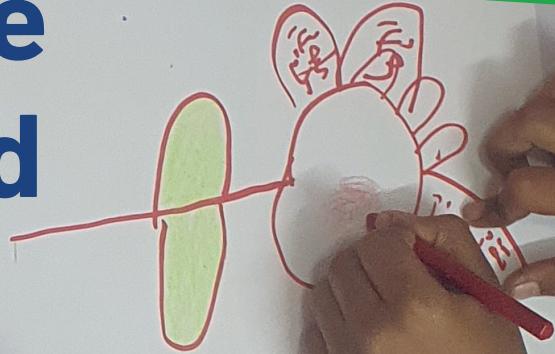


2022

Children's Rights in Jordan Our Voice to the Whole World



Information and Research Center- King Hussein Foundation

The Information and Research Center – King Hussein Foundation (IRCKHF) was initially launched in 1995 as part of the National Task Force for Children. Today, the IRCKHF mobilizes knowledge for positive social change. IRCKHF's vision is to promote socio-economic development by conducting comprehensive research and evidence-based advocacy, and sharing knowledge with practitioners, decision-makers, and civil society on human rights, gender and social justice issues.

For more information, see www.irckhf.org.

IM -Swedish Development Partner

IM has operated in Jordan since the 1960s, and it collaborates with organizations and networks that engage in increasing opportunities for women, young people and people with disabilities to assert their economic, social and political rights. Moreover, IM cooperates closely with civil society organizations in Jordan in order to ensure a guaranteed space of freedom and a strong civil society at all levels.



IRCKHF



IRC_KHF



irc_khf

Children's Rights in Jordan Our Voice to the Whole World!

KING HUSSEIN FOUNDATION  **مؤسسة الملك الحسين**
مركز المعلومات والبحوث
INFORMATION AND RESEARCH CENTER



Who we are?



We are imaginary characters drawn by children in workshops.

Disclaimer:

This album reflects the writer's view, and IM- Swedish Development Partner accepts no responsibility for its contents.

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IRCKHF's contributions towards field of children's rights

The issue of child protection in Jordan has been an important part of government policies over the years. In 1990, Jordan ratified the Convention on the Rights of the Child, which became the most widely accepted convention ever, one year after its participation in the World Summit for Children. Established in 1995, the National Commission for Childhood (NCC) has acted as a focal point for Jordanian national efforts aimed at improving levels of achievement in children-related issues, and ensuring that children continue to enjoy their basic rights, including the right to survival, the right to development and the right to protection.

Furthermore, NCC followed up on the periodic reports submitted to the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child (CRC) in coordination with NGOs for the period 1993-1998, which covered: child labor, smoking among young people, and education, many of which were included in the recommendations of CRC to Jordan.

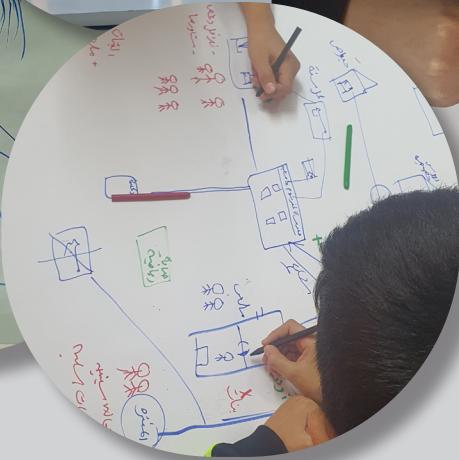
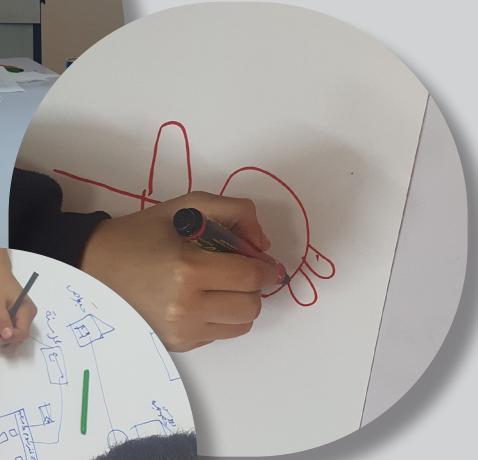
Formed in 1997, the Studies Unit of NCC, a division of IRCKHF, conducted the first national study on child labor in cooperation with the National Program for the Elimination of Child Labor (IPEC) of the International Labor Organization (ILO). The said study aimed to identify the causes, conditions and consequences of illegal child labor activities in Jordan.

The study found that there are several reasons for child labor, including high poverty rates, poor economy, high school drop-out rates, absence of extracurricular activities, and lack of awareness of the socio-economic reality of the child workers. In 2011, a national study entitled "Cultural and Legal Discrimination against the Female Children in Jordan" was conducted. The said study aimed to contribute to the collection of accurate data on the status of female children, and to analyzing how the societal culture practiced by society affects drafting of the law.

In 2013, the Information and Research Center (IRC) took the lead, in cooperation with three Jordanian NGOs, in submitting a periodic non-governmental report to CRC. The report discussed issues of negative stereotypes of girls and the role of such stereotypes in curtailing the girl's rights, early marriage, child abuse, gender-based violence and gender-discriminatory laws that affect children, based on the studies conducted by IRC and published on its website www.irckhf.org in addition to the HAQQI platform, www.haqqi.info.

Mobilizing knowledge for positive social change is an ongoing process in which all stakeholders and target groups participate. IRC is constantly developing effective ways to engage children in this process, such as the participatory research method in order to build children's capacities and enable them to defend their rights in their communities. Over the past year, IRC led a coalition composed of many academic bodies and civil society organizations advocating for human rights to submit the 2022 Shadow Report and to introduce to a knowledge product for children that was prepared in cooperation with children in the workshops organized in four governorates of the Kingdom.



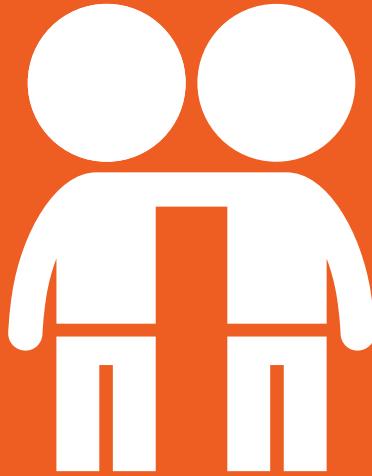




Thanks!

IRCKHF would like to extend its thanks to all children for their significant contributions to production of this Album, and to the civil society organizations and local associations that cooperated with us and hosted us and the children in all governorates of the Kingdom.





Non-discrimination

All children have these rights, and no child may be unfairly treated for any reasons whatsoever.

Introduction

This Album records and reviews the views and perceptions of male and female children on the rights they enjoy or of which they are deprived in the governorates in which they live in Jordan.

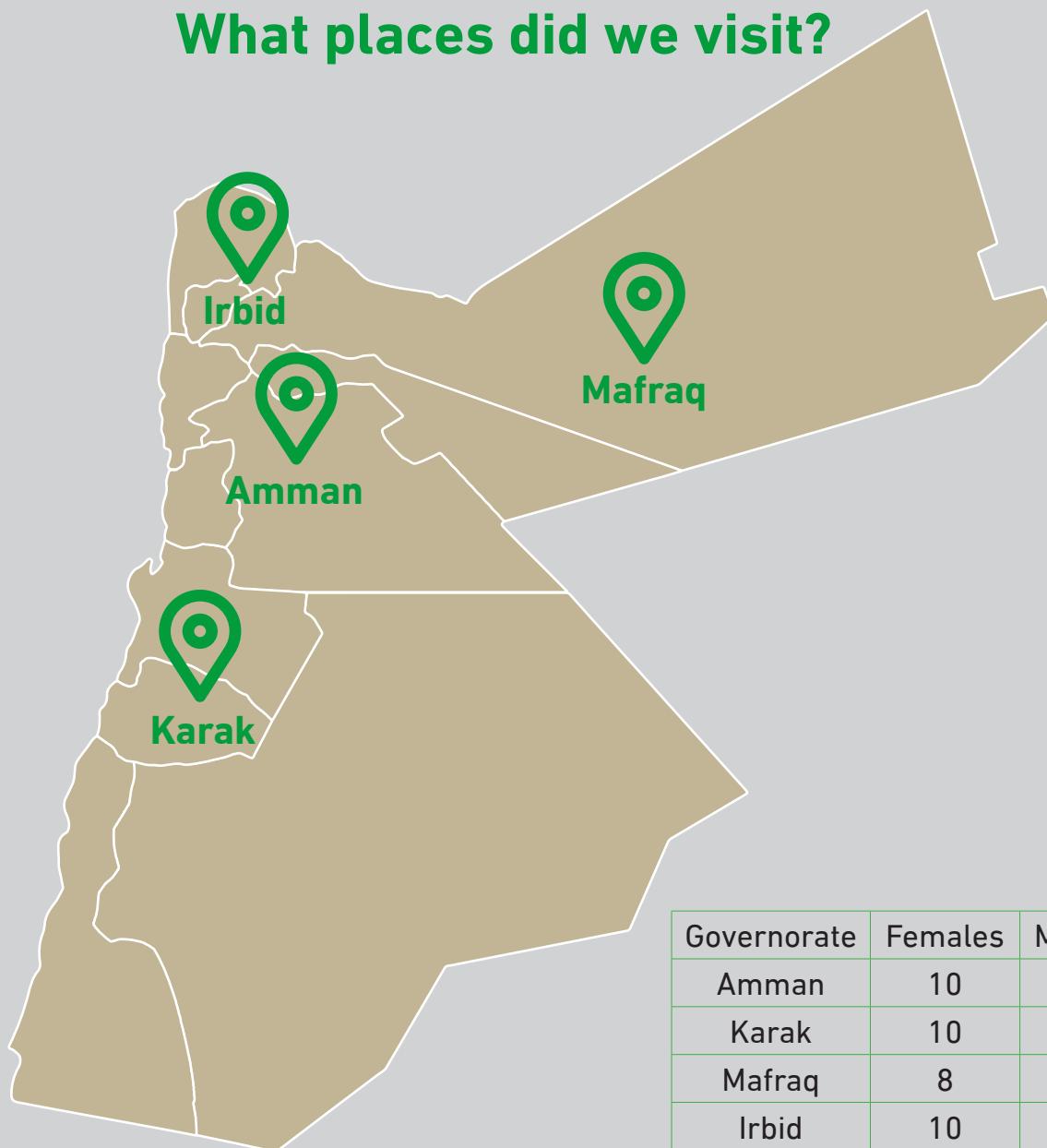
Sundus, Jaafar, Milla, Salma, Hasoon, Rami and Aseel are imaginary characters drawn by the children in presence of the researchers to express, through such characters, their opinions on different issues and to share with us the problems they face.

This Album aims to enhance the voice of children as provided for in Article (12) of Convention on the Rights of the Child and to affirm their right to form their own opinions, and the right to express such opinions freely and safely.

On the other hand, this Album is an attempt to convey the voice of children and highlight what they think of with the aim of learning about their opinions and aspirations, and hearing their suggestions and recommendations with respect to the most important problems and obstacles that they face and communicating the same directly to CRC in the children's own words without interference from older people.



What places did we visit?



We visited several governorates in the southern, central and northern areas. Initially, we visited Amman. Then, we headed to Karak in the south of Jordan, and then we moved to Mafrag in the east of Jordan. Finally, we visited Irbid in the north of Jordan.

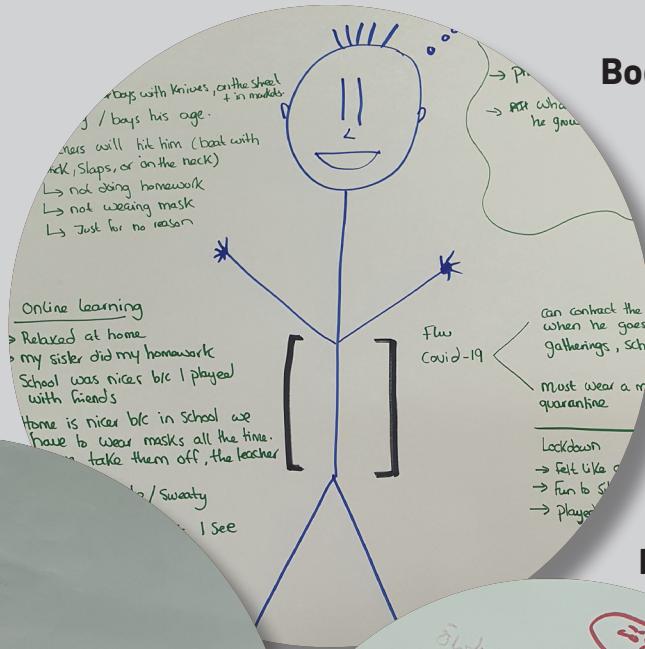
Who participated in our activities?

During the journey, we organized eight various workshops for 76 male and female children aged 10-13 years old.

The children actively participated in the activities. Some exploratory tools and icebreakers were used in the workshops to collect information from children in a manner suitable to their ages. Workshops ended with presentation of an awareness video prepared by IRC on the children's rights.



Body map



Flower map

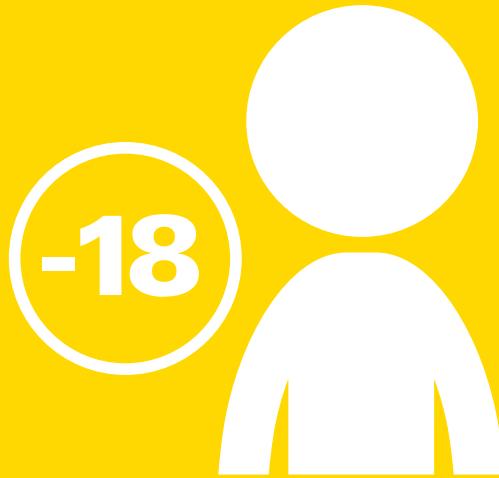


Map of children's relationship with society and institutions

Explanatory tools

To encourage children to interact and participate, the research team of IRC designed interactive tools to understand how children visualize their life and learn about the activities they usually exercise, and determine the places and spaces they cannot access. We used a body map tool as a main tool in most workshops. At other times, “the map of children’s relationship with society” and the “flower map” were used to confirm some information we obtained from the first tool.





Definition of child

A child is every human being below the age of eighteen years.

Children in Jordan

There are 3.8 million children under the age of 18 in Jordan: i.e. more than 40% of the population. About 30% of which are non-Jordanians, including many refugees from neighboring countries.





Keeping the family together

A child may not be separated from his or her parents unless such child does not receive an appropriate and sufficient care from parents; a child should be permitted to maintain constant contact with both parents if they are separated or do not live together.

Having a family is one of the most important rights that must be granted to a child, as indicated by most of children who participated in the workshops.

She expresses her feelings to her mother. A mother can feel me as I am her daughter. Indeed, a mother can feel you even if you say nothing.

A female child, Karak

A female child likes to talk with her sister. My sister tells me some secrets and I do. She is one year older than me.

A female child, Karak

I like talking with my father, I ask him about the details of life, or I ask him about his childhood.

A male child, Irbid





Refugee children

Refugee children should have the right to assistance and protection (if remaining at homeland is no longer safe) and should enjoy the same rights enjoyed by children in the host country.

Children believe that Jordan is required to receive refugees and that the Jordanian society always welcomes and supports refugees.

You should live in a house that is far away from bombing and hashish.

A Syrian male child, Mafrag

Jordan must receive refugees since Arabs belong to the same nation, and there should be no borders between Arab countries.

A male child, Irbid

What are the problems faced by the refugees from the children's perspective?

Racism

It is a widespread phenomenon especially on Tiktok application. Syrians argue with Jordanians and they start cursing each other.... They might be older people we do not know.

A male child, Irbid

On one occasion, my classmate said to a Syrian "You are Syrian, you must return to your country". The teacher punished him. If a person curses another person, such other person will get angry, won't he?

A male child, Irbid

Access to healthcare

Oh, Miss, Gazan children are forced to go to private schools..... the public school do not receive them.

A female child, Irbid





Respect for the views of children

Children have the right to freely express their views and feelings on the issues affecting them. Adults should hear and deal with children's views seriously.

Do adults hear children's views?

If I ask my mother about something, she ignores me. If I did not have to come here today, she would hit me and send me to school.

A male child, Karak

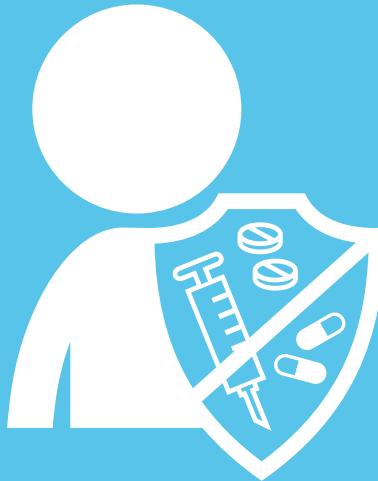
Oh, Miss, a child cannot express his views as he is still young; when he gets older he can do it. Some parents do whatever they want, and they don't hear our views... however, some parents hear their children's views.

A male child, Mafraq

When a child gets older and becomes a young man, parents will hear his views; I think when he is twenty.

A male child, Irbid





Protection from harmful drugs

Governments should protect children from use, manufacture, possession or sale of harmful and prohibited narcotic substances.

Many children considered spread of narcotic drugs a societal problem that provokes fear among people. At the same time, some families avoid talking about this problem in front of children. Further, schools do not talk about this problem, where there is a lack of accurate information among children.

My cousins live in next district where narcotic drugs are used. If I want to visit my cousins, my mother prevents me from doing so because of such narcotic drugs.

A female child, Karak

We should stay off the drug users, we have to be careful.

A female child, Karak

There are drugs and gangsters who carry daggers in the next district.

A male child, Amman

Our parents do not tell us about these things, they do not want us to know about them.

A male child, Irbid





Protection from violence

Governments should protect children from violence, abuse and neglect by any person responsible for childcare.

Children experience various forms of emotional, verbal and physical violence.

The sources of violence usually include the school, the home, the street, and peers themselves.

The Family Protection Department should be informed. Some parents experience violence and this might affect a child. For instance, a father might hit his wife and daughter, or a mother and a father might hit a daughter.

A female child, Karak

Oh, Miss, Jaafar lives in a district where some young people who carry daggers and knives live. Those guys might hit Jaafar whether for a reason or for no reason.

A male child, Amman

Older boys bully a child in the district or school.

A male child, Amman

If parents are divorced, a husband and a wife might quarrel with each other for keeping the child, and the child gets depressed. The government should grant this child his rights, such as safety.... The Family Protection Department is not safe since the women there do not show sympathy or tenderness, and a child will not feel safe.

A Female child, Karak





Children with disabilities

A disabled child should enjoy a full and decent life in the community. Governments should remove all obstacles faced by children with disabilities in order to promote their self-reliance and facilitate their active participation in the community.

Many public facilities in Jordan are still not equipped to meet needs of children with disabilities of all kinds. Some children who participated in the workshops have classmates with disabilities in their schools, but most of them agreed that the school was not equipped to meet their needs. A family member of the child with a disability has to stay with him throughout the school hours. Some children with disabilities also experience bullying by schoolmates.

In my school, a child with a disability uses a wheelchair. His brother brings him to school and places him in the classroom. When we want to play in the playground, he is carried by someone. He does not go to the bathroom. On one occasion, he got ill, and we sent him back to home. His home is close to the school.

A male child, Irbid

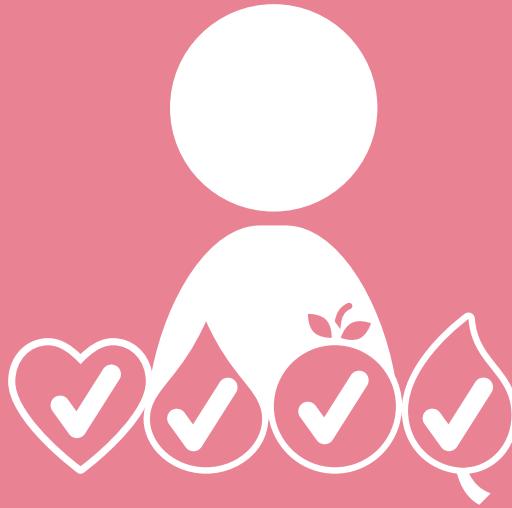
There is a paralyzed female child in my school. Her mother carries her and stays with her in the classroom. Her mother brings her to school and a child's classmates help her.

A female child, Karak

My classmate suffers from pronunciation difficulties, and the girls always mock and make fun of her.

A female child,
Amman





Health, water, food and environment

Children have the right to access the best possible healthcare, potable water, healthy food and a clean and safe environment. All required information must be made available to children and adults so that they stay safe and healthy.

What are the problems faced by children while access to health services/information?

Limited healthcare awareness

A boy in our district got older and he started to behave bumptiously. He smokes cigarettes though he is only 10. It seems that smoking get a person older. He is tall; he seems as if he is 25, though he is only 10. He has a body of an older person. He is in the ninth grade now.

Male child, Irbid

Pressure on the hospitals

Oh, Miss, we felt very scared when patients died for the lack of oxygen in Salt Hospital.

Male child, Irbid

High cost

We face some problems while access to medication... sometimes money should be paid for medication.

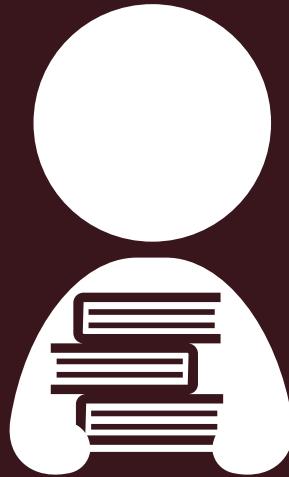
Male child, Irbid

Children need psychological and emotional support and guidance if a child gets sick or a family member dies. This need has increased after Covid-19 pandemic. Many children have lost people close to them.

A classmate's mother died due to Covid-19, it seems he is not aware of this fact. Some people say that he went insane after his mother's death. He still goes to school. There is no school counselor in our school; we only have a principal and an assistant principal. The said classmate lives with his father and his older brother; he cannot go to any place to have assistance.

A male child, Karak





Access to education

Every child has the right to have access to education. Primary education must be made available free to all, and secondary and high education must be made available. Children must be encouraged to go to school to attain the highest possible level of education. Schools must respect children's rights and mustn't exercise any form of violence whatsoever.

What is the best thing in the school?

School is better as a child can see and communicate with teachers. Teachers can help you understand the school subjects easily.

Male child, Karak

The best thing in the school is the break. We play games and have fun in the break.

Male child, Irbid

School is a nice place. We go to school and make new friends who we can play with.

Male child, Mafraq

School is better as a child can see and communicate with teachers. Teachers can help you understand the school subjects easily.

Male child, Karak

What are the problems faced by students in the classroom and school? (Educational constraints)

Increased number of lessons and school pressures

For example, I get up at 7:00; it is too early. Further, some lessons are boring.

A female child, Irbid

A student gets tired of the lessons and homework... there is a sort of pressure and fatigue.

A female child, Mafraq

Overcrowded classrooms

Oh, Miss, our classrooms are overcrowded, there are about (00) students in a classroom. The situation is too difficult.

A female child, Mafraq

Violence

I feel that the teacher comes to school to hit us and not to teach us.

A female child, Karak

If a student talks or laughs with his classmate, a teacher hits him 8 times on his hand.

A male child, Mafraq





Goals of education

Education received by children should help them develop their personalities, talents and abilities to their fullest potential. Education should enable children to learn about their rights and should develop their respect for others' rights, cultures and differences. Education should enable children to live in peace and to protect environment.

If you were responsible for education process, what changes would you like to make? How could you improve schools?

I will prevent corporal punishment, and a teacher who hits students must be held accountable.

A male student, Irbid

The morning assembly lasts for a long time; we keep standing up under the sun. The morning assembly program is too long.

A female child, Mafraq

I would transform the morning shift into an evening shift since I hate getting up early.

A male student, Irbid

I would reduce amount of lessons since there is a lot of pressure.

A male student, Irbid





Rest, play, culture and arts

Every child has the right to rest and leisure, to engage in play and cultural and creative activities.

Most children do not go to local centers and associations, and they do not participate in activities either because such centers are far from their homes or because they do not know if such centers organize activities and design programs for children.

I was completely isolated from the world. I used to move from home and school. You know lack of self-confidence and embarrassment affect a person. I did not use to talk with my parents, mother or sisters. The matters have changed since I started to go to the association. I learnt how to express my feelings. In the past, I used to keep silent.

A female child, Amman

A child must play in an appropriate place and not in the street among cars. The playgrounds are far away and some people find no place to play in.

A male child, Karak

If you go to the amusement park, you will spend 50 JOD on some games.

A Syrian male child, Mafraq

Girls can only play in the schoolyard. Girls can play or walk secretly. However, we ride bikes after school.

A male child, Karak





Effects of Covid-19 pandemic on children

During curfew and lockdown, children were greatly affected by these measures on several levels, including restricting their movement and fear of the unknown, closure of schools and switching to e-learning

We felt that there are no people. The lockdown made people disappear, the world transformed into desert, indeed.

A female child, Karak

Covid-19 is not nice; a person must keep wearing a mask to avoid infection.

A male child, Mafraq

I was not happy at all in 2020.

A male child, Amman

During the long curfew, I did not leave home for a month; it was like I was in a prison. I did not leave home even in the morning.

Male child, Amman

During the curfew, we used to sit in the street. There were no people and no cars because of the curfew. On one occasion, we saw a police car, and we run away. One of us was hit by a car.

A male child, Amman

I used to play with my brothers and to play games on the cellphone. Sometimes, I used to walk in the street.

A female child, Irbid

In March, 2020, people were prevented from leaving homes. We used place the ladder in the courtyard and climb it to look at the street.

A male child, Amman



Conclusion

Results of the workshops show that the most of children know a few rights. However, they lack a clear knowledge of the concept of “children’s rights”, contrary to Article (εΓ) of the Convention, which provides that children and adults should be familiarized with all of their rights under the Convention.

It could be said that most of children in Jordan enjoy some basic rights such as the right to survival, the right to housing, the right to food and the right to education. However, the other rights, such as the right development, the right participation in decision-making and the right to expression of opinion are still unknown.

Children’s opinions are often dealt with negatively, which makes children reluctant to express their feelings and make them less confident to express their thoughts. Additionally, children with disabilities still face challenges in getting to school. The poor in remote areas may not find a means to transport them to school if it is far from their places of residence, not to mention the limited health services that refugees can access.

Although most children reported that they can spend fun times with their friends, there is still a shortage in the child-friendly places that can meet their needs such as playgrounds, parks, theaters, sports and cultural clubs, where the majority of children play with their friends in the street, which makes them more vulnerable to dangers such as car accident or kidnapping, etc. yet, some of the female children cannot go out on the street and they usually stay at home.

When asked to send a message to the authority responsible for children’s rights, a child said that in order for the world to be child-friendly, children need affection and justice.

“All children must be treated equally and affectionately”

