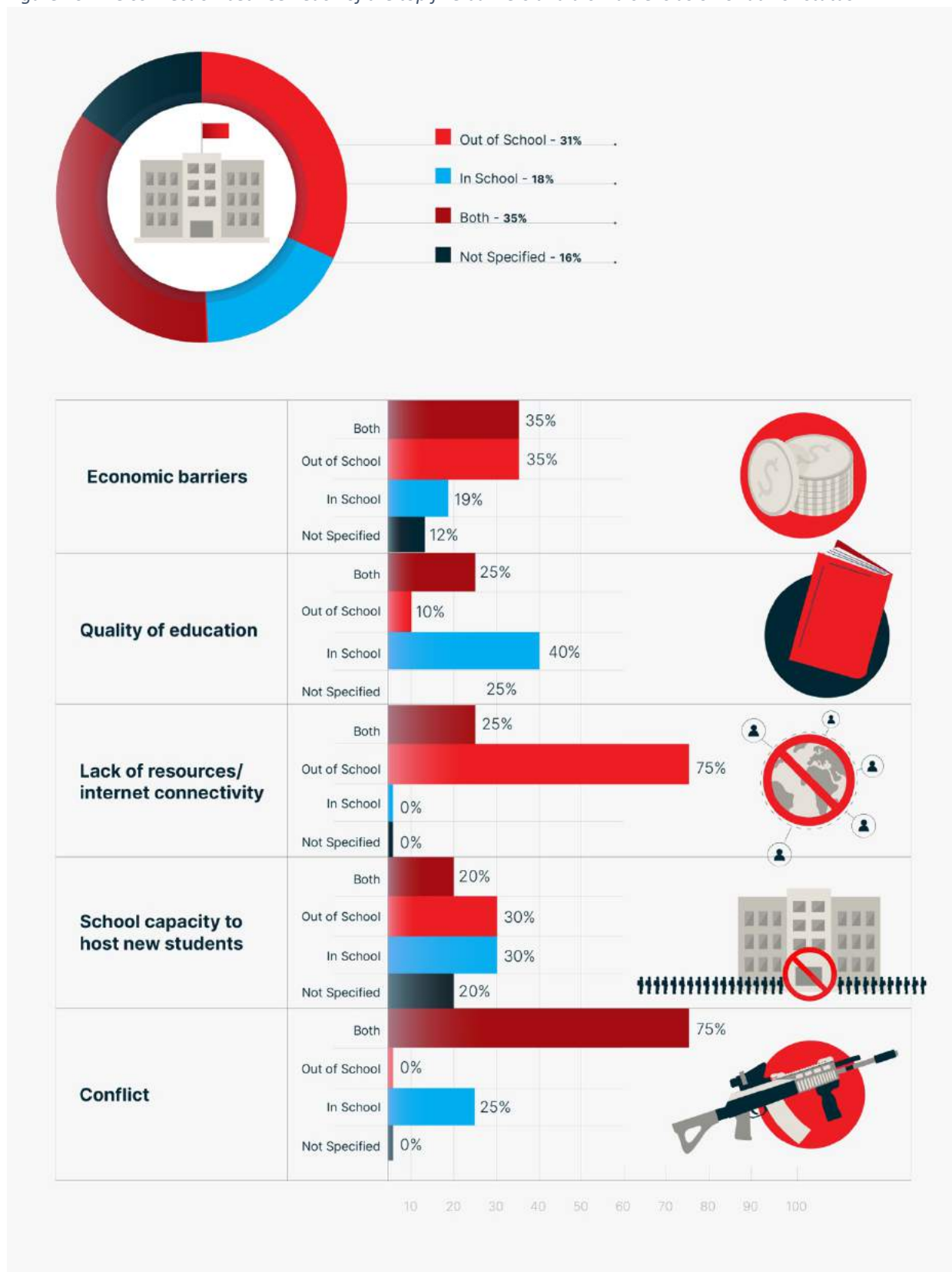
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Finding 13 Data sources did not perceive gender and other identifying characteristics as relevant to any of the barriers[7]

73% of data sources did not believe the barriers were related to a child's gender

17% of data sources thought economic barriers were more impactful on boys than on girls

10% of data sources thought economic barriers were more impactful on girls than on boys

20% of data sources believed lack of resources such as internet connectivity was more impactful on girls than boys

22% of data sources thought conflict was more impactful on girls than boys

Figure 11 summarises the connection between the top five barriers and a child's gender

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[7] This finding was surprising, and challenging to present, for a number of reasons. First, there is always a risk of misrepresenting nuance when aggregating information. For example, the variances amongst countries in which gender comprised the majority of OOSC, detailed in Finding 4, suggest that country-specific factors influence whether boys or girls are more likely to be out of school. The high percentage of boys OOSC in Palestine and reasons behind this trend provide another example of the influence of gender on school engagement. A 2021 UNICEF study on progression rates found variances between boys and girls, suggesting again that gender does influence engagement. Secondly, the methodology of this desk study does not facilitate the surfacing of nuance that gender and other identity factors have on school engagement. Gender-related correlations with barriers and motivating factors are best informed through primary data collection at the field level that includes qualitative data capture. Third, the different experiences of girls and boys vary by cycle and other identity-related factors, which cannot be presented clearly in the aggregate.

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Figure 11: The connection between the top five barriers and a child's gender

Legend:
- Not Specified to gender - **64%**
- Not specified - **9%**
- Girls - **19%**
- Boys - **8%**

Barrier	Group	Value
Quality of education	Not specified to gender	57%
	Not specified	14%
	Girls	14%
	Boys	14%
Economic barriers	Not specified to gender	66%
	Not specified	7%
	Girls	10%
	Boys	17%
Lack of resources/ internet connectivity	Not specified to gender	70%
	Not specified	10%
	Girls	20%
	Boys	0%
School capacity to host new students	Not specified to gender	100%
	Not specified	0%
	Girls	0%
	Boys	0%
Conflict	Not specified to gender	56%
	Not specified	22%
	Girls	22%
	Boys	0%

Finding 14 Most barriers were as impactful on participation as they were on retention

73% of data sources suggested that all barriers were as impactful on participation as they were on retention

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However, the following barriers were more impactful on retention:
- school-based violence
- quality of education
- school policy-related issues
- Demand-side factors such as the need for child labour

Furthermore, the following barriers were more impactful on participation.

30% identified a school's capacity to host new students

18% identified a lack of resources/internet connectivity issues

17% identified economic barriers

Figure 12 summarises the connection between the barriers and participation issues as well as retention issues

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Figure 12: The connection between the barriers and participation issues as well as retention issues

Economic barriers
- Both **73%**
- Participation **17%**
- Retention **3%**
- N/A **7%**

Quality of education
- Both **78%**
- Participation **11%**
- Retention **11%**
- N/A 0%

Lack of resources/ internet connectivity
- Both **73%**
- Participation **18%**
- Retention **9%**
- N/A 0%

School capacity to host new students
- Both **50%**
- Participation **30%**
- Retention **10%**
- N/A **10%**

Conflict
- Both **100%**
- Participation 0%
- Retention 0%
- N/A 0%

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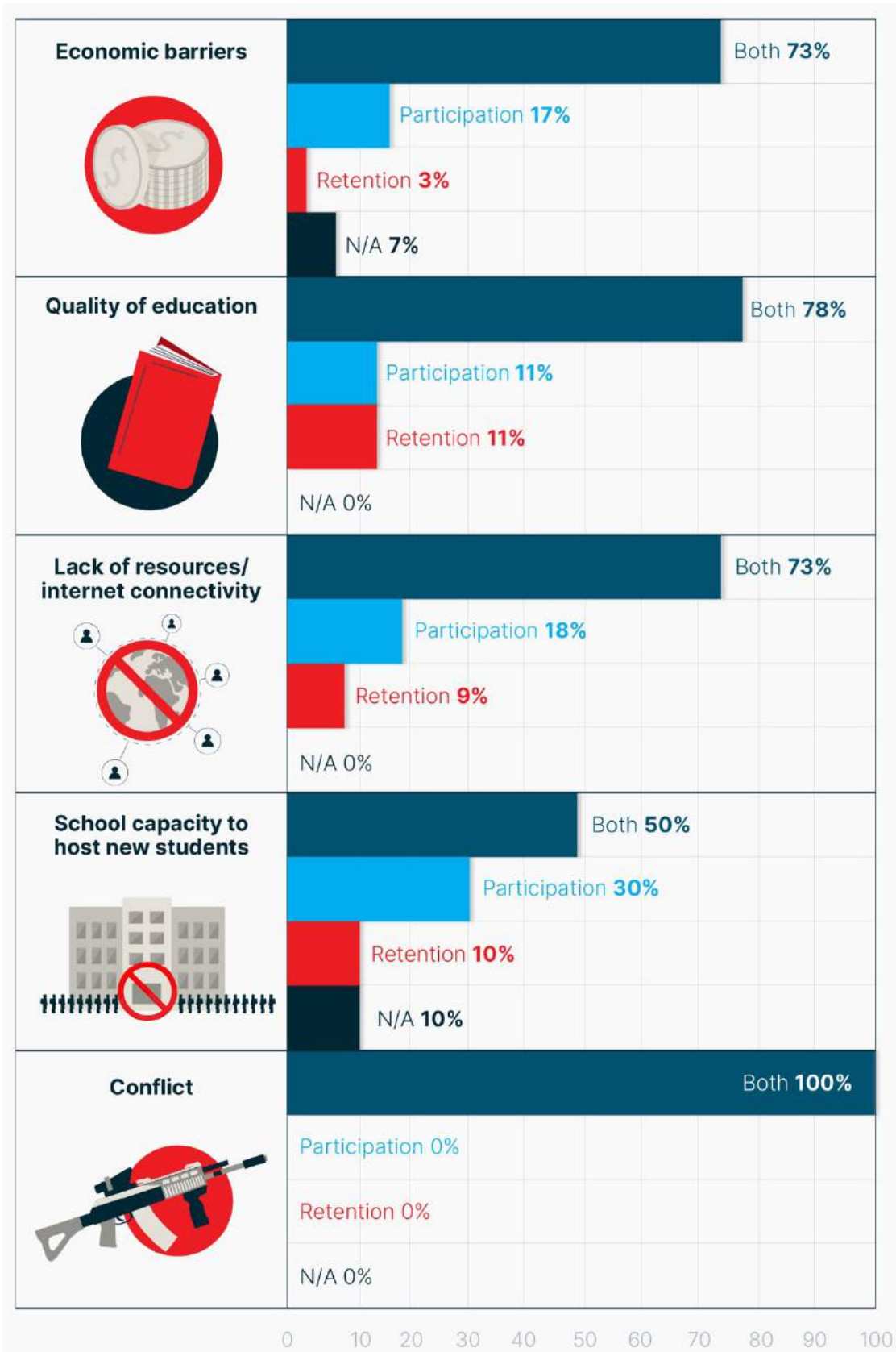
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Conclusions and Recommendations Area 2.1-2.2 Barriers

Conclusion 2.1 The primary barriers to participation and retention from the demand-side were economic; the primary barriers from the supply-side were education availability and quality

Summary When viewed through a demand-side lens, the majority of the barriers were economic. When viewed through a supply-side lens, most barriers are related to the availability of sufficient learning spaces and the quality of education. There were no trends across the countries concerning how demand or supply-side factors were more impactful.

Recommendation 2.1.1 (I)NGOs should develop an advocacy campaign for integrated policy solutions to economic and quality of education-related barriers

Priority 1

Affiliated area of inquiry Barriers to children's (sustained) (re) engagement in education

Recommendation(s) most relevant to

Examples of most relevant stakeholder(s) Save the Children

Action Type Advocacy

Action 2.1.1 Develop simple, high impact advocacy pieces based on the findings of this study. Use them as part of a campaign to encourage donors and host country governments to modify or create policies that affect OOSC. Encourage changes that will better target the barriers that OOSC face. For example, encourage shifts in design and implementation protocol that facilitate easier cross-sectoral/integrated programming.

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Factors that influence children's participation and retention in education
Conclusions and Recommendations: Barriers to (sustained) (re)engagement in education

Recommendation 2.1.2 Donors and (I)NGOs should revise programme strategies and proposals to prioritise integrated programming solutions that address the relationship between the demand and supply-side barriers that affect OOSC

Priority 1

Affiliated area of inquiry Barriers to children's (sustained) (re) engagement in education

Recommendation(s) most relevant to

Recommendation(s) also relevant to

Examples of most relevant stakeholder(s) UNICEF, USAID, DFID, ECHO, ECW, Save the Children

Action Type Implementation

Action 2.1.2 Develop guidance to facilitate better-integrated programming. Solicit proposals that align with this guidance. Elevate the value of addressing the demand-side economic barriers to education that traditionally fall under the responsibility of livelihoods actors. Incentivise the use of cash transfer programmes; unconditional for short-term programmes aimed at securing improved enrolment, and conditional for longer-term programmes aimed at promoting retention.

Conclusion 2.2 The primary barriers affected OOSC more so than CRODO

Summary Most of the top barriers appears to affect both OOSC and CRODO. After that, however, OOSC were logically identified as being more affected by the remaining barriers than their in-school counterparts. This finding is in line with the empirical evidence. However, the degree to which targeting OOSC over CRODO based solely on needs is appropriate (and cost-effective) in light of the impact of COVID-19 is unknown.

Findings, Conclusions, and Recommendations   **24**
Factors that influence children's participation and retention in education
Conclusions and Recommendations: Barriers to (sustained) (re)engagement in education

Recommendation 2.2 Researchers should review whether prioritising the barriers that primarily affect OOSC over CRODO is still ethically relevant in the "post" COVID-19 era

Priority 2

Affiliated area of inquiry Barriers to (sustained) (re)engagement in education

Recommendation(s) most relevant to

Recommendation(s) also relevant to

Examples of most relevant stakeholder(s) UNICEF, USAID, DFID, ECHO, ECW, Save the Children

Action Type Advocacy and Research

Action 2.2 Advocacy efforts should include asking donors to make funding available for further research.[8] As part of additional research, review the experiences of OOSC and CRODO. Focus specifically on the changing nature of education in light of the COVID-19 closures and other prevention protocols. Focus on how to address existing and new barriers and motivating factors that are affected by COVID-19.

Rationale Traditional logic (pre-COVID-19), based on humanitarian imperative values, would prioritise reaching the most marginalised. This approach would elevate OOSC over CRODO. In the post-COVID-19 era, it might be appropriate to review existing literature to see if there is value in targeting those in-school before COVID-19 and at increased risk of dropping out after school-reopening. The presumption is that targeting CRODO is less time-intensive and thus more cost-efficient, despite this cohort not being the most vulnerable between the two cohorts of interest. However, it's possible that targeting those in-school before COVID-19 and at increased risk of dropout after school-reopening might be more appropriate. It will be necessary to source data to inform this understanding.

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[8] A new partnership amongst Johns Hopkins University eSchool+ Initiative, the World Bank, and UNICEF is in place to capture information specific to education sector recovery from COVID-19. Information includes the status of education service delivery, teacher vaccination, and the availability and nature of in-person and/or remote learning support, by cycle.

Findings, Conclusions, and Recommendations   **25**
Factors that influence children's participation and retention in education
Conclusions and Recommendations: Barriers to (sustained) (re)engagement in education

Findings Motivating factors

Finding 15 The top motivating factors are correlated with the barriers and are: 1) Quality education; 2) Parents with sufficient income; 3) Cash transfer programmes; 4) Community engagement; and 5) Safe access to schools

| Quality Education | Parents with sufficient income | Cash transfer programme | Community engagement | Safe access to schools |

As expected, there is a correlation between the primary barriers to and primary motivating factors supporting (sustained) (re)engagement in education.

35% of data sources identified quality education as the top motivating factor. Notably, this factor is an antidote to the quality of education barrier that ranked second amongst all identified barriers. In addition, this factor is impactful as both a pull and push factor. For example, (perceived or actual) poor quality of education can keep households from choosing to both initiate or suspend support for their children's engagement in education. Similarly, (perceived or actual) good quality of education can lead households to make the initial or ongoing investments to support participation and retention.

The second and third top-ranked motivating factors are related to the top barrier that was identified-economic factors such as impoverishment.

19% of data sources identified parents with sufficient income as a top motivating factor

16% of data sources identified cash transfer programmes as a principal motivating factor

Community engagement and safe access to schools complete the list of the top five motivating factors.

16% of data sources identified community engagement as a principal motivating factor

16% of data sources identified safe access to schools as a top motivating factor

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Factors that influence children's participation and retention in education
Findings: Motivating factors supporting (sustained) (re)engagement in education

After that, the remaining factors in the top ten list are supply-side.

14% of data sources identified increased availability of learning spaces as a motivating factor

9% of data sources identified accelerated education programmes as a motivating factor

9% of data sources identified support services in schools that help promote retention and prevent dropout as a motivating factor

9% of data sources identified the provision of school meals as a motivating factor

7% of data sources identified the safety of the learning spaces as a motivating factor

Figure 13 summarises the top ten motivating factors.

Figure 13: Top ten motivating factors

01. Quality and inclusive education	35%
02. Parents with sufficient income	19%
03. Cash transfer programme	16%
04. Community engagement	16%
05. Safe access to schools	16%
06. Increased availabillity of learning spaces	14%
07. Accelerated education programme	9%
08. Preventive support services in school	9%
09. School meals	9%
10. Safe learning spaces	7%
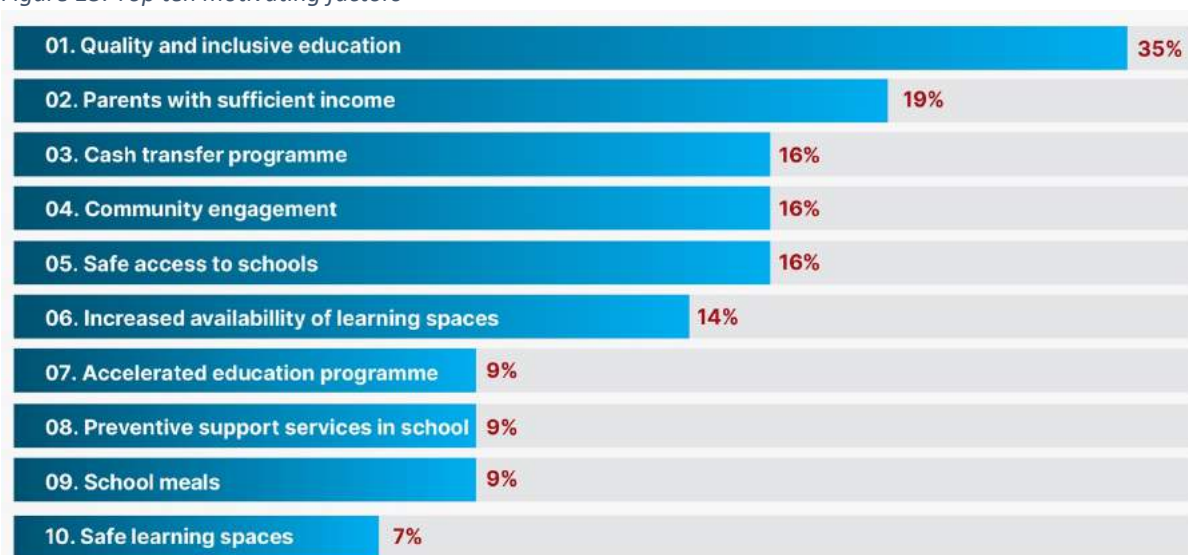
Finding 16 The majority of motivating factors come from within the education sector
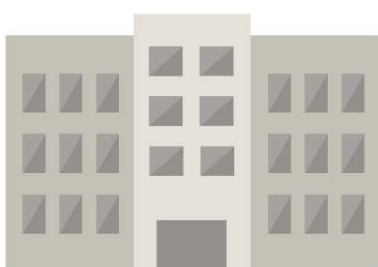
Of the twenty-eight motivating factors

64% of data sources classified these motivating factors as being the remit of the education sector itself, and thus were supply-side factors

36% of data sources classified these motivating factors as being both demand and supply-side factors within the education sector

25% of data sources ranked these motivating factors as primarily influential on the demand-side of the equation (i.e., at the household and community level).

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Factors that influence children's participation and retention in education
Findings: Motivating factors supporting (sustained) (re)engagement in education

Finding 17 Most motivating factors were influential before and after the start of COVID-19
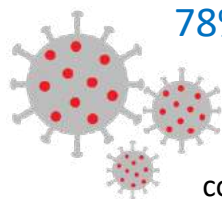
78% of data sources did not classify motivating factors as being specific to COVID-19. This finding is in line with how data sources perceived barriers and COVID-19. Amongst the top five motivating factors, the only area where there was a split opinion amongst data sources concerning the connection between a factor and COVID-19 was safe access to schools.

43% of data sources noted no connection between safe access to schools and COVID-19

43% of data sources emphasised a relationship between safe access to schools and COVID-19

Figure 15 shows the connection between the motivating factors and COVID-19

Findings, Conclusions, and Recommendations   **28**
Factors that influence children's participation and retention in education
Findings: Motivating factors supporting (sustained) (re)engagement in education

Figure 14: The connection between the motivating factors and COVID-19
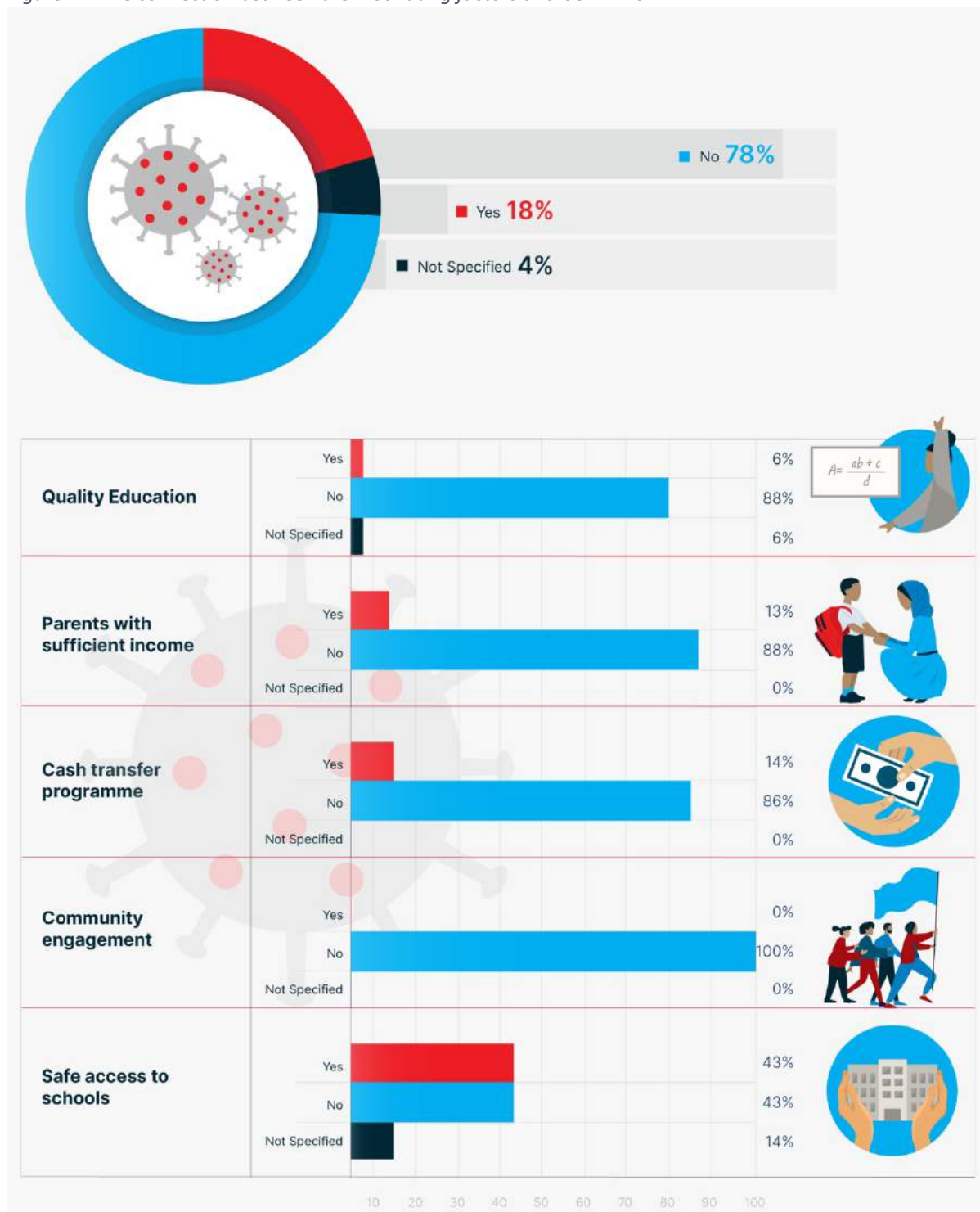
		No **78%**
		Yes **18%**
		Not Specified **4%**

Quality Education	Yes		6%
	No		88%
	Not Specified		6%
Parents with sufficient income	Yes		13%
	No		88%
	Not Specified		0%
Cash transfer programme	Yes		14%
	No		86%
	Not Specified		0%
Community engagement	Yes		0%
	No		100%
	Not Specified		0%
Safe access to schools	Yes		43%
	No		43%
	Not Specified		14%

$$A = \frac{ab + c}{d}$$

Factors that influence children's participation and retention in education
Findings: Motivating factors supporting (sustained) (re)engagement in education

Safe access to schools is the factor that appears to have been influenced by COVID-19.

40% of data sources identified safe access to schools as a stable motivating factor across 2015-2019

70% of data sources identified safe access to schools as a motivating factor in 2020

50% of data sources identified the availability of learning spaces as a motivating factor between 2015-2018

65% of data sources identified the availability of learning spaces as a motivating factor in 2019 before declining again in 2020 when most schools closed due to COVID-19.

Figure 16 summarises the relevance of the top five motivating factors across each of the years of the study.

Figure 15: Relevance of the top five motivating factors, by year
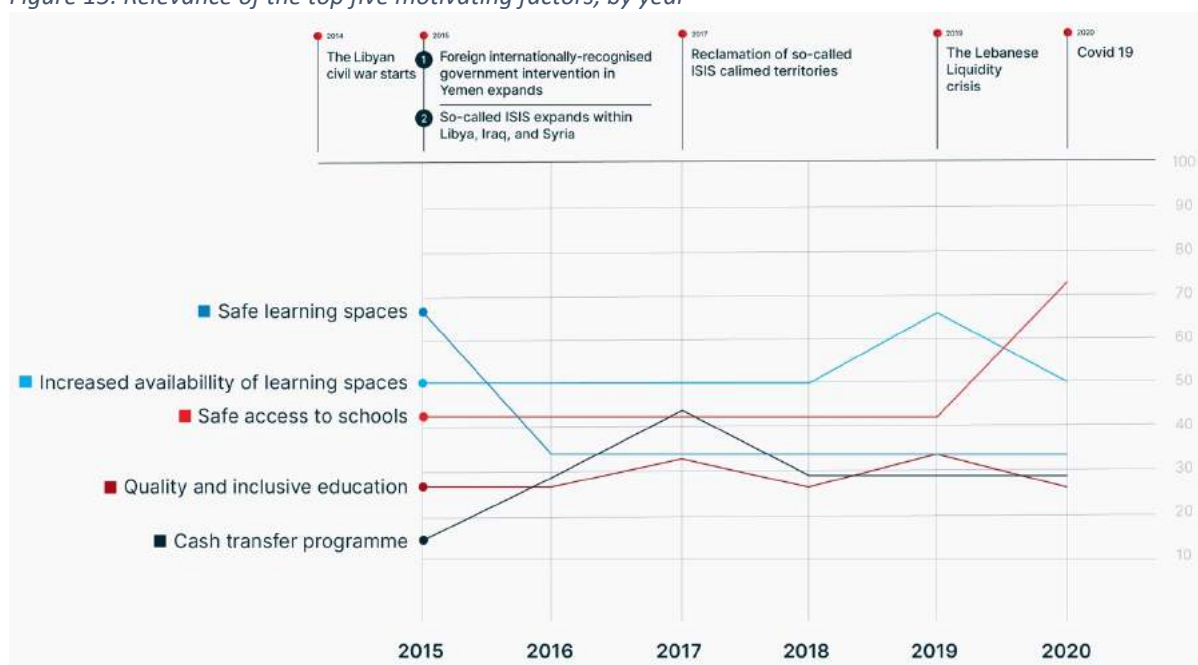
Findings, Conclusions, and Recommendations   **30**
Factors that influence children's participation and retention in education
Findings: Motivating factors supporting (sustained) (re)engagement in education

Finding 18 Most motivating factors had the most influence at compulsory levels

As with the barriers, motivating factors were more influential at the primary and lower secondary cycles and less impactful at the pre-primary and upper secondary levels.

70% of data sources said the barriers were most influential at the lower secondary level

65% of data sources said the barriers were most impactful at the primary level

Figure 19 shows the connection between all motivating factors and each of the education cycles.

Figure 16: The connection between all motivating factors and education cycles
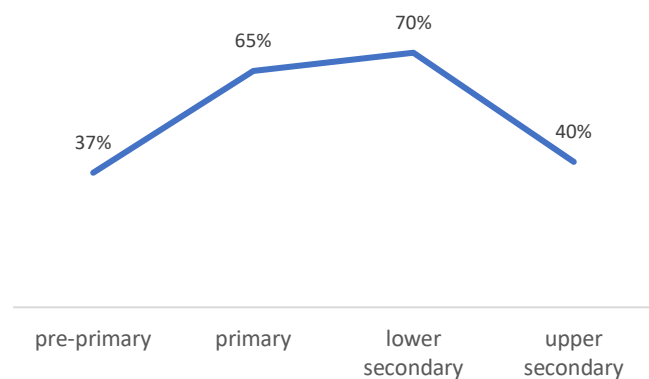
This trend continues with each of the top five motivating factors. Within the top five motivating factors, the notable nuances within this trend are as follows:

Quality education
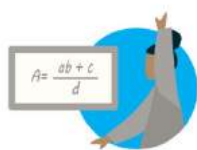
47% of data sources classified quality education as impactful at the primary level

40% of data sources classified quality education as impactful at the lower secondary level

Safe access to schools

57% of data sources viewed safe access to schools as impactful for the primary level

43% of data sources viewed safe access to schools as impactful for the lower secondary level

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Safe learning spaces

100% of data sources classified safe learning spaces as motivating for the primary level

67% of data sources classified safe learning spaces as motivating for the pre-primary and lower secondary levels.

Parents with sufficient income

50% of data sources identified sufficient parental income as impactful at the lower secondary level

38% of data sources identified sufficient parental income as impactful at the primary level

Figure 20 shows the connection between the top five motivating factors and each of the education cycles.

Figure 17: The connection between the top 5 motivating factors and each of the education cycles
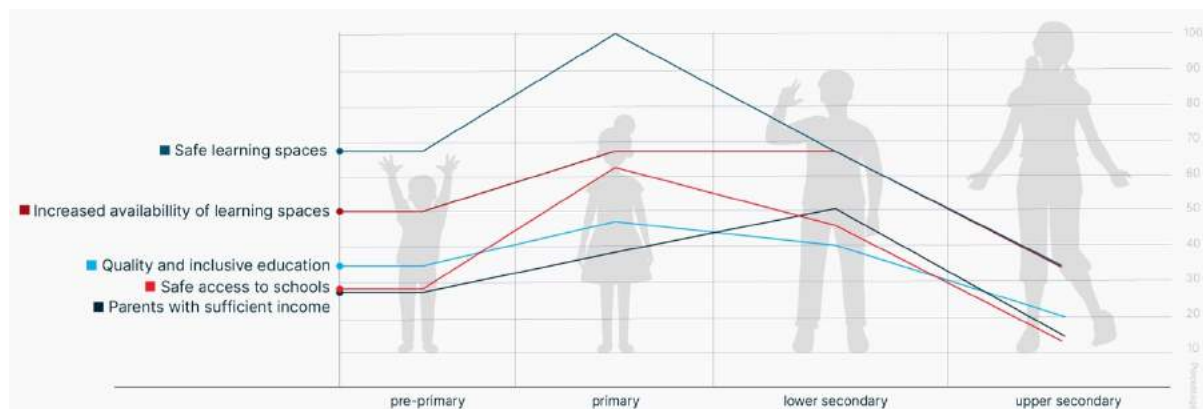
Findings, Conclusions, and Recommendations   **32**
Factors that influence children's participation and retention in education
Findings: Motivating factors supporting (sustained) (re)engagement in education
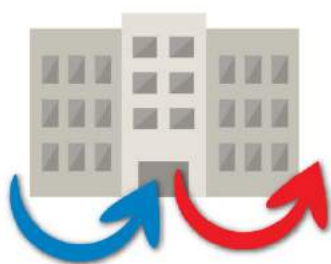
Finding 19 Most motivating factors were as influential on participation as on retention

84% of data sources classified the motivating factors as impactful on both participation and retention

12% of data sources ranked the motivating factors as more influential on participation than on retention

3% of data sources ranked the motivating factors as more influential on retention than on participation

Within the top five motivating factors, the only notable differences are as follows:
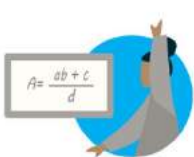
Quality education

13% of data sources deemed quality education to be primarily impactful on retention

7% of data sources viewed quality education as primarily impactful as a pull factor for participation.

Community engagement

17% of data sources classified community engagement as being influential primarily to participation

Safe access to schools

57% of data sources deemed safe access to schools to be equally impactful on participation and retention

43% of data sources believed safe access to schools to be primarily impactful on participation

Figure 18 summarises the connection between the top five motivating factors and participation and retention.

Figure 18: The connection between the top five motivating factors and participation and retention

Findings, Conclusions, and Recommendations   **33**
Factors that influence children's participation and retention in education
Findings: Motivating factors supporting (sustained) (re)engagement in education

Quality Education

$$A = \frac{ab + c}{d}$$

- Both **80%**
- Participation **7%**
- Retention **13&**
- N/A **0%**

Parents with sufficient income

- Both **100%**
- Participation 0%
- Retention 0%
- N/A 0%

Cash transfer programme

- Both **100%**
- Participation 0%
- Retention 0%
- N/A 0%

Community engagement

- Both **83%**
- Participation **17%**
- Retention **0%**
- N/A **10%**

Safe access to schools

- Both **57%**
- Participation 43%
- Retention 0%
- N/A 0%

0 10 20 30 40 50 60 70 80 90 100
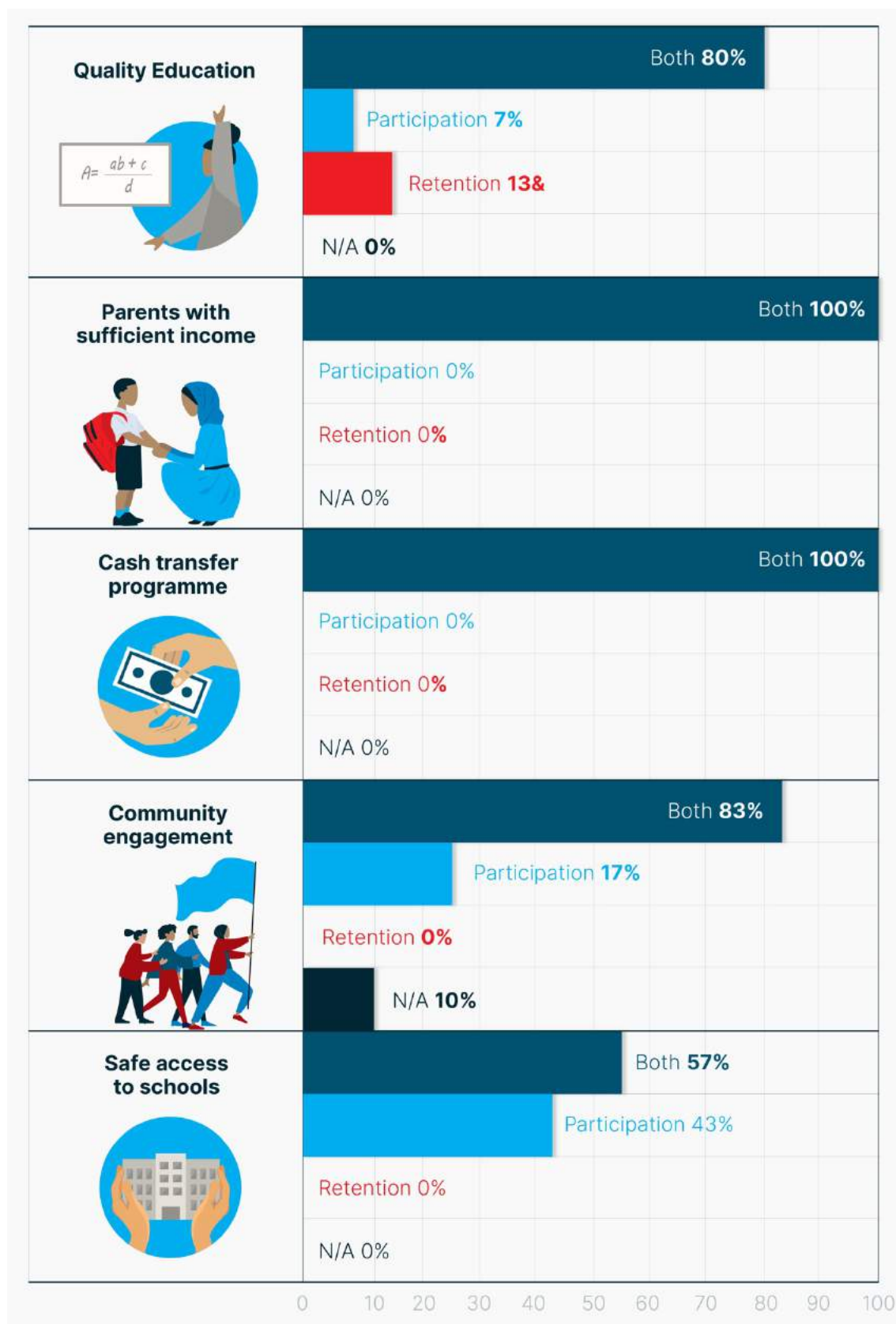
Factors that influence children's participation and retention in education
Findings: Motivating factors supporting (sustained) (re)engagement in education

Finding 20 It is not clear how influential motivating factors were on OOSC versus CRODO

A majority of data sources did not specify whether motivating factors were more impactful on one cohort or the other.

30% of data sources did not identify whether specific motivating factors were more influential on OOSC or CRODO or if the factor affected each cohort in the same way

27% of data sources identified motivating factors as affecting both OOSC and CRODO

25% of data sources identified motivating factors as primarily impactful on CRODO

18% of data sources identified motivating factors as primarily impactful on OOSC

Regarding the top five motivating factors and their influence on OOSC or CRODO:

Quality of education

35% of data sources identified quality education to be a pull factor for both OOSC and CRODO

24% of data sources identified quality education to be of greater relevance to CRODO **6%** of data sources identified quality education as a pull factor for OOSC.
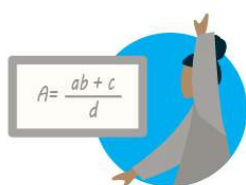
Parents with sufficient income

38% of data sources saw parents with sufficient income as an impactful motivating factor, mainly for CRODO

25% of data sources saw parents with sufficient income as more impactful on OOSC.

Cash transfer programmes

43% of data sources identified cash transfer programmes to be motivating factors for OOSC

29% of data sources identified cash transfer programmes to be as impactful for OOSC as for CRODO

Community engagement

57% of data sources did not identify a connection between community engagement in education and a child's exclusion or at-risk status

29% of data sources identified community engagement in education as being impactful on OOSC

14% of data sources identified community engagement in education as impactful on OOSC and CRODO.

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Factors that influence children's participation and retention in education
Findings: Motivating factors supporting (sustained) (re)engagement in education

Safe access to schools

57% of data sources did not identify a connection between safe access to schools and a child's exclusion or at-risk status

14% of data sources identified safe access to schools as impactful on both OOSC and CRODO

14% of data sources identified safe access to schools as more impactful on OOSC

14% of data sources identified safe access to schools as more impactful on CRODO

Figure 14 summarises the connection between the motivating factors and a child's exclusion or at-risk status

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Factors that influence children's participation and retention in education
Findings: Motivating factors supporting (sustained) (re)engagement in education

Figure 19: The connection between the motivating factors and a child's exclusion or at-risk status
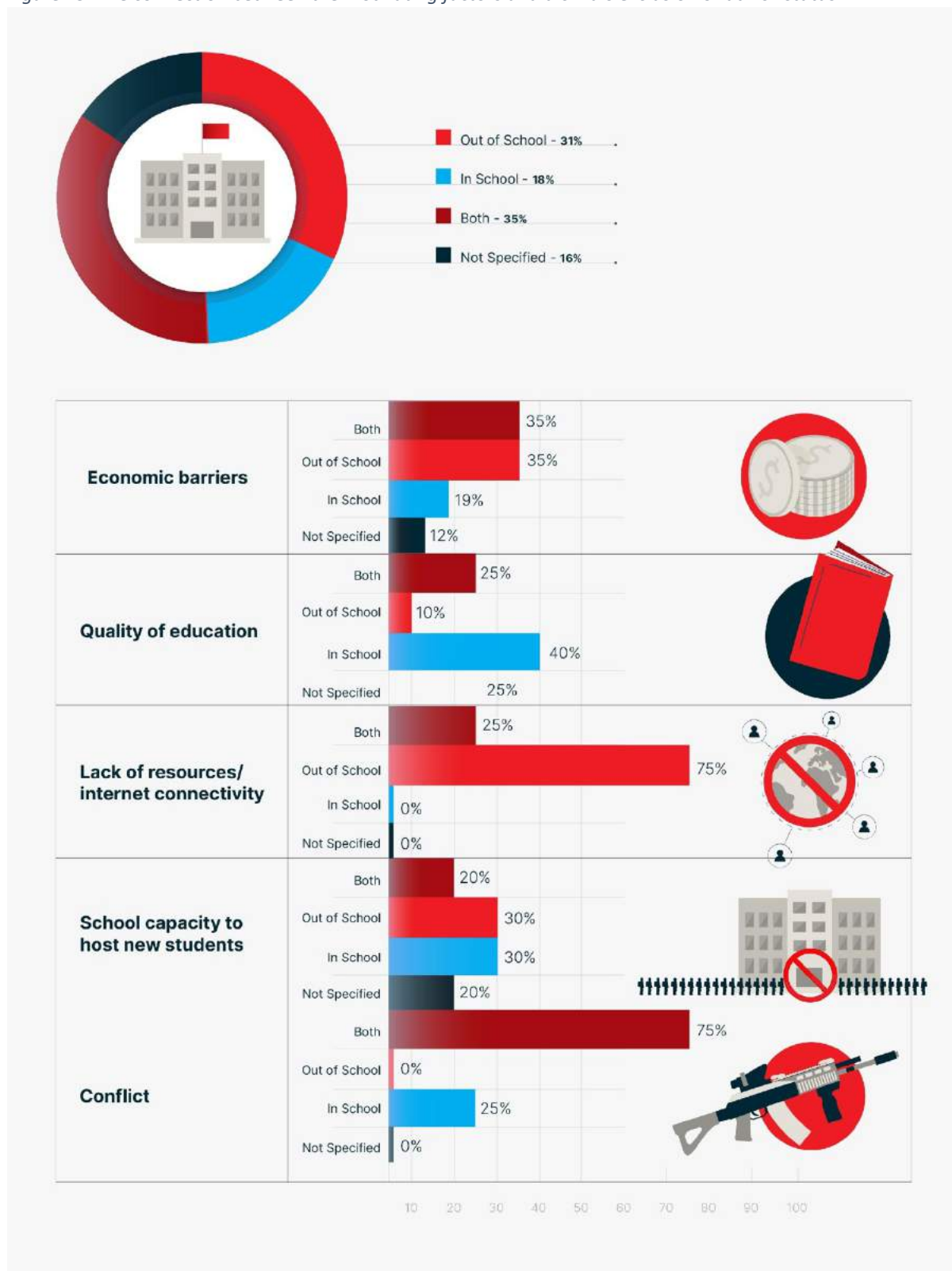
Legend:
- Out of School - 31%
- In School - 18%
- Both - 35%
- Not Specified - 16%

Economic barriers	Both	35%
	Out of School	35%
	In School	19%
	Not Specified	12%
Quality of education	Both	25%
	Out of School	10%
	In School	40%
	Not Specified	25%
Lack of resources/ internet connectivity	Both	25%
	Out of School	75%
	In School	0%
	Not Specified	0%
School capacity to host new students	Both	20%
	Out of School	30%
	In School	30%
	Not Specified	20%
Conflict	Both	75%
	Out of School	0%
	In School	25%
	Not Specified	0%

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Factors that influence children's participation and retention in education
Findings: Motivating factors supporting (sustained) (re)engagement in education

Finding 21 Most motivating factors were not classified as correlated with a child's gender or other identifying characteristics

73% of data sources did not see a connection between the motivating factors and a child's gender

13% of data sources directly linked motivating factors to girls

2% of data sources directly linked motivating factors to boys

Within the top five motivating factors, the only notable classifications are as follows:
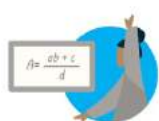
Quality education

14% of data sources identified quality education as influential for boys

Parents with sufficient income

25% of data sources identified parents with sufficient income as being influential to girls

Community engagement

17% of data sources classified community engagement as being influential on girls

Safe access to schools

0% of data sources classified safe school access as specifically motivating to either girls or boys.

Figure 17 summarises the connection between the top five motivating factors and a child's gender

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Factors that influence children's participation and retention in education
Findings: Motivating factors supporting (sustained) (re)engagement in education

Figure 20: The connection between the top five motivating factors and a child's gender
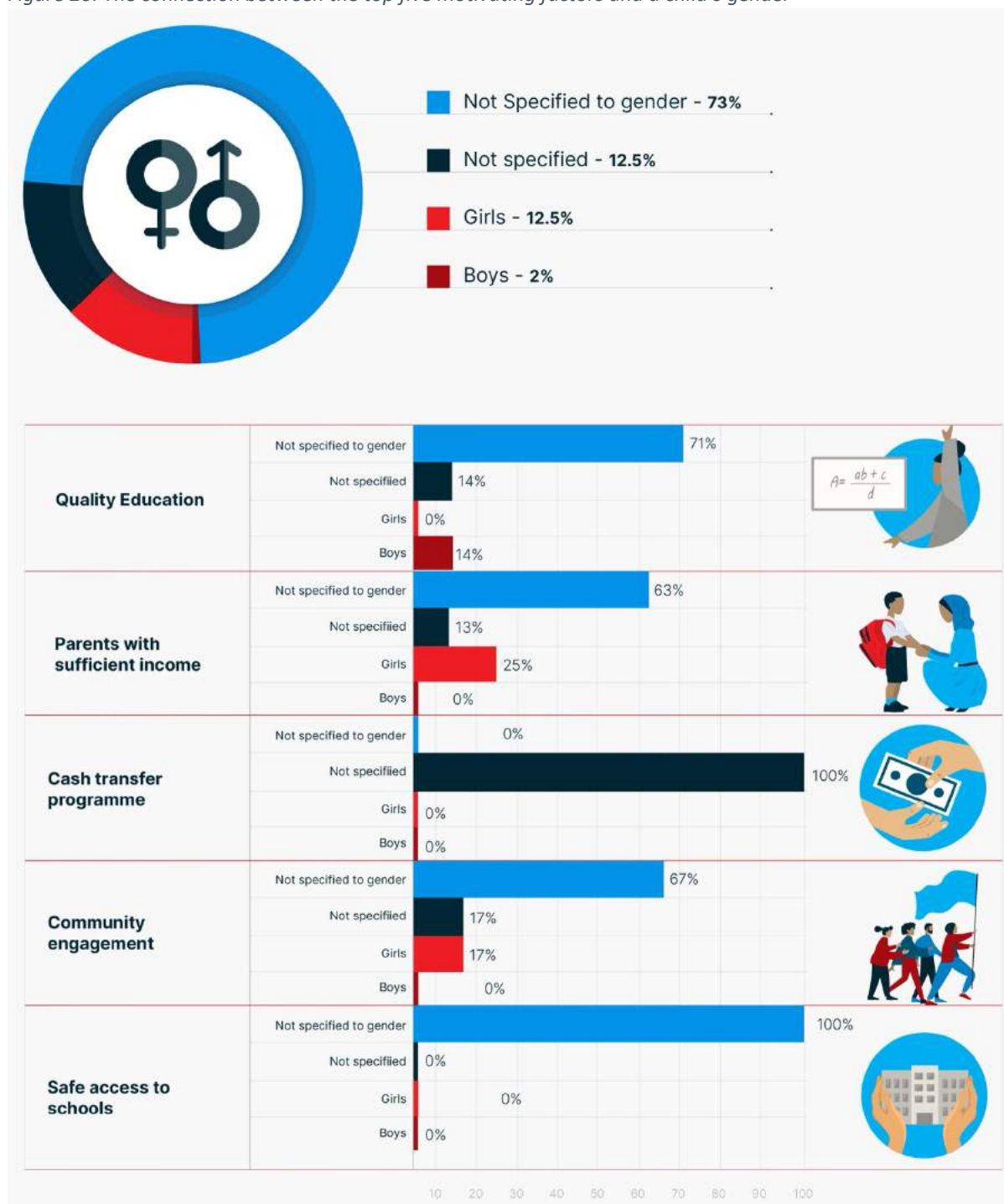
Factors that influence children's participation and retention in education
Findings: Motivating factors supporting (sustained) (re)engagement in education

Conclusions and Recommendations Area 2.3-2.4 Motivating factors

Conclusion 2.3 The degree to which motivating factors influence OOSC and CRODO remains unclear

Summary Roughly 30% of data sources identified both OOSC and CRODO as equally affected by the motivating factors. Another 30% said CID/ARODO were mainly affected by the motivating factors. The final 30% didn't classify the degree of influence. However, 43% of data sources deemed cash transfer programmes as more impactful on OOSC. On the other hand, the quality of education appears to be more of an influencing factor for CRODO; it was viewed as both a pull factor for OOSC and as a push factor for in-school children amongst 35% of the data sources, while 24% saw it as only influencing those in-school. Interestingly, data sources perceived parent's income levels to be more impactful on CRODO (38%) than on OOSC (25%), which seems counterintuitive.

Recommendation 2.3 Researchers should assess the degree to which certain motivating factors are or are not more influential to OOSC or CRODO cohorts

Priority 2

Affiliated area of inquiry Motivating factors supporting (sustained) (re)engagement in education

Recommendation(s) most relevant to

Researchers or Data Scientists

Recommendation(s) also relevant to

Donors

National Governments

(I)NGOs

Examples of most relevant stakeholder(s) UNICEF, USAID, DFID, ECHO, ECW, Save the Children

Action Type Advocacy and Research

Action 2.3 Advocacy efforts should encourage donors to make funding available for further research. Include as part of additional research primary data collection using mixed methods. Researchers should review the experiences of OOSC and CRODO specifically about what factors are more relevant to one cohort than the other, if at all.

Rationale The underlying data suggests that OOSC are more likely to be more vulnerable than those in-school and at risk of drop out, and thus less likely to not only participate in but to stay engaged in education. As such, they would logically be classified as a priority cohort for programming over child in-school and at risk of drop out, putting aside the resource-intensive nature of targeting OOSC, the hardest to reach group. Thus, theoretically, identifying nuanced data could be helpful in terms of identifying which motivating factors could best reach OOSC

Findings, Conclusions, and Recommendations   **40**
Factors that influence children's participation and retention in education
Conclusions and Recommendations: Motivating factors supporting (sustained) (re)engagement in education

Conclusion 2.4 Factors within the responsibility of the education sector play the most significant role in motivating investment in education

Summary: While most (63%) of motivating factors were internal and external to the education sector, the education sector's supply-side responsibilities were a significant influencer. 58% of data sources noted that the factors could be controlled or influenced within the sector, and 64% of data sourced reported the factors were indeed supply side.

Recommendation 2.4.1 Donors should invest in evidence-based supply-side activities

Priority 1

Affiliated area of inquiry Motivating factors to (sustained) (re)engagement in education

Recommendation(s) most relevant to

Recommendation(s) also relevant to

Examples of most relevant stakeholder(s) UNICEF, USAID, DFID, ECHO, ECW, ministries of education of the study countries

Action Type Policy and investment shifts

Action 2.4.1 Donors should prioritise supply-side investment in enhancing the quality of education

Findings, Conclusions, and Recommendations   **41**
Factors that influence children's participation and retention in education
Conclusions and Recommendations: Motivating factors supporting (sustained) (re)engagement in education

Recommendation 2.4.2 (I)NGOs should encourage donors to invest in evidence-based supply-side activities, namely those that sustainably and measurably improve the quality of education

Priority 1

Affiliated area of inquiry Motivating factors to (sustained) (re)engagement in education

Recommendation(s) most relevant to

(I)NGOs

Recommendation(s) also relevant to

Donors

National Governments

Examples of most relevant stakeholder(s) UNICEF, USAID, DFID, ECHO, ECW, ministries of education of the study countries

Action Type Strategic planning for donor priorities

Action 2.4.2 In all cases, but particularly in those contexts where the demand-side barriers are less significant than supply-side barriers, prioritise supply-side investment in enhancing the quality of education.

Findings, Conclusions, and Recommendations   **42**
Factors that influence children's participation and retention in education
Conclusions and Recommendations: Motivating factors supporting (sustained) (re)engagement in education

Conclusion Area 2.5-2.7 Barriers and motivating factors

Conclusion 2.5 Barriers and motivating factors relevant before COVID-19 remained relevant (if not more relevant) during the pandemic.

Summary Safe access to schools became more of a factor under two COVID-19-related factors: a) after COVID-19 related school closures occurred; or b) as concerns about prevention measures within schools became more of an issue. Otherwise, 78% of data sources did not see a significant influence. That said, it is likely that the longer-term impacts of the pandemic and related closures will have ongoing ripple effects, as noted earlier regarding the economic impact on both the supply of and ability to invest in education. Furthermore, there are COVID-19-related factors that are likely to remain in the public eye and relevant to fostering (sustained) (re)engagement in education. These include low-resourced households' ability to participate in education during COVID-19 related re-openings and steps taken to prepare education service delivery for future shocks.

Recommendation 2.5.1 (I)NGOs should argue for programme design that addresses barriers and motivating factors that were relevant before and during COVID-19.

Priority 1

Affiliated area of inquiry Barriers to and motivating factors of (sustained) (re)engagement in education

Recommendation(s) most relevant to

(I)NGOs

Recommendation(s) also relevant to

Donors

National Governments

Examples of most relevant stakeholder(s) UNICEF, USAID, DFID, ECHO, ECW, Save the Children

Action type Advocacy

Action 2.5 Develop simple, high impact advocacy pieces based on the findings of this study. Use them as part of a campaign to encourage donors and host country governments to modify or create policies that affect OOSC. Encourage changes that will better target the barriers and motivating factors that influence OOSC. For example, encourage shifts in design and implementation protocol that facilitate easier cross-sectoral/integrated programming.

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Factors that influence children's participation and retention in education
Conclusions and recommendations: Barriers and motivating factors supporting (sustained) (re)engagement in education

Recommendation 2.5.2 (I)NGOs should elevate the lessons well learnt in some crisis-affected contexts about effective community-based education and alternative forms of learning that address multiple intelligences

Priority 1

Recommendation(s) most relevant to

(I)NGOs

Recommendation(s) also relevant to

Donors

National Governments

Examples of most relevant stakeholder(s) UNICEF, USAID, DFID, ECHO, ECW, Save the Children

Action type Advocacy

Action 2.5.2 Develop simple, high impact advocacy pieces based on the Research produced by Dr. Dana Burde and any relevant research that surfaces specifically to home-based learning during COVID-19 related closures. Use them as part of a campaign to encourage donors and host country governments to modify or create policies that affect OOSC.

Findings, Conclusions, and Recommendations   **44**
Factors that influence children's participation and retention in education
Conclusions and recommendations: Barriers and motivating factors supporting (sustained) (re)engagement in education

Recommendation 2.5.3 Researchers should research the extent to which COVID-19 will impact existing barriers and motivating factors or contribute to new ones

Priority 2

Affiliated area of inquiry Barriers to and motivating factors of (sustained) (re)engagement in education

Recommendation(s) most relevant to

Recommendation(s) also relevant to
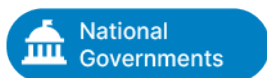
Examples of most relevant stakeholder(s) UNICEF, USAID, DFID, ECHO, ECW, Save the Children

Action type Research

Action 2.5.3 Donors should make funding available for further multi-stage research, both immediate and longitudinal. First, the researchers should assess the impact of COVID-19 on existing barriers and motivating factors. Second, they should also look at any new or modified barriers and motivating factors. From there, they can understand how to shift policies and practices to address them. Doing so can strengthen the resilience of the education sector and education service delivery to future shocks.

Rationale Notably, the only major COVID-19 specific challenge was resource availability and internet connectivity. Relatedly, the only COVID-19 specific motivating factor had to do with safe access to schools. As explained in some detail earlier in the piece, the other barriers and motivating remained as relevant, for the most part, across the years pre-COVID as they did during COVID-19 closures. As discussed earlier, some arguments can be made for these factors becoming even more significant in the COVID-19 recovery phase, given the economic factors at play. Furthermore, the study's recommendations explore how expanding awareness of and appreciation for the continuum of differentiated learning opportunities can be impactful. Differentiated learning methods can be alternatives to traditional classroom-based education. In addition, they can alleviate some of the resource constraints thrust upon learners during COVID-19 closures. These include a switch to internet-based or other resource-intensive learning methods.

Findings, Conclusions, and Recommendations 45
Factors that influence children's participation and retention in education
Conclusions and recommendations: Barriers and motivating factors supporting (sustained) (re)engagement in education

Conclusion 2.6 The main barriers and motivating factors are most relevant to compulsory education

Summary: The barriers were most relevant to primary and lower secondary education, likely because these levels are compulsory in most study countries.

Recommendation 2.6 Researchers should assess the appropriateness of continuing to invest in compulsory level programming

Priority 2

Affiliated area of inquiry Barriers and motivating factors to (sustained) (re)engagement in education

Recommendation(s) most relevant to

Researchers or Data Scientists

Recommendation(s) also relevant to

Donors

National Governments

Examples of most relevant stakeholder(s) UNICEF, USAID, DFID, ECHO, ECW, Save the Children

Action type Research

Action 2.6 Research if it is appropriate to continue investing primarily at the compulsory level. Explore if investments to support (sustained) (re)engagement at the pre-primary to primary and the primary to lower secondary levels transitions are essential in areas where primary and lower secondary are compulsory.

Rationale These affiliations are rational; however, they suggest that even (some) educationalists view the factors through the lens of what is critical now and not what will sustain engagement in education later. In other words, the evidence base for investing in pre-primary education is well-established; it has the highest long-term return on investment amongst the education cycles. The evidence base also shows that the longer girls stay in school (especially into and beyond the secondary level), the better overall social and economic outcomes are at the individual and societal levels.

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Factors that influence children's participation and retention in education
Conclusions and recommendations: Barriers and motivating factors supporting (sustained) (re)engagement in education

Conclusion 2.7 Neither the main barriers nor the primary motivating factors correlate with gender, participation, or retention

Summary: Interestingly, data sources didn't classify gender as particularly relevant to any main barriers. Similarly, data sources ranked the main barriers as equally influential to participation and retention. These findings are out of line with empirical evidence about gender. Furthermore, logic suggests that unique factors prevent children from participating in school, and other unique factors prevent them from staying in school.

Recommendation 2.7 Researchers should undertake further research regarding the individual connections between 1) gender, 2) participation, 3) retention, and the main barriers and motivating factors.

Affiliated area of inquiry Barriers to and motivating factors supporting (sustained) (re)engagement in education

Recommendation(s) most relevant to

Recommendation(s) also relevant to

Examples of most relevant stakeholder(s) UNICEF, USAID, DFID, ECHO, ECW, Save the Children

Action type Research

Action 2.7 In later research, surface nuanced connections, if any, between and amongst the main barriers and identifying characteristics of children. Use the same methods to explore the correlation between and amongst the barriers. Also, research their correlation with participation and retention in education. Prioritise data collection methods and areas of inquiry that explore the validity of the findings in this desk study that gender, participation, and retention factors are not relevant to most of the primary barriers and motivating factors identified herein. Unpack the data at the most granular level feasible, using the types of factors that framed this study (geographic area, displacement status, formal or NFE, etc.)

Rationale: Conventional wisdom and empirical evidence have highlighted the gendered nature of exclusion and at-risk status, specifically at later ages for boys and girls, and amongst specific sub-populations, as influenced by religious beliefs. Demand and supply-side factors can influence participation (such as enrolment and attendance) and retention (such as progression and completion) differently. For example, looking at programmes that affect economic barriers using motivating factors such as cash transfers, UCT has been found to have a more significant influence on participation. In contrast, CCTs are more impactful on retention.

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Factors that influence children's participation and retention in education
Conclusions and recommendations: Barriers and motivating factors supporting (sustained) (re)engagement in education

Policies and programmes affecting OOSC

Findings Overview

Finding 22 Access to quality basic education is specified as a goal, outcome, or result of MOE policies

Despite the limited number of policies accessible for review during this phase of the study, primary data sources were able to shed light on the profile of (primarily) MOE policies as they relate to the issue of OOSC, as follows.

MOE policies regarding access to quality basic education

70% of primary data sources agreed somewhat that access to quality basic education was a goal, outcome, or result of the MOE policies

30%% of primary data sources completely agreed that access to quality basic education was a goal, outcome, or result of the MOE policies

Inclusive nature of how existing policies address OOSC

40% of primary data sources disagreed somewhat that current policies addressed out of school children in an inclusive way

30% of primary data sources agreed somewhat that current policies addressed out of school children in an inclusive way

Finding 23 Most programmes affecting OOSC are implemented in partnership

93% of programmes were jointly implemented amongst partners

7% of programmes were implemented by one actor

Figure 21 summarises programme implementation management.

Figure 21: Implementation management, by single or joint implementors

Findings, Conclusions, and Recommendations   **48**
Policies and programmes affecting OOSC
Findings
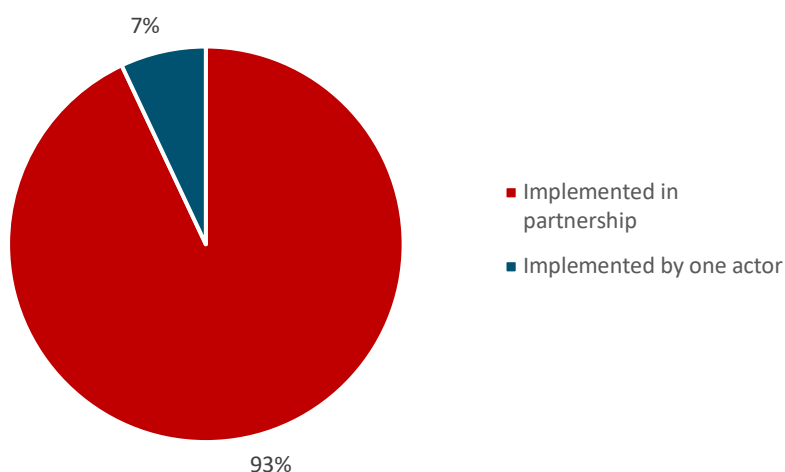
The primary stakeholders and partners mentioned were

- UNICEF and its implementing partners
- international NGOs (notably Save the Children)
- WFP
- MOE and their colleagues at the district level
- the EU
- and national NGOs.

Other ministries of relevance included those responsible for youth, sports, and labour. Finally, secondary stakeholders were characterised as school and community leadership.

Figure 22 summarises the percentage of OOSC-related programmes reviewed by country focus.

Figure 22: OOSC-related programmes reviewed, by country focus
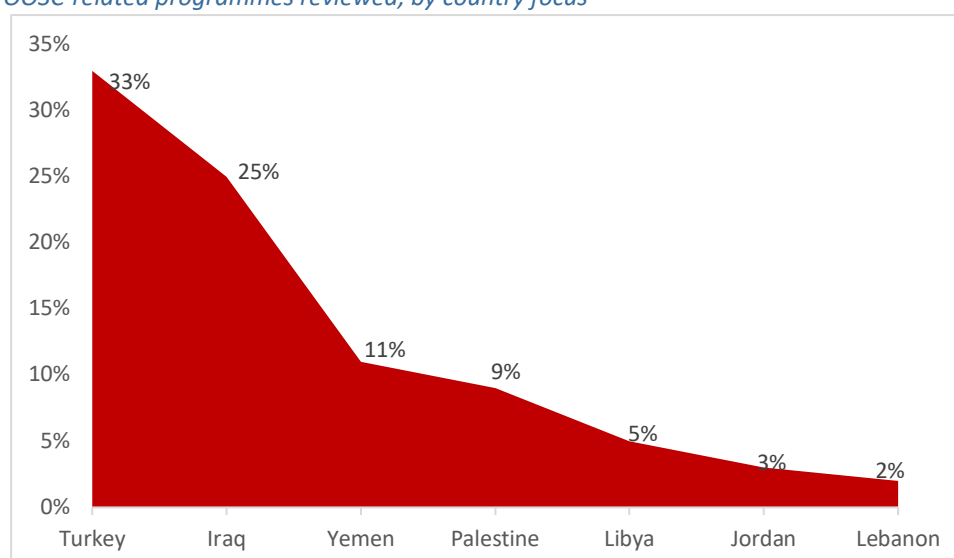
Findings Policy and programme targeting

Finding 24 Most policies and programmes did not target beneficiaries based on gender and were gender and protection-sensitive

There appears to be a disconnect between crucial informant perceptions of how gender and protection-sensitive policies and programmes are and how well they purposefully target beneficiaries based on their identities and needs.

While the intent of such policies and programmes is presumably to reach the most vulnerable and structurally marginalised and design them based on the available evidence about the most cost-effective and impactful ways, it was difficult to identify such targeting amongst them the documents public. This finding is disappointing considering the evidence about unique needs based on different aspects of school-age students' identities.

73% of primary data sources agreed somewhat that existing programmes integrated gender and protection-related considerations

18% of primary data sources ultimately agreed that existing programmes integrated gender and protection-related considerations

This characterisation could be appropriate because most barriers and motivating factors were not particularly relevant to one gender or the other at the aggregate level. However, that finding itself requires validation as it is not in line with anecdotal evidence.

58% of the secondary data sources suggested that policies and programmes relevant to OOSC did not state a targeted beneficiary characteristic. (These include gender, nature of exclusion or at-risk status, and other identifying characteristics that contribute to vulnerability, such as their ability status or legal status.)

More specifically
82% of policies and programmes did not explicitly target boys or girls.

Where policies or programmes did include targeting based on a beneficiary's characteristics, 47% of policies or programmes were targeted at displaced populations[9]

Figure 23 Summarises purposeful targeting of girls or boys by policies and programmes

Figure 23: Purposeful targeting of girls or boys by policies and programmes

Not Specified to gender - **82%**

Not Specified - **12%**

Girls - **4%**

Boys - **2%**

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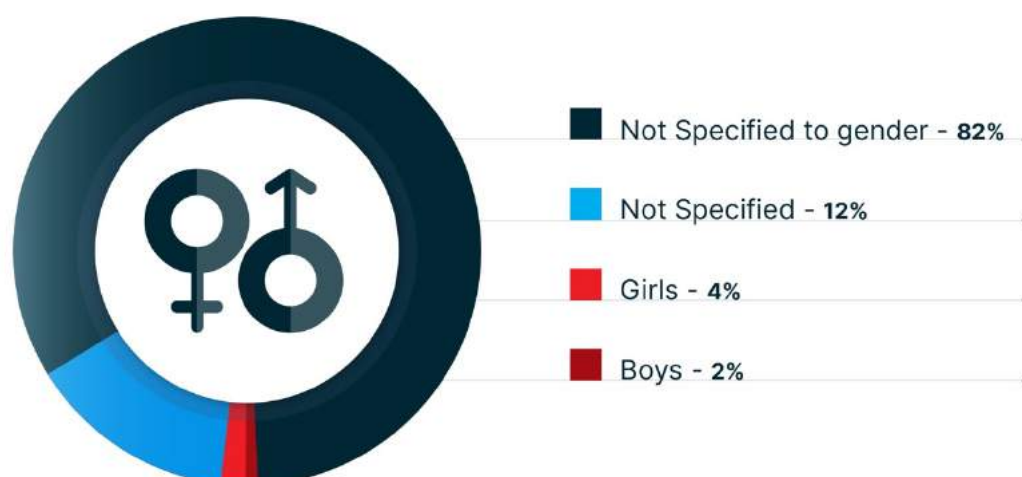
[9] Notably, these were primarily documents from Turkey, which has a higher median income than the other countries of the study and would be expected to have more (readily available) refined policies and programmes. It is also the country hosting the most displaced Syrians and in receipt of a significant amount of international funds to support this population.

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Policies and programmes affecting OOSC
Findings

Finding 25 Most policies and programmes did not target beneficiaries based on their exclusion status and could improve how inclusive they are of OOSC

Despite the classification of OOSC as being more at risk than those CRODO, explicit targeting of OOSC was not as expected.

36% of the policies and programmes reviewed did not clearly define whether targeted beneficiaries were OOSC and/or CRODO

27% of the policies and programmes reviewed targeted CRODO

Primary data sources confirmed these findings:

40% of primary data sources disagreed somewhat that existing policies addressed out of school children in an inclusive way

30% of primary data sources agreed somewhat that current policies addressed out of school children in an inclusive way

Figure 24 summarises the degree to which there is purposeful targeting of the impoverishment status of beneficiaries amongst policies and programmes that affect OOSC.

Figure 24:   Purposeful targeting of beneficiaries based on their impoverishment status amongst policies and programmes that affect OOSC
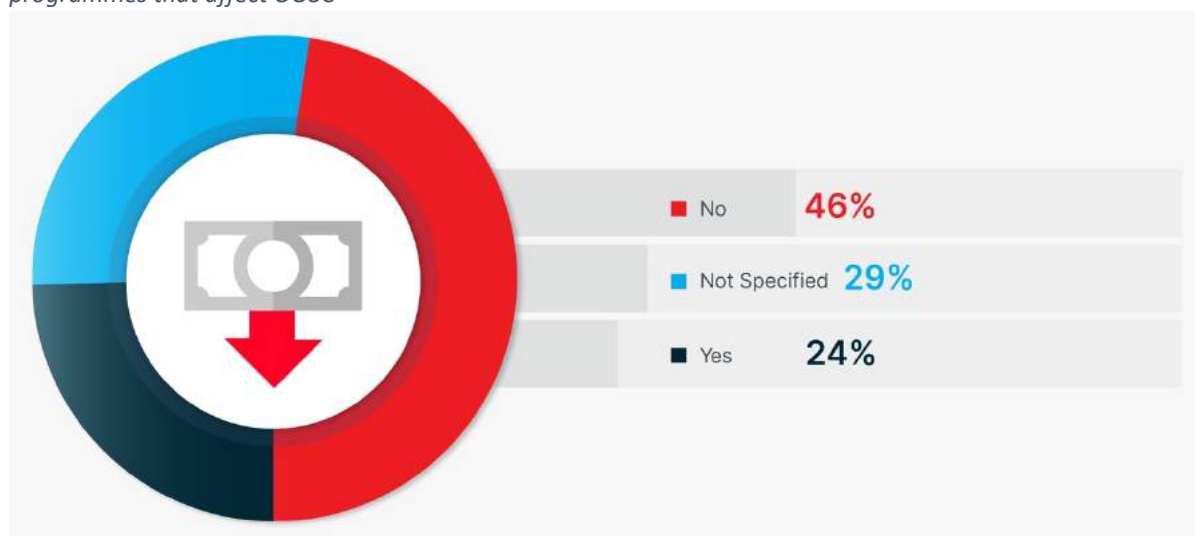
Finding 26 Most policies and programmes were in place before COVID-19 were perceived to be crisis-sensitive but could be more COVID-19 responsive

Figure 25 summarises the connection between policies and programmes that affect OOSC and COVID-19

Figure 25: Connection between policies and programmes that affect OOSC and COVID-19
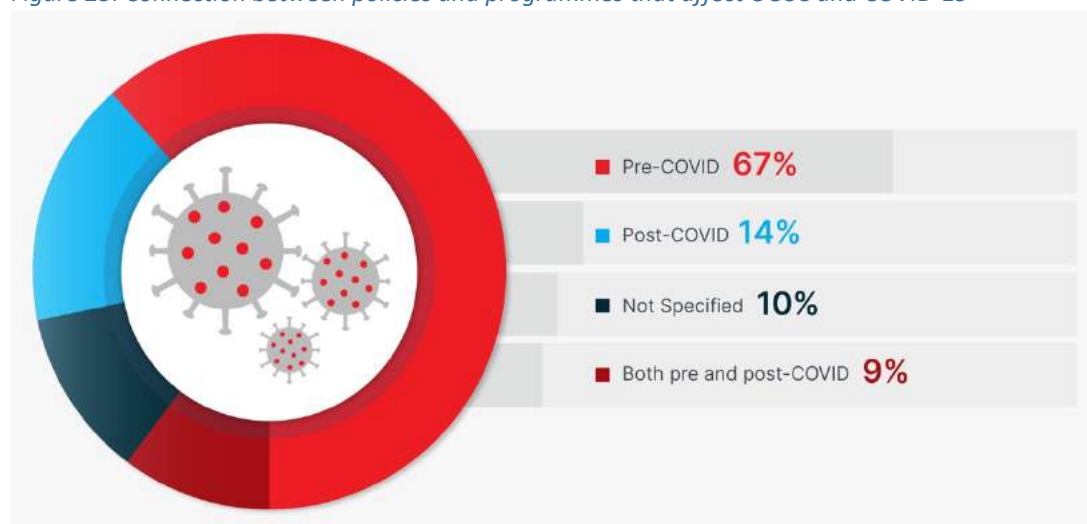
- Pre-COVID **67%**
- Post-COVID **14%**
- Not Specified **10%**
- Both pre and post-COVID **9%**

82% of primary data sources agreed somewhat that current programmes are appropriate in crisis settings

55% of primary data sources agreed somewhat that existing programmes were relevant to the COVID-19 crisis

36% of primary data sources disagreed somewhat that existing programmes were relevant to the COVID-19 crisis

These beliefs seem to correlate with the finding that most barriers and motivating factors were not COVID-19 specific, except for the availability of resources/internet connectivity.

Finding 27 Most policies and programmes do not explicitly target beneficiaries based on their impoverishment status

24% of policies and programmes reviewed explicitly targeted beneficiaries based on their impoverishment status. This finding is disappointing, considering how essential economic barriers such as impoverishment and motivating factors such as sufficient parental income were to the experiences of OOSC.

Finding 28 Most policies and programmes target the primary cohort

61% of policies and programmes targeted the primary level

35% of policies and programmes targeted the upper secondary level

44% of policies and programmes targeted the lower secondary level

6% of policies and programmes targeted the pre-primary level

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Findings

It is not surprising that most policies and programmes target the primary level considering its foundational role in compulsory education. However, the lower percentage targeting lower secondary than that targeting upper secondary is notable because most of the countries in the study have (somewhat recently) made lower secondary part of compulsory education. In contrast, only one country (Turkey) requires upper secondary level completion. Furthermore, retention in lower secondary is inherently essential to progression to upper secondary and success therein.

Figure 26 summarises the targeting of specific education cycles amongst policies and programmes that affect OOSC.

Figure 26: Targeting of specific education cycles amongst policies and programmes that affect OOSC
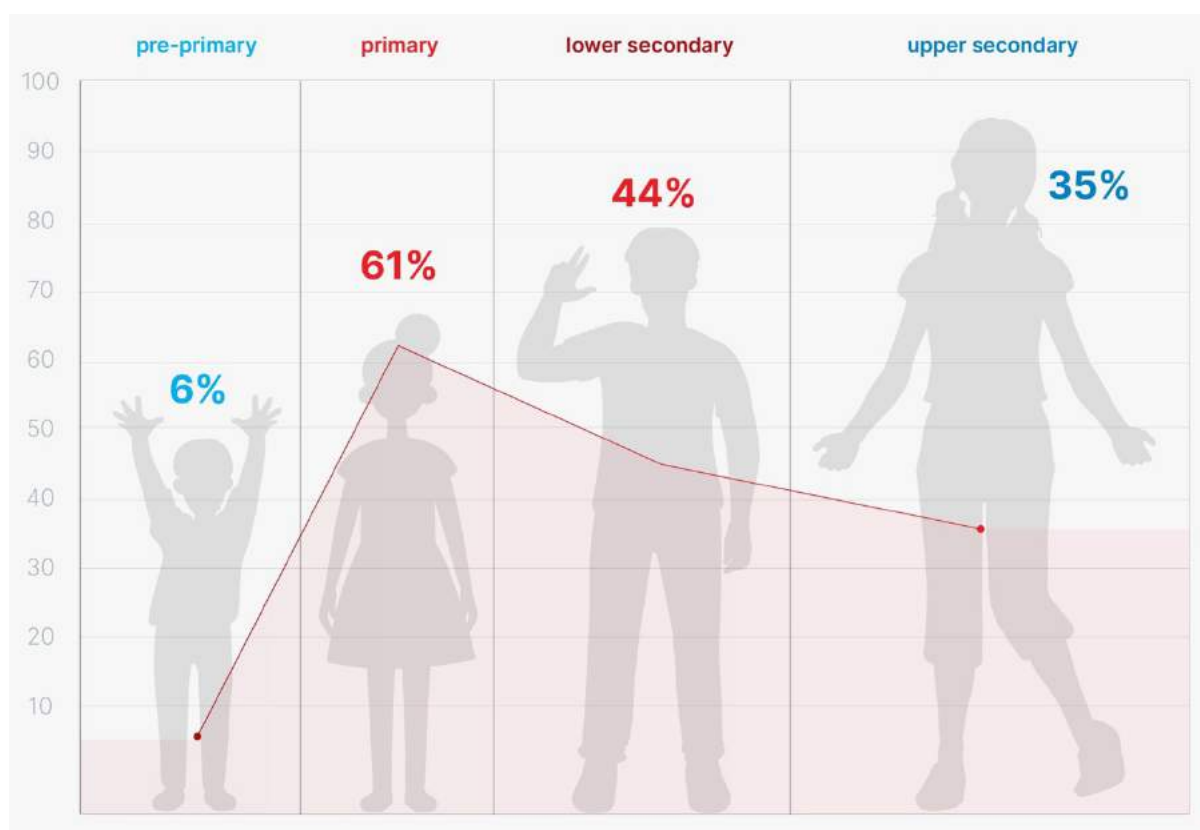
Finding 29 Many policies and programmes did not have a specific geographic sub-focus

Even though most populations[10] and the many out of school refugees[11] are in urban settings, most policies and programmes reviewed did not have a specific geographic sub-focus (urban over rural, for example).

44% of policies and programmes reviewed did not have a specific geographic focus

Figure 27 summarises the degree to which policies and programmes that affect OOSC purposefully target specific geographic areas.

Figure 27: Purposeful targeting of geographic areas by policies and programmes that affect OOSC

Finding 30 School feeding programmes are a valuable pull factor for OOSC

School feeding programmes reduce barriers to education related to impoverishment. These barriers include indirect costs (such as school lunch) and opportunity costs (such as the loss of earned income). Links between school feeding programmes and enrolment, at least in the short term, are positively correlated with the appropriate utilisation of food (as facilitated by thoughtfully designed school feeding programmes), improved nutrition, and improved engagement in learning activities.[i] School feeding is also a social safety net, pull factor for OOSC, and protective action.[ii] In August 2021, 38 UN member countries and 40 implementing partners had expressed an interest to sign on to the newly formed School Meals Coalition, set to be officially launched in September 2021 at the UN Food Systems Summit[iii]

Figure 28 situates school feeding programmes as part of integrated health, nutrition, and education programming.[iv]

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[10] Iraq: 68%, Jordan: 82%, Lebanon: 62%, Libya: 77%, Palestine: 75%, Turkey: 76%, and Yemen: 35%.
[11] Jordan: 46%, Lebanon: 60%, and Turkey: 85%

Findings, Conclusions, and Recommendations **54**
Policies and programmes affecting OOSC
Findings

Figure 28: Integrated health, nutrition, and education landscape during the pre-tertiary years
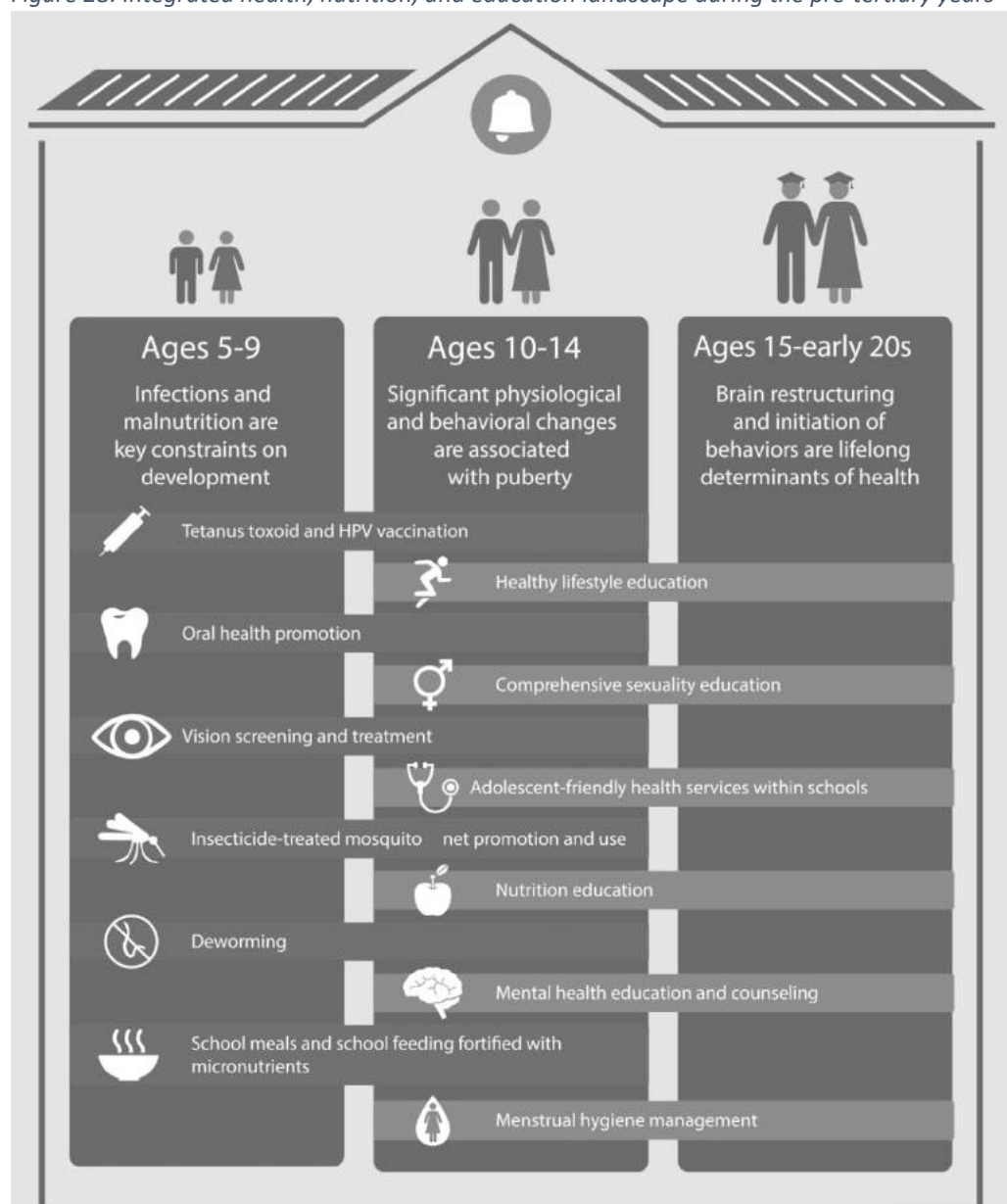
The following figure summarises the school feeding priorities of the WFP in 2020 and 2021. Notably, before COVID-19, the focus in crisis-affected contexts was to implement school feeding programmes because of their contributions to peace and stability (at the individual and thus community levels) at the humanitarian-development nexus (this priority is in addition to the noted pull factor that SFP play for OOSC).

Figure 29 shows the World Food Programme's School feeding priorities for 2020-2021.[v]

Figure 29: World Food Programme's 2020-2021 School Feeding Priorities
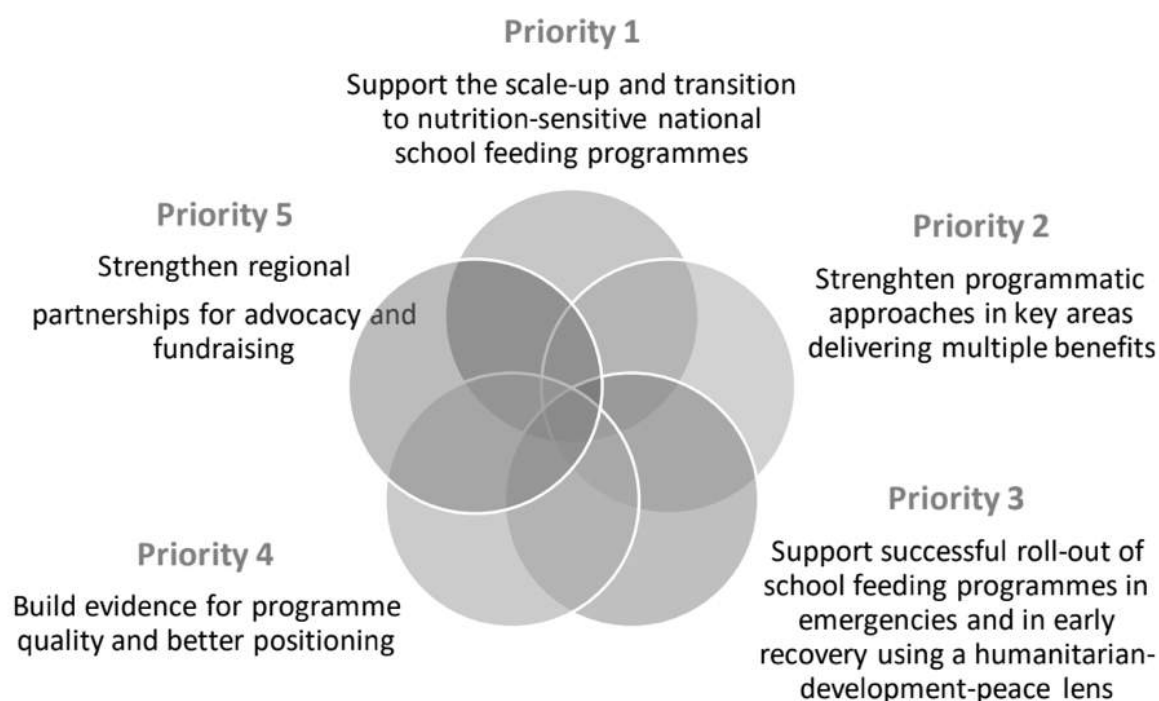
The 2020 global investment in school feeding was USD41-43 billion, of which the WFP's contribution was USD3.1 million.[vi]

90% the majority of school feeding investments (90%) are made by governments, though **29%** the percentage for low-income countries is much lower.[vii]

71% of the funding needed to support school feeding programmes in 2020 was covered by international donors[viii]

38% (6.5 million) of the children reached by WFP in 2019 via school feeding were in crisis-affected contexts[ix]

6.4 million children were reached in 2019 by the WFP's Middle East, North Africa, Eastern Europe and Central Asia school feeding programmes

Figure 30 shows the World Food Programme's countries of operation across the Middle East and North Africa region.[x]

Figure 30: Map of World Food Programme's countries of operation across the Middle East and North Africa region

Notably, children in low-income countries comprise the lowest percentage of school-age children receiving school meals amongst low, lower to middle, and high-income countries. For example

<20% less than 20% of children in Yemen and Palestine receive school meals

100% of children in Turkey receive school meals.

The WFP highlighted the disproportional impact of COVID-19 on those populations already vulnerable or structurally marginalised.[xi]

82% In April 2020, the WFP projected the number of people in its programming countries classified as acutely food insecure would increase by 80% without additional action.

300% By August 2020, the WFP had identified an increase in the severely food insecure populations of 300%.

Regarding school feeding programmes, WFP (like other school meals providers) identified alternative distribution methods to continue supporting those children in need of food and nutrition assistance. These methods included take-home rations, cash, and voucher options.[xii] Longitudinal studies on the impact these different methods have on children's engagement in school are not yet available. Notably, most studies comparing in-school meals, take-home rations, and general food distribution activities found that only in-school meals and school engagement-related indicators were positively correlated.[xiii] Relatedly, guidance from UNICEF and UNESCO on school reopening in the stabilising context of the COVID-19 pandemic is nearly universal in its recommendation to include school feeding as a pull factor.[xiv]

Of the five countries of the study in which the WFP provided support:

Iraq WFP-supported school feeding programmes in Iraq increased throughout programming from 2018 through 2020. Nearly

89,000 children were reached in 2018

345,000 children were reached in 2020

Jordan There was stable school feeding programmes with WFP support throughout five of the study, from 2016-2020.

403,000 children were reached on average each year

Lebanon The WFP supported school feeding programmes in Lebanon from 2017-2020, but reach varied per year, and figures were generally low compared to the other study countries.

4,000 children were reached in 2017

50,000 children were reached in 2020

Libya The WFP supported school feeding programmes in Lebanon in 2019 and 2020 at comparatively low levels compared to other study countries.

20,000 children were reached in each of 2019 and 2020

Yemen WFP support to school feeding programmes in Yemen was significantly larger than the other study countries, with significant increases from 2018-2020.

394,000 children were reached in 2018

680,000 children were reached in 2019

1.7 million children were reached in 2020

Figure 31 summarises the number of children reached between 2015 and 2020 in the five countries of the study in which WFP implements school feeding programmes.[xv]

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Figure 31: World Food Programme's school feeding programme reach, by country and year
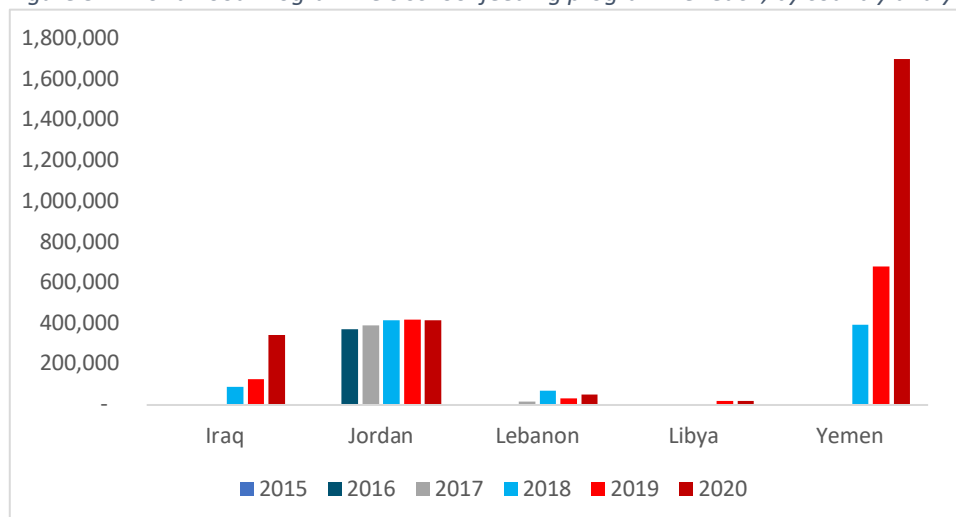
WFP's regional strategic concept note for the 2021-2022 period, *A Chance For Every Schoolchild In North Africa, The Middle East, Eastern Europe And Central Asia: Regional Strategic Concept Note* 2021-2022, prepares the groundwork for the 2025-2030 strategic period.[xvi] The foci include improved integration of school feeding in and the mainstreaming of gender, protection, and conflict sensitivity principles into, national school health and nutrition agendas and similar priorities amongst school health, nutrition and education sector integrated programming packages with critical partners.

The current WFP model focuses on targeting primary schools and girls therein. Still, where pre-primary or (lower or upper) secondary schools are collocated with said primary schools, these cohorts are also included in the school feeding programme. However, WFP is exploring reaching children through the NFE space and working with UNICEF to do so. The WFP is considering providing conditional food or fresh food vouchers, depending on context, with beneficiaries required to have 80% attendance rates. The pathway to this targeting and reach shift is complicated, in part because NFE-focused, food-based distribution programmes could be a pull factor away from formal education.

Conclusion Area 3 Policies and programmes that affect OOSC

Conclusion 3.1 The appropriateness of national policies that affect OOSC is unclear in most of the study countries

Summary The policies available for review under this study were affiliated with the MOE. However, to capture the best picture of children along the continua of exclusion and visibility, policies from related ministries such as health, youth, labour, and women need to be reviewed as well. Such an effort is likely most feasible during field-based data collection as envisioned in later studies.

Recommendation 3.1 Researchers should review ministry of education and other relevant ministry policies that affect OOSC in each study country

Priority 2

Affiliated area of inquiry Policies and programmes that affect OOSC

Recommendation(s) most relevant to

Researchers or Data Scientists

Recommendation(s) also relevant to

Donors

National Governments

Examples of most relevant stakeholder(s) UNICEF, USAID, DFID, ECHO, ECW, Save the Children, ministries of education and other social services in the study countries

Action type Research

Action 3.1 Include as part of further research primary data collection using mixed methods that aims to surface particularly nuanced connections, if any, between and amongst the main barriers and identifying characteristics of children. For example, use the same methods to explore the correlation between and amongst the barriers and participation and retention in education.

Rationale Such data is necessary to capture a better profile of the operating environment, especially in the post-COVID-19 recovery period and historically, as well as to balance the weight of the dataset amongst the countries.

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Conclusions and recommendations

Conclusion 3.2 The degree of coherence between national policies that affect OOSC and their implementation is unclear

Summary As written, most policies aim to provide equal access to quality education for all.[12] However, it would be helpful to review the degree to which the policies explicitly target children along the exclusion continuum or are appropriate for crisis-affected contexts (especially in light of COVID-19), as well as their operationalisation. The (limited) data suggests sound policy intent and fair policy relevant to OOSC and CAC. However, it would be good to identify the degree to which the policy operationalisation reaches and addresses the underlying barriers and provide the appropriate resources to facilitate (sustained) (re)engagement in education. In addition, it will be crucial to see

1 the degree to which current policies can "flex" to be responsive to the enhanced weight of pre-existing barriers impacted by COVID-19

2 the ability to modify service delivery practices to meet the expanded and shifted needs

3 where new policies are needed

4 what shifts in operations and management are required to respond more quickly, both to current and likely future such shocks.

The last suggestion is particularly relevant to the two areas identified as being directly related to COVID-19. These areas are

- safe access to learning spaces
- equitable access to affordable teaching and learning materials and other inputs, such as reliable internet.

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[12] Noting that while only three policies were directly reviewed by the study team, KI were asked to provide their opinions on the nature of the policies in their countries of remit with respect to appropriateness to the OOSC and related cohorts.

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Conclusions and recommendations

Recommendation 3.2 Researchers should assess the degree of coherence between policy intent and policy implementation related to OOSC in each study country

Priority 2

Affiliated area of inquiry Policies and programmes that affect OOSC

Recommendation(s) most relevant to

Recommendation(s) also relevant to

Examples of most relevant stakeholder(s) UNICEF, USAID, DFID, ECHO, ECW, Save the Children, ministries of education and other social services in the study countries

Action type Research

Action 3.2 Include as part of further research primary data collection using mixed methods to explore the correlation between policy intent and policy implementation

Rationale Past research has revealed that, in many cases, policies are appropriately worded and in line with international best practices and standards. This finding is sometimes due to the partnerships between donor agencies and the related ministries, the symbiotic relationship between such policies and plans, and bilateral agreements for funding. Examples include USAID's Country Development and Cooperation Strategies, the sector-wide approaches that have influenced entities like the Global Partnership for Education and the World Bank's financing decision making. However, while often well-intended, the nature of the financing or the specific grant doesn't necessarily translate into school and community level changes. Surfacing the degree of coherence between policy intent and policy practice will help elucidate where, if any, operationalisation support such as capacity building or enhanced financing is needed.

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Conclusion 3.3 Programmes that affect OOSC are not effectively targeting them

Summary The data suggests that programme targeting is not based on

1 gender and doesn't need to be

2 geographic context, but should be

3 traditionally accepted profiles of vulnerability and should be

4 exclusion status (OOSC or CRODO), and should be

There are at least three possible realities concerning the appropriateness of targeting.

1 First, that data used heretofore to argue for improved targeting of specific beneficiary profiles particularly vulnerable along the exclusion continuum are perhaps not as relevant as earlier conceived. Examples include girls, children living with disabilities, children living in impoverished households, linguistic minorities, and children without legal status.

2 Or, programmes are, perhaps for cost-effectiveness or other reasons focused on output related programmes (number of children reached, versus the percentage of most challenging to reach population enrolled and progression).

3 Or third, the data itself is not reliable about targeting and thus, further, field-level information is needed to inform the reality better. Additional information specific to targeting based on vulnerability and exclusion-related profile characteristics (as noted above), education cycle (or skill level), and that through a COVID-19 lens is appropriate.

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Recommendation 3.3 (I)NGOs should advocate for programmes that are better targeted, more contextually relevant, and based on the available evidence

Priority 1

Affiliated area of inquiry Policies and programmes that affect OOSC

Recommendation(s) most relevant to

(I)NGOs

Recommendation(s) also relevant to

Donors

National Governments

Examples of most relevant stakeholder(s) UNICEF, USAID, DFID, ECHO, ECW, Save the Children, ministries of education and other social services in the study countries

Action type Advocacy

Action 3.3.1 Advocate for integrated programming that recognises the economic and quality of education-related factors that affect participation and retention

Rationale There is an inherent connection between the barriers to and the motivating factors. This study found that economic barriers (namely, impoverishment) and the (perceived low) quality of education were the top two barriers. Logically, the quality of education was the principal motivating factor, and parents with sufficient income and cash transfer programmes were the following top factors. Thus, integrated programming responses will prove more impactful than siloed programming.

Action 3.3.2 Put in place (and seek to implement partner support for) programme actions that respond to economic and quality of education-related barriers and motivating factors.

Action 3.3.2.1 *Pivot toward cash transfer programming* to help address demand-side economic barriers, focusing on unconditional cash transfers for OOSC and conditional cash transfers for CRODO.

Rationale The evidence base about conditional and unconditional cash transfers (UCT) and their impact on participation and retention is strong and growing. This evidence base has as its foundation studies of the *Oportunidades* health and education social transfer programme in Mexico and expands from its iterations and those influenced by it. In addition, it includes longitudinal studies and, importantly, replication studies in widely different contexts.

Other sectors, including health and livelihoods, have long made the cash-based programming argument based partly on this evidence pipeline for both development and humanitarian contexts. Broadly, the data suggests that unconditional transfers provided in

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Conclusions and recommendations

acute crisis contexts and over short periods are impactful in a cost-effective way in improving participation, namely enrolment and attendance. In addition, conditional cash transfers (CCT), though more costly to implement than UCT, are correlated with improvements in retention and progression and improved learning outcomes. More recent evidence, including RCTs, has shown that cash transfer programmes with social and behaviour change communication are most impactful. These treatment groups improved their investments in services that supported the wellbeing of their children (namely health, child protection, and education). They did this more than those who received just the cash transfers. Those who received just cash transfers made better decisions than those who received no treatment at all.

Action 3.3.2 Put in place (and seek to implement partner support for) programme actions that respond to economic and quality of education-related barriers and motivating factors. Specifically:

Action 3.3.2.2 *Prioritise quality-related interventions in areas with high levels of CRODO.* The study found that most data sources classified the quality of education to be most relevant to CRODO; as such, prioritise quality-related interventions in areas with high CRODO.

Action 3.3.2.3 *Consider gender and cohort level/age, along with sociocultural behaviour change support, in the design of economic efforts to address direct, indirect, and opportunity costs of education and low household income constraints.* For example, the study found that boys were more affected by girls by economic barriers. This finding presumes that they are more likely to leave school early to work to support the family in most contexts. However, girls often leave for similar reasons, such as early marriage. As such, ensure that gender and cohort level/age are carefully considered, along with sociocultural behaviour change support, in the design of economic efforts to address direct, indirect, and opportunity costs of education and low household income constraints.

Rationale This study is not unique in identifying the pull factor of quality education on retention, nor on suggesting that demand-side cost factors are key participation and retention barriers.

Action 3.3.2.4 *Enhance girls' access to education via non-resource intensive methods of engagement and sociocultural behaviour change support.* Girls were most impacted by the lack of internet connectivity, likely due to sociocultural perceptions of asset access and allocation at the household level. As such, efforts to enhance girls' access to education should consider non-resource intensive methods of engagement and sociocultural behaviour change support.

Action 3.3.2.5 *Explore non-traditional methods of learning and improve availability and safe access to learning spaces in areas with high numbers of OOSC.* Availability of learning spaces and safe access to them were more relevant to OOSC and their participation in education than to CRODO. As such, non-traditional methods of learning and efforts to improve availability and safe access to learning spaces should specifically target areas with high numbers of OOSC.

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Conclusions and recommendations

Rationale The effectiveness of community-based (private) education in areas such as Afghanistan and Pakistan have been well documented by the likes of Burde. Importantly, where successful, they tended to be community solutions to community problems, namely a desire for girls' education by mothers living under the Taliban in Afghanistan and remote communities in Pakistan underserved by both the traditional centralised means of recruiting and deploying teachers as well as the process of devolving responsibility for education service delivery to local levels. The relatively well-documented argument between Pearson and DFID about the appropriate methods for scaling these models brought the approach into a more public discourse within the education community, but less so than did the pushback from host governments primarily in Sub-Saharan Africa against Bridge International's effort to do so.

The widely accepted model of success addresses the barriers and motivating factors highlighted by this study that keep children out of school. These factors are the availability of equitably and safely accessible quality education that is affordable—localising learning spaces as close to community populations as possible addresses many of these issues. Safety and distance issues are alleviated. Hiring known and trusted community members to teach in them facilitates retention, fosters improved partnerships between schools and homes, and alleviates safety concerns. The shortened distance, localised hiring, and community ownership of decision making contribute to reduced direct, indirect, and opportunity costs. Children traditionally marginalised because of gender or other forms of identity have reduced barriers due to their colocation with the service providers. Relatedly, Syrian refugee teachers and other motivated community members living in Turkey in the early days of the Syria crisis set up informal schools in urban settings. These schools kept Syrian children learning before they had legal, financial, sociocultural, and linguistic pathways to Turkish schools.

Furthermore, the COVID-19 crisis has helped elevate awareness of and value for differentiated means of learning, which inherently promotes appreciation for multiple intelligences and child-centred learning. While classroom-based, face to face learning is long accepted, progress has been made on shifting pedagogical practices away from rote and didactic methods of instruction and toward dialectic and inquiry-based means of learning. As a result, there is increased opportunity for and awareness of the continuum of non-traditional learning options. The fact that most of the world's school-age population was not participating in face-to-face learning for at least a period of the 2019-2020 school year contributes to this opportunity. These methods can range from:

- Correspondence course styles of distributed learning packets-such as those utilised as a part of the Self Learning Programme amidst the Syria crisis-to the methods long espoused by private sector technology actors that rely on the internet to deliver educational content.
- Montessorian and Freirean principles have long translated into education services that are community-based, relevant, low-cost, and effective. They are learner-focused and led, and experiential.

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- Right To Play has long implemented effective skill development and behaviour change programmes in crisis-affected contexts using game and play as the medium.
- Peer learning models, including pairing youth mentors with younger children, and supporting teachers to learn from each other, are well-founded in the evidence, including in crisis-affected contexts.
- A mixture of asynchronous, sometimes self-directed, and in-person learning.

These methods naturally increase opportunities for different learning style preferences and learning requirements based on various aspects of a child's identity, gender, religion, displacement or legal status, mother tongue, etc. This increase occurs because of the opportunity for multiple pathways to multiple forms of learning. Such approaches are well established; they should be explored for traditionally marginalised populations. This suggestion is especially relevant for people for whom traditional brick and mortar learning spaces have never been the best option, even with the best facilitation and accessibility intentions and efforts put in place by MOE.

Action 3.3.2.6 *Advocate for and design policies and programmes to assess improvements in mother tongue instruction that target younger cohorts.* Language of instruction was most relevant to the pre-primary and primary levels. This finding is appropriate; at these levels, children are likely to feel most comfortable in their mother tongue but might find themselves in spaces in which the language of instruction is different. As such, policy and programmes to assess improvements in mother tongue instruction should naturally target the younger cohorts (most of the time). Notably, language was a key barrier for Syrian refugees in Turkey for a while into their displacement. Likewise, it was a noted barrier for those in Lebanon concerning the use of French and English.

Action 3.3.2.7 *Advocate for and design policies and programmes that target urban populations*. The preponderance of host and displaced communities is in urban areas, yet policies and programmes don't appear to reflect this reality. This practice must change.

Action 3.3.2.8 *Prioritise advocating for and designing programmes to improve internal efficiencies of the education sectors.* Many of the barriers and motivating factors were within the remit of the education sector. As such, improvements to the internal efficiencies of the sector are needed wherever significant portfolios of funding are available to make such sector-wide investments.

Action 3.3.2.9 *Advocate for and design programmes that ensure that policies and programmes recognise the changing nature of humanitarian needs.* The data supports the

1 unfortunate expansion of the timeframe for displacement and crisis

2 the cyclical nature of some forms of crises

3 the increased likelihood of shocks such as the COVID-19 pandemic in the future

Rationale Each of these recommendations is based on the findings of the study as well as extremely well established findings from other studies on the referenced topics.

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Action 3.3.3 Produce and publicise evidence-based integrated programming solutions that address the interrelationship between economic and quality of education-related factors

Rationale Barriers and motivating factors relating to the cost and quality of education consistently ranked in the top two. They are also symbiotic. In other words, economic barriers limit the ability of the education sector to provide a supply of equitably accessible quality education given the low valuation of the sector as a budgetary priority and, relatedly, the low socioeconomic value placed on education. Moreover, ongoing inefficiencies in supply-side investments in quality education feed the belief amongst low-income households that education is not worth the cost, either in the short term or the long term. Moreover, through structural adjustment policies, entities like the World Bank and IMF have long prioritised supply-side cuts to social service provisions, including education. As explored in depth by Samoff and Sumra,[xvii] UNESCO,[xviii] and Reimers,[xix] such policies have had harmful effects on the education sector. They have contributed to the ill-conceived policies of short-term return (and, as some would argue, short-term impact) investments such as infrastructure, rehabilitation, and materials distribution.

Action 3.3.4 Advocate for programmes that address the whole child and for funding and reporting mechanisms that allow for a shift away from sector-specific funding.

Rationale The study's findings highlighted the inherent connection between actual and perceptions of the quality of education supplied by service providers and the demand for such services by households. Naturally, this correlation elevates the need for policies and programmes that address both the supply and demand-side aspects of education service provision and consumption.

These findings highlight the direct, indirect, and opportunity costs that households face when deciding how to invest in education for school-age children. The launch of Education for All in 1990 and efforts to actualise the commitment have helped to surface specific barriers to education that still require policy and programming attention. Quickly said in hindsight, opening up primary schools by removing just the direct costs (fees) without anticipating the need for significant supply-side investments to meet the increased demand was a mistake on the part of those seeking to realise the commitment to educate all made in Jomtien. So too were the limited considerations for the indirect and opportunity costs of a "free" basic education. There again, more than 30 years later, neither humanitarian nor development actors appear to have effectively prioritised the need to elevate indirect or opportunity cost coverage in their programmes.

There were no trends across the countries concerning how demand or supply-side factors were more impactful. This point highlights the importance of country-specific field-level data collection to inform the most appropriate programmes and provides food for thought concerning how regional programmes should be designed and targeted.

Importantly, quality of (inclusive) education is an area that is impactful as both a pull and push factor, meaning that the (perceived or actual) poor quality of education can keep

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households from choosing to both initiate or suspend support for their children's engagement in education.

The study's findings again highlight the needs of the whole child as part of a family unit. This finding is evident upon reviewing the barriers and motivating factors through the demand-side lens. Development and humanitarian actors have traditionally programmed by sector. Donor organisational structures continue to be dominated, for the most part, by such frameworks, and humanitarian coordination uses the same approach (though noting that inter-cluster coordination functions do exist). Such paradigms are passed on to (most) implementing partners, resulting in programming designs and reporting of implementation fragmented by sector. As such, it is not common to see large-scale, well-implemented programmes that effectively integrate sector-based approaches that are, in fact, appropriate to the needs of the whole child and the whole family. Efforts are underway to alleviate some of these barriers globally, such as via the INEE and the Child Protection Area of Responsibility partnership. In addition, ChildFund has long organised its efforts by child age cohort rather than by sector. And yet, the education sector has not found a way to strategically, consistently, and sustainably integrate livelihoods-related programming to address the primary household demand-side barriers- insufficient income- to cover education's direct, indirect, and opportunity costs.

Integrated programming responses will prove more impactful than siloed programming has proven to be.

Action 3.3.5 Advocate for (and contribute to the dialogue about) realistic shifts in programme funding methods that elevate results-based financing while also facilitating continued localisation of aid

Rationale A long-standing inefficiency in education programming results from the disconnect between investments and their returns. This inefficiency is also under-discussed. The disconnect occurs because of investments' inherent long-term return horizon, which contrasts with the essential short-term, visible returns investors who initiate their need. Supply-side activities that provide visibility in the short term for education funders and their efforts, such as infrastructure and materials distributions, have long been relied upon and prioritised within budgets. However, arguments for shifts toward enhanced investments in these "softer" supply side investments have increased. These shifts result from

1 awareness of the so-called learning crisis

2 availability of evidence showing positive correlations between investments in areas such as teacher effectiveness and student wellbeing on learning outcomes

Notably, investments in teacher effectiveness and student wellbeing tend to have higher rates of return with populations with the lowest baselines (as already noted for school feeding programmes). However, as previously mentioned, those most vulnerable before the crisis are also often made more vulnerable. Related analysis has been provided by the World

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Bank concerning the cost of COVID-19 on education, identifying in June 2020 the possibility of permanent losses in learning and trillions of dollars in lost earning.[xx]

So too have arguments for enhanced investments to reduce and alleviate the demand-side barriers that prevent participation and retention in learning, which often require intersectoral programming (such as livelihoods and education, health and education, and child protection and education). Notably, cross-sectoral programming, while technically appropriate, is often operationally difficult. It is difficult because of institutional structures and donor reporting requirements.

Contrasting analysis of the newly established International Finance Facility for Education unpack some of these complications. Proponents (and affiliates) of the fund argue its importance in facilitating more accessible access to more significant amounts of funding for critical contexts. At the same time, critics suggest that funding such programmes needs to consider the output related and optics barriers[xxi] explained above. They offer the following:

> *"The problem seems to be that while investment in education produces big social returns, these are not thought likely to produce sufficient fiscal returns to repay loans on a realistic timescale. To increase demand for education finance, donors could have more impact by monetising the social returns—for example, by promising to pay for outcomes. This would increase education finance, and respect country ownership, while reducing the risk for donors that they might otherwise be financing ineffective programmes."*

Impact investing, as envisioned by a partnership between the City of New York under then-Mayor Michael Bloomberg and the Rockefeller Foundation and inspired by the City's Center for Economic Opportunity, is a complicated and controversial concept and topic. One might argue it has influenced traditional donors like USAID and DFID to shift some of their funding toward payment by results-based models. However, critics[13] ignore the realities that actors in need of such financial support cannot self-finance the (often proportionally higher) upfront costs of such undertakings. All told, COVID-19 provides an unfortunate opportunity. It allows us to reconsider

1 how to reach vulnerable populations

2 how to reach vulnerable people with less funding (The global COVID-19-related economic downturn is expected to reduce tax revenues. Reduced tax revenues will result in reduced foreign assistance and national government budgets.)

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[13] Noting they are in line with support for Paris Principles and the Grand Bargain Commitment with respect to localisation of aid and enhanced country ownership thereof.

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Conclusion 3.4 The sector needs further research on how to reach the most vulnerable school-age children with (school-based) feeding programmes

Summary The traditional model of school-based feeding programmes, effective as a pull factor for some OOSC, might not reach the most vulnerable children. However, further research is needed to confirm this theory, based partly on the use of proxy indicators from this study, such as the nature of barriers and motivating factors to (sustained) (re)engagement in education. Furthermore, other research finds that village and household level activities best reach vulnerable children. This finding is particularly true for adolescents, for whom secondary schools are often very far from their homes.

Recommendation 3.4 Researchers should assess innovative means for reaching the most vulnerable children via (school-based) feeding programmes in the seven countries of study.

Priority 2

Affiliated area of inquiry Policies and programmes that affect OOSC

Recommendation(s) most relevant to

Researchers or Data Scientists

Recommendation(s) also relevant to

Donors   National Governments   (I)NGOs   Global Education Cluster

Examples of most relevant stakeholder(s) World Food Programme, CRS, ministries of education and other social services in the study countries

Action type Research

Action 3.4 Include WFP and (I)NGO feeding programmes in further research. Focus on the continuum of current and potential options for reaching the most vulnerable, including through non-formal education spaces and with cash as well as in-kind food transfers.

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Desk Study: Main Trends and Analysis on
Out of School Children in the Middle
East and North Africa Region

2015 - 2020

IRAQ

IRAQ COUNTRY CASE STUDY
Desk Study: Main Trends and Analysis on Out of School Children in the Middle East and North Africa Region

Out of School Children Trends

Iraq Case Study Finding 1 There are one notable increase in the number of OOS, which correlates with changes in the country's context

From 2016 to 2017, the OOSC population increases from 2.1 million to 5.5 million. Considering the nature of most OOSC data reporting, it is likely that the figures presented for 2017 are related to at least 2016 and possibly 2015. This explanation would fit with the period during which the so-called IS was expanding into Iraq, and thus affecting access to education.

Figure 1 summarises the total OOSC figures by year.

Figure 1: Total OOSC figures, annual trends-Iraq (in millions)
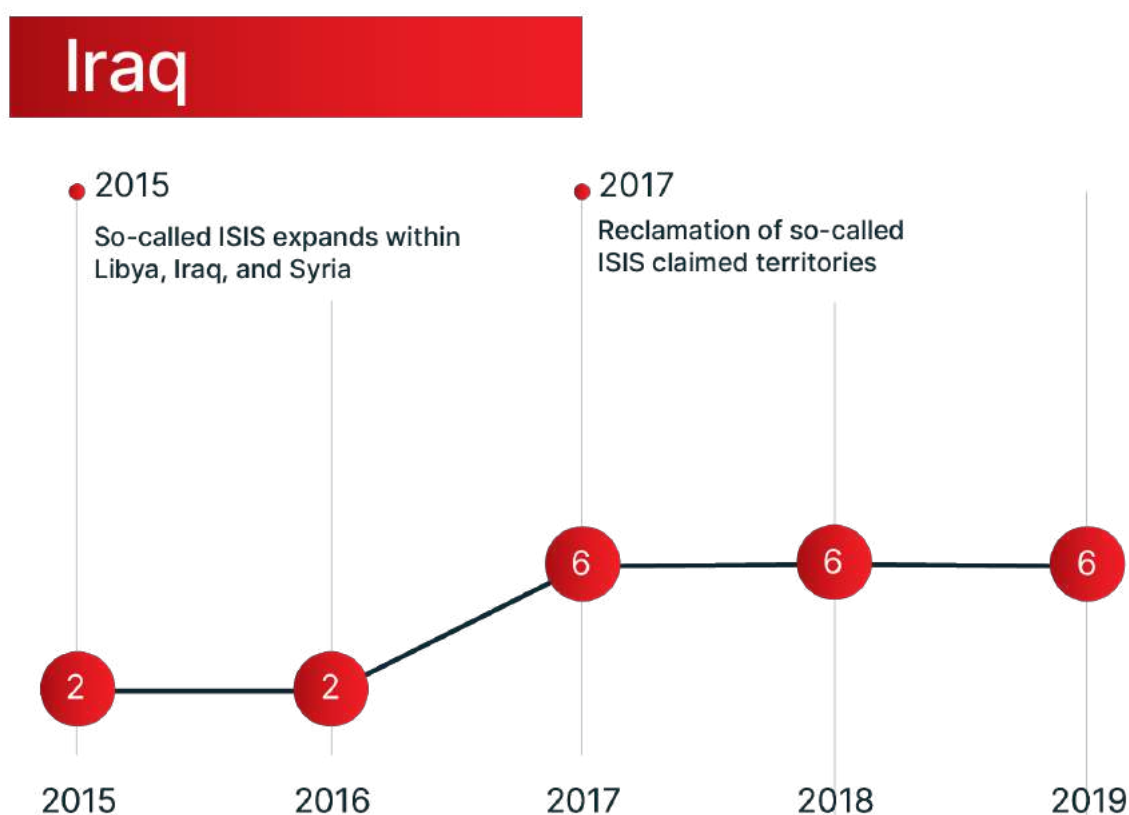
Iraq Case Study Finding 2 While most of Iraq's OOSC are at the secondary level, the number of children OOS at the primary level is relatively high

Most OOSC is at the secondary level (46%), then the pre-primary level (30%), and then the primary level (24%). However, it is notable that Iraq's primary OOSC population level is relatively high compared to the other two cohorts, wherein primary school access remains reasonably sound in some CAC. This status is likely indicative of the protracted nature of Iraq's CAC status.

Figure 2 summarises the total OOSC figures by cycle

Figure 2: Total OOSC cohort figure profiles-Iraq
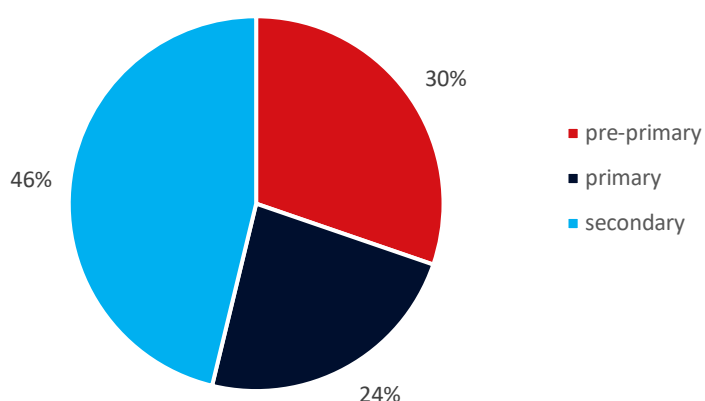
Iraq Case Study Finding 3 The majority of OOSC in Iraq are female
The majority (56%) of OOSC in Iraq are female. This finding is common in these contexts.

Figure 3 summarises the total OOSC figures by gender.

Figure 3: Total OOSC figures by gender- Iraq
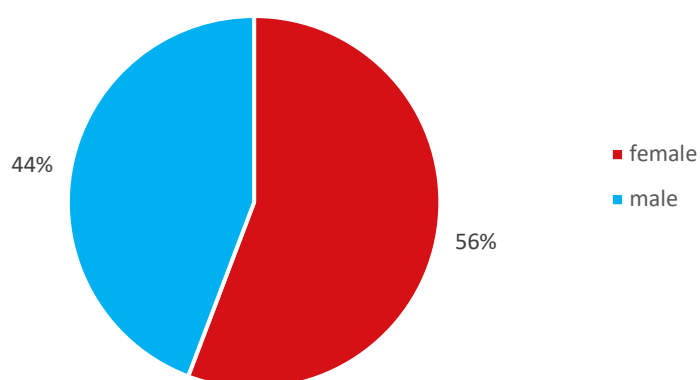
Iraq Case Study Finding 4 Most OOSC in Iraq are in urban areas

Along with the broader population shift from rural to urban spaces, the percentage of children OOS in Iraq is now highest in urban areas (63%).

Figure 4 summarises the total OOSC figures by geographic location.

Figure 4: Total OOSC figures by geographic location-Iraq
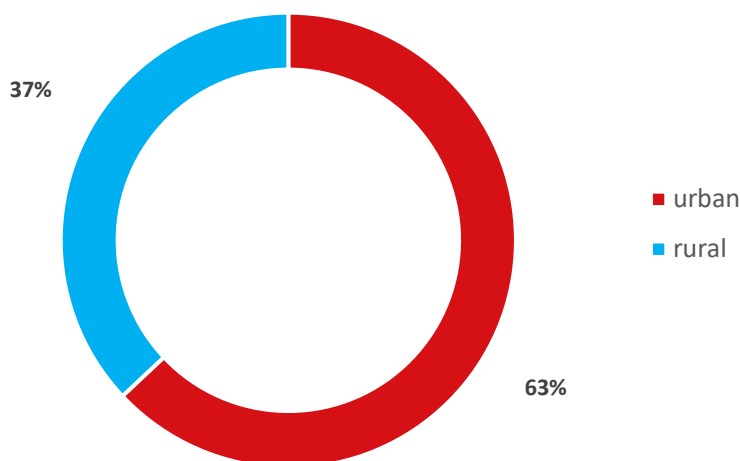
Iraq Case Study Finding 5 Displaced children were more likely to be OOS

The only data available during this phase of the study was for 2017 and 2019. In 2019, 21% of children at the primary and secondary levels were out of school, but these figures were 50% and 30%, respectively, amongst IDPs and Syrian refugees.[i] In 2017, 90% of children in these cycles were out of school in Salah-ah-Din and Diyala. This finding might connect to the Republic of Iraq (ROI) barring children born to fathers suspected of supporting ISIS from attending school.[ii]

Figure 5 summarises the total OOSC figures by year.

Figure 5: OOSC population by cycle and displacement status, Iraq
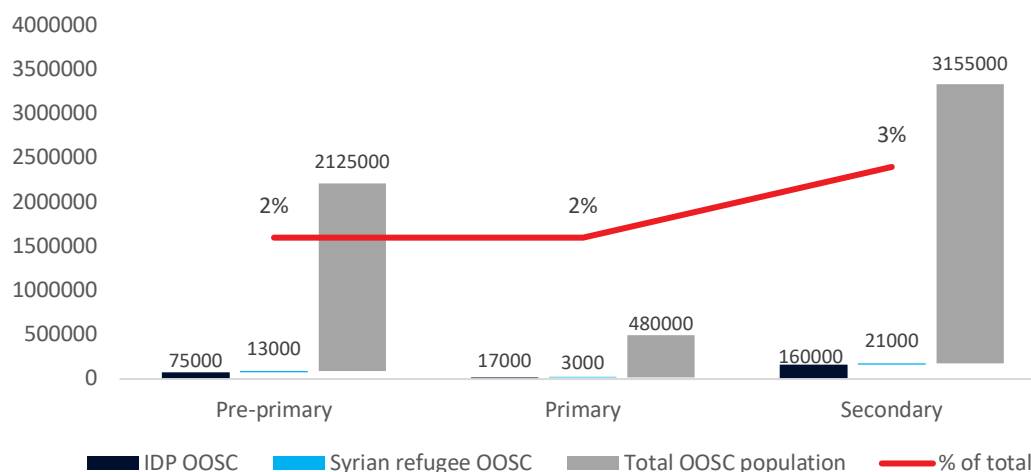
Factors that influence children's participation and retention in education

Barriers to (sustained) (re)engagement in education

Iraq Case Study Finding 6 The available data identified the following issues as the top barriers; they are listed in order of frequency count

1. Economic barriers
2. Violence and safety issues
3. Gender discrimination
4. Lack of resources/[1]internet connectivity
5. The nature of school infrastructure and facilities
6. Missing school certificates

The WFP found the following details about school infrastructure and facilities

- An insufficient amount of school buildings to accommodate the population has led to schools having multiple shifts (up to three daily).
- There is limited availability of WASH facilities in schools and a lack of essential services such as electricity, water, and mobile networking.
- Limited resources spent on equipment.

Iraq Case Study Finding 7 There was a mix of demand and supply-side barriers

Data sources identified gender discrimination as a barrier internal to the sector, along with school certificates and the nature of school infrastructure and facilities. In addition, data sources identified economic issues and violence and safety issues as external to the sector.

Iraq Case Study Finding 8 Most barriers were more relevant to OOSC than CRODO

The majority (73%) of data sources perceived the barriers more relevant to OOSC than CRODO. This assessment appears to be appropriate both to the context and OOSC's experiences than CRODO more generally.

Iraq Case Study Finding 9 Surprisingly, 80% of data sources did not identify the barriers as being unique to specific aspects of the country's context

80% of data sources did not identify the barriers as unique to specific aspects of the country context. This finding is surprising considering the varying areas of control that have been or are still in place during the study period. For example, the so-called Islamic State (IS) had Mosul until 2017, and the KRI and ROI still have different governing bodies. Relatedly, cultural aspects of these three areas differ(ed) from each other. Additionally, KRI was more affected by the Syrian crisis than were other parts of Iraq. There is insufficient data to

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[1] WFP also noted "staffing issues" broadly, and limited resources spent in trainings for teachers more specifically as issues affecting education and thus OOSC and those in school and at risk of drop out.

accurately capture the degree of correlation between barriers and geographic contexts. However, it seems possible that the urbanisation trend, notably relevant amongst displaced populations, is positively correlated with OOSC numbers. Most of the barriers (88%) were classified by data sources as not related to COVID-19. However, the point about lack of resources/internet connectivity was unclassified. In contrast, in other cases across the study, this barrier was primarily perceived as an issue elevated by the impact of COVID-19 if not specific to it.

Iraq Case Study Finding 10 Only one trend was identified relating barriers to specific years
Data sources classified the nature of school infrastructure and facilities, school certificates, and gender discrimination as issues across all years. Some data sources ranked violence and economic barriers more impactful in 2019, while others identified them as relevant across all years. The lack of resources/internet connectivity issue was classified as particularly appropriate during 2020 and thus aligned with COVID-19's impact on the sector.

Iraq Case Study Finding 11 Data on connections between the barriers, gender, participation and retention issues was limited
Only two data sources found that economic barriers and violence were not relevant to a child's gender. Given broader evidence to the contrary across the EICC sector and the low number of data points, this area will require further study. 50% of data sources classified economic barriers, violence/safety issues, and gender discrimination as relevant to participation and retention. 50% of data sources classified economic barriers, school certificates, the nature of school infrastructure and facilities, and lack of resources/internet connectivity as relevant to participation. The barriers were not tied only to retention by any of the data sources.

Iraq Case Study Finding 12 More data sources classified barriers as related to primary and lower secondary levels than to other cycles
Primary and lower secondary levels were classified more frequently (50%) than other cycles. This finding is expected; these two cycles represent the majority of enrolment. After that, 30% of the data sources classified the barriers as relevant to upper secondary.

Motivating factors supporting (sustained) (re)engagement in education
Iraq Case Study Finding 13 Further research must highlight information on motivating factors
The study would not accurately identify the connection between the factors the identities of OOSC. The conclusions and recommendations section suggests further research into this topic. Only two data sources identified four motivating factors, all of which were equally weighted:

1 Parents with sufficient income

2 Quality education

3 School meals

4 Security

Policies and programmes that affect OOSC

Overview

Iraq Case Study Finding 14 Additional research is required about policies affecting OOSC

Iraq Case Study Finding 15 Programmes affecting OOSC appear to have evolved appropriately over time

In 2018, most wide-scale programmes appeared to be mainly supply-side infrastructure investments. However, by 2019, programmes included capacity-building investments, and by 2020 they had support for flexible learning options in light of COVID-19 school closures.

2018

UNICEF (and partners)

- provided pre-fabricated classrooms for school expansion and pre-fabricated spaces to support access to catch-up learning opportunities for OOSC at the intermediate level (i.e. lower secondary).[iii]
- Provided tented classrooms for Salamiyah and Hassansham IDP camps in Ninewa, supported the Directorates of Education (DoE) in Dahuk and Ninewa to repair desks and distributed school uniforms to students in Dahuk, Erbil, and Ninewa. In addition, UNICEF delivered education supplies to facilitate children's enrolment in formal or NFE programmes.[iv]
- Established temporary learning spaces and supported OOSC through formal and NFE interventions,[v] including catch-up classes[vi] and quality of learning through the provision of teaching and learning materials.
- Provided capacity strengthening support to national education actors to be responsive via education programming during humanitarian crises and increased parent and community involvement in children's education.[vii]
- Provided specialised child protection services to complement its education efforts and a related means of tracking OOSC and at-risk children.[viii]

The WFP (and partners)

- Supported vulnerable children and adolescents through nutritional awareness and government capacity strengthening, including for school meals and social protection (namely, improving the targeting of social safety net efforts), specifically in support of the Poverty Reduction Strategy for 2018-2022.
- Plans were in place to explore technical assistance to a nationwide school meals programme under the National Education Strategy 2022.
- Provided direct assistance through emergency school meals activities in areas affected by conflict, primarily in Mosul. This programme focused on targeting students enrolled in regular school programmes at the primary level. Schools were targeted in the poorest areas of the city that had been reclaimed from so-called ISIS and rehabilitated. Meal content included bread, cheese, milk and fruit and covered 20 days of meals.

UNICEF and partners
- supported the opening of two new ALP centres.[ix]
- Provided large-scale teacher training on education in emergencies, PSS, and updated pedagogy.[x]
- With the Education Cluster, advanced advocacy to re-deploy teachers and education support staff to fill needs in under-resourced areas. [xi]
- With UNESCO, worked with both ROI and KRI MOE on broader systems strengthening activities, such as strengthening the Education Management Information System (EMIS), helping local governments develop Education Sector Plans, and expanding the MoE-endorsed School-Based Management (SBM) approach. [xii]

The WFP (and partners)
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2020
UNICEF and partners
- In the early days of the pandemic (April 2020), UNICEF supported the MOE to broadcast educational lessons through TV and digital platforms such as Newton as part of a package of solutions to foster continuity of learning following school closures COVID-19 pandemic.[xiii]
- Throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, education partners continued to deliver specific activities, including school rehabilitation, disinfection of schools, distribution of home-learning materials, distance training of teachers and set-up of e-learning platforms for children, including supporting the creation of online content.[xiv]
- UNICEF also helped prepare blended learning approaches as part of a Back to Learning campaign in preparation for a return to school-based learning. [xv]

The WFP (and partners)
Supported a cash transfer programme to help girls transition to secondary school; the pilot took place in Basra and Shat Al Arab.[xvi]

Purposeful targeting of beneficiaries by policies and programmes that affect OOSC

Iraq Case Study Finding 16 82% of the programmes did not target one gender or the other

82% of the programmes did not target one gender or the other. While this finding aligns with the gender-related aspects of the barriers and motivating factors, it goes against empirical evidence suggesting that girls are boys have unique needs depending on age and context.

Iraq Case Study Finding 17 46% of programmes targeted CRODO

46% of classifiable programmes (79%) were not targeted at OOSC but instead at CRODO. Again, this finding goes against the empirical evidence suggesting that OOSC figures are more significant than and represent the more marginalised cohorts amongst the two and thus should be prioritised.

Iraq Case Study Finding 18 75% of programmes did not target children based on their impoverishment or other vulnerability characteristics and were in place before COVID-19

75% of programmes did not target children based on their impoverishment or other vulnerability characteristics. This is a discouraging finding, considering the role of economic factors as barriers to (sustained) (re)engagement in education, the evidence supporting U/CCT programmes, and the number of times U/CCT programmes were mentioned as motivating factors. Of the programmes targeted at low-income households (14%), all targeted children engaged in formal education, which is appropriate.

75% of programmes did not target any other aspect of the vulnerability of children most at risk of being OOSC or in school and at risk of dropping out. This finding is also discouraging; vulnerable children are more likely to be OOSC or CRODO.

Iraq Case Study Finding 19 75% of programmes were in place before COVID-19

75% of programmes were in place before COVID-19, as would be expected. Of the 25% put in place after COVID-19, there was no appreciable targeting based on sex, geographic context, type of education, or impoverishment status. This point is discouraging to note, as targeting those most vulnerable (such as via impoverishment status) and via NFE would have been appropriate.

Iraq Case Study Finding 20 53% of programmes targeted the primary cohort

53% of programmes targeted the primary cohort. This targeting is to be expected, as primary is the only compulsory level of education in Iraq. But, interestingly, the following largest targeting classification by cycle (22%) was for the upper secondary level, when lower secondary or pre-primary would be the logical priority after the primary cycle.

Iraq Case Study Finding 21 50% of programmes targeted both formal and NFE

50% of programmes targeted both formal and NFE. However, it would make more sense to target NFE to facilitate the OOSC cohort to attain primary level proficiency in this context. Unfortunately, only 7% of the assessed programmes targeted NFE.

Iraq Case Study Finding 22 Most programmes didn't have a geographic target or targeted camps

The same percentage of programmes (32%) did not have a specific geographic target as the percentage of programmes targeting camps (32%). 25% of the programmes did not have classifiable geographic targets. This is a discouraging finding considering 58% of OOSC in Iraq are in urban areas.

School feeding programmes

In Iraq, the WFP works with a variety of partners to implement school feeding programmes. These partners include:

- **Governmental and quasi-governmental agencies**: the Ministries of Education, Health, Youth and Sport; the Supreme Committee of School Feeding; the Department for School Health and Nutrition; and the Nutrition Research Institute.
- **Other UN agencies:** UNICEF; UNESCO; UNFPA; WHO
- **Implementing partners:** NGOs

The long-term vision of WFP Iraq is a "nationally owned, sustainable school feeding programme that is nutrition-sensitive, supports local economic production, and is the right of every primary-aged school child." In early 2020 before COVID-19, progress appeared to be underway, as detailed below.

With complete financial support from the ROI, WFP worked from 2018 with the MOE and the MOH and (I)NGOs to directly implement a pilot school feeding programme in West Mosul following the liberation of Mosul from so-called ISIS. It reached 11 districts and was part of the National School Feeding Programme. In 2020, during a National School Feeding workshop, the MOE and WFP agreed that WFP's efforts would transition from supporting implementation to supporting capacity building and for the MOE to take over implementation responsibilities.

Conclusions and recommendations

It would be difficult to draw clear conclusions given the need for additional data that explicitly identifies issues related to unique aspects of the Iraqi context. For example, more data must elucidate the different experiences of children in KRI and the ROI. So too must data illuminate the experiences of sub-populations therein, such as children living in or re-settling around Mosul. However, some observational conclusions are possible.

Iraq Case Study Conclusion Area 1 OOSC figure and trends
Iraq Case Study Conclusion 1 The available OOSC figures appear in line with the context, but more granular data is needed

Summary The increase in OOSC figures in 2017 is explainable by context changes. However, there is also a reason to believe, specifically for the notable increase from 2016 to 2017, that data quality issues could be a concern. The apportion of OOSC figures amongst the three cohorts is significant; the primary figure is higher than usual amongst even similar CAC and is likely connected to the protracted nature of the crisis in Iraq. Higher percentages of females and particularly vulnerable children such as IDPs and refugees OOSC is as expected. However, the connection between OOSC figures and geographic context is unclear. The planned UNICEF-led OOSC study can help explain and elucidate some of these points.

Iraq Case Study Recommendation 1 Source additional, granular data about OOSC figures and cohort profiles

Priority 2

Affiliated area of inquiry OOSC figures and trends

Recommendation(s) most relevant to

Researchers or Data Scientists

Recommendation(s) also relevant to

Donors | National Governments | (I)NGOs | Global Education Cluster

Examples of most relevant stakeholder(s) UNICEF, USAID, DFID, ECHO, ECW, Save the Children

Action Type Advocacy and Research

Action 1 Advocacy efforts should encourage donors to make funding available for further research. Include as part of other research primary data collection using mixed methods. Researchers should review the experiences of OOSC and CRODO specifically about what factors are more relevant to one cohort than the other, if at all.

Rationale Data validation is needed generally, and particularly more specific disaggregated data relevant to children in KRI. IDP data across all years is also required.

Iraq Case Study Conclusion Area 2 Factors that influence children's participation and retention in education

Iraq Case Study Conclusion 2 The nature and classification of the barriers and motivating factors are in line with the empirical evidence and are context-relevant but can be better nuanced

Summary: The interrelation between push and pull factors were again clear for Iraq; the study highlighted significant economic barriers and related motivating factors such as sufficient household income and school feeding programmes. OOSC furthermore were identified as the most vulnerable on the continuum of exclusion. However, many of the more nuanced aspects of the connection were unclear. This lack of clarity is due to a scarcity of granular data, which can be sourced through additional research.

Iraq Case Study Recommendation 2 Secure additional, multi-source data about specific aspects of the barriers and more general information about motivating factors

<div style="border:1px solid">

<p align="center" style="color:red">**Priority 2**</p>

Affiliated area of inquiry Barriers to and motivating factors supporting (sustained) (re)engagement in education

Recommendation(s) most relevant to

Researchers or Data Scientists

Recommendation(s) also relevant to

Donors | National Governments | (I)NGOs | Global Education Cluster

Examples of most relevant stakeholder(s) UNICEF, USAID, DFID, ECHO, ECW, Save the Children, the IRC, NRC

Action Type Advocacy and Research

Action 2 Ensure that the UNICEF Iraq-led OOSC study uses participatory methods to collect qualitative data about OOSC and CRODO.

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Rationale More information is needed from more sources about the following barriers to inform specific, context-responsive programmes.

- the barriers and how they relate to the different profiles of children and their exclusion status
- barriers specific to gender, and again as differentiated between children in KRI and those in ROI
- barriers specific to (the experiences of) IDPs
- the degree to which particular barriers (either those surfaced under this study or those newly identified in later studies) are related to retention factors
- school certificates
- and the degree to which they are relevant at which cycle of education
- the degree to which they are an issue from a demand-side (availability of) or a supply-side (requirements for)
- confirming the degree to which the topic relates to a specific subpopulation (such as refugees or IDPs, or both)
- the degree to which barriers and geographic contexts are correlated

Furthermore, very little data was available about motivating factors. As such, later studies must collect more information and validate that from this study, across geographic and other classifications, and nuanced through OOSC-related profile lenses.

Iraq Case Study Conclusion Area 3 Policies and programmes that affect OOSC

Iraq Case Study Conclusion 3 Programmes do not appear to be targeted at the most vulnerable

Summary Policy data is needed to situate any analysis properly. Available information on programmes suggests appropriate activities but is not of sufficient scope to address the known barriers and motivating factors. The majority of programme information indicates a focus on the supply side, access-related activities. While this is appropriate, what appears to be missing are the demand-side considerations. Furthermore, targeting by need seems to be pretty limited. Finally, the nature of the school feeding programmes available appears limited in scale. Implementors should review these programmes; first, considering the impact of COVID-19 and, secondly, declining funding for the sector, both leading up to and anticipated as a result of the pandemic.

Iraq Case Study Recommendation 3.1 (I)NGOs should ensure current and envisioned programmes use existing evidence to reach the most vulnerable

---

Priority 1

Affiliated area of inquiry Policies and programmes that affect OOSC

Recommendation(s) most relevant to

(I)NGOs

Recommendation(s) also relevant to

Donors   National Governments   Global Education Cluster

Examples of most relevant stakeholder(s) UNICEF, USAID, DFID, ECHO, ECW, Save the Children, the IRC, NRC

Action Type Advocacy and Research

Action Type Programme design and implementation

Action 3.1 Modify programming practices to utilise the evidence about effective targeting of the most vulnerable populations.

Rationale Existing evidence can help improve targeting; programmes should explicitly target:

- children in impoverished households
- children known to be the most vulnerable in the context based on their identity

Iraq Case Study Recommendation 3.2 The WFP should assess modifications needed to their Iraq country programme in light of the (possible) impact of COVID-19 on school feeding-related needs

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Priority 1

Affiliated area of inquiry Policies and programmes that affect OOSC

Recommendation(s) most relevant to

Donors

Recommendation(s) also relevant to

National Governments   (I)NGOs   Global Education Cluster

Examples of most relevant stakeholder(s) UNICEF, USAID, DFID, ECHO, ECW, Save the Children, the IRC, NRC

Action Type Programme strategy

Action 3.2 Review the Iraq country strategic plan

Rationale The MOE and WFP made an agreement in February 2020 regarding changes to their school feeding partnership. The WFP should review this agreement in light of the impact of COVID-19 on school feeding-related needs. This review is particularly relevant given that the change envisioned a transition like their relationship. The MOE would prioritise taking responsibility for direct implementation efforts, and WFP would transition to support capacity building therefor. Furthermore, the specific needs of children in KRI should be assessed and elevated for policy and programme responses and modifications.

Iraq Case Study Recommendation 3.3.1 Researchers leading future studies must capture more policy data on OOSC and CRODO

<div style="border:1px solid #999;padding:10px;">

Priority 2

Affiliated area of inquiry Policies and programmes that affect OOSC

Recommendation(s) most relevant to

Researchers or Data Scientists

Recommendation(s) also relevant to

Donors | National Governments | (I)NGOs | Global Education Cluster

Examples of most relevant stakeholder(s) UNICEF, USAID, DFID, ECHO, ECW, Save the Children, the IRC, NRC

Action Type Research

Action 3.3.1 Source relevant policy data for KRI and ROI, going beyond just the respective MOE, including other ministries with related interests in vulnerable children

</div>

Rationale Policy data was not sourced during this phase of the study and would need to be identified and analysed for all study years, including KRI and ROI, during later studies.

Iraq Case Study Recommendation 3.3.2 Researchers leading future studies must capture more programme data on OOSC and CRODO

<div style="border:1px solid #999;padding:10px;">

Priority 2

Affiliated area of inquiry Policies and programmes that affect OOSC

Recommendation(s) most relevant to

Researchers or Data Scientists

Recommendation(s) also relevant to

Donors | National Governments | (I)NGOs | Global Education Cluster

Examples of most relevant stakeholder(s) UNICEF, USAID, DFID, ECHO, ECW, Save the Children

Action Type Research

Action 3.3.2 Source additional, non-UN-related programme data for KRI and ROI, specifically for 2015-2017

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Rationale Data for programmes in place in 2015, 2016, and 2017 was difficult to source. If critical, later studies should secure this information. Furthermore, non-UN programming must be better identified and analysed.

Iraq Case Study Recommendation 3.3.3 Researchers leading future studies must include specific research questions to surface beneficiary targeting priorities

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<div align="center">

Priority 2

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Affiliated area of inquiry Policies and programmes that affect OOSC

Recommendation(s) most relevant to

Researchers or Data Scientists

Recommendation(s) also relevant to

Donors | National Governments | (I)NGOs | Global Education Cluster

Examples of most relevant stakeholder(s) UNICEF, USAID, DFID, ECHO, ECW, Save the Children

Action Type Research

Action 3.3.3 Use additional data collected during later studies to refine programme targeting criteria.

Rationale Future studies should prioritise the following areas to determine the appropriateness of using them as programme targeting criteria
- gender
- geographic location
- primary school age (or skill level) children
- OOSC as a priority over CRODO

[i] Bhatti, J. (2020, November 12). *In Iraq, War and Marriage Are Frequent Obstacles to Education*. Al-Fanar Media.

[ii] Stauffer, B. (2020). *With Millions Out of School, the Countdown Begins to Get All Children into Quality, Accessible Education*. Human Rights Watch.

[iii] UNICEF. (2018d). *Iraq Humanitarian Situation Report: April 2018*

[iv] UNICEF. (2018e). *Iraq Humanitarian Situation Report*: *June 2018.*

[v] UNICEF. (2018f). *Iraq Humanitarian Situation Report: March 2018.*

[vi] UNICEF. (2018d). *Iraq Humanitarian Situation Report*: *April 2018*

[vii] UNICEF. (2018g). *Iraq Humanitarian Situation Report: May 2018.*

[viii] UNICEF. (2018h). *Iraq Humanitarian Situation Report: September 2018*.

[ix] UNICEF. (2019a). *Iraq Humanitarian Situation Report: January 2019.*

[x] UNICEF. (2019b). *Iraq Humanitarian Situation Report: July 2019.*

[xi] UNICEF. (2019a). *Iraq Humanitarian Situation Report: January 2019.*

[xii] UNICEF. (2019b). *Iraq Humanitarian Situation Report: July 2019.*

[xiii] UNICEF. (2020a). *Iraq Humanitarian Situation Report: April 2020.*

[xiv] UNICEF. (2020b). *Iraq Humanitarian Situation Report: December 2020.*

[xv] UNICEF. (2020b). *Iraq Humanitarian Situation Report: December 2020.*

[xvi] Personal conversation, 2021

Desk Study: Main Trends and Analysis on
Out of School Children in the Middle
East and North Africa Region

2015 - 2020

COUNTRY CASE STUDY
JORDAN

equitas education   Save the Children   World Food Programme   unicef

JORDAN COUNTRY CASE STUDY
Desk Study: Main Trends and Analysis on Out of School Children in the Middle East and North Africa Region

Out of School Children Trends

An unpublished internal December 2020 report for the Jordanian MOE assessing the progress of the MOE-run and internationally funded project commonly known as the Accelerating Access Initiative[1] (AAI) identified now commonly understood OOSC estimation issues specific to Jordan. It noted the importance of revisiting the OOSC estimation methodology. It stated two points to back up this statement: a) the outdated nature of the methodology itself and b) validity concerns about OOSC figures it has to hand. The report noted that the numbers the MOE can present are likely well below the actual numbers due to COVID-19. While the MOE endorsed the OOSC report co-published by the MOE and UNICEF in late 2020, the MOE's response to the report was that it would consider the recommendation.

Jordan Case Study Finding 1 The OOSC figures for Jordan are unstable; furthermore, neither context nor methodological factors can explain them

1 The jump from 2015 to 2016 (.9 million to 1.1 million) and then return in 2017 to .9 million suggests a calculation error.

2 The decline from 2018 to 2019 (.9 million to .5 million) cannot be explained.

Figure 1 summarises the total OOSC figures by year.

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[1] Also known variably as the "Impact of Syria Crisis on Education in Jordan and Accelerating Access to Quality Formal Education for Syrian Refugee Children" project and the "Accelerating Access to Quality Formal Education for Syrian Refugee Children" project.

Figure 1: Total OOSC figures, annual trends-Jordan (in millions)
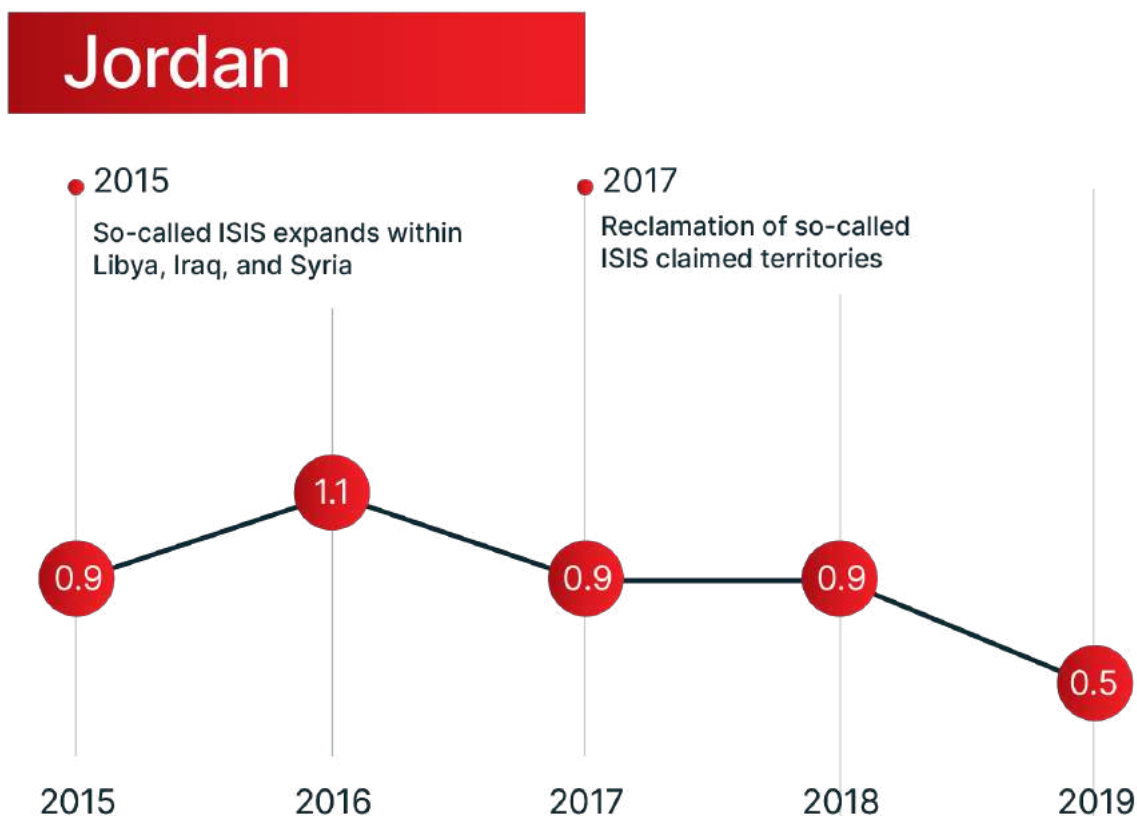
Jordan Case Study Finding 2 The profile for OOSC by cycle needs validation

Noting the data reliability concerns stated above, the secondary OOSC figure (49%) is feasible but unlikely, and the close connection between the figure for primary (27%) and that for pre-primary (24%) is again not likely correct.

Figure 2 summarises the total OOSC figures by cycle

Figure 2: Total OOSC cohort figure profiles-Jordan
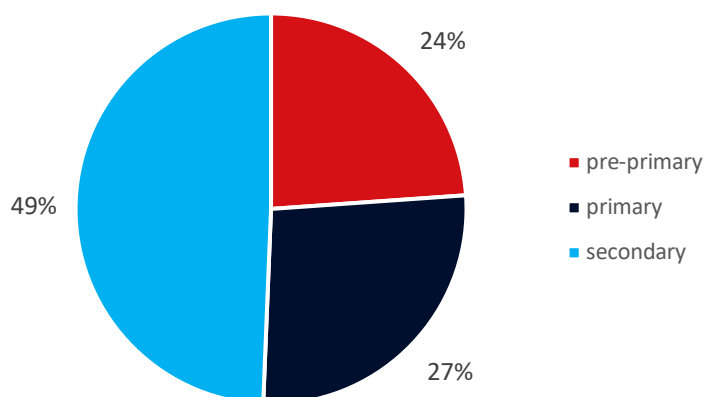
Jordan Case Study Finding 3 The majority of OOSC in Jordan appear to be male

There are known data reliability issues with the gender calculation. These figures (34% female and 66% male) could be accurate through a refugee lens, considering that most refugees are in urban areas and adolescent males might be working therein. But it is not likely to be correct for the Jordanian population as a whole.

Figure 3 summarises the total OOSC figures by gender.

Figure 3: Total OOSC figures by gender- Jordan
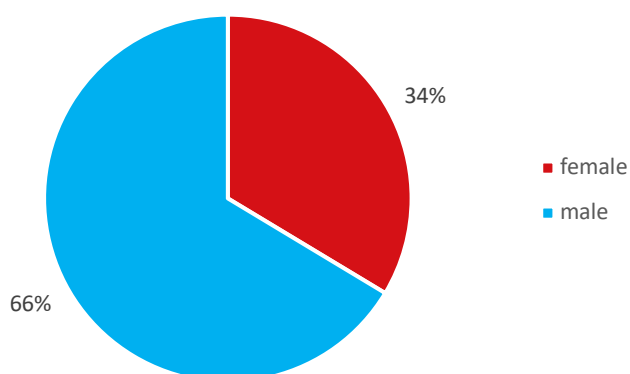
Jordan Case Study Finding 4 Most OOSC in Jordan are in urban areas

As noted above, there is a higher likelihood of OOSC populations, be they Jordanian (85%) or Syrian refugees (77%), being in urban areas (where the majority of non-camp spaces in which Syrians reside are urban).

Figure 4 summarises the total OOSC figures by geographic location and displacement status.

Figure 4: Total OOSC figures by geographic location-Jordan
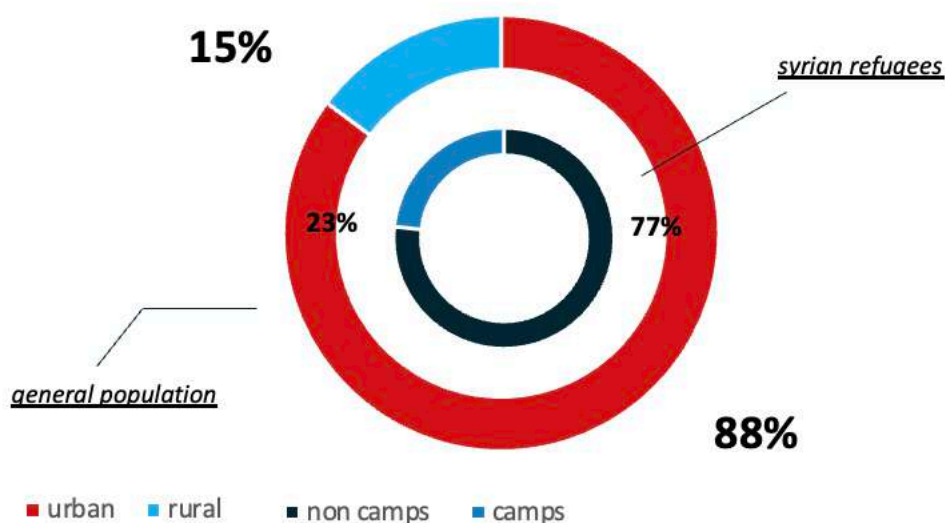
Factors that influence children's participation and retention in education

Barriers to (sustained) (re)engagement in education

Jordan Case Study Finding 5 The top five barriers relate to economic challenges, school capacity to host new students, child labour, child marriage, and the quality of education

Fifteen barriers were identified specific to Jordan. The top-ranked barriers are listed below in order of weight.

1   Economic barriers
2   School capacity to host new students
3   Child labour
4   Child marriage
5   Quality of education/the perceived value of or low returns from education

Jordan Case Study Finding 6 Most barriers were demand-side

91% of the barriers were classified by data sources as demand-side factors. These included four of the top five barriers (economic barriers, child labour, child marriage, and the perceived value or low returns from education) as well as family obligations and the well-being of children

45% of the barriers were classified by data sources as both demand and supply-side barriers. Factors influencing children from both sides of the equation included: economic barriers, disability, school certificates, and violence and safety issues.

45% of the barriers were classified by data sources supply-side factors. For example, amongst the top five barriers, school capacity to host new students and quality of education were classified this way. Related factors classified as supply-side barriers included accessibility and inclusive education, infrastructure, school location, and violence in schools.

Jordan Case Study Finding 7 Most barriers were more relevant to OOSC than CRODO

The majority (63%) of data sources perceived the barriers more relevant to OOSC than CRODO. This assessment appears to be appropriate both to the context and OOSC's experiences than CRODO more generally.

Jordan Case Study Finding 8 Surprisingly, the majority (80%) of data sources did not identify the barriers as being unique to specific aspects of the country's context

The majority (77%) of data sources did not identify the barriers as unique to specific aspects of the country context. This finding is relatively surprising, considering that the impact of the Syrian crisis affected some parts of Jordan (such as the north and urban areas) more so than others (such as southern areas). Furthermore, displaced children in camps and the urban

regions had unique educational experiences, as did children who were not displaced but in rural or urban areas. The conclusions and recommendations section suggests further research on this topic.

Jordan Case Study Finding 9 The connection between barriers and COVID-19 was unclear

40% of data sources classified the barriers as unrelated to COVID-19. All but one of these factors were supply-side factors. Some data sources classified economic barriers within this "no" cohort. However, which broader analysis around the impact of COVID-19 suggests will not be the case.

30% of the data sources classified barriers as related to COVID-19. These included economic barriers, child labour, child marriage, education quality, and the perceived value of low returns from education.

Jordan Case Study Finding 10 The connections between the barriers, gender, participation and retention issues are unclear

Data was insufficient regarding connections between barriers, gender, participation or retention issue. Given broader evidence to the contrary across the EICC sector and the low number of data points, this area will require further study.

Jordan Case Study Finding 11 The connection between the barriers and education cycles is unclear

Data were insufficient to identify how barriers and specific education cycles were correlated. However, where classified, 33% of the barriers were most relevant to primary and lower secondary education.

Motivating factors supporting (sustained) (re)engagement in education

Jordan Case Study Finding 12 Further research must highlight information on motivating factors

The study would not accurately identify the connection between the factors the identities of OOSC. An insufficient number of (diverse) sources identified only four motivating factors. As a result, the study cannot make sound judgements. However, the available data confirms anecdotal and empirical evidence that the motivating factors raised by these sources are relevant in similar contexts. Furthermore, the heavier weight of supply-side factors is also in line with similar findings. The conclusions and recommendations section suggests further research on this topic. The motivating factors were:

1 Community engagement

2 Preventative support services within the school

3 Quality education

4 Safe learning spaces

Policies and programmes that affect OOSC

As explored in the terminology, concepts and classifications section of the methodology, a more significant number of policies and programmes relevant to OOSC is neither indicative of a more efficient and effective environment nor a poorly coordinated and ineffective one. In the case of Jordan, the study reviewed a small number of policies and programmes. They include the current education sector strategy as well as the large-scale AAI programme.

Jordan Case Study Finding 13 Gender-based targeting is not common

None of the documents explicitly targeted either gender. It's discouraging that data do not better inform visible guiding documents. Interestingly, the Ministry of Education's Education Strategic Plan 2018-2022 (2018) is replete with thoughtful and nuanced assessments of the unique barriers to each gender at different stages of development and in other contexts. It even includes a strategic component for Mainstreaming Gender Qualifying Education. However, none of the interventions differentiate how to address these unique challenges. The indicators in the log frame provide gender-disaggregated data but in ways that seek to collect information specific to shifts in inputs, processes, outputs, or outcomes that would speak to targeting or its effectiveness.

Jordan Case Study Finding 14 Targeting based on exclusion status is limited

Another discouraging finding was the limited targeting by exclusion status. One of the programmes reviewed, run by Questscope, explicitly targeted this cohort. However, the others did not clearly define the targets. This point is relevant, noting that OOSC is more vulnerable than CRODO.

Jordan Case Study Finding 15 Programmes haven't pivoted to address COVID-19
The larger-scale efforts crossed the COVID-19 pandemic timeframe but were not modified to respond to the changing contexts.

Jordan Case Study Finding 16 Large scale programmes target based on impoverishment status
The large-scale programmes such as AAI did reference specific targeting of beneficiaries by impoverishment status.

Jordan Case Study Finding 17 Compulsory education is the priority
Policies and programmes prioritise primary and lower secondary cycles. This finding is expected since they are the compulsory levels in Jordan.

Jordan Case Study Finding 18 Targeting does not consider geographic areas thoughtfully
Geographic targeting was not a targeting priority within the documents reviewed. This finding is again disappointing, considering the unique needs of OOSC based on their location.

School feeding programmes

Jordan's National School Feeding Plan was established in 1999. In concept, potential beneficiary impoverishment status drives targeting. The WFP has been a partner in this program since 2012. Other partners include the MOE, Ministry of Health (MOH), Royal Health Awareness Society, World Vision International, UNICEF, and WHO. However, the MOH has not been as engaged recently as envisioned and as might be appropriate.

Furthermore, the MOE only provides support for 50% of the school days, has limited reach for children in pre-primary schools, and does not reach urban cohorts. It also does not provide this programme for children in the second shift of double shifted schools for Syrian refugees. As such, programmes do not reach some of the most vulnerable populations.

As in Iraq, the WFP envisions handing over the component of the programme it leads to national ownership in the coming 5-10 years. COVID-19 might impact this timeframe. Furthermore, funding for this programme continues to decrease.

Conclusions and recommendations

It would be difficult to draw clear conclusions given the need for additional data that explicitly identifies issues related to unique aspects of the Jordanian context. However, some observational conclusions are possible.

Jordan Case Study Conclusion Area 1 OOSC figure and trends

Jordan Case Study Conclusion 1 The available OOSC figures do not appear to be reliable

Summary The data validity concerns are too significant to make reliable conclusions.

Jordan Case Study Recommendation 1 Researchers should source additional, granular data about OOSC figures and cohort profiles

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Priority 2

Affiliated area of inquiry OOSC figures and trends

Recommendation(s) most relevant to

 Researchers or Data Scientists

Recommendation(s) also relevant to

 Donors   National Governments   (I)NGOs   Global Education Cluster

Examples of most relevant stakeholder(s) UNICEF, USAID, DFID, ECHO, ECW, Save the Children

Action Type Advocacy and Research

Action 1 Advocacy efforts should encourage donors to make funding available for further research. Include as part of other research primary data collection using mixed methods. Researchers should review the experiences of OOSC and CRODO specifically about what factors are more relevant to one cohort than the other, if at all.

Rationale Data validation is needed generally.

Jordan Case Study Conclusion Area 2 Factors that influence children's participation and retention in education

Jordan Case Study Conclusion 2 The nature and classification of the barriers and motivating factors are in line with the empirical evidence and are context-relevant but can be better nuanced

Summary The interrelation between push and pull factors were again clear for Jordan, with issues relating to perceived low quality of education being a barrier and the provision of safe, school-based support services being a motivating factor. OOSC again was identified as the most vulnerable on the continuum of exclusion. However, nuanced connections were unclear. This lack of clarity is due to a paucity of granular data, which additional research can provide.

Jordan Case Study Recommendation 2 Researchers should secure additional, multi-source data about specific aspects of the barriers and more general information about motivating factors

Priority 2

Affiliated area of inquiry Barriers to and motivating factors supporting (sustained) (re)engagement in education

Recommendation(s) most relevant to

Researchers or Data Scientists

Recommendation(s) also relevant to

Donors | National Governments | (I)NGOs | Global Education Cluster

Examples of most relevant stakeholder(s) UNICEF, USAID, DFID, ECHO, ECW, Save the Children, the IRC, NRC

Action Type Advocacy and Research

Action 2 Ensure that the UNICEF Jordan-led OOSC study uses participatory methods to collect qualitative data about OOSC and CRODO.

Rationale More information is needed from more sources about the following barriers to inform specific, context-responsive programmes.
- barriers specific to gender
- barriers specific to (the experiences of) refugees
- the degree to which particular barriers (either those surfaced under this study or those newly identified during later studies) are related to participation and retention factors
- the degree to which barriers and geographic contexts are correlated

Very little data was available about motivating factors. Later studies should surface this information and validate this study's findings.

Jordan Case Study Conclusion Area 3 Policies and programmes that affect OOSC

Summary More policy data is needed to situate any analysis properly. This suggestion includes understanding the degree to which the implementation of the current education strategy does a better job at targeting populations particularly vulnerable to being OOS than the policy itself suggests. More data from other ministries with mandates that relate to OOSC would also be helpful. For example, available information on programmes indicates that specific targeting of OOSC-related vulnerabilities (gender, impoverished, geographic location, etc.) is minimal. Furthermore, targeting by need appears to be pretty limited. For example, the nature of the school feeding programme available appears to not appropriately target those most in need and not engage partners critical to its effectiveness. Its relevance also needs to be reviewed in light of the impact of COVID-19.

Jordan Case Study Recommendation 3 Additional information is needed on policies affecting children beyond the MOE's; additionally, programmes don't appear to target beneficiaries be based on the evidence

Jordan Case Study Recommendation 3.1 (I)NGOs should ensure current and envisioned programmes use existing evidence to reach the most vulnerable

<div style="border:1px solid">

Priority 1

Affiliated area of inquiry Policies and programmes that affect OOSC

Recommendation(s) most relevant to

 (I)NGOs

Recommendation(s) also relevant to

 Donors   National Governments   Global Education Cluster

Examples of most relevant stakeholder(s) UNICEF, USAID, DFID, ECHO, ECW, Save the Children, the IRC, NRC

Action Type Programme design and implementation

Action 3.1 Modify programming practices to utilise the evidence about effective targeting of the most vulnerable populations.

</div>

Rationale Existing evidence can help improve targeting; programmes should explicitly target:

- children in impoverished households
- children known to be the most vulnerable in the context based on their identity

Jordan Case Study Recommendation 3.2 The WFP should assess modifications to its Jordan country programme in light of COVID-19

<div>

Priority 1

Affiliated area of inquiry Policies and programmes that affect OOSC

Recommendation(s) most relevant to

Donors

Recommendation(s) also relevant to

National Governments   Global Education Cluster

Examples of most relevant stakeholder(s) WFP

Action Type Programme strategy

Action 3.2 Review the Jordan country strategic plan

</div>

Rationale The MOE and WFP made an agreement in February 2020 regarding changes to their school feeding partnership. The WFP should review this agreement in light of the impact of COVID-19 on school feeding-related needs. This review is particularly relevant given that the change envisioned a transition like their relationship. The MOE would prioritise taking responsibility for direct implementation efforts, and WFP would transition to support capacity building therefor. Furthermore, the specific needs of children in KRI should be assessed and elevated for policy and programme responses and modifications.

Jordan Case Study Recommendation 3.3 Researchers should source relevant policy data from other ministries with related interests in vulnerable children and field-level data on the MOE's applicable policies

Priority 2

Recommendation(s) most relevant to

 Researchers or Data Scientists

Recommendation(s) also relevant to

 Donors   National Governments   (I)NGOs   Global Education Cluster

Examples of most relevant stakeholder(s)

Action Type Advocacy and Research

Action 3.3 Collect more data on policies affecting OOSC from more ministries-not just the MOE

Rationale Integrated efforts are more critical now than ever and yet, traditionally, the MOE is the leading actor engaged in efforts to address the OOSC issue. Even then, the MOE's existing strategy does not appear to target those most at risk of being OOS. Field-level data collection will be helpful. This data can help explain how the MOE's implements their strategy. For example, is it as written or is better targeting is happening at the local level. Furthermore, additional data is needed from other ministries to see how they support children at risk of being OOS.

Desk Study: Main Trends and Analysis on
Out of School Children in the Middle
East and North Africa Region

2015 - 2020

LEBANON

equitas education   **Save the Children**   World Food Programme   unicef

LEBANON COUNTRY CASE STUDY
Desk Study: Main Trends and Analysis on Out of School Children in the Middle East and North Africa Region

Out of School Children Trends

Lebanon Case Study Finding 1 The variations in OOSC suggest data validity and politicisation concerns

From 2016 to 2017, the increase in OOSC (.3 million to .6 million), is difficult to explain due to context or known methodological changes. Variations between 2017 and 2019 are not significant. While unlikely due to the OOSC reporting trends, the shift from 2018 to 2019 (.5 million to .6 million) might be connected to the liquidity crisis starting in 2019. Notably, the last official OOSC report from MEHE (2019) stated that, for the 2018-2019 school year, only 70,448 (.07 million) children were out of school. This finding suggests data sourcing and validity issues. The multiple sources used for this study suggest the figure was roughly .55 million, a significant difference.

Figure 1 summarises the total OOSC figures by year

Figure 1: Total OOSC figures, annual trends-Lebanon (in millions)
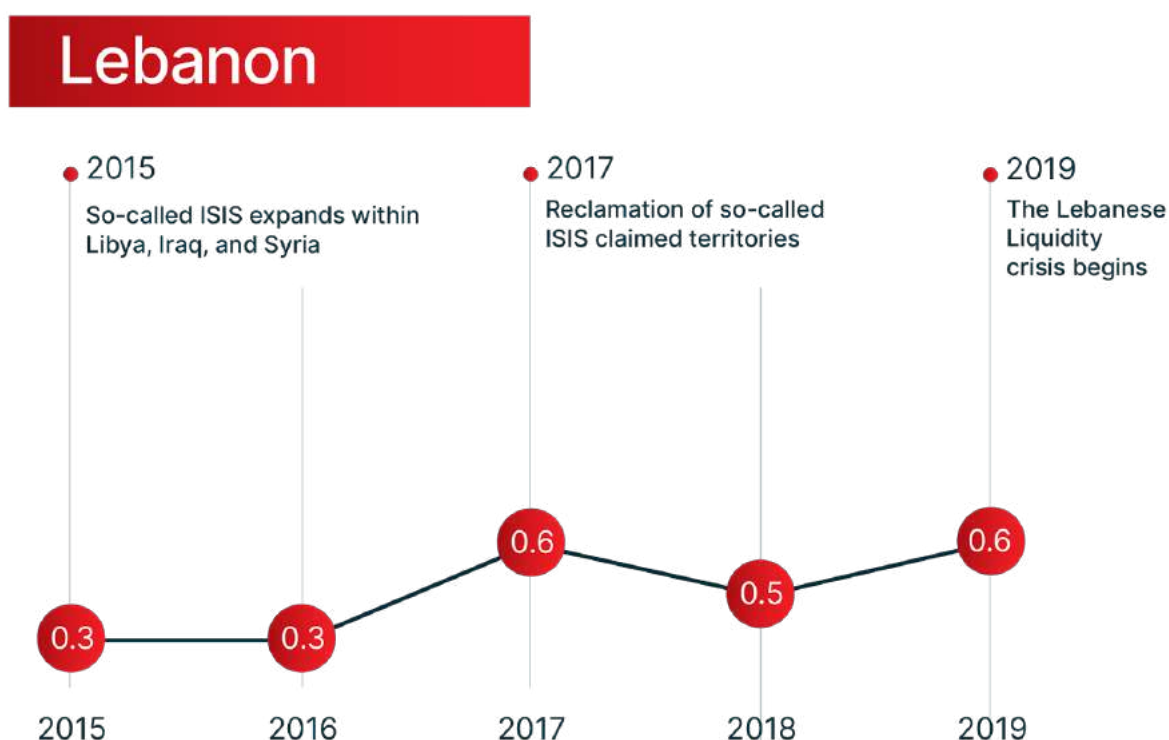
Lebanon Case Study Finding 2 The majority of OOSC in Lebanon are at the pre-primary level

The apportionment of OOSC amongst the three pre-tertiary cycles is as expected for the context, which has traditionally had a strong focus on both primary and post-primary education. Thus, pre-primary education comprises the majority (55%) of OOSC, followed by secondary with (29%), and finally primary (16%).

Figure 2 summarises the total OOSC figures by cycle

Figure 2: Total OOSC cohort figure profiles-Lebanon
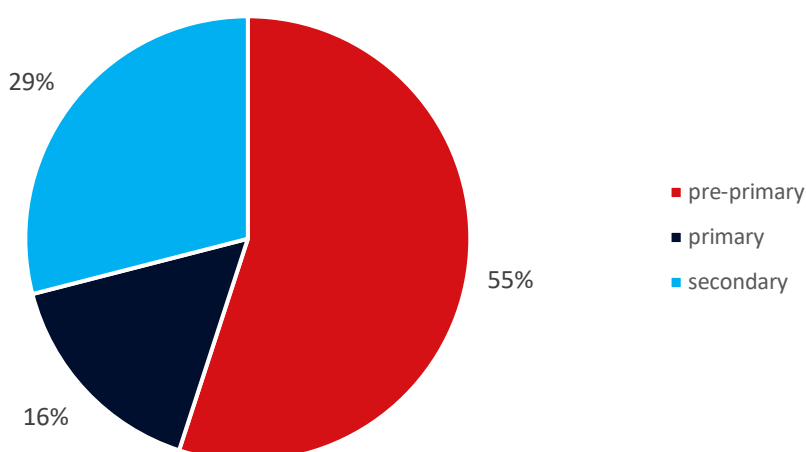
Lebanon Case Study Finding 3 The majority of OOSC in Lebanon are female

Through a context lens, the percentage of OOSC by gender seems appropriate. The data suggest that girls are slightly more likely to be OOSC (51%) than boys (49%).

Figure 3 summarises the total OOSC figures by gender

Figure 3: Total OOSC figures by gender- Lebanon
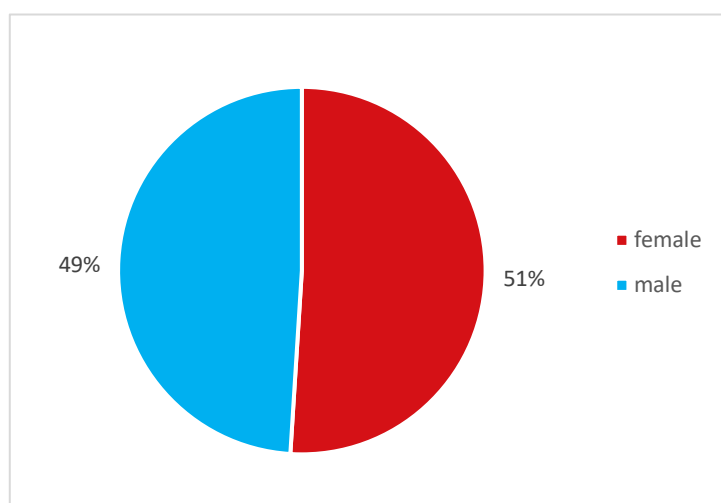
Lebanon Case Study Finding 4 Most (65%) OOSC in Lebanon are in urban areas, except for Palestinian OOSC

Urbanisation is a strong trend in Lebanon, though data suggests a minor decline between 2015 and 2020. The urban/rural trend seen elsewhere is also actual in Lebanon, with 64% of the OOSC cohort based in urban spaces. The demographic breakdown amongst cohorts by displacement status or nationality is interesting. The majority of Palestinians (54%) are camp-based. This cohort includes both those well established in Lebanon since 1948 and those re-displaced from Syria after 2010. Both Syrian refugee and Lebanese school-age children are more likely to be in urban areas, with 78% of Lebanese children and 60% of Syrian refugee children there.

Figure 4 summarises the school-age population of children in Lebanon by geographic context and nationality

Figure 4: Total OOSC figures by nationality and geographic location-Lebanon
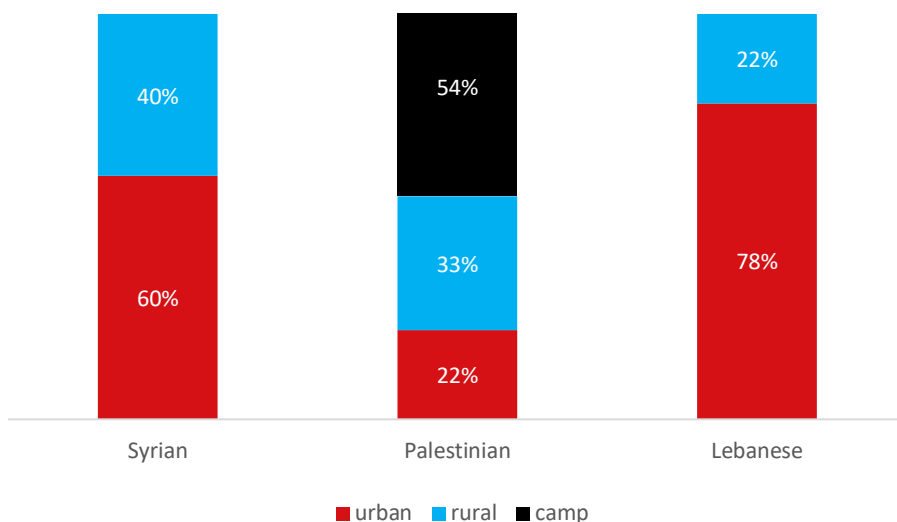
As a result, Palestinians in camps are more likely to have access to services such as education provided by UNRWA. Thus only 1% of the OOSC cohort is camp-based and are Palestinians.

Figure 5 summarises the OOSC population by geographic context

Figure 5: Total OOSC figures by geographic location-Lebanon
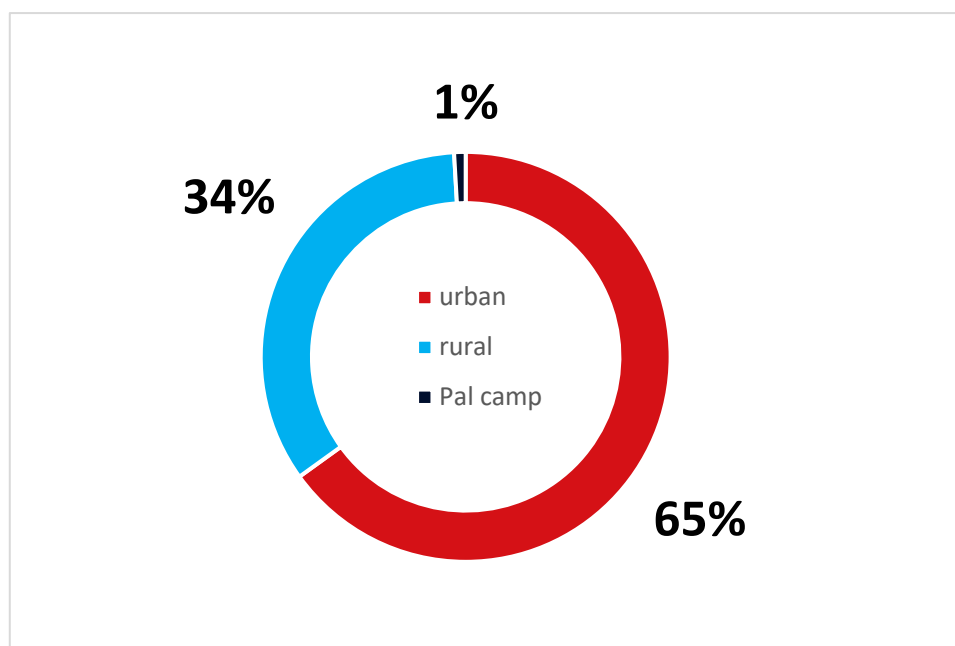
Lebanon Case Study Finding 5 Most OOSC in Lebanon are Syrian

While specific figures are difficult to source and confirm, most OOSC in Lebanon are mainly Syrian. However, this percentage is estimated to have declined over time, starting at 82% in 2015 and falling to 67% in 2019.

In 2015, the percentage of all Syrian school-age children who were out of school was 25%.[i] This figure rose to 50% in 2016,[ii] 54% in 2017,[iii] and 50% in 2018.[iv] By 2019, 45% of the total Syrian school-age population was still out of school.[v]

By geographic location, in 2017, 78% of all Syrian refugees in the Bekaa were out of school. [vi]

By cycle cohort, as of 2016, 90% of Syrians of secondary school age were not enrolled,[vii] and in 2017, the figure of Syrians of upper secondary school age not enrolled was 97%.[viii]

Factors that influence children's participation and retention in education

Barriers to (sustained) (re)engagement in education

Lebanon Case Study Finding 6 The top three barriers relate to economic challenges, school capacity to host new students, and transportation.

21 barriers were identified specific to Lebanon, with the top-ranked barriers, listed in order of frequency count, as follows:

1 Economic barriers
2 School capacity to host new students
3 Transportation

6 barriers were weighted equally as the 4th most impactful

- Child labour
- Lack of awareness of free education
- Lack of resources/internet connectivity
- Language barriers
- Limited school personnel capacity
- Quality of education

Lebanon Case Study Finding 7 Most barriers were supply-side

52% of data sources classified the barriers as supply-side factors. They include school capacity to host new students, quality of education, and limited school personnel capacity.

Lebanon Case Study Finding 8 Barriers were as relevant to OOSC as to CRODO

48% of data sources classified the barriers as affect OOSC and CRODO to the same degree

36% of data sources ranked them as affecting OOSC more than CRODO. As such, it appears that while OOSC is still likely to be most affected by these barriers, CRODO in Lebanon is also in a reasonably weak position.

Lebanon Case Study Finding 9 The majority (55%) of data sources believed the barriers related to the country's CAC-status

55% of data sources thought that the barriers were relevant to the nature of the country's CAC status. The most pertinent factor was identified as the Syria crisis, followed by Lebanon's other internal crises. This finding appears appropriate to the context noting other empirical evidence about the multiplier effects of each crisis on the other.

Lebanon Case Study Finding 10 Most barriers were unrelated to COVID-19

72% of data sources did not classify the barriers as being specific to COVID-19. Notably, those classified as such included child labour, economic barriers, family obligations, and many other demand-side factors. Most children in second shift schools, primarily comprised of refugee populations, did not have access to online learning. [ix] Even if they did, their impoverishment status likely meant they would not sustain engagement therein.

Figure 6 shows the types of protection-related barriers that Palestinians living in camps stated their children faced in light of COVID-19.[x]

Figure 6: Child protection issues amongst Palestinians in Lebanon in the early days of the COVID-19 shutdowns (end of Q1 and start of Q2 2020).
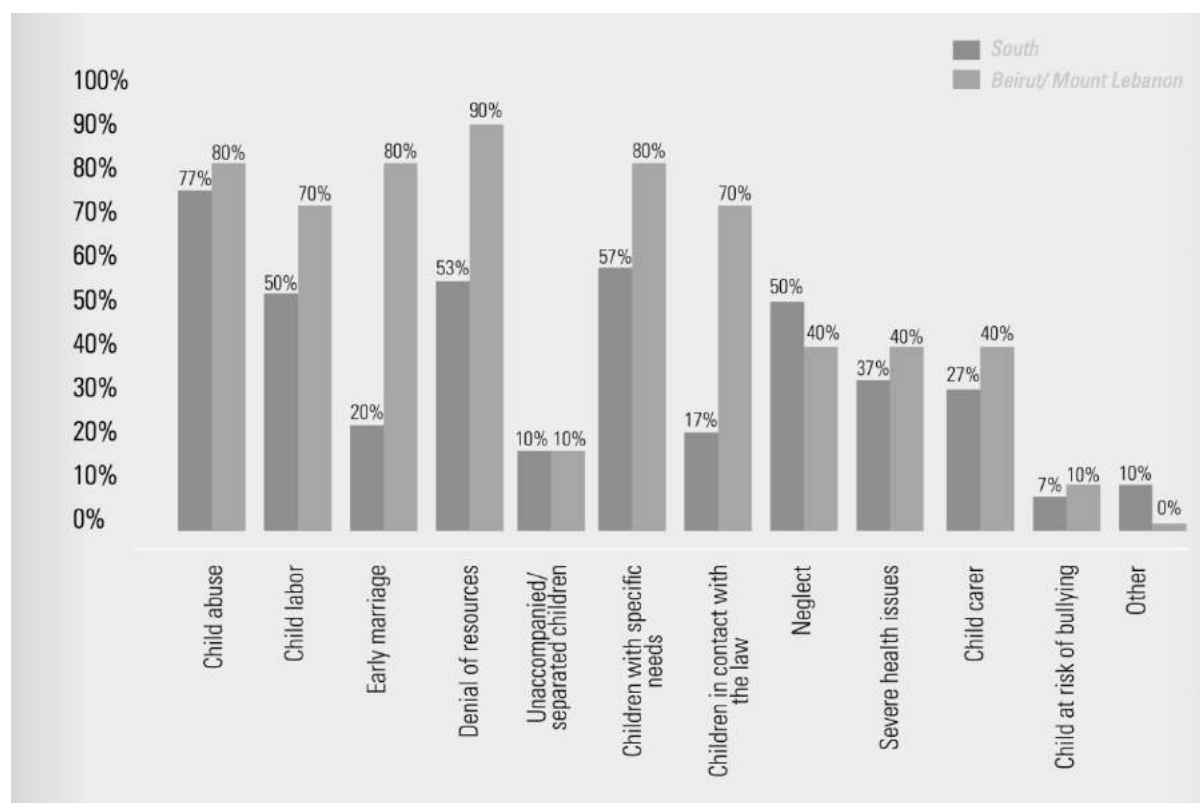
Lebanon Case Study Finding 11 Most barriers were not correlated with gender

59% of barriers were classified as irrelevant to a child's gender. Notably, child labour-related barriers were classified as being more relevant to boys and family obligations to girls.

Lebanon Case Study Finding 12 Most barriers to Syrian OOSC related to policies or policy implementation

Human Rights Watch looked at the barriers specific to Syrian refugee children. They identified the disconnect between creating learning spaces specifically for Syrian children and the geographic locations of need. For example, of the 200,000 spaces made available, 25% went unused.[xi] In addition, as noted in earlier sections, while the intent of the education policy concerning access for refugee children is sound, there are disconnects between intent and implementation at the school level and between MEHE and other ministries responsible for Syrian refugees. One example identified by Human Rights Watch was schools that did not follow enrolment guidance provided by MEHE. [xii] Another was the restriction placed on freedom of movement (via residency requirements) that resulted in geographic barriers to even the educational opportunities available to Syrian refugee students.

Lebanon Case Study Finding 13 Impoverishment and living with disabilities are significant barriers for OOSC in Lebanon

Human Rights Watch also found that children with disabilities are relegated to institutions without the mandate to provide an education as a significant barrier.[xiii] Concerning

economic barriers, the majority of all people living in Lebanon are now impoverished and likely to be food insecure. This cohort includes 55% of Lebanese, 70% of Palestinians, and 90% of Syrians.[xiv]

Lebanon Case Study Finding 14 Most barriers affected participation and retention equally

90% of data sources classified the barriers as relevant to both participation and retention issues.

38% of data sources ranked the barriers as specific to participation issues, including factors such as school capacity to host new students and transportation.

Lebanon Case Study Finding 15 Barriers don't appear to be particularly relevant to any specific education cycles

58% of data sources classified the barriers as particular to an education cycle. Therein, however, each of the four cycles was characterised as being equally influenced.

Motivating factors supporting (sustained) (re)engagement in education

Lebanon Case Study Finding 16 The top five motivating factors are: 1) parents with sufficient income; 2) education services outside school spaces; 3) language support; 4) quality education; and 5) schools that offer transport.

The study identified 18 motivating factors in the Lebanon context. The top five motivating factors, listed in order of their weight, are:

1   Parents with sufficient income
2   Education services provided outside of school spaces
3   Language support
4   Quality education
5   Schools that provide transportation

Language support is most relevant to Syrians who are expected to study in French and English in Lebanese schools.[xv]

Lebanon Case Study Finding 17 Most motivating factors were supply-side

55% of data sources classified the motivating factors as supply-side. This finding puts the onus on the education sector to provide the services that would foster demand amongst household decision-makers. Quality education and education services offered outside of school spaces were the top factors listed.

27% of data sources classifying the motivating factors as demand-side. The top factor listed was parents with sufficient income.

Lebanon Case Study Finding 18 The connection between motivating factors and exclusion status was hard to classify

40% of data sources found the motivating factors difficult to classify concerning their impact on OOSC or CRODO.

24% of data sources ranked the motivating factors as relevant to both OOSC and CRODO

24% of data sources ranked the motivating factors as more relevant to OOSC.

Lebanon Case Study Finding 19 There do not appear to be correlations between the motivating factors and specific aspects of the Lebanese context

78% of data sources did not see a connection between motivating factors and particular elements of the country context. Considering the complex nature of the (various) crises in Lebanon, this point might be valid. However, the counterargument could be as well, and there appears to be data to suggest it is. For example, the specific experience of Palestinian refugees from Syria living in rural areas would be quite different from those living in camps and different still from Syrian refugees living in rural areas.

Lebanon Case Study Finding 20 There do not appear to be correlations between the motivating factors and specific geographic contexts

92% of data sources did not see a connection between motivating factors and specific geographic areas. However, at least one data point suggests there are connections. Data indicates that Palestinian refugees living in camps are more likely to be in school than their counterparts outside of centres. Relatedly, another study found that Syrian refugees in the Bekaa valley were OOS at a higher rate than their counterparts in other parts of Lebanon.

Lebanon Case Study Finding 21 Most motivating factors were not related to COVID-19

61% of data sources did not classify motivating factors as related to COVID-19. Of those perceived to be connected, data sources identified factors such as parents with sufficient income and education services out of schools.

Lebanon Case Study Finding 22 No motivating factors were correlated with gender
None of the motivating factors was classified as being related to a child's gender.

Lebanon Case Study Finding 23 Most motivating factors affected participation and retention equally

89% of data sources classified barriers as relevant to both participation and retention issues.

16% of data sources classified barriers as specific to participation issues: increased availability of learning spaces, language support, and schools that provided transportation.

Lebanon Case Study Finding 24 Most motivating factors were most relevant to all but the upper secondary cycle

50% of data sources classified motivating factors as appropriate to pre-primary, primary, and lower secondary cycles.

16% of data sources ranked motivating factors as relevant to upper secondary as well. There was little overlap amongst the elements, showing the perceived uniqueness of the factors to the age cohort. For example, the factors identified as more relevant to older cohorts related to the availability of flexible learning opportunities and language support. Those identified as more relevant to the younger cohorts appeared to relate to factors facilitating children's access to formal learning spaces.

Policies and programmes that affect OOSC

Remote data collection for Lebanon is complex; the study could only secure a few documents from a limited number of sources. As a result, further field-level research is required.

Lebanon Case Study Finding 25 Gender-based targeting is not common

None of the efforts reviewed explicitly targeted either gender. This practice counters empirical evidence.

Lebanon Case Study Finding 26 Targeting based on exclusion status is limited

None of the efforts reviewed targeted beneficiaries based on their exclusion status. This finding is counter to the context-relevant and other CAC-relevant data that suggests OOSC are at least at slightly greater risk.

Lebanon Case Study Finding 27 All programmes were in place before COVID-19; at least one has pivoted to address its impact

All of the efforts reviewed were in place before COVID-19. However, in response, UNICEF is giving 100,000 LP[1] to beneficiaries of its Basic Literacy and Numeracy (BLN) activities additional funding to support internet access to facilitate continued access to online learning.[xvi] Furthermore, a large number of (I)NGOs also provided support for internet connectivity and online learning, including Save the Children, which provided recharge cards for all children in their non-formal education programmes.

Lebanon Case Study Finding 27 Programmes target based on impoverishment status

The programmes reviewed included impoverishment status as part of its beneficiary targeting criteria. This practice is sound and evidence-based.

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[1] The equivalent of approximately USD66 at the time of publication.

Lebanon Case Study Finding 17 There is insufficient data to assess the degree of targeting by education cycle

Lebanon Case Study Finding 18 Targeting does not sufficiently consider geographic areas

One of the programmes reviewed targeted rural areas, and the rest did not have a geographic component to their targeting. However, the existing data for Lebanon suggests different experiences of school-age children in other areas. For example, data from 2017[xvii] shows pockets of localised vulnerable populations.

Figure 7 shows the most vulnerable localities in Lebanon in 2017.

Figure 7: Most vulnerable localities in Lebanon, 2017
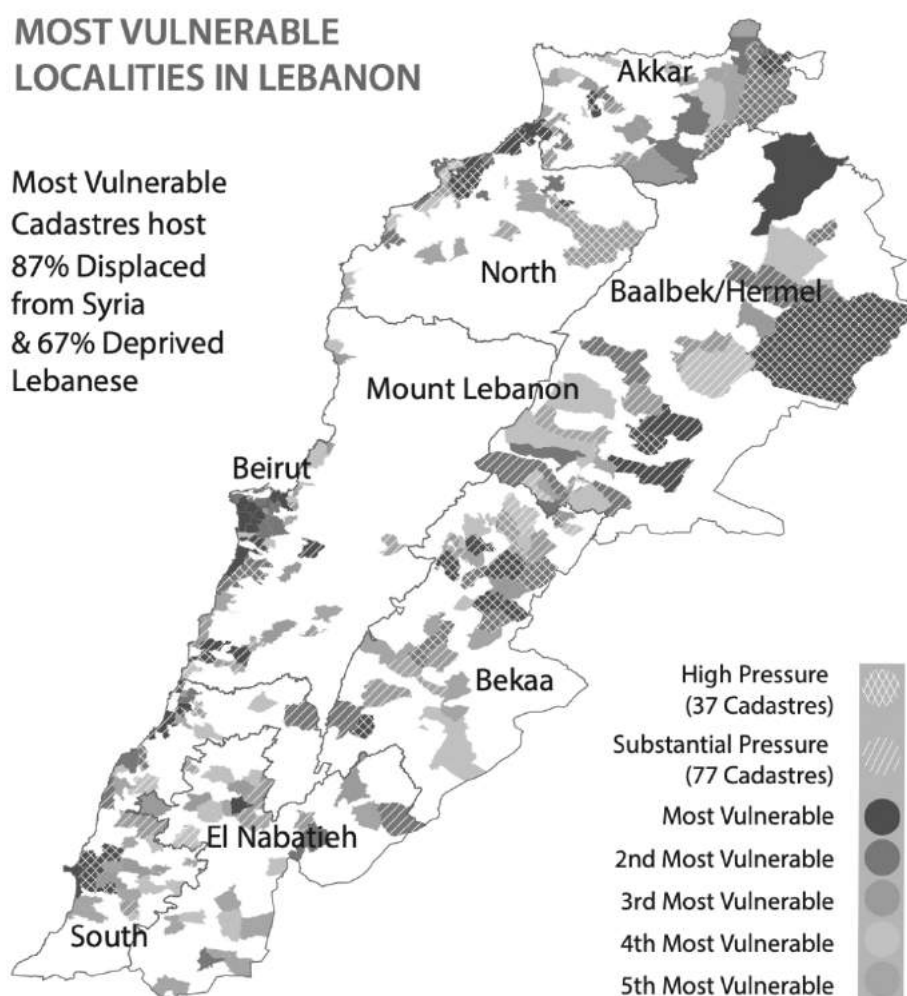
School feeding programmes

WFP introduced the first broad-scale SFP in Lebanon in public schools in 2016 to reach the most vulnerable, specifically Syrian refugees and collocated vulnerable Lebanese students. It currently partners with MEHE, the Ministry of Health, UNICEF, WHO, UNFPA, IOCC, World

Vision International, the Lebanese Red Cross and Crescent, and Tabitha to carry out these programmes. In addition, MEHE has shown a commitment to SFP, establishing a school-based health and nutrition department to support them and other related initiatives.

Conclusions and recommendations

Lebanon Case Study Conclusion Area 1 OOSC figure and trends

Lebanon Case Study Conclusion 1 The available OOSC figures appear in line with the context, but more granular data is needed

Summary While additional data can enhance the profile of the OOSC, the information in place provides a relatively clear idea of the trends.

Lebanon Case Study Recommendation 1 Researchers should source additional, granular data about OOSC figures and cohort profiles

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Priority 2

Affiliated area of inquiry OOSC figures and trends

Recommendation(s) most relevant to

Researchers or Data Scientists

Recommendation(s) also relevant to

Donors

National Governments

(I)NGOs

Global Education Cluster

Examples of most relevant stakeholder(s) UNICEF, USAID, DFID, ECHO, ECW, Save the Children

Action Type Advocacy and Research

Action 1 Advocacy efforts should encourage donors to make funding available for further research. Include as part of other research primary data collection using mixed methods. Researchers should review the experiences of OOSC and CRODO specifically about what factors are more relevant to one cohort than the other, if at all.

Rationale Data validation is needed generally

Lebanon Case Study Conclusion Area 2 Factors that influence children's participation and retention in education

Lebanon Case Study Conclusion 2 The nature and classification of the barriers and motivating factors are in line with the empirical evidence and are context-relevant but can be better nuanced

Summary The interrelation between push and pull factors were again clear for Lebanon, with issues relating to economic barriers and specific aspects of education services clearly defined as barriers and motivating factors. Notably, the tenuousness of CRODO in Lebanon appears to be more significant than in other countries. On the other hand, the barriers facing OOSC are comparatively more relevant to CRODO and in different contexts. This finding appears to result from the various crises confronting school-age children in Lebanon- and the financial crisis especially so.

Lebanon Case Study Recommendation 2 Researchers should secure additional, multi-source data about specific aspects of the barriers

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Priority 2

Affiliated area of inquiry Barriers to and motivating factors supporting (sustained) (re)engagement in education

Recommendation(s) most relevant to

🔍 Researchers or Data Scientists

Recommendation(s) also relevant to

💲 Donors 🏛 National Governments 🤲 (I)NGOs

Examples of most relevant stakeholder(s) UNICEF, USAID, DFID, ECHO, ECW, Save the Children, the IRC, NRC

Action Type Advocacy and Research

Action 2 Ensure that future studies use participatory methods to collect qualitative data about OOSC and CRODO.

Rationale More information is needed from more sources about:
- barriers specific to gender
- the connection between certain barriers (either those surfaced under this study or those newly identified during later studies) and participation and retention
- the degree to which barriers and geographic contexts are correlated

Very little data was available about motivating factors. As such, later studies should collect more information needs and validate the findings from this study.

Lebanon Case Study Conclusion Area 3 Policies and programmes that affect OOSC

Lebanon Case Study Conclusion 3 There are well-defined investment areas that can improve access and quality education to vulnerable populations.

Summary There is a disconnect between MEHE's refugee-specific policy intent and its practical implementation. Some of these issues appear to be within the education sector itself, and others seem to be due to poor collaboration across ministries with refugee-related mandates. There is also a notable degree of specification amongst data sources about the exact nature of supply-side factors that serve as barriers to (sustained) (re)engagement in education

Lebanon Case Study Recommendation 3.1 In the post-COVID stabilisation period, donors and the Lebanese government should establish a "fit-for-purpose" education coordination platform, expand the use of cash transfers, and support teachers as schools reopen.[xviii]

Priority 1

Affiliated area of inquiry Policies and programmes that affect OOSC

Recommendation(s) most relevant to

 researchers or data scientists

Recommendation(s) also relevant to

 Donors   National Governments   (I)NGOs

Examples of most relevant stakeholder(s) UNICEF, USAID, DFID, ECHO, ECW, Save the Children, the IRC, NRC

Action Type Implementation and coordination

Action 2 Establish a "fit-for-purpose coordination platform" amongst all education stakeholders, including children; expand the use of cash mechanisms to reach all in need regardless of nationality; thoughtfully attempt to safely reopen schools, balancing consideration for the impact of ongoing school closures or inaccessibility on all aspects of children's development and well-being, not just the health and safety considerations; and prepare to support teacher's re-engagement.

Rationale The unique needs of OOSC in Lebanon, amongst the varied crises facing the country, warrant a bespoke coordination platform to safely facilitate (sustained) (re)engagement in education. The evidence base supports the use of expanded cash transfer mechanisms as part of (re)enrolment efforts. Teachers are the primary duty bearers in this context and the evidence suggests they need wellbeing support and training to enable them to successfully support students.

Lebanon Case Study Recommendation 3.2 The WFP should assess modifications needed to their Lebanon country programme considering COVID-19 and the multiplier effects of the various crises at play in Lebanon

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Priority 1

Affiliated area of inquiry Policies and programmes that affect OOSC

Recommendation(s) most relevant to

Donors

Recommendation(s) also relevant to

(I)NGOs   National Governments

Action Type Programme strategy

Action 3.2 Review the Lebanon country strategic plan

Rationale A full assessment can identify the implications of school-feeding-related funding constraints and increased food insecurity resulting from the pandemic and the liquidity crises and the changes necessary to school feeding programmes.

Lebanon Case Study Recommendation 3.3 Researchers should source relevant policy data from other ministries with related interests in OOSC and source field-level data on MEHE's policy implementation

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Priority 2

Affiliated area of inquiry Policies and programmes that affect OOSC

Recommendation(s) most relevant to

Researchers or Data Scientists

Recommendation(s) also relevant to

Donors   National Governments

Action Type Research

Action 3.3 Collect more data from more sources to strengthen the understanding of improving efficiencies in reaching OOSC.

Rationale Integrated efforts are more critical now than ever. Traditionally, the Ministry of Education and Higher Education (MEHE) is the leading actor engaged in efforts to address the OOSC issue. Furthermore, additional data is needed from other ministries to see how they support children at risk of being OOS. Field-level data collection can explore any disconnect between policy intent and implementation.

Lebanon Case Study Recommendation 3.4 Researchers should conduct additional analysis using the data collected in later studies to assess the appropriateness of improved programme targeting toward certain vulnerability profiles

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Priority 2

Affiliated area of inquiry Policies and programmes that affect OOSC

Recommendation(s) most relevant to

Researchers or Data Scientists

Recommendation(s) also relevant to

Donors   National Governments   (I)NGOs

Action Type Research

Action 3.3 Researchers should analyse programme effectiveness once field-level data is feasible

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Rationale Studies should assess the following areas to determine the appropriateness of using them as programme targeting criteria in this context.
- gender
- geographic location
- factors unique to participation and retention
- the suitability of cycle-specific targeting

Furthermore, more data is needed about programming activities to inform a clear understanding of OOSC-related efforts.

[i] International Alert. (2015). *Background Paper-November 2015. Better Together: The Impact Of The Schooling System Of Lebanese And Syrian Displaced Pupils On Social Stability*.

[ii] Human Rights Watch. (2016). *Growing Up Without an Education: Barriers to Education for Syrian Refugee Children in Lebanon*.

[iii] Government of Lebanon and the United Nations. (2017). *Lebanon Crisis Response Plan: 2017-202*0.

[iv] UNICEF. (2018). *Lebanon Humanitarian Situation Report: December 2018.*

[v] Smith, C. and Ndeda, N. (2021). *Lebanon Education in Crisis: Raising the Alarm*. Save the Children.

[vi] Government of Lebanon and the United Nations. (2017). *Lebanon Crisis Response Plan: 2017-202*0.

[vii] Yarrow, N. (2016, March 24). *Addressing the education emergency in Lebanon. The World Bank.*

[viii] Government of Lebanon and the United Nations. (2017). *Lebanon Crisis Response Plan: 2017-202*0.

[ix] Smith, C. and Ndeda, N. (2021). *Lebanon Education in Crisis: Raising the Alarm*. Save the Children.

[x] Terre des homes.(2020).*COVID-19 rapid needs assessment in the Palestinian camps of Lebanon.*

[xi] Human Rights Watch. (2016). *Growing Up Without an Education: Barriers to Education for Syrian Refugee Children in Lebanon*.

[xii] Human Rights Watch. (2016). *Growing Up Without an Education: Barriers to Education for Syrian Refugee Children in Lebanon*.

[xiii] Human Rights Watch. (2020). *Impact of Covid-19 on Children's Education in Africa: Submission to The African Committee of Experts on the Rights and Welfare of the Child*. Observer status N0. 025

[xiv] Smith, C. and Ndeda, N. (2021). *Lebanon Education in Crisis: Raising the Alarm*. Save the Children.

[xv] Human Rights Watch. (2016). *Growing Up Without an Education: Barriers to Education for Syrian Refugee Children in Lebanon*.

[xvi] Personal communication, 2021

[xvii] Lebanese Ministry of Education and Higher Education. (2017). *National Policy for Alternative Education Pathways: Meeting the Diverse Learning Needs for the Vulnerable and Marginalized Children and Youth in Lebanon*.

[xviii] Smith, C. and Ndeda, N. (2021). *Lebanon Education in Crisis: Raising the Alarm*. Save the Children.

Desk Study: Main Trends and Analysis on Out of School Children in the Middle East and North Africa Region

2015 - 2020

LIBYA

equitas education

Save the Children

WFP World Food Programme

unicef
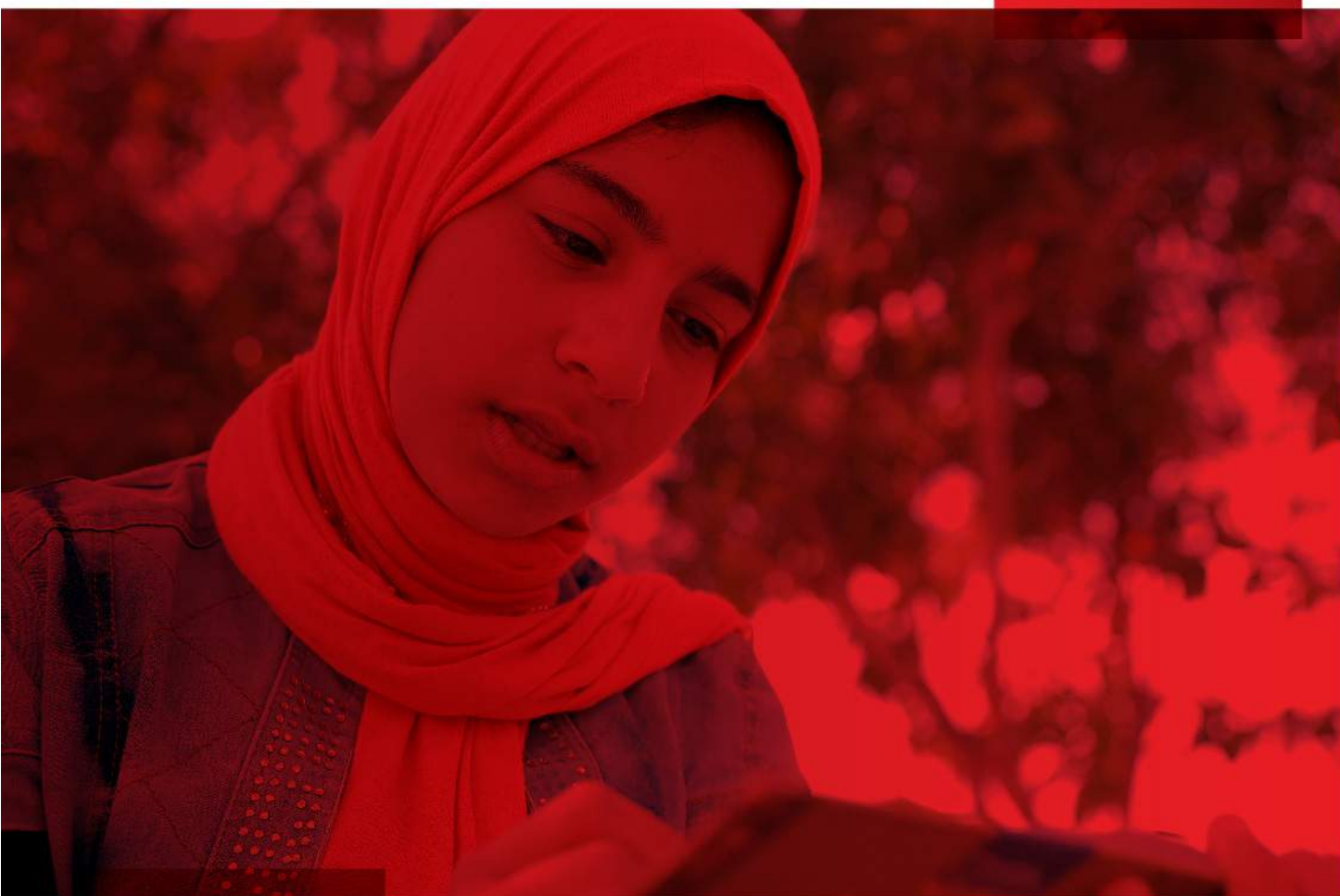
LIBYA COUNTRY CASE STUDY

Desk Study: Main Trends and Analysis on Out of School Children in the Middle East and North Africa Region

While the study intended to source information about OOSC and their experiences specific to both the eastern[1] and western[2] regions of Libya, data available via the desk study provided only cursory detail on the differentiation between the two. As such, later studies will need to focus on field-level data collection to unpack both this top-line information and surface more nuanced information.

Out of School Children Trends

Libya Case Study Finding 1 The OOSC requires field-level verification

Due partly to security and access-related limitations, the data available on the scale of OOSC is likely inaccurate. For example, the most recent Joint Education Needs Assessment (JENA) only had access to the west and south of the country.[i] This point is notable considering that a large percentage of the IDP population is in the east and that schools there have been effectively closed even before COVID-19 due in part to teacher strikes as well as security-related factors. As a result, the conclusions and recommendations section recommends additional, field-level research to validate these figures.

The available data only shows an average of approximately .28 million children out of school across most of the study period. This figure accounts for roughly 16% of the school-age population.

Figure 1 summarises the total OOSC figures by year

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[1] Eastern areas are technically controlled by the Government of National Unity as of March 2021, but are still heavily influenced by the Libyan National Army.
[2] Formally and historically controlled by the IRG of National Unity.

Figure 1: Total OOSC figures, annual trends-Libya (in millions)
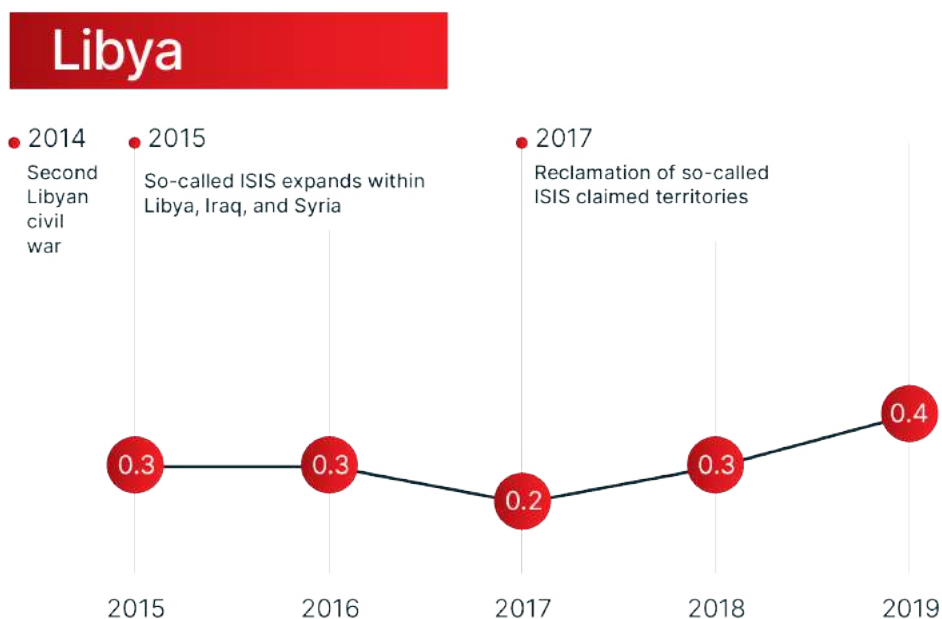
Libya Case Study Finding 2 The majority of OOSC in Libya is at the primary level

The cohort-specific figures appear to be out of line with those in other CAC. Specifically, the primary school figure appears higher than usual (45%), and the pre-primary level appears lower (15%) than normal.

Figure 2 summarises the total OOSC figures by cycle.

Figure 2: Total OOSC cohort figure profiles-Libya
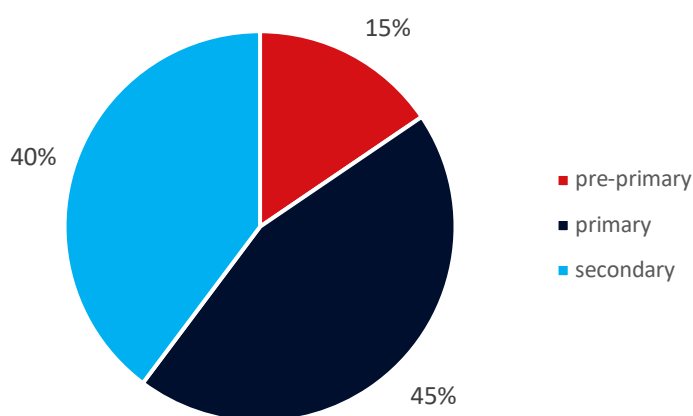
Libya Case Study Finding 3 Slightly more OOSC in Libya are male

The breakdown by gender (49% female and 51% male) appears appropriate. However, field-level validation would be beneficial; the empirical evidence suggests that conflict affects adolescent male participation in education more than female participation.

Figure 3 summarises the total OOSC figures by gender.

Figure 3: Total OOSC figures by gender- Libya
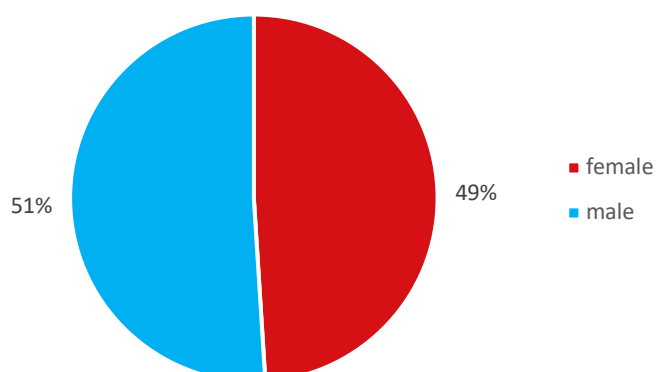
Libya Case Study Finding 4 Most (77%) OOSC in Libya are in urban areas

The majority of the population is now urban, and the percentage of OOSC appears to be as well (77%).

Figure 4 summarises the school-age population of children in Libya by geographic context.

Figure 4: Total OOSC figures by nationality and geographic location-Libya
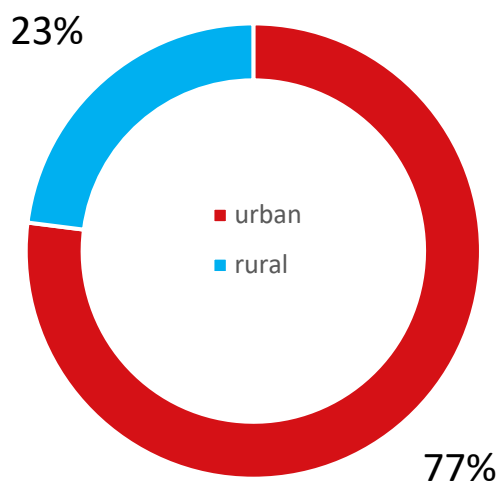
Libya Case Study Finding 5 Most OOSC in Libya are IDPs

A 2017 assessment by REACH of eight areas with high concentrations of IDPs and other vulnerable populations identified 30% of school-aged children OOS (due to not being enrolled).[ii] This finding aligns with the empirical evidence about displaced and other vulnerable people, noting that the average percentage of the school-age population OOS in Libya is 16%.

Factors that influence children's participation and retention in education

Barriers to (sustained) (re)engagement in education

Libya Case Study Finding 6 The study identified eight barriers; all were equally weighted

8 barriers were identified specific to Libya. Considering the lack of sources,[3] they are all listed here, noting that, except conflict, all mentioned barriers had equal weight. Notably, most issues noted below are the same as those in Libya's last primary education sector assessment, the 2019 JENA. However, the JENA didn't include any parts of eastern Libya. The JENA specifically mentioned the costs of educational materials and the household need for children's labour within the point about economic barriers.

1 Conflict
2 COVID-19
3 Economic barriers
4 Family instability or multiple displacements
5 Language barriers
6 School certificates
7 The well-being of the child/family
8 Violence/safety issues

Libya Case Study Finding 7 The study found that most barriers were both demand and supply-side barriers

75% of data sources classified the barriers as being both within the remit of the education sector and outside of it. Examples include conflict, COVID-19, economic barriers, language barriers, school certificates, and violence/safety issues.

25% of data sources classified family instability and child/family well-being as demand-side factors.

However, the data is also mixed regarding the education sector's ability to provide adequate spaces to learn. Before COVID-19, 83% of public schools and 73% of private schools were classified as operational by the IOM.[iii]

Figure 5 shows the operating status of schools in Libya before COVID-19.

Figure 5: Schools' operating status, pre-COVID-19

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[3] Given the limited data availability for Libya, all data points should be validated through in-country/field level data collection.
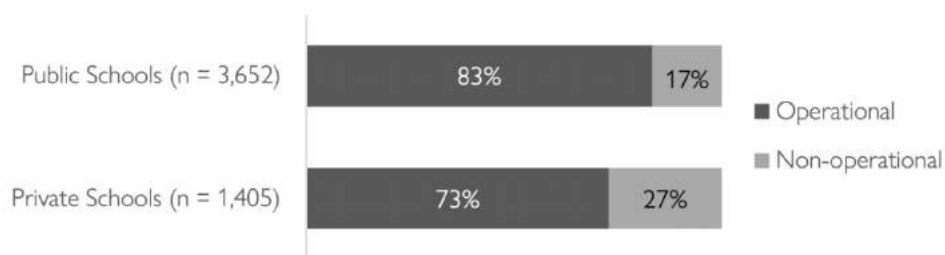
While this data aligns with the data from the Education Cluster's 2019 JENA, which found 88% of schools to be functioning, there are data comparability[4] and quality concerns.[iv] For example, the JENA used indicators such as a school's ability to dispose of waste, the availability of potable water, the availability of soap, and textbooks. None of the schools in the west or south scored above 37% on each of these indicators. [v] However, the JENA only classified 11% of schools in the west as non-functioning and only 1% in the east. [vi] The logic of sub-indicators being rated so low and total functionality placed so high doesn't hold.

Libya Case Study Finding 8 Barriers were as relevant to OOSC as to CRODO

30% of data sources classified the barriers as affecting OOSC and CRODO to the same degree

30% of data sources ranked them as affecting OOSC more than CRODO.

30% of data sources ranked them as affecting CRODO more than OOSC.

Libya Case Study Finding 9 The country's conflict is a significant contributor to barriers

All data sources (100%) said the barriers were related to specific aspects of the country's context. Among the four sub-classifications,[5] most data sources classified the crisis-affected status of Libya (meaning the protracted nature of the conflict) as the primary influence. This finding appears to align with the other data available; such 100% of schools closed in the east in 2019 due to teacher strikes.[vii] The conflict has affected this part of the country more than other parts. However, the closures in the west are also notable. 35% of schools in the west were closed in 2019, and 29% of those schools had been closed since 2015 due to conflict. [viii] Teacher strikes also affected schools in the south. [ix]

From an access perspective, the majority (87%) of households assessed in a Multi-sector Needs Assessment did not face access barriers to education.[x] Of those who did face barriers, most were IDP households and most reported distance, safety, and cost-related barriers as the primary factors. The barriers in eastern Libya are mainly specific to conflict and security issues. These include the use of schools as temporary centres for IDPs, safety concerns getting to and within schools, infrastructure, materials, and human resources constraints,

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[4] The IOM uses a different classification system, making it difficult to compare. Furthermore, the classifications for open and partially open were combined, making it difficult to understand the degree of availability of learning spaces. In 2021, more schools were classified as being open or partially open (84% for public schools and 87% for private schools) than those classified as operational before COVID-19. This finding is counter-intuitive.

[5] Crisis-affected status, nature of crisis, connection to crisis, and other.

and lack of transportation. [xi] However, the conflict also influenced a schools' ability to function. For example, 44% of schools in secure areas struggled to absorb IDPs from insecure regions.[xii] In addition, 25% of schools in the west had to function with double shifts; 5% did so in the south. [xiii]

The majority of data sources (56%) suggested that the geographic context of the country was a factor concerning the barriers. Given how impactful the conflict has been in urban areas, this classification seems to be appropriate.

Libya Case Study Finding 10 Most barriers were unrelated to COVID-19, but it was a dominant influence on barriers in 2020

The primary barriers to accessing learning spaces in 2020 were related to COVID-19: a) concerns about contracting the illness in school spaces (32%); b) school closures (16%); and c) lack access to required personal protective equipment (PPE) (13%). Furthermore, the well-being of the child/family was related to COVID-19.

Figure 6 shows the operating status of schools in Libya in 2020 according to the IOM. [xiv]

Figure 6: Operating status of schools in Libya, 2020
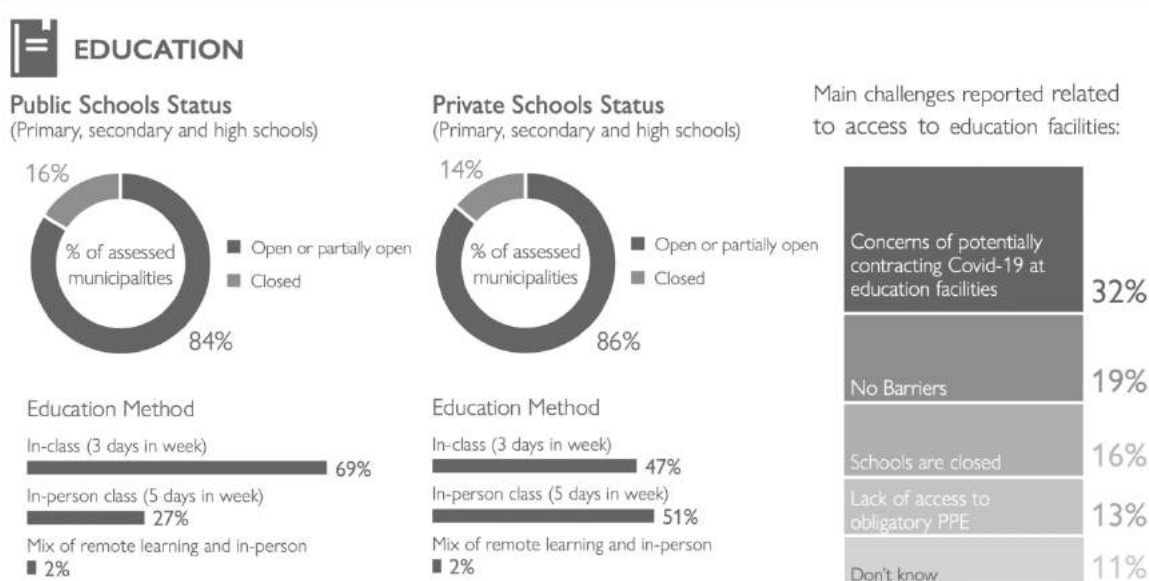
Libya Case Study Finding 11 Most barriers were not correlated with gender

As with the other countries, most data sources did not perceive barriers as being related to a child's gender. Only two classifications were made to the contrary: one for COVID-19 being more impactful on boys, and one for family instability or multiple displacements being more impactful on girls.

Libya Case Study Finding 12 A child's vulnerability status was correlated with barriers

89% of data sources said that the barriers were not specific to other identifying characteristics of a child, but

67% of data sources said that a child's vulnerability status was correlated with the barriers they faced.

UNICEF found most OOSC populations in areas of active conflict, as part of migrant families, or as unaccompanied.[xv] OCHA and Taha found other factors of vulnerability as impactful on a child's OOS status. These include being in hard-to-reach areas, labouring or affiliated with armed groups, having disabilities, being from an ethnic minority, or being an adolescent girl. [xvi] The JENA found that having a disability was a limiting factor for children. While 50% of schools had children with physical disabilities enrolled, and 47% as having children with mental or cognitive disabilities enrolled, only 18% of these schools had the means for providing accessible learning options for them.[xvii]

Libya Case Study Finding 12 Most barriers affected participation and retention equally

89% of data sources classified the barriers as relevant to both participation and retention issues. Language barriers were classified as being more relevant to participation.

Libya Case Study Finding 15 Barriers don't appear to be particularly relevant to any specific education cycles

75% of data sources classified the barriers as particular to an education cycle, but which ones and why are unclear.

Motivating factors supporting (sustained) (re)engagement in education

Libya Case Study Finding 16 The study identified five motivating factors: accelerated education programmes, increased availability of learning spaces, parents with sufficient income, safe access to schools, and the provision of school meals.

Five motivating factors were identified, all equally weighted. However, again noting the lack of data sources, the study cannot confidently make context-specific conclusions.

1. Accelerated education programmes
2. Increased availability of learning spaces
3. Parents with sufficient income
4. Safe access to schools
5. School meals

Libya Case Study Finding 17 Most motivating factors were supply-side

All motivating factors, except for parents with sufficient income, were within the remit of the education sector.

Libya Case Study Finding 18 Motivating factors impacted CRODO most

67% of data sources ranked the motivating factors as more relevant to CRODO.

Libya Case Study Finding 19 All motivating factors were classified as relevant to specific aspects of the country context

This finding highlights the impact of the conflict on the education sector and its ability to engage OOSC

Libya Case Study Finding 20 Data sources did not classify motivating factors as specific to geographic contexts

67% of data sources did not see a connection between motivating factors and specific geographic areas. This classification counters the data about the barriers and the responses regarding the motivating factors and particular aspects of the country context; it is also counterintuitive.

Libya Case Study Finding 21 Most motivating factors were not related to COVID-19

COVID-19-specific safe access to schools was the only pandemic-specific motivating factor.

Libya Case Study Finding 22 Motivating factors, gender, identifying and vulnerability characteristics were not correlated

None of the motivating factors was classified as relevant to a child's gender, nor were any of them identified as appropriate to a child's identifying characteristics. Only one data source believed a connection between the motivating factors and a child's vulnerability characteristics. This point seems counterintuitive.

Libya Case Study Finding 23 All motivating factors affected participation and retention equally

All motivating factors were connected to both participation and retention.

Libya Case Study Finding 24 Most motivating factors were most relevant to all but the upper secondary cycle

60% of data sources classified the motivating factors as being connected to specific education cycles. Of these, 57% of data sources identified them as being most pertinent to primary education. Lower secondary followed, and then pre-primary.

40% of data sources classified the motivating factors as affecting all education cycles.

Policies and programmes that affect OOSC

It was challenging to secure data from government officials to inform an assessment of the policy landscape. Field-based data collection is required. Programme data was more accessible to source.

2017

UNICEF was characterised as the leading education sector actor in Libya in 2017.[xviii] UNICEF identified the following stakeholders as active in the education cluster working group:

Government: MOE and Ministry of Planning

UN Agencies: UNDP (under the stabilisation fund) & World Bank (Assessment).

Donors: German Government; European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations (ECHO); US Office of Foreign Disaster Assistance (OFDA); Department for International Development (DFID), UK; European Union (EU); and Government of Sweden.

(I)NGOs: Boy Scouts and Girls Guides of Libya, Breezes Organization for Sustainable Development in Libya, British Council, Education Development Trust, Ekraa Assembly for Education and Development, Libyan Association for Youth and Development, and STACO.

The challenges facing education sector actors related primarily to insecurity and related coordination and access challenges. Specifically, various armed actors and their supporters or affiliates negatively affected education. Furthermore, working through bureaucratic processes was challenging, and limited civil society capacity exists to support implementation. [xix] The 2017 funding shortfall for the education sector was 42%, which is relatively common for even level 3 (L3) responses. [xx]

2018

The education component of the 2018 Humanitarian Response Programme targeted slightly less than 50% of the identified children in need figures for the year (300,000 children). However, it focused on a fairly standard package of services - namely, access to quality education for the most vulnerable, along with psychosocial support services and materials. Notably, it did include capacity building for education staff.

Small-scale efforts to improve the connection between schools and learner households have been piloted, which, while laudable, have notably limited reach. For example, the School Connect Application (App) was launched as Panda in Libya in 2018 with support from the European Union, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and Tatweer Research.[xxi] Initially, it provided teachers and parents/caregivers to communicate about children's academic and behavioural progress. [xxii]

UNICEF funded local partners to increase access to quality emergency education through non-formal and formal education support and established mobile classes in conflict-affected areas. They also funded education partners to provide psychosocial support and preschool, education classes.[xxiii]

2019

The WFP supported an SFP targeting 60 schools in four areas in cooperation with the MOE.[xxiv]

UNICEF and the MOE partnered to deliver a back-to-school campaign, reaching 40,000 students with learning and recreation materials.[xxv] This effort complemented their ongoing teacher training efforts and planned to support remedial education for children affected by conflict. [xxvi]

2020

UNICEF continued funding non-formal education, psychosocial support and preschool education classes.[xxvii]

UNICEF and UNHCR supported the MOE to draft a blueprint programme to provide documents for refugee children to enrol in formal education targeting.[xxviii]

ECW allocated USD750,000 to the education programme initiated by UNICEF to respond to emergencies to support 9,000 girls and boys affected by the ongoing crisis in Libya, which the COVID-19 pandemic has exacerbated.[xxix]

With support from UNICEF, the MOE distributed hardware (such as computers and tablets) to support the transition of 1.3 million students to online learning due to COVID-19 related school closures.[xxx] The MOE also launched the Android version of the free Let's Learn mobile app to provide students with access to online learning videos and stimuli. [xxxi] Google Play shows 221 reviews of the application and a 2.5-star rating out of 5.[xxxii] Plans are in place to release an iOS version. [xxxiii]

The Panda application launched in 2018 was expanded after COVID-19 to distribute educational content to learner households. However, its reach remains limited to 10,000 students and parents/caregivers across 30 schools. [xxxiv]

Libya Case Study Finding 25 Gender-based targeting is not common

None of the efforts reviewed explicitly targeted either gender. This practice counters empirical evidence.

Libya Case Study Finding 26 Programmes either don't explicitly target children based on exclusion status or target CRODO

Half of the programmes reviewed, funded mainly by UNICEF, explicitly targeted CRODO. The others did not clearly define the targets. This point is relevant, noting that OOSC is more vulnerable than CRODO.

Libya Case Study Finding 27 Programmes did not appear to pivot to address COVID-19 needs

The larger-scale efforts crossed the COVID-19 pandemic timeframe. Available data suggest that these efforts were not modified to respond to the changing contexts or challenges.

Libya Case Study Finding 27 Programmes target based on impoverishment status

The programmes reviewed included impoverishment status as part of its beneficiary targeting criteria. This practice is sound and evidence-based.

Libya Case Study Finding 28 Programmes target the primary level

The programmes targeted the primary cycle, which is expected since it is a compulsory level.

Libya Case Study Finding 29 Targeting does not sufficiently consider geographic areas

Geographic targeting did not appear strategic. This finding is disappointing, considering the unique needs of OOSC based on where they are located. The study found that children in urban areas of Libya were particularly needy.

School feeding programmes

The 2019 JENA identified 32% of schools as having school feeding programmes.[xxxv] In July of 2019, WFP started a school feeding programme in Libya in partnership with the MOE. It characterised 219 schools as destroyed or damaged and requiring rehabilitation of both classrooms and WASH facilities. Other challenges facing school-aged children included overcrowded classrooms and the occupation of schools by IDPs using them as temporary shelters. Like other countries, WFP planned before COVID-19 to hand over the school feeding programme to the government.

Conclusions and recommendations

Libya Case Study Conclusion Area 1 OOSC figure and trends

Libya Case Study Conclusion 1 The available OOSC figures appear to be inaccurate and inconsistent

Summary The OOSC figures do not cover the eastern areas of Libya, which are those most affected by the conflict.

Libya Case Study Recommendation 1 Researchers should source additional, granular data about OOSC figures and cohort profiles

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Priority 2

Affiliated area of inquiry OOSC figures and trends

Recommendation(s) most relevant to

Researchers or Data Scientists

Recommendation(s) also relevant to

Donors   National Governments   (I)NGOs   Global Education Cluster

Examples of most relevant stakeholder(s) UNICEF, USAID, DFID, ECHO, ECW, Save the Children

Action Type Advocacy and Research

Action 1 Advocacy efforts should encourage donors to make funding available for further research. Source additional field-level data for eastern Libya and validate the OOSC numbers across other areas.

Rationale Data validation is needed generally.

Libya Case Study Conclusion Area 2 Factors that influence children's participation and retention in education

Libya Case Study Conclusion 2 The nature and classification of the barriers and motivating factors are in line with the empirical evidence and are context-relevant but can be better nuanced

Summary Libya's crisis-affected status, compounded with issues resulting from COVID-19, foster a sector rife with barriers.

Libya Case Study Recommendation 2 Researchers should secure additional, multi-source data about specific aspects of the barriers

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Priority 2

Affiliated area of inquiry Barriers to and motivating factors supporting (sustained) (re)engagement in education

Recommendation(s) most relevant to

 Researchers or Data Scientists

Recommendation(s) most relevant to

 Donors   National Governments   (I)NGOs   Global Education Cluster

Examples of most relevant stakeholder(s) UNICEF, USAID, DFID, ECHO, ECW, Save the Children, the IRC, NRC

Action Type Advocacy and Research

Action 2 Advocacy efforts should encourage donors to make funding available for further research—source additional, multi-source data about specific aspects of the barriers.

Rationale More information is needed from more sources about:
- barriers specific to gender
- barriers specific to education cycles
- the degree to which barriers and child's exclusion or at-risk status are correlated
- the degree to which barriers and particular aspects of country context are correlated
- the degree to which barriers and gender are correlated

Libya Case Study Conclusion Area 3 Policies and programmes that affect OOSC
Libya Case Study Conclusion 3 Policy and more programming data are needed from multiple sources.

Summary Sufficient and timely data were not available upon which to make sound analysis that included the most vulnerable populations in Libya.

Libya Case Study Recommendation 3.1 The WFP should assess modifications needed to their Libya country programme regarding COVID-19 and the multiplier effects of the various crises at play in Libya

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Priority 1

Affiliated area of inquiry Policies and programmes that affect OOSC

Recommendation(s) most relevant to

 Donors

Recommendation(s) most relevant to

 National Governments   (I)NGOs   Global Education Cluster

Examples of most relevant stakeholder(s) The WFP

Action Type Programme strategy

Action 3.1 Review the Libya country strategic plan

Rationale A full assessment can identify the implications of school-feeding-related funding constraints and increased food insecurity resulting from the pandemic and the liquidity crises and the changes necessary to school feeding programmes.

Libya Case Study Recommendation 3.2 Researchers should source relevant policy data from the MOE and other ministries. They should also source more programme information.

Priority 2

Affiliated area of inquiry Policies and programmes that affect OOSC

Recommendation(s) most relevant to

Researchers or Data Scientists

Recommendation(s) most relevant to

Donors | National Governments | (I)NGOs | Global Education Cluster

Examples of most relevant stakeholder(s) Save the Children

Action Type Research

Action 3.2 Undertake field-level data collection

Rationale Field-level data collection is needed to understand the impact of policies and programmes implementation. Furthermore, more data is required about programming activities to inform a clear understanding of OOSC-related efforts.

Libya Case Study Recommendation 3.3 Researchers should undertake additional analysis using the data collected in later studies to assess the appropriateness of improved programme targeting toward certain vulnerability profiles

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Priority 2

Affiliated area of inquiry Policies and programmes that affect OOSC

Recommendation(s) most relevant to

Researchers or Data Scientists

Recommendation(s) most relevant to

Donors | National Governments | (I)NGOs | Global Education Cluster

Examples of most relevant stakeholder(s) UNICEF, USAID, DFID, ECHO, ECW, Save the Children, the IRC, NRC

Action Type Research

Action 3.3 Researchers should analyse programme effectiveness once field-level data is feasible

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Rationale Later studies should assess the following areas to determine the appropriateness of using them as programme targeting criteria in this context: gender, geographic location, factors unique to participation and retention, and the suitability of cycle-specific targeting.

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iii International Organisation for Migration. (2021d). *Libya IDP And Returnee Report Round 35. January - February 2021.*

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vi Libya Education Sector. (2019). *Libya Joint Education Needs Assessment: Report December 2019*

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xix Carter, B. (2018, September 11). *Helpdesk Report: Girls' educational needs in Libya. The Knowledge, Evidence and Learning for Development Programme*. Institute of Development Studies.

xx Carter, B. (2018, September 11). *Helpdesk Report: Girls' educational needs in Libya. The Knowledge, Evidence and Learning for Development Programme*. Institute of Development Studies.

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xxii Riggins, S. (2021, April 12). *How Education in Libya is Boosted Through Mobile App*s. Borgen Magazine.

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xxiv World Food Programme. (2020, January 24). *Millions of children in Middle East and North Africa are missing out on education*, UNESCO and World Food Programme say.

xxv Riggins, S. (2021, April 12). *How Education in Libya is Boosted Through Mobile App*s. Borgen Magazine.

xxvi Riggins, S. (2021, April 12). *How Education in Libya is Boosted Through Mobile App*s. Borgen Magazine.

xxvii UNICEF. (2020c). *Libya Humanitarian Situation Report*. Libya.

xxviii UNICEF. (2020, January 6). Fighting in and around Tripoli shuts 210 schools, depriving over 115,000 children of their education.

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xxxi Riggins, S. (2021, April 12). *How Education in Libya is Boosted Through Mobile App*s. Borgen Magazine.

xxxii https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=com.eduly.lets_learn&hl=en_US&gl=US

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Desk Study: Main Trends and Analysis on Out of School Children in the Middle East and North Africa Region

2015 - 2020

COUNTRY CASE STUDY

PALESTINE*

equitas education   Save the Children   World Food Programme   unicef

The commissioning agencies use the term Palestine for the purpose of this study, recognising that different nomenclatures exist.

PALESTINE[1] COUNTRY CASE STUDY
Desk Study: Main Trends and Analysis on Out of School Children in the Middle East and North Africa Region

While the study intended to source information about OOSC and their experiences specific to the West Bank and Gaza,[2] data available via the desk study provided only cursory detail on the differentiation between the two. As such, later studies will need to focus on field-level data collection to unpack both this top-line information and surface more nuanced information.

Out of School Children Trends
Palestine Case Study Finding 1 The OOSC requires field-level verification

23% The available data shows that approximately 23% of the school-age population was out of school in 2015-2019, with total OOSC figures increasing from 0.35 to 0.38 million children over this time. Most sources (namely UNICEF sitreps, UNICEF country reports, and the UIS dataset) include very little pre-primary OOSC. Furthermore, it was challenging to cross-check and validate these estimates due to data sourcing constraints. In particular, few sources offered reliable data on the pre-primary cohort for the established timeframe.

Figure 1 summarises the total OOSC figures by year

Figure 1: Total OOSC figures, annual trends-Palestine (in millions)

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[1] The commissioning agencies use the term Palestine for the purpose of this study, recognising that different nomenclatures exist.

[2] The Oslo II Accord divided the West Bank into three administrative divisions – Areas A, B and C – which are each governed differently. Area A is exclusively administered by the Palestinian Authority; Area B is administered by both the Palestinian Authority and Israel; and Area C (which makes up 60% of the West Bank) is administered by Israel and contains Israeli settlements.

Palestine
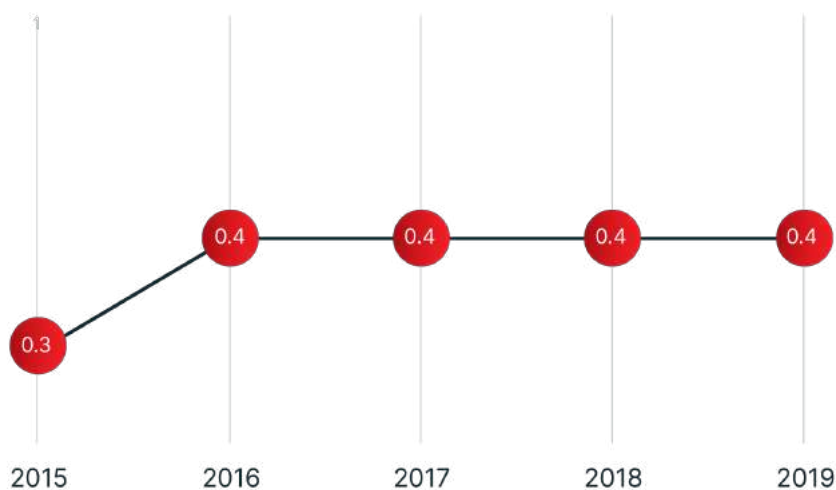
Palestine Case Study Finding 2 The majority of OOSC in Palestine is at the secondary level

Despite the data reliability concerns stated above, the distribution of OOSC amongst the three pre-tertiary cycles is as expected for the context, which has traditionally had a strong focus on primary education.

49% of secondary school-age children are OOS

47% of pre-primary school-age children are OOS

4% of primary school-age children are OOS

Figure 2 summarises the total OOSC figures by cycle

Figure 2: Total OOSC cohort figure profiles-Palestine
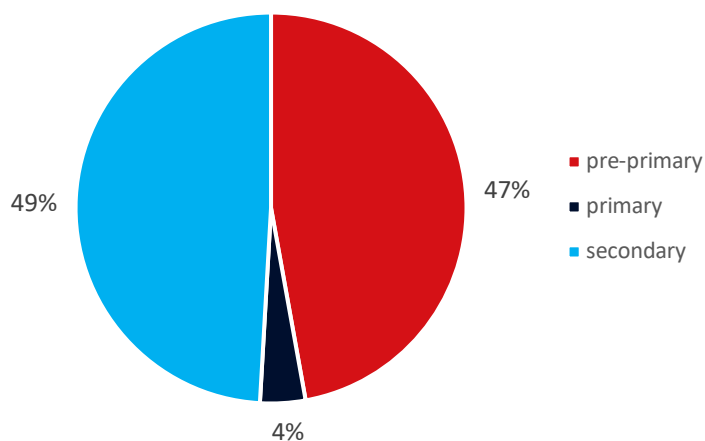
Palestine Case Study Finding 3 Most OOSC in Palestine are male
The breakdown of the OOSC figures shows a notable imbalance across the gender divide.

72% of OOSC are male

28% of OOSC are female

These results might be affected by the scarcity of reliable gender-disaggregated data for pre-primary cohorts. However, the broader literature documents well the prevalence of male OOSC in the Palestinian context. Moreover, this finding is prevalent at the secondary level.

Figure 3 summarises the total OOSC figures by gender
Figure 3: Total OOSC figures by gender- Palestine
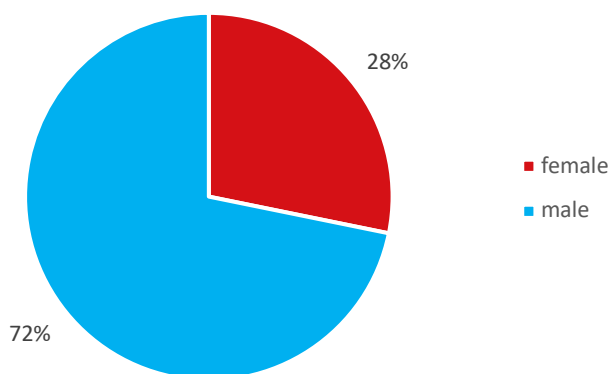
Palestine Case Study Finding 4 Most OOSC in Palestine are in urban areas

73% the majority of the OOSC population appears to be urban

20% of OOSC are in rural areas

7% of OOSC are in camp settings

This finding aligns with global trends.

Figure 4 summarises OOSC in Palestine by geographic context
Figure 4: Total OOSC figures by nationality and geographic location- Palestine
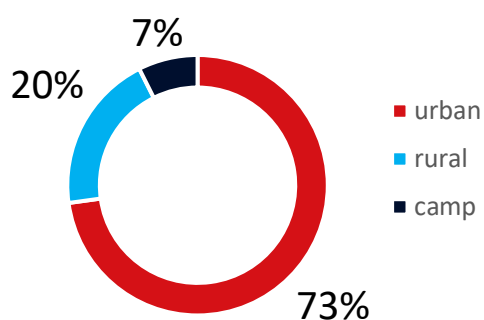
Factors that influence children's participation and retention in education

Barriers to (sustained) (re)engagement in education

Palestine Case Study Finding 5 The study identified six barriers; 1) economic barriers; 2) quality of education; 3) the well-being of the child/family; 4) administrative policies/practices; 5) violence/safety issues; and 6) COVID-19.

6 barriers were identified specific to Palestine. Considering the lack of sources, they are all listed here, noting that all mentioned barriers had equal weight except for economic barriers and quality of education.

1. Economic barriers
2. Quality of education
3. The well-being of the child/family
4. Administrative policies/practices
5. Violence/safety issues
6. COVID-19

Palestine Case Study Finding 6 The study found that most barriers were either supply side, or both demand and supply-side

36% of data sources classified the barriers as supply-side factors, such as quality of education and administrative policies/practices.

36% of data sources classified the barriers as both demand and supply-side factors (economic barriers, COVID-19 and violence/safety issues). In this sense, COVID-19 is an external shock to the education system that has affected the schools' ability to provide education and the community's attitude towards attendance to school. A small number of barriers were classified as demand-side factors (such as economic barriers connected to poverty and the well-being of the child/family).

Palestine Case Study Finding 7 Barriers affected CRODO more than OOSC

56% of data sources classified the barriers as involving CRODO more than OOSC, related to violence, quality of education, administrative policies and most economic barriers.

27% of data sources ranked the barriers as affecting OOSC more than CRODO, including the COVID-19 pandemic.

18% of data sources ranked the barriers as affecting CRODO and OOSC equally.

As such, it appears that, despite advances bringing children to school in Palestine (particularly at the primary level), the situation of CRODO and the challenges they face remain a concern.

Palestine Case Study Finding 8 The country's context is a significant contributor to barriers

64% of data sources believed that the barriers were relevant to the nature of the country's CAC status. These included particularly high-risk and vulnerable areas, such as Israeli-controlled Area C. This point was confirmed by KI, as children in high-risk areas face more challenges accessing schools.

Palestine Case Study Finding 9 Most barriers were not connected to geographic contexts

91% of data sources believed the barriers and specific geographic contexts of the country (such as urban or rural areas or camps) were not correlated.

Palestine Case Study Finding 10 Most barriers were unrelated to COVID-19, but it was a dominant influence on barriers in 2021

The same barriers that prevented children before the beginning of the global health crisis remained relevant after its outbreak. Quality of education and economic barriers are notable barriers. The well-being of children and families was classified as connected to COVID-19. This finding might point to the psychological effect of school closures on children. It might also mean the reduced well-being of the families due to the pandemic, which might cause them to resort to child labour for income.

Palestine Case Study Finding 11 Most barriers are correlated with gender, affecting boys disproportionately

55% of data sources identified a correlation between walls and a child's gender. Boys were disproportionately affected by specific economic barriers, violence/safety issues, and the quality of education. The impact was most significant for (upper) secondary school age boys. In essence the value of the secondary level education was lower than the value of income earning opportunities in place of that education. This has historically been especially true for boys in East Jerusalem with access to income earning opportunities in West Jerusalem. These factors were also classified as most relevant in high risk and vulnerable areas by KI, as the Israeli forces target boys in these areas.

Palestine Case Study Finding 12 A child's vulnerability status was correlated with barriers

89% of data sources said that the barriers were not specific to other identifying characteristics of a child, but

67% of data sources said that a child's vulnerability status was correlated with the barriers they faced.

Palestine Case Study Finding 13 Most barriers affected participation and retention equally

82% of data sources classified barriers as similarly connected to participation and retention issues.

18% of data sources considered economic barriers and quality of education as mainly related to retention. These results align with the nature of exclusion previously classified, as they seemed to affect CRODO primarily.

Palestine Case Study Finding 14 Barriers don't appear to be particularly relevant to any specific education cycles

37% of data sources classified the barriers as particularly applicable to primary and lower secondary education

27% of data sources ranked the barriers as appropriate at all cycles

27% of data sources organised the barriers as particularly as relevant to both lower and upper secondary education

9% of data sources classified the barriers as particularly appropriate to the primary education cycle

Motivating factors supporting (sustained) (re)engagement in education

Palestine Case Study Finding 15 The study identified five motivating factors: quality of education and preventative support services in schools had the most significant weight.

Five motivating factors were identified, all equally weighted. The top factors were as follows, with all motivating factors from school meals and below (3a-d) equally ranked:

1 Quality education
2 Preventive support services in school
3 School meals, increased availability of learning spaces, and safe access to schools

Palestine Case Study Finding 16 All motivating factors were supply-side

All factors were classified as related to the supply-side, putting the onus on the education sector to provide the services that would foster demand amongst household decision-makers.

Palestine Case Study Finding 17 Motivating factors impacted CRODO most

37% of motivating factors were predominantly related to the situation of CRODO

37% of motivating factors were classified as affecting OOSC and CRODO equally

Palestine Case Study Finding 18 Most motivating factors were not relevant to either specific aspects of the country context or specific geographic contexts

75% of motivating factors were not perceived to apply to particular parts of the country or geographic contexts. This result is surprising, considering that several of the identified barriers seemed to depend on the country context, particularly those present in high-risk areas. Only one factor (safe access to school) was connected to the nature of the country context, specifically the area of control and nature of the crisis.

Palestine Case Study Finding 19 Most motivating factors were not related to COVID-19

63% of data sources classified motivating factors as not being connected to COVID-19.

Palestine Case Study Finding 20 Most motivating factors and gender were not correlated

Only one of the motivating factors was classified as being related to a child's gender; the pull factor of quality education, especially at secondary levels, for boys. This finding aligns with the empirical evidence on the experience of adolescent boys in Palestine, and particularly in East Jerusalem. In such circumstances, the pull factor of income earning opportunities in West Jerusalem for adolescent boys in East Jerusalem has been stronger than the pull of secondary education.

Palestine Case Study Finding 21 Most motivating factors affected participation and retention equally

50% of data sources classified the motivating factors as relevant to both participation and retention issues.

25% of the data sources ranked the barriers (including school meals and quality education) as specific to retention issues. Safe access to school was the only factor considered as relevant exclusively to children's participation in school, with particular regarding areas affected by the conflict. This finding could be attributed to children's difficulties accessing their schools in high-risk areas.

Palestine Case Study Finding 22 Most motivating factors were relevant to all cycles

63% of data sources classified motivating factors as appropriate to different education cycles, including pre-primary, primary and secondary processes. These factors mainly encompassed the quality of education, safe access to school, and education services through additional learning spaces and preventive support services. Data sources considered school meals as mainly relevant to the primary education cycle, while inclusive education was particularly relevant to the secondary education cycle.

Policies and programmes that affect OOSC

It was challenging to secure data from government officials to inform an assessment of the policy landscape. Field-based data collection is required. Programme data was more accessible to source.

Palestine Case Study Finding 23 Supply side programming is most common in Palestine and focuses on NFE.

2015

The WFP provided nutritious school meals in the morning shift to 150,000 students in the West Bank and the education sector to improve inclusive education in schools.

2018

UNICEF funded catch up and remedial education.[i]

2019

UNICEF funded a remedial education programme in Gaza targeting children at substantial risk of dropping out of school, including supporting them to catch up with their peers. [ii]

UNICEF funded a remedial education programme for improved literacy and numeracy. [iii]

2020

UNICEF facilitated a remedial programme to enable children to improve their basic skills in numeracy and literacy to mitigate learning loss during school closures. [iv]

For 2016-2020 multiple donors in cooperation with the MEHE and the Ministry of Labour worked on a strategy and related programmes to facilitate OOSC entering and transitioning through the formal sector.

Palestine Case Study Finding 24 Gender-based targeting is not common
None of the efforts reviewed explicitly targeted either gender. This practice counters empirical evidence.

Palestine Case Study Finding 25 Programmes either don't explicitly target children based on exclusion status or target CRODO
All of the programmes funded by UNICEF explicitly targeted CRODO. The others did not clearly define the targets. This point is relevant, noting that OOSC is more vulnerable than CRODO.

Palestine Case Study Finding 26 Programmes did not appear to pivot to address COVID-19 needs
Most programmes were in place before the COVID-19 pandemic timeframe. Available data suggest that these efforts were not modified to respond to the changing contexts or challenges.

Palestine Case Study Finding 27 Programmes target based on impoverishment status
The programmes reviewed included impoverishment status as part of its beneficiary targeting criteria. This practice is sound and evidence-based.

Palestine Case Study Finding 28 Programmes target the primary level
The programmes targeted the primary cycle, which is expected since it is a compulsory level.

Palestine Case Study Finding 29 Targeting does not sufficiently consider geographic areas
Geographic targeting did not appear to be refined, which is again disappointing, considering the unique needs of OOSC in the West Bank compared to those in Gaza.

School feeding programmes

The WFP, in cooperation with MEHE, supported retention through school meals in the morning shift in the West Bank and Gaza in 2015. It also contributed to the five-year plan to strengthen the national school health strategy.

Conclusions and recommendations

Palestine Case Study Conclusion Area 1 OOSC figure and trends

Palestine Case Study Conclusion 1 The available OOSC figures appear in line with the context, but more granular data is needed

Summary While additional data can enhance the profile of the OOSC, the information in place provides inadequate information on trends related to pre-primary and impact of the pandemic on OOSC.

Palestine Case Study Recommendation 1 Researchers should source additional, granular data about OOSC figures and cohort profiles during COVID-19

Priority 2

Affiliated area of inquiry OOSC figures and trends

Recommendation(s) most relevant to

 Researchers or Data Scientists

Recommendation(s) also relevant to

 Donors   National Governments   (I)NGOs   Global Education Cluster

Examples of most relevant stakeholder(s) UNICEF, USAID, DFID, ECHO, ECW, Save the Children

Action Type Advocacy and Research

Action 1 Advocacy efforts should encourage donors to make funding available for further research. Source additional field-level data for the eastern Palestine and validate the OOSC numbers across other areas.

Rationale A broader range of data is needed and all existing data collected under this phase must be re-assessed in terms of pre-primary, gender and impact of COVID-19 on OOSC.

Palestine Case Study Conclusion Area 2 Factors that influence children's participation and retention in education

Palestine Case Study Conclusion 2 The nature and classification of the barriers and motivating factors are in line with the empirical evidence and are context-relevant but can be better nuanced

Summary The interrelation between the barriers and motivating factors was clear for SOP, except for issues related to the impact of COVID-19. Notably, the tenuousness of CRODO appears to be significant, as in other CAC. This challenge seems to result from the difficulties facing school-age children, particularly adolescent boys, to reach schools due to military checkpoints and restrictions on movement.

Palestine Case Study Recommendation 2 Researchers should secure additional, multi-source data about specific aspects of the barriers

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Priority 2

Affiliated area of inquiry Barriers to and motivating factors supporting (sustained) (re)engagement in education

Recommendation(s) most relevant to

Researchers or Data Scientists

Recommendation(s) also relevant to

Donors | National Governments | (I)NGOs | Global Education Cluster

Examples of most relevant stakeholder(s) UNICEF, USAID, DFID, ECHO, ECW, Save the Children, the IRC, NRC

Action Type Advocacy and Research

Action 2 Advocacy efforts should encourage donors to make funding available for further research—source additional, multi-source data about specific aspects of the barriers.

Rationale More information is needed from more sources about:

- barriers specific to gender
- the degree to which certain barriers are participation- or retention-specific
- the degree to which barriers and geographic contexts are correlated
- barriers specific to child's exclusion or at-risk status
- barriers specific to COVID-19

Palestine Case Study Conclusion Area 3 Policies and programmes that affect OOSC

Palestine Case Study Conclusion 3 Policy and more programming data is needed from multiple sources.

Summary Sufficient and timely data were not available to make a sound analysis that included the most vulnerable populations in the Palestine.

Palestine Case Study Recommendation 3.1 The WFP should assess the capacity of the national authorities in light of COVID-19 and provide appropriate technical support to strengthen the capacity of MEHE

Priority 1

Affiliated area of inquiry Policies and programmes that affect OOSC

Recommendation(s) most relevant to

Donors

Recommendation(s) most relevant to

National Governments | Researchers or Data Scientists | (I)NGOs | Global Education Cluster

Examples of most relevant stakeholder(s) The WFP

Action Type Programme strategy

Action 3.1 Review school feeding needs and MEHE capacity to address them, specifically in light of the impact of COVID-19.

Rationale A full assessment can identify the implications of school-feeding-related funding constraints and increased food insecurity resulting from the pandemic and the liquidity crises and the changes necessary to school feeding programmes.

Palestine Case Study Recommendation 3.2 Researchers should source relevant policy data from the MEHE and other ministries, and more programme information.

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Priority 2

Affiliated area of inquiry Policies and programmes that affect OOSC

Recommendation(s) most relevant to

[Researchers or Data Scientists]

Recommendation(s) also relevant to

[Donors] [National Governments] [(I)NGOs] [Global Education Cluster]

Examples of most relevant stakeholder(s) UNICEF, USAID, DFID, ECHO, ECW, Save the Children

Action Type Research

Action 3.2 Undertake field-level data collection

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Rationale Field-level data collection is needed to understand the impact of policies and programmes implementation. Furthermore, more data is required about programming activities to inform a clear understanding of OOSC-related efforts.

Palestine Case Study Recommendation 3.3 Researchers should undertake additional analysis using the data collected in later studies to assess the appropriateness of improved programme targeting toward certain vulnerability profiles

<div style="border:1px solid">

Priority 2

Affiliated area of inquiry Policies and programmes that affect OOSC

Recommendation(s) most relevant to

[Researchers or Data Scientists]

Recommendation(s) most relevant to

[Donors] [National Governments] [(I)NGOs] [Global Education Cluster]

Examples of most relevant stakeholder(s) UNICEF, USAID, DFID, ECHO, ECW, Save the Children, the IRC

Action Type Research

Action 3.3 Researchers should analyse programme effectiveness once field-level data is feasible

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Rationale Later studies should assess the following areas to determine the appropriateness of using them as programme targeting criteria in this context: a) gender; b) geographic location; c) factors unique to participation and retention; and d) the suitability of cycle-specific   targeting.

i UNICEF. (2018f). *State of Palestine Humanitarian Situation Report: December 2018.*
ii UNICEF (2019c). *State of Palestine Humanitarian Situation Report: March 2019.*
iii UNICEF. (2019e). *State of Palestine Humanitarian Situation Report: November 2019.*
iv UNICEF. (2020b). *State of Palestine Humanitarian Situation Report: December 2020.*

Desk Study: Main Trends and Analysis on Out of School Children in the Middle East and North Africa Region

2015 - 2020

COUNTRY CASE STUDY

TURKEY

equitas education   Save the Children   WFP World Food Programme   unicef

TURKEY COUNTRY CASE STUDY
Desk Study: Main Trends and Analysis on Out of School Children in the Middle East and North Africa Region

Out of School Children Trends
Turkey Case Study Finding 1 The OOSC are relatively stable across the study period, and require validation[1]

The trend in the OOSC estimates during most of the study period is relatively stable. This is an unlikely finding, considering the shifts in access Syrian under temporary protection (SUTP) had to formal school during this time. For detailed information on OOSC in Turkey during this time, please review the 2021 UNICEF-led study.

Figure 1 summarises the total OOSC figures by year

Figure 1: Total OOSC figures, annual trends-Turkey (in millions)

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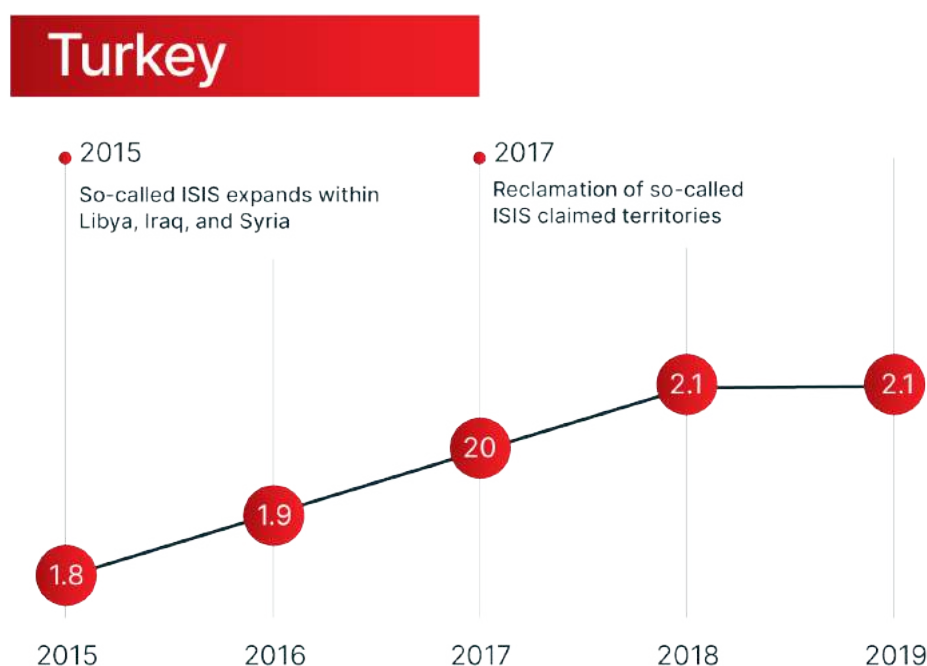
[1] The information on OOSC published by the Turkish Ministry of National Education (MoNE) provides a partial picture of the situation of children out of school in the country. It is partial because OOSC calculations exclude foreign nationals residing in Turkey, such as Syrian under temporary protection (SUTP) or other refugee children. Furthermore, the official figures are calculated on the basis of net enrolment rates by educational year and age groups, without considering the education level/type of the students to the total population of the students in the relevant age group. In other words, this method marginalises and/or disregards the experience of overage students. In order to obtain a more comprehensive picture for this area of inquiry, the official data was integrated and triangulated with the information provided by multiple education sector stakeholders (including UN mandate holders, think thanks, academia and foundations).

Turkey Case Study Finding 2 The majority of OOSC in Turkey is at the secondary level

52% of OOSC are at the secondary level

28% of OOSC are at the pre-primary level

20% of OOSC are at the primary level

These figures conceal significant differences between Turkish and non-Turkish groups: 49% of Turkish OOSC are in the pre-primary cohort (49%) compared to 17% of OOS refugee children. The low figure for refugee populations is probably due to under-reporting.

Figure 2 summarises the total OOSC figures by cycle.

Figure 2: Total OOSC cohort figure profiles-Turkey
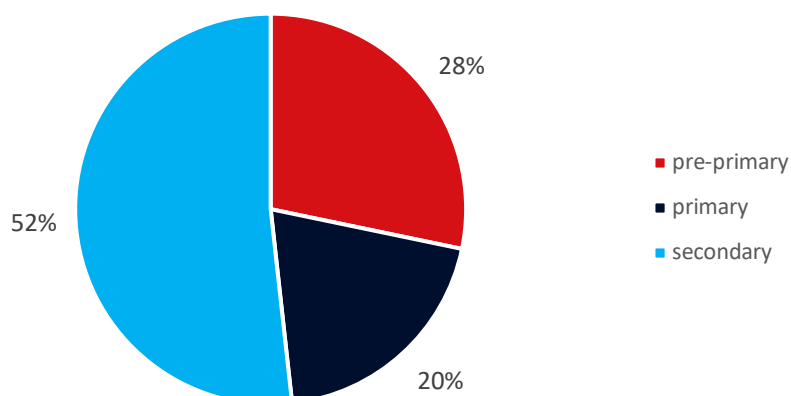
Turkey Case Study Finding 3 Most OOSC in Turkey are male

The study estimates find the majority (57%) of OOSC in Turkey are male. This result is partially in line with MoNE estimates, which found that boys are slightly more likely to be out of school (52%) than girls (48%). However, these estimates could be reassessed through a refugee lens considering that most refugees are in urban areas and adolescent males might be working therein. Still, the lack of reliable gender-disaggregated data for the refugee children population undermines the validity of this finding.

57% of OOSC are male

43% of OOSC are female

Figure 3 summarises the total OOSC figures by gender

Figure 3: Total OOSC figures by gender- Turkey
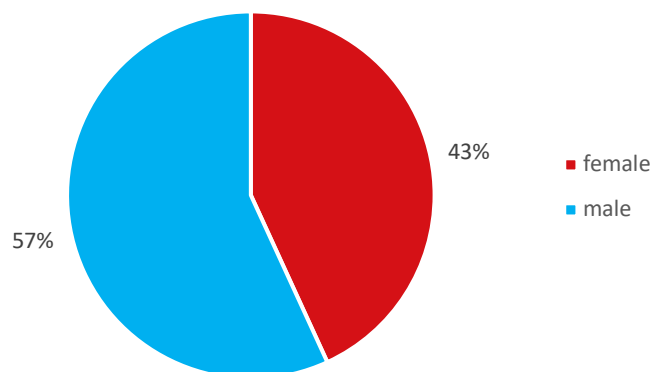
Turkey Case Study Finding 4 Most OOSC in Turkey are in urban areas

As in other contexts, OOSC populations are more likely to be in urbanised areas, be they Turkish (74%) or SUTP (98% living out of camp, mostly in urban or peri-urban areas).
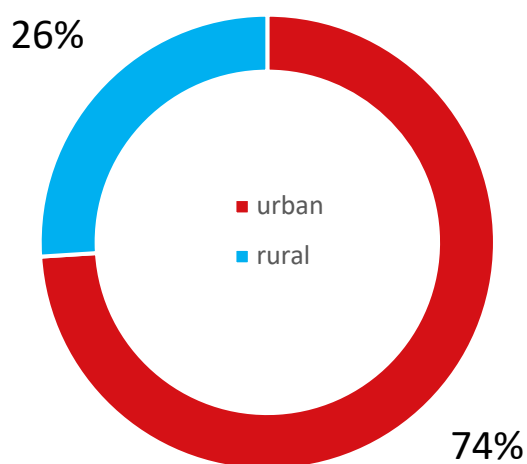
74% of Turkish OOSC are in urban areas

98% of SUTP are outside of camps and likely in urban or peri-urban areas

This finding aligns with global trends.

Figure 4 summarises the OOSC in Turkey by geographic context.

Figure 4: Total OOSC figures by nationality and geographic location-Turkey

Turkey Case Study Finding 5 Most OOSC in Turkey are in urban areas

Refugee children and SUTP represent a more significant percentage of the OOSC than their Turkish peers.

6% of the pre-primary school-age population are refugee children and SUTP.

8%[2] of the OOSC pre-primary cohort are refugees or SUTP.

4% of the primary school-age population are refugee children and SUTP.

28% of the OOSC primary cohort are refugees or SUTP.

6% of the secondary school-age population are refugee children and SUTP.

29% of the OOSC secondary cohort are refugees or SUTP.

Figure 5 summarises the OOSC population in Turkey by cycle and displacement status.

Figure 5: OOSC population by cycle and displacement status, Turkey

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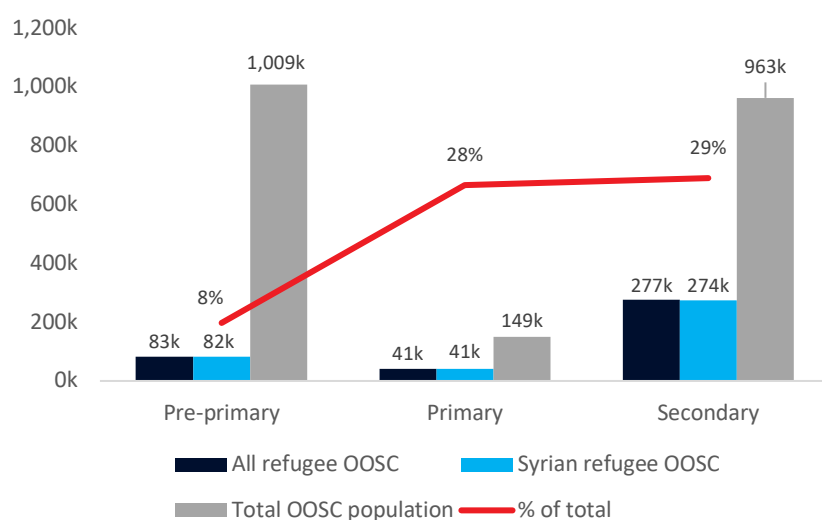
[2] As noted above, this result is unlikely inaccurate and reduced by under-reporting for this particular cohort.

Factors that influence children's participation and retention in education

Barriers to (sustained) (re)engagement in education

Turkey Case Study Finding 6 The top five barriers were lack of resources/internet connectivity; economic barriers; disability; child marriage; and language barriers

16 barriers were identified specific to Turkey. The top five barriers are.

1. Lack of resources/internet connectivity
2. Economic barriers
3. Disability
4. Child marriage
5. Language barriers

Turkey Case Study Finding 7 The study found that most barriers were both demand and supply-side barriers

This finding means, for example, that disability is likely considered a supply-side barrier because of poor inclusive education practices. Furthermore, it is likely considered a demand-side barrier because of sociocultural beliefs about the value of education for children living with disabilities.

56% of data sources classified barriers as both demand and supply-side factors

33% of data sources ranked barriers as demand-side factors

11% of barriers were supply-side factors.

Turkey Case Study Finding 8 Barriers affected CRODO more than OOSC

53% of data sources classified the barriers as involving OOSC more than CRODO.

18% of data sources ranked the barriers as affecting CRODO and OOSC equally.

0% of data sources ranked the barriers as affecting CRODO more than OOSC.[3]

Among the top barriers that were classified, lack of connectivity and language barriers were characterised as mainly affecting OOSC; economic barriers, child marriage and disability, were considered to affect OOSC primarily, but CRODO to some extent as well.

Turkey Case Study Finding 9 The degree of influence the country's context has on OOSC differs based on displacement status

Unsurprisingly, the barriers that were perceived to have a connection to the country context were almost entirely connected to the perceived crisis status of the country and the Syrian crisis in particular.

47% of data sources did not believe the barriers were relevant to the nature of the country's CAC status.

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[3] 29% of data sources did not classify a barrier in terms of whether it affected OOSC or CRODO more.

44% of data sources believed that the barriers were relevant to the nature of the country's CAC status.

Turkey Case Study Finding 10 Most barriers were not connected to geographic contexts

67% of data sources believed the barriers and specific geographic contexts of the country were not correlated.

28% of data sources classified barriers as specific to rural areas.

Urban settings could have been considered "standard" – thus reducing the perceived relation of urban-specific barriers as relevant. This possibility seems feasible given the data provided earlier in this section concerning high rates of urbanisation and urban spaces being the primary locations of refugees and SUTP.

Turkey Case Study Finding 11 Most barriers connected to a specific year were COVID-specific or related to active periods of the Syria-crisis

75% of data sources found no connection between the barriers and COVID-19

22% of data sources classified barriers as connected to the global health crisis, including the lack of internet connectivity, COVID-19-related measures, and the insufficient public education expenditure that resulted in a lack of preparedness.

Sources that cited 2015 and 2016 as having unique barriers identified a connection with SUTP. These barriers are related to the prevalence of child labour and the lack of accessible public schools in areas with high concentrations of refugees and SUTP.

Turkey Case Study Finding 12 Most barriers were not correlated with gender

64% of data sources did not identify a correlation between barriers and a child's gender. Among the barriers classified as gender-specific, more barriers were considered more impactful on girls (17%) than boys (8%). Barriers that mainly affected girls included parents' safety concerns stemming from the distance between school and home, negative attitude towards mixed-gender education, culturally accepted early marriage, and economic barriers. Interestingly, lack of internet connectivity appeared to affect girls disproportionately. This finding links to sociocultural expectations that girls help with household chores and the difficulty low-income girls face accessing distance learning. Economic conditions and child labour were barriers more impactful on boys.

Turkey Case Study Finding 13 Most barriers affected participation and retention equally

75% of data sources classified barriers as similarly connected to participation and retention issues.

25% of data sources considered barriers as mainly related to participation.

Turkey Case Study Finding 14 Most barriers related to the upper secondary cycle

58% of data sources classified the barriers as particularly applicable to one cycle

36% of data sources ranked the barriers as impactful on all cycles

Among the classified barriers,

50% related to upper secondary education, mainly encompassing barriers of a socio-economic nature, such as child marriage, economic barriers and child labour.

42% related to lower secondary education

42% related to primary education

8% of all barriers related to the pre-primary cycle of education.

The last finding seems to confirm a general under-reporting of OOSC for pre-primary education in Turkey, both in terms of OOSC figures and the specific barriers to education faced by the youngest cohort.

Motivating factors supporting (sustained) (re)engagement in education

Turkey Case Study Finding 15 The study identified five motivating factors: 1) cash transfer programmes; 2) quality education; 3) mobile education options; 4) accelerated education programmes; and 5) community engagement.

Five motivating factors were identified and are listed below in order of their weight:

1 Cash transfer programme
2 Quality education
3 Mobile education support points/transportation to mobile points
4 Accelerated education programme
5 Community engagement

Turkey Case Study Finding 16 Most motivating factors were supply-side

73% of data sources classified motivating factors as supply-side factors. These classifications were specific to quality education, mobile education support points and accelerated education programmes.

Turkey Case Study Finding 17 Motivating factors appear to impact OOSC the most[4]

45% of data sources classified motivating factors as predominantly relevant to OOSC

18% of data sources classified motivating factors as affecting OOSC and CRODO equally

0% of data sources classified motivating factors specific to CRODO.

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[4] 36% of motivating factors were not classified, reducing the inference value of these findings.

Turkey Case Study Finding 18 Nearly half of the motivating factors were relevant to either specific aspects of the country context

45% of data sources classified motivating factors as specific to particular parts of the country. These factors, such as community engagement and cash transfer programmes, were connected to the Syria crisis and impoverished areas.

Turkey Case Study Finding 19 Most motivating factors were not relevant to specific geographic contexts

64% of data sources did not believe motivating factors connected to particular geographic contexts within the country. Data sources didn't even perceive mobile education support points as relevant, despite the expectation that they are particularly relevant to remote or otherwise hard to reach areas.

Turkey Case Study Finding 20 Most motivating factors were not related to COVID-19
Mobile education support service was the only factor connected to COVID-19.

Turkey Case Study Finding 21 Most motivating factors, gender, and a child's vulnerability status were not correlated
Community engagement was the only factor perceived to have a more significant impact on gender (girls). Similarly, only three data sources believed there was a connection between the motivating factors and a child's vulnerability characteristics, mainly because cash transfer programmes were seen as particularly relevant to facilitating displaced children's access to education.

Turkey Case Study Finding 22 Most motivating factors affected participation and retention equally

82% of data sources classified the motivating factors as relevant to both participation and retention issues.

18% of the data sources ranked the barriers as specific to participation

Turkey Case Study Finding 23 Most motivating factors were relevant secondary education

55% of data sources classified motivating factors as appropriate to specific education cycles.

36% of these data sources identified motivating factors as being most pertinent to secondary education

27% of these data sources identified motivating factors as being most relevant to primary

27% of these data sources identified motivating factors as being most pertinent to pre-primary

Quality education was most relevant to younger cohorts, while the accelerated education programme and the cash transfer programmes were most motivating for lower and upper secondary education.

Policies and programmes that affect OOSC

Turkey Case Study Finding 24 Gender-based targeting is not common

80% of the policies and programmes reviewed did not target either gender. This practice counters empirical evidence.

Turkey Case Study Finding 25 Half of the programmes target CRODO

50% of the programmes reviewed targeted CRODO. This point is relevant, noting that OOSC is more vulnerable than CRODO.

Turkey Case Study Finding 26 Most programmes were in place before COVID-19

90% of programmes were in place before the COVID-19 pandemic timeframe.

Turkey Case Study Finding 27 Large-scale programmes target based on impoverishment status

The large-scale programmes reviewed included impoverishment status as part of its beneficiary targeting criteria. This practice is sound and evidence-based.

Turkey Case Study Finding 28 Cycle-specific targeting was mixed

33% of the programmes reviewed did not target a specific cycle.

13% of programmes targeted primary and lower secondary.

Turkey Case Study Finding 29 Targeting does not appear[5] to sufficiently consider geographic areas

42% of programmes did not have a geographic target
23% of programmes targeted rural areas

School feeding programmes

All school feeding in Turkey is government-supported, and 100% of enrolled children are eligible to receive school meals.

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[5] 30% of the programmes could not be classified by their geographic targeting.

Conclusions and recommendations

Turkey Case Study Conclusion Area 1 OOSC figure and trends

Turkey Case Study Conclusion 1 The available OOSC figures appear in line with the context

Summary The information available provides inadequate detail on trends related to the impact of the pandemic, pre-primary school-age children, SUTP, and refugees. The UNICEF Turkey-led 2021 OOSC study should be referred to for greater detail.

Turkey Case Study Recommendation 1 Researchers should source additional, granular data about OOSC

Priority 2

Affiliated area of inquiry OOSC figures and trends

Recommendation(s) most relevant to

Researchers or Data Scientists

Recommendation(s) also relevant to

Donors | National Governments | (I)NGOs | Global Education Cluster

Examples of most relevant stakeholder(s) UNICEF, USAID, DFID, ECHO, ECW

Action Type Advocacy and Research

Action 1 Advocacy efforts should encourage donors to make funding available for further research. Source additional field-level data regarding pre-primary OOSC, the impact of COVID-19 on OOSC, and the experiences of SUTP and refugees.

Rationale Later studies should provide a broader range of data to enhance data reliability and validate specific data collected under this study.

Turkey Case Study Conclusion Area 2 Factors that influence children's participation and retention in education

Turkey Case Study Conclusion 2 The nature and classification of the barriers and motivating factors are in line with the empirical evidence and are context-relevant but can be better nuanced

Summary The interrelationship between push and pull factors is clear for Turkey. For example, issues relating to internet connectivity and economic factors were both barriers and motivating factors. For instance, schools requiring internet connectivity would be a barrier for low-income households; households with internet connectivity that can access remote learning would consider it a motivating factor. OOSC were the most vulnerable on the continuum of exclusion.

Turkey Case Study Recommendation 2.1 Researchers should secure additional, multi-source data about specific aspects of the barriers

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<p align="center" style="color:#c00;">Priority 2</p>

Affiliated area of inquiry Barriers to and motivating factors supporting (sustained) (re)engagement in education

Recommendation(s) most relevant to

Researchers or Data Scientists

Recommendation(s) also relevant to

Donors   National Governments   (I)NGOs

Examples of most relevant stakeholder(s) UNICEF, USAID, DFID, ECHO, ECW, Save the Children, the IRC

Action Type Advocacy and Research

Action 2.1 Advocacy efforts should encourage donors to make funding available for further research—source additional, multi-source data about specific aspects of the barriers.

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Rationale More information is needed from more sources about:

- barriers specific to demand and supply factors
- barriers specific to child's exclusion or at-risk status
- barriers specific to years
- barriers specific to gender
- barriers specific to (the experiences of) refugees
- the degree to which particular barriers are related to participation and retention factors
- the degree to which barriers and geographic contexts are correlated

Turkey Case Study Recommendation 2.2 Researchers should secure additional, multi-source data about motivating factors in general

<div align="center">

Priority 2

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Affiliated area of inquiry Barriers to and motivating factors supporting (sustained) (re)engagement in education

Recommendation(s) most relevant to

Researchers or Data Scientists

Recommendation(s) also relevant to

Donors   National Governments   (I)NGOs

Examples of most relevant stakeholder(s) UNICEF, USAID, DFID, ECHO, ECW, Save the Children, the IRC

Action Type Advocacy and Research

Action 2.2 Advocacy efforts should encourage donors to make funding available for further research—source additional, multi-source data about motivating factors.

Rationale Data classification about motivating factors was unclear. As such, later studies must collect more information and validate some of that identified during this study across geographic and other types and nuanced through OOSC-related profile lenses.

Turkey Case Study Conclusion Area 3 Policies and programmes that affect OOSC

Turkey Case Study Conclusion 3 Additional information is needed on policies affecting children beyond the MONE's, and programme information suggests limited targeting

Summary More policy data is needed to situate any analysis properly. This deficit includes data from other ministries and the degree to which the implementation of the current education strategy does a better job at targeting populations particularly vulnerable to being OOS than the policy itself suggests. Available information on programmes means that specific targeting of OOSC-related vulnerabilities (gender, impoverished, geographic location, etc.) is minimal.

Turkey Case Study Recommendation 3.1 Researchers should source relevant policy data from other ministries with related interests in vulnerable children and field-level data on the applicable policies

<div style="border:1px solid #ccc;padding:1em;">

Priority 2

Affiliated area of inquiry Policies and programmes that affect OOSC

Recommendation(s) most relevant to

Researchers or Data Scientists

Recommendation(s) also relevant to

Donors　　National Governments　　(I)NGOs

Examples of most relevant stakeholder(s) UNICEF, USAID, DFID, ECHO, ECW, Save the Children

Action Type Research

Action 3.2 Undertake field-level data collection

</div>

Rationale Integrated efforts are cited mainly for MONE and the Ministry of Youth and Sports (MoYS) to support retention. MONE remains the leading actor engaged in efforts to address the OOSC issue. However, MONE's existing strategy does not appear to target those most at risk of being OOS. Field-level data collection will be helpful to see the degree to which MONE's strategy is implemented as written or if better targeting is happening at the local level in addition beyond just language support. Furthermore, additional data is needed from other ministries to see how they support children at risk of being OOS from all backgrounds, including refugees, SUTP, and the displaced.

Turkey Case Study Recommendation 3.2 Researchers should source additional programme data

<div style="border:1px solid #ccc;padding:1em;">

Priority 2

Affiliated area of inquiry Policies and programmes that affect OOSC

Recommendation(s) most relevant to

Researchers or Data Scientists

Recommendation(s) also relevant to

Donors　　National Governments　　(I)NGOs

Examples of most relevant stakeholder(s) UNICEF, USAID, DFID, ECHO, ECW, Save the Children

Action Type Research

Action 3.2 Undertake field-level data collection

</div>

Rationale Noting that the UNICEF-supported ALP and NFE are the large umbrellas for many programmes, future studies must source more programming information beyond this effort.

Turkey Case Study Recommendation 3.3 Researchers should undertake additional analysis using the data collected in later studies to assess the appropriateness of improved programme targeting toward certain vulnerability profiles

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Priority 2

Affiliated area of inquiry Policies and programmes that affect OOSC

Recommendation(s) most relevant to

 Researchers or Data Scientists

Recommendation(s) most relevant to

 Donors   National Governments   (I)NGOs

Examples of most relevant stakeholder(s) UNICEF, USAID, DFID, ECHO, ECW, Save the Children

Action Type Research

Action 3.3 Undertake field-level data collection

Rationale: Future studies should assess further the following areas to determine the appropriateness of using them as programme targeting criteria in this context, building on additional data collected during later studies.

- gender
- geographic location
- factors unique to participation and retention
- cycles
- OOSC or CRODO as targets cohorts

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Desk Study: Main Trends and Analysis on Out of School Children in the Middle East and North Africa Region

2015 - 2020

YEMEN

equitas education   Save the Children   World Food Programme   unicef

YEMEN COUNTRY CASE STUDY
Desk Study: Main Trends and Analysis on Out of School Children in the Middle East and North Africa Region

The study intended to source information about OOSC and their experiences specific to both the southern areas controlled by the Internationally Recognised Government (IRG) (based in Aden) and the northern regions (controlled by the Houthis). However, data available via the desk study provided only cursory detail on the differentiation between the two, and most data came from IRG areas. As such, later studies will need to focus on field-level data collection to unpack both this top-line information and surface more nuanced information.

Out of School Children Trends
Yemen Case Study Finding 1 The OOSC requires field-level verification
The available data only shows approximately 4 million children out of school across most of the study period. This figure accounts for roughly 41% of the school-age population and is likely inaccurate considering the protracted nature of the conflict.[1]

Figure 1 summarises the total OOSC figures by year
Figure 1: Total OOSC figures, annual trends-Yemen (in millions)
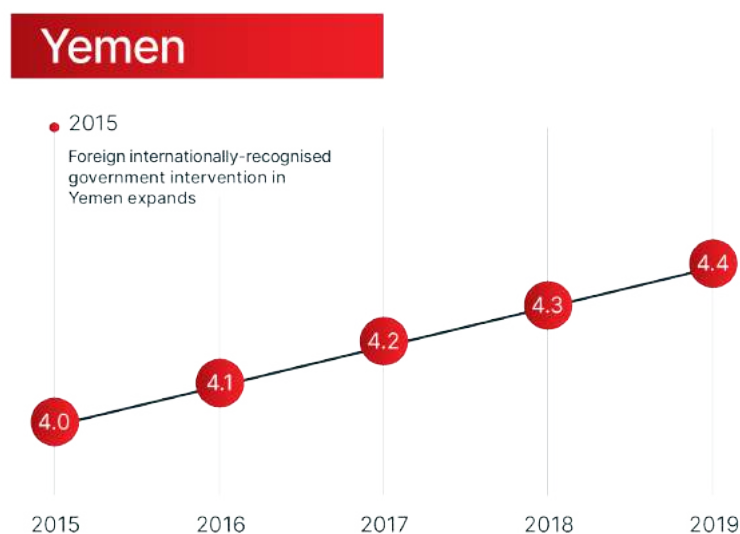
Yemen Case Study Finding 2 The majority of OOSC in Yemen is at the secondary level
Noting the data reliability concerns stated above, the profile of OOSC for Yemen does not resemble those in other CAC contexts. The majority of the OOSC cohort is at the pre-primary level (45%), then the primary level (30%), and then the secondary level (25%).

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[1] The study authors are aware of figures differing from these, including from the cluster. Notably, the study included the pre-primary cycle in calculations and used a wide variety of sources to arrive at the estimates.
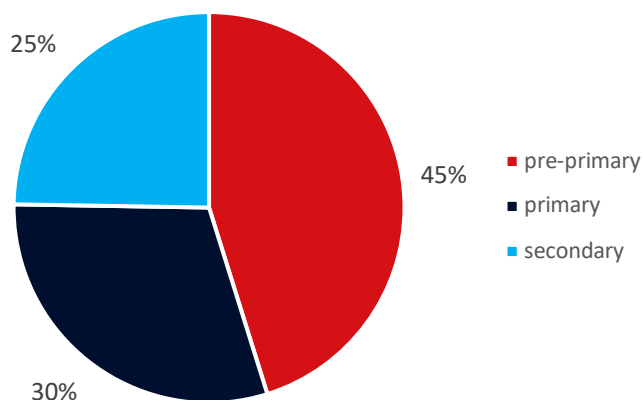
45% of OOSC are at the pre-primary level

30% of OOSC are at the primary level

25% of OOSC are at the secondary level

Figure 2 summarises the total OOSC figures by cycle

Figure 2: Total OOSC cohort figure profiles-Yemen

## Yemen Case Study Finding 3 Slightly more OOSC in Yemen are male than female

The estimated breakdown by gender (49% female and 51% male) is similar to other CAC. Data suggest that more males might be OOS because of their role in the conflict or because of it. At the same time, data also indicate that more females might be OOS, given the impact of conflict on girls.

51% of OOSC are male

49% of OOSC are female

Figure 3 summarises the total OOSC figures by gender

Figure 3: Total OOSC figures by gender- Yemen
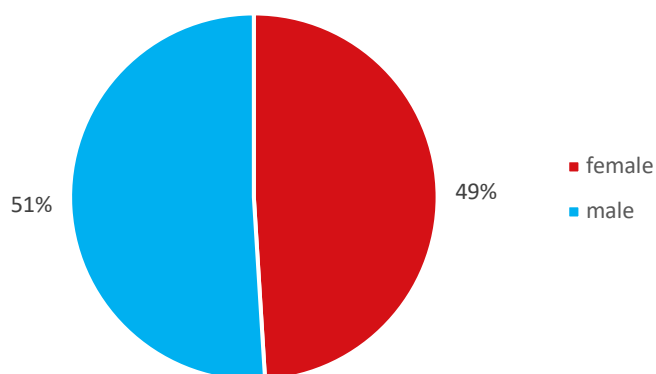
Yemen Case Study Finding 4 Most OOSC in Yemen are in rural areas

Yemen represents an outlier amongst study countries concerning urbanisation. Urban OOSC comprise 35% of the overall group. Despite the preponderance of OOSC in rural settings (64%), limited information is available on children's specific barriers to access education in rural areas.

65% of OOSC in Yemen are in rural areas
35% of OOSC in Yemen are in urban areas

Figure 4 summarises the OOSC in Yemen by geographic context

Figure 4: Total OOSC figures by nationality and geographic location-Yemen
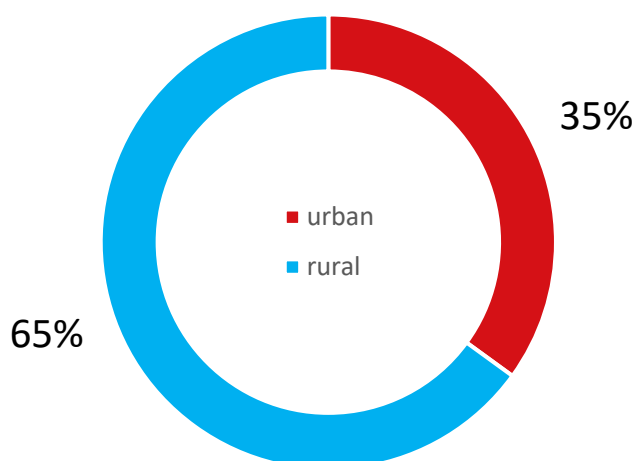
Factors that influence children's participation and retention in education

Barriers to (sustained) (re)engagement in education

Yemen Case Study Finding 6 The study identified 12 barriers; the top two were school capacity to host new students and economic barriers.

12 barriers were identified specific to Yemen. The top barriers were as follows, with all barriers from child labour and below (3a-e) equally ranked:

1. School capacity to host new students
2. Economic barriers
3.
   a. Child Labour
   b. Quality of education
   c. Limited human, administrative and technical capacities
   d. Conflict
   e. Insufficient public education expenditure

Yemen Case Study Finding 7 The study found that most barriers were supply-side

66% of barriers were supply-side factors, including COVID-19-related closures and gender discrimination.

19% of data sources classified barriers as demand-side factors. These included child labour and parents' attitudes and pre-conditions to the enrolment of their daughters.

Yemen Case Study Finding 8 Barriers affected CRODO and OOSC equally

52% of data sources classified the barriers as involving OOSC and CRODO equally. Again, these factors included the impact of COVID-19, violence and safety issues, gender discrimination, and the quality of education.

19% of data sources ranked the barriers as affecting CRODO more than OOSC.

14% of data sources ranked the barriers as affecting OOSC more than CRODO.

14% of data sources did not classify barriers regarding how they affect OOSC or CRODO.

Yemen Case Study Finding 9 A slight majority of barriers are connected to the country's CAC status

52% of data sources classified the barriers as related to the country context,

43% a surprisingly large proportion of barriers (43%) was classified as independent of the country context. The barriers are classified as connected to the country context related to violence, conflict, and gender discrimination.

Yemen Case Study Finding 10 Most barriers were not connected to geographic contexts

24% of data sources believed the barriers and specific geographic contexts of the country were correlated. This finding is surprising, given the established prevalence of OOSC in rural settings. Only the child labour and gender discrimination barriers were partially connected to the rural areas, while the conflict was equally impactful in rural and urban areas.

Yemen Case Study Finding 11 Data on COVID-19 and its impact on barriers is insufficient or needs to be validated at the field level

Several sources provided data for the Yemen context in 2020, but none classified the barriers related to COVID-19. Therefore, any analysis for 2020 must be captured at the field-level data collection.

Yemen Case Study Finding 12 Data on the connection between barriers and gender is insufficient

48% of data sources could not identify a correlation between barriers and a child's gender.

24% of data sources believed specific barriers were more impactful on one gender than another. The gender-sensitive barriers were all considered more impactful on girls, including gender discrimination as a whole. Economic barriers, child labour and even the lack of adequate public education expenditure were more impactful on girls. No data sources classified specific barriers that boys might face in the Yemen context; considering the evidence on the impact of conflict on boys, further research is required to unpack the nuances herein.

Yemen Case Study Finding 13 Most barriers affected participation and retention equally

86% of data sources classified barriers as similarly connected to participation and retention

9% of data sources were not able to classify a correlation

5% of data sources considered barriers as mainly related to participation.

Yemen Case Study Finding 14 Most barriers related to the primary and lower secondary cycles

71% of data sources classified the barriers as particularly applicable to both primary and lower secondary cycles

29% of data sources established a connection between barriers and the upper secondary cohort

10% of data sources showed a relationship between barriers and the pre-primary cohort.

The study identified child labour as more relevant to the primary cohort and gender discrimination as more relevant to the secondary cohort.

Motivating factors supporting (sustained) (re)engagement in education

Yemen Case Study Finding 15 The top motivating factors were: 1) safe access to schools; 2) security; 3) quality education; 4) increased availability of learning spaces; 5) cash transfer programmes, and 6) education meeting the needs of working children.

The study identified 9 motivating factors for Yemen. The top factors are listed in order of their weight below:

1   Safe access to schools (including in COVID-19 context)
2   Security
3   Quality education
4   Increased availability of learning spaces
5   Cash transfer programme
6   Programmatic interventions/schooling supply meet the needs of working children

Unsurprisingly, there is a direct correlation between the top motivating factors and the top barriers in Yemen. The most notable connections are safety, economic barriers and child labour, and local capacity schools.

Yemen Case Study Finding 16 Most motivating factors were supply-side

75% of data sources classified motivating factors as a supply-side factor. The most notable factors related to the provision of quality education increased availability of learning spaces and programmatic interventions that serve as pull factors for children (such as cash transfer programmes and programmes addressing the needs of working children).

19% of data sources classified motivating factors as supply and demand, such as safe access to school for children. However, only the engagement of the local communities was seen as a predominantly demand-side factor.

Yemen Case Study Finding 17 Motivating factors appear to impact OOSC and CRODO equally

38% of data sources could not classify a connection between specific motivating factors and exclusion status

Of the barriers that were classified,

31% of data sources ranked motivating factors as related to both OOSC and CRODO. These motivating factors included security, quality education, and cash transfer programmes

18% of data sources classified motivating factors as specific to CRODO, including preventive support services in school and programmatic interventions designed to prevent CRODO from leaving school to work.

Yemen Case Study Finding 18 Most motivating factors were relevant to the country context

75% of data sources classified motivating factors as specific to Yemen's CAC status

67% of data sources ranked the motivating factors as related to the conflict. Specifically, safe access to school and security were the most relevant factors.

Yemen Case Study Finding 19 Most motivating factors were not relevant to specific geographic contexts

56% of data sources did not believe motivating factors were connected to particular geographic contexts within the country.

31% of data sources classified motivating factors as connected to a specific geographic area. Factors related to safety and the provision of preventive support services were seen as particularly impactful in rural settings due to the long distance that children have to travel in areas affected by conflict

13% of data sources could not establish a connection between a motivating factor and a geographic context.

As noted above, more information on the challenges and resources to access education in rural contexts is needed given the prominence of OOSC in these areas.

Yemen Case Study Finding 20 Most motivating factors were not related to COVID-19

75% of data sources suggested that motivating factors were not related to COVID-19. However, unsurprisingly, safe access to schools was perceived as profoundly affected by COVID-19, and the provision of support services at school (such as hygiene kits and wash facilities) were seen as necessary in the post-COVID context.

Yemen Case Study Finding 21 Most motivating factors, gender, and a child's vulnerability status were not correlated

75% of data sources could not classify a connection between the motivating factors and a child's gender. Only one factor was classified as connected to a child's gender, providing additional learning spaces for girls. The lack of data on this aspect seems counter-intuitive to the Yemen context.

Yemen Case Study Finding 22 Most motivating factors affected participation and retention equally

81% of data sources classified the motivating factors as relevant to both participation and retention issues.

19% of the data sources ranked barriers as specific to participation: preventive support services in school and quality education.

Yemen Case Study Finding 23 Most motivating factors were relevant secondary education

69% of data sources classified motivating factors as appropriate to specific education cycles; of these, all motivating factors related to at least the primary and lower secondary cycles.

31% of these data sources identified motivating factors as being most pertinent to pre-primary education.

25% of these data sources identified motivating factors as being most pertinent to upper secondary education

Policies and programmes that affect OOSC

It was challenging to secure data from government officials to inform an assessment of the policy landscape. Field-based data collection is required. Programme data was more accessible.

2014

UNICEF offered conditional cash transfers (CCTs) to improve attendance and participation. In addition, they gave free school kits and food rations and conducted awareness activities.[i]

2015-2020

The education cluster members targeted the most vulnerable school-age populations in severe areas of need. In addition, programmes focused on reaching girls and displaced children, child marriage, and child labour.[ii]

2018

UNICEF launched a back-to-school campaign to foster improved engagement in education in cooperation with MOE and NGOs using volunteers and teachers to reach the community. In addition, UNICEF advocated for improvements to teachers' salaries, noting the positive knock-on effect such modifications would have on the local economy.[iii] UNICEF also supported education partners to conduct community-based classes targeting OOSC[iv] and provided stipends for 135,000 teachers and school staff for approximately nine months. [v]

The Yemeni Food Bank and the Education Office of the Secretariat established a database of targeted schools in the poorest areas. The goal of the database was to provide data to help reduce malnutrition and school dropout.[vi]

2020

The WFP and MOE provided school meals, focusing on areas affected by the conflict.[vii]

Yemen Case Study Finding 24 Gender-based targeting is not common
None of the programmes reviewed targeted either gender. This finding is discouraging considering the context and unique experiences of boys and girls.

Yemen Case Study Finding 25 Targeting based on exclusion status was limited

33% of the programmes reviewed targeted OOSC.

17% of the programmes reviewed targeted CRODO.

Yemen Case Study Finding 26 Most programmes were in place before COVID-19

58% of programmes were in place before COVID-19

16% of programmes were put in place after COVID-19

16% of programmes were in place both before and during COVID-19.

There was no appreciable targeting based on sex, geographic context, type of education, or impoverishment status. This point is discouraging, as targeting those most vulnerable (such as via impoverishment status) would have been appropriate in light of COVID-19.

Yemen Case Study Finding 27 50% of programmes use household income to target

50% of programmes targeted children based on their impoverished status. This finding is discouraging considering the role that economic factors and conflict play as barriers to and motivating factors.

33% of the programmes did not target children based on their impoverishment status.

Yemen Case Study Finding 28 Cycle-specific targeting was limited

42% of the programmes reviewed did not target a specific cycle.

17% of programmes targeted the primary cycle

Yemen Case Study Finding 29 Programmes do not sufficiently target geographic areas

58% of programmes did not have a geographic target

33% of programmes targeted urban areas

School feeding programmes

School feeding programmes in Yemen are sizeable, with the WFP providing the majority of the international support.

Conclusions and recommendations

It would be difficult to draw clear conclusions given the lack of data. Additional data is needed that explores explicitly unique aspects of the Yemeni context in terms of areas of control and the impact of COVID-19. However, some observational conclusions are shared as follows.

Yemen Case Study Conclusion Area 1 OOSC figure and trends

Yemen Case Study Conclusion 1 The available OOSC figures appear in line with the context, but more granular data is needed

Summary The apportionment of OOSC figures amongst the three cycles is notable mainly because the pre-primary figure is higher than usual amongst even similar CAC and likely impacts the protracted nature of Yemen's CAC context. The data suggest that girls are not uniquely vulnerable, which is out of line with anecdotal evidence.

Yemen Case Study Recommendation 1 Researchers should source additional, granular data about OOSC figures and cohort profiles during COVID-19

Priority 2
Affiliated area of inquiry OOSC figures and trends
Recommendation(s) most relevant to

Researchers or Data Scientists

Recommendation(s) also relevant to

Donors **National Governments** **(I)NGOs** **Global Education Cluster**

Examples of most relevant stakeholder(s) UNICEF, USAID, DFID, ECHO, ECW, Save the Children

Action Type Advocacy and Research

Action 1 Advocacy efforts should encourage donors to make funding available for further research. Source additional field-level data in both areas of control in Yemen and validate the OOSC numbers across them.

Rationale Additional data and validation is needed, and more specific disaggregated data relevant to children in both areas of control is needed in particular. More information is also required about IDP OOSC (all years) and the impact of COVID-19 on OOSC.

Yemen Case Study Conclusion Area 2 Factors that influence children's participation and retention in education

Yemen Case Study Conclusion 2 The nature and classification of the barriers and motivating factors are in line with the empirical evidence and are context-relevant but can be better nuanced

Summary The interrelation between push and pull factors were clear for Yemen. Schools' capacity to host more children and the economic barriers were related, for example. In addition, data sources identified OOSC as the most vulnerable on the continuum of exclusion. However, many of the more nuanced connections between these factors and aspects of the context were unclear. This outcome is due to a lack of granular data, which can be sourced through additional research.

Yemen Case Study Recommendation 2.1 Researchers should secure additional, multi-source data about specific aspects of the barriers

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Priority 2

Affiliated area of inquiry Barriers to and motivating factors supporting (sustained) (re)engagement in education

Recommendation(s) most relevant to

Researchers or Data Scientists

Recommendation(s) also relevant to

Donors | National Governments | (I)NGOs | Global Education Cluster

Examples of most relevant stakeholder(s) UNICEF, USAID, DFID, ECHO, ECW, Save the Children

Action Type Advocacy and Research

Action 2.1 Advocacy efforts should encourage donors to make funding available for further research—source additional, multi-source data about specific aspects of the barriers.

Rationale More information is needed from more sources about:

- the barriers and how they relate to the different profiles of children and their exclusion status across Yemen (Southern areas controlled by the IRG and the northern areas controlled by the Houthis).
- barriers specific to gender in both controlled areas
- barriers specific to IDPs and other particularly vulnerable populations, such as refugees, migrants, and *mohamasheen.*[2viii]

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[2] According the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights (2011) the mohamasheen were "[a] lso called « Al Akhdam » which literally translates as 'the servants', and is figuratively suggestive of 'people held in contempt

- the degree to which certain barriers (either those surfaced under this study or those newly identified during later studies) are related to engagement and retention factors
- the degree to which barriers and geographic contexts are correlated

Yemen Case Study Recommendation 2.2 Researchers should source additional, multi-source data about motivating factors in general

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Priority 2

Affiliated area of inquiry Barriers to and motivating factors supporting (sustained) (re)engagement in education

Recommendation(s) most relevant to

Researchers or Data Scientists

Recommendation(s) also relevant to

Donors | National Governments | (I)NGOs | Global Education Cluster

Examples of most relevant stakeholder(s) UNICEF, USAID, DFID, ECHO, ECW, Save the Children

Action Type Advocacy and Research

Action 2.2 Advocacy efforts should encourage donors to make funding available for further research—source additional, multi-source data about motivating factors.

Rationale Very little data was available about motivating factors. As such, more information needs to be collected during later studies. That identified during this study needs to be validated across geographic and other classifications and nuanced through OOSC-related profile lenses.

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and servitude in Yemen'. The Mohamasheen are a group of Yemeni citizens subjected to social, economic and political discrimination."

Yemen Case Study Conclusion Area 3 Policies and programmes that affect OOSC

Yemen Case Study Conclusion 3 Additional information is needed on policies affecting children in Yemen (IRG and Houthis controlled areas), and programme information suggests limited scope and targeting

Summary Policy data is needed to situate any analysis properly. Available information on programmes suggests appropriate, limited activities but insufficient scope to address the known barriers and motivating factors. The majority of programme information indicates a focus on the supply side, access-related activities. While this is appropriate, what appears to be missing are the demand-side considerations. Funding shortage is a crucial issue not well covered and severely impacts the human resources for education.

Furthermore, targeting by need appears to be pretty limited across Yemen, covering the two areas of control. Finally, the nature of the school feeding programmes needs review. Inquiry lenses should include the impact of COVID-19 and declining funding for the education sector (both leading up to and anticipated as a result of the pandemic).

Yemen Case Study Recommendation 3.1 The WFP should assess the capacity of the national authorities in light of COVID-19 and provide appropriate technical support to strengthen the capacity of MOE

Priority 1

Affiliated area of inquiry Policies and programmes that affect OOSC

Recommendation(s) most relevant to

 Donors

Recommendation(s) most relevant to

 National Governments   Researchers or Data Scientists   (I)NGOs   Global Education Cluster

Examples of most relevant stakeholder(s) The WFP

Action Type Programme strategy

Action 3.1 Review school feeding needs and MOE capacity to address them, specifically in light of the impact of COVID-19.

Rationale The MOE in Yemen has no school health and nutrition agenda or activities on the school level. To remedy this, the specific needs of children across Yemen should be assessed. The findings from this assessment should include recommendations for policy and programme responses and capacity building support to the MOE.

Yemen Case Study Recommendation 3.2 Researchers should source relevant policy and programme data for IRG and Houthi controlled areas

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Priority 2

Affiliated area of inquiry Policies and programmes that affect OOSC

Recommendation(s) most relevant to

Researchers or Data Scientists

Recommendation(s) also relevant to

Donors | National Governments | (I)NGOs | Global Education Cluster

Examples of most relevant stakeholder(s) UNICEF, USAID, DFID, ECHO, ECW, Save the Children

Action Type Research

Action 3.2 Undertake field-level data collection

Rationale Policy and programme data were limited during this phase of the study. They would need to be identified and analysed for all years of the study, including for IRG and Houthi areas, during later studies. Data collection should go beyond just the respective MOE and including other ministries, UN and NGOs with related interests in vulnerable children**,** specifically for 2017 and 2019-2020

Yemen Case Study Recommendation 3.3 Researchers should undertake additional analysis using the data collected in later studies is required specific to the appropriateness of improved programme targeting toward certain vulnerability profiles

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Priority 2

Affiliated area of inquiry Policies and programmes that affect OOSC

Recommendation(s) most relevant to

Researchers or Data Scientists

Recommendation(s) also relevant to

Donors

National Governments

(I)NGOs

Global Education Cluster

Examples of most relevant stakeholder(s) UNICEF, USAID, DFID, ECHO, ECW, Save the Children

Action Type Research

Action 3.3 Researchers should analyse programme effectiveness once field-level data is feasible

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Rationale Later studies should assess further the following areas to determine the appropriateness of using them as programme targeting criteria in this context, building on additional data collected during Phase II.

- gender
- geographical location
- primary school age (or skill level) children
- OOSC as a priority over CRODO

i UNICEF. (2014). *Summary Yemen Country Report on Out-of-School Children.* [ملخص تقرير الأطفال خارج المدرسة].

ii Yemen Education Cluster. (2021). *YEC Partner Consultation meeting: HNO and HRP.*

iii UNICEF. (2018s). *Yemen Humanitarian Situation Report: June 2018.*

iv UNICEF. (2018ab). *Yemen Humanitarian Situation Report: October 2018.*

v UNICEF. (2018h). *Yemen Humanitarian Situation Report: December 2018.*

vi Yemen Food Bank. (2018, January 31). *Database for YFB.* [بنك الطعام اليمني].

vii Almushahid. (2020, 5 September). *World Food Programme resumes school feeding project in Yemen.* [الغذاء العالمي يستأنف مشروع التغذية المدرسية في اليمن].

viii UN Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights. (2011). *Report of the High Commissioner on OHCHR's visit to Yemen.*

Desk Study: Main Trends and Analysis on
Out of School Children in the Middle
East and North Africa Region

2015 - 2020

METHODOLOGICAL NOTE

equitas education   **Save the Children**   **World Food Programme**   unicef
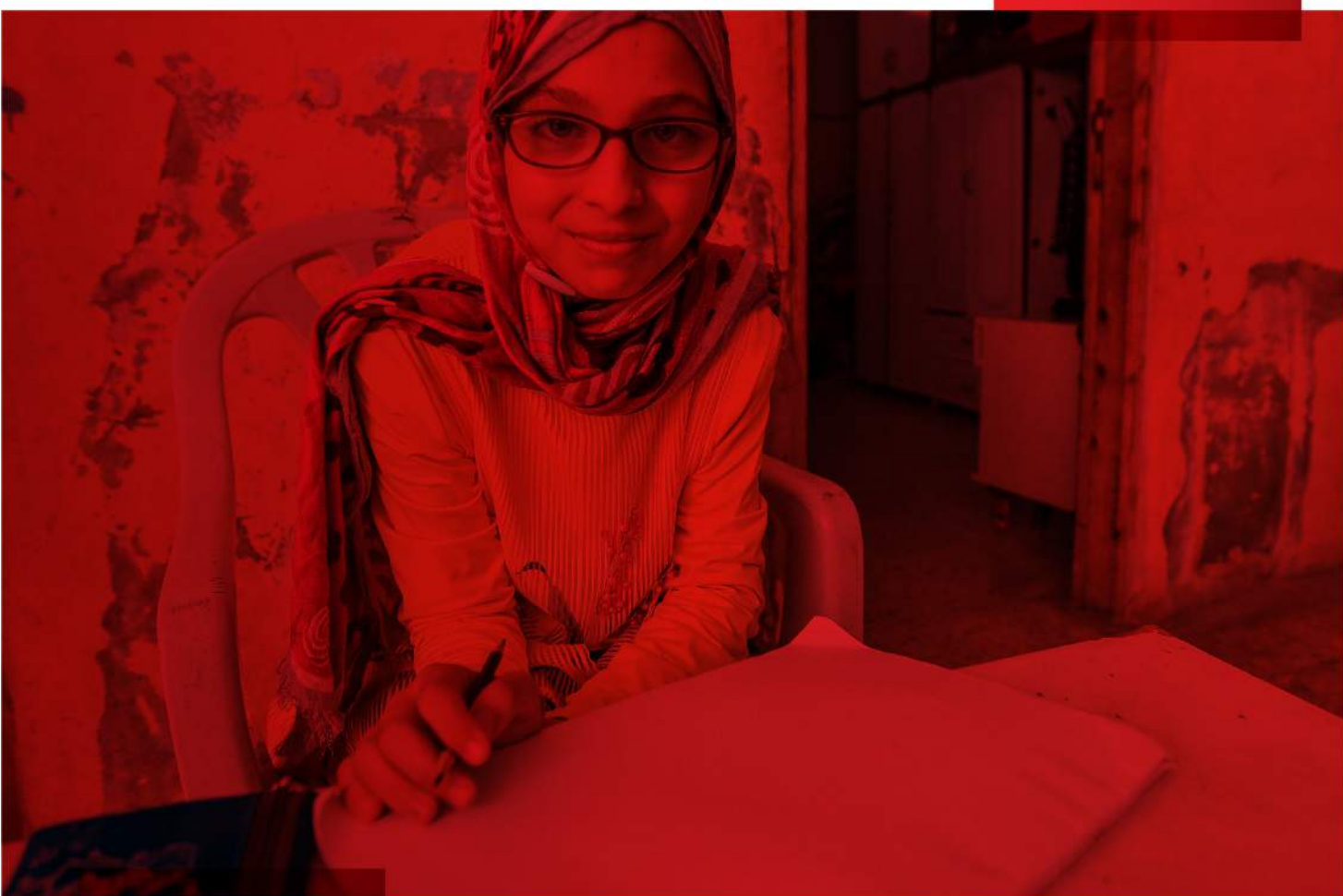
Defining OOSC and prioritising estimation parameters

This section unpacks the conceptualisation and definition of OOSC and CRODO under the study and how the study prioritised measuring OOSC and CRODO, considering the available study-related resources (time, funding, etc.).

Visibility and exclusion status

Given the desk-based nature of this study, data collection focused on visible OOSC. Given the challenges faced in identifying even visible OOSC children, the team could not identify semi-visible ones. Additionally, given the desk-based nature of this study, it did not measure invisible OOSC or CRODO. Where information is available, the report describes the experiences of CRODO.

Type of education services

The focus on visible OOSC naturally led to a focus on OOSC-related figures related to formal education (FE). Thus quantitative figures for those children disengaged from NFE opportunities were not feasible to collect. However, the study collected qualitative data about the experiences of children along the continuum of exclusion.

Out of school classification

Most OOSC reports present data only for compulsory education. The primary factor leading to a classification as OOSC in this report is that a child or youth is not enrolled in formal, pre-tertiary education.

Governance and education service delivery responsibilities

In each country, the priority was securing OOSC figures for education services provided by the internationally recognised government (IRG)[1] within that country's internationally recognised geopolitical borders. The study acknowledges OOSC are usually those excluded from such formal systems. As such, it sought data about children in areas outside the influence or control of the IRG of the seven focus countries. It did this in the most conflict, and politically sensitive manner possible with due consideration for the do no harm principle. However, such data was difficult to identify during this study. Securing it is recommended as part of later studies.

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[1] The team anticipates that there will be various sources of conflicting data, depending on the source and the country context. Sources are likely to include IRG, other governing entities, and the (I)NGO sector at a minimum and will be triangulated whenever possible.

The geographic areas of focus were

- **Iraq** Focusing first on the Republic of Iraq but also including the Kurdistan Region of Iraq
- **Jordan**
- **Lebanon**
- **Libya** focusing first on areas controlled by the Government of National Accord but also including areas under the influence of the Libyan National Army
- **Palestine**[2] focusing first on the West Bank and then on Gaza
- **Turkey**
- **Yemen** focusing on the IRG based out of Aden, but also considering Houthi-controlled areas if possible.

ISCED parity

The study does not intend to compare OOSC rates amongst the seven countries; they were selected based on the commissioning agencies' institutional and programming purposes. For example, four of these countries have zones of control overseen by different authorities, some of which are internationally recognised.

However, it is helpful to situate the different figures within an understanding of

1 what the compulsory levels of education are in each of these countries

2 how the UN system classifies them via UNESCO's International Standard Classification of Education (ISCED).

Compulsory education

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[2] The commissioning agencies use the term Palestine for the purpose of this study, recognising that different nomenclatures exist.

In all study countries, compulsory education begins with primary school. It covers primary school and lower primary school for all countries, except Turkey, which includes upper secondary school

The number of years of compulsory schooling differs across the seven countries, as follows:

6 years in Iraq

9 years in Libya and Yemen

10 years in Lebanon, Jordan, and Palestine
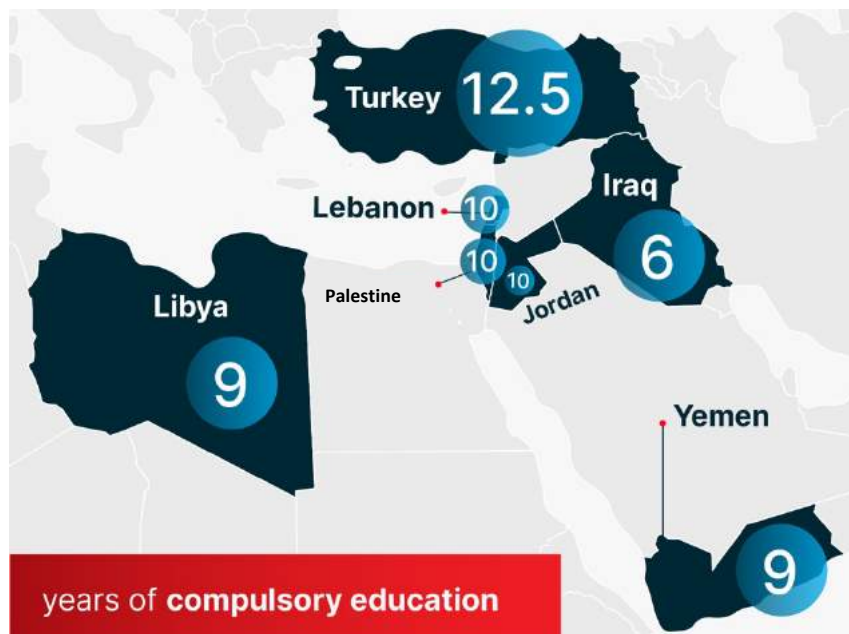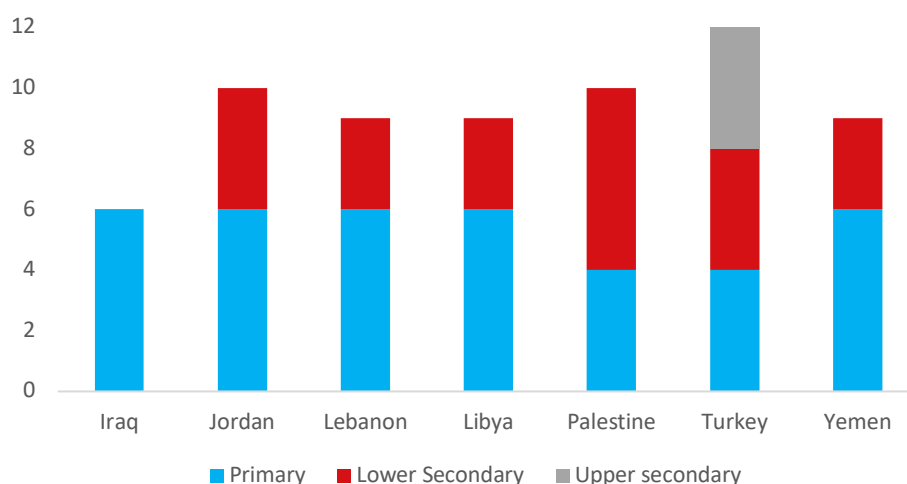
12 years in Turkey

Figure 1 summarises the years of compulsory schooling across each of the seven countries of the study.[i]

*Figure 1: Comparison of years of compulsory schooling across the seven countries*

6   The official age to start compulsory education is six in all study countries but Turkey and Palestine.[ii]

5.75   In Turkey, the official starting age is 5.75.[iii]

5.8   In Palestine, the official starting age is 5.8 years.[iv]

Figure 2 summarises the official age of entry to each level of compulsory schooling across each of the seven countries of the study. [ii]

Figure 2: Age at the entry to each of the compulsory levels across the seven countries
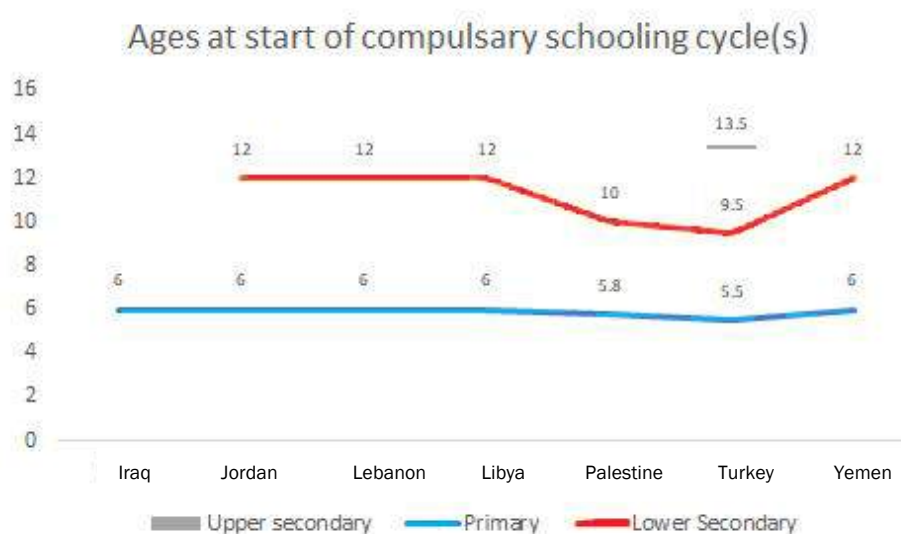

Operational aspects of the study

Data sourcing, vetting, analysis, and management methods
See Annex 2 for the inception report; it provides considerable detail on the specific methods used in the study.

Figure 3 provides a profile of the primary and secondary sources cited by the main geographic scope and relevant area of control.

*Figure 3: Map of sources cited by main geographic scope*
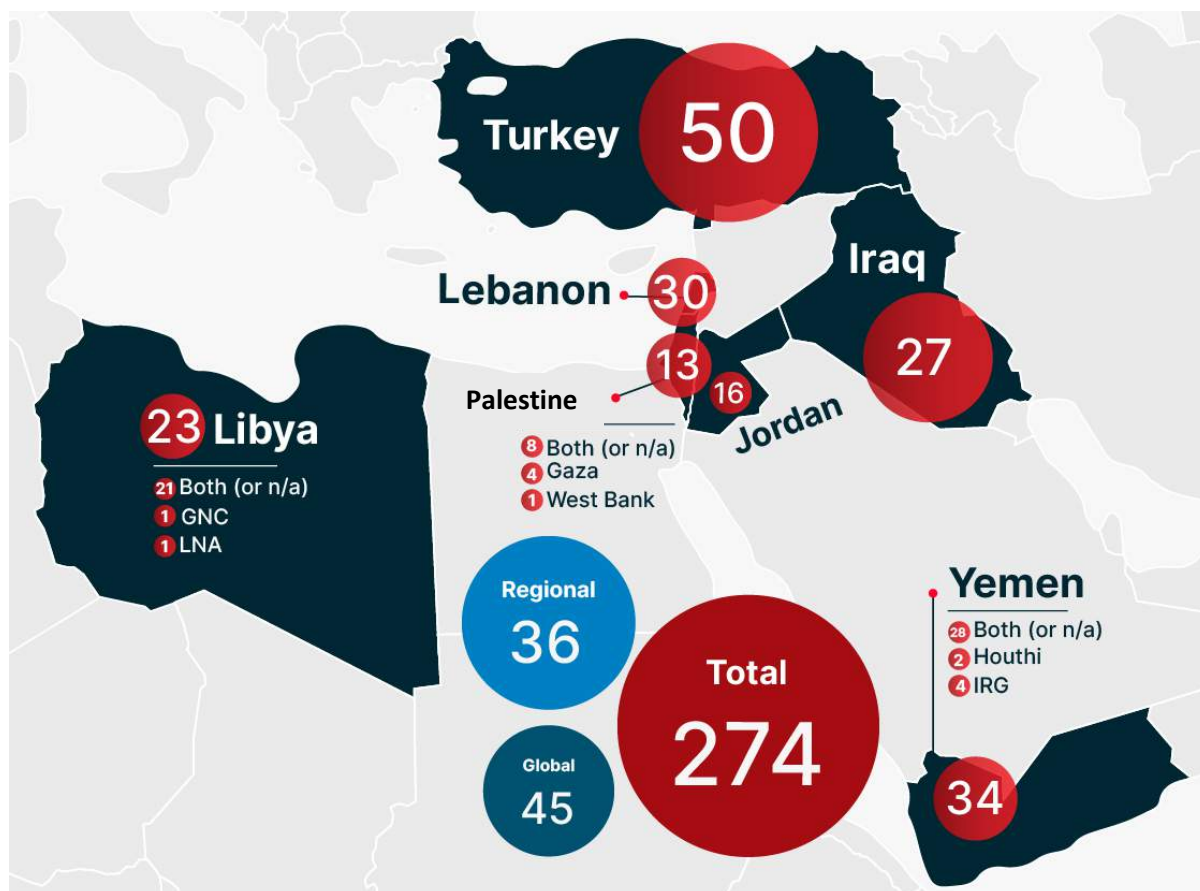
Secondary data sources

The study identified nearly 700 documents for review using the criteria detailed in the inception report. It reviewed approximately 550 of these for relevance. Of those, the study cited or used for OOSC population calculation purposes 241 of these documents. As rationalised in the inception report, the study sought secondary and primary data in the language most relevant to the countries of the study, namely Arabic and Turkish. However, as expected, most of the available data was in English.

Figure 4 provides the breakdown of documents reviewed by or cited and in what language native speakers reviewed them.

Figure 4: Document sources, by language
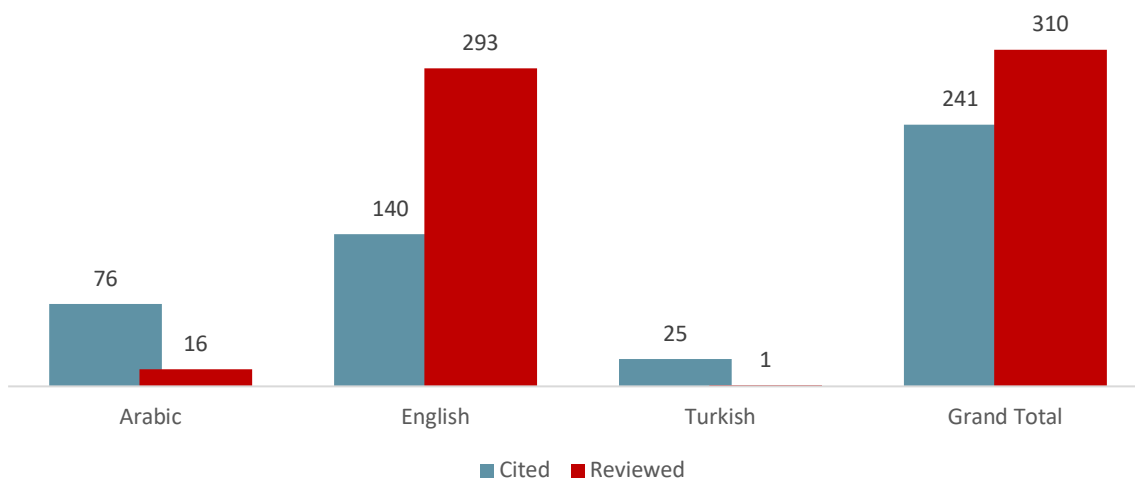
Most secondary sources were UN-affiliated, which does affect the findings and contributes to the importance of further field-based studies. The preponderance of UN-affiliated data is not surprising given the nature of the study and its methods and the UN's mandate, budget, and scale.

Figure 5 provides detail on the source of the data reviewed and cited.

Figure 5: Document sources, by author/publisher type
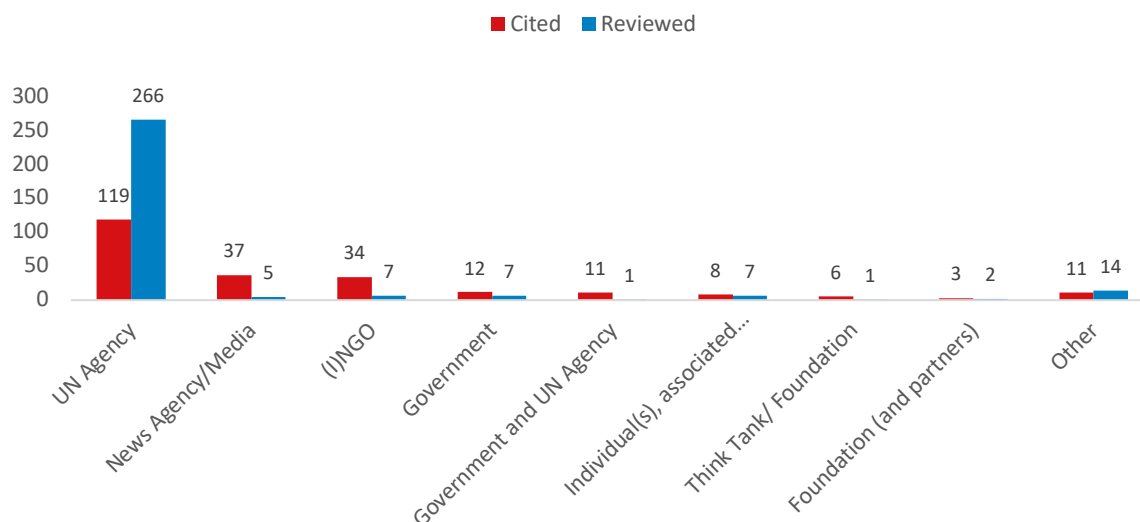
Data was more difficult to source for the earlier years of the study. Notably, there was a spike in relevant secondary data around the COVID-19 pandemic. However, OOSC data was difficult to validate at this stage of the stabilisation period.

Figure 6 explores document publication year in some detail.

Figure 6: Document sources, by year of publication
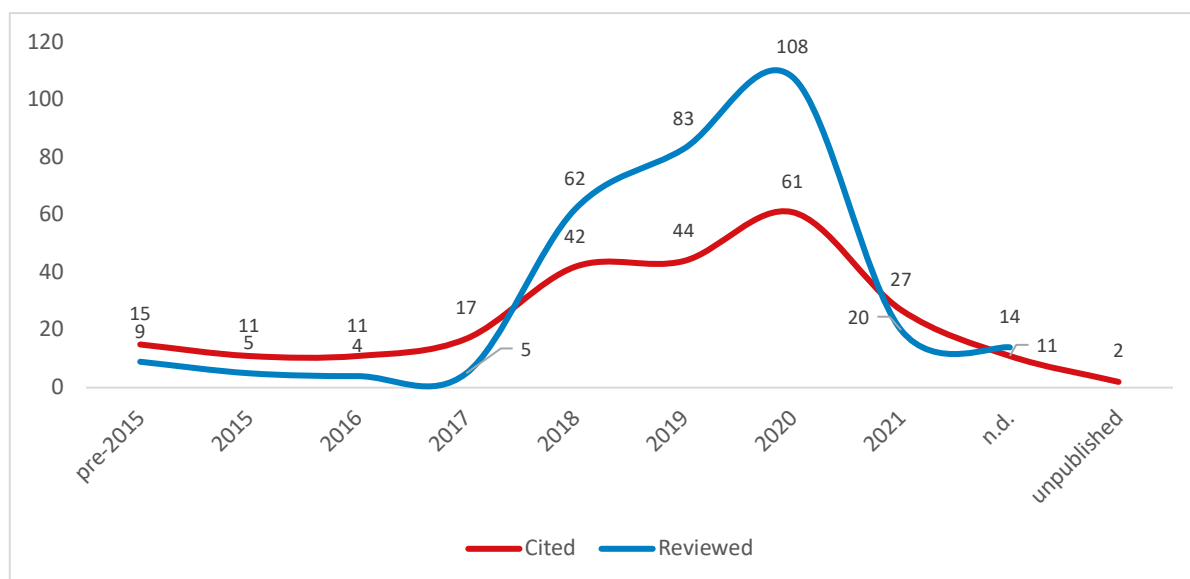
104 policies and programmes related to OOSC in the seven countries of the study were reviewed

4% of these were country-specific policies (Lebanon, Jordan, Turkey, and Yemen)

96% of these were programmes

Figure 7 summarises the percentage of policies and programmes reviewed by document type.

Figure 7: Profile of reviewed policies and programmes
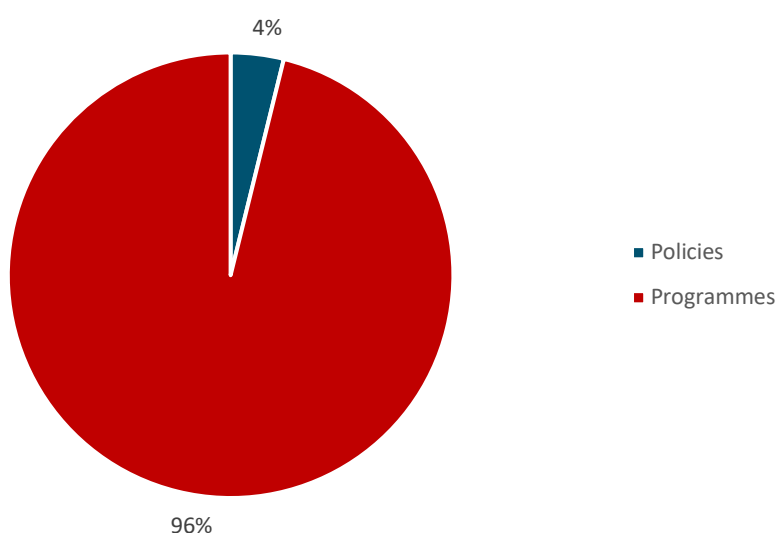
39% of the programmes reviewed were specific to Turkey

27% of the programmes reviewed were specific to Iraq

Higher numbers of programmes do not necessarily correlate with a more robust, nor with a more fragmented, programming environment. In some cases, umbrella programmes are large and bring together what might have been smaller projects in the past. Examples of these programmes include RACES I and II in Lebanon and the Accelerating Access Initiative in Jordan.[iii] In addition, the increase in pooled funding and direct budget support may funnel large sums of OOSC-related funds through one programme. Entities like the No Lost Generation Initiative and the Education Cannot Wait fund facilitate this type of large-scale funding.

Primary data sources

200 potential KI and survey respondents were identified collaboratively with the commissioning agencies via purposeful sampling and then via snowball sampling during primary data source outreach.

The study sought

1 potential data sources for all countries of the studies

2 a representative balance amongst different stakeholder types. These stakeholders included representatives of IRG and non-IRG governments, donor institutions, and implementing partners.

3 representatives with country-specific and regional remits

4 representatives with expertise in specific areas of inquiry, such as OOSC data sourcing and estimation methods, and those with access to complementary data sources.

The study organised potential data sources into two groups;

1 key informant interviewees, or

2 survey respondents.

The study determined how to allocate primary data sources based on factors such as
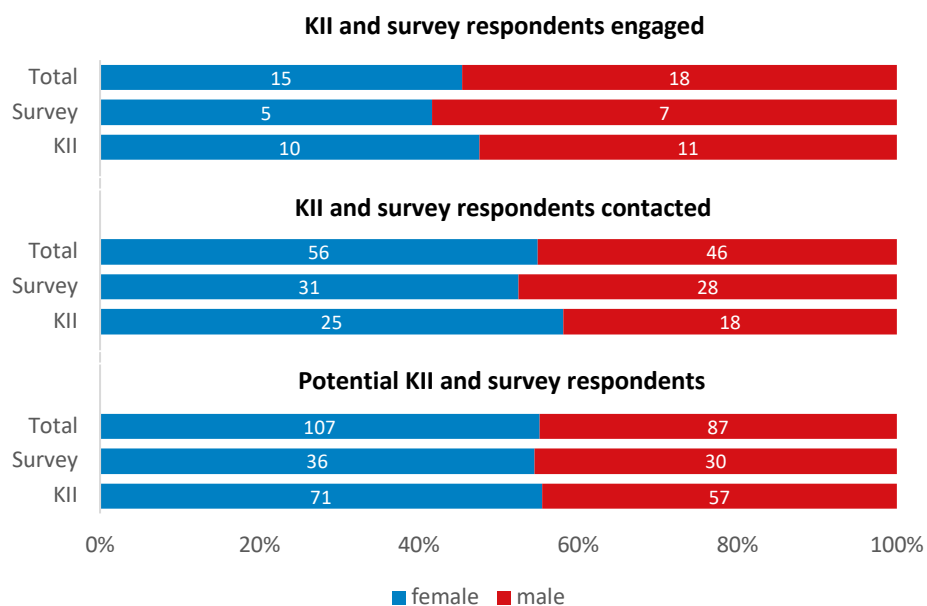
1 their (presumed) language preferences, and

2 the nature of questions to be asked.

Primary data sources were further coded by

1 the criticality of speaking with them during the first phase of the study, or

2 those best placed to engage during the second phase.

Figure 8 provides the profile of potential/identified, contacted/reached, and engaged/actual primary data sources by sex.

Figure 8: Potential and actual KI, by sex

KII and survey respondents engaged

	female	male
Total	15	18
Survey	5	7
KII	10	11

KII and survey respondents contacted

	female	male
Total	56	46
Survey	31	28
KII	25	18

Potential KII and survey respondents

	female	male
Total	107	87
Survey	36	30
KII	71	57

■ female ■ male

As noted, purposeful sampling was employed to attempt to reach a reasonably representative sample across institutional affiliations.

Figure 9 summarises these potential and actual KI by institutional affiliation.

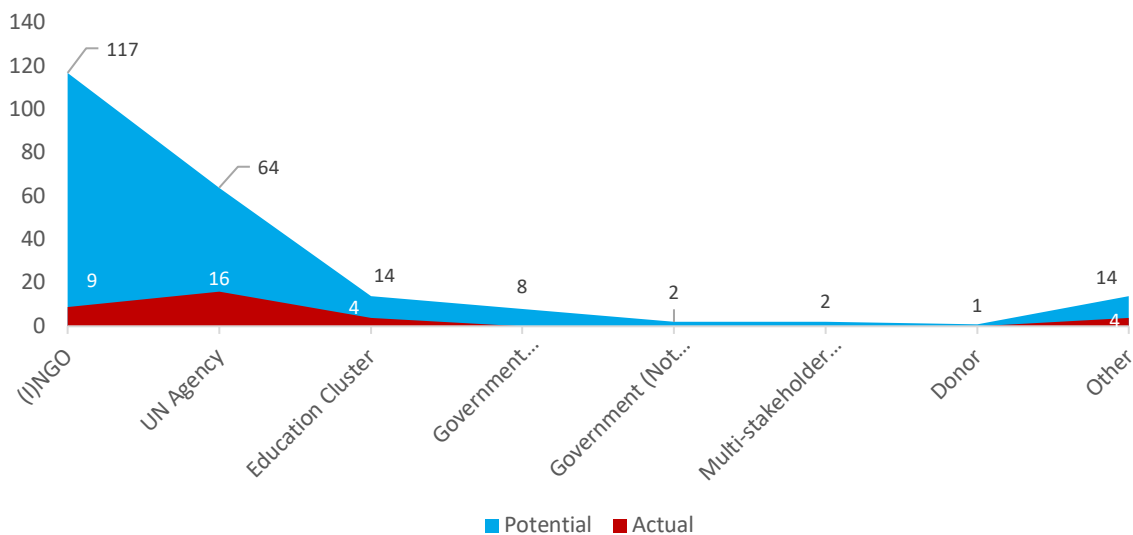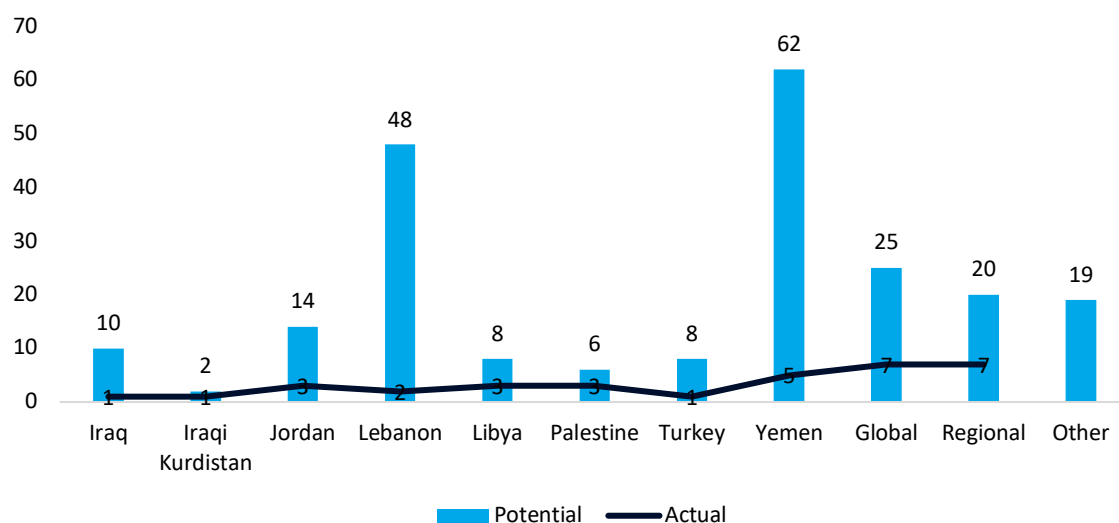*Figure 9: Potential and actual KI, by institutional affiliation type*

■ Potential ■ Actual

Figure *10* *shows the potential and actual primary data sources by their geographic remit.*

Figure 10: Potential and actual KI, by geographic remit

Phasing of the study

Phase A: OOSC calculation methodology

The inception phase[3] highlighted the complexity of deciding on a model for calculating OOSC figures. Contributors to this complexity include

1 the timeframe available for data collection

2 the various components of exclusion and cohort profiling (as initially considered in the Five Dimensions of Exclusion model (5DE)) developed under the OOSCI,[iv] as illustrated in Figure 11 below, and

3 shifts in the methods used for such calculations within UNESCO's UIS in recent years.

4 the anticipated introduction in 2022 of the Seven Dimensions of Exclusion model (7DE) to include upper secondary school.

Figure 11 summarises the five dimensions of exclusion.

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[3] See Annex 2 for the study's inception report, which contains the complete methodology as originally envisioned.

Figure 11: The Five Dimensions of Exclusion Model
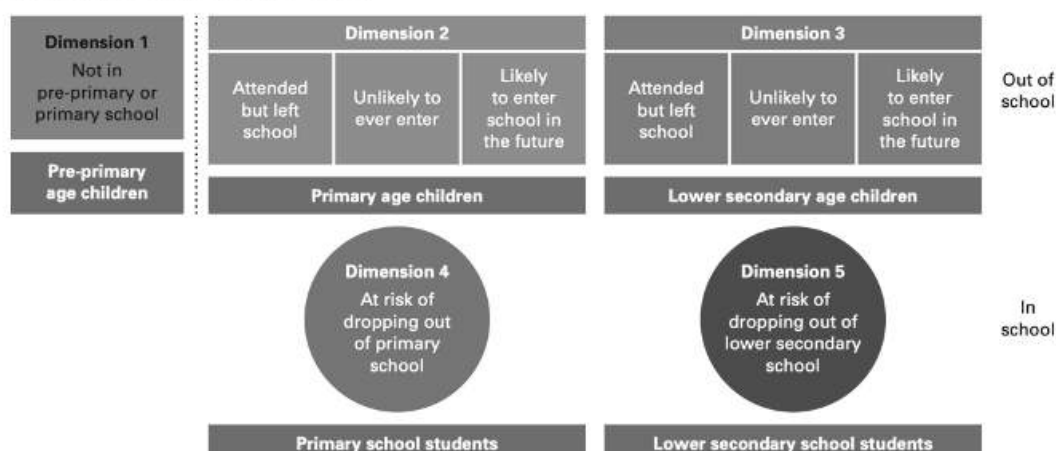
While not originally envisioned as part of the study in its terms of reference, the study team proposed establishing clearly defined and rationalised means for calculating the OSSC data. This effort was relevant on its own. Furthermore, OOSC estimation outcomes were foundational for other analyses under the study.

OOSC estimation methods-focused KII and surveys complemented the desk review of OOSC estimation methods. Stakeholders included people close to past and current OOSC estimation methodology efforts. Primary data sources included current and former OOSCI staff and data scientists within the international education and education in emergencies (EiE) communities. See Annex 6 for a list of primary data sources by institutional affiliation. This effort served to fill gaps in the desk review findings, validate understanding, and source new information.

Phase B: Data collection and concurrent triangulation
As with Phase A, the study focused primary data sourcing efforts on

1 filling gaps identified after the desk review, and
2 validating early analysis of the findings.

Primary data sources for this study component included representatives of the study sponsors in each of the targeted countries, ministry and affiliate representatives, and GEC representatives, including information management officers (IMO). In addition, the study team presented to the commissioning agencies a mid-point findings update. This update served both technical and operational purposes—helping to inform any refinements to methods and study foci.

Phase C: Full analysis
While concurrent analysis allowed progress assessment and the early surfacing of trends, the complete analysis allowed for a more nuanced review of the data in the aggregate and

confirmation of operational and technical recommendations for further studies, during this part of the analysis, comprehensive comparative and correlational analysis occurred.

Phase D: Presentation of findings and external validation

This report is a vital part of the presentation of the findings, as will be an external validation effort.

Figure 12 summarises the study's methodological process.

Figure 12: Methodological process
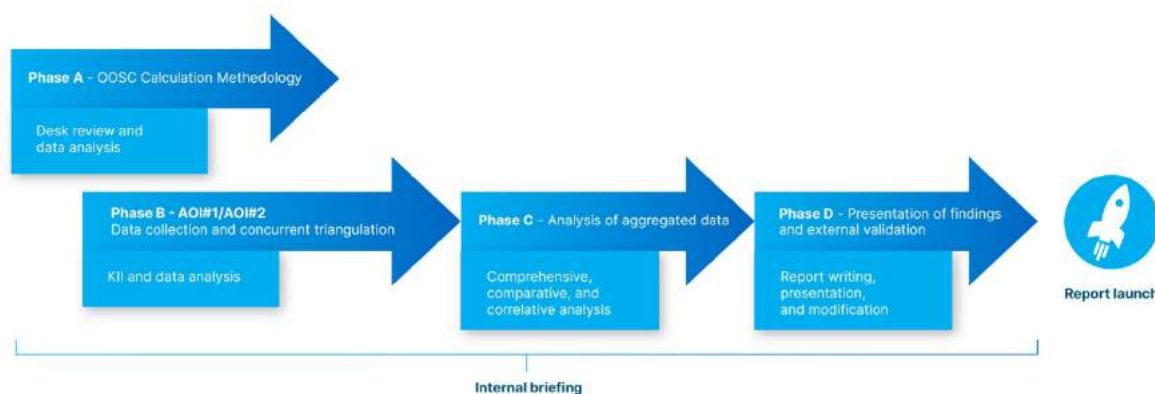
Study limitations

The project's inception stage identified a few limitations and assessed their potential impact on the study, as outlined in the figure below.

Figure 13 summarises the envisioned impact of limitations on the desk review.

Figure 13: Envisioned impact of limitations on the desk review

The following section is a reflection on the impact of these anticipated outcomes on the study.

Data availability and data fidelity

These areas proved to be more impactful on the study than envisioned-impacting the process efficiency and outputs. The study intended to source as much data about OOSC at the country and, where appropriate, intra-country zones of control as possible. This effort was arduous;

1 there are inherent limitations in a desk study

2 these limitations are compounded when the study cohort is by its nature difficult to quantify

3 The study topic is inherently political.

The study team attempted to source the same types of data from different sources. Some of the challenges faced, and resulting limitations to the study's findings follow:

- Reports from significant stakeholders might be published in one year and present the data as relevant to that year. Still, an in-depth review of the information might reveal the information is actually from data sourced three years prior.

- Other data sources might suggest that certain figures-such as officially registered refugee-based information might be significantly higher than the figures stated in such reports. For example, where figures increased over time, did it have to do with a change in calculation methodology outside of those documented by UIS? Did it have to do with a social, economic, or other crisis-related shift about which we don't already know? The study answered such questions, resolved discrepancies, and explained actual shocks/unexpected changes or shifts whenever possible.

- Most of the data available via a desk study tend to be from actors with significant means (such as the UN) and often those with institutional mandates to coordinate with IRG, who themselves might have reasons to present figures in a certain way.

- Given the history of referring to OOSC figures only by that which is compulsory (at this point, mainly primary and lower secondary), it was necessary to unpack to which cycles reported figures referred.

- It was important, albeit challenging, to unpack to what degree OOSC figures included subpopulations such as refugees.

- It is essential to recognise that IDP populations tend to be greater in crisis-affected countries that host the crisis itself than refugee numbers in countries affected by the crisis. As a result, information identifying school-age IDP figures was difficult to source. This challenge is not unique to this study. While entities such as UNHCR have a mandate to help all displaced populations, political principles of state responsibility to protect their citizens and financial limitations often lead international actors to reach and report on refugees more easily.

- There was more data available from Turkey and Iraq than from the other countries of the study.

While the study made every effort to triangulate data and understand where figures appeared to be outliers regarding other trends, the existing data will need to be verified. In addition, later studies must collect additional data at the field level. Each of the seven countries of the study is crisis-affected. However, the nature of how those crises affected each country of the study varied. Therefore, comparability across countries is not appropriate.

COVID-19

COVID-19 related factors were interesting in that there was a significant amount of literature on OOSC as related to COVID-19 and, at the same time, not much reliable data therein.

Security issues

Security issues ended up not being relevant given the desk review nature of the study and the ability to contact primary data sources remotely.

Confidentiality concerns and the sensitive nature of specific findings

The study managed these challenges through standard consent and data sharing protocol.

i UNESCO. (2011a). *ISCED Iraq Mapping*; UNESCO. (2011b). *ISCED Jordan Mapping*; UNESCO. (2011c). *ISCED Lebanon Mapping;* UNESCO. (2011d). *ISCED Libya Mapping*; UNESCO. (2011e). *ISCED Turkey Mapping*; and UNESCO. (2011f). *ISCED Yemen Mapping*; UNESCO. (n.d.e) B*rowse by country-Turkey: Education and Literacy-Participation in Education;* UNESCO. (n.d.e) B*rowse by country-Yemen: Education and Literacy-Participation in Education;* UNESCO. (n.d.f) *Browse by country-Iraq: Education and Literacy-Participation in Education*; UNESCO. (n.d.g) *Browse by country-Jordan: Education and Literacy-Participation in Education*; UNESCO. (n.d.h) *Browse by country-Lebanon: Education and Literacy-Participation in Education*; UNESCO. (n.d.i) *Browse by country-Libya: Education and Literacy-Participation in Education;* and UNESCO. (n.d.j) *Browse by country-State of Palestine: Education and Literacy-Participation in Education.*

ii UNESCO. (2011a). *ISCED Iraq Mapping*; UNESCO. (2011b). *ISCED Jordan Mapping*; UNESCO. (2011c). *ISCED Lebanon Mapping;* UNESCO. (2011d). *ISCED Libya Mapping*; UNESCO. (2011e). *ISCED Turkey Mapping*; and UNESCO. (2011f). *ISCED Yemen Mapping*; UNESCO. (n.d.e) B*rowse by country-Turkey: Education and Literacy-Participation in Education;* UNESCO. (n.d.e) B*rowse by country-Yemen: Education and Literacy-Participation in Education;* UNESCO. (n.d.f) *Browse by country-Iraq: Education and Literacy-Participation in Education*; UNESCO. (n.d.g) *Browse by country-Jordan: Education and Literacy-Participation in Education*; UNESCO. (n.d.h) *Browse by country-Lebanon: Education and Literacy-Participation in Education*; UNESCO. (n.d.i) *Browse by country-Libya: Education and Literacy-Participation in Education;* and UNESCO. (n.d.j) *Browse by country-State of Palestine: Education and Literacy-Participation in Education.*

iii Rashid, K. (2020, March 30.) *Supporting Education in Jordan for Refugee and Jordanian Children. UNHCR Global Compact for Refugees.*

iv UNICEF. (2018). *All in School: Middle East and North Africa Out-of-school Children Initiative-Regional Fact Sheet 2018.*

Desk Study: Main Trends and Analysis on
Out of School Children in the Middle
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2015 - 2020

OOSC ESTIMATION
METHODS SUBREPORT

equitas education   Save the Children   World Food Programme   unicef
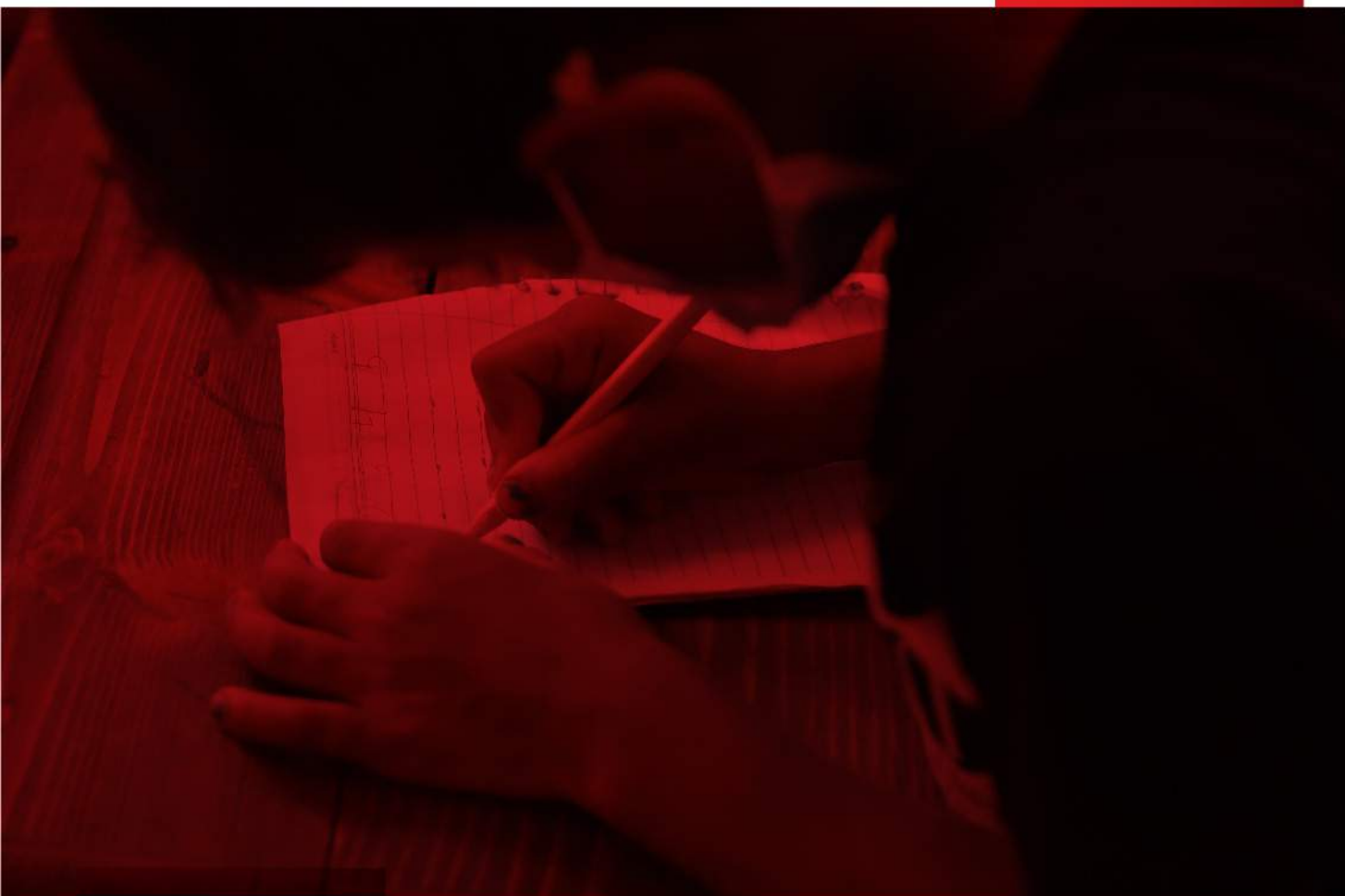
Background on OOSC calculation methodologies

The inception phase revealed that an improved understanding of the out-of-school children (OOSC) estimation methods would be necessary. Doing so would help situate the report and its findings to understand the challenges and opportunities facing this and similar efforts.

This effort surfaced significant changes in calculation and estimation methodologies. Several methodological manuals and technical notes detail the changes to these methods. For example, UNICEF's and UNESCO Institute for Statistics' (UIS) 2015 *Global Out-of-School Children Initiative Operational Manual*, Educate A Child's 2019 document *Inclusion: Counting and Accounting for Out of School Children*, and the 2019 fact sheet produced by UIS, *New Methodology Shows that 258 Million Children, Adolescents and Youth Are Out of School*.

In summary, the OOSC calculation and estimation methods vary amongst key duty bearer stakeholders, and they have changed over time, as would be appropriate.

Key duty bearers

The critical duty bearer stakeholders are as follows. They are not in any purposeful order:

UIS holds the mandate for reporting on the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG).

UNICEF, which along with UIS, co-led the Out-of-School Children Initiative, with Global Partnership for Education funding, from 2010-2016. The initiative is alternately known as "All In School: The Global Initiative on Out-of-School Children." UNICEF is leading the modification of the 2015-2016 era of OOSC calculation methodology guidance documents. Notably, it is also a strategic partner of the Educate A Child (EAC) platform. As detailed in its 2019 piece on inclusion, it also focuses on accurately capturing and providing services to OOSC.

Governments capture census and other data that contribute to calculations of their school-age populations via their Education Management Information Systems (EMIS) using enrolment and related education statistics.

Other stakeholders who engage with the topic might see it as part of their institutional mandate include (I)NGOs, civil society organisations (CSO), and related advocacy organisations with education as part of their remit.

Data sourcing
The following primary data is used to estimate OOSC and CRODO.[1]

Administrative data
Census figures and other population estimates
School-age population figures come from population data contained in census figures. This data is used to calculate gross and net enrolment rates.

UIS uses population data collected by the UN's Department of Economic and Social Affairs' Population Dynamics' World Population Prospects. However, it is essential to note that this data might differ from the population data that governments use. Governments may rely primarily on census data, and censuses are conducted infrequently, with every 10 years being an international standard often difficult to meet. Population estimates can take place more frequently, and for the UN this is usually at mid-year. UNDP population estimates may differ from those produced nationally for many reasons. In the case of discrepancies between national and international population estimates, the UIS may use national population estimates following an agreement with concerned countries. Because school-age population figures for one country might vary between the UIS and that country's government and thus, OOSC and CRODO figures might also differ.

EMIS data
Ministries of education (MOE) almost always have some system for collecting and managing education-related information. The profiles of these systems can fall along a continuum, ranging from highly digitised to hard copy forms, from highly centralised to decentralised, those that contain "live" data to those that are updated only periodically, along with other considerations.[2] Countries in which EiCC activities are taking place likely fall at the end of this continuum in which any available EMIS data is more likely to be fragmented at best.

Household and other local-level data
These tools provide data that can help validate administrative data and provide contextual data that can improve understanding of the circumstances of OOSC and CRODO. They are instrumental in informing nuanced policy recommendations.

Household surveys
This data comes in many forms. The most commonly used tool for collecting household-level data relevant for this study is UNICEF's multiple indicator cluster surveys (MICS). Stakeholders use MICS data to triangulate and estimate enrolment and attendance data. They also use it to understand the nature of children's engagement in formal learning and what factors influence them (such as household income and parent/caregiver education levels). In addition, WFP uses household surveys called mobile Vulnerability Analysis and Mapping (mVAM) as part of its targeting efforts, inclusive of SFP. These surveys are familiar sources of targeting data for

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[1] It is common for reliable OOSC figures to only be available long after the close of the school year (even years after). For example, the Kingdom of Jordan's and UNICEF's 2020 OOSC in Jordan report is for the 2017/2018 school year. Data is thus often dated.

[2] UIS and the Global Partnership for Education have developed EMIS user's and buyer's guides as a means of supporting improved data quality. They may be found here (http://emis.uis.unesco.org/buyers-and-users-guide/).

general food distribution and cash transfers, but targeting for school feeding, might vary from country to country and not incorporate all questions asked for the other modalities.

Other surveys

Data collection, such as that which occurs through Education Cluster or Working Group activities, to inform documents like UNICEF's Situation Reports or other forms of needs assessments, can help inform OOSC and at-risk of drop out figures. Tools such as the GEC's Joint Education Needs Assessment and USAID's Rapid Education and Risk Analysis can provide such information. Other bespoke tools developed by agencies for their OOSC and at risk of drop-out programming purposes, including those influenced by these GEC and USAID tools, can also be useful sources.

Classification of OOSC and CRODO

There are three main components of classification for the OOSC and children at risk of drop-out (CRODO) cohorts.

Visibility

Figures are presented based on visibility status: visible, semi-visible, or invisible OOSC and CRODO.[3] Logically, figures for visible children are easiest to capture. They come primarily from administrative data, but can also come from household surveys and census data. Data regarding semi-visible children can be sourced from both administrative data and household and other survey data. Figures for invisible children are more likely to be estimates based on the above two categories and other anecdotal data. Theoretically, desk research can surface reliable visible data. However, ethical, participatory, field level, primary data is always of value. Reliable semi-visible data naturally requires primary data but can be complemented with secondary data. Data on invisible cohorts requires primary data and should rely on a wide range of sources far beyond the education sector.

The International Standard Classification of Education (ISCED)

The International Standard Classification of Education (ISCED) developed and maintained by UIS is used to ensure international comparability of data by education level. These levels include: pre-primary (ISCED 0), primary (ISCED 1, which includes lower and upper, which UIS does not break down, but which is used by some countries either formally or informally), secondary (including lower-ISCED 2-and upper-ISCED 3), and post-secondary education (ISCED 4-8). This study used ISCED 0-3 levels. OOSC figures by cycle/mapped to ISCED may differ between UIS and national reports in part simply because of nomenclature, but for other more complicated reasons. These include the use of different population data and calculation methods, as well as politically driven reasons.

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[3] Defining these terms is complicated. They are detailed in the Terms and Concepts section of the Quick Reference Guide under "Continuum of exclusion" and "(The) visibility model." Visibility refers to the ease or feasibility of identifying or otherwise estimating OOSC. This study technically presents figures of invisible OOSC, but because they are estimable (subtracting enrolment from known school age population estimates), the study presents them as visible. This approach contrasts with official definitions. The study does not report on figures of CRODO.

Dimensions of exclusion

The UNICEF and UIS introduced the concept of dimensions of exclusion in 2015 during the last major global update of the calculation methods framework and guidance, the Operational Manual of the Global Out-of-School Children Initiative.[i] As detailed in point 3.1 on page four below, the Five Dimensions of Exclusion (5DE) Model, will likely be replaced in 2022 with a model identifying seven dimensions of exclusions (7DE), which will include upper secondary school OOSC and CRODO. The 5DE model identified the following classifications, bringing together cohorts and their engagement status. Sourcing data for and reporting on the sub-categories for Dimensions 2 and 3 are understandably difficult and require household-level data. These classifications also require an ability to secure data for semi-visible and invisible children. Sourcing data for and then reporting on Dimensions 4 and 5 is understandably tricky and needs reliable school-level EMIS data and household data.

Dimension 1*:* Children of pre-primary age who are not in pre-primary or primary school.

Dimension 2: Children of primary school-age who are not in primary or secondary school, characterised as one of the following:
- Attended but dropped out
- Will never enter
- Will enter late

Dimension 3*:* Children of lower secondary school-age who are not in primary or secondary school, characterised as one of the following:
- Attended but dropped out
- Will never enter
- Will enter late

Dimension 4: Children of primary school-age in primary school but at risk of dropping out.

Dimension 5: Children of lower secondary school-age in lower secondary school but at risk of dropping out.

Shifts in calculation methods over time

The calculation methods have changed over time as education sector investments have shifted. These changes track from the focus on universal primary education (UPE) in the post-Jomtien era (1990-2000) to shifts made to promote UNESCO's Education For All (EFA) initiative in the post-Dakar Framework For Action era (2000-2015) and further since the establishment of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in 2015. UIS' 2019 fact sheet explaining a shift in methodology*, New Methodology Shows that 258 Million Children, Adolescents and Youth Are Out of School*, accurately and succinctly explains the relevant calculation methods shifts during this time frame.

Before 2005

The main focus was on the primary net enrolment rate. Subtracting this figure from 1 thus theoretically secured the OOS population for the critical cohort at that time, primary school children. Those of primary school age enrolled in secondary were counted as OOS.

2005-2009

To address the issue with counting primary school-age children enrolled in secondary school, the calculation shifted. It identified the absolute number of primary school-age children out-of-school as:(primary school-age population)-(the number of primary school-age children enrolled in primary education or enrolled in secondary education). This enabled those of primary school-age that are enrolled in lower secondary as in school. A new indicator (Adjusted NER in primary education) was thus introduced.

2010-2015

Refinements to data estimation methods continued. Three major changes occurred during this timeframe. Notably, these changes facilitated the collection of more information about the engagement of pre-primary and primary school age children in formal education, but decreased the ability to use these cycle-specific figures to assess education sector efficiency.

First, OOSC estimates were calculated for pre-primary, primary, and lower secondary school age populations. Prior to this change, children of primary school-age that were enrolled in pre-primary education used to be considered as OOS as they were not either in primary or lower secondary. Thus, UIS included children one year below the official entrance into primary school in its population calculation. As a result, if a child aged one year before the official primary education entry age is not enrolled in either pre-primary or primary education, that child is counted as OOS.

Additionally, those of lower secondary school age enrolled in primary, secondary, post-secondary non-tertiary, or tertiary education were counted as being in school.

Finally, in 2010, in addition to introducing out-of-school rates for lower secondary and pre-primary, the use of adjusted net attendance rate (ANAR) using household survey data was promoted.

2016-2018

The Adjusted Gender Parity Index (GPIA)[4] was introduced and data published using this new formulation of the GPI from 2017. in 2018, the upper secondary out-of-school rate was introduced, and OOS rates redefined as the share of children, adolescents, and youth of primary, lower secondary, and upper secondary school age who are not enrolled in pre-primary, primary, secondary, or post-secondary education. The transition from MDGs to SDGs precipitated this change via an expanded interest in pre-primary education. However, as a result of this change, there was virtually no change in the OOSC trends, suggesting that OOSC figures have stopped the declining trend seen during the earlier years of the OOSCI reporting period.

Anticipated changes after 2021

Two global efforts currently underway relate to OOSC estimation methods.

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[4] If the female value of an indicator is less than or equal to the male value, the unadjusted and adjusted GPI are identical and calculated by dividing the female value of an indicator by the male value of the same indicator. If the female value is greater than the male value: adjusted GPI = 2 - 1 / (female value / male value). (The World Bank, 2020).

Effort 1

Led by UNICEF with support from UIS, ILO, and the World Bank (WB) to update the methodological guidance last published in the 2015-2016 period under the auspices of the Global Partnership for Education (GPE)-funded OOSCI. UNICEF will produce this iteration. The envisioned changes at the time of the writing of this report focus on the following, listed in no particular order:

1. Data sourcing and validation partnership considerations:
    1.1. Providing recommendations on how to enhance engagement of government actors in the collection of such data for international purposes, focusing on improving opportunities for and successfully obtaining their collaboration during OOSC study preparation and report writing.
2. Indicator modifications
    2.1. The addition of indicators
    2.2. The modification of some existing indicators.
    2.3. Modifications to computing methodologies for some of the existing indicators.
3. Upper secondary (school-aged) cohort considerations
    3.1. The addition of formal dimensions of exclusion (D6 and D7, to reflect those overage, OOSC, and/or those at risk of dropping out) for the upper secondary cycle, as well as guidance on methods for calculation thereof, noting that this level is not compulsory in most of the EiCC areas of work.
    3.2. Incorporating the Not In Education, Employment, or Training (NEET) indicator as a means of capturing that some within this cohort may be on a track to leave upper secondary school before completing it in order to work.
4. Considerations for the impact of COVID-19
    4.1. as a factor of exclusion.
    4.2. Lessons learned from remote learning, including how to apply them to the challenges and needs of reaching children who were OOS before the COVID-19 pandemic.
5. Looking at links between OOSC figures and those at risk of drop-out and the learning crisis.
6. A particular focus on the learning crisis as a factor in drop-out, through the lenses of, at least the following: a) poor perceptions of the value of education; b) sub-optimal schooling pathways; c) repetition; and d) being overage. This component suggests the introduction of assessment of learning outcomes based on minimum proficiency levels.
7. Identifying how to strengthen the connection between the available evidence on OOSC and CRODO and policy recommendations based on them. This component is likely to include:
    7.1. A review-through a structured and systemic framework-of current policy coverage of the topic of OOSC and those at risk of drop-out, including the effectiveness of existing policy efforts as well as any identifiable gaps;
    7.2. A review of the process of developing and sharing policy recommendations. This effort will include a broad participatory method. This method will surface key evidence, such as the profiles of OOSC and CRODO and critical barriers. This information can be jointly analysed and validated and used to identify and elevate appropriate responses.

Effort 2

The INEE Data Reference Group for Education in Emergencies leads the second effort, co-chaired by UIS and ECW. This effort focuses on refining and standardising methods for estimating global figures of OOSC in emergency contexts. Other key leaders of this effort include UNESCO-GEM and UNICEF. The goal of this effort will be to produce figures regularly as a global good.

Since the launch of the OOSCI framework and guidance during the 2015-2016 period, "official" OOSC studies—namely those produced by UNICEF and UNESCO, have relied mainly upon the 5DE methodology for their studies. However, the sector has introduced some modifications. An example is the recent OOSC study conducted in Turkey, which included Dimensions 6 and 7 (though they are not yet officially part of the guidance).[5]

This report's estimation method

The report focuses only on OOSC figures between 2015 and 2019. It uses the existing OOSC calculation methodology, last modified by UIS in 2018. It calculates invisible children, as defined by UNICEF and UIS in 2016 [ii,iii] as detailed in the Terms and Concepts section of the Quick Reference Guide. It identifies an OOSC as a child or youth not enrolled in formal, pre-tertiary education. In other words it goes beyond both the Five Dimensions and Seven Dimensions of Exclusion models, and includes pre-primary through upper secondary cycles. It does not provide estimates for OOSC in 2020, nor does it try to capture figures for children out of learning as a result of COVID-19.

Findings related to OOSC estimation methods

Findings area 1 There are notable data quality and validity issues

The global OOSC framework documents and manuals produced in the 2015-2016 period provide a practical and significant level of detail about the types of challenges faced in sourcing appropriate and reliable data. This section summarises some key considerations, including current efforts described above to update estimation and calculation methodology effect.

Finding 1.1 OOSC data is political and can be politicised

When reviewing OOSC or CRODO figures, consider the data source. This step is important

1. regardless of any data reliability and methods concerns
2. because of the inherently political nature of education and education-related data
3. in particular for government-sourced data, but might also apply to data presented by other institutions.
4. because OOSC and CRODO data might come from institutions other than ministries of education (to include those that have a mandate for women and children, health, social service provision, labour, and others). Different institutions may view these cohorts and their constituents differently and have reasons for elevating or marginalising data points thereabouts.

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[5] It is appropriate to estimate all 7DE, regardless of which cycles of education are compulsory in a particular country. This practice provides a clear profile of engagement in education and enables targeted policy making and programming. It is important to present clearly what dimensions have been estimated and what cycles are compulsory.

Finding 1.2 Efforts to foster international comparability of data creates parallel tracks of OOSC data, one at the global level and one at the national level

UIS' mandate to capture and present SDG data requires it to, as previously noted, use a single population calculation method as well as to harmonise how it calculates school-age cohorts. Its ISCED system provides a means for the latter, and its use of UN Population Statistics data enables the former. However, this practice means that while its data provides a means for international comparability, this data might not align with the same type of data country governments present.

Finding 1.3 Institutional mandates differ, and these differences influence data collection and presentation

Related to the point about data politicisation, entities such as UNESCO and UNICEF also have different mandates that influence how they engage with the topic of OOSC and CRODO. As previously noted, UIS' focus is on international comparability and facilitating progress reporting on the SDGs. The focus is naturally on feeding in quantitative data about visible OOSC figures by the ISCED cohort. In contrast, UNICEF's interest might be characterised as more granular qualitative data. This characterisation is based on UNICEF's broader mandate and presence at the field level. This data can identify children in the

1 semi-visible and invisible categories

2 Dimensions 2-3

3 Dimensions 4-5

The Educate A Child programme, for example, focuses on sourcing such data and targeting their programming thereupon. Though perhaps a minor note, UNESCO and UNICEF categorise at least one country of note to this study-Turkey-differently. UNESCO has shifted its internal classifications as of 2020, meaning that regional comparisons need to be thoughtfully analysed. Until 2020, UNESCO included all seven study countries in a geographic category called "Northern African and Western Asia." Now, figures for Turkey are part of the Central and Eastern Europe region, and the other six study countries are in their new "Arab States" geographic categorisation. UNICEF also includes Turkey in its Europe and Central Asia geographic grouping.[iv] The World Population Programme uses cohort age groupings for its population figures, such as 0-1, 0-14, 3-4, etc.; this practice is changing in the near term.[v]

Conclusions and Recommendations Area 1 OOSC estimation methods
Conclusion 1 Estimating visible OOSC figures is challenging; identifying less visible populations is even harder

Summary: Estimating the number of visible OOSC is incredibly difficult to do. This finding is notable, considering that, amongst figures relevant to children disconnected from or at risk of dropping out of school, these figures are the most accessible figure to source.

Challenges include data and data source availability, reliability, validity, and fidelity. The implications of such significant challenges for visible OOSC figures suggest even greater concerns about collecting data for semi-visible and invisible cohorts. Theoretically, invisible OOSC would be more challenging to identify than the semi-visible OOSC.

For CRODO, access to reliable data would be dependent on factors such as the availability and quality of EMIS or related systems, MICS or similar survey data, and even the use of formative assessment and teacher fidelity in applying appropriate methods of such assessment. Moreover, in most of the contexts of this study, especially in those hosting conflict (Yemen and Libya) followed by those more recently affected by crisis and with lower resources to mitigate their impact (Lebanon and Iraq), such data sourcing would be complicated and costly.

Notably, whatever access and systems were in place before COVID-19 would likely have been negatively affected because of it. The impact of economic downturns on both supply and demand-side factors of the sector is a significant one. On the supply side, the lower tax basis and other forms of sourcing funds in both donor countries and national governments will likely reduce the already low allocation of funds to education. On the demand side, households vulnerable before the pandemic are likely to have even fewer resources to invest in education after it.

Recommendation 1.1 Agree to place value on and use "good enough" data

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Priority 1

Affiliated area of inquiry OOSC figures and profiles

Recommendations most relevant to

Examples of most relevant stakeholder(s) UNICEF, UIS, Educate a Child, Save the Children

Action Type Policymaking, advocacy

Action 1.1 Agree as a community that good enough data about the priority needs (cohorts, vulnerable populations, geographic preponderance, etc.) of OOSC and CRODO out are sufficient to indicate which investments to make

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Rationale Perfection is the enemy of the good, and good data is sufficient to help identify promising opportunities for improved engagement of these populations. The data surfaced about the profiles of these populations does not tend to be surprising, regardless of whether the population data used is from the UN or that from (most) internationally recognised governments. For example, girls are more likely to drop out over time than boys in most contexts. In most contexts, most displaced populations are better able to access education in camps than in informal settlements, and urbanisation is, in fact, the trend now for both host and displaced people.

Recommendation 1.2 Explore innovations in data collection methods that will secure good enough data in a cost-effective and efficient way

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Priority 1

Affiliated area of inquiry OOSC figures and profiles

Recommendations most relevant to

[🔍 Researchers or Data Scientists] [🌐 Global Education Cluster]

Examples of most relevant stakeholder(s) UNICEF, UIS, Educate a Child

Action Type Research

Action 1.2 Explore open-source, crowdsourcing, artificial intelligence (AI), and other innovations in data sourcing and propose modifications to traditional practices

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Rationale The traditional methods for sourcing and analysing data that feed into OOSC and CRODO calculations may indeed be the most politically appropriate and in line with standards for rigour. Still, they might not be the most suitable to reach populations in need in a timely way. For example, census data might be collected infrequently (or might not be feasible to collect in crisis areas). MICS surveys provide rich and nuanced data but are significant undertakings. Both traditionally rely on face-to-face data collection.

Researchers who work in crisis-affected contexts, and anyone researching the closures of the COVID-19 pandemic, know that while imperfect-there are methods for securing fairly reliable and representative data that do not require traditional in-person and face-to-face data collection. These methods also help elevate local ownership of research, putting people already in or near data collection sites in positions of responsibility.

Open-source tools for data collection, such as KoBo, allow offline data collection that can be automatically updated and synced with backend databases when the internet is available. In addition, communication platforms that have functionality in low bandwidth areas can serve as facilitating agents for remote video interviews. So too can low-bandwidth friendly chat functions, allowing for remote consultations.

While the recommendation to explore crowdsourcing data, including via proxy indicators, has been considered and analysed within the community, it remains controversial. Nevertheless,

entities such as the UN's Global Pulse have explored using "Big Data" and artificial intelligence to advance global social impact. Their methods and personnel borrow from Big Tech, which pioneered such methods for corporate advantage and profit. Examples of innovative data collection methods in development and humanitarian programming include

1 the use of drones to monitor possible acts of genocide in Asia and as monitoring and evaluation tools for otherwise incentive-based reforestation programmes in East Africa.

2 one of the Global Pulse's earliest efforts; they sought to land on the same market value of a unit of rice in Indonesia for a specific year, an effort that traditionally took one year using traditional government-led processes. Global Pulse instead used proxy indicators and social media scans to source that figure in a significantly shorter period accurately.[vi]

Recommendation 1.3 Expand and improve collaboration amongst the actors involved, including partners from other sectors such as the child protection area of responsibility and ministries responsible for social welfare and refugees

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Priority 1

Affiliated area of inquiry OOSC figures and profiles

Recommendations most relevant to

Donors National Governments Researchers or Data Scientists (I)NGOs

Global Education Cluster

Examples of most relevant stakeholder(s) UNICEF, UIS, Educate a Child, GEC, Save the Children

Action Type Advocacy, coordination

Action 1.3 explore the means for collaboration that break down institutional systems, tools, and remits that serve as barriers to collaboration and thus enhance opportunities for improvements to the timely collection and sharing of reliable data

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Rationale Consider the role that other ministries, and related agencies, beyond MOE, play in identifying and supporting vulnerable populations that are inherently more likely to have OOS or children in-school and at-risk of drop out. These include but are not limited to ministries of sport, youth, labour, and women. Using open-source tools can contribute to improved collaboration. This suggestion holds even if they cannot be the platform for information sharing. Instead, these tools can at least facilitate information sharing, using low bandwidth means of communicating, and enabling asynchronous and remote forms of engagement and meeting (rather than traditional and often high-cost face to face)

Recommendation 1.4 While exploring innovations in data collection methods, maintain the commitment to rigour and to expanding the means of identifying the most vulnerable populations

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Priority 1

Affiliated area of inquiry OOSC figures and profiles

Recommendations most relevant to

National Governments   Researchers or Data Scientists   (I)NGOs   Global Education Cluster

Examples of most relevant stakeholder(s) UNICEF, UIS, Educate a Child, GEC, Save the Children

Action Type Advocacy, coordination

Action 1.4 Agree to anticipate and accept cognitive dissonance amongst policymakers and data scientists regarding shifts to OOSC estimation methods and maintain a common goal of sound OOSC estimation practices that are both evidence-based and innovations-led.

Rationale The principles that frame humanitarian work, including the humanitarian imperative and the do no harm principle, as well as ethical commitments such as duty of care, likely will and must remain central to any strategies to secure reliable data on OOSC and CRODO. Examples of past such efforts include:

- modifying methods to pursue such goals include the ongoing expansion of the then five dimensions of exclusion to the now anticipated seven dimensions of exclusion;
- developing considerations of the visibility in the traditional datasets and efforts thereupon to unearth "hidden" OOSC figures, and
- including steps to track and enumerate CRODO.

Balancing the commitment to rigour with the pursuit of timely and reliable data that is good enough to tell the story of investment needs will be a difficult one. It is unlikely that data scientists and policymakers can harmonise their goals to this end. However, intentional acceptance of likely cognitive dissonance and acceptance of different approaches to a common goal might allow for both evidence-based and innovation-led methodological breakthroughs.

Recommendation 1.5 Expand open source-based, light touch access to data collection tools and management systems that a variety of stakeholders can use

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Affiliated area of inquiry OOSC figures and profiles

Recommendations most relevant to

National Governments | Researchers or Data Scientists | (I)NGOs | Global Education Cluster

Examples of most relevant stakeholder(s) UNICEF, UIS, Educate a Child, GEC, Save the Children

Action Type Advocacy, coordination, policymaking

Action 1.5 Invest in EMIS systems that can facilitate more reliable real-time data about student participation and retention and ensuring that these data collection tools collect school level-level data and can speak to those in other relevant sectors

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[i] UNICEF. (2015). *Operational Manual of the Global Out-of-School Children Initiative.* Accessed via (http://uis.unesco.org/sites/default/files/documents/global-out-of-school-initiative-operational-manual-2015-en_0.pdf.)

[ii] UNICEF and UIS. (2016) *The visibility model of out-of-school children and children at risk of dropping out.* Accessed via http://uis.unesco.org/sites/default/files/documents/rws_windhoek2016_10._uis_oosci_qt-and-selected-indicators.pdf.

[iii] UNICEF and UIS (2016). *Monitoring Education Participation: Framework for Monitoring Children and Adolescents who are Out of School or at Risk of Dropping Out.* UNICEF Series on Education Participation and Dropout Prevention, Vol I. Geneva: UNICEF Regional Office for Central and Eastern Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent States.

[iv] UNICEF. (n.d.-a) *Eastern and Central Asia: Where we work.*

[v] United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Population Division (2019). *World Population Prospects 2019*, Online Edition. Rev. 1.

[vi] Personal Communication, 2011.

Desk Study: Main Trends and Analysis on Out of School Children in the Middle East and North Africa Region

2015 - 2020

ANNEX 1

STUDY TERMS OF REFERENCE

WFP – Save the Children – UNICEF REGIONAL DESK REVIEW ON OOSC

Desk Study on Main Trends and Analysis on Out of School Children
in Middle East and North Africa Region

Terms of Reference

November 2020

1. Introduction

The Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region presents some of the most complex and diverse development and humanitarian challenges in the world, including inequitable development pathways, resource scarcity, limited production potential, dependence on food imports, increasing poverty, double burden of malnutrition, and conflict-induced crises that have caused the largest displacement and refugee crisis since World War II. It is largely in view of these factors that millions of primary and secondary aged children are out of school.

Prior to the COVID-19 crisis, an estimated 15 million children in the MENA region between the ages of 5-14 were out of school, while 10 million were in school but at risk of dropping out due to poverty and social marginalization, as well as migration, displacement and disruption of infrastructure caused by conflict[1]. As a consequence of the COVID 19 crisis, this number is expected to increase by an additional 1.31 million children unlikely to return to their education institutions in the Arab states, unless urgent and appropriate actions are taken.

Over the last years, UNICEF and UNESCO have conducted Out of School Children (OOSC) studies in a number of countries and the factors that cause them. Yet, there is a need for an up to date and comprehensive regional overview of the situation of out of school children in the MENA region that includes an assessment of the impact of COVID-19 on participation and learning. Similarly, there is a need to review policies and programmatic interventions in light of new realities to make sure they address the underlying causes of why children are not in school and/or learning.

The World Food Programme, Save the Children and UNICEF are therefore jointly commissioning a desk research on Out of School Children (OOSC) in the MENA region with a focus on main trends (data and policies in place to reach out to OOSC), key barriers to participation and retention in learning, impact of existing policies and challenges and opportunities in the coming years to reduce the number of OOSC. This exercise will cover the period from 2015-2020 and aims to contribute to the debate on Building Back Better education systems through rethinking education and or to transform education systems, make them more flexible and innovative for reaching out-of-school that are inclusive and equitable in terms of access, participation, retention and learning outcomes. The study will build on and complement other studies done, and ongoing in this area, for example the simulation model from the WB to estimate learning loss due to COVID19. Finally, the present study

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[1] UNICEF, https://www.unicef.org/mena/out-school-children#:~:text=Nearly%2015%20million%20children%20between,toll%20on%20children%20and%20youth.

will offer a unique opportunity to enhance the growing demand for new data and international comparative data, while existing national education statistical infrastructures are not prepared to provide accurate data on national education response to COVID-19 nor to generate up-to-date evidence needed at country level to gauge the effectiveness and appropriateness of national response and education systems that include multiple pathways. More importantly, the monitoring and evaluation systems need to be more adaptive to flexible ways of delivering education. The findings of the study will inform a possible M&E methodological framework update and or development to guide data collection at country level.

2. Rationale and Objectives

2.1. Rationale

This study is primarily commissioned as a learning exercise, to document and analyze main trends of Out of School Children, understand the impact of policies and programmes in place on access, retention and learning, including School Feeding in the MENA region, programmes working with OOSC and in schools, and fill in the knowledge gaps. Commissioning this joint study between WFP, Save the Children and UNICEF has been decided based on common programming areas and needs for information, as well as, as a quality practice of data collection.

2.2. Objectives

The study will analyze why girls and boys aged 5-17 are not attending formal and non-formal education facilities in up to 7 countries and how COVID-19 has impacted the prevalence of OOSC in Iraq, Libya, OPT, Yemen, as well as Syrian Refugees in neighboring countries (I.e. Jordan, Lebanon and Turkey). In order to have a comprehensive view of the barriers and trends of OOSC, the study will explore along the socio-ecological continuum covering the following levels: policies, systems, communities, families and lastly out of school boys and girls. With this framework as a guiding principle, the study aims to result in following:

- **Update of the trends on data regarding OOSC pre-COVID-19**:
  Key areas for the research to focus on may include:
  - o The study will review data for OOSC available in the countries throughout the MENA region (I.e. number of OOSC pre-COVID19, percentage of OOSC boys and girls, trends in the 2015-2020 time period, etc.)
- **Assessment of the access barriers on participation and retention that OOSC face**
  Key areas for the research to focus on may include:
  - o It will review if, why and how COVID19 has contributed to increasing the number of OOSC (i.e. preventing children who were out of school before to re-enroll, children previously at risk of dropping out that actually dropped out, etc.)
  - o As part of this review, it will focus on any other specific barriers that exist (gender, disability, ethnicity, socio-economic condition, displaced/migrant/refugee/IDP status or other forms of heightened vulnerability).
  - o It will unpack to what extent demand side barriers vs demand for quality education by communities affect participation and retention in learning
  - o It will explore how government policies (pre and post COVID) address the OOSC issue, their impact on reducing OOSC, and compare governments' response across the MENA region.
  - o It will have a specific focus on those policies and strategies that have been put in place within the context of reopening schools (as part of the regional call for Back to learning)
  - o As part of this, it will systematize policies/strategies/decisions taken by Govt to address the negative impact of COVID on children in terms of:

- Access
- Participation and retention
- Learning
- Protection

- A **specific focus will be on the role of joint initiatives and programmes specifically targeting OOSC (before and during COVID)**.
Key areas for the research to focus on may include:
  - The study will assess whether (joint) initiatives and programmes specifically targeting OOSC (pre and post COVID), i.e. holistic package of (joint) interventions including school feeding programmes, have an impact on enrolment, attendance and/or dropout rates

- **Identification of data gaps/recommendations for further studies**

3. Context

A survey conducted by UNESCO[2] on over 180 countries highlights that, following the education disruption due to COVID-19, about 24 million learners, from pre-primary to university level, are at risk of not returning to school in 2020. The 24 million estimated by UNESCO are in addition to the 258 million children and youth of primary and secondary school age who were already out-of-school prior to the crisis. In the MENA region the estimated number of out of school children prior to the COVID19 pandemic was 15, which could rise by an additional 1.31 million of at risk students who will be unlikely to return to their education institutions unless urgent and appropriate actions are taken.

WFP school feeding has traditionally focused on access to education especially in context where there are large numbers of out-of-school children, gender disparities persist, and school feeding – with other interventions – can help to draw hard-to-reach children into the education system. Strong evidence shows that school feeding can act as an incentive to enhance enrolment and reduce absenteeism and drop out, especially for girls. While WFP's commitment to OOSC is explicitly mentioned in the corporate SF strategy, as well as in the Regional Implementation Plan, and while country offices of the countries selected for the present desk research either target OOSC indirectly or are now aiming to develop programmes and activities specifically benefitting out of school children, no programme directly targeting OOSC per se is currently being implemented across the region by WFP.

For Save the Children, based on its global and regional education steer, the MENA Region is an important focus area from education and OOSC perspective. There is a regional learning crisis, and major challenges persist across the MENA Region in regards to quality educational access for the most vulnerable. The inherent barriers to access to education remain numerous in MENA region, with conflicts, social norms and poverty as a few determinants impacting children drop out or lack of accessibility to education. COVID-19 and related measures have further exacerbated this.

Based on the global study that Save the Children conducted in 37 countries, due to COVID-19 related school closures and distance learning programs, more than 8 in 10 children felt that they were learning little or nothing at all, and two thirds of parents and caregivers reported their child had received no contact from teachers since their schools closed. Less than 1% of the poorer children interviewed had access to internet for distance learning. Among households that classified themselves as non-poor, it was 19%. These results are just

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2 https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000373992?locale=en

early indications of the potential impact that COVID-19 has and will have in future on OOSC[3]. In order to respond to these challenges, Save the Children`s Country Strategic Plans and Regional Strategy have the following objective: Vulnerable children will have improved and equitable access and retention in safe quality ECCD and Basic Education with a focus on improved literacy, numeracy and wellbeing outcomes. This is then linked to three main sub-objectives: 1) ECCD -Start Early; 2) Basic Education – Foundational Education; and 3) Non-formal education – uninterrupted learning. Specifically, for this desk research perspective, Save the Children will focus within Basic Education sub objective - Increased access to safe, appropriate and quality Formal learning opportunities designed to measurably improve the learning outcomes and vulnerable children

For WFP, at country level we can observe the following:

The Iraqi Country Office (CO) does not currently target OOSC through its programmes. The national school feeding programme, which is implemented by WFP, targets over 3,000 among the most vulnerable students and their families, distributed over 1,000 schools. Despite the positive effects on attendance of children at school and their participation in class the programme showed, the number of OOSC still remains high. On the basis of the 2018 MICS survey[4], which showed that 68% of girls and 67.9% of boys do not attend early childhood or primary education programmes, the CO has very recently worked with UNICEF on the drafting of a project proposal aimed at encouraging girls' transition from primary to secondary school, which would allow the CO to directly collaborate with UNICEF on OOSC.

In Yemen, despite the fact that school feeding programmes target districts with low education indicators of which a high number of OOSC is a poor education indicators, no intervention is specifically designed to for the benefit of out of school children. The CO is working on preparing the 2020 expansion, which will bring the overall case load from around 680.000 to over 1 million children, who will benefit of the school feeding and healthy kitchen programmes.

In Libya, no specific programme is currently specifically targeting out of school children. In the country, school feeding interventions are being expanded to reach over 40.000 school children, who will receive nutritionally balanced date bars. Despite not having active programmes for the benefit of OOSC, the CO recognizes the need to further expand on the subject and has for this reason, in occasion of the WFP-UNICEF joint Back to Learning Campaign aimed at preventing drop-outs due to the impacts of COVID19, worked on a joint concept note. If implemented, the newly designed programme, will, after having identified and reached out to OOCS, provide catch up classes, take home rations distributions, education supplies/cash support, PPEs and MHPSS to encourage return/enrolment.

The Jordan CO has occasionally reached OOSC through its media and communication campaigns, despite never having a formal and fix role in outreach to out of school children. However, under the joint WFP-UNICEF Back to Learning campaign, the CO contributed to the carrying out of calls to more than 1000 parents and caregivers of OOSC that had been targeted by UNICEF on the basis of pre COVID19 data. The information collected informed a media campaign aimed at motivating parents to send their children back to school and/or making sure they kept being engaged with learning.

In Lebanon, the CO has no active programme directly targeting out of school children. The main objective of school feeding programmes is however to address the critical issue of limited primary education for displaced Syrian and vulnerable Lebanese children mainly by encouraging regular attendance and school retention. SF

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3 The Hidden Impact of COVID-19 on Children:
https://resourcecentre.savethechildren.net/library/hidden-impact-covid-19-children-global-research-series
4 https://www.unicef.org/iraq/media/481/file/MICS6.pdf

interventions target 62 primary schools across Lebanon and reach more than 34,000 Lebanese and Syrian refugee students through the distribution of either daily ready-to-eat snacks or cold sandwiches prepared in the school kitchens. An expansion of the programme through the addition of 12,000 students is planned for the school year 2020-2021.

For Save the Children, the following can be observed concerning in country programmes:
In Iraq, in 2019, a total of 57,615 children (25,770 girls and 31,845 boys aged 3-17) were reached directly through access and quality improvement initiatives in the education sector across Dohuk, Diyala, Kirkuk, Salah al-Din and Ninewa governorates. Save the Children's Early Childhood Care and Development (ECCD) curriculum, integrating Ready to Learn with the national curriculum, was recognized as formal education by the Ministry of Education (MoE) in the Kurdistan Region of Iraq (KRI). Additionally, building on the competencies that SC has globally and in country on psychosocial support and social emotional learning, an ISELA pilot was conducted in 2019.

In Yemen, the current conflict led to a severe toll on children's access to education, depriving them of school and exposing them to greater risks of recruitment to armed groups and child marriage. Currently an estimated 4.7 million children need education assistance including about 2 million out of school children. Over the past years, Save the Children has expanded the education response targeting the most conflict affected, vulnerable areas, groups and individuals in both the north and the south. Out of school children are offered non-formal accelerated learning classes that aim to bring them eventually back to formal school. Similarly, remedial classes are organised for at-risk children. IDPs student are provided with temporary learning spaces (TLS) in their camps or helped to join schools nearest to their settlements.

In Palestine, Save the Children focuses on ECCD, transition to basic education, as well as positive learning experiences within the family. Enhanced resources & infrastructure of 20 schools, based on Risk/Resource Mapping, to become child, disability and gender sensitive and provide safe, inclusive and effective learning environments for all are conducted through the provision of support that was identified by the school management committees.

During the school year 2018/19, 48% of 666,491 Syrian children aged 3-18 in Lebanon were not enrolled in any form of learning, and 58% were outside the formal education system. Many children have never been to school or had their education interrupted for a long time, SC invested in removing barriers to education and improving retention. SC provided vulnerable boys and girls (age 3 – 18), many of them out of school, with quality and inclusive education services in protective learning environments, ensuring that they have opportunities to learn, thrive and develop their full potential.

There are over 1,047,999 school-age refugee children in Turkey; among them 40% remain out of school due to e.g. lack of affordable transportation, overcrowded classrooms, lack of materials and infrastructure, peer-bullying and challenges in registration to school. The South-East region of Turkey hosts 45% of the Syrian refugees, in provinces located near Turkish-Syrian border. To address this issue, Save the Children is working to provide school transportation to girls and boys in Hatay province. This includes both transportation to school during the school semester and transportation to summer schools to further support refugee children's integration in Turkish public educational system.

4. Deliverables

The research team will be responsible for the following deliverables:

DELIVERABLES	KEY DATE
Inception report	January 2021
Final report	May 2021
Dissemination event	June 2021

5. Methodology

The methodology of this evaluation should rely on mixed-methods approaches, using both secondary and primary sources of data, through triangulation of sources, methods and target groups for comprehensive and in-depth understanding. The methods should incorporate participatory, child-friendly and gender sensitive approaches of data collection and analysis. Child safeguarding principles and practices should be the basis for all activities. This will be guaranteed through using desk research of existing consultations with OOSC and communities (during phase 1) and will be further strengthened through participatory methods during phase 2 (see below).

It is envisioned to have 2 phases of this study, given COVID-19 and related restrictions in most of the countries of interest:

Phase 1 – This will include provision of main trends, analysis and background based on the secondary data (from desk research) and some primary data with key informants.

Phase 2 – Once the first phase will be completed, the commissioners of this data collection, together with stakeholders of this research will discuss and consider the second phase, which will include data collection from out of school children, caregivers and communities. This consultation part is extremely important to gain full understanding, however, this TOR is only covering the Phase 1 at this stage.

Secondary data / Desk research: The first phase of the study will be based on review of secondary sources, conducting a desk research of existing similar researches, implemented projects and programmes in the region. The objective of the desk research is to identify existing scholarship of the topic, support in identifying gaps in knowledge and fine tune specific questions and tools that the primary research will rely on. Additionally, the desk research will provide analysis of policies and strategies in these countries concerning out of school children, in order to help formulate policy level initiatives and recommendations. Desk research will be aimed on individual country level, with analysis reflecting on regional level as well.

Consultation with Key Informants: This group will support in understanding some of the gaps from the desk research, as well as provide a holistic perspective. Key informants will include following stakeholders (but is not limited to this group): staff from organizations working with out of school children, social workers, ministry representatives (policy makers responsible for implementation of existing OOSC policies), school representatives, employers, community representatives, etc. The main method used with Key Informants will include qualitative interviews, with a semi or un-structured interview guide, which will be developed for each group of stakeholders individually. The exact type of stakeholders to be interviewed will be developed as the

result of desk research, and the selection will rely on purposeful sampling, with snowball principle used as needed.

Research limitations: COVID-19 restrictions – due to the COVID-19 related restrictions in many countries, the primary data collection is not included as part of the TOR, however it is acknowledged that without consulting with OOSC, caregivers and communities, this study findings are very limiting. This is why the second phase of the study is envisioned for 2021.

Ethics and risks: Before starting the field work, the Risk Assessment will be completed, in order to identify and mitigate any risks. The data collectors will use informed consent and ascent forms and follow the safeguarding principles during the phase 2 when primary data collection will take place.

6. Research Team Composition and Competencies

The research team is expected to include 3 members, including an experienced team leader, a senior researcher , and one data analyst. To the extent possible, the desk research will be conducted by a gender-balanced, geographically and culturally diverse team with appropriate skills to assess gender dimensions of the subject. At least one team member should have experience in conducting desk researches for UN agencies and be fluent in Arabic language.

The team will be multi-disciplinary and include members who together include an appropriate balance of expertise and practical knowledge in the following areas:

- Education in emergencies, including working with Out of School Children

- Child protection and mental health and psychosocial support in emergencies

- School meals programmes;

- Emergency setting in the humanitarian context;

- Food assistance in humanitarian context;

- School meals programmes;

- Expertise within areas of Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (GEWE), monitoring and Protection;

- Familiarity with the conflict context within the MENA region;

- At least one of the team members should be fluent in Arabic to ensure quality in primary data collection;

- All team members should have strong analytical skills, communication skills, and desk research experience.

The **Team leader** will have technical expertise in one of the technical areas listed above as well as expertise in designing methodology and data collection tools and demonstrated experience in leading similar exercises in MENA region preferably. She/he will also have leadership, analytical and communication skills, including a track record of excellent English writing and presentation skills, fluency in Arabic is highly desirable.

Her/his primary responsibilities will be: i) defining the desk research approach and methodology; ii) guiding and managing the team; iii) leading the research mission and representing the research team; iv) drafting and revising, as required, the inception report, the end of work (i.e. exit) debriefing presentation and final report.

The **team members** will bring together a complementary combination of the technical expertise required and have a track record of written work on similar assignments. Team members will: i) contribute to the methodology in their area of expertise based on a document review; ii) participate in team meetings and meetings with stakeholders; iii) contribute to the drafting and revision of the products in their technical area(s).

7. Roles and responsibilities

The three commissioning agencies, **World Food Programme**, **Save the Children and UNICEF**, will be responsible for the following:

a) Assign the co-managers for the exercise (WFP: Matilde Agostini – SF Programme Policy Officer; SC: Ana Kvintradze, Regional MEAL Advisor; UNICEF: Alassane Ouedraogo: Education Specialist);
b) Approve the final ToR,
c) Sign a Field Level Agreement (FLA) between WFP and SCN that will establish and regulate the payment modalities between the two parties for the contracting of the research firm;
d) Select the research team
e) Save the Children Norway will hold the final contract.
f) Approve the inception and final reports;
g) Participate in discussions with the research team on the research design and the research subject, its performance and results with the Research Team Leader and his/her team;
h) Oversee dissemination and follow-up processes.

The focal points appointed as **co-managers** will be responsible for:

a) Manage the research process through all phases;
b) Ensure quality assurance mechanisms are operational (Save the Children);
c) Consolidate and share comments from management on draft ToR, inception and final reports with the research team;
d) Ensure that the research team has access to all documentation and information necessary to the exercise; facilitate the team's contacts with local stakeholders; set up meetings, if required.

A **Reference Group** (see annex 1) is to be formed as part of ensuring the independence and impartiality of the evaluation, composed of WFP, SCI and UNICEF and representation from key internal and external stakeholders. While representatives from the commissioning agencies (WFP, SCI and UNICEF) will guide the exercise, take part in key decisions related to this desk research (I.e. recruitment of research firm, contracting modality, established partnerships, etc.) and will review key documents (I.e. ToR, inception report and final report), the other members of the RG will review and comment on the products, and act as key informants in order to further safeguard against bias and influence.

Annex 1. Reference Group

The main objective of the Reference Group is twofold: 1) provide sign off decision making on key products, and 2) provide technical insights and guarantee technical quality of the study from multiple thematic perspectives. Different individuals are tasked with above mentioned objectives:

	Name	Title	Role
WFP	Kate Newton	DRD Programme	• Take part in key decisions related to this desk research • Review, comment and approve key documents
	Rebecca Lamade	Head of Programme	
	Maria Tsvetkova	Head of School Feeding unit	
SCI	Cathy Emery	Regional PDQ Director	
	Emily Durkin	Senior Advisor, Education in Emergencies	
UNICEF	Adriana Vogelaar		
WFP	Andrea Castorina	Regional Programme Policy Officer (Humanitarian Response)	• Technical review and comment on the products • Act as key informants in order to further safeguard against bias and influence
	Intisar Birkia	Head of Gender Unit	
	Siddarth Krishnaswamy	Head of VAM Unit	
SCI	Samar Ali	Regional Child Protection Advisor	
	Natalia Tapies	Adolescent and Youth Advisor	
	Marta Petagna	Regional MHPSS Advisor	
	Dianah Nelsen	Senior Regional Education Advisor	
UN Agencies	Hana Yoshimoto	UNESCO Regional Office	
	Andreas Blom	World Bank	
	Irina Isomova	UNHCR Regional Office	
Regional Education Coordination Group	Theresa Curran	NRC Regional Education Advisor	

Desk Study: Main Trends and Analysis on Out of School Children in the Middle East and North Africa Region

2015 - 2020

ANNEX 2

INCEPTION REPORT

equitas education   Save the Children   World Food Programme   unicef

Desk Study
Main Trends and Analysis on
Out of School Children in the Middle East and North Africa Region

Inception Report

Submitted to Save the Children Norway/Redd Barna
3 February 2021

Revision submitted: 24 February 2021

equitas education

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Acronyms

3RP	Regional Refugee and Resilience Plan
AGTC	[Abu Ghazaleh Translation Company](#)
AOI	Area of Inquiry
COVID-19	Coronavirus Disease-2019
CV	Curriculum Vitae
CVA	Cash and voucher assistance
DFID	Department for International Development
DPFP	Data Protection Focal Point
EC	European Commission
ECCD	Early Childhood Care and Development
ECW	Education Cannot Wait
EMIS	Education Management Information System
EU	European Union
FE	Formal Education
GDPR	General Data Protection Regulation
GEC	Global Education Cluster
GEM	Global Education Monitoring
GPE	Global Partnership for Education
IDP	Internally Displaced Person
IFPRI	International Food Policy Research Initiative
ILO	International Labour Organisation
IMO	Information Management Officers
INGO	International Non-governmental Organisation
IOM	International Organisation of Migration
IRG	Internationally Recognised Government
ISCED	International Standard Classification of Education
KI	Key Informant
KII	Key Informant Interview
LSCE	Life Skills and Citizenship Education
MENA	Middle East and North Africa
MENARO	Middle East and North Africa Regional Office
MHPSS	Mental Health and Psychosocial Support
MICS	Multiple Indicator Cluster Surveys
MOE	Ministry of Education
NFE	Non-formal Education
NGO	Non-governmental Organisation
NLG	No Lost Generation
NRC	Norwegian Refugee Council
OECD	Organisation of Education Cooperation and Development
OOS	Out of School
OOSC	Out of School Child(ren)

OOSCI	Out of School Children Initiative
RO	Regional Office
SBCC	Social and behaviour change communication
SWOT	Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats
TBC	To Be Confirmed
TOR	Terms of Reference
UIS	UNESCO Institute of Statistics
UN	United Nations
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organisation
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
WB	World Bank
WFP	World Food Programme

1. Background to the study

1.1 Context

Children living in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region are exposed to various types of challenges to opportunities for healthy physical, social, emotional, and cognitive development. These challenges range from the impacts of poverty, to violence and conflict. The region is host to a significant number of humanitarian crises, and notably those that revolve around protracted crisis, starting with one of the longest running modern day displacement crises-that of the Palestinians-to the current protracted crisis emanating out of Syria and Yemen. Both Bronfenbrenner's bioecological systems theory (Guy-Evans, 2020) and political economy analysis (DFID, 2009; Novelli, Higgins, Ugur, and Valiente, 2014 can help to surface the types of challenges that children face in engaging with education in MENA. For example, at each level of Bronfenbrenner's model (chrono-, macro-, exo-, meso-, and micro--systems we can find political and economic (macro or more institutional at the upper layers and more micro or individual/community level) influences on a child's development. These include decisions about how and where resources are allocated via policies, how the formalization of institutions facilitate or serve as barriers to, as well as social and cultural norms as well as values and ideas affect, household decision making regarding a child's developmental pathway. Factors such as generational poverty, (multiple) displacement, resource scarcity, and sociocultural norms that marginalize groups like girls and the differently abled are amongst those that prevent efficient engagement of children in education.

The All in School Initiative (formerly the Out of School Initiative), started in 2010 by UNICEF and UNESCO. By 2015, the initiative had completed 30 country studies and seven regional reports, had 20 studies planned, and had published a global report (UNICEF, 2015). The last published report for the MENA region was in 2014 (though a regional factsheet was produced in 2018 (UNICEF, 2018)) and, especially when combined with the unprecedented impact on school closures and thus the OOSC figures resulting from COVID-19, an updated regional overview of the OOSC profile is warranted. Relatedly, there is a need to review policies and programmatic interventions in light of new COVID-19 influenced realities to make sure they address the underlying causes of why children are not in school and/or learning.

1.2 Client motivation

Save the Children, UNICEF, and WFP each have significant programming interests in relation to OOSC. In summary, both Save the Children and UNICEF support access as well as quality-related activities. WFP supports both as well, but historically has focused the propensity of its resources on incentivising access through its school-based feeding programmes, while providing complementary activities within the quality-related programming realm. All three study sponsors have developed COVID-19 specific responses, some of which are in partnership. In Iraq, for example, the WFP and UNICEF are working on a project to encourage girls' to transition from primary to secondary school. In Libya, the two institutions are jointly seeking funding to support the COVID-19 related Back to Learning Campaign. If funded, it would provide catch up classes, take home rations distributions, education supplies/cash support, personal protective equipment and mental health and psychosocial support (MHPSS) services to encourage return to and/or (re)enrolment in school. A joint Back to Learning Campaign has already taken place in Jordan, focusing on advocacy to return and

(re)enrolment. Save the Children and UNICEF are long-formal partners in the area of supporting OOSC, particularly through their shared responsibilities co-leading the Global Education Cluster (GEC). In 2020, they jointly published a technical note on the impact of COVID-19 on child poverty-a contributing factor to a child's likelihood of being OOS (UNICEF and Save the Children, 2020).

Complementarity of effort is inherently beneficial to organisations and their beneficiaries. As such, a clear understanding of current and planned OOSC-related focus areas amongst the three sponsors of the study will be an important component of the study. In so doing, the consultancy team can enhance the likelihood that the study's recommendations are also relevant to if not explicitly targeted to each sponsor, Furthermore, and perhaps most importantly, doing so will show awareness of how such recommendations can complement each other through the lens of each sponsor's institutional priorities. The following section summarises their interests and activities in the region. Further codification of activities by type, cohort, and geographic coverage will occur as a result of the secondary and primary data collection.

Save the Children

Save the Children is a global leader in evidence-based advocacy for education in emergencies. It recently published a series of research papers on the impact of COVID-19 on children, with data collected from 37 countries (Save the Children, 2020). Of those surveyed, the majority said that COVID-19 related school closures and distance learning programs resulted in them feeling they were learning little or nothing at all (8 in 10 children), and two thirds of parents and caregivers reported their child had received no contact from teachers since their schools closed (Save the Children, 2020). The study also highlighted the disproportional impact of the COVID-19 crisis on those already vulnerable beforehand; 19 per cent of those who said they had access to the internet for distance learning identified as non-poor while less than 1 per cent identified as poor (Save the Children, 2020). A Yemen-specific OOSC study is also underway.

The MENA region is the site of a sizeable education portfolio for Save the Children and is particularly important to it institutionally given its global identity as a leader of the education in emergencies field. The issue of OOSC in MENA is thus a critical issue for Save the Children. Its current Country Strategic Plans and Regional Strategy include the objective that: "Vulnerable children will have improved and equitable access and retention in safe quality ECCD and Basic Education with a focus on improved literacy, numeracy and wellbeing outcomes." Of relevance to this study is the focus on one of the three primary sub-objectives: a) Basic Education-"Increased access to safe, appropriate and quality Formal learning opportunities designed to measurably improve the learning outcomes and vulnerable children." Save the Children provides a variety of context relevant and needs responsive programming in each of the seven countries of the study.

Due to unprecedented impacts of COVID-19 on children's access to quality education, in 2020 Save the Children established the Safe Back to School Initiative, which articulates children's return to learning as a global priority for Save the Children. To effectively plan, deliver and track the education response to the COVID-19 crisis, Save the Children is invested in supporting the collection and management of reliable data on out of school children. Country

Offices have identified the out-of-school children measurement gap as a priority and requested support on tracking children's return to learning, who is out of school and why. As such, the Safe Back to School initiative has established a specific project on OOSC, aiming to address the data gap in three ways: (1) Shape the external national and global levels narrative and correlating measurement systems to secure greater clarity and communicate the continuing education crisis in the context of COVID19, and the nature, scope and scale of the marginalized children being left behind. (2) Be the voice of the out-of-school children in Save the Children project operational areas through reporting how many children are out-of-school (in countries where schools have re-opened), which children are out-of-school, and why they haven't returned (inclusive of all barriers). And (3) Empower Save the Children program teams with measurement tools to better track who is out-of-school and why. This study in the MENA region will contribute to this body of work and potentially support analysis in other regions.

World Food Programme (WFP)

WFP is the world largest provider of school feeding programme working in XX countries and feeding between 15-20 million of children each year and as such has a great interest in the matter. Just in MENA WFP targets XX million of children in 12 countries. Like UNICEF, WFP takes a twofold approach: 1) providing service delivery i.e. school meals and 2) capacity strengthening to the governments in MENA region. WFP's school feeding programmes inherently target OOSC and those at risk of drop out given the overlap between a child's propensity to be food insecure and his/her challenges engaging with and staying in school. Such efforts are based on evidence that shows how school based feeding can, at least in the short term, improve enrolment and reduce truancy and drop-out, with a particularly strong effect on marginalised populations (Drake, et al., 2018). Amidst the COVID-19 crisis, and together with UNICEF, WFP also strongly promoted safe school re-opening. The study is of particularly interest to WFP at this time of its strategic growth because of a shift to explicitly targeting OOSC through the development of new programming approaches to reach them. As such, recommendations from this study that can be operationalised via policy and programme design would be of value to it.

UNICEF

UNICEF's education-related work in the region is expectedly comprehensive. UNICEF's focus is on transformation of education systems, including integrating life skills and promoting multiple pathways. Digital solutions can support in making systems more flexible and inclusive. The MENA regional office (RO) characterises its education work as promoting a "holistic, lifelong and rights-based vision" (UNICEF, n.d.) It is centred on the Life Skills and Citizenship Education (LSCE) Initiative, which is delivered through four focus areas: a) systems strengthening; b) enabling environment creation; c) the facilitation of multiple pathways to learning, which is of particular value for OOSC; and d) teaching and learning methods that are child-centred and market aligned (UNICEF, n.d.). The primary message of its COVID-19 related responses is: "Keep Learning." It efforts focus on fostering safe learning environments and practices inside the home with particular attention to reading; supporting the safe re-opening of schools; and reaching the most marginalised (UNICEF, n.d.). Several OOSC-related studies have been conducted or are under way in the region, including in Lebanon (concluded) and Turkey (status to be determined).

2. Overview of the study

The study aims to provide an updated OOSC profile of each of seven countries of interest to the study's sponsors. It will, however, be developed as a global good with a focus on supporting all stakeholders to improve policy and practice with respect to decreasing the number of children who are OOS or at risk of dropping out. It will provide analysis through a pre- and post-COVID[1] lens, unpacking the demand and supply side factors that influence children to be out of school, and assessing how policies and programmes that affect OOSC are framed and delivered. The study will focus on four specific areas of inquiry (AOI).

AOI #1: First, it will document the main trends of Out of School Children (OOSC),[2] including the barriers and motivating factors[3] that influence their engagement in education. Identify the main profile-related factors of OOSC. These include the number of children OOS, organised by the factors such as their age and/or last ISCED cycle or grade, their legal status, sex,[4] and where possible, their vulnerability status.

AOI #2: Second, it will analyse the barriers and motivating factors that prevent and/or facilitate children's participation and retention in education. It will analyse these main trends to identify commonalities, outliers, and any other key factors of relevance to the stakeholders of the study.

AOI #3: Third, it will seek to understand the impact[5] of policies and programmes[6] in the study areas that target access, retention and learning. It will analyse the relationship between current policies and programmes (their intent, coverage, outcomes, etc.) and the trends and analysis surfaced in AOI#1 and AOI#2. These will include but not be limited to school feeding-related activities, and those working both with OOSC as well as to help prevent children currently in school from dropping out. The review will include:

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[1] The consultancy team understands the Client's preference to define COVID-19 as a shock, and that the endemic challenges facing OOSC are of notable priority.

[2] The term OOSC is unpacked as follows, and further defines the cohorts to be studied. "Children" is defined by the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (The United Nations, 1989) as the cohort between the ages of 0-18. This definition of children also includes sub-groups characterised by various UN and other international agencies as "adolescents" and "youth." The UN does not have a formal definition of what comprises adolescence, but usually uses the 10-19 years age group for this cohort (UNFPA, n.d). The UN further defines youth as those persons between the ages of 15 and 24 (UNDESA, n.d). Notably, many persons who are out of school fall into the adolescent and youth cohorts. The term OOSC will used to refer to children, adolescents, and youth.

[3] The TOR mentioned barriers to as well as motivating and contributing factors. The consultancy team recommends limiting the analyses to barriers and motivating factors, as attempting to identify contributing factors would potentially unnecessarily complicate what would naturally be construed as binary forces affecting children's engagement with education.

[4] Besides sex disaggregation of data under AOI#1, there are nine other questions in AOI#2 and AOI#3 at present that solicit information that can speak to the impact of sex (or gender) on the OOSC issue.

[5] Noting that the study is not seeking to evaluate through a DAC criteria lens the actual impact of policies or programmes, but rather to assess the correlational value of their intent and where possible their outcomes with the identified trends, barriers, and motivating factors that relate to the OOSC experience.

[6] Where a policy is differentiated from a programme in that the latter is often the operationalization of the former, or a stand-alone effort, perhaps by a(n) (international) non-governmental organization ((I)NGO) aiming to support a policy of a host government or other education service delivery entity.

1. learning from activities that aim to address demand-side barriers to education, such as economic support to households via humanitarian cash and voucher assistance (CVA) and other social protection schemes), as well as social and behaviour change communication (SBCC) programmes.
2. a review of implementation models (programmes and where feasible/appropriate, policies as well), such as their sustainability, replicability, scalability, and partnership leveraging.[7]
3. employment policies and (barriers to) access to the labour market (factors that may play a role in disincentivizing households' investments in education, and which may be particularly relevant for refugee, displaced and migrant children)
4. policies and practices related to violence in school, school climate, and quality of teacher/students and peer relationships
5. policies and practices related to access to, and type of, mental health and psychosocial support services and interventions available to both students and teachers

AOI #4: Fourth, it will identify what remaining areas of inquiry exist in relation to where the knowledge gaps were at the start of the study and where they are at the end of it, and make recommendations for further study, either in Phase II or through other efforts. It will also identify potential responses to the findings and conclusions, such as potential programmatic approaches and policy advocacy focus areas.

The recommendations section will also identify contributions to the *Building Back Better* (OECD, 2020) conceptualisation of improving education systems through transformative change, some of which have been surfaced as a result of the COVID-19-related closures and related restrictions and others that have been under consideration for reaching the most marginalised for some time.[8] The findings will serve to inform a possible methodological update and/or guidance on rapid OOSC calculations (relevant firstly to the MENA region with possibility for other contexts).

The study is Part I of a planned two part effort. Part I is envisioned to focus heavily on desk review, with limited primary data collection from key stakeholders with global, regional, and/or national level remits. Part II will (COVID-19 conditions dependent) enable primary data collection in the countries covered by the study, to the field level. The study will cover the period the 2015-2020 calendar years, including the 2014-2015 school year and available data for the 2020-2021 school year.[9] Notably, it will look at the situation of OOSC both before and after the COVID-19 pandemic. It will endeavour to source data that is as granular as possible and will utilise a methodology influenced by those tested by the All in School Initiative. However, given the timeframe and other resources available for the study, as well as the fact

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[7] Noting again that this assessment will be qualitative, looking to surface any possible lessons learned that could be applied, without hinting at any sort of evaluative assessment.

[8] Indeed, opportunities to leverage more flexible and community-based education service delivery models-such as those studied by Dana Burde in Pakistan and Afghanistan-and exploited by Bridge International through the low-cost private school model-have opportunities in a post-COVID-19 world.

[9] Iraq, Jordan, Libya, Palestine, Turkey school years are scheduled to last from September through June. Lebanon's is from October through June, and Yemen's is from September through May.

that it is Phase I desk review based study of a planned two phase effort, it will have to rely on only that data that is publicly available and/or accessible via the Client and related stakeholders. Notably, these methodological limitations present opportunities to identify and suggest new and perhaps more flexible if imperfect methods of calculating and projecting OOSC trend data via a "good enough" approach. Findings will be conditioned on these limitations and validation and refinement of the findings will be recommended during in-country data collection under Phase II of the study. As noted in the TOR:

> "The study will build on and complement other studies done, and ongoing in this area, for example the simulation model from the WB to estimate learning loss due to COVID19. Finally, the present study will offer a unique opportunity to enhance the growing demand for new data and international comparative data, while existing national education statistical infrastructures are not prepared to provide accurate data on national education response to COVID-19 nor to generate up-to-date evidence needed at country level to gauge the effectiveness and appropriateness of national response and education systems that include multiple pathways."

The study will analyse why girls and boys are not engaged in the free, basic, and compulsory education[10] (hereafter referred to as formal education-FE) of their (host) country and/or in non-formal education services (NFE)[11] that ostensibly support engagement in FE. This cohort is estimated to be in the 5-17 age range, but will not be limited by it, as OOSC are often overage.

The study will review these circumstances in seven countries: Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon, Libya, the State of Palestine (SOP) Turkey, and Yemen.[12] Figure 1 below shows the geographic focus of the study.

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[10] As defined by UNESCO's International Standard Classification of Education (ISCED) or by other policy documents or decrees specific to each country or region of control.

[11] During the desk research focused on policies, the consultancy team will determine to what extent some programmes traditionally referred to as NFE might be included as part of the FE system, as is the case in Lebanon.

[12] The team understands that the rationale for the seven countries selected by the Client is that information about OOSC in these areas is of programmatic value to each of the three sponsoring agencies, and because they overlap with the All in School Initiative/formerly the OOSCI.

Figure 1: Geographic focus of the study
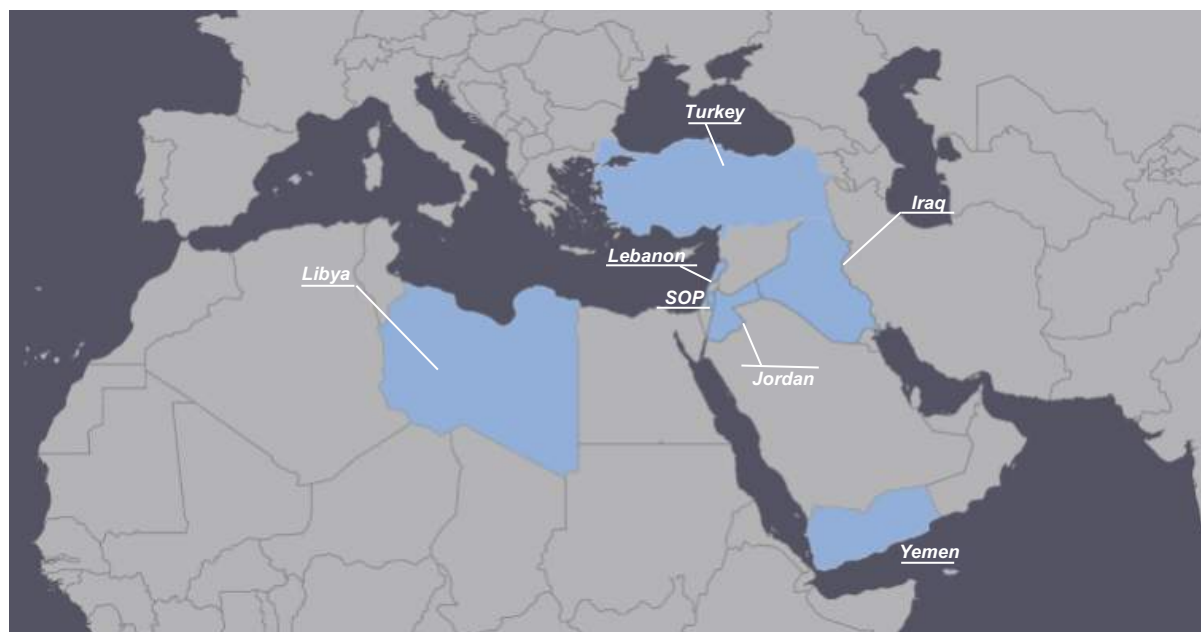
The study will conclude with a written report and a short, virtual dissemination event. The profile of these deliverables is available in Section 5: Profile of Deliverables.

3. Context and rationale

UNESCO estimated in 2019 that 258 million children and youth of primary and secondary school age were out of school, representing 17 per cent of all school age children. In the MENA region,[13] this OOSC figure for children between the ages of 5-14 was estimated at 15.5 million, or 15.5 per cent of the school age population for the region (UNESCO, 2019). Prior to the COVID-19 crisis, UNICEF (via UNESCO) further identified 10 million children who were in school but at risk of dropping out (UNICEF, n.d.).

When looking at the impact of COVID-19 on OOSC, the World Bank (2020) estimated that the majority of the world's school children (1.6 billion, or nearly 92 per cent) were out of school in April 2020, and that the figure decreased by December 2020, but to only 700 million (approximately 40 per cent). While the decline in these figures is as notable as their initial spike, the experiences of those children who are affected by school closures is undoubtably more significant now than before the pandemic; we know that those who are marginalised before crises are likely to be even further marginalised as a result of them (ELHRA, n.d.).

The exact figure for children affected by school closures in the MENA region at this point in the COVID-19 pandemic is not clear, and thus at present only extrapolations from global figures can be made.[14] At some point during the COVID-19 pandemic, UNICEF identified 100

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[13] Characterized as "Northern Africa and Western Asia" by UNESCO prior to 2020, at which point the referencing became "Arab States."

[14] Noting that UNESCO's 2020 COVID19 education response data "As a consequence of the COVID 19 crisis, this number is expected to increase by an additional 1.31 million children unlikely to return to their education institutions in the Arab states, unless urgent and appropriate actions are taken."

million children who were out of school or otherwise affected by school closures (UNICEF, n.d.). UNESCO's most current COVID-19 related educational exclusion data (2021) estimates that, as of 25 January 2021, the figure of enrolled children affected by school closures globally is 223 million, or approximately 12 per cent. Calculations suggest that the MENA regions figures are approximately 91 per cent of the global average/rate. We can thus presume that the current OOSC cohort and/or cohort of children affected by school closures in the MENA region is at least 36 per cent.[15]

4. Areas of Inquiry

Four areas of inquiry guide the study. They are summarised below in relation to how the TOR conceptualised their connection to the COVID-19 factor. It is from these conceptualisations that the analysis framework, including the sub-areas of inquiry and specific questions to be asked of both the literature and KI are drawn.

Table 1: Area of Inquiry and COVID-19 related focus areas

AOI #	AOI	Pre-COVID	Post-COVID
1	**Update of the trends on data regarding OOSC pre-COVID-19**	The study will review data for OOSC available in the countries throughout the MENA region (i.e., number of OOSC pre-COVID19, per centage of OOSC boys and girls, trends in the 2015-2020 time period, etc.)	
2	**Assessment of the access barriers on participation and retention that OOSC face**	The study will review any other specific barriers that exist (gender, disability, ethnicity, economic and socio-cultural profiles, displaced/migrant/refugee/IDP status or other forms of heightened vulnerability).	The study will review if, why and how COVID19 has contributed to increasing the number of OOSC (i.e., preventing children who were out of school before to re-enrol, children previously at risk of dropping out that actually dropped out, etc.)
		The study will unpack to what extent demand side barriers vs demand for quality education by communities affect participation and retention in learning	
		The study will explore how government policies (pre and post COVID) address the OOSC issue, their impact on reducing OOSC, and compare governments' response across the MENA region	
			The study will have a specific focus on those policies and strategies that have been put in place within the context of reopening schools (as part of the regional call for Back to

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[15] Calculation method: Most recent known out of school per centage for the MENA region (25 per cent) pre-COVID-19 + estimated per centage of additionally affected enrolled learners in the MENA region due to COVID-19, extrapolated for the MENA region based on global UNESCO and MENA-specific UNESCO calculations (11 per cent)=36 per cent.

			learning). As part of this, it will systematize policies/strategies/decisions taken by Govt to address the negative impact of COVID on children in terms: • Access • Participation and retention • Learning • Protection
3	**A specific focus will be on the role of joint initiatives and programmes specifically targeting OOSC (before and during COVID).**	The study will assess whether (joint) initiatives and programmes specifically targeting OOSC (pre and post COVID), i.e., holistic package of (joint) interventions including school feeding programmes, have an impact on enrolment, attendance and/or dropout rates	
4	**Identification of data gaps/recommendations for further studies**	Both	

These areas of inquiry are broken down into specific questions and coded variables as detailed in the following section on Methodology.

5. Methodology

The consultancy team will use the following methodological process to guide the study.

Phase A: OOSC calculation methodology
The inception phase has highlighted the complexity of deciding on a model for calculating OOSC figures. Contributors to this situation include the timeframe available for data collection, the various components of exclusion and cohort profiling (as initially considered in the five dimensions of exclusion model developed under the All In School Initiative/formerly OOSCI) and shifts in the methods used for such calculations within UNESCO's UIS in recent years.

As such, the team believes that a concerted effort to land on a clearly defined and rationalised means for calculating the OSSC data required by AOI#1 will be necessary. This is relevant on its own but becomes even more important when we note that AOI#1 outcomes serve as the basis for much of the analysis in AOI#2 as well as major reference points for analysis of data collected in AOI#3. It is further a critical point to agree on, considering the different institutional priorities of the advisory group members.

The following list illustrates the types of documents and other types of data to be reviewed in depth during Step 1: desk review:

- All in School Initiative/Out of School Children Initiative(OOSCI) documents
- Other relevant UNESCO UIS documents and databases
    - Other relevant UNICEF documents

- No Lost Generation documents
- Other relevant donor, (I)NGO and think tank/ university methodological pieces

The desk review will be complemented by a methods-specific set of KII with stakeholders close to past OOSC calculation methodology efforts and undertaking. This will comprise Step 2. It will focus on gaps identified after the OOSC calculation methodology desk-review-based analysis is complete. Proposed KI include current and former All in School Initiative/OOSCI staff, including country focal points and data scientists.

The following are the types of questions that might be used to interrogate the data as well as source information from the referenced KI:

1. Who developed the revised calculation method that provides more precise estimates of the out-of-school population?
2. How are the two methods different?
3. What was the rationale for the revision?
4. How did it affect the OOSC findings?
5. What does the geographic categorization of the seven countries of the study look like amongst and between key international actors?
6. How does any difference affect (if at all) how data is aggregated and shared? (N.B. UNESCO formerly called what many call MENA, "Northern Africa and Western Asia" prior to 2020, when it started calling this geographic area the "Arab States.") For example, is Turkish data included in the aggregate figures for "Arab States" in UNESCO's system?
7. To what extent have countries used which calculation methods, and what are the reports that resulted from each?
8. What were the perceived limitations of the various calculation methods?
9. How did opinions about these limitations (and/or perceived strengths) differ by stakeholder?

From there, with a methodology established and parameters set, the full desk review will commence.

Phase B: AOI#1-AOI#4 data collection and concurrent triangulation[16]
Phase B will not be launched in full until after the completion of Phase A, but strategic data collection from the literature will occur. For example, mapping of the policies and programmes to be analysed through AOI#3 will be feasible regardless of the progress of Phase A.

This part of the desk review will be focused on AOI#1-AOI#3, and opportunist analysis for AOI#4 where appropriate and feasible. It will include all documents referenced in Step 1, though their review will be expanded beyond methodological calculation sections. It also

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[16] Concurrent triangulation allows for the analysis of data in "real time" while data collection is ongoing. It also allows for the best aspects of both quantitative and qualitative data to be leveraged, as well as that of different methods of data collection.

under this Phase that all other documents will be reviewed, including those already listed in Annex 2 as well as those that are sourced in addition to them due to snowball referencing.

This part of the KIIs will again be focused on gaps identified after the completion of the AOI#1-AOI#3 desk-review-focused analysis. The purpose of other KII, if and where feasible, may include those with KI who can help validate early analysis of the findings. Some KII might take place for primarily courtesy purposes, as advised by the reference group, if critical. However, these types of KII will be marginalised to the greatest extent in favour of those that result in new or confirmational data.

Proposed KI include representatives of the study sponsors in each of the targeted countries, ministry and affiliate representatives, GEC representatives-including information management officers (IMO).

Mid-way through Phase B, the initial findings meeting will occur. It will focus on an update to the Client of progress against plans, with a technical rather than an operational or management focus. It will provide updates on how well the consultancy team believes the questions have been answered with the data to hand. It will provide an update on challenges and proposed mitigation strategies to completing the data collection and analysis. It will seek both requested as well as unsolicited guidance and input to guide the completion of data collection and concurrent triangulation. Based on this feedback, any modifications to the data collection and analysis methods as well as their completion will occur.

Phase C: Full analysis
While concurrent analysis will allow for progress assessment and the early surfacing of trends in what the data is telling the consultancy team about the AOI, a complete analysis of all of the data to hand once data collection is complete will be necessary and useful. This will be Step 3. It will allow for more nuanced review of the data in the aggregate as well as any need for any further analysis or lines of inquiry. During this part of the analysis, comprehensive comparative and correlational analysis will occur. The consultancy team will specifically seek to surface nuanced relationships amongst the data in each of the AOI, and to complete the analytical element of AOI#4.

Phase D: Presentation of findings and external validation
Once analysis is complete, reporting writing will take place. This will be Step 4. It will have been initiated earlier in the study to the extent possible with the analysed data to hand. The report writing timeframe will also be that during which plans for the dissemination event will be finalised and resources will be sourced and/or put in place to hold the event itself.

The profile of the event is thus to be confirmed. However, considering that it will almost surely be remote, it is envisioned as a three hour event with an audience wider than that of the KIs. While expanding the accessibility of such an event is important, it will then be all the more important to ensure that the event is highly engaging and inclusive. See section Dissemination Event for some initial thinking about the profile of the event.

Figure 2 below outlines how the phases of the process are envisioned to occur.

Figure 2: Proposed methodological process
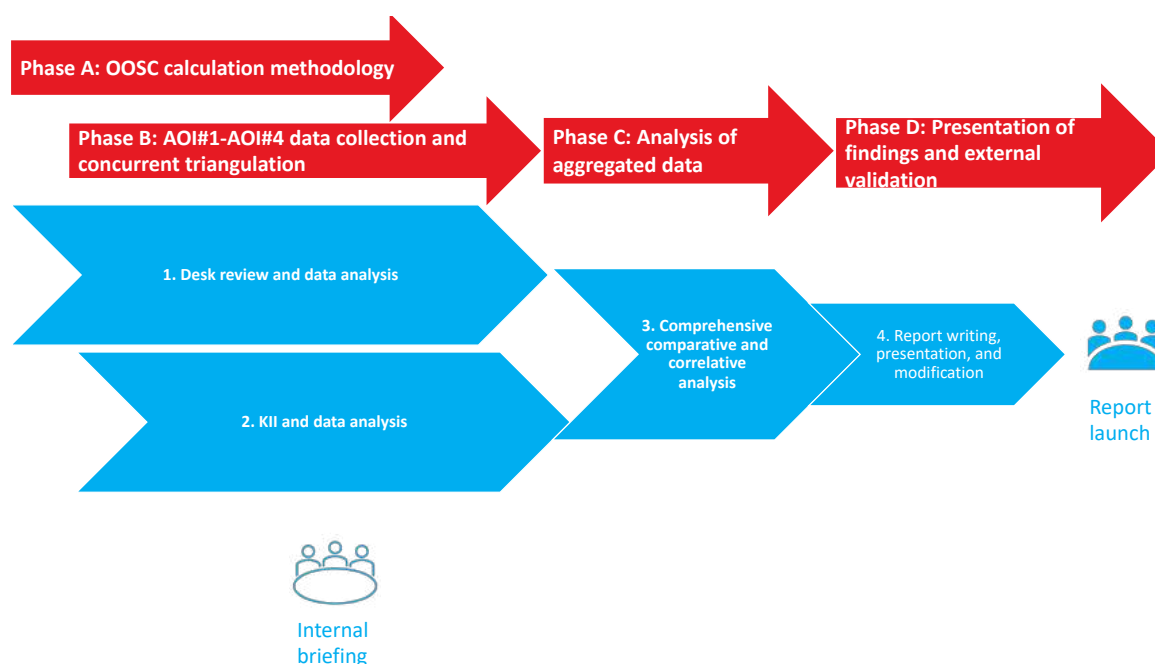
5.1 Proposed team profile

The following table summarises current and proposed team member profiles and responsibilities. Updated profiles of all current and proposed team members are included in Annex 5.

Table 2: Proposed team profile

Title/role	Main Responsibilities	Agency/person[17]
Data Analyst	• Input on the design of data collection tools and the data analysis framework. • "Coding" and building the data collection tools. • Building the data collection queries and running the analysis under the advisement of the Team Leader. • Leading on data visualisation efforts to support analysis.	Gabriele Bompani
Graphic Designer	• Taking existing visualised data and creating and/or refining them to become crisp infographics. • Turning raw copy into visually appealing final documents, using the required fonts and colour schemes.	To Be Confirmed (TBC): CV of Rama Alazzam included as illustrative example

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[17] Possible subcontractors are known to the consultancy team and are being assessed for appropriateness under this project at the time of the inception report's completion.

Title/role	Main Responsibilities	Agency/person[17]
Report Editors	Copy editing the final drafts of the report and any dissemination event materials. The Arabic copy editing will follow the completion of the English copy editing.	English: TBC-CV of Christine Pollitt included as illustrative example Arabic: TBC
Researcher	• Turkish speaking education in emergencies (EiE) expert • Identifying the extent to which relevant and critical data to answer the AOI#1-#3 questions are in Turkish. • Reviewing and summarising into English said data.	Benil Mostafa (contracted)
Senior Researcher	• Context and technical expert informing all aspects of the project. • Primary aggregator of desk review data. • Lead reviewer of data in Arabic and lead interviewer of Arabic KI. • Translation into English of all critical data and analysis.	Raja'a Al-Alawi
Team Leader	• Methodological conceptualisation and team management. • Lead reviewer of data in English and lead interviewer of English KI. • Primary report author and presenter.	Jen Steele
Simultaneous Translator(s)	Provide translation between Arabic and English[18] during the dissemination event.	TBC: The consultancy team obtained three quotes from Amman-based agencies[19] as part of equitas education's proposal refinement process with Save the Children Norway. Requests for more detailed proposals are being sought to determine which agency provides the best value for money.
Translators	• Translate the final version of the English report into Arabic • Translate the final version of any presentation materials for the event from English to Arabic	

5.2 Limitations

There are a few potential limitations that have been identified at this stage. Figure 3 provides a heatmap style summary of the team's assessment of the main challenges and their potential impact on the study.

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[18] The consultancy team recognizes that the Turkish and Kurdish languages are relevant to the areas of study as well. The supposition at this stage is that final products in English and Arabic will be sufficient for those parties connected to Turkey and Iraqi Kurdistan who are interested in reading study outcomes and/or participating in the dissemination event.

[19] Considering that the event might be in-person, but also because of the preponderance of companies with the relevant capacity in Amman given the propensity for MENA regional offices to be based there.

Figure 3: Potential impact of limitations on the desk review

Table 3 below describes the potential limitations in detail, with the approaches that will be taken to mitigate these limitations and their potential impact on the study.

Table 3: Limitations, mitigation efforts, and potential impact

No.	Limitation/Challenge	Proposed Mitigation Effort	Potential Impact on Study
1	**Data availability and access:** The team is aware of the challenges the international community has faced trying to obtain reliable data on the OOSC cohort, as evidenced by the very existence of the All in School initiative, but also by the challenges faced in producing reports in recent years. For example, the issues of OOSC visibility, semi-visibility, and invisibility provide evidence that even under the best data systems conditions, accurately identifying OOSC would be difficult.	Given the resources available for the study and recognizing that it is the initial and desk-based phase of an envisioned two part study, the team will put in place clear parameters, as described in section 4.3, for what data it can feasibly source remotely and, relatedly, flag what data it believes might be feasible to collect during the proposed field-based data collection in Phase II and/or that which is unlikely to be feasible under current conditions.	**Low to Moderate**: the audience for the report is well versed in the practical and political challenges to data availability and access.
2	**Data fidelity and/or validity concerns**: The team recognises that data fidelity and validity are significant issues areas covered by the study, and especially those affected by	Triangulation will be used whenever various data sources exist to help surface the most likely value points.	**Moderate:** Validation efforts will be attempted during Phase I and proposed as a core component of Phase II, but the issues are simply a part of the operating context and agreeing

No.	Limitation/Challenge	Proposed Mitigation Effort	Potential Impact on Study
	political conflict.		to put forward to best understanding of the best available data will need to be sufficient.
3	**COVID-19 related restrictions:** Even though the data is to be collected via desk review and remote KII, COVID-19-related restrictions will impact the study. For example, limited movement to collect data in 2020 upon which this study's findings will be based is likely to reduce the breadth and representativeness of the data collected about 2020. School closures and remote work schedules might restrict the time available for KIs to join calls if they are affected by said closures. Furthermore, analysis that is forward looking will have to make informed assumptions about what a "post-COVID" context means for each of the areas of the study.	Efforts will be made to review the 2020-sourced data through the lens of it being plausibly indicative rather than representative. KII will be scheduled with as much flexibility and "buffer" room as possible between preferred data capture date/timeframe and drop dead date, and KI will have opportunities to provide their feedback in various formats (such as surveys and video calls) at their convenience.	**Moderate:** Most data for the five year period covered by the study will have been collected and documented before COVID-19 restrictions began affecting the operating environment. Forward looking analysis is always based on the best available data to hand and while the COVID-19 context is unique, the analysis will be based on triangulated data from multiple perspectives, thus evening out uncertainties to some extent.
4	**Security-related challenges:** Access to KI might be affected by ongoing in security in some of the areas of the study, namely Libya and Yemen.	KII will be scheduled with as much flexibility and "buffer" room as possible between preferred data capture date/timeframe and drop dead date, and KI will have opportunities to provide their feedback in various formats (such as surveys and video calls) at their convenience.	**Low to moderate:** The team has undertaken remote KII and overseen remote data collection in areas of insecurity and are skilled at connecting with KI in these contexts and flexible with the use of various methods of data collection, including real time as well as asynchronous methods.
5	**Data source confidentiality concerns:** In areas of conflict, KI are often hesitant about having their identities known and be connected to statements that might be sensitive in nature.	All KI will be asked to confirm their understanding of the confidentiality of their data. Data source information will be kept on secure servers and data will be anonymised. No data source information besides affiliation type ((I)NGO representative and a randomised numerical identifier, etc.) will be documented. The team is well versed in protecting data source confidentiality given its experience collecting and managing data from conflict-	**Low:** The team has used similar systems for data storage and security in the past and to date is not aware of any leaks of data source identity nor have KI refused to participate once data security protocol is shared with them.

No.	Limitation/Challenge	Proposed Mitigation Effort	Potential Impact on Study
		affected areas, and in particular those in the Middle East. Finally, all General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) compliance will be in order.	
6	**Sensitive findings:** The topic of OOSC is an inherently political one, for all parties involved. Most education service providers (government and otherwise) often want to be seen as doing all that is possible to reach and engage all students. Other education service providers might be overtly or tacitly targeting or excluding learners of certain profiles and have different definitions of who should and shouldn't be in school.	A clearly defined calculation methodology will be established with clear parameters about what type of data will and will not be included. Information will be presented in both aggregated as well as in clear but disaggregated formats to help provide transparency of how composite figures are arrived at. Data source and data triangulation will be used to try and surface the most reliable information. Where data and analysis are not appropriate for all audiences due to concerns about how it will be perceived or used by different stakeholders, it will be flagged for review by the client and reference group.	**Low:** The team and clients are familiar with how to deal with politically sensitive data and can ethically source and analyse such data as well as figure out how to best honour the findings and their sources while not exposing them to harm.

5.3 Thematic foci and technical parameters

This section unpacks how the conceptualisation of OOSC and their measurement will be refined, considering the available study-related resources (time, funding, etc.).

Visibility: OOSC figure sourcing will focus first on those OOSC figures that are visible. The team expects that, of the quantitative data that will be available, it will relate primarily to visible OOSC disconnected from the FE system. If time and resources avail, efforts will be made to identify the OOSC who are semi-visible. The study does not intend at this stage of the study's inception to try to measure OOSC who are invisible or those students enrolled and at risk of dropping out. Nor does it anticipate being able to clearly identify quantitative figures for those children disengaged from NFE opportunities. These elements of assessment are deemed to be more feasible under Phase II of the planned research. Phase A of this study focusing on the methodology of OOSC calculations might surface rationale for inclusion of these groups that the consultancy team at this time does not anticipate will be feasible with the resources to hand and those expected. A decision will be made in consultation with the Client at the end of Phase A. However, anecdotal evidence will be sought to help answer the question about what type of children are and are not engaging in NFE and why. Furthermore, policies and programmes will be assessed under AOI#3 to review the extent to which they acknowledge and/or try to address the issue of invisible OOSC. Additionally, recommendations will be made as to what the framework for assessment of invisible OOSC

might look like, under Phase II or other studies. The following table summarises under which Phase of the planned research the various dimensions of visibility are likely to be assessed.

Governance and education service delivery responsibilities: In each country, the priority will be OOSC figures for education services provided by the internationally recognised government (IRG)[20] within the internationally recognised geopolitical borders of that country. The countries of focus are: Iraq (focusing first on the government in Baghdad, but also including Iraqi Kurdistan), Jordan, Lebanon, Libya (focusing first on areas controlled by the Government of National Accord), Palestine (focusing first on Fatah-controlled West Bank, and then on Hamas-controlled Gaza), Turkey, and Yemen (focusing on the IRG but considering Houthi-controlled areas if possible). However, noting that OOSC are usually those excluded from such formal systems, it will be important to source, in the most conflict and politically-sensitive manner possible, and with due consideration for the do no harm principle, data about children in areas outside the influence or control of the IRG of the seven focus countries.

Area of Inquiry technical foci:[21]
AOI#1: OOSC related profile data. These include the number of children OOS, organised by the factors such as their age and/or last ISCED cycle or grade, sex, and where possible, their vulnerability status.

AOI#2: Barriers and motivating factors that prevent and/or facilitate children's participation and retention in education.[22] Such analysis will use the AOI#1 data as its basis and interrogate it through a series of lenses, such as relational factors-their geographic location, their sex or other identifying characteristics, such as their legal status, and others related to Bronfenbrenner's bioecological framework, focusing on both supply and demand[23] side economic, sociocultural, political, environmental, and other factors. Specific analysis will review increased disparities and/or inequities as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic as well. The study will leverage prediction models that relate to the experiences of refugee and other forcibly displaced populations, noting that these populations are already predisposed to be at greater risk of being OOS than non-displaced children.

AOI#3: The relationship between current policies and programmes (their financial allocations, intent, coverage, outcomes, etc.) and the trends and analysis surfaced in AOI#1

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[20] The team anticipates that there will be various sources of conflicting data, depending on the source and the country context. Sources are likely to include IRG, other governing entities, and the (I)NGO sector at a minimum and will be triangulated whenever possible.

[21] All details can be found in the data collection tool, included as Annex 6.

[22] Participation will be defined as enrolment and, if available, attendance. Retention will be a composite review of the per centage of children who continue from a preceding the year/grade to the next tear grade as well as a review of drop out and repetition rates.

[23] The TOR notes that the study "…will unpack to what extent demand side barriers vs demand for quality education by communities affect participation and retention in learning." The consultancy understands this to mean the consideration of both demand side barriers as well as demand side appetite for education in the face of poor supply side provision of quality education.

and AOI#2. In other words, to what extent are they responsive to the experiences of OOSC and what recommendations can be made therefrom?[24]

AOI#4: An identification of the remaining data gaps that the study has yet to fill, and recommendations for doing so in Phase II or other efforts. Data for this area of inquiry will be sourced through the analysis of data covered by the other three AOI.

5.4 Data Sourcing Methods

5.4.1   Desk Review
The desk review aims to source and analyse a range of secondary data, including that shared by the Client and key informants, members of the reference group, and that identified by the consultancy team.

5.4.1.1 Criteria for inclusion
The criteria for inclusion in the list of documents to be reviewed are as follows:

1. **Language criteria:** In a language spoken/read by the consultancy team AND relevant to the context (namely, Arabic, Kurdish, Turkish, and/or English).
2. **Time criteria:**
   a. Documents written during the study's period of focus (2015-2020) and or in 2021 and reflective of that period. Where policies or programmes established or in place outside of this timeframe had a significant impact on the study's focus, they will be included.
   b. Selective works written before this period that might influence understanding of the data contained during the study's period of focus.
3. **Authorship criteria:** we will seek a balance amongst different points of view, considering the inherently political nature of the presentation of data around and about OOSC. Efforts to triangulate said data will be pursued, meaning for example that data from sources with the responsibility to protect and promote the learning opportunities for this cohort (namely, governments of which they are constituents or that are hosting them) will be reviewed along with data from those advocating for their education (such as UN agencies and implementing partners) as well as less "partial" entities such as the news media and/or think tanks. The final report will contain an analysis of the documents selected for inclusion as well as those that were discarded, and for what reason. Furthermore, efforts will be made to achieve a representative balance of authors writing in their mother tongue and/or from the regions of the study.
4. **Content criteria:** Documents that focus explicitly on the topic of OOSC will be prioritized, while documents that speak to factors that relate to barriers to and facilitating factors regarding their engagement in education will also be included.

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[24] The TOR refers to policy and program "impact on access, retention, and/or learning" as well "impact on enrolment, attendance and/or dropout rates." The study team understands that the Client is interested in each of these referenced areas and any other identified theoretical or correlational impact. The study team further understands that the Client is interested in the perceived limitations of these efforts as well.

5. **Descriptive criteria for OOSC**: the team will seek to be inclusive of the various criteria that might be used to define OOSC, and at the same time will seek to organise and code the data according to the broadly agreed upon criteria driven by the five dimensions of exclusion.
6. **Connection to study area of inquiries and/or specific study questions**: the document must relate directly to at least one of areas of inquiry and provide data to answer at least one of the related study questions.
7. **Data availability:** attempts will be made to source data that is both public and publicly available in full test, as well as that which is considered "grey," or otherwise not widely available, and/or not peer reviewed, and/or not available for public consumption.
8. **Sourcing criteria:** searches for data will be conducted online through Google and Google Scholar search. They will also be conducted via requests of the Client and of KI, focusing where possible on databases that are not publicly accessible but to which the Client and/or KI have access. Documents will also be sourced from the lists of works cited/bibliography of the initial searches. Documents that are abstract only will be excluded.

Documents that contain information that appears to be subjective, and/or poorly sourced will be excluded and coded as such. Figure 3 below summarises the above, providing a visual summary of the proposed inclusion criteria for the documents to be reviewed.

Figure 4: Desk review inclusion criteria

5.4.1.2 Search criteria

Searches of online databases for literature-as well as searches within the documents themselves-will include the following terms, their logical derivatives, and conjunctions of the terms.

a. **Cohort type:** such as "out of school children," "OOSC," and "out of school children and youth"

b. **Vulnerability type:** such as "girls," "children living with disabilities," "linguistic minorities" "internally displaced" "religious minorities" and "ethnic minorities"

c. **Geographic focus:** such as "Middle East," "North Africa," "Middle East and North Africa," and each of the names of the study's focus countries.

d. **Responsible education service delivery actors:** including internationally recognised governments of the study's focus countries (such as the "Ministry of Education and Higher Education in Lebanon"), as well as entities functioning in a governance role (such as the Southern Transitional Council" (for Yemen) or Libyan National Army (for Libya)

e. **Dimensions of exclusion:** such as "attended by dropped out," and "will never enter"

f. **Participation lens:** such as "access to education," "retention" and "barriers to accessing education"

g. **COVID-19-related terms:** such as "pandemic-related closures," and "remote learning"

5.4.1.3 Document coding

Document coding will be used to classify the nature of the data source to facilitate a balanced accumulation of data sources to the greatest degree possible. This will be done in the data collection tool, which is included as Annex 6 of this report. Doing so will enable analysis queries to be run using the Pivot Table function of Excel. Coding criteria will be sourced primarily from the above list of inclusion criteria.

An initial list of approximately 400 documents was developed based on the consultants' familiarity with the literature and the topic. This list will be reviewed and revised in line with the criteria noted above. The following visuals summarise the profile of this data set at present and provide opportunities to flag where additional literature is needed, as detailed below the figures.

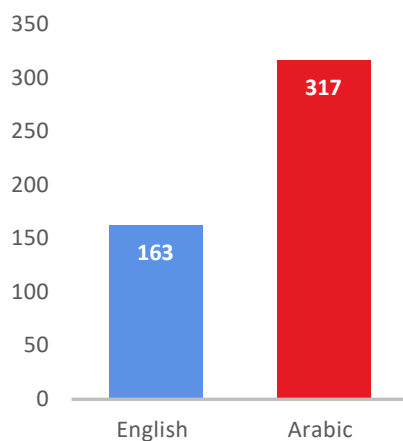*Figure 5: Document sources, by language*
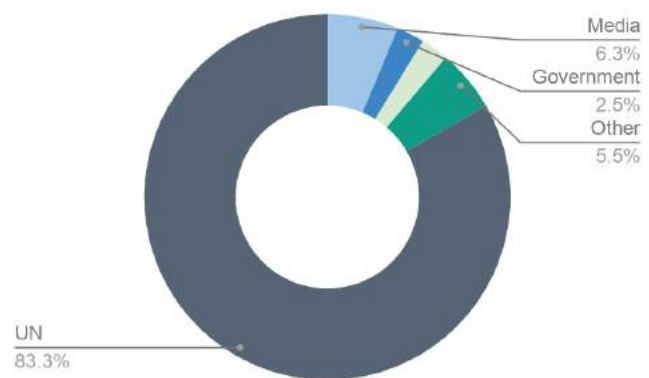

Figure 6: Document sources, by author

The following is a list of the types of documents and data sources that the team intends to add, based on further sourcing efforts, including via requests of the Client and KI.

1) **Language source**
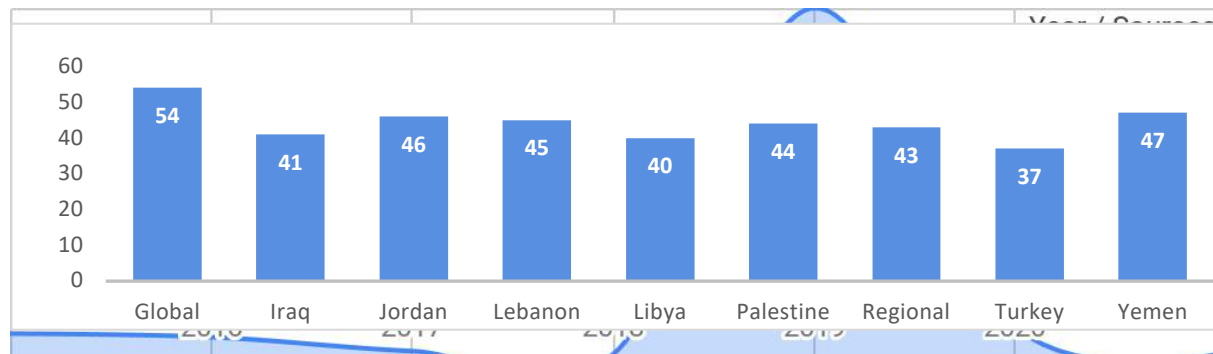   a) Turkish
   b) Kurdish
2) **Time period**
   a) Data from 2015-2017
3) **Publication type:**

Figure 7: Document sources, by year of publication
Figure 8: Document sources, by geographic focus

   a) Gray literature: Privy to the Client and/or KI (such as the Mapping and Profiling of OOSC reports that UNICEF and their MOE counterparts do together which is not made public) and/or that which they can access that is not publicly available. In particular, any OOSCI and NLG data. Identified examples follow:
      i) Internationally Recognised Government EMIS data (Iraq, Iraqi Kurdistan, Jordan, Lebanon, Turkey)
      ii) Any OpenEMIS data
      iii) Libya
         (1) Government of National Accord data
         (2) Haftar Libyan National Army data
      iv) Palestine
         (1) Hamas data
         (2) Fatah data
      v) Yemen
         (1) Houthi government data
         (2) IRG of Yemen data
   b) Public data
         (1) Bilateral donor reports
         (2) EC reports
         (3) ECW reports
         (4) Education Cluster data managed by information management officers (IMO)
         (5) Global Coalition for Education Under Attack reports

25

(6) GPE reports

(7) IFPRI research (for school feeding)

(8) ILO data and reports

(9) IOM data and reports

(10)　　　NGO (rather than INGO) reports

(11)　　　NLG reports

(12)　　　Save the Children Advocacy reports

(13)　　　UN's 3RPs

(14)　　　UNESCO GEM reports

(15)　　　UNESCO UIS data

(16)　　　UNICEF *Innocenti* reports

(17)　　　UNICEF MICS data

(18)　　　UNHCR publications (strategic overviews, progress reports, country chapters, appeals etc

(19)　　　UNDP publications (strategic overviews, progress reports, country chapters, appeals etc

(20)　　　Reports that elevate the voices of children, in the vein of the "Hear It From the Children" reports from Save the Children and NRC circa 2014. Other sources might include World Vision, *Terres des Hommes*, and War Child.

5.4.2　Key Informant Interviews

A list of approximately 200 potential KI was developed by the consultants for the Client to review. This list is comprised primarily of United Nations (UN) and (international) non-governmental organization (I)NGOs) staff (with both regional and national remits) responsible for education programming in the target areas, and, where they exist, such programming that is specific to OOSC. Where possible, and with Client's approval, Ministry staff will be included. Where postholder names are not known, they are place held for support from the Client.

Priority #1 KII will be contacted during Phase I of the study. At present, this list of potential Priority #1 KI numbers 118 and needs to be refined with support from the Client. Where KI are ranked as Priority #2 and below, they are likely to be proposed for Phase II of the study, though they may be elevated to Priority #1 status based on the rate of success engaging the proposed Priority #1 KI. The list of (potential) KI for both Phase I and Phase II will grow opportunistically through snowball referencing.

The list of potential KII will be revised further using the following types of criteria with support from the Client:

1. Recommendations from the Client about priority (political and technical) KI, and in particular
   a. Contacts from the relevant KIs in Iraq, Iraqi Kurdistan, Libya, Palestine, Turkey, and Yemen.
   b. Client representatives in each of the targeted countries who have a responsibility for education and/or school feeding.
   c. Specific ministry of education (MOE) representatives (initially of internationally recognised governments. The Client is requested to advise on

access to representatives of entities supporting education services that are not internationally recognised, such as Hamas and the Houthis).

    d. Representatives of other ministries that are deemed critical by the client or other stakeholders to the OOSC issue, such as ministries of health and social affairs.

    e. Persons formerly engaged in the OOSCI, including UNICEF and UNESCO's UIS.

    f. Education cluster or working group co-leads and/or IMO from each study country.

2. Authors of key OOSC reports reviewed as part of the desk review

No outreach to any (potential) KI will occur without the explicit approval of the Client in writing. The list of potential KI can be found in Annex 3. The following figures profile the potential priority KI by their sex, institutional affiliation, and geographic remit.
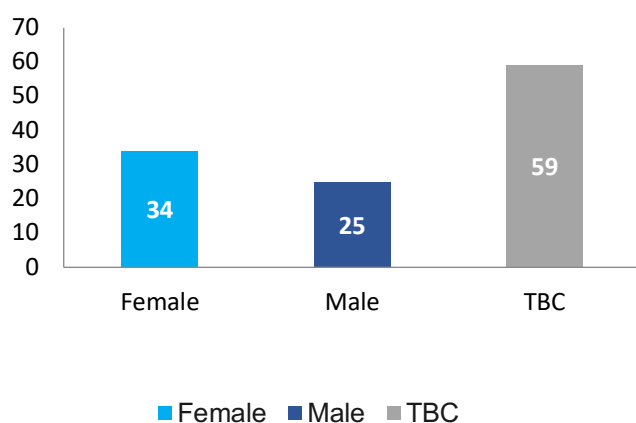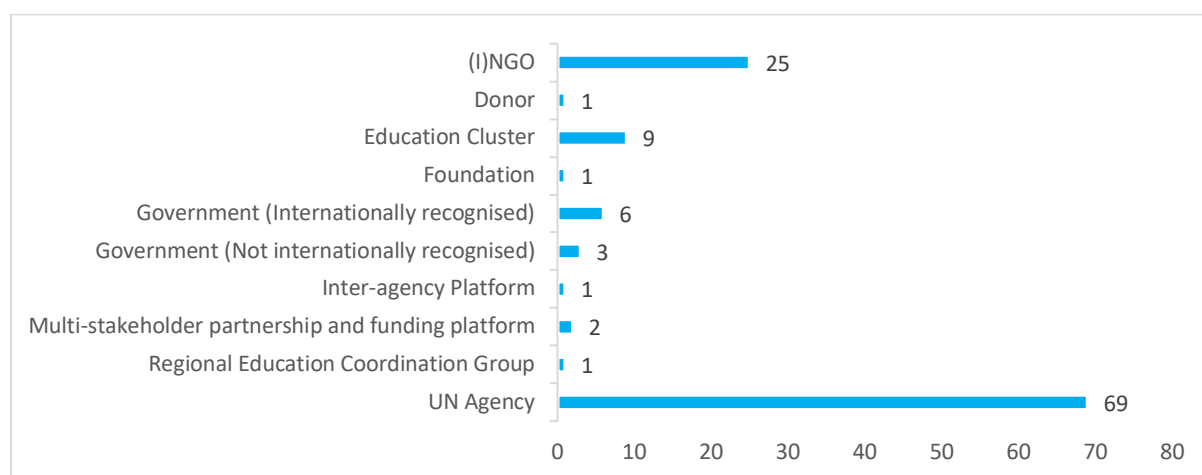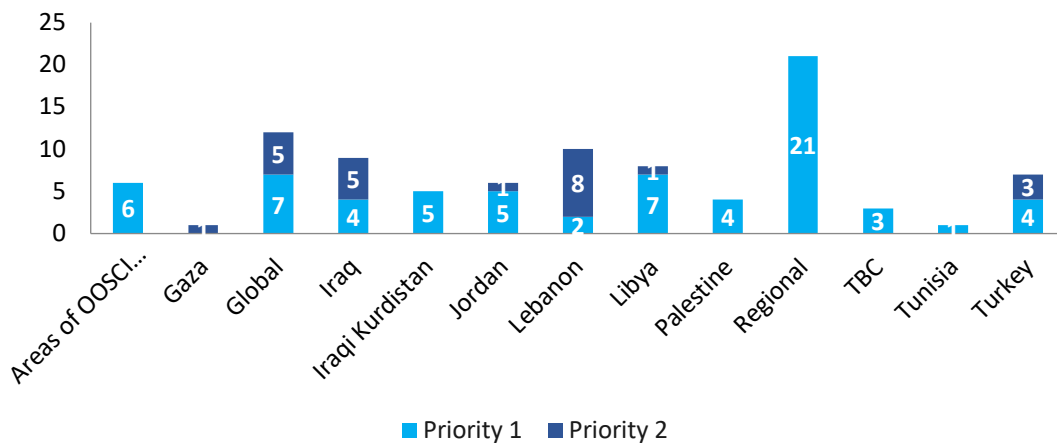
Figure 9: Potential priority KI, by sex[25]

Figure 10: Potential priority KI, by Institutional affiliation

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[25] Where the sex of the potential KI is listed as TBC, it is because a placeholder record has been established for a stakeholder type where the specific person has not yet been identified (such as a person engaged in former OOSCI studies in Libya, for example).

5.5 Data-related Systems

5.5.1 Data security

equitas education has completed numerous studies in areas in which data security was paramount to the protection of data collectors and informants alike, notably in areas of conflict such as Syria. As such, it has established data security and data protection practices and provides all team members with clear instructions on how to handle sensitive data and protect it from loss or misuse. equitas education's practices are aligned to and comply with widely recognised data protection laws like the European Union's General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) (The European Parliament and the Council of the European Union, 2016).

The following is a summary of our key rules:

1. Secure storage protocol: equitas education stores all in Google Drive and/or DropBox with restricted access (i.e., it cannot be accessed by users who are not included in the list of authorised users). The Google Suite tools represent the generally preferred option for sharing and storing data due to their compliance with the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and the presence of solid data protection guarantees. When collecting data from KI or survey respondents, the team uses software like SurveyMonkey.
2. Data security focal points and access restrictions: The Team Leader serves as the data protection focal point (DPFP) within the project and configures second-level restrictions within the data cloud and perform routine checks. She allocates responsibility to the Data Analyst the responsibility for compiling and updating the allow list, ensuring that only authorised users can access the data cloud.
3. Data backup: The Data Analyst is responsible to create a backup for the data collected on external platforms (such as SurveyMonkey) on a weekly basis to prevent data loss. equitas education's data cloud on Google Drive is protected against data loss by Google Suite features for data storage saving, security, data recovery and automatic backup.
4. Data confidentiality and privacy: All data about a key informant (such as identifying information) will be kept separate from the information they share with the study team. No identifying characteristics will be shared publicly unless the key informant specifically requests attribution. Consent forms will be required of all key informants, inclusive of a description of how information will be documented, secured, and used.

5.5.2   Data management

All data is proposed to be managed in Excel. At present, the following datasets exist and are envisioned to continue to be the primary data management tools used throughout the project. As needs are identified, this may change.

a. **The data sourcing dataset:** This file contains information on the literature to be reviewed as well as the key informants to be contacted, both proposed as priorities for Phase I as well as those that might be relevant for Phase II. It also contains Pivot tables that help the consultancy team analyse the data sources using variables such as the author and year of publication of a piece of literature, and the institutional affiliation and sex of a KI.
b. **The data collection tool**: This file contains the envisioned (and possibly singular) tool the consultancy team envisions using to collect (and later analyse) the data. Based on past experience, the consultancy team finds it useful for a dataset of this anticipated size to identify all questions to be asked regardless of the data source (be it a piece of literature or a person) and to allocate the responses from each data source to the appropriate question, where each data source serves as one record. In this way, triangulation of data amongst types of data sources as well as other relevant variables can be easily done via Pivot queries or other forms of analysis, including simple frequency counts. At present the tool also holds the envisioned analysis framework for each of the four areas of inquiry.
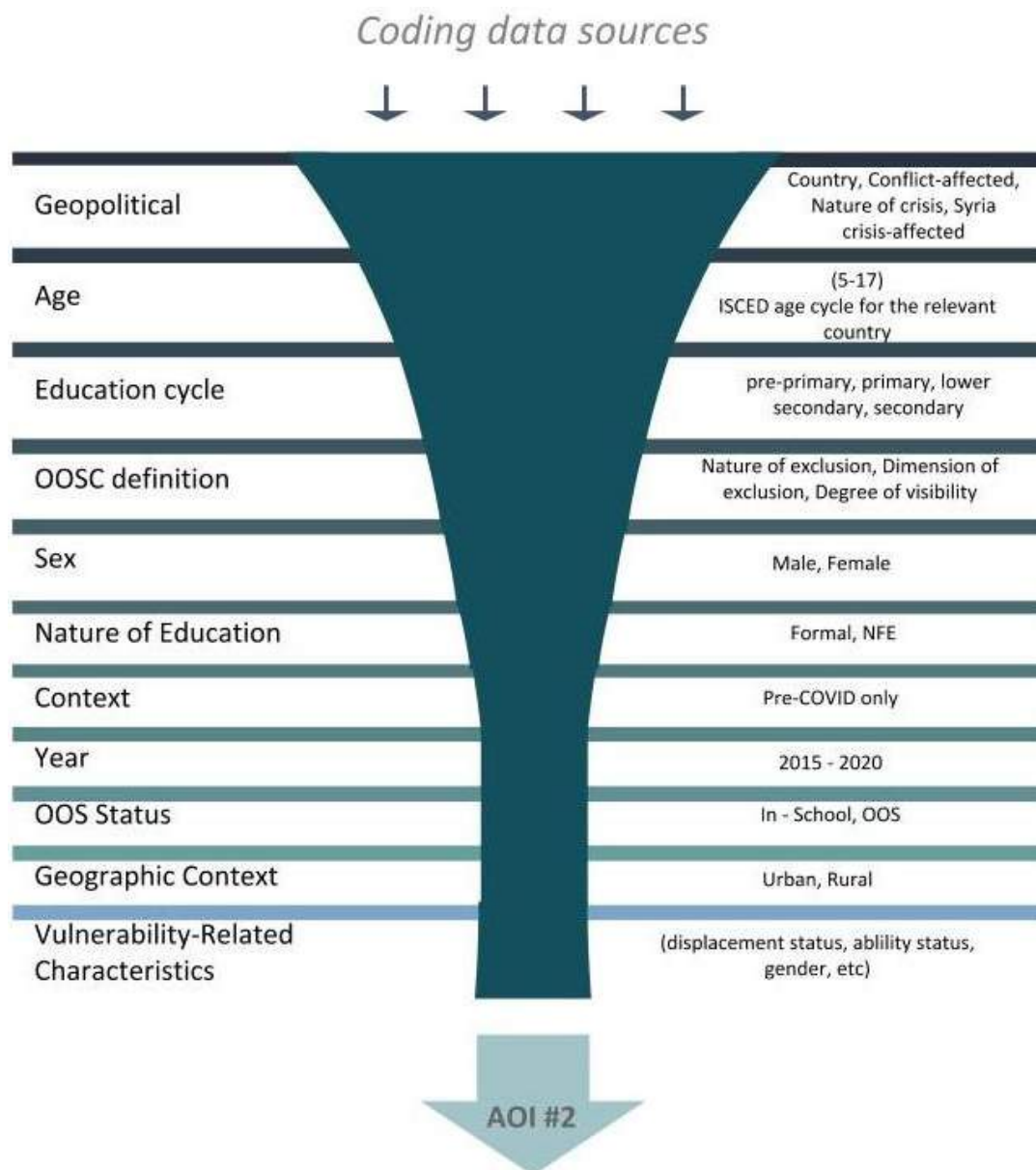
5.5.3   Data coding

See below the envisioned process for coding each piece of data according to the areas of inquiry and related questions put forward in the TOR and by the client. These codes will be used as part of the comparative and correlational analysis described in section 4.5.5 below.

Area of inquiry #1 and #4
The data points of value to AOI#1 are described below. They seek to answer the question about the main trends of OOSC between 2015-2020 in the seven focus countries. Where data cannot be found to help understand the trends (for example, the question of to what extent children visibly OOS from FE are however engaged in NFE might be difficult to answer), this absence will be used to populate the narrative for AOI#4 which is focused on areas for further study.

The tab "data collection tool" in the file "OOSC data collection management and analysis" provides the specific questions or sub-areas of inquiry that the team will use to document the main trends of OOSC and details can be reviewed therein. For example, however, they include the geopolitical profile of the area under review (is it current affected by conflict? Is it relatively stable? Etc.). The team might also code datum according to the year to which it is relevant, and/or whether it speaks to a rural or urban context.

Figure 12: AOI#1 and AOI#4-Main trends and gaps in OOSC data

Coding data sources

Geopolitical	Country, Conflict-affected, Nature of crisis, Syria crisis-affected
Age	(5-17) ISCED age cycle for the relevant country
Education cycle	pre-primary, primary, lower secondary, secondary
OOSC definition	Nature of exclusion, Dimension of exclusion, Degree of visibility
Sex	Male, Female
Nature of Education	Formal, NFE
Context	Pre-COVID only
Year	2015 - 2020
OOS Status	In - School, OOS
Geographic Context	Urban, Rural
Vulnerability-Related Characteristics	(displacement status, ability status, gender, etc)

AOI #2

Area of inquiry #2 and #4

Using the data sourced to answer AOI#1, as well as a broader literature looking for qualitative analysis about barriers and motivating factors to engaging in education, the consultancy team will again sort and code the data through additional lenses, as detailed below. In short, it will take three "passes" at the data. First, looking at the factors that affected whether a child was likely to be in or out of school before the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic. These factors will be coded regarding whether or not they relate to participation or retention, if they are specific to a certain age group, or geographic context, etc. Details can be found in the tab "data collection tool" and "AOI#2 access barriers + AOI#4" in the file "OOSC data collection management and analysis." Similar to AOI#1, where there appears to be a paucity of information regarding what barriers and motivating factors are, what their effect is, and to what they can be attributed, this information will be included as part of the analysis and recommendations presented under AOI#4.

*Figure 13: AOI#2 and AOI#4 - Analysis [JS1] of access barriers*
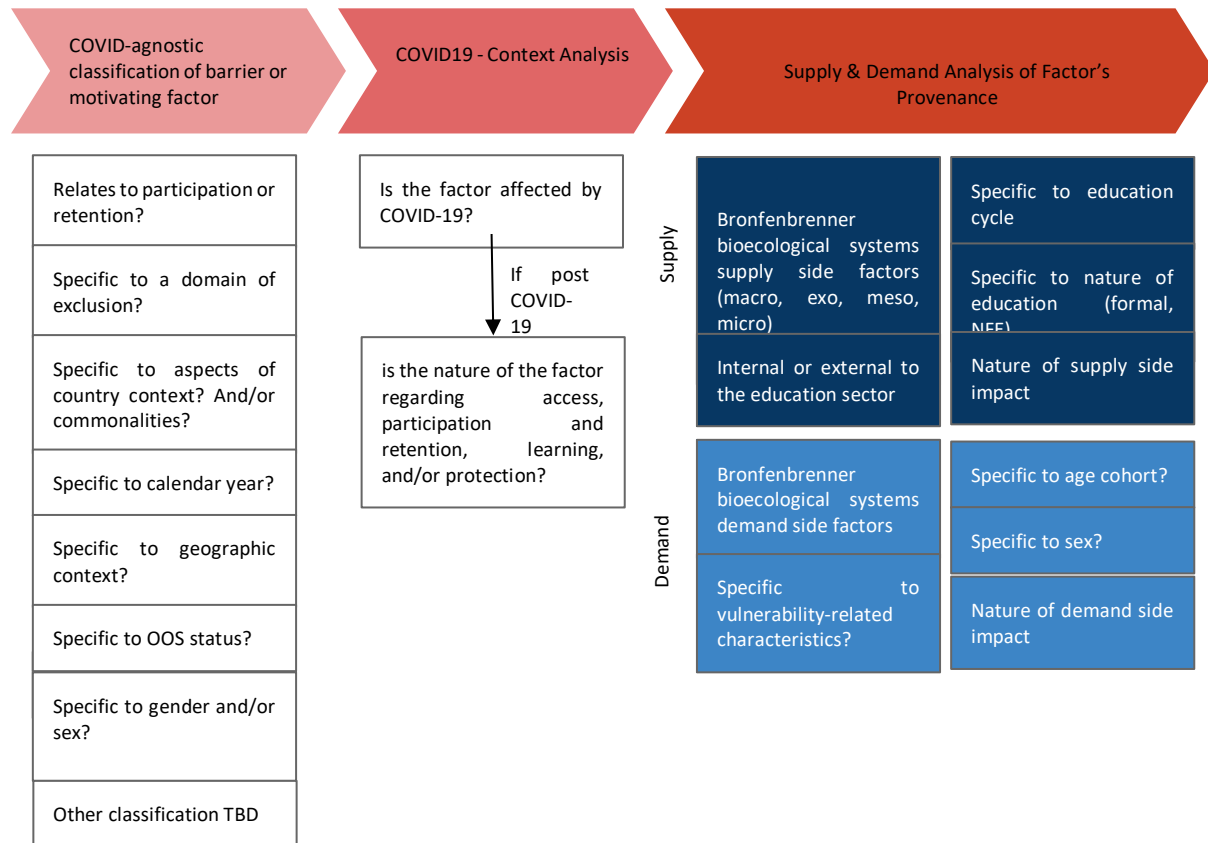
Area of inquiry #3 and #4

The data sourcing and analysis in relation to AOI#3 will also build on the outcomes of that for AOI#1 and AOI#2. It will look at the policies and programmes in place that relate to the OOSC issue and will correlate how well they appear to target both motivating factors[26] as well as barriers to engaging in school. As with the previous AOI, the policy or programme will be coded in various ways to understand how it relates to the topic of OOSC. For example, in what country is it relevant? Does it target a specific dimension of exclusion? A specific sex? Is it COVID-19 responsive? Figure 14 provides examples of such coding.

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[26] The consultancy team has clarified with the Client that referencing in the TOR to programmes taking place "in schools" relates at a minimum to school feeding programmes that intend to both serve as pull factors for enrolment as well as contributing factors to retention once enrolled. These and other school-based programmes will be reviewed for their theoretical efficacy.

Figure 14: AOI#3 and AOI#4 - Impacts of policies and programmes on OOSC: coding criteria
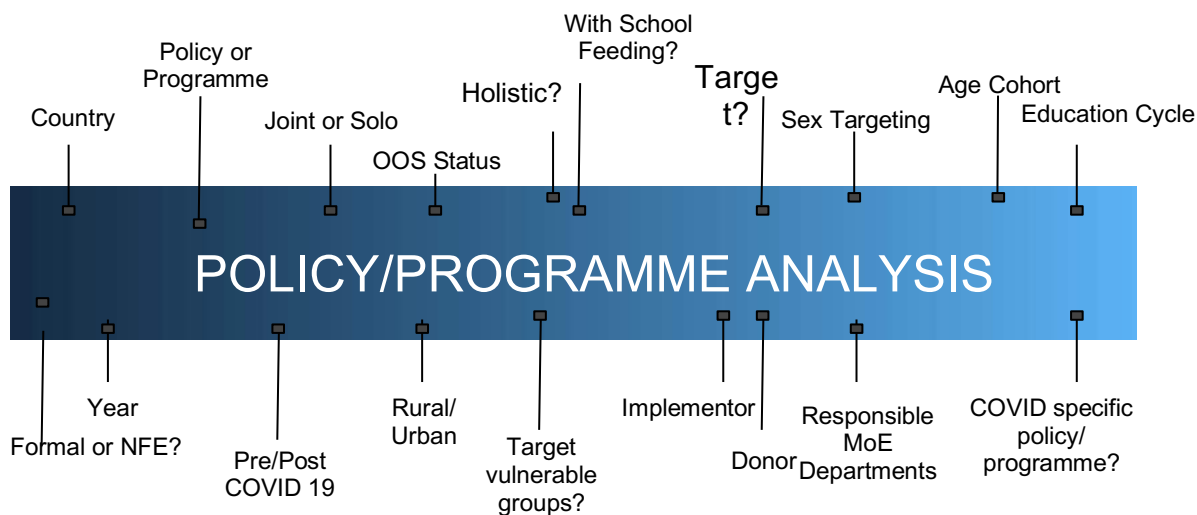
The second layer of analysis will be a series of questions that will source qualitative profiling of individual policies or programmes and/or cohorts of them (for example, those that are COVID-19 specific, those that relate to a certain age cohort, those that target children with certain vulnerability profiles). These questions as they are currently envisioned are detailed in Figure 15 below.

The impact of the policies or programmes will not be assessed in the way they would under an evaluation. Rather, their theoretical relevance to their stated purposes and/or to the challenges faced by OOSC will be analysed. Similar to AOI#1 and AOI#2, where there appears to be a paucity of information regarding OOSC-related policies and programmes, this

Figure 15: AOI#3-Policy and programme-related questions

information will be included as part of the analysis and recommendations presented under AOI#4.

Q1	To what extent is access to quality basic education specified as a goal, outcome or result of MOE policies?	Q2	How inclusive are existing policies addressing OOSC?	Q3	How does the operationalization of these policies take place?
Q4	To what extent are currently existing programmes appropriate in crisis settings?	Q5	To what extent are currently existing programmes appropriate to COVID settings?	Q6	What is the role of international and local partners? Schools? Communities?
Q7	Perceived benefits of and perception of need for school by school-aged children?	Q8	Perceived benefits of, and perception of need for school by the parents/caregivers of school-aged children?	Q9	Perceived benefits of and perception of need for school by community leaders?
Q10	To what extent are gender and protection considerations integrated into currently existing programme design/implementation?	Q11	What are the most appropriate channels, entry points and existing service delivery platforms to reach the target audience?	Q12	To what extent do OOSC programmes contribute to SDG 2, 5 and 17?
Q13	What are the major factors which influence sustainability of OOSC programmes?	Q14	Who are the most influential actors?	Q15	How to ensure that programmes support community and institutional coping and recovery?
Q16	How to ensure that programmes contribute to building long-term systems?	Q17	What good practices and lessons learned can be extracted from the COVID-19 response?	Q18	To what extent are funding resources being allocated towards OOSC programmes in the MENA region?
Q19	How likely are funding resources going to continue based on future funding?	Q20	To what extent are OOSC programmes linked to transition strategies?		

5.5.4   Data quality assurance

The primary team has three English speakers (the mother tongue of the Team Leader) and two Arabic speakers (the mother tongue of the Senior Researcher). The two mother tongue speakers of the two primary languages of data to be sourced will do the mass majority of the document review in their mother tongue. To quality assure the English and Arabic data collection and translation of findings and analysis, the Data Analyst-who is both an English and Arabic speaker-will randomly review 10 per cent of the to verify that there isn't any pattern of error (for example, that we are not consistently quoting the wrong figures).

He will also be responsible for establishing-with the support of the Team Leader and Senior Researcher-some criteria to verify the consistency of data. For example, we will identify benchmarks from the literature that speak to the expected OOSC trends, such as from the end of the primary grades to the start of the lower secondary grades, or amongst certain vulnerability groups, so that we can track outlier data to see if it is a mistake or in fact an unexpected change that might warrant further research, validation, and/or analysis.

He will undertake this quality assurance effort on a weekly basis during data collection.

5.5.5   Data analysis

Comparative and correlational analysis will be used to identify commonalities and differences amongst the data through the lens of specific variables and other identifying characteristics outlined earlier in the report. These dimensions of analysis will be finalised upon confirmation of the type of analysis most valuable to the majority of study stakeholders. The analysis will be done in such a way that the data disaggregated to the country or other sub-area of inquiry

level will be "stackable" and, when combined with other analysed sub-components (such as geographic context, or intent of a certain policy) can help provide a nuanced and rich picture of the totality of the study's findings. Examples of the types of dimensions of analysis follow.

a. Country (which of or each of the seven included in the study)
b. Area of control   (if relevant, for Libya, Palestine, Yemen)
c. Crisis-affected status (current or past)
d. Nature of crisis (natural hazard, conflict, complex, etc)
e. Connection to crisis (hosting or otherwise affected, as well as link to the Syria crisis)

f. Dimension of exclusion (D1-3)
g. Sex (M, F)
h. Nature of education (formal or non-formal)
i. Calendar Year and/or School Year (2014-2021)
j. Geographic context (urban, rural, camp, host community, etc)
k. Vulnerability-related characteristics (religion, ability status, ethnicity, etc.)

5.5.6   Data presentation

In addition to more traditional narrative analysis, the consultancy team will present the main findings using heatmaps to the greatest extent possible. Such a method has been used by the consultancy team under recent projects completed for UNICEF MENARO (in 2019) on the topic of Curriculum, Accreditation, and Certification amongst Syrian refugee host governments as well as for research supported by UNHCR and the Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC) (in 2020) regarding the degree of alignment between the Syrian and Jordanian curriculum. Clients have found the presentation of data using such methods to be highly valuable.

6. Profile of deliverables[27]

6.1 Report

The report will be written with thoughtful consideration for the primary audience(s) for which it has been prepared. These considerations cover a number of layers. For example, the consultancy team notes from observation as well as from early advisory group meetings that there are unique institutional preferences and priorities relating to the study of and programming for OOSC amongst Save the Children, UNICEF, and the WFP that need to be considered. The consultancy team also notes that representatives of the reference group include other agencies with mandates touching on education for OOSC and that these entities will also have their own preferences and priorities.

The report will also be written with an understanding of the types of sensitivities that are inherent with the topic of OOSC. These include those borne by duty bearers for the provision of education to children (namely the governments for whom they are constituents, as well as host country governments) as well as the UN and other international entities, such as bilateral

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[27] The Client will provide the consultancy team with the preferred colour palette and other branding related information such as font preference so that the graphic designer can integrate these into the finalization of the product. This information is requested at least three weeks before the due date of the draft report.

donors, who have support for education as their mandate. Every effort will made through the desk review and KII process to surface, analyse, and prioritise coalescing these various preferences and priorities while also keeping in mind the importance of centring data about and for OOSC and their needs as the report's priority as well as the agreed to parameters of the TOR. Where necessary, findings and/or language in the final report that are deemed to be sensitive as defined above will be clearly flagged to the client when the draft is delivered so that decisions can be made about how to thoroughly and thoughtfully present the findings while also maintaining data fidelity.

The Executive Summary will naturally be developed as a stand-alone document that can be used as the basis for the dissemination event and/or other advocacy regarding the full study. It will first tell the regional story and then provide snapshots of the country-level data. As such, it is possible that it might reach 10-20 pages in length and will rely heavily on infographics to quickly tell the story of OOSC in the targeted countries.

The introductory part of the report will focus on findings that are both geographically and thematically cross cutting. These include commonalities and/or outliers that relate to OOSC's sex, or conflict-affected status of the area in which they reside, the degree to which a certain calendar year shows great trends in OOSC over others, and/or if certain vulnerability-related characteristics are particularly relevant. Such an effort will enable thoughtful analysis of the potential impact of various aspects of a child's environment or identity on his or her engagement with education. It will then move into country-specific analysis, with the vision that these chapters of the report can function as standalone studies for stakeholders whose work is focused on that specific country. Therein, as much disaggregation of data by area of control as is possible will be noted.

The recommendations section will focus to the greatest degree possible on the following:
1. Identifying potential responses to the findings and conclusions (policy, policy advocacy, programming, etc.) while also flagging that such responses likely require field-level verification/validation under the envisioned Phase II. Where possible, identifying evidence-based technical recommendations that can be considered reliable enough at this phase of the two part study to be applied to programming in the near term and/or without the outcomes of the Phase II findings. Thereupon:
    i. Differentiating where specific next steps are clearly under the remit of a specific agency
    ii. Differentiating recommendations by specific variable, namely country, OOSC status, sex, etc.
    iii. Focusing on presenting recommendations that can be easily operationalised rather than presenting theoretical suggestions or those that are not considered through the lens of practical implementation
2. Knowledge gaps and further research, inclusive of Phase II of the study, and if appropriate beyond that. It will focus on practical rather than theoretical recommendations for Phase II of the study.

See the proposed Table of Contents in Annex 7, which was provided by Save the Children and has to date only been slightly modified to address anticipated elements of the final report unique to this study.

6.2 Dissemination Event

Profile

The consultancy team is operating under the guidance of the Client that the dissemination event is likely to be virtual. It further understands the Client's interest to ensure the event is as dynamic and inclusive as possible. Initial thinking is for a roughly three-hour event, to mimic the type of traditional report launch to which those in the sector are accustomed, and that usually might have taken place in a large public conference facility.

The envisioned purpose of the event is to widen the cohort of engaged stakeholders who are invested in and want to contribute to as well as benefit from Phase II of the research and the conclusions drawn from both Phases of the research. Its objectives will be to foster a sense of trust in the data being presented, as well as in the entities behind the research, and to improve understanding of WFP's expanding interest in this cohort and its partnership with UNICEF to this end. An outcome of the event would be an expanded list of stakeholders who could facilitate aspects of field-based Phase II data collection.

Recognising that a three hour plenary session online is unlikely to serve the purpose of generating excitement about and interest in the report outcomes, the consultancy team will endeavour to:

- First, ensure that any session or sessions that aim to share information with participants be brief and utilise unique visualisation tools. For example, rather than a fairly static PowerPoint presentation, a dynamic dashboard-based presentation could be used, with Google Data Studio as the platform host, for example.

- Secondly, considering the potential breadth of participants, the consultancy team might explore the development of "birds of a feather" side meetings, in which language groups could gather for facilitated discussion about the presented findings or perhaps participants with a particular geographic or technical interest could gather to do the same. Opportunities for (a) question and answer session(s) via a monitored chat function, and/or resulting from these side gatherings, could help make the event participatory and engaging.

- Thirdly, ensure that the event is planned well for both participants engaging in Arabic as well as in English, noting that simultaneous translation is planned for these two languages. It does not anticipate needing to have simultaneous translation in other languages of the region, including Kurdish or Turkish.

Process for event design and decision making

While the expected on-line nature of the event provides both opportunities for expanded engagement of sector stakeholders, it also presents hosting and other logistical challenges. It also must be recognised that some potential stakeholders might face barriers to engagement given internet connectivity or electricity related challenges. These considerations will be kept to mind in framing the options for what the event might look like.

A brief literature review of sorts will take place to review guidance-especially that developed since the onset of mainstreamed remote learning, training, and conferences in the year since

the start of the COVID-19 pandemic. The team will also undertake a brief set of KII with platform hosts and consumers to learn about the options and challenges that have been faced in their use.

As the data collection and analysis process reaches its midpoint (approximately mid-March 2021), the consultancy team will share updated thinking with the Client about how findings to date might influence the scope and scale of the event. The recommendations will likely be presented through a strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats (SWOT) lens. By the end of the data collection and analysis period (approximately mid-April 2021) further updates about the consultancy team's thinking about the event will be provided during the periodic meetings with the advisory group. After the submission of the report in mid-May 2021, planning for the event will begin in earnest, with lists of invitees developed, a hosting platform chosen, coordination with the (potential or chosen) simultaneous translation service providers, and agenda development. Finalisation of this support package will occur after the advisory and reference group feedback is received at the end of May 2021. From there, the refinement of presentation materials will occur and be presented to the advisory group, reference group for finalisation in English before they are translated into Arabic.

Annexes

Annex 1: Works Cited

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Annex 3:   Initial list of proposed key informants to be consulted

Annex 4: Updated timetable/work plan

The workplan presented as part of the updated proposal process has been included as part of the inception report, with the relevant deliverable dates and other related timeframe updated. Otherwise, no other changes have been made to the agreed upon workplan.

Annex 5: CVs and/or company profiles of potential team members and affiliates

Data Analyst: Gabriele Bompani (confirmed)

Editing-English: Christine Pollitt (proposed)

Graphic Designer: Rama Alazzam (illustrative)

Researcher (Turkish Language): Benil Mustafa (confirmed)

Senior Researcher: Raja'a Al-Alawi (confirmed)

Team Leader: Jen Steele (confirmed)

Translation, Editing, and Simultaneous Translators: (potential)[28]

- **Option A**:[29] Abu Ghazaleh Translation Company: For 30 years, Abu Ghazaleh Translation Company (AGTC) has been empowering communications for leading multinationals. Originally known as a supplier to suppliers, our company has quickly become one of the fastest growing multilingual Language Service Providers in the marketplace and the world. AGTC is a customer-centric organization with a keen focus on high-quality standards and technological creativity to overcome any obstacle and ultimately add true value to any localization program

- **Option B:** Nadia Al Sharief is a freelance translator and interpreter who has worked in the field of translation for more than 10 years and covers the work of international agencies in Amman.

- **Option C:** Gibran is a language services company that provides businesses and organizations with flawless, world-class content across more than a dozen languages. Specializing in consulting, business, financial, legal, and technical texts that allow clients operating in diverse industries and markets to connect with audiences around the globe. Gibran employs a diverse international team of leading language and content professionals, hailing from across the Middle East and North Africa – and beyond.

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[28] Note that the brief descriptions come from the company websites themselves.
[29] Listed in alphabetical order.

Annex 6: Area of inquiry analysis framework

Annex 7:   Proposed outline of final report

1. Title page

Name and location of the programme or project, date of the study's submission, the name (and/or the institute) of evaluator

2.   Contents page

Including boxes, figures, tables, maps and annexes

3.   List of acronyms

4.   Executive summary

Brief description of the context and the programme/project; the objectives of the evaluation; the methodology used; key findings and conclusions; recommendations and lessons learned

5.   Background and description

A description of the programme/project goals, objectives, indicators and key activities

6.   Rationale: scope and purpose of the desk review

Explaining why desk review is being conducted and how the findings will be used, as well as clearly identifying the geographic and thematic coverage

7.   Methodology

Rationale, criteria for data source selection and inclusion, sources of information, description of the data collection tools, data analysis method

8.   Findings

A description of the findings against the objectives / indicators in the ToR

9.   Conclusions

Conclusions derived from the findings that are consistent with the data and methodology used

10.   Recommendations

Recommendations for any further study based on evidence analysis, including desk review but focused on Phase II of the study which will comprise of primary data collection activities, that are realistic and achievable taking into consideration the context and resources available. In addition, whatever programmatic recommendations that can be made based on the desk review, with the caveat that they should be validated via Phase II data collection and/or other studies.

11. Lessons learned

Both positive lessons and ongoing challenges, to share learning with other stakeholders

12. Annexes

These are likely to include the ToR, the list of data sources, data collection tools, the dataset, bibliography, list of documents reviewed, and the list of key informants, amongst other supporting data

Annex 8:   Terms of Reference

Annex 9: Draft data collection tool

Desk Study: Main Trends and Analysis on Out of School Children in the Middle East and North Africa Region

2015 - 2020

ANNEX 3
WORKS CITED OR USED IN DATA CALCULATION

equitas education   Save the Children   World Food Programme   unicef

Annex 3 Works Cited or Used in Data Calculation

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