

YEARNING TO LEARN: Behavioral barriers and enablers to inclusive education in Jordan

*Understanding the behavioral determinants that impact
Jordanian and Syrian refugee parents' decisions to send their
children with disabilities to school on a regular basis*

February 2022

I. OVERVIEW & METHODOLOGY

Understanding the behavioral determinants impacting Jordanian and Syrian refugee parents when striving to ensure their children's regular school attendance is key to identify the barriers and enablers that continue to impact children with disabilities' inclusion in the classroom.

For this reason the No Lost Generation (NLG) initiative – with the support of World Vision and Mercy Corps – conducted an extensive behavioral barrier analysis among more than **250 Jordanian and Syrian parents of children with disabilities** in the host community and camp settings.

Focus group discussions were also held with more than a dozen teachers and disability experts to better understand the challenges faced with inclusion in the classrooms, in addition to the lessons learned from remote learning during the recent COVID-19 pandemic.

The thematic findings were primarily related to **(1)** disability category, **(2)** social norms and support networks, **(3)** values and beliefs surrounding education and future prospects, including religion, **(4)** perceptions on inclusive education versus access to specialized facilities, **(5)** concerns related to bullying and stigma, and lastly **(6)** financial and physical barriers such as transportation, personal escort and daily allowances.



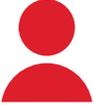
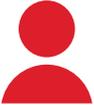
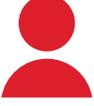
© World Vision. A young boy with disability and his father take part in the barrier analysis survey at World Vision's pre-primary school in Azraq camp. ▶

The main findings are detailed in the table below:

	ENABLERS Parents who sent their children to school regularly were...	BARRIERS Parents who did not send their children to school regularly were...
1 Disability categories and their impact on inclusion	 <p>More likely to have a child with a hearing or speech disability.</p>	 <p>Much more likely to have children with intellectual disabilities.</p>
2 Social norms and support networks	 <p>Much more likely to benefit from strong support networks at the family and community levels.</p>	 <p>More likely to lack any support at the family or community levels.</p>
3 Values and beliefs surrounding education and future prospects, including divine will	 <p>More likely to value their children's education while also holding a more positive outlook on their child's future.</p> <p>They also believed their religion promoted a commitment to education.</p>	 <p>More likely not to see any value in pursuing an education for their child, while also holding a pessimistic outlook on their child's future.</p> <p>They were also more likely to think that their religion promoted a commitment to education.</p>
4 Perceptions on inclusive education versus access to specialized facilities	 <p>More likely to have faith in inclusive education while also being confident that school establishments would be able to address their children's specific needs.</p>	 <p>More likely not to have faith in educational establishments' capacity to integrate their children and respond to their educational needs, and were more in favor of their children attending specialized facilities instead.</p>
5 Concerns related to bullying and stigma	 <p>Less concerned about bullying and more invested in their child building social connections at school.</p>	 <p>Much more concerned about bullying and stigma linked to disability at school.</p>
6 Physical and financial barriers to regular school attendance	 <p>More likely to live at proximity to the educational establishment, and have access to tailored transportation or personal escort services for their child to travel to and from school.</p>	 <p>More likely to lack access to specialized transportation and personal escort services to accompany their children to and from school.</p> <p>They also expressed concerns related to being able to afford school supplies and daily allowances for their children.</p>

II. MAIN FINDINGS

Overview of survey and samples per location and parents' classifications:

Category group	Number of surveyed parents	Number of parents who sent their children with disabilities to school regularly	Number of parents who did not send their children with disabilities to school regularly
Jordanian parents of children with disabilities	31 fathers 59 mothers 90 respondents	 47	 43
Syrian parents of children with disabilities in host communities	30 fathers 59 mothers 1 related caregiver 90 respondents	 50	 40
Syrian parents of children with disabilities in Azraq camp	35 fathers 34 mothers 2 related caregiver 71 respondents	 45	 26
GRAND TOTAL	251	142	109

The overarching thematic findings were as follows:

a. Disability categories and their impact on inclusion

ENABLERS



3 TIMES
MORE
LIKELY

Syrian parents in host community who sent their children to school regularly were **three times more likely to have a child with a speech disability** and;



5 TIMES
MORE
LIKELY

close to **five times more likely to have a child with a hearing disability.**

BARRIERS



TWICE
AS
LIKELY

Jordanian parents who did not send their children to school on a regular basis were **twice as likely to have children with intellectual disabilities.**



6 AND 4
TIMES
MORE
LIKELY

Syrian parents in the host community who did not send their children to school regularly were **six times more likely to have a child with an intellectual disability** and;

those residing in Azraq camp were **close to four times more likely to have a child with an intellectual disability.**

b. Social norms and the importance of support networks

ENABLERS



**TWICE
MORE
LIKELY**

Jordanian parents who sent their children to school regularly **were twice more likely to say, “Most parents in my community ensure that their child with disabilities attends classes every day.”**



**4 TIMES
MORE
LIKELY**

They were also close to four times more likely to say that most people in their community were supportive of their child attending school.



**TWICE
MORE
LIKELY**

Syrian parents in the host community who sent their child to school regularly were **more than twice more likely to say, “Among parents that I know, most ensure that their child with disability attends classes regularly.”**

BARRIERS



**4 TIMES
MORE
LIKELY**

Jordanian parents who did not send their children to school regularly were **more than four times more likely to say that very few parents in their community ensured that their child with disabilities attended classes daily** and;



**6 TIMES
MORE
LIKELY**

close to five times **more likely to say that most people were not supportive of their child attending school, and six times more likely to say that “no one” was supportive in these efforts.**



**TWICE
MORE
LIKELY**

Syrian parents in the host community who did not send their child to school regularly were **twice more likely to say, “I do not know any other parents of children with disabilities.”**

c. Values and beliefs surrounding education and future prospects, including religion

ENABLERS



**5 TIMES
MORE
LIKELY**

Jordanian parents who sent their children to school regularly had a more positive outlook on their child’s educational future and were **more than five times more likely to say, “It is easy [to send my child to school] because my child likes to go to school and wants to learn.”**



**3 TIMES
MORE
LIKELY**

Syrian parents in the host community who sent their children to school regularly were **more than three times as likely to say that sending their child with disability to school was easy because they understood the benefits of learning and education for their child.**



**3 TIMES
MORE
LIKELY**

Regarding religious beliefs in particular, Jordanian parents who sent their children to school regularly were **close to three times more likely to say, “Yes, I think that my religion promotes a commitment to education.”**

BARRIERS



**8 TIMES
MORE
LIKELY**

Jordanian parents who did not send their child to school were close to **eight times more likely to say, “It is not likely at all that my child will finish his or her education,”** and close to five times more likely to say, **“It would not be serious at all if my child did not complete his or her education.”**



**6 TIMES
MORE
LIKELY**

Syrian parents in the host community were **more than six times more likely to say, “It is not likely at all that my child will complete his or her education”** and three times more likely to say, **“It is not likely at all that my child will complete his or her education even if he attends classes every day.”**



**9 TIMES
MORE
LIKELY**

Syrian parents in the camp setting who did not send their child to school regularly were **more than nine times more likely to think their child did not get any benefits from attending school.**

d. Perceptions on inclusive education versus access to specialized facilities

ENABLERS



4 TIMES
MORE
LIKELY

Jordanian and Syrian parents who sent their children to school regularly were respectively **more than three and four times more likely to say, “Access to educational facilities is about the same for children with disabilities and children without disabilities.”**



12 TIMES
MORE
LIKELY

Jordanian parents were also **twelve times more likely to mention that teachers were well equipped to manage children with disabilities and six times more likely to say that their child had access to a resource room and assistant teacher at school.**

BARRIERS



4 AND 3
TIMES
MORE
LIKELY

Paradoxically, both Syrian and Jordanian parents who did not send their children to school regularly were respectively **four and three times more likely to say that access to educational facilities was easier for a child without disabilities.**



5 TIMES
MORE
LIKELY

Jordanian parents were **five times more likely to say that teachers were not very well equipped to manage children with disabilities in their classrooms**, often stating that **the school did not have an integration system or support mechanisms.**

e. Concerns related to bullying and stigma

ENABLERS



**3 AND 4
TIMES
MORE
LIKELY**

Jordanian and Syrian parents from the host community who sent their children to school regularly were respectively **close to three and four times more likely to say, “It is not likely at all that my child will be bullied at school.”**



**6 TIMES
MORE
LIKELY**

Syrian parents were also close to **six times more likely to say, “It is easier [to send my child to school] because my child interacts with other children, makes friends, and experiences the social benefits of school.”**

BARRIERS



**10 TIMES
MORE
LIKELY**

When it came to bullying Jordanian parents were **more than ten times more likely to say, “A disadvantage of ensuring that my child attends classes every day is that my child will be bullied at school.”** They were also more likely to believe that both teachers and students would have a lack of consideration for their child’s needs.



**10 TIMES
MORE
LIKELY**

Syrian parents in the host community who did not send their children to school regularly were also **close to ten times more likely to say, “It is difficult because teachers and students have a lack of consideration for children with disabilities.”**

Interestingly, Syrian parents in Azraq camp were **more likely to say, “My child can misbehave and hurt others.”**

f. Physical and financial barriers to regular school attendance

ENABLERS



**2 AND 3
TIMES
MORE
LIKELY**

Both Jordanian and Syrian parents who sent their children to school regularly in the host community were respectively **more than twice and three more likely to say, “It is easy because we live only a short distance from the school.”**



**MORE
LIKELY**

Parents in all three category groups including the camp were more likely to say that **their child had a personal aid to escort them to and from school, often referring to a family member, neighbor or other student who accompanies them.**

BARRIERS



**3 AND 4
TIMES
MORE
LIKELY**

Jordanian and Syrian parents who did not send their children to school regularly were respectively **close to three and four times more likely to say, “It is difficult because we need a bus due to distance to the school and my child’s disability.”**



**MORE
LIKELY**

When it came to financial barriers, both Jordanian and Syrian parents in the host community who did not send their children regularly to school were **more likely to mention that their family faced difficulties in paying for school items such as stationery and daily allowance.**

III. CHALLENGES & POSITIVE OUTCOMES FOLLOWING THE PANDEMIC

Challenges with Remote Learning: During focus group discussions, teachers in camp and host communities reflected on their remote learning experiences during the strict lockdown periods imposed in Jordan as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. In order to adapt to this new reality, teachers from both camp and host communities filmed their lessons and sent them to parents of children with disabilities via WhatsApp as part of their programs. On the one hand, this provided teachers with the opportunity to follow up bilaterally on the needs of children with disabilities by communicating with parents over the phone and sending tailored videos for each child. On the other hand, this also entailed challenges as not all parents were able to regularly follow up on their children's learning needs, particularly if their children had severe intellectual or developmental disabilities requiring support from experienced teachers. For these reasons, the HCD had recommended the continuation of face-to-face learning for children with disabilities as early as September 2020 in order to avoid regression.

A POSITIVE OUTCOME: Despite some challenges with internet connection particularly in the camp setting, the videos filmed by teachers to support remote learning for children with disabilities were very popular among parents and children alike and could be tailored to their needs. Teachers expressed eagerness to continue with similar initiatives even after the end of lockdown periods.

◀ © Mercy Corps. students with disabilities included in class in Zaatari and Azraq camps, Benefiting from adapted desks that were created in the adaptation workshops operated by Syrian volunteers under supervision of the Mercy Corps team via UNICEF funding and support.

IV. KEY RECOMMENDATIONS

4 key recommendations can be taken out from this behavioral barrier analysis:

