



CPMS MAINSTREAMING CASE STUDIES SERIES

Child Protection and Education

“Makani (“My Space”) Approach in Jordan: Integrating child protection, education, youth empowerment and psychosocial support for Syrian children”

In emergencies, girls and boys face increased risk to violence, abuse, neglect and exploitation. The way in which humanitarian aid is delivered can further increase these risks. Children may be exposed to harm during the chaos of a distribution or at water points or experience abuse in cramped evacuation centres. Sometimes harm is caused directly due to humanitarian workers’ actions or non-actions. Many threats to the safety and wellbeing of children can be mitigated or even eradicated through timely and sensitive provision of humanitarian aid across all sectors. All humanitarian actors have an important contribution to make to the protection and recovery of children.

*To mainstream child protection means to ensure child protection considerations inform all aspects of humanitarian action. It also minimizes the risks of children being violated by programmes designed without proper consideration for children’s safety or wellbeing. **Mainstreaming child protection is an essential part of compliance with the ‘do no harm’ principle that applies to all humanitarian action.**¹*

Going beyond mainstreaming, integrated programming allows for actions between two or more sectors to work together towards a common programme objective, based on an assessment of needs. Where integrated child protection programming is not possible, child protection mainstreaming is essential. This case studies series looks at both examples of integrated programming and mainstreaming and the CPMS mainstreaming standards are applicable for both.

Over the last five years, millions of Syrian refugees have fled conflict into neighbouring countries and beyond. Today, the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan is host to over 650,000 registered Syrian refugees with close to 52 % being girls and boys.² Over 80% of Syrian refugees are settled in host communities largely in urban areas.³ With a population of approximately 6 million in Jordan, the refugee crisis has stretched Jordan’s resources and the capacity of government institutions to deliver crucial social services such as education and child protection.⁴

This case study explores the process of creating, developing and implementing the Makani approach in 2015 in Jordan. The impetus for this innovative approach, led by UNICEF Jordan, came out of a need to provide access to psychosocial support and learning support services to Syrian girls and boys; evolving into an integrated programme providing education, life-skills and psychosocial support within one space. Within approximately one year, there were over 200 Makani spaces throughout Jordan, reaching around 218,000

¹ Child Protection Working Group, *Minimum Standards for Child Protection in Humanitarian Action: Briefing note to ensure child protection mainstreaming*, “Standard 20: Education and Child Protection”, 15 December 2014, available at http://cpwg.net/minimum_standards-topics/mainstream

² UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), *Syria Regional Refugee Response, Inter-agency Information Sharing Portal*, available at <http://data.unhcr.org/syrianrefugees/country.php?id=107>

³ Government of Jordan, *Jordan Response Plan for the Syria Crisis 2016-2018*, 14 January 2016, available at <http://reliefweb.int/report/jordan/jordan-response-plan-syria-crisis-2016-2018>

⁴ UNICEF, *Makani – My Space: All Children in Jordan Accessing Learning*, available at <https://data.unhcr.org/syrianrefugees/download.php?id=8423>



girls and boys. This ensured, among other things, that all Syrian refugee school-aged children were able to access educational support.

This case study is based on an interview with Muhammad Rafiq Khan, head of Child Protection in Emergencies in UNICEF Jordan.⁵ Rafiq began working in Jordan at the end of 2012. He was responsible for the development of the guidance note for the Makani approach (My space approach) in consultation with education and other teams, and played a key role in the implementation of Makani within UNICEF, in collaboration with partners. He was also the Coordinator of the Child Protection Sub-Sector Working Group in Jordan.

The challenge: Ensuring access to education for all Syrian refugee children



By the end of 2012, approximately 4,000 Syrian refugees were crossing the border into Syria every day, many of whom began to settle in urban areas with host communities. For those in urban areas refugees, accessing services was more challenging as very little was being provided outside of the camps. For UNICEF, this required a significant scaling up of child protection, psychosocial support and education programmes for those settling with host communities throughout Jordan.

(Photo @ UNICEF Jordan)

In particular, there were significant challenges trying to enable 230,000 school-aged Syrian refugee children to access formal education through the Jordanian education system. In response, the government agreed to open formal schools to Syrian children. In addition the Ministry of Education started a “double-shift” system in 98 schools, mostly in Governorates with a very high concentration of Syrian refugees⁶ in host communities in urban areas. This policy ensured access to formal education for close to 140,000 Syrian children. Notwithstanding these efforts, this still left approximately 90,000 school-aged children by the end of 2014 without access to formal education. The Government of Jordan was unable to do more.

In addition to being a right enshrined in the UNCRC, education is crucial for ensuring children’s safety and wellbeing. Particularly for children and young people coming from conflict contexts such as Syria where children have lost loved ones, communities and homes, learning and psychosocial support is essential in supporting their resilience. Among other benefits, accessing education restores a sense of normalcy and enables children to socialize with their peers.⁷ Indeed, an evaluation of UNICEF’s psychosocial support response for Syrian Children in Jordan conducted

⁵ Conducted on 22 June 2016. Images and quotes provided by Rafiq Khan

⁶ Schools were split into two learning periods: Jordanian children attended school from 8-12pm and Syrian children attended from 1-5pm

⁷ Child Protection Working Group, *Minimum Standards for Child Protection in Humanitarian Action (2012), Standard 20: Education and Child Protection*, p.173, available at <http://cpwg.net/minimum-standards>

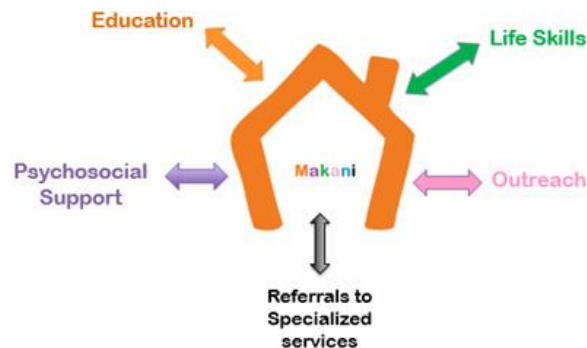


in 2015 revealed that while psychosocial support provided in the child friendly spaces was having a positive impact for children, the long-term effects were limited, because while attending they were unable to attend school.⁸ Attending schools is also an important preventive factor for child protection – it reduces the risk of early marriage, child labour, recruitment into armed groups, gender-based violence, and other forms of exploitation and abuse.

The evaluation confirmed what education actors also realized by the beginning of 2015: UNICEF urgently needed to provide learning support for 90,000 Syrian children still out of school, as well as for an estimated 30,000 Jordanian children without access to education. The Ministries of Social Development and Education in Jordan were consulted and brought onboard.

The response: The concept of the Makani Approach⁹

Rather than designing a programme which only addressed educational needs, the concept of Makani evolved into a multi-sectoral programme involving child protection and education actors. By converting existing child friendly spaces, UNICEF and its partners created spaces which provide child protection, psychosocial support, life skills as well as education through learning support services. Makani centres are also used for referrals to other specialized services for identified child protection and gender-based violence (GBV) cases.¹⁰ In addition, WASH services are also integrated into Makani, for example through hygiene promotion. The services provided in Makani are not only available to children and young people but also for families and community members, both Syrian and Jordanian. For example, there are regular awareness raising sessions for parents/caregivers and the community around key issues related to education, child protection, corporal punishment, child labour, early marriage and violence against children.¹¹



But Makani isn't only about a physical space for the provision of services; it's an approach to creating a safe and supportive environment for all and providing services which promote and

⁸ UNICEF/Antares Foundation, *Evaluation of UNICEF's Psychosocial Support Response for Syrian Children in Jordan 2013-2014*, p.5, available at http://www.unicef.org/jordan/resources_10112.html

⁹ UNICEF worked with partners to develop a Guidance note and the operational manual for the Makani approach. All developed materials were translated into Arabic and shared quickly with frontline workers. The Makani Guidance Note and SOPs are available on this webpage: http://www.unicef.org/jordan/overview_10143.htm

¹⁰ UNICEF Jordan Country Office, *Guidance Note on "Makani" – "My Space" Approach*, 8 April 2015, p.2, available: http://www.unicef.org/jordan/overview_10143.htm and

[http://www.unicef.org/jordan/Makani_Guidelines_English\(1\).pdf](http://www.unicef.org/jordan/Makani_Guidelines_English(1).pdf)

¹¹ *ibid.*, p.5



encourage children’s well-being (physical, cognitive, social and emotional).¹² Psychosocial support isn’t a separate aspect of Makani but has been integrated into education, guiding the way that children are taught and spoken to, the way they are organized; it is also integrated into life skills activities to build upon and strengthen resilience amongst young people.

Working with Communities

Makani centers are designed to strongly emphasize a community-based approach in a number of ways. Firstly, each Makani centre includes a community outreach component. Often staffed by youth peer educators who’ve graduated from the life skills programme, community outreach teams promote Makani services, identify and refer out of school girls and boys and spread messages to support learning, psychosocial support and healthy lifestyles.¹³

In addition, each Makani has a Community Committee associated with it. This Committee comprises of representatives from Syrian and Jordanian communities. It meets every month and serves a number of functions. It provides a forum for parents to contribute to matters related to the running of Makani, to raise issues and provide feedback and to convey information to families, including on child protection concerns. The Committee also serves as a vehicle for social cohesion, promoting understanding and collaboration between refugees and host communities.

Makani centres are operated by local non-governmental and community-based organisations from across Jordan. Staff working in the centres are largely drawn from communities – both Syrian (approximately 50%) and Jordanian. These community members are volunteers (Syrian refugees are unable to work in Jordan) who are paid a stipend, many of whom are engaged on a rotational basis to allow as many refugees as possible to benefit from this form of employment. All staff receive basic child protection training and are required to sign the child protection Code of Conduct.

Collaboration and Coordination across sectors

The concept of Makani, as well as its development and implementation, emerged through a collaborative process between the child protection and education sectors. Under the leadership of the Government of Jordan, UNHCR coordinates the overall refugee response. The Child Protection Sub-Sector Working Group is co-chaired by UNHCR and UNICEF and the Education Sector Working Group is chaired by UNICEF.¹⁴ Rafiq and other UNICEF colleagues from education and child protection engaged partners within their respective working groups as well as other implementing partners to gather feedback, advice and guidance on how to develop the idea. Discussions were held as to what curriculum Makani would use and it was agreed that UNICEF would be responsible for developing the curriculum in consultation with government ministries.

¹² *ibid.*, p.3

¹³ *Ibid.*, p.6

¹⁴ For more information on coordination arrangements in the Jordan refugee response, see: UNHCR, *Jordan Refugee Response: Inter-Agency Coordination Briefing Kit*, May 2016, available at <http://reliefweb.int/report/jordan/jordan-refugee-response-inter-agency-coordination-briefing-kit-may-2016>



Challenges arising from success

The Makani approach far exceeded expectations in terms of its success and popularity, reflecting on the strength of the idea and its execution across Jordan. Indeed, as awareness of the approach grew, organisations who were not partners of UNICEF began requesting to use the Makani approach themselves, without UNICEF’s involvement. UNICEF agreed that the concept itself should be used widely.

Unfortunately, the educational component of Makani stood out most within the project. This led to misunderstandings and the Ministry of Education began to worry that Makani would be seen as a replacement or alternative to the formal education system in Jordan. There were concerns that funds would be diverted away from Jordanian schools which were accommodating over 140,000 Syrian children. These concerns were resolved by placing greater emphasis on the other aspects of Makani, countering the image that Makani was a replacement for formal schooling.

(Photo @ UNICEF Jordan)



A successful outcome: Government of Jordan opens more schools for Syrian children

By the end of 2015, there were around 200 Makani spaces across Jordan. Its popularity and visibility put pressure on the Jordanian Government to open additional schools to accommodate eligible Syrian boys and girls, which became one of the main points in the Jordan Compact agreed in London in Feb 2016. Jordan agreed that “every school will offer a safe, inclusive and tolerant environment with psychosocial support available to refugee children. Access to vocational training

“Makani is a fantastic programme. It has exceeded all of our expectations in terms of how well it’s been received and the impact it’s had. It has worked really well to engage with children in meaningful ways.” Rafiq Khan

for Syrians and access to tertiary/higher education opportunities for all vulnerable youth (Jordanian and Syrian) will be increased.”¹⁵ Rafiq reflects that they had not considered that the attention that Makani received across Jordan would be a factor adding additional pressure on the government.

In July of 2016, the Government of Jordan announced that it would begin add an additional 102 schools for the double-shifted system. This will be in place from January 2017. Rafiq notes “this will ensure that each and every Syrian child who is at school-going age and is eligible to go to school will be able to do so.”

¹⁵ The Government of Jordan, *The Jordan Compact: A New Holistic Approach between the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan and the International Community to deal with the Syrian Refugee Crisis*, 7 February 2016, available at <http://reliefweb.int/report/jordan/jordan-compact-new-holistic-approach-between-hashemite-kingdom-jordan-and>



Next steps for Makani

While the increased capacity for Jordanian schools to accommodate Syrian children is an important development, challenges still remain for some children to attend formal schooling. This is why Makani remains a crucial aspect of the Syria refugee response. Barriers to education through formal schools still remain for many Syrian children.¹⁶ However, these barriers are lifting. On 22 August 2016 the Government announced that it is creating special classes for 25,000 Syrian children to enable them to catch up with their education.¹⁷

An exciting new stage for the Makani programme is its increasing integration into the Jordanian school system. Currently, a small pilot programme is being run in 6 schools that host Makani activities after school hours. Rafiq hopes that eventually, at least half of all Makani's will be run from within Jordan's schools, providing additional support for children and families at the end of the school day. To better understand how to further strengthen Makani, UNICEF has planned for a detailed evaluation and assessment to take place later this year (2016).

Lessons Learned

Child Protection Mainstreaming can lead to Integration

The idea for Makani did not happen in a vacuum but was built on existing work and collaboration between child protection and other sectors prior to Makani. For example, Child Protection and Education actors had worked together to build strong referral pathways. Child protection mainstreaming efforts, led by the Child Protection Sub-sector Working Group, had generated an appreciation for the value and importance of child protection mainstreaming. When the initial idea for Makani was raised by the Child Protection and Education working groups it was quickly embraced by other sectors. The concrete nature of Makani helped to explain what child protection mainstreaming or integration looks like and once this was grasped, it was easy for other sectors to see how they could be involved. Rafiq adds, "If we just go around in coordination meetings with a standard PowerPoint presentation on CP mainstreaming, people will go away without a clear idea of what they can do in their programmes."

Embedding Child Protection mainstreaming efforts within inter-agency mechanisms

As the above lesson highlights, mainstreaming and integration efforts took place at the Working Group level, ensuring a sense of ownership amongst all major agencies involved in child protection and education. Moreover, Rafiq highlights that linking Makani with the overall Jordan Refugee Response Plan was crucial to its success. By embedding the programme and concept within a planning mechanism that is both multi-sectoral and inter-agency, Makani was not seen as a UNICEF programme but was owned by all those involved in it.

¹⁶ Human Rights Watch, "We're Afraid for Their Future": Barriers to Education for Syrian Refugee Children in Jordan, 16 August 2016, available at <https://www.hrw.org/report/2016/08/16/were-afraid-their-future/barriers-education-syrian-refugee-children-jordan>

¹⁷ Middle East Online, *Jordan to allow more Syrian children access to education*, 22 August 2016, available at <http://www.middle-east-online.com/english/?id=78324>, [accessed 25 August 2016]



Building on existing resources and contextualisation processes

Jordan had previously conducted a contextualisation process for both child protection (in 2013) and education (in early 2014)¹⁸ to adapt existing minimum standards in both sectors to the specific needs in Jordan. The process involved collaboration between child protection and education to determine key actions to guide the way child protection issues were to be mainstreamed within the education sector's work and vice versa. This joint work provided an important base and a wealth of guidance in building the different integrated elements that came together within the Makani initiative. Rafiq reiterates the importance of beginning child protection mainstreaming efforts early in an emergency and making use of what's already available and in place. "We were packaging these already existing integration ideas into an approach that addressed the specific needs of boys and girls in Jordan." Rafiq notes that the Child Protection Minimum Standards (CPMS) were critical in this regard.¹⁹

Monitoring and Reporting through "Bayanati" (My Data)²⁰

The importance of establishing information management systems right at the beginning of an integrated programme like Makani is something that Rafiq learned from this throughout process. One key weakness was the initially poor monitoring at the Makani centres, making it impossible to accurately know the numbers and details of children, young people and adults accessing the various services provided. Within six months, UNICEF Jordan had conceptualised a web-based monitoring and information management system (Bayanati, "My data") to monitor in real time the performance of Makani centres.²¹ There are currently 150 Makani centres where CBOs can use Bayanati to collect, store and report on data. By the end of 2017, all Makani centres will be connected online via Bayanati.

An unexpected strength: Makani's build social cohesion

Makani is available to, and utilised by not only refugees but also Jordanians from host communities. Indeed, of the 200,000 people accessing services provided through Makani centres, approximately 30% are Jordanians. Through accessing services Syrian and Jordanian children and parents are able to learn and socialise together; and through Community Committees, parents of Syrian and Jordanian children work together and address issues or tensions that arise. This aspect of Makani was not a major focus in the initial conceptual planning phase, but has come to be a key component of its success, resulting in more harmonious relations between refugee and host communities. If the ultimate goal of child protection mainstreaming is to provide a more protective and supportive environment for children, then reducing tensions between host and refugee communities and building social cohesion and is crucial to achieving that goal.

¹⁸ For more information on the education contextualization outcome, see: INEE/Jordan Education Sector Working Group, *Jordan Minimum Standards for Education in Emergencies* (2015), available at http://toolkit.ineesite.org/inee_minimum_standards/contextualised_standards

¹⁹ CPWG, op. cit.

²⁰ www.bayanati.org

²¹ UNICEF Jordan Country Office, *UNICEF Annual Report 2015: Jordan*, available at www.unicef.org/about/annualreport/files/Jordan_Annual_Report_2014.pdf