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ANNEX I

to the Commission Implementing Decision on the Special Measure in favour of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan and support for durable solutions for refugees from Syria for 2024

Action Document for Education for All – Inclusive and quality education for refugees and vulnerable children and youth in host communities in Jordan – Phase 2

ANNUAL MEASURE

This document constitutes the annual work programme in the sense of Article 110(2) of the Financial Regulation, and action plan/measure in the sense of Article 23(4) of NDICI-Global Europe Regulation.

1. SYNOPSIS

1.1. Action Summary Table

1. Title OPSYS Basic Act	Education for All – Inclusive and quality education for refugees and vulnerable children and youth in host communities – Part 2 Special Measure in favour of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan and support for durable solutions for refugees from Syria for 2024 OPSYS business reference: ACT-62605 ABAC Commitment level 1 number: JAD.1413916 Financed under the Neighbourhood, Development and International Cooperation Instrument (NDICI-Global Europe).
2. Economic and Investment Plan (EIP)	Yes vi. Human Development (incl. human capital and youth)
EIP Flagship	Yes
3. Team Europe Initiative	No
4. Beneficiary(y)/(ies) of the action	The action shall be carried out in the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan
5. Programming document	N/A (Special Measure)
6. Link with relevant MIP(s) objectives/expected results	N/A
PRIORITY AREAS AND SECTOR INFORMATION	

7. Priority Area(s), sectors	Basic Education (112) Secondary Education (113) Post-secondary Education (114)			
8. Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)	Main SDG: SDG 4 Other significant SDGs: SDG 1 – No poverty SDG 5 – Gender Equality SDG 8 – Decent work and economic growth SDG 10 – Reduced inequalities			
9. DAC code(s)	11220 – Primary education 35% 11260 – Lower secondary education 25% 11320 – Upper Secondary Education 15% 11420 – Higher education 15% 11240 – Early childhood education 5% 11231 – Basic life skills for youth 5%			
10. Main Delivery Channel	Recipient Government (Central Government) – 12001 UNICEF – 41122 University, college or other teaching institution, research institute or think-tank-51000			
11. Targets	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Migration <input type="checkbox"/> Climate <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Social inclusion and Human Development <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Gender <input type="checkbox"/> Biodiversity <input type="checkbox"/> Human Rights, Democracy and Governance			
12. Markers (from DAC form)	General policy objective	Not targeted	Significant objective	Principal objective
	Participation development/good governance	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Aid to environment	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Gender equality and women's and girl's empowerment	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Reproductive, maternal, new-born and child health	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Disaster Risk Reduction	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Inclusion of persons with Disabilities	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Nutrition	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	RIO Convention markers	Not targeted	Significant objective	Principal objective

13. Internal markers and Tags	Biological diversity	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Combat desertification	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Climate change mitigation	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Climate change adaptation	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Policy objectives	Not targeted	Significant objective	Principal objective
	EIP	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	EIP Flagship	<div>YES</div> <div><input checked="" type="checkbox"/></div> <div>NO</div> <div><input type="checkbox"/></div>		
	Tags	<div>YES</div> <div><input type="checkbox"/></div> <div>NO</div> <div><input type="checkbox"/></div>		
	transport	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
	energy	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
	environment, climate resilience	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
	digital	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>
	economic development (incl. private sector, trade and macroeconomic support)	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
	human development (incl. human capital and youth)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>
	health resilience	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
	migration and mobility	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>
	agriculture, food security and rural development	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
	rule of law, governance and public administration reform	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
	other	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
	Digitalisation	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Tags	<div>YES</div> <div><input checked="" type="checkbox"/></div> <div>NO</div> <div><input type="checkbox"/></div>		
	digital connectivity	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>
	digital governance	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
	digital entrepreneurship	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
	digital skills/literacy	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>
	digital services	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
	Connectivity	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Tags	<div>YES</div> <div><input checked="" type="checkbox"/></div> <div>NO</div> <div><input type="checkbox"/></div>		
	digital connectivity	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>

	energy	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
	transport	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
	health	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
	education and research	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Migration	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
	Reduction of Inequalities	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
	COVID-19	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
BUDGET INFORMATION			
14. Amounts concerned	Budget line: 14.020110 Southern Neighbourhood Total estimated cost: EUR 25 000 000.00 Total amount of EU budget contribution EUR 25 000 000.00 of which EUR 14 900 000.00 for budget support and EUR 10 100 000.00 for complementary support		
MANAGEMENT AND IMPLEMENTATION			
15. Implementation modalities (management mode and delivery methods)	Direct management through: - Budget Support: State and Resilience Building Contract - Grants Indirect management with a pillar assessed entity (UNICEF)		

1.2. Summary of the Action

The Government of Jordan is committed to the provision of certified education for all children, regardless of their registration status or nationality. The most recently adopted education policies, strategies and plans - the Economic Modernization Vision¹, the Human Resources Development strategy², the Education Strategic Plan³ (ESP) - reflect the government's determination to pursue the enhancement of quality education while also reforming the national education system without compromising the efforts made to accommodate refugees. The Ministry of Education (MoE) in Jordan has developed a sound results-based and costed strategic education framework, supplemented by the Accelerated Access Initiative⁴ (AAI), which reinforces Jordan's commitment to 'Leaving No One Behind' and aims at preventing a 'lost generation' of vulnerable children and youth.

In line with the Jordan Compact⁵ and the commitments adopted in the subsequent Brussels conferences on "Supporting the future of Syria and the region", to enhance the quality, equity and capacity of the education system for refugee children and youth, the action builds on the EU's long-term support, which has been considered a successful experience open to replication. Strengthened interaction between our different education interventions, going from early childhood to tertiary education, including Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) and non-formal education will help the transition between them and contribute to a full cycle of quality education for all, in line with the Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 4

¹ <https://www.jordanvision.jo/en>

² Education for prosperity : Delivering results, A National Strategy for Human Resource Development 2016-2025, https://docs.wixstatic.com/ugd/176e64_5ad5680491ba47deb1579b450950ac46.pdf

³ Ministry of Education, Education Strategic Plan 2018-2022 (extended to 2025), https://moe.gov.jo/sites/default/files/esp_english_final.pdf

⁴ Accelerating Access Initiative (AAI) 2.0, September 2020 – August 2023, Development Coordination Unit, Ministry of Education

⁵ JOIN(2016) 41 final

– Quality Education. Considering the Syrian crisis is in its second decade, the international community pushes for long-term sustainability and a national system strengthening approach. Joint targeted policy dialogue and synergetic Technical Assistance and a better leveraged leading role for the EU in the existing donor coordination mechanisms will be critical in breaking down the silos.

The Overall Objective of this action is: Refugees and the most vulnerable host communities' children/youth have improved literacy and numeracy skills, as well as educational qualifications.

The Specific Objectives (SO) of this action are:

1. Increased completion of a full-cycle of quality education (early childhood, primary and secondary level) for refugees and vulnerable children and youth in host communities in Jordan for the school year 2026-2027;
2. Refugees and vulnerable Jordanians in host communities are empowered for better career and livelihood pathways.

The action is in line with the priorities of the ambitious and innovative Agenda for the Mediterranean, set out in the Joint Communication from the Commission and the High Representative on the Southern Neighbourhood of 9 February 2021⁶ and its Economic and Investment Plan⁷ and in the subsequent Council conclusions on a renewed Partnership with the Southern Neighbourhood of 16 April 2021⁸, especially the flagship 1 “Support to social sectors, education, skills and health”.

1.3. Beneficiar(y)/(ies) of the action

The Action shall be carried out in the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, which is included in the list of ODA recipients.

2. RATIONALE

2.1. Context

Today, with the Syria crisis entering its second decade, Jordan hosts around 643,199 UNHCR-registered Syrian refugees⁹, although the real total of Syrians living in Jordan following the outbreak of the war is estimated at around 1.36 million. They make up about 12.3% of the total population in Jordan and an overwhelming majority of them is living out of the camps¹⁰. In line with the **EU-Jordan 2021-2027 Partnership Priorities**¹¹, the response to the Syria crisis continues to be politically and strategically framed by the **Jordan Compact**¹² and the subsequent Brussels Conferences. Against a backdrop of continued extreme vulnerability of refugees and host communities, further exacerbated by the Israel war on Gaza, the Russian war of aggression against Ukraine and the COVID-19 pandemic, pursuing investments to improve their access to services, ensure respect of their human rights, working to enhance their potential for self-reliance, and creating opportunities for them to contribute to Jordan's economic development remain high on the agenda.

⁶ JOIN(2021) 2 final.

⁷ SWD(2021) 23 final

⁸ <https://data.consilium.europa.eu/doc/document/ST-7931-2021-INIT/en/pdf>.

⁹ January 2024; <https://data.unhcr.org/en/situations/syria/location/36>

¹⁰ Only 20% of official UNHCR-registered Syrian refugees live in camps.

¹¹ COM(2022) 164 final

¹² The Jordan Compact, adopted in December 2016, contains a comprehensive package which combines assistance in diverse policy areas such as trade, employment, mobility, countering violent extremism and education. In exchange, Jordan has adopted diverse measures to facilitate social and economic inclusion of Syrian refugees.

The Jordan Compact builds on the **Jordan 2025 national vision and strategy**, the national blueprint for a ten-year economic development path. It identifies three major priorities: (i) addressing currently high levels of unemployment, particularly for women and youth, (ii) reducing poverty, which is concentrated in disadvantaged regions and (iii) increasing investment. The effectiveness and efficiency of the Syria Response is therefore closely linked to developments in Jordan. As such, Syria crisis response programmes in the education sector require to be anchored firmly in the national Education Strategic Plan (ESP). Vulnerability considerations remain the basis for targeting in the education programmes, alongside projections for future sustainability of the absorption capacity of Jordan's education sector in a context where possibilities for voluntary, safe and dignified returns remain limited. This is also emphasised in the **Multi-annual Indicative Programme (MIP) 2021-2027**¹³ for Jordan and in full adherence with the priorities of the Commission: "Alliances for Sustainable Growth and Jobs"¹⁴, and "Migration Partnerships"¹⁵.

In this framework, the inclusion efforts that were done in the education sector in the last years are exemplary and should be built on further. The Government of Jordan (GoJ) is committed to the provision of free certified education in the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan for all children, regardless of their registration status or nationality, hence Syrian and other non-Jordanian children can participate within the national system. The most recently adopted education policies, strategies and plans – the **Human Resources Development strategy**¹⁶ (HRD) as well the **Education Strategic Plan**¹⁷ (ESP), as well as the **Economic Modernization Vision**¹⁸ – reflect the GoJ's determination to pursue simultaneously the enhancement of quality education, while also reforming the national education system without compromising the efforts made to accommodate refugees.

Important elements of these efforts have focused on the national education sector in a comprehensive manner, in line with SDG4 commitments. The **Accelerating Access to Quality Formal Education for Syrian Refugee Children** (AAI) that was launched in 2016 under the Jordan Compact, includes the provision of school facilities in refugee camps, double-shifting in host community schools, the refurbishment of others, and the provision of tuition fees and textbooks for Syrian students together with the appointment of more teachers. Responses to addressing the need to cater for the influx of Syrian students have been aligned with the **Jordan Response Plan (JRP)**¹⁹, helping to implement sustainable delivery systems that meet the needs of both refugees and vulnerable host communities.

¹³ C(2022)3821

¹⁴ https://international-partnerships.ec.europa.eu/policies/sustainable-growth-and-jobs_en

¹⁵ https://international-partnerships.ec.europa.eu/policies/migration-and-forced-displacement_en

¹⁶ **Education for Prosperity: Delivering Results. A National Strategy for Human Resource Development. 2016-2025:** The King officially launched the strategy, which came into force in October 2016. It stipulates that the future design and operation of the HRD system, within and across each phase of education and development, should be informed by five key principles entitled (i) Access; (ii) Quality; (iii) Accountability; (iv) Innovation; and (v) Mindset.

¹⁷ **Education Strategic Plan 2018-2025 (extended through the MTR that was finalized in 2022)**, anchored in the goals of the HRD strategy and adopted by MoE in 2018 as the key policy document for the entire education sector, including a comprehensive set of Key Performance Indicators

¹⁸ Jordan's **Economic Modernisation Vision (2022-2033)** centers on the slogan of "A Better Future", and is based on two strategic pillars: accelerated growth through unleashing Jordan's full economic potential; improved quality of life for all citizens, while sustainability is a cornerstone of this future vision. The vision will be implemented through eight engines of economic growth covering 35 main and sub-sectors and including more than 366 initiatives. Education is considered a critical enabler with a key role in supplying skilled and capable citizens and workforce for the future. This is reflected in a sector specific roadmap that puts forward 40 priority actions required to reach this goal by 2033.

¹⁹ **Jordan Response Plan 2020-22** defines 7 sectors, of which education is the largest. The overall education objective is "to ensure sustained quality educational services for children and youth impacted by the Syria crisis". The latest iteration of the JRP (2024-2026) is currently being developed. It brings together development and humanitarian responses to the Syrian crisis under one integrated planning and coordination framework, meeting the needs of both refugees and vulnerable host communities. Education (included TVET and Higher Education) is estimated to remain the largest sector.

The **Accelerating Access Initiative 2.0**²⁰ (AAI 2.0), which runs from 2020 until 2024, expanded the scope of its precursor, the AAI. The AAI 2.0's strategic objective is to support the GoJ to deliver a quality education that provides equitable and inclusive opportunities for improved learning outcomes, life-skills development, and work readiness not only for Syrian refugee children — the original scope of AAI — but also for non-Syrian refugee children and other vulnerable groups, including children with disabilities and out of school children. The AAI 2.0 is fully aligned with the **10-Year Strategy for Inclusive Education (2020-2030)** for Jordan and the ESP and can actually be seen as a programme under the strategy. The follow-up programme, AAI 3.0 (name tbc), expected to formally start in September 2024, is in the pipeline. An in-depth assessment of refugee education in Jordan is currently ongoing and should feed into the formulation of this next stage of the initiative. Inclusion into the national education system will be further reinforced. It is expected that AAI 3.0 will run until August 2028.

Complementary to the objectives of the AAI, with the support of the EU, UNICEF has been ensuring school operations, focusing on improvements in the quality of education, across 51 schools and eleven stand-alone Kindergartens (KGs) in Azraq, Za'atari and Emirati Jordanian Camp (EJC) refugee camps. Over 36,500 Syrian refugee girls and boys benefit from these services through both formal and non-formal (NFE) education. The focus on learning recovery programmes to catch-up lost learning and the improvement of the learning environment inside the camps will continue to be at the core of this intervention. Empowered Syrian Assistant Teachers (SAT) will play a key role in its implementation.

The right of every child to a full cycle of education, higher education and TVET are becoming of increasing importance. Under the Syria response (previously EUTF Madad), higher education has been targeted through several initiatives; in particular the scholarship programme EDU-Syria, which places refugees, in particular Syrian refugees, and disadvantaged Jordanians in higher education and TVET programmes. Aiming to offer innovative solutions, both under academic and TVET streams that could maximise the employment options for young Syrians towards multiple scenarios in the future is critical, not only from a human capital investment perspective but also in the fight against extremism and radicalisation. This is outlined in the Jordan Response Plan Education Sector Strategy, fully in line with SDG 4 and the ESP.

Activities under the proposed programme, will build the capacities of Syrian refugees. Something that will increase opportunities for their future employment and self-reliance. This will allow them to contribute positively to the socio-economic fabric of Jordan as well as of Syria, when and if the conditions for a voluntary, safe and dignified return are met.

This Action is the continuation of the ongoing education interventions under the 2022 & 2023 Special Measure for Jordan. Initially it was foreseen to commit the allocated funds for this action under a Multi-Annual Special Measure in 2023, covering school years 2024-2025, 2025-2026 and 2026-2027. However, the decision was made to separate it into two separate Annual Measures (one for school years 2024-2025 and 2025-2026 and one for school year 2026-2027) which explains why this action is included in the 2024 Special Measure. No changes to the theory of change of the intervention have been made.

2.2. Problem Analysis

Short problem analysis

²⁰The AAI 2.0 is implemented through a combination of mixed funding modalities. This includes funding from the AAI donor group comprised of the UK, the USA, Norway, Canada and Australia, along with direct budget support from the EU and off-budget earmarked support from Germany. It formally ends 31 March 2024 but pending the formal approval of AAI 3.0 (name tbc), core costs such as salaries, tuition, fees and books are continuously covered during the transitional period, although they can no longer be considered as a part of AAI 2.0. We already refer to it as AAI 3.0 but it hasn't officially kicked-off and the full rationale has yet to be defined.

According to the latest figures, of the 643,199 UNHCR-registered Syrian refugees hosted by Jordan, around 233,024 (36%) are school-aged children (5-17 years). The 2022 UNHCR Vulnerability Assessment²¹, which for the first time also looked at non-Syrian refugees²², highlights that economic conditions have worsened for many Syrians since 2018²³ and that vulnerabilities tend to compound one another. More particularly for education, while Jordan has taken important steps to enable access to education for school-aged refugee children, 40% of Syrian, 49% of Iraqi and 44% of other nationalities' children of school-age are in families that are rated as highly vulnerable in the education domain. In the host communities, across the sample²⁴, 75% of school-aged children are enrolled in school, while 17% have never been enrolled. In the camps, 87% of school-aged children were enrolled in Azraq and 83% in Za'atari, with enrolment rates declining significantly with age in both locations. In particular, males between the ages of 16-17 are much more likely than females to report non-enrolment (46% compared to 30%). The 18-year old cohort illustrates high increase in non-enrolment for females and a continuous rise for males (57% for females, 53% for males). Furthermore, a higher proportion of school-aged children in Azraq had never attended compared to Za'atari (47% and 37% respectively).

The protracted nature of the Syria crisis has placed significant stress on the socio-economic situation in the country, strained the capacity of the GoJ and partners to provide quality services for all children and challenged communities and caregivers to meet the needs of the vulnerable. Out of the estimated 3.16 million children in Jordan, more than 0.6 million are multi-dimensionally poor (moderate poverty level), and 0.04 million are acutely poor²⁵. Vulnerability has become an important concept used to guide the design, evaluation, and targeting of programmes but in order to do it successfully, coordination between the national system and the humanitarian assistance programmes should be sufficiently robust. The UNHCR Multi-Year Strategy 2023-2025²⁶ reports that refugees, including in camps, should no longer be considered as automatically vulnerable, which means a more comprehensive approach to vulnerability should be adopted and comparability with national data should be encouraged. Evidence points to intersectional poverty wherein refugees, poor households, people living with disability, residing in rural areas, and women suffer higher rates of vulnerability.

Children and young people in a vulnerable situation face multiple deprivations – poverty, profound stress, and limited access to quality education. The impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic have been particularly severe for refugees living in camps, due to prolonged movement restrictions that further restricted their access to income-earning opportunities combined with the continued closure of schools. While out of school, children and youth became more vulnerable to engaging in unsafe practices and negative coping mechanisms such as child labour and early marriage. The effects of the Israel war on Gaza and the Russian war of aggression against Ukraine could further aggravate this situation.

Refugees and other vulnerable children in Jordan face significant barriers to completing a full cycle of education and learning to their potential. The latest AAI Progress Report²⁷ reports that of the 239,243 estimated school-aged Syrian refugee children, 151,000 children were enrolled in formal education in

²¹ 2022 VAF population report for refugees in Camps and 2022 VAF population report for refugees in host communities. In the host communities, 6427 refugee households were randomly sampled across all governorates and in the camps, a total of 10141 individuals, representing 2208 families living in 1620 households were interviewed.

²² In addition to the 2.3 million registered Palestinian refugees (not accounted for in this VAF), smaller groups comprised of Iraqi, Yemeni, Sudani, Somali and other refugees live in Jordan.

²³ Non-Syrian refugees were added to the VAF studies in 2021 and thus comparison prior to this year cannot be concluded.

²⁴ In the host communities, 6427 refugee households were randomly sampled across all governorates and in the camps, a total of 10141 individuals, representing 2208 families living in 1620 households were interviewed.

²⁵ "Geographic Multidimensional Vulnerability Analysis – Jordan" – UNICEF, 2020

²⁶ https://www.unhcr.org/jo/wp-content/uploads/sites/60/2023/01/2023-2025-SUMMARY-Multi-Year-Strategy-UNHCR-Jordan_final.pdf

²⁷ Semi-annual progress report (12/2022-05/2023), Accelerating Access to Quality Formal Education for Syrian Refugee Children Program (AAI), Development Coordination Unit, 31/05/2023, Ministry of Education

2022/2023, up from 147,000 in 2021/2022. For non-Syrian refugees, the number went down from 3,583 in 2021/2022 to 3,386 in 2022/2023, close follow-up will be required.

The Jordan Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) results of 2022²⁸ show a drop in mathematics compared to 2018 and are about the same as in 2018 in reading and science. Overall, students in Jordan scored less than the OECD average in mathematics, reading and science. PISA doesn't disaggregate between refugees and non-refugees but does make the distinction between socio-economically advantaged and disadvantaged students, which gives an indication on vulnerability more broadly. In Jordan, socio-economically advantaged students (the top 25% in terms of socio-economic status) out performed disadvantaged students (the bottom 25%) by 40 score points in mathematics. What is interesting is that this is smaller than the average difference between the two groups across OECD countries. Between 2012 and 2022, the gap in mathematics performance between the top and the bottom 25% of students narrowed in Jordan, while the average gap across OECD countries remained stable. This can be due to many factors but it could be an indication that programmes that specifically targeted vulnerable populations, such as refugees, have been successful to some extent in providing similar quality of education to all.

Although it is gaining traction, in protracted crisis contexts, higher education for refugees remains low on the agenda and has been perceived as a luxury in contexts without universal primary or secondary education. This perception has been further magnified by the recent pandemic. Despite the important social and economic benefits of higher education, both at the level of the individual and the community, particularly to drive post-conflict reconstruction, globally only 1% of refugees attend university. In Jordan, 8% of Syrian refugees are participating in higher education. This is due to a complex array of factors, including financial hardship, refugees' lack of identity documentation and proof of former study, institutional rigidity and the incapacity of Jordanian higher education institutions to absorb vast numbers of refugees. A popular donor strategy for increasing access to higher education for refugees has been TVET/skills development, focusing on employability and economic development. It is a pathway that has proven successful and that should definitely be continued and further strengthened.

However, a one-size fits all approach to higher education with a sole overarching aim to improve employment outcomes might fail to address the non-financial aspects of welfare of refugees and fall short in enabling young people to live lives that they have reason to value. Lack of higher education opportunities, unequal access to these opportunities, and/or the wrong type of education can also contribute to regional insecurity and instability and increase refugee's vulnerability to a range of undesirable outcomes, including radicalisation, criminal activity or early or forced marriage. For these reasons, and also considering that during post-conflict reconstruction, educated refugees are the human capital that can play an important role in rebuilding local, national and regional institutions, continued investments in higher and university education remain of equal importance.

Identification of main stakeholders and corresponding institutional and/or organisational issues (mandates, potential roles, and capacities) to be covered by the action²⁹:

- **Refugee communities in and outside the camps and vulnerable children/youth in host communities.** These are considered to be the first and main priority stakeholders. Providing quality education and access to both refugees and vulnerable children and youth in host communities will have a positive impact on the overall socio-economic situation of the population;

²⁸ <https://www.oecd.org/publication/pisa-2022-results/webbooks/dynamic/pisa-country-notes/d1c865b3/pdf/jordan.pdf>

²⁹ It is possible that reforms to the mandate of public sector institutions (e.g. MoE, MoHESR, TVSDC etc.) will materialise in the course of this action following implementation of the triple reform process that Jordan launched recently: Economic Modernisation Vision, Political Modernisation Vision and Public Administration Modernisation Vision. This may then possibly also lead to a change in stakeholders for the Action.

- **The Ministry of Education (MoE)** will be the main government stakeholder, supported by **Ministry of Planning and International Cooperation (MoPIC)**. They will participate in regular coordination and steering of the programme;
- **UNICEF** as the UN mandated agency on education, will provide complementary support to the government-led education system in the camp environment;
- **The AAI 2.0 donors coordination group** (as it is currently known) will meet regularly throughout implementation and will be regularly consulted, in particular participating EU Member States. The EU will take a more active role within this group and try to strengthen the linkages with the national sector coordination groups: Education Development Partner Group (EDPG) and the Education Sector Working Group (ESWG), also feeding into the regular policy dialogue and align where possible;
- **Civil society and other relevant education actors active at camp level:** The MoE will establish core teams combining key technical staff from the camp directorates to monitor the performance of activities at the field level. Regular coordination meetings focusing on the camp schools will take place. Coordination will include representatives from the humanitarian and development community and closer interaction with UNICEF and the schools will be encouraged;
- **The Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research (MoHESR)** will be closely involved in the coordination and monitoring of the higher education/TVET component under this action, ensuring more ownership and possible expansion;
- **Technical and Vocational Skills Development Commission (TVSDC)** may be involved in the coordination and monitoring of the higher education/TVET component under this action, ensuring more ownership and possible expansion;
- **Relevant higher education institutions**, probably in the form of a consortium (exact composition remains to be confirmed), potentially including German Jordanian University (GJU), Queen Rania Teacher Academy (QRTA), DAAD, NUFFIC, Luminus, Princess Sumaya University for Technology, Zarqa University, Yarmouk University, Jordan University of Sciences and Technology, Mu'tah University, etc. The consortium is open to examine the benefit of additional partners;
- **Ministry of Finance (MoF)** transfers the funds to the MoE.

International support to the implementation of the AAI is well coordinated by the MoE that takes a leading role in the determination of priorities and the follow-up to the initiative. A broad group of donors are supporting the AAI, including Germany, Canada, Australia, UK, USA and Norway. With reduced funding from some of the donor partners, the EU contribution will be increasingly important to ensure continuity of quality and access to education for refugee youth in camps and host communities.

2.3. Lessons Learned

The following lessons learned from the previous phases should be highlighted:

The Evaluation of EU Trust Fund (EUTF)-funded Programmes/Projects on Basic Education that was done in 2019, highlights that EUTF support remains highly relevant and critical to providing basic education to refugee children, vulnerable children and youth in host communities. The findings of the Outcome Evaluation of EUTF Syria (2022) reiterate that the enrolment target has been exceeded, even though the transition from NFE into formal education is challenging and the drop-out numbers remain high.

In Jordan more specifically, in June 2023, the Joint ESP Annual Review Meeting (JARM) took place and brought together MoE, national stakeholders and development partners. This is the most important mechanism for assessing Jordan's overall education sector progress on a yearly basis. Per domain of the ESP³⁰, the key achievements were highlighted and a couple of high-level recommendations were made. Another important

³⁰ The ESP has 6 domains: (1) Early childhood education and development, (2) Access & Equity, (3) System Strengthening, (4) Quality, (5) Human Resources, (6) TVET

development was that in addition of the progress made against the ESP objectives, the priorities stipulated in the recently launched EMV³¹ were also reported against.

To have the full picture on the progress made, more specifically focusing on the refugee response, the six-monthly AAI progress report³² is a core source of information. In addition, in the beginning of 2023, a Rapid Assessment of the AAI 2.0 implementation and achievements, human resources and financial systems was done³³.

Considering these reports, the following achievements/recommendations should be highlighted:

- The evaluation found that AAI 2.0 interventions for access and equity were mostly implemented as planned and outcomes and outputs were mostly achieved. AAI 2.0 continued to strengthen access and equity, especially for Syrian refugees, out of school children, and children with disabilities. A total of 151 000 Syrian refugee students, 3386 non-Syrian refugee students, 2264 children with disabilities, and 5696 children who were out of school benefitted from AAI 2.0 interventions;
- Considerable increase in Syrians' participation in KG2 have been observed in recent years. The gap was 56 percentage points to the advantage of Jordanians in 2016/2017 (when only 11.8% of Syrians were enrolled) and this decreased to 9.7 percentage points in 2021/2022 (when 56.5% of Syrians were enrolled). In addition, the Gross Intake Rate to the last grade of basic education for Syrian children has increased from 48.7% in 2016/2017 to 56.7% in 2021/2022;
- Through AAI 2.0 support for salaries, a total of 6177 contract teachers and 1560 administrators benefited from this intervention. At national level, teacher qualifications and career advancement have been identified as a main priority. The aim of focusing on this is to raise the status of the profession and improve the quality of the system, which should equally benefit refugees. Even though the AAI contract teachers do not benefit from all the same trainings as the regular teachers on the payroll, efforts are being done to include them as much as possible and this seems to have been effective in some cases as demonstrated in the Rapid Assessment Report³⁴;
- Inclusive education was advanced as a direct result of AAI 2.0. Through AAI support, the MoE began to operationalize the **Inclusive Education Strategy**³⁵. The MoE hired learning support teachers and multi-disciplinary teams in 60 schools in 2022/2023 and is planning to scale this up to an additional 60 schools in 2023/2024. An important result is that the number of students with disabilities in regular schools increased to 26 700 male and female students, an increase of 44% compared with the year 2020/2021;
- According to the Rapid Assessment, more specific interventions for quality education and system strengthening were largely not implemented as planned and were only marginally achieved. While the MoE supported AAI 2.0 through staff time and positions, implementation challenges such as the onset of COVID-19, government and donor bureaucracy, and insufficient human and financial resources necessitated a reduction in the overall work plan for AAI 2.0. This adjustment to the work plan directly contributed to a lack of progress on some results, especially for quality and system strengthening;

³¹ See Annex I, Priorities of MoE in the EMV

³² See Annex I, AAI 2.0, Semi-Annual Progress Report (Dec 2022-May 2023), Development Coordination Unit (DCU), MoE

³³ See Annex I, Rapid evaluation-Final Report, Accelerating Access Initiative 2.0 Rapid Evaluation, May 2023

³⁴ One out of 6 (17%) of the quality education outcome and output KPIs was exceeded, which was the percentage of teachers that are applying new methodologies in classroom in Type I, II, and III schools

³⁵ Ministry of Education & Higher Council for the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (2020). 10-Year Strategy for Inclusive Education, https://moe.gov.jo/sites/default/files/the_10-year_strategy_for_inclsuive_education.pdf

Overall, recovering the learning loss caused by COVID-19 remained at the heart of the MoE's undertakings in 2022/2023 and this will be so for the foreseeable future. Different large-scale diagnostic studies of students³⁶ in Grades 4-11 provide testimony of the significantly lower levels of learning than what is expected for these grades, indicating that most students have fallen out of typical grade range and need additional support. With the backing of USAID (under the Technical Assistance Program, TAP), MoE and the National Center for Curriculum Development (NCCD) developed a holistic strategy/action plan for this purpose "The National Plan for the Remedial Programme 2023-2025", which includes a focus on curriculum adjustments, professional development of educators as well as learning and teaching resources support. The aim of these interventions is that by the end of the 2024-2025 school year there is a substantial increase in the number of students ready to engage in on-grade learning (baseline and end line targets were established). MoE will equally conduct a mid-line study to track progress towards the targeted outcomes and to inform program adjustments as necessary.

For the schools that came out as the lowest performers during the national assessments, the National Remedial Plan foresees the adaptation of the Accelerated Learning programme (ALP) developed by UNICEF for the Makani centres. A pilot including 50 schools will allow the roll-out of this programme under AAI 2.0 during school year 2023-2024 and the planned expansion will be supported with EU funding under the bilateral envelope, as of September 2024. ALP will be implemented as an extra-curricular programme outside of school hours to complement the TAP programme, which focuses more on remedial packages for low to mid learning loss students. The ALP on its side will specifically focus on math and reading recovery for mid to high learning loss students.

Since 2015, the EU has been supporting higher education under the Madad Fund through the EDU-Syria scholarship programme. A recent Results Oriented Monitoring (ROM) that took place in 2021 considered that the initiative remains extremely relevant for the target group in the region. The activities contribute to the overarching aim to support Syrian refugees and disadvantaged Jordanians in their academic progress and development of their work and life skills. The 2018 Evaluation of Madad-funded Programmes for Higher Education considered that the higher education pathway of a young refugee starts in secondary school where perspectives and study orientation need to begin and continue towards preparation for entering TVET at lower or higher levels or for accessing higher education. The complementarity between the different components of this action aims to ensure this transition successfully. This also implies developing innovative solutions that maximise the options for young refugees towards multiple scenarios in the future, which is something EDU-Syria has started to invest in more strongly.

2.4. Additional Areas of Assessment

2.4.1. Public Policy

The MoE has continued to make progress in the reform of the education system in Jordan. MoE's commitment to implementation of the education reform in its various components remains strong. The Development Coordination Unit (DCU) continues to provide reliable coordination services towards the overall sector

³⁶ **National Diagnostic Assessment** 2022, Summary Report Learning Outcomes in Arabic and Mathematics, MoE & UNICEF. It was sat by all 1.25 million students in Jordan, including refugees, from Grade 4 to 11 and assessed learning loss in Arabic and Mathematics. Given the likely learning loss it was agreed to assess students on the critical concepts from two grades as well as one grade prior to the one they were in. In Arabic, only for grades 2 to 4 between 31% and 40% of the students scored 70% or more, showing good understanding of concepts 1 or 2 grades below their actual grade. For the remaining grades, less than a quarter of the students reached that score. In mathematics, on all but grades 2 and 3, the proportion of students reaching a score of 70% or above is 7% or less, and this falls to less than 5% for grades 5-10.

USAID/TAP programme: In 2022, the Technical Assistance Program (TAP) assisted the MoE to conduct a nationwide diagnostic assessment study for Grades 4-11 to serve as a baseline for the remedial program. It was carried out on a nationally representative sample involving 52 638 students, 3188 teachers, and 809 principals, covering all 42 directorates. The results revealed that on average over 40% of students are performing at basic proficiency in Arabic and Math, lacking the requisite skills to engage in on-grade learning.

reform, and contributes greatly towards successful dialogue within and across the MoE, donors and also the Ministry of Planning and International Cooperation (MoPIC).

The adoption of the Education Strategic Plan 2018-2022 (with its extension including refined Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) with targets through to 2024/2025) has been an important milestone with regard to future educational development in Jordan. The sector policy as contained in the ESP remains credible and relevant: key problems are identified and substantiated, specific objectives support strategies, and objectives are clear and measurable, with clear reform-oriented actions building on previous achievements. It contributes primarily to the progressive achievement of SDG 4 Quality Education but also promotes progress towards SDG 5 Gender Equality, SDG 8 Decent Work and Economic Growth, and SDG 10 Reduced Inequalities. A new ESP is expected to cover the period from 2025 onwards; discussions on revised targets are ongoing.

With a view to addressing the crisis situation created by the high influx of Syrian refugees into the Jordanian education system, the ESP demonstrates its relevance also with regard to the JRP, which explicitly adopts a resilience-based approach to respond to and mitigate the effects of the crisis on Syrian refugees and Jordanian people, host communities and institutions. The efforts supported by partners of a fuller incorporation of the AAI into the ESP have been sustained, in order to increase complementarities and avoid duplications. The extended scope of AAI 2.0 really helped with re-framing it as part of the ESP, and reporting against ESP KPIs. The negotiations for the follow-up programme are still ongoing and will depend on the new JRP³⁷ priorities as well. A more in-depth assessment of AAI, since its inception until now, is ongoing. The outcomes of this assessment will largely define the next phase (name tbc), starting in September 2024, when the activities and objectives will be revised accordingly. There is an overall consensus from the GoJ and the contributing donors to continue to commit to refugee education in the years to come. The aim is to strive for the highest degree of alignment with the accountability system and legislation of the MoE so as to enhance effective implementation, reduce the administrative burden on the MoE and minimise transaction costs.

In conclusion, the policy is sufficiently relevant and credible for budget support contract objectives to be largely achieved. Therefore, the policy can be supported by the Commission with the proposed budget support contract.

2.4.2. Macroeconomic Policy

Jordan has weathered well a series of shocks over the past few years, maintaining macro-stability and moderate economic growth thanks to adept policy making and sizable international support. Prudent fiscal and monetary policies have reduced deficits, strengthened reserve buffers, preserved financial stability, and maintained market confidence in a challenging global and regional environment. Significant progress has also been made in implementing structural reforms.

Overall, the authorities have been successful in maintaining macro-stability and, despite the challenging environment, Jordan's economy is growing, albeit at a modest pace of 2–3 percent per year. Inflation, which had picked up in the wake of the rise in commodity prices, has since fallen, as commodity prices eased and in response to the tightening of monetary policy. Nonetheless, Jordan still faces considerable challenges in an uncertain external environment. Risks to the outlook are large, including from a possible escalation of the conflict in Gaza. Global economic fragmentation, weak and uneven global growth, as well as climate change all pose considerable threats.

The previous arrangement under the Extended Fund Facility (EFF) approved in March 2020 was designed to help Jordan rebuild buffers and address long-standing structural obstacles to growth, as well as challenges

³⁷ At the time of writing the AD, the new JRP 2024-2026 remains under development.

from hosting over 1 million Syrian refugees. The external environment turned out to be more difficult than originally envisaged, first as the pandemic hit and later with the Russian war of aggression against Ukraine and the subsequent rise in commodity prices, and most recently Israel's war on Gaza. Meanwhile, while notable progress in fiscal consolidation achieved under the 2020 EFF arrangement, public debt is still elevated and above pre-pandemic levels, and gross financing needs are large.

Bringing down the traditionally high **unemployment rate** and increasing labour market participation are important structural challenges in Jordan. In 2023, the unemployment rate slightly decreased to 22.3% in Q3 2023 (22.9% in 2022). Unemployment remains high especially for women, youth and university graduates, with women's labour force participation rate (around 14% in 2023) being one of the lowest world-wide.

On 10 January 2024, the IMF approved a new four-year arrangement under the Extended Fund Facility (EFF) with Jordan, for an amount equivalent to SDR 926.37 million (about USD1.2 billion and equivalent to 270 percent of Jordan's quota), to support the country's economic and financial reform program. The new arrangement replaces and succeeds the previous EFF arrangement that was approved in March 2020 and that was set to expire in March 2024. The interest and fees Jordan would pay for the new EFF are expected to be above 8%, i.e. above the rate of an April 2023 Eurobond issuance (7.5% for USD 1.25 billion; maturity of 5 $\frac{3}{4}$ years).

In the same context, following the successful conclusion of its 3rd Macro-Financial Assistance (MFA) operation with Jordan in May 2023, the Jordanian authorities asked for a follow-up MFA of EUR 700 million for 2024-2026. Also to alleviate the economic fall-out from the war in Gaza, the Commission replied favourably, however the MoU of a new MFA will be negotiated at a later stage, where conditionality would partly build on prior reform projects.

Economic growth has remained stable albeit relatively low (compared to regional peers), over the past years, and is expected to only slowly pick up. Following the contraction during the pandemic, GDP recovered at 2.2% growth in 2021 and 2.5% in 2022; growth expectations for 2023 were slightly revised downward to 2.6%, following the outbreak of the Israel war on Gaza in Q4. The sectors that contributed most to economic growth in 2023 were agriculture, manufacturing, tourism and mining, reflecting the still strong role of these sectors in the economy but also the rebound in tourism. While economic growth has generally remained stable, it is not strong enough to lower the very high unemployment. Important structural challenges remain to boost economic growth, in particular with respect to private sector development, where deficiencies in the business environment, access to finance, labour market flexibility and public administration persist.

Inflation decelerated considerably in 2023, with average inflation at 2.1% in 2023 (4.2% in 2022). Price increases moderated in response to the tightening of monetary policy and lower commodity prices. The Central Bank of Jordan (CBJ) raised its policy rates in 10 steps from 2.5% in March 2022 to 7.5% in July 2023. The CBJ decisions were necessary given the JOD's peg to the USD, to be in line with the US Federal Reserve's monetary tightening and avoid pressures on capital flows, and indeed contributed to the moderation of inflationary pressures.

The **fiscal situation** remains challenging, with structurally high deficits feeding into the already high level of debt. Total public sector debt (excluding debt holdings by the Social Security Corporation, SSC) stood at 88.7% of GDP in 2023, slightly down from 90.8% of GDP in 2021, as nominal GDP growth outpaced the increase in debt. Adding debt holdings by the SSC, public sector debt reached 111.5% of GDP in 2023, after having continuously increased over the past decade (from 84.5% of GDP in 2013). In its report on the new Extended Fund Facility (EFF) arrangement with Jordan (January 2024), the IMF assessed Jordan's public debt level as sustainable; stating further that while debt sustainability risks remained, the authorities' policy efforts and the development partners' ongoing commitment to Jordan would constitute important safeguards. The fiscal deficit stood at 5.1% for the first eight months of 2023 (4.6% of GDP in 2022), roughly in line with the average fiscal deficit of the past five years. Public sector revenue increased by 5.4% during the first eight

months compared to the same period a year earlier, on the back of higher income and profit tax collection. Total expenditure grew by 2.9%, driven by higher interest payments, military expenditure and compensation of civil sector employees. In April 2023, Jordan successfully issued Eurobonds for USD 1.25 billion, despite the tightening of global financing conditions. The issuance has a maturity of 6 years at 7.5% and was oversubscribed six times, allowing the government to increase the initially sought amount.

On the external side, Jordan experiences chronic **external deficits**, driven by the persistent deficit in trade in goods, which reflects Jordan's dependence on energy, food and machinery imports. Main export items over the past years have been phosphoric acid, potash and phosphates, which have benefitted from increased demand following the Russian war of aggression against Ukraine. Overall, the current account deficit averaged around 6.5% of GDP in the past five years, with larger deficits in 2021-2023. Most recently, the current account deficit narrowed to 7.1% of GDP in H1 2023 (from 13% in H1 2022), on the back of an increased trade in services surplus driven by increasing tourism revenue amid the ongoing tourism rebound. Strong remittances (around 8% of GDP over the past years) from abroad also contribute to mitigating the current account deficit. The CBJ's gross **foreign reserves have remained strong**. Total foreign reserves amounted to USD 17.3 billion at the end of September 2023, covering an estimated 7.6 months of imports of goods and services.

While Jordan's **credit rating** BB- (elevated vulnerability to credit risk) with Stable Outlook has been confirmed by Fitch in November 2023. Jordan's ratings are supported by a record of macroeconomic stability, progress in fiscal and economic reforms, and resilient financing linked to the liquid banking sector, public pension fund and international support. The ratings are constrained by high government debt, weak growth, risks stemming from domestic and regional politics, a sizeable current account deficit and net external debt that is higher than rating peers. Israel's war on Gaza has increased geopolitical risks given the uncertainty regarding the conflict's duration and the potential for the conflict to escalate. In Fitch's view, near-term risks are mitigated by strong multilateral and bilateral official support, including military and economic assistance from the US, reduced exposure to food and energy price volatility and potential supply disruptions.

Regarding **the banking sector and financial stability**, the banking sector in Jordan continued to maintain sound financial indicators and, hence, a high capability of withstanding shocks and high risks. The IMF Financial Sector Assessment Program (FSAP), which completed in March 2023, found that the banking sector appeared broadly resilient, and that Jordan's financial sector had withstood a series of large external shocks well. Moreover, banks were assessed to be well-placed to withstand further shocks, given high levels of system-wide regulatory capital and robust earnings. Non-performing loans stood at 5%, similar to previous years. The robust growth of credit to private sector observed in 2022 (as mitigation of Covid-19 impact) has slowed down in 2023 year in response to the tightening of monetary conditions and stood at 2½ percent y-o-y in September 2023.

At its Plenary meeting of October 2021, the Financial Action Task Force, (FATF) added Jordan on its list of "Jurisdictions under Increased Monitoring". This decision was based on the Mutual Evaluation Report of the MENAFATF from November 2019. Consequently, in January 2022, Jordan has been included to the EU list of high-risk third countries for **Anti Money Laundering and Terrorism Finance** (AML/CFT) purposes. The new Money Laundering and Terrorist Financing Law entered into force in mid-September 2021, and was already addressing many shortcomings related to the legislative aspects. Between 5-7 September 2023, the FATF carried-out a joint mission with the European Commission (represented by DG FISMA) to assess the level of implementation of Jordan's action plan. The compliance mission established that the high level of commitment remains in place, the progress are concrete as well as sustainability is ensured, which led Jordan's delisting from the AML/CFT "grey list". The new EU AML list (removing Jordan)³⁸ has in February 2024 entered into force.

³⁸ <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX:32024R0163>

At its annual revision of country classifications in July 2023, the **World Bank downgraded Jordan's economy** from upper-middle-income (UMIC) status to lower-middle-income (LMIC) classification. Jordan has moved between the two categories in the recent past: it was classified as UMIC in 2016, then downgraded to LMIC in 2017 and then upgraded again in 2018 until its reclassification now. Jordan's GNI/capita is in the border zone between the two categories and any change can modify its classification. The WB defines lower-middle-income countries by a per capita national income ranging from USD 1,136 to 4,465. Jordan's reclassification this year was reportedly driven by an upward revision of Jordan's population (+8.6% to 11.3 million) by the UNPD reflecting new data from the latest population census. Jordan is the only country with a downward classification change this year. The reclassification could affect guarantees and interest rates on international loans and might negatively impact the perception of Jordan as an investment destination, consequently affecting the private sector.

In conclusion, the authorities are pursuing a stability-oriented macroeconomic policy and the eligibility criterion is met.

2.4.3. Public Financial Management

A **PEFA assessment** has been carried out in 2021 through EU support. The final report was received from the assessors in the beginning of December, and was validated by stakeholders in June 2022. PEFA check has been also issued by the PEFA Secretariat. The Government finalised - with donor assistance - the PFM Reform Strategy in October 2022, which is based on the most recent PEFA findings as well as IMF Fiscal Transparency Evaluation FTE (2021).

The **new Public Financial Management Strategy**³⁹ (2022-2025) aims to identify the government's direction regarding the development and reform of public finance mechanisms in line with national goals and government priorities and the financial reform program agreed with the International Monetary Fund IMF, to improve public finance performance, strengthen fiscal discipline and promote economic growth and raise the standard of living for citizens. Hence, this strategy is a continuation of previous strategies that the government, led by the Ministry of Finance and the concerned authorities have implemented during the past years.

The new strategy consists of five strategic pillars targeting a total of 12 sub-pillars, as follows:

Strategy Pillars:

The strategy consists of five key pillars:

1. Budget Reliability and Execution

- Increasing Domestic Revenues
- Public Procurement and Tenders Management
- Improving Cash Management

2. Public Finance Transparency

- Dissemination of Financial Reports
- Budget Law Documents

3. Financial Forecasting

- Macroeconomic and Financial Forecasting

4. Asset and Liability Management

- Public Investment Management

³⁹ [https://www.mof.gov.jo/ebv4.0/root_storage/en/eb_list_page/pfm_strategy_\(2022-2025\).pdf](https://www.mof.gov.jo/ebv4.0/root_storage/en/eb_list_page/pfm_strategy_(2022-2025).pdf)

- Public Debt Management

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- Public Assets Management

5. Control

- Internal Audit
- External Audit – Audit Bureau
- Accounting and Reporting

The strategy also attaches activities to achieve the goals with a timeline. The strategy is also costed and indicates the stakeholders; it is therefore satisfies the criteria described in PEFA Volume IV manual.

In line with the IMF programme and the wider policy framework, there is a strong commitment from the authorities **to improve tax administration and public financial management**, not just to improve budget outcomes but to increase public trust. GoJ is implementing its revenue mobilisation plan developed with the support of the IMF's Fiscal Affairs Department (FAD) in 2021. The plan encompasses both tax policy and administration, including a focus on implementing recent and ongoing legislative reforms.

Under public finance management, fiscal policy measures, the GoJ made significant progress toward closing tax loopholes, while ISTD has made substantial inroads into improving compliance. Building on the substantial progress in recent years, the Government aims at continuing to increase revenue collection by further broadening the revenue base, including by further reducing remaining exemptions where feasible, and improving compliance in line with the revenue administration reform plan, notably by increased digitalization of taxpayer services and data capture and analysis.

Going forward, the **tax administration reform** plans of the GoJ include: (i) upgrading the Income and Sales Tax Department's (ISTD) IT infrastructure, including a new Integrated Tax Administration System (ITAS); (ii) expansion of the application of the new transfer pricing rules (currently it is applicable to multinationals and related parties, mid-sized companies and family-owned companies will be included by end 2024, while Phase III will extend it to related parties); (iii) to curb smuggling, the ISTD has already successfully introduced a digital track-and-trace for tobacco products and for alcohol is under completion; (iv) use of an AI-based e-audit system, with well-defined benchmarks covering all tax returns; (v) the introduced e-invoicing system covering all sales transactions (by end 2024) subject to GST will allow enhanced monitoring of economic activities, will address under-invoicing, and hence strengthens the audit function of the sales-tax framework.

The **restructuring and reduction in customs tariffs**, combined with the inclusion of the ASEZA zone in the broader customs administration, has already resulted in a significant increase in revenues, notably in GST collection. The Custom Administration will continue to enhance the National Single Window, which already encompasses 55 entities. Additionally, the establishment of the single border authority will be instrumental in facilitating expedited and predictable goods clearance for both exports and imports, including through the mandatory use of the digital licensing hub platform for the 5 largest control entities (JSMO, Ministry of Environment, JFDA, Ministry of Agriculture, Customs), allowing companies to obtain licenses ahead of arrival of goods.

With a view to promoting a high level of good tax governance, in September 2020, Jordan ratified the Multilateral Convention to Implement Tax Treaty Related Measures to Prevent Base Erosion and Profit Shifting (Multilateral Convention or MLI), underlining its strong commitment to prevent the abuse of tax treaties and base erosion and profit shifting (**BEPS**) by multinational enterprises. Moreover, Jordan also signed and ratified the Convention on Mutual Administrative Assistance in Tax Matters (**MAC Convention**), which

entered into force in December 2021. Since 2019, Jordan is also member of the **Global Forum on Transparency and Exchange** of Information for Tax Purposes, which is the leading international body working on the implementation of global transparency and exchange of information standards around the world.

In the area of public investment management, GoJ endorsed the **PIM - PPP Governance Framework** (2019). The Public Private Partnership (PPP) secondary legislation was approved by the Council of Ministers and published in the Official Gazette in November 2020 and April 2021, respectively. The bylaws regulate the four PPP project phases, namely the selection, preparation, tendering and implementation phases. They further regulate the creation of a “Technical Committee of Fiscal Commitments”, a “Public Private Partnership Projects Account” at the central bank and a “National Registry of Public Investment Projects Regulation”. The PPP secondary legislation is in line with international best practice, as confirmed by the World Bank, which has assisted Jordan throughout the drafting process. A dedicated Public Investment Management Unit has been established by Government, guidelines for projects appraisal methodology was introduced and almost 200 public investment project proposals were assessed in accordance with these Public Investment Management Guidelines.

The government furthermore rolled out the National Registry of Investment Projects (NRIP), comprising of the Public Investment Project (PIP) Databank and the Public-Private Partnership (PPP) Project Databank; which is collecting the necessary information on approved PPPs. The NRIP also includes all public investment projects in the 2023 General Budget with a value of greater than JOD 1 million.

To further improve public financial management, particularly in the areas of fiscal risk analysis, public investment management, macro-fiscal analysis, and cash management, the GoJ will launch a centralized single database of all PPP contracts approved since the 2020 PPP law came into effect and data, with analytical tools, to enhance fiscal risk analysis by identifying critical risk factors. Based on the C-PIMA recommendations, the GoJ will refine project scoring system and strengthen methodologies for project appraisal, providing more detail in appraisal guidelines in complex areas such as the assessment of climate impacts and resilience.

In order to increase transparency and efficiency in the **public procurement system**, the government is working on the full operationalisation of the electronic tendering system. The Jordan Online E-Procurement System (JONEPS) shall be used for all procurements of public authorities to unify the previously fragmented procurement process in Jordan.

The Audit Bureau Law (2018) strengthened the Bureau’s functioning and independence. Work is ongoing to strengthen **external audit** covering both performance in service delivery and the content and quality of financial reporting. Risk based and IT audits are further reinforced through the recently closed (07/11/2023) EU twinning project at the Audit Bureau.

As for debt management, an updated **Debt Management Strategy** (2020 – 2024) was published in 2022⁴⁰.

In conclusion, the public finance management reform strategy is sufficiently relevant and credible, including on domestic revenue mobilisation, and the eligibility criterion is met.

2.4.4. Transparency and Oversight of the Budget

The Government of Jordan has met the entry point of the general condition on transparency and oversight of the budget as it is defined in the EU Budget Support Guidelines of December 2017. The GoJ has in fact published the enacted budget of the past budget cycle within the same fiscal year.

The budget proposal for 2023 was endorsed by Cabinet on 22/11/2023 and was published on the General Budget Department (GBD) website the following day on 27/11/2023. The Lower House in January 2024

⁴⁰ https://www.mop.gov.jo/ebv4.0/root_storage/en/eb_list_page/jordan_reform_matrix_2018-2024_english_oct2022-0.pdf

subsequently discussed the draft Law and passed the Bill on 31/01/2024. The Royal Decree will be issued after the Upper House endorsement and will be subsequently published on GBD's website.

The **Open Budget Survey (OBS)** 2021 (released 31/05/2022) Jordan scored 61/100 on budget transparency, which is considered sufficient to enable the public to engage in budget discussions in an informed manner and is substantially higher than the global average of 45. Since the 2015 Survey (which was updated in 2016), Jordan has increased the availability of budget information, however there are still weaknesses with the compilation and dissemination of the Mid-Year Reviews. The EU Delegation is closely following up the regional IBP⁴¹ project in relation with the OBS. (The 2023 report is expected to be issued in Q2 2024.)

As for budget oversight by the legislature Jordan scored 39/100, which is a deterioration compared to the previous survey (i.e. 43/100). This score reflects that the legislature and supreme audit institution in Jordan, together, provide weak oversight during the budget process. Taken individually, the legislative oversight is limited (44/100), while the audit oversight is weak (28/100). The score on the oversight by the Supreme Audit institution is lower (28/100) because of the limited independence and resources of the Audit Bureau. The Audit Bureau Law was amended by the Parliament in September 2018 with some positive elements to enhance the independence of the institution in line with INTOSAI standards and there is a strong commitment from the current President⁴² of the AB to further strengthen the institution, however lack of independence has been also confirmed by the 2021 PEFA assessment.

The EU is supporting transparency and oversight through several projects, such as the i) “Ma’an – Together” accountability and integrity project in Jordan, implemented by OECD; ii) twinning with the Audit Bureau in Jordan; as well as the iii) regional International Budget Partnership (IBP) programme (“Building Alliances for Budget Accountability in the Southern Neighbourhood”).

The **IMF Fiscal Transparency Evaluation** of October 2021 also concluded that although, further improvement is needed, in Jordan the fiscal reports have become more comprehensive and cover a high proportion of public sector institutions. The frequency of in-year reporting is at an advanced level, as is the timeliness of publication of the government’s annual financial statements. Fiscal statistics are disseminated in accordance with international standards (SDDS). Fiscal forecasts and budgets have become more forward looking and policy oriented with the introduction of a five-year medium-term budget framework and a program classification.

In conclusion, the relevant budget documentation has been published and the eligibility criterion is met.

3. DESCRIPTION OF THE ACTION

3.1. Objectives and Expected Outputs

The Overall Objective/Impact of this action: Refugees and the most vulnerable host communities’ children/youth have improved literacy and numeracy skills, as well as educational qualifications.

The Specific Objective(s) (Outcomes) of this action are:

1. Increased rate of completion of a full cycle of quality education (early childhood, primary and secondary level) for refugees and vulnerable children and youth in host communities in Jordan for the school year 2026-2027;

⁴¹ Regional International Budget Partnership (IBP) programme (“Building Alliances for Budget Accountability in the Southern Neighbourhood”)

⁴² On 17 November 2019, Assem Haddad was sworn as president of the Audit Bureau

2. Refugees and vulnerable Jordanians in host communities are empowered for better career and livelihood pathways.

The **Induced Outputs** to be delivered by this action contributing to the corresponding Specific Objectives (Outcomes) are:

- 1.1 Increased availability of safe and well-resourced learning environments
- 1.2 Improved leadership and management of schools and institutions accountable for learning
- 1.3 Increased availability and presence of qualified, motivated teachers and other education staff

The **Direct Outputs** to be delivered by this action contributing to the corresponding Induced Outputs are:

- 1.1.1 Increased size and share of external funds provided through the national budget and available for increased discretionary spending in support of Education sector objectives
- 1.1.2 Framework for policy dialogue strengthened and aligned to the MoEs performance framework
- 1.1.3 Improved capacity for design and implementation of systems for teacher well-being and professional development
- 1.1.4 Improved capacities, processes and tools for quality assurance, including assessing learning outcomes and supervising and supporting schools
- 1.1.5 Improved strategies for school resource management focused on learning, equity and engagement with local communities
- 2.1 Increased availability and completion of diverse and context relevant scholarships (TVET, Bachelor, Master, Teacher certificate, etc.)
- 2.2 Strengthened entrepreneurship and employment skills and (motivation for) participation in the labour market
- 2.3 Developed national and regional alumni networks and platforms of information sharing, collective learning and community development

The objectives of the Action contribute to the general objectives of the EIP, in particular: Flagship 1 “Support to social sectors, education, skills and health”.

3.2. Indicative Activities

Activities related to Direct Outputs 1.1.1 -1.1.5:

- Transfer of funds
- Provision (contracts and salaries) of Syrian Assistant Teachers (SATs);
- Policy and political dialogue, assessment of the performance framework and disbursement of funds;
- School leadership trainers teams trained and supported to develop plans and conduct outreach to parents and communities, contributing to student inclusion, retention and re-engagement in learning, including efforts to end violence in schools and create safe and protective learning environments;
- SATs supported to undertake data management, including tracking use of attendance and learning data;
- SATs receive training to manage learning resources and support teachers to deliver accelerated learning programme;
- SATs receive professional development coaching (including via training the trainers where applicable) and mentoring to screen and diagnose reading difficulties and to support targeted students in Grade 4 and 5 in formal education to learn to read to a Grade 3 level;
- Operations and maintenance in camp schools e.g.: oversight/quality control, furniture, transportation of children, supplies (maintenance, cleaning, hygiene, etc.), security in schools, utilities (for example

maintenance of generators and fuel), infrastructure and heavy maintenance, procurement of ICT equipment and teaching materials;

Considering that the next phase of the AAI is under formulation, this list of activities is only indicative and might be expanded or reduced depending on the priorities that will be jointly agreed with MoE and the contributing donors. Strong alignment with the ESP will be ensured.

Activities related to Direct Outputs 2.1 – 2.3

- Develop adequate and timely information and services on preparation, eligibility and availability of TVET/higher education scholarship programmes and opportunities for secondary school students;
- Manage the scholarship programme (Master, Bachelor, TVET level) including a unified application process and award criteria on the basis of a calibrated mix of transparent academic, motivation and vulnerability criteria;
- Provide scholarship students with a broad range of high quality study programmes and access to administrative, educational, livelihood and psychosocial support;
- Conduct regular graduate tracer studies to allow evidence-based adaptations to the scholarships and increase compatibility with the needs of the labour market or link with alternative pathways to employment;
- Provide short-term programmes designed to increase access to the labour market (e.g. Teacher Certificate Scholarship Programme, Six-Month Labor Market Oriented Course Scholarship Programme, “Bottlenecks” Alleviation Programme and Entrepreneurship Training Scholarship Programme, language and digital skill courses) and strengthen collaborations with partners who offer tailored training and job opportunities aligned with refugees’ needs;
- Strengthen the national/regional alumni platform with broad based representation and regular networking opportunities for employers, graduates and alumni to increase employability;
- Develop a local and regional media outreach plan to actively engage the press and social media around innovative collaborative and participative actions and to identify and promote additional funding for the scholarships.

3.3. Mainstreaming

Environmental Protection, Climate Change and Biodiversity

Outcomes of the Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) screening

The SEA screening concluded that no further action was required.

Outcomes of the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) screening

The EIA screening classified the action as Category C (no need for further assessment).

Outcome of the Climate Risk Assessment (CRA) screening

The CRA screening concluded that this action is no or low risk (no need for further assessment).

Gender equality and empowerment of women and girls

As per OECD Gender DAC codes identified in section 1.1, this action is labelled as G1. This implies that throughout the project design and implementation gender mainstreaming will be taken into consideration. With respect to access to quality education, special effort will be made to ensure gender equality, and taking into account the different barriers, which may influence boys’ and girls’ participation, such as child labour, domestic labour, child marriage and traditional gender roles.

Human Rights

The 2017 EU Guidelines for the Promotion and Protection of the Rights of the Child serve as the basis to ensure that key elements of the Rights Based Approach are taken into account for this action. For the target groups of this action special attention will be given to married children, victims of violence and/or gender-based violence, child labour victims, children traumatised/affected by armed conflict, and physical or mentally disabled children.

Disability

As per OECD Disability DAC codes identified in section 1.1, this action is labelled as D1. This implies that children/youth with disabilities will be specifically targeted through this action, in particular under SO 1.

Democracy

N/A

Conflict sensitivity, peace and resilience

The overall focus of the Action is towards reducing inequalities and strengthening self-reliance of vulnerable host community and Syrian youths, which should pave the way for increased resilience among the Syrian refugee population in Jordan.

Disaster Risk Reduction

N/A

3.4. Risks and Assumptions

Category	Risks	Likelihood (High/ Medium/ Low)	Impact (High/ Medium/ Low)	Mitigating measures
1-External environment	Political climate in the region (also the repercussions of the Israel war on Gaza and the Russian war of aggression against Ukraine) adversely affects attitudes towards Syrian refugees.	M	H	Active engagement with the state and civil society and inclusion of host communities' vulnerable children/youth to promote social cohesion.
1-External environment	Staff changes within the relevant line ministries; shifts in Government priorities.	M	M	Longstanding engagement with MoE Intervention in line with the national education policy framework and the Jordan Compact. Intensive policy dialogue will take place throughout implementation.
1-External environment	Impact on the economy due to regional or global	H	H	MoE developed an <i>Education During Emergency Plan</i> (EDEP), including a comprehensive and sequenced set of

Category	Risks	Likelihood (High/ Medium/ Low)	Impact (High/ Medium/ Low)	Mitigating measures
	developments (e.g. Gaza war) with repercussions on the education and learning sector.			response measures to avoid the resort to negative coping mechanisms.
2-Planning, processes and systems	Restructuring of Ministry of Education may lead to a changed institutional set-up for education, higher education and TVET.	M	M	Continuous policy dialogue with various Government of Jordan stakeholders to clarify early on the possible impact of restructuring on the programme and establish mitigation measures jointly to ensure continuity of the operations.
2-Planning, processes and systems	The AAI 2.0 runs until March 2024 while EU support still covers the full school year 2026-2027.	M	M	AAI 2.0 should transition into a similar, yet more integrated set-up in mid-2024; while AAI 2.0 formally ends in March 2024, discussions on the follow-up AAI 3.0 have already started. Pending the formal approval of AAI 3.0 (name tbc), core costs such as salaries, tuition fees books continue to be covered during the transitional period (no longer formally AAI 2.0 and not yet formally AAI 3.0). GoJ commitment to refugee education remains strong and the follow-up program is in full preparation jointly with several likeminded donors who remain committed to ensuring education for all refugees in the most cost-efficient manner. The new ESP (from 2025 on) will have a stronger focus on mainstreaming refugee education. The new Jordan Response Plan (2024-2026) will consider education as one of its main priorities. Continuous policy dialogue throughout implementation.
3- People and the organisation	Limited availability of good teachers due to lack of pre-service training.	M	H	Unemployment rate is around 30% among academics. The MoE is organising a 10 weeks pre-service course. Separate measures will be implemented to support the school management and the teachers in the double shift schools.

Category	Risks	Likelihood (High/ Medium/ Low)	Impact (High/ Medium/ Low)	Mitigating measures
3- People and the organisation	High dropout rates at secondary level reduce number of scholarship candidates.	L	H	Improved student orientation in the last years of secondary education is planned. Stronger focus on the transition rate from secondary education into tertiary education or secondary level TVET education or non-formal education will be ensured. Close follow-up and preparation of potential candidates is foreseen. So far the demand for the scholarships largely surpasses the offer

External Assumptions

- The GoJ maintains its commitment towards refugees and transition efforts and the relevant ministries (MoE, MoPIC, MoF) are closely associated to this action;
- Strong donor cooperation and coordination continues, with donors delivering on their commitments;
- UNICEF funding gaps in camps are addressed in order to have the schools in camps fully operational.

3.5. Intervention Logic

The underlying intervention logic for this action builds on longstanding and well-established initiatives that have proven their effectiveness in addressing education as a response to the Syrian crisis and minimising the impact on children's and youth learning. The intervention also works on the assumption that further inclusion of refugee children into the national education system remains a commitment by the Jordanian authorities. Policy dialogue will be at the very heart of this intervention. Under the EU's bilateral cooperation with Jordan, education has been a major priority sector for almost a decade, long-term and considerable investments have been made. For the upcoming seven years this will continue to be the case, as outlined in the MIP 2021-2027. The comparative advantage of this strong presence on both sides of the spectrum and stable funding perspectives, should be further leveraged through strengthened engagement in the existing donor coordination mechanisms (AAI 2.0, EDPG and ESWG) and a strong joint policy dialogue at all levels. The policy dialogue will be accompanied by continued Technical Assistance that covers both refugee and bilateral support in a mainstreamed manner and by the strategic partnership with UNICEF in areas such as remedial education, non-formal education, contract teachers.

Based on those assumptions, the intervention logic is that:

IF the EU continues to contribute to the Accelerated Access Initiative, and

IF the Jordanian authorities remain committed to the inclusion of refugee children into the national education system, and

IF the AAI is able to pay costs for all education needs of refugee and host community children, and

IF the MoE is able to provide qualified teachers to the schools in camps and host communities, and

IF the professional development of Syrian Teaching Assistants can be further strengthened,

THEN the quality of teaching within the camp and host community schools will increase and

THEN enrolment of children into formal education establishments will increase and

THEN a full cycle of quality education can be provided for all refugee children in Jordan.

In parallel,

IF the EU invests in scholarships for tertiary education and TVET for refugee and host community graduates, and

IF those scholarships can be linked to livelihoods and TVET actions,

THEN refugee graduates and vulnerable host communities will increase their self-reliance and

THEN their dependence on social protection and cash assistance will reduce and

THEN they will be able to contribute to a productive economy.

3.6. Indicative Logical Framework Matrix

Results	Results chain	Indicators (max. 15)	Baselines (value and year)	Targets by the end of the budget support contract (value and year) ⁴³	Sources of data (1 per indicator)
Indicative Impact of the policy	Refugees and the most vulnerable host communities' children/youth have improved literacy and numeracy skills, as well as educational qualifications.	1. Youth literacy rate (disaggregated by sex, access to Early Childhood Education, community of origin, and geographical location - region, urban/rural, wealth quintile)**	99.3% (2018)	99.7% (2027)	Sustainable Development Report
		2.2 Percentage of refugees and vulnerable Jordanian youths employed after having benefitted from an EU funded scholarship**	0 (2023)	50-60% of EU funded graduates are employed (2027)	Ex-post evaluation/tracer study
Expected Outcomes of the policy	1. Increased rate of completion of a full-cycle of quality education (early childhood, primary and secondary level) for refugees and vulnerable children and youth in host communities in Jordan for the school years 2026-2027	1.1 Average performance of refugee students in national examinations for grade 3 in Arabic and math	Arabic: 68% (2019) Math: 69% (2019)	Arabic: 72% (2025) Math: 68% (2025)	ESP results framework, EMIS data MoE Direction of Tests and Exams
		1.2 Net enrolment rate for grades KG2- 12 in AAI schools	82.3% (2022)	85% (2027)	AAI bi-annual progress report, EMIS data
		1.3 Percentage of students who transition from the NFE dropout programme into formal education	21.4% (2022)	27.5% (2025)	
	2. Refugees and vulnerable Jordanians in host communities are empowered for better career and livelihood pathways	2.1 Number of youth who complete EU-funded scholarships (TVET, Bachelor, Master, Teacher certificate, etc.), disaggregated by sex and community of origin	0 (2023)	400 ⁴⁴ (2027) (50% male – 50% female) (30% Jordanians – 70% Syrian)	EDU-Syria annual report
Induced Outputs	1.1 Increased availability of safe and well-resourced learning environments	1.1.1 Percentage of refugee students who receive tuition fee support	100% (2022)	100% (2028)	AAI bi-annual progress report, EMIS data

		1.2.1 Percentage of refugee students who received supportive remedial programs	TBD (discussion with GoJ ongoing)	TBD (discussion with GoJ ongoing)	Financial Affairs Directorate
	1.2 Improved leadership and management of schools and institutions accountable for learning	1.2.1 Percentage of types I, II and III schools categorised as performing acceptable or better according to the Education Quality and Accountability Unit (EQUA) criteria	39% (2022)	60% (2028)	EQUA reporting
		1.2.2 Percentage of accredited school improvement plans (SIPs) that have been implemented	70% (2022)	100% (2025)	EMIS data, MoE
	1.3 Increased availability and presence of qualified, motivated teachers and other education staff	1.3.1 Pupil-Teacher Ratio in AAI schools	23.1:1 (2022)	24:1 (2028)	AAI bi-annual progress reports
Direct Outputs	1.1.1 Increased size and share of external funds provided through the national budget and available for increased discretionary spending in support of Education sector objectives	1.1.1.1 Share available for discretionary spending in support of Education sector objectives	13% (2022)	14% (2026)	National budget
	1.1.2 Framework for policy dialogue strengthened and aligned to MoEs performance framework	1.1.2.1 Level and regularity of Government-led reporting on results	Result reporting mechanisms under review (2022)	M&E framework adopted with Joint Annual Review meeting and performance report (2026)	Minutes Annual Review meeting and annual performance report submitted
	1.1.3 Improved capacity for design and implementation of	1.1.3.1 Percentage of AAI teachers paid in a timely manner (disaggregated by sex and community of origin)	Salaries delayed some	100% (2026)	AAI bi-annual progress report, EMIS data

⁴³ Targets for 2027 are still highly indicative, pending the finalisation of the (new) Education Sector Strategy by the Ministry of Education as well as the finalisation of AAI 3.0 by MoE and the group of donors involved. Targets introduced here are formulated based on the existing 2025 targets and careful projections for later years. Adjustments to the log-frame may be needed to ensure final targets are in line with the relevant national strategies.

⁴⁴ Based on estimates from the previous EDU-Syria programmes

	systems for teacher well-being and professional development		months (2023)		
		1.1.3.2 Percentage of Syrian Assistant Teachers who benefitted from professional development through EU support	0% (2023)	100% (2027)	UNICEF reports, DoE lists, field support staff monitoring visits
	1.1.4 Improved capacities, processes and tools for quality assurance, including assessing learning outcomes and supervising and supporting schools	1.1.4.1 Percentage of MoE employees who have been able to access the OpenEMIS system	50% (2021)	90% (2025)	Directorate of Queen Rania Center for IT
		1.1.4.2 Number of available and qualified human cadres for M&E and impact measurement	2(2022)	100 (2025)	Supervision and Training department
	1.1.5 Improved strategies for school resource management focused on learning, equity and engagement with local communities	1.1.5.1 Number of AAI schools who engage parent councils to follow-up on SIPs	0 (2022)	TBD at inception phase	School and Directorate Development Division
	2.1.1 Increased availability and completion of diverse and context relevant scholarships (TVET, Bachelor, Master, Teacher certificate, etc.)	2.1.1.1 Number of youth awarded with EU-funded scholarships, disaggregated by sex and community of origin	0 (2023)	450 ⁴⁵ (2027)	EDU-Syria annual report
	2.1.2 Strengthened entrepreneurship and employment skills and (motivation for) participation in the labour market	2.1.2.1 Number of youth participating in EU-funded employability/livelihood enhancing courses, activities and networks, disaggregated by sex and community of origin	0 (2023)	550 ⁴⁶ (2027)	EDU-Syria annual report
	2.1.3 Developed national and regional alumni networks and platforms of information sharing, collective learning and community development	2.1.3.1 Percentage of alumni subscribed to the alumni network, disaggregated by sex and community of origin	0 (2023)	50% of EU graduates subscribed to the alumni network (2027)	EDU-Syria annual report/social media platforms

⁴⁵ Based on estimates from the previous EDU-Syria programmes

⁴⁶ Based on estimates from the previous EDU-Syria programmes

4. IMPLEMENTATION ARRANGEMENTS

4.1. Financing Agreement

In order to implement this action, it is envisaged to conclude a financing agreement with the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan.

4.2. Indicative Implementation Period

The indicative operational implementation period of this action, during which the activities described in section 3 will be carried out and the corresponding contracts and agreements implemented, is 60 months from the date of entry into force of the financing agreement.

Extensions of the implementation period may be agreed by the Commission's responsible authorising officer by amending this financing Decision and the relevant contracts and agreements.

4.3. Implementation of the Budget Support Component

4.3.1. Rationale for the Amounts Allocated to Budget Support

The amount allocated for the budget support component is EUR 14 900 000.00, and for complementary support is EUR 10 100 000.00. These amounts are based on the analysis of former and ongoing budget support interventions, as well as of the joint donor cooperation in this field. Proposed amounts are fully needs-based and constitute the confirmed requirements for a full school year. The division between budget support and complementary measures is based on an EUTF Madad decision (2022) to group all education interventions under a comprehensive Action (rather than as separate Actions), contributing to the same overarching objective and in full complementarity. This action is a continuation of three ongoing programmes that holistically aim to provide a full-cycle of quality education to refugees and vulnerable host communities in Jordan, in line with the commitments in the Jordan Compact. Part of component 1⁴⁷ and component 2 of this action do not directly support the implementation of the budget support component but they jointly contribute to the overall objectives of the programme. This explains why the complementary support under this action is quite high in relation to the budget support intervention.

The estimated additional costs of the education of refugees under AAI amounts to an estimated JOD 60 000 000.00 on average per year. The EU is an important partner of MoE in supporting its efforts to respond to the Syrian refugee crisis, currently financing around 23% of the AAI. The ongoing budget support intervention is based on a figure of around 36 000 enrolled students in camps (KGs, primary and secondary schools) which is expected to stay stable or rise slightly in the coming years for demographic reasons.

4.3.2. Criteria for Disbursement of Budget Support

a) Conditions.

The general conditions for disbursement of all tranches are as follows:

- Satisfactory progress in the implementation of the (follow-up programme of the) Accelerating Access Initiative (initiative under the Jordan ESP) and continued credibility and relevance thereof or of the subsequent policy.
- Maintenance of a credible and relevant stability-oriented macroeconomic policy or progress made towards restoring key balances.

⁴⁷ In particular the provision of Syrian Assistant Teachers (SAT) as well as operation and maintenance of camp schools.

- Satisfactory progress in the implementation of reforms to improve public financial management, including domestic revenue mobilisation, and continued relevance and credibility of the reform programme.
- Satisfactory progress with regard to the public availability of accessible, timely, comprehensive, and sound budgetary information.

b) The performance indicators for disbursement that may be used for variable tranches may focus on the following policy priorities:

- Access to quality education for all
- Teacher professional development and well-being
- Well-resourced and safe learning environments
- Transition from NFE to formal education and TVET
- Quality learning assessment systems
- Institutional management and sector governance

The chosen performance indicators and targets to be used for the disbursement of variable tranches will apply for the duration of the action.

c) Modifications.

The chosen performance indicators and targets to be used for the disbursement of variable tranches will apply for the duration of the action. However, in duly justified cases, the partner country and the Commission may agree on changes to indicators or on upward/downward revisions of targets. Such changes shall be authorised in writing ex-ante or at the latest by the end of the first quarter of the period under review applicable to the indicators and targets.

In exceptional and/or duly justified cases, for instance where unexpected events, external shocks or changing circumstances have made the indicator or the target irrelevant and could not be anticipated, a variable tranche indicator may be waived. In these cases, the related amount could either be reallocated to the other indicators of the variable tranche the same year or be transferred to the next variable tranche the following year (in accordance with the original weighting of the indicators). It could also be decided to re-assess an indicator the following year against the original target, if there was a positive trend and the authorities did not reach the target because of factors beyond their control. The use of this provision shall be requested by the partner country and approved in writing by the Commission.

d) Fundamental values

In case of a significant deterioration of fundamental values, budget support disbursements may be suspended, reduced or cancelled, in accordance with the relevant provisions of the financing agreement.

4.3.3. Budget Support Details

The following disbursement calendar and profile proposed for the action is indicative. The actual disbursement calendar and profile will be set out in the financing agreement and may remain subject to change.

	Year 1 (2027)	Year 2 (2028)	Total
Fixed tranche in MEUR	0	0	0
Variable tranche in MEUR	6	8.9	14.9
Total in MEUR	6	8.9	14.9

Budget support is provided as direct untargeted budget support to the national treasury. The crediting of the euro transfers disbursed into Jordanian Dinar (JOD) will be undertaken at the appropriate exchange rates in line with the relevant provisions of the financing agreement.

4.4. Implementation Modalities

The Commission will ensure that the EU appropriate rules and procedures for providing financing to third parties are respected, including review procedures, where appropriate, and compliance of the action with EU restrictive measures⁴⁸.

4.4.1. Direct Management (Grants)

4.4.1.1. Grants

a) Purpose of the grant(s)

The grant will contribute to achieving Specific Objective 2 - TVET and higher education opportunities empower refugees and vulnerable Jordanians in host communities for better career and livelihood pathways.

(b) Justification of a direct grant

Under the responsibility of the Commission's authorising officer responsible, the grant may be awarded without a call for proposals to a consortium led by German Jordanian University.

The consortium members may include Luminus Technical College, Zarqa University, Princess Sumaya University for Technology, Queen Rania Teacher Academy, Jordanian University of Sciences and Technology, Yarmouk University, Mu'tah University, DAAD and NUFFIC. The composition of the consortium might change slightly based on the type of scholarships that will be identified.

Under the responsibility of the Commission's authorising officer responsible, the recourse to an award of a grant without a call for proposals is justified in line with Article 198 FR (f), as in the framework of the Syrian crisis, the above-mentioned organisations have an evidenced high degree of specialisation and technical competence. The consortium has longstanding experience and is also equipped with the necessary administrative powers for the specific characteristic of this action. The justification is based on the (1) limited number of providers working in the field of higher education; (2) The specific character to work with higher educational facilities and refugee youth as well as vulnerable host community members in Jordan demands an implementing partner that is well established; (3) Competence with regards to the methodology and the management of such complex assignment is crucial for the success. The proposed partners do satisfy these criteria as they have the knowledge, experience and expertise.

The part of the action under the budgetary envelope reserved for grants may, partially or totally and including where an entity is designated for receiving a grant without a call for proposals, be implemented in indirect management with an entity, which will be selected by the Commission's services using the following criteria: Technical expertise, logistical and management capacities of the entity(ies) in the field of education scholarships.

4.4.2. Indirect Management with a pillar-assessed entity

A part of this action may be implemented in indirect management with UNICEF. This implementation entails part of the activities that will take place under Specific Objective 1 and related outputs 1.1, 1.2 and 1.3, mainly focusing on the operationalization of camp schools and supporting the professional development of the SATs. The envisaged entity has been selected using the following criteria:

- Relevant collaboration with the MoE, the local authorities and relevant partners, particularly in support to formal education;

⁴⁸ [EU Sanctions Map](#). Please note that the sanctions map is an IT tool for identifying the sanctions regimes. The source of the sanctions stems from legal acts published in the Official Journal (OJ). In case of discrepancy between the published legal acts and the updates on the website it is the OJ version that prevails.

- Extensive experience in the refugee camps and a proficient expertise in providing education services in crisis contexts.

In case the envisaged entity would need to be replaced, the Commission's services may select a replacement entity using the same criteria. If the entity is replaced, the decision to replace it needs to be justified.

4.4.3. Changes from indirect to direct management (and vice versa) mode due to exceptional circumstances

If the implementation modality under indirect management as defined in section 4.4.2 cannot be implemented due to circumstances beyond the control of the Commission, the modality of implementation by grants under direct management would be used according to section 4.4.1.

Targeted applicants would be composed of all or any of the following: legal entities, natural persons or groupings without legal personality; public bodies, NGOs, economic operators such as SMEs;

If the implementation modality under direct management as defined in section 4.4.1 (grants) cannot be implemented due to circumstances beyond the control of the Commission, the modality of implementation by indirect management with a pillar-assessed entity would be used, with the following criteria:

- Technical expertise, logistical and management capacities of the entity(ies) in the field of education scholarships;

4.5. Scope of geographical eligibility for procurement and grants

The geographical eligibility in terms of place of establishment for participating in procurement and grant award procedures and in terms of origin of supplies purchased as established in the basic act and set out in the relevant contractual documents shall apply, subject to the following provisions.

The Commission's authorising officer responsible may extend the geographical eligibility on the basis of urgency or of unavailability of services in the markets of the countries or territories concerned, or in other duly substantiated cases where application of the eligibility rules would make the realization of this action impossible or exceedingly difficult (Article 28(10) NDICI-Global Europe Regulation).

4.6. Indicative Budget

Indicative Budget components	EU contribution (amount in EUR)
Budget support - cf. section 4.3	14 900 000.00
Implementation modalities – cf. section 4.4	
Specific Objective 1 composed of	
Indirect management with UNICEF – cf. section 4.4.2	5 000 000.00
Specific Objective 2 composed of	
Grants (direct management) – cf. section 4.4.1	5 000 000.00
Evaluation – cf. section 5.2	100 000.00
Audit – cf. section 5.3	

Strategic communication and Public diplomacy – cf. section 6	will be covered by another Decision
Totals	25 000 000.00

4.7. Organisational Set-up and Responsibilities

Regular and joint policy dialogue with MoE will take place, on a bilateral basis as well as through the AAI coordination group and the EDPG. More alignment with the national education sector coordination mechanisms will be ensured.

A Programme Steering Committee (SC) will be formed and will meet annually to endorse strategic orientations, oversee programme execution, and facilitate implementation of the activities. The SC will be chaired by MoE. It will include representatives from MoPIC and other relevant government institutions (MoHESR, etc), UNICEF, the higher education consortium and the EU Delegation as observer. The SC will monitor the overall implementation of the intervention, review progress and consider sustainability and possible exit strategies, coordinate the different components and guide to the successful achievement of the objectives. It will also help co-ordinate between other institutions and groups likely to be involved in the project (other donors, civil society representatives, private sector). The SC discussions will feed into the policy dialogue with the MoE.

As part of its prerogative of budget implementation and to safeguard the financial interests of the Union, the Commission may participate in the above governance structures set up for governing the implementation of the action.

5. PERFORMANCE MEASUREMENT

5.1. Monitoring and Reporting

The day-to-day technical and financial monitoring of the implementation of this action will be a continuous process, and part of the implementing partner's responsibilities. To this aim, the implementing partner shall establish a technical and financial monitoring system for the action and elaborate regular progress reports (not less than annual) and final reports. Every report shall provide an accurate account of implementation of the action, difficulties encountered, changes introduced, as well as the degree of achievement of its Outputs and contribution to the achievement of its Outcomes, and if possible at the time of reporting, contribution to the achievement of its Impacts, as measured by corresponding indicators, using as reference the logframe matrix (for project modality) and the partner's strategy, policy or reform action plan list (for budget support).

The Commission may undertake additional project monitoring visits both through its own staff and through independent consultants recruited directly by the Commission for independent monitoring reviews (or recruited by the responsible agent contracted by the Commission for implementing such reviews).

Arrangements for monitoring and reporting, including roles and responsibilities for data collection, analysis and monitoring: The GoJ organ for data collection, analysis and monitoring is the Department of Statistics but for education more specifically the Education Quality and Accountability Unit (EQUA) under MoE is our main counterpart.

The statistical and monitoring systems as well as the quality of official data in the policy field covered have been assessed. This assessment has fed into the design of the action as follows: The AAI Monitoring and Evaluation and Learning Plan aligns with the ESP/EDEP KPIs and MoEs commitment to collaboration, learning, adaptation and the use of data-driven approaches for evidence-based decision making. Monitoring

is carried out on an ongoing basis through routine and systematic field visits by EQAU. Regular progress reports are issued and discussed in the framework of the AAI coordination meetings.

Limited staff capacities, high staff turnover and lack of technological equipment and software programmes do remain major obstacles for smooth data collection, processing and verification. Targeted capacity building for planning, budgeting, Monitoring and Evaluation and reporting needs to be further reinforced.

5.2. Evaluation

Having regard to the nature of the action, a final evaluation will be carried out for this action or its components via independent consultants.

It will be carried out for accountability and learning purposes at various levels (including for policy revision), taking into account in particular the fact that how the different components are interlinked and how they contribute to the overall objective of this action and its sustainability.

The evaluation of this action may be performed individually or through a joint strategic evaluation of budget support operations carried out with the partner country, other budget support providers and relevant stakeholders.

The Commission shall inform the implementing partner at least 1 month in advance of the dates envisaged for the evaluation exercise and missions. The implementing partner shall collaborate efficiently and effectively with the evaluation experts, and inter alia provide them with all necessary information and documentation, as well as access to the project premises and activities.

The evaluation reports shall be shared with the partner country and other key stakeholders following the best practice of evaluation dissemination. The implementing partner and the Commission shall analyse the conclusions and recommendations of the evaluations and, where appropriate, in agreement with the partner country, jointly decide on the follow-up actions to be taken and any adjustments necessary, including, if indicated, the reorientation of the project.

Evaluation services may be contracted under a framework contract.

5.3. Audit and Verifications

Without prejudice to the obligations applicable to contracts concluded for the implementation of this action, the Commission may, on the basis of a risk assessment, contract independent audit or verification assignments for one or several contracts or agreements.

6. STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND PUBLIC DIPLOMACY

All entities implementing EU-funded external actions have the contractual obligation to inform the relevant audiences of the Union's support for their work by displaying the EU emblem and a short funding statement as appropriate on all communication materials related to the actions concerned. To that end they must comply with the instructions given in the 2022 guidance document [*Communicating and raising EU visibility: Guidance for external actions*](#) (or any successor document).

This obligation will apply equally, regardless of whether the actions concerned are implemented by the Commission, the partner country, service providers, grant beneficiaries or entrusted or delegated entities such as UN agencies, international financial institutions and agencies of EU Member States. In each case, a reference to the relevant contractual obligations must be included in the respective financing agreement, procurement and grant contracts, and contribution agreements.

For the purpose of enhancing the visibility of the EU and its contribution to this action, the Commission may sign or enter into joint declarations or statements, as part of its prerogative of budget implementation and to safeguard the financial interests of the Union. Visibility and communication measures should also promote transparency and accountability on the use of funds. Effectiveness of communication activities on awareness about the action and its objectives as well as on EU funding of the action should be measured.

Implementing partners shall keep the Commission and the EU Delegation/Office fully informed of the planning and implementation of specific visibility and communication activities before the implementation. Implementing partners will ensure adequate visibility of EU financing and will report on visibility and communication actions as well as the results of the overall action to the relevant monitoring committees.

The EU has been a longstanding partner of Jordan but many Jordanians might not be fully aware of this partnership in all its aspects. In particular, as the EU is opting more and more for budget support to channel its financial aid, by definition a modality less visible to the general public than a more traditional project approach. Communication about the outcomes of our budget support interventions cannot be seen in isolation of the sector policies and the reforms that these interventions support. Budget support is successful when the policy itself is successful and when the EU's contribution helps bring about effective reforms and sustainable change in the country, trickling down to the level of citizens – who perceive an improvement in their lives. The EUD together with the GoJ, with MoE for this action in particular, intends to invest in uplifting the awareness on what the EU is doing in Jordan through its budget support interventions in strategic areas such as social protection, education and employment generation.