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## FINAL EVALUATION REPORT

RESILIENCE AND EMPOWERMENT OF VULNERABLE WOMEN: THE FUTURE OF JORDAN'S GROWTH AND STABILITY (EUTF MADAD PHASE 2) – JORDAN

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With Every Sincere Wish



**Wasi Haider**  
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# LIST OF ACRONYMS

<b>Abbreviations</b>	<b>Meanings</b>
ARDD	Arab Renaissance for Democracy and Development
BNLWG	Basic Needs and Livelihoods Working Group
CAPI	Computer Assisted Personal Interview
CPE	Country Portfolio Evaluation
CSO	Civil Society Organization
EFE	Education for Employment
ERG	Evaluation Reference Group
EU	European Union
EUTF	EU Regional Trust Fund in Response to the Syrian Crisis
FGD	Focus Group Discussion
GBV	Gender Based Violence
GERAAS	Global Evaluation Reports Assessment and Analysis System
GFGE	General Framework for Gender Equality
GRES	Gender Results Effectiveness Scale
IBV-SOP	Incentive Based Volunteering - Standard Operating Procedures
ILO	International Labour Organization
JCI	Jordan Chamber of Industry
JNCW	Jordanian National Committee for Women
JORISS	Jordan Response Information System for the Syria Crisis
JRP	Jordan Response Plan to the Syria Crisis
KII	Key Informant Interview
MoI	Ministry of Interior
MoL	Ministry of Labor
MOPIC	Ministry of Planning and International Cooperation
MoSD	Ministry of Social Development
MSME	Micro, Small and Medium Enterprise
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
OECD-DAC	Organization for Economic Co-operation-Development-Development Assistance Committee
PwD	Person with Disability
RAIS	Refugee Assistance Information System
RIMA	Resilience Index Measurement and Analysis
ROAS	Regional Office for Arab States
SADA	SADA Women's Cooperative
SDG	Sustainable Development Goal
ToC	Theory of Change
ToR	Terms of Reference
UN	United Nations
UNCT	United Nations Country Team
UNEG	United Nations Evaluation Group
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund

UNSDCF	United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework
VAF	Vulnerability Assessment Framework
VTC	Vocational Training Center
WFP	World Food Programme
WwD	Women with Disabilities

# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

*This report covers the final evaluation of the "Resilience and Empowerment of Vulnerable Women: The Future of Jordan's Growth and Stability (EUTF Madad Phase 2)" programme implemented in Jordan from February 2021 to February 2024 and later extended through a no-cost extension until November 2024. The evaluation assesses the programme's relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, sustainability and gender equality integration in strengthening the resilience of Syrian refugee and vulnerable Jordanian women through economic empowerment, protection services, and civic engagement activities. The report provides detailed findings, lessons learned, and recommendations for improving future iterations of a similar programme.*

<b>Jordan Country Context</b>
As of November 2024, Jordan accommodates 619,559 <sup>1</sup> Syrian refugees, imposing notable pressure on its societal framework.
The gender distribution among Syrian refugees in Jordan is relatively balanced, with 307,833 or 49.7 per cent male and 311,726 or 50.3 per cent female, as of November 2024. <sup>2</sup>
As of 2023, 31 per cent <sup>3</sup> of refugee households are headed by females, encountering amplified vulnerability compared to male-led households.
Jordan exhibited the lowest women's labor force participation rate in the region at 14% in 2023 <sup>4</sup> , remaining relatively stagnant over the past decade and preceding the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic.
Jordan struggles with continuing challenges stemming from prolonged displacement, significantly straining its economy and societal cohesion.
Both vulnerable Jordanian and Syrian women confront similar barriers to economic empowerment, including entrenched gender norms, inadequate access to affordable and quality childcare, unreliable transportation options, and substandard working conditions.

## Context and Background of the MADAD-2 Programme

The programme "Resilience and Empowerment of Vulnerable Women: The Future of Jordan's Growth and Stability", hereinafter called "the programme" is a three-year initiative by UN Women-Jordan, running from February 2021 to February 2024 with a EUR 7 million budget. Following the conclusion of the programme and in agreement with the donor, the programme was extended for an additional nine months, until the end of November 2024. However, since this evaluation was conducted after the original conclusion of the programme in February 2024, the data collected only covers the

<sup>1</sup> [UNHCR November 2024](#)

<sup>2</sup> *ibid*

<sup>3</sup> [The World Bank 2023](#)

<sup>4</sup> *ibid*



implementation period from February 2021 to February 2024. The programme focused on empowering Syrian refugee and vulnerable Jordanian women through economic participation and resilience-building using the Oasis model, which provides support like cash-for-work, skills training, and gender-based violence protection. Operating across 22 centres, the programme collaborates with Jordanian ministries, the EU, UN agencies, CSOs and private sector companies to enhance livelihoods, promote gender-responsive policies, and improve women's leadership amidst challenges such as the Syrian refugee crisis and COVID-19.

### Evaluation Purpose, Objectives and Use

The purpose of the evaluation was twofold: (a) accountability, assessing the contributions made by the programme in achievement and performance of outcome level results; and (b) learning and forward-looking in scope to support the Programme and its stakeholders' strategic learning and decision-making for future programme design, implementation and scale-up.

The objectives of the evaluation were-

1. To assess the **relevance** of the programme objectives, strategy, and approach at the local, central, and regional level as well as UN Women's comparative advantage/added value in this area as compared with key partners.
2. To assess **effectiveness** and a potential measurable impact of the intervention in Jordan.
3. To assess **organizational efficiency** and **coordination mechanisms** in progressing towards the achievement of the intended results.
4. To assess the **connectedness** and **sustainability** of the results and the intervention in advancing gender equality in Jordan.
5. To analyse how **human rights approach** and **gender equality principles** are integrated in implementation.
6. To identify and document **lessons learned**, **good practices** and **innovations**, **case stories** and **challenges** within the programme, to inform future work of UN Women with refugees, displaced people, and host communities.
7. To provide **actionable recommendations** with respect to the development of future programmes.

The evaluation findings will be used to inform future programmatic decisions, organizational learning, and accountability as well as for the identification of good practices to strengthen the resilience of Syrian women and girls and host communities in Jordan. This focused assessment will allow stakeholders to identify strengths, weaknesses, and areas for improvement at a more nuanced level, informing strategic decision-making, resource allocation, and programme design adjustments with enhanced precision and efficacy. The targeted users of the evaluation are UN Women Senior Management at country level, programme staff, and key stakeholders at the country level (donors, humanitarian actors, government entities, UN system) as well as regional actors working on the Syrian response.

## Evaluation scope

The scope of the evaluation included the programme from February 24, 2021 to February 23, 2024. The geographical scope of the evaluation was 11 governorates of Jordan including 4 Oasis centres in Za'atari and Azraq refugee camps, and 18 Oasis centres in host communities. Direct beneficiaries included Syrian refugee women, vulnerable Jordanian women, children benefiting from childcare and afterschool services, as well as men beneficiaries targeted through the behavioural change interventions and key sub-national government authorities targeted for strengthened capacity.

## Evaluation Methodology

The evaluation methodology applied the OECD-DAC criteria, including relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, sustainability as well as the criterion of gender equality and human rights. The evaluation employed a theory-based approach and used mixed-methods incorporating both qualitative and quantitative data. It adhered to gender-responsive and human rights principles and had 'a utilization-focused lens' focusing on generating actionable recommendations. Data was collected through survey, focus group discussions, key informant interviews, and case stories. Triangulation was used to ensure data reliability. It used contribution analysis (CA) approach to systematically assess the 'contribution' of the programme towards achieving the programme outcomes. It also used the Gender Results Effectiveness Scale (GRES)<sup>5</sup> to assess the gender-transformative impact. Despite some limitations, such as low participation in specific areas, mitigation strategies ensured comprehensive data collection. Ethical considerations, including confidentiality and informed consent, were strictly followed throughout the process.

## Lessons Learned

**Lesson 1:** Holistic approaches are essential for women's economic empowerment by addressing supply-side, demand-side, and structural barriers to effectively empower women economically. Sustained mentoring, policy advocacy, and long-term employer engagement is necessary to create inclusive workplaces and opportunities.

**Lesson 2:** Engaging men and boys are key to sustainable gender equality in women's empowerment efforts for achieving long-term change. Programs should develop strategies to engage men and challenge and transform masculine social norms, promoting an environment that supports gender equality.

**Lesson 3:** Combining humanitarian and development goals increases programme impact and is effective in women's empowerment. Aligning with national strategies and engaging diverse stakeholders ensures a more comprehensive impact on gender equality and women's rights.

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<sup>5</sup> [Gender Results Effectiveness Scale](#)

## Conclusion and Recommendations

**Conclusion-1** The programme is well aligned with and contributes towards various national and international strategies and plans for gender equality and women's empowerment. It is also well aligned with UN Women's global and regional strategies. The programme design and its intervention logic demonstrated relevance to the changing contexts, including the need for addressing both immediate humanitarian needs to medium and long-term development priorities. During the COVID-19 pandemic, the programme demonstrated its agility and flexibility by successfully adjusting its operations. However, moving forward, to strengthen its relevance to all vulnerable individuals and groups, it needs to focus on nuancing its vulnerability indicators in the Incentive-based volunteering (IBV) -SOP, aligned with the vulnerability assessment framework (VAF) of UNHCR. It also needs to support some key legislative recommendations from the General Framework for Gender Equality (GFGE) of Jordan.

**Recommendation-1** In the upcoming phases, the programme should be informed about the required legislative changes from the General Framework for Gender Equality (GFGE) of Jordan and develop strategies for supporting their full implementation.

**Recommendation-2** The programme should focus on enhancing the comprehensiveness of vulnerability indicators in the Incentive-based volunteering (IBV) -SOP provided in the UNHCRs vulnerability assessment framework (VAF).

**Conclusion-2** The programme has been effective in strengthening the resilience of Syrian refugees and host community members. On the normative side, it successfully advocated for some key gender-responsive policies, and legal framework changes. It provided livelihood support and exceeded targets in cash-for-work beneficiaries and Micro, Small & Medium Enterprises (MSME) training, while effectively raising awareness about GBV and providing referral services. However, challenges remain in sustainable long-term employment or livelihood, especially for Syrian refugees and in camp setting. Structural limitations, including restrictions on the types of occupations open to Syrians, and other labor market barriers needs further consideration and work from the programmes' end.

**Recommendation-3** The programme should focus on developing comprehensive strategies for sustainable long-term income generation, especially for Syrian refugees and in camp setting. It should collaborate with the local government and economic institutions to address systemic barriers in the labor market, with a focus on gender equality and inclusion.

**Conclusion-3** The programme developed meaningful strategic partnerships such as with government partners, UN agencies and Private sector. Its strategic partnership with MoSD was key in facilitating the programme expansion, coverage and reach through the growth of Oasis centres. Partnerships with UN partners such as WFP on blockchain and OneCard technology ensured efficient cash assistance distribution, even during the COVID-19 pandemic. The collaboration with private sector particularly through the Women's Empowerment Principles (WEPs) network, contributed to the programme's success in providing job opportunities and creating employment opportunities. However, it faces significant challenges in obtaining work permits for Syrian refugees, and addressing systemic issues such as delays in project approvals and financial management.

**Recommendation-4** The programme should develop a dedicated action plan to streamline the work permit process for the Syrian refugees. This should include collaboration with its existing strategic partners, particularly the MoL and ILO to work on the necessary policy or legislative reforms to address the existing obstacles in the work permit system for Syrian refugees.

**Recommendation-5** UN Women should develop and implement a financial management improvement plan to address funding delays. This should include developing and monitoring key performance indicators related to financial management and fund disbursement timelines. It should also review and optimize internal procedures for project approvals to avoid delays.

**Conclusion-4** The programme design incorporated a gender transformative approach to a large extent with an intention to identify and address structural gender inequalities. Gender transformative results were observed in the area of women's decision-making power at household level, awareness and intention for addressing GBV, and change in perception and attitudes towards child marriage and harassment. However, less transformative results were observed in the area of women's participation in the labor market, involvement in community activities and political participation on local governance structures. While the programme engaged men and communities through dialogues and advocacy, the programme will need to strengthen the application of the social ecological model. There was a shift in men's perspectives on women's roles however, long-standing patriarchal views persisted, particularly in conservative areas where participation from men remained lower than expected. The programme showed some positive results on women with disabilities (WwD) in terms of increased resilience, community participation, however, challenges such as limited specialized training and support services, societal attitudes, logistical barriers, and lack of direct involvement in decision-making persisted.

**Recommendation-6** The programme should apply a socio-ecological model for creating an enabling environment for gender transformative results. It should continue to engage men while building the capacity of young men and boys on gender social norms, gender equality as well as GBV prevention with a targeted approach towards the conservative areas to increase the participation of men and other key family and community members.

**Recommendation-7** To address the gap in involvement of women with disabilities in decision-making structures and processes, the MoSD and UN Women should establish a comprehensive mechanism for their inclusion. This should include but not limited to supporting incorporation of the perspectives of women with disabilities from various regions and backgrounds in a systematic manner as well as developing clear targets to monitor various elements of disability inclusion in the programme. The programme should use the United Nations Disability Inclusion Strategy (UNDIS) as a point of reference for strengthening its disability inclusion work.

**Conclusion-5** The programme has achieved significant progress in strengthening institutional capacities for gender mainstreaming and women's economic empowerment, particularly through its work with the MoSD and the MoL. However, financial sustainability remains a critical challenge, especially for the Oasis model, which is still heavily reliant on donor funding.

**Recommendation-8** To address the financial sustainability challenges and improve long-term outcomes, the programme should develop a comprehensive sustainability strategy focused on transitioning the Oasis model to government, women's organizations or private sector support.

# 1. CONTEXT AND OBJECT OF EVALUATION

## 1.1 Background and Context of the Programme

The Jordanian government has shown commitment to addressing the needs of both refugees and vulnerable Jordanians through various national strategies and policies. This includes the National Strategy for Women 2020-2025<sup>6</sup>, Economic Modernisation Vision 2022<sup>7</sup>, National Social Protection Strategy 2019-2025<sup>8</sup>, the Jordan Response Plan for Syrian Crises 2020-2022<sup>9</sup>, and General Framework for Gender Equality in Jordan 2022<sup>10</sup>.

Jordan's economy has been heavily strained by the influx of refugees, exacerbating existing challenges in the country<sup>11</sup>. The COVID-19 pandemic further exacerbated these challenges, leading to increased unemployment and economic hardship<sup>12</sup>. The economy was showing some signs of recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic in early 2023, with growth accelerating to 2.7 percent in the first half of the year 2023 compared to a pre-COVID average of 2.4 percent primarily driven by a strong rebound in tourism, substantial contributions from services, particularly transport and communications, finance and insurance, and wholesale and retail trade—alongside growth in manufacturing and a recovery in agriculture<sup>13</sup>. However, the outbreak of the war in Gaza in October 2023 has significantly impacted Jordan's economy. Resultantly, Jordan's economy grew by 2.7 per cent in first quarter of 2023, the growth was projected to slow to 2.4 per cent in 2024, primarily due to the impacts of the regional conflict<sup>14</sup>.

Jordan's demographic makeup is defined by a significant proportion of youth, as it boasts one of the world's youngest populations, with 63 per cent<sup>15</sup> of its inhabitants being under the age of 30 (2022), while 82 per cent<sup>16</sup> of refugees living outside of camp settings.

In Jordan, the resilience and empowerment of vulnerable women are influenced by several institutional factors, including legal frameworks, government policies, and the activities of non-governmental organizations (NGOs). Despite Jordan's commitment to international treaties like the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), since December 1980<sup>17</sup>, and improvements in laws such as the Personal Status Law, challenges remain. Discriminatory laws and limited enforcement, particularly regarding protection from domestic violence, hinder progress. Government's initiatives like the National Strategy for Women aim to

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<sup>6</sup> [National Strategy for Women 2020-2025](#)

<sup>7</sup> [Economic Modernisation Vision 2022](#)

<sup>8</sup> [National Social Protection Strategy 2019-2025](#)

<sup>9</sup> [Jordan Response Plan for Syrian Crises 2020-2022](#)

<sup>10</sup> <https://jordan.unwomen.org/en/digital-library/publications/2022/03/general-framework-for-gender-equality-in-jordan#view>

<sup>11</sup> <https://data.unhcr.org/en/documents/download/43835>

<sup>12</sup> [Follow-up assessment on gendered realities in displacement – UN Women](#)

<sup>13</sup> [Jordan Economic Monitor – Fall 2023](#)

<sup>14</sup> [Jordan Economic Monitor, Summer 2024: Strength Amidst Strain: Jordan's Economic Resilience-The World Bank](#)

<sup>15</sup> [UNICEF-Jordan 2022](#)

<sup>16</sup> [UNHCR 2024](#)

<sup>17</sup> [United Nations Treaty Collection 1981](#)

enhance women's economic participation and political involvement. However, societal norms and insufficient resources often limit the effectiveness of these programmes, especially in rural areas.<sup>18</sup>

Jordan has made progress in promoting gender equality, particularly in education and healthcare. Women in Jordan have access to education at all levels, and there are efforts to increase their participation in the workforce. However, the female labor force participation rate remains low, at around 14 per cent<sup>19</sup> as of 2023 compared to 63 per cent of men<sup>20</sup>. This is attributed to social norms and barriers that discourage women from working outside the home. The government has implemented several policies aimed at empowering women, including the National Strategy for Women (2020-2025)<sup>21</sup>, which focuses on enhancing women's economic participation, protecting women from violence, and promoting their involvement in public and political life. Despite these efforts, women's representation in political life remains limited. Women's quota is 12.3 per cent<sup>22</sup> (18 seats) in the 138-seat lower house of parliament, while 27 women elected in 2024 election, including 18 via quota<sup>23</sup>.

The Women's Empowerment Principles (WEPs)<sup>24</sup> are a set of guidelines established jointly by UN Women and the UN Global Compact to promote gender equality and women's empowerment in the workplace, marketplace, and community. Jordan has the second highest number of WEPs signatories in the Arab States region, with 74 companies committed to the principles of women's empowerment. Despite this, women in Jordan still face significant barriers in the labor market. For instance, as of 2022, women held under 5 per cent of board positions, and around 78 per cent of companies had no women on their boards<sup>25</sup>. In private shareholding companies, women constituted only 9.1 per cent of senior management, and a mere 2.6 per cent of these companies had women chairs<sup>26</sup>. These statistics show the persistent ceiling that prevents women from reaching leadership and decision-making positions<sup>27</sup>.

The gender equality among Syrian refugees in Jordan is challenging and reveals disparities, particularly affecting women and girls. According to a survey by UN Women, published in 2023<sup>28</sup>, 25 per cent of Syrian refugee women participate in the labor market, with a mere 12 per cent engaged in any form of employment. This low participation is compounded by the fact that only 5 per cent of work permits issued to Syrian refugees between 2016 and 2020 were granted to women<sup>29</sup>. The most recent data shows that 215,668 work permits have been issued by Jordan to Syrian refugees from January 01, 2016, to December 31, 2021, 20,742 of which were directly supported by the ILO (14% to women)<sup>30</sup>. Female-headed households, while more likely to have economically active members, are

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<sup>18</sup><https://documents.worldbank.org/curated/en/859411541448063088/pdf/ACS25170-PUBLIC-FULL-REPORT-Jordan-Social-Norms-June-1-2018-with-titlepg.pdf>

<sup>19</sup> [The World Bank 2023](#)

<sup>20</sup> [WPS Agenda-Updates from Chemonics 2023](#)

<sup>21</sup> [National Strategy for Women in Jordan 2020-2025](#)

<sup>22</sup> [World Bank 2022](#)

<sup>23</sup> [The Jordan Time 2024](#)

<sup>24</sup> [Women's Empowerment Principles](#)

<sup>25</sup> [United Nations-Jordan](#)

<sup>26</sup> *ibid*

<sup>27</sup> [UN Jordan 2022](#)

<sup>28</sup> [UN Women-Arab States](#)

<sup>29</sup> [Impact of work permits on decent work for Syrians in Jordan, ILO, September, 2021](#)

<sup>30</sup> [United Nations: Department of Economic and Social Affairs - Sustainable Development](#)

also more likely to be in the lowest income band (62 per cent compared to 43 per cent for male-headed households) and are heavily reliant on humanitarian cash assistance<sup>31</sup>. Education does not significantly protect against economic difficulties, as women with higher education levels still face high unemployment rates (29 per cent unemployed compared to 19 per cent employed). Additionally, 45.3 per cent of 14-17-year-olds are not attending school, with boys more likely to be out of school than girls, and child marriage cited as a reason for girls' school dropout in 12 per cent of cases for ages 12-14 and 29 per cent for ages 15-17. Women's decision-making power is limited, especially in households with an adult male present as married women living with their spouses have little authority over financial decisions.<sup>32</sup> Safety and security concerns also disproportionately affect women, with 73 per cent of reported safety issues being verbal harassment, primarily targeting women and girls. Gender-based violence (GBV) remains a significant issue, with 23 per cent of women recognizing it as a serious problem, and younger women more likely to acknowledge its prevalence. Health services are more accessible in camps, but psychosocial and mental health services remain difficult to access. The COVID-19 pandemic has exacerbated economic pressures and household tensions, particularly affecting the mental health of women and girls, with 71 per cent of survey participants reporting negative impact.<sup>33</sup>

Social attitudes in Jordan are deeply influenced by traditional and patriarchal values, which shape gender roles and family structures. Men are generally seen as breadwinners and heads of households, while women are primarily viewed in roles related to homemaking and child raising. These traditional roles are slowly evolving, but the pace of change is gradual and varies significantly across different parts of the country. Honor crimes, although illegal, still occur and are a severe violation of women's rights. These crimes are rooted in cultural norms that value family honor over individual rights<sup>34</sup>. The government and various NGOs are working to combat this issue through education and legal reforms. For example, the Jordanian Women's Union<sup>35</sup> has permanent central programmes aimed at confronting forms of violence against women, providing protection and assistance, and monitoring violations.

## 1.2 About the Programme – Object of Evaluation

**1.2.1** The programme titled "Resilience and Empowerment of Vulnerable Women: The Future of Jordan's Growth and Stability (EUTF Madad Phase 2)", hereinafter called as "The programme" is an initiative aimed at empowering Syrian refugee and vulnerable Jordanian women by providing them with the skills and opportunities needed to participate in the labor market. Through a holistic approach that addressed both immediate and broader social issues, the programme aimed to directly benefit Syrian refugee women, vulnerable Jordanian women, and children through services provided at Oasis centres. The programme also sought to engage men for behavioral change and

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<sup>31</sup> [UN Women-Arab States](#)

<sup>32</sup> [ibid](#)

<sup>33</sup> [Impact of COVID-19 on gender roles and violence against women - results from Jordan](#)

<sup>34</sup> [US State Department 2022](#)

<sup>35</sup> [The Jordanian Women's Union](#)



strengthen government capacities at the sub-national level to mainstream gender into humanitarian action, resilience building and sustainable development initiatives.

The programme was planned to run for three years, from February 2021 to February 2024. The total budget allocated was 7 million euros from the Madad Trust Fund, with an annual budget of approximately 2.3 million euros per year over the 3-year period. Following the conclusion of the programme and in agreement with the donor, the programme received a no-cost extension and was extended for an additional nine months, until the end of November 2024. However, since this evaluation was conducted after the original conclusion of the programme in February, the data collected only covers the implementation period from February 2021 to February 2024. The programme operated in various locations across Jordan, covering both refugee camp and host community settings across Jordan, including four centres in Za'atari and Azraq refugee camps and 18 centres in host communities.

The programme was implemented through Oasis model which began in Jordan in 2012 when UN Women opened its first Oasis centre at Za'atari refugee camp in northern Jordan. This centre provided emergency aid and specialized gender-based violence services to refugee women and girls. Over time, the scope and impact of the Oasis model expanded to include multi-sectoral services that focused on building women's resilience and empowerment. This programme aimed at providing financial support as well as supporting women to improve their psychological well-being and gain confidence through their work<sup>36</sup>. The Oasis model has continued to evolve and expand, with the establishment of 22 centres across Jordan by 2023. These centres provide crucial cash-for-work, skill development, and early childhood services to Syrian refugees and vulnerable Jordanian women. The initiative focused on addressing gender barriers, promoting economic empowerment, and enhancing protection against gender-based violence.

Under the programme, the Oasis model was implemented in both refugee camps and host communities, with the goal of strengthening the resilience of Syrian refugee and Jordanian women to conflict, displacement, and other crises in Jordan. It has been a key entry point for community resilience, especially in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic. The key aspects of the Oasis model are given in the table below:

Table 1 Key aspects of the Oasis Model<sup>37</sup>

Aspect	Description
<b>Comprehensive Support</b>	Provides a range of services including cash-for-work, vocational and entrepreneurial skills training, access to work permits, and support for opening micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs). Offers psychosocial support, counseling, and referrals related to gender-based violence (GBV). Strengthens women's participation, civic engagement, and leadership skills.
<b>Partnerships</b>	Works closely with the Ministry of Social Development (MoSD) and their nationwide network of community centres. Collaborates with the Ministry of Labor (MoL) to support women's economic participation. Partners with the Association of Banks in

<sup>36</sup> UN Women 2023

<sup>37</sup> Jordan Country Portfolio Evaluation-Report Strategic Note 2018-2022



	Jordan and Education for Employment (EFE) for employability and entrepreneurship training.
<b>Sustainability</b>	Aims to strengthen the capacity of government institutions like MoSD and MoL to implement gender responsive policies. Focuses on integrating the Oasis model with national systems for long-term sustainability.
<b>Holistic Approach</b>	Recognizes that women's economic empowerment requires addressing complex social norms and challenges like lack of childcare, safe transportation, and poor working conditions. Provides not just skills training but also addresses broader barriers to women's participation in the labor force.

### 1.2.2 Programme Theory of Change, Outputs, Outcomes, and Impact

The expected **impact** of the programme described in the programme document is to strengthen the resilience of Syrian and host community women, girls, and their communities to conflict, displacement and other crises in Jordan. The programme had two expected **outcomes** and total five associated **outputs** as described below:

1. **Outcome 1:** MoSD, MoL, and governorates have strategies and instruments in place to implement gender responsive policies to support women’s economic empowerment:  
**Output 1.1:** Strengthened capacity of MoSD, governorates and other national stakeholders to mainstream gender into humanitarian action, resilience building and sustainable development initiatives.
  
2. **Outcome 2:** Syrian and Jordanian women in camps and host communities have strengthened livelihoods:  
**Output 2.1:** Oasis in refugee camps and cash-for-work strengthened and livelihoods for vulnerable Syrian refugee women secured.  
**Output 2.2:** Oasis and cash-for-work supported and livelihoods for vulnerable Jordanian women and Syrian refugees in non-camp settings secured.  
**Output 2.3:** Stakeholders on prevention, protection and service delivery related to GBV for vulnerable women in both camp and non-camp settings are convened to provide GBV services and referrals.  
**Output 2.4:** Participation, civic engagement and leadership skills development for refugee women and vulnerable Jordanian women are strengthened.

The evaluation team completed an analysis of the programme Theory of Change (ToC) at the inception phase of the evaluation which indicated that the programme's underpinning design logic was sound and responsive to the Jordanian context, outlining a clear progression from activities to outcomes to impact for Syrian refugees and vulnerable Jordanian women. However, while the causal pathways were generally well-mapped and specific to the programme, some assumptions and evidence bases behind the programme logic needed to be made more explicit and well-articulated. As a result, the evaluation team reconstructed the ToC in consultation with the programme management and programme staff and relevant stakeholders to articulate the logical sequence of how and why a programme’s activities are expected to lead to desired outcomes and impacts. The reconstructed ToC included five key outcomes aimed at increasing women's economic

empowerment, participation, and resilience as well as potential risks and assumptions for each outcome. The re-constructed ToC is presented in the table below:

Table 2 Re-constructed Theory of Change (developed by the evaluation team)

Outcome	Medium-term Result (Contributing to Long-term Goals)	Ultimate Impact/Change	Risks	Assumptions
MoSD, Mol, and governorates implement gender-responsive policies	Legal frameworks and policies supporting women's economic participation	Increased women's economic empowerment and participation in Jordan	Risk of government capacity and commitment being insufficient for gender mainstreaming	Continued government commitment to gender mainstreaming and scaling Oasis model
Syrian and Jordanian women in camps and host communities have strengthened livelihoods	Women's employment and entrepreneurial opportunities are increased	Resilience and economic self-reliance of vulnerable women	Limited job opportunities, societal resistance to women's employment in non-traditional sectors	Economic sectors open for women, social norms can be shifted to support women's work
Vulnerable Syrian refugee women in camps have access to cash-for-work and job training	Livelihoods security through cash-for-work rotations and MSMEs	Strengthened livelihoods of Syrian refugee women	Economic downturn or lack of job opportunities post-COVID	Cash-for-work and entrepreneurship support are effective in building women's resilience
Increased access to GBV services and referrals	Improved protection mechanisms and awareness of GBV issues	Reduced vulnerability of women to gender-based violence	Limited capacity to scale up GBV services, social stigma limiting the use of GBV services	GBV prevention efforts can reduce violence and stigma, and service referrals will improve women's access to help
Strengthened participation, civic engagement, and leadership skills for women	Women become active leaders in community decision-making and advocacy roles	Women contribute to community resilience and leadership	Lack of support from men and communities for women's leadership roles	Engaging men and boys will create support for women's leadership, and advocacy efforts will promote community acceptance

In narrative form the reconstructed ToC was described as below:

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*If women's labor force participation in Jordan is strengthened  
Through institutional capacity building, livelihoods support, GBV services, and civic engagement opportunities,  
Then Syrian refugee and vulnerable Jordanian women will have increased economic empowerment and resilience,  
Leading to their greater participation in the labor force and decision-making, ultimately contributing to Jordan's inclusive economic growth and stability,  
Provided there is continued government commitment, community acceptance, and alignment with market demands.*

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### 1.2.3 Human Resources Allocation

The human resources allocation for the programme included a diverse team of specialists and support staff dedicated to ensuring effective implementation and management. The key roles included a Head of Programmes (25% allocation), Programme Management Specialist (50%), Women's Economic Empowerment Specialist (100%), Institutional Capacity Development Specialist (25%), field staff for camp and host community operations, communications support, security, transportation, and financial/procurement associates. This staffing structure was designed to provide comprehensive oversight, technical expertise, operational support, and financial management across all aspects of the programme, with allocations ranging from 25% to 100% depending on the role's criticality to programme activities. The total investment in human resources over the three-year period amounted to over 1.2 million Euros, reflecting the programme's commitment to staffing to achieve its objectives. Further details about human resources allocation are provided in [Annex-14](#).

### 1.2.4 Key Stakeholders and their Roles

The programme involved a diverse range of stakeholders working collaboratively to enhance the resilience and economic empowerment of Syrian refugee and vulnerable Jordanian women. Key stakeholders included the direct and indirect beneficiaries (Syrian refugee women, vulnerable Jordanian women, children, men, and their families), the EU Regional Trust Fund providing financial support and strategic input, UN Women as the primary implementing partner, and various government ministries (MoSD, MoL, Ministry of Interior) contributing to policy development and implementation. Other UN agencies (WFP, UNHCR, UNICEF) provided specialized support, while private sector companies and civil society organizations (Education for Employment, EFE, Jordan, Arab Renaissance for Democracy and Development, ARDD) contributed to vocational training, job placement, and community engagement. The UN Country Team worked to strengthen national institutions' capacity for gender-responsive policies across sectors. The details about the roles of stakeholders is provided in [Annex-15](#).

## 2. PURPOSE, OBJECTIVES AND SCOPE OF EVALUATION

The purpose, objectives and scope of evaluation are explained hereunder.

### 2.1 Purpose of Evaluation

The purpose of the evaluation was twofold: (a) accountability, assessing the contributions made by the programme in achievement and performance of outcome level results; and (b) learning and forward-looking in scope to support the Programme and its stakeholders' strategic learning and decision-making for future programme design, implementation and scale-up. The evaluation therefore aimed at assessing the performance and progress of the programme within diverse crisis-affected populations, whether situated in camps or non-camp settings paying attention to how well the programme addressed the varying needs and priorities of these populations, recognizing the distinct challenges and circumstances they face. Furthermore, the evaluation endeavored to learn about the level of synergy and multiplying effect between the various activities implemented by the programme, examining how different programme components complement each other and contribute to broader impact. It also aimed to identify opportunities for collaboration and synergy with other programmes led by UN Women and partners along the humanitarian-development continuum, maximizing collective efforts to address complex challenges.

### 2.2 Objectives of Evaluation

As outlined in the ToR, the specific objectives of evaluation were:

1. To assess the **relevance** of the programme objectives, strategy, and approach at the local, central, and regional level as well as UN Women's comparative advantage/added value in this area as compared with key partners.
2. To assess **effectiveness** and a potential measurable impact of the intervention in Jordan.
3. To assess **organizational efficiency** and **coordination mechanisms** in progressing towards the achievement of the intended results.
4. To assess the **connectedness** and **sustainability** of the results and the intervention in advancing gender equality in Jordan.
5. To identify and document **lessons learned, good practices and innovations, case stories and challenges** within the programme, to inform future work of UN Women with refugees, displaced people, and host communities.
6. To analyse how **human rights approach** and **gender equality principles** are integrated in implementation.
7. To provide **actionable recommendations** with respect to the development of future programmes.

## 2.3 Scope of Evaluation

The scope of the evaluation included the programme from February 24, 2021, to February 23, 2024. The geographical scope of the evaluation was 11 governorates of Jordan including four Oasis centres in Za'atari and Azraq refugee camps, and 18 Oasis centres in host communities. Direct beneficiaries included Syrian refugee women, vulnerable Jordanian women, children benefiting from childcare and afterschool services, as well as men beneficiaries targeted through the behavioural change interventions and key sub-national government authorities targeted for strengthened capacity.

## 2.4 Intended use and users of the evaluation

The findings will be used to inform future programmatic decisions, organizational learning and accountability as well as for the identification of good practices to strengthen the resilience of Syrian women and girls and host communities in Jordan. The evaluation will complement the Country Portfolio Evaluation (CPE),<sup>38</sup> which was conducted from September 2022 to August 2023 by providing a more targeted and detailed analysis of specific interventions under this programme. While the CPE provided a comprehensive overview of all programmes operating within the UN Women Country Office in Jordan, this programme evaluation will facilitate a deeper exploration of the effectiveness, efficiency, relevance, and sustainability of the programme. This focused assessment will allow stakeholders to identify strengths, weaknesses, and areas for improvement at a more nuanced level, informing strategic decision-making, resource allocation, and programme design adjustments with enhanced precision and efficacy.

The targeted users of the evaluation are UN Women Senior Management at country level, programme staff, and key stakeholders at the country level (donors, humanitarian actors, government entities, UN system) as well as regional actors working on the Syrian response.

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<sup>38</sup> [Jordan Country Portfolio Evaluation](#)

### 3. METHODOLOGY

The evaluation methodology applied the OECD-DAC criteria, including relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, sustainability as well as the criterion of gender equality and human rights. The evaluation followed the principles of Gender-Responsive Evaluations and had ‘a utilization-focused lens’ to generate forward-looking and actionable recommendations ensuring the information needs of the Country Office and stakeholders are met.

#### 3.1 Evaluation Questions and Evaluation Matrix

The evaluation used OECD DAC criteria and key evaluation questions are provided in the table below.

Table 3 Evaluation Questions

DAC Evaluation Criteria	Evaluation Questions
<b>Relevance</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. To what extent do the intervention strategies and activities respond to the country context and specific needs/priorities of Syrian and host community beneficiaries, including those who were most vulnerable? How distinct is it compared to similar initiatives by national or development partners?</li> <li>2. To what extent does UN Women’s approach complement and add value to that of other actors in the context of the Jordan Response Plan to the Syria Crisis (JRP)?</li> <li>3. To what extent the programme has adapted to changing situations and adjusted its strategies based on the evolving refugees’ needs and external environment.</li> </ol>
<b>Effectiveness</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>4. To what extent has the programme achieved its planned objectives and targeted results? Which unexpected positive outcomes or negative results have resulted from the implementation of the programme? Which factors influences the achievement of objectives?</li> <li>5. To what extent have activities under the programme contributed to women’s empowerment (socio, economic and political<sup>39</sup>) in a gender-transformative way, including through awareness raising and changing social norms?</li> <li>6. To what extent was the programme effective in addressing structural barriers to employment, participation, safety, and economic well-being of refugees, displaced, and host communities, and what enabling and limiting factors (internal and external) contributed to the results? What actions are needed to overcome barriers and what opportunities exist for further scaling up?</li> </ol>
<b>Efficiency</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>7. How well are programme activities and achievements monitored and evaluated?</li> <li>8. Have human and financial resources been optimally deployed to achieve the results?</li> </ol>

<sup>39</sup> **Political Empowerment** in the context of this programme refers to the ways in which the activities have enabled women to participate in and influence decision-making processes at various levels. This includes:

1. **Participation in Governance:** Increasing the involvement of women in local governance structures, community committees, and other decision-making bodies.
2. **Leadership Roles:** Encouraging and supporting women to take on leadership positions within their communities and organizations.
3. **Advocacy and Policy Influence:** Empowering women to advocate for their rights and interests, influence policymaking, and contribute to the development of gender-sensitive policies and regulations.
4. **Civic Engagement:** Enhancing women’s ability to engage in civic activities, including voting, participating in public consultations, and being active members of civil society organizations.

These aspects collectively contribute to women’s empowerment by ensuring their voices are heard and considered in political and public spheres, thereby fostering a more inclusive and equitable society. For more details see- [Political Empowerment of Women: Framework for Strategic Action – UN Women](#)

	9. What roles do partnerships <sup>40</sup> play in achieving programme results and are these optimally developed?
	10. Do UN Women’s institutional arrangements and mechanisms support efficient and timely refugee response in the context of the implementation of this programme?
<b>Sustainability</b>	11. What indications are there that the outcomes will be sustained, e.g., through capacities development of partners (systems, structures, staff, etc.)?
	12. Will the programme beneficiaries be able to rely on themselves (be resilient) after funding is reduced or is withdrawn?
	13. To what extent are policy and regulatory frameworks in place that will support the continuation of benefits?
<b>Gender equality, disability inclusion, and human rights</b>	14. To what extent was gender equality incorporated in the design and implementation of the programme?
	15. To what extent does the intervention address the underlying causes of inequality and discrimination, including those experienced by vulnerable group such as women with disabilities within the framework of the leave no-one behind (LNOB) principle?

An evaluation matrix, covering criteria such as Relevance, Effectiveness, Efficiency, Sustainability, Gender equality, disability inclusion, and human rights, included questions, sub-questions, indicators, data sources, and means of verification for each criterion, is provided in [Annex 4](#). The evaluation also utilized a comprehensive set of indicators to measure the progress towards achieving planned impact, including both outcome and output levels, providing assessment about the programme's impact on individual empowerment, policy changes, and systemic improvements. The indicators’ description, measurement, and sub-questions in evaluation matrix are provided in [Annex-1](#) to this report.

### 3.2 Evaluation Design

The evaluation applied a theory-based design to assess the programme against its theory of change<sup>41</sup> and its stated intervention logic and assumptions about how change happens. It used contribution analysis (CA) approach to assess the ‘contribution’ of the programme towards achieving the two programme outcomes in presence of (and in parallel to) other government, I/ NGOs/ institutions/ organizations’ programmes/ initiatives which are also contributing to achieve these outcomes & SDGs. Contribution analysis is provided in [Annex-13](#) to this report.

The evaluation adhered to UNEG guidance on integrating Human Rights and Gender Equality in evaluations with gender responsive and human rights approaches integrated into the scope and conduct of the evaluation. The evaluation applied the Gender Results Effectiveness Scale (GRES) developed by UNDP<sup>42</sup>, using a five-point rating scale to assess the effectiveness or quality of the

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<sup>40</sup> UN Women partnered with other UN Agencies and stakeholders. Partners’ detail is provided in Annex 15.  
<sup>41</sup> Re-constructed theory of change developed by the evaluation team at the evaluation inception stage  
<sup>42</sup> [http://web.undp.org/evaluation/documents/guidance/gender/GRES\\_English.pdf](http://web.undp.org/evaluation/documents/guidance/gender/GRES_English.pdf)

gender transformative programme results. Below are the specifics on how questions were used to evaluate gender transformation through the Gender Results Effectiveness Scale (GRES):

### Individual & Community Level

Through the survey and FGD questions, the following changes were assessed:

- Decision-making power of women within households
- Women's labor force participation and economic opportunities
- Awareness, attitudes and responses to gender-based violence, harassment, child marriage
- Women's community participation and involvement in decision-making
- Women's political participation at local governance level

### National Level

The questions at the national level assessed the programme's impact on changing laws, policies and structural barriers related to:

- Women's representation and decision-making power
- Women's employment and entrepreneurship
- Gender-based violence, harassment, and child marriages
- Access to services like health, education for refugees/displaced persons
- Community participation for refugees/displaced persons

It also used UN Women Strategic Guide Political Empowerment of Women: Framework for Strategic Action, 2014 – 2017 to assess the political empowerment outcomes of the programme <sup>43</sup>.

## 3.3 Methods of Data Collection

The evaluation utilized a mixed-methods approach, combining quantitative and qualitative data collection from diverse primary and secondary sources. It employed a combination of data collection tools -focus group discussions, key informant interviews, survey, observations, and case stories, conducted both online and onsite. This approach allowed for a robust analysis of the programme's implementation and outcomes, incorporating perspectives from stakeholders including donors, UN Women, local partners, government officials, and beneficiaries. The evaluation adhered to United Nations Evaluation Group (UNEG) Norms and Standards<sup>44</sup>, ensuring the integration of human rights and gender equality principles throughout the process. The specific data collection tools applied are as following:

a) **Document review-** The evaluation conducted literature review of programme documents including evaluation of Madad phase-1 and Country Portfolio Evaluation (CPE), national and regional policies and vulnerability assessment frameworks, which helped the evaluation to understand the context of the programme and to design the evaluation including recommendations. The list of documents reviewed is provided in **Annex 2**.

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<sup>43</sup> [Political Empowerment of Women: Framework for Strategic Action – UN Women](#)

<sup>44</sup> [UNEG Norms and Standards for Evaluation in the UN System](#)



b) A **survey** or structured questionnaire was administered to collect quantitative data from beneficiaries. The survey was conducted on phone from the sampled beneficiaries from both in-camp and host community settings due to absence of beneficiaries from centres, transportation challenges, higher participation potential by phone and time constraints. A team of male and female enumerators surveyed the respondents after taking their informed consent. The respondents included both females and males, as well as persons with disabilities (PwDs). KOBO Collect, a data collection application, was used to administer and record the data. The survey tool is provided in **Annex-6 & 7**.

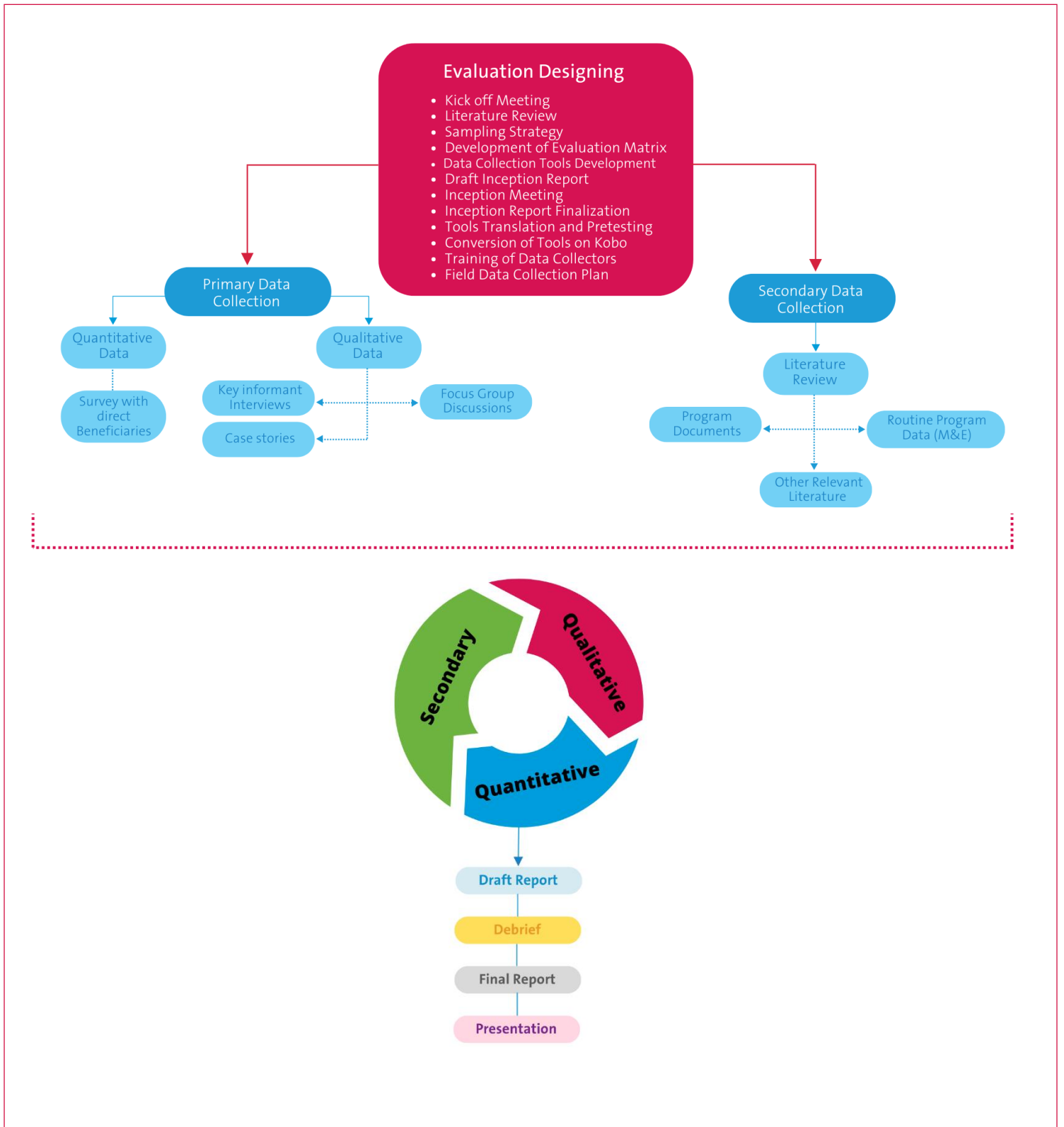
c) **Focus Group Discussions** were conducted with beneficiary groups, such as women, and community members, to document their experiences and perceptions of the programme's impact. The FGD tool is provided in **Annex-6 & 7**.

d) **Key Informant Interviews (KIIs)** were conducted with key stakeholders and informants on the programme to seek their views on the relevance, efficiency, effectiveness, inclusiveness, sustainability, gender, and human rights aspects of the programme. Interviews also assessed the extent to which the capacity of relevant institutions has been enhanced. The list of stakeholders for KIIs is provided in **Annex-3**.

e) **Case stories** were captured to show the programme's impact or highlight particular successes or challenges. In total 4 case stories were compiled. The cases were identified during the survey and FGDs by the data collection team.

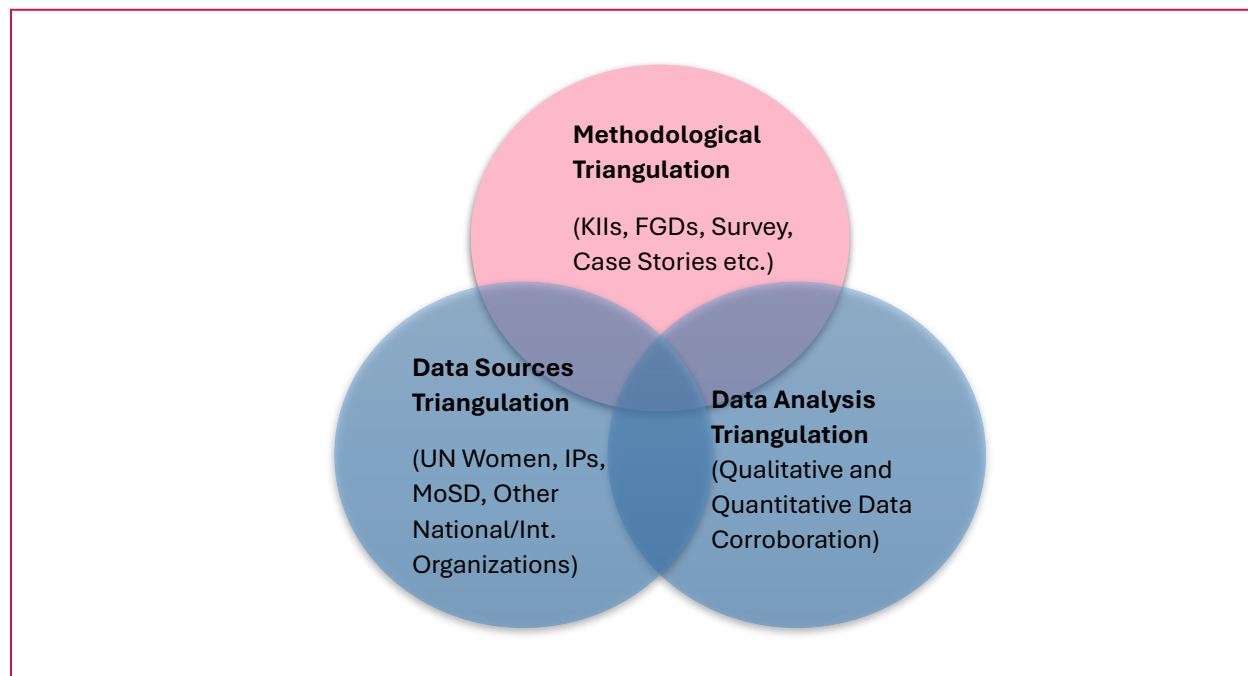
A detailed methodological framework is presented in the figure below:

Figure 1 Methodological framework of evaluation (prepared by the evaluation team)



A comprehensive triangulation approach included a) **methodological triangulation**, which combined document reviews, secondary data analysis, survey, interviews, and focus groups to strengthen research outcomes, b) **Data source triangulation** gathered information from diverse stakeholders at macro and micro levels, including government counterparts, partners, programme staff, and beneficiaries, c) Finally, **triangulation of data analysis** integrated both quantitative and qualitative methods to formulate evidence-based conclusions. The triangulation is summarized in the figure below.

Figure 2 Types of data triangulations utilized in the evaluation, (prepared by the evaluation team)



### 3.4 Implementation of data collection

The evaluation methodology combined quantitative and qualitative data collection techniques, adhering to ethical standards and ensuring data quality throughout the process. Before data collection, tools were translated into Arabic, enumerators were trained, and tool piloting was conducted, followed by the development of a detailed data collection plan. Data collection, using the KOBO platform, was carried out on the phone, with close monitoring. Data processing involved thorough cleaning and verification, followed by comprehensive analysis, employing descriptive statistics for quantitative data and inductive/deductive techniques for qualitative data. The process concluded with triangulation, integrating multiple data sources to ensure reliability and produce well-reasoned conclusions and recommendations for the UN Women programme evaluation.

### 3.5 Sample and Sampling Design

The sample design utilized a mixed approach to ensure representative and comprehensive data collection.

For the quantitative survey, a stratified random sampling method was used, with a calculated sample size of 358 participants (19 men, 339 women) drawn from a total programme population of 5,101 beneficiaries. This sample size was determined using a 95% confidence level, 5% margin of error, and 50% population proportion. The sample was distributed across various locations and outputs to ensure broad coverage. However, in actual, the survey was conducted with 375 total respondents, comprising 10 men and 365 women. Due to the relatively small number of male respondents in the survey<sup>45</sup>, the percentages of male responses presented in the report should be interpreted with caution and in the context of their limited representation in the overall sample.

The data of women with disabilities was provided by UN Women, out of which 27 (7 per cent of total women survey respondents) were surveyed. The survey covered the respondents with other vulnerabilities identified during the beneficiaries' selection that included assessment of income level, households with disabled persons or those with diseases, type of residential property, number of family members, and beneficiaries of national aid funds.

A total of 14 focus group discussions (FGDs) were initially planned (2 with men and 12 with women). However, the actual conducted qualitative data collection included 15 FGDs (2 with men, 13 with women) conducted using purposive sampling. In FGDs 130 beneficiaries participated (16 men and 114 women).

Originally, 23 key informant interviews (KIIs) were planned with the key stakeholders identified during desk review. However, in practice, 9 KIIs (4 men and 5 women) were conducted with strategically selected stakeholders due to lower response rate. This was complemented by 4 in-depth case stories.

Overall, the data collection methods reached a total of 526 individuals across the various approaches, with a strong emphasis on female participation, particularly in the survey and FGDs. The details of demographics are provided in [Annex-12](#).

*Table 4 Summary of Data Collection*

<b>Data Collection Methods</b>	<b>Male</b>	<b>Female</b>	<b>Total</b>
Survey	10	365	375
Number of FGDs	2	13	15
Participants of FGDs	16	114	130
KIIs	4	5	9
In-depth Case Study	1	3	4

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<sup>45</sup> The implementing partner faced significant challenges in reaching the target number of men in the trainings. These challenges were mediated partially by involving family members of the female beneficiaries but nevertheless impacted the overall achievement of the target. This also led to lack of trainings for men in some centres. During the evaluation, the consulting company tried to reach men participants for the survey, but it remained challenging. Although 10 is a small number of male participants, it represents almost 13% of the men reached through the programme.

### 3.6 Evaluation limitations and risk mitigation strategies

The evaluation of the programme faced several limitations. Below are the limitations and corresponding mitigation strategies during the evaluation process:

Table 5. Limitations and mitigation strategies for the evaluation

Category	Limitation	Mitigation Strategy
<b>Low participation in some areas</b>	In Muwaqqar, only two beneficiaries agreed to participate in the Focus Group Discussion (FGD) for civic engagement.	The location of the FGD was changed to Madaba, specifically to the Jabal Bany Hamida centre. As a result on average, eight participants participated in each FGD.
<b>Low participation from government ministries</b>	The concerned personnels from the MoSD, MoL, and governorates did not participate in the interview.	After several reminders and follow-ups only one person from MoSD was interviewed. The secondary data such as past evaluations were taken into account to assess the government perspective.
<b>Beneficiary availability in Oasis centres</b>	Absences of many beneficiaries in the Oasis centres and they were unable to access centres due to lack of funds for transport.	It was decided to conduct all survey in host communities via phone calls instead of in-person to ensure higher participation rates.
<b>Limited availability of civic engagement beneficiaries</b>	Beneficiaries who attended civic engagement trainings had already completed the project and were not currently visiting the centres.	This survey was conducted via phone and lists of names and contact information were obtained from UN Women.
<b>Unavailability of beneficiaries in specific centres</b>	No beneficiaries were available in Um Sayhoun and Qura Bani Hashem centres.	Focus group discussions were cancelled for these centres, but survey was still conducted via phone.
<b>Difficulty in organizing civic engagement FGD with men</b>	There was difficulty in organizing a civic engagement FGD with men in Karak.	The field team worked to reach out to these men and tried their best to achieve their participation. As a result, 13% of the men reached through the programme participated in the data collection for this evaluation. <sup>46</sup>
<b>Ensuring sufficient number of survey respondents</b>	There was a risk of not having enough respondents for the survey.	50% more beneficiary contacts than the target sample size were obtained from UN Women to overcome any potential non-responses.

<sup>46</sup> ibid

### 3.7 Ethical Considerations During the Evaluation

The evaluation team adhered to UNEG standards<sup>47</sup> and the UN Women Evaluation Handbook, ensuring ethical practices such as independence, impartiality, and transparency. They prioritized respect for participants' dignity, cultural sensitivity, and the protection of vulnerable groups, including women with disabilities. Specifically, the data collection process focused on ensuring accessibility for women with physical, and sensory disabilities. To ensure the application of ethical considerations, enumerators were trained on disability inclusion and cultural competence, ensuring they were sensitive to the needs of participants. Informed consent was obtained through clear, verbal explanations of the survey objectives and process. The data collection tools were translated into Arabic, and practice of informed consent, confidentiality, and fair representation were strictly followed and monitored. The evaluation team-maintained objectivity by involving experienced local enumerators for data collection, following ethical standards and informed consent checklist during the data collection. These checklists are provided in **Annex 10 and 11**, respectively. Data was securely stored on encrypted devices to safeguard privacy, and efforts were made to avoid any harm to participants.

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<sup>47</sup>[UNEG Ethical Guidelines for Evaluation., 2020](#)

## 4. FINDINGS

### 4.1. Relevance

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**FINDING 1:** *The programme is aligned with and contributes towards various national strategies and plans such as the Jordan's Economic Modernization Vision 2022, Jordan's National Strategy for Women 2020-2025, Jordan's National social protection Strategy (2019 – 2025 and Jordanian Response Plan (JRP) 2020-2023. It is also well aligned with the key international instruments for gender equality and women's empowerment as well as UN Women's global and regional strategies to increase women's employment, address harmful practices related to gender-based violence and enhance the relevant normative framework. The programme influenced several amendments to the Jordanian legal framework proposed under the General Framework for Gender Equality (GFGE) in Jordan (2022) however, some key legislative recommendations by the GFGE such as laws governing professional associations, workers' unions etc. were not supported by the programme. The Incentive-Based Volunteering criteria focus more on basic eligibility requirements rather than nuanced vulnerability assessment framework (VAF) of UNHCR.*

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The evaluation found that the programme aligns well with Jordans' various key strategies and plans such as the Jordan's Economic Modernization Vision 2022, Jordan's National Strategy for Women 2020-2025<sup>48</sup>, Jordan's National social protection Strategy (2019 – 2025)<sup>49</sup> as well as Jordanian Response Plan (JRP) 2020-2023<sup>50</sup>. For instance, the programme supported and contributed towards the Jordan's Economic Modernization Vision 2022 by providing entrepreneurship support to the beneficiaries, the programme also supports the vision's goals of enhancing entrepreneurship, particularly for Micro, Small & Medium Enterprises (MSMEs)<sup>51</sup>. It also supported the Vision's aim of strengthening "High Value Industries" as a driver for growth by promoting women's participation in the manufacturing sector. Similarly, the assessment of programme's alignment within Jordan's National Strategy for Women 2020-2025, found that the programme supported all four strategic goals of human and economic rights, gender-based violence (GBV), changing gender norms, and institutional capacity building as stated in the strategy. The programme's Oasis model focused on economic empowerment, addressing GBV by providing prevention, protection, and referral services, while also raising awareness and engaging men in dialogues on women's rights. Furthermore, the programme focused on changing harmful gender norms through community outreach and awareness campaigns and strengthening institutional capacity by partnering with Ministry of Social Development (MoSD) to implement gender-sensitive policies.

The evaluation also found programme's alignment with the Jordan's National social protection Strategy (2019 – 2025). For example, supporting integration of women in labour market through partnership with private sector aligns with National social protection Strategy's strategic objective of

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<sup>48</sup> [National Strategy for Women in Jordan 2020-2025](#)

<sup>49</sup> [Jordan National Social Protection Strategy 2019 - 2025](#)

<sup>50</sup> [Jordanian Response Plan \(JRP\) 2020-2023](#)

<sup>51</sup> [Jordan's Economic Modernization Vision 2022](#)

“private sector focused labour market”. The provision of cash-for-work and emergency cash assistance for vulnerable Syrian and Jordanian women during the COVID-19 pandemic demonstrates alignment with the strategy’s goal of providing “temporary assistance”<sup>52</sup>.

The programme also directly contributed to the Jordanian Response Plan (JRP) 2020-2023 objectives by promoting access to short-term job and formal employment opportunities for Syria refugees. The JRP includes provision of vocational training and employability programs for decent employment opportunities as well as support to existing and potential MSMEs, which is also covered by the programme. The evaluation found that the programme also supported the JRP’s objectives of enhancing food security for host communities and Syrian refugees. While the programme does not have a dedicated food security output or outcome, its livelihoods interventions indirectly contributed to improved food security by increasing income and economic opportunities<sup>53</sup>.

The programme also aligns with the UN Women’s Regional Office for Arab States (ROAS)<sup>54</sup> strategy on women’s economic empowerment by focusing on increasing labor force participation and access to decent work for Syrian refugees and Jordanian vulnerable women, as mentioned in the ROAS strategic note 2022-2025. Additionally, the programme directly supported the UN Women’s objectives outlined in its Country-Level Strategic Plan(s)<sup>55</sup>, which include increasing women’s employment, promoting social norms that encourage gender equality and women’s workforce participation, and enhancing the capacity of government stakeholders to develop laws and policies aimed at accelerating women’s labor force participation, particularly through entrepreneurship. Through its interventions of participation, civic engagement and leadership skills development, the programme created opportunities for Syrian refugees and vulnerable Jordanian women to participate in governance, public life, and community decision-making, a thematic priority of UN Women’s Strategic Plan 2022-2025<sup>56</sup>. Additionally, the programme contributed to other thematic areas of the strategic plan, such as Women’s Economic Empowerment, Ending Violence Against Women and Girls, by providing GBV services and referrals in both camp and non-camp settings.

It is also noted by the evaluation that the programme was designed to contribute to sustainable development goals (SDGs)<sup>57</sup> of No poverty (SDG-1), gender equality (SDG-5), decent work and economic growth (SDG-8), Reduced Inequalities (SDG-10), and Partnerships for the Goals (SDG-17), through its various outputs. It is further assessed that programme followed several key guiding principles outlined in the UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (UNSDCF)<sup>58</sup>. For example, the programme targeted vulnerable Syrian refugee and Jordanian women covering camp settings and non-camp settings of vulnerable districts across Jordan, aligning with the principle of Leaving No One Behind. It incorporated a Human Rights-Based Approach by focusing on GBV and referral services and addressing gender inequalities. The programme intended to build Resilience of vulnerable women and communities through supporting income generation. It focused on sustainability through building sustainable livelihoods and institutional capacity and incorporated

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<sup>52</sup> [National Social Protection Strategy 2019-2025](#)

<sup>53</sup> [Jordan Response Plan 2020-2022](#)

<sup>54</sup> [The UN Women’s Regional Office for Arab States](#)

<sup>55</sup> [Strategic Note 2018– 2022 and the current Strategic Note 2023– 2027](#)

<sup>56</sup> [UN Women’s Strategic Plan 2022-2025](#)

<sup>57</sup> [Department of Economic and Social Affairs - Sustainable Development](#)

<sup>58</sup> [UNSDCF Jordan 2023-27](#)



accountability measures through alignment with national priorities like Jordan Response Plan, inclusion of outcome and output indicators to measure progress, and plans for monitoring and evaluation<sup>59</sup>.

The General Framework for Gender Equality (GFGE) in Jordan (2022) proposed several amendments to the Jordanian legal framework to promote gender equality. Notably, the framework recommended amendments to Articles 69 and 29 of the Labour Law to enhance women's economic participation by creating a safer and more supportive work environment. When the GFGE was drafted in 2022, these amendments were still under review. Through successful advocacy efforts, the programme influenced the passage of these amendments in June 2023. However, despite these achievements, the programme did not address other legislative recommendations by the GFGE. These include, for example, amendments to laws governing professional associations, workers' unions, chambers of industry and commerce, and corporate and banking laws to establish minimum quotas for women's representation and ensure their equitable participation<sup>60</sup>.

The evaluation determined that the Incentive-Based Volunteering Camp Standard Operating Procedures (IBV SOP), used by the programme for selection of beneficiaries, is in compliance with the UNHCR's Vulnerability Assessment Framework (VAF)<sup>61</sup>, as both prioritize vulnerable individuals and households for assistance. These vulnerable groups include, but are not limited to, women at risk, persons with disabilities, older persons at risk, and single parents. Both the IBV SOP and VAF utilize standardized UNHCR vulnerability codes and Profile Global Registration System (ProGres) data for the identification of vulnerable cases, with the IBV SOP additionally referencing the Refugee Assistance Information System (RAIS) IBV Module for verifying vulnerability status. Gender considerations are well integrated into IBV SOP; the VAF includes gender analysis, while the IBV SOP promotes gender parity and encourages greater access for women. As guided by VAF, IBV SOP recognized disability as a significant vulnerability factor. However, UNHCR's VAF uses a more comprehensive set of vulnerability indicators compared to the basic eligibility criteria outlined in the programmes' IBV SOPs. For example, the VAF includes detailed assessments of dependency ratio, shelter vulnerability, WASH and climate vulnerability, food security, and health vulnerability. Whereas the programmes' IBV criteria focusses more on basic eligibility requirements rather than nuanced vulnerability scoring.

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**FINDING 2:** *The programme design and its intervention logic demonstrated relevance to the changing contexts, including the need for addressing both immediate humanitarian needs to medium and long-term development priorities through accelerating women's labor force participation, civic engagement, leadership skills development as well as enabling the policy and normative frameworks for gender equality and women's empowerment. During the COVID-19 pandemic, the programme demonstrated its agility and flexibility by successfully adjusting its operations. To address the increasing challenge of securing work permits for Syrian refugees in Jordan, it adjusted its strategies to improve women's access to work permits and job opportunities.*

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<sup>59</sup> [United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework Guidance](#)

<sup>60</sup> [General Framework for Gender Equality in Jordan](#)

<sup>61</sup> [UNHCR's vulnerability assessment framework](#)

Through the secondary research, the evaluation found that the Government of Jordan enacted notable legal reforms to advance gender equality, including constitutional amendments in Chapter 2 to explicitly recognize "Jordanian women" and the addition of Article 6 to further empower and protect women<sup>62</sup>. These reforms were intended to enhance women's rights and societal roles. Despite such constitutional efforts, traditional expectations and cultural norms continued to limit women's advancement in Jordan, hindering their full economic and political participation. The evaluation found that the programme took due consideration of such context and focused on changing societal norms and practices related to gender roles. Subsequently, it implemented initiatives aimed at economic empowerment and conducted awareness sessions to educate women about their rights including awareness related to child marriages, harassment, GBV, and gender equality. The programme also engaged with the private sector and government to promote family-friendly work environments, although changing deeply ingrained societal stereotypes remained a long-term process. The programme also had a component of engaging with men and boys to challenge and change gender social norms.

The evaluation found that the programme demonstrated its agility and flexibility during the COVID-19 pandemic. The pandemic led to movement restrictions and lockdowns, limiting in-person activities at the Oasis centres. The childcare facilities and services were also suspended for most of 2021 due to COVID-19 related centre closures. The pandemic caused economic disruptions that limited job opportunities for programme beneficiaries and there were challenges in communicating with communities due to movement restrictions. Remote education for children impacted on women's ability to participate in work opportunities. To understand the impact of the pandemic, the programme conducted its first rapid assessment on the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on UN Women Oasis Centre beneficiaries in March 2020 and in June 2021 in both camp and non-camp settings<sup>63</sup>. The assessment concluded that significant portion of beneficiaries (45 per cent), including persons with disabilities (PwDs), had someone in their household become unemployed due to the pandemic. PwDs faced additional vulnerabilities during economic shocks due to disability-related costs. However, it also highlights a positive finding - many previously unemployed PwDs found new income sources during the Pandemic, with the majority coming from UN Women Oasis Centres and informal work.<sup>64</sup>

The secondary research of UN Women's annual reports shows that, responding to the situation during COVID-19, the programme shifted to providing direct cash assistance, through mobile automated teller machines (ATMs), instead of cash-for-work opportunities, from February to August 2021. A key informant noted that the programme involved men and boys in identifying women in need within their communities through initiatives like "My neighbor and I," which helped identify beneficiaries for cash assistance. The programme also implemented remote provision of services, including remote protection services via phone calls and WhatsApp messages, remote awareness raising sessions on GBV, and online after-school programs for children. As restrictions eased, the programme gradually reactivated in-person activities with COVID-19 mitigation measures. Cash-for-work was resumed at 50 per cent capacity in September 2021 and fully reactivated to 100 per cent

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<sup>62</sup> [Gender Equality and Decent Work in Jordan 2022](#)

<sup>63</sup> [2021 Assessment of the Impact of COVID-19 on Vulnerable Women in Jordan](#)

<sup>64</sup> [ibid](#)

capacity by January 2022, however, COVID-19 safety protocols were implemented at centres including social distancing, temperature screening, masks, and disinfection.

The evaluation observed that securing work permits for Syrian refugees in Jordan became increasingly difficult due to various reasons such as difficulties in identifying employers willing to be involved in the work permit process, limited local partners certified to work as intermediaries with the MoL, restrictions on the types of occupations open to Syrian refugees, and practical barriers for women such as transportation and childcare responsibilities. Under such context, the evaluation found that in order to meet the relatively high programme targets, the programme adjusted its strategies by working with trade unions and sector-specific organizations to improve women's access to work permits and job opportunities. It also adapted by collaborating with the EU, the Jordanian government, and partners like Education for Employment (EFE) to improve access to work permits.

## 4.2. Effectiveness

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**FINDING 3:** *The programme demonstrated effectiveness in strengthening the resilience of Syrian refugees and host community members, with 93% of evaluation survey respondents reporting increased resilience. On the normative side, it successfully advocated for gender-responsive policies, and legal framework changes. It provided livelihood support and exceeded targets in cash-for-work beneficiaries and MSME training, while effectively raising awareness about GBV and providing referral services, as evident from the survey results. However, there was a shortfall in long-term employment retention and support for women with disabilities in enhancing resilience. There were also concerns about income criteria for selecting beneficiaries and about the effectiveness of civic engagement activities like repetitiveness of some training sessions.*

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The evaluation assessed the extent to which the programme's objective of strengthening the resilience of Syrian refugees and host community members was achieved. The beneficiaries' perspectives from the survey results indicated that 93 per cent of respondents across all categories reported increased resilience-see table 6. Livelihood activities were most effective, with 94 per cent of participants feeling more resilient, at varied level, followed by GBV and referral services, with 93 per cent of participants feeling more resilient at varied level and then the Civic Engagement and Leadership, with 91 per cent of the participants feeling more resilient.

Furthermore, the evaluation survey reflected slight variation in the increased level of resilience between the Syrian refugees and the host community members with 97 per cent of Syrian refugees reporting increased levels of resilience compared to 91 per cent of host community members. Another variation was observed between the in-camp respondents and out-of-camp respondents with 99 per cent in-camp respondents reporting increased levels of resilience compared to 91 per cent of out-of-camp respondents- see table 6.

Table 6 Perception of Increased Resilience

Perception of Increased Resilience	Responses of Survey Participants			
	Categories of Survey Respondents	Yes, significantly more resilient	Yes, somewhat more resilient	Less resilient
<b>By Programme Services</b>				
Livelihood	38%	56%	0%	6%
GBV and Referral	45%	48%	1%	7%
Civic Engagement and Leadership	56%	35%	0%	9%
<b>By Nationality</b>				
Host Community	43%	48%	0%	8%
Syrian Refugees	44%	53%	0%	3%
<b>By Location</b>				
In Camp	44%	55%	0%	1%
Out of Camp	44%	47%	0%	9%
<b>Total</b>	<b>43%</b>	<b>50%</b>	<b>0%</b>	<b>7%</b>

Data source-evaluation survey

The evaluation of the effectiveness of Outcome 1, related to the implementing of gender responsive women’s empowerment policies in the Ministry of Social Development (MoSD), the Ministry of labor (MoL), and the governorates, indicates a positive contribution of the programme towards gender responsive normative policies and legal frameworks. For instance, the process of amending the labor law that progressed through several stages. Initially, draft amendments were sent to the Upper House for deliberation after passing the Lower House, which were subsequently approved including amendments to Articles 29 and 69 of the labor law, along with seven other articles, all of which were published in the Official Gazette in Jordan. Additionally, new provisions were introduced to the Social Security Law, such as childcare support and cash subsidies. Agreeing to the above analysis, key informants consulted by the evaluation team, mentioned that UN Women’s efforts have shaped policy and legislative reforms, including defining sexual harassment in labor laws and enhancing workplace protections. According to the stakeholders consulted, the training programs, organized in partnership with the Arab Renaissance for Democracy and Development (ARDD), built the capacity of government personnel from MoSD Community Development Centres on gender sensitive national and local policy frameworks and mechanisms. It is pertinent to mention that International Labour Organization has played a significant role in advocating for and supporting amendments to Articles 69 and 29 of Jordan's Labour Law<sup>65</sup> through facilitating dialogue and provision of technical assistance in partnership with Government of Jordan, ILO social partners, Jordan Chamber of Industry (JCI), General Federation of Jordanian Trade Unions (GFJTU), the Jordanian National Committee for Women (JNCW) and civil society organisations (CSOs).

The evaluation observed that contributing to the gender-sensitive policies, the programme met its target by finalizing three policies: with the programmes' support, the MoSD drafted and adopted two

<sup>65</sup> [Gender Equality and Decent Work in Jordan](#)

policy documents on GBV and gender mainstreaming within MoSD social protection services, while one gender mainstreaming policy was drafted and finalized for the Ministry of Labor. To ensure buy-in of these policies, the programme involved multiple stakeholders and held series of meetings with different directorates including with the Directorate of Women and Gender Work, Directorate of Legal Affairs, Directorate of Financial Affairs, Directorate of Human Resources and the Directorate of Policies, Strategies and Institutional Performance Development, MoSD, Ministry of Information (MoI) and MoL. In terms of capacity building, the programme significantly exceeded its annual target of training 50 government personnel, with 192 officials (124 women and 68 men) from subnational governments and decentralised service providers receiving training on gender-sensitive national and local policy frameworks- see box 1 for target versus programme results. The stakeholders consulted indicated that the capacity building interventions have been effective and have supported them to transfer their knowledge gained from their individual level as trainees to the institutional level.

#### Box 1- Analysis of programme target and achievements (prepared by the evaluation team)

The analysis of target and achievement reflects mixed performance as it exceeded targets in several areas, particularly in training government staff, providing cash for work opportunities, and conducting GBV awareness-raising sessions in both camps and host communities. However, it fell short in some key areas, notably in achieving sustainable employment for women (378 vs target of 2,767) and providing work permits for Syrian women (250 vs target of 300). The programme management showed efficiency in training women to open and run MSMEs, significantly surpassing the target (1,219 vs 150). While the programme met or exceeded most targets related to GBV services and awareness, it underperformed in engaging men in dialogues promoting women's rights (72 vs target of 600). The target and achievement against each output and indicator is provided in Annex 16.

The evaluation found that the programme was largely effective in achieving Outcome 2 and its related outputs, demonstrating progress in strengthening livelihoods for Syrian and Jordanian women in camps and host communities as reflected in the beneficiary survey results (table 6). From beneficiaries' perspective, the programme showed notable success in enhancing women's livelihoods. Evaluation survey results indicated that 91 per cent of women reported increased decision-making ability in the household financial matters, exceeding the 80 per cent target. Furthermore, the programme significantly exceeded its targets for refugees receiving cash for work in non-camp settings, with 2,099<sup>66</sup>beneficiaries compared to the target of 800. Moreover, 1,219 women were trained to open and run Micro, Small & Medium Enterprises, surpassing the target of 150. This positive trend was further validated by the FGDs at the community level. Commenting on the effectiveness of the programme activities at community level, the FGD participants across locations reported feeling more confident and empowered to make decisions within their households mainly due to participation in the programme, which provided them with new skills, knowledge, and financial independence. According to them, from all locations but mainly in Allan and Aqaba, their ability to contribute financially has significantly altered their roles in household

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<sup>66</sup> 1,797 women, 84 per cent and 302 men, 16 per cent. Out of which 211, 10 per cent were PwDs

decision-making. Women are now more involved in household budgeting, managing household expenses, and making domestic investment decisions, like buying capital assets. Some of the participants also indicated to have taken on leadership roles within their families, becoming key decision-makers. In some cases, they have taken on both maternal and paternal roles. The case stories also reflected that the programme contributed towards significant positive changes in the participants' lives, including improved financial situations, enhanced skills, and increased self-confidence. For example, Aveen<sup>67</sup> transitioned from a struggling single mother to a trainer at the centre, while Marvan<sup>68</sup> went from having no income to earning 100-200 JOD per month.

FGD participants however, raised some concerns about specific programme aspects. For instance, in Taibaa al Karak, the income criterion for selecting the beneficiaries was deemed too rigid, as it excluded individuals who were slightly above the income threshold but still in need of support. This led to concerns that the programme's reach and impact were limited, as it did not account for the nuanced economic challenges faced by those just above the defined income bracket, who might also significantly benefit from the services provided. Conversely, in Muwaqqar, while the provided salary of 150 JOD was appreciated, it was also viewed as insufficient by some participants. One participant mentioned that although the salary represented a positive step, it fell short of meeting their family's needs. The evaluation also observed that the number of women employed 12 months after graduating from the Oasis programme (378) fell short of the target of 2,767, as reported by the programme's monitoring data.

The programme also showed effectiveness in raising awareness and providing GBV and referral services, an output of outcome-2. FGD participants noted improvements in community responses to GBV, with individuals coming forward to report incidents and seeking help, which reflects a shift in societal attitudes and a reduction in the stigma associated with GBV. Furthermore, the establishment of support services such as counseling, legal aid, and hotlines has provided survivors with the necessary resources and assistance. These services are seen as more professional and confidential, which encourages more survivors to seek help. Supporting the responses of participants of FGDs, the survey data (table 7) also demonstrates high awareness of GBV support services, available in the community, among women, with 96 per cent of overall informed. Moreover, 98 per cent each of Syrian refugee and host community women, and 97 per cent in-camp respondents showed slightly higher awareness, at varied level, compared to 95 per cent out-of-camp respondents. Regarding the likelihood of reporting GBV incidents, 86 per cent of women of both nationalities and locations indicated they were "very likely" or "likely" to report, with minimal variation between Syrian refugees, host community members, and in-camp or out-of-camp respondents, as presented in the table below.

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<sup>67</sup> Actual names have been changed.

<sup>68</sup> Ibid.

Table 7 Information and Likelihood of Reporting GBV incidents

Categories of Survey Respondents	Information About Availability of GBV Support Services		Likelihood of Reporting GBV Incidents				
	Yes	No	Very Likely	Likely	Neutral	Unlikely	Very Unlikely
<b>By Programme Services</b>							
Livelihood	98%	2%	61%	26%	6%	2%	5%
GBV and Referral	93%	7%	50%	36%	7%	2%	5%
Civic Engagement and Leadership	98%	2%	53%	31%	6%	0%	10%
<b>By Nationality</b>							
Host Community	98%	2%	61%	26%	6%	3%	4%
Syrian Refugees	98%	2%	45%	40%	8%	0%	7%
<b>By Location</b>							
In Camp	97%	3%	45%	41%	8%	0%	6%
Out of Camp	95%	5%	60%	27%	5%	3%	5%
<b>Total</b>	96%	4%	55%	31%	6%	2%	6%

Data source-evaluation survey

Jordanian participants of survey expressed that their involvement in the programme has led to enhanced self-awareness and an increased ability to protect themselves and their families. Similarly, Syrian female survey participants reported to have learned valuable information and practical skills from the awareness raising sessions and protection key messages. They appreciated the support in addressing violence, protecting children, and making family decisions.

Despite these empowering experiences, some participants reported that they faced limitations due to societal and cultural constraints that hindered the practical application of their newly acquired knowledge related to gender equality and women’s rights. Additionally, the stakeholders consulted indicated that the perception of economic independence had a significant impact on the overall benefits derived from the GBV awareness-raising sessions. Therefore, participants who felt more economically secure were better able to internalize and act upon the knowledge gained from the GBV awareness sessions. Those with a degree of financial stability viewed the sessions as empowering and relevant to their lives, while individuals struggling with severe economic insecurity prioritized immediate financial needs over long-term behavioral or attitudinal change, reducing the overall impact of the sessions on this group.

Regarding the output of participation and civic engagement activities, evaluation found moderate effectiveness. While the FGD participants reported taking on leadership roles in community organizations and advocacy, indicating success in empowering women's civic engagement, the survey results showed that only 49 per cent of women reported a “significant or somewhat increase”



in participation in community decision-making bodies- see table 8. While these numbers indicate a positive change, there is room for improvement as 51 per cent of female participants reported no change in their participation in community decision-making bodies.

Table 8 Increase in Participation in Community Decision-Making Bodies

Categories of Survey Respondents	Yes, Significantly Increased	Yes, Somewhat Increased	No Change
<b>By Programme Services</b>			
Civic Engagement and Leadership	20%	29%	51%
<b>By Nationality</b>			
Host Community	20%	24%	56%
Syrian Refugees	19%	35%	46%
<b>By Location</b>			
In Camp	20%	36%	44%
Out of Camp	19%	23%	58%

Data source-evaluation survey

The evaluation case stories captured the anecdotal evidence of participants who have taken on leadership role such as Aveen<sup>69</sup>, 35, who transformed from a programme participant to a trainer at the centre where she first enrolled. Another piece of evidence is from Asma<sup>69</sup>, who organized a small event where she provided free beauty services to children attending a special celebration.

Overall, the Jordanian women trained reported enhancements in leadership skills, financial management, community involvement, and self-defense, while Syrian women noted acquiring practical skills, such as clothing measurements, cutting, stitching, and designing uniforms, which bolstered their self-confidence. However, one feedback provided by them was regarding the issue of repetitiveness of certain training sessions. They indicated that the training content was at times repetitive as some of them have already attended training on these topics from other organizations. The repetitiveness may have contributed to a lack of engagement or perceived value for some participants, potentially limiting the overall effectiveness of these training sessions in empowering women to take on more active roles in their communities.

The effectiveness of interventions was also assessed through the application of skills beneficiaries learned through programme support. The survey data indicates that a significant portion of participants are applying their acquired skills regularly, with variations observed across types of services, location and nationality. As shown in the table below, 87% of survey participants responded that they utilize their skills regularly to some extent, with only 12 per cent not applying them at all, with slight variation among participants in different activities. By nationality and location, 96 per cent of Syrian participants and 97 per cent those in camps reported regular utilization rates category compared to 85 per cent Jordanian and 86 per cent out-of-camp survey participants. The reasons for not applying the learned skills, particularly regarding the livelihood skills as reported by the key informants are economic instability in the country, specifically during Covid-19, which significantly

<sup>69</sup> Pseudonyms are used to ensure confidentiality.



affected the beneficiaries' ability to secure long-term employment. This is reflected in the programme's outcomes, with only 378 beneficiaries retaining jobs for 12 months or more, falling short of the target of 2,767, 14 per cent achievement.

Table 9 Application of Skills Gained from Programme Activities

Categories of Survey Respondents	Responses of Survey Participants	
	Yes, I am utilizing the skills and knowledge regularly	No, I am not utilizing the skills and knowledge
<b>By Programme Services</b>		
Livelihood	88%	12%
GBV and Referral	89%	11%
Civic Engagement and Leadership	86%	14%
<b>By Nationality</b>		
Host Community	85%	15%
Syrian Refugees	96%	4%
<b>By Location</b>		
In Camp	97%	3%
Out of Camp	86%	14%
<b>Total</b>	<b>88%</b>	<b>12%</b>

Data source-evaluation survey

The key informants reported that the programme's effectiveness faced several challenges, including difficulties in managing community expectations, as many participants anticipated more financial support. Additionally, economic instability in the country as indicated above, specifically during COVID-19, significantly affected the programme's ability to secure long-term employment opportunities for the beneficiaries. Additionally, challenges in identifying willing employers and navigating complex work permit processes for Syrian refugees created barriers to meeting targets for transitioning women into formal employment. Structural limitations, including restrictions on the types of occupations open to Syrians, further complicated efforts to secure job placements.

Endorsing the effectiveness of the programme, key informants further reported that the programme's targeted approach, including tailored support and seed funding for livelihood beneficiaries, distinguished it from other initiatives. It provided a flexible and culturally sensitive response, informed by the need assessment and thorough understanding of the context, to the needs of both Syrian refugees and host communities. Key informant from partner organization stated that the programme's focus on integrating gender considerations with economic support, set it apart from similar programs. It addressed barriers such as national policies and work permit costs, aiming to create more inclusive workplaces.

The project reports indicate that the achievement of programme objectives was influenced by various strategic, operational, and contextual factors. Strategically, the programme's alignment with various national and regional strategies, as detailed in the relevance section, facilitated stakeholder acceptance and integration into national frameworks through strong partnerships with key government bodies like the MoSD and the MoL. Operationally, the Oasis model successfully reached over 30,000 beneficiaries during the programme period concerned, enhancing their economic resilience and social networks through a comprehensive approach that included protection services, livelihood support, and skill development, as well as capacity-building initiatives. Contextually, while the broader economic Modernization Vision of Jordan created a favorable environment for

implementation, challenges such as declining donor funding, labor market barriers, severe winter weather that temporarily closed Oasis centres, and bureaucratic delays in essential processes complicated programme delivery.

Other factors that contributed towards the programme effectiveness as captured in the UN Women Jordan Country Portfolio Evaluation<sup>70</sup> indicated that the programme's effectiveness was strengthened by its focus on long-term empowerment through job training and entrepreneurship opportunities, enabling women to actively participate in the labor market. This approach was further enhanced by the integration of gender-responsive practices, including the implementation of the Gender in Humanitarian Action (GiHA) Action Plan, grassroots-level awareness efforts, and addressing gender-based violence (GBV). Additionally, the use of innovative technology, such as blockchain and mobile ATMs (One card), in partnership with the World Food Programme (WFP), enabled the programme to sustain activities during the challenges posed by COVID-19.<sup>71</sup>

### 4.3. Efficiency

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**FINDING 4:** *The programme demonstrated efficiency through strategic partnerships, particularly with the MoSD, other UN agencies, CSOs and the private sector that supported programme's reach. However, challenges included securing sustainable employment for women, obtaining work permits for Syrian refugees, and delays in project approvals via the Jordan Response Information System (JORISS) system. There was limited tracking of employment outcomes, particularly for refugees. Despite annual budget utilization variations, the programme ultimately utilized its full allocation over the extended implementation period. Additionally, some key recommendations from previous evaluations and financial management issues, including delays in receiving tranches, remain unaddressed.*

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The secondary analysis of the project reports found that the programme leveraged partnerships in enhancing the efficiency and achievement of programme objectives. The partnership with the MoSD enabled joint operation of 18 Oasis centres in host communities and allocation of national budget funds to partially cover operational costs further reinforced the efficiency. The partnership also led to the development of joint beneficiary selection criteria and gender mainstreaming policies, enhancing the institutional capacity of MoSD. Key informant from MoSD mentioned that the collaboration of UN Women with MoSD has grown from simple projects to train women in skills like sewing and weaving, to initiatives aiming at longer term gainful employment and entrepreneurship, thereby enhancing their economic prospects. The evaluation observed that the involvement of local community technical centres managed by the MoSD has been crucial for the programme's success, demonstrating strong partnerships with local government.

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<sup>70</sup> [UN Women Jordan Country Portfolio Evaluation Report](#)

<sup>71</sup> [ibid](#)

Collaborations with other UN agencies contributed to enhanced service delivery and impact. For instance, working with the WFP on blockchain and OneCard technology ensured efficient cash assistance distribution, even during the COVID-19 pandemic. Additionally, coordination with UNHCR on beneficiary referrals and with UNICEF on the distribution of baby kits produced by beneficiaries expanded the scope and reach of services, maximizing programme effectiveness. Furthermore, private sector engagement, particularly through the Women's Empowerment Principles (WEPs) network, created opportunities for job training, placements, and the purchase of products made by Oasis beneficiaries and connected women to more sustainable economic opportunities beyond the cash-for-work program.

Conversely, the programme faced challenges affecting its efficiency, with respect to partnerships, as mentioned in the programme reports. For example, partnership with Arab Renaissance for Democracy and Development (ARDD) encountered significant delays in obtaining project approvals through the government's Jordan Response Information System for the Syria Crisis (JORISS) system, which severely delayed activities focused on women's leadership and gender norm change. This should also be noted that barriers to obtaining JORISS approvals are particularly strict for national women's rights organisations (i.e. local organisations which have as their primary mandate and core focus the promotion of women's rights) and more so for those with projects targeting refugees. These delays hindered UN Women's ability to engage with civil society organizations on advocacy for women's rights and gender equality, limiting the programme's broader impact in this area.

Responding to the efficiency of partnership, key informants reported that the programme's success is significantly attributed to the strategic partnership between UN Women and MoSD, which ensured the effective programme implementation. Furthermore, the involvement of the private sector contributed to the programme's success in providing job opportunities and creating employment opportunities.

Regarding monitoring and evaluation, the evaluation noted that the programme employs a detailed set of indicators at various levels (specific objectives, outputs) to measure progress. These indicators, developed with the support from partners like ARDD to capture both quantitative and qualitative data. For examples, quantitative data include the number of women employed or self-employed after participating in the programme, and the number of women receiving cash-for-work opportunities. The qualitative data include improvements in women's decision-making capacities within households and their increased self-confidence. Furthermore, the programme disaggregates data by sex, age, nationality, and disability status, which helps in understanding the impact on different demographic groups. For instance, the number of Syrian refugees receiving cash-for-work opportunities is broken down by gender and disability status.

The key informants reported that the programme's M&E activities primarily involved reporting to donors on a quarterly basis. Data was collected to measure improvements among beneficiaries in targeted areas. However, while these data collection tools were used for reporting, there was a noted gap in utilizing this feedback to adjust the programme during most of its implementation period. The data collected did not significantly inform programme modifications. For example, programme data revealed significant structural barriers that hindered Syrian refugee women from accessing work permits and formal employment. Due to such challenges, programme targets related to supporting

Syrian women in obtaining work permits were most likely not met. However, the evaluation observed that over a period, UN Women took into consideration such feedback to implement solutions.

Another notable example is the delay in cash for work salary that was also noted in Country Programme Evaluation (CPE)<sup>72</sup> and reiterated by the current evaluation survey and FGD responses. Key informant from ministries reported that there was no adequate tracking system to measure how many beneficiaries, especially refugees, secured jobs after training, indicating a gap in follow-up on employment outcomes. They further reported that while awareness training was provided, the programme did not clearly demonstrate its impact on women's political empowerment or participation in decision-making. Furthermore, inadequate activity-specific geographic disaggregation provided to the evaluation, made it difficult to fully assess the programme's reach and effectiveness across different locations.

The community feedback mechanism is in place, including a hotline for immediate concerns and complaints. This system addresses issues such as salary delays, and this system helped in resolving these issues. It is important to note that the community feedback system was still being established during the CPE, and this was included as part of recommendations in the CPE report and internal audit report of UN Women Country Office in Jordan.

The analysis of to what extent the CPE's recommendations were addressed by the program<sup>73</sup>, the analysis of project reports and primary data suggest that the CPE's recommendations for enhancing coordination with CSOs, the UNCT, and private sector companies have been effectively implemented, as evidenced by the analysis of partnership efficiency stated earlier in this section. The programme's focus on livelihood support, GBV prevention, and civic engagement shows commitment to women's economic empowerment, reducing violence against women, and increasing women's participation in decision-making, aligning with key CPE recommendations. However, despite these efforts, challenges remain in fully integrating women with disabilities, especially in decision making role.

The evaluation also demonstrated that the UN Women addressed several key recommendations from the previous Madad-phase one evaluation<sup>74</sup>. Based on the secondary analysis of project documents and primary data collected by the evaluation team, it was evident that the programme continued its leading role in advocating for gender mainstreaming in the Syria crisis response, working with government ministries to implement gender-responsive policies. It maintained a focus on long-term donor commitment by expanding the Oasis model from 17 to 22 centres, providing comprehensive services in women-only safe spaces. There was increased emphasis on creating income-generating opportunities, particularly through entrepreneurship and micro-projects for Syrian women facing employment challenges. The programme offered support for women to start businesses, provided mentoring, and encouraged innovative ventures. The Oasis model was further promoted and expanded in collaboration with the government. In response to challenges like the COVID-19 pandemic, the programme explored virtual support options such as online training and

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<sup>72</sup> [ibid](#)

<sup>73</sup> [ibid](#)

<sup>74</sup> [Strengthening the Resilience of Syrian Women and Girls and Host Communities programme: EU MADAD Programme](#)

services. Partnerships with NGOs were also extended beyond Amman to include local organizations in the intervention areas. However, some recommendations were only partially addressed or lacked clear evidence of implementation. These included conducting a comparative study of Oasis and SADA Women's Cooperative (SADA) models, designing strong outcome-level monitoring mechanisms, further developing the gender-sensitive Resilience Index Measurement and Analysis (RIMA), creating a robust inter-country learning framework, developing long-term strategies for changing gender norms among men and boys, and conducting two-stage needs assessments.

Regarding the financial and human resources management, the key informants mentioned that the utilization of human and financial resources in the programme faced some challenges, particularly towards the end of the programme. The final tranche of funding was received late, which led to difficulties in fully liquidating the funds before the programme's conclusion. This delay in disbursement hindered optimal resource utilization and resulted in the need to request a no-cost extension, towards the end of the programme in February 2024, to spend the remaining funds. The key informants also suggested that even with the resources available, there was a need for additional financial support due to the complexities of managing multiple stakeholders across vast geographical areas. The process of engaging with various entities, such as government bodies and private sector partners, required extensive communication and effort, indicating that further resources could have enhanced the efficiency and impact of the implementation.

Regarding the financial expenditure, the Madad-2 had a total budget of \$7,614,309.46 over a 4-year period from 2021 to 2024. The yearly comparison of budget and expenditure shows variations in budget utilization and spending patterns as described below-

In 2021, the project had a substantial underspending of \$1,363,713.69, with only \$1,432,164.45 (51 per cent), spent out of the allocated \$2,795,878.14. Underspending was attributed to delays in programme startup activities and time for approval from the government. For example, UN Women signed an agreement with ARDD in Q4 2021 and only received the government approval (via JORISS) to start the implementation of the "Enhancing civic Engagement for Social Protection among Host Community and Refugee Women" project on 6th July 2022<sup>75</sup>. Another instance is, in response to the COVID-19 pandemic and related movement restrictions, beneficiaries benefited from direct cash-assistance instead of cash-for-work opportunities from February to August 2021. At the beginning of September 2021, the new rotation of beneficiaries began to participate in cash-for-work opportunities at 50% capacity, with activities including tailoring, beauty, as well as mosaic- and craft-making. For 2022, there was a slight overspending of \$26,314.93, with expenditures of \$2,311,881.20 (101 per cent), against a budget of \$2,285,566.27. This suggested an acceleration of activities as COVID-19 restrictions eased. For example, cash-for-work was fully reactivated to 100% capacity by January 2022<sup>75</sup>. In 2023, the project again underspent by \$278,113.00, with \$2,254,752.05, (89 per cent), spent out of \$2,532,865.05 budgeted. A significant reason for underspending in 2023 was the prolonged process of renewing agreements between UN Women and its partner organizations. This administrative process had a cascading effect on project activities throughout the year. During the first half of 2023, specifically in Q1 and Q2, no trainings were conducted as UN Women was engaged in the renewal process. The impact extended beyond trainings, as Q2 of 2023, also saw no

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<sup>75</sup> Madad-2 Annual Narrative Report 2022

employment or income-generating opportunities provided to the beneficiaries. The situation began to improve in Q3 of 2023 when a new partner agreement with EFE-Jordan was finally signed<sup>76</sup>. For 2024, a no-cost extension period, there is an expenditure of \$1,615,511.75. Despite the yearly fluctuations, the total expenditure matches the total budget at \$7,614,309.46, indicating that the project ultimately utilized its full allocation over the extended implementation period. The yearly budget allocation, expenditure and variance can be seen in the table below:

Table 10 Annual Budget Allocation, Expenditure, and Variances (2021–2024)

Years	EU Contributions USD	Expenditure USD	(Over)/Under Spending USD	Spending %
2021	2,795,878.14	1,432,164.45	1,363,713.69	51%
2022	2,285,566.27	2,311,881.20	(26,314.93)	101%
2023	2,532,865.05	2,254,752.05	278,113.00	89%
2024		1,615,511.75	(1,615,511.75)	0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>7,614,309.46</b>	<b>7,614,309.46</b>	-	

Data source- programme financial report

## 4.4 Human Rights and Gender

**FINDING 5:** *The programme has demonstrated different levels of success in its efforts towards gender transformation. Gender transformative results were observed in the area of women’s decision-making power at household level, awareness and support for addressing GBV, and change in perception and attitudes towards child marriage and harassment. However, less transformative results were observed in the area of women’s participation in the labor market, involvement in community activities and political participation on local governance structures. There was a shift in men’s perspectives on women’s roles however, long-standing patriarchal views persisted, particularly in conservative areas where participation from men remained lower than expected.*

The evaluation employed the Gender Results Effectiveness Scale (GRES)<sup>77</sup> to categorize and assess the programme's activities and outcomes across seven key areas. The evaluation survey results reveal that the programme has experienced different levels of success in its efforts towards gender transformation. Below table shows the categorization according to the GRES scales.

<sup>76</sup> QIN 2023

<sup>77</sup> [http://web.undp.org/evaluation/documents/guidance/gender/GRES\\_English.pdf](http://web.undp.org/evaluation/documents/guidance/gender/GRES_English.pdf)

Table 11 Women's Empowerment and Gender Transformation Assessment

Area of gender Transformation	Male	Female	Total	GRES Category
Increased Decision-Making Power at Household Level	92%	91%	91%	Gender-transformative
Positive change in community norms about Child Marriages (Individual Attitude, Perception, Community Norms)	73%	81%	78%	Gender- transformative
Increased awareness and response towards <b>Harassment</b> (Individual Perception, Community Practice, Response, Community Perception)	91%	87%	87%	Gender- transformative
Increased awareness and response towards <b>GBV</b> (Individual Perception, Awareness of GBV Support, Response, Community Perception)	80%	81%	81%	Gender- transformative
Increased Women's Participation in Labor Market	42%	40%	39%	Gender-Responsive
Increased Community Participation in Decision Making Bodies	33%	37%	37%	Gender-Responsive
Increased Political Participation in Local Governance Structures	8%	25%	25%	Gender-targeted

Data source-evaluation survey

The evaluation noted gender transformative progress in several areas of women's empowerment and gender equality as 91 per cent of responses indicate a significant increase in women's household decision-making power. Awareness and support for addressing GBV have also improved considerably, with 81 per cent indicating positive responses. Child marriage perceptions have shifted positively, with 78 per cent of responses. Harassment awareness has also seen a notable rise, reaching 87 per cent. Less gender transformative areas reflected in the survey includes Women's participation in the labor market, 39 per cent, while involvement in community activities at 37 per cent and women's political participation reported as only by 25 per cent.

Furthermore, the evaluative evidence indicated that the social awareness campaigns reduced stigma but did not fully address the deep-seated attitudes within the community. The FGD analysis with men revealed shifts in societal attitudes toward women's roles and rights. Participants noted that due to the project dialogues, there was a shift in men's attitudes from domination to shared responsibilities. The dialogues helped break traditional barriers, fostering openness toward women's economic role, social engagement, education, and political participation. Additionally, the case stories indicate that men gained new perspectives on family planning and household leadership. However, while the programme engaged men and communities through dialogues and advocacy, gaps in full application of the social ecological model<sup>78</sup> remained and while shifts were noticeable, long-standing patriarchal views persisted, particularly in conservative areas where participation from men remained lower than expected. At the household level, men's perspectives on women's

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<sup>78</sup> [Socio ecological operational framework.pdf](#)



roles shifted, but traditional norms persisted in certain areas like Muwaqqar, where discrimination and limited access to services were still reported. Though community-level interventions, such as in Taibaa al Karak, successfully challenged some societal norms, deeper cultural attitudes, particularly regarding disability inclusion still requires efforts. While some men acknowledged women's increased participation in household decision-making and economic activities, the engagement with men in more conservative areas, especially regarding disability inclusion, continued to face resistance. Male FGDs indicated that these shifts were more visible in urban areas, but rural settings showed more significant resistance.

Based on the Key Informant Interviews (KIIs), the programme had notable impacts and challenges. According to the KIIs, many women reported increased self-confidence, greater control over household finances, and improved decision-making power within their families. One woman shared how the programme helped her gain skills and earn income, transforming her role within her household. However, while the programme had some success in changing men's attitudes, especially concerning women's economic contributions, challenges remained in engaging men from conservative areas. Men acknowledged the increased economic contributions of women but participation in awareness sessions was limited, especially in more traditional regions.

The programme also collaborated with ministries, such as the Ministry of Labor, to improve policies, including labor law amendments to protect women from harassment. However, participants noted that the broader social and cultural changes were slow and required more sustained efforts, especially in challenging regions like rural areas.

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**FINDING 6:** *The programme showed positive results on women with disabilities (WwD) in terms of increased resilience and community participation, with 86% of WwD reporting increased resilience and 71% experiencing changes in community decision-making participation. However, challenges such as limited specialized training and support services essential for empowering individuals with disabilities, societal attitudes, logistical barriers, and lack of direct involvement in decision-making persisted.*

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The evaluation survey assessing changes in resilience, a primary goal of the programme, revealed that 86 per cent of women with disabilities (WwD) reported increased resilience at varying levels compared to 94 per cent of those without disabilities who reported an increase-see table below. Conversely, in terms of participation in community decision-making bodies, 71 per cent of WwDs reported a change at different levels, compared to only 45 per cent of those without disabilities reflecting positive impact of the program's activities on enhancing resilience and community participation among vulnerable women.



Table 12 Perception of change in resilience and participation in community decision-making processes.

<b>Responses from the Survey Respondents</b>	<b>With Disability</b>	<b>Without Disability</b>
<b>Perception of Change in Resilience</b>		
Yes, significantly increased	31%	49%
Yes, somewhat increased	54%	45%
No change	15%	6%
<b>Change in Participation in Community Decision-Making</b>		
Yes, significantly increased	14%	20%
Yes, somewhat increased	57%	25%
No change	29%	55%

Data source-evaluation survey

The effectiveness of the programme for WwD was evaluated by examining how they apply the skills learned through the program's livelihood activities. Survey data reveals that a significant majority, 75 per cent of WwD reported using the knowledge and skills acquired from these activities, albeit to varying degrees. While none of the WwDs reported starting their own businesses as a direct result of the programme, 33 per cent of WwD have found employment related to the training they received. Regarding the application of the acquired skills, 67 per cent reported applying their newly acquired skills for personal or household purposes, while 33 percent indicated application of the same for job and none of them were able to apply it for starting a small business or income-generating activity. The details are provided in table below:

Table 13 The Extent of Utilization of Skills and Knowledge and Application of Skills

<b>Response</b>	<b>With Disability</b>	<b>Without Disability</b>
<b>The Extent of Utilization of Skills and Knowledge</b>		
Yes, I am utilizing the skills and knowledge regularly	50%	54%
Yes, I am utilizing the skills and knowledge sometimes	25%	35%
No, I am not utilizing the skills and knowledge	25%	11%
<b>Application of Skills</b>		
Started a small business or income-generating activity	0%	24%
Employed in a job related to the training	33%	12%
Performing skills for personal or household use	67%	64%

Data source-evaluation survey

Despite efforts to include WwD in the programme, the overall impact remained limited, as reported by key informants and FGD participants. They highlighted that the programme fell short of providing specialized training and tailored support services essential for empowering individuals with disabilities. For example, the economic support provided, such as job training, was a step forward but insufficient to overcome the financial barriers faced by women with disabilities. Similarly, while social awareness campaigns played a role in reducing stigma, they did not fully tackle the deeply

rooted societal attitudes toward disabilities within the community. Both male and female participants in the FGDs noted that despite the programme's efforts, the involvement of people with disabilities remained limited due to barriers like lack of accessible facilities, cultural stigma, and reluctance from families and individuals themselves. Factors, such as societal attitudes and stereotypes that hindered business startups by WwD, requiring strategic and multifaceted interventions. Logistical barriers, accessibility issues including transportation in rural areas and the provision of suitable facilities for people with disabilities, and the lack of family support also presented significant challenges. Furthermore, while the programme made efforts to include women with disabilities in activities and provided support, there was limited evidence of their direct involvement in decision-making processes within UN Women or partner NGOs. FGD participants also reported that livelihood support like job training was beneficial but insufficient to overcome all financial barriers faced by women with disabilities.

## 4.5 Sustainability

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**FINDING 7:** *The programme has made significant progress in strengthening institutional capacities for gender mainstreaming and women's economic empowerment, particularly through enhancing the MoSD's capacity to implement the Oasis model and supporting the MoL in policy reforms. Civil society partners and private sector companies have also been engaged to promote gender equality practices. However, financial sustainability remains a key challenge, with the Oasis model still largely dependent on donor funding and lacking a clear transition plan for government or private sector support. At the individual level, while 66% of livelihood beneficiaries initially generated income, only 21% sustained it for 12 months, with significant disparity between Syrian refugees, 3 per cent, and host communities, 20 per cent.*

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The evaluation noted that the programme has made progress in strengthening institutional capacities for gender mainstreaming and women's economic empowerment. A key contributor was enhancing the MoSD capacity to implement the Oasis model through training 52 staff on gender-sensitive frameworks and developing a gender mainstreaming policy. The evaluation observed that this institutional capacity development has enabled MoSD to take greater ownership of the Oasis initiatives. Additionally, the programme provided technical support to the MoL for policy reforms, including drafting amendments to Articles 29 and 69 of the Labour Code. These efforts have strengthened their ability to promote gender-responsive labor policies and managing Oasis centre by embedding gender-sensitive frameworks into MoSD's operations. Training MoSD staff and developing gender mainstreaming policies have enhanced service delivery, aligned operations with national gender equality frameworks, and improved referral mechanisms. Additionally, labor policy reforms have created an enabling environment that supports the centres' mission of women's economic empowerment by addressing barriers to workforce participation.

The evaluation also noted that the programme built capacity of civil society partners like EFE-Jordan to deliver employability training. Furthermore, engagement with private sector companies through the Women's Empowerment Principles (WEPs) Network has equipped businesses to integrate gender equality practices. However, their long-term impact will depend on continued commitment and resources.

The evaluation found limited evidence of financial sustainability mechanisms being put in place to continue programme interventions beyond the funding period. The Oasis model remains largely dependent on donor funding, with no clear transition plan for government or private sector financial support. Some positive steps were taken to engage private sector companies in providing pro-bono training and job placements for beneficiaries. However, comprehensive resource mobilization for continuing financial support for Oasis centres was not evident.

Sustainability at individual level was assessed through the evaluation survey which showed mixed results in terms of sustainable impact on beneficiaries' livelihoods and empowerment. The survey from women beneficiaries, found that 65 per cent of livelihood beneficiaries began generating income as a result of programme participation. However, only 21 per cent continued generating income for 12 months after support ended, indicating challenges in sustaining economic gains. Syrian refugees, despite having the highest initial success rate of 74 per cent, compared to 63 per cent of host community, struggled the most with long-term income continuation as only 3 per cent of them continued generating income for 12 months, compared to 20 per cent from host community. It is further noted that the continuation of income generation for 12 months is 2 per cent in camps compared to 19 per cent out of camps. The data, as presented in the table below, shows a stark contrast in income continuation between Syrian refugees and the host community.

Table 14 Start Income Generation and Continuation

Categories of Survey Respondents	Start Generating Income as a Result of Participation in Livelihood Activities		Income Generation Continued for 12 Months	
	Yes	No	Yes	No
<b>By Programme Services</b>				
Livelihood Beneficiaries	65%	35%	21%	79%
<b>By Nationality</b>				
Host Community	63%	37%	20%	80%
Syrian Refugees	74%	26%	3%	97%
<b>By Location</b>				
In Camp	74%	26%	2%	98%
Out of Camp	64%	36%	19%	81%
<b>Total</b>	67%	33%	14%	86%

Data source-evaluation survey

Sustainability at individual level is reported in the case stories where skills and knowledge gained through the programs have enabled participants to secure ongoing income sources and improve their long-term prospects. Some, for instance, reported having started their own businesses, indicating that the benefits of the programme extend beyond the duration of participation. However, they also suggested the need for advanced skills, specifically suggesting that training should expand beyond beauty and sewing due to market saturation.

Overall, the evaluation observed that the programme made progress towards institutional capacity building and individual skills development, and the financial sustainability of Oasis centres remains a key challenge. At an individual level, there is a relatively low rate of sustained income generation, especially in Syrian refugees and in camp settings.

## 5. LESSONS LEARNED

The below lessons learned are derived from the analysis and findings and are structured at strategic level and should be applied to similar programmes in the region.

### Lesson 1:

Women's economic empowerment programs need a holistic approach addressing supply-side, demand-side, and structural barriers simultaneously. Future programs should incorporate sustained mentoring, policy advocacy, and long-term employer engagement to create women-friendly workplaces.

There is a need for programmes to take a holistic approach when aiming to empower women economically, going beyond just skills training to address the broader ecosystem that influences women's ability to enter and remain in the job market. Specifically, the programme faced challenges in securing sustainable employment for beneficiaries due to factors like low job retention rates linked to social norms and inadequate compensation as well as legal barriers. The evaluation noted the programme's efforts to engage with the private sector to improve job conditions and promote family-friendly work environments, as well as providing childcare services at Oasis centres. However, these initiatives alone were not sufficient to overcome all barriers. The lesson learned is that effective women's economic empowerment programs need to simultaneously address supply-side factors (skills, confidence) and demand-side factors (employer practices, workplace laws and policies) while also tackling structural barriers like childcare, transportation, societal attitudes and the absence of legal and policy frameworks that incentivize or mandate these changes. Future iterations of such programs should consider incorporating elements like sustained mentoring support, advocacy for policy changes, social norms changes and longer-term engagement with employers to create more women-friendly workplaces.

### Lesson 2:

Involving men and boys is crucial in women's empowerment programs to ensure sustainable outcomes. Future programs should develop tailored strategies to engage male participants and address masculine norms to create lasting changes in gender dynamics.

An important finding is regarding the importance of considering the broader social ecosystem when targeting women for skills development and empowerment programs. Specifically, involving men and boys is crucial to avoid unintended negative consequences and ensure sustainable positive outcomes. The programme faced challenges in securing participation from Syrian refugee men in some activities, indicating a need for more tailored strategies to engage male participants. The evaluation findings on persistent societal norms limiting women's advancement, despite constitutional changes, underscore the need for holistic approaches that address the entire social ecosystem. By addressing masculine norms, involving male community champions, and starting gender equality awareness early with boys, future iterations of such programs could enhance effectiveness and create more sustainable changes in gender dynamics within communities.

### Lesson 3:

Adopting a holistic, integrated approach combining humanitarian support with long-term development goals is effective. Replication of this comprehensive model, addressing multiple dimensions of women's empowerment while aligning with national strategies and engaging diverse stakeholders will amplify the impact.

A key practice by the programme, at the strategic and programme design level that should be implemented in similar programmes in the region is the adoption of a holistic, integrated approach that combines immediate humanitarian support with long-term development goals. The programme demonstrated the effectiveness of using a comprehensive "resilience and empowerment" model that addressed multiple dimensions of women's empowerment simultaneously - economic participation, protection from gender-based violence, civic engagement, and policy/institutional changes. This integrated approach allowed the programme to tackle interconnected barriers facing vulnerable women. The programme also successfully aligned its activities with national strategies while engaging diverse stakeholders across government, civil society, and the private sector, enhancing sustainability and impact. For future similar programmes, adopting this type of holistic, adaptive, and multi-stakeholder approach - grounded in national priorities but able to evolve based on emerging needs - would be an impactful practice to replicate.

## 6. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This section provides overall conclusions and corresponding recommendations. The recommendations have been drafted following a consultative approach with the Evaluation Reference Group. Presentation of the preliminary findings and the way forward took place in a workshop with the Country Office management team to inform the recommendations presented below. Each recommendation is tied to corresponding findings and conclusions and includes actions for consideration by the UN Women. The level of priority and responsibility for the action are indicated with each recommendation.

### Conclusion-1

The programme is well aligned with and contributes towards various national and international strategies and plans for gender equality and women's empowerment. It is also well aligned with UN Women's global and regional strategies to promote enabling policy and normative environment, increase women's resilience, labor force participation, civic engagement, leadership skills as well as to address harmful practices related to gender-based violence. The programme design and its intervention logic demonstrated relevance to the changing contexts, including the need for addressing both immediate humanitarian needs to medium and long-term development priorities. During the COVID-19 pandemic, the programme demonstrated its agility and flexibility by successfully adjusting its operations. However, moving forward, to strengthen its relevance to all vulnerable individuals and groups, it needs to focus on nuancing its vulnerability indicators in the Incentive-based volunteering (IBV) -SOP, aligned with the vulnerability assessment framework (VAF) of UNHCR. It also needs to support some key legislative recommendations from the General Framework for Gender Equality (GFGE) of Jordan. (*Findings 1 and 2*)

#### Recommendation-1

In the upcoming phases, the programme should be informed about the required legislative changes from the General Framework for Gender Equality (GFGE) of Jordan recommendations and develop strategies for supporting their full implementation.

#### Responsible Office

Jordan Country Office

#### Medium priority

#### Actions

1. Strengthen advocacy efforts with the MoSD for full implementation of GFGE legislative recommendations.
2. Expand training and capacity building for government officials on GFGE recommendation implementation.
3. Support government partners to develop monitoring frameworks to track progress on GFGE legislative recommendations.
4. Work with the private sector partners to promote adoption of gender-responsive policies based on GFGE recommendations.

5. Support government in implementing GFGE legislative recommendations addressing intersecting vulnerabilities like disability and refugee status.

### Recommendation-2

The programme should focus on enhancing the comprehensiveness of vulnerability indicators in the Incentive-based volunteering (IBV) -SOP provided in the UNHCR's vulnerability assessment framework (VAF).

**Responsible Office**

Jordan Country Office

**Medium priority**

#### Actions

1. Conducting a thorough review of the current vulnerability indicators.
2. Consulting with experts in gender equality and vulnerability assessment.
3. Incorporating additional factors that may influence vulnerability, such as intersectionality, socio-economic status, and access to resources.
4. Take community feedback to prepare context specific targeting model and pilot test the enhanced indicators to ensure their effectiveness and relevance.
5. Providing training to staff on the use of the updated vulnerability assessment framework.

## Conclusion-2

The programme has been effective in strengthening the resilience of Syrian refugees and host community members. On the normative side, it successfully advocated for some key gender-responsive policies, and legal framework changes. It provided livelihood support and exceeded targets in cash-for-work beneficiaries and Micro, Small & Medium Enterprises (MSME) training, while effectively raising awareness about GBV and providing referral services. However, challenges remain in sustainable long-term employment or livelihood, especially for Syrian refugees and in camp setting. Structural limitations, including restrictions on the types of occupations open to Syrians, and other labor market barriers needs further consideration and work from the programmes' end to secure job placements. **(Finding 3)**

### Recommendation-3

The programme should focus on developing comprehensive strategies for sustainable long-term income generation, especially for Syrian refugees and in camp setting. It should collaborate with the local government and other economic institutions to address systemic barriers in the labor market, with a focus on gender equality and inclusion.

**Responsible Office**

Jordan Country Office

**High priority**

### Actions

1. Build capacity of vocational training centres (VTCs) in conducting labor market assessment to design the courses as per market demands for sustainable employment opportunities for both men and women.
2. Link the Oasis centres with the VTCs to enhance sustainability of VTCs services to the vulnerable population served by the Oasis programme, ensuring equal access for women and men.
3. Linking the VTCs with the local businesses and industries to create long-term job placements, with specific initiatives to support women's employment.
4. Collaborating with local government and economic institutions to address systemic barriers in the labor market, with a focus on gender equality and inclusion.
5. Support MoSD in implementing this mechanism beyond the programme to ensure sustainability and a follow-up system to track and support beneficiaries' employment status over an extended period.
6. Develop targeted support programs for women with disabilities and refugees and in camp setting to enhance their employability and sustainability of income generation.

### Conclusion-3

The programme developed meaningful strategic partnerships such as with government partners, UN agencies and Private sector. Its strategic partnership with MoSD was key in facilitating the programme expansion, coverage and reach through the growth of Oasis centres. Partnerships with UN partners such as WFP on blockchain and OneCard technology ensured efficient cash assistance distribution, even during the COVID-19 pandemic. Furthermore, the collaboration with private sector particularly through the Women's Empowerment Principles (WEPs) network, contributed to the programme's success in providing job opportunities and creating employment opportunities. However, it faces significant challenges in obtaining work permits for Syrian refugees, and addressing systemic issues such as delays in project approvals and financial management. **(Finding 4)**

### Recommendation-4

The programme should develop a dedicated action plan to streamline the work permit process for the Syrian refugees. This should include collaboration with its existing strategic partners, particularly the MoL and ILO to work on the necessary policy or legislative reforms to address the existing obstacles in the work permit system for Syrian refugees.

**Responsible Office**

**Jordan Country Office**

**High priority**



### **Actions**

1. Conduct research to identify specific obstacles Syrian refugees face in obtaining work permits and use the findings to inform policy recommendations.
2. Enhance advocacy efforts with government agencies, particularly the MoL, to address obstacles in the work permit system for Syrian refugees. Focus on promoting policy reforms to simplify and streamline the application and renewal processes for work permits.
3. Collaborate more closely with other UN agencies, for example International Labour Organization (ILO), and partners working on refugee employment issues to develop coordinated strategies for improving work permit access.
4. Identify the sectors open for work permit and provide vocational training in these sectors to enhance the probability of obtaining work permit. It should be noted that in July 2021, the MoL expanded the list of economic sectors open to Syrian refugees, including services, sales, crafts, agriculture, forestry, fishery, manufacturing, construction, and basic industries<sup>79</sup>.
5. Provide targeted support and information to Syrian refugee women about the work permit application process, eligibility requirements, and their rights as workers.
6. Work with employers to raise awareness about hiring Syrian refugees and the benefits of providing them with work permits.
7. Explore partnerships with legal aid organizations to provide assistance to Syrian refugees navigating the work permit system.

### **Recommendation-5**

UN Women should develop and implement a financial management improvement plan to address funding delays. This should include developing and monitoring key performance indicators related to financial management and fund disbursement timelines. It should also review and optimize internal procedures for project approvals to avoid delays.

### **Responsible Office**

Jordan Country Office

### **High priority**

### **Actions**

1. Review and optimize internal procedures for project approvals and fund disbursements to reduce delays in receiving funds from donors.
2. Develop more accurate cash flow projections to anticipate funding needs and potential shortfalls in advance. Also compare cash projections with actual cash flows on a regular basis to know the gaps.
3. Maintain regular, proactive communication with donors about funding needs and timelines to facilitate more timely disbursements.
4. Offer targeted training to programme staff on financial procedures, budgeting, and reporting to improve overall financial efficiency and address the reasons causing delays.
5. Define and monitor key performance indicators related to financial management and fund disbursement timelines.

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<sup>79</sup> Gender Gap: The Absence of Syrian Refugee Women from the Jordanian Economy - American University: Journal of International Service

## Conclusion-4

The programme design incorporated a gender transformative approach to a large extent with an intention to identify and address structural gender inequalities. Gender transformative results were observed in the area of women’s decision-making power at household level, awareness and intention for addressing GBV, and change in perception and attitudes towards child marriage and harassment. However, less transformative results were observed in the area of women’s participation in the labor market, involvement in community activities and political participation on local governance structures. While the programme engaged men and communities through dialogues and advocacy, the programme needed to strengthen the application of the social ecological model. There was a shift in men’s perspectives on women’s roles however, long-standing patriarchal views persisted, particularly in conservative areas where participation from men remained lower than expected. The programme showed some positive results on women with disabilities (WwD) in terms of increased resilience, community participation, however, challenges such as limited specialized training and support services essential for empowering individuals with disabilities, societal attitudes, logistical barriers, and lack of direct involvement in decision-making persisted. **(Finding 5 and finding 6)**

### Recommendation-6

The programme should strengthen the implementation of the components of socio-ecological model for creating an enabling environment for gender transformative results. It should continue to engage men while also engaging with other key family members, community and institutions and build the capacity of young men and boys on gender social norms, gender equality as well as GBV prevention. Particular attention should be paid to the conservative areas to increase the participation of men and other key family and community members.

### Responsible Office

Jordan Country Office

### High priority

#### Actions

1. Conduct community-based research to understand local gender norms, attitudes and barriers to male engagement in gender equality initiatives.
2. Develop tailored messaging strategies based on the research findings to effectively reach and engage men and boys and other key family and community members.
3. Design capacity building programs for young men and boys focused on gender-based violence prevention, women's economic empowerment, and women's leadership.
4. Create a youth innovation fund or grant programme to support youth-led initiatives addressing gender equality issues at the community level.
5. Partner with local youth organizations, schools and community groups to implement capacity building programs and youth initiatives.
6. Organize community events to showcase youth-led gender equality projects and promote male allyship.
7. Develop a monitoring and evaluation framework to track changes in attitudes and behaviors among male participants over time.
8. Establish partnerships with organizations focused on engaging men and boys to leverage expertise and resources.

### **Recommendation-7**

To address the gap in involvement of women with disabilities in decision-making structures and processes, the MoSD and UN Women should establish a comprehensive mechanism for their inclusion. This should include but not limited to supporting incorporation of the perspectives of women with disabilities from various regions and backgrounds in a systematic manner as well as developing clear targets to monitor various elements of disability inclusion in the programme. The programme should use the United Nations Disability Inclusion Strategy (UNDIS) <sup>80</sup>as a point of reference for strengthening its disability inclusion work.

**Responsible Office**

**Jordan Country Office**

**Medium priority**

#### **Actions**

1. Establish a mechanism, in partnership with MoSD and MoL using the United Nations Disability Inclusion Strategy (UNDIS) <sup>81</sup>as a point of reference to address the gap in decision-making involvement for women with disabilities.
2. Involve women with disabilities in the design and implementation of the programme.
3. Ensure representation of women with disabilities from various regions and backgrounds.
4. Provide necessary logistical support to facilitate full participation of women with disabilities.
5. Set the indicators and targets to monitor their participation and take adaptive measures if their participation is lower than the targets.

### **Conclusion-5**

The programme has achieved significant progress in strengthening institutional capacities for gender mainstreaming and women's economic empowerment, particularly through its work with the MoSD and the MoL. However, financial sustainability remains a critical challenge, especially for the Oasis model, which is still heavily reliant on donor funding. (Finding 7)

### **Recommendation-8**

To address the financial sustainability challenges and improve long-term outcomes, the programme should develop a comprehensive sustainability strategy focused on transitioning the Oasis model to government, women's organizations or private sector support.

**Responsible Office**

**Jordan Country Office**

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<sup>80</sup> [UN Disability inclusion Strategy](#)

<sup>81</sup> [ibid](#)

## **High priority**

### **Actions**

1. With the support from MoSD, developing a phased transition plan that gradually shifts financial responsibility from donors to national and local stakeholders. This should be supported by a detailed costing exercise of the programme integration and various scenarios (full, partial Oasis programme adoption, in all/few centres)
2. Engaging with government ministries to integrate the Oasis model into national budgeting processes.
3. Exploring public-private partnership opportunities to diversify funding sources, the programme can leverage corporate social responsibility (CSR) while working with industries.
4. Implementing a social enterprise component within the Oasis model to generate income and reduce donor dependency.

**ANNEXES- separate document**

UN WOMEN IS THE UN ORGANIZATION  
DEDICATED TO GENDER EQUALITY  
AND THE EMPOWERMENT OF WOMEN.  
A GLOBAL CHAMPION FOR WOMEN  
AND GIRLS, UN WOMEN WAS  
ESTABLISHED TO ACCELERATE  
PROGRESS ON MEETING THEIR NEEDS  
WORLDWIDE.

UN Women supports UN Member States as they set global standards for achieving gender equality and works with governments and civil society to design laws, policies, programmes and services needed to ensure that the standards are effectively implemented and truly benefit women and girls worldwide. It works globally to make the vision of the Sustainable Development Goals a reality for women and girls and stands behind women's equal participation in all aspects of life, focusing on four strategic priorities: Women lead, participate in and benefit equally from governance systems; Women have income security, decent work and economic autonomy; All women and girls live a life free from all forms of violence; Women and girls contribute to and have greater influence in building sustainable peace and



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