PROMISING PRACTICES IN REFUGEE EDUCATION

NON-FORMAL EDUCATION PROGRAM: An innovation to build and nurture youth-centred creativity, problem-solving, teamwork and leadership in refugee contexts

Relief International

Location:	Za'atari and Azraq refugee Camps, Jordan
Target population:	14-18 year old girls and boys
Intervention type:	Social Innovation Labs: Non-formal education opportunities for refugee youth
Date started:	August 2016
Number of beneficiaries reached:	7,200; 3,600 Girls and 3,600 Boys

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KEY FINDINGS

The Social Innovation Lab (SIL) is a unique programme where young people aged 14-18 years interact in creative, safe (hangout) spaces to propose and implement solutions to social issues in refugee camps. In the SIL, youth develop skills such as problem solving, leadership and collaboration as well as vocational and technical skills. Ultimately, the aim is to develop and nurture potential, innovation and hope amongst the future generation of leaders.

Engaging and consulting all sectors of the refugee population at all stages of the intervention is absolutely essential. This enables young people and their communities to be a part of a change orientated towards improving their current situation and initiating dreams and hopes for a better future.

> **"Do not stop dreaming, always pursue your dream; no matter what difficulties you are facing"**
>
> **Haifa, female Social Innovation participant**

Taking a broad definition of education, with a focus on building competencies such as real-life problem-solving, teamwork, and creative trouble-shooting the SIL approach has provided an equitable platform for young people to apply both formal education skills and those they have developed outside of the school environment. This helps to foster social cohesion, and develop and nurture skills that will be essential when the time comes to rebuild Syria. This is crucial for a young population that has suffered protracted trauma, stress and crisis, and that faces an uncertain future.

The two-stage, competitive format has proven effective in generating collaborative and innovative projects that more efficiently address the growing social needs in refugee camps. If applied well, we have seen that they can be delivered using fewer resources, which is particularly important at a time of reduced financial capacity (both in terms of households and humanitarian response).

An outreach and post-programme opportunity strategy is a key component of this approach. SILs are a catalyst for further innovation within the camps and bring opportunities to the camp – essential in a context where formal employment and freedom of movement are strictly limited. Having a skilled cadre of young people with strong leadership skills is attracting further investment and interest from the development and private sectors. The latter is starting to see the refugee population as a potential workforce and market.

Finally, this is a creative way to empower vulnerable and marginalised young people to plan for their future and take full advantage of post-programme opportunities. It breaks the cycle of hopelessness and poverty.

INTRODUCTION

With the support of UNICEF Jordan, Relief International (RI) has been providing integrated non-formal education support to in and out-of-school Syrian refugee children and young people in Azraq and Za'atari Refugee Camps since 2013. This comprises remedial and supplementary classes, psychosocial support and lifeskills training in nine Makani Centres.[1]

Makani means "My Space" in Arabic and the concept offers a comprehensive approach (I am safe, I learn, I connect) to ensure that vulnerable girls, boys, men and women have access to quality services: education, skills and capacity building programmes and psychosocial support. They form a network of non-formal educational spaces across Jordanian refugee camps with a standardised approach and set of components. RI runs nine of these centres in Azraq and Za'atari refugee camps, and other agencies run additional centres.

A new, optional component was introduced to the Makani model ('Makani Plus') in August 2016. SILs target youth, girls and boys aged 14-18. Young people in the refugee camps have been forced to grow up quickly and have to contend with situations such as working to earn money for their family's survival on a daily basis. SILs are creative safe spaces for these youth to work together to identify and prioritise social issues affecting them and their communities. They go on to design solutions and the most promising receive small grants to support implementation and evaluation. Each SIL program cycle lasts five and a half months, is highly structured and facilitated by trained adult volunteers.

Photo: Social Innovation Pitching day, Hygiene Unit proposal. Youth from Azraq camp. © Relief International

CONTEXT

134,000[a] of the 1.3 million Syrians[b] in Jordan live in Azraq and Za'atari refugee camps. Over 60% of this camp population is under 25 and many have an incomplete education. Forced to make the dangerous journey to flee the conflict in Syria, young people face an uncertain future in the camps. Formal and non-formal education opportunities are available, but non-enrolment or dropping out is a reality for many, especially as children enter adolescence. According to a recent Human Rights Watch report, barriers to education in the camps include poor infrastructure, long distances between schools, and for some children, *'a sense of the pointlessness of education as they had limited hope for their future prospects'.*[2] Child marriage and labour are common, and psychological trauma violence and exploitation impact many young Syrian refugees.
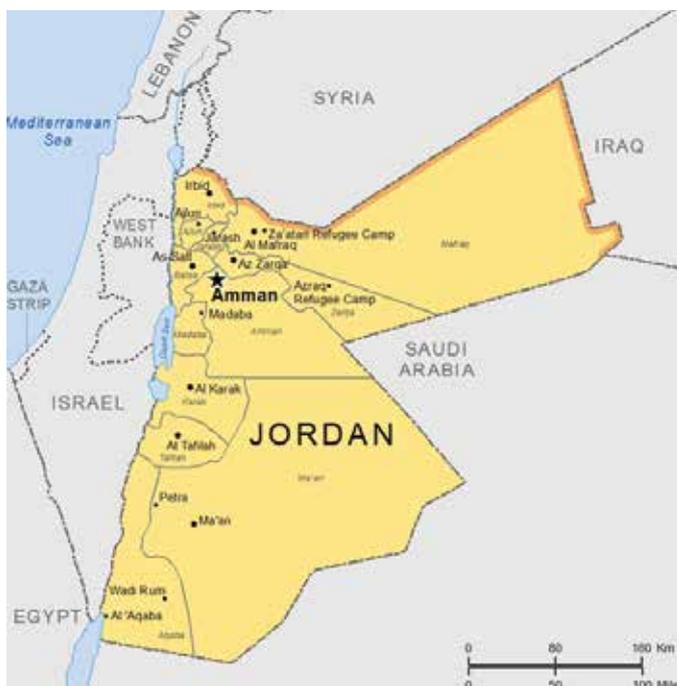
Za'atari and Azraq camps are run by UNICEF and UNHCR. Za'atari camp was established in July 2012 and is located north of Amman and has a population of 80,128 (July 2017). Azraq camp opened in April 2014 and is located east of Amman, with population of 53,610 (July 2017). The population of both camps has slowed significantly after the Jordanian government closed the borders completely in June 2016.

Historically, relations between Syrians and Jordanians have been very good, and since the Syria crisis, the Jordanian government and people have worked hard to accommodate the needs of the influx of Syrian refugees. There are, however, limitations imposed on Syrians in Jordan. Any Syrian wishing to leave Za'atari or Azraq must apply for a permit. Formal employment opportunities for Syrians are limited by quotas, and work permits are difficult to acquire due to complicated requirements.[3] Syrians working without permits face arrest and being sent to refugee camps.[4] A considerable fear is that Syrians will compete with Jordanians for jobs. Skilled Syrians are forced to accept manual labour jobs or to work in the informal sector. [5]

The Jordan Compact (February 2016) includes pledges from the Jordanian government to improve employment opportunities for Syrians, including increasing the number of work permits available and allowing Syrians to formalise existing businesses. Whilst promising, progress towards turning the rhetoric into reality has been slow and uneven.[6] Regarding tertiary education, Syrian youth are allowed to go to university, however the cost often prohibits this, especially as Syrians pay higher fees as non-residents. Only 6,024 Syrians were registered in Jordanian universities for the 2015-16 academic year, 4.5% of the 18-24 age-group. Pre-conflict, 26% of Syrians were enrolled in tertiary education.[7] This means that opportunities need to be brought to the camps themselves and the most effective approach is through entrepreneurship avenues.

Most Syrian refugees in Za'atari and Azraq camps come from poor, rural areas in southern Syria, and there are approximately 87,000 school-aged children in urgent need of educational services. These children face many challenges, including early marriage, [8] the need to work to support their families and protracted absence from school. It is in this context that the Ministry of Education runs formal schools in both camps: five in Azraq and nine in Za'atari; each school hosts primary and secondary education based on two shifts of three and a half hours for girls and boys. However, lack of financial and human resources, combined with high numbers of young people and a condensed timetable, has resulted in poor quality education provision with overcrowded classrooms (average student: teacher ratio is 45:1) and untrained and demotivated teaching staff. According to a 2014 UNHCR estimate, the Education Ministry prohibits school enrolment to all Jordanian and Syrian children three or more years older than their grade level which has resulted in 77,000 Syrian children being barred from formal education.[9] Most recent figures for Za'atari camp indicate that approximately 20% of Syrian school-aged children are still out-of-school, equating to 5,234 6-17 year olds.[10] In Azraq, there are now enough schools open to provide places for all school-aged children, yet there are currently just 10,698 children enrolled out of 19,836 eligible children, meaning that there remains 9,138 (46%) out of school.[11] This lack of access to quality education directly impacts their ability to lead healthy, productive and self-sufficient lives.

In order to enhance services, representatives from the international community working in the education sector (comprising of UNICEF, UNHCR and (I)NGOs) are focused on providing complementary support such as remedial and supplementary education though Makani Centres, which are open to girls, boys and young people aged five to 24. A particular focus is on out-of-school children and youth (dropouts, those who have not enrolled, and those who could not get places in nearby schools due to over-enrolment) facing multiple and complex vulnerabilities such as disability, exploitative labour, the effects of conflict, child-headed household and separation from parents.
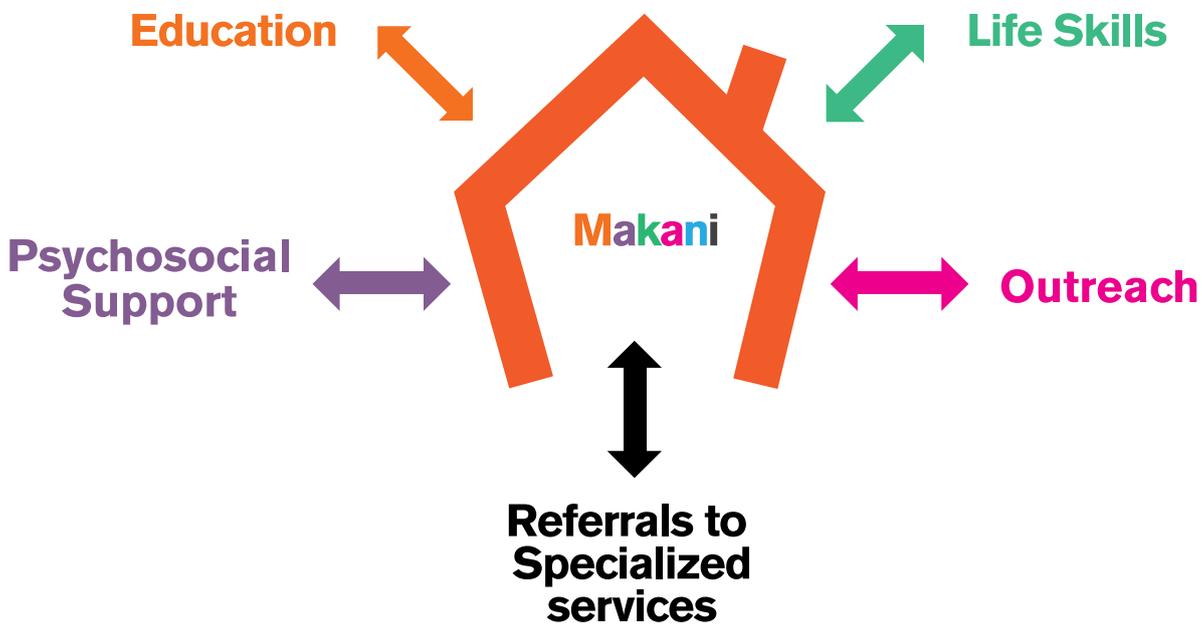
Education

Life Skills

Makani

Psychosocial Support

Outreach

Referrals to Specialized services

Figure 1: The Makani Approach: https://www.unicef.org/jordan/overview_10143.html

INTERVENTION

1. Problem statement

Syrian children and youth refugees living in Za'atari and Azraq camps face a multitude of challenges when it comes to accessing and completing education. Supply-side barriers include the previously mentioned 'three-year-rule' which especially impacts displaced Syrians. Other supply-side barriers include high student: teacher ratios, double-shifts resulting in insufficient time-on-learning, a curriculum that fails to address the specific psychosocial needs of the population and underqualified and demotivated teaching staff. Meanwhile, demand-side barriers include negative coping strategies for families with extremely low financial capacity, including early marriage and child labour – both paid and unpaid.

RI internal monitoring has found that parents choose not to send their children to school as they live in hope that they will be returning to Syria in the near future. This is compounded by the concern that any schooling gained in the camps will not be valid on their return. The uncertainty and perceived temporary nature of life in the camps results in their inability to commit to long-term education. This can manifest in a certain malaise and acceptance of a future they are unable to control. However, in many cases, RI has found refugee populations to have a strong desire to prove their worth and to create positive change in their communities – it is this energy and commitment that the SIL channel and cultivate.

2. Approach overview

SILs have been introduced to directly respond to this challenge. The approach directly empowers the future generation of leaders which has a hugely positive impact on their contribution to and position in the community, both current and future. The aim of SILs is to develop and nurture potential, innovation and hope amongst the future generation of leaders, as well as to provide opportunities for youth to make positive contributions to society.

RI has established nine SILs (three in Za'atari; six in Azraq) that are open to young people aged 14-18 years, regardless of their school-enrolment status. The programme builds competencies in problem-solving, teamwork, and creative trouble-shooting and helps to foster social cohesion, develop 21st century skills (applied cognitive skills and non-academic skills valued by employees such as the International Computer Driving License, Photography, English language), and provides a foundation for positive and ambitious future opportunities. This is all essential for a young population that has suffered protracted trauma, stress and crisis, and that faces an uncertain future the full SIL programme during the pilot from August 2016 to February 2018. A further 1,300 young people have access to the resources, technology and safe space for recreational purposes.

SILs are designed to be simple, inclusive, participatory and non-judgmental. They are based on ideas from young people, who participated in a design workshop at the beginning of the project. SILs have resources such as games, computers and other specialist equipment so that young people can learn about technology, photography, music, arts and sports. This attracts a more diverse youth population.

Photo: Social Innovation Lab in Zaatari camp District 5. © Relief International

3. Innovation

The SIL concept is based on user-centred design thinking. This means that youth and parents have been, and continue to be, consulted at every stage of the programme. For example, when the SIL idea was first conceived, the initial step was to go to the refugee camps and discuss with different groups what their issues were and how these might best be addressed. The programme design was then based on this consultation and continues to be reviewed and adapted according to regular feedback. This is also reflected in the projects SIL participants undertake, with community consultation and review being a significant component. This motivates youth to take responsibility in and ownership of their community and act as leaders. In this camp environment, youth-led interventions have never been implemented before. Young people have so far experienced the dichotomy of being treated as children (excluded from decision-making over their own lives, within the community) yet having to take on adult responsibilities (getting married, going to work, dropping out of school).

Projects emerging from SIL are highly innovative and examples to-date include a solar powered oven and a robot made out of recycled materials that welcomes students to school (using Bluetooth technology). More efficient answers to meet growing social needs in refugee camps are being identified by SIL participants. If applied well, they can be delivered using fewer resources, which is particularly important at a time of reduced financial capacity (both in terms of households and humanitarian response).

Finally, this is a creative way to empower in- and out-of-school young people to plan for their future and take advantage of post-programme opportunities. It breaks the cycle of hopelessness and poverty.

4. Approach implementation and evaluation

Social innovation curriculum	• Two phases: design and implementation • 10 - 14 hours per week
Technical and Vocational Training	• Various in-house basic courses - can be referred to other providers if a higher level • 4 - 6 hours per week
Hangout Space	• Safe social space equipped with games, computers etc. • Open to the SIL participants and wider refugee youth population

Figure 2: Social Innovation Model

Key Numbers

- **Nine Makani Centres**
- **Four SIL cycles per centre**
- **Each cycle lasts five and a half months**
- **25 – 30 young people (50:50 m/f) per lab per cycle**
- **Sessions run six days a week for the training phase, and then are flexible for theimplementation stage**

Figure 3: Social Innovation Labs in Numbers

Figure two outlines the SIL implementation model. The team consists of one Team Leader, nine Jordanian Coordinators (one for each lab), 36 Syrian (Refugee) Facilitators (two males and two females for each lab): and two females for each lab: Syrian refugees) and two Monitoring and Evaluation Officers (one at each camp). The whole team meets one day a month to discuss main successes and challenges, exchange experiences, plan activities and to have a holistic picture of project progress.

Monitoring and evaluation (M&E) is at the heart of SIL. Our approach supports adaptive and innovative programming, which is crucial in this complex and dynamic context. In addition to baseline and endline evaluations, the M&E Officer at each camp will collect quantitative and qualitative data on a daily, weekly and monthly basis.

The following quantitative data is captured:

• Enrolment, attendance and completion data (disaggregated by sex)

• Number of trainings for facilitators and participants

• Number of SIL cycles completed

• Number of projects developed

• Amount of grants given

• Number of participants accessing further opportunities via post-programme referrals, e.g. (re)enrolling in formal education and Technical and Vocational Educational and Training (TVET) courses.

Qualitative data is captured through the following mechanisms:

• Facilitator feedback (daily): SIL facilitators reflect on the day-to-day effect of the sessions: which activities they want to keep, to change, to add or to remove to have real-time enhancement of session quality.

• Parent feedback (weekly): Parents give feedback of the impact they are noticing on their children. They review the activities on a weekly basis, which encourages their critical engagement in the SIL.

• Student feedback (monthly): SIL participants complete monthly feedback forms. This allows time for them experience different phases of the intervention and reflect on strengths and weaknesses. They also have the opportunity to feedback more regularly to facilitators and project staff as required.

Data is inputted into the Bayanati database, which is a shared database used by all partners working in the Makani Centre programme.
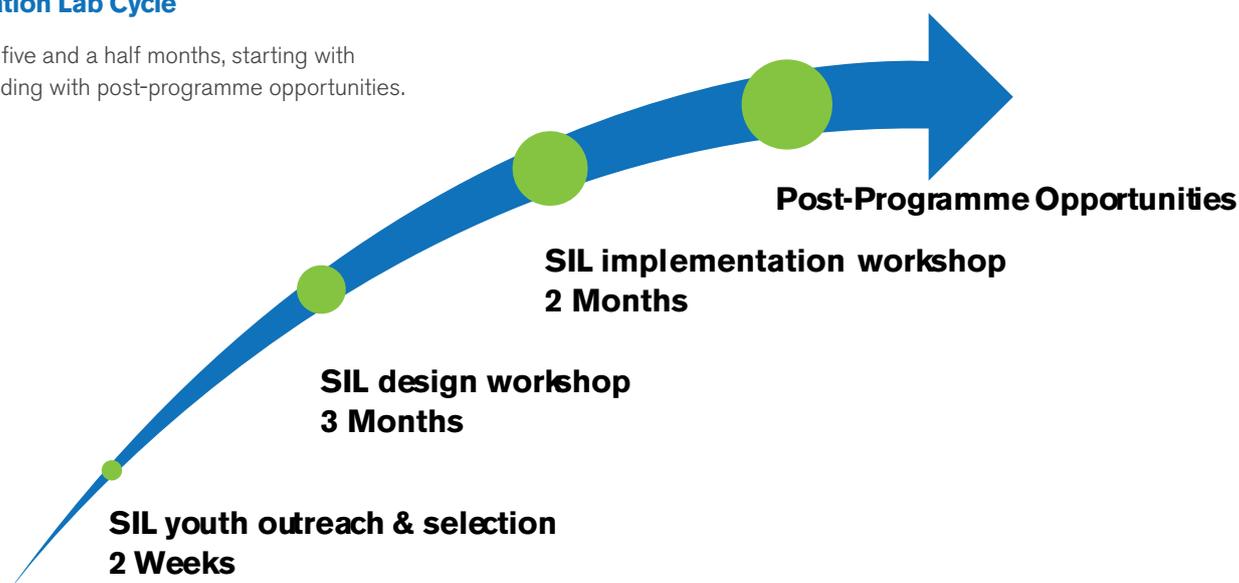
Following this pilot phase from August 2016 to February 2018, RI, RI will be working with education partners also running SIL, such as UNICEF and its other partners, to develop a longer-term impact measurement framework based on learning and feedback.

Team Coordinators and Facilitators conduct field visits to other Makani centres managed by other UNICEF partners to facilitate SIL sessions to encourage their adoption of the SIL approach and to other SIL centres to encourage cross-organisational learning. Finally, the RI M&E team provide technical support and training to other UNICEF partners implementing social innovation in host communities.

KEY MILESTONES AND OUTCOMES

Social Innovation Lab Cycle

The SIL cycle is five and a half months, starting with outreach and ending with post-programme opportunities.

Post-Programme Opportunities

**SIL implementation workshop
2 Months**

**SIL design workshop
3 Months**

**SIL youth outreach & selection
2 Weeks**

Outreach:

In this step, Coordinators and Facilitators undertake two weeks of outreach in the camp communities in order to ensure clear communication and proactive targeting. This includes the following activities:

• Brochures and flyers on SIL project
• Outreach to beneficiaries in formal schools
• Outreach to households
• Selection of participants; these are young people who demonstrate commitment, creativity and the willingness to work as part of a team. They show potential to become community leaders.

Phase 1 (Project Design Phase):

This is a 10-week cycle, based on two stages. Stage 1 lasts two weeks and consists of 12 SIL design curriculum sessions. In brief, this covers:

• Self-discovery
• Ownership
• Leadership
• Team building activities
• Project management aspects including action planning and budgeting and presentation skills

During the second stage, youth go through eight weeks of enhancing project ideas to be ready for pitching. As part of this, they work on proving the need and testing their proposed solution's acceptance within their target setting (community, school, learning space).

Pitching day

Each SIL design cycle produces 4-6 initiatives per lab. These initiatives are presented by the teams in a pre-pitching event to an RI internal jury. The most feasible and scalable initiatives are selected to be pitched and presented on pitching day in front of a jury from UNICEF and RI.

Pitching ceremonies are attended by prominent figures in the camps, Innovation Specialists from UNICEF, UNHCR representatives, NGOs, and other companies prominent in Jordan, such as Zain (telecommunications) and Techfugees. The most promising initiatives are selected and implemented: so far 15 projects have been selected for development and implementation. Examples to-date include recycling collection for rubbish, curtains for schools, low-cost projectors for films, water filters and innovative electricity generators.

Phase 2 (Project Implementation Phase)

Selected proposals proceed to the second phase of the curriculum: implementation of projects and producing a first prototype. During a two-month cycle (nine sessions), SIL Coordinators and Facilitators support youth with selected initiatives to learn about:

• How to get help from other people or organisations
• Systems thinking and how to connect the project with the larger system
• Visionary leadership
• Sustainability
• Advanced team work
• Setting criteria to measure the success of the project
• Sharing success and lessons with others
• How to utilise the knowledge they have gained for future projects

Post programme opportunities

Post-programme opportunities can be a deciding factor of the success of the social innovation programme. When targeted youth and their parents see that the labs lead to opportunities that they would not otherwise be able to obtain, they are more actively involved in the lab activities. Post-programme opportunities that have already arisen include: public recognition, further education opportunities, professional placement and on-going access to innovation. Examples include young people who had dropped out of school returning to formal education, SIL graduates taking part as user-testers for tech-firm Rumie and linking SIL graduates to vocational training opportunities offered by other camp partners.

Results to date

We are coming up to the half-way stage of the pilot and the table below demonstrates that we are largely on track to reach targets (July 2017).

Outcome	Target	Achieved to date
Number of SIL cycles	4	2
Number SIL participants	900	591
Number of projects/ initiatives developed	30	15
Number of projects implemented	30	7 (9 more to be implemented by end of August 2017)

Social Innovation Youth Training

In addition to the SIL cycle, participants also have access to a variety of short basic training courses. These include:

• Computer skills, Internet surfing and searching skills
• First aid
• English Language Skills
• Vocational skills, e.g. electrician and mechanic skills, hairdressing and sewing
• Music lessons
• Time management
• Soft skills, such as inner happiness and conflict resolution
• Photography

Participants spend 4 – 6 hours per week completing courses of their choice. If they want to transition to more advanced courses, RI will support them to seek out post-programme opportunities with other providers.

Hangout Space

An important and inclusive aspect of the SIL is the hangout spaces. The full SIL programme can only be offered to a limited number of young people, therefore, when the lab spaces are not in use by the full programme, they are open to the wider youth population. Facilities such as laptops, foosball, XBOX, TV, DVD, board games and puzzles are available and young people know how to register to use these facilities.

SIL Staff Capacity Building

A comprehensive professional development programme is implemented with SIL staff (Team Leader, Coordinators and Facilitators). This includes:

• Social Innovation curricula
• M&E
• Child Protection
• Attitudinal barriers: Interacting with people with disabilities
• International Computer Driving License

Sustainability

In order to maximize sustainability, social innovation in SIL goes through stages. It starts with ideas, which may then be piloted or prototyped in the SIL themselves. If successful, there is a process of sustaining the new model in the implementation stage – perhaps as a small-scale venture or policy within the community or school. The final stage is to scale-up – to identify which small-scale ventures are best able to improve on existing models of practice or fill gaps.

Youths are trained in transferable skills such as project management, budgeting, time management and critical evaluation.

Half-way into the SIL implementation, it is proving to be a powerful platform for attracting complementary and follow-on initiatives. Given the complex context around employment opportunities for youth in Azraq and Za'atari camps, an emerging priority has been attracting private firms and NGOs to develop initiatives within the camps. These include a 'Time Currency' project, whereby camp residents can exchange services without money, 'Human Rights with Art' and Tech firm Rumie employing SIL graduates as user-testers for their new tablets.

For sustainability and continuity, we place significant focus on how to keep the initiative running and to fund itself, with brainstorming on financial mobilisation and roles and responsibilities. However, the reality is that SILs do come with costs, albeit much reduced once the initial infrastructure and resources have been covered. The main ongoing costs are human resources – trained and supported facilitators are key to the success of SIL.

Photo: Community leader, Azraq camp. © Relief International

CHALLENGES

- **Community hesitancy:** The social innovation concept was completely new to camp communities, and initial reactions were of caution and doubt. To overcome this we arranged awareness sessions and invited parents to the labs to be more involved in the process and understanding the role their children are playing in the community. We also invited parents to see their children's achievements on pitching days. *"In RI SIL, our children have the chance to gain more self-awareness and play a significant role in helping their community by initiating creative simple solutions for community challenges"* Abu Ahmad, Azraq camp Village 5 (RI Pitching day 4th May 2017).

- **Participant attrition rates**: Keeping children enrolled in the programme can be a challenge, especially in Azraq camp. Here, children and their families are shifted from village to village, and given that movement is restricted to the village in which one currently resides, this poses continuity problems. To address this, we ensure that any young person who has had to move gets the opportunity to enrol in the lab nearest to their new home. This is facilitated through facilitators providing centre information and a letter of recommendation to the young person, and tracked through the RI team planning and review meetings. From experience we know that there are better outcomes when participants are enrolled for the entire cycle in one lab; however, this flexibility means that in the given context, young people do not miss out.

- **Hangout space attendance**: To begin with, numbers of young people using the hangout space was low; however, this is now steadily increasing. During recently carried out feedback sessions, youth requested resources such as musical instruments and more sports equipment. These have now been purchased.

- **Programme integration**: As Makani centres in Za'atari and Azraq camps offer multiple services, management and coordination between teams and activities are paramount. We work hard to ensure that youth are able to take advantage of as many services as they are interested in through flexible and responsive timetabling of activities. We also ensure that there are opportunities for girls and boys to attend mixed sessions at least once a week – this is an important feature in a context where boys and girls attend segregated formal education.

LESSONS FOR PROMISING PRACTICE

Young people have the ability to look at old problems in new ways and are uniquely equipped to change the world. The continuous consultation process has been key in harnessing this ability, both in ensuring that the training content is relevant, engaging and challenging for youth, as well as supporting them to build up their own consultation and analysis skills during innovation project design and implementation phases.

The participants' energy and idealism propel them to take risks and think in innovative, path-breaking ways. A key learning that has supported them to thrive and expand their work has been the development of a support system that connects them to potential sponsors to scale up their ideas. For example, we are currently working on a design stage of a Leaders Innovation Lab which will aim to connect all social innovation stakeholders (education, private and UN) in Jordan to scale-up and scale-out project ideas beyond their own community space.

Young people learn by doing. They also develop best when they are exchanging ideas, strategies and failures with their peers. Such cross-cultural, one-on-one exchanges enrich their entrepreneurial training and spur even greater innovation in their individual fields of interest. A lesson to overcome the potentially damaging confinement of the camp context has been to reach out to other social innovation projects around the world targeting the same age group, including one team in the USA.

PERSONAL IMPACT STORY

A Leader in the Making

"Women need to feel safe, appreciated and respected for their innate value and contribution," Haifa*, one of the SIL participants says. She continues, *"This is the main reason that made me so eager to join the SIL. I see that RI provides a foundation for girls to feel empowered to dream and pursue those dreams as active community members, who will create a world where we know we are equal and one family."*

Haifa* is 16 years old. She is the youngest in a family of six; two sisters and one brother, along with her mother and father. After she saw the success of the first SIL round, she decided that it was her turn to make a difference and give back to her community.

"I was raised to believe that my place was to be at home, that girls can't participate in most of the things that boys can, and that walls surround every move I make." When asked what is different now, Haifa replies, *"Today, I believe in women's role to leave a footprint on a world that is mostly controlled and ruled by men.*

In the beginning my parents were hesitant to allow me to participate. But with my determination to join and the great work of the RI outreach team to explain to my parents the core idea of youth participation and change-making in the community, they finally allowed me."

Many refugees with hearing impairments do not answer when people knock on their door, so Haifa's group came up with an invention called "a light bell" that generates a light along with the sound. It works off both solar and mains electricity. So far the team has tested the prototype and has received positive feedback. They have also consulted within the wider community and over 80% of people responded positively.

"There are so many circumstances of war that can thwart a girl's dream. However, education and empowerment are gifts that no one should be denied. I would like to say to every girl: "Do not stop dreaming, always pursue your dream; no matter what difficulties you are facing." I know that girls in my community are surrounded by many limitations, yet that should never limit their abilities to achieve change and be role models to others."

Photo: Haifa* was determined to take up the chance of taking part in the SILs. © Relief International

Aiming High

Abdel* is 16 years old. He comes from a family that escaped their hometown because they did not want their eldest son to join the military.

"The news spread all over town that my brother's turn to join the military had come. That's when my father took the decision to leave his job, despite knowing that he would reach retirement in one month. Yet he chose to flee to Jordan for his family's sake.

It took us 17 days to reach Azraq camp. Then after only three days my father had a heart attack. We had minimal health care and no income to support the family. So we left the camp illegally to go to Ramtha city in the south of Jordan where we had some relatives.

We spent a year in the city. My aunt sent us enough money for one person to immigrate to Germany. However, my father managed to figure out a way so that the money would be enough for three people – my father and two of my brothers made it to Germany. My mother, little sister, my twin brother and myself returned to Azraq to register to follow. We didn't re-enrol in formal camp as we thought we would be leaving soon.

One day when I was playing, a man approached to tell me about something called "Social Innovation Labs". I liked the idea but I was afraid that I was not eligible as I am not a formal school student.

The news of my eligibility to join this program made me feel extremely happy. The opportunity unleashed the creativeness within me. My project was one of the winning projects. It is called Data Show, and projects whatever you want on a big screen. The idea came to me through remembering the cinema machine that I studied about in 6th grade and we decided to give it a try.

My grandfather used to tell me, "Life is full of rocks. Do not collide with them; rather gather them into a stairway that leads you to the top". These words have echoed in my mind since childhood. I have now re-enrolled in school. My advice for all children and youths in the camp is to never give up; there is a light at the end of the tunnel".

Photo: Abdel* pitches his Data Show idea. © Relief International

*Names changed to protect identity.

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APPENDIX

[1] https://www.unicef.org/jordan/overview_10143.html (accessed 20 July 2017)

[2] Human Rights Watch, 2016. "We're afraid for their future" Barriers to Education for Syrian Refugee Children in Jordan, [pdf] pp 5. Available at: https://www.hrw.org/report/2016/08/16/were-afraid-their-future/barriers-education-syrian-refugee-children-jordan

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[7] Al-Hawamdeh, A and El-GhaliHigher, H, 2017. "Higher Education and Syrian Refugee Students: The Case of Jordan" (Polices, Practices, and Perspectives), [pdf] pp12. Available at: http://www.unesco.org/new/fileadmin/MULTIMEDIA/FIELD/Beirut/Jordan.pdf

[8] Up to 51% of youth girls in the camps are at risk of being married before the age of 18 (Care International: Unpublished) and this trend is only getting worse.

[9] Ibid. pp 2-3

[10] Enrolment of Syrians in Formal Education (2016-17) in Za'atari camp – figures collated by UNICEF (data source: UNHCR, MOE, OSM – 4 June 2017)

[11] http://data.unhcr.org/syrianrefugees/settlement.php?id=251&country=107&region=73 (accessed 19 July 2017 – note that the figures were arrived at by calculating the number of 5 – 17 year olds from the total number of persons of concern and using the latest school enrolment figures for the 2016 – 17 academic year as per the MOE and UNHCR).

[a] http://data.unhcr.org/syrianrefugees/country.php?id=107

[b] The Jordan Response Plan for the Syrian Crisis, 2017-19, available here: http://www.jrpsc.org/

Photo: Community member speaking about the importance of the SIL project proposals and discussing the implementation benefits and challenges. Azraq Camp, Village 5. © Relief International

Promising Practices in Refugee Education is a joint initiative of Save the Children, the world's largest independent children's rights organisation, UNHCR, the UN refugee agency, and Pearson, the world's learning company.

Launched in March 2017, the initiative set out to identify, document and promote innovative ways to effectively reach refugee children and young people with quality educational opportunities.

This case study is one of more than twenty promising practices that were selected as part of the initiative.

The practices have been grouped under one or more of six themes.

- Equity
- Access
- Learning
- Wellbeing
- Technology
- System Strengthening

The practices and the experience of implementing partners have been used to identify ten recommendations, grouped under three overarching pillars, aimed at improving refugee education policy and practice. They are:

Approaching the immediate crisis with a long-term perspective:

1. Strengthen inclusive national systems
2. Commit to predictable multi-year funding for education in refugee responses
3. Improve collaboration and develop innovative partnerships

Understanding different contexts and meeting distinct needs

4. Adopt user-centred design and empowering approaches
5. Establish diverse pathways that meet distinct needs
6. Use space and infrastructure creatively

Improving outcomes for all

7. Support teachers to help ensure quality
8. Prioritise both learning and well-being
9. Use technology as an enabling tool in pursuit of education outcomes
10. Build a robust evidence base

Our reflections on all of the promising practices that we identified and documented and their implications for policy and practice are available in a separate Synthesis Report.

More information including case studies, the Synthesis Report and a series of articles from thought leaders in the field can be found at

www.promisingpractices.online

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