

Jordan

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Introduction

Overview of Education System

Jordan’s national education system is well-developed. The country has achieved universal basic education for all, and with high attendance rates. Education Reform for the Knowledge Economy programs (ERfKE I and II) and other ongoing reform efforts have improved the education system; however, there are still major challenges providing quality education to all children residing in the Kingdom. In addition to the Ministry of Education’s Education Strategic Plan 2018–2022,¹ the National Strategy for Human Resource Development (2016–2025) outlines plans to overcome challenges in the Jordanian education sector with regard to access, quality, accountability, innovation, and mindset.

Jordan’s education system aims to prepare citizens, equipped with various skills, to achieve their aspirations, meet the challenges of the future, and achieve wider benefits for individuals and society. A central principle of Jordan’s education policy is centralizing the general planning and monitoring of the education system while decentralizing its administration.² Within the Ministry of Education (MOE), the Board of Education determines the curriculum, and the Ministry’s divisions for monitoring, finance, and inspection are responsible for auditing the school system.³

Since 2011, there has been an influx of Syrian students into Jordanian schools, creating challenges to infrastructure and access, among others. Despite this, the Ministry, in cooperation with its development partners, has continued to offer quality education services to students impacted by the political crisis. This commitment to the provision of quality education remains strong as the Ministry works to ensure access and equality—moving toward the vision of “Education for All” and equity for all students, including those with special needs—by boosting enrollment rates, accommodating all age groups, providing a dynamic education environment, and developing programs on awareness and health. To ease the challenges related to infrastructure, the Ministry also is aiming to reduce the number of schools that are rented and offer double shift classrooms, while also increasing the land available for school facilities and developing a school maintenance system. Such initiatives necessitate thorough cooperation, commitment, and participation.⁴

The Ministry of Education provides high-quality curricula, textbooks, and teacher manuals that meet international standards. These materials include improved content and form; emphasize

critical and creative thinking, as well as problem solving skills; and link content to life experiences. The Ministry aims to provide quality education services using an integrated policy tracking the quality of teaching and learning and acting as the general framework for curricula and assessment. This policy, in turn, ensures the achievement of education outputs, while keeping pace with the rapid development of Information and Communications Technology (ICT); the provision of sustainable, smart electronic learning resources; and the development of the quality of electronic services provided by the Ministry.⁵

Jordan's education system consists of the following cycles:

- Kindergarten—A 2-year cycle beginning at age 4, Kindergarten includes preschool and is noncompulsory. It aims to create a suitable environment for children and offer them balanced educational opportunities.
- Basic education—A 10-year cycle comprising Grades 1 to 10 (ages 6 to 16), basic education is compulsory and aims to achieve general education goals, preparing citizens in all aspects of life. In Grades 8 to 10, students are tracked and enroll in different types of lower secondary education based on their marks.
- Secondary education—A 2-year cycle comprising Grades 11 and 12 (ages 17 and 18), secondary education is optional and aims to prepare citizens equipped with various capacities and skills, particularly in regard to specialized cultural, scientific, and vocational skills that meet the existing and anticipated needs of Jordanian society. This stage consists of two main streams: comprehensive (academic and vocational) and applied. The comprehensive stream is based on a common cultural basis and specialized academic subjects and culminates in the General Secondary Education Certificate Examination. The applied stream provides students with vocational education and training that enable them to join the labor market directly after graduation.

Education statistics indicate that 2,151,670 students were enrolled in schools in Jordan in the 2019–2020 academic year.⁶ The gross enrollment rates were 41 percent in Kindergarten, 98 percent in the basic cycle, and 78 percent in the secondary cycle.

The Ministry of Education plans to expand and improve the quality of preschool education and encourage the private sector to establish Kindergartens, indicating the importance the Ministry attaches to preprimary education. The Education Strategic Plan (ESP) 2018–2022 is a government-supported effort to transform the education system at the early childhood, basic, and secondary levels to produce graduates with the skills needed for the knowledge economy. One component of the project promotes learning readiness in early childhood education and emphasizes targeted approaches to improving the availability and quality of early childhood learning opportunities. The project contributed to the implementation of a comprehensive approach to improving the scope and quality of essential early childhood services.⁷

The Ministry of Education has established a number of Kindergartens, particularly in remote and underprivileged areas, to achieve the following goals:

- Provide children with an adequate education environment and care for well-balanced education growth
- Help children acquire positive attitudes toward school for smooth transitions from home to school
- Develop good health practices
- Improve children’s social relationships
- Enhance children’s positive attitudes and love for school life

Use and Impact of PIRLS

Jordan participated in the PIRLS 2021 cycle, in paper format, with the principal goals of evaluating the curriculum with reference to international benchmarks and assessing the capabilities of Jordanian students compared with their international peers. Policymakers will use the international results, particularly the international comparative results in achievement, to compare Jordan with the world’s best performers, such as Russian Federation, Singapore, Hong Kong SAR, Ireland, Finland, and Poland.

As a direct result of participation in PIRLS, committees have been formed to revise the Arabic language curriculum in Jordan. Released PIRLS items from previous cycles (2006, 2011, 2016, and 2021) will be used in the development of new textbooks for Arabic language.

Following PIRLS analyses, the Ministry of Education, in collaboration with the National Center for Human Resources Development, will develop teacher guides and initiate nationwide discussions to raise awareness of the importance of the PIRLS assessment and its results. Student data from PIRLS 2021 will be studied thoroughly, and the teacher guides will be used in teacher education programs in Arabic language. The teacher guides will include the following:

- Identification of student errors on assessments, types of errors, and how errors occur
- Suggested questions and tasks that may help students become aware of how errors occur
- Suggested learning strategies to help students deal with errors
- Suggested teaching strategies to help teachers deal with students’ errors

PIRLS will play a vital role in the development of the Education Reform for Education Strategic Plan 2018–2022 and the National Strategy for Human Resource Development (2016–2025). The results of PIRLS 2021 will be used as a baseline to be compared with upcoming cycles of PIRLS 2026 and 2031. PIRLS will provide valid and reliable data for monitoring and evaluating reform projects across time. PIRLS in Jordan elicited a great deal of interest from educators, policymakers, and the media, and will allow the National Center for Human Resources Development (NCHRD), research centers, and universities to produce a series of research reports related to PIRLS as has been done with the Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study (TIMSS) in Jordan.⁸

The Language/Reading Curriculum in Primary Grades

Jordan has undergone several education reforms since 1989 in which curricular revisions were a major component. In general, Jordan has made impressive progress in developing curriculum and teaching and learning materials over the last few years. In particular, in 2015, Jordan introduced a national policy on textbooks and teaching and learning materials that is comparable to policies in high-performing countries in education around the world. If these policies and processes are maintained over time and expanded to all grades in basic education, major improvements in learning hopefully will be seen in Jordan.⁹

In the Education Reform for the Knowledge Economy, the Arabic language curriculum was revised to focus on learning outcomes and knowledge economy skills. The general expectations for students in the basic cycle (Grades 1 to 10) are as follows:¹⁰

- Employ the Arabic language in expressing feelings of belief in God Almighty and connection with Arab and Islamic values
- Use the four communication skills adequately: listening, speaking, reading, and writing
- Use the Arabic language with its system components: sounds, morphology, lexicon, syntax, and semantics, according to its eloquent form, in a manner that is compatible with contemporary life
- Experience the arts of literary creativity in the Arabic language and forms of literary creativity in other languages, leading to positive communication and common understanding between people

The specific outcomes of the listening domain at fourth grade are:¹¹

- Employ acquired vocabulary, knowledge, and experience
- Determine the general idea of an audio text
- Reconstruct the audio text in its own style without violating its general idea
- Distinguish truth from fiction in the audio text
- Evoke situations similar to the idea of the audio text
- Clearly distinguish linguistic styles
- Practice good listening habits such as respecting the speaker and showing interest in the speaker's speech
- Possess positive values and attitudes such as patriotism and loyalty

The specific outcomes of the speaking domain at fourth grade are:

- Orally express a specific idea within one minute
- Adhere to the specific topic of a speech
- Present sequential actions on a specific topic such as preparing a meal or ablution
- Express an opinion orally in a scene or a case read or heard

- Use what has been gained from lexical credit in speaking
- In speaking, consider the use of various methods: interrogation, exclamation, and appeal
- Converse with members of a group on simple topics such as the four seasons or the rights of a neighbor
- Have good speaking habits, for example, listening to the speaker and not interrupting
- Possess positive values and attitudes such as virtue and self-confidence

The specific outcomes of the reading domain at fourth grade are:

- Read text silently at an appropriate speed, with comprehension
- Read text aloud correctly and expressively, taking into account punctuation marks
- Read newspapers, stories, and magazines that are age-appropriate
- Take into account the *hamzat* (cutting and connection) while reading
- Pronounce words whose writing differs from their correct pronunciation, such as but, this, these, etc.
- Consider the appropriate intonation according to the meaning
- Interpret new vocabulary and structures in the text according to their context
- Extract specific sentences that represent specific meanings from the text
- Identify the main ideas in the text
- Distinguish fact from fiction
- Distinguish the cause from the effect in what is read
- Discuss the contents of what is read
- Suggest a new title for what is read
- Give examples of what is read as linguistic patterns and structures; read through the observations of others
- Use what is read to solve problems as they are encountered
- Memorize texts from the Noble Quran, hadith, and Arabic poetry
- Employ acquired vocabulary and structures in speaking and writing
- Employ acquired information, concepts, and cognitive and cultural facts in speaking and writing
- Have good reading habits, for example, focus and distance from distractions
- Possess positive values and attitudes such as mercy and kindness

The specific outcomes of the writing domain at fourth grade are:

- Write words that include the soft *alif* at the end of the word, the *hamzati*—*wasl*, *qat'*—in verbs, the singular extreme *hamza* after a vowel, and the *alif tanween* accusative
- Write correctly a dictated paragraph at an appropriate speed and time
- Write sentences and paragraphs in *Naskh* script

- Write from scattered sentences a life topic in one paragraph
- Write in one paragraph an invitation that relates to a social situation
- Use punctuation marks: the question mark, the period, the exclamation point, and the colon
- Employ acquired linguistic patterns and structures in writing
- Possess good writing habits, for example, leave an acceptable space between written words
- Possess positive values and tendencies, for example, respecting the system, appreciating the value of time

The specific outcomes of the linguistic patterns and structures domain at fourth grade are:

- Read multiple simple linguistic patterns and structures
- Compare the various linguistic patterns and structures
- Correct errors in some learned linguistic patterns and structures
- Employ learned linguistic patterns and structures
- Possess positive values and tendencies such as love and pride in the Arabic language

Professional Development Requirements and Programs

The Ministry of Education in Jordan recognizes that improving the quality of education is a priority for the nation's development and, therefore, an ultimate goal to be achieved. Important tools for achieving this goal include developing the quality of teacher education through progressive reform of education policies and strategies and improving teacher preparation.

Decision makers in the Ministry believe that the Jordanian education system must prepare and qualify young people to be critical thinkers who acquire life skills in a changing world. They have identified an urgent need for highly qualified, competent teachers. The Ministry has responded to this need by implementing the ERfKE project in two phases: ERfKE I in 2003–2009 and ERfKE II in 2010–2015. Key components of this reform are improved professional development and education, and improved learning resources. Education Strategic Plan 2018–2022 is a new education reform that seeks to provide, develop, and sustain qualified human resources for the education system. The Ministry of Education continuously seeks to develop its staff professionally to become education leaders able to meet Jordan's need to prepare students for the future. Jordan relies on education leaders to inspire, motivate, and empower the school community to prepare good citizens. Principals are the inspiring leaders who motivate and encourage stakeholders and beneficiaries around the school to make a positive difference. Positive change is expected to lead to a better physical, social, and academic learning environment that fosters the development of healthy students capable of achievement.

Monitoring Student Progress in Reading

Assessment policies have been updated to ensure that classroom assessment practices conform to the Education Reform for the Knowledge Economy project, which places students at the center of the learning process and focuses on their development as responsible citizens within the knowledge economy. A set of assessment strategies and tools has been developed and employed to monitor individual student progress, including performance-based assessment, observation, communication, reflection, checklists, rubrics, and learning logs. These resources are used to inform and generate grades, which are recorded along with grades collected from paper-and-pencil tests. New report cards have been designed to facilitate a new reporting system that focuses on basic skills and general learning competencies. Parents also receive supplemental information regarding their child's learning progress that may help them with future planning.¹²

According to regulations issued by the Directorate of Examinations and Tests, students in Grades 1 to 3 are promoted automatically unless they earn a grade of less than 40 percent in mathematics and Arabic language. Students in Grades 4 to 10 will not be promoted to the next grade level if they fail three subjects. If a student fails one or two subjects, the student must pass a makeup examination with a score of at least 50 percent. Acceleration of students is possible after careful assessment, special tests, and interviews to ensure student capability. However, acceleration may not exceed two grades. In secondary education, promotion and retention are course-based, and students may take individual tests more than once to fulfill the requirements of the General Secondary Certificate Examination.¹³ The General Secondary Certificate Examination is administered to students who have completed 12 years of schooling. There are two versions—academic and vocational—that correspond to the same respective streams of secondary education. High stakes are attached to these examinations because the results are used for higher education admission.

Special Reading Initiatives

The Queen Rania Teacher Academy (QRTA), established in 2009, is an independent nonprofit institution committed to empowering teachers, supervisors, and school principals with the skills, recognition, and support necessary to excel at both the classroom and school levels. The QRTA is in successful partnership with the Teachers College (TC) of Columbia University and the Columbia University Middle East Research Center (CUMERC). It specializes in training teachers in the use of advanced education technology and the use of innovative teaching methodology. The academy is keen to develop innovative curricula and training programs for teachers (including teachers of Arabic and English languages), coupled with innovative approaches to teaching Arabic and English languages, and works to advance national and regional education standards. The QRTA began providing training for newly appointed teachers (including Arabic and English languages teachers) in the first term of the 2016–2017 academic year. It is anticipated that these training courses will model approaches for the enrichment of Arabic and English language

education in the basic education grades, with a focus on making Arabic and English languages fun, interactive, and accessible.

Founded in 2017, the National Center for Curriculum Development (NCCD) seeks to develop textbooks and curricula according to the requirements and best practices of the Kingdom. The Center reviews and develops the general framework of curricula from early childhood to twelfth grade. It also reviews and develops education outcomes, evaluation and teaching strategies, and performance indicators. The most recent textbooks in mathematics and science curricula for the first and fourth grades were developed and used in the 2019–2020 academic year.¹⁴

Response to COVID-19 Pandemic

Throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, the Ministry of Education has made sure that education remained a priority in Jordan through all phases of emergency preparedness, response, and remediation. The response phase includes the development of digital content, along with the emergency plan and action plans for the MOE, the Ministry of Higher Education (MOHE), and the Vocational Training Corporation (VTC) to continue the learning process using different media and online channels. The Education During Emergency Task Force and technical committees also were formed in the response phase to implement those schemes fully, monitor their quality, and improve them based on continual assessment. The response phase also involved effectively using e-learning and television in the learning process, ensuring ways to interact with and assess students, training educators on the best methods to use for e-learning and blended instruction with learners, as well as integrating online examinations and monitoring completion.

Remedial and enrichment programs serve all students in Grades 1 to 11 and *Tawjihi*.^a These programs include marginalized students, those who struggle to access e-learning or have not passed the e-learning assessment, disabled students, and students with special needs, by enhancing and developing their e-learning, life, and communication skills over the summer holiday. These programs are directed at students who were not engaged in the e-learning process, and use well-facilitated and blended approaches with shortened programs and particular tools to address learning gaps so all students can return to their classrooms once the pandemic emergency has ended.

The MOE will support ongoing improvements of different education methods and ways to increase parental engagement and support in learning, even after schools reopen. The MOE will acquire funding to hire a specialized consulting firm to evaluate the development of sustainable distance learning and media programs offered to students, as well as manage program implementation, monitor and evaluate learning students' outcomes, and ensure sustainable and quality-driven results.¹⁵

^a *Tawjihi* is the final grade of schooling in Jordan, i.e., twelfth grade.

Teaching and Learning During the COVID-19 Pandemic

The COVID-19 pandemic has taken a heavy toll on learners, teachers, and education officials at all levels of the education system in Jordan. However, the Ministry of Education and partners have implemented well-targeted measures to promote learning and reduce the impact of the pandemic. To respond to the challenges caused by COVID-19 and ensure learning continuity, the Ministry formulated the Education During Emergency Plan 2020–2023, advancing blended learning as a priority extending beyond the time of the pandemic.

Jordan experienced 323 days of complete school closure from mid-march 2020 to the end of June 2021. The Ministry quickly responded to ensure learning continuity by introducing the Darsak learning platform, as well as the creation of online lessons and content. On any given day during the first semester of the 2021–2022 academic year, an average of 62 percent of students and 55 percent of teachers logged into the Darsak platform. Significantly fewer male teachers logged in compared to female teachers. The Ministry of Education developed two blended learning packages designed to support students to recover learning loss from the 2019-2020 academic year and to continue their learning for the 2020-2021 academic year. It also implemented a major program to raise children’s readiness for learning before first grade.

In April 2020, the MOE developed the Education During Emergency Plan (EDEP). This plan was updated in January 2021. It specifies key interventions to ensure continued teaching and learning for all children and youth during the COVID-19 crisis. EDEP outlines six key objectives that center learning recovery, educational technology, inclusion, and safe school operations. It provides comprehensive guidance for the education sector to ensure continued learning during school closures, and targeted education support for marginalized learners and a phased recovery approach to address learning loss. In April 2020, the MOE published guidelines for going back to school and safe school operation based on international guidance. To monitor crisis response and impacts on education, the Ministry of Education formed an Operations Room in April 2020, and the Education Quality and Accountability Unit, in cooperation with field directorates, conducted weekly follow-up evaluations at the school and district levels to ensure compliance with health protocols.

COVID-19 had a major impact on the human resource domain, especially in the field of teacher professional development. The preservice diploma program was not offered to newly recruited teachers in 2020 because a distance option had not yet been created. All in-service teacher education either was stopped or was revised to take place in blended or remote modes. The Ministry launched the teacher education platform Edraak in April 2020, which offered up to 90 hours of professional development training for teachers to learn how to use Darsak and how to teach their students using online tools and methodologies. The Ministry also certified training initiatives offered by partners to improve teachers’ skills for online and blended teaching and learning. While more than 90 percent of teachers accessed the Darsak platform to create

assignments or examinations for their students, a significantly smaller percentage of teachers (in particular, male teachers) actively engaged with the platform.

Vocational education was also included in the Ministry's delivery of distance learning scenarios. Practical and theoretical videos were created and uploaded on the Darsak platform for different vocational fields. A limited number of teachers received training from the Ministry about effective e-learning and also conducted student examinations on Darsak with the establishment of the Technical and Vocational Skills Development Commission (TVSDC) and the newly developed Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) platform. Tadreebak, the capacity building platform of vocational education (VE) teachers and education personnel, is expected to enhance the general TVET situation.

The main focus has been on theoretical learning for vocational education students during countrywide closures because face-to-face practical training was not possible during most of the pandemic. However, students were able to receive practical training during the summers of both 2020 and 2021, as most sectors had reopened. Despite these achievements, the vocational education experienced severe constraints during COVID-19, notably:

- Inability to conduct practical sessions
- Inability to attain universal student access to Darsak
- Inability to measure the extent of students' commitment to follow lessons on Darsak and receive the information and skills required
- Students' inability to interact and ask questions about vocational education lessons

Impact of the Pandemic on Student Learning

The adverse economic impact of the pandemic made many families move their children from private to public Kindergartens in 2020. On the whole, the public Kindergarten system experienced an unparalleled 56 percent increase in the number of students, while the private Kindergarten system saw a 42 percent reduction in the number of students in the same year.¹⁶ The pressure on public Kindergartens has thus been, and continues to be, high. The pandemic led to a rapid change in the Ministry's use of ICT, most notably the introduction of the Darsak learning platform and the creation of online learning materials. The Ministry developed an educational activity package for families with children in Kindergarten, delivered as videos and audio messages. Overall, Kindergarten children's participation on Darsak has been low given that Kindergarten children require parental support and cannot learn independently. As has been the case globally, the distance modality is also challenging for teachers, who do not have skills in remote pedagogies for early years and face the same technology challenges as students and their families.

The COVID-19 pandemic has affected, and is expected to affect further, access to education. School, Kindergarten, and university closures in Jordan in March 2020 impacted 2.37 million learners. The general social and economic impacts of COVID-19 put more strain on the education of children, increasing the vulnerabilities of out-of-school and at-risk children, mainly in relation

to exacerbated learning loss, inequity in access to remote learning, and more families resorting to negative coping mechanisms including child labor (70,000 child laborers) and child marriage.¹⁷ In addition, there has already been a shift of around 224,000 students (Kindergarten, basic, and secondary) from the private sector into public education, which puts additional stress on already crowded schools. The MOE has addressed this through blended schools and classes, double shift schools, and renting of more schools.

While the majority of students (93 percent) were able to log into their accounts via the Darsak platform, this could not be used as a measure of the quality and progress of learning. The measured level of student engagement during the first semester was less than indicated by the number of students who were able to log in, with around 62.19 percent of students completing at least one of their examinations and 66 percent completing at least one homework assignment.¹⁸ Syrian refugee children, children with disabilities, and students from lower income families were less likely to access online learning on a regular basis and are potentially less likely to return to schooling. In addition, the online modality was less suitable for younger students in lower grades who are not independent learners, as well as for children without parents who are able to support their continued learning or who have easy access to technology.

Efforts of the Ministry and its partners to improve the quality of education and learning outcomes were beginning to come to fruition before the pandemic. After more than one year of school closure, however, these gains are at risk. The World Bank developed a simulation to estimate potential learning losses in Jordan, which estimates that “COVID-19 may reduce Learning-Adjusted Years of Schooling (LAYS) by as much as 0.9 years,”¹⁹ due to school dropout and quality shortcomings of distance learning solutions. Even with an optimistic scenario, the World Bank model estimates that “COVID-19 will erase almost the entire progress made by Jordan between PISA 2015 and PISA 2018 [in reading scores]. . . . [And] an analysis of heterogeneous impact by socio-economic status suggests that the achievement gap between the poorest and richest quintile may increase by 11 percent, highlighting the significant negative impact of COVID-19 on equity.”²⁰

Policy and Practice Changes

Considering that it will take a concerted effort to reenroll and retain students now that schools have reopened, the MOE will focus its efforts on institutionalizing blended learning, implementing remedial support programs, and addressing equity concerns related to vulnerable children, as well as putting to full functionality the new learning platform that ensures interactivity between students and teachers with no reduction in the number of learning days for students. This also will be supported by investing more into private-public partnership to alleviate the stress in the public sector and by mobilizing more teaching resources to cover additional online teaching hours.

The pandemic and resulting extended school closures have created the largest disruption to education ever known in Jordan. The most prominent accomplishment was the coordinated crisis

response to the COVID-19 pandemic in the education sector. The Ministry acted swiftly, and several of the system-strengthening domain accomplishments formed essential building blocks of the Ministry’s COVID-19 response. For instance, the launch of Darsak II in the second semester of the 2019–2020 academic year was based on OpenEMIS^b student and teacher data, allowing students and teachers to continue schooling remotely. Right before the COVID-19 crisis, the MOE developed a comprehensive operational plan for Education Management Information System (EMIS) phase II, which was updated further with emerging priorities and needs during the pandemic. The MOE plan focuses on system development and capacity strengthening at both central and decentralized levels.

Another important accomplishment was the establishment of a risk management department within the Ministry’s Department of Educational Planning and Research in 2020. The challenge that remains is to activate the department, including recruitment of dedicated staff. In the remaining time frame of the ESP 2018–2022, the MOE plans to institutionalize risk management at all levels of education, including the development of a comprehensive and integrated strategy for risk management. In addition, the MOE will work to strengthen coordination and communication mechanisms with partners; develop a risk management database that allows forecasts and scenario building to reduce risk, and prepare for and mitigate the effects of crises on education; and enhance crisis management capacity among education staff—from schools to the central MOE. Overall, the COVID-19 response efforts have helped to develop further a sector wide risk management culture and helped solidify initial plans for further crisis-sensitive planning. The risk management system will be linked to the facility management system established at the central and decentralized levels.

While the Ministry has met (and even exceeded) the ESP targets, given the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic and the necessity to prepare for future disruptions and/or changes in teaching and learning methodologies, the Ministry will continue working to improve its ICT infrastructure. This includes cloud-based solutions, increased computers/tablets in schools, Wi-Fi in schools and offices, devices for children from vulnerable groups, and improving the quality and breadth of the offerings on Darsak. Importantly, an early focus will be on groups that experienced more challenges with accessing learning via technology during 2020—specifically, children in early grades, children with disabilities, children with little or no access to technology (predominantly refugee children in host communities and camps, and children from lower socioeconomic families).

During the pandemic, school leadership and parent and teacher councils were engaged in efforts to provide safe learning environments during the short time when schools were open. The training for education leaders was put on hold in 2020 and is being revised in line with updated

^b OpenEMIS (Open Education Management Information System) is an education management information system for the education sector. Its main purpose is to collect, analyze, and report data related to the management of education activities.

standards. A ministerial analysis conducted under the EDRiL project (Evidence-Driven Results in Learning), with the collaboration of the Queen Rania Foundation, also highlighted the need to consolidate multiple existing councils (such as the Council for a Safe Environment) into one School and Directorate Development Program (SDDP) education council and then to revise legislation to improve the independence of schools, strengthen the role of councils in promoting community accountability, and give greater importance to the voice of students.

Impact of the Pandemic on PIRLS 2021

Although schools were closed in April 2021 during the expected data collection, data collection was still able to proceed after the Ministry asked the students who were sampled to attend PIRLS testing sessions in their schools. Data collection, data entry, scoring of constructed response items, and all other activities of the PIRLS study went well, but student performance is expected to be weak due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Suggested Readings

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