NORWEGIAN REFUGEE COUNCIL

Evaluation of NRC's education programming in the camps of Jordan

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1 Executive Summary

Since 2013, the Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC) as part of its broader package of support to the Syrian crisis in Jordan has offered education programming in the camps. This informal education programming, offered through dedicated learning centres, has aimed to provide learning support services (LSS), remedial education, and catch-up education for in and out of school refugee students between the ages of 6-15 residing in the camps. Since 2013, NRC has served over 12,000 beneficiaries in the camps.

This evaluation was commissioned by NRC Jordan country office, and conducted by Dr. Ritesh Shah from the University of Auckland, Faculty of Education and Social Work in late 2017. The purpose of this evaluation was two-fold. One was to look back, and assess how NRC has ensured access to quality, inclusive education for the refugee population residing in the camps to date. The other was to look ahead, and help NRC strategize on how it can ensure that its education programme remains *relevant* to the needs of its beneficiaries and *effective* in terms of ensuring children are able to remain in or return to formal schooling or other accredited pathways—all within a changing institutional and humanitarian context that has moved from an emergency to protracted crisis situation at current time.

The evaluation found that there are several key strengths of NRC's programming historically and at present time. For the children and adolescents, NRC has contributed meaningfully to improved learning outcomes, both in terms of improvements in academic knowledge and skills in core curriculum areas, but also in broader dispositions towards learning, particularly academic self-efficacy and school enjoyment. For children and adolescents out of school or significantly below where they needed to be academically in the formal schooling system, NRC's support provided them meaningful opportunities to gain knowledge and skills they saw important for their life. A strong component of NRC's programming has been to support children not just academically, but socially and emotionally as well through the inclusion of a strong life skills and PSS component to its programme, as well as by mainstreaming a strong protection component across all its activities. The evaluation found that this focus had demonstrable impacts on the ability of its beneficiaries to regulate their emotions, and improve connections to peers and other adults, as well as their behaviour. More broadly it was also found to have important impacts on their overall state of well-being and sense of safety and security within the camp setting. For both in and out of school beneficiaries, participating in NRC's education programming has been an important catalyst for supporting them to stay or enrol in the formal schooling system. Protection-focussed components, such as the Better Learning Programme (BLP) and the Walking to School (W2S) programme have also helped children to reach school on time and attend school regularly. Importantly, NRC has been relatively successful in providing access to and guaranteeing similar outcomes for various groups of learners, particularly in regards to gender and disability status.

Within the learning centres, NRC has ensured that the Syrian teachers it employs to run the programme are renumerated in line with the approved SOP in the camps, respected and valued for their professional commitment, and concurrently, offered ongoing professional development and learning opportunities to improve their technical capacities for their present and future career possibilities. This support has been highly valued and appreciated, and has demonstrated impacts on these individuals at both the personal and professional level. At the same time, beneficiaries noted that it was these teachers who were key to allowing them to (re)gain academic motivation and confidence and enable them to take risks. Additional to that, a number of other features within the learning centre—such as its sports/recreation, library and ICT facilities, and the ability to offer a more holistic curriculum inclusive of PSS/SEL—continue to act as an important complement to the formal schooling system, offering opportunities for a child's development which are currently not able to be offered in that setting due to a lack of appropriate facilities, capacity and personnel. Within the broader operational environment of the camps and the wider education sector of Jordan, NRC's education programming over the years has

been highly valued for its attention to quality implementation, and its ability to respond and adapt to a rapidly changing context.

That stated a number of challenges face the programme at present. One is getting out of school adolescents to enrol in formal, non-formal and informal education opportunities on offer, due to a combination of demand and supply side factors. Specifically, many adolescents do not appear to see relevance to the educational opportunities on offer to them; and for those who do, there are often significant hurdles put up for them to enrol in the Ministry's drop-out and catch-up programme at present. Specific to NRC's informal education programming, this group represents a small fraction of the overall beneficiary pool at present, despite concerted efforts to attract them to the learning centre. For students who have attended NRC's learning centre and then seek out opportunities to enrol in new accredited non-formal pathways, there remain a number of administrative hurdles that appear to stand in their way. Another key challenge is that drop-out, non-completion and irregular attendance remain a chronic feature of NRC's education programming in the camps, and is further exacerbated by the fact that its activities are non-accredited, and increasingly in competition with a range of other informal education opportunities available to learners in the camp. Again, these issues are most pronounced for adolescents between 13-15 years old. A final challenge is ensuring that within the current context NRC's informal education programing in the learning centres is not viewed as parallel, but rather complementary to and supportive of, formal education provision.

The evaluation makes a number of key recommendations, including:

1. Within NRC's theory of change and education strategy, the protective, safe, and inclusive environment which the education programming in the camp currently fosters, and the impacts this creates—in terms of students' social and emotional well-being and academic self-efficacy and motivation—should be a stronger central pillar of its work, and measured as a series of outcomes (immediate, medium and long-term).
2. Efforts must be placed to developing outcome measures based on students' academic performance in the formal school system, for the purposes of data validation and measurement of sustainability. Additionally, the reliability and validity of NRC's internal learning assessments should be further examined, and a clear set of protocols developed to ensure they are being administered in a systematic and consistent way across the two camps and with each cohort.
3. The main objective(s) and purpose(s) for engaging parents and community in NRC's education programming in the camps remains unclear, and should more fully articulated in programme design and subsequently in monitoring/outcome measurement.
4. Informal education programming for adolescents needs to be more adaptive to the needs and demands which this population faces, and in turn, offer different models of delivery—a matter which NRC needs to consider with urgency within its current approach. This may need to vary by the gendered and livelihood needs and demands of these groups within the two different camps, and would need to start with an in-depth understanding of what this age group would see as relevant education provision.
5. Until referral pathways back into the formal system function as intended, and the provision of catch up and drop out programmes is sufficient to demand, it may not be appropriate for NRC to treat OOSC in the same way that those already in the formal school are treated within the learning centre. Programming may need to be better differentiated for these learners out of recognition of the discrete needs and demands this group faces with NRC's informal education provision targeting these beneficiaries in particular.
6. Different options for maximising efficiency within the current LSS model need to be considered—including running multiple cohorts at once and concurrently reducing days of expected participation from 5 to 3 for each group within the learning centre; expanding the

number of beneficiaries served through direct engagement with the formal school; and/or working more directly with the Ministry's drop-out and catch-up programmes.

7. There are a number of ways in which NRC could support Ministry efforts to improve quality, protective educational provision for those in school and out of school in the camps based on its demonstrated strengths and achievements in the informal education environment. Specifically, efforts should be directed towards supporting professional development opportunities for formal school teachers, particularly in areas such as classroom management, and by ensuring that the remedial education opportunities in the learning centres are primarily directed towards those referred from the formal schooling system. NRC could also direct its community mobilisation and outreach efforts towards reinforcing and strengthening parental/caregiver engagement in the schools their children attend. For OOSC, NRC should explore ways it can contribute to advocating for the reduction of barriers for learners who show interest to enrol in catch-up and drop-out programmes, and simultaneously to ensure that such programming is delivered in the most effective, relevant and holistic way possible. This may mean NRC engaging directly in supporting or strengthening the delivery of these programmes and/or potentially advocating for other non-formal education pathways for these learners.
8. As part of assessing the continued relevance and appropriateness of its current educational response in the camps, NRC should explore the potential of a differentiated approach within Azraq and Zaatari based on the fact that the current contexts of these two camps is quite distinct.

There are also several key recommendations which are relevant to NRC's future work within and outside the education core competency at the country, regional and global level. Chief amongst them are:

- A staged, beneficiary-centric approach to working within and parallel to the formal education system should be considered as NRC increasingly shifts between humanitarianan and developmental responses.
- In light of a changing context both within each of the camps, in the country, and throughout the region, there is to ensure that the evidence and data on which programmatic decisions are made is both up to date and still relevant to the actual needs of beneficiaries.
- Stronger emphasis within NRC as an organisation needs to be given to collecting data not just for monitoring and reporting purposes, but for formative learning and programme development. This begins with a concerted effort on building the evaluative capacity of key management and programme staff.
- A strength of NRC's education programming globally has been to take a set of guiding ideas or principles and to adapt this in response to the context and needs of beneficiaries. This should not be lost in the drive for increased programme efficiency and NRC should not attempt to universalise responses through standardised manuals and toolkits.
- Both in Jordan and globally, NRC is seen as a provider of holistic, multi-faceted and quality education provision. Its programming is seen to focus on depth rather than breadth. This should be kept in mind in all strategic programme developments, given the strong push by some of NRC's donors to deliver at scale.
- As the actors supporting NRC's education programming in Jordan and regionally grows, so too do opportunities to 'pitch' particular components of its education response to particular donors, given that some will be more interested in quality outcomes, and others more interested in beneficiary numbers.
- The significant and rapid evolution of NRC's education programming in the camps has led to a number of new components being added to its core activities, but without a comprehensive review of how these components fit to its overall objective and theory of change. It is critical, for both quality and programme management purposes, that NRC's education programming

remain focussed and directed towards a clear end goal which is unambiguous and realistic in timeframe and scope.

2 List of abbreviations and acronyms

ALP	Accelerated Learning Programme
BLP	Better Learning Programme
CEP	Child Education Pack
ESWG	Education Sector Working Group
FGD	Focus group discussion
IBV	Incentive-based volunteer
LSS	Learning support services
M&E	Monitoring and evaluation
MoE	Ministry of Education
MSC	Most Significant Change
MSU	Monitoring and Support Unit
NMFA	Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs
NRC	Norwegian Refugee Council
OOSC	Out of school children
PCG	Parent and Community Group
PSS	Psychosocial support
RI	Relief International
SEL	Social-emotional learning
SoW	Scope of work
TIP	Teacher Induction Package
ToR	Terms of reference
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
W2S	Walking to School

3 Introduction

A changing context

Since the outbreak of conflict in Syria in 2011 over 3 million people have sought safety abroad. As of May 2017, 659,246 Syrian refugees have registered with UNHCR in Jordan. Of the total number of registered refugees, the majority are children and youth with 57% under the age of 18. Approximately 20% of Syrian refugees have settled in the refugee camps of Zaatari in Mafraq Governorate, and Azraq in Zarqa Governorate. In May 2017, 55.6% of the 79,822 registered refugees living in Zaatari Camp were aged 0-17. The figures are similar in Azraq: 57% of the 53,915 residents in the camp were aged 0-17.

NRC's Jordan country programme started in August 2012, with the main focus of supporting UNHCR in setting-up and operating Zaatari refugee camp. From the start of NRC's education intervention in Zaatari in 2013, and its later expansion into Azraq and Emirates Jordan (EJC) camps in 2015, the Jordan education programme focused on out of school children (OOSC) by providing access to expanded informal education in the form of remedial and catch-up education, to help out of school children transition into the formal school system and to stay in school. It also provided non-accredited informal education—through the teaching of basic literacy, numeracy and life skills—for children who were unlikely to be able to transition back to formal school due to their age and the restrictions on registration in formal schools. These programmes took place in dedicated learning centres which NRC established. In addition to the core academic programme in these centres, NRC also provided other services such as recreational activities, computer classes and psychosocial wellbeing activities. These activities were mainly carried out with UNICEF Jordan and other education actors. Concurrent to this, NRC has established a separate education programme to support Syrian and Jordanian students who attend schools in communities outside camps facing conditions of overcrowding caused by the presence of vulnerable refugee communities attending and/or surrounding the school. In this programme, NRC has supported improvements to infrastructure and teaching and learning, as well as governance structures inside targeted formal schools.

Following the London Compact in February 2016, however, the response to the Syria crisis in Jordan has refocussed activities across a range of sectors from an emergency to longer-term response. The aim is to expand access for Syrian refugees to a range of services, but also to enhance the overall quality of the structures and systems in place for all Jordanians, including the education sector. Since that point, the Jordanian Ministry of Education (MoE) has established an ambitious plan to enable access for all Syrian refugee children to certified, formal and/or non-formal[1] education pathways in the mainstream Jordanian school system. The government's initial response to this plan has been to significant address *supply-side barriers* inside the camps by opening and/or expanding school facilities, recruiting more Jordanian teachers to work in the camp schools, and increasing the size of its Teacher Induction Program (TIP) to train more new teachers. Plans and policies were also established for the commencement of catch up and continuation of drop-out programmes for over-aged and out of school children who had missed out on significant periods of school.

Together, the MoE, UNICEF and its partners led a nation-wide Back to School campaign[2] in the lead up to the start of the 2016/17 academic year to inform and assist all Syrian refugee families to ensure that

[1] This includes a "catch-up" programme for students 12 and under who have missed a period of schooling, and need an accelerated programme of learning to re-enter an age-appropriate grade level and a "drop out" programme for students 13-18 (boys) and 13-20 (girls) who have missed more than three years of school and would like to earn a equivalency certificate that recognises learning to Grade 10 level. The drop out programme covers 3 years of schooling in 8 month cycles, over two years. The final year, which involves home-based learning, then allows students to take an examination and earn the equivalency degree.

[2] This campaign, known as Learning for All, is one which NRC has been a partner in supporting through its community outreach volunteers.

their children are not only in, but that they stay in, formal school. The result was that in the 2016-7 school year, enrolment for children ages 5 to 15 in the formal system in the camps was approximately 28,000 (51% girls), with a further 1,300 in informal and non-formal education classes (39% girls)—which represents 95% of all children in the ages 5-12 bracket enrolled in formal schooling. Yet, enrolment data for the full age range of 6-18 suggests that approximately 23% of students are out of school, with the majority of these being adolescents between the ages of 13-15, where only a small fraction enrolled in either formal schooling or non-formal pathways (such as Drop Out or Adult Literacy classes).[3] Additionally, significant *demand-side* barriers for children in camps to access and remain in the formal system persist. Past research highlights how formal schools are perceived as having poor quality teaching and lacking facilities. Children and families report violence and bullying – classrooms, as a result of overcrowding in classrooms and lack of teacher skills; and on the way to/from school, as a result of children having to travel long distances to/from formal schools in camps – as some of the main barriers to accessing and/or remaining in the formal schools.[4]

NRC's current response in the camps

In light of this changing context, NRC's education response has shifted dramatically from one addressing some of the supply-side constraints, particularly regarding a lack of schooling opportunities for over-aged or out of school children; to tackling some of the demand-side issues, noted in the previous section. NRC's ambition through its education programming is to support and strengthen the government-led response to ensure that children can enter into and remain in school through quality education.

Through its programming in the learning centres, which remain its hub at present, NRC currently offers children ages 6-15 in its specified catchment areas in the camps[5], remedial learning support to supplement formal school classroom teaching and learning in the core subjects; as well as access to psychosocial support, ICTs/e-learning, art, library and creative play facilities, and other recreational activities. While supporting both out of school and in-school children, its target population has shifted from years prior, and is now largely focussed on supporting children already in the formal schooling system, rather than those outside of it. This is a direct product of NRC's current attention to supporting and strengthening the formal education system, rather than offering an alternative pathway to this system.

The remedial education/learning support services (LSS) NRC provides is offered in three-month blocks where cohorts of unique beneficiaries enter and cycle through. Two separate groups (one male and one female) come through the centre each day, for approximately three hours, either before or after their school day. Students are placed in classes according to their grades in the formal school. The programme for 6-12 year olds, the vast majority who are in school is differentiated from that for students ages 13-15 where there are higher numbers of out of school children and adolescents.[6]

For the 6-12 year olds, who are the majority of beneficiaries in the current programme, the focus of the programme remains on providing remedial classes and homework/revision support in the core curriculum subjects covered in school of Arabic, Mathematics, English and Science. NRC prepares its

[3] These data are taken from PLAN International (2016) *Needs assessment report: Syria refugee crisis in Jordan*, which utilises final data from the 2016-7 Learning for All Campaign. A final report for the 2017-8 campaign is yet to be produced.
[4] See for example, See UNICEF/REACH (2014) *Joint Education Needs Assessment Report on Access to Education for Syrian Refugees in Zaatari Camp*, UNICEF/REACH (2015) *Joint Education Needs Asssessment Report on Access to Education for Syrian Refugees in Azraq Camp* (2015); Human Rights Watch (2016) *"We're Afraid for their Future": Barriers to Education for Syrian Refugee Children in Jordan*; PLAN International (2016) *Needs assessment report: Syria refugee crisis in Jordan;* UNICEF (2017) *Demand Side Barriers to Education,* A presentation to the donors and Ministry of Education (October 23, 2017)
[5] While NRC does not exclude children from outside its catchment areas, it does not actively recruit them through outreach activities.
[6] This differentiation is explored later in the report in terms of its relevance and appropriateness. The focus on supporting children in school rather than out of school also has had impacts in terms of the number of beneficiaries from these two different age groups, with the 13-15 group now representing a small minority of the total beneficiary population served in the learning centre. Implications of this are also discussed later in the report.

own curriculum materials and resources which are based on the official Jordanian curricula for each grade level.[7] The curriculum materials and lesson plans are revised regularly based on students' identified learning needs. Additional to that, students receive regular psychosocial support and life skills classes which are based on the Better Learning Programme 1 (BLP 1) guide, the Child Education Pack and UNICEF's Makani programme. Art and sport classes are also planned and taught in line with MoE guidelines, and by specifically trained teachers (for Art). Specific sessions are also planned in the library, to take advantage of the Kitabna and Big Bad Boo resources, as well as the wealth of other books available in the space. Finally, specific e-learning classes are also taught, using materials selected by teachers from the internet, and often using the Ipads or computers available in the learning centre.[8]

For 13-15 year olds, while the general structure remains the same, some adaptations have been made to cater to the interests and needs of this population, many of whom are either out of school, have missed significant amounts of school and/or are most vulnerable to dropping out/irregular attendance in the formal schooling system. NRC is drawing more on the UNICEF-developed Makani curriculum, which it used to use for adolescents ages 12-15 under its CLP model, to teach the core subjects, and has introduced a separate computing class for this age group. It also provides opportunities for those in this age group to lead their own education and community-development initiatives.[9]

SUBJECT	NO. OF SESSIONS		DESCRIPTION
AGE RANGE	6-12	13-15	
ARABIC	2	1	Homework and revision
	2	2	Remedial classes
	1	1	E- Learning
MATH	2	1	Homework and revision
	2	2	Remedial classes
	1	1	E- Learning
ENGLISH	1	1	Homework and revision
	1	1	Remedial classes
	1	1	E- Learning
SCIENCE	1	2	Remedial classes Homework
	1	1	E- Learning and revision
ART	1	1	
SPORT	1	1	
LIBRARY	1	1	
PSS /BLP1	1	1	
LIFE SKILLS	1	1	
COMPUTERS	0	1	

Table 1: Number of subject sessions per week, by age group, in NRC learning centres

[7] The reason for this is that at present, none of the informal education providers have the necessary permissions to use Ministry of Education texts and resources inside the learning centre.
[8] E-learning activities are facilitated through the Ideas Box, a project of Libraries without Borders. See https://www.librarieswithoutborders.org/ideasbox/
[9] Examples of the nature of these initiatives are discussed later in the report.

As Table 1 indicates, a total of 20 sessions are planned over the school week, with each session scheduled for 35 minutes duration. Saturdays are typically planned as a time for students needing extra learning or psychosocial support to participate, from either the past or current cohorts.

With the long-term ambition of supporting and strengthening its links with the formal schooling system, NRC has now established referral systems with neighbouring schools in the camp, to ensure that students requiring remedial learning support receive this, and ideally avoid dropping out of school because of poor academic performance. NRC also continues to support a 'walking to school programme' to provide safe passage for all children attending formal school or other educational activities in the camps; and focusses on establishing and strengthening Parents and Community Groups (PCGs) to support the broader educational environment in camps. Since 2013, approximately 12,000 Syrian school-aged refugee children have been supported by NRC through its camp-based programming.

Purpose of this evaluation

In light of this evolving situation, the purpose of this evaluation is two-fold. One is to look back, and assess how NRC has ensured access to quality, inclusive education for the refugee population residing in the camps to date. The other is look ahead, and help NRC strategize on how it can ensure that its education programme remains *relevant* to the needs of its beneficiaries and *effective* in terms of ensuring children are able to remain in or return to (in)formal schooling—all within a changing institutional and humanitarian context that has moved from an emergency to protracted crisis situation at current time.

These issues were expected to be explored through several lines of inquiry, specified in the Terms of Reference for the evaluation. One key concern was the **relevance and appropriateness** of NRC response to this shifting context, particularly against the benchmark of NRC's mandate as a humanitarian organisation which targets the most vulnerable. Specifically, this evaluation explores whether and how NRC in its education programming in the two camps is effectively identifying, targeting and supporting the educational needs of the most vulnerable children at any given time. Additionally, given the difference in operating contexts between Azraq and Zaatari, the evaluation also assesses whether the conditions of the camps' context mediate what NRC is able to accomplish; and in line with one of the strategic evaluation questions, whether NRC's responses have been both relevant and appropriate to each context.

Another key focus of this evaluation are the **outcomes and impacts** of NRC's responses to date—particularly in terms of its current focus on ensuring that children at risk of dropping out of school are better able to access and remain in school. This was explored by looking not only at the effectiveness of what occurs in the learning centres themselves through an examination of attendance and academic achievement data collected internally, but also in terms of the impacts programming is having on key educational outcomes such as students' retention in the formal system. At the same time, the evaluation also examines learning outcomes beyond these factors, particularly given the focus on protection within NRC's education response. In particular, attention was given to the impacts of the programme's psychosocial components, and particularly the Better Learning Programme (BLP), on measures/predictors of academic self-efficacy such as concentration in school, ability to complete homework, motivation to attend school, and enjoyment of schooling/learning. Related to the above two lines of inquiry, the evaluation also gave close scrutiny to the issue of how **effective, relevant and appropriate** NRC's response has been to the needs of various subsections of its target group in the camps. Outcome and impact data was disaggregated by a range of factors including age, gender, disability, and attendance rates.

A final issue explored in this evaluation is of the **approach which NRC has undertaken** to supporting learners' access to and retention of learners to formal schooling, through LSS and remedial education in the separate learning centres is operates . NRC has invested significant efforts to ensure that its learning centres are staffed by well-trained and supported Syrian facilitators who are able to support

the learning of children in a non-threatening and dynamic way. NRC has also engaged in outreach activities with areas of the camp it supports management of, and strengthened referral pathways into the formal and non-formal education system in an attempt to ensure all learners who are able, are given the opportunity to reintegrate; and likewise, with formal education providers and the community, to ensure that all are aware of the support which NRC's learning centres provide. NRC is also working hard to engage parents and caregivers in the activities of the learning centres through the establishment of the Parental Community Groups (PCGs). Technology is recognised to play an increasing role in shaping the instructional programme within and outside the centre. To that end, the evaluation assesses the efficiency and alignment of these approaches to international best practice, and to the work of other stakeholders with recommendations given on how this might be improved.

These matters were explored through several key evaluation questions, that were reformulated from the original ones presented in the Terms of Reference.[10] They are:

- **Impact:** What have been the intended and unintended outcomes of NRC's education programming in the camps for direct (the learners themselves) and indirect beneficiaries (parents, learning centre staff, broader camp community) since the commencement of activity? What influence has the context and approach to implementation had on outcomes noted—in other words—are some beneficiaries and contexts served better or worse by NRC's programme approach than others and why?
- **Process:** Has the approach undertaken by NRC to supporting and providing access to quality education been an effective, inclusive, and coordinated response to the needs of its beneficiaries and activities of other stakeholders, and the particular context of operation in each of the two camps?
- **Relevance/Appropriateness**: How relevant and appropriate have these responses been to the needs of participating children, their duty-bearers, and the broader camp and educational context of Jordan, both at present and historically?
- **Efficiency:** Have the resources and support deployed for been sufficient and appropriate to the needs identified for project beneficiaries, and if not, what factors have constrained this?
- **Sustainability:** What evidence exist to suggest that through NRC's efforts: (a) beneficiaries are able to remain in schooling and successfully meet learning outcomes, independent of their ongoing participation in LSS; and (b) education provision for Syrian refugees as a whole has been strengthened in Jordan through NRC's interventions and advocacy efforts?
- **Learning:** How might NRC's programming through the learning centres or other streams of activity better support access and retention in formal education, while also addressing the educational needs/aspirations of children and their parents? Does NRC have the right structures, M&E tools/practices, and staff in place to achieve this aim, and if not, what changes might be required? And, does NRC systematically incorporate lessons learned from its activities to ongoing programme development, within and outside the camp settings of Jordan?

[10] Both the initial Terms of Reference and the Inception Report, approved by the Evaluation Steering Committee, are appended

4 Methodology

The evaluation adopted the following approaches to answering the evaluation questions noted in the Introduction: (1) Key stakeholder interviews with individuals within NRC and external partners; (2) Desk review of project documentation to date; (3) Further quantitative analysis of project monitoring and outcome data; (4) Most Significant Change stories collected from current and past project beneficiaries, teachers, and caregivers; and (5) Workshops with NRC Education team/key internal stakeholders at the conclusion of fieldwork. For each question within the evaluation, data was triangulated from at least two different approaches/sources.

The evaluation was carried out in late 2017. An inception period, to review existing programme documentation and identify gaps in data, was followed by two weeks in Jordan in October. During that time, key stakeholders were interviewed, Most Significant Change stories collected, observations of classes and activities in the learning centre conducted, and workshops and discussions with NRC team members held. Below is a brief description of the methodologies employed in this evaluation, including a description of how data was collected and analysed from these approaches.

Key stakeholder interviews

Key stakeholder interviews occurred with individuals within NRC and external to NRC to: (1) contextualise the relevance/appropriateness of NRC's education response in the camps; (2) understand NRC's comparative advantage to other actors working in both Zaatari and Azraq, (3) assess the perceived effectiveness (and possible challenges) of this approach within the current educational context of the camps; and (4) identify how NRC's activities could be sustained and leveraged on moving forward. A semi-structured interview guide for internal and external stakeholders was developed and is appended to this report. A total of 8 individuals within the Country Management Group or managers/coordinators within the Education Core Competency, and 8 representatives from partners external to NRC[11] were interviewed, with further details included in the appendices.

Additionally, in each learning centre, interviews or focus group discussions were held in each setting with centre staff, teachers[12], and incentive-based volunteers (IBVs) supporting programme activity.[13] The aim of these interviews was to elicit more information on their understanding of the purpose and relevance of NRC's education programming at present, and ideas of ways it might be improved or refined for the future. In total 13 teachers, 10 IBVs, and 6 centre staff were interviewed.

Finally, a formal school in close proximity to each of the learning centres was visited in each camp. In Azraq, a short interview with the principal was followed by a focus group discussion with 8 teachers working at the school. In Zaatari, 4 teachers working at the school participated in a focus group discussion.

Desk review of existing documentation

A number of documents were provided by the NRC Jordan Education team and reviewed as part of the evaluation. This documentation included curriculum and assessment materials used in the learning centre, advocacy and policy drafts for the Compensatory Learning Programme (CLP) developed by NRC previously, ToRs/SoW/position descriptions for centre-based staff and volunteers, and funding proposals with associated progress and final reporting.

[11] This included the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs (NMFA), UNICEF Jordan, Porticus, Relief International and Save the Children

[12] Teachers in this evaluation refer to the Syrian facilitators (IBVs) who work directly with students in each of the centres and given their incentives by NRC. Teachers in the formal school setting, who are Jordanian, are differentiated as such.

[13] This included Walking to School volunteers and Community Outreach Officers at each centre

This documentation provided a wealth of information on the intent, design and implementation of the education programming, both historically and at present, and where appropriate is included in this evaluation as either background or evidence.

Additional quantitative analysis

In the inception phase of the study, it became evident that the programme has and continues to collect a significant amount of monitoring data for each student—in regards to attendance, academic performance, and student well-being—which is then used to generate outcome report to donors at the end of each cohort. While 'headline' results against targets were produced, it was agreed that more could and should be done with these data as part of the evaluation. To that end, these data were further collated, and disaggregated to identify differential patterns in attendance, academic performance and student well-being by camp, gender, and age groupings. Additionally, associations between attendance rates and academic performance were assessed. These data are presented, as appropriate, in the findings of the report.

A key limitation about this analysis is that a complete data set was only able to be further analysed for the first two cohorts in 2017.[14] The second cohort data set was much smaller, and attendance more irregular because of it falling during the summer holidays and Ramadan. For that reason, in some circumstances, only analysis from the first cohort is presented in the report, unless the second cohort data presents a significantly different picture. Another key limitation with the achievement data is that each centre administers its own assessments at the outset and conclusion of each cohort. These assessments, while based on curriculum expectations at each grade level, do not vary throughout the year, despite the fact that student would be expected to come in with greater knowledge of the content, depending on which cohort they are in. Additionally, centre staff and teachers also stated that the post-tests were sometimes adapted to assess content which the teachers focussed on, rather than all curriculum expectations, as the pre-test measures. Hence, the internal consistency and reliability of these assessments is somewhat questionable, and was not able to be triangulated through independent data available in the formal schooling system. As a result of these limitations, no remark can be made on the statistical significance of trends noted, as internal reliability and validity of these assessments would need to be completed first.[15]

For the student well-being data as measured in the psychosocial integrity questionnaire,[16] it is important to note that this has not been administered consistently to students outside of BLP 2 for each cohort, and even within cohorts where it has been administered to non-BLP 2 students, not universally. For this reason, it is hard to make firm conclusions based on data from partial cohorts, or a single cohort.

Most Significant Change (MSC) Stories

MSC was used to collect stories of change from a range of direct and indirect beneficiaries who have been part of NRC's education programming in the camps to date. MSC is a collaborative, qualitative evaluation method that has gained significant attention within international development circles in the

[14] In Cohort One, complete achievement data based on the test administered to students at the outset and conclusion of the cohort was available for between 855 and 860 students, depending on the subject. This included approximately 290 students from Azraq and 570 students from Zaatari. For Cohort Two, complete achievement data was available for between 320 and 360 students, depending on the subject, with 145-170 students; data available from Azraq, and 178-187 students' data available from Zaatari.

[15] This is a particularly important point given the fact that standard deviations on these assessments was quite large—often between 12 to 15 points—on a scale of 50.

[16] This includes tracking of nightmare incidences and pre/post scores on a psychosocial integrity questionnaire for students who were part of the Better Learning 2 programme in Cohort 1 in Zaatari and Azraq (approximately 186 students in total, with 134 from Zaatari and 52 from Azraq) , and pre/post scores for the psychosocial integrity questionnaire for all students in Cohort 2 in Zaatari camp only (complete data available for approximately 730 students).

past decade.[17] It provides information that can be used to identify impacts of an initiative and promote programme learning (such as improving implementation, and identifying and addressing negative or unexpected outcomes). In MSC, beneficiaries of an initiative, as well as those responsible for managing and implementing such activity, are asked in an interview to identify at least three positive or negative changes, from their perspective, that are the result of the initiative in question. From this, each individual selects the one change that they believe is most significant to them, and the interviewee documents a narrative story of this change, documenting what things were like prior to the change, the change itself, and what things are like after the change. The interviewee also documents why this change is significant to the narrator, and the narrator also provides a short title for the story.[18] In the case of this evaluation, stories of change were collected from those who have been current or past beneficiaries of NRC's support—and included those who had been part of the programme when it was structured differently as a catch up or CLP. While the majority were children who were direct beneficiaries of NRC's non-formal education programming, a small number of caregivers of these children (who were also members of the PCGs), teachers, and beneficiaries of the W2S initiative were also interviewed in this process.[19]

As a result, a total of 85 stories of change were collected, from 72 former and current students[20], 7 teachers, and 6 parents. Stories were collected by the external evaluator (using translation assistance), and three additional members of the NRC education team who were trained on the MSC methodology at the outset. In addition to collating all the stories into a collection (see annex), the stories collected were thematically analysed by several categories, including the challenges/issues faced, the factor causing the change noted, the type of change noted, and how they heard about NRC's programming. This analysis is presented later in this report and themes discussed are reported as percentages, based on the frequency which a particular theme is mentioned as compared to the total count of themes coded within a particular category.

Findings/sense-making workshops

At the conclusion of the evaluation visit, two separate workshops were held. The first workshop was for select members of the Education Core Competency team in Jordan to review all the MSC stories collected, and deliberate on which two stories best reflect NRC's education programming in the camps to date. These discussions, as well as the final stories selected helped to inform aspects of this evaluation, particularly an understanding of what the programme implementation team believes are the most important aspects of what its programming does or should do at present time. Some of the points raised from these discussions, particularly the lessons learned and reflections about specific stories are included, as relevant, in the findings section.

Immediately following on this, a presentation of key data and interim conclusions was made to NRC Jordan senior management. Time was afforded within this to discuss and debate the conclusions reached, and for those gathered to identify the possible implications of these conclusions in terms of ways forward. These perspectives helped to inform the final conclusions and recommendations included in this evaluation.

[17] See Davies, R. and Dart, J. (2005). The 'Most Significant Change' (MSC) Technique. A Guide to Its Use. www.mande.co.uk/docs/MSCGuide.pdf; or Shah, R. (2014). Assessing the 'true impact' of development assistance in the Gaza Strip and Tokelau: 'Most Significant Change' as an evaluation technique. *Asia Pacific Viewpoint, 55* (3), 262-276.

[18] An MSC interview guide for adult interviewees is provided in this report. For participating children a modified approach was used where they were asked to draw a picture before and after their participation in some aspect of NRC's education programming in the camps, and then asked to narrate (orally) a story about this.

[19] A sampling framework for MSC story collection, and the number of individuals against a range of different categories was sent to NRC during the inception phase. Student beneficiary groups were disaggregated by gender, age, disability status, activity of which he/she was a participant, and whether he/she was a current or former beneficiary (see appended inception report for full breakdown). NRC, in consultation with the evaluator, then recruited individuals in line with this criterion. The total number of expected stories to be collected ended up slightly less than anticipated (106), due to some of those contacted not coming at the specified time.

[20] An additional 6 stories were collected from students but were not included in the MSC story catalogue because they did not clearly describe a change or were unspecific in their attribution to the activities of NRC.

5 Findings

This chapter takes the key evaluation themes of impact, relevance/appropriateness, process, efficiency, and sustainability and combine some of these together in the presentation of findings which are broadly grouped under impact and relevance/appropriateness. The question of what can be learned from these findings is presented in the next chapter, given the forward focus of this set of questions. At the end of each sub-chapter, conclusions and key recommendations are made.

5.1 Impacts of NRC's programming

This section explores the impacts of NRC's education programming in the camps for its direct beneficiaries (learners between the ages of 6-15), and indirect beneficiaries (parents, learning centre staff, broader camp community). In exploring the impacts, particularly on direct beneficiaries, whether or not they are different based on characteristics such as age range, gender, location and disability status, is also identified. While focus of this analysis is on present programming, it does also explore the historical impacts of NRC's Compensatory Learning Programme (CLP)—which was established as a pilot for how NRC could support Accelerated Learning programming in the camp setting in Jordan. Where possible, the sustainability or potential sustainability of impacts noted is discussed.

5.1.1 Strengthening academic performance

One of the key impacts of NRC's informal education support to date has been improved academic achievement amongst beneficiaries. This is reflected in both the quantitative data (collected through pre/post-tests in the core subjects of Arabic, Mathematics, English and Science), and qualitative data (collected through the MSC stories from beneficiaries and their caregivers).

Analysis completed by NRC as part of preparing reporting on outcomes to their donors suggests that the majority of students (between 70-90%) improve academically as a result of participation in the learning support services provided in the two centres. These data were further reviewed and analysed as part of this evaluation, to ascertain the mean scores before and after the tests for all students who completed the first cohort in 2017, and to discern if there were any notable differences between the camp population, by gender, age range, and disability status.

Figure 1 below provides a breakdown by gender to the academic improvements across each subject area.

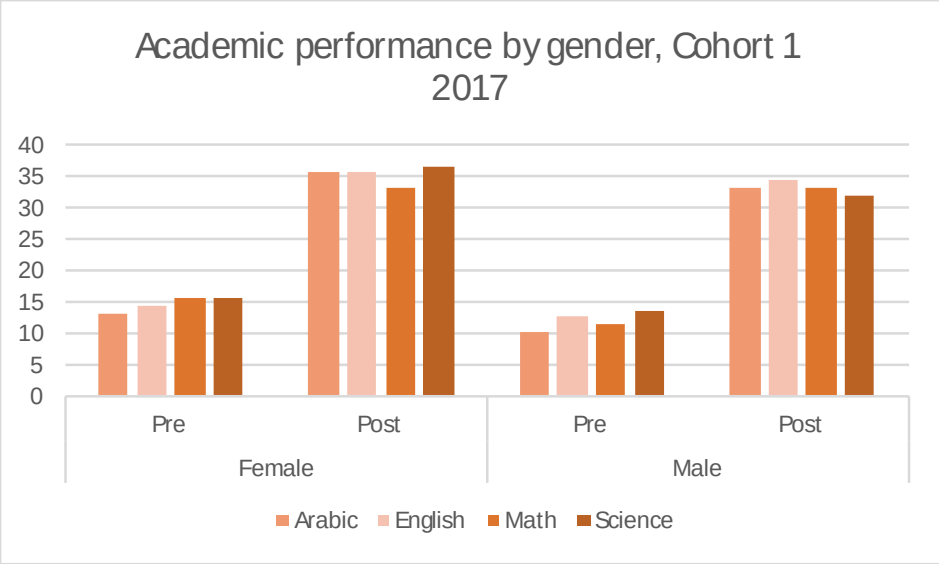


Figure 1: Academic performance by gender

Across all four core subjects, rates of improvement in terms of mean scores were roughly similar, irrespective of gender.[21] Additionally, across all subject areas females tended to enter into the programme with slightly higher mean scores than males, but within the margin of variability.

In regards to students with identified disabilities, again rates of improvement in mean scores were roughly similar to those without such an identification (see below). Baseline scores varied for the subjects, with students with disabilities starting the programme with slightly higher mean scores in Science and Arabic, and slightly lower scores in Mathematics and English.

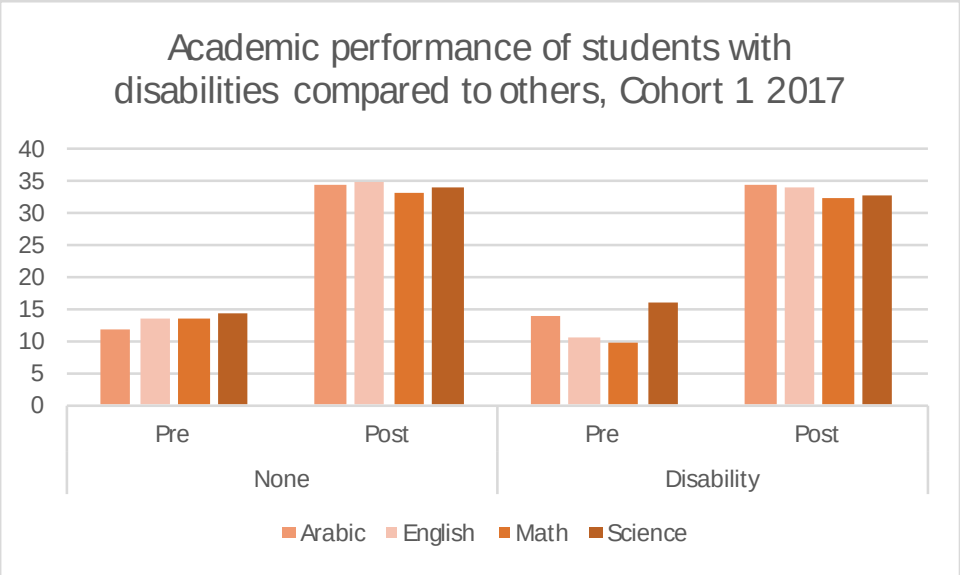


Figure 2: Academic performance of students with identified disabilities in Cohort 1, 2017

Analysis by camp for the first cohort in 2017 indicates that rates of progress and baseline scores were roughly equivalent between the camps with student populations in both camps showing sizeable improvements in all subject areas. Students in Azraq tended to come into the programme with lower baseline scores for all subjects except English. Arabic was the subject with the biggest difference in performance between the two camps, with students in Azraq entering into the cohort with a mean score of 8.4 while students in Zaatari entered in with mean score of 12.4 (both out of 50). Despite this difference, by the end of the three months, the students were performing roughly equivalent in Arabic (33.8 in Azraq and 35.8 in Zaatari). Data for the second cohort, which was much smaller, and for which there were many fewer students who completed both the pre and post assessments[22], revealed more stark differences (see Figure 3).

[21] While males did demonstrate slightly greater improvement in Math performance in this cohort, the size of variation (standard deviation) within this group makes this difference insignificant statistically.

[22] In Azraq between 140 and 176 students completed the pre and post tests in the different subjects, while in Zaatari between 176 and 187 students completed these tests at both time points.

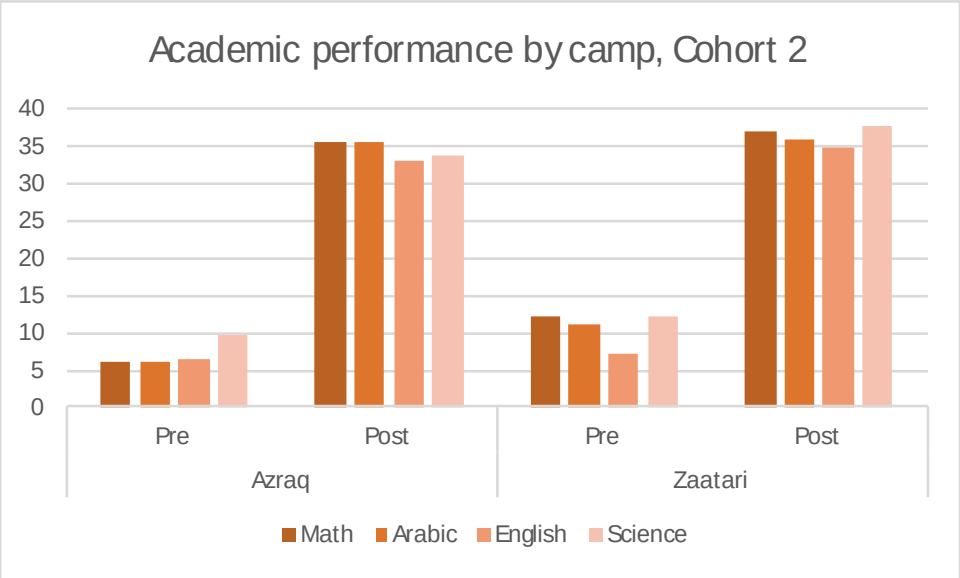


Figure 3: Academic performance in 2nd cohort 2017, by camp

In this second cohort, which took place over the summer holidays, students in Azraq appeared to come into the programme with much lower baseline (pre-test) scores than their peers in Zaatari in all subjects. For example, students in Azraq entered in with mean pre-test scores of 6.1 in Math and Arabic, while students in Zaatari entered with pre-test scores of 12 and 11.2 respectively. The reasons for this are unclear, but notably by the end of the three months, academic performance in both camps was roughly equivalent, suggesting a greater "added value" to NRC's support in Azraq for these particular students.

Observable improvements in academic performance over the three months were also discussed as one of the more significant changes by beneficiaries. Across the stories of change collected from them, improved academic achievement or the fact that the beneficiary had gained practical or academic knowledge from their participation in learning centre activities comprised 27% of all changes discussed (see Figure 4).

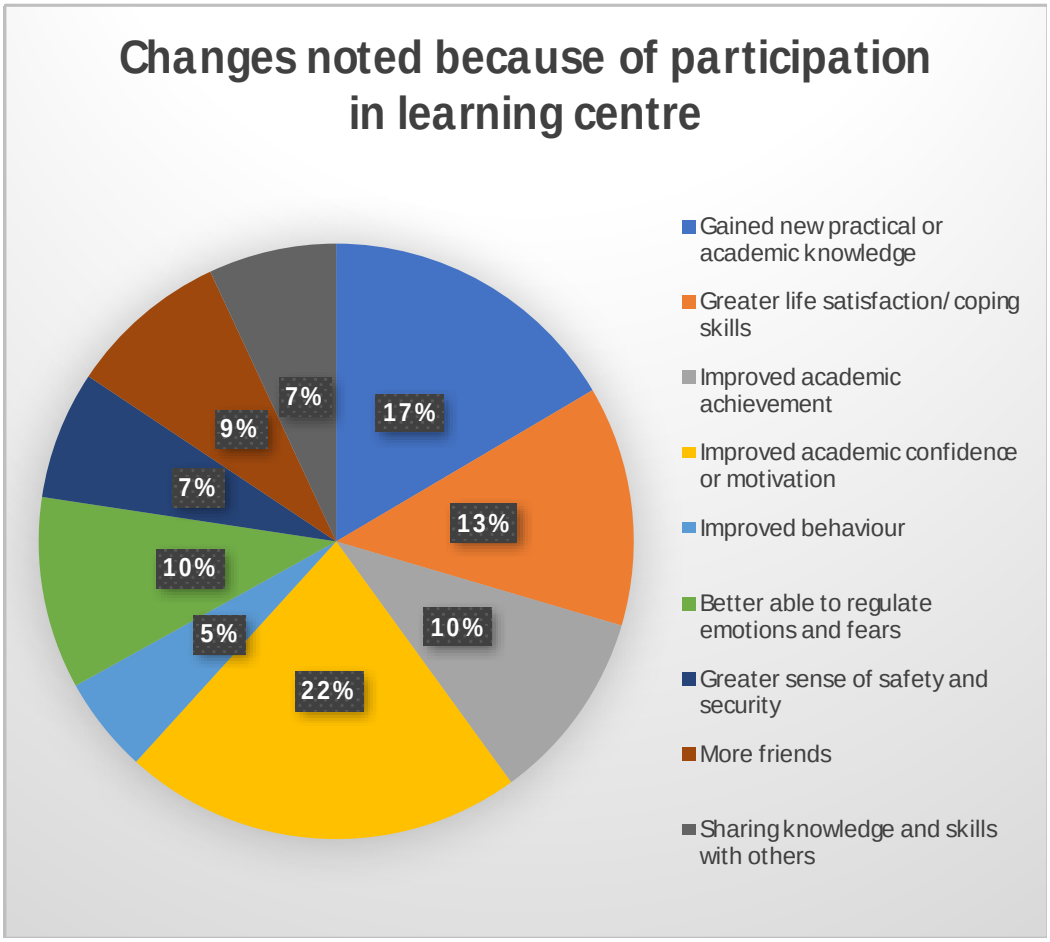


Figure 4: Types of changes discussed across the MSC stories collected

When discussing improved academic performance, students often described this in light with the story featured below.

MSC STORY 15: LIFE AT THE LEARNING CENTRE (FEMALE, AZRAQ, 10)

Before coming to the learning centre, I used to study English and Math in the school, but I found some things hard, particularly the vocabulary in English. I really wanted to be the top of my class. My teacher at the formal school would help a lot and teach us the grammar, the vocabulary and writing, and then she would tell us to memorise this. But I feel that by coming here I have become better at learning. For example, I knew before how to tell the time, but by coming here I now know how to do this much better. Here the teacher took a big paper clock and moved the hands around and asked us different questions about what time it was. Also, here at the centre they have lots of books and there is a library where I can come and read anytime. It made learning more fun this way. Because of being here at the learning centre, I've moved from being good at English and Math to be being better.

As this story suggests, students and their parents often made a decision to enrol in NRC's programming based primarily on the expectation that such participation would lead to academic improvement. Poor academic performance or poor motivation for learning were cited frequently as the key challenge faced prior to enrolling in the learning centre (see Figure 7). Students often described feeling "stupid", "incapable" of learning prior to commencing the programme, or described, as the student above

described, a desire to move from what they perceived as mediocrity, to one of excellence, as the story above suggests.

While NRC does not currently have access to academic achievement data of its beneficiaries within the formal system, the stories of change collected suggests that the improvements in performance noted within the learning centre, also result in improved academic performance in formal schooling. Students, like the one in the story above, often described being top of the class, or performing better in particular school subjects because of their participation in NRC's programme. Other students specified, for example how, "*I have gotten so much better at school*"[23], and how "*I've become one of the best students in the class.*"[24]

It is unclear, however, from these stories alone how long-term or durable these changes are, or if, as students continue to progress through the formal schooling system they will continue to need additional LSS. Many students, in their stories, did articulate a desire to continue to be able to attend the learning centre after their three months ended, but whether this was for the broader package of support offered within the centre, or specific to academic support in the core subjects was unclear. It is, however, readily acknowledged by a range of stakeholders interviewed that the quality of education in the formal schooling system in the camps is still a significant issue—and the statement, "we [our children] go to the learning centre to learn, and to school just for the certificate," stated repeatedly in conversations with beneficiaries, their caregivers and community outreach officers. Teachers in the formal school also acknowledged the important and ongoing role which remedial education and LSS would need to play into the future in the camps, noting that a combination of insufficient time in the day, a lack of appropriate resources and facilities to teach all subjects, and large class sizes made it impossible to effectively deliver all areas of the curriculum at present.

For children and adolescents out of school or significantly below where they needed to be academically in the formal schooling system, NRC's support provided them meaningful opportunities to gain knowledge and skills they saw important for their life. For them, learning was not just about academic achievement in school, but the development of key literacy and numeracy skills for life. A number of stories described the pride of a child or parent in being able to read, write and spell basic words, speak or read English, or understand basic computation skills. One 15 year-old out of school male described how, "*I was not able to read or write and because of that I was not really interested in going to school. Instead, I preferred to work, picking peaches and other fruits outside the camp. I would attend schools for two days, and then miss a month or more of school…[but] I've been coming here for a month now, and learned how to read the letters. This gives me hope that one day I will be able to read correctly.*"[25] Another 14 year-old male described in his story how, "*I tried to learn English myself, but I couldn't. This made me feel discouraged. Then I came to the learning centre. The teachers here were different. I felt that they cared about me and my success. They took responsibility to see me learn… Because of this, I learned to speak English. I feel excited now. The future is my hand because I can understand and speak English*."[26]

The importance of gaining these skills, as the adolescent below narrates in his story of change, was not only on future career aspirations—such as being a doctor, engineer, or teacher, which many of the stories above went onto detail in their stories—but also in terms of daily functioning in the camps themselves. The ability to read signs, run a small business, or to speak another language are skills that hopefully these students will take through life, rather than just the three months of participation in the programme. Barring a larger-scale tracer study of former out of school participants in NRC's learning centre activities, however, it is hard to state with certainty how and to what degree gaining these skills has been an empowering and life-changing experience for them in the medium to long-term.

[23] MSC story 22
[24] MSC story 29
[25] MSC story 11
[26] MSC story 25

MSC STORY 48: MY LIFE (MALE, ZAATARI, 11)

When I came to the learning centre I didn't know how to read. I also wasn't going to school in the camp. This made my life boring and meant I had no opportunity to learn how to read. Then one day my mother brought me here, because she saw I was bored all day on the streets. She had also sent my brothers and sisters here before and could see that they had learned something. Here, the teacher helped me to learn how to read, and I learned quickly how to do this—in one or two days. He started by writing one word on a sheet of paper, and asked me to read it. At first, I didn't know how to read it, but he helped me to do this. Once I could read the word, he wrote more words down on the paper, and soon I could read them all. Because I can read now, I can go to the bus stop and know where to go. I can also help my parents in reading signs and information in the camp. My life is no longer so boring.

5.1.2 Improving academic motivation and academic self-efficacy

Perhaps most important to beneficiaries, was the way in which gaining these academic competencies improved their attitude or confidence towards learning in general. As Figure 4 suggest, improved academic self-efficacy/confidence was the change most noted across the stories collected. As one parent described in her story, "*For the first time, I see my child excited to learn and attend classes. He comes back home now and he talks to me about all that he learned, he brings back homework with him and he enjoys doing them*."[27] Another student described in her story described how, "*I've gained confidence and became proud of myself*;"[28] while another female specified how while before she used to feel "*stupid or slow*" in her school, since coming to the learning centre she was "*motivate[ed]…to learn better*," so that "*…I no longer feel stupid, and actually believe I am intelligent and capable.*"[29]

These improvements are also validated from responses to three separate statements from the Psychosocial Integrity Test, which was recently administered to all students enrolled in NRC's learning support services in Zaatari camp. The pre/post data suggests (see Figure 5 below) that over the course of the students' three months participation there were notable shifts in students' confidence to complete their homework, their enjoyment of school, and their sense of confidence to do their best in school all the time. For example, at the outset of the programme, mean levels of agreement to the statement "I am able to complete my homework most of the time", was 6.7, suggesting that students were only slightly more in agreement than disagreement with this sentiment. By the completion of the programme, however, the mean score had risen to 9.1, suggesting strong levels of agreement to the same statement.

Having the necessary confidence and efficacy for learning is an important precursor to successful learning outcomes, and is well founded in education research. What the outcomes above suggest is that NRC has established an important foundation for this support. Again, it is unknown the degree to which the shifts noted are permanent or temporary, but the stories of change from prior beneficiaries would suggest that there is some medium-term impact beyond their three months of participation in NRC programming.

[27] MSC story 30
[28] MSC story 10
[29] MSC story 63

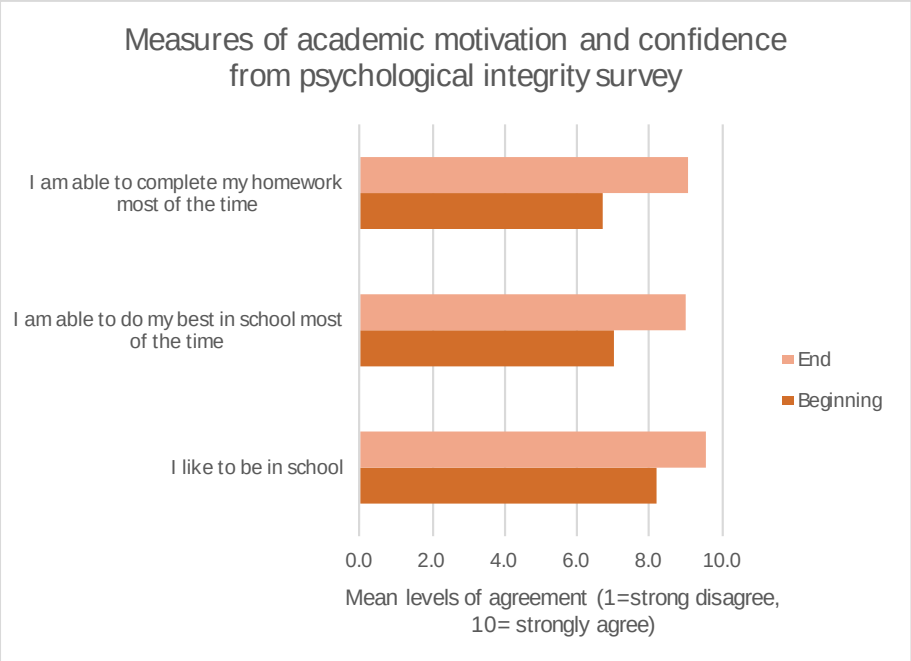


Figure 5: Mean levels agreement to school functioning statements from psychological integrity survey (for all students in Zaatari, Cohort 2 2017)

5.1.3 Improving access and retention within formal education

The key objective of NRC's education programme, as specified at the outset, is to support children to enrol and remain in school. Historically this was done by providing a pathway for children to be able to re-enrol in school at an age-appropriate level, by offering catch up programming in its centres.

Data from 2014, in which NRC followed up on its first cohort of students in its catch-up programme[30], suggested that 93% of the students in Zaatari were enrolled and integrated into an age-appropriate grade level and 90% of them had completed the first semester in school successfully; while in EJC 100% of the students were enrolled and integrated into an age-appropriate grade, and 98% completed the first semester successfully.[31] When NRC ran its own CLP, a report produced at the conclusion of that pilot in 2016 noted that one of the significant issues was that because the CLP was an unaccredited non-formal programme, "*…students who have the competency to enter grade 3 after completing level A (equivalent to Grades 1 and 2), are rejected. In addition, NRC had not made plans to talk directly to the principals of public schools to register children as the staff saw ALP/CLP as an NRC programme in which children should remain*." Another member of the NRC team noted, however, that several meetings were in fact held with school principals at the conclusion of the CLP, and the result was that all students were ultimately accepted into formal schools after taking a Ministry-administered placement test.

With the shift in NRC's education programing towards more directly supporting children already in the formal education system, a key aspect of outreach and recruitment is to ensure that students are either enrolled in the formal school prior to joining NRC's remedial education programming, or by NRC referring out of school children to the formal school as part of the enrolment process. Recent data suggests the results of these efforts are generally positive, but more successful for those students already in school. Overall, data suggests that of the students who completed Cohort 1 (finishing in May 2017), and Cohort 2 (finishing in August 2017), 93% of the students remain enrolled in the formal school

[30] The data is based on a sample of 78 students, out of the 414 in the cohort from both Zaatari and EJC. It is not made clear in the report whether the sample was based on convenience or was purposively stratified to be representative of the entire cohort.
[31] An important note about this success, was that at that time, NRC continued to support students after completion of the catch-up classes, by continuing to provide remedial classes to these same students. This is different to the situation now, where for the most part, new beneficiaries cycle through the cohort groups each time.

for at least 3 months following completion of NRC's LSS programme. Broken down further by students who identified themselves as enrolled in formal school at the time that they commenced participation in one of these two cohorts, it was found that 95.9% of students were still enrolled in school in the 2017-8 school year (as of October 2017). For those students identified as not in school at the time they commenced participation in NRC's programming, 55% of them were now reported to be enrolled in school, which can be seen as a success.[32]

There are, however, several important caveats that should be made of this data. One, is the classification of being enrolled in school is based on students or their parents reporting that they attended at least one day of school in 2017-2018. There is no sense of the frequency of attendance for these students, as meaningful learning requires more than one days' attendance. The second, is that the follow up was carried out relatively early in the 2017-2018 school year, and may need to be carried out six or nine months into the school year to determine how sustainable these efforts really are. The final issue, particularly for the out of school children is that the sample of students is relatively small (108 out of 1695 students surveyed). That stated, an example of the success of NRC's efforts to reenrol out of children in school is signalled in the story below. It also suggests the significant and constant follow through that has to occur to overcome demand-side barriers, in this case, resistance from the family themselves.

MSC STORY 71: THE BEGINNING OF MY FUTURE (FEMALE, 15, ZAATARI)

I come from a fairly over protective family, who always fear for me and my safety. When we arrived at the camp, they did not allow me to move freely across the camp and I was not allowed to register in school. In this time, I always felt like something was missing because I couldn't go to formal school—and because of that I could not read and write. I could only see girls passing by our place going to the school and coming back from there. I always envied them. I always had a broken smile and a sad face. At that time, I had friends from our neighbourhood that would also go to the NRC learning centre. They spread a good word about how safe it is to be at that centre, and they managed to convince my family that I sign up here. When I arrived, I told the teachers about why I didn't go to school, so she went to visit my parents about their worries. She listened to their concerns about the boys hanging around the formal school and the fear they had for my safety because of this, and she told them how the Jordanian police handle those guys strictly. She also mentioned to them that the NRC staff provide a walking to school service to ensure all the girls were safe. She kept visiting until she finally managed to convince my parents to let me go to the formal school. Ever since then, I have become a happier person with dreams and goals to

NRC has also been supporting out of school children to enrol in school as a partner in UNICEF's *Learning for All* campaign. Using its community outreach officers, NRC has helped to identify children out of school in its catchment areas in both camps, and refer them to formal or non-formal education programming available in the camps (i.e. catch-up or drop-out education). Data from NRC in the period February-September 2017, suggests that 744 students in Azraq and 630 students in Zaatari had been referred, based on reporting to UNICEF. Yet, when NRC did a follow-up in October of this year of

[32] While there do not appear to be differences by camp, there do appear some notable differences by both cohort and gender. Specifically, OOSC in Cohort 2 appeared more likely to be attending formal school at the time of the follow-up in October (63% of OOSC in Cohort 2 reported to be in school versus 49% in Cohort 1). Additionally, OOS females appear more likely to enroll in formal schools (61%) versus males (51%). Finally, it does appear that OOSC who are youngest, specifically ages 6-8, are the most likely to return to school (100%) while students ages 13-15 are the least likely to return to school (43.9%). Whether these differences are statistically significant or not cannot be determined, however, due to the relatively small sample sizes, as well as the fact that the time between cohort completion and the survey is not the same for each of the two cohorts. For the first cohort, the time gap is approximately 5 months, while in the second cohort the gap is only 2 months.

a sample of students it had referred to determine how effective these outreach efforts were, it suggested that only 22% of them were found to have actually enrolled in either a formal or non-formal learning programme.[33] The main reason reported for not enrolling in school was a reported lack of interest or desire to study, noted by 50% of the respondents. This suggest that despite large advocacy efforts in the past couple years by UNICEF and its partners, there remains a large proportion of OOSC who choose to remain out of school because they do not see relevance or importance in education.[34] Significant differences do appear to exist between Azraq and Zaatari, where in the former approximately 50% of these identified students did end up enrolling in some form of education, while in the latter only 17% were found to have done so. It also appears that OOS males in both camps were more likely to enrol in some form of education as a result of the campaign than females, but given the small sample sizes, it is difficult to draw definitive conclusions from these data alone.[35]

Yet, while NRC's survey data would suggest that the majority of OOSC choose to remain out of school education wilfully, recent data collected by UNICEF as part of its Learning for All campaign follow up would suggest a different story. It was found that in 48% of cases where OOSC did not return to some form of education, it was due to administrative issues, rather than a wilful decision on the part of the learner or the family.[36] In particular, a lack of appropriate documentation, Ministry of Education or school-level officials not implementing current Ministry policies[37] as they should, students being ineligible to enter into formal schools because they are too old, or schools not having set up appropriate catch up programmes were all found to fall into this category.[38] A separate Learning for All presentation from October of this year on statistics from Azraq suggests that despite the majority of students being referred to the drop-out programme, less than 10% have actually enrolled, due to there being insufficient capacity for implementation (space or personnel). Similar statistics are also true of catch-up programme. The challenge of there being insufficient supply of drop out programme provision, and an unwillingness or lack of capacity for schools to set up new catch up cohorts was also acknowledged by UNICEF officials when interviewed as part of this evaluation. This suggests there remain critical supply side constraints to children being able to enter into school, despite the perception of the government and its partners that this is no longer the case. It also raises important questions about the relevance and appropriateness of referring children into a system that is unwilling or unable to absorb them, and is discussed further in the next section.

5.1.4 Impacts on student well-being

As discussed in brief at the outset of this report, a strong component of NRC's programming has been to support children not just academically, but socially and emotionally as well through the inclusion of a strong life skills and PSS component to its programme. From the outset, life skills and a lighter PSS component was included in NRC's programming using UNICEF's Makani curriculum and/or Life Skills manual. This curriculum focusses on teaching children social-emotional and, health, hygiene and nutrition skills. This was later added to through the addition of components from NRC's Child

[33] A total of 143 students, 79 male and 64 female, agreed to participate in this follow up phone survey.
[34] Human Rights Watch, in its 2016 notes that one of the more notable differences between camp and host community populations is a higher level of apathy towards education in the camps amongst the population. Specifically, the report identifies that "a sense of pointlessness of education as they had limited hope for their future prospects," as being more pervasive in the camp setting (p. 5).
[35] Specifically, in Azraq camp, 27% of males versus 22% of female, and in Zaatari, 10% of males versus 7% of females were reported to be enrolled in some form of education. It should be noted, however, that the sample sizes of males/females were not equivalent, nor were they similarly sizeable, in each of the two camps. In Zaatari, 70 males and 51 females were surveyed, while in Azraq only 13 females and 9 males were surveyed.
[36] This data, based on surveys of an unknown number of households with OOSC in host and camp communities across Jordan, from both the PDM Cash assistance programme and L4A Fall Campaign by UNICEF, 2017, was presented at the Donor Meeting on October 23, 2017. Unfortunately, no disaggregation of data by host/camp community was available to identify whether these issues are equally common across both camp and host communities or are particular to one or the other.
[37] In particular it would appear that many schools are still not cognisant of the official letter, signed by the Minister of Education on September 25, 2017 which grants all Syrian children access to education irrespective of whether they have an MoI card or not. Additionally, a separate official letter from the Minister instructs its directorates and schools to open up catch up centres once there are minimum 5 eligible children who have expressed interest.
[38] Based on data from PDM Cash assistance programme, 2017 and L4A Fall Campaign data by UNICEF, 2017

Education Pack (CEP), and other internally developed resources. In early 2016, NRC Jordan decided to introduce the Better Learning Programme (BLP) into its camp-based education activities (see Section 7.2 in Appendix for a full and discussion of that component) to strengthen the PSS component of the programme.

Additional protection components have been added to the programme, including the establishment of a specialised and specifically trained cadre of teachers, known as the Monitoring and Support Unit (MSU) to support children's social-emotional and protection needs within the learning centre. Comprised of five teachers in each centre, they hold a number of key responsibilities including:

1. Preparing and implementing individualised PSS plans for children who exhibit challenging behaviours in the learning centre;
2. Supporting classroom teachers in periods of transition into/out of the classroom and monitoring students while they are out of the classroom;
3. Delivering PSS and life skills components of the curriculum inside the classroom as well as running the BLP 2 sessions;
4. Monitoring child protection issues inside and outside the classroom, and reporting any incidences to the child protection focal point within the learning centre (Jordanian staff); and
5. Identifying children who need specialised medical/mental health support, and coordinating with NRC staff referrals to other services providers.

Additionally, NRC fully follows the referral SOPs according to the Education Working Group and Child Protection Working Group. Specifically, NRC ensures that when there are concerning issues that are raised by a child, or observed by a teacher or other member of staff about a child, a clear process is in place to guarantee the safety and well-being of that individual. This includes having a child protection focal point for each centre, and a clear process in place for reporting issues of concern to management and NRC's protection unit. On case by case basis NRC staff also conduct outreach visits to children in need of protection, and if need warrants, refers them to service providers who can offer specialised support. Specific attention is paid to children who might be in need of medical care. Working with the International Medical Corps (IMC), NRC has also ensured that staff working in the centres, as well as the broader parental community are fully aware of the impacts of violence on children, by running awareness sessions and trainings. Recently, working with the Accountability and Protection sections of NRC Jordan, the education programme in the camps has begun instituting a child-based complaints mechanism. The intention is to give children within the learning centre a direct voice in raising protection issues or concerns to NRC. NRC hopes this approach will create a more open, safe and child-friendly space for them to discuss aspects of their experiences in the learning centre or outside, that might be causing them physical or emotional harm/discomfort.

Coming out of the stories of change from beneficiaries was a strong sense that these components of NRC's programme in the learning centres have a strong impact on children's emotional and social well-being. As Figure 1Figure 4suggests, 10% of beneficiaries reported improvements in their ability to regulate their emotions and control their fears; 13% reported feeling happier about life in general or having a more positive outlook on their life in the camp and beyond; 9% reported having more friends or being less socially isolated; 7% reported a greater sense of security and safety within or on their way to school; and 5% reported improved behaviour either at school or outside. In combination, these impacts total more than 50% of all reported changes from NRC's education programming in the camps—signalling the role that these components play in supporting and strengthening education's protective function in such a context. Specifically, both beneficiaries and their caregivers identified how a key strength of NRC's programme was the attention and care it gave to a child's well-being. The story below, exemplifies this.Specifically, both beneficiaries and their caregivers identified how a key strength of NRC's programme was the attention and care it gave to a child's well-being. The story below, exemplifies this.

MSC STORY 30: NO TITLE 7 (FEMALE, AZRAQ, PARENT)

My 9 years old was really affected by the displacement; he was always angry, lying, and getting himself into disagreements and fights out in the streets. My older children attended the NRC centre for a while, so I decided to register him in hope that attending will fill his time and keep him away from trouble. At the centre, they give him guidance on how to correctly communicate and treat his family, his friends, the neighbours. They handled him with love, and took his circumstances and experiences of the past into consideration. They constantly try to understand him better, and genuinely care for him. For example, if my son misses a class they call us, or If he expresses something he's worried or afraid of a group from the centre comes to the house to check on him and make sure he's alright. I've never seen so much care from an institution. His life changed for the better now, for the first time I see my child excited to learn and attend classes. He comes back home now and he talks to me about all that he learned, he brings back homework with him and he enjoys doing them. He is calm and positive, and he no longer gets in serious trouble. The education here has changed the

Importantly, a number of stories from beneficiaries also raise the fact that because of a number of enabling factors within the Learning Centre (discussed in Section 5.2), they have learned how to discuss and address concerns in their life. By resolving these together with staff in the centre, they now have a more positive disposition on life in general. They note that critical to this change was a sense of trust, confidence and safety to discuss these issues, something which the culture of the learning centre does incredibly well. An example of this is given below.

MSC STORY 64: THE FIGHTING BROTHERS (FEMALE, ZAATARI, 11)

Since my older brother who is 13, and I were little, we've always been fighting. We often fight at home we have an IPad and we both want to use it. But he also does not allow me to go outside without wearing a veil. I argue back with him because I do not want to wear the veil because it is so hot. When I refuse, then he starts to beat me. When I start to fight with this brother, then my other twin brother jumps in and begins to beat him up asking him why he is constantly fighting with me. He is just trying to protect me. But it creates problems in our house because then it then means that my parents have had to separate my brother and I, and even made us sleep in separate caravans. A few weeks ago, I came to the learning centre. We were told about a way that we could write down things we were not happy with in the centre or at home, and afterwards I told one of the teachers here about this situation and how I didn't like fighting with my brother all the time. The teacher told me that it was important I communicated my feelings to my brother. She advised me to go and speak with him openly about this. So, I did that. I went home, sat down with him and asked him 'why do you pick on me all the time, because brothers and sisters are supposed to care and love each other, not hurt each other.' I also told him how this fighting between us made me really sad. My brother felt bad and he hugged me. It was the first time I had managed to speak to my brother in this way. It was important that my brother understood how I feel and I am happy he does not beat me up anymore

Another beneficiary in her story of change describes how for a long time, she was reluctant to discuss the intense feelings of fear, sadness and isolation she felt about her displacement and life in Azraq. She describes how when she first started at the learning centre, she carried this in her but after encouragement from her friends, "*…I finally reached out for help. I immediately felt relieved because the teacher became like a mother to me. Over time, I grew to trust her and shared with her my feelings. I started to feel much better, and she helped me to understand that the war will not follow us here. Here I*

am safe. Now I can sleep more easily…I have friends, and I can leave and enter the house as I please. After speaking with this teacher, my view of the future has changed. It helped, and it helped me understand that I'm not alone in this."[39]

As the stories above suggest, one of the key benefits of children's participation in NRC's learning centre is a general improvement in their satisfaction with life, as well as their sense of safety and security, both within the centre and outside. This is reflected in students' responses to a number of statements on the Psychological Integrity Test on these matters. For all measures, mean responses on the 10-point Likert-like scale were higher at the conclusion of beneficiaries' participation in the programme, than at the outset. Biggest gains appeared to be in regards to gaining capacity to focus in school, and feeling safe on the way to and from school. While students also reported feeling more satisfied with life at the conclusion of the programme, as well as feeling safe in school, the baseline mean scores started quite high on those items (8.2 and 8.3 respectively).

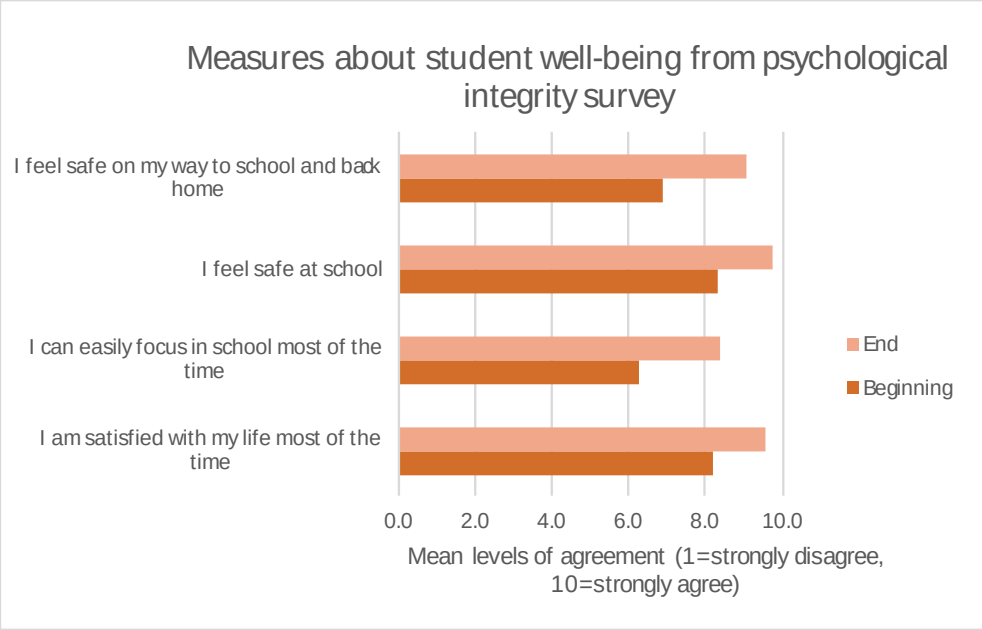


Figure 6: Mean scores on PSS integrity survey for statements related to student well-being

Several stories do suggest an ability to continue practicing and using the skills of self-care and emotional regulation beneficiaries gained during their time in the learning centre afterwards. One former beneficiary, described how, "*now when I feel anger or sadness, I write my feelings down on a paper…I tear it to parts and throw it up into the skies…I no longer feel as angry about life*."[40] Another described how after participating in BLP 2, "*I sleep well now, and when I wake up I'm not afraid…I've become much less timid, and don't hide behind my mother anymore*."[41] Students also described taking lessons on self-care and emotional regulation they had learned from the centre, into their communities and homes. One, for example described "*teaching our neighbours the breathing exercises we learned [in BLP 1].*"[42] What is not clear or evident, from the stories of change and other evidence reviewed, is if students have access to the same networks of caring adults and peers outside the learning centre. This may be why several students also expressed a desire to continue attending the learning centre after their cohort had ended.

[39] MSC story 85
[40] MSC story 23
[41] MSC story 28
[42] MSC story 31

With particular respect to the improvements on feeling safer on the way to/from school, NRC's walking to school programme appears to have played an important role in affecting this outcome. Arising out of recognition that a long-standing issue in the camps is that children (or their families) do not feel safe on their routes to the formal schools from their caravans because of gender-based violence, harassment, or bullying, NRC commenced a Walking to School (W2S) initiative in both camps in 2017 to prevent irregular attendance or drop out from school.[43] For the 2017-8 school year, NRC has 25 assembly points from various parts of Villages 3 and 6 in Azraq, and 15 assembly points for the formal schools in Districts 6, 3, and 5 in Zaatari. Children are collected from their families/caravans, assembled at safe meeting points throughout the camp, then taken by NRC trained volunteers[44], and community staff to their schools. As children gather and then walk to school, the IBVs sing songs, play games, and encourage them to practice some of the BLP 1 relaxation and breathing activities. As of September 2017, 2,221 students in both Zaatari and Azraq camps have been beneficiaries of W2S.

Beneficiaries of the W2S initiative, in their stories of changes, readily identified the positive impacts of this component of NRC's programming in the camps, and often discussed how it had significantly impacted on their sense of safety and security as they made their way to/from school each day. An example of this, is provided below.

MSC STORY 59: GOING TO SCHOOL (MALE, ZAATARI, 11)

On my daily walk to school with my younger brother I used to get beaten up by older kids. They would verbally harass me and sometimes they would even purposefully push me onto the road. This scared my younger brother and sometimes he would cry. One day, I saw a cluster of kids walking together to school. I asked them whether I could join or not and they welcomed me. Ever since then, I feel much safer and happier walking to school. I no longer miss classes or get to school late, no one gets in my way anymore and the volunteers make

As this students' story indicates, while the immediate benefit of the W2S initiative is that children feel safer getting to school, it also has direct impacts on children's learning by ensuring they reach school on time, and are regularly attending. The W2S volunteers also appear to take their duty of care to ensure that children reached and returned from school each day safely, with one volunteer stating, "*we treat these children as if they are one of our sons…it is our responsibility to get them school safely each day.*"

A recent survey conducted by NRC of the caregivers of W2S beneficiaries found that prior to their children commencing, 21.3% of children in Zaatari and 15.3% of children in Azraq had incidents on their way to school. After commencing W2S, 9.7% of children in Zaatari and 7.9% in Azraq reported having an incident. More important, just over a quarter of the parents in Azraq (28%) and 18% of parents in Zaatari stated that if W2S were to stop, they would most likely stop sending their children to school. This suggests the importance of W2S, not only as a protection-focussed intervention but also, as a critical component of supporting children's continued access to schooling.

5.1.5 Impacts on indirect beneficiaries (teachers, parents and the broader community)

The focus of NRC's education programme, as reflected in its current outcome indicators for its major donors is focussed on the direct beneficiaries it serves either in the learning centre, or the W2S initiative. NRC does, however, invest significant time, energy and investment in supporting Syrian teachers working in the learning centre through professional development and support; and gives

[43] This issue is noted in the JENAs from both Azraq and Zaatari, as well as the Human Rights Watch report from 2016. See footnote 6 for full references for these reports. Additionally,

[44] These IBVs receive training on basic child protection principles, as well as BLP 1.

particular attention to ensuring parents and the broader community are strongly engaged and supportive of their children's learning. The impacts of this support are briefly considered in this section.

Supporting teachers in the learning centre

Since the start of programming in each camp, NRC has worked hard to recruit and retain well-qualified Syrian teachers to run the education programme in its learning centres. While supervised by Jordanian staff on site, these teachers are very much the core of the programme, and their dedication and professionalism to their work has and continues to be a key factor in the impacts on beneficiaries noted above. NRC, for its part, has ensured that these teachers are renumerated in line with the approved SOP in the camps, respected and valued for their professional commitment, and concurrently, offered ongoing professional development and learning opportunities to improve their technical capacities for their present and future career possibilities.

The structure and content of NRC's professional development framework for its teachers is predicated on developing knowledge, skills and professional attitudes on general education content, a curriculum specialisation area, and the science and art of teaching. Since the start of the programme, at least 26 different training sessions have been offered to the Syrian teachers on a range of topics, ranging from general topics like Child Protection and Do No Harm principles, dynamic/interactive teaching and learning methodologies, incorporating technology in the classroom, and inclusive education; to specialised area such as the Kitabna and BLP familiarisation and refresher courses. Staff are also supported and directly supervised by a Teacher Support Officer in each centre, who has main responsibility for carrying out classroom observations and feedback sessions with all teachers, reviewing and co-constructing lesson plans and new resources for use in the classroom, and supporting the ongoing training programme at the centre. Teachers are given an hour per day to prepare teaching materials and lesson plans as part of this support.

Importantly, NRC also recognises the importance of teacher continuity to its programme integrity. Agencies have successfully gained an exemption from the general camp policy of rotating IBVs on a monthly basis for education and protection staff in Zataari, on the basis that they are highly-skilled individuals with sensitive service delivery roles. This exemption is however still not in place in Azraq negatively impacting the education agency working in the camp.

The teachers, for their part, felt that they had benefited personally and professionally from their ongoing involvement in the learning centre. For many of them, the opportunity to gain meaningful and ongoing work from NRC, had important ramifications on their own sense of purpose and well-being in the context of the uncertainty of displacement. It helped many to come to regain hope. One teacher specified how working in the learning centre "*reminded me of my roles and responsibility as a teacher [and]…restored some of the hope and professional identify I lost when I left Syria.*"[45] Another noted, "*we lost hope, and working here at the centre is where I have found it again*."[46] A more detailed example of how this unfolds for teachers is presented in the story below.

[45] MSC story 46
[46] MSC story 53

MSC STORY 20: REGAINING A LOST DREAM (FEMALE, ZAATARI, TEACHER)

In 2012, I was about to sit a pre-test to enrol in my master's degree in Syria, when it was cancelled because the conflict was getting too intense. At that point, I was also eight months into my high diploma, and was writing a thesis about psychosocial support for children. One month later, the Syrian police came to my house and forced me out. I begged them to let me go back in and get my degree and the work I had written for my thesis but they wouldn't let me. Instead they set fire to my house and my degree and hard work were destroyed in an instant. Soon after I moved to Zaatari with my grandparents. While I lost my chance to study, I didn't lose my motivation to one day try again. So, I took on several volunteer positions in the camp, including as a teacher with NRC in the learning centre, to save up enough money to pay someone 1000 JD on the black market to bring another copy of my degree from the Ministry in Syria. After I got back my degree, I worked so hard to get a scholarship for four years…but every time, I was unsuccessful for different reasons, either my English was not good enough or I was too old or too young…every time it felt like a different excuse. I started to lose hope. But then I would gain inspiration again from the girls I was working with in the centre—like the 12-13 year old illiterate girls I worked with in my first year who have become the top of their class and are now studying at university. The students in the centre gave me the power and inspiration to continue trying for the scholarship. Because they too had to stop their education because of what happened in Syria, and like me, when they arrived in Zaatari, they had to start all over again. They have been a role model for me to continue working hard to be successful. Finally, this year I received a scholarship to start my Master's degree in education with a specialisation in curriculum. While I have started my Master's degree, I will not give up my job at the learning centre, because I cannot live a day without coming here. These girls give me inspiration. The students and NRC standing by and supporting me all this time have taught me how to stand up for myself again. If I am to

There was also significant appreciation for the professional development and support they had received from NRC during the time as teacher, noting it had increased their professional expertise, efficacy and confidence. A teacher in Azraq, for example reflected how "*I've received a lot of additional training and courses…on a range of subjects including classroom management and curriculum planning. As a result, I've become a lot more creative in how I teach, and more effective in ensuring that students learn. I've learned how to make learning more hands-on and interactive, encouraged to develop new talents and identify some of my untapped talents*." As result, he notes that he has "*blossomed as a teacher…and feel more confident to support the students in my community to learn in the best possible way—whether in Azraq or in Syria when I return.*"[47] Another teacher described how her professional confidence had grown "*with all the additional trainings…we have in our centre*", which means that, "*I am better able to solve children's academic problems at their root, rather than trying to fix a small hole in a bigger problem.*"[48] On a more personal note a third teacher described how, "*through…trainings which NRC has provided, I feel I am a better teacher and person today…I have the knowledge and tools to change the way these children, and myself, view life*."[49]

Evident from the stories of change collected from teachers is a clear benefit of their work in the learning centre, both at present and into the future. Specifically, the improved professional capacity and confidence many of the stories described, as well as the changes such participation has brought about at a personal level, suggests the impacts will endure beyond their period of time in the learning

[47] MSC story 35
[48] MSC story 3
[49] MSC story 12

centre itself. Ideally, as one of the stories above identifies, teachers will one day take these skills and confidence back into the Syrian education system upon their return.

Engaging parents and the broader community in learning

As part of NRC's commitment to support demand-side constraints on education, the education programme in the camps has focussed increasingly on engaging parents and/or children's caregivers in the learning process through outreach campaigns, awareness sessions and the initiation of Parental Community Groups (PCGs). The core belief is that if parents/caregivers understand and are committed to the importance of education for their children, then they will be more likely to enrol their children in education opportunities on offer, support education in the home, and encourage them to stay in school. For the PCGs specifically, the intention is to also provide parents and other caregivers an opportunity to gain skills and work together on both self and community development activities. Community outreach officers, NRC centre-based staff, and the Syrian facilitators are all involved in supporting this range of activities. Awareness and outreach sessions for parents and the broader community have run for some time, and focus on a range of different issues. The key message, reinforced throughout all these sessions, however is on why education is important, and to introduce parents and the broader community to what learning opportunities are available within the centre, and through other channels, to the children of the camp.

Recently, NRC conducted a small-scale survey of parents who had been participants in either awareness/orientation sessions, or more extensively involved in the PCGs. Of the 72 respondents who were reached and had engaged in such activities, more than half of the parents noted that a key benefit of their participation was that it had either improved their ongoing connection/communication with the school, ensured that they were better able to follow up on their child's education at home, and/or understand more about their children's academic performance. Other benefits include improved parental skills such literacy (6%) or computing (8%); or knowledge about how to manage and/or address children's behaviour (5%).

Despite the positive reported benefits of such parental engagement, an ongoing challenge for the learning centres remains getting sufficient numbers of parents/caregivers to be part of such activities. Specific to attendance at the PCG sessions, data from Azraq suggest that for the first two cohorts of 2017, a total of 79 parents attended a range of activities including caravan painting, doll making, decorating chairs and gardening, cooking, and arts/crafts. The aim of the PCGs is to encourage camp parents and community members to assess ways in which they can help to support safe, protective environments for camp children, at home, at school, and in NRC learning centres. NRC supports these PCGs to assess their existing skills and empowers them to employ these skills in addressing educational issues and/or improving the community at large. As part of this, a range of PCG activities are conducted by NRC, ranging from training on child protection and PSS principles, to skills/vocational courses, such as computer and tailoring classes, to awareness sessions on different educative topics. The ambition is that these PCGs then become involved in different community based projects which reinforce the messages NRC and its partners are trying to communicate about education within the camps. Underpinning these efforts is also a belief that through increased parental engagement, the significant rates of drop out and poor attendance, both within the learning centre overall, and for BLP 2 students in particular can be reduced. Yet, it does not appear as if drop out or absenteeism rates have declined at all as a result of this focus on parental engagement, but it may be too early to draw definitive conclusion on the efficacy of this action.

As part of this evaluation, a small number of parents who have been involved in the PCGs were interviewed, to determine what impact, if any, their involvement in these groups had on them. The PCGs are a more recent initiative, piloted late last year and fully implemented with each cohort in 2017. The PCG members spoken to did not detail impacts or changes of their participation in the community

development projects[50] that were beginning to take shape in both camps. Rather, most described changes in their children as their stories of significant change. The exception, were the two stories below. The first details how a father's involvement in the PCG supported him to gain new skills and better communicate with his children. It reflects a key ambition of the PCGs, which is to bring caregivers and their children together on an activity—whether it be cooking, doll making, arts and crafts, or gardening.

MSC STORY 72: LEARNING WITH THE KIDS AT THE NRC (FATHER, AZRAQ)

My children used to play on the street all day, not making good use of their time. I did not know how to interact with them and support their learning. Then I heard from my relatives about NRC's learning centre. Once my children were part of the centre, they included me in multiple PCGs where I have learnt new skills that benefit me in my day to day life. I have learned how to garden, plant and recycle. More importantly, the PCG has helped me bond more with my kids. It has broken the ice and distance I had with them before. Now I know

The second story, from the perspective of a mother, describes the benefits of her participation in a PCG activity on tailoring that has then allowed her to gain skills which provides a hobby, and potentially a small-scale livelihood opportunity in the camp.

MSC STORY 65: THE STORY OF OUR CHANGE (MOTHER, AZRAQ)

For a long time in the camp, our life has been fairly boring and empty. To give my children an escape out of the boredom, I sent them to school but I did not really think it was of good quality. I thought the teachers were not strict enough and did not give the students enough care. I then heard about NRC learning centre, and thought that it would be a good opportunity to do something productive when they were not in school. My kids really loved going, and particularly liked seeing their teachers. Then I too was invited to come to the centre, to take a tailoring and crochet class. When I went, I gained a lot of new ideas and techniques on knitting, and I can now create a lot of models using crochet. I can also tailor sweaters for my children and other people in our village. Having these new skills helped me to fill my own free time with a hobby, and gave me a distraction from the daily routine of the camp.

The newness of the PCGs, and the limited depth of engagement with parents/caregivers in terms of the awareness sessions, makes it difficult to make any comment on sustainability of this stream of work at present. There is however, an intention that through this engagement with parents and the wider community a supportive and protective network which advocates for children's access to quality education provision is sustained.

[50] Reporting to UNICEF in July and September notes that in Azraq two community projects initiated were a recycling campaign with one of the formal schools, and the painting of caravans in the vicinity of the learning centre; while in Zaatari, a cooking club where mothers and daughters came together to prepare meals together has commenced, as has a technology recycling club, to turn everyday waste into useful objects.

KEY CONCLUSIONS

- ✓ NRC's informal programming in camps appears to have significant impact in terms of improving students' academic achievement in the core curriculum areas during the period of their participation in the LSS in the centres. Generally, these improvements are similar in magnitude irrespective of gender, disability status, or camp location. That stated, a key limitation is that at present there is no way to triangulate the data collected internally, with achievement data from within the formal schooling system.
- ✓ NRC's programming also appears to have significant impacts on children's social and emotional well-being and their academic efficacy and motivation. These impacts are noted as critical key preconditions for beneficiaries to be able to meaningfully access and succeed with their learning in other education settings.
- ✓ For out of school children the main benefits of their involvement in programming are similar. A particular benefit for this group is having access to learning opportunities, and being able to gain basic literacy and numeracy skills that are perceived as useful for daily functioning.
- ✓ Students enrolled in formal education at the time of enrolling in the learning centre, do appear to remain in school in high numbers in the 3-6 months following completion in NRC's programme. Additionally, the majority of students identified as out of school at the time of enrolling in NRC's programme do end up enrolling in formal or non-formal education services following. A challenge remains, however, in getting out of school adolescents to enrol in formal, non-formal and informal education opportunities on offer, due to a combination of demand and supply side factors.
- ✓ For many of the key impacts noted, the longer-term sustainability of these benefits for direct beneficiaries remains unknown.
- ✓ NRC's strong focus on continuous professional development and support for its staff in the camps has important impacts on the professional and personal efficacy these individuals have to do their job well.
- ✓ For parents and other caregivers who have been part of NRC's awareness and orientation sessions and/or PCGs, there do appear to be some clear benefits for these individuals, and indirectly for their children. The challenge, however, remains in engaging sufficient numbers of parents to be part of these activities, and to see it then have some effect on the high rates of student absenteeism and drop out which exists in the learning centre at present.

KEY RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Within NRC's theory of change and education strategy, the protective, safe, and inclusive environment which the education programming in the camp currently fosters, and the impacts this creates—in terms of students' social and emotional well-being and academic self-efficacy and motivation—should be a stronger central pillar of its work, and measured as a series of outcomes (immediate, medium and long-term). Tools already exist to measure much of this (such as the PSS Integrity Survey), but would need to administered more consistently and clarity amongst all stakeholders about why and how these data are equally important to achievement data. Research and evidence shows that these factors are critical for students to claim and fully benefit from other learning opportunities that are currently available to them in the camp or elsewhere, ultimately leading to improved academic performance and participation in these activities.
2. The measurement of learning outcomes—as captured through pre and post assessments administered internally by NRC—remains a poor proxy for impacts of programming beyond students' time in the cohort. Efforts must be placed to developing outcome measures based on students' academic performance in the formal school system, for the purposes of data validation and measurement of sustainability. Additionally, the reliability and validity of these assessments should be further examined, and a clear set of protocols developed to ensure they are being administered in a systematic and consistent way across the two camps and with each cohort.
3. The main objective(s) and purpose(s) for engaging parents and community in NRC's education programming in the camps remains unclear, and should more fully articulated in programme design and subsequently in monitoring/outcome measurement.

5.2 Relevance and appropriateness of current approach

To contextualise the importance of the impacts of within a broader context, this section assesses the relevance and appropriateness of the current response. In considering this question, NRC's response is assessed: (1) as a complement to the formal education system; (2) in regards to the added value or benefits it provides for particular groups of beneficiaries in the programme; (3) alongside other non-formal or formal education opportunities available in each camp at present; and (4) in terms of its programmatic structure and approach in terms of both targeting of beneficiaries and towards maximising efficiencies.

5.2.1 Supporting or acting in parallel to the formal education system?

Community outreach volunteers, responsible for recruiting families to NRC's centre described how for parents and caregivers, their top concern was providing a quality education to their children—something which many felt did not exist in the formal schooling system inside the camp.

General impressions from centre teachers, outreach volunteers, and parents interviewed was that NRC's current education programming was deemed to be of quality, in part because its facilities, structure and curriculum all appear, from an outsiders' point of view, to be parallel to, and in concert with that of the formal schools. Teachers in formal schools in both camps also felt that a key strength of NRC's programming, in comparison to other informal education provision was its alignment to what was occurring in the formal school. Teacher support officers interviewed in both camps also specified that they were very firmly committed to following the Jordanian curriculum, and ensuring that the focus remained on close alignment of NRC's programme to the content that should be taught offered in the formal schooling system. What differentiated NRC's programming, however, were the smaller class sizes, more individualised attention, and the care and concern of teachers. Students and their caregivers felt that through attending the learning centre, their academic improvements were visible and immediate, something which the previous section verifies. Some stories, even went onto compare NRC's programme to informal programmes of other actors identifying that there was a visible difference in quality. For example, one girl described how, "*I found [the classes] of other centres not very useful…but after coming here I've seen myself improve…[before] I never had a good English teacher to support me*".[51]

There was a strong sense amongst children and caregivers interviewed that the quality of the formal schooling was poor, and teachers working in that environment are unsupportive or unable to properly motivate and assist all children in the classroom. Formal school teachers spoken to also recognise this challenge and cited the short school day (generally no more than three hours), large class sizes, and a range of student learning, emotional, and behavioural needs as reasons students needed the support of programmes like NRC's. MSC stories also signalled this challenge strongly. Often, beneficiaries began by detailing some of the negative impacts of the poor learning conditions they faced in the formal schools, or the reasons why they had either failed to enrol or remain in formal schools. Students frequently noted that the conditions of the formal school made it difficult for them to learn, and often it reduced their motivation and confidence to succeed. For example, one girl of 10 years old described how she was "*…enrolled in school last year but…did not like it very much…[because]… teachers would only explain the lessons once and then leave me to sit in the corner alone practicing*,"[52] while another male student of 10, specified how "*I used to be unhappy, and disliked learning [because] the teachers in the formal school used to beat me."*

The in-school factors discussed here—of violence against children and poor quality teaching, along with infrastructure and poor learning achievement (discussed earlier)—are ones also noted as some of the

[51] MSC story 67
[52] MSC story 18

key demand-side barriers to children staying and remaining in school, based on a recent UNICEF study.[53]

As Figure 7 below suggests, poor academic performance, or a lack of a motivation or enthusiasm for learning were key barriers described in more than half the stories.

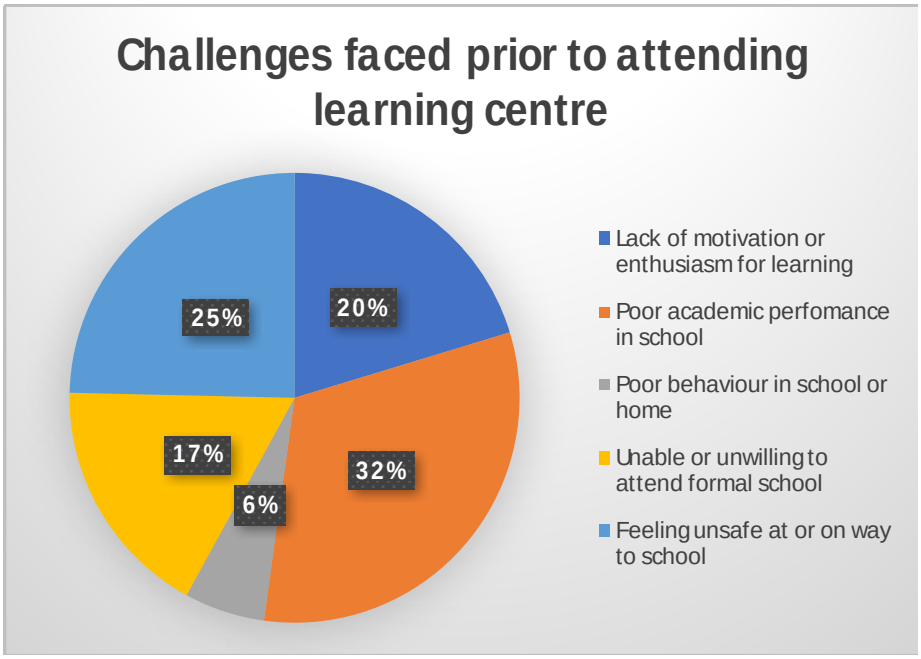


Figure 7: Types of challenges faced in past, as described in MSC stories

What made the learning centre different, and allowed students to improve academically and (re)gain academic motivation and confidence, were the different conditions for learning which the learning centre provided. This is reflected in Figure 8, which provides an analysis of the MSC stories in terms of the factors causing the changes described.

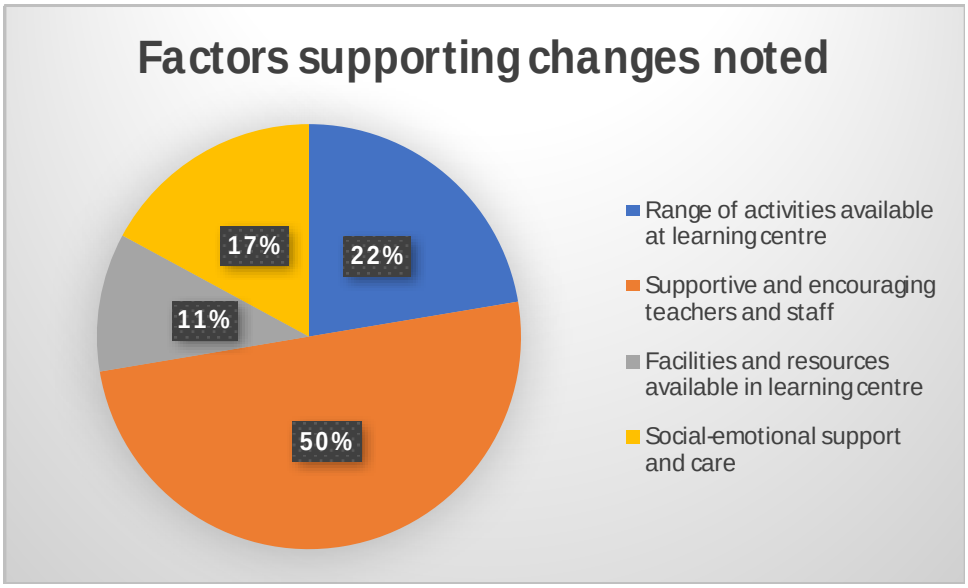


Figure 8: Identified and specified factors causing changes noted in MSC stories collected

[53] UNICEF (2017) *Demand Side Barriers to Education,* A presentation to the donors and Ministry of Education (October 23, 2017)

As this figure suggests, one of the strongest factors leading to the impacts noted in this section are the centre staff, and particularly the Syrian teachers who spend the most time with these students. The vast majority of stories from beneficiaries spoke highly about their teachers and made comments such as:

- *"…the teachers accepted me for who I was, and did not make me feel stupid…they never shied away from helping me"*;[54]
- "*Here, the teachers treat all students as important, not just the best students…children are encouraged to participate in the lesson and if someone doesn't understand, the teacher keeps repeating the lessons and stands with them until they do*";[55]
- "*The teachers were kind and friendly and were willing to take me in with their arms wide open…they encouraged me to study and learn and made me feel more confident about myself*";[56]
- "*They were always very patient and used more than one way to give us the information*."[57]

What is important in the above comments is that the teachers encouraged students to take risks, ask questions and seek support by making them feel safe and not resorting to emotional or physical violence. Numerous reports note that one of the key factors which either discourages students from enrolling in formal schooling, or discourages them from staying in schooling is the endemic violence that prevails there at present. For example, a 2016 PLAN International report highlights how, "School and gender based violence has been widely reported: issues from range from verbal and sexual harassment to corporal punishment and contribute to students dropping out from school."[58] A 2016 Human Rights Watch report concludes a similar point, highlighting how corporal punishment is a widespread practice in the schools in the camp, often borne out of a frustration with the learning environment, and a lack of sufficient training on classroom management for Jordanian teachers.[59]

When Jordanian staff working at the centres, were asked what they believed was the programme's biggest strengths, the majority specified the Syrian teachers as one of them. One of the members of staff at Zaatari observed that because the teachers are Syrian, "*the students feel comfortable with them…they can share their experiences, and the teachers understand the students' miseries and challenges*," and another member of staff at Azraq specifying that the, "*teachers have been key to creating a positive environment in the learning centre, and building a strong relationship with our community through our success with their children."*

Importantly, it was also observed that these teachers, as a result of the training and support they had received from NRC, as well as the prior knowledge and experience they brought to the role, meant they were able to deliver instruction and relay content in ways that were meaningful and authentic to the students. One student described this clearly in her story of change below.

[54] MSC story 49
[55] MSC story 39
[56] MSC story 50
[57] MSC story 62
[58] PLAN International (2016) *Needs assessment report: Syria refugee crisis in Jordan,* p. 7
[59] Human Rights Watch (2016) *We're Afraid for their Future*, pp. 50-52

MSC STORY 19: UNDERSTANDING TEACHER (FEMALE, ZAATARI, 10)

I started to attend the LC in the fourth grade. I was already good in most of the subjects but when I started to come here, the teachers helped to make the subjects even easier to understand. The science teacher, for example, made a food chain and explained how cats help to get rid of mice. In math, the teacher used to use acting to pass on the information to us. But my favourite place in the centre was the art room because there we can draw and make handmade things using paper. I hope that one day, when I'm grown up, I can be a teacher likes the ones here, and educate other children

The story also highlights another component which beneficiaries identified as critical to the changes they spoke of—the actual facilities of the centre itself. A number of stories of change spoke of the benefit of having access to ICTs, a well-stocked library, science lab, and recreation facilities like a playground, particularly in terms of their motivation for learning. While the formal schools which these children attend are equipped with some of these same facilities (i.e. a school library), teachers at these schools acknowledged that they were underutilised, or lacked necessary infrastructure support to make them useful (for example electricity to run the computers in Azraq). Additionally, as more and more of the school grounds are taken over for new classrooms, spaces for recreation in the formal school appeared to be in high demand, and the general environment of the schools themselves was often bleak and without colour. One girl in Azraq even went onto note how one of the things she liked best about coming to NRC's centre was the fact that she could see greenery, which is notably absent otherwise in the camp. She specified how, "*It is the only place in the camp where I see plans and greenery and I really do love flowers.*"[60]

The availability of these facilities also affords NRC opportunities to establish a more holistic and well-rounded programme in the learning centres, than is currently available in the formal school. Sports are taught regularly because of having access to a field and space for children to play. Similarly, having an art room with a range of supplies and a skilled art teacher ensures that children have a space to be creative.

Importantly, NRC has also utilised and partnered with other organisations to strengthen the teaching of literacy through creative means such as storytelling, drama, theatre and song. This has included:

1. A partnership with Kitabna to train teachers and parents to produce a series of illustrated children's stories about life in the camps. Teachers were then given further support on bringing these stories to life using the "al hakawati" tradition of oral storytelling, and trained on techniques for engaging reluctant readers using drama, music and visual aids. These books have now become a core component of NRC's programme, with further teacher support around utilisation of these texts being developed internally;[61]
2. Engagement with the Goethe institute to target students 13-15 years old on learning to use storytelling, reading, drama, dancing and photography to express oneself. Over a period of three months earlier in 2017, and delivered in a series of sessions, students are trained on taking photographs of their life in the camps, using acting to convey key messages from stories, and applying dance movements to genres of music. This programme culminated in a public performance at the learning centre in July;
3. Utilisation of the Big Bad Boo animated series and associated comic books, based on the 1001 Arabian Nights story, to teach students about life skills, and particularly moral and ethical education. Activities and resources developed within the Big Bad Boo series encourage

[60] MSC story 22

[61] See https://www.nrc.no/news/2017/august/tales-from-our-refugee-camps/ for a feature story about this project

students to discuss what they have read and viewed collectively, identify themselves with particular characters in the series, and to dramatize elements of what they have seen or read.

Lastly, the strong focus on PSS and broader socio-emotional learning skills in the learning centre not only had a strong impact, but relevance and importance to children and their families. Specifically, it has helped them to cope with underlying stressors and challenges they faced as a result of displacement and life in the camp. One student, for example, described how through this support, "*I felt so much relief…everything is so much better…I no longer feel afraid and I can focus on my studies…I now feel happy to live in Azraq and no longer want to leave it.*"[62] Another student described how "*…the teachers taught me how to handle problems, and because of that, I am now more capable of solving issues with my siblings.*"[63] The fact that NRC has put in place a strong focus within its programming on addressing these issues, and appropriately training and supporting its staff to do so, provides strong "added value" within the broader context. A 2016 Human Rights Watch report specifies a clear lack of appropriate PSS support and capacity in formal or in-formal education settings, and notes that when offered, is often done without the appropriate referral pathways or necessary support and training to staff provided.[64] In this way, NRC's programme addresses many of these shortcomings and contributes significantly to the notion of a holistic education offering. It is reflective of what a recent Jordan INGO Forum report notes as a key contribution of INGOs within the education sector to the Jordan Compact. It specifies that programmes like NRC's "…create environments that are appealing to children to encourage a love of learning in their beneficiaries…[using] well-trained teachers and facilitators, appealing spaces, and innovative pedagogical models," and by doing so motivating children to either enrol or remain in schooling.[65]

In sum, the holistic nature of the programme provided in the learning centres (inclusive of the psychosocial support discussed in the next section), was an element which many beneficiaries also attributed as a factor underpinning the impacts described. For the programme team, the holistic nature of what they offered in the learning centres, was also seen as a key strength of the programme, and was one of the reasons they selected the story below in the MSC selection panel at the end of the evaluation.

MSC STORY 61: MY LIFE ZAATARI POST-NRC (FEMALE, ZAATARI, 15)

I have always dreamed about being a calligrapher, but my dream always seemed too farfetched since I did not know how to read and write. I was too shy to go to go to school because I was old and I did not know my alphabet yet. Then, one day we had a visit at our house from the NRC's community officers who told us about their catch up and literacy programs. I was very happy and my family helped to register me the very next day. During my time in the centre, I was passionate about learning. I was very committed and tried to miss as few classes as possible. My teachers were always nice and patient with me and their constant praise encouraged me to do more. They also encouraged me sing during morning assembly, and after I did sing, all students told me I had a very beautiful voice. Doing this made me very confident and happy. I was very sad by the end of the cohort and I thought I would never hear from NRC again, but they called me a year later and asked me to be part of a video they were filming. During this time, I met with a person from Austria, and we took plenty of photos. They gave me a copy and I was really happy I keep these photos on the wall. Every time I see them I smile because I remember my time in the learning centre, and my day gets a bit better.

[62] MSC story 82
[63] MSC story 76
[64] Human Rights Watch (2016) *We're Afraid for their Future*, pp. 44-42
[65] Jordan INGO Forum (2017). *Forward Together: INGO Contributions to the Jordan Compact*, p. 13

In the story, this past beneficiary describes the impact that a programme that went beyond pure academics had a significant impact on her confidence and general well-being. It also expresses disappointment in not being able to remain, and her elation when she was asked to return to participate in the targeted activities for adolescent out of school children that were part of the Goethe Institute's recent partnership with NRC. According to the panel the story highlights a key aspect of NRC's learning support programme which differentiates it from that of other actors—a holistic programme that takes into consideration the full development of the academic, emotional, artistic, and social self. Discussions with other partners and some of NRC's key donors also acknowledged that this was a strong point of differentiation of NRC's education support in the camp that marked it as a provider of quality education in the fullest sense.

In both learning centres during the walk-through observation, students appeared to especially enjoying thumbing through books in the library, having access to iPads and computers, having a dedicated and colourful art room where they could be creative, using gender-separated toilets with running water and hand-washing facilities and being able to play in a playground with equipment that was maintained, shaded, and spacious. Such facilities outside the learning centre were rare or non-existent. The learning centre facilities themselves provided a welcome escape from the harsher conditions of the camp outside, as the student in this story of change narrated.

These data suggest that NRC's learning centres act as important complement to the formal schooling system, offering opportunities for a child's development which are currently not available to them there due to a lack of appropriate facilities, capacity and personnel. Yet, some danger exists that students and their caregivers do not see the learning centre as a complement to, but rather a substitution for attending formal school. There was a strong sense that the learning centre was where learning actually occurred, and schools were only a place for gaining formal accreditation, due to the insufficient learning conditions in these settings at present.

Community outreach volunteers in Azraq specified that often parents and students would give more priority to attending the learning centre, than school, because of this issue, and the fact that children's attendance was not being regularly tracked at the formal school. One parent also specified how, *"[My child] loves the centre so much now that he no longer wants to go to school."*[66] Likewise, a teacher in his story, identified how "*NRC's learning centre [is] seen as a good provider of education in the camps, on par with a private school in terms of quality. I have no doubt if NRC had more space, parents would readily send their children here rather than to the formal schools because the education there just fills children's time, because of the large class sizes and the lack of good teachers*."[67] Students, when describing the learning centre during the MSC interviews, also often described the centre as a "school" despite the fact that this differentiation was made clear to them, and a particular term does exist in Arabic for the learning centre space that is distinct from school.

The unintended consequence of this complementary learning support outside the confines of the formal school is that some school-based stakeholders interviewed perceived NRC's learning centres as acting as competition to them, rather than allies in supporting and strengthening their work. schools. This may explain, in part, why NRC has struggled to work more collaboratively with the formal schools, and where in some instances, the school leadership has been quite adversarial towards NRC. In the meetings held at the formal school, while this was not explicitly, teachers argued that NRC's programme might need to be more distinct and targeted towards particular groups of learners so that students were clear on the specific mandate of each learning environment. Specifically, one group of formal school teachers interviewed felt that the way students were taught material in the NRC learning centres was in conflict with how they were taught at school. They noted that this then confused learners and made it difficult for them to support the learners effectively. They noted they had very limited contact or knowledge of what actually went on in NRC's learning centres, which they noted was

[66] MSC story 34
[67] MSC story 36

quite different to Relief International's (RI) remedial education programming. With RI, they reflected that the relationship was different, and they were communicating on an almost weekly basis with the teachers in that programme, something which they had never occurred with NRC.

These same teachers also felt that where NRC's programme could be most useful was in regards to remedial support, particularly in the areas of Arabic and English reading and writing. Many seemed unaware that NRC's current focus is on remedial education support, and felt that it was the strongest students who ended up attending the learning centre, rather than those struggling to learn. This perception and the consequences of this in terms of the continued appropriateness and relevance of LSS is further explored in section which looks explicitly at NRC's current targeting approach.

5.2.2 Assessing the efficiency of the programme structure

A significant challenge which has existed historically, and continues for NRC's education programming in the camp is significant rate of non-completion, drop out or absenteeism. When NRC ran the CLP, drop out and completion rates were noted as one of the more significant challenges facing the programme. In the first CLP cohort in Zaatari, for example, drop-out rates stood at 45%. Previous final reporting to the donors also notes that irregular attendance has been a consistent challenge for NRC's education activities since 2013.

This issue continues today within NRC's programming in the camps. An example from Cohort 1 is given below to illustrate the nature and the scale of the issue in terms of retention and dropout.

	Total	**Male**	**Female**
Total number of students registered	**560**	294	266
Number of students attending at least one day	**503**	288	215
Number of students attending at least five days	**450**	265	185
Completed cohort (by attending at least 60% of sessions)	**320**	188	132
Official drop outs	**79**	42	37

Table 2: A breakdown of student drop out and completion for Azraq, Cohort 1 2017

As Table 2 suggests, while 90% of the registered students attend one day, and 80% five days of the three-month cohort, only 57% attended sessions at least 60% of the time. Officially, while drop outs stand at approximately 14% of the entire registered group, it would appear that the actual number is closer to 40% because of the significant number of non-completions.

Attendance rates on average are not high at 51.2% for Cohort 1 and 28.2% for Cohort 2.[68]

Figure 9 provides a summary of the attendance rates by age group, as this breakdown provides the most interesting type of discrepancy that exists within the learning centres regarding attendance.[69]

[68] The poor attendance in Cohort 2 is a product of it falling in summer when temperatures are high and many students choose not to walk to the centre in the heat, and Ramadan occurring in this period. It is also a time when the formal schools are not in session.

[69] Disaggregation by gender, disability and location was also done. By identified disability status, the differences were small (42.6% for those without an identified disability, 46.4% for those with an identified disability). By gender, males were more likely to attend (46.2%) to females (39.1%). By location, students in Azraq had a lower average attendance rate (38.2%) to Zaatari (46.5%).

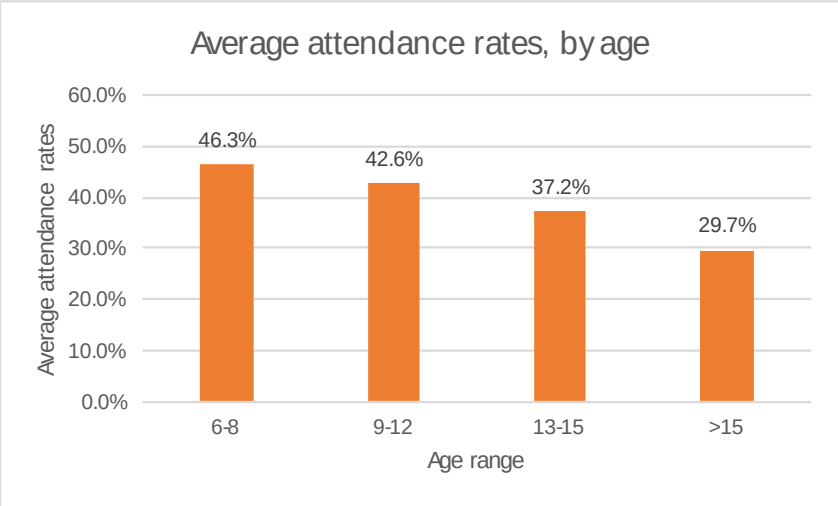


Figure 9: Average attendance rates by age groupings for first two cohorts, 2017

The data suggests that older students are less likely to attend the centre regularly, putting into question the relative importance and value that these particular beneficiaries give to the forms of support which NRC currently provides. This is discussed further in subsequent sections.

Universally, when asked about the top challenges or shortcomings of the programme at present, those based in the centres identified absenteeism and drop out as the key concern. For teachers, it makes it difficult to plan and sequence lessons for the entire student group, particularly when a number of students have missed out on the prerequisite learning. It also leads to specific challenges for running programmes like BLP 2, which necessitate sequential and regular attendance for it to be effective (this is discussed further in Section 7.2). Community outreach volunteers also have responsibility for following up on these absences, and are then required to call or visit the households of these families when they become recurrent. While this follow up was appreciated and recognised as an extension of NRC's continuity of care by beneficiaries and their caregivers, the volunteers noted that this ends up taking up a significant portion of their workload. From a management and planning perspective, irregular attendance has made it difficult for them to utilise the learning centre spaces and Syrian teachers in the best way possible. It has led in some cases, to the amalgamation of several classes at the upper grades where the numbers become too small to sustain a separate class; and conversely to unequal workloads between those teaching the lower grades, where classes are larger, and upper grades, where classes are much smaller. Yet, putting upper grades together, as has become standard practice in the learning centres because of the low initial enrolment numbers coupled with high absenteeism/drop out, has become a detractor from parents being willing to send their children to the centre, according to community outreach volunteers. This is due to the perception that teachers are unable to cater to the needs of all students fully when this is done.

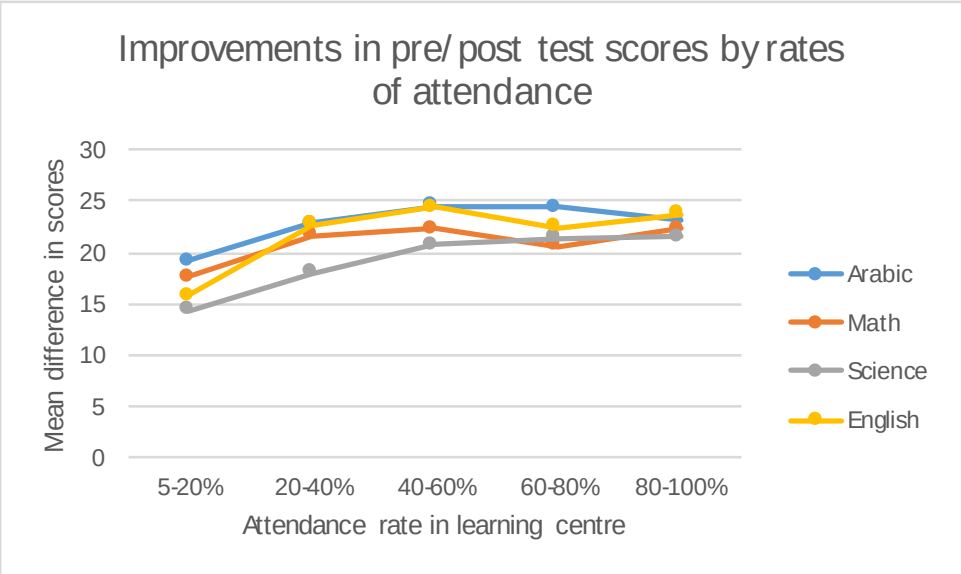
It is unknown how these attendance or drop-out rates compare to that of the formal schools in the camps, and no official comparable current data was able to be obtained for the purposes of this evaluation. Based, however, on data presented in the Joint Education Needs Assessment from Zaatari (2014), it would appear that irregular attendance is much more of an issue in NRC's centres, than it is in the formal system.[70] Additionally, teachers and principals in formal schools perceived that absenteeism and drop out are no longer the issue that they note it used to be, as there is now a sense that parents

[70] The JENA for Zaatari notes, based on focus group discussions with students ages 6-17, that only 6% of students reported to be attending school less than five days per week with those 6-11 more likely to miss school than those 12-17, and males more likely to miss school to miss school than females. No comparable data appears available for Azraq. It is important to note, however, the JENA data is self-report and unable to be independently triangulated through analysis of records kept by the fomal schools themselves.

and children see greater value in participating in certified education pathways.[71] Teachers, community outreach volunteers and caregivers of beneficiaries spoken to, however, held a different perspective on the issue of absenteeism in the formal schools. They noted that what was important to formal schools was that students were enrolled, but that there was little concern or serious record-keeping when it came to attendance.[72] Despite the regulation that students who miss more than 15% of the days in a year should be dropped from school rolls, it was believed that this was not done, as schools were incentivised by donors and the government to maximise their enrolment numbers.

It was also noted by community outreach officers that due to the multitude of informal education opportunities now available in the camps, students and their families appeared to be picking and choosing programmes based on incentives provided in each programme (such as free meals or snacks) and location. Anecdotally it was noted that many students had or were attending other informal education programmes concurrently, and would decide where to go based on what was being offered or what was occurring on that particular day. A disincentive for NRC's centre, particularly in Zaatari, was its perceived distance away from the formal school(s) which its beneficiaries attended, as well as its actual location on the periphery of the camp.

From an efficiency standpoint, another point to note is while there was some value added to attending the learning centre regularly, there was not a direct and proportional correlation between increased attendance and increased academic performance (see Figure 10 below). For most subjects, a direct correlation did exist between improved attendance and greater scales of improvement on core subject testing up until 60% attendance; however, after that point, the rate of improvement was negligible. In Arabic for example, students attending between 5-20% showed an average of 19.9 points of improvement on the tests, while those attending 40-60%, 24.5 points of improvement. Those attending 80-100% of the time, however fared slightly worse on the exam, improving on average only 23.7 points.[73] This raises the question of whether a 5-6 day/week programme is necessary or effective in terms of achieving one of the programme's core objectives of improved learning outcomes; specifically, whether a programme that ran 2-3 times per week could offer the same academic benefits as one that runs daily.



[71] This is self-reported perceptions, and again, was unable to be verified by an independent assessment of school attendance data over time.

[72] While it does appear daily attendance records are kept at schools (based on observation of attendance books at one formal school in Azraq), these data are not shared as a matter of course with informal education providers in the camps, nor is it clear how this data is then fed in centrally to the government's EMIS.

[73] This small difference, however, is not significant in any way due to the large standard deviation in the average rate of Improvement on these tests.

Figure 10: A comparison of gains in achievement on pre/post-test compared to attendance rates for Cohort 1, 2017

5.2.3 Maximising efficiency or effectiveness?

One of the key concerns which came out strongly throughout the course of the evaluation was the approach to counting and maximising beneficiary numbers to donors. For two of the programme's main donors—UNICEF and NMFA—beneficiaries are counted as such depending on the number of days they actually attend the learning centre. For UNICEF, attendance for one day allows NRC to count them as beneficiaries, while for NMFA, attendance for five days is the minimum threshold. Irrespective, for a three-month programme focussed on providing a comprehensive, holistic and sequential programming, counting beneficiaries based on limited participation is questionable to say the least, and potentially disingenuous on the part of both the donor and NRC. Evidence provided in this evaluation suggests both the value, and efficacy of students being engaged in programming in a sustained fashion; yet this approach to "counting" disregards the importance of student participation and attendance for the sake of maximising beneficiary numbers. While NRC is following donor guidelines on how beneficiaries should be counted, it does also have a responsibility to question this approach and to argue back to funders that the impact of its quality education approach cannot be demonstrated with such limited beneficiary participation.

Internally, however, NRC has also made decisions this year on how to maximise value for money and efficiency of its efforts. This has come about because of pressure from some of its donors to reduce the cost/beneficiary of its programming. The internal programme management response has been to move programming from its former approach, which cycled students through its activities in four month cohorts, but also afforded greater opportunities to work with groups of students for more than one cohort; to one now where every three months, an entirely different group of beneficiaries commences, cycles through, and completes NRC's LSS. This change allows NRC to report a greater number of unique beneficiaries over the course of a year.[74]

This decision has led to significant challenges for programme staff and teachers, who note that many of the beneficiaries could stand to do with a longer period of engagement in the learning centre to maximise benefits, particularly for those who join the cohort late, show insufficient academic improvement, or where there are key protection concerns/issues. It was also felt that for out of school children, the same rule should not apply and in some cases, centre staff did allow these students to re-enrol, or a decision was made to establish Saturdays as a day for former students to come back and participate in specific activities and learning support. Students from earlier cohorts in 2017 expressed disappointment in not being able to continue to participate on an ongoing basis in the learning centre, as did their caregivers. Community outreach volunteers also questioned this approach, noting that if there was limited supply of informal education provision in the camps this tact would make sense; but given that the camp population has been stable or is even in declining in some cases, and that informal education provision has remained constant they noted there was no need to turn students with continued need or interest away. They felt that this decision had, as one volunteer stated, "undermined the strong reputation NRC had built in the community" as an organisation that put the needs of their child first. Part of the problem, the volunteers noted, is that this new approach to beneficiary targeting and enrolment had not been well communicated to caregivers or students, and many seemed surprised when they were then told they could only register once in a calendar year. Hence, while efficiency, in terms of maximising beneficiary numbers can be achieved better through this model, there are considerable questions about whether it is effective or appropriate for students and the broader camp community. Further, unintended consequences of this approach are discussed throughout this section.

[74] Under NRC's current PCA with UNICEF, it needs to target 2,800 students per annum in its LSS, and another 1,500 from the Walking to School initiative. The past PCA with UNICEF, over a 16-month period set a target of 3,400 students to benefit from alternative education services.

It is also important to note that other informal education providers, such as Relief International, approach the balance between efficiency and effectiveness in other ways. In that programme, students sit a post-test at the end of a cohort, which in their case runs four months. If students show adequate progress and the formal school agrees, then they are referred "back" to the formal school. If not, then they are re-enrolled for a further cohort. This is then repeated every four months. The result is that every four months, 20% of the cohort is refreshed with new beneficiaries, but the remaining 80% continue.[75] A similar approach could also be undertaken by NRC, and ensure that at the end of three months, only those students who have shown sufficient progress are noted as having completed the programme, while others would be given opportunities to re-enrol. Additionally, NRC could also consider operating multiple groups at once as an alternative to a single male and female cohort in any one three-month period. Lastly, to ensure that beneficiaries gain value from their participation, it is important that NRC does not allow new beneficiaries to enrol much beyond one month into any three-month cohort period.

5.2.4 Serving the particular needs of adolescents

At present, adolescents in the 13-15 age bracket represent only a small number of the total enrolments in NRC's learning centres. For example, in the first two cohorts of 2017, a total of 119 out of 1117 students who completed pre and post tests were in the age bracket of 13-15. Programme staff argued that this age group was the hardest to gain buy-in and interest from in relation to NRC's current focus on LSS and remedial education due to a lack of interest in academic-focussed activities, and the fact that for many, the more immediate needs to develop skills and livelihoods opportunities took precedent. This group, unfortunately, is too young for the programming in NRC's youth centre's where this is more of the focus. For the small number of students who do participate in programme, however, evidence suggests that it has meaningful impacts and benefits on them, particularly in terms of providing opportunities for academic growth and learning that they may not have elsewhere. Analysis from the first two cohorts, suggests that adolescents in this age group showed significant rates of improvement between pre and post test scores, and in many cases, similar to that of peers in other age bands.

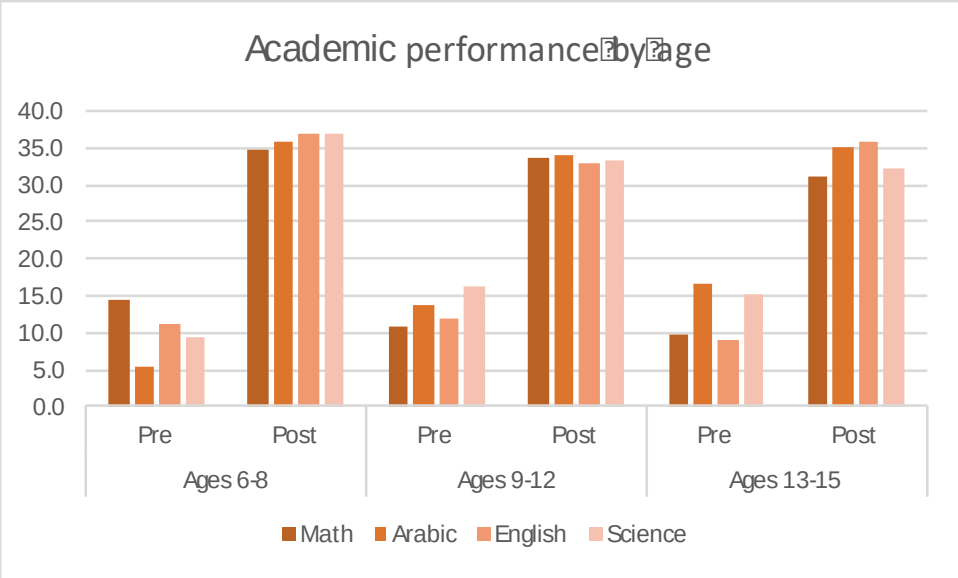


Figure 11: Academic performance on pre and post tests, by age, for Cohorts 1 and 2, 2017

[75] According to the individual from RI interviewed, RI serves approximately 4,000 students through LSS annually. Relief International's programme differs in that it serves students up to Grades 10. It is also understood that classes for particular students and grades are staggered throughout the week, so that students may only attend LSS run by RI two to three times per week.

What the data suggest, however is that adolescents appear to come in with greater aptitude in Science and Arabic and weaker aptitude in English and Mathematics. Additionally, in terms of greatest "valued added" for this group, it would appear that focussing on English and Mathematics would wield greatest improvements, as the gains there were larger than in the subjects of Science and Arabic. Stories of change collected from these adolescents also suggests that for those that chose to attend the learning centre, there was significant relevance in learning English, as the story below specifies.

MSC STORY 32: MOVING BEYOND THE PAST (MALE, ZAATARI, 15)

When I first arrived at the camp, I enrolled in an English class. There, on the first day the teacher sat and asked me the question "what is my name". I could not answer it. I couldn't read and write anything in English. Even though I could do nothing I had the motivation to stay in school and learn. In the learning centres, both of NRC and then other organisations, the teachers helped me to learn the basics of English. They were always there to assist, even after the end of the sessions. They didn't lose patience when I would ask the questions several times before I understood something. This was different to the formal schools where teachers did not seem interested to help me. Over time my English improved, and I could begin to learn English by myself. These days if a person doesn't know English they cannot do anything by themselves in life. I feel excellent about myself and my future now.

One of the big challenges, remains the retention and participation of adolescents in their learning centre programme. As Figure 9 suggests, learners 13 and over appear to have lower rates of attendance than their younger peers. Specifically, in Cohort 1, the attendance rate of students 13-15 and 15 and over stood at 45.1% and 32.9% respectively, while those under 13 appear to be above 50%. In Cohort 2, the attendance rates were lower, at 18.1% and 15.5% respectively, while those under 13 had an average attendance rate of approximately 30%. The data from Cohort 2 suggests that those 13 and older attended the centre infrequently, one in every 5 days on average, and brings into question the amount of actual benefit these students gain from the learning centre when attending so infrequently.

Additionally, it would appear that completion rates for students 13 and older in NRC's three-month programme of learning support also vary quite starkly. For example, in Azraq camp, just 10% of this population completed the programme, based on attending the programme 60% of the time or more.[76] This was much lower than the general cohort average of 57%. In Zaatari camp for the same cohort, however, completion rates stood at 86%. The reason for this large difference between the two camps is unknown.

Irrespective, the demands on this age group are many. Specifically, child labour, as well as early marriage (for girls) remain a significant demand-side constraint for this group. Domestic work inside the household, such as caring for younger siblings or assisting families with other chores, or working informally inside or outside the camp are noted as significant factors for the low participation and attendance rates of this age group in formal and non-formal education. Particularly during harvest season in Zaatari, community outreach volunteers noted that adolescents often left the camp to pick tomatoes and peaches in the fields surrounding the camp. In Azraq, while the opportunities for such informal labour are less, reports note that rates of participation in formal and informal schooling remain less than other groups. Early marriage, while typically affecting girls between 15-18 years of age, remains a concern for those younger, as girls who are believed to be underperforming are more likely to

[76] It should be noted that there is a significant disparity in how data is reported within M&E systems, where official "drop outs" are noted to be much lower for this age group; approximately 10% of the cohort (7 out of 67). Completion, however, is identified as students who attend 60% of the time or more, and appears to be a better measure against which to report.

be pulled out of school and kept at home until they can marry.[77] Additionally, for adolescents in particular, there remain questions about the relevance of education for employability, as studies have found that there does not appear to be any direct link to this at present.[78] Finally, it is this age group that is most likely to be out of school and ineligible to be able to register in formal education, instead needing to enrol in the drop out programme.

These issues raise the question of whether informal education programming needs to be more adaptive to the needs and demands which this population faces, and in turn, offer different models of delivery—a matter which NRC also needs to consider within its current approach. This may need to vary by the gendered and livelihood needs and demands of these groups within the two different camps, and would need to start with an in-depth understanding of what this age groups hopes to achieve out of education. At the same time, however, it would appear that there is a critical need to service this population as this is the age at which education could serve multiple protective functions, particularly in terms of preventing exploitation from unregulated and informal labour (which is noted as prevalent), early marriage, and sexual or physical violence—irrespective of whether this age group is already in-school or out of school.[79]

5.2.5 Addressing the needs of out of school children

While at present, NRC's current LSS programme only targets a small number of out of school beneficiaries—approximately 5% of the overall cohort group based on estimates from programme staff and monitoring data—historically, this was a larger proportion of its target population.[80] Evidence and analysis from NRC's model of accelerated learning, which was piloted as the Compensatory Learning Programme (CLP)[81] over eight months between September 2015 and June 2016 , demonstrated mixed results for beneficiaries who managed to complete one or more cycles of the programme—in terms of academic achievement. Internal reporting from the programme team suggest that for those children that completed all of level A in Zaatari and Azraq camps, 55.5% progressed to the next level based on demonstrated competency in both Arabic and Maths. In level B, 37% progressed to the next level. In Level C, only a small percentage of students (8%) were able to gain the necessary competencies in Arabic and Maths to enable them, if permissions had allowed, to enter grade 7. Importantly, however, the report notes that "…both teachers and parents reported an increase in confidence of the children as they felt they were catching up with their peer group in the public school," reflecting the same kinds of outcomes in terms of improved confidence and motivation noted earlier.[82]

Current OOSC also saw relevance and benefit in coming to the learning centre. It offered, for many of them, an opportunity to re-engage in learning as already discussed in Section 5.1. Importantly, having access to education was also a key component of protecting them against the difficult conditions of displacement and life in the camps, as the story below suggests.

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[77] See for example, PLAN International (2016) *Needs assessment report: Syria refugee crisis in Jordan,* p. 19

[78] See for example, See UNICEF/REACH (2014) *Joint Education Needs Assessment Report on Access to Education for Syrian Refugees in Zaatari Camp*, UNICEF/REACH (2015) *Joint Education Needs Asssessment Report on Access to Education for Syrian Refugees in Azraq Camp* (2015); Human Rights Watch (2016) *"We're Afraid for their Future": Barriers to Education for Syrian Refugee Children in Jordan*; PLAN International (2016) *Needs assessment report: Syria refugee crisis in Jordan;*

[79] This point is also noted in the recent Jordan INGO Report (2017, p. 13) where it specifies that to date programming has, "understand and address the underlying reasons behind why children do not stay in school, going beyond the initial step of enrolling them in education programs. If these root problems are not addressed, students are more likely to drop-out of programs regardless of their quality."

[80] Before 2017, NRC ran a range of different forms of support in its programming. This included: (1) remedial education classes for students in primary school, as well as Tawjihi support stream classes for students in Grades 10-12; (2) informal education in the form of either ALP provision for students 8-12, and implementing UNICEF's Makani programme for adolescents 12-15

[81] The CLP was broken up into three levels: Level A, covering Grades 1-2 for students ages 9-12; Level B, covering Grades 3-4 for students ages 10-12; and Level C, covering Grades 5-6, for students ages 11-12. Each level was covered in eight months. NRC ran two different cohorts in this period; one which started in September 2015 and another in Feburary 2016.

[82] NRC ALP Pilot Analysis 2016, p. 10.

MSC STORY 68: HAPPINESS IN JORDAN (MALE, AZRAQ, 10)

The days seemed longer as I stayed at home day after day waiting for a phone call from the school to tell me that I can finally register. Ever since I left village 5, I haven't been able to get my documents from there. My mother and I would spend days going back and forth across the camp to get my papers so that I could register at school. Eventually, I was losing hope that I might ever be able to return to school. Staying at home also made all the bad memories of things I saw in Syria return, and these haunted me for a long period of time. I started to not sleep, and would constantly walk around during the day tired, with red eyes, and sometimes fainting from exhaustion. Then one of my relatives told me about the NRC's learning centre. After enrolling here, I feel like I now have a purpose again. I wake up knowing that I have a place to go. I wake up knowing that if I do not come one day, they will call and ask about me. My days of feeling bored, useless and aimless wandering seem long gone. I feel happier than I used to be. Although I get really homesick at times, I am very thankful for the safety I feel here. Now I get support from my teachers and my friends at the learning centre and things are becoming

The issue which several out of school beneficiaries faced, however, was to find opportunities to continue learning and to have purpose after their three months of participation in a cohort came to an end. Many of them, despite having interest in returning to education, struggled to regain entry, potentially because catch up or drop out classes had not yet been formalised, or because of administrative barriers placed at the school level. This led to significant frustration and disillusionment, as the story below suggests.

MSC STORY 5: HOPE (FEMALE, ZAATARI, 13)

Since leaving Syria, I hadn't gone to school for a while, and had to learn things on my own. While I tried to continue to study the best I could, I struggled to get better in English and Math. I would see other girls walking in front of my house, and talk about school and the lessons they took there. I desperately wanted to be like them. My family and I tried here in Azraq to get me in the school but they would not take me. So instead, my parents brought me to NRC's learning centre. When I was here, the teachers taught me so many different things, including multiplication, English, Arabic and drawing. Based on what I learned, I was able to start teach my younger siblings to count and draw. When the time at the centre came to an end, I thought I might have a better chance to go back and enrol in the formal school so I went with my parents again to the school. We gave them all our information, and they said they would call when I could enrol, but they never have called us back. The centre here said I could come back in the meantime, but I no longer want to come, because I cannot get a certificate here, but with no certification I cannot get into school or get work, so what's the point? While I hope I could stay here and learn to read and earn a certificate, I realise now this may not be possible. So, I would rather not go to any centres, and stay home with my sisters and visit my aunts instead.

The challenges described above were repeated several times in the interviews with former and current out of school beneficiaries and their caregivers. It was also witnessed first-hand in the case of Azraq camp where during a visit to the formal school, a child was denied entry by the principal because she

did not have the appropriate "papers" to register.[83] Community outreach volunteers in Azraq noted that this issue was widespread in the camp, and that despite numerous efforts to raise such concerns to relevant authorities, including local Ministry officials, UNICEF, Save the Children and UNOPS, there has been little action. It is also a concern raised in a 2016 Human Rights Watch report where it is noted that in numerous instances principals refused entry to learners for "other, official criterion" that are neither specified in regulation or necessarily following the Ministry's recent directives.[84] Recent data also suggests that despite the identification of at least 28,280 Syrian children and adolescents identified as out of school and overaged, only 3,080 have registered in either catch-up or drop out programmes. Demand for such programmes continues to exceed the capacity of the government and its partners to supply access to them.[85]

This suggests that until the referral pathways back into the formal system function as intended, and the provision of catch up and drop out programmes is sufficient to demand, it may not be appropriate for NRC to treat OOSC in the same way that those already in the formal school are. Rather, there may be an important duty of care to allowing these learners to remain in the learning centre, until the point at which they have actually been able to enrol into a catch-up/drop-out programme or age-appropriate grade in the formal school, should they choose to do so. It may also mean that NRC might need to partner with UNICEF and Questscope to support the drop out programming they have developed, and potentially support UNICEF to train teachers and develop curricula around the catch-up programmes to be established in schools.

It is also important to put a cautionary tale on the current catch-up programme structure in terms of its relevance for out of school learners, particularly ones older than 11, based on NRC's past experience of running the CLP. The way the programme was structured, meant that students who were already 12 would only be able to continue in the programme until they were 13. For students needing to complete more than one cycle to regain entry, it meant that the CLP could not serve their needs of re-entry into the formal schooling system, as after completion of Level A only they would still only be able to re-enter into Grade 3.

With the Ministry of Education having adopted the general structure of the catch-up programme which NRC developed, there remains the same gap in service provision for 12-year old students, which existed when NRC piloted the programme in 2015-6. They are too young to enter into the Ministry's drop out programme, and potentially too old to remain in its catch-up programme for more than one year. This suggests a critical need to align and map the relationship between these two forms of non-formal provision and is an area of advocacy and policy shaping which NRC is well poised to engage in, based on its past local and international experience of support out of school children to re-enter into schooling.[86]

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[83] While Save the Children's presence on the school site is meant to address these issues immediately, it did not appear that was functioning well, according to both what was observed, as well as what community outreach volunteers discussed in a focus group conversation.

[84] Human Rights Watch (2016), *"We're Afraid for their Future": Barriers to Education for Syrian Refugee Children in Jordan,* p. 40

[85] This was acknowledged to be an issue in interviews with UNICEF, who is supporting the Ministry to establish these catch-up and drop-out programmes in the camps, and Relief International, who is working alongside Questscope to implement drop-out programming in the camps.

[86] See Shah (2015), *A meta-evaluation of NRC's Accelerated Education Programming*, for a summary of the range of models utilised by NRC education programming globally over the past 20 years to reengage out of school learners into formal education. The CLP was often labelled as an Accelerated Learning Programme within NRC documentation. Yet, recent guidance by the Accelerated Education Working Group (of which NRC is a member) has clarified that ALPs are typically for over-aged out of school children who are not able to effectively reintegrate into the formal schooling system. These programmes, which exist outside or parallel to the formal education system, often aim to provide learners with a full course of certified basic education in an accelerated timeframe. For this reason, they typically target students between the ages of 11-20. Catch-up programmes are more appropriate for younger children (probably up to about 10) who can catch up and then reintegrate at an age appropriate level at an intermediate point in the basic education cycle. The design of the CLP, which then informed the Ministry of Education's catch up programme appears to provide both catch-up and Accelerated Education opportunities within the same design. While this is possible, it is important to note that there are different design parameters and beneficiary needs for catch-up and AE provision which must be carefully considered. See AEWG (2017). *Guide to the Accelerated Education Principles.*

5.2.6 Addressing inclusion

The principle of inclusion appears as a cross-cutting theme across all of NRC's programme areas in two respects. The first in regards to protection which specifies in line with the SPERE standards that its programming should, "identify [inclusive] responses that address inequalities and specific needs".[87] The second is more specific to various types of differences which exists amongst the beneficiary population. This necessitates programming taking a beneficiary-centric perspective, with a mandate towards, "[prioritising] programme interventions [to] those most in need, in proportion to their vulnerabilities and capacities."[88] This includes, amongst other things, by gender, disability, sexuality, and linguistic/ethnic status.

In regards to gender, the programming appears to recognise gender at an output and outcome level, by disaggregating data on the numbers of male/female beneficiaries, with an aim to have equal numbers of participants of male/females across the year, and to ensure that the outcomes for males and females are equivalent by disaggregating all analysis by sex. To date, NRC has relative success in ensuring equitable access and outcomes for boys and girls. For example, data available on total beneficiary numbers as of September 2017 (as reported to UNICEF) suggests the following breakdown:

Category	Total	Male	Female
In-school children and adolescents enrolled in LSS	2,630	1,453	1,177
Out of school children and adolescents enrolled in LSS	105	63	42
Children referred to formal or non-formal education	1,374	726	650
Assistance for walking to/from school	2,221	1120	1101

Table 3: Summary of beneficiaries of programming by gender

While it would appear that it has proved more difficult to recruit females in equal numbers to NRC's LSS, the W2S initiative has been an important response, particularly for girls to the threats of harassment and gender-based violence, which often deter them from regularly attending school. The fact that girls have enrolled in higher numbers in this initiative suggests its importance and relevance to them in particular. Additionally, and as already covered in previous sections, learning outcomes for boys and girls within the programme are generally equivalent in most areas; yet boys appear more likely to complete the full three months of programme activity, and to attend more regularly.

Some elements of the programme structure also indicate gender-sensitive actions. Specifically, cohorts are broken up into male and female shifts, as a response to what is deemed both acceptable to the broader camp community, and to ensure alignment with the structures of formal schooling which are also differentiated by sex. Each learning centre also has separate WASH facilities for boys and girls, and male teachers work with the boys, while female teachers work with the females. That stated, it would generally appear from examining the curriculum design and structure, that there is a gender-blind, rather than responsive approach taken. Curriculum structure, content and teaching approaches appear to be standardised across both groups, despite the fact that for adolescents in particular, the gendered-nature of their experience in the camp has the potential to be quite distinct (see Section 0). Additionally, a review of teacher training offered to date suggests that there has been little focus given to gender-responsive or transformative pedagogies. It is questionable whether a gender-blind perspective when it comes to teaching and learning is wholly appropriate, given that NRC's own programme guidance specifies that across all activities, the "different roles, needs, vulnerabilities, capacities and opportunities [based on gender]", should be recognised and incorporated into all aspects of programme design and delivery.[89] This largely gender-blind approach to education programming in the camps is not unique to NRC, as an evaluation of UNICEF's emergency education response in Jordan

Available at http://s3.amazonaws.com/inee-assets/resources/AEWG_Accelerated_Education_Guide_to_the_Principles-screen.pdf.

[87] NRC Programme Policy, p. 6

[88] Ibid, p. 5

[89] Ibid, p. 7

also observed that, "Girls and boys face different gendered challenges both in the classroom and outside", and recommended that, "responses need to be better targeted to different gendered needs."[90] As of now, it is unclear how much of these gendered-needs have been taken into account in programme design and implementation of NRC or other actors.

The number of students with identified disabilities (mental or physical impairments) in NRC's programming remains quite small. Attendance data suggests that in Cohorts 1 and 2, 91 students with identified disabilities participated in NRC's LSS, representing approximately 4% of the overall beneficiary population. Programme staff at both centres specified the challenges of recruiting and retaining students with identified disabilities, describing how accessibility issues, including travelling to/from the centre, alongside stigma within the community and within households towards those with disabilities made these students' enrolment and retention difficult. For those students who do enrol with an identified disability, outcome data suggests that they are able to demonstrate the same types of improvements in learning and well-being that their peers enjoy, and appear to attend with equal or higher regularity to their peers.

In recent times, the education programme has also attempted to be more inclusive of students with disabilities. Earlier this year, the programme partnered with Handicap International to develop an action plan for inclusion of students with disabilities in its programming. A number of key points were specified in this plan including: (1) improving the physical accessibility of the centre's facilities to those with particular impairments; (2) strengthen disaggregation of beneficiary data by disability type; (3) broader the base of referral services and partners with whom NRC works with in regards to students with disabilities; (4) improve the culture of inclusiveness and support amongst students and staff towards students with disabilities; (5) better gather data from students with disabilities about their experiences in the learning centre; and (6) improve the capacity and knowledge of staff to work with students with disabilities through targeted training.

It would appear that in the five months since the action plan was agreed to, many of these actions were already being implemented and that the learning centres were making concerted efforts towards creating a more inclusive environment for students with disabilities. Reporting from June of this year, for example, describes how as part of the registration process, "Children with disabilities are asked to have a meeting prior to enrollment at the centre including their teachers and parents/caregivers in order to discuss their needs and abilities and in order to guarantee that the best of our teacher's services and abilities are being used." As a specific example of an accommodation the programme has made in response to the two students with visual impairments has been the creation of "simple braille materials to support them with early literacy and numeracy", along with close "follow up by NRC Monitoring and Support Unit."[91] Such accommodation also extends to the W2S programme, where reporting describes three students with physical disabilities joining the programme this academic year (2017-8). All three have been encouraged to "integrate naturally with the rest of the children accompanying them on the walk route…[and] also accommodated by the facilitator via means such as making them a leader of the group for the day, and [by] incentivising other children to assist with the child."[92] Teachers have also participated in at least two professional development trainings about working with students with physical or learning disabilities in the past year.

As part of the evaluation, five children with disabilities were interviewed. Stories of change were collected by them through this process in most instances. Below is the story of one of these beneficiaries.

[90] UNICEF (2015) *Evaluation of UNICEF's Emergency Education Response for Syrian Refugee Children and Host Communities in Jordan*, p. xvi
[91] NRC July 2017 progress report to UNICEF
[92] NRC September 2017 progress report to UNICEF

MSC STORY 33: EXCLUDED (MALE, ZAATARI, 15)

Before coming here to the learning centre, I was not in school in Zaatari. I have a disability and I was too old to go to school. Instead, I learned by staying at home and reading books and newspapers. My sister, who is a doctor and a teacher would help me to learn. But then after visiting the learning centre with my sister, they said I could join the drop out programme for the 7th grade even though I was older than most students. I liked that it was warm here. I also loved the library because there is a television, and it is organised. In the library, I got a chance to learn using the Ipad, the laptop and the computer which I really enjoyed. Here I also learned to do art, and draw well. Because I did so well in computers and in art I got a certificate. I was so proud, and I put it on my wall at home. But, the teachers would not let me part of some of the activities of the centre, like the play, because of my disability. Some of the teachers and students also said that I don't belong here because I am crazy. They would tease and call me a "mongol" which made me feel different. I started to feel more and more excluded from things at the centre. So, I've stopped coming to the learning centre for the last two weeks. I still feel angry and upset about the lack of respect people have shown me, and hope this might change. I'd really like to come back and use the Ipads and computers

While this child with a disability highlights the joy of having access to the learning centre's facilities, he also indicates the challenges around exclusion, based on his disability, that he faced from both staff and students in the programme. This ultimately led him to drop out of the learning centre. This point is important, given the important focus NRC places on creating a safe, inclusive and protective learning for all children. When the education programme team discussed this story, it was clear to them that inclusive teaching and learning practices were still not full realised in the learning programme.

5.2.7 Relevance of current targeting and outreach approach

At present, NRC's programming in the camps targets students in formal schooling but at risk of dropping out—largely because the current focus of the programme is on supporting and strengthening the formal schooling system, rather than acting in parallel to it. OOSC represent a small proportion of the total number of beneficiaries because of this focus, and when enrolled, the intent is to refer them to formal or non-formal pathways sanctioned by the government.

At present, the main recruitment tactic for students into the learning centres comes from the community outreach officers. At the start of each cohort, a key function they play is in going around to sections of the villages in the camps and go door to door to identify eligible students in the appropriate age ranges that might benefit from NRC's learning support services. The recruitment drive typically goes on for a couple months, until NRC has reached its target numbers for each cohort group. While there is a particular attempt to identify and recruit students ages 12-15, and students with disabilities, there is usually the least success with these groups. According to the community outreach officers interviewed this because of a lack of interest or family willingness to send these groups of learners to the learning centre.

Registration data from Zaatari camp from the first three cohorts from 2017 suggests that 31.5% of the students register as walk-ins, while the other 68.5% are registered through outreach efforts (either though the formal school or the work of the community outreach officers). NRC has, this year, started to more actively ask schools to refer students to the centre for LSS. To date, however, the percentage of the total cohort that come through these formal referrals remains relatively small, ranging from approximately 5-10% of the total number of registrations in each centre, depending on location and

cohort group.[93] Hence, the majority of students participating in the learning centre are self-selected, rather than purposively targeted and recruited at present.

This has then led to a perception from formal schools visited, that despite NRC's intentions otherwise, it is not students most in need of LSS who come to the learning centres, but rather the stronger and more able ones. This may not be unsurprising, given there is a natural propensity for students who are already motivated to learn, and whose families are more engaged in their children's education to seek out the best educational experiences for their children. For example, one grandfather, who had responsibility for the care of his grandsons, described in his story of significant change[94] how,

"From the moment I arrived [in Zaatari], I knew I had to seek out the best possible opportunities for my grandsons. The responsibility to educate them was now on my neck, but I myself do not have an education, so I sought out all the extra help I could for them. The only future I can give them is an education. On top of enrolling them in the formal school I have also placed them in NRC's programme and two other learning programmes every year since we arrived nearly five years ago now. Every year my two grandsons get better and better, and gain more knowledge and get better marks in school."

Another student in her story of change describes how "*My father is a teacher, so he really values education… Because my father values education so much, he also encouraged me to go to the learning centres for extra help. I hated them all, and would get bored there. Because of coming here, I have gotten so much better at school*,"[95] suggesting that for this student her father was constantly seeking additional learning opportunities in the camp because of the value he already had for education; while another beneficiary describes how "…*because of being here at the learning centre, I've moved from being good at English and Math to be being better*"[96], indicating that this student was not struggling in schools, but just wanting extra advancement. NRC does not appear to turn these types of families away, but it does appear to identify students who are deemed at risk of dropping out of school. The basis on which such a judgement is made is not entirely clear or explicit in M&E reporting or programme documentation.[97]

There is an indication, however, that the students who are referred and do register from the formal school do tend to come in with lower baseline scores than the rest of the cohort, suggesting that these are in fact the struggling learners (see Figure 12).).

[93] In Zaatari, data from the first two cohorts combined suggests that of the approximately 1724 students registered, 93 were noted as being referrals from the formal school. In Azraq, data from the second cohort suggests of the 374 students registered in Cohort 2, 39 were referrals from the formal school.
[94] MSC story 79
[95] MSC story 29
[96] MSC story 15
[97] For example, in recent reporting data to one of the programme's donors, NRC notes that of the 2767 students registered in Cohorts 1 and 2 across the two camps, 2250 were in formal school and classified as at risk of dropping out. The basis on which they are classified as such is unknown.

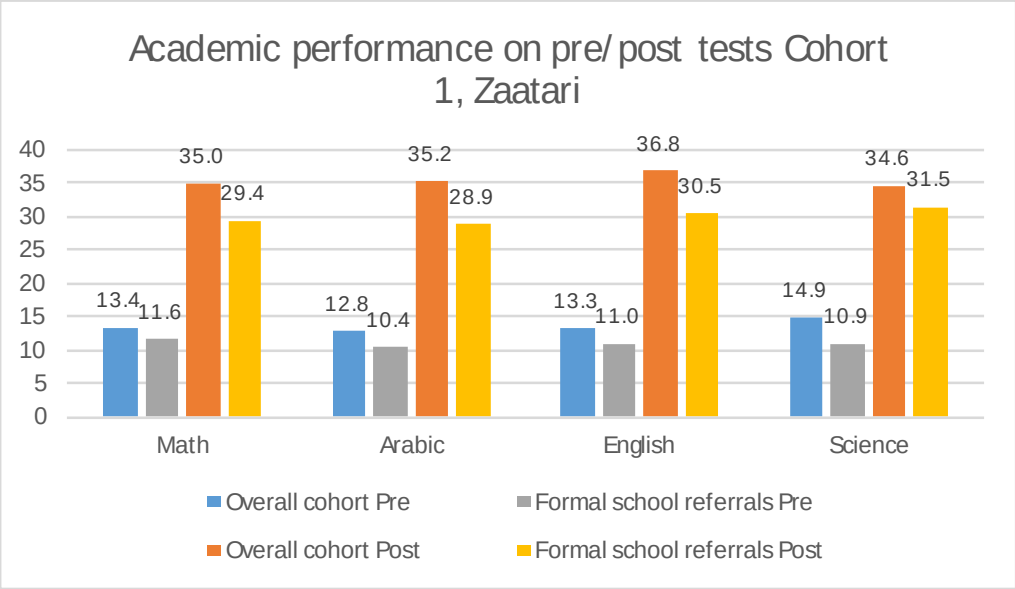


Figure 12: Comparison of academic performance of students referred from formal school versus the general population from Zaatari Camp, Cohort 1 2017

Importantly, these learners do make significant academic progress, based on the results of their post-test scores, but still underperform those students who are not direct referrals at the end of the cohort.

Additionally, there appears to be increasing pressure on centre staff, and particularly the outreach volunteers to target and identify new beneficiaries to serve for each cohort. This challenge becomes greater as the year progresses, as there is less of a "pool" from within NRC's catchment areas to draw on, according to outreach volunteers interviewed. The result is that centre staff come under pressure to meet target numbers, accepting greater numbers of walk-ins and self-referrals who potentially could be less in need of support.[98] Hence, it does appear that there is a finite number of possible beneficiaries, and with the move to enrolling unique individuals each time, NRC will face increasing challenges in recruiting sufficient numbers of beneficiaries in need. While NRC could explore options such as expanding its catchment within each of the camps, there is reluctance on the part of many families interviewed to sending their children long distances for LSS, and likewise, NRC may then come into direct competition with other informal education providers in the camp.

The current situation also increases the likelihood as the year progresses of greater numbers of beneficiaries being allowed to register in a cohort at any point in the three months, until target beneficiary numbers are met.[99] According to centre staff, in previous cohorts, this has occurred until very close to the end of the three months, creating problems for teachers and students. For beneficiaries, it is questionable the benefit they derive from enrolling two months into a three-month programme, particularly if it then excludes them from re-enrolling in another cohort until the following year, which is the situation at present.[100]

Given it is NRC's mandate to target those most in need, it would seem critical that the current opportunistic targeting approach, in part driven by increased and potentially unrealistic numbers of unique beneficiaries, needs to be rethought. If NRC education programming in the camps is to remain focussed on LSS and informal remedial education, then it must ensure it is actually targeting the

[98] Trends in the registration data support this issue, with greater numbers of walk ins appearing to be registered as the year progresses.
[99] A review of registration data across the year suggests this has been what has occurred in the first two cohorts of 2017, when for Cohort 1, for example, new registrations occurred until April, albeit in smaller numbers.
[100] In at least two circumstances during the course of the evaluation this situation was run into, where parents and beneficiaries were not made aware of this 'rule' and were then upset that despite only participating for the last 10-15 days of one cohort, they were then excluded from being part of NRC's full programme until the following year.

students needing this assistance. Data would suggest students referred from the formal schools may be part of that group, and NRC needs to rely increasingly on recruiting its in-school population through these channels, rather than through self-referrals or community outreach. Otherwise, there is danger that NRC's programming is treated not as a remedial, but rather an enrichment learning opportunity. An alternative, might be to expand NRC's support within the formal schooling system, reaching a larger number of in-school beneficiaries in that way, and allowing its current informal education programming to focus on beneficiaries who are currently not served through formal schooling. Given the nature of the operational space in which NRC education programming in the camps is likely to function within, the latter may be a preferred path forward.

5.2.8 Relevance and appropriateness of NRC's response within the broader context

As the introduction to this evaluation described, NRC's education programming has changed significantly in the camps over time. When programming first started and as new populations of refugees from Syria entered into the camps, there was a stronger focus on emergency forms of response, including the provision of recreational and psychosocial activities, and basic teaching and learning activities. Provided mainly in the reception areas of the camp, this focus has greatly diminished in recent times as the flow of new arrivals in Zaatari has stopped altogether, and in Azraq is comprised largely of those being involuntary relocated back to the camp because of overstaying leave permits or leaving the camps informally. Instead, the development and implementation of catch up and remedial education programming gained momentum out of recognition of the protracted nature of the displacement facing Syrian refugees, and the lack of access to quality education which faced the majority of this population.

Following the London Conference and Jordan Compact, however, programming has had to shift again towards more durable solutions, and is now very much driven by the mandate to: (1) "support governments to uphold their duties," through "the inclusion of IDP and refugee children and youth into formal education systems", in line with NRC's own Programme Policy[101]; and the Jordan Response Plan's overall objective for the education sector which is to, "ensure sustained quality educational services for children and youth affected by the Syria crisis."

This mandate is to be met through three key pillars specified in the 2016-8 Jordan Response Plan:

- **Systems strengthening:** Improving capacities of education authorities to the continuous delivery of quality inclusive education services, as part of support the Government of Jordan and relevant Ministries to strengthen its ability to manage the current impact of the Syria crisis and plan for future needs and shocks.
- **Improving provision of education which sustains safe, adequate and protective learning:** Improving the quality and nature of education offered to all learners by strengthening professional development and training for teachers, and the engagement of communities in schools; with a key focus on improving safe and ICT-enabled facilities and environments within formal schools.
- **Increasing the provision of adequate, safe, and protective learning facilities and spaces:** This access focussed pillar aims to increase the available supply of formal and non-formal education opportunities available to Syrian refugees and vulnerable Jordanian populations and to strengthen retention of these learners through remedial education.

At present, NRC's camp programming focusses most directly on the last of these pillars, given that remedial education is where most of its efforts and resource within the camps are currently directed. This is different to its host-community programming which is addressing the other two pillars more directly through the construction of additional school facilities, targeted teacher and principal training, systems-strengthening work with particular directorates of the Ministry of Education, and

[101] NRC Programme Policy, p. 12

strengthening of PTAs. The new education strategy for NRC suggests that there is a desire to see its camp programming also shift in a similar direction and to focus more effort towards supporting and strengthening the formal schools in the camps. Given the nature of the current Jordan response plan and NRC's recently adopted Programme Policy, this would appear be to an appropriate and timely shift.

In the past, informal education provision helped to fill a gap in service provision for out of school children who were unable to access formal schools because they were either too old to re-enter or where there was insufficient space. With the government's commitment, however, to providing sufficient opportunities and space for students to re-enter into education through formal or non-formal pathways, there has been growing questioning from the Ministry about the continued need or relevance for informal education opportunities in the camps. As a PLAN report specifies, "The MoE believes that with the increase in places for Syrian refugee children in formal schools…and catch-up programmes, informal education will become redundant."[102] Discussions within the Education Sector Working Group led to providers agreeing to change informal education provision to be more explicitly focused on strengthening basic literacy and numeracy skills, and providing remedial education and other support services for children already enrolled in formal schools. It is this form of support which is deemed important within the current Jordan response plan, and is where NRC's efforts through its learning centres are focused at present.[103] Conversations with donors also signal, that given the shifting nature of both the conflict in Syria, and the protracted nature of the crisis, funding streams are likely to be tied increasingly to developmental, rather than humanitarian responses. UNICEF, for example signalled strongly that all new PCAs it is negotiating with partners must focus explicitly on supporting one of four key pillars: catch-up education provision, drop-out education provision, violence prevention, and supporting accreditation pathways. Effectively, this shuts the door on UNICEF funding any form of informal education that is not clearly linked to one of these areas. NMFA also specified that as the Government of Jordan shifts towards resilience-focused efforts within the Syrian response, it is likely that its access to humanitarian-based support, is likely to dwindle and be replaced by development funding, which is expected to be less in value and more competitive to obtain. As part of this, there would be an expectation to see partners which NMFA funds working and engaging directly with the Government of Jordan on all education responses.

While this shift signals an important, positive step as the Government of Jordan signals its intent to take greater ownership and responsibility for addressing gaps in education service provision for Syrian refugees and its own population, there remain significant concerns about its actual capacity and ability to do this. As already highlighted earlier in this report, it would appear that catch-up and drop-out programme provision has been insufficient to demand, and many interested learners are being turned away during the enrolment process at present. Additionally, there does not appear to be a clear curricula or process for training teachers to work in the catch-up programme, suggesting that the quality of provision could be quite poor unless immediate support is provided. Given NRC's strong past experience and engagement in developing flexible, accredited and alternative learning opportunities in other contexts, there is a continued need for NRC to continue to promote effective policy dialogue and change on opportunities for OOSC to effectively engage in a range of educational pathways within Jordan and the region more broadly.[104] Similarly, while access to education has been greatly increased for Syrian refugees in the camps, there remain significant concerns about quality, as a range of stakeholders have described throughout this report. For this reason, there appears to be continued relevance for NRC to continue running its LSS at present time, given that a recent needs assessment by PLAN International which suggests that, "there will be continuing needs for remedial education and

[102] PLAN (2016), p. 23
[103] Objective 3.3 within the education sector priorities specifies the continued need to "support retention in formal education through the provision of remedial classes." (p. 65) with a constant budget for such activity throughout the period of the plan until 2019.
[104] This is also a key aspect of NRC's mandate in education programming within its new Programme Policy.

support services for children enrolled in formal education and for those who are unable to access it."[105] At the same time, the present operational environment necessitates NRC shifting attention and focus towards engaging directly with the formal education system, and leveraging its considerable strengths and capacities, particularly in areas like teacher professional development, introducing a strong protection component within educational activities, and supporting/strengthening community outreach and engagement efforts. Opportunities to strengthen the formal school system in these regards is already acknowledged and being addressed within NRC Jordan's new education strategy for 2018.

That stated, a significant issue which came up in this evaluation was why in most instances a common response exists for all Syrian refugees residing in camps, rather than one that is tailored to the needs and contexts prevalent within each camp. It became clear that many programming decisions, of both NRC, and other actors, appears based on data and information that was collected at least two years ago now, and where the context since then has changed significantly. Visits to Azraq and Zaatari revealed how different the camp contexts actually are, in terms of the nature of education provision prevalent in the camps, the relation which NRC Jordan has with the Ministry directorates responsible and the schools themselves, the economic and education background of the households residing in the camps, and the push and pull factors impacting on education service provision. As a simple example, it is often presumed that child labour is one of the big pull factors out of education for adolescents, and is the explanation for the reason they do not attend school or other LSS with the same frequency as their younger peers. For Zaatari, a number of stakeholders spoken to confirmed that this is indeed the case, particularly in the harvest months when there is increased demand for informal paid labour immediately outside the camp. For Azraq, however, its isolated location precludes opportunity for informal paid labour both inside and outside the camp, suggesting that the reasons for non-participation may be different.

Additionally, while outcomes-level data suggests that there are not large differences in well-being or learning gains between the two camps due to NRC's support, there would appear to clear differences in the types of issues which beneficiaries come into the learning centres with. As a number of stories of change from Azraq indicate, the beneficiaries have often experienced and witnessed the conflict in Syria differently to their peers in Zaatari, and have vivid and more recent memories of the trauma they endured. Many have also spent time illegally outside Azraq and faced hardship in that time of uncertainty; an issue that continues when they are forcibly returned to the camp, and separate from members from their family and/or spend time in Village 5 (a high-security vetting village within the camp) before being placed into the general population of the camp. Their stories also appear to suggest higher degrees of hopelessness and despair, and indicate the absolutely critical role education can serve in such a context as a protective experience in such circumstances. Conversely in Zaatari, what became clear is that there appear to much stronger provision in place for beneficiaries for both formal, non-formal and informal education opportunities. The result is that it is more of a "buyer's market" for learners and their family, and the options and freedom to access a range of options greater. In other words, Zaatari appears to ready to move towards developmental responses that work to consolidate provision and strengthen the education system as a whole, while in Azraq there may be a continued need and demand for education that fills critical gaps in service provision. This is a matter which NRC and other partners should explore and consider with urgency.

It is important to also acknowledge, that while LSS and remedial education is where NRC's education programme in the camps currently contributes most directly to the Jordan Response Plan, it has in the past also supported systems strengthening, particularly in terms of the significant time, investment and effort that went into developing the Ministry's current catch-up programme. Advocacy for the government's acceptance of an Accelerated Learning programme (ALP) began in 2014, with a working group formed and led by NRC and UNICEF. In December 2014, NRC, UNHCR and UNICEF held a

[105] PLAN (2016), *Needs Assessment Report: Syria refugee crisis in Jordan,* p. 23

workshop on *Alternative Education Opportunities for Out-of-School Children*. This led to the subsequent creation of a framework for a certified ALP for out of school children that was suitable for the Jordanian context aligned with MoE policies and regulations, and responsive to the needs of out-of-school children in emergencies. By early 2015, there appeared to be significant traction behind this, with NRC beginning the work of developing an ALP policy and establishing two committees for ALP—programme design and curricula, and policy. Yet, by September of that year, the process had stalled with a change of leadership in the Ministry. Despite the best efforts of NRC, the ALP was not approved and significant time and investment which NRC had put into facilitating this appeared to have been lost. Yet, following the London Conference in 2016, the Ministry announced its own certified "catch-up" programme for 25,000 Syrian refugee children aged 9-12. The new programme, consists of 3 levels covering grades 1-6. Upon successful completion of the programme, successful students will receive a certificate signed and endorsed by the MoE, allowing them re-entry into the formal education or the ability to continue in non-formal education.[106] Informally, the MoE has acknowledged that this catch-up programme is based on the work that NRC and the MoE had done together previously on the ALP, yet NRC by that point had been shut out of discussions to assist in implementing the catch-up programme. Instead, UNICEF took on responsibility for providing support for teacher salaries, teacher training, outreach, transportation and technical support to the steering committee on the catch-up programme. Today, there is acknowledgement, even within UNICEF, that the catch-up programme is not operating as it should, and that assistance from other partners is needed to fully operationalise it. However, it does not appear as if UNICEF has established opportunities for its partners to support efforts in this area, despite Ministry of Education recognition that there is a need and gap in this area.

Finally, the need to rapidly respond to this changing context and adapt programming to fit the changed demands and requests of donors and the Ministry of Education has not been easy for NRC, and has at point created tensions and issues internally, and externally with some partners. That stated, all of NRC's major donors for its programming in the camps noted that two things have remained consistent and constant:

(1) **The quality of programming delivered:** It was noted that a key contribution of NRC in the education sector in the camps has been its ability to deliver quality, holistic and meaningful programming to its beneficiaries.

(2) **As a supportive partner:** NRC was noted by all parties that in response to a changing context, it has acted as a supportive partner at all times, and willing to cede its own agenda to respond to the most pressing needs and demands at the time.

The first of these points has been made clear throughout prior sections of the evaluation in regards to both the impacts and relevance of its programming for beneficiaries. Specifically, donors felt that NRC's greatest contribution to the education sector in the camps had been on demonstrating how to deliver programming that was responsive to the needs of beneficiaries and contributed to meaningful impacts on learning and protection-focussed issues. There was also a sense that NRC stood out as a "boutique provider" in in terms of the depth of its programming (compared to breadth), which also then made it more difficult for it to garner the same types of visibility that other providers of informal education enjoy.

On the latter aspect, that of NRC being an adaptive, receptive and willing partner, there are several ways in which this manifest itself. NRC Jordan has worked closely with the Ministry of Education on its current LSS, and one of its current members of staff has also been seconded part-time to the Ministry to support and strengthen efforts at the systems-level. Increasingly, there is evidence of closer collaboration occurring between the Ministry and NRC Jordan, particularly under the leadership of the current Minister. There appear to be new opportunities to reopen doors that may have been shut prior,

[106] MoE concept note on Catch-up classes April 2016

specifically in regards to its engagement/involvement in supporting the Ministry to support quality educational provision for Jordanian and refugee populations alike.

NRC Jordan is also actively involved in coordination platforms at the national level, as an active member of the Education Sector Working Group (ESWG) and the Jordan INFO Forum (JIF), and at the camp level by acting as co-chair of the ESWG in Zaatari Camp. Within the camp programming, and as discussed in previous sections, NRC has also partnered with a range of local and international organisations to promote literacy & numeracy.

KEY CONCLUSIONS

- ✓ For learners in school, NRC's programming in the learning centres helps to complement their education by providing a supportive, enabling, child-friendly and rich learning environment where their schooling experiences can be extended and deepened. It has particular added value for students struggling to learn in the formal schools who are officially referred to NRC by officials there, despite the fact that these referrals currently constitute a small proportion of the total number of beneficiaries. That stated, an ongoing challenge for NRC is to ensure that its informal education programing in the learning centres is not viewed as parallel, but rather complementary to, formal education provision.
- ✓ Some of the key factors of NRC's learning centres which contribute to a quality learning experience for learners include: (1) its holistic programming which extends beyond support in the core curriculum areas, to other areas of interest and need for learners; (2) the Syrian facilitators who enable students to feel safe to take risks, and learn in their own time; and (3) the learning facilities of the centres themselves which provide access to a myriad of opportunities which learners do not have regular access to elsewhere.
- ✓ Drop out, non-completion and irregular attendance are a chronic feature of NRC's education programming in the camps, and is further exacerbated by the fact that its activities are non-accredited, and increasingly in competition with a range of other informal education opportunities available to learners in the camp. Thus, despite demonstrated effectiveness and relevance for learners who do attend, there are significant operational and strategic questions about the efficiency of its current model of support. In light of these issues, and the demand from donors to maximise value for money, NRC's shift towards directly engaging with the formal schools in the camps appears appropriate and relevant.
- ✓ The decision to maximise beneficiary numbers by limiting student participation to one cohort in a year in most cases is problematic on many levels, and signals a potential prioritisation at present on programme efficiency and donor demands, rather than programme effectiveness and beneficiary need.
- ✓ While NRC's education programming and outreach efforts in the camps serves an important protective function for adolescents and out of school children, these two groups remain the hardest to engage and retain in NRC education programming.
- ✓ NRC has been relatively successful in providing access to and guaranteeing similar outcomes for various groups of learners, particularly in regards to gender and disability status. Structural and operational aspects of current programming employ a gender-sensitive approach, but on matters of teaching and learning there is little evidence of gender-sensitive actions. Students with disabilities, while still few in number, have been well accommodated in NRC's education programming in the camps. A key challenge appears to remain in terms of ensuring that these students are treated with respect by others, including other students and staff.
- ✓ At present, referral pathways for OOSC back into the formal system do not appear to function as intended, and the provision of catch up and drop out programmes remains insufficient to demand. As such, there is a continued demand and relevance for informal education provision for this population in particular.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- ✓ Informal education programming for adolescents needs to be more adaptive to the needs and demands which this population faces, and in turn, offer different models of delivery—a matter which NRC needs to consider with urgency within its current approach. This may need to vary by the gendered and livelihood needs and demands of these groups within the two different camps, and would need to start with an in-depth understanding of what this age group would see as relevant education provision.
- ✓ Until referral pathways back into the formal system function as intended, and the provision of catch up and drop out programmes is sufficient to demand, it may not be appropriate for NRC to treat OOSC in the same way that those already in the formal school are treated within the learning centre. Programming may need to be better differentiated for these learners out of recognition of the discrete needs and demands this group faces with NRC's informal education provision targeting these beneficiaries in particular.
- ✓ Different options for maximising efficiency within the current LSS model need to be considered—including running multiple cohorts at once and concurrently reducing days of expected participation from 5 to 3 for each group within the learning centre; expanding the number of beneficiaries served through direct engagement with the formal school; and/or working more directly with the Ministry's drop-out and catch-up programmes.
- ✓ There are a number of ways in which NRC could support Ministry efforts to improve quality, protective educational provision for those in school and out of school in the camps based on its demonstrated strengths and achievements in the informal education environment. Specifically, efforts should be directed towards supporting professional development opportunities for formal school teachers, particularly in areas such as classroom management, and by ensuring that the remedial education opportunities in the learning centres are primarily directed towards those referred from the formal schooling system. NRC could also direct its community mobilisation and outreach efforts towards reinforcing and strengthening parental/caregiver engagement in the schools their children attend. For OOSC, NRC should explore ways it can contribute to advocating for the reduction of barriers for learners who show interest to enrol in catch-up and drop-out programmes, and simultaneously to ensure that such programming is delivered in the most effective, relevant and holistic way possible. This may mean NRC engaging directly in supporting or strengthening the delivery of these programmes and/or potentially advocating for other non-formal education pathways for these learners.
- ✓ As part of assessing the continued relevance and appropriateness of its current educational response in the camps, NRC should explore the potential of a differentiated approach within Azraq and Zaatari based on the fact that the current contexts of these two camps is quite distinct.

6 Lessons learned

This evaluation set out to explore the efficiency, effectiveness, relevance, appropriateness of NRC's education programming in the camps of Jordan since it commenced operation in Zaatari in 2013. The evaluation has found that overall, NRC's programming has strong impacts on beneficiaries in terms of improvements in learning and student well-being. Through a holistic, well-resourced programme staffed by highly motivated and well-trained Syrian and Jordanian staff it has managed to provide a response to the educational needs of a large majority of Syrian children and adolescents residing in the camps which appears to be relevant and appropriate.

In regards to the *INEE Minimum Standards for Education*, there are many areas in which programming is reflective of good practice including:

- ✓ Protection and Learning Environments (Access and Learning): Learning environments are secure, safe and promote the protection and psychosocial well-being learners, teachers and other educational personnel;
- ✓ Facilities and Services (Access and Learning): Education facilities promote the safety and well-being of learners, teachers and other educational personnel and are linked to health, nutrition, psychosocial and other protection services;
- ✓ Training, Professional Development and Support (Teaching and Learning): Teachers and other education personnel receive periodic, relevant and structured training according to needs and circumstances;
- ✓ Conditions of Work (Teachers and Other Education Personnel): Teachers and other education personnel have clearly defined conditions of work and are appropriately compensated;
- ✓ Support and Supervision (Teachers and Other Education Personnel): Support and supervision mechanisms for teachers and other education personnel function effectively

There is significant potential for other NRC programmes in the region and further afield to learn from how NRC Jordan has achieved these successes in its camp programming and consider how it can adapt such approaches to their context.

That stated, the evaluation also identified a series of issues which NRC needs consider moving forward both for its (education) programming in Jordan, as well as its education programming more globally. Some of the key issues include the following:

1. The shared long-term commitment which exists between the Government of Jordan and its partners to strengthen the education system as a whole to be responsive and resilient to ongoing crises and the needs of all learners is laudable and commendable. This vision has and continues to shape the operational space within which NRC and other actors operate, and shifted responses towards more developmental approaches. Unfortunately, in the short and medium term, there remain significant gaps in this rapid transition that have the potential to unwittingly jeopardise the rights of children to a quality education and exacerbate concerns about a "lost generation" of Syrian refugees. For example, government commitment and ownership towards supporting educational opportunities for OOSC has not yet been matched by sufficient capacity for effective provision. Similarly, while access for children able to immediately enrol in formal school has improved significantly in recent years, insufficient attention has been given to quality. For this reason, a staged, beneficiary-centric approach to working within and parallel to the formal education system should be considered as NRC shifts between humanitarian and developmental responses.
2. Despite significant changes in the institutional and camp contexts over the past three years, it does not appear that NRC or other INGO actors have taken the time to assess if the general

trajectory of action is still the right one, for the education sector in the camps as a whole, for each camp population, and for sub-populations within the camps. Rather many programmatic decisions appear to be based on past assumptions and data which may no longer be relevant. Now would be the time to take stock of this, and better understand how this changing context is having an effect on the educational experiences of the programme's intended beneficiaries.

3. One of the key challenges faced in this evaluation was the multitude of data—at an output and outcome level—that has been collected from beneficiaries over the past years but poorly organised and analysed. Much of these data have been used crudely to provide reporting to donors against target indicators, with nothing else done with them since. In reviewing these data several issues arose including: (1) inconsistencies in how data was being collated, tabulated and analysed at the centre-level, (2) differences in the frequency and quantity of beneficiaries from which outcome data was being collected; (3) a lack of attention to the reliability and consistency of administration of particular tools and measures; and (4) issues in how these data are labelled, stored and consolidated centrally by management and M&E at the country office level. It would appear that many of these issues are the product of inattention to the M&E functions at a management level, and poor coordination and oversight of M&E activity in the programme, particularly between the learning centre staff in the camps and key individuals in Amman. This could be a product of NRC as an organisation not giving sufficient support or attention to building the evaluative capacity of key management staff, who should be able to oversee and ask questions of the data being collected to shape programme activity more formatively based on evidence.
4. Within NRC's programming globally, there appears to be a desire to establish more standardised approaches and toolkits across a range of context. The regional roll out of BLP is a good example of this. An important cautionary note, however, is that programmes operate within a particular context, hence it should not be assumed that what works in one context will work in another, or that inputs that are necessary and sufficient in one context, are the same necessary and sufficient inputs in another. A strength of NRC's programming globally has been to take a set of guiding ideas or principles and to adapt this in response to the context and needs of beneficiaries. This should not be lost in the drive for increased programme efficiency.
5. It would appear that a long-standing question within NRC's education programming has been that of whether programming which originates as something that is holistic, multi-faceted, and of quality can be scaled up to reach more beneficiaries without losing programme quality. What experience has revealed, both in Jordan, and other contexts is that in most cases there is a trade-off. This trade-off should be carefully considered given that in Jordan, as in many other contexts where NRC is involved in education programming, it is known as a provider of quality programming, rather than an actor who necessarily delivers at scale.
6. As NRC broadens its pool of donors for education programming in Jordan, it offers up new opportunities to consider how it can strategically leverage on various streams of funding to maintain integrity to the key considerations of quality impacts, and relevance of programming to beneficiaries. There are, for example some donors who are more concerned about depth and quality of impact, and others who are concerned more about maximising beneficiaries. At present, there are components of NRC's programme activity where it is feasible to have large numbers of beneficiaries (i.e. Walk to School programme), and other components where the beneficiary numbers may not be large, but the potential for meaningful and sustained impact on individuals quite large (i.e. out of school children). NRC may be able to 'pitch' particular components of its education response to particular donors, with these interests in mind.
7. While the Government of Jordan has now developed a model for "catch up" and "drop out" education, there appears to remain an opportunity to work with a range of actors and the government to advocate for a more meaningful Accelerated Learning Programme (ALP) for out of school and overage learners. ALPs are typically geared at learners between the ages of

11-18 and offer them the possibility to gain a certified education in an accelerated timeframe.[107] While the catch-up programme offers this potential, it only does so for those younger than 11 at the time of commencement (due to the time required to complete the full 24-month cycle). The drop-out programme, on the other hand, appears to not guarantee certification unless learners complete an additional home-based year of learning. For this reason, there is still no true ALP in place which might target learners 11-15, and provide them with the equivalent of a Grade 7 or 9 education in up to 3 years.

8. Care should be taken as the education programme continues to evolve in the coming months and years to not just "add on" activities to those already occurring, but to consistently evaluation current efforts and possibly consolidate or remove some facets of programming which are no longer relevant or having the desired impact. The danger, otherwise, is that the education programme in the camps could become a multi-headed hydra without a clear sense of direction. Additional inputs or activities also have the potential to demand increased data collection as part of M&E, stretching the already limited team capacity in this area even further.

[107] See Accelerated Education Working Group: 10 Principles for Effective Practice.

7 Annexes

7.1 Terms of Reference for Evaluation

Country: Jordan
Duration: July – December 2017
Reporting to: Evaluation Steering Committee

1. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Background on the conflict/context
Since the outbreak of conflict in Syria in 2011 over 3 million people have sought safety abroad. As of May 2017, 659,246 Syrian refugees have registered with UNHCR in Jordan[108]. Of the total number of registered refugees, the majority are children and youth; 57% are under the age of 18[109]. Over 80% of registered Syrian refugees are living in the host community predominately in the Northern Governorates and large urban areas like Amman and Irbid. Many more Syrian refugees living in these areas are not registered or have the Ministry of Interior (MoI) card which enables access to free education and subsidised health services. Approximately 20% of Syrian refugees have settled in the refugee camps of Zaatari in Mafraq Governorate, and Azraq in Zarqa Governorate. In May 2017, 55.6% of the 79,822 registered refugees living in Zaatari Camp were aged 0-17. The figures are similar in Azraq: 57% of the 53,915 residents in the camp were aged 0-17. Jordan has been shouldering the burden of the crisis by contributing substantial assistance to refugees yet, the situation for Syrians refugees has deteriorated significantly in the last few years. resulting in 69%[110] of Syrian refugee families living below the national poverty line. Families are increasingly relying upon negative coping strategies, such as limiting food consumption, restricting children's access to education, engaging in illegal activities, in child labour or accepting early marriage. In camps, alternative income sources are extremely scarce with an exceedingly high unemployment rate of 80%[111]. Responses to the Syrian refugee crisis have been led by the UN and the Jordanian government, The most recent Jordan Response Plan for the Syria Crisis 2016-2018, integrates the needs of Syrian urban refugees with Jordanian citizens into each sector. Key elements include increasing *access for Syrian refugees to works permits and the labour market, and increasing access to formal education.
Education in Jordan
In the school year 2016-2017[112], 125,000[113] Syrian children were enrolled in the formal education system. Of these, 32,000 children (25%) attend schools in camps and with the remaining 75% attended schools in the host community. Another 1,620 children were enrolled in MOE-certified NFE programmes (dropout and basic literacy) and 66,038 children receive

108 UNHCR 1st May 2017 Syria Regional Refugee Response Interagency Information Sharing Portal http://data.unhcr.org/syrianrefugees/country.php?id=107#

109 UNHCR Jordan Factsheet, February 2017.

110 CARE (2015). Five years into exile. Retrieved from www. care-international.org

111 ILO Impact of Syrian refugees on the Jordanian labour market June 2015

112 Jordan – Syrian refugee children enrolled in public schools – by directorates (2015-2016) UNICEF 21 Feb 2016

113 Preparing for the Future of Children and Youth in Syria and the Region through Education: London One Year On Brussels Conference Education Report April 2017 No Lost Generation

learning support services in Makani centres (UNICEF funded informal education). A total of 6,102 children attended pre-primary education.
However UNICEF estimated that up to 145,000 Syrian school age children were still out of school in May 2016[114] in host communities in Jordan. The single most important factor which accounts for 39% of children's failure to enrol relates to low monetary welfare in the family (financial constraints, cost of transport, child labour and the need to move to make a living). Lack of spaces in nearby schools affected 26% of non-enrolment with 13% of that related to missing documentation for the school registration process.

2016 saw huge changes in the education sector in Jordan. Following the London Conference in February 2016, donors funded the Jordanian Ministry of Education's (MoE) plan to enable access for all Syrian refugee children to certified formal and non-formal education. In August 2016 two nation-wide Learning-for-All campaigns were conducted to boost enrolment, identify out-of-school children and provide referral and registration support allowing all children – even those without documentation – the chance to register in formal education immediately. Since September 2016, the MoE has increased the total of double shift schools from 98 schools which hosted over 50,000 Syrian children in the school year 2015-2016[115], to 198. In addition, 47 catch up centres were established in these schools to provide certified non-formal education to children who are currently out of school.

After four years of education service delivery for refugees in Zaatari Camp and more than two in Azraq[116], a wide range of education programming specifically addressing the needs of children have been implemented: formal and non-formal education conducted by the Ministry of Education, and informal education[117]conducted by humanitarian actors. These informal programmes constitute a range of activities designed to meet the psychosocial, educational and skills-based needs of refugees between the ages of 3-18 and include life skills and recreational activities.

Whilst the education conditions in camp schools are somewhat improved, given that they serve only Syrian students in both the morning and afternoon shift, dropout rates are still high for the higher grades. UNICEF lists poverty, child labour, overcrowding and poor quality teaching as the factors leading to drop out in formal schools in camps, particularly for boys aged over 12[118]. In camps in particular, there are concerns around violence and protection with many young boys engaged in child labour, and widespread early marriage affecting girls. Harassment en-route to school and perceived harsh treatment in class is another push factor leading to dropout.

1.3 NRC's Presence and Activities in the Country

NRC's Jordan country programme was started in August 2012, with the main focus of supporting UNHCR in setting-up and operating Zaatari refugee camp and supporting formal schools in Zaatari. In 2013, NRC launched education and youth programmes for out-of-school children and youth in camps and its first non-camp operation through its Shelter, Information Counselling and Legal Assistance (ICLA) and school construction programme in Irbid. NRC currently operates in 2 major Syrian refugee camps (Zaatari, Azraq) and the 4 Governorates of Irbid, Jerash, Ajloun and Mafraq, where the concentration of Syrian refugees is among the highest in the country.

NRC Jordan Country Factsheet

114 UNICEF, Running on Empty – The Situation of Syrian children in host communities in Jordan, May 2016.
115 UNICEF, Syrian refugee children enrolled in public schools (2015-2016), December 2015.
116 Zaatari Camp officially opened 12 July 2012.UNHCR Zaatari Refugee Camp Factsheet, November 2016. Azraq Camp officially opened 30 April 2014. UNHCR Azraq Refugee Camp Factsheet, November 2016.
117 'Formal school' refers to accredited learning at all age levels, including primary school, secondary school, and tertiary education. 'Non-formal education' in Jordan refers to the government-led, accredited Catch-Up and Drop-Out courses. 'Informal education' refers to all educative programmes that take place outside of the 'formal' classroom, and build an individual's skills and capacities. For the purposes of this assessment, informal education is used to refer to remedial and adult literacy courses also.
118 Joint Education Needs Assessment (2014) Access to Education for Syrian refugee Children in Za'atari Camp, Jordan. ESWG

(https://www.nrc.no/globalassets/pdf/fact-sheets/2017/jordan/country-fact-sheet_jordan-dec-2016.pdf)

1.4 NRC's Education Intervention

From the start of NRC's education intervention in Zaatari in 2013, the Jordan education programme focused on out of school children (OOSC) by providing access to expanded informal education in the form of an Accelerated Education Programme (ALP) to help out of school children transition into the formal school system. It also provided informal education for children who were unlikely to be able to transition back to formal school due to their age and the restrictions on registration in formal schools. In the camp context NRC informal education took place in dedicated learning centres where other services such as recreational activities, computer classes and psychosocial wellbeing activities are carried out as well as support for remedial education for children who would otherwise be pushed out. These activities were mainly carried out with UNICEF Jordan and other education actors.

In 2015 NRC Education branched out from the camp-based work to ensure that children in the host community, (both refugee and non-refugee) had enhanced access to infrastructure and services to meet the huge demand. NRC has built on this initial work with a massively expanded programme of classroom and WASH unit construction in double shifted schools with soft components for quality teaching and learning focusing on the second Syrian shift.

In 2016 NRC had to significantly change its strategy for education in camps in line with the MoE commitment in the Jordan Response plan 2017-2019. NRC now supports OOSC to register in formal or non-formal education provided by the formal schools and works to support children vulnerable to drop out and needing remedial support to remain in school.

Since the beginning of the Education programme in camps, more than 11,964 Syrian school-aged refugee children have been supported by NRC in dedicated learning centres. Whilst in host communities, 51 classrooms and 8 sanitation facilities across 7 schools have been constructed, and more than 6000 children have been engaged in NRC educational activities.

NRC coordinates with key stakeholders including national partners to find ways to address the needs of Syrian and Jordanian children. NRC co-leads the Zaatari Education Sector Working Group and is an active member of the Donor Education group, Education Sector Working Group, Protection Working Group, and the Task Force Ending Violence Against Children in Schools chaired by UNICEF and MoE.

2. PURPOSE OF EVALUATION AND INTENDED USE

The main purpose of the evaluation is to support learning and provide guidance for future programme direction. In addition, the evaluation should be an opportunity for NRC to be accountable to beneficiaries, partners and donors. NRC policy is to conduct an external evaluation of its programmes once every 3 years and NRC hopes that the many lessons learned captured in Jordan will provide additional evidence to feed into global programme development for education.

The primary users of the evaluation are the Core Competency Section in Head Office, country management teams and in particular the Education Section, to inform and feed ongoing global and national program development within education work. Primary users of the evaluation are also the NRC management team in Jordan as well as Education teams who will directly utilise the evaluation findings to adjust programme implementation, improve its quality and to guide the future direction of the programme. In addition, the Head Office Education Core Competency section will utilise the learning to inform ongoing global programme development in education.

Secondary users include the MERO regional office and NRC Education Staff in the region. Tertiary users include partners, donors, and other stakeholders. The findings and conclusions of the evaluation will be shared with these actors. The evaluation will support the transference

of learning; what specific lessons learned and best practices should be highlighted and continued or disseminated either within the programme or more widely within NRC.

3. SCOPE OF WORK AND LINES OF INQUIRY

The evaluation will cover the education programme in refugee camps in support of Syrian refugee children, which has been implemented in Zaatari since early 2013 and Azraq since early 2015.

3.1. Lines of inquiry

The evaluation will look to answer the following questions:

Relevance/Appropriateness

- How relevant and appropriate is the current program design and implementation to the educational, life skills and social needs of Syrian refugee children in Zaatari and Azraq camps? To what extent has NRC adapted to changes in the operating context since 2013? What should be done to improve the relevance and appropriateness of the program? What programmatic areas should be scaled up or adapted in future?
- To what degree is the project designed and implemented based on the opinions and the priorities of Syrian refugee children and parents? Is it perceived as relevant by them? If so, how?
- To what extent are the different needs of the various sub-groups (overage children, out of school children, adolescents, children with disabilities, children with special education needs) taken into account? How can the programme better target sub-groups to become more inclusive? Does the curricula and pedagogy meet the needs of the students? How can they be made more appropriate?
- Does the education programme meet the INEE minimum standards for education in emergency?

All NRC evaluations are required to respond to two additional 'Evidence Case Study' – one which addresses a strategically important question for NRC. NRC has a new strategic evaluation question for 2017: 'How can we ensure that we do the right things (according to the needs and priorities of the targeted population)?' (See Annex A attached for guidance on how to answer this question and to fulfil this requirement)

The second case study will focus on an after-action review of the Better Learning Programme and will look at the impact the BLP has on access to learning and learning outcomes. (See Annex B attached for guidance on how to answer this question.)

Efficiency and effectiveness

- To what extent were the objectives of the program achieved/are likely to be achieved? Has the program ensured children in Zaatari and Azraq both out of school children and those in formal school, adequate access to quality education so that they meet learning outcomes and remain in education? What can be changed to improve the effectiveness of the program?
- How cost-efficient, timely, and inclusive are the activities and processes used in the provision of quality education by NRC in both camps? How do beneficiaries and key stakeholders perceive the quality of education? Is the program implemented in the most efficient way (modality) compared to alternatives with in the camp setting?
- To what extent has NRC adapted to the change in MoE response after the London conference in 2016, in which a large number of refugee children would be provided access to formal education? Was the education programme able to respond strategically, and on the ground to meet the change in education context?

- How effective is NRC at measuring the impact on learning outcomes? Does it have the right tools and systems in place to provide evidence of both intentional and unintentional outcomes?

Coordination

- How well is the NRC program internally coordinated across Azraq and Zaatari? And how can it be improved? What is the potential for synergies with other NRC Core Competencies or programmes?
- What has been the role of NRC in the advocacy and coordination of quality certified education for refugee children in camps? How can this be improved?
- How well does the education programme coordinate with Formal schools the camps? What systems have been established to ensure efficient referrals between formal schools and NRC learning centres? How can these be improved?

Impact

- How has the education programme (learning space, facilitators, curricula and staff) contributed to the protection, personal, social and emotional development of children in the programme?
- What impact has NRC education programme had on access and retention of Syrian children in formal education since the beginning of the programme? How did the Accelerated education programme contribute to access and retention of children in formal education?
- What impact has NRC Education programme had on community participation and refugee engagement of both parents and out of school adolescents? How has it improved their lives?
- What role is technology playing to support the education for Syrian children. Is it appropriate and relevant and which areas should be scaled up or adapted in the future?

Learning and sustainability

- What are the suggestions for more effective programming to meet the overarching objective of access and retention in quality formal education? (structurally, work modality and staffing)? Identify current gaps and suggest good practices for future responses and organizational learning.
- What, if any, are the scale up options for the education programme in both the camps and host community in Jordan? How can NRC contribute to a sustainable educational strategy in the camps? What steps need to be put in place to ensure the learning centres can continue to provide quality education for the Syrian Refugee community?
- By reviewing the theory of change and identifying existing as well as potential innovative elements of the programme, what could be strengthened to achieve greater impact in areas identified as important by children and their parents?

4. METHODOLOGY

To answer evaluation questions, NRC would like the evaluator to submit a study design and methodology, which focuses on participatory, qualitative methods, to complement the significant amount of quantitative data about the programme already available. In particular, we are seeking an evaluator experienced in participatory evaluations and with demonstrable

experience of qualitative evaluations, such as process tracing or most significant change, is desirable. We require an evaluator familiar with theories of change.

At a minimum, the methodology should include a desk review of key documents, including analysis of existing quantitative data, semi-structured interviews with key informants, and methods to seek the views and perceptions of the targeted communities and key stakeholders.

5. EVALUATION FOLLOW UP AND LEARNING

NRC follows up all evaluations with a management response, and its implementation is subsequently tracked. This will include the documentation of key learning, which will be shared with the relevant head office technical advisor for circulation to NRC country offices.

This evaluation, including the case studies will contribute to an annual learning review, which feeds into an annual strategic planning processes. Key findings will be reported to NRC's senior management team in Oslo.

6. EVALUATION PRINCIPALS

The views expressed in the report shall be the independent and candid professional opinion of the evaluator. The evaluation will be guided by the following ethical considerations:

- Openness - of information given, to the highest possible degree to all involved parties
- Public access - to the results when there are not special considerations against this
- Broad participation - the interested parties should be involved where relevant and possible
- Reliability and independence - the evaluation should be conducted so that findings and conclusions are correct and trustworthy

7. COORDINATION AND MANAGEMENT OF THE EVALUATION

An evaluation Steering committee will be established by NRC, with the following members:

The Committee Chair, the Education and Youth Specialist, is responsible to facilitate access to information, documentation sources, travel, and field logistics. In case of any changes in the positions in country or at Head Office, the Steering Committee will be adjusted accordingly.

The Steering committee will oversee administration and overall coordination, including monitoring progress. The main functions of the Steering committee will be:

- to establish the Terms of Reference of the evaluation;
- select external evaluator(s);
- review and comment on the inception report and approve the proposed evaluation strategy;
- review and comment on the draft evaluation report;
- establish a dissemination and utilization strategy.

The main functions of the Reference Group will be:

- to facilitate the gathering of data necessary for the evaluation;
- to participate in the validation of evaluation findings, and to ensure that they are factually accurate;
- to contribute to the management response;
- to act on the relevant recommendations.

8. DELIVERABLES AND REPORTING DEADLINES

The evaluator/ evaluation team will submit three reports and three presentations:

- Inception report: Following the desk review and prior to beginning fieldwork, the evaluation team will produce an inception report subject to approval by the NRC Evaluation Steering Committee. This report will detail a draft work plan with a summary of the primary information needs, the methodology to be used, and a work plan/schedule for field visits and major deadlines. With respect to methodology, the evaluation team will provide a description of how data will be collected and a sampling framework, data sources, and drafts of suggested data collection tools such as questionnaires and interview guides.
  Once the report is finalised and accepted, the evaluation team must submit a request for any change in strategy or approach to the NRC Evaluation Steering Committee. Inception report is due in **first draft by COB 1st September, final by 13th September. Field work will start in October.**
- Draft Report: Draft evaluation report to be submitted to the Evaluation Steering Committee, who will review the draft and provide feedback within ten days of receipt of the draft report. The draft will be submitted by 5th November and feedback will be provided to researchers by **COB 14th November.**
- Final report: The Final Evaluation Report, including the BLP Case Study report, will follow NRC's standard template for evaluation reports. The final report should include a maximum two-page executive summary that summarizes the key lessons learned and should also include best practices case studies that can be shared with NRC's technical and management staff. Submission is **due 24th November** to the Steering Committee and will be finalised and approved by steering committee by **1st December.**
- Presentation of findings:
  - At the end of the field research, the evaluation team will present preliminary findings to validate and prioritise learning at the Jordan level. This will take place on **17th October**.
  - One Skype call for HO and other interested NRC staff who may benefit from the learning with the lead Evaluator.
  - An online workshop will be conducted to present final report on **1st December**.

All material collected in the undertaking of the evaluation process shall be lodged with the Chair of the NRC Evaluation Steering Committee prior to the termination of the contract.

9. TIMEFRAME

Proposals should present a budget for the number of expected working days over the entire period.

The evaluation is scheduled to start August and fieldwork is projected in October.

The evaluator/ evaluation team is expected to provide a suggested timeline and work plan for the evaluation based on these scheduling parameters and in keeping with the scope of the evaluation questions and criteria.

In event of serious problems or delays, the (lead) evaluator should inform the Steering Committee immediately. Any significant changes to review timetables shall be approved by the Steering Committee in advance.

10. EVALUATION CONSULTANT TEAM

NRC seeks expressions of interest from individuals or joint applications, ideally with the following skills/qualifications and expertise:

- Sound and proven experience in conducting evaluations, particularly utilisation and learning focused evaluations
- Extensive experience of theories of change and how they can be used to carry out evaluations
- Expertise in participatory qualitative data collection techniques
- Background in delivery of education programmes

Additional, desirable knowledge, includes:

- Understanding of refugee education programmes providing psychosocial well-being
- Understanding of global and regional trends and initiatives on youth

Necessary Skills:

- Fluency in written and spoken English is required
- Prior experience in Middle East
- Proven experience of managing evaluations of humanitarian projects in camp settings
- Experience of designing qualitative data collection methods and of managing participatory and learning focused evaluations
- Excellent team working and communication skills, flexibility and good organisation skills

11. APPLICATION PROCESS AND REQUIREMENTS

Application Deadline: 29 June 2017

Interview dates: First week July

Bids must include the following:

- Proposal including, outline of evaluation framework and methods, including comments on the TOR, proposed timeframe and work plan (bids over 3 pages will be automatically excluded).
- Proposed evaluation budget including an estimation of the expected working days over the entire period between August to December.
- Cover letter clearly summarizing experience as it pertains to this assignment and three professional references.
- CVs and evidence of past evaluations for each team member
- At least one example of an evaluation report most similar to that described in this TOR.

Disclaimer: *The daily cost quoted needs to include all travel to and from home country (if living outside of Jordan), accommodation while in Jordan, equipment, phone calls and any costs associated with undertaking the Scope of Work (including insurance). Non-resident income tax rate is 10% and resident income tax is 5% and is to be deducted from the contract amount and paid by NRC to the tax department. An income tax clause has to be included in the contract with the percentage that will be deducted and paid to the tax department. NRC also provides the Consultant with the receipt (proof of payment) within 1 month. Tax at 10% will be deducted from any payment and so should be included in the budget. The successful candidate will receive his/her payment following clearance of the pre-agreed milestones.*

Submit completed bids to Julie Chinnery.

7.2 After action review: Better Learning Programme in Jordan

7.2.1 Background

As part of the evaluation of the education programming within NRC Jordan's camp response, it was asked that an after-action review be completed of the Better Learning programme (BLP) implementation in Jordan. The intent of this after-action review was to provide a more focussed investigation of BLP's successes and failures in the Jordan programme, as well as to clearly document its approach to implementation. Particular questions were raised about the impact of the BLP on learning and student learning outcomes, as well as on classroom management, and conflicts between students and parents.

7.2.2 Summary of the Better Learning Programme

The Better Learning Programme consists of two components: BLP 1 reaches out to all pupils and provides psycho-education and coping skills, while BLP 2 is a specialised intervention for those with chronic symptoms of traumatic stress.[119] Both components combine a psychosocial and trauma-focussed approach.

The BLP 1 is a general preventive tool based on education, crisis psychology and traumatic stress research and is administered by the teacher in the classroom. It provides explanations to students on normal reactions after experiencing crisis and focuses on teaching them relaxation methods to enhance their normal coping resources. Teachers are equipped with a guide that provides model language, but with scope to adapt to the circumstance and particular context. The intention is that BLP 1 is implemented as part of the normal classroom/school programme, and is aimed to strengthen the psychosocial wellbeing of all learners.

The BLP 2 targets pupils who report nightmares and sleep disturbances, linked to a conflict-inflicted trauma incidence, and uses a series of structured group and individual sessions to provide them with strategies for calming themselves and improving self-regulation. Trained counsellors have implemented this component and run a more targeted and focussed initiative for those children suffering more acute forms of conflict-induced trauma. BLP 2 uses a more clinical approach with a clear sequence of activities and approaches which counsellors are expected to adhere to in running the sessions.

Both modules aim to improve pupils' learning capacity by empowering the school community, integrating coping techniques into daily teaching and learning, and encouraging pupils' natural recovery. The psychosocial support offered in both components aims: (1) to establish a sense of stability and safety; (2) to promote calming and a capacity for self-regulation; (3) to increase community and self-efficacy, including where to find support and how to give and receive support; and (4) to promote mastery and hope.[120]

7.2.3 Implementation approach in Jordan

In late 2015, a decision was made to introduce BLP into the informal education setting of NRC's learning centres in the camps. At that time, it was clear to programme staff that many of the beneficiaries attending NRC's learning centres were suffering from the impacts of the conflict they had witnessed in Syria, and struggling to cope with the difficult living conditions in the camps. A survey conducted by the programme at that time revealed that nearly 50% of the students were exhibiting symptoms of traumatic stress. This often manifested itself within the learning centres as students being aggressive towards their peers or teachers, acting as bullies, being completely detached from others and/or a complete lack of willingness to participate in centre activities. Teachers in the learning

[119] The Better Learning Programme has evolved further since its implementation in Palestine and Jordan and is now split into into three components—BLP 1, 2, and 3. When referred to in this report, BLP 2 would be the equivalent to the contemporary BLP 3 manual and approach.

[120] These goals are based on commonly accepted prevention efforts for dealing with traumatic stress (e.g., Hobfoll et al. 2007).

centre were overwhelmed by the range of behaviours, and in turn, felt obliged to use authoritarian forms of discipline to get children to comply. The fear at that time was unless the programme addressed the underlying causes of these students' behaviours, teachers would resort to physical or emotional violence over time.

Most teachers working in NRC's learning centres in the three camps in August 2015 were trained by the BLP Technical Experts from the University of Tromso on the implementation of BLP 1 in a two-day training—one day of covering the key concepts of the programme, and another at the centres themselves focussed on teachers observing the BLP 1 techniques and approaches being implemented with students. In line with the guidance in the BLP manual, and based on the PSS-SEL intervention pyramid, the belief was that 70% of the student population's general psychosocial well-being could be improved through this general programme delivered to all students in the centre. BLP 1 was first implemented in the confines of NRC's CLP. It was noted, however, that similar to what was observed in Palestine, BLP 1 tended to be used primarily as a series of exercises and activities during assemblies/line ups at the start of the session, and little of the more theoretical sessions (such as the mind-body connection and safe space) were being implemented effectively in the classroom.

Additionally, in early 2016, administration of a survey to students in the learning centres revealed that 50% of the students were exhibiting more acute symptoms of traumatic stress. Programme management felt it was important for BLP 2 to be introduced quickly to address this need. A smaller group of teachers, along with the Education Programme Manager (PM) for the camps were trained in BLP 2 (5 in Zaatari, 10 in Azraq) by the experts from the University of Tromso in January. Soon after, the process of recruitment and identification of students for the first BLP 2 cohort started.

Prior to commencement of the first sessions with students, a plan for the parental awareness session for selected BLP 2 students was developed and run. These parental awareness sessions, which have become an integral part of the start-up of every BLP 2 cohort in Jordan serves several purposes. One is to make parents more aware of the impact of traumatic events on children and adults. Parents are also introduced to many of the key messages and techniques taught to students in the BLP 2 manual, and given an opportunity to practice some of the approaches on themselves. These sessions also stress to parents the importance of ensuring that their children feel safe to discuss their nightmares with them, and ways they can support their children to overcome their sleeping problems at home. The awareness session also emphasised to parents how BLP 2 is not a clinical PSS programme, that all information shared in the sessions remains confidential, and most importantly, how critical it was that parents ensure their child attends all sessions.

The programme manager also decided to run a short refresher prior to the commencement of the first cohort of BLP 2 students. The intent was for the teachers to practice the sessions in front of their peers and receive feedback and support. Once the first sessions began, the programme manager followed the implementation process closely to ensure that the BLP 2 teachers were sticking to the manualised sequence of sessions, and to identify and respond to issues as they arose.

As part of this, a 'Teacher Supervision Group' was set up and facilitated by the programme manager directly. The aim of the group was two-fold: (1) quality-assure the implementation of each BLP 2 session; and (2) provide immediate feedback and PSS first aid to teachers who often were exposed to similar traumatic events. The group met immediately or soon after BLP 2 sessions with students each week were done. Teachers were asked during the course of each BLP 2 session to keep track of and document observations of their own emotions, feelings, and/or cases of individual children which had an impact on them. Turns were then taken in the teacher supervision group to share these observations with peers, and for them to listen, take notes, and then respond afterwards. What was observed in running the first Teacher Supervision Group by the PM, was that teachers went through a series of stages in the process, moving from a position of questioning their efficacy to support the students in the group, to seeing the difference they were making in a students' life. Now, the intent by the PM is to shift responsibility for facilitating these groups away from him, and create a structure for

the BLP 2 teachers to support each other on a regular basis using a peer to peer supervision and support model.

In 2016, further training on BLP was conducted by the University of Tromso, with support from the Education PM. On two occasions, a case follow-up training was conducted by a consultant from the University of Tromso to discuss experiences and challenges coming out of implementation of the first cohorts of BLP 2. Additionally, more teachers were trained by the BLP technical expert from Tromso, in both BLP 1 and 2, so that by the end of 2016, 19 teachers in Zaatari and 15 teachers in Azraq had been trained on BLP 2; and all teachers working in the learning centres were trained on BLP 1. The intent by the end of 2016, was to begin to develop a cadre of Master Trainers who could support ongoing training for BLP 1 and 2 independent of the support of the technical team from Tromso. This ended up not occurring as the BLP technical expert team was unable to come to Jordan to carry out a Training for these Master Trainers, and the education PM did not feel confident to do this on his own.

An important learning that came about from NRC's implementation of successive cohorts of BLP 2 was the need to strengthen the way BLP 1 was being delivered. Over time, the teachers running the BLP 2 group and individual sessions realised that students' behaviours and actions were often the product of traumatic or stressful events that they had or were continuing to experience. A teacher in one group commented, "*We are now able to understand why children are being very challenging and aggressive, we understand now how much do they suffer and we were not considering that before."* This recognition, according to the PM, meant that behavioural issues in the classroom needed to be understood and dealt with differently, and that all students needed stronger support to address the stressors and tensions they were facing from life in the camp.

At the end of 2016, the PM decided to set up a specialised Monitoring and Support unit (MSU) who would take on the main role for implementation of BLP activities (1 and 2) in the learning centre. Comprised of 5 dedicated teachers within each learning centre, they were given the mandate of identifying and supporting children in need of individualised PSS. Their role was to allow classroom teachers who run into challenges in terms of managing the behaviours of particular children to refer them out of the classroom and into the responsibility of the MSU. The MSU teachers are then tasked with using BLP 1 techniques and strategies with children until they are ready to be referred back into the classroom. The MSU teachers are also responsible for delivering the PSS/BLP lessons in the classroom, and running the BLP 2 sessions.

This year, the PSS/classroom-based component of BLP 1 has also been strengthened so that there are now five separate lessons that have been developed related to concepts such as the mind-body connection and safe places, that are taught during the allocated PSS time in the learning centre schedule. This has been a joint effort between the PM and the Teacher Support Officer in Zaatari, who bring with her expertise and knowledge in PSS programming and curriculum development. This process of improvement is described in the story of change told by one of the MSU teachers in the programme.

IMPROVING PSS IN THE NRC LEARNING CENTRE (TEACHER, MALE, ZAATARI)

When I started working here at the learning centre last year, there was not a good structure on how we taught students life skills and psychosocial support. At that time, there was no MSU unit and it was not clear how we could support the children socially and emotionally all the time while they were here. Towards the end of last year, we realised we were not working in the right direction and that our activities as life skills and PSS teachers was unaligned and inconsistent. So, a decision was made at the beginning of this year to change the way we provide this support. We agreed that psychosocial and life skills education should be taught across the entire curriculum and at all levels. We also agreed that we needed to increase the amount of time we had dedicated to teaching these subjects because of the time it takes to build trust and relationship with students on sensitive topics. Working with the teacher support officer, we developed an extended curriculum plan that Integrates PSS, BLP and life skills over the entire cohort and in a clear and sequenced way. We start each lesson with a warm up activity from BLP 1, introduce the main content, and then we do calm down activity. Teaching in this way has allowed us to move beyond just teaching the BLP 1 stretching and balancing activities and introducing to the children ideas like balancing the mind and body and, identifying stressful situations in a deeper way. All of this has meant that the children now have a better understanding of themselves and their behaviours. It has also allowed us to build better relationships and trust with all students in the centre, as we spent longer with them. We can see as well, that by teaching them these skills, the cases of bullying and other violent behaviour have reduced, and there are overall less serious referrals to the MSU. Throughout this process, we communicate consistently with the parents about our activities. This has strengthened the reputation and trust that the community has of NRC's programme. They now know that if they send their children to the centre, their children will receive a full education. They also feel as if they are sending their children to another member of their family, rather than a set of strangers.

7.2.4 Impacts of BLP on access to learning

As part of a broader package of responses that aim to establish safe, inclusive environments for all students in the in the learning centre and broader community, BLP 1 and 2 appear to work together to support students' ability to learn effectively; in other words, providing the necessary preconditions for students to gain meaningful access to learning. Results of the PSS Integrity tests, administered to students in BLP 1 and all students in BLP 2 in the second cohort of 2017 (see Table 4) reflect sizeable improvements in all domains which the survey capture—general life satisfaction, academic efficacy, and a sense of safety/security. [121] All of these factors are important pre-conditions for students to learn effectively.

What the survey data reveals is that for most statements, students in BLP 2 start out with slightly higher mean scores. The exception is the statement on life satisfaction which suggests that the trauma which these students face may have an undesirable impact on their general sense of well-being. This is also the domain where the most sizeable gains are made in terms of mean scores before and after for BLP 2 students.[122] On other statements directly related to learning, BLP students appear to start with higher baseline scores, but still show sizeable improvement.

	BLP 1		BLP 2	
	Pre	Post	Pre	Post
I am satisfied with my life most of the time	7.3	9.2	6.4	9.5

[121] This included the entire cohort in Zaatari (who were not part of BLP 2), and select students in Azraq (n=52)
[122] At end of cohort, BLP 2 students, mean=9.5; for BLP 1 students, mean=9.2

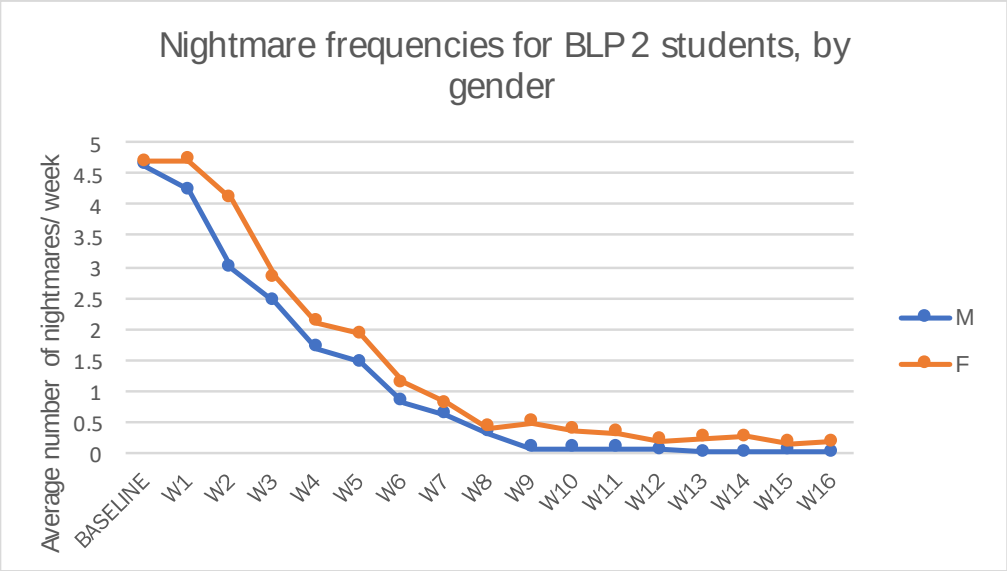
I like to be in school	7.6	9.3	8.8	9.8
I am able to do my best in school most of the time	6.7	8.5	7.4	9.4
I can easily focus in school most of the time	6.3	8.4	6.5	9.1
I am able to complete my homework most of the time	6.4	8.6	7.0	9.5

Table 4: Mean scores from PSS integrity survey for BLP 2 and BLP 1 students, Cohort 2 2017

These impacts are corroborated by stories of change collected from BLP 1 and BLP 2 students as part of the evaluation. As discussed in the main evaluation report, at least 50% of the changes specified by beneficiaries related to different aspects of a students' sense of well-being in areas such as emotional or behavioural regulation, or a more positive disposition towards life. An additional 22% of all changes specified related to improvements in academic self-efficacy.

Perhaps the most immediate and clearly attributable impacts of BLP 2 are on reductions in the frequency of children's nightmares. Data from 2016 suggests that 79% of BLP 2 students reported to not be having any nightmares at all after the completion of the individual sessions. A further 19% reported only having 1-2 nightmares per week (compared to on average 5 nightmares/week at the start). A very small minority of students (less than 1%) continued to have 3 or more nightmares per week. As part of this evaluation, data from 2017 was analysed from the first cohort in both Zaatari and Azraq. Overall, the significant reductions in patterns of nightmares remained consistent with previous data.[123]

Data was disaggregated by gender and camp to identify if there were any discernible differences (see Figure 13 and Figure 14). It would appear that while the boys and girls in this cohort started BLP 2 reporting a similar frequency of nightmares per week, the boys were quicker to see reductions than girls. Boys also appeared to be more likely to report a reduction of nightmares per week to 0 by the end, while girls tended to still report between 0 and 2 nightmares per week. By camp, it also appears as if students in Zaatari are quicker to see a reduction in nightmares than students in Azraq, despite the students in Zaatari reporting a higher frequency of nightmares in the first couple sessions. It isn't until Week 7 where students in Azraq and students in Zaatari are roughly equivalent again, and after Week 7 students in Azraq appear to report less nightmares per week than their counterparts in Zaatari.[124]



[123] This included a total of 165 students, 118 who completed all eight sessions of BLP 2.

[124] Given that these data are based on self-report, and evidence from Palestine would suggest that it is highly unlikely that nightmares are to remain at 0, some questions need to be raised, however, about the reliability of the reporting, particularly after the end of the sessions.

Figure 13: Nightmare frequencies for BLP 2 students in Cohort 1, 2017 by gender

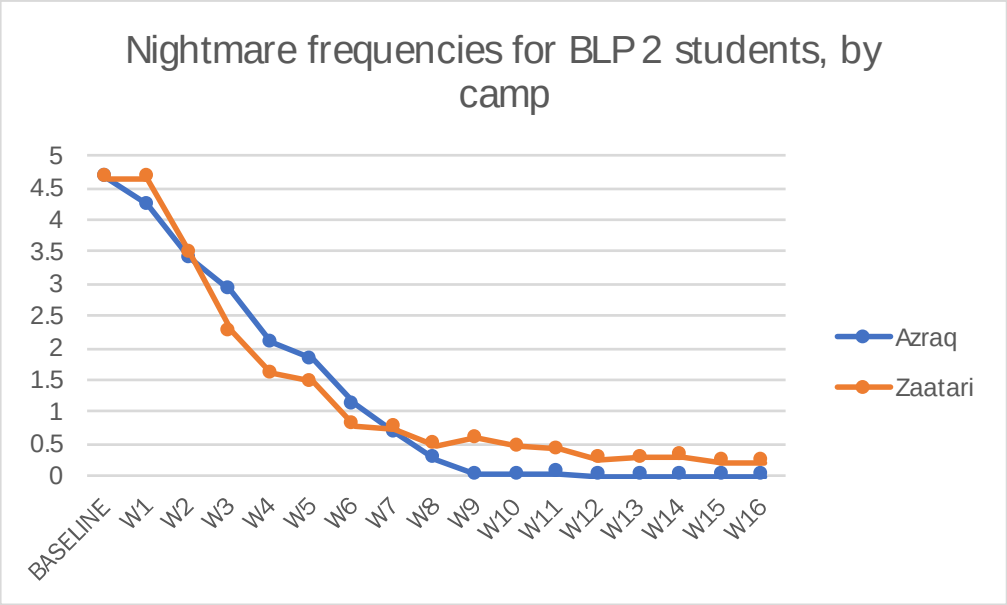


Figure 14: Nightmare frequencies for BLP 2 students in Cohort 1, 2017 by camp

While reductions in nightmares is an important outcome in and of itself, there is also evidence to suggest how this then translates into improved access to education. The story below, told by a beneficiary who was part of BLP 2, discusses in depth the impacts which trauma-induced nightmares had on his ability to meaningfully learn, and his general well-being. He also describes in this story, the process of change that occurred, and the impact that it now has on his improved ability to be focused on learning. It suggests the tangible benefits of BLP 2 in strengthening children's academic capacities and motivations.

THE STORY OF DREAMS (MALE, AZRAQ, 12)

When we came from Aleppo to Azraq I was not happy. I used to see a lot of nightmares, I was afraid to sleep and would stay awake. I used to dream about my siblings who died in the war, and I couldn't stop thinking about their death. Even when I used to study, I wouldn't be able to focus. For example, when I would try to write at school, I would start thinking about when and how they did. Wherever I would walk, I would be afraid. Some kids around the caravan told me to come to NRC's learning centre. They told me they were learning so much and having fun. They said they were getting better and strong in their classes. So, I asked my father, and he enrolled me in the centre. Once I came, they taught me how to draw and talk about my nightmares. They taught me to express my feelings, and showed me ways that I could relax. I felt so much relief. I don't have the nightmares about my siblings as much anymore. Everything is so much better. I no longer feel afraid, and can focus on my studies more. I've now become one of the best students in the class. I now feel happy to live in Azraq and no

Additionally, while it is difficult to attribute some of these changes in children's stories of change to the BLP alone, it does also appear that BLP contributes to improving children's sense of safety and well-being, both within and outside the centre as Figure X and the story above suggests. Stories from other beneficiaries suggests that being able to control and regulate nightmares does impact on their broader sense of safety and well-being. The first example, below, suggests how being able to sleep better has a direct impact on them being targeted as a victim for violence in school.

MOHAMMAD AND THE MONSTER (MALE, ZAATARI, 12)

My father is the one who encouraged me to return to school after we came to Zaatari. He told me that I need to learn to read before I grew up, and that if I didn't he would not let me get married! I was convinced and started going to school. But, I suffered from nightmares, and usually the same one every night. It was of a monster chasing after and attacking me, and when I would imagine waking up I would find myself trapped in the same dream and the same room. It was very hard for me to figure out what was a dream and what was real. Because of this, my academic performance moved very slowly because I always went there sleep deprived, and late because of the nightmares I was having all the time. When I would show up late the teachers would beat me. I felt bad about this situation until one of the teachers at NRC's learning centre asked if we see nightmares at night. I said I did, so they put me in a special program for nightmares. In the programme they taught us breathing exercises and helped us to visualise a safe place. They also showed me how to defeat all the monsters I would see at night. After the nightmares programme I learned how to break out of my bad dreams. I was finally able to go to

Another example identifies how learning how to reduce ones' anxieties and fears reduces the challenges which some learners face to leave their homes and be willing to attend school.

OH, HOW I LOVE MY BROTHER (FEMALE, AZRAQ, 13)

Last year I didn't attend any sort of centres or schools because of my brother. I used to have these reoccurring nightmares that someone would come and take my brother away from me. The nightmares really scared me, and I would never want to leave him alone. I did not even feel safe leaving him with my sisters or parents, that was the main reason I used to miss school. My sister used to come to NRC, she would always tell us how much she loved her teacher here. But, unlike my sister, I preferred going to other centres where I was allowed to bring my brother with me. Then one day, my mother warned me that I would never become a science teacher, which is my dream, if I don't learn to read and write. She convinced me to come to the NRC centre and give things a try. When I started coming to NRC, the teachers taught me about safe places, and how to relax and calm myself. This helped me to no longer see the nightmares of my brother being taken away. I've also become a better student, because here if I don't understand a lesson the repeats it for me. This is different to the formal schools, where I might not understand but no one would care…instead the teacher just sits down and plays with her phone. Because of coming here, I am now a better student. I no longer have nightmares and I don't fear for my brother. I feel safe leaving him at home while I get an education. My life is now full.

And, finally, another BLP 2 beneficiary specifies how the programme has given her increased confidence and willingness to take risks at school without fear of ridicule.

OVERCOMING NIGHTMARES (FEMALE, 12, AZRAQ)

I came from Syria with a very vivid memory of all the horrible things that happened there. For the longest time, I had horrifying nightmares about the war events that I encountered before I left and my dreams took the best of me. I wasn't able to forget the nightmares and thinking about them all the time consumed me. After restless nights of sleep, going to school was exhausting. In school, I had poor academic skills that made me too shy to ever participate in my classes because my classmates would make fun of me whenever I would spell something wrong. Then I heard about NRC's learning centre. While here, the centre gave me group and individual sessions to overcome my nightmares. I was finally able to have a full night sleep. I became more energetic and all my fears have left. I no longer see any bad dreams and I currently teach my younger sisters the exercises I learned in the sessions in order for here to get over her fears as well. My academic skills have also vastly improved, and I started to feel more confident. Being here has helped me to overcome my shyness and to begin to feel

7.2.5 Impacts of BLP on learning outcomes

As noted in the body of the main evaluation report, evidence would suggest substantial improvements in achievement for most students who attend NRC's learning centres. Given the multiple streams of activity and variety of factors which could potentially contribute to these positive learning outcomes, it is difficult to isolate the impact of BLP from the other contributing factors, particularly for BLP 1 which is integrated into the programme curriculum. That stated, analysis was done to ascertain if there was any differential impact of students' participation in BLP 2 on academic achievement to others.

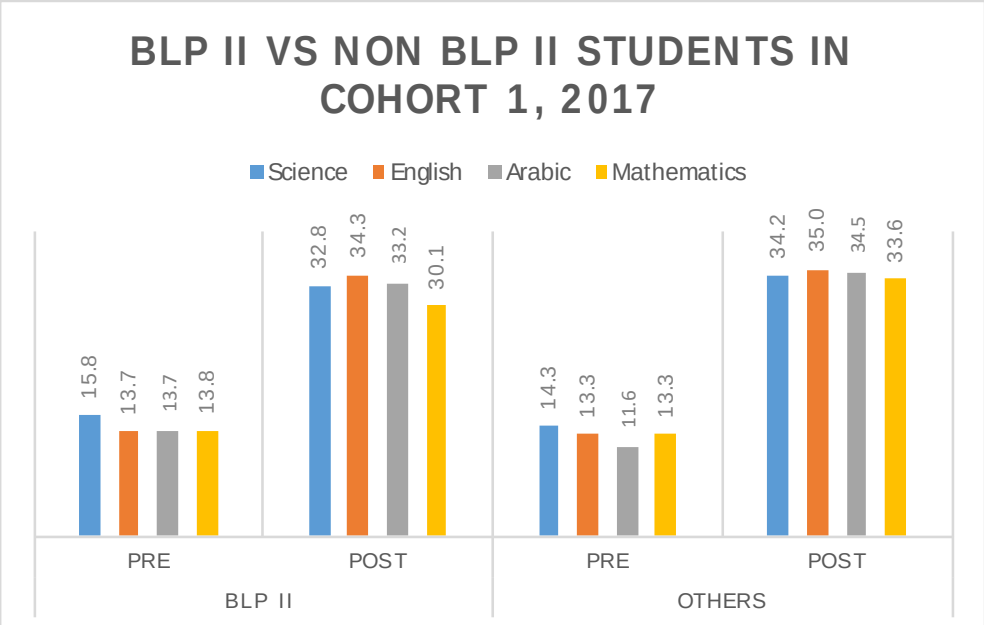


Figure 15: Pre and post test mean scores, for Cohort 1 2017, between BLP2 and other students

Interesting about the data in Figure 15, is a suggestion that upon entry, BLP 2 students appear to be on average, performing stronger than their peers. By the end of the cohort, however, BLP 2 students appear to be performing less well than their peers. That stated, the differences are relatively negligible and within the margin of error. The data does, however, raise questions about whether BLP 2's main contribution is to improved academic achievement, given that there does not appear to be any significant difference in rate of improvement between BLP 2 and non-BLP 2 students. This is despite the perception of many of the beneficiaries who identify it as such (see above stories).

7.2.6 BLP's impact on behaviour inside and outside the classroom

A number of beneficiaries and their caregivers in their stories of change specified clear impacts of BLP on children's behaviour within or outside school. For example, one BLP 1 student described in her story of change how prior to enrolling in the learning centre, "*I wouldn't let anyone at home get close to me, and I didn't have a good relationship with my family because of how I was feeling. I used to beat my younger sisters because of all the anger I felt." After starting at the centre, she notes, "teachers taught me patience and how to better control my anger…They taught me how to communicate my feelings to my family, and how to deal with my feelings without harming those around me.*" As a result, she specified how "*…when I feel anger and sadness [now], I write my feelings down on a paper, I tear it to parts, and I throw it up to the skies*" and how "*…my life is now better; I have a good relationship with my family, and I no longer feel as angry about life*."[125] Students' improved behaviour is also noted as a change in the story *Improving PSS in the NRC learning centre* where he specifies that, "*We can see as well, that by teaching them these skills, the cases of bullying and other violent behaviour have reduced, and there are overall less serious referrals to the MSU.*"

Beyond the impact on direct beneficiaries, there is also evidence to suggest that BLP has had impact on the behaviour of some of its teachers, and their ability to control and regulate their own emotions. This is perhaps best exemplified in the story *The Way I am Now*.

THE WAY I AM NOW (FEMALE, TEACHER, ZAATARI)

In an instant, the war flipped our life upside down. When we came to Zaatari we had to leave everything behind quickly including our house, our cars, and everything else we owned. We ended up in a dusty tent with few possessions. This situation, over time, began to affect my psychological wellbeing, and I became angry and frustrated with our circumstance. In the first months, there were no jobs and I began losing control of my emotions. I became short-tempered and tension rose at home affecting my relationship with my kids and husband. I lost all hope for a normal life. Then an opportunity came along to work for NRC in its learning centre, and it became a turning point in my life. It was nice to work in an environment where everyone shared the same goal of helping the children. As part of this, we were introduced to the Better Learning programme last year. After going to the training, I realised that I first needed to use it to deal with my own issues first in order to better able to help the children. I began practicing the content of BLP2 in my daily life, things like imagining a safe space and controlling my breathing. I started becoming calmer and my anger gradually faded away. Through BLP and other trainings which NRC has provided, I feel I'm a better teacher and person today. I feel that I have the knowledge and tools to change the way these children, and myself, view life. I now better understand my students when they misbehave I know that it is not that they lack morals but that they are dealing with trauma and they need support, just like I did. The students I work with continuously give me the motivation and encouragement to deal with

Recently, NRC has also collected data from the learning centre teachers on whether a students' participation in BLP2 had improved the students' ability to regulate their emotions and behaviour in class. 100% of teachers in both Zaatari and Azraq noted this to be true.

7.2.7 Key strengths of BLP approach in Jordan

There are several factors that lead to the positive impacts noted below. They include the following:

- **Strong integration into the education programme**: In Jordan, BLP is integrated within a broader set of initiatives focused on strengthening the protective role of education in the camp setting. This includes, amongst others the Walking to School initiative, the establishment of

[125] MSC story 23

the Monitoring and Support Unit, the integration of life skills/PSS into the education curriculum, the critical role of community outreach officers on follow-up and support into the homes, a strong referral system and set of operation procedures for protection based issues, and the Child-Based Reporting Mechanisms.

- **A focus on strengthening BLP 1**: The Jordan programme recognised early on that the BLP 1 manual, as current written, was insufficient in terms of providing a clear instructional programme for teachers to use in the classroom. The result, as occurred in Palestine, was that when BLP 1 when first implemented in Jordan, ended up being seen as an ice-breaker or classroom management tool, rather than a core part of the PSS curriculum. NRC Jordan has taken the initiative to develop its own curriculum materials from BLP 1 and make it a classroom-friendly tool. This has enabled BLP to be seamlessly integrated into its broader PSS programme in the learning centre.
- **Strong technical expertise at a management level:** The EPM in Jordan has played a critical role in ensuring that BLP is properly and fully implemented in the camp programme. This comes out of both personal interest, professional expertise/background, and a passion for protection-based concerns within education programming. Having this technical expertise, has allowed the programme to identify key gaps—such as providing ongoing training, support and care for the teachers implementing BLP, and further developing BLP 1—and to expand and adapt BLP beyond its original form.
- **Establishment of a cadre of BLP specialists at the programme level:** The BLP, when it was implemented in Jordan, was the first attempt to take it outside the formal education system, and into informal education settings. An obvious challenge in doing so, particularly for the implementation of BLP 2, was the lack of qualified and skilled personnel to implement the programme. The BLP 2 manual itself notes that the programme should ideally, "*The intervention can be performed by an experienced teacher or a school psychologist*" and goes on to note that, "*When teachers are group leaders, without the assistance of a school psychologist, the most complex part will not be performed*."[126] For this reason, there have, and continue to be significant reservations within NRC about implementing BLP 2 in the absence of trained school counsellors or psychologist to support the programme. That stated, the Jordan programme has fostered that expertise in teachers so that there is now a de-facto counselling or support unit on site in the form of the Monitoring and Support Unit. These teachers have received extensive training and support, internally led by the PM, and externally by a range of trainings led by the University of Tromso. In interviews with these MSU teachers, many also noted that prior to working for NRC, they had gained experience in PSS or child protection through other programming in the camps, or prior to leaving Syria. Hence, they bring some knowledge and experience with t them to their roles. Additionally, one of the teacher support officers bring a strong PSS background with her as well, assisting the PM in the BLP 1 curriculum development process.

7.2.8 Key challenges of BLP approach and implementation in Jordan at present

- **Drop out within BLP 2:** Perhaps the most significant challenge for the implementation of BLP, and in particular BLP 2, are the continually high drop-out rates from the programme. In 2016, analysis from NRC indicated that 26% of the 383 students who were identified as needing the support of BLP 2 and joined, dropped out at some intermediary point. A similar drop-out rate (25.4%) was noted for the 158 students in Cohort 1 in 2017. Analysis of the 2016 drop outs by the PM suggested that most drop outs occurred in Weeks 3-6, which are the most sensitive weeks of the programme. It is during these weeks that students begin to discuss and share the nature of their nightmare, as well the traumatic event(s) sitting behind their nightmare in both

[126] BLP 2 Manual (Edition 3, 2013), p. 9

group and individual sessions. It is at that point that arguably, children are most vulnerable, having opened up feelings and issues they may have supressed for some time. For the students who end up leaving during these weeks, for various reasons whether of their own volition or not, it raises significant questions about whether BLP 2 does more harm than good. The BLP 2 manual is quite clear in this regard: "*We should be aware that many war-affected children and youths experience their inner life as an area with lots of 'land mines'. If we enter and walk out again, the child is left alone to cope with the blows…we must always commit ourselves to continue what we have started.*"[127] While NRC does aim to follow up and re-engage these students, these efforts are often unsuccessful and potentially leave the students who have dropped out quite vulnerable. Additionally, it does not appear at present that the parental awareness sessions are sufficient to changing this circumstance.

- **Inconsistent monitoring and evaluation of BLP 1 outcomes**: While BLP 1 is embedded and included within a broader set of protection-oriented responses, there does not appear to be a systematic approach in place within the camps programme to monitoring outcomes from BLP 1 specifically. For example, the data available for BLP 1 students for this evaluation, in the form of the PSS integrity survey results at the outset and completion of the three-month cycle, was available for all of Zaatari in Cohort 1 but only a small number of students in Azraq. The reason for the inconsistency of data collection between the two camps is unclear. It would appear that the PSS Integrity survey could be a useful, quick and easy measure to assess impacts of not only BLP 1 but of NRC's broader focus on improving student well-being, safety and academic self-efficacy in its programming. Instead, at present, to measure the impact of BLP 1 at an outcome-level, the indicator focusses on % of teachers who report BLP 1 had led to increased participation of students in class. This would appear to be a weaker, and potentially less objective means of assessing BLP 1 impact than the administration of the PSS Integrity Test to each entire cohort, or stratified sample within that.
- **Inconsistent follow up with BLP 2 students**: It is generally expected that following students' participation in BLP 2, there is a duty of care to follow up with all of them to ensure that the nightmares are not reoccurring, and that when they do, students have the appropriate coping skills to deal with them. As part of this, nightmares frequencies per week are to be tracked. In the informal education setting, where NRC's access to students beyond the cohort period becomes limited, there are significant challenges with this follow up. Many students (and their families) become hard to contact once they are not coming to the centre on a regular basis, and there does not appear to have been a concerted and consistent focus within and between the two camps regarding the duration of follow up, or the obligations of the programme to maintain a duty of care to all past BLP 2 beneficiaries. This is very different to implementation of BLP 2 in the formal school settings, where school counsellors who sit across the grade levels, can maintain that relationship in the long-term. The easy solution, would be to create opportunities for past BLP 2 students to return to the centre on a regular occasion, but a reason for them to do so would need to be established.
- **A lack of Master Trainers**: Despite the aim of the PM to take the next step and support some of his more experienced and expert MSU teachers to become BLP Master Trainers who could then deliver training independent of the BLP Technical Experts, this has not yet occurred. There is a risk that with staff turnover (though low at present), the programme is left without sufficient capacity to continue to deliver BLP 2 in the long run. It is still unclear whether Master Trainers can be unqualified counsellors/psychologist, as the BLP 2 manual also specifies that BLP 2 training should only be delivered by, "*For the trainers who train group leaders we recommend extensive knowledge and experience with education in emergencies. Knowledge about traumatic stress, educational psychology and clinical experience should be a*

[127] BLP 2 Manual (Edition 3, 2013), p. 53

requirement for trainers."[128] This would appear to suggest that it may be the responsibility of the PM and some key Jordanian staff within the education team to serve the role of Master Trainers, rather than the MSU teachers themselves.

7.3 Most Significant Change Stories

1. My Life (Female, 10, Azraq)

I sat for first grade twice; once in Syria and once here in Azraq. After I finished first grade here in Azraq, we left the camp so my father could find work as a carpenter. While we were away, life in Azraq started improving. The camp became organised, and job opportunities became available, so we came back. Once we were back, my father tried to register me in school but they wouldn't accept me and I had to stay home instead. I was very sad and bored now that I didn't go to school. I didn't know how to read or write, nor did I have any friends. I asked my father to buy me a notebook and asked my parents to teach me whatever they could. Then, my dad heard about the centre from his friend. He told him that it was a great place where your daughter will benefit a lot. After my father registered me at the centre, and since then, so much has changed. Suddenly, there were teachers who cared about me and my wellbeing. I learned to read and write, and I made friends. My parents are proud of me now that I'm a good student, and my father brings me gifts all the time.

2. The Best Teachers in the World (Female, 10, Azraq)

In Syria, I used to attend first grade. We left Syria and ended up in Amman. There I began attending a catch-up program in a school. Three months ago, though, the police caught my family and brought us to Azraq. Since then I haven't been able to go to school because my papers have been stuck in Amman. What saddened me the most about coming here was this fact: I felt like a prisoner of my own house. I never left the house. I was stuck at home burdened with errands to run. All I was doing is cooking and doing the dishes. I was not very happy. Then recently, we found out about NRC's centre from my brother's friend. My parents immediately said yes to enrolling me because they want me to learn…both of them are educated and they value their children getting an education too. Here the teachers treat us really well. In Amman, my teachers always used to scream at me, while here they only speak nicely. I've also made friends at the centre. Being here has given me so much energy, and I am much happier now. Now, my own wish is that I could also attend the formal school.

3. Hope never ends (Teacher, Zaatari, Female)

I was one of the first teachers who started in this centre four a half years ago. When I first started working here, the education programme we had in the centre was not that well organised or comprehensive. People's skills and talents were not being used—for example while I was a trained teacher from Syria with seven years' experience in KG and psychosocial support, I was facilitating a skills club. This was because when I left Syria, I lost my documentation and could not prove this experience. For this reason, when I started working at the centre, I didn't feel like my expertise and background were acknowledged or used as best they could. There was also no curriculum, or plan and lessons were very poorly structured. Teachers didn't have much support or guidance. While we had art and technology classes, and sports activities, children did not enjoy them and there wasn't a lot of thought given into how to make children engage with this more. Over time, though the programme has evolved. A number of new initiatives have been brought in to strengthen our academic component with parts that address the rest of the child's well-being—for example BLP. With each new programme

[128] BLP 2 Manual (Edition 3, 2013), p. 10

has been training and support for s teachers to ensure we can successfully implement them. While I took a lot of professional development about psychosocial support in Syria, it was all theoretical and I was never given the opportunity to implement this in my own classroom. Today the programme is much stronger, both for myself and my students. I've learned not only how to better support my students to succeed in life, but I also have new techniques and tools to improve my own life. We can see more improvement in the students, academically and socially. All of this has improved the reputation and visibility of NRC's programme in the community. I also feel that now, with all the additional training and activities we have in our centre I am better able to solve children's academic problems at their root, rather than trying to fix a small hole in a bigger problem.

4. The Queue (Male, 11, Zaatari)

The way to school is very long and in the summer days it gets really hot. Despite this, I would walk to school most days on my own. One day on my way to school I stumbled on rocks and fell down. My mouth bled, and I was in a lot of pain, but no one was around to help me. Since that day I never wanted to walk alone again. For a while, my brother would walk me, to ensure I got to school, but then he heard about Walk to School and registered me. Now we walk in a group which is an organised queue behind the teacher. Walking together, I feel safe that no car will hit and harm me because the teacher ensures we all walk in one straight line, and when we are crossing the streets the teachers stop the cars for us.

5. Hope (Female, 13, Zataari)

Since leaving Syria, I hadn't gone to school for a while, and had to learn things on my own. While I tried to continue to study the best I could, I struggled to get better in English and Math. I would see other girls walking in front of my house, and talk about school and the lessons they took there. I desperately wanted to be like them. My family and I tried here in Azraq to get me in the school but they would not take me. So instead, my parents brought me to NRC's learning centre. When I was here, the teachers taught me so many different things, including multiplication, English, Arabic and drawing. Based on what I learned, I was able to start teach my younger siblings to count and draw. When the time at the centre came to an end, I thought I might have a better chance to go back and enrol in the formal school so I went with my parents again to the school. We gave them all our information, and they said they would call when I could enrol, but they never have called us back. The centre here said I could come back in the meantime, but I no longer want to come, because I cannot get a certificate here, but with no certification I cannot get into school or get work, so what's the point? While I hope I could stay here and learn to read and earn a certificate, I realise now this may not be possible. So, I would rather not go to any centres, and stay home with my sisters and visit my aunts instead.

6. No Title 1 (Female, 13, Zaatari)

I have always hated going to school here, despite my mother telling me that I should go. This is because in school, girls bully and beat each other, and this made me not want to be there. Also, on our way to school, boys on the streets harass us. Recently, for example, a group of boys kept calling us and when one of them grabbed my friend's arm, she started screaming and crying. When she got away she called her dad, but when he arrived he beat her up and forbade her from ever going to school. Because of all of this, I used to stay home, and play with my friends and draw. Unfortunately, some of these friends have gone back to Syria. Recently though, I started coming to the learning centre. I love the teachers here. I have friends, and I have started to feel better about school and my life here in Azraq.

7. No title 2 (Male, 9, Zaatari)

I didn't know how to read and write which is why I registered at the centre. But, later I dropped out because I didn't feel it is important to come to the centre and to school because they just give us the same lessons in both places.

8. No title 3 (Female, 11, Zaatari)

In Syria, I used to attend school, but then we had to leave. My wish was to continue my learning in Azraq. Often, when I would visit the market, I would see girls who went to the learning centre, and they seemed happy. So, I stopped by the centre one day, and they told me to bring my father so I could get registered. I did this, and even since I have been coming. Here, the teachers really help me to read and write. I also love the library and all the stories in it. Here I feel happy and successful.

9. English Alphabets (Male, 10, Zaatari)

Before I started to come to the centre, I did not know any of the numbers in English. I did not know how to spell, read or write, I was not a good student. My mom brought me here to the centre because my sister used to attend. Teachers here use the board and explain the lessons well, and repeat them over and over until we understand. They engage us in playing and sports, and they teach me everything. I am now a good at school. I like doing homework everywhere—here, at home, and in school—because it makes me mentally and physically active. I can now count to 28 in English!

10. My Daily Life (Female, 12, Zataari)

I never really liked to read or write or engage in anything school related…I only liked to play. In particular, Math and English were always a struggle for me, and I didn't bother to even try. My mom told me to come centre, and ever since then my life has changed. I finally learned how to read and now enjoy picking up a book and reading in my free time. This is because the teachers here treat us nicely, while in school would they would beat us. Teachers here support and encourage us, as do the other girls in the class. I've also become better at focussing, and performing in class, due to the breathing exercises they teach me here. I've also started to oblige my religious duties, and started to pray and fast, even on Mondays and Thursdays which I didn't do before. This is because the teachers here teach us the importance of religion and being close to god. This is all important to me because when I grow up if I want to be a doctor no one will employ me if I don't know how to write, or if I become a mother how will I teach my kids to be a good person without having an education? At the centre, I've gained confidence and became proud of myself.

11. Education (Male, 15, Zaatari)

I was not able to read or write and because of that I was not really interested in going to school. Instead, I preferred to work, picking peaches and other fruits outside the camp. I would attend schools for two days, and then miss a month or more of school. While I felt good that I was earning money, I realised I was not making any progress in my life. Then my friends convinced me to go to the learning centre and register. I've been coming here for a month now, and learned how to read the letters. This gives me hope that one day I will be able to read correctly. My time at the learning centre has also made me realise that I would rather be a teacher in my future, rather than a farmer.

12. The Way I Am Now (Teacher, Female, Zaatari)

In an instant, the war flipped our life upside down. When we came to Zaatari we had to leave everything behind quickly including our house, our cars, and everything else we owned. We ended up in a dusty tent with few possessions. This situation, over time, began to affect my psychological wellbeing, and I became angry and frustrated with our circumstance. In the first months, there were no jobs and I began losing control of my emotions. I became short-tempered and tension rose at home affecting my relationship with my kids and husband. I lost all hope for a normal life. Then an opportunity came along to work for NRC in its learning centre, and it became a turning point in my life. It was nice to work in an environment where everyone shared the same goal of helping the children. As part of this, we were introduced to the Better Learning programme last year. After going to the training, I realised that I

first needed to use it to deal with my own issues first in order to better able to help the children. I began practicing the content of BLP2 in my daily life, things like imagining a safe space and controlling my breathing. I started becoming calmer and my anger gradually faded away. Through BLP and other trainings which NRC has provided, I feel I'm a better teacher and person today. I feel that I have the knowledge and tools to change the way these children, and myself, view life. I now better understand my students when they misbehave I know that it is not that they lack morals but that they are dealing with trauma and they need support, just like I did. The students I work with continuously give me the motivation and encouragement to deal with my own problems. Because of the experience in this learning centre, I am more lenient now. I have more patience, and the anger is gone. I am more energised, my desire to work is high, and I lead healthy relationships at home.

13. Hard easy (Male, 9, Zaatari)

I was 4 years old when I arrived to Zaatari. While I started the KG in the camp, I don't know how to read and write when I started formal school, so my parents put me in the first grade at the learning centre. At first it was really hard, but the teachers didn't let me fall behind, and supported me every day. Over time the reading got easier. The teachers at the centre also taught me to play football properly and the art teacher helped me to deal with older people. Now I'm in the second grade and I can read. I continue to study hard, but now I know I can do it so that one day I will become a dentist.

14. Moving between Village 5 and Village 6 (Male, Azraq, 9)

I used to live in Village 5 and study at the school there. I liked being in the school there because I loved learning and drawing. Then we moved from Village 5 to Village 6. We came here without my papers, so when we arrived I was unable to enrol in the formal school. Then one day, people came to our caravan and told us about the NRC learning centre, and the fact that I could start immediately without my papers. So, I came to the NRC learning centre with my parents and started studying in the second grade here. I was happy because here at the learning centre I am learning to write the letters, read words and become a better student. I hope that one day I can go to the formal school in Village 6 as well.

15. Life at the learning centre (Female, Azraq, 10)

Before coming to the learning centre, I used to study English and Math in the school, but I found some things hard, particularly the vocabulary in English. I really wanted to be the top of my class. My teacher at the formal school would help a lot and teach us the grammar, the vocabulary and writing, and then she would tell us to memorise this. But I feel that by coming here I have become better at learning. For example, I knew before how to tell the time, but by coming here I now know how to do this much better. Here the teacher took a big paper clock and moved the hands around and asked us different questions about what time it was. Also, here at the centre they have lots of books and there is a library where I can come and read anytime. It made learning more fun this way. Because of being here at the learning centre, I've moved from being good at English and Math to be being better.

16. The beautiful and good future (Female, Zaatari, 9)

In the camp, there is no much to do, and it is easy to become bored. But since registering in the learning centre, my time is better filled. There are lots of interesting classes here—particularly on Saturday—when we do acting classes and visit the science lab. I especially like the like the brain, teeth and heart prototypes. If I was not in the centre, I would be bored, but here I can do lots of things related to learning.

17. Oh, how I love my brother (Female, 13, Azraq)

Last year I didn't attend any sort of centres or schools because of my brother. I used to have these reoccurring nightmares that someone would come and take my brother away from me. The nightmares really scared me, and I would never want to leave him alone. I did not even feel safe leaving him with my sisters or parents, that was the main reason I used to miss school. My sister used to come to NRC, she would always tell us how much she loved her teacher here. But, unlike my sister, I preferred going to other centres where I was allowed to bring my brother with me. Then one day, my mother warned me that I would never become a science teacher, which is my dream, if I don't learn to read and write. She convinced me to come to the NRC centre and give things a try. When I started coming to NRC, the teachers taught me about safe spaces, and how to relax and calm myself. This helped me to no longer see the nightmares of my brother being taken away. I've also become a better student, because here if I don't understand a lesson the repeats it for me. This is different to the formal schools, where I might not understand but no one would care…instead the teacher just sits down and plays with her phone. Because of coming here, I am now a better student. I no longer have nightmares and I don't fear for my brother. I feel safe leaving him at home while I get an education. My life is now full.

18. I Love Flowers (Female, 10, Azraq)

I was enrolled in school last year but I did not like it very much. The teachers would only explain the lessons once and then leave me to sit in the corner alone practicing. Also, at school, I did not have any friends, and the girls used to spit on me and exclude me. I felt alone, and would relive memories of jet planes bombing our neighbourhood. Towards the end of the year, we left the camp for a vacation. During that time, I stopped school. When we came back to register me again, they told us to go home. They said they would call us back so that I could start school again, but they never did. So, I stayed at home cleaning and doing other housework. When I would go out, the girls in my neighbourhood, who came to the NRC centre told me that I should go, and one day I came with them when there was a party here. After that day, I went home and asked my father to register me, and the very next day he enrolled me. Since the very first day here, I've loved being here…much more so than any school I've even been to. The students here are very kind, and I've made many friends. I feel as if I am not alone here because the entire classroom are my friends. Also, the teachers here are compassionate, they make sure to repeat lessons for us until we understand them. They take us to the playground, and they also teach us about safe spaces, breathing, how to forget about the war and seeing people dying, and how to reconcile with our relatives' deaths. This advice has helped me to sleep better, and to no longer see nightmares. I feel at ease throughout the night. I wish I could continue here, but the teachers have told me not to come back again because I am not a new student.

19. Understanding teacher (Female, 10, Zaatari)

I started to attend the LC in the fourth grade. I was already good in most of the subjects but when I started to come here, the teachers helped to make the subjects even easier to understand. The science teacher, for example, made a food chain and explained how cats help to get rid of mice. In math, the teacher used to use acting to pass on the information to us. But my favourite place in the centre was the art room because there we can draw and make handmade things using paper. I hope that one day, when I'm grown up, I can be a teacher likes the ones here, and educate other children.

20. Regaining a lost dream (Teacher, Zaatari, Female)

In 2012, I was about to sit a pre-test to enrol in my master's degree in Syria, when it was cancelled because the conflict was getting too intense. At that point, I was also eight months into my high diploma, and was writing a thesis about psychosocial support for children. One month later, the Syrian police came to my house and forced me out. I begged them to let me go back in and get my degree and the work I had written for my thesis but they wouldn't let me. Instead they set fire to my house and my degree and hard work were destroyed in an instant. Soon after I moved to Zaatari with my

grandparents. While I lost my chance to study, I didn't lose my motivation to one day try again. So, I took on several volunteer positions in the camp, including as a teacher with NRC in the learning centre, to save up enough money to pay someone 1000 JD on the black market to bring another copy of my degree from the Ministry in Syria. After I got back my degree, I worked so hard to get a scholarship for four years…but every time, I was unsuccessful for different reasons, either my English was not good enough or I was too old or too young…every time it felt like a different excuse. I started to lose hope. But then I would gain inspiration again from the girls I was working with in the centre—like the 12-13 year old illiterate girls I worked with in my first year who have become the top of their class and are now studying at university. The students in the centre gave me the power and inspiration to continue trying for the scholarship. Because they too had to stop their education because of what happened in Syria, and like me, when they arrived in Zaatari, they had to start all over again. They have been a role model for me to continue working hard to be successful. Finally, this year I received a scholarship to start my Master's degree in education with a specialisation in curriculum. While I have started my Master's degree, I will not give up my job at the learning centre, because I cannot live a day without coming here. These girls give me inspiration. The students and NRC standing by and supporting me all this time have taught me how to stand up for myself again. If I am to remain a role model to the girls I need to now show them how it is never too late to learn again.

21. The Story of a Bus and a Queue (Female, 11, Azraq)

Before I got to the camp, I used to go to school in Amman. There students are organised and I didn't face any problems getting to and from school. When we came to Azraq, and enrolled in school, I was shocked by what I saw. When I used to try and take the bus to school, I would wait for long periods, but still not manage to get on. This is because the bus gets too crowded and everyone pushes and shoves to enter. There are just not enough busses for all of us. Kids on the bus are also rowdy. One day, some boys threw rocks on the bus and a girl got badly hurt. Her head started to bleed, and she had to go to the hospital. This made me fear going on the bus, so I started to walk to school on my own. Walking in the heat by myself was also not fun, and when it was hot outside I would get very tired. Then one day I saw the walking group gathered near my house, I asked them what they are, and they welcomed me to join. When I walk with the group, everything is organised. Everyone listens to the teachers and it makes me feel safe. Now things are organized with the Walk to School, everyone listens to the teachers, it makes me feel safe. I prefer to walk to school because we do fun things along the way. All the friends I have at school are ones I've made in the programme. They are my sisters…they give me pencils when I forget mine, they respect me, help me, and play with me. Now I am no longer alone.

22. My Journey to My Dream (Female, 14, Azraq)

My father is a teacher, so he really values education. When we were back in Homs they used to bomb the area around my school but my father insisted I continue my education and go to school. But, when things got worse we left Syria in order to continue going school, and moved to Zarqa. I attended school there for two years. Every day when I would come back from school I would sit down and have the time to do my homework, and relax both my mind and my body. I would help my mother with housework, and spend time with my family. Then one day the police caught my father and sent him to Azraq. We didn't want to leave him alone so we all moved to the camp. After my family managed to bring my documents from my old school in Zarqa I was able to start attending school in the camp. Because my father values education so much, he also encouraged me to go to the learning centres for extra help. I hated them all, and would get bored there. My friend, though, told me coming to NRC's centre would be different, so I decided to try. I loved this centre as soon as I stepped in, because it is very organised. It is the only place in the camp where I see plants and greenery and I really do love flowers. The teachers here are also great. They treat us like sisters. They do not push us to uncomfortable limits and they understand our circumstances. Because of coming here, I have gotten so much better at school, I am

now more energised and motivated. I now have more hope for the future and have renewed faith and hope to reach my dream and become a doctor.

23. The Story of a Girl Refugee (Female, 14, Azraq)

When we first left Syria we moved to Karak. In Karak, I felt I had no hope to ever reach my dreams because I used to hate school there. All the girls in the school refused to be my friends because I am Syrian, but because both my parents are teachers they insisted I continue to go to school. Then we had to move to Azraq. When we first arrived, I was shocked by the camp. Our houses had rocks and not proper flooring. The weather was always dusty and horrible, and the bathroom was far from the caravan. I used to fear using the bathroom after sunset, because there wasn't any light and there were many stray dogs. All of this left me very upset and I felt I didn't have anyone to tell my story to which let me very angry. I wouldn't let anyone at home get close to me, and I didn't have a good relationship with my family because of how I was feeling. I used to beat my younger sisters because of all the anger I felt. When my mother started teaching at the NRC centre, she decided to bring me along and enrol me. At the centre, teachers taught me patience and how to better control my anger. They treated the students like family, and encouraged us to share our secrets and feelings with them. They taught me how to communicate my feelings to my family, and how to deal with my feelings without harming those around me. Now when I feel anger and sadness, I write my feelings down on a paper, I tear it to parts, and I throw it up to the skies. My life is now better; I have a good relationship with my family, and I no longer feel as angry about life.

24. The Story of Explosives and Blood (Male, 10, Zaatari)

I used to be unhappy, and disliked learning. The teachers in the formal school used to beat me. My dad brought me here because my sister was here before and she was happy to come. Here teachers do not beat me. There are fun activities at the centre. I've become so much better in my studies, in fact I am now the best in my class. Here, I've also made lots of friends, learned to spell, even in English, and memorised the multiplication table. The only bad thing is that I live in District 12 which is so far, but I walk here with 5 of my friends every day.

25. Don't lose hope (Male, Zaatari, 14)

In the past, I would try to speak in English or read a book in English but I could not. I wanted to learn English so that one day I could become doctor. In the school, I go to I tried and tried but the teachers wouldn't help me, and they would even beat me if I did something incorrect. They didn't care about me, only about seeing that I would finish the year. So, I tried to learn English myself, but I couldn't. This made me feel discouraged. Then I came to the learning centre. The teachers here were different. I felt that they cared about me and my success. They took responsibility to see me learn. I know that here a teacher would never leave me if I didn't understand. They would continue to help me until I understand. Because of this, I learned to speak English. I feel excited now. The future is my hand because I can understand and speak English. One day I will be a doctor. My mother has given me a lot of support in the past, and now by being a doctor I can help her and others.

26. The Pathway to Hope (Teacher, Female, Azraq)

When we left Syria and came to Azraq, we had nothing left but the clothes we had on, my university certificate, and some family pictures. On our way to the camp I sold my last belonging--my wedding band—to get us here. In Azraq, my kids grew depressed because would think about how much more they had in Syria and how when they came here they had to live with nothing. My heart broke every time I saw my kids lacking the simplest things. I always used to be in debt, and was forced to make difficult decisions. For example, I would sell the sugar we would receive from our rations to get my sons other necessities like shoes. Everyone was miserable and this created a lot of tension at home. One day

I passed by this centre and thought I have nothing more to lose if I try to apply for a job here One week later I had a job! It was the only place that would employ me as a teacher, the job I had in Syria, and not as a cleaner or a bread distributor. Everything changed because of this job. When I first got paid, I bought a phone, a bicycle for my eldest son and my husband, and clothes for the entire household. I was so happy to be able to provide. Now we are very comfortable, I am even able to send money to my sister who remains in Syria, and other family members in the camp. My kids now have everything—a fridge, a TV, phones, a tablet, and a washer. Because of this job we no longer wish to leave the camp. Azraq is now our home. We lost hope, and working here at the centre is where I have found it again.

27. The Story of Future and Hope (Parent, Female, Azraq)

Back in Syria my son was spoiled. He had his house and his toys, he had everything he would desire. Then we had to leave all this behind and make the long journey to Azraq. It was long and hard and we stayed at the border for a few months. For eight months, all we had was a tent over our heads—no clothes, no food, no water. During that time, my son became angry all that time. He would not listen to a word my husband or I would say. Whenever he would sit down, he would start pulling out his own hair. Clearly, he was in a lot of distress and I believed our situation had made him depressed. One day, after we arrived to Azraq, the outreach team knocked on our door and told us about the NRC Centre and its benefits. We were immediately convinced, and registered him right away. Very quickly things began to change; straightaway my son was committed to the centre and would attend every day. Since attending, he has started to put colour back into his drawings. His psychological wellbeing is getting better and he respects us now and treats us better. He no longer faces the same problems he used to. Now he brushes his hair and he takes care of himself. All of this change is because of the teachers and students here and the way they treated him kindly. And seeing this change in my son, has convinced me to start coming here as well, to learn to use the computer. The changes in my son have allowed me to forget the past, and accept our situation at present, and figure out how to ensure I can best support my children's education.

28. The Dreams of my Childhood (Female, 11, Zaatari)

In Syria, I used to have fun dreams where I would laugh and play with my friends and family. Then the war came and I saw tanks shooting opposite to my house. My entire family would hide in one corner of the house, with all the adults shielding the children. My dreams changed after that, and I started to have nightmares. By the time we reached the camp, I would regularly dream that someone was chasing after me and trying to hurt me. It scared me that might dream might come true, so I wouldn't tell any of my family members about them. In the morning, I would wake up and continue of my nightmare. I would wander around the house thinking that someone was still coming after me. I would go sit next to my mother and not move. My mind was distracted with these thoughts all the time and I did not have the space to think about learning. Then I started the BLP II programme. When I started, the teachers taught us how to get rid of nightmares by breathing, relaxing our bodies, stretching before sleep, and thinking of a safe space. I started seeing less nightmares and I became more confident speaking to my mother and sisters about these nightmares. They no longer terrified me as much. I now know no man will come and try to harm me, not at night nor during the day. I sleep well now, and when I wake up I'm not afraid. Because my mind is now clear, I've been learning a lot, I now know how to read and write. I've become much less timid, and don't hide behind my mother anymore…in fact I have even participated in theatre activities at the learning centre and learned to act and dance in front of others.

29. The Story of Dreams (Male, 12, Azraq)

When we came from Aleppo to Azraq I was not happy. I used to see a lot of nightmares, I was afraid to sleep and would stay awake. I used to dream about my siblings who died in the war, and I couldn't stop thinking about their death. Even when I used to study, I wouldn't be able to focus. For example, when I would try to write at school, I would start thinking about when and how they did. Wherever I would

walk, I would be afraid. Some kids around the caravan told me to come to NRC's learning centre. They told me they were learning so much and having fun. They said they were getting better and strong in their classes. So, I asked my father, and he enrolled me in the centre. Once I came, they taught me how to draw and talk about my nightmares. They taught me to express my feelings, and showed me ways that I could relax. I felt so much relief. I don't have the nightmares about my siblings as much anymore. Everything is so much better. I no longer feel afraid, and can focus on my studies more. I've now become one of the best students in the class. I now feel happy to live in Azraq and no longer want to leave it.

30. No title 7 (Parent, Female, Azraq)

My 9 years old was really affected by the displacement; he was always angry, lying, and getting himself into disagreements and fights out in the streets. My older children attended the NRC centre for a while, so I decided to register him in hope that attending will fill his time and keep him away from trouble. At the centre, they give him guidance on how to correctly communicate and treat his family, his friends, the neighbours. They handled him with love, and took his circumstances and experiences of the past into consideration. They constantly try to understand him better, and genuinely care for him. For example, if my son misses a class they call us, or If he expresses something he's worried or afraid of a group from the centre comes to the house to check on him and make sure he's alright. I've never seen so much care from an institution. His life changed for the better now, for the first time I see my child excited to learn and attend classes. He comes back home now and he talks to me about all that he learned, he brings back homework with him and he enjoys doing them. He is calm and positive, and he no longer gets in serious trouble. The education here has changed the life of my children.

31. The Developments of My Life (Female, 13, Zaatari)

When we first came from Syria to the camp and registered in the schools, I struggled to learn because not all the information the teachers taught us was clear. As a result, I didn't learn how to read well and I was not a strong student. Then, we heard about the centre from our neighbours and my sisters and I enrolled here at once. Since starting, I've learned so much. Teachers here have taught me life skills, design, reading, writing, and how to use the computer. For the first time, I know how to use the computer at home. Now if I don't know anything I just look it up on the internet. I love passing on the knowledge of what I've learned in the centre. For example, my sisters and I taught my mother how to better design the interior of our house, we started teaching our neighbours the breathing exercises we learned here, we even started teaching the kids in our neighbourhood reading and writing. The kids in the neighbourhood really benefited from what we taught them and now they have all enrolled in schools. Helping and teaching makes me very happy. After seeing the influence teachers have had here, my dream now is to become one myself.

32. Moving beyond the past (Male, Zaatari, 15)

When I first arrived at the camp, I enrolled in an English class. There, on the first day the teacher sat and asked me the question "what is my name". I could not answer it. I couldn't read and write anything in English. Even though I could do nothing I had the motivation to stay in school and learn. In the learning centres, both of NRC and then other organisations, the teachers helped me to learn the basics of English. They were always there to assist, even after the end of the sessions. They didn't lose patience when I would ask the questions several times before I understood something. This was different to the formal schools where teachers did not seem interested to help me. Over time my English improved, and I could begin to learn English by myself. These days if a person doesn't know English they cannot do anything by themselves in life. I feel excellent about myself and my future now.

33. Excluded (Male, 15, Zaatari)

Before coming here to the learning centre, I was not in school in Zaatari. I have a disability and I was too old to go to school. Instead, I learned by staying at home and reading books and newspapers. My sister, who is a doctor and a teacher would help me to learn. But then after visiting the learning centre with my sister, they said I could join the drop out programme for the 7th grade even though I was older than most students. I liked that it was warm here. I also loved the library because there is a television, and it is organised. In the library, I got a chance to learn using the Ipad, the laptop and the computer which I really enjoyed. Here I also learned to do art, and draw well. Because I did so well in computers and in art I got a certificate. I was so proud, and I put it on my wall at home. But, the teachers would not let me part of some of the activities of the centre, like the play, because of my disability. Some of the teachers and students also said that I don't belong here because I am crazy. They would tease and call me a "mongol" which made me feel different. I started to feel more and more excluded from things at the centre. So, I've stopped coming to the learning centre for the last two weeks. I still feel angry and upset about the lack of respect people have shown me, and hope this might change. I'd really like to come back and use the Ipads and computers again.

34. No title 8 (Parent, Female, Azraq)

When we arrived in Azraq, my child became a troublemaker. He had no respect for us, and was always creating some sort of trouble. Then one day the outreach team from the NRC centre came out to the caravan. We asked our neighbours about it, and they said it had a very good reputation. So, we decided to enrol him to see if they could help us with our son's problems. Since he has started here, the centre has become a second home and helped us raise our child. The teachers here reflect the very best attitudes and morals, which are then passed on and taught to the students at the centre as well. Because of what he has learned, my son now respects me, appreciates his family, and is always inquiring about how he can help around the house. He loves the centre so much now that he no longer wants to go to school. I have to continuously convince him to go to both.

35. NRC: Revealing my creativity (Azraq, male, teacher)

I started working as a teacher in Syria in 2004. In my time as a teacher in Syria, I gained a lot of experience and had a lot of training, but often I was limited in what I could do by the structures and systems which meant that I could not be as creative or free as I would like. Then I moved to Azraq in 2014. I started working here in the learning centre in 2014. Since starting, I've received a lot of support and encouragement from NRC to explore my creativity and to think about how to best engage students in the learning. I've received a lot of additional training and courses, I think maybe up to 20 on a range of subjects including classroom management and curriculum planning. As a result, I've become a lot more creative in how I teach, and more effective in ensuring that students learn. I've learned how to make learning more hands-on and interactive, encouraged to develop new talents and skills, and identify some of my untapped talents. For example, I learned I was a good storyteller and wrote a story about my experiences in the camp which has now been turned into a children's book. All of this has enabled NRC's learning centre to become seen as a good provider of education in the camps, on par with a private school in terms of quality. I have no doubt if NRC had more space, parents would readily send their children here rather than to the formal schools because the education there just fills children's time, because of the large class sizes and the lack of good teachers. Here children are being educated by professionals who are well trained and continuously improving what they do. For me personally, I feel I've really blossomed as a teacher through all the professional opportunities, freedom and trust I've been given, and feel much more confident to support the students of my community to learn in the best possible way—whether in Azraq or in Syria when I return.

36. Improving PSS in the NRC learning centre (Teacher, Male, Zaatari)

When I started working here at the learning centre last year, there was not a good structure on how we taught students life skills and psychosocial support. At that time, there was no MSU unit and it was not clear how we could support the children socially and emotionally all the time while they were here. Towards the end of last year, we realised we were not working in the right direction and that our activities as life skills and PSS teachers was unaligned and inconsistent. So, a decision was made at the beginning of this year to change the way we provide this support. We agreed that psychosocial and life skills education should be taught across the entire curriculum and at all levels. We also agreed that we needed to increase the amount of time we had dedicated to teaching these subjects because of the time it takes to build trust and relationship with students on sensitive topics. Working with the teacher support officer, we developed an extended curriculum plan that Integrates PSS, BLP and life skills over the entire cohort and in a clear and sequenced way. We start each lesson with a warm up activity from BLP I, introduce the main content, and then we do calm down activity. Teaching in this way has allowed us to move beyond just teaching the BLP I stretching and balancing activities and introducing to the children ideas like balancing the mind and body and, identifying stressful situations in a deeper way. All of this has meant that the children now have a better understanding of themselves and their behaviours. It has also allowed us to build better relationships and trust with all students in the centre, as we spent longer with them. We can see as well, that by teaching them these skills, the cases of bullying and other violent behaviour have reduced, and there are overall less serious referrals to the MSU. Throughout this process, we communicate consistently with the parents about our activities. This has strengthened the reputation and trust that the community has of NRC's programme. They now know that if they send their children to the centre, their children will receive a full education. They also feel as if they are sending their children to another member of their family, rather than a set of strangers.

37. Shoes shop and studying (Male, Zaatari, 13)

Since arriving in Azraq, I have not been in school. Instead, I've been working in our family's shoe shop. At first, I thought that it was good to work instead of study, because I wanted to be a man and earn money for my family, and I didn't want to stay in the streets all day. It was not bad working, and I was able to earn money for my family depending on how much I was able to sell each day, but I started to feel that money was not everything. I thought I needed to do something for myself. So, I came to the centre with my friend who was also out of school and we registered together. When I first came, I only thought I would stay for a day or two, because I thought it would be boring. But I quickly found this was not the case. I could see that I was starting to learn new things like sounding out words and writing them using the letters. Seeing this change made me want to continue, and I am really excited to see if by the end I have learned how to read. Now, my father sits in the shop instead of me, so I can come to the centre each day. One day, my plan is to open my own shop, and I know to be successful with this, I need to learn how to read.

38. Mohammad and The Monster (Male, 12, Zaatari)

My father is the one who encouraged me to return to school after we came to Zaatari. He told me that I need to learn to read before I grew up, and that if I didn't he would not let me get married! I was convinced and started going to school. But, I suffered from nightmares, and usually the same one every night. It was of a monster chasing after and attacking me, and when I would imagine waking up I would find myself trapped in the same dream and the same room. It was very hard for me to figure out what was a dream and what was real. Because of this, my academic performance moved very slowly because I always went there sleep deprived, and late because of the nightmares I was having all the time. When I would show up late the teachers would beat me. I felt bad about this situation until one of the teachers at NRC's learning centre asked if we see nightmares at night. I said I did, so they put me in a special program for nightmares. In the programme they taught us breathing exercises and helped us to visualise a safe place. They also showed me how to defeat all the monsters I would see at night.

After the nightmares programme I learned how to break out of my bad dreams. I was finally able to go to school on time.

39. My progress in Education (Female, 14, Zaatari)

I used to always feel down and blue because I was weak in many subjects at schools. My mother and father did not go to school and do don't have an education so there was no one to help my sisters and I with school. I was also very lonely, and bored, as there are no other girls from my school living in my neighbourhood. Once I started attending the NRC centre though, everything changed. For one, I became stronger academically. This is because here, the teachers treat all students as important, not just the best students. All children are encouraged to participate in the lesson and if someone doesn't understand, the teacher keeps repeating the lessons and stands with them until they do. She ensures that all students develop their skills. This encouragement allowed me to start participating more in class. The teachers also taught us things we could use in our daily life—skills like good breathing, gardening, and interior design. I've also made a number of new friends who I am much happier and more positive now, the psychological support we get from the centre really changed a lot for us. In addition, the friends I made here who support me. We can laugh and vent our frustrations with each other. Because of what I've learned here, I have now taken responsibility of helping my siblings with their schoolwork and supporting them. If I keep learning and continue working hard, I am sure I will reach my dream and become a doctor and then I'll be able to help all those in need.

40. Being back with my friends (Azraq, male, 10)

When I was in the second grade I was living with my family in Zirka. I really loved the school there because I knew everyone and had lots of friends. But the people living around us complained to the Jordanian authorities, so the police forced us to move out of Zirka and we were put into Azraq. I had to leave school immediately and I was sad because I could not complete the second grade and I was now living in a jail. I missed my friends and relatives a lot and I was sad that the school in the camp would not let me in without my papers. I was lucky though that on our one month vacation out of the camp, I was able to return to Zirka and complete my studies for the second grade. But at the start of this school year, I wasn't able to start school in Village 3 as planned because I didn't have the papers yet. So, we came to the learning centre instead because they would let me in and continue to learn immediately. I was also told that by being here I would learn a lot and be top of my class. I was so happy because I really want to be a good student and also spend time with my friends. And now I also have my papers for the formal school and they have just said that they will let me in. I'm so happy that I can continue to learn!

41. Building a new generation (Azraq, male, teacher)

In Syria, I was a passionate teacher who felt strongly about the important role that education and knowledge could have in changing children's future. When the war started, my heart was broken because I could see so many of the children from my country dropping out of school because of the war. After arriving here in Azraq and becoming a teacher here at the learning centre, I could see that there was a lot of opportunity to make a difference. We had to work hard together to create interest and encourage parents to send their children to the learning centre. As part of this NRC, invested a lot in us teachers to learn new skills and improve the quality of education we provide. Being here in the centre has reminded me of my roles and responsibilities as a teacher, and strengthened my conviction to improve the education for students who have missed out on their education because of the war. It has re-ignited my passion to make a difference, and restored some of the hope and professional identify I lost when I left Syria. It has strengthened my conviction that there is nothing more beautiful than education, to restore light to those who may have lost that when they left Syria. Now in the learning centre, we've created a space which has a strong reputation for quality education, so much so that there are more registrations for students, then spaces we have available. It means we have to now turn

some students away, but is also means that the community trusts and values us for the important role we play in getting their children back into school and providing a quality education that does not exist elsewhere.

42. The courage (Male, 13, Zaatari)

When I arrived at Zaatari camp, I didn't know how to read words. I could only read the letters. This is because I moved here in the second grade. I started school here almost immediately, but it was hard for me to keep up with the reading. Then, I started to attend the NRC learning centre. The teachers here were very patient. They would continue to teach me the words until I could read them myself. This encouraged me to begin to ask for help myself and motivated me to push myself to read. I also started asking for help in my school, and the teachers started to help me there as well. Now I have learned to read. Reading is important for anything I might want to do in my future—like be an engineer—and I am really happy that now I am confident and able to read anything.

43. Learning (Male, 13, Zaatari)

When I came here to Zaatari I didn't know how read. I was 11. I didn't feel good because I was failing my all my subjects in schools and there was no one to help me. While I continued to try to learn, it was becoming more and more of a struggle. Then I came to the learning centre. The teachers showed me how to read words letter by letter. Eventually I began to be able to read words. I learned enough reading to pass my exams in all my subjects. I was proud when I could do this. Now I can read almost perfect and enjoy reading. I want to be a teacher in the future so that I can read all the time.

44. The way to success (Female, Azraq, Parent)

Since moving to Azraq, I've been very unhappy with the quality of the education in the formal schools. My 5 children go there, but do not learn much and the teachers do not seem to care much about the children's education. Then my friends told me about NRC's learning centre and the services they provide. They told me they offered the high-quality education that I was seeking for my children. While before, all my children were illiterate, I can see they now know how to read and write. This is because the teachers here care about my children. Their success has made them feel happier and it makes me feel great as a mother. When I see them do their homework now, I can see they can do more of it independently. They now manage their time far better than before and now they care about going to formal school as well. NRC has had a great role and impact on my life as they made it easier for me to help my kids get educated. I want my children to become degree holders in the future and NRC has nurtured this hope into more of a reality.

45. Overcoming nightmares (Female, 12, Azraq)

I came from Syria with a very vivid memory of all the horrible things that happened there. For the longest time, I had horrifying nightmares about the war events that I encountered before I left and my dreams took the best of me. I wasn't able to forget the nightmares and thinking about them all the time consumed me. After restless nights of sleep, going to school was exhausting. In school, I had poor academic skills that made me too shy to ever participate in my classes because my classmates would make fun of me whenever I would spell something wrong. Then I heard about NRC's learning centre. While here, the centre gave me group and individual sessions to overcome my nightmares. I was finally able to have a full night sleep. I became more energetic and all my fears have left. I no longer see any bad dreams and I currently teach my younger sisters the exercises I learned in the sessions in order for here to get over her fears as well. My academic skills have also vastly improved, and I started to feel more confident. Being here has helped me to overcome my shyness and to begin to feel better about myself.

46. No title 11 (Father, Zaatari)

Before my kids registered at the centre, they used to come to me for help with their homework. The problem is that I wasn't always able to help them out because of the different curriculum they use in Jordan and because it has been a while since I have studied. Luckily, we live right across from NRC's centre, and so I came across and asked about the services they provide. When I found out they could help my children academically, I enrolled them right away. Since starting, I've noticed great collaboration from the teachers at the centre and my kids have improved academically…all except my child with a speech disability who does not appear to be helped much by coming here.

47. Cheetah (Male, 13, Zaatari)

I used to not like playing football with others. I also didn't like being around other people here at the centre and didn't have many friends. Then I came to the learning centre. Here they had a field and they would take us to play every day. There was a teacher who taught us how to play as well, and no one had ever bothered to teach me how to play the game properly before. Through playing together, I've also made friends and like being in the centre more now. Now I love to play football even more, but I also like coming here because I have more friends. I feel like my life has changed, it makes my life here in Zaatari better.

48. My life (Male, 11, Zaatari)

When I came to the learning centre I didn't know how to read. I also wasn't going to school in the camp. This made my life boring and meant I had no opportunity to learn how to read. Then one day my mother brought me here, because she saw I was bored all day on the streets. She had also sent my brothers and sisters here before and could see that they had learned something. Here, the teacher helped me to learn how to read, and I learned quickly how to do this—in one or two days. He started by writing one word on a sheet of paper, and asked me to read it. At first, I didn't know how to read it, but he helped me to do this. Once I could read the word, he wrote more words down on the paper, and soon I could read them all. Because I can read now, I can go to the bus stop and know where to go. I can also help my parents in reading signs and information in the camp. My life is no longer so boring.

49. My Dream (Female, 14, Azraq)

I used to stay at home and look after my younger siblings and help my mother with housework. While I was a student at the formal school, I did not understand English classes that much and actually I did not understand most of the other subjects. My mother could not help me with my homework and that made me feel bad. Often, I would not go to school, because I didn't think I was a good student. One

day, my cousins told me about NRC's learning centre. I went to visit the centre and I really loved it…it looked very colourful and different. So, I got my mother to register to me. Once I started, the teachers accepted me for who I was, and did not make me feel stupid. They never shied away from helping me, and helped me to learn the alphabet in Arabic and English. With time, I became very good in the English language and that reflected in my academic performance in the formal school. Because I started to do better, I became more engaged in my classes and participated a lot in what was going on in the classroom. The teachers at the learning centre made me feel special, and praised me, saying that I am smart and I will be a doctor in the future.

50. No title 9 (Female, 11, Azraq)

In the past, lots of doors have been shut in my face whenever I have asked for academic help and support, and whenever the door was open and the help was offered, I got bullied from my classmates about my poor skills. For that reason, in all the other centres I've been to, I have never spent more than a week before I drop out. When I first came to NRC's centre, I wasn't expecting it to be any different, and to be honest, the first time I enrolled I dropped out because I was very depressed. But NRC did not give up and the outreach team came and encouraged me to register again. Over time, I came to see that the teachers were kind and friendly and were willing to take me in with their arms wide open. They encouraged me to study and learn and made me feel more confident about myself. While I've always liked stories, I've never managed to read them. Here the teachers read lots of new and different stories to me, and in doing so I've learned to spell and read some words. The teachers here have made me love education again.

51. Reading (Female, 12, Azraq)

When we first came to the camp my mother took me and my siblings to the formal school. The school accepted all my siblings, but did not allow me to register…maybe because I was too old. I felt really sad as I stayed at home alone every day when all my siblings went to school. Then, a year later, the school announced a catch-up program. I managed to enrol, and was starting to learn, but as I approached the end of the programme, I had to go on a long vacation with my family. I missed the final exams, and when I returned, they refused to let me back into the formal school. I waited and waited for them to call me to tell me I go back to school, but they never did. I grew increasingly depressed and hopeless until I heard from my neighbour about NRC's learning centre. They told me, it was exactly like the school, and that they would take me in even if I was too old. Since starting, I have learnt so much here and it makes me really happy. I have learned how to read and write. I have also made lots of new friends, and do not need to stay alone anymore. My friends here keep me company and we have a lot of fun. I also really like the art classes because drawing helps to calm me. While I'm really happy that I've been able to come here, I still feel hopeless about my future because I will never hold a degree or a legitimate certificate. On the upside, I have learnt how to read stories here, and I spend a lot of time reading and picturing myself one the story's characters…it helps me forget how bad my reality is.

52. Azraq's Flower (Female, Azraq, 12)

I used to live in Village 5 and I went to the formal school there. When we moved out of Village 5, the formal school here would not allow me to register because I do not have my file with me. My family was really sad for my situation, and they tried several times to sign me up in the formal school, but without success. I felt like I was wasting my time being out of school doing nothing at all, and I remember feeling bored all the time. Then my relatives told me about the NRC learning centre, and they brought me here to register. Now, I am no longer bored. I go home and tell my family about what we did at the centre and they are really happy to hear what I have learned. The learning centre has also changed my mental and physical outlook, because of the sport classes we take. This has made me more productive and helpful a home, and when I do something fun here I take it home to my family now, and do it with them at home.

53. The Pathway to Hope (Teacher, Female, Azraq)

When we left Syria and came to Azraq, we had nothing left but the clothes we had on, my university certificate, and some family pictures. On our way to the camp I sold my last belonging--my wedding band—to get us here. In Azraq, my kids grew depressed because would think about how much more they had in Syria and how when they came here they had to live with nothing. My heart broke every time I saw my kids lacking the simplest things. I always used to be in debt, and was forced to make difficult decisions. For example, I would sell the sugar we would receive from our rations to get my sons other necessities like shoes. Everyone was miserable and this created a lot of tension at home. One day I passed by this centre and thought I have nothing more to lose if I try to apply for a job here One week later I had a job! It was the only place that would employ me as a teacher, the job I had in Syria, and not as a cleaner or a bread distributor. Everything changed because of this job. When I first got paid, I bought a phone, a bicycle for my eldest son and my husband, and clothes for the entire household. I was so happy to be able to provide. Now we are very comfortable, I am even able to send money to my sister who remains in Syria, and other family members in the camp. My kids now have everything—a fridge, a TV, phones, a tablet, and a washer. Because of this job we no longer wish to leave the camp. Azraq is now our home. We lost hope, and working here at the centre is where I have found it again.

54. Ali the smart kid (Male, 10, Zaatari)

I have always tried to make the best use of my time while in the camp. I go to school every day, come back and play football with my friends, and afterwards I would always go to prayer then head off to bed. One problem I had though was that my reading and writing skills were very poor and I was never able to read Quran. This made me really upset. One day, I heard about NRC's programme from our neighbours, and my father signed me up. I attended the classes here. The teachers were very patient and they worked with me in the group and sometimes individually. This made me improve by skills in no time. I am now capable of reading the holy book before I sleep and it keeps my heart warm.

55. My reading and writing journey (Male, 10, Zaatari)

I used to waste my time every day by playing football and staying at home doing nothing. I was bored, and would pick fights with my siblings. I did not know how to read and write, and I did not want to go to school because I was ashamed of this fact. Then my father heard from his friends about the NRC learning centre and signed me up. I was part of a literacy program where they taught me how to read and write. They helped me with all my subjects, and I now feel confident academically in the formal school because I learn my lessons in advance. I now help my younger siblings study and I want to be a civil engineer in the future.

56. The Good Student (Female, Azraq, 12)

Examination time at the formal school in Azraq has always been hard for me. Often, we have to study a big portion of the material and the teachers never fully explain all the content with us. My mother has never able to assist me with revision, and this has always been a major setback for me. It means I cannot do as well as I would like to do on my exams. Then my friend told me about the learning centre of NRC, and I came. I was astonished how helpful and nice the teachers were. They would always repeat information that we don't capture at the first time, help us with our homework, and support us to revise for our exam. This has reflected on my marks at the school where now I get high grades. This has made me very proud of myself.

57. Enthusiastic child (Female, 12, Azraq)

When I came to the camp four years ago, I registered at the formal school upon my arrival. I was doing fine until I moved with my family outside of the camp for a full year. During that year, I did not go to

school and fell behind. When we returned to the camp, people told us about NRC's catch up programme. I registered there to make up for the year I missed out on. The programme helped me to get back into formal school and I was then able to reunite with my old friends. More importantly, it meant I could satisfy my family's desire for me to complete my education, because they have always looked after me, and I hope one day I can do the same.

58. The nightmare story (Male, 14, Zaatari)

In the past, I used to have problems sleeping. I have nightmares about someone coming after and trying to kill me, or see images of a person with his hands cut off. I would wake up scared. My parents would come and give me water to drink and try to calm me down. They would ask me to go back to sleep but I found it hard. Sometimes I would stay up the rest of the night waiting for the sun to come up. Other times, rather than nightmares, I would sleepwalk. Sometimes I would hit the wall while walking, and other times I would even wander outside and my family would have to then come looking for me. This would happen every two or three days. But I got used to this pattern and it became normal. Within 30 minutes of waking up I would forget my nightmare or the fact that I had been sleepwalking and continue on with my day. One day when I was here at the centre, the teacher came into the classroom to tell us about this new programme to help us with our nightmares. He said that having nightmares was normal and there was nothing to be ashamed of by admitting we had them. I gathered up my courage and decided to go speak to him after, and become part of BLP. When we started the group, the teacher told us that we could share anything with him that we wanted, including things we might not even tell our parents. He also said that if we woke up with nightmares we could drink some water and wash our face. I also learned other things but I've now forgotten most of them. The teacher also started talking with my father about the nightmares, and discussed how he could help at home. Now I don't have the same level of sleep issues. I may only have the nightmare every eight or nine days. When this happens, I go tell the teacher and he is happy to sit with me again and remind me of what we learned in the programme. It is a relief that I am able to sleep better now, and because of this I feel more energised during the day.

59. Going to school (Male, 11, Zaatari)

On my daily walk to school with my younger brother I used to get beaten up by older kids. They would verbally harass me and sometimes they would even purposefully push me onto the road. This scared my younger brother and sometimes he would cry. One day, I saw a cluster of kids walking together to school. I asked them whether I could join or not and they welcomed me. Ever since then, I feel much safer and happier walking to school. I no longer miss classes or get to school late, no one gets in my way anymore and the volunteers make sure we all arrive safely.

60. My life (Male, 10, Zaatari)

I didn't know how to read and write. I also didn't know how to draw. I also didn't go to school. Then I came to the learning centre. The teacher taught me how to hold the pencil. He would hold my hand and show me how to write the letters and draw things. I'm happy that I can now do this.

61. My life in Zaatari post-NRC (Female, 15, Zaatari)

I have always dreamed about being a calligrapher, but my dream always seemed too farfetched since I did not know how to read and write. I was too shy to go to go to school because I was old and I did not know my alphabet yet. Then, one day we had a visit at our house from the NRC's community officers who told us about their catch up and literacy programs. I was very happy and my family helped to register me the very next day. During my time in the centre, I was passionate about learning. I was very committed and tried to miss as few classes as possible. My teachers were always nice and patient with me and their constant praise encouraged me to do more. They also encouraged me sing during

morning assembly, and after I did sing, all students told me I had a very beautiful voice. Doing this made me very confident and happy. I was very sad by the end of the cohort and I thought I would never hear from NRC again, but they called me a year later and asked me to be part of a video they were filming. During this time, I met with a person from Austria, and we took plenty of photos. They gave me a copy and I was really happy I keep these photos on the wall. Every time I see them I smile because I remember my time in the learning centre, and my day gets a bit better.

62. Education is the sun of the universe (Female, Azraq, 13)

I used to spend my time at home after school doing nothing. I also would struggle with the homework from school which I didn't know how to do. One day, my father's friend visited us and told us about the learning centre of the NRC. When I came, I would tell the teachers here about the things that I did not understand in the school and they would explain everything. They were always very patient and used more than one way to give us the information. This made me feel more confident I started to participate in all the classes at school. Sometimes, I even knew the information in advance of what was being taught in the school, and this made me feel smart. I now feel more optimistic about the future. I feel like I am part of a bigger world where I can work, contribute and influence. I thank all my teachers for giving me this hope and support.

63. I love learning (Female, Azraq, 13)

I go to formal school every day. However, I used to never understand anything. I was beginning to feel that I was stupid or slow and I asked my mother for help. My mother asked around about a centre that could help me, and they referred us to the NRC learning centre. During my first week at the NRC I felt something different. For once I was able to understand all the lessons, they used games, activities, e-learning and other things that made me understand better. These things also helped to motivate me to learn better. The teachers were also very friendly and patient and they had no problem repeating the lesson multiple times until we all understood things. The teachers make me feel safe and I knew that if I faced personal issues, they were always there to guide and support me. Now, I no longer feel stupid, and actually believe I am very intelligent and capable.

64. The fighting brothers (Female, Zaatari, 11)

Since my older brother who is 13, and I were little, we've always been fighting. We often fight at home we have an IPad and we both want to use it. But he also does not allow me to go outside without wearing a veil. I argue back with him because I do not want to wear the veil because it is so hot. When I refuse, then he starts to beat me. When I start to fight with this brother, then my other twin brother jumps in and begins to beat him up asking him why he is constantly fighting with me. He is just trying to protect me. But it creates problems in our house because then it then means that my parents have had to separate my brother and I, and even made us sleep in separate caravans. A few weeks ago, I came to the learning centre. We were told about a way that we could write down things we were not happy with in the centre or at home, and afterwards I told one of the teachers here about this situation and how I didn't like fighting with my brother all the time. The teacher told me that it was important I communicated my feelings to my brother. She advised me to go and speak with him openly about this. So, I did that. I went home, sat down with him and asked him 'why do you pick on me all the time, because brothers and sisters are supposed to care and love each other, not hurt each other.' I also told him how this fighting between us made me really sad. My brother felt bad and he hugged me. It was the first time I had managed to speak to my brother in this way. It was important that my brother understood how I feel and I am happy he does not beat me up anymore.

65. The story of our change (Parent, female, Azraq)

For a long time in the camp, our life has been fairly boring and empty. To give my children an escape out of the boredom, I sent them to school but I did not really think it was of good quality. I thought the teachers were not strict enough and did not give the students enough care. I then heard about NRC learning centre, and thought that it would be a good opportunity to do something productive when they were not in school. My kids really loved going, and particularly liked seeing their teachers. Then I too was invited to come to the centre, to take a tailoring and crochet class. When I went, I gained a lot of new ideas and techniques on knitting, and I can now create a lot of models using crochet. I can also tailor sweaters for my children and other people in our village. Having these new skills helped me to fill my own free time with a hobby, and gave me a distraction from the daily routine of the camp.

66. No longer afraid of the dark (Female, 11, Zaatari)

When I was younger, I used to have nightmares all the time. I would have really bad dreams that would keep me up at night. It made me scared to go to sleep at night and I grew afraid of the dark. Then I started coming to the centre. One day, the teacher came and told us if we were having nightmares we could be part of a group to talk about them more. I wanted to understand my nightmares better and know what it was really about so I decided to join this group. We would meet to draw our nightmares and talk about it. The process of doing this helped me. I now know what my nightmare is about and I'm relieved. I don't have this nightmare anymore and I'm no longer afraid of the dark.

67. Education's importance in life (Female, Azraq, 13)

When I used to live in village 2, after school, I used to go to other support classes. I found these classes not very useful so I dropped out of that programme. When we moved, a friend of the family, who is also a teacher at NRC's learning centre, she told us about the educational services provided here and encouraged us to sign up. She promised that it be more useful than the other programme I used to go to. She was right! The teachers here were really dedicated, and they worked very hard to help each and every student. For me, I used to be particularly weak in English, but after coming here I've seen myself improve. To me this is important because I have always wanted to be a translator, but never had a good English teacher to support me. Now I believe I can achieve this goal because I have a good teacher and I am learning a lot of English.

68. Happiness in Jordan (Male, 10, Azraq)

The days seemed longer as I stayed at home day after day waiting for a phone call from the school to tell me that I can finally register. Ever since I left village 5, I haven't been able to get my documents from there. My mother and I would spend days going back and forth across the camp to get my papers so that I could register at school. Eventually, I was losing hope that I might ever be able to return to school. Staying at home also made all the bad memories of things I saw in Syria return, and these haunted me for a long period of time. I started to not sleep, and would constantly walk around during the day tired, with red eyes, and sometimes fainting from exhaustion. Then one of my relatives told me about the NRC's learning centre. After enrolling here, I feel like I now have a purpose again. I wake up knowing that I have a place to go. I wake up knowing that if I do not come one day, they will call and ask about me. My days of feeling bored, useless and aimless wandering seem long gone. I feel happier than I used to be. Although I get really homesick at times, I am very thankful for the safety I feel here. Now I get support from my teachers and my friends at the learning centre and things are becoming easier for me. I am learning how to cope better.

69. No title 12 (Mother, Zaatari)

I have 5 kids. My eldest ones are not educated in any sense, and I am illiterate as well. I did not want things to take the same turn for my younger kids. After leaving Syria, they used to have a below average academic skills. I asked around about a centre that could help to improve their performance

the neighbours have told me about the NRC's learning centre. Since they started, I have seen a huge difference in their academic level. Now my ten-year old child teaches his 19-year old brother the alphabet. It makes me happy to see the learning spreading across the family. I trust this centre a lot and would highly recommend it to all mothers seeking a good education for their children.

70. The story of my life (Male, 14, Zaatari)

Before I came here, my only dream in life was to sell good in the market. So, my family encouraged me to sell veggies in the market and they told me this will be my future job as well. Then, one day, I heard about the NRC learning centre from my friends who told me it was better at teaching kids more than any other school. Recently, I registered at the LC and I since starting, I have become a happier person generally. I have enjoyed all my classes and sparked new friendships. I became very committed and make sure that I do not miss any of my classes. I also learned new breathing exercises which have shown me how to calm down when I encounter a problem at home or in the street. This has made me a better person. Now I have a bigger dream than to be someone who sells goods in the market all day…I would like to be an artist instead.

71. The beginning of my future (Female, 15, Zaatari)

I come from a fairly over protective family, who always fear for me and my safety. When we arrived at the camp, they did not allow me to move freely across the camp and I was not allowed to register in school. In this time, I always felt like something was missing because I couldn't go to formal school—and because of that I could not read and write. I could only see girls passing by our place going to the school and coming back from there. I always envied them. I always had a broken smile and a sad face. At that time, I had friends from our neighbourhood that would also go to the NRC learning centre. They spread a good word about how safe it is to be at that centre, and they managed to convince my family that I sign up here. When I arrived, I told the teachers about why I didn't go to school, so she went to visit my parents about their worries. She listened to their concerns about the boys hanging around the formal school and the fear they had for my safety because of this, and she told them how the Jordanian police handle those guys strictly. She also mentioned to them that the NRC staff provide a walking to school service to ensure all the girls were safe. She kept visiting until she finally managed to convince my parents to let me go to the formal school. Ever since then, I have become a happier person with dreams and goals to achieve in the future.

72. Learning with the kids at the NRC (Parent, male, Azraq)

My children used to play on the street all day, not making good use of their time. I did not know how to interact with them and support their learning. Then I heard from my relatives about NRC's learning centre. Once my children were part of the centre, they included me in multiple PCGs where I have learnt new skills that benefit me in my day to day life. I have learned how to garden, plant and recycle. More importantly, the PCG has helped me bond more with my kids. It has broken the ice and distance I had with them before. Now I know better how to interact with them at home, and they spend more time at home studying.

73. My teachers and my friends (Male, 12, Azraq)

In the past years, we have moved several times. In Syria, we moved twice to escape the war, and then ended up finally in Amman. In Amman, people did not accept us, we had no food, and my parents couldn't get any job. While I signed up to go to school there, the teachers would sometimes beat us, and I did not feel safe. Finally, my family made a decision to move to Azraq camp. We thought things would be bad here, but surprisingly everything felt a lot better. We no longer had to worry about getting food on the table because my family were able to find jobs. Unfortunately, I have not been able to register at the formal school because I do not have my documents with me. I started to feel guilty

that I was missing classes and wasting my time being out of school, until I heard from my friends and neighbours about the NRC learning centre. I registered right away and because I was longing to be back in school. I was really happy that NRC provided the same lessons as the school, because when I go back eventually, I want to make sure I haven't missed too many classes. Here the teachers are kind and supportive and they have given me an opportunity to learn again.

74. Mystery in Sumayya's Life (Female, 13, Zaatari)

My friends at the formal school told me that NRC learning centre has a remedial program for students to become better readers and writers. I wanted to become a fast learner, who does not ask stupid questions in class or asks the teacher to repeat herself over and over again, so I had my family sign me up at the learning centre. When I arrived, I was surprised by how nice and patient the teachers were here. They were very different than any other teachers I ever had. Also, I used to be very shy and my shyness would get in my way of being engaged at class. I was very afraid to participate, but thankfully the teachers helped me overcome these issues. They always help me with my homework and they never punish me if I do it incorrectly. They have nurtured the love of learning in me. I want to become an astronaut and the teachers at NRC do not make fun of my dream. They make me believe everything is possible and for that I will do all that it is in my power to achieve my goal. While before I had zero hope of achieving my dreams, now I strongly believe in myself.

75. A journey to school (Male, 11, Azraq)

I am very close to my cousins. We always play together and spend most of the time doing everything as a group. Then, suddenly they became too busy to play with me. I felt very left out, so I asked them what had changed for them that meant they could not hang out any more. They told me they go to NRC's learning centre. So I asked my father to sign me up so I could spend time with my cousins again. At first, I did not like coming to the centre. But, after a week I started to enjoy things more, especially the sports class. The centre has very friendly teachers. I feel their support and patience have fed into my academic performance in school and that because of them, my intelligence has increased. In school, I've become more engaged in classes and my teachers there now compliment me a lot. The teachers at NRC's centre have also taught me how to handle problems, and because of that, I am now more capable of solving issues with my siblings.

76. Walking to school (Female, 12, Azraq)

I was on the 3rd grade when I started to attend the formal school in Azraq Camp. I used to go by myself, but it was far walk from my caravan. On the way, I faced a lot of harassment from boys who threw stones at me. I had to run away from them quickly each day. And one time, while running way, I lost my way back to my caravan. I started to cry and ask people for help. Luckily a man came and took my hand and walked me to my home that time. Then, one day I was on my way to school when I saw a bunch of students gathered around a teacher near my house. I asked what was going on and they told me it was the assembly point for the walking to school programme. From that day on, I started going with them to school. Once I started to walk to school with others, I noticed how much better it was to go to school as a group. On the way, we would play lots of games, do sport exercises and even sing. I felt safer being part of this group, and arrived at school with more energy. I know that the teachers in this programme care about me, and would make sure nothing would ever happen on my way to school.

77. Metamorphosis (Teacher, Male, Zaatari)

Before I came to NRC I was working as English teacher for Relief International, supporting the students in the Tawjihi exam. When I got the job here at the learning centre, it was a period of adjustment, and the first month was really hard. At one point, I even thought about quitting and returning to my old job. This is because with the older students, I didn't have to think about how to teach students in different

ways, while here I realised that students were not going to learn English unless I taught them with different resources like visuals, flash cards and e-learning. Also, while with the older students I only used direct instruction, here I have had to think about different ways to communicate the material, like having students in group, having them learn through games, and having them learn from each other. I will admit, making this transition was difficult, and it took me some time to figure out how I would teach English to the younger students. But NRC provided me a lot of support on teaching approaches through seminars and training, and we also had frequent meetings as a team. All of this has helped to strengthen my teaching and now I feel more confident to work with students of varying levels, ages and abilities. In this time, I've come to better understand how important it is to think about the student in front of you, and plan your lessons with their needs in mind. All of this has been positive, but it has come at a personal cost. Doing this job takes much more time, both at work, and at home than what I used to do with the older students. Often, I bring my work home, particularly in terms of developing new worksheets and activities. And this puts more stress on me, and limits the time I have for my family. While I could go and work elsewhere, I don't feel I would want to though, because I appreciate the respect which NRC shows me for my work.

78. Knowledge (Male, 11, Zaatari)

At the formal school, it is really hard to learn. This is because the teachers there hit students all the time, including me and my friends. Also, the teachers give us tough questions on exams but they don't teach us all the material. And often, students in the class are really mean and use bad language, and the teachers do nothing to change their behaviour. This makes it frustrating for me and I don't feel like I learn much there. Eight months ago, I started coming to the NRC learning centre and am really happy because here I feel like here I can learn. For one, the teachers here actually do their job…they teach us. They will support us with revision rather than making us doing it on our own. Also, the teachers here make sure that all students behave well. If anyone does something wrong, they would immediately speak to their parents. For that reason, the students here are also really kind. What I also like here is that we have space and time to play sport, which we don't have school. At the learning centre, I feel like I have been able to gain knowledge and have fun at the same time.

79. The life of children in Zaatari (Male, parent, Zaatari)

I came from Syria with my grandsons the start of the war. I brought them here because their father died in the war at the age of 27, and their mother decided to stay in Syria and remarry someone else. From the moment I arrived, I knew I had to seek out the best possible opportunities for my grandsons. The responsibility to educate them was now on my neck, but I myself do not have an education, so I sought out all the extra help I could for them. The only future I can give them is an education. On top of enrolling them in the formal school I have also placed them in NRC's programme and two other learning programmes every year since we arrived nearly five years ago now. Every year my two grandsons get better and better, and gain more knowledge and get better marks in school. They are both very smart and learn so much—particularly about how to use things like computers, laptops and Ipads—which they used to have in Syria because their father liked these things too. Even though the centre is far from our caravan, they are happy to come here every day waking up at 7:30am to make the journey, and also to quickly rush home to have a quick bite to eat before then going to the school in the afternoon. My only wish is that they could come here even more because they are orphans and I need all the help I can to raise them well.

80. The beautiful journey (Female, 12, Azraq)

Once upon a time, I used to walk to school on my own. I would have no friends to speak to and would grow bored on the journey. Also, because Azraq was so big and new to me, sometimes I would get lost on my way to school. When this would happen, I would start to get anxious for fears of being late to school and missing my classes. And, the boys on the would harass and follow me. I tried a few times to

take the bus, but the other children would push me over constantly. One time, I even fell on the floor and really hurt myself. After that I refused to take the bus again. Then our neighbour who is a volunteer for the walk to school programme suggested I join. Now on the way we sing songs, we chant, we read books, and the volunteers talk to us. I've learned new songs. I have also learned respect and discipline from the programme. For example, the teachers taught us how to respect our neighbours and not be too loud when walking around residential areas in the morning because people are sleeping. I've made friends too…Halima and Iman are my new best friends from the walk group and we share all our secrets together. Now I cannot wait for the start of the school week so that I can walk to school with all my friends.

81. The Story of a Bus and a Queue (Female, 11, Azraq)

Before I got to the camp, I used to go to school in Amman. There students are organised and I didn't face any problems getting to and from school. When we came to Azraq, and enrolled in school, I was shocked by what I saw. When I used to try and take the bus to school, I would wait for long periods, but still not manage to get on. This is because the bus gets too crowded and everyone pushes and shoves to enter. There are just not enough busses for all of us. Kids on the bus are also rowdy. One day, some boys threw rocks on the bus and a girl got badly hurt. Her head started to bleed, and she had to go to the hospital. This made me fear going on the bus, so I started to walk to school on my own. Walking in the heat by myself was also not fun, and when it was hot outside I would get very tired. Then one day I saw the walking group gathered near my house, I asked them what they are, and they welcomed me to join. When I walk with the group, everything is organised. Everyone listens to the teachers and it makes me feel safe. Now things are organized with the Walk to School, everyone listens to the teachers, it makes me feel safe. I prefer to walk to school because we do fun things along the way. All the friends I have at school are ones I've made in the programme. They are my sisters…they give me pencils when I forget mine, they respect me, help me, and play with me. Now I am no longer alone.

82. The Story of Dreams (Male, 12, Azraq)

When we came from Aleppo to Azraq I was not happy. I used to see a lot of nightmares, I was afraid to sleep and would stay awake. I used to dream about my siblings who died in the war, and I couldn't stop thinking about their death. Even when I used to study, I wouldn't be able to focus. For example, when I would try to write at school, I would start thinking about when and how they did. Wherever I would walk, I would be afraid. Some kids around the caravan told me to come to NRC's learning centre. They told me they were learning so much and having fun. They said they were getting better and strong in their classes. So, I asked my father, and he enrolled me in the centre. Once I came, they taught me how to draw and talk about my nightmares. They taught me to express my feelings, and showed me ways that I could relax. I felt so much relief. I don't have the nightmares about my siblings as much anymore. Everything is so much better. I no longer feel afraid, and can focus on my studies more. I've now become one of the best students in the class. I now feel happy to live in Azraq and no longer want to leave it.

83. Learning at NRC (Female, 12, Zaatari)

I used to stay at home and play all day because of my disability. I did not have the chance to go to school. Then one of the community ambassadors team came to my family and told us about NRC's learning centre. I decided to come so that I could make friends and be with other children. While I still do not have many friends, I have discovered the library at the centre. I love this place, and reading all the books it has in it. In other centres I have been in, they never allowed me to read the books in the library by myself. The books have become my friends with time, and it has become my absolute favourite place to go in the camp.

84. A changed situation (Male, teacher, Zaatari)

I still remember the frown my daughter and my wife carried on their faces the minute I opened the door coming home darn tired from my previous work in the camp at the market. Doing this hard work, and earning very little made me an angry and short-tempered person. I used to be very frustrated by the fact I had a bachelor degree in counselling but still couldn't find a better job than working in the market. This was the case until one day my neighbour recommended I check the NRC's learning centre as they were hiring. Soon after I was employed as a teacher of the centre's PSS and behaviour monitoring unit. While I had knowledge and experience from my previous life in Syria, NRC has given me numerous additional trainings relevant to what I do. These trainings have been enriching professionally, personally, and academically. Because of this work, my entire attitude has changed with everyone I deal with especially my family. Seeing the impacts I can have on students, particularly those suffering trauma and nightmares, keeps me motivated. With this job, I feel like I am now a productive and contributing member of my society again.

85. The Change of Self (Female, 15, Azraq)

I was very unhappy when I arrived here in Azraq. Psychologically I was exhausted, and academically I was weak as I had to stop going to school in Syria because of the war. I used to fear seeing soldiers and men around the camp because I thought they would hurt me and my family. I would see nightmares all the time…I would remember the noises of the war…the jet planes flying over our houses, and the kids running afraid. I was constantly thinking of all the people still in Syria, and I felt helpless that I couldn't help them. I didn't feel safe. I was always afraid. I used to feel suffocated. I did not have friends, and we did not have any relatives here. Sometimes I would be so afraid that I wouldn't leave the house. It all caused me a lot of stress. Then one day an outreach group from NRC came to our house and they told us the centre helps girls to do better academically and gives them psychological support to help them forget what they've seen in war. I asked my dad if he would let me enrol. At first, he refused, as I am the eldest and I have responsibilities in the house, including taking care of my younger siblings. But I persisted and told him I want to become something when I grow up. I told him I wanted to help people, and advocate for girls to stay in school. He was soon after convinced and he enrolled me in both the school and the centre. When I first enrolled here I wasn't very good. After a few days, I heard that there was a teacher who listens to the girls and helps them solve their personal problems. At first, I didn't want to go to this teacher. What I had to say was a big secret, and I didn't want it to spread and get to anyone. I thought about it for a few days, and the girls in my class insisted that everything I would say is confidential. I felt encouraged by my friends, who before were always sad, but after speaking to the teacher seemed to be smiling more. I finally reached out for help. I immediately felt relieved because the teacher became like a mother to me. Over time, I grew to trust her and shared with her my feelings. I started to feel much better, and she helped me to understand that the war will not follow us here. Here I am safe. Now I can sleep more easily…I have friends, and I can leave and enter the house as I please. After speaking with this teacher, my view of the future has changed. It helped, and it helped me understand that I'm not alone in this.

7.4 Inception report (inclusive of evaluation protocols and sampling framework)

Understanding the evaluation's background and purpose

Having closely reviewed the ToR and associated annexes, there is clear indication that the evaluation approach should be (1) *retrospective* by assessing how NRC has ensured access to quality, inclusive education for the refugee population residing in Zaatari and Azraq camps; and (2) *prospective* to help NRC strategize on how it can ensure that its education programme remains relevant to the needs of its beneficiaries, fit for a changing institutional context, and effective in terms of ensuring children are able to remain in or return to (in)formal schooling.

This was further confirmed in initial conversations with Julie Chinnery and after reviewing project documentation. This suggests a significant shift in 2016 in NRC's education strategy within the camp setting; one which is largely due to the Government of Jordan taking increasing responsibility for supporting out of school Syrian refugee children to access and return to formal school, or access appropriate non-formal education pathways (such as the Ministry's Catch-Up and Drop-Out programmes). As a result, NRC's education programming in the camps has evolved from one focused on returning OOSC to school, to one largely supporting children already in formal schooling to stay in school. The hub of NRC's education programming in camps, has and remains the learning centre it operates in each camp.

At present, learning support services (LSS) for students who are in the formal system, but at risk of dropping out, has become the core of NRC's educational programming in the camps. There are a range of other initiatives which now wrap around this work—including the Walking to School initiative to ensure children safely travel to/from school, Parental Community Groups (PCGs) to enable parents to better support their children's well-being and learning, and the implementation of Better Learning Programme (BLP I and II) to help children regain lost capacity, resilience and confidence due to traumatic experiences. Given NRC's shift to explicitly supporting the formal education system, NRC is also currently setting up referral pathways between learning centres and the schools, and is aiming to work more closely with the formal schools on teacher training and support, given its experience of working with its learning centre facilitators. This evolution in programming is noted below.

2013-2014	NRC delivered the "Catch up" program as an immediate emergency educational response to Syrian Refugee Children in Camps in Jordan.
2014-2015	NRC started a dialogue with the local Government and the UNICEF in order to create cooperatively a sustainable educational program that respond to the real needs of Syrian Refugee students in Jordan through development of an Accelerated Learning Programme (ALP)
2014-2015	The political situation of Syrian refugees in Jordan moved from emergency to sustainable responses. NRC supported the MOE to increase the access to quality education through the expansion of the absorptive capacity of schools in the country's most affected areas, and professional development in inclusive education and psychosocial support as well as social cohesion topics to ensure a conducive learning environment.
2015-2016	In London conference for Syria, held in February 2016, the Jordanian MOE decided to take charge of the development and the implementation of an ALP for both Syrian and Jordanian students. Meanwhile, NRC decided to move forward and pilot an ALP internally prepared by NRC technical educational team as an informal program for OOSC. Pilot data suggested the success of this programme in ensuring learners were progressing academically.
2017-onwards	Due to MOE policies and restrictions, NRC stopped delivering the OOSC program (ALP) and started a new approach to support students' learning in school through a remedial and enrichment learning program run in the learning centres

A review of the Terms of Reference and initial discussions with Julie reveal that there are several underpinning questions, which it is hoped this evaluation can provide information on. One key area is assessing the **relevance and appropriateness** of NRC response to this shifting context, particularly against the benchmark of NRC's mandate as a humanitarian organisation which targets the most vulnerable. Specifically, the evaluation will explore whether and how NRC in its education programming in the two camps is effectively identifying, targeting and supporting the educational needs of the most vulnerable children at any given time. Another key area, given the difference in operating contexts between Azraq and Zaatari, is whether this context then mediates what NRC is able to accomplish, and in line with one of the strategic evaluation questions, whether NRC's responses have been both relevant and appropriate to each context.

To explore these issues, it is critical that the evaluation collect primary data from the direct beneficiaries of NRC's education programming in each camp, Perceptions of relevance and appropriateness of action can then be triangulated by collecting views from those involved in supporting these beneficiaries, including the staff working in the learning centres, representatives from some of the formal school(s)[129] these children feed into, and the caregivers/parents of these children. Additionally, to contextualise NRC's response within the broader education setting/sector of the camp and Jordan more broadly, it will be important to speak to officials from UNICEF, the Ministry of Education (if necessary), and other key members of the Education Sector Working Group in both camps.

Another key focus is on the **outcomes and impacts** of NRC's responses to date—particularly in terms of its current focus on ensuring that children at risk of dropping out of school are better able to access, achieve and stay in school. This needs to be explored by looking not only at the effectiveness of what occurs in the learning centres themselves, but also in terms of the impacts it then may have on key educational outcomes such as students' attendance, learning and longer-term retention in the formal system. At the same time, it is important to explore learning outcomes beyond these factors, particularly given the focus on protection within NRC's education response. In particular, attention should be given to the impacts of the Better Learning Programme on measures/predictors of school functioning such as concentration in school, ability to complete homework, and enjoyment of school.

Some of the evaluation techniques proposed—specifically Most Significant Change—will help to reveal the ways in which beneficiaries and their duty bearers articulate the changes that participation in NRC's education programming has brought about. This then allows some analysis of the degree to which key educational outcomes figures as a change of significance in such narratives compared to other factors. Additionally, the evaluation will also aim to further review and/or explore existing quantitative data collected by NRC (namely project monitoring data), and review past longitudinal data, to triangulate these perceptions with independent information. Measures of student well-being, such as their coping skills, satisfaction/enjoyment of skills, and self-regulation– as articulated in MSC stories and also collected through the BLP pre/post quantitative data will also be collected and/or further analysed and presented in this evaluation.

Related to the above to lines of inquiry is the question of how **effective, relevant and appropriate** has NRC's response been to the needs of various subsections of its target group in the camps—refugee girls and boys ages 6-15 most at risk of being left out, or dropping out, of the formal education system. NRC Jordan signals in its most recent macro-log frame narrative that the gendered needs of boys and girls in this age range are explicitly considered in its programme response.[130] Likewise, it recognises the importance of giving consideration to the needs of children with disabilities and learning difficulties, as

[129] Subsequent discussions with NRC Jordan suggest that speaking to stakeholders—namely students' current teachers—in a formal school which past beneficiaries attend may only be possible in Zaatari.
[130] At the time of writing this report, the 2018 strategy, logframe and theory of change were being constructed, and will reviewed alongside the 2016 strategy available at present.

well as those who face distress or symptoms of trauma. Additionally, those between 13-15 years old are most likely to be out of school, but tare currently a small segment of NRC's target population (approx. 20%). Concerns have been voiced about this particular sub-population of beneficiaries, and whether/if NRC could do more for these adolescents. At present, it appears that NRC is trailing new approaches, such as adolescent-led community development activities—the relevance, appropriateness and impacts of which can be explored further in this evaluation—with specific focus on how NRC is supporting OOSC into formal, non-formal or informal education pathways.

This evaluation needs to ensure that it explores impacts on several different subgroups, disaggregated by age, gender, disability, and current status of enrolment in formal schooling (in or out of school). The proposed sampling framework for each learning centre and beneficiaries within them aims to explore these contextual differences by ensuring that a broad spectrum of stakeholders is interviewed and/or MSC stories collected from in each location. Additionally, it is clear that a gender, location and implementation model disaggregated analysis must be done of existing and additional data collected through the evaluation. This will be done as a matter of course, with identification of any differences of note included in the evaluation. The aim is to determine if there are any discernible differences on the nature of the impacts or the relevance of NRC's programme responses between these beneficiaries. Given one of the Strategic Evaluation questions focusses on the Better Learning Programme, it is believed that it is also important to explore the particular impacts of the targeted and psychosocial support offered through BLP II compared to the more general social-emotional learning provided through BLP I. What has enabled or hindered BLP to an effective programme in the informal education setting of the learning centre is a key matter of interest for NRC regionally and globally.

A final key issue is that of the **approach which NRC has undertaken** to supporting and improving quality of education and access to and retention of learners to education. NRC has invested significant efforts to ensure that its learning centres are staffed by well-trained and supported Syrian facilitators who are able to support the learning of children in a non-threatening and dynamic way. NRC has also engaged in outreach activities with areas of the camp it supports management of, and strengthened referral pathways into the formal and non-formal education system in an attempt to ensure all learners who are able, are given the opportunity to reintegrate; and likewise, with formal education providers and the community, to ensure that all are aware of the support which NRC's learning centres provide. NRC is also working hard to engage parents and caregivers in the activities of the learning centres through the establishment of the Parental Community Groups. The programme of educational, recreational and psychosocial support offered in the centres appears to be driven by the INEE Minimum Standards, recent guidance on SEL-PSS, and conflict-sensitive education approaches. Technology is recognised to play an increasing role in shaping the instructional programme within and outside the centre. The ToR makes clear that the efficiency and alignment of these approaches to international best practice, and to the work of other stakeholders should be assessed, and recommendations given on how this might be improved.

Specific to these issues, the evaluation will need to review and assess the programme of learning within the learning centres themselves through a review of key curriculum documentation, teacher training material, and observations of classes in the centres themselves. It will also require speaking to the staff working in the learning centres to obtain their understandings of how their approaches support student's learning and success. It will also require discussions with NRC management, technical and implementation teams to understand the strategic decisions that have been made around this approach, key challenges, and possible ways forward. Data from students about their experiences in the learning centre will be used to corroborate some of the perspectives provided from these other forms of data collection.

Key evaluation questions

The Terms of Reference outlines several (a total of 18) evaluation questions that are to be explored in the scope of this evaluation. These are categorised, under several broad headings—

relevance/appropriateness, efficiency and effectiveness, coordination, learning and sustainability, and impact. Additional to that, two strategic NRC questions—one about the particular impact BLP has had on access to learning and learning outcomes, and another about the appropriateness of NRC's response according to the needs and priorities of the targeted population—are required to be answered and explored, with the BLP findings written up as a separate case study. In an attempt to rationalise the number of evaluation questions initially presented in the ToR, these have been reworded, reorganised and simplified into the following key evaluation questions:

Impact: What have been the intended and unintended outcomes of NRC's education programming in the camps for direct (the learners themselves) and indirect beneficiaries (parents, learning centre staff, broader camp community) since the commencement of activity? What influence has the context and approach to implementation had on outcomes noted—in other words—are some beneficiaries and contexts served better or worse by NRC's programme approach than others and why?

Process: Has the approach undertaken by NRC to supporting and providing access to quality education been an effective, inclusive, and coordinated response to the needs of its beneficiaries and activities of other stakeholders, and the particular context of operation in each of the two camps?

Relevance/Appropriateness: How relevant and appropriate have these responses been to the needs of participating children, their duty-bearers, and the broader camp and educational context of Jordan, both at present and historically?

Efficiency: Have the resources and support deployed for been sufficient and appropriate to the needs identified for project beneficiaries, and if not, what factors have constrained this?

Sustainability: What evidence exist to suggest that through NRC's efforts: (a) beneficiaries are able to remain in schooling and successfully meet learning outcomes, independent of their ongoing participation in LSS; and (b) education provision for Syrian refugees as a whole has been strengthened in Jordan through NRC's interventions and advocacy efforts?

Learning: How might NRC's programming through the learning centres or other streams of activity better support access and retention in formal education, while also addressing the educational needs/aspirations of children and their parents? Does NRC have the right structures, M&E tools/practices, and staff in place to achieve this aim, and if not, what changes might be required? And, does NRC systematically incorporate lessons learned from its activities to ongoing programme development, within and outside the camp settings of Jordan?

In categorising the questions in this way, the objective is not to ignore the questions noted in the ToR, but to interpret the broader intent of the questions and simplify how these might be asked and explored. Specific lines of inquiry within each of the categories above will be informed by the more detailed questions in the ToR, but the final evaluation report will present data against the themes and questions noted above. In addition, a separate short case study, specific to the impacts of BLP in terms of learning outcomes will be produced. The ways the questions above will be explored is discussed in the subsequent sections.

Evaluation approach

The evaluation will adopt the following approaches to answering the evaluation questions noted above:

(1) **Key stakeholder interviews** with key individuals within NRC and externally;

(2) **Desk review** of project documentation to date;

(3) **Review and further analysis of project monitoring data**, specifically the PSS integrity survey administered to BLP I and II participants and nightmare survey to BLP II participants, pre/post examination results from NRC administered tests in learning centres, attendance records of students in learning centres, and any post-programme participation data on learners' participation, attendance and academic achievement in formal schooling;

(4) **Most Significant Change** stories collected from children and adolescents who have participated in summer and school year activities in the learning centres and walk to school activities; as well as key indirect beneficiaries, specifically parents who have been part of the PCGs and Syrian facilitators working in the learning centres

(5) **Focus group discussions** with indirect and non-beneficiary groups such as the IBVs supporting the walk to school programme and parents of children participating in learning centre (who are not part of PCGs).

(6) A **walk through and general observations** of the activities in the learning centre will be noted

(7) **Workshops** with NRC Education team/key stakeholders at conclusion of field visit

A summary of how each of the specified evaluation domains will be explored using these methods is noted in the table on the next page. As the table notes, each of the evaluation domains will be explored through multiple data sources as a way of increasing the credibility and validity of subsequent analysis. Each of the data collection/analysis methods is described in a subsequent section.

Key evaluation domains and key objectives	Evaluation approaches						
	Key stakeholder Interviews	Most significant change	Desk review of project documentation	Review/analysis of project monitoring data	Focus group discussions	Observation/walk through	Workshops
Impact	X	X	X	X	X		
Process	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Relevance/appropriateness	X	X	X	X	X	X	
Efficiency	X		X				
Sustainability	X		X		X		X
Learning	X		X	X	X		X

Within each learning centre, it is likely that a combination of data will be collected on site from various stakeholder groups that are part of these centres. The total numbers of individuals (at each centre) who would be involved in each form of data collection is summarised in the table below. How this work will be carried out is detailed further in a subsequent section.

Stakeholder	MSC story collection (20 mins/individual)	Focus group interview (1-1.5 hrs)	Observation (1 hr)
Students participating in LSS	40	0	0
Students participating in walk to school only	4	0	0
Subject teachers	3	3	1
MSU teachers	3	3	0
Caregivers who are part of PCG	3	0	0
Caregivers who are not part of PCG	0	3	0
Walk to school IBVs	0	3	0
Teachers within a formal school which learning centre students attend (Zaatari only)	0	3	0
Team leader and project officers	0	3	0
Education coordinator and teacher support officer	0	2	0
TOTAL PERSONS INVOLVED	**53**	**20**	**1**

Table 5: Summary of data to be collected from each centre

Key stakeholder/focus group interviews

Key stakeholder interviews will occur with individuals within NRC and externally to explore many of the evaluation questions noted. These interviews will be critical to contextualising the relevance/appropriateness of NRC's education response in the camps, understand its comparative advantage to other actors working in both Zaatari and Azraq, and to assess the perceived effectiveness (and possible challenges) of this approach within the current educational context of the camps. These interviews are also critical to determine how NRC's activities can be sustained and leveraged on moving forward. Semi-structured interview guides for internal and external stakeholders has been developed and is appended to this inception report. It is important to note that not all questions will be equally relevant to all parties, and particular questions within the guide may drive the interview. It is anticipated that approximately one hour would need to be scheduled for each interview. At present, it is anticipated that the following individuals/organisations would need to be interviewed (either individually or as part of a focus group) as part of the evaluation process.[131]

Within NRC	External to NRC
Education and Youth Specialist Education Camps Project Manager Technical team for each centre (inclusive of teacher support officers) Learning Centre Subject Teachers & Library Teachers (Syrian Facilitators) at each site Monitoring and Support Unit (MSU) Teachers (Child Protection, LS, PSS) at each site Head of Programmes Regional Education Advisor M&E manager and focal group (together)	UNICEF Other providers/partners of remedial education support in each camp (Relief International, Save the Children, other ESWG members) Referral partners in each camp (Mercy Corps/Handicap International) NMFA (if available/relevant) Representative from Porticus

All interviews are reflected in the daily fieldwork plan at the end of this document.

Most Significant Change (MSC)

A key component of the qualitative work that will be undertaken in this evaluation exercise will be utilisation of MSC to collectively analyse the types of impacts which NRC's education activities to date

[131] This list needs to be further negotiated and finalised in consultation with NRC Jordan.

have afforded beneficiaries. It is proposed that at the beneficiary level, MSC stories be collected from past and present beneficiaries (i.e. children and adolescents) who have been part of NRC's programming, as well as from some of the key indirect beneficiary groups (parents and teachers). The aim is that **two members** of the NRC Jordan M&E or Education team will work alongside the consultant to collect these narratives, after receiving training on the first day. These individuals would need to have excellent written/language skills in English and prior experience of conducting interviews.

MSC is a collaborative, qualitative evaluation method that has gained significant attention within international development circles in the past decade.[132] It provides information that can be used to identify impacts of an initiative and promote ongoing programme learning, such as improving implementation, and identifying and addressing negative or unexpected outcomes. In MSC, participants of an initiative, as well as those responsible for managing and implementing such activity are asked in an interview to identify at least three positive or negative changes, from their perspective, that are the result of the initiative in question. From this, each individual selects the one change that they believe is most significant to them, and the interviewee documents a narrative story of this change, documenting what things were like prior to the change, the change itself, and what things are like after the change. The interviewee also documents why this change is significant to the narrator, and the narrator also provides a short title for the story.[133] In the case of this evaluation, stories of change will be collected from a range of discrete direct beneficiary sub-groups within NRC's education programming in the camps. A sampling framework for the students to be recruited for collection of MSC stories is presented below (**Error! Reference source not found.**).

Location	Out of school LSS ages 9-12		Out of school LSS ages 13-15		In school LSS ages 9-12		In school LSS ages 13-15		BLP II students ages 9-15		Students with disabilities engaged in LSS		Walk to school (not part of LSS)	
	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M
Zaatari current beneficiaries	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	0	0	1	1	2	2
Zaatari past beneficiaries	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	1	1	0	0
Azraq current beneficiaries	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	0	0	1	1	2	2
Azraq past beneficiaries	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	1	1	0	0

Table 6: Breakdown, by location, age, and gender of children participating in MSC process

It is expected in total that **106** stories of change from direct and indirect beneficiaries will be collected, collated and analysed during the course of the evaluation (see **Error! Reference source not found.**).

Caregivers, children and teachers should be randomly selected for collection of MSC stories, if at all possible.[134] It is important to note that MSC is not intended to produce success stories, but rather a cross-section of different experiences of the initiative in question. It may be expected that some may find it more difficult to articulate a change from their participation in BLP alone, and that is fine.

[132] See Davies, R. and Dart, J. (2005). The 'Most Significant Change' (MSC) Technique. A Guide to Its Use. www.mande.co.uk/docs/MSCGuide.pdf; or Shah, R. (2014). Assessing the 'true impact' of development assistance in the Gaza Strip and Tokelau: 'Most Significant Change' as an evaluation technique. *Asia Pacific Viewpoint, 55* (3), 262-276.

[133] An MSC interview guide for adult interviewees is provided in this report. For young students, a modified approach will be used, whereby they will be asked to draw a picture before and after their participation in BLP and then asked to narrate (orally) a story about this. This will allow them to become more comfortable in narrating their story, and also provide an additional data source (in the form of the pictures drawn) for the evaluation.

[134] While random selection of parents and teachers may be the 'ideal' it is acknowledged that there are both time constraints and the fact that teacher available may not allow for this to occur.

Caregivers, children, and teachers <u>should not</u> be selected on the basis of their ability to provide an exemplary "success" story.

Below is a sample schedule for how MSC stories and the other forms of data might be collected over two days in each centre, drawing on the assistance of two additional staff from NRC who have been trained prior.

Time allotment	Activity	Individual responsible
8:30-10	MSC **group** story collection from 4 out of school boys ages 9-12 (**past and present combined**)	Ritesh and NRC staff member
	MSC **group** story collection from 4 out of school girls ages 9-12 (**past and present combined**)	NRC staff member
10-11:30	MSC **group** story collection from 4 in school boys ages 9-12 (**past and present combined**)	Ritesh and NRC staff member
	MSC **group** story collection from 4 in school girls ages 9-12 (**past and present combined**)	NRC staff member
11:30-12:30	LUNCH	
12:30-2	MSC **group** story collection from 4 out of school boys ages 13-15 (**past and present combined**)	Ritesh and NRC staff member
	MSC **group** story collection from 4 out of school girls ages 13-15 (**past and present combined**)	NRC staff member
2-3:30	MSC **group** story collection from 4 in school boys ages 13-15 (**past and present combined**)	Ritesh and NRC staff member
	MSC **group** story collection from 4 in school girls ages 13-15 (**past and present combined**)	NRC staff member

<u>Day 2</u>

Time	Activity	Individual responsible
8:30-9:30	MSC **group** story collection from 2 male students with disabilities (**past and present combined**)	Ritesh and NRC staff member
	MSC **group** story collection from 2 female students with disabilities (**past and present combined**)	NRC staff member
9:30-10:30	MSC **group** story collection from 2 male "walk to school" students (**present only**)	Ritesh and NRC staff member
	MSC **group** story collection from 2 female "walk to school" students (**present only**)	NRC staff member
10:30-12	MSC **individual** story collection from 3 subject teachers (20-30 mins/each)	Ritesh and NRC staff member (if needed)
12-1	**LUNCH**	
1-2:30	MSC **individual** story collection from 3 MSU teachers (20-30 mins/each)	Ritesh and NRC staff member (if needed)
	MSC **individual** story collection with 3 PCG parents (20-30 mins/each)	NRC staff member
2:30-3:30	MSC **individual** story collection from 2 male BLP II students (**past**)	Ritesh and NRC staff member (if needed)
	MSC **individual** story collection from 2 female BLP II students (**past**)	NRC staff member

Table 7: Summary of MSC data collection from each centre

<u>Key assumptions and issues with MSC data collection in the centres:</u>

1. Staff resource required from NRC Jordan during fieldwork: One female individual (potentially from M&E team or education team) to assist with MSC story collection, and another (male or

female) to assist with translation alongside Ritesh. Ideally these same individuals could be committed to fieldwork for the entire evaluation period.

2. Logistical organisation: NRC teams at will need to support the recruitment of relevant individuals within the sampling framework proposed, and to organise the schedule for each day in line with what is proposed in this report.
3. All teachers selected would be those who have been part of the learning centre staff for at least one year, so they are well aware of the activities of NRC.

Review of existing documentation, project data and secondary analysis of quantitative data collected

As part of this inception stage of the project a number of documents were provided to the consultant by NRC Jordan's Education team and reviewed in preparing this inception report. Key documentation reviewed included:

- NRC Jordan country strategy;
- 2016 Education programme macro log frame and narrative;
- Concept note, programme framework, monitoring data and final assessment of NRC's ALP pilot;
- Curriculum support materials (Big Bad Boo, Child Education Pack, BLP Manuals);
- Final reports to donors from past support to education programming in the camp;
- Concept notes and programme planning documents related to LSS activities;
- Analysis of BLP impacts from 2016;
- Analysis of ALP Pilot from 2015-6;
- SoPs and training framework for teacher support in the learning centres;
- Reports produced by other actors about the education context for Syrian refugees in Jordan;
- Currently funded proposals—Porticus, UNICEF, NMFA GPA—and associated progress reporting; and
- Internal evaluation regarding LSS for adolescents ages 13-15

This documentation provides a wealth of information on the intent, design, implementation and evolution of NRC's education programming in the camps to date. Data reviewed also provides some indication of the type of impacts that this programming has had, most notably on direct beneficiaries, and to a lesser extent indirect beneficiaries. Accompanying this, narrative reports to donors provide an overview of quantitative and qualitative measures, specifically numbers of beneficiaries served, immediate outcomes, and lessons/challenges learned from implementation. Much of this documentation will be vital to partly answering/exploring the above evaluation questions.

That stated there appear to be some information gaps that need to be further explored. Importantly, there is a need to better understand the forms of monitoring data that are collected from learners who are participating in activities within the learning centre. It does appear that specific to BLP, a survey is conducted with all students to measure aspects of their well-being (pre/post). In addition, it would appear that data on attendance and learning outcomes is kept throughout the period of enrolment of learners in the centre. There also appear to be some measures in place to track past NRC beneficiaries once reintegrated into the formal education system. **What is unknown as of now is the scale and scope of this data, as well as the depth of analysis which has been done to date.** It is expected that further analysis in terms of both aggregation and disaggregation of data sets could be done, if they are made available to the evaluator. **This is a matter that warrants further discussion with both the education and M&E teams, ideally ahead of the planned field visit in October.**

Given constraints of time, it is not feasible to collect significant amounts of new quantitative data as part of this evaluation project. For this reason, while quantitative data from these sources may be included in the evaluation report, the limitations of these data (once fully known) will be made explicit, as will recommendations on improving M&E practice for the future. This is particularly important given NRC's interest in being able to more firmly specify impacts of its support on learning outcomes.

MSC Selection Panel and Findings Workshop

From the MSC stories collected, a selection panel will then be organised at the conclusion of fieldwork in Jordan. Members of the NRC education team, sitting alongside invited external stakeholders (decided by NRC), will jointly deliberate on the merit and worth of each story, and choose two or three narratives that best reflect the key outcomes of NRC education programming in the camps to date. The purpose of this selection panel is to reveal competing perceptions and opinions on which outcomes/changes from the stories collected are most important to the programme team and its partners. This discussion and the final articulation by the group as to why they have chosen the stories they have is recorded to ensure this information is not lost. This information will then be included in the evaluation itself, as are the chosen stories from the panel. The reason to undertake this process is that it supports formative and organisational learning, and could be useful in shaping/refining the education programme's Theory of Change moving forward.

While the selected stories will be featured in the evaluation, additional stories of change will also be included in the evaluation itself, to exemplify or provide a case study of impacts noted through other forms of data analysis. Additionally, in the evaluation report, a secondary analysis of the stories based on thematic issues/content/topics (quantified) will also be presented. This will serve to identify broader patterns of "significant change" amongst the project's direct and indirect beneficiaries, and act to contribute to the further development of NRC's programming in the camps.

Following this, a separate findings and recommendations workshops will be held where impacts noted by beneficiaries will be brought together with the other data collected in the course of the evaluation to identify key findings, and to co-construct what the potential implications and ways forward from this evaluation are. These perspectives would then be taken into account in the shaping of recommendations within the evaluation report.

The intent of having these two workshops would be to have NRC staff actively involved in making sense of the data; and to ensure that the issues highlighted in the final evaluation report are the ones which are collectively noted as the most important ones.

7.5 Data collection protocols

Interview Guide for NRC Stakeholders (not based in learning centre)

1) How long and how have you been involved with NRC's programming in Jordan?
2) In your opinion, what would you say have been some of the biggest successes to date from the education programming in the camps?
3) When thinking about these successes, what have been the factors that have been critical to achieving them?
4) What have been some of the biggest challenges that you/and or the team have faced in designing and implementing education programming in the camps to date? Which of these challenges does NRC have control over, and which of these are more contextual in nature?
5) In what ways does the unique context of each of the camps influence how programming has been designed and implemented?
6) At present which organisations/agencies have the biggest influence on the educational opportunities and outcomes for children and adolescents in the camps? Why?
7) How has the education programming aligned with NRC Programme Policy, the INEE Minimum Standards and other INEE resources (conflict-sensitive education pack, PSS-SEL Guidance) to ensure relevance to best practice in the field at the moment?
8) Do you believe the education programme in the camps is targeting the right beneficiaries at the moment? Are there children who you feel deserve to participate in these programmes but miss out at present or/and are there children who are part of the programme and you feel do not feel it is the appropriate or relevant response for? Why? What can be done to solve this issue?
9) What would you say has been NRC's comparative advantage in running education programming in the camps to date? How might/has the organisation build off that success in the future in shaping its programming inside or outside the camps in Jordan, or within the region more broadly?

External Stakeholder Interview Guide

1) How familiar are you with the work of NRC in regards to education in Zaatari and Azraq camps? What do you believe NRC has sought to do with its programme?
2) Based on your observations and knowledge of NRC's activities, what would you say have been some of the biggest achievements of it to date? Why are these achievements so important to the Syrian refugees residing in the camps?
3) In the current institutional context where there does not appear to be any immediate solution to the Syrian crisis, and where the Ministry of Education is exerting more control over formal/non-formal education programmes, how well do you think the successes of NRC's work in the camps can be sustained in the medium to long term? Why/why not?
4) Are there particular groups of children where NRC has shown particular success in regards to its programming in your opinion? Why might that be? Are there particular groups where NRC has not shown success? Why might that be?
5) At present time, when do you believe are the most immediate learning needs of Syrian refugee children in the camps? How well do you feel NRC's programming can address these concerns? Explain.
6) In working with NRC, what would you say is unique or novel about their approach in the education sector of the camps? Why do you think they can work in this way?
7) At present time, what do you believe are the biggest challenges facing the donor community, education service providers and/or implementing partners in continuing to support the educational needs of Syrian refugee children and adolescents residing in the camps?
8) How does NRC's response fit into the current Jordan Response Plan, and are there areas that NRC could be better poised to contribute in terms of its education programming?

MSC Interview/Recording Guide

Introduction: I am here today to discuss with you the participation you have had in the past in the Norwegian Refugee Council's Learning Centre/Walking to School programme in your camp. As part of this programme a number of activities occurred, some of which you were personally involved in as a student/parent/teacher. I would like you to think back on that experience and some of the changes that you witnessed because of this project—either for yourself personally, your child/the children you work with, or the camp community as a whole. These changes can either be good ones or bad ones, but need to be changes that are important to you.

Contact Details

Name of person recording story _____

Project and location _____

Date of recording _____

Thinking back on some of the activities that have occurred from your involvement in the Learning Centre/Walking to School Programme, what were three significant changes, either positive or negative, that resulted from this?

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

Of these changes, which would you say has been the most important change to you personally and why?

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TURN PAGE OVER

Now I would like you to tell me the complete story about this change. In doing so, describe what things were like before you were part of these activities, how the change was brought about, and what things are like now. Try to tell the story in this sequence and I will write down what you have said and then read it back to you after for you to add/correct any details of what you have stated.

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What title or name would you like to give to your story?

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7.6 Evaluation schedule

Date	Location	Activit(ies)	
Weds, Oct 4	Amman	**Ritesh arrives into Amman (approx. 3pm) and goes directly to NRC office** Security briefing with NRC, Inception meeting with Education Specialist and Education Programme Manager (camps)	
Thurs, Oct 5	Amman	**Until noon**	Individual interviews with Technical Officer (Zaatari), Team Leader (Azraq)
		After noon	MSC training for the 2-3 members of M&E/education team (and others) who will be assisting Ritesh in the collection of stories in the field (either translation or direct collection of stories), meeting with M&E Manager
Fri, Oct 6	Amman	**All day**	Day off—analysis of BLP survey data and assessment results from LSS (if provided prior)
Sat, Oct 7	Zaatari Camp	**All day**	Observation and walk around of activities in centre **(1hr)**, interview with Technical Education Officer, focus group interviews with MSU teachers, WTS IBVs, community outreach volunteers, and subject teacher
Sun, Oct 8	Zaatari Camp	**All day**	Meeting with principal/teachers from formal school; MSC story collection with beneficiaries (in and out of school of various ages)
Mon, Oct 9	Azraq Camp	**All day**	Observation and walk around of activities in centre **(1hr)** Individual interview with Education Officer, Technical Support Officer; focus group interviews with MSU teachers, community outreach volunteers, WTS volunteers, subject teachers
Tues, Oct 10	Azraq Camp	**All day**	Meeting with principal/teachers from formal school; MSC story collection with beneficiaries (in and out of school of various ages), parents, teachers Meeting with Education Programme Manager (Camps)

Date	Location	Activit(ies)	
Weds, Oct 11	Azraq Camp	**All day**	MSC story collection with beneficiaries (students with disabilities, BLP II students, WTS), MSU teachers, PCG parents, teachers
Thurs, Oct 12	Amman	**All day**	External stakeholder interviews with: Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Relief International, UNICEF, Porticus
Fri, Oct 13	Amman	**All day**	Day off, analysis of project monitoring data
Sat, Oct 14	Zaatari	**All day**	MSC story collection with beneficiaries (students with disabilities, BLP II students, WTS), MSU teachers, PCG parents, teachers
Sun, Oct 15	Amman	**AM**	Interviews with key internal NRC stakeholders: Country Director, Head of Programmes, Head of Operations, Advocacy and Protection Manager, Education Specialist
		PM	MSC selection panel with education team and other NRC stakeholders
Mon, Oct 16	Amman	**AM**	Preparation for findings workshop
		PM	**Findings workshop (1-4pm)**
Tues, Oct 17	Return home	Depart Amman early morning	

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