

# Violence Against Children in the Household

## *Protection Monitoring Report*



BPRM Q2 Report 2020-2021

Award Number: SPRMCO20CA0138



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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

***If there is violence in the family in the first place, then the whole family becomes violent, and the practice of violence becomes normal.*** -Adult Male, Syrian Refugee

This protection monitoring report, produced by ICMC Jordan, analyzes the issue of **violence against children within the domestic setting**. While a plethora of data is available on other violence related topics such as child labor, bullying in schools, child marriage and various gender-based violence issues against children, limited studies have been conducted on **violence towards children committed by family or household members** in this context. ICMC's report aims to document the perspectives of parents and caregivers, children, and service providers on this particular issue. The individuals whom ICMC consulted shared their own experiences with violence in the household, **whether it affected their own family directly, happened in a friend or neighbor's household**, or relates to the wider theme of violence against children at home.

Through these testimonies, ICMC has captured the differences in impact of violence outside compared with inside the home, how violence can be gendered and specific to nationality, **the ways in which violence against children is often justified by parents and caregivers**, how children define safety, when and how this type of violence is reported or not, and gaps in responding to children affected by violence at home.

The report concludes with attainable recommendations for relevant stakeholders, including ICMC and other humanitarian and development organizations, the donor community, as well as the Government of Jordan. **These include suggestions for program activities, community based awareness raising, reporting mechanisms and capacity building.**



## INTRODUCTION

Violence against children is a global issue, crossing borders, cultures, religions, and socioeconomic status. A broad spectrum of perpetrators can enact violence towards children such as parents, caregivers and other family members, teachers, employers, neighbors, as well as strangers. Violence occurs in multiple forms such as physical, emotional, and sexual abuse, and can also include neglect. [All types of violence negatively impact children's dignity and self-worth and have detrimental effects on their development<sup>1</sup> as well as other life-long implications<sup>2</sup>.](#)

Globally, the statistics on violence against children remains limited in many countries for a number of reasons. Some of these reasons include a lack of structured reporting and response mechanisms in place, as well as uncoordinated efforts to document and analyze data at regular intervals. [Social norms can also create obstacles for children to report violence within the household and seek help, due to the risk of shame and the potential for further exposure to abuse.](#)

In order to combat violence against children, international frameworks have been introduced over the last several decades, such as the [UN Convention of the Rights of the Child \(CRC\), which Jordan ratified in 1991<sup>3</sup>](#). Despite this sanction, violence against children is still widely accepted in some communities, and the government has yet to pass laws which codify key provisions of the CRC, which would enable the creation of a domestic legal framework to protect children from violence and [revise specific laws which are not to the benefit of children<sup>4</sup>](#).

In Jordan, the impact of displacement from Syria, as well as other neighboring conflicts, and more recently the COVID-19 lockdowns have exacerbated tensions within the household. These issues, in combination with inadequate socioeconomic resources, have challenged traditional gender roles of parents/caregivers, families have been further exposed to stress and instability, and have been forced to adapt to new ways of living, [many of which have resulted in negative outcomes for children. Incidents of violence against children, including neglect and exploitation, have all increased according to stakeholder reports<sup>5</sup>.](#)

Through ICMC's targeted protection response with refugee and host communities in Irbid and Mafraq, its field teams have identified violence against children, specifically within the domestic sphere, as a major area of concern requiring further investigation. Currently, there are a lack of reports and assessments available at the country level to document this issue through the perspectives of both parents/caregivers and children. In fact, government statistics on violence against children within the household setting are not publicly available. Through this protection monitoring report, ICMC aims to capture the voices of the affected populations and provide recommendations for both its own programs and for in-country responses more broadly.

1. <https://data.unicef.org/topic/child-protection/violence/>

2. <https://www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/violence-against-children>

3. <https://www.hrw.org/news/2014/11/17/25th-anniversary-convention-rights-child>

4. <http://www.childrenofjordan.org/definition.html>

5. UNHCR WFP Multi Sectoral Assessment COVID-19.pdf

## OBJECTIVES AND METHODOLOGY

1. To contribute to the limited literature available on violence against children in Jordan, particularly within the household setting.
2. To provide practical recommendations for building upon ICMC's existing positive parenting response and the empowerment of children.
3. To identify additional mechanisms for changing knowledges, attitudes and practices around the rights of children and non-violence in the household.
4. To identify the existing gaps in the response to violence against children in Irbid and Mafraq within refugee and host communities.
5. To identify ways to increase ICMC's partnership with national actors for responding to violence against children.

This protection monitoring report was conducted during the second quarter of the program, between the months of January and March, using a qualitative methodology approach through primary data collection. The primary data collection focused on **qualitative methods** to directly engage concerned stakeholders from the local population **including children and parents/caregivers**. Children and parents/caregivers who participated in the study were selected from different families to strengthen the reliability of the data. **National service providers** responding to violence against children were also consulted. ICMC's monitoring and evaluation team with the support of other program staff utilized the following tools to collect the primary data for this report. The samples of participants were extracted randomly from ICMC's database.

- **Child Friendly Consultations**: Groups of children were invited to ICMC's Child Friendly Spaces for child friendly consultations using participatory methods. Children were first introduced to the topic of violence through group activities, and then further engaged on specific aspects of violence against children and their experiences. A total of **62 children were consulted** (35 girls, 27 boys; 50 Syrian refugees and 12 Jordanians; 25 in Irbid, 37 in Mafraq) between 6 different groups ages 7-15. The official consent of parents and caregivers was required before children could participate in the consultations.
- **Focus Groups Discussions**: Focus group discussions (FGDs) were facilitated with parents and caregivers. Participants were encouraged to discuss attitudes towards violence against children in their communities and to share examples from their personal lives. A total of 8 FGDs with adults took place (4 in Mafraq and 4 in Irbid) with a total of **79 individuals** (44 females and 35 males; 68 Syrian refugees and 11 Jordanians). FGDs were segregated by gender to respect local customs.
- **Semi-Structured Interviews**: National service providers who respond to violence against children were consulted through semi-structured interviews. The programs and services available were discussed, as well as challenges, coordination with humanitarian actors, and areas to be strengthened. ICMC conducted interviews with the **2 professionals** who agreed to participate in this exercise, (out of the 5 identified professionals who work specifically on cases of domestic violence against children) and who currently work for the Nour Al Hussein Foundation (NHF) and the Juvenile and Rehabilitation Department within the Ministry of Social Development (MOSD), respectively.

## REPORT LIMITATIONS

The topic of this protection monitoring report is sensitive within the communities that ICMC works with as it directly concerns children, a highly vulnerable group. Furthermore, topics related to dynamics within the private setting (i.e. the household) are often considered taboo and not appropriate to discuss with others outside of the immediate family. Therefore, some of the experiences shared by participants may have been limited due to the settings in which data was collected. As the primary data was obtained through qualitative approaches, it is also not statistically representative to refugee and host community families living in Jordan. The data does, however, allow the reader to learn from the unique experiences of children, parents/caregivers, and service providers on this particular type of violence against children. The findings also provide insight to participants' experiences and perspectives on violence against children in the household setting, and current gaps in the response among humanitarian actors.



## FINDINGS

### **Home is the Safest Place for Children**

Parents and caregivers who participated in the focus group discussions (FGDs) were eager to articulate the challenges faced by children in their communities, particularly those related to external factors. When discussing the types of violence children are exposed to in their communities, participants first focused on the types of violence inflicted by other children, teachers, employers, and sexual predators. They also emphasized how the COVID-19 restrictions had exacerbated educational, social, and physical and mental health problems affecting their children. With the transition to online education and the closure of extracurricular activities, children no longer have appropriate spaces to empty their energy and engage with their peers outside of the home. However, parents also expressed that they ***Don't even feel safe to allow them (children) to play outside.*** -Adult Male, Syrian Refugee

Due to the changing social fabric of society, some parents are now reluctant to let their children play with other children for fear of social problems. Specifically, parents reported increased incidents of bullying and harassment (including based on nationality), problems between neighbour children, exposure to **bad friends** since the lockdown period, and **addiction to technology** such as inappropriate games accessible via mobile phones. In all of the group discussions, parents and caregivers also noted problems such as child labour, and addiction to alcohol and cigarettes which they said is a **result of neglect inside the home**. Parents/caregivers are eager to identify safe outlets for children to grow and develop, **but are increasingly fearful of others outside their families and the potential for exposure to violence and inappropriate content. This fear is unintentionally contributing to increased social isolation of children and escalation of tensions inside the home that lead to violence against children.**

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### **Impact of Violence Inside the Home Vs. Outside the Home**

Participants were asked questions about the impact of violence inside the household and how it may be different from violence outside the home. While some participants were adamant violence was never acceptable in either setting, others expressed that violence inflicted by a parent is often done for the benefit of the child, and believed external violence to be more harmful. Those who understood both physical and verbal violence against children, within the context of the household, as a disciplinary action to correct or avoid unwanted behavior. However, it is important to note that there were no unanimous opinion, nor definition of justifiable violence across groups.

***Violence inside the home is safe violence, but outside the home is harmful violence.*** -Adult Male, Syrian Refugee

***You can control violence inside home but you can't control it outside. If the child is exposed to violence inside the home it could be for his own interest.***-Adult Female, Syrian Refugee

***Violence outside the home could affect children much more than inside the home, because whatever violence happens inside the home is in the child's interest, but outside the home no one is going to hit them for their sake.*** -Adult Male, Syrian Refugee

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It was also identified that exposure to violence outside of the home could negatively impact a child's social development more than violence occurring inside the family.

***Violence outside the home may affect him more. When the child is beaten outside the home and other children get used to hitting him, he becomes rejected and his self-confidence is weak.***

-Adult Male, Syrian Refugee

There were however, a higher number of parents and caregivers in the groups that believed violence inside the home was more detrimental to a child's well-being. They identified that the household setting is supposed to offer safety and security to a child and that if the home does not provide this, then children will never be safe outside, and consequently will become more vulnerable to external risk factors. A lack of safety and security in the home setting leaves children in need of protection. When they do not receive this protection from their parents, they will naturally look elsewhere, even to individuals who may cause them harm and exploitation.

***It is also possible for them to look for safety in other places or other people who are not worthy of trust.***

-Adult Female, Syrian Refugee

***Violence inside the home could affect children's mental health for the long term.***

-Adult Male, Syrian Refugee

***For sure violence inside the home has a huge negative impact more than outside the home, because to the child the home is the secure and the safe place. If his home wasn't safe, then nothing is safe.***

-Adult Female, Jordanian

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### **Varying Perceptions on Violence Against Children**

In addition to the differences between internal and external types of violence against children, there was a lot of disagreement between the parents/caregivers under which circumstances violence inside the home is justified. As mentioned previously, some types of violence were viewed as beneficial for the child in order to build their character and prepare them for real life. There were no major differences in these views between male and female parents and caregivers.

***If the family atmosphere is appropriate, there is no room for violence to appear.***

-Adult Female, Syrian Refugee

***I won't say it's acceptable, but sometime its happens. The presence of children with the father at home, with all the pressures that the father is exposed to, such as his inability to find an income, this generates pressure and tension, which leads to violence.***

-Adult Male, Syrian Refugee

Parents and caregivers who excused violence against children cited corrective action for wrong behaviors, disobedience, hyperactivity, disrupting adults and other guests, violence between siblings, and pressure on parents as circumstances in which violence is warranted. They also expressed concerns that without using some violence as punishment, children would not learn from their mistakes or be prepared to enter the real world.

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***When a child does something wrong, he may go in a wrong way or have no respect for others.***-Adult Male, Syrian Refugee

***(Violence is acceptable) when a child makes a mistake for the first time, such as stealing.***-Adult Female, Syrian Refugee

Other participants shared personal examples of times in which they punished their own children through physical violence which they believed were justified due to their children's poor behavior.

***Yesterday my kids quarreled with each other, which caused me a headache, so I hit them.*** -Adult Female, Syrian Refugee

***When she (my daughter) gets angry, she grabs the phone or something else and throws it. I hit her for this reason and every time she does that I hit her.*** -Adult Male, Syrian Refugee

***In my opinion, sometimes children need to be punished, because they could be naughty. My son set fire to the house out of curiosity and when he made this mistake, I followed the method of 'raising awareness' with him. Of course, I cursed all the organizations that made me not cruel to my son. When a mistake is made, one must be cruel to the children, so that the mistake is not repeated. Moreover, I have a method of punishment like raising the foot and standing at the wall or yelling, this is for a child with energy. If I cannot control it now, I never will.*** -Adult Male, Jordanian

Some parents did express that violence was only necessary for adolescent children, but not very young children. Additionally, household stress were also mentioned as justifications for violence against children, including pressures on both the father and mother, which are discussed further in the next section of the report.

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### **Violence Against Children: Passed Down by Generations**

While discussing the reasons for inflicting violence on children in the household, participants were forthcoming about their own upbringings and how this shaped their current parenting styles, as well as how other relationships in the home can impact violence towards children. Participants' own relationships with their parents as a child have influenced their decision to use violent and non-violent approaches to discipline.

***I have suffered violence when I was small by my father. He beat me with or without cause, and since I married I promised myself not to hit my children never ever.*** -Adult Male, Syrian Refugee

***Sometimes we can't call it violence, it is necessary to raise a man. I was beaten by my father. Otherwise I would not have endured the cruelty of life.*** -Adult Male, Syrian Refugee

***It is possible that the quarrel between spouses may affect the child. When the child hears the offensive words of the mother, this also is considered violence, and we even notice that the children's psyche changes.*** -Adult Female, Syrian Refugee

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While discussing generational issues related to violence, participants identified who the main perpetrators are of violence inside the home and the impact this has on children. The father was most commonly mentioned, but mothers as well as grandparents, and other siblings were discussed as well. Violence inflicted by an older siblings towards a younger sibling was generally accepted and viewed as normal. Power dynamics related to age were also evident in the examples shared. If an elder in the family (not the parent) was violent towards a child, it would usually go unchallenged due to their status within the family.

***Of course the uncle and grandfather could hit the children. In order to discipline children, I mean, I cannot be angry with my father or brother in case a problem occurs. We know the grandfather loves the grandson more than the son himself, so if the grandfather has to beat the child it's for the sake of his interest.*** -Adult Male, Syrian Refugee

***In the big families that live together, the grandparents make distinctions between grandchildren and practice violence with extreme hostility, especially if the mother of the children is not liked by them.*** -Adult Male, Syrian Refugee

There was also disagreement over whether the father or mother is more violent towards children and the reasons that they chose to use violent discipline strategies, many of which were linked to the current socioeconomic situation in the country and the impact of COVID-19 closures. Pressures on both the father and mother were cited as legitimate reasons for violence. These findings indicate the urgent need to support parents to learn and adapt effective, non-violent discipline strategies for their children.

***In this situation with COVID, the mother has pressure from the children and husband. She can't bear to understand the children. Beating them is much faster and easier. Understanding them or talking to them takes more time and energy.*** -Adult Male, Syrian Refugee

***Not to mention the pressure of the father, we have no work, no source of income, and the last thing we need is the children disturbing and annoying us.***-Adult Male, Syrian Refugee

***The mother is more compassionate than the father. If I want to beat 100 palm from me, it is not equal to one palm from their father.*** -Adult Female, Syrian Refugee

Children were also consulted on the normalization of violence and shared whether they viewed violence in the households, especially towards children, as acceptable. Nearly all of them expressed that violence was never justified.

***It's not normal because children must feel safe, its their right to be safe.*** -Female Child, Syrian Refugee

***Even if children did something wrong, they (parents) should talk to them, not scold them or say bad words to them.***-Female Child, Syrian Refugee

***No, it's not normal, it's a bad thing, because you can talk to children and they will stop being noisy or go to another place.*** -Male Child, Syrian Refugee

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### **Gender and Nationality Dynamics of Violence Towards Children**

Underlying gender stereotypes and perceptions about refugees and Jordanian host communities influenced how both service providers and parents and caregivers viewed violence towards children in the household, and the ways in which they would respond to rumors of violence. Girls were almost always referred to as “weak” by participants, whereas boys were viewed as being able to “fight back” and “defend themselves”, which is why more violent approaches would be tolerated for boys and not for girls. However, girls were also viewed as more vulnerable to violence overall, with participants mentioning the potential for honor crimes and harsher punishments for behavior perceived as immoral.

***For girls, we will not forget the violence inflicted on them because of sensitive topics such as honor, morals and traditions.*** -MOSD

***Its related to traditions. Even if the girl and the boy make the same mistake, we fear for the girl more than we fear for the boy.*** -Adult Female, Syrian Refugee

***There is also some verbal violence in which the boy differs from the girl. The girl cannot respond, but the boy can respond.*** -Adult Female, Syrian Refugee

***The girl is always the weakest link. We always see girls whose lives end in death due to violence, especially beating by parents.*** -Adult Female, Syrian Refugee

Participants and service providers had differing views on the impact of nationality and exposure to violence. There was a perception that refugee households are under more financial and social pressures which could lead to increased incidents of violence against children. The shame of reporting violence also appeared to be stronger in refugee families. Some participants disagreed, however and did not believe nationality was relevant to violence towards children.

***The refugee has a fear of reporting, especially stigma. We deal with refugees in tents or caravans in random camps, and most of the refugees know each other or from the same family. He is afraid that those around him will know about his case.*** -MOSD

***Even Jordanians have their own problems. Besides, I think violence is an attribute in a person, no matter his nationality. Some men cannot deal with children normally, without hitting them or even cursing them. I know a Jordanian neighbor who does not call his son except by the names of animals.*** -Adult Male, Syrian refugee

While nationality was not thought to be a main driver of violence towards children, it was significant when deciding whether to report a case of violence against a child, as discussed in the following section.

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### **When to Intervene**

For this study, it was important to discuss with participants the circumstances in which they would intervene on behalf of a child affected by violence at home. Most participants expressed hesitation to intervene in the family matters of others, even if a child directly reported the incident of violence to them, though stories of intervention were still shared. The decision to intervene or not was also sometimes dependent upon the nationality of the family. Specifically, refugees expressed concerns over approaching Jordanian families, fearing threats of deportation and other resources or connections that may be used against them.

***As a Syrian, I wouldn't interfere with my Jordanian neighbor. Eventually I'm a stranger, and there's still some tension between Syrians and Jordanians.*** -Adult Male, Syrian Refugee

***I would be kind to the child and let my children play with him, but I don't think I would talk to his parents unless we have a close relationship.*** -Adult Female, Jordanian

***On many days my daughter and I used to hear the sound of a child at night being subjected to violence. My daughter, after a while, could not bear it, and she made me go with her to the building and she screamed that she could hear someone beating the child and threatened that she would contact the police came, and since that day, we no longer hear a sound.***-Adult Female, Syrian Refugee

Other participants stated that they would take the child to the family protection unit or the local police, if physical violence was occurring. Others described incidents where they did intervene, but were met with resistance.

***I have a neighbor and her daughter-in-law left her 5 children with her and ran away, and her second daughter-in-law had 3 children living with her. I went to visit them and the grandmother carried a big stick and hit the children. When I told her that this is not permissible and that it is possible to use dialogue or good words as a solution, she said to me that they do not hear the words and they only respond to beating and this is education.*** -Adult Female, Syrian Refugee

***Certainly, I will not intervene if I do not have a connection to the child's family, such as strong friendship or family connection. I tried once with my neighbors children and his father almost hit me.*** -Adult Male, Syrian Refugee

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### **Preventing Violence Against Children in the Household**

Parents and caregivers, as well as the service providers were asked to identify ways in which violence against children in the household can be prevented, along with the gaps that still exist in the response. Awareness sessions for both parents and children were frequently mentioned as were re-opening the schools and providing extra curricular activities for children. Proving group activities for children where both external and internal violence can be discussed were also mentioned by several men and women in the focus groups, as well as giving children opportunities to be valued like adults. Participating in awareness sessions on parenting skills were viewed as a

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better solution that involving local authorities or service providers. The environment within the household setting was identified by a few participants, who explained that if the parents avoid disputes in front of their children, the exposure to violence will decrease.

***Awareness raising sessions. I have a neighbor who was exposed to violence by her husband as well her children. Their voices reached outside their home and every day they had a new problem, until she took sessions about violence in an organization. Her husband's dealings with her and with the children completely differed. She applied everything that was told to her and even I began to take her advice.*** -Adult Female, Jordanian

Parents were also adamant that improving the socioeconomic conditions would enhance their ability to better care for their children and reduce violent practices in the household.

***I raised my children from childhood saying that I will meet their needs if I have the ability, but if I don't have money, then excuse me.*** -Adult Male, Syrian Refugee

Beyond community-based approaches and improving the financial situation of parents, participants also identified the need for stricter laws and punishment for individuals who inflict violence upon children at home.

***In the event that anyone is subjected to violence, he must be punished and the laws tightened by the state so that anyone is afraid of causing harm.*** -Adult Female, Syrian Refugee

***We are following the crimes that occur in Jordan, and the nature of the penalties is not sufficient. There are those who come out on bail or through an intermediary. There should be a class in the curriculum on violence.*** -Adult Female, Syrian Refugee

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### **Safe Spaces, Safe People, and Reporting Violence**

Children, parents/caregivers, and service providers all identified the mechanisms in which violence against children can be reported in their geographic areas. Children were also asked to discuss what places they feel are safe or comfortable, and individuals who are safe people for children. In terms of reporting violence, both parents and children identified the family protection unit and local police as resources. Parents and caregivers also identified UNHCR as a potential resource, although there was a common perception that they do not offer specific protection services for cases of violence against children. UNICEF and Save the Children were also mentioned. Others felt that there are no specific services available for this problem. Children identified safe spaces including their homes, schools, grandparents' homes, the roof of their homes, and friends and neighbors homes. In terms of safe people, teachers, extended family members, and other familiar adults were mentioned.

***My Teacher, she defends me if my colleagues beat or make fun of me.*** -Male Child, Syrian Refugee

***If we're outside the home, we can ask for help from any adult.*** -Male Child, Syrian Refugee

***I would tell my grandma if my parents hits me.*** -Female Child, Syrian Refugee

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Children also vocalized how they could support other children affected by violence, especially when the violence is occurring inside the home. Children were more likely to express support for other children and a willingness to report violence than the adults who participated in the FGDs, though some, especially boys, were more likely to try and deal with the problem themselves.

***Help him and don't make fun of him, because he will be sad if we didn't help him.*** -Female Child, Syrian Refugee

***No, if I faced violence, I won't tell anyone, I can deal with everything.*** -Male Child, Syrian Refugee

In terms of the services providers, they explained how cases of violence against children at home are reported to them, but that they are rarely approached directly by children in need.

***If children are facing violence outside home they usually seek support from their family, however if the violence is occurring at home children won't report that. The Family Protection Unit will know about these cases by neighbors or relatives. It's very rare to know from children themselves.*** -MOSD

***Usually, the mother reports cases of violence or that her child needs help.*** -NHF

Parents and caregivers identified from whom children will seek support if experiencing violence at home or by a relative. Close relatives living outside the home, as well as friends were frequently mentioned. All participants acknowledged the difficulties children face in coming forward after they've experienced violence, especially by a family member, and that they may even resort to harmful behaviors to cope with the violence.

***Friends, because now we see that friends are closer to each other than family connections.*** -Adult Male, Syrian Refugee

***The child may resort to drugs, lie, or place the blame on one of his brothers, and not seek help.*** -Adult Male, Jordanian

***There is a boy and his mother is my cousin's daughter. He was in the eighth grade when exposed to violence by his family. He turned to us and remained with my family for a few days. When his family called and asked him to return, he went to the street and stayed there for two hours and then returned to us. He did not accept to return and when he learned his family is coming to take him, he went to his aunt in Ramtha to escape from them.*** -Adult Female, Syrian

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### **Gaps in Responding to Violence Against Children**

Service providers consulted for this study employ a holistic, family-based approach to addressing violence against children in the household. Sometimes this includes temporarily placing the child in a foster home or alternative family, and then returning the child to the family after they have signed a pledge to no longer harm the child (MOSD). After that, the family and the child are followed up for years by the Family Protection Unit, until the case is closed.

***The response must start with the family as a whole. We cannot work with the child in isolation from the family, and there must be communication between the family and other organizations.*** -MOSD

Despite this seemingly robust system at the local level, many cases go unreported and significant gaps remain in terms of capacity to respond to identified children in need. This is largely due to a lack of awareness among community members, limited or absent knowledge of positive parenting strategies, and insufficient staffing to meet the needs of complex cases.

***Most of the gaps are related to general capabilities, such as lack of having enough awareness, and the lack of staff. Now after the Coronavirus, and 50% staffing, there is greater pressure on workers, and that leads to the failure to properly deal with cases of violence. Besides we don't have staff to increase the awareness for children or their families who abuse them or provide psychological services.*** -MOSD

***We are faced with parents rejecting, or not allowing service providers to intervene in the first place. Moreover, their argument is that violence is a method of education. There are women and children who do not know what they are facing is violence, and there is also the problem of justification. Parents and even children provide justifications for this violence. Often, the child says this is normal and he is used to it.*** -NHF

Based on these gaps and challenges, service providers have recommended to increase training courses for its field based staff in responding to complex cases of violence against children, as well as for teachers and school counsellors , who are in the frontline, to identify children victims of violence and abuse and be able to provide appropriate responses. They also suggested to create more awareness sessions for families and children, and to strengthen the linkages between all stakeholders including government agencies, INGOs, NGOs, and CBOs. Other ideas, such as community events with child survivors sharing their experiences were noted. Lastly, both service providers acknowledge the important role of economic empowerment in reducing violence

# RECOMMENDATIONS

## **For Humanitarian Partners (including ICMC)**

- ◆ Continue to strengthen and expand upon positive parenting activities with both refugees and host communities.
- ◆ Initiate child-led campaigns and awareness raising for children, where child survivors of violence can be advocates in their own communities.
- ◆ Establish neighborhood safety networks, which are accessible and user-friendly for children, to facilitate improved reporting on violence against children, and educate communities on the warning signs of violence and the methods for reporting.
- ◆ Expand existing counselling/psychosocial support programs to include parent support groups.

## **For International Donors**

- ◆ Increase funding for longer-term, positive parenting programs to ensure sustainable changes and the appropriate resources to measure these changes.
- ◆ Fund media campaigns that spread awareness on violence against children, using creative and accessible approaches (i.e. to reach rural and isolated areas, especially those with limited resources).
- ◆ Increase technical support for local and international partners in conducting case management of child violence cases.

## **For the Government of Jordan**

- ◆ Strengthen the referral systems between the GoJ entities and I/NGOs to promote comprehensive, joint case management approaches.
- ◆ Continue to advocate for a comprehensive, national data system that collects timely and reliable data on cases of violence against children in the country.
- ◆ Establish centralized and child-friendly reporting systems connected to available support services, including protection hotlines.
- ◆ Implement core tenants of the UN Convention of the Rights of the Child (CRC) when revising existing family protection laws that effect the wellbeing of children.