National Study on Child Labor

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Executive Summary
National Study on Child Labor

1. Introduction

The practice of hiring young child workers is known to exist in Jordan despite laws prohibiting children below the age of 16 from working. There are no accurate statistics on the nature and extent of child labor despite increasing public awareness of the phenomenon of "Street Children". Employment surveys conducted in Jordan between 1961 and 1994 are believed to have under-estimated statistics on the prevalence of child labor as households typically are reluctant to acknowledge that they have children working illegally. Moreover, employment surveys do not take into account children who are working in the informal sector, such as children engaged in domestic help, family enterprises, and farming activities.

The new Jordan Labor Law of 1996 (Article 73 of Labor Law No. 8) prohibits any person under the age of 16 from engaging in formal employment, legislation with respect to vocational training not withstanding. The new minimum age limit of 16 is more consistent with the compulsory schooling age limit and provisions of the Educational Act of 1988 which makes schooling compulsory during the first 10 years. However, the new labor law does not provide any protection for children working in family enterprises, agricultural activities and domestic labor (Article 3) thereby largely excluding female child workers and children working in informal sector enterprises from the protection of the law.

The series of economic set-backs which faced Jordan from the beginning of the recession in the early 1980's to the end of the Gulf crisis have resulted in lower living standards and higher rates of poverty and unemployment than at any time in the past. The increased incidence of poverty and the high inflation in Jordan has resulted in an increased number of families living under economic hardship and social stress and has placed a major strain on family and community coping mechanisms. It is within this socioeconomic context that child labor in Jordan was examined in this study. Poverty, driven by large family size, inflation, and unemployment are factors largely contributing to child labor and children “out of place”.

In May 1991, the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan ratified the International Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) which represents one of the most important international instrument for combating child labor and economic exploitation of children. In June 1997, Jordan ratified the ILO Minimum Age Convention of 1973. This convention stipulates that the minimum age for employment should not be less than the age at which compulsory education is completed and under no circumstances should be less than 15 years of age.

The International Program on the Elimination of Child Labor (IPEC) of the International Labor Organization (ILO) commissioned this study on child labor in Jordan. The National Task Force for Children (NTFC) was supportive of the study as unregulated child labor interferes with a child’s education and constitutes a form of child abuse and neglect, a rising social problem in Jordan. In this study child labor is defined as the active participation of any child less than 16 years of age in any economic activity, regardless of the type of work, the employer, the nature of the job, or the activity.

2. Objectives

The objectives of this study were twofold:

(1) Explore the magnitude of child labor in Jordan based on existing information and the collection of additional field data (both qualitative and quantitative) on the causes, conditions, and consequences of child labor; and,
(2) Recommend preventive as well as remedial measures to combat illegal or harmful child labor.

Sub-objectives of this study included: (1) identifying sub-populations of children most at risk to child labor (for example, school drop-outs); (2) identifying inadequacies in the Jordan Labor Law with respect to child labor; (3) identifying inadequacies in the educational and social assistance legislation that may adversely affect child labor; and, (4) examining vocational training programs and existing non-formal educational programs for school drop-outs in relation to child labor.

3. Methodology

In this study information on child labor in Jordan was obtained from both secondary and primary sources. The lack of adequate statistics on child labor, particularly in the informal sector, prompted the collection of primary data. Information was obtained from: (1) previous studies, (2) interviews conducted with various ministries, non-governmental organizations, general union of workers' unions, child advocates, community outreach professionals, and key informants in four selected refugee camps; and, (3) field survey.

A purposive sample survey rather than a random sample survey was the design chosen for conducting the field study. This sampling approach is consistent with the Rapid Assessment Methodology applied in this study. This methodology is appropriate because the study objectives were to explore how widespread the phenomenon of child labor is in Jordan on a preliminary basis and not to give exact figures of the proportion of employed children nationwide.

Study sites included four selected low-income areas (Al-Nuzha, Tafayleh, Jabal Al-Naser, and Dabaybeh), four selected refugee camps (Wihdat, Baqa'a, Zarqa, Ghazza), and four industrial areas (i.e., manufacturing and auto-repair enterprises) in Amman and the neighboring cities of Zarqa and Jerash (Wadi Al Seer, Sahab, Wadi Al-Rimam, Marka). The instruments used for data collection were three sets of questionnaires administered to employed children, their mothers, and their employers. These instruments were based on the Rapid Assessment Methodology. Open-ended questions during informal interviews were used to collect information from key informants in governmental, non-governmental organizations
and refugee camps. Observational methods were used to collect information on conditions of labor. A few case studies describing a typical day in the life of an employed child were included in the findings.

Descriptive and analytical statistical techniques were used. Statistical analyses were

performed on the sample as a whole and by area (refugee camps, poverty pockets, and industrial areas) to give an overall view of child labor and to allow comparisons among responses in each of the three types of sampled areas. The Statistical Package For Social Sciences (SPSS) was used for statistical analyses. Descriptive statistics (percentages and frequencies) were used to classify employed children by child related variables, sociodemographic variables, and employment related variables. Descriptive statistics were also used to describe working conditions based on information by children and employers. Children were classified by number of hours worked per day, number of days worked per week, kinds of problems faced at work and by treatment of employer. The number of child abuse events (both physical and sexual) that a child heard of or experienced also were tabulated. Qualitative data was collected on the causes and consequences of child labor as perceived by mothers and employers and the major themes that emerged were tabulated.

4. Findings

Employment Surveys

The only available statistics on employed children are from employment surveys conducted periodically since 1961. The Employment, Unemployment, Returnees and Poverty Survey (EURPS) of 1991 provide the most recent nationwide statistics on employed children under 16 years of age. Based on EURPS data employed children age 13-15 constituted 1.02% of the total labor force. The majority of employed children were males (93.2%) and 5.7% of employed children were non-Jordanians. The EURPS data indicated the poor educational attainment and lack of vocational training of working children aged 13-15. The majority of children engaged in craft, trade and elementary occupations. The highest percentage of employed children (both males and females) had regular employment in the private sector. Half of the employed female children worked in agricultural activities and fisheries. The highest percentage of employed children (both males and females) had regular employment in the private sector. The EURPS indicated that the majority of children (42%) worked long hours exceeding 49 hours per week.

In 1991, 3% of males and less than 1% of females in the 13-14 age group were economically active. By comparison, economically active rates for males and females in the 10-14 age group were approximately 10% and 1% in 1961, and approximately 3% and 0.25% in 1987 respectively. The drop in employment rates is attributed to increased academic enrollment rates and free compulsory education for the firs ten years of schooling. More recent statistics from the 1996 employment survey revealed that 1.1% of females and 13% of males in the 15-16 age group of the study sample (15,000) were economically active.

Interviews With Key Informants

Ministry of Labor sources reported encountering very few cases of illegally working children. A few cases were reported of children that worked in cigarette companies and candy manufacturing with the consent of the parents. The Ministry of Social Development and Ministry of Planning community outreach professionals believe that poverty and low financial returns from education were the principal causes of child labor. Ministry of Social Development survey of 1996 of detained street children revealed that only 37% of children

suffered dire financial need. Ministry of youth officials expressed the need for extracurricular activities in public schools. Ministry of Tourism expressed concern over the effect of children's involvement in tourism on school dropouts in Petra and the Wadi Moussa areas.

Community outreach professionals at non-governmental organizations including UNICEF believed poverty, lack of parental awareness of children's rights and needs, and dissatisfaction with school (due to violence and poorly maintained facilities) were the main causes of child labor. Unregulated child labor and street selling were considered exploitative and hazardous. In addition to poverty, domestic violence, often triggered by father's unemployment and substance abuse, was considered an important risk factor for child labor.

Key informants in refugee camps reported child labor to be rampant in and around refugee camps especially during summer months. Low family income, large family size and poor parenting were factors pushing children out of school and pulling them into the labor market. Children of unemployed or handicapped parents were more at risk of school drop-out and labor than other children. Shortage of summer camps and the ineffectiveness of existing camps due to lack of resources largely contributed to full-time employment of children during summer months.

Social workers at refugee camps reported that as many as 20-30% of children apprentices that worked in mechanic auto-repair workshops and small enterprises were exposed to sexual assaults and substance abuse (smoking, drug-intake, and inhaling paint thinner and other solvents). Some children were reported active in selling drugs such as Artin and Tesophane. Children from Jerash Camp (also called Gaza Camp) engaged in harvesting of crops in the Jordan Valley. They reportedly work daily for as long as 12 hours for half to one JD per day. Young children from refugee camps were also reported to work in major private manufacturing enterprises during the summer months.

The health staff at UNRWA clinics reported many occupational injuries suffered by employed children that were treated at their clinics. Employed children suffered deep cuts from mechanical machines and sharp instruments in mechanic workshops, butcheries and carpentry and from glass in recycling activities. A child engaged in construction activities suffered cut and bruises from falling objects (stones and bricks). Cuts and bruises from fights at work were other commonly treated injuries. Severe eye injuries occurred to children working in welding and metal works. Children engaged in agricultural activities particularly children at the Jerash Camp suffered injuries and severe fungal infections to toes and feet as they worked barefoot. Children shepherds were commonly treated for Malta Fever and from animal bites (donkeys and dogs) that often required stitching. Doctors at the UNRWA clinics also reported treating street vendors from frost bites in winter and from heat strokes in summer. Street children were reported to suffer motor vehicle related injuries while pushing their grocery carts.

Negative consequences of child labor as reported by key informants were (1) delinquency and substance abuse; (2) negative effect on educational attainment; (3) economic exploitation of children; and (4) physical and sexual abuse by employers and older employees.

Field Survey

Results of the field survey are valuable as indicators rather than actual statistics of the magnitude of child labor and labor conditions of children in refugee camps and poverty pockets. The purposive sample design employed did not allow extrapolation of results to the total population of employed children.

The total number of interviewed employed children was 377, of which 95% were males. The total number of interviewed mothers was 245, and the total number of interviewed employers was 355. Three quarters of the interviewed children (76%) reportedly attended school and 24% were school drop-outs.

In the industrial areas, the majority of the children worked as assistants in auto-repair shops, in metal workshops, carpentry and upholstery enterprises, and in food handling. In refugee camps and in poverty pockets the children engaged in a variety of occupations. The most predominant occupations were independent vendors, auto-repair shop assistant, carpentry and upholstery, handicrafts, kitchen work and working in grocery stalls.

Results strongly indicate that the majority of employed children were exploited as they earned very low wages for very long hours of labor, exceeding the legal limit. The majority of the children reportedly worked between 8-12 hours per day. Some children (as high as 15% in refugee camps) reportedly worked longer than 12 hours per day. A large percentage of interviewed employed children had no weekly day off ; the percentages were: 43%, 29%, and 26% in refugee camps, industrial areas, and poverty pockets respectively. Over 50% of the employed children earned less than JD 30 per month.

Employed children reported a variety of occupational hazards that employed children were exposed to. Hazards included: accidents from sharp and moving machinery, and burns from explosive gasses and substances. Children reported facing a variety of problems at work. In addition to occupational accidents, employed children reported suffering physical abuse by their employers. Physical abuse by employers was reported to be the highest in industrial areas. Ten percent of the employed children who responded to child abuse questions reported experiencing sexual harassment.

According to employed children, the main causes for child labor were: helping the family financially, gaining work experience, avoiding school, and lack of recreational activities. According to mothers, financial help to the family was the overriding cause for child employment. About one fifth of the employed children reported using their incomes towards meeting school expenses. According to employed children who were school drop-outs, the leading causes for school drop-out were: low academic achievement, child employment, lack of desire for education, and punishment by teachers.

Results suggest that children of unemployed and uneducated parents were at risk of child employment and school drop-out respectively. Analytical statistics (Chi-square statistics) revealed significant associations between parental unemployment and number of hours worked by children. Also there was a statistically significant association between lack of parental education and school drop-out.

Work sites where children were employed were observed to have unsanitary and hazardous environmental conditions. Onsite observations revealed that work sites such as carpentry and auto-repair shops lacked ventilation and had very high noise levels and large amounts of dust and other air pollutants. Smoking was observed at close proximity of flammable substances.

The majority of interviewed employed children reported no good relationship with their families. Five case profiles of employed children who were highly distressed and suffered neglect at home and physical and psychological abuse in their work environments were included in the study.

Governmental Policies

Labor Law No. 8 of 1996 raised the minimum age from 13 to 16 years thus closing the gap between the age of employment and the age of compulsory education. One major shortcoming of this new law is that it does not cover children working in family enterprises, agricultural activities, and domestic labor thereby largely excluding females from legal protection. Another gap in Labor Law No. 8 is that it does not specify a minimum age for vocational training of children. Presently, this law implies that any juvenile over the age of seven years can undergo vocational training as an apprentice.

The Ministry of Labor is very concerned with studying the phenomenon of child labor and has just completed a field study to examine the prevalence of child labor and to study conditions under which children are working. The Ministry is aware of the need to increase the number of labor inspectors (total 69) and to strengthen mechanisms of inspection and enforcement of the current labor law with regards to child labor. Better coordination is needed between labor inspectors and school counselors and between labor inspectors and social workers for effective prevention and regulation of child labor.

The Educational Act of 1988 made schooling compulsory for the first 10 years. However, there is no legislative mechanism for enforcing the law on compulsory education. The 1988 Comprehensive Education Reform Program focused among other things on improving the quality of learning in Jordan, improving educational supervision, and on reducing school dropout rates. Although the overall rates of school drop-outs appear low in Jordan (0.93% for all classes in 1994/1995), the drop-out rates vary significantly by region signifying regional specific measures to address the problem. Currently, there are 735 educational supervisors in various Directorates of the Ministry of Education. Counseling services are available in one third of the public schools.

The Ministry of Education has non-formal programs for providing educational services to older individuals who missed educational opportunities at a younger age and for school dropouts. In addition to the academic stream, non-formal educational programs comprise a vocational training stream that includes training and rehabilitation programs supervised by semi-official and voluntary organizations. The Division of non-formal education has plans to conduct a pilot study for conducting week-end camps for children below 16 who work in selected industrial sites. The aim is to develop academic and vocational training skills and provide extra-curricular activities.

Presently, there are no programs designed specifically for employed children. The Ministry of Social Development has programs that deal with street children and the rehabilitation of delinquents. Several governmental and non-governmental poverty alleviation programs exist that are indirectly related to child labor as children are less likely to work when families can meet their basic needs.

Government direct assistance to the poor is provided through four main programs: (1) the National Assistance Fund; (2) medical care exemptions; (3) food coupons and subsidies, and; (4) the Development and Employment Fund. Prior to the newly established Social Productivity Program (SPP) there was no clear coordinated governmental policy to alleviate poverty.

The Semi-governmental Zakat Fund and various other Jordanian and international non-governmental organizations provide financial aid to poor families and loans for income-generating activities. Little information is available regarding the coverage of poverty alleviation programs and to what extent they keep pace with the increasing number of poor families in the country. Ministries of Social Development statistics show that in 1995 only 40% of poor families received some form of assistance. Coordination is needed among governmental and non-governmental organizations to avoid duplication of aid to some families while others remain unreached.

5.0 Conclusions and Recommendations

Results indicate that child labor in Jordan is concentrated in informal sector enterprises and is mostly temporary and seasonal. Child labor in Jordan is a product of poverty, perceptions of diminishing social and economic returns from education, and lack of extra-curricular activities for children. Recognizing the socio-economic context of the phenomenon of child labor in Jordan, and in the presence of a weak economy and high levels of poverty in Jordan, it is unrealistic at the present time to aim at total eradication of child labor. In the short-term, regulation of child labor in Jordan and removing children from exploitative and hazardous work conditions seems more realistic than a total ban on child labor.

It is important for policy makers and relevant parties (including ministers, legislators and workers' unions) to formulate a clear definition of child labor for policy setting and for developing effective programs to combat child labor. The distinction between 'child labor' and 'child work' is important for the selection and development of policies and strategies incorporating prohibitions, which address child labor and regulations, which address work.

Since child labor is a complex phenomenon with multiple underlying factors such as poverty, school-drop-outs, lack of parental education and lack of youth activities, a multidimensional approach is needed for combating child labor. Such an approach requires inter-sectoral cooperation and should combine long term strategies for prevention and regulation with short term strategies to regulate child labor. Regulation of child labor aims at removing any negative physical or psychosocial effects on children's health or physical, social and mental development. It is recommended that short-term and long-term measures for combating child labor include advocacy and public awareness campaigns to increase awareness of decision-makers, parents, teachers, and children on child rights and on the

negative consequences of child labor.

Both short-term and long-term measures for regulation and prevention of child labor respectively are presented in the sections below.

Short-term Measures

1. A national study using probability sampling techniques is recommended to develop accurate statistics, provide a database on the magnitude of child labor nationwide, and on the various occupations children are engaged in. Such a study should take into account female employment. In-depth qualitative data that explore the variety of realities faced by working children are needed.

2. Subsequent to the findings of the field survey conducted recently by the Ministry of Labor and the recommended national study, children who work long hours, at night, and in hazardous occupations where they are exposed to dangerous machinery and equipment and to toxic substances and fumes (such as pesticides in agricultural activities) should be removed from such occupations.

3. The Labor Inspectorate Division at the Ministry of Labor should be strengthened. The number of inspectors should be increased and the inspectors should be given specific training on child labor.

4. The work of vendors and street children should be regulated rather than totally banned. Banning of street selling may push children into more exploitative and illicit forms of labor. It is recommended that the Ministry of Social Development in cooperation with the Ministry of Education apply special programs to educate street children and link them with the educational cycle whenever possible.

5. Programs are needed for helping older children find suitable employment opportunities during summer holidays. Conditions of work should be improved for summer employment and apprenticeship. Employment should be compatible with the age, health, skills, and educational and developmental level of the child.

6. Conditions of work under the apprenticeship system should be improved. Currently, under the present apprenticeship system children are exploited and abused. Measures recommended are: reduction in working hours, implementation of health and safety measures, improvements in pay, and increased access to relevant education, health services and recreation. Children undergoing vocational training in the private sector should be regularly supervised and monitored.

7. In addition to improving working conditions, child labor programs should aim at increased access to education, proper nutrition, health services, and recreational activities and participation in community life. Non-formal educational and vocational training programs for school drop-outs should be strengthened and expanded.

8. Public awareness campaigns are recommended for increasing awareness of policy makers, legislators, employers, parents, teachers, and children themselves on child

rights and on the phenomenon of child labor and its negative impact on children and society.

Long Term Measures

1. Integrate child labor programs in national planning for development as well as in national strategies for poverty alleviation (Social Productivity Program) and strategies for improvement of the quality of life for children and their families.

2. Legislative and Policy Measures

The current labor law in Jordan should be revised to include provisions for children working in agriculture, domestic labor, and family enterprises.

A mechanism for enforcement of compulsory education in the basic education cycle is needed. Currently, there is no legal mechanism or authority for enforcing the law on compulsory education.

It is recommended that the Juvenile Act of 1968 be updated to give legal authority to social workers and other ministry workers to provide follow-up care on cases of juvenile delinquents and neglected or abused children.

It is recommended that child abuse provisions in the penal code of 1960 be updated. Article 62(a) should be amended to prohibit parents from abusing their children. Also, Article 334 (2) of the same penal code should be amended to give the right to the child to file his complaint freely.

3. Advocacy for child rights is necessary to ensure implementation of the various provisions of the CRC and the Jordanian Child Rights Law currently underway. A social action front is needed in the long-term to lobby against child labor and to motivate major actors instrumental in protecting children from abuse and neglect. The National Coalition for Children in Jordan can play a key advocacy and lobbying role in this regard.

Concluding Remarks

Child labor is a product of interwoven multiple factors that require multiple strategies from different sectors and at different levels of society. Although the Ministry of Labor has the primary responsibility for dealing with child labor, intersectoral cooperation (labor, social development, education, planning and youth) and collaboration among governmental and non-governmental organizations is necessary for an effective convergent approach to combat child labor. In addition to regulation and enforcement and in order to be effective, child labor policies and programs should target the following areas; education and training, social welfare services, protected work schemes, advocacy and public awareness raising.

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Key to Acronyms

CDEC	**Children in Especially Difficult Circumstances**
CRC	**Convention on the Rights of the Child**
EURPS	**Employment Unemployment Returnees and Poverty Survey**
ILO	**International Labor Organization**
IPEC	**International Program for the Elimination of Child Labor**
NAF	**National Assistance Fund**
NGO	**Non-Governmental Organization**
NTFC	**National Task Force for Children**
SPP	**Social Productivity Program**
UNDP	**United Nations Development Program**
UNESCWA	**United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia**
UNHCR	**United Nations High Commission on Refugees**
UNICEF	**United Nations Children's fund**
UNRWA	**United Nations Relief and Welfare Agency**

1.0 Introduction

1.1 Overview

The practice of hiring young child workers is known to exist in Jordan despite laws prohibiting children below the age of 16 from working. The sight of young children selling or begging is a visible phenomenon in Jordanian cities. Ministry of Social Development statistics reveal that the problem of children begging or selling goods on the streets is growing in magnitude every year (Ministry of Social Development, 1996).

There are no accurate statistics on the nature and extent of child labor in Jordan. Little literature or research is available despite the increasing public awareness of the phenomenon of "Street Children" as reflected in published newspaper articles. Employment surveys conducted periodically in Jordan between 1961 and 1994 are believed to have under-estimated statistics on the prevalence of child labor in Jordan. A 1991 employment survey revealed that three percent (3%) of males and less than one percent (1%) of girls from the 13-14 year age group were economically active in 1991, the most recent year for which data are available (Department of Statistics, 1991). It is believed that households contacted by the surveys were reluctant to acknowledge that they had children working illegally. Also, employment surveys do not take into account children who are working in the informal sector, such as domestic help, garages, small enterprises, and farms.

In May 1991, the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan ratified the International Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC). The CRC represents one of the most important international instruments for combating child labor and economic exploitation of children. By ratifying the CRC, Jordan recognized the right of the child to be protected from economic exploitation and from performing work that is likely to be hazardous or interfere with the child's education or to be harmful to the child's health and development.

1.2 Background

Child labor is broadly defined as "work which is exploitative and/or dangerous, which undermines the child's physical and psycho-social health and development, and/or deprives him/her of an education and access to other basic services" (UNICEF, 1994). The International Program on the Elimination of Child Labor (IPEC) has a similar operational definition for child labor. Child labor is operationally defined as "work which is detrimental to the physical, psychological, or intellectual well-being of the child" (ILO, 1995). This definition distinguishes child labor from child work which means activities that are productive and are part of a child's development. Child work is defined as "work which may involve paid or unpaid productive or survival activities, within the family or outside" (Mustafa, 1996). Most child labor is believed to lie along a continuum with hazardous and exploitative tasks at one end and work which encourages the development and socialization of the child at the other end. The distinction between these extremes is important for the selection and development of policies and strategies incorporating regulations which address work and prohibitions which address child labor (Mustafa, 1996).

The population of Jordan reached 4,444,000 in 1996; 79% of the population lives in urban areas (Department of Statistics, 1996a). An urban area is defined as an area having a population of 5,000 or more. Although the fertility rate fell from 7.6 in 1976 to 4.6 by 1994, Jordan's annual population growth rate was 3.2% for 1996, one of the highest in the world. This high natural growth rate in combination with the influx of Palestinian refugees following the 1948 and the 1967 Arab-Israeli wars has caused a rapid increase in Jordan's population. Jordan also received approximately 210,000 returnees from Kuwait in 1990-1991 as a result of the Gulf crisis (Department of Statistics, 1991). The total number of Palestinians currently registered with the United Nations Relief and Welfare Agency (UNRWA) is 1.29 million of which 262,633 live in 10 official UNRWA camps. UNRWA provides education, health services and some relief assistance to residents of these camps (UNRWA, 1997). The remainder of the Palestinians are integrated into the Jordanian community with the poorest concentrated in the peri-urban areas of the Amman-Zarqa region.

In addition to the extremely high growth rate, Jordan's population is characterized by a young age structure. Approximately 41% of the population (41.4%) in Jordan is under the

age of 15 resulting in a high ratio of economically dependent to economically-productive members of society. This places a strain on the household's ability to meet the desired and sometimes basic health and educational needs of the children who often come from large families. Instead, basic resources must be expended to meet food and subsistence items (Department of Statistics, 1996a).

1.3 Socio-Economic Overview

The series of economic set-backs which faced Jordan from the beginning of the recession in the early 1980's to the end of the Gulf crisis led to the emergence of a new class of urban and rural poor. The economic recession, prompted by a decline in regional oil revenues, led to high unemployment and inflation and necessitated the implementation of an economic structural adjustment program. Although there has been a modest economic recovery following 1991, the economic recession and subsequent stringent economic adjustment program have resulted in lower living standards and higher rates of poverty and unemployment than at any time in the past (UNICEF, 1997). This has occurred despite governmental and non-governmental programs to alleviate poverty.

Poverty studies show a quadrupling of households in absolute poverty between 1987 and 1992 (World Bank, 1994). A comprehensive government study on poverty incidence published in 1993 found that 21% of families (i.e., around 880,000 persons) live in absolute poverty[1] , and that 7% of families (i.e., around 273,000 persons) live in abject poverty[2] (Ministry of Social Development, 1993). This study like other government poverty studies showed that the absolute numbers of poor are greatest in the populous governorates of Amman and Zarqa. However, the greatest concentration of poverty was in the sparsely populated governorates of Karak, Balqa, and Mafraq (World Bank, 1994; UNICEF, 1996b).

[1] Officially defined absolute poverty line for a family of 6.8 persons is JD 97 per month for a family not paying rent and JD 119 for a family paying rent. This is defined as the minimum expenditure necessary to meet the minimum food, housing, education, health, transportation, and clothing needs of household members.

[2] Officially defined abject poverty line for a family of 6.8 persons is JD 61 per month. This is defined as the minimum expenditure needed to meet the basic caloric requirements for house-hold members to remain active and function normally.

The studies indicated no major difference in poverty by gender. In 1991, there were almost 1.6 million children 15 years of age and younger in Jordan of which approximately 375,000 were classified as poor. The Employment, Unemployment, Returnees, and Poverty Survey (EURPS) of 1991 revealed that 71% of those persons in the lowest 10% of the income distribution were under the age of 21 (Department of Statistics, 1991). The EURPS study also found that 21% of children younger than seven years of age lived in poor households while 25% of children between seven and 15 years of age were poor. These age groups had the highest incidence of poverty and the data strongly support the belief that children are disproportionately poor in Jordan.

Currently, the official unemployment rate in Jordan is at 12% overall, and at 24.2% percent among females (Department of Statistics, 1996). The unemployment rate was 14% in 1991. A recent unpublished study completed in early 1997 by the Center for Strategic Studies at the University of Jordan estimates the unemployment rate to be between 22-27.5% (depending on the definition of unemployment). The high unemployment rate is attributed to several factors. These include: (1) the decline in economic growth rates; (2) the increase in the natural growth rate of the population; (3) the decline in out-migration to the Gulf States; (4) the return of a large number of Jordanians working abroad; (5) the increase in foreign labor; (6) an incompatibility between the outputs of the educational and training system and labor market requirements; and, (7) the lack of regular information on labor supply and demand. The most important consequences of unemployment are: (1) rising crime rates among the unemployed; (2) lower health and educational levels for the children of the unemployed; (3) high drop-out rates of children from schools due to the inability of the unemployed household head to pay for their children's education; and, (4) increasing rate of migration from rural to urban areas, especially to major cities (Ministry of Planning, 1993).

The increased incidence of poverty and the high inflation in Jordan has placed a major strain on family and community coping mechanisms. As a result, the number of families living under economic and social stress has increased. Although the government has social safety net programs to aid the poor, the Ministry of Social Development estimated in 1995 that only 63,000 out of 107,000 identified needy families received financial aid, suggesting that a high proportion of vulnerable families are unreached (UNICEF, 1997).

It is within this socioeconomic context that child labor in Jordan should be studied. Child labor for the most part emerges out of the socioeconomic conditions prevailing in the economy. Poverty driven by large family size, inflation, and unemployment are factors largely contributing to child labor and children "out of place". Recent studies on children in exceptionally difficult circumstances in two low-income urban areas of Tafayleh and Nuzha in the greater Amman area revealed the social problems of child neglect and abuse resulting from rapid urban expansion within a framework of limited economic opportunity (UNICEF, 1997; Questscope, 1995). Participatory needs appraisal in these two low-income areas revealed a high prevalence of drug and alcohol abuse among children, high drop-out rates from school, children's involvement in illicit income generating activities, and early sexual relationships. Social workers, doctors, lawyers, and other child-care professionals agree that physical and sexual abuse of children exist as social problems in Jordan.

1.4 Applicable Labor Laws

The new Jordan Labor Law of 1996 (Article 73 of Labor Law No. 8) prohibits any person under the age of 16 from engaging in formal employment, legislation with respect to vocational training not withstanding. The new labor law sets restrictions on the employment of young persons, defined as persons of legal working age who have not yet completed 17 years of age. However, the law does not provide any protection for children working in informal sector enterprises such as family enterprises, agricultural activities and domestic labor (Article 3).

The minimum working age in Jordan formerly was 13 years (Article 21 of the Jordanian Labor Law of 1960). The new minimum age limit of 16 is more consistent with the compulsory schooling age limit and provisions of the Educational Act of 1988 which makes schooling compulsory during the first 10 years. The Educational Act also stipulates that the student shall not leave the educational system before reaching the age of 16 (Article 10 (c)). The Ministry of Education presently is following-up on legislation that will enforce the law on compulsory education. Although the overall rates of drop-outs appear to be low in Jordan (1.5%), the rates vary significantly by region. A 1995 Ministry of Education study of 50 schools with drop-out rates exceeding five percent indicated that 84% of families with drop-

outs had a monthly income of less than JD 200, and 43% had a monthly income of less than JD 100. Family poverty and the need to work, violence by teachers, and poor academic performance were reported to be major factors for school drop-outs (Ministry of Education, 1995).

Article 74 of Labor Law No. 8 (1996) states that young persons cannot be employed in any dangerous, strenuous or hazardous employment, as determined by the Minister of Labor after consultations with related official institutions. To this effect, a list of hazardous or strenuous occupations was distributed to all directorates within the Ministry of Labor for strict enforcement of the provisions of the law by labor inspectors. The same law also states that young persons cannot work for more than six hours per day and should be given a rest period of no less than one hour after working four hours continuously. Young persons cannot work between 8:00 p.m. and 6:00 a.m. on weekends, and national and religious holidays (Article 75). Before employing a young person, an employer must obtain his/her birth certificate, health certificate (from a specialized doctor and notarized by the Ministry of Health), and the guardian's written approval (Article 76). Employers who do not conform with any of the above articles of the law can be fined a minimum of 100 JD not to exceed 500 JD. The fine is to be doubled if the offense is repeated (Article 77). Despite the strictness of the new labor law, it fails to cover children working in family undertakings, agriculture and domestic labor where, paradoxically , the majority of children work. The law does not apply to children who work as domestic servants (Article 3).

Based on interviews with key officials in governmental and non-governmental organizations and based on observations and interviews in the field, there is a general consensus that most child employment in Jordan is in the informal sector. Examples include: street selling; working in small shops, garages, parking lots, restaurants, and other small family and non-family enterprises; farming; shepherding; tourism; and cross-border smuggling. While it is within the mandate of the Ministry of Labor to inspect and monitor cases of child labor in formal institutions, dealing with children beggars and street vendors is within the mandate of the Ministry of Social Development. Interviews with officials in both ministries revealed that there are no joint actions or efforts between the two ministries in relation to dealing with street children.

1.5 Study Objectives

This study is concerned with economic activities of children under 16 years of age who are working or employed on a regular basis for the purpose of providing a livelihood for themselves or their families. For the purposes of this study, child labor is considered to involve the participation of any child less than 16 years of age in any economic activity, regardless of the type of work, the employer, the nature of the job, or the activity. As noted above, Jordanian labor laws restrict children from working if they are less than 16 years of age.

The International Program on the Elimination of Child Labor (IPEC) of the International Labor Organization (ILO) commissioned this study on child labor in Jordan. The National Task Force for Children (NTFC) was supportive of the study as unregulated child labor interferes with a child's education and constitutes a form of child abuse and neglect, a rising social problem in Jordan. The objectives of this study were twofold:

(1) Explore the magnitude of child labor in Jordan based on existing information and the collection of additional field data (both qualitative and quantitative) to supplement existing information; and,
(2) Recommend preventive as well as remedial measures to combat illegal or harmful child labor.

Sub-objectives of this study included: (1) identifying sub-populations of children most at risk to child labor (for example, school drop-outs); (2) identifying inadequacies in the Jordan Labor Law with respect to child labor; (3) identifying inadequacies in the educational and social assistance legislation that may adversely affect child labor; and, (4) examining vocational training programs and existing non-formal educational programs for school drop-outs in relation to child labor.

The recommendations of this study also will open channels of communication among concerned governmental and non-governmental organizations and will facilitate addressing underlying causes of child labor such as poverty and unemployment in a national plan of

action. The study should increase awareness among the public, policy makers and legislators regarding child labor in Jordan and the urgent need to examine current legislation and address relevant social problems such as child abuse (both physical and sexual), child neglect, and childhood injuries. Because child labor is a complex phenomenon with multiple underlying factors such as poverty and school drop-outs, this study will highlight the need for multi-dimensional child labor preventive measures such as vocational training, improving the quality of education, legislative measures, public education, and community based development programs to alleviate poverty and to prevent school drop-outs.

2. 0 Methodology

Information on child labor in Jordan presented in this study was obtained from both secondary and primary sources. The lack of adequate statistics on child labor, particularly in the informal sector, prompted the collection of primary data. This was necessary for a fuller understanding of the phenomenon of child labor in Jordan and its causes.

Information was obtained from three main sources: (1) previous studies, surveys (formal and informal), reports, and newspaper articles; (2) interviews conducted with various ministries, non-governmental organizations, general union of workers' unions, and community outreach professionals and lawyers active in defending children's rights; and, (3) field research conducted as part of this study during a five week period between July 9th through August 20th, 1997. Field research sources were the target populations in a purposive sample survey conducted in four-refugee camps, four poverty pockets, and four industrial areas in the cities of Amman, Zarqa and Jerash. Both qualitative and quantitative data about child labor were collected from interviews with key informants: administrators of key governmental organizations; community professionals and outreach workers in non-governmental organizations; and members of the target populations (employers, parents, and children). The purpose of the field campaign was to gather information on the prevalence of child labor, the magnitude of the phenomenon, the sectors in which it is concentrated, and the causes, conditions and consequences of child labor in Jordan.

The scope of work for this study was executed in three stages as described below.

2.1 Planning Stage

During the planning stage the following tasks were performed:

1. Identified sources of data for child labor; (governmental and non-governmental organizations, trade unions, societies, chambers of industry and commerce, voluntary societies, and others).

2. Made contacts (verbal and written) for obtaining relevant documents, studies, reports and databases related to child labor and associated social problems (poverty, education, domestic violence) and for obtaining legislation on child labor, compulsory education, and mechanisms for enforcement.

3. Prepared instruments for interviews with key informants and members of the target population (children, employers, and mothers).

2.2 Data Collection Stage

In this stage, quantitative data were collected from existing formal and non-formal surveys. In addition, qualitative data were collected based on interviews conducted with key governmental and non-governmental officials and with key informants in four low-income areas, four refugee camps, and four industrial areas in the greater Amman area and the cities of Jerash and Zarqa. The purpose for collecting qualitative data was to describe whether child labor is prevalent and to gather information on the causes, conditions, and consequences of child labor as perceived by the respondents. Observational methods were used to collect information on conditions of child labor. The instruments used for collecting data were based on the Rapid Assessment Methodology developed by the ILO and UNICEF (ILO, 1995).

Specific tasks completed in this stage included:

1. Conducted interviews with officials (administrators) in governmental and non-governmental organizations to obtain quantitative data (from existing surveys and studies) and qualitative data on child labor. Key ministries were: Ministry of Social Development, Ministry of Labor, Ministry of Education, Ministry of Planning, Ministry of Youth and Culture, and Ministry of Tourism (for statistics on children working in the tourism sector). Interviews were conducted with researchers in the Public Security Department as they are closely involved in school violence, domestic violence, and child abuse.

2. Conducted interviews with administrators and community professionals (outreach workers) in UNICEF, UNRWA, and non-governmental organizations conducting community development projects such as Adventist Development and Relief Agency (ADRA) and Save the Children. Also, interviews were conducted with counselors in family counseling and lawyers active in the field of child rights.

3. Conducted interviews with key informants in each of the four refugee camps. Key informants included social workers, medical staff, school principals, teachers, school counselors and active members of camp committees (e.g., committee for improving camp conditions). Open-ended questions on child labor were asked pertaining to the extent of the phenomenon, causes, conditions, and consequences of child labor.

4. Conducted a field study in which children, their employers, and their mothers were interviewed in selected refugee camps, low-income urban areas, and industrial areas in Amman and Jerash and Zarqa. Open and close-ended questionnaires were administered. The field study methodology is outlined below.

2.2.1 Field Study Design

The objectives for collecting primary data were to explore the magnitude of the child labor phenomenon and to examine the perceptions of children, parents, and employers about the causes of child labor, the working conditions of child laborers, and the consequences of child labor.

For the purposes of this study, choosing a random sample survey was prohibitive due to the absence of basic information which could serve as a master sampling frame and due to the time limitations. Also, because children, their employers, and their mothers were to be interviewed and their answers compared, a purposive sample was determined to be more appropriate. This sampling approach is consistent with the Rapid Assessment Methodology (ILO, 1995) applied in this study. This methodology is appropriate because the study

objectives were to explore how widespread the phenomenon of child labor is in Jordan as a preliminary study and not to give exact figures of the proportion of employed children nationwide. The purposive sampling approach was used for interviewing children in 12 selected locations in the greater Amman area and the two cities of Jerash and Zarqa.

2.2.2 Selection of Field Study Sites

Based on interviews with administrators and community professionals and outreach workers in the Ministry of Social Development and refugee camps, three types of sites were selected for the field study. These included: low-income urban areas, refugee camps, and industrial (i.e., manufacturing and small repair enterprises) areas inside and outside of Amman.

Based on contacts with the Directorate of Local Community Development of the Ministry of Social Development and with the Housing and Urban Development Corporation, four low-income urban areas of Greater Amman area were selected as study sites. These areas were identified as urban low-income pockets with high population density. These neighborhoods are Al-Nuzha, Tafayleh, Jabal Al-Naser, and Dabaybeh.

The Al-Nuzha and Tafayleh neighborhoods are sites of urban development projects commissioned by UNICEF. The children in these two areas also were identified as children in Especially Difficult Circumstances (Questscope, 1995). The Al-Nuzha neighborhood is located in east Amman and is situated between Jabal Al-Nuzha and Jabal Al-Hussein adjacent to the Jabal Al-Hussein refugee camp. The population is 10 -12,000 and its area is 0.25 square kilometer. The Tafayleh neighborhood is situated between Jabal Al-Taj and Jabal Al-Jofeh in east Amman. Its population is 12 - 15,000 and its area is 2.25 square kilometers. This neighborhood also is densely populated with multiple storey buildings very close together. This neighborhood is isolated from the rest of the city as it is built on the edge of a steep mountain which makes communication difficult. The Jabal Al-Naser area is a larger urban area (16 square kilometers) situated east of Amman. The Hay Al-Naser area along the main street and adjacent to the Naser refugee camp was targeted for this study. The Dabaybeh neighborhood lies south of Amman between Quweismeh and the Wihdat refugee camp. It has a highly dense population of 30,000 and an area of 0.5 square kilometer.

Key informants including social workers reported child labor to be prevalent in Palestinian refugee camps. Consequently, four refugee camps of a total of 10 camps registered by UNRWA were included in this study. Selected refugee camps were characterized by poverty, high population density, and high unemployment. Of the two camps in southern Amman, the more populous Wihdat refugee camp (official registered population of 43,180) was chosen. Of the two camps in northern Amman, the Baqa'a refugee camp was chosen (official registered population of 72,499). Of the two camps in Zarqa, the Zarqa refugee camp (official registered population of 15,186) was chosen and not the Marka refugee camp because the Marka industrial area was already included in the study sample. It was assumed that children from Marka refugee camp would be working in the garages and industrial enterprises sampled in the Marka area. Of the two refugee camps in the Governorate of Irbid, the Jerash refugee camp (also called Ghazza camp) was selected because it is isolated and has a large unemployed population who had come from Gaza during the 1967 Arab-Israeli conflict.

Four industrial areas full of garages, repair shops, and trade services were targeted for the field study. Three of these areas were in greater Amman: Wadi Al Seer, Sahab, and Wadi Al-Rimam. The fourth industrial area is located in Marka northeast of Amman. These areas were selected because child labor was rampant in these areas based on information from key informants in the Ministry of Housing and Urban Development Department, from outreach workers at the Ministry of Social Development and non-governmental organizations, and from the general public.

2.2.3 Instrument Development and Pretesting

The instruments used for data collection were questionnaires administered to the working children, their mothers (or adult female respondents in the household), and their employers. Three sets of questionnaires were used: one for children (Appendix A), one for mothers (Appendix B), and one for employers (Appendix C). A main questionnaire and one of four sub-questionnaires were completed for each child. The sub-questionnaire was selected based on whether the child attended school or not and whether the child was self-employed or not. The interviewer would choose the corresponding sub-questionnaire based

on the child's response to these two questions. In order to facilitate the interview process, a different color was chosen for each of the four sub-questionnaires (see Appendices A1, A2, A3, and A4).

In addition to the close-ended items on the questionnaires, the child was asked qualitative open-ended questions pertaining to the causes for work, a typical day in the life of a working child, and employment conditions. Questions related to physical or sexual abuse also were open-ended. Similarly, the questionnaires administered to mothers included open-ended questions pertaining to causes for the child's employment, conditions of employment, employment consequences, and expectations for the child's future. The questionnaire administered to employers also had open-ended items for collecting qualitative data pertaining to occupational risks and accidents, problems faced by employed children, and consequences of employment (measured by behavioral changes among young children).

The instruments were pre-tested in the field and modified prior to administration. Redundant and ambiguous questions that were invalid were modified. Triangulation, the use of multiple sources of information, was used in order to cross-check the validity and credibility of the data obtained. Some sets of questions on causes of child labor were administered to mothers and children to compare responses and corroborate findings. Also, some sets of questions were administered to children and employers on conditions of employment. Questions in relation to behavioral changes among employed children were asked to both mothers and employers and responses were compared.

2.2.4 Data Collection Process

Using the Rapid Assessment Methodology (ILO, 1995), work-site based interviews were the primary techniques employed for interviewing children and their employers. The interviews were conducted within the workplace or in the immediate vicinity. This technique was used to gain an insight into working conditions of children and to observe children while working in order to obtain concrete information on child labor.

Eight qualified interviewers were recruited to collect field data. All the interviewers had a university level education in the social sciences or related field. Two interviewers were males with extensive field experience in low-income urban areas of Amman. Two of the interviewers were members of the NTFC staff. Two interviewers were community outreach workers with the Ministry of Social Development: one with a law degree and the other with a social science background. Both Ministry of Social Development interviewers had extensive experience in field data collection and were recruited for data collection in the poverty pockets (along with two other interviewers). An experienced field coordinator was recruited for monitoring, coordinating and supervising field activities. The field coordinator participated in devising the instruments, pre-testing the instruments, and training the interviewers.

The eight interviewers were given an orientation to the field study program and training over a one day period. The training emphasized the administration of the questionnaires and clarified qualitative aspects of the instruments. Probing methods for obtaining sensitive information relating to child abuse and describing a typical day in the life of a working child also were emphasized. Official letters signed by the NTFC were handed out to interviewers explaining that the objective of the study was to help working children and their families and to regulate labor rather than to apply punitive measures against employers or children's families. During the interviews, the interviewers assured the interviewees of the confidentiality of their responses and whenever possible interviewed the children separately from their parents or employers to ensure reliability of responses.

The goal was to interview 30 children, 30 related employers, and 30 mothers of interviewed children in each of the 12 field study locations. In some study locations, these figures were slightly more or less than targeted, because in some cases the employer or household of the working child could not be located. Table 1 presents a summary of the schedule for the field study and the number of interviewers and interviewees for each location.

Table 1. Fieldwork Schedule and Number of Interviewers in Each Location.

	Number of Employers	Number of Children	Number of Mothers
Industrial Areas Number of Interviewers (4) Study Period: July 9-July 13, 1997	105	115	--
Refugee Camps (4) Number of Interviewers (8) Study Period: July 15-July 23, 1997	118	130	120
Low-Income Urban Areas Number of Interviewers (4) Study Period: August 10-19, 1997	132	132	125

The data collection strategy used in the field study was to choose the youngest working male child in each interviewed household to be the index child, to be referred to when interviewing mothers in each household. In the majority of cases, however, the employed child was interviewed at the employment site, then the child would accompany the interviewer to his/her household. If the mother was not available in the household, then the oldest sister was interviewed. Limiting the household interview to female respondents was to ensure comparability between responses. In the industrial areas, interviewers worked in pairs, one male interviewer administered the questionnaire to the employer while a female interviewer administered the questionnaire to the child.

2.3 Data Review and Analysis

Activities performed under this stage includes: review of available studies and existing legislation on labor and education; secondary and primary data analysis.

Secondary Data

Secondary data on child labor available from surveys, reports, and published and unpublished studies were reviewed and evaluated. Strengths and weaknesses of data collection and analysis methods were identified. Statistical summaries about child labor based on data from employment surveys were prepared. Reviewed studies were not limited

to studies directly related to child labor but included studies on the situation of children, poverty, and social development and school dropouts.

Primary Data

Qualitative primary data were collected from interviews with key informants: administrators of key governmental organizations; community professionals and outreach workers in non-governmental organizations; and members of the target populations (children, parents, employers). On-site observations of the interviewers of child labor conditions were described. Children who were at risk and who had physical, psychological, or social stress were described based on field observations and verbal responses during the interviews. A few case studies describing a typical day in the life of an employed child were included in the findings.

Both quantitative and qualitative data were transcribed, coded, and statistically analyzed and reduced to give statistical summaries. Descriptive and analytical statistical techniques were used. The Statistical Package For Social Sciences (SPSS) was used for statistical Analyses. Descriptive statistics (percentages and frequencies) were used to classify employed children by age, sex, nationality, educational level, schooling, part-time versus full-time employment, type of employment, family size, health status of child, parental status, parental employment, and family income. Descriptive statistics were used to describe working conditions. Children were classified by number of hours worked per day, number of days worked per week, and by kinds of problems faced at work and by treatment by employer. The number of events of child abuse (both physical and sexual) that a child heard of or experienced also was tabulated. Descriptive statistics were also used to tabulate causes for child labor and school drop-out and how employed children spend their income.

Consequences of child labor were measured by two questions asking mothers and employers of behavioral changes among children following employment. Descriptive answers of mothers and employers were analyzed and tabulated.

Statistical analyses were performed on the sample as a whole and by area (refugee camps, poverty pockets, and industrial areas) to give an overall view of child labor and to allow comparisons among responses in each of the three types of sampled areas. Chi-square

statistical tests were used to examine statistically significant associations between the extent of child labor (part-time or full-time) and between each of the following variables: family size, single parent, income, school satisfaction, child health, and parental employment. Chi-square tests were also used to examine associations between parental education and whether the child was in school or not.

For triangulation, correlation analyses (correlation coefficients) were used to compare responses of mothers and children with regard to questions relating to causes for child's employment, perceptions of importance of school, and problems faced by the child at work. Correlation analyses also were used to compare responses of employers and mothers in regard to behavioral change among children following employment.

Review of Existing Legislation on Labor and Education

Existing legislation on child labor was reviewed to determine the extent to which children are protected by Jordan's legal framework. Also, legislation on compulsory education and mechanisms for reporting violations and law enforcement was examined. Educational policies and programs relating to improving the quality of education and preventing school drop-out were reviewed. Primary activities under this item included:

- Assessing the current labor legislation and its adequate coverage and protection of children;
- Assessing the role of the labor inspectorate in reporting on child labor practices and law violations (examine the gap between legislation and practice);
- Assessing the enforcement of compulsory education in Jordan and its impact on school drop-out and child labor;
- Assessing the extent to which educational counseling is utilized in schools;
- Assessing the effectiveness of school inspection systems in controlling enrollment, attendance, and quality education;

- Assessing vocational training policies and programs including special formal and non-formal training programs that exist for assisting children with special needs and learning difficulties.

Lastly, the role of employers and workers' organizations/unions in preventing or regulating child labor was reviewed and assessed. Gaps or inadequacies in the current labor legislation and other legislation on education or rights of the child were identified using the ILO standards on child labor as a basis for assessment.

Government Social Assistance (Anti-poverty) Schemes

This activity focused on examining governmental social safety net programs and existing governmental and non-governmental welfare programs for alleviating poverty and for income-generating activities and their effectiveness in combating school drop-out and child labor. The role of government assistance schemes, community development projects, and vocational training policies and programs related to child labor were reviewed and assessed.

3. 0 Extent of Child Labor in Jordan

There are no precise or accurate statistics on the magnitude or extent of child labor in Jordan. The only available statistics on employed children are from Jordanian employment surveys conducted periodically since 1961. This section presents a summary of the available statistical information regarding child labor obtained from employment surveys. Data collected from interviews with knowledgeable persons in the field and with relevant organizations also are presented in this section, as well as data collected during the field study described in Section 2.0.

3.1 Employment Survey Data

In a study on child labor in the Arab countries initiated by the Arab Council for Childhood and Development (Fergany, 1993), Jordan ranked fourteenth out of 20 Arab countries in an index of the relative prevalence of child labor. The index was based on two indicators: average years of schooling in 1990 and per capita share of the real Gross Domestic Product (corrected for purchasing power) in 1989[3]. These indicators were considered causally related to the extent of economic activity of children. A high index ranking meant a higher likely prevalence of child labor. However, under-enumeration of child labor and the great variety in the minimum age of economic activity within and among Arab countries limited the effectiveness of these data toward answering basic questions on the size, distribution, trends, and major characteristics of child labor (Fergany, 1993).

Employment survey data presented in Table 2 show the prevalence of economically active children in Jordan between 1961 and 1991 for the study samples. The data suggest approximately three percent of males and less than one percent of females in the 13 - 14 age group were economically active in 1991, the most recent year for which data on this age group were available (Department of Statistics, 1991). By comparison, economically active rates for males and females in the 10 - 14 age group were approximately 10 percent and one percent in 1961, and approximately three percent and a quarter percent in 1987, respectively

[3] The index was defined as the complement of the normalized sum of the standardized indicators to express the relative prevalence of child labor (Fergany: 1993, page 16).

(ESCWA, 1994). The drop in the economically active rates of children between 1961 to 1991 is attributed to increased academic enrollment rates and free compulsory education for the first ten years of schooling.

Table 2. Economically Active Population By Gender, Age and Year.

Year of Study	Age Group	Economically Active Population (%) total	male	female
1961	10 - 14	5.71	9.64	1.12
	15 - 19	5.85	57.02	0.39
1979	15 - 19	20.97	37.18	3.44
1983	15 - 19	17.35	29.82	3.75
1987	10 - 14	1.76	3.16	0.24
	15 - 19	16.66	29.82	2.15
1991	13 - 14	1.76	3.21	0.31
	15 - 19	15.74	28.06	2.34

The data presented in Table 2 suggest a lower female child participation in the labor force than male child participation. This may be partly explained by the local and Arab customs and traditions which, in general, still tend to discourage female employment outside the household. This difference is more pronounced in the 15 - 19 age group as females in this age group tend to get married. However, the differences between male and female activity as reflected in these data are not considered accurate. Female employment tends to be 'hidden' and confined to income-generating activities within the household and consequently not reflected in the data. Embroidery, weaving, and farming are examples of such activities.

More recent statistics from the Department of Statistics (1996b) revealed that 1.1% of females and 13% of males in the 15 - 16 age group of the study sample (15,000 families) were economically active. For the study sample the total number of economically active children in this age group was only 330, of which 92% were males. No statistics were available on economically active children in younger age groups.

These data from employment surveys underestimate the full extent of the child labor phenomenon. The data do not account for child labor (paid and un-paid) in the informal sector such as domestic work, sheep shepherding, tourism and farming activities. Moreover, even if children are working in the formal sector, survey households are reluctant to acknowledge they have children who are working illegally (UNICEF, 1997).

Only two reports prepared by the Ministry of Planning (Hayek, 1997; Tikriti, 1993) focused on child labor in Jordan. Both reports were based on the Employment, Unemployment, Returnees and Poverty Survey (EURPS) of 1991 (Department of Statistics, 1991). These data provide the most recent nationwide statistics on employed children under 16 years of age. Based on data from the EURPS, which comprised 50,000 households nationwide (9% of 1991 total population), the number of employed children aged 13-15 was 9,400. This constituted 1.02% of the total labor force. The majority of employed children in this age group (93.2%) were males and 5.7% of the employed children were non-Jordanians. The distribution of employed children by age and sex is summarized in Table 3 for 1991. The data indicated that the largest percentage of employed children (60.1%) in the 13-15 years age group are 15 years of age. This was true for both males and females. The percentage of working male children who were fifteen years old was 60.9%, while for females the percentage was 48.8%.

The EURPS data indicated the poor educational attainment of working children aged 13-15 (Department of Statistics, 1991). The data also suggested the need for vocational training programs and illiteracy eradication programs among employed children, especially among females. Employed children had a low level of education. A majority of the children (51.5%) only had a primary level education (27.9% of females and 53.3% of males). Children who had vocational training represented only 0.2% of the total employed children and all were males. Of the employed females, 20.9% were illiterate and of the employed males, 3.3% were illiterate. 44.2% of employed females could only read and write and 33.3% of employed males could only read and write.

Table 3. Employed Children Aged 13 - 15 Years by Age and Sex.

Age of Children	Male (% of Study Population)	Female (% of Study Population)	Total (% of Study Population)
13	10.2	20.9	11.0
14	28.8	30.2	28.9
15	60.9	48.8	60.1

The EURPS survey revealed that child labor is concentrated in large urban areas (Department of Statistics, 1991). The majority of children (75.4%) were employed in the Amman, Zarqa, and Irbid Governorates (34.1%, 13.7%, and 27.6%, respectively). In the southern, sparsely populated governorates of Jordan, the percentages of employed children were the least (1.6%, 1.8%, and 5.3% in Ma'an, Tafileh, and Karak, respectively). However, these figures should be interpreted with caution as they do not include children working on farms, engaged in domestic labor or income generating activities for the household, and are employed in other forms of 'hidden' labor that may be concentrated in rural areas.

Of the total labor force in the 13-15 age group, the percentage of children actively looking for employment was 23.8% (Department of Statistics, 1991). Of these children, only 7.7% completed elementary level education. The remainder had lower levels of education. These children are in especially difficult circumstances as they suffer double deprivation, that of school and of work. This extreme form of deprivation seriously compromises participation of these children in society. Eighty-three percent (83%) of these children cited the lack of employment opportunities as the cause for their unemployment.

The EURPS indicated that a large percentage of children work in administration, government, and social security services (26.5%) and in trade services, and hotels and restaurants (24.2%) (Department of Statistics, 1991). Fourteen percent (14.5%) of children work in agricultural activities. It is interesting that the majority of females (50.5%) employed in the 13-15 age group work in agricultural activities compared to 11.9% of employed males. Table 4 presents a summary of these data.

Table 4. Employed Children 13-15 Years of Age by Sex and Economic Activity.

Economic Activity	Female (% of Study Population)	Male (% of Study Population)	Total (% of Study Population)
Agriculture and Fisheries	50.5	11.9	14.5
Mining	-	0.4	0.3
Manufacturing	16.7	18.2	18.1
Construction	-	10.9	10.1
Trade/Restaurants/Hotels	4.8	25.6	24.2
Transportation/Storage/ Communication	-	2.3	2.1
Administration/Defense/ Social Security	9.5	27.7	26.5
Education/Health and Social Services	19.0	2.9	4.0
Other Occupations	-	0.1	0.2

EURPS also presented data regarding various occupations in which children aged 13-15 were engaged (Department of Statistics, 1991). These data are summarized in Table 5. The data were not classified by sex of the child. Such information would be useful for differentiating patterns of employment between males and females. The data suggested that the majority of children are engaged in craft, trade, and elementary occupations. Those who were classified as technicians or specialists are a minority (less than 3.3%) which implies that the majority of employed children receive little or no vocational training to enhance their skills and develop their careers. These occupation data (Table 5) are somewhat difficult to relate to the economic activity data presented in Table 4. For example, there are slight differences in the percentages of children engaged in agriculture and fisheries. In addition, the occupations filled by children engaged in the manufacturing, construction, and mining activities which may tend to be more hazardous and have safety concerns are not clear. A sub-breakdown of the economic activity categories by occupation may provide a clearer understanding of employed children at greater risk relative to safety and health issues.

Table 5. Distribution of Employed Children Aged 13 - 15 by Occupation.

Occupation	%
Administrators/Specialists/Technicians	3.3
Clerks	20.1
Vendors/Service Workers	9.9
Skilled Agricultural and Fishery Workers	14.1
Craft and Related Trade Workers	37.3
Machine Operators/Assemblers	2.0
Elementary Operations	31.3

The majority of employed children (68.3%) in the 13-15 years age group worked for wages (see Table 6). This status of children probably are the most vulnerable and the most exploited. Fourteen percent (14.5%) of children worked for the family and were probably not paid. The children who worked for no wage (10.2%) are most probably apprentices learning vocational or craft skills.

Table 6. Distribution of Employed Children by Employment Status.

Employment Status	%
Work for wage	68.3
Self employed	6.1
Work for family	14.5
Work for no wage	10.2
Unknown	0.8

Table 7 summarizes the percentage of employed children by employment sector and by sex. The highest percentage of employed children (both males and females) have regular employment in the private sector. Approximately 49% (48.9%) of employed females aged 13-15 work in the private sector compared to 38.2% of males of the same age group. The

data also indicated that the percentage of female children employed in family enterprises is higher than that of male children (23.3% versus 16.8%). The family enterprise and non-regular work sectors have the lowest percentage of employed children (17.3% and 17.6%, respectively). This category of employed children who work on a non-regular basis are believed to have no benefits and no protection by the labor law in the event of occupational hazards or accidents (Al Hayek, 1977).

Table 7. Percentage of Employed Children by Employment Sector and by Sex.

Sector	Male (% of Study Population)	Female (% of Study Population)	Total (% of Study Population)
Government	27.3	11.6	26.2
Private (regular)	38.2	48.9	39.0
Private (non-regular)	17.7	16.3	17.6
Family Enterprise	16.8	23.3	17.3

Table 8 summarizes the working hours for children aged 13-15. The data indicated that the majority of children (41.8%) worked long hours, exceeding 49 hours per week. This is a striking violation of the Labor Law (Law No. 21 in effect in 1991 and the present Labor Law) which prohibit children from working longer than six hours per day. Only 24% of the children worked within the legally permissible work load for child labor. The maximum working hours allowed for children under age 16 under applicable laws is 36 hours per week. Seventy-six (76%) of children worked longer hours than permitted by the Jordan Labor Laws. However, in 1993 it was reported that not a single penalty was issued to any employer of children (Tikriti, 1993).

3.2 Findings on Child Labor Based On Interviews

Semi-structured interviews were conducted with key administrators and community outreach professionals in governmental and non-governmental organizations and refugee camps to learn about the following: (1) whether the phenomenon of child labor is prevalent;

Table 8. Distribution of Employed Children (Hours Worked Per Week).

% of Employed Children	Number of Working Hours Per Week
7.8	Less than 36
16.3	36
8.7	37 - 42
25.3	43 - 48
41.8	Greater than 49

(2) causes of child labor; and, (3) consequences of child labor. Key findings based on interviews with each of the organizations contacted are presented below.

Ministry of Labor

Senior officials at the Ministry of Labor believe that child labor is not a prevalent problem in Jordan. They indicate that formerly some children were found to work in cigarette companies and candy manufacturing. The parents of these employed children are very keen that these children have a vocation and learn a trade. The Ministry indicated that no complaints have been received from minors in connection with child labor. The Ministry also expressed its readiness, based on the findings of this study, to take remedial measures to improve vocational skills and the working conditions of children whose ages are above the minimum age limit for employment.

Ministry of Social Development

The Ministry of Social Development deals only with street children who constitute a segment of employed children. Street children include street vendors and beggars. Community outreach workers believe that the phenomenon of child labor is prevalent especially in refuge camps and low income areas where children are employed in small enterprises such as automotive workshops and light industries. Also, they stress the need to study whether children are employed at the Sahab Industrial City (outside Amman) because of chemical hazards in the occupational environment. The Ministry emphasized the direct relationship between poverty and child labor. Financial aid to families with incomes less

than 60 JD is insufficient. In addition to poverty, the perceived diminishing return from education is given as a principal cause for child labor. Ministry officials emphasized the need to identify pockets where child labor is prevalent especially in light of the significant social changes occurring in the Jordanian society.

The Ministry is deeply concerned about the increasing phenomenon of street children (beggars and vendors). The Ministry currently has studies and programs which target these children. Dire financial need is not considered the main reason for begging. Of a total of 230 children admitted to a center for the care of street children during the period January 1996 to December 1996, 63% (145 children) were begging or selling for professional reasons whereas 37% (85 children) were begging or selling on the street due to the family's financial difficulties. The Ministry provides supportive services, financial and, rehabilitation and/or vocational training for street children according to their needs.

Ministry of Planning

Officials at the Ministry of Planning believe that figures from the EURPS 1991 survey under estimated the number of employed children in Jordan. They stress the need to conduct further detailed studies about the extent of child labor. Child labor studies should be child centered and should take into consideration the perceptions of employed children and their families of their needs in order to identify real causes of child labor. Poverty and the perceived diminishing returns from education are cited as principal causes of child labor. The need for empowerment of children was emphasized so that children are more aware of their legal rights and entitled benefits.

Ministry of Education

The Ministry of Education officials does not deal directly with the issue of child labor but are involved with studies and programs related to the causes and prevention of school drop-outs. Non-formal education programs are made available for school drop-outs. The educational sector will be further elaborated on in the next section.

Ministry of Tourism

No accurate figures are available at the Ministry of Tourism on the number of children engaged in touristic activities in Petra and Wadi Musa. Ministry officials in the area know of 30 children between the age of 10-15 who are school drop-outs and sell handicrafts inside the city of Petra. Ministry officials acknowledge that employment of children below 16 years of age is prohibited during the school year. However, child employment increases during summer and mid-school year holidays. Children sell handicrafts, lead animals, and assist parents in services, commercial and agricultural sectors. Officials believe that the only positive aspect of child labor is supplementing the family's income. Negative aspects of child labor are mainly school drop-out and low financial returns for very long hours of work.

Ministry of Youth

This Ministry of Youth is not directly involved with the issue of child labor. Ministry officials report that although there are 297 clubs (sports, cultural, alumni) in the Kingdom (with 85 clubs located in Amman), there are a limited number of clubs in low-income areas. The few clubs in these areas are reported to be inactive because of low local initiative. The lack of extra-curricular activities is considered a factor for driving children into the streets. Ministry officials believe that the Ministry of Education should have an increased role in providing extra-curricular activities to students.

Non-Governmental Organizations

Interviews were conducted with program directors and community professionals at UNICEF's area and regional offices in Amman. Community outreach professionals at UNICEF also are involved with community development projects by other non-governmental organizations (such as Save the Children and Care) in low-income urban areas of Amman. Child labor is reported to be rampant in these communities. Children work as street vendors and in a variety of enterprises that include professional cleaning companies. Young children have been observed to clean premises of universities, homes, and offices.

Outreach professionals at UNICEF believe that poverty and the concomitant inability of parents to provide their children's school needs as a main cause for child labor. Another main reason is the dissatisfaction of children with their schools. Children complain to community workers about school violence, the need to separate playground facilities of older

children from those of younger students, and insufficient and poorly maintained restroom facilities. Lack of parental awareness of their children's needs and rights specifically the right to play and to recreate is reported to be related to child labor. Consequences of child labor are perceived by outreach professionals to be negative as employed children, especially those on the streets, are likely to be exploited and abused. Rebellious attitudes of children towards their parents as a result of economic independence of children is reported to be a negative consequence of child labor. UNICEF professionals recommend an in-depth study of child labor and its consequences within the framework of the Convention of the Rights of the Child (CRC).

UNRWA administrators and key officials in UNRWA's headquarters office in Amman express the need to study child labor among refugee camps as the phenomenon is prevalent but there are no statistics or data to document the extent of the problem and its negative impacts on the physical, mental, and psychological development of children.

Save the Children believes poverty and school drop-out are causal factors for child labor. Violence and the prevailing environmental conditions (classroom crowdedness and inadequate playground facilities) in public schools are believed to be causal factors for school drop-out. Professionals point out the need to expand non-formal educational and vocational training programs to accommodate school drop-outs and the formation of street gangs.

Interviews were conducted with Questscope, a non-governmental organization engaged in social development in the low-income urban areas of Tafayleh and Nuzha in greater Amman area. These projects are commissioned by UNICEF's area office in Amman. Project directors stated that child labor is prevalent in these two areas. In the area of Nuzha, working children typically are school drop-outs who came from families where the father is unemployed or employed on a non-regular basis. In some of these families, unemployed fathers are alcohol addicts or drug users. A belief in the limited benefits of education by parents and children is cited as a cause for school drop-out. In the Tafayleh area, parents reportedly give their children home-made goods and other manufactured goods to sell on the street to supplement family income. All revenues go to the family. Project directors perceive the consequences of child labor to be negative as children often work long hours on the streets without adult guidance or supervision. Community outreach workers report of several

cases of children who worked as street vendors but disappeared and were later found to have been killed.

The Amman Chamber of Industry does not consider child labor a serious problem in Jordan. The Chamber stressed that children under 18 years of age should not work in the industrial sector, not even during summer holidays. In addition, children who work in small unorganized enterprises are not protected by the Amman Chamber of Industry because enterprises in the informal sector are not registered with the Chamber.

The General Union for Workers' Unions believes that child labor in Jordan is concentrated in the informal sector in enterprises that do not belong to the union. Thus vendors, apprentices and children who work in auto repair shops, are not registered with the union and receive no protection. Union officials expressed the need to examine the working conditions of employed children and take measures to prevent potential child abuse and exploitation.

The Jordanian Women's Union, which has been a prominent child advocacy organization, believes that child labor exists in Jordan but is not a prevalent phenomenon. The Union commends the new labor law which offers protection to working children in the formal sector. However, the Union realizes the law does not adequately cover children who work in the informal sector such as in family enterprises or in domestic labor. In addition, violence (in the school, work or home environment) and sexual exploitation of children are aspects that should be studied and monitored within the context of child labor.

An interview was conducted with a family guidance and counseling society in Zarqa. Child labor is believed to be prevalent among the urban poor in the Zarqa area. Based on the society’s experience with counseled families, poverty and family violence are identified as characteristics of the families of children who drop-out of school and work. The society considers father's unemployment and substance abuse (alcohol and/or drugs) as risk factors for family violence. The society has first hand experience with problems that street children are exposed to. Younger street vendors are exposed to theft from older street children who often harass them and steal their goods. Consequently, the younger children often face severe punishment from their fathers (beatings and/or expulsion from home) if they return

home with no earnings from street selling. The society provides counseling to older members of families and helps find employment for adults in the family so as to discourage minors from dropping-out of school and entering the labor market prematurely.

Refugee Camps

Semi-structured interviews were conducted with key informants in refugee camps. Key informants included: camp directors, heads of various camp centers and committees, UNRWA schools superintendents and counselors, social workers, and directors and staff of UNRWA health clinics. Key findings on child labor for each of the four refugee camps are presented below:

Zarqa Camp

The director of the camp acknowledged that child labor exists in the camp and surrounding areas. Children work in the market selling used clothes, fruits and vegetables, newspapers, and cigarettes. In neighboring Marka, the children work in auto repair shops and in butcheries. The director attributed child labor to four main causes: (1) low family income; (2) large family size; (3) lack of parenting resulting in child neglect; and, (4) school drop-out. Low family income results in the inability of parents to provide school supplies and basic necessities. School drop-out is partially triggered by peer influence.

The director believes children are exploited as they work long hours for low wages (1/2 - 1 JD) per day for at least nine (9) hours of work per day. Young children who work in auto repair shops have a tendency to become delinquent as they are likely to get exposed to physical and/or sexual abuse and substance abuse (smoking and alcohol). Apprenticeship and vocational training programs should be under supervision of the public sector with strict enforcement of by-laws and regulations of work conditions. The director added that arresting street vendors by the Ministry of Social Development officials aggravates the problem because children who are caught resort to hidden forms of illicit labor (e.g., selling drugs) that is worse than street selling.

The trustee of the Committee for Camp Improvement indicated that children who have unemployed handicapped parents are more likely to work than other children. Poverty and crowded conditions in the camp are considered leading causes for child labor. Lack of

playground facilities and recreational activities are reported as important factors driving camp children to work. School drop-out is a major factor for delinquency and drug dealing. Some children who do not attend school reportedly are engaged in selling drugs such as Artin and Tesophane smuggled from Syria.

Three social workers at the camp are of the impression that child labor is a visible phenomenon in the camp. Next to poverty, they identified the following causal factors for child labor: (1) lack of parenting skills and lack of parental awareness of the needs of their children; (2) disintegration of the family as a social unit; and (3) parental belief that economic returns from education are limited. Employed children are reported to be exploited by working as many as 10 hours per day for a low salary. Employed children are exploited not only by strangers but by their parents who in many cases would not accept them to return home until they obtain a fixed amount of money. The social workers believe the only positive aspect of child labor is that some of the earned money helps defray school expenses. Negative consequences outweigh the benefits. The children often work in abusive environments where they learn substance abuse and bad language. One of the social workers has dealt with the case of a 14 year old who worked in a grocery shop and was attacked sexually by his employer. Another reported negative consequence is that the families of employed children lose control over their children's behavior. Social workers believe that as many as 20-30% of children in mechanic auto repair workshops and small enterprises are exposed to sexual assaults and substance abuse including intake and inhaling paint thinner and other solvents.

UNRWA school counselors believe that the child labor phenomenon is present and should be tackled at the level of the family, society, and the government at large. The issue of school drop-out is acknowledged to be closely linked to child labor. The factors causing school drop-out are believed to be similar to those that cause child labor. In addition to poverty and unemployment, the following causes are given for child labor in the camp: (1) polygamy and large family size; (2) peer pressure; (3) lack of parental guidance partially due to the generation gap; (4) diminishing returns from education; (5) educational policies that forbid class repetition and the perpetuation of weak educational attainment resulting in school drop-out; and, (6) father's migration or work outside the country.

Jerash Camp

Also called the Gaza Camp because the residents are from the Gaza Strip, this camp is characterized by extreme poverty resulting from high unemployment. Inhabitants do not hold Jordanian passports and consequently they cannot work in the public sector. This problem is compounded by geographic isolation.

The director of the camp and other UNRWA staff members reported child labor to be prevalent among children during holidays and throughout the year. Children under 16 years of age work in a variety of enterprises. They work as street vendors selling ice, home-made food, vegetables and fruits, and used clothes. They also: wash cars; work as bus ushers; work in butcheries, a sewing factory, a brick factory; and work in mechanic shops outside the camp. Children reportedly help their families harvest vegetables in the Jordan Valley during summer and pick olives in Jerash. Entire families often are hired by landowners. Children reportedly work as many as 12 hours per day for JD ½ - 1 per day.

Cultural factors prohibit girls from working outside the home except for farming with their parents. Girls engaged in domestic work tend to get married at an early age, as young as 14 years of age. Social workers report that young girls as young as nine years of age are given responsibility for keeping house and attending to younger siblings. This situation has resulted in many home accidents to infants and toddlers. Up to 90% of mothers work outside their homes during harvesting.

Key informants shared similar points of view relating to causes for child labor with Zarqa camp informants. Abject poverty, large family size, polygamy and familial disintegration are reported to be major social problems in the camp. Social workers note that of 308 special hardship cases, 70 cases involved a family divorce. Children from broken families are believed to be at higher risk of school drop-out than other children.

The head of the Women's Committee and the social workers stressed the negative consequences of child labor. They emphasized the negative impact of child labor on the child's psychological and physical development and that it contributed to substance abuse among children (inhalants and drugs).

Interviews with UNRWA health center staff revealed a significant number of occupational hazards suffered by camp children. The clinic treats at least six cases per month of cuts from sharp instruments suffered by children employed in garages. At least six children per month are treated at the clinic for deep cuts from saws used by carpentries. Such cuts require many stitches. The health staff report that severe occupational accident cases suffered by children are treated by hospitals. Children who work in nurseries and in agriculture in the Jordan Valley suffer injuries to toe nails and skin from glass and nails as the majority of children worked barefoot. Incidents of snake and scorpion bites while farming in the Jordan Valley are reported. Such cases are given first aid and then are taken to a hospital for treatment. Children who work in construction reportedly suffer major cuts and fractures from falling objects, stones, and bricks. Children who push carts when selling goods in the market suffer injuries from car accidents while some children engaged in shepherding are diagnosed and treated for Malta fever and animal bites. During the month preceding the interview, two cases of bites to children by a donkey and a dog were treated by the clinic staff. These children were shepherds of 12-13 years of age. The most recent injury was that of a cut that required 16 stitches sustained by a 12 year old boy bitten by a shepherding dog.

The director of the camp and other UNRWA staff firmly believe that child labor is a serious socio-economic phenomenon and that children are exploited in terms of the long hours they work in often hazardous conditions for a minimum wage. Proposed solutions to this problem include: (1) increasing awareness of the plight of employed children and of child labor and its implications (awareness should be raised at the family and societal levels); (2) improving economic conditions of the family by providing employment opportunities; and (3) changing social and cultural values in relation to polygamy and high fertility rates.

Wihdat Camp

The head of the Center for Women's activities at the camp(also a member of the Committee for Camp Improvement) reported that child labor is prevalent in the camp. Children work even if their parents are employed as additional income sources are needed to cover the basic needs of a large number of family members. Children work as street vendors in garages and in recycling enterprises, in welding, carpentries and butcheries. Girls reportedly do embroidery work at home. The director of the Committee for Camp Improvement) knew of girls as young as 15 that work as secretaries and telephone operators for half the wages that adults doing a similar activity earn. Such girls work at least 10 hours a day for six days a week for about JD 50 per month. This informant also knew of children who work in private industries, in manufacturing companies (such as biscuit manufacturing), and in handicrafts. Young children who are siblings of adult employees reportedly are recruited during summer holidays in industries in the Sahab Industrial City. To circumvent the illegality of employing young children and to cut down taxes, the financial compensation given to children is reported as bonuses of their older siblings. This situation needs to be explored in more detail because the scope of this study and time limitations did not allow for independent verification of this information or visits to organized formal enterprises.

Again, abject poverty followed by lack of youth activities are given as the main causes for child labor and for school drop-out. The close relationship between school drop-out and child labor is acknowledged. The head of the Committee for Camp Improvement who also is a long time educator listed several deficiencies in the educational public school system that lead to school drop-outs. In addition to what was previously mentioned by key informants in the other two camps, the lack of compatibility of school curricula with students needs and the non-repetition of classes in the basic education cycles are considered as factors associated with school drop-outs. Intimidation of students by teachers and crowded schoolrooms are other factors for school drop-out. The head of the Education Division at UNRWA stressed the importance of increasing parental awareness so that parents became more concerned with the educational attainment of their children. Key informants consider child labor to be harmful to children. The following negative consequences of child labor are reported: (1) delinquency and substance abuse (smoking, alcohol, drugs) by children as young as 10 years; (2) negative effect on educational attainment; and (3) exploitation of

children including sexual exploitation. Child labor is perceived as acceptable only if it is regulated and under proper family supervision.

The director of the UNRWA health center at the camp reported that severe occupational child injuries are treated at the hospital. Injuries of working children that commonly are treated at the UNRWA clinic are cuts (from carpentry, mechanical sewing machines) and bruises and cuts from fights at work. Doctors report that heatstrokes in summer and frostbites in winter are common injuries suffered by street vendors and are treated at the clinic. Street vendors also are reported to suffer higher rates of pedestrian accidents than non-working children but there are no supporting statistics available. A social worker also mentioned severe eye injuries to teenage boys that work with welding machines without protective eye-cover.

Baqa'a Camp

Meetings were conducted with the UNRWA camp director and supervisor of women's activities, clinic health staff, and principals and counselors of schools at the camp. There is a consensus that child labor is prevalent in the camp. Children are employed in a variety of occupations that reportedly includes digging graves. Boys as young as six years of age are reported to work as street vendors. Girls from very poor families reportedly are engaged in domestic cleaning outside their homes at a rate of JD 5 per day. Many girls also are engaged in embroidery activities with their mothers for no pay. A considerable number of girls help their families in farming activities, but there are no documented statistics as to their number.

The same social problems as the other camps are identified by social workers. Large family size, unemployment, substance abuse and family disintegration resulting from increased incidence of divorce are reported by social workers as pressing social problems that directly lead to child labor.

Principals of UNRWA elementary and secondary schools at the camp complained about the lack of student innovativeness and/or interest in education because of high unemployment and belief in the low economic return from education. Violence among school children is a concern among educators. Principals attribute the ineffectiveness of summer camps to lack of resources.

The findings as to causes and consequences of child labor based on key informants' interviews are similar to those of the other three camps. Health staff at the UNRWA health center said they treat injuries suffered by employed children. Cuts from sharp instruments in butcheries and from glass recycling are common. Burns including eye burns from welding and metal working shops are reported as employed children do not wear protective eye cover or clothing. The UNRWA clinic believes that malnutrition, abuse including assaults by employers and strangers, delinquency and substance abuse are major negative outcomes of child labor. The UNRWA doctor believes that malnutrition is likely to be more prevalent among young employed children because the children tend to have most of their meals outside the home.

3.3 Field Survey Data

The total number of employed children interviewed as part of this study was 377. The total number of interviewed mothers was 245, and the total number of interviewed employers was 355. Table 1 (Section 2) summarizes the distribution of interviewees by category (child, mother, employer) and by area (poverty area, refugee camp, industrial area).

3.3.1 Socio-Demographics

The results from the field survey should be interpreted with caution because the sample of employed children was a purposive sample and not a representative random sample. The reported results cannot be extrapolated to the total populations from which the sample of children was drawn. Consequently, the results are valuable as indicators rather than as actual figures and precise statistics of the magnitude and conditions of child labor in Jordan.

The majority of interviewed children were males (95%). By age, 4% (17) of employed children were between 6-9 years of age, 40% (147) were between the ages of 10-13 years, and 56% (213) were between the ages of 14-16 years. Children of Jordanian and non-refugee camp Palestinian origin constituted 76% (187) of the survey population of employed children. Children of Palestinian origin living in refugee camps constituted 21%

(54) of the survey population, and other nationalities (Egyptian, Syrian and Iraqi) constituted 3% (6) of the survey population.

Three-quarters of the interviewed children (76%, 286 total) reportedly attended school and 24% (91) were school drop-outs. The highest percentage of children in the sample who attended school were from poverty pocket areas (83%), followed by refugee camps (78%), followed by industrial areas. Of the children attending school, 92% (251) worked only during summer and school holidays; only 8% (31) attended school and worked throughout the school year. The highest percentage of employed children who worked only during school holidays were from poverty pocket areas, followed by refugee camps, followed by industrial areas.

The majority of the children (94%, 348) lived with both parents. However, the sample was characterized by a high parental unemployment rate. The percentage of children whose fathers were unemployed was 28% (103). Children from refugee camps had the highest percentage of unemployed fathers (32%); children from poverty pockets reported the least percentage of unemployed fathers (8%). A minority of mothers of employed children worked. In the refugee camps 18% (23) of the mothers of employed children worked; in industrial areas 8% (10) of the mothers of employed children worked. The fact that the highest percentage of employed mothers are in refugee camps may be attributed to the presence of several development projects (e.g., micro lending) for women in the refugee camps. These projects are designed to help supplement family income.

The majority of employed children are from households with large family size. Forty-one percent (41%) (152) of the employed children in the sample came from households that had greater than 10 family members. Only 5% (19) of the children in the sample were from households of less than five family members. The majority of employed children from the refugee camps were from families exceeding 10 members (51%); only 29% of children in the poverty pockets areas came from families exceeding 10 members.

The reported family income clearly indicates that the employed children interviewed as part of the field survey come from conditions of poverty as defined by the Ministry of Social Development (see page 3). As high as 32% (109) of the employed children surveyed

reported their families earn less than JD 100 per month and 17% (59) of the employed children reported that their families earn less than JD 50 per month. Table 9 summarizes the reported family incomes by area surveyed. As reported by the employed children, 75% (97) of the sample households in refugee camps own their homes while 25% (32) rent their homes. In poverty pockets, half the sample households reportedly own their homes.

Table 9. Distribution of Family's Monthly Income By Area

	Industrial Area n=93	Refugee Camps n=119	Poverty Pockets n=131	Total n=343
Less than JD 50	12 12.9%	34 28.6%	13 9.9%	59 17.2%
JD 50 - 100	7 7.5%	27 22.7%	16 12.2%	50 14.6%
JD 101 - 300	45 48.4%	45 37.8%	72 55.0%	162 47.2%
More than JD 300	29 31.2%	13 10.9%	30 22.9%	72 21%

3.3.2 Child Labor Results

Table 10 lists the various occupations in which employed children interviewed for the field survey are engaged. There are differences among the areas as to the predominant occupations of employed children. In the industrial areas, the majority of the children (61%, 68) work as assistants in auto repair shops, 10% (11) work in metalwork shops, 9% (10) work in food handling, and 6% (7) work in carpentry and upholstery enterprises. In refugee camps, the children work in a variety of occupations that include: (1) independent vendor (19%, 24), shop assistant (16%, 21), selling second hand clothes (14%, 18), assistant in auto repair shops (13%, 17), carpentry (9%, 12), and kitchen work 6% (8). In poverty pockets, children also are engaged in a variety of occupations. The most predominant are: working as a shop assistant (30%, 38), independent vendors (13%, 16), kitchen work (12%, 15), carpentry and upholstery (8%, 10), handicrafts (7%, 9) and working in grocery stalls (6%, 8).

Most of the employed children reported working long hours exceeding eight (8) hours per day. This is a clear violation of Labor Law No. 8 of 1996 which stipulates that young persons should not work longer than six (6) hours per day (Article 75). A large percentage of employed children in each of the three survey areas reported working 8-12 hours per day. Eighty-four percent (84%, 94) of employed children in the industrial areas, 58% (74) of the employed children in refugee camps, and 62% (74) of the children in poverty pockets reportedly work between 8-12 hours per day. Some children in the three areas reported working longer than 12 hours per day: 15%, 13% and 7% in refugee camps, poverty pockets, and industrial areas, respectively. Table 11 summarizes the distribution of daily hours worked by area surveyed.

Table 10. Distribution of Children's Occupations by Area

	Industrial Areas n=111	Refugee Camps n=128	Poverty Pockets n=127	Total n=366
Food handling/ restaurant	10 9.0%	8 6.2%	15 11.8%	33 9.0%
Carpenter/ Upholster	7 6.3%	12 9.3%	10 7.8%	29 7.9%
Porter (attal)	4 3.6%	7 5.4%	1 0.8%	12 3.3%
Auto repair shops	68 61.3%	17 13.3%	4 3.1%	89 24.3%
Metal work/ Blacksmith	11 10%	4 3.1%	7 5.6%	22 6.0%
Electrician	_	1 0.8%	2 1.5%	3 0.8%
Green Grocer	1 0.9%	8 6.3%	8 6.3%	17 4.6%
Hairdresser	_	1 0.8%	2 1.6%	3 0.8%
Cleaning	3 2.7%	1 0.8%	1 0.8%	5 1.4%
Handicrafts	1 0.9%	1 0.8%	9 7.1%	11 3.0%
Laborer (construction)	4 3.5%	3 2.3%	6 4.7%	13 3.6%
Recycling	1 0.9%	1 0.8%	_	2 0.6%
Painter	1 0.9%	1 0.8%	2 1.6%	4 1.1%
Shop Assistant	_	21 16.4%	38 29.9%	59 16.1%
Second Hand Clothing	_	18 14.1%	1 0.8%	19 5.2%
Independent Vendor	_	24 18.8%	16 12.6%	40 10.9%
Newspaper Salesman	_	_	5 4.0%	5 1.4%

Table 11. Distribution of Daily Working Hours for Children by Area

Number of Daily Hours Worked	Industrial Areas n=112	Refugee Camps n=127	Poverty Pockets n=119	Total n=358
Less than 8	10 8.9%	34 26.7%	30 25.2%	74 20.7%
8-12 hours	94 83.9%	74 58.3%	74 62.2%	242 67.6%
More than 12 hours	8 7%	19 15.0%	15 12.6%	42 11.7%

The distribution of monthly income of employed children was similar for the three survey areas (Table 12). The largest percentage of children (survey average of 53%) earn less than JD 30 per month. By area, the percentages are: industrial areas (60%, 47), refugee camps (53%, 51), and poverty pockets (46%, 42). The percentage of children earning between JD 30-50 per month is: 34%, 32%, and 29% in refugee camps, industrial areas, and poverty pockets, respectively. Only a very small percentage of the employed children reported earnings exceeding JD 50 per month: 25% in poverty pockets, 12% in refugee camps, and 8% in industrial areas. These data strongly indicate that the majority of employed children in the informal sector are exploited as they earn very low wages for very long hours of labor often exceeding the legal limit. Furthermore, 43% (45) of employed children in refugee camps, 29% (25) in industrial areas, and 26% (28) in poverty pockets reported they had no day off each week and were obligated to work seven (7) days a week.

Table 12. Distribution of Employed Children by Income Earned Per Month By Study Site

Income JDs	Industrial Areas n=78	Refugee Camps n=96	Poverty Pockets n=92	Total n=266
<30	47 60.2%	51 53.1%	42 45.6%	140 52.6%
30 - 50	25 32.0%	33 34.4%	27 29.4%	85 32.0%
51 - 75	5 6.4%	6 6.3%	19 20.7%	30 11.3%
>75	1 1.3%	6 6.2%	4 4.3%	11 4.1%

When asked about their health, the majority of employed children perceived they had good health. Only 19% (24) of children in refugee camps, 12% (14) in industrial areas, and 8% (11) in poverty pockets reported average or poor health. Table 13 lists the problems faced at work as reported by children. In industrial areas, the major problems reported are occupational accidents, burns, and injuries followed by beatings and verbal abuse. Physical stress also was reported. In refugee camps, the major problems reported are occupational accidents followed by thefts and fights and environmental factors (heat, cold, and sanitation). Physical stress also was a problem. In poverty pockets, arguments with clients is a major problem (52%) followed by environmental factors and physical stress. Other less frequently reported problems are theft, accidents, beatings, and verbal abuse.

For occupational hazards reported by employers, there were different problems depending on the survey area. Table 14 summarizes these problems. In industrial areas, accidents from sharp machines and materials, moving machinery, and burns from explosive gases and substances (e.g., acids) are the major hazards reported by employers. Other less reported occupational hazards include chemicals, electricity, and falling heavy objects. In refugee camps, the major hazards reported by employers are falling heavy objects, burns from flammable substances, and cuts from sharp machinery. In poverty pockets, falling heavy objects, electric hazards, and sharp machines and instruments are the major reported

Table 13. Problems Faced at Work as Reported by Employed Children

Theme	Industrial Areas n=32	Refugee Camps n=43	Poverty Pockets n=31	Total n=106
Theft	1 3.1%	7 16.3%	2 6.5%	10 9.4%
Fights	5 15.6%	6 14.0%	3 9.7%	14 13.2%
Arguments with clients	1 3.1%	3 7.0%	16 51.6%	20 18.9%
Physical Stress	1 3.1%	5 11.6%	4 12.9%	10 9.4%
Burns/Injuries	10 31.5%	6 14.0%	2 6.5%	18 17.0%
Threats from employer	1 3.1%	–	–	1 0.9%
Getting caught by authorities	–	2 4.7%	1 3.2%	3 2.8%
Environmental	1 3.1%	6 14.0%	5 16.1%	12 11.3%
Accidents	10 31.3%	11 25.6%	1 3.2%	22 20.7%
Beatings	3 9.4%	1 2.3%	1 3.2%	5 4.7%
Verbal Abuse	3 9.4%	1 2.3%	1 3.2%	5 4.7%

hazards. Theft and fights with people are occupational hazards less frequently reported by employers in both poverty pockets and refugee camps.

Table 14. Occupational Hazards and Problems faced by Children as Reported by Employers

Reason	Industrial Area n=50	Refugee Camps n=115	Poverty Pockets n=104	Total n=269
Machines hazards, sharp machines	20 40.0%	8 7.0%	13 12.5%	41 15.2%
Fires, burns, Oxygen & Gas hazards	14 28.0%	10 8.7%	1 1.0%	25 9.3%
Chemicals & other substances	8 16.0%	1 0.9%	4 3.9%	13 4.8%
Car falls and accidents	8 16.0%	2 1.7%	2 1.9%	12 4.5%
Electrical hazards	8 16.0%	8 7.0%	13 12.5%	29 10.8%
Heavy objects	6 12.0%	22 19.1%	18 17.3%	46 17.1%
Iron filings, Wood sawdust	_	2 1.7%	1 1.0%	3 1.1%
Side effects on health	_	5 4.4%	2 1.9%	7 2.6%
Theft	_	2 1.7%	4 3.9%	6 2.2%
Problems with people	_	2 1.7%	5 4.8%	7 2.6%
Policemen	_	1 0.9%	1 1.0%	2 0.7%

Table 15 lists the various punishment methods used by employers as reported by children and employers in each of the three areas. Punishment is administered if the child's performance or behavior is unsatisfactory to the employer. Responses in each of the categories listed are not mutually exclusive as more than one type of punishment was reported by children and employers. For this reason the percentages do not add up to 100%. It is noted that the percentage of children who reported verbal abuse was similar for the three areas (about 50%). Similarly, the percentage of children who reported physical punishment (beatings) by employers was similar for the three areas (about 11%). What is striking,

however, is that employers in the three areas did not deny they employed forms of physical punishment. Table 15 clearly demonstrates consistent trends across the three areas in the punishment methods used by employers. As high as 20% (23) of employers in refugee camps admit to physically punishing employed children. The percentages for physical punishment are 12% and 11% in industrial areas and poverty pockets, respectively.

Table 15. Distribution of Punishment Methods Afflicted on Children by Employers

	Industrial Areas		**Refugee Camps**		**Poverty Pockets**	
	Child * n=116	Emp. n=105	Child n=108	Emp. n=118	Child n=102	Emp. n=132
None	34 29.3%	20 19%	35 32.4%	15 12.7%	20 19.6%	23 17.4%
Verbal	60 51.7%	68 64.8%	52 48.1%	74 62.7%	51 50%	79 59.8%
Physical	14 12.1%	13 12.4%	11 10.2%	23 19.5%	10 9.8%	14 10.6%
Salary Cuts	13 11.2%	8 7.6%	4 3.7%	8 6.8%	5 4.9%	17 12.9%
Warning	7 6%	4 3.8%	11 10.2%	9 7.6%	7 6.9%	29 22%
Dismissal	5 4.3%	6 5.7%	1 0.9%	10 8.5%	3 2.9%	19 14.4%

* n for the child and employer refers to the number of children and employers who responded to this open-ended question.

Tables 16 and 17 show that a higher number of children (130) were willing to respond to questions about physical and sexual child abuse suffered by other children than respond to questions about physical and sexual abuse experienced by themselves (66). Responses in the different categories are not mutually exclusive in that more than one type of abuse could have been reported by children. Consequently, the percentages will not total 100%. The highest percentages of children who reported hearing about children being beaten by their employers

were from industrial areas (89%), followed by poverty pockets (81%) and by refugee camps (44%).

Table 16. Distribution of Employed Children by Abuse Cases Heard of by Area

Abuse Themes	Industrial Areas n=37	Refugee Camps n=34	Poverty Pockets n=59	Total n=130
SEXUAL: Attempted rape of boys	2 5.4%	2 5.9%	2 3.4%	6 4.6%
sexual harassment	10 27%	4 11.8%	14 23.7%	28 21.5%
rape of boys	7 18.9%	1 2.9%	3 5.1%	11 8.5%
murder of boys	_	4 11.8%	3 5.1%	7 5.4%
kidnapping	1 2.7%	3 8.8%	5 8.5%	9 6.9%
PHYSICAL: beating of brothers	_	3 8.8%	1 1.7%	4 3.1%
beating by employer	33 89.2%	15 44.1%	48 81.4%	96 73.8%
burns & injuries	4 10.8%	14 41.2%	2 3.4%	4 3.1%
fights	4 10.8%	14 41.2%	12 20.3%	30 23%

For children who themselves reported experiencing physical abuse, the highest percentage was for industrial areas (52%, 11), followed by refugee camps (40%, 10), followed by poverty pockets (20%, 4). As for sexual harassment, Table 17 shows that seven (7) children out of a total of 66 who responded to this question reported experiencing sexual harassment. Since child abuse is a sensitive issue that requires probing and may require multiple interviews, sexual abuse experienced by children may have been under reported. The fact that almost 10% of the children who responded reported experiencing sexual harassment, that an average of 22% of children in the three survey areas reported hearing of

sexual harassment of children, and that an average of 13% of children in all areas heard of rapes or attempted rape of boys is a clear indication that sexual abuse among children in these areas is a problem worth investigating. Studies conducted on sexual abuse of children in Jordan indicate that the highest incidence of sexual abuse occurs in the lower socio-economic classes manifesting itself in two main forms: rape and molestation (Nasser and Kholqi, 1996). Also, sexual harassment to young children by adults and older children was documented in a study conducted in the Nuzha and Tafayleh areas using the Participatory Rapid Appraisal Method. The appraisals also revealed a high prevalence of aggressive behavior among children, cases of domestic abuse, incidence of alcohol and drug usage among children and children's involvement in illicit income-generating activities (Questscope, 1995; UNICEF, 1996a).

Table 17. Distribution of Employed Children by Abuse Experienced by Children by Area

Abuse Theme	Industrial Areas n=21	Refugee Camps n=25	Poverty Pockets n=20	Total n=66
SEXUAL: Sexual harassment	2 9.5%	2 8%	3 15%	7 10.6%
PHYSICAL ABUSE: Beating at home	4 19.1%	3 12%	1 5%	8 12.1%
Beating by employer	11 52.4%	10 40%	4 20%	25 37.9%
Fights	3 14.3%	8 32%	12 65%	13 19.7%
Beating by police	_	_	2 10%	2 3.0%

As to the causes for child labor, open-ended questions were addressed to both children and their mothers. The qualitative responses then were classified into response categories that were not mutually exclusive. Mothers and children gave more than one reason for child labor. For this reason the percentages of each response category do not sum up to 100%. Table 18 indicates the reasons for labor given by employed children in each of the three study sites. In the industrial areas the most frequent responses given by children

are: to gain work experience (31%), to help the family and father financially (25%), no recreational facilities (21%), to avoid going to school (17%), to avoid streets (10%), and upon parents request (10%). In refugee camps, the most frequently reported causes for child labor are financial help for the family (33%), to help out father (21%), to fill the time during summer holidays (23%), to gain work experience (12%), and likes to work (11%). In poverty pockets 54% of the children cite financial help for the family and help for the father as the primary cause for child labor. Fifteen percent of the children in poverty pockets report gaining work experience as a cause for child labor while 12% indicate that employment is better than doing nothing at work and 12% said they liked to work. As to causes for child labor, the most frequent maternal response is financial help to the family and father. This is the most frequent response reported by 53% (62) of mothers in refugee camps and 48% (59) of mothers in poverty pockets. Filling time in summer holidays, avoiding boredom and being on the streets are other reported causes for child labor following financial help to the family. In poverty pockets, gaining work experience is the leading cause for child labor according to mothers. Providing school expenses is mentioned by a small percentage of both mothers and children as a cause for child labor.

Open-ended responses were obtained from children as to how they spend their income. The three most frequently reported ways of spending incomes are: financial help to the family, personal expenses and savings. About 5% (18) of children in all areas do not receive any salary for their work. About 21% (27) of children in poverty pockets and 15% of children in camp areas (17) report using their incomes for meeting school expenses. Only 8% (8) of children in the industrial areas report using their incomes for that purpose. Very few children in all three areas indicate using their incomes for recreational purposes.

Table 18. Causes for Employment as Reported by Children

Reason for Employment	Industrial Areas n=115	Refugee Camps n=129	Poverty Pockets n=123	Total n=367
to gain work experience	36 31.3%	16 12.4%	19 15.4%	71 19.3%
to help the family financially	29 25.2%	42 32.6%	43 35%	114 31.1%
no recreational areas to go to	24 20.9%	1 o.8%	4 3.3%	29 7.9%
to avoid going to school	20 17.4%	7 5.4%	6 4.9%	33 9.0%
to avoid streets	12 10.4%	8 6.2%	8 6.5%	28 7.6%
due to parents request	11 9.6%	6 4.7%	4 3.3%	21 5.7%
to be economically independent	9 7.8%	6 4.7%	18 14.6%	33 9.0%
to fill the time in summer holiday	6 5.2%	30 23.3%	52 42.3%	88 24.0%
to help out father	5 4.3%	27 20.9%	23 18.7%	55 15.0%
better than doing nothing at home	_	7 5.4%	15 12.2%	22 6.0%
likes work	_	14 10.9%	15 12.2%	29 7.9%
low school grades	_	5 3.9%		5 1.4%
encouragement from working brothers	_	2 1.6%	1 0.8%	3 0.8%
to provide school expenses for himself	_	3 2.3%	10 8.1%	13 3.5%

Table 19 lists causes for school drop-out as reported by children. Open-ended responses were obtained from children. The responses were analyzed and fitted into non-mutually exclusive categories as each child listed more than one cause for school drop-out. Low academic achievement is the most frequently reported cause for school drop-out in all three study areas. Child employment is the second most frequently reported cause in poverty pockets while lack of desire for education, financial need, and child employment are reported as leading causes for school drop-out in industrial areas and refugee camps. Bad teacher treatment and ongoing punishment also are reported as causes for school drop-out more so in the refugee camps and poverty pockets than in industrial areas. Family pressure as a cause for school drop-out is more frequently reported by children in refugee camps than in the other two areas. These results on causes for school drop-out are consistent with a field study conducted by Ministry of Education and UNICEF (1995) in which low educational achievement, fear of punishment and child employment were reported to be causal factors for school drop-outs.

Regarding schooling, at least 80% of children who are employed and attend school perceive that school secures a better future. This finding is consistent across all areas. A lesser percentage of children who worked and dropped out of school perceive that school secures a better future. Percentages are: 40%, 52% and 67% in the poverty pockets, industrial areas and refugee camps, respectively. In regard to this same question, 75% of mothers in poverty pockets and 67% of mothers in refugee camps believe that school secures a better future for their children. An average of 85% of employers in all three areas believe that school secures a better future for children. There were no significant correlations between responses of mothers and children in regard to this question.

Behavioral changes among children as a consequence of their employment was an open-ended question that elicited multiple responses by mothers and employers. An average of 84% of employers believe that children underwent behavioral changes. These responses were consistent across areas. Behavioral changes by employers are perceived to be mainly positive. Maturity, better communication skills and improved personality attributes are considered the main positive changes among employed children. Only 6% (15) of employers

Table 19. Causes for School Drop-out as Reported by Children

	Industrial Areas n*=39	Refugee Camps n=28	Poverty Pockets n=24	Total n=91
Financial need	13 33.3%	9 32.1%	6 25%	28 30.8%
Low academic achievement	18 46.2%	14 50%	13 54.2%	45 49.5%
Behavioral problems	4 10.3%	2 7.1%	_	6 6.6%
Family pressure	1 2.6%	8 28.6%	2 8.3%	11 12.1%
Peer pressure	3 7.7%	1 3.6%	1 4.2%	5 5.5%
Employment	11 28.2%	5 17.9%	10 41.7%	26 28.6%
Bad teacher treatment	5 12.8%	8 28.6%	5 20.8%	18 19.8%
Ongoing punishment	3 7.7%	3 10.7%	2 8.3%	8 8.8%
Lack of desire for education	13 33.3%	13 46.4%	5 20.8%	31 34.1%
Violence from students	3 7.7%	3 10.7%	_	6 6.6%

n* - refers to the total number of children who were school drop-outs and responded to this open-ended question. More than one cause was given by each child.

report negative behavioral changes as a consequence of child employment. As for mothers, an average of 70% (169) perceive behavioral changes among their children as a consequence of employment. Most of the mothers (an average of 85% in refugee camps and poverty pockets) report positive behavioral changes among their children following their employment. The percentage of mothers that report positive behavioral changes in refugee camps is the same as in poverty pockets. Bad language, irritability and negativism, poor health, bad company and initiation of smoking are negative behavioral changes among children that were reported by some mothers. Correlation analysis (Spearman Correlation)

indicated no significant correlations between responses of employers and mothers in regard to behavioral change among employed children.

When mothers were asked about problems faced by their children at work, the majority of mothers in refugee camps (81%, 96) and in poverty pockets (68%, 82) report their children faced no problems. Fourteen percent (16) of mothers in refugee camps and 19% (23) of mothers in poverty pockets report that fighting is the main problem. Theft is another problem reported by a small percentage of mothers more so in poverty pockets than in refugee camps. The problems faced at work as reported by children are diverse and differ by area. In industrial areas, burns, injuries and accidents followed by fights, beatings and verbal abuse by employers are the most commonly reported problems. In refugee camps, accidents and thefts are the most frequently reported problems at work reported by children. Fights, physical stress are other reported problems.

In poverty pockets, arguments with clients are the most frequently reported problem by employed children followed by physical stress and fights. Correlation analysis (Spearman Correlation) indicated no significant correlation between responses of mothers and children in regard to problems faced at work by employed children.

Of the chi-square statistical tests conducted, a significant association was found between the number of working hours by the child and the father's unemployment. Long hours of work by the child (8-12 hours daily) are associated with the father's unemployment. Chi-square statistical test reveals a statistically significant association in this sample between school drop-out and parental education. School drop-out is independently associated with low educational level of the father and with low educational level of the mother. Low educational level is defined as less than primary level education. These associations were highly significant statistically ($p<0.01$).

3.3.3 On-Site Observational Information

Since the field survey was conducted during the summer holidays, the number of children observed working is inflated as a large number of children work only during holidays. Children working as street sellers were observed everywhere in stores and in the markets in all four refugee camps during the survey. Some of these children were as young as six or seven years old. Many children were observed in auto repair shops inside the camps and in the peripheral areas. In Baqa'a camp, some children were observed working in brick manufacturing and transporting heavy bricks out in the open under very hot conditions.

In Sahab area, children were observed in the vegetable market as early as six o'clock in the morning and 10 o'clock at night collecting trash vegetables and fruits. In Jabal Al-Nasser area almost every store or small enterprise had one or two employed children. A teacher from the local school informed the field research team about the crowded schoolrooms and lack of available playgrounds and recreational facilities in these areas. These are factors which encourage parents to have their children work. The teacher also talked about violence in the school environment, the carrying of knives and razor blades by adolescent students, and the frequent fights in which students and teachers became involved. The team interviewed two children aged 12 and 15 who worked full time in a general practioner's office sterilizing equipment, cleaning and assisting in circumcision operations. The doctor would not talk to the interviewers and dismissed them.

In Al Tafayleh area, some neighborhood residents said that the majority of children vendors sold cigarettes in a neighboring area called Al Hashmeyeh square. In Dabaybeh area, an adult newspaper salesman informed the interviewers that children in the area sold newspapers and earned 4 piasters (JD 0.04) per newspaper. If they were involved in an accident on the road or were arrested by the police or Ministry of Social Development workers, the newspaper office did not interfere. Moreover, children had no paid vacation or any other benefits.

In the Nuzha area, almost every store, workshop or garage had at least one employed child. In carpentries where children were interviewed, the saw dust was unbearable and the noise levels from electrical saws and drills were very high. No employees used any ear

plugs. One child complained of some hearing loss because of excessive noise levels. The interviewer had to repeat the question to the child several times to get a response.

In refugee camps and poverty pockets gender role differentiation was apparent by the parents encouraging female children to stay home while encouraging male children to work and gain independence. Girls helped their mothers in domestic work and other domestic chores. In Bayader Wadi Seer young girls were observed engaged in farming activities.

In the industrial areas, observed children looked dirty and some (in the area of Ojan outside Zarqa) had many scars and cuts on their faces and arms. Children felt intimidated and nervous whenever the employers stood by and some would stop answering. In the majority of cases, the child would say the employer was a stranger but the employer claimed he was a relative. Work facilities in garages were small and overcrowded. Some children reported having to work outside because of small space, and that this was difficult in winter because of weather conditions. No ventilation existed except for fans in some of the garages. Poor sanitary conditions existed as individual garages had no restroom facilities and children reported using neighbors' facilities or facilities at the end of the street. Restroom facilities were small and very dirty. Strong smell of paint thinner was prevalent inside auto repair shops. No children or adults were observed to wear protective clothing, eye covers or gloves in metal work shops or auto repair shops. Some children in these enterprises complained of headaches.

There were very high noise levels in workshops and carpentries from drilling and other operations but no ear plugs were used by any children or employers. Sharp instruments and hazardous equipment were observed in carpentries and workshops. Children were observed using electric saws, electric drills and electric hole drillers in carpentries. Smoking was observed in workshops where flammable substances were at close proximity. Fires were reported as a major hazard by employers in the industrial areas.

A 25 year old informant who owned an auto repair shop reported widespread problems of substance abuse among children (drinking and inhaling paint solvents) and homosexual relations between employers and children or between older employees and younger employed children. One informant in Ojan industrial area outside Zarqa reported

knowledge of at least 10 cases of physical abuse of employed children in automotive workshops. In Wadi Al Rimam an informant reported of the case of a young boy who hanged himself overnight in an auto repair shop as well as two sexual assaults of two young male children.

In the petroleum refinery area of Zarqa young girls were also observed by the interviewers to work in a small shampoo factory with no protective gloves or aprons. Male children age 10-14 were observed working during the summer in a small ceramics factory that had little ventilation. Some employers stated that lack of summer activities and playground facilities cause children to work as apprentices during summer. In auto repair shops, the hazard of cars falling down on top of workers were reported as the majority of workshops do not have protective measures. Employers stressed that the unions should become active in monitoring conditions in auto repair shops and other small enterprises.

When asked to describe a typical day in one's life, more than half the employed children in all study sites expressed dissatisfaction with their lives. Of those children who chose to talk about job satisfaction, the majority expressed dissatisfaction with their jobs. When asked to describe their eating patterns, 80% of employed children in industrial areas and only 50% of employed children in camp areas and 43% in poverty pockets reported having three meals per day. Some employed children (as high as 20% (26) in poverty pockets) reported having no time or energy for recreational activities. The majority of children in all study sites (over 50%) reported not having a good relationship with their family. Although some children did not complain of their work conditions, a number of children who talked about their work and described a typical day in their lives were quite distressed; some cried during interviews. Appendix D presents five case profiles of employed children who were highly distressed and suffered neglect at home and physical and psychological abuse in their work environments.

3.4 A Note on Iraqi Refugees

There is a large number of Iraqis who have come to Jordan following the Gulf War to escape political and economic hardship particularly due to economic sanctions imposed on Iraq by the United Nations. There is no knowledge of the exact number of Iraqi refugees in Jordan. Some independent sources estimate their number at 100,000, but estimates of their exact number vary from as low as 30,000 to as high as 500,000 (United Nations Children Fund, 1996b).

The vast majority of Iraqis in Jordan do not have official refugee status and consequently are not eligible for assistance from the United Nations High Commission on Refugees (UNHCR). The overwhelming majority of Iraqis in Jordan work on a non-regular basis and do not have work permits or official residency permits. No figure could be obtained from the Ministry of Labor as to the number of Iraqis who hold work permits. Contacts with the Ministry of Interior revealed that the cumulative number of Iraqis who have official residence permits as of January 1997 is only 9,519 (Ministry of Interior, 1997). These represent Iraqi professionals such as university professors and other educated affluent Iraqis who have regular employment and hold work permits.

Contacts with the Iraqi embassy and with Iraqi refugees revealed that Iraqis must pay an amount equal to 400,000 Iraqi dinars (equivalent of JD 200) prior to leaving Iraq. The Ministry of Interior in Jordan allows Iraqi refugees free residence for a three months period renewable for another three months. After the period of six months, Iraqis must pay a residence fee of JD 1 each day for each family member. In order to avoid paying residence fees, many Iraqis who do not have regular employment opt to leave Jordan for Iraq and return to Jordan for another six months.

In terms of access to the education system in Jordan, contacts with official sources at the Ministry of Education revealed that Iraqi children are admitted to the public schools for the first six months after they enter Jordan. If the children obtain a residence permit following the first six months, they are allowed to stay in school, otherwise they are obliged to quit. If an Iraqi student does not have official school records or authentic documents, the Ministry of Education cooperates by having the student undergo an evaluation test in order to

decide the educational level to which the student will be admitted. As for private schools, these are accessible to affluent Iraqis who can afford to pay their fees. The policy of UNRWA is to admit students of non-Palestinian origin only in areas where no other schools exist such as in the areas of Zeizia and Karameh.

As for access to the health care system in Jordan, Ministry of Health sources revealed that preventive health services such as vaccinations are available to Iraqis at a low cost at the Ministry's maternal and child health centers. Iraqis must pay a service fee but the vaccines are provided free of charge. Available medicines at the Ministry of Health are provided for free. Iraqis must pay for any health care services they receive from the public sector unless a family is exempted from paying by a written statement from the Royal Court or the Prime Ministry. Interviews with private specialized physicians who have treated Iraqi cancer patients revealed that non-Jordanian cancer patients (including Iraqis) do not have access to radiotherapy treatment services provided at Al Bashir Hospital which is under the Ministry of Health.

Some non-governmental relief organizations provide health care services to needy non-Jordanian families including Iraqis. General health services are provided mainly for women and children by the Pontificate Mission for Palestine (PMP) which was established in 1993. Patients that need specialized care are referred to CARITAS, another relief non-governmental organization that works closely with PMP. CARITAS gives free prescribed medications and has laboratories that run free diagnostic tests for needy patients regardless of nationality. The PMP pays for the cost of deliveries, Caesarian sections, operations, and emergency services for needy Iraqi families (and families of other nationalities) at the Italian Hospital in Amman. The Italian Hospital offers free beds and accommodation for Iraqi patients sponsored by PMP. The head of the PMP program acknowledged that shortages of formula, milk and medications were problems faced by the program. Better coordination and cooperation are needed between the Ministry of Health and the Mission so as to provide comprehensive health care to needy patients.

Campaigns by the Ministry of Social Development during 1997 led to the temporary detention of several Iraqi children (10) begging or selling on the streets. Some were sent back to Iraq with their families while others stayed with their families in Jordan. Outreach

workers at the Ministry revealed that there are large numbers of Iraqis living in low-income urban areas in Amman. Many of these Iraqis work as street vendors selling dates, leather products, carpets, cigarettes, and miscellaneous items. Some have left their children behind in Iraq while others brought their children. Outreach workers believe that in most cases the children do not join school because they lack scholastic records or do not have residence permits.

Information gathered from the public revealed that some cleaning companies in Jordan hire young Iraqi girls as young as 12 years of age for domestic work. The cleaning company charges the client JD 7 per day and gives the child JD 2 per day for working from 9:00 am until 5:00 pm in the evening. One household client gave an account of her personal experience with an Iraqi young girl who was sent by a cleaning company to clean her house. The child suffered severe back pain from lifting and moving heavy household furniture in other houses and could not work, but she was afraid to tell the cleaning company. The client felt sorry for her condition, gave her free money and asked her to rest at her house for the day for fear that she would be sent to another household where she would be obliged to do heavy duty cleaning. The cleaning company would not release any information on child domestic workers.

Several Iraqi vendors and families in downtown Amman were interviewed for this study. Most of the vendors were women selling cigarettes and miscellaneous items on street pavements. Some had their children selling with them. Some reported living in hotels because they only had come on a temporary basis. One woman reported leaving her nine year old son alone in the hotel while she was selling on the streets. Several women said they left their children in Iraq because of school and because of inability to pay residence fees. Most of the Iraqi vendors complained of harassment by municipal police who would forbid them from selling on street pavements as it interfered with pedestrians. Often their goods were seized by police or by custom officials who would seize cigarettes and other goods.

The interviews with Iraqis indicated that obtaining legal residence was a big hurdle as they worked on a non-regular basis and consequently were not eligible for work permits. The residence fee after the first six months constituted a heavy financial burden on Iraqi families. It was apparent from the interviews that the vast majority of Iraqis were residing in Jordan

on an illegal basis. Some of the mothers expressed lack of knowledge that their children were permitted to enter public schools during the interim six months period. Other mothers reported that their children were denied access to public schools in Jordan because their school documents and/or identification cards were lost. One mother reported her son lost three years of school because the public school would not admit him. Presently, he attends non-regular school at a cost of JD 20 per month. A few Iraqi families living in Baqa'a refugee camp said their children were admitted to the public schools.

A few of the mothers reported using private clinics for immunizations. The majority of mothers said they left their infants and toddlers with relatives in Iraq (father or grandparents). Others who had older children said they already received their immunizations in Iraq.

Interviews conducted with Iraqi families revealed the economic hardships the Iraqi refugees face. Many of them acknowledged they had to sell their furniture and electric appliances just to pay the required exit fee to leave Iraq and escape the stringent economic sanctions imposed on their country. Most of the interviewed mothers complained of health ailments such as diabetes and hypertension; their husbands also were reported to be sick or handicapped. The preliminary contacts made with Iraqi families revealed the pressing need to assess the living conditions of the Iraqi refugees in Jordan and to link them with basic education, health and social services.

4.0 Government Policies

This section discusses government policies in the fields of labor and education. Labor legislation and enforcement is discussed first followed by an overview of educational achievements and existing policies for improving educational attainment and quality of education.

4.1 Labor Legislation and Enforcement:

This section presents an overview of national legislation and regional and international conventions ratified by the Government of Jordan which have an impact on child labor. Labor laws are discussed as well as mechanisms for inspection and enforcement.

4.1.1 International and Regional Instruments

In May 1991, the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan ratified the International Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC). By ratifying the CRC Jordan committed to protecting children from harmful economic exploitation and from performing work that interferes with the child's health, education and normal development. In 1987 Jordan had signed the Arab Charter on the Rights of the Arab Child. This charter commits governments to adopt policies and implement concrete actions to ensure the realization of children's rights for survival, development and protection. Provisions of this charter stipulate the regulation of child labor thereby protecting children from neglect and exploitation. To this effect, child labor should start at an early age. Children are not to engage in occupations or vocations that are hazardous, or harmful to their health or that obstruct their education or negatively impact on their physical, psychological, mental, moral or social development. (Section b (article 12)).

In June 1997 Jordan ratified the ILO Minimum Age Convention of 1973 (No. 138). This was done after Jordan enacted a new labor law (Labor Law No. 8) and fixed the minimum age for formal employment or work at 16 years, the age for completing compulsory schooling. Convention No. 138 is a consolidation of principles that had been cumulatively established in earlier (ILO) instruments and includes all sectors of economic activity by

children whether paid or unpaid. Convention No. 138 commits ratifying states to fix a minimum age for admission to employment and to pursue a national policy aimed at abolishing child labor and raising progressively the minimum age for employment to a level consistent with the fullest physical and mental development of children (ILO, 1996). Convention No. 138 stipulates that the minimum age for employment should not be less than the age at which compulsory education is completed and under no circumstances should be less than 15 years of age (Convention No. 138 Article 2 (3)).

In April 1966, Jordan had signed the International Labor Treaty of 1965 (No. 123) which set the minimum age for working in mines at 16 years (Article 2). In the same year, Jordan also ratified the International Labor Treaty of 1965 (No. 124) concerning the medical examination of children to determine their fitness for employment in mines. In 1970 Jordan ratified several conventions of the Arab Labor Organization namely, the Arab Labor Convention No.1 of 1966 on labor standards, as amended by Convention No. 6 of 1976. According to the Arab Labor Conventions, child labor under the age of 12 for both sexes is generally prohibited (Article 57). Also, these two conventions prohibit employment of children under 15 years of age in industrial establishments (Article 57). Children under the age of 17 are prohibited to work in industries that are dangerous, hazardous or harmful to health (Article 58). Jordan has not yet ratified the new Arab Labor Convention No. 18 of 1996 on child labor. The provisions of this convention relate to setting a minimum age for child labor, increasing public awareness about the potential negative impacts of child labor, and listing work activities that are hazardous and harmful to children's health.

4.1.2 National Legislation

Presently, Labor Law No. 8 of 1996 is applicable in Jordan. This law repeals all previous applicable legislation (Article 141). Previously, Labor Law No. 21 of 1960 (with amendments) was the applicable law.

Labor Law No. 8 prohibits the employment of children under the age of 16, legislation with respect to vocational training notwithstanding (Article 73). According to this law young persons cannot be employed in dangerous, hazardous or strenuous employment as

determined by the Minister of Labor after consultations with relevant institutions. To this end, a list of hazardous or strenuous occupations was distributed within the Ministry to facilitate enforcement of provisions of the Labor Law by labor inspectors. The law also stipulates that children cannot work longer than six hours per day and should be given a rest period of at least half an hour after four hours of continuous work. Children cannot work late hours (between 8:00 pm and 6:00 am), on weekends, and national and religious holidays (Article 75). Before employing a child, an employer must obtain his/her birth certificate, health certificate, and the guardian's written approval (Article 76). Employers who do not conform with any of the provisions of the law can be fined a minimum of JD 100 not to exceed JD 500 and the fine is to be doubled if the offense is repeated (Article 77). A copy of Labor Law No. 8 is provided in Appendix E.

Since Labor Law No. 8 raised the minimum working age from 13 to 16, the gap is now closed between the age of employment and the age of completion of compulsory education. The Educational Act of 1988 stipulates that the student shall not leave the educational system before reaching the age of 16 (Article 10 (c)). Thus, minimum level of compulsory education is the end of the 10th grade. The average age for that class is 15-16 years. By raising the minimum working age limit to 16 to be in line with compulsory schooling age limit, Labor Law No. 8 satisfies requirements of Article 2 (3) of the ILO Minimum Age Convention, 1973 (No. 138).

The new labor law does not cover children working in the following sectors: (1) public and municipal employees; (2) children working in family enterprises who in most cases work for no wages; (3) domestic servants, gardeners and cooks, and (4) agricultural workers. These exclusions have particular negative impacts on female children who are known to work mainly in housekeeping, agriculture, and family enterprises. Thus, the new law provides very little coverage for female child workers.

One other shortcoming of Labor Law No. 8 is that it does not specify a minimum age for the vocational training of children. The Vocational Training Corporation stipulates that children who join vocational training programs should have a minimum age of 16. However, the new labor law implies that any juvenile above the age of seven can undergo vocational

training as an apprentice. Labor Law No. 8 defines a juvenile as any person who has reached the age of seven and has not yet turned 18.

4.1.3 Mechanisms of Inspection to Enforce the Legislation

Ministry of Labor officials state that there is no gap between labor legislation and law enforcement. However, Ministry sources acknowledge that there is a shortage of labor inspectors. Presently, there are 69 labor inspectors for the entire country of which 24 are in Amman. The rest are distributed throughout the Kingdom[4]. These inspectors deal with occupational health and safety and related hazards of employees including children, in various establishments and enterprises. In Amman, the number of establishments inspected monthly by the Ministry as of September 1, 1997 are 13,452. On an average day, each inspector inspects five enterprises and establishments.

The Inspectorate Division of the Ministry of Labor is very interested in monitoring child labor. When the National Plan of Action for Jordanian Children was launched, the Ministry of Labor notified all inspectors about the importance of monitoring child labor in various establishments in Amman and other governorates. In mid November 1997, the Ministry of Labor launched a field survey and recruited inspectors in all directorates throughout the Kingdom to inspect various establishments and identify cases of child labor. The survey will be completed in December 1997 and results will indicate names and addresses of establishments that employ children, kinds of employment children are engaged in, training in Vocational Training Institute, age of the child, wages, number of hours worked, and number of weekly days off and vacations days.

Labor inspectors at the Ministry of Labor are given periodic training every year at the Institute of General Administration in Amman. Training sessions are financed by the International Labor Organization and the Arab Labor Organization. Each session is one week long. Training relates to all aspects of the Labor Law including interpretation and

1 Information is based on interviews conducted with the Labor Inspection Division of the Ministry of Labor in Jordan.

application of provisions of the law in relation to child labor. Training sessions include group discussions based on field experiences of inspectors.

Ministry of Labor sources indicate that there is no coordination between labor inspectors and educational counselors (previously called inspectors) even in the cases of children who are school drop-outs and working illegally prior to completing the compulsory education stage. The Inspectorate Division acknowledged they had encountered few cases of child labor that were reported and consequently were inspected. In these isolated cases, the families of the employed children begged the inspectors to allow the children to work on holidays in view of dire financial need by the family. In dealing with such cases the inspectors counseled needy families and referred them to the National Assistance Fund. In other cases, children who were school drop-outs were counseled to obtain vocational training prior to employment.

With respect to enforcement of the Labor Law, the Inspectorate Division stated that generally they would enforce the law and instruct the employer to dismiss a working child if the occupational environment is hazardous and negatively impacts on the health, safety and welfare of the child. If the working environment is safe and the family of the child is in dire financial need, the Inspectorate Division would tend to let the child work, provided his/her work did not interfere with the child's education. Furthermore, labor inspectors refrained from transferring cases of violations of the law to courts and imposing fines on employers because of the difficult economic situation. No child labor cases have ever been referred to courts for violations of the child labor provisions of the current labor law or the previous law.

The Director of the Union for Mechanical Enterprises acknowledged that child labor is rampant in mechanical and auto body repair workshops. In these enterprises child labor is hidden under the cover of apprenticeship. He said children were exploited as they worked long hours for meager wages. He said he knew that children were abused physically and morally but the children never complained to the Union. The Director stated that he personally was against hiring of children but that employers resorted to child labor, a cheap form of labor because of lack of economic prosperity and stagnant business. The Director recommended a change in the system of apprenticeship whereby apprentices undergo training

at the premises of the Vocational Training Corporation instead of small unregulated private enterprises where children are likely to face abuse and economic exploitation. Another recommended option is for the apprentices to undergo formal theoretical training at the Vocational Training Corporation and then subsequently enter the labor market as full time employees with entitled benefits. This would put an end to their exploitation as apprentices.

The Director of the Union for Restaurants and Sweet Manufacturing acknowledged that child labor is prevalent in small enterprises that have five employees or less, that are not registered with the Union. Bigger enterprises generally do not employ children. He said it would be very difficult to control child labor in very small unlicensed enterprises. He believed that child labor in food service establishments should be permitted only if it is regulated, if it takes place during holidays, and if it does not interfere with the child's education. He also added that the phenomenon of child labor should be studied and considered by relevant ministries and non-governmental organizations in Jordan.

4.2 Educational Achievements and Policy

The educational policy in Jordan from independence until the 1980s focused on ensuring that all children had access to and are enrolled in the educational system. This policy focus which stemmed from Jordan's human resources based development strategy caused enrollment rates in Jordanian schools to be among the highest in the Middle East for both males and females. Provisions dating back to Educational Act No. 20 for 1955 made education mandatory for boys and girls and entitled every village with at least 10 school-age children to a school (Articles 30 and 31).

4.2.1 Educational Achievements

The total number of enrolled students for the 1996/1997 scholastic year was 1,320,207 students. Of this number, 670,472 were males and 649,735 were females. The number of students enrolled in the basic education cycle (grades 1-10) was 1,099,215 students. The ratio of male to female students in the basic education cycle was almost

identical with female enrollment slightly higher than male enrollment in Ministry of Education public schools (Ministry of Education, 1997).

Educational services in Jordan are provided by the public sector (Ministry of Education and Ministry of Defense), the United Nations Relief and Welfare Agency (UNRWA) for Palestinian Refugees in the Near East, and the private sector. For the scholastic year 1996/1997, the Ministry of Education (the dominant provider) accounted for 71% of the total enrollment, followed by the private sector (16%), UNRWA (11%) and Ministry of Defense (1%). At the kindergarten level, non-governmental organizations, voluntary societies, and the private sector accounted for 99.5% of enrollment and the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Defense accounted for only 0.5% of enrollment (Ministry of Education, 1997).

Table 20 below provides summary statistics of the number of schools, number of students, number of teachers, and student-teacher ratios for each of the educational providers (ministry of Education, 1997).

Table 20. Summary of Statistical Information Regarding Educational Providers

Provider	No. of Schools	No. of Students	No. of Teachers	Student-Teacher Ratio
Ministry of Education	2,746	940,268	46,438	20:1
Ministry of Defense	25	17,112	1,010	17:1
UNRWA	198	146,188	4,154	35:1
Private	1,473	216,639	11,687	18:1

Student-teacher ratios differ between urban and rural areas in public and in private schools. In the schools that are under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Education, the student-teacher ratio is 24:1 in urban areas and 16:1 in rural areas. In other public schools the student-teacher ratio is 17:1 in urban areas and 16:1 in rural areas. In private schools, the student-teacher ratio is 17:1 in urban areas and 19:1 in rural areas. In UNRWA schools, the student-teacher ratio of 35:1 is the same in both urban and rural areas.

Overall rates of school drop-outs appear to be low in Jordan. In 1994/1995 the drop-out rate of total students for all classes was 0.93%; 1.16% for male students and 0.69% for female students (Ministry of Education, 1996). The drop-out rates varied significantly by region signifying regional specific measures to address the problem. In 1992/1993, average drop-out rate for grades 5-10 was 2.5% in Amman, but in Tafileh and Irbid the drop-out rates were considerably higher (6.9% and 5.2%, respectively) (National Center for Human Research and Development, 1995). School drop-out rates increase in the last grade of the basic education cycle (tenth grade) and are much higher at the secondary level. In 1994/1995, the drop-out rate at the 10th grade was 1.83% for males and 1.37% for females. At the first secondary school grade (grade 11), drop-out rates are much higher for males (6.36%) compared with a rate of 1.06% for females (Ministry of Education, 1996). In private schools, drop-out rates are very low and insignificant. In UNRWA schools, teaching covers the basic education cycle only. School drop-outs in UNRWA schools start at grade six. Drop-out rates for grades 6-9 were 4.2% for males and 3.6% for females for the academic year 1995/1996 (UNRWA, 1996).

Increasing school drop-out rates at higher grades of the basic education cycle and in the secondary level account for the low enrollments at higher educational grade levels. While Jordan ranks second in the MENA countries (where data are available) in primary enrollment (enrollment rate of 92% for grades 1-6 and 72% for grades 7-10), Jordan ranks fifth in the region in secondary level enrollment. The net enrollment rate is only 48% for grades 11-12 (UNICEF, 1996b)

A 1995 field study by the Ministry of Education and UNICEF of 48 schools in 11 governorates provided useful information on the major determinants of school drop-outs in the basic education cycle. Responses were obtained from student drop-outs (n=444), their families (n=477), and school principals (n=48). Information also was obtained from teachers (n=350) concerning the main problems they faced in teaching.

The study reported that student drop-outs gave three main reasons for dropping-out of school. These were: punishment by teachers, poor academic performance (repeated

failures), and family poverty and the need to work. Seventy percent (70%) of the drop-outs had repeated one or more classes, 70% indicated they were hit by teachers, and 59% were slow learners. Eighty-four percent (84%) of families with drop-outs had a monthly income of less than JD 200 and 43% had a monthly income of less than JD 100. Getting married was a major factor pulling girls away from schools. Parents cited lack of relevance of schooling for their children as a major reason for dropping-out in addition to repeated failure and preference of the parents for vocational training of the child. The need to work and help in domestic chores also were cited by parents as reasons for dropping-out. School principals indicated that students were pushed out of school by poor academic performance and pulled out by the lack of family interest in education, family poverty, family disintegration, and the need to work. Teachers stated they had no time to prepare for lessons or help students with poor educational attainment or devote time to gifted students (Ministry of Education and UNICEF, 1995).

The same study revealed regional variations in determinants of school drop-outs. In Bedouin communities, migratory life style and shepherding were causal factors. Touristic activities were causal factors for drop-outs in the Petra and Wadi Mousa area while distance from school was a key determinant for girl drop-outs in Ramtha (Ministry of Education and UNICEF, 1995).

Since the onset of the Comprehensive Education Reform Program in Jordan in 1988, activating the role of counseling and in-service training of teachers and supervisors have been some of the measures undertaken by the Ministry of Education to improve the quality of education and to prevent school drop-outs. Under the same reform program, new curricula and text books have been developed for the basic and secondary cycles. It is too early to assess the impact of the new curricula (completed in 1996) on learning quality and achievement. Counseling in Ministry of Education schools started in 1969 with only six counselors. Currently there are 934 counselors in schools under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Education. Sixty-six percent (66%) of the counselors are in schools for females and 34% are in schools for males.[5] However, two-thirds of the schools under the jurisdiction

[5] Information in this section is based on interviews with the Guidance and Counseling Division and the Training Division at the Directorate of General Education, Ministry of Education.

of the Ministry of Education are in need of counselors. Counselors are required to have a university degree in counseling and psychology. In private schools there are 54 counselors in Amman, but there are no statistics by the Ministry of Education as to the number of counselors in private schools outside Amman.

School counseling has three main functions: (1) development of the student's self-direction, social skills, and positive attitudes towards self and others; (2) developing the student's ability to avoid problems and to alert the student to causes and types of problems and ways of dealing with them; and, (3) helping the student in educational and career choices according to student preferences, abilities and aptitudes in the light of the needs of the labor market.

Counseling services are evaluated monthly and annually by the school principals and by each directorate in all the governorates. An evaluation by the students of counseling services in Amman schools is now underway and will be completed and published in 1998. The evaluation comprised a sample of ten schools in Amman.

The Division of Guidance and Counseling in the Ministry of Education has developed a plan for promoting counseling services in schools. Planned activities include: (1) assigning more than one counselor in schools exceeding 500 students; (2) increasing awareness in the school and local communities of the important role of the counselor in the educational process and in participating in family and local community problems; and, (3) coordinating counselors' activities with those of social workers and doctors and extending counselors' activities to include family counseling. This would better enable the counselors to deal with emerging social problems such as family disintegration and domestic violence.

During the period 1993-1997 counselors have received training courses and attended seminars, advanced courses and workshops in coordination with the Certification and Training Department at the Ministry of Education, counseling divisions in the Ministry and counseling centers in the Jordanian universities. Counselors will soon receive training in peer mediation techniques including skills for settling disputes between students or between students and teachers or between students and parents. This training is aimed at reducing

violence in the school environment. Peer mediation techniques involve the use of neutral mediators (teachers or students) who help disputants settle their conflicts and reach amicable consensus and acceptable solutions.

The Educational Supervision Reform Program of 1988 aspired to change the attitudes and beliefs of educational supervisors to meet the new challenges of improvement of quality of education specified by the Education Reform of 1988. Currently there are 735 educational supervisors in the various directorates of the Ministry of Education. The majority of these (660) supervise the teaching of academic subjects while 75 supervise the teaching of vocational subjects. The supervisors undergo training upon recruitment as well as in-service training. Supervisors in the Directorate of Private Education supervise education in private schools. UNRWA schools have 56 supervisors that also undergo in-service training at the UNRWA/UNESCO Division of Education in Amman.

Educational supervisors are specialized by subject. For example, supervisors for Arabic are responsible for the quality of education of the Arabic language of schools in a specific directorate, and thus their academic credentials must fit their area of speciality. On the average, each inspector is responsible for supervising 80 teachers. There also are supervisors for training activities who develop plans for training and who evaluate the training of teachers. The supervisors conduct inspection visits to schools and submit reports as to conditions in schools. They examine attendance and enrollment records with teachers and principals. They work closely with teachers and help them solve problems in order to improve the educational process. Supervisors make recommendations as to any training needed by teachers. They also work closely with counselors and contribute to development of curricula and text books. Supervisors give recognition to distinguished teachers and participate in scholastic activities such as book fairs and celebrations. Evaluations of supervisors are carried out by their respective directorates.

4.2.2 Cost of Education

Education is almost free at the public sector in Jordan as there are only nominal fees for education in government schools. For the compulsory education cycle (grades 1-10), the annual fees are between JD 3-6, while for the secondary education cycle the fees are JD 6 per student per year. Fees partially defray the cost of maintenance, library, and stationary costs. Education at UNRWA schools is totally free. Fees for private schools vary from one school to another as there are no fee restrictions imposed on the private sector by the Ministry of Education. Some of the private schools have a tuition as high as US $4,000 per student per year in the basic cycles. Books are free of charge for the basic cycle at government and UNRWA schools but are relatively expensive at private schools. There are costs associated with books at the secondary cycle in government schools. Costs vary according to the specialization and curriculum used in each stream (academic, vocational). Even though tuition and books are almost free of charge at government schools, transportation and costs of meals are a financial burden to poor families.

There is no system of financial assistance to students to cover all educational costs. In private schools, school principals have the authority to exempt gifted and/or needy students from tuition fees and costs of books. In government schools, poor families with several children enrolled in school may be given a fee exemption not to exceed 20% of tuition cost.

4.2.3 Educational Policies

The Education Act of 1988 made schooling compulsory for the first 10 years. Previously and since 1967, compulsory schooling comprised the first nine years. However, there is no legislative mechanism for forcing parents or guardians to have their children attend school. There is a national consensus among all governmental and non-governmental organizations on the need for legislative mechanisms to enforce the law on compulsory schooling. In 1988, the 10-year Comprehensive Education Reform Program was launched. This program focused on improving the quality of learning in the Jordanian Education System. Major components of the reform program included the following: (1) upgrading curricula and text books; (2) upgrading teacher training levels; (3) upgrading evaluation and student assessment for better evaluation of the quality of education; (4) improving the educational environment through introduction of new techniques and equipment; (5) improving school administration through staff training and increased decentralization; and, (6) expanding school construction to reduce rented facilities and of double-shifting in schools (UNICEF, 1997).

The comprehensive secondary education level has a vocational education stream alongside the academic education stream. In 1995, the vocational training stream was expanded to include vocations such as clothes manufacturing and cosmetics for female students. The secondary education level also has applied vocational training for students (1-2 years) after which students enter the labor market. In 1996, the responsibility for applied vocational training at the secondary education level was transferred to the Vocational Training Corporation (VTC). The VTC has 40 training centers throughout Jordan. Students must be at least 16 years of age to be accepted for training at the VTC.

The curriculum reform program subcomponent of the Comprehensive Education Reform Program of 1988 resulted in the development of new curricula and text books for all grades. The curriculum reform program aimed at promoting the development of higher cognitive skills, modernizing curriculum content to reflect contemporary issues, and making curricula more flexible and responsive to individual abilities and interests. The Global Education Initiative (GEI) involving the development of teaching/learning modules grounded in interactive learning approaches was introduced by the Ministry of Education in 1993. This

initiative was introduced on an experimental basis as a means of promoting problem solving skills by students and as an alternative to traditional rote learning methods. Pilot tests took place involving 300 teachers in 33 schools. Feedback from field testing was very positive from both students and teachers. The Ministry of Education currently is exploring means of expanding the implementation of this initiative.

Children with Learning Disabilities

Presently, the Ministry of Education is implementing a tripartite project set up with Princess Tharwat College and Queen Alia Fund for Social Development (QAF) to provide specialized learning opportunities for slow learners. The QAF furnishes resources learning centers in some schools while the Princess Tharwat College trains and equips teachers and counselors with the necessary skills to deal with children who are slow learners and who have learning disabilities.

The Ministry of Education started the use of resource rooms in 1987.[6] Currently only 5% (118) of public schools have resource rooms. These facilities are used for slow learners and children with learning disabilities who are in grades one through four. There is a high demand for expanding resource rooms to other schools. The Ministry, subsequent to obtaining funds, has the objective of providing a resource room in every school that has grades one and higher. In the resource room, the student receives individualized teaching for one to two periods per day by a teacher specialized and trained in special education.

The Ministry of Education in cooperation with the Ministry of Social Development has a program for integrating male and female handicapped students in regular classes in government schools. Students with physical handicaps only will be integrated but students with mental handicaps will be excluded.

School Feeding Programs

[6] Information in this section is based on an interview with the Division of Remedial Education at the Directorate of Special Education, Ministry of Education.

The School Feeding Program started in 1974 with support from World Food Program. The aim was to encourage students from remote villages to attend school and to minimize drop-out rates in remote areas. The program also aimed at attracting illiterate women in remote villages to attend illiteracy eradication classes and vocational training in rural development centers. Since 1974, the project has had three phases and was scheduled to end in 1994 but was extended until the end of the scholastic year 1996/1997. The Government of Jordan presently is seeking funding to continue the project.

Currently, students in grades one through six from the remote villages of eight governorates benefit from the project (about 60,000 students). Beneficiaries also include 4,000 women participants of illiteracy eradication classes, 900 women in vocational training, and 1,200 kindergarten children in the rural development centers. Wheat, cereals, cheese, meat, sugar and tea have been provided throughout this program. Wheat and cereals are distributed at the onset of the scholastic semester or training course while cheese and meat are distributed daily to students who bring their own bread from home. In the period 1974-1986, sterilized milk was given to students in grades one through three but this was discontinued due to health problems related to improper mixing of milk.

Non-Formal Education Programs

The Ministry of Education has non-formal programs for providing educational services to older students who missed educational opportunities at a younger age and for students who dropped out of school prior to completing the basic cycle. Presently, there are four kinds of non-formal education programs that enable students to finish secondary level education.[7] These programs are:

1. **Illiteracy Eradication Program:** These classes which started in 1968 enable the students to complete their education through grade six. These classes as well as books and stationary are free of charge. In 1996/1997, the number of classes had totaled 635 with a total enrollment of 11,475 participants; 1,179 of these were males and 10,296 were females.

[7] Information in this section is obtained from the Director of the Division of Non-formal Education at the Ministry of Education.

2. Evening Studies Program: This program which started in 1978/1979 covers education from grade seven through the end of the secondary cycle. The cost is JD 20 per semester or a total cost of JD 40 per scholastic year. During the scholastic year 1996/1997, the total number of participants was 3,407; of these 1,673 were males and 1,734 were females. Evening classes are conducted in schools under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Education.

3. Home Studies Program: This program which started in 1978/1979 covers the entire basic and secondary education cycles. It is free of charge. Students pay only for the cost of books. In 1996/1997, participants totaled 567 of which 341 were males and 226 were females.

4. Summer Studies Program: This program which started in 1977 offers summer courses to strengthen students' aptitude in certain subject areas and to provide extra curricular activities. The cost is JD 8 for the entire summer course. In 1995/1996, there were 92 centers throughout the Kingdom with 5,013 beneficiaries, both males and females.

Non-formal education programs also comprise a vocational training stream that includes training and rehabilitation programs supervised by semi-official and voluntary organizations.

The Ministry of Education has been very supportive of non-formal education programs and has formulated a development plan for the period 1993-1997 which significantly increased the number of participants in these programs. The division of non-formal education has plans to conduct weekend camps for children below 16 who are school drop-outs and who work in industrial enterprises in the Ojan and Sahab areas. The camps will take place on Thursdays and Fridays. The aim is to develop academic and vocation training skills and provide extra curricular activities. Funding was obtained for pilot studies to be conducted in early 1998 in three industrial sites.

5.0 Targeted Programs

This section gives a brief overview of governmental and non-governmental programs that directly or indirectly affect employed children and their families. Presently, there are no programs that are designed specifically for employed children. The Ministry of Social Development has programs that deal with street children and the rehabilitation of delinquents. Several governmental and non-governmental programs exist for poverty alleviation and for helping households meet their basic needs. Poverty alleviation programs are indirectly related to child labor as children are less likely to work when families can meet their basic needs. Governmental programs related to child labor are presented below followed by a brief overview of poverty alleviation programs in Jordan.

5.1 Programs Related to Child Labor

Ministry of Social Development

The Ministry of Social Development currently does not have any programs targeted at working children. However, the Ministry deals with street children which constitute a segment of working children. The Ministry systematically conducts campaigns for detaining street children and studying their social and economic conditions. If the families of street children are eligible for financial aid, they are referred to welfare programs for assistance. In addition, the Ministry has programs and institutions for vocational training and rehabilitation of juvenile delinquents.

Ministry of Labor

Enactment of the Labor Law No. 8 of 1996 was a significant attempt by the Ministry of Labor to prevent children from working prior to completion of the basic education cycle. The Ministry is very concerned with exploring the phenomenon of child labor. Presently, the Ministry of Labor is conducting a field study to examine the prevalence of child labor and to study conditions under which children are working. The Ministry is aware of the need to increase the number of labor inspectors to strengthen mechanisms of inspection and enforcement of the labor law concerning child labor.

Ministry of Education

The Ministry of Education's reform programs were designed to improve educational quality and prevent drop-outs Non-formal education programs are aimed at upgrading the skills of school drop-outs who are working by linking them with the educational cycle. Summer camp programs to be initiated soon in three industrial sites will specifically target employed children. When implemented, these programs should be evaluated and if successful they should be replicated in other communities of children working in industrial enterprises.

Ministry of Planning

The Ministry of Planning's Division of Human Resources recently published a report on child labor based on 1991 employment survey data. The report recommended studying the child labor phenomenon in Jordan in depth because of its devastating consequences on the health and development of children. The Ministry is concerned with poverty alleviation, one of the root causes of child labor. The Ministry has a coordination unit for the comprehensive Social Productivity Program (SPP) which aims at improving the living standards of citizens in under- developed regions of Jordan including refugee camps. The program will start in 1998 and entails restructuring the National Aid Fund which provides assistance to the poor.

Public Security Directorate

The Public Security Directorate though not directly involved in child labor is active in studying domestic violence and child neglect and abuse. To this effect, the Directorate recently established a unit for family protection. One of the functions of the unit is studying the causes for child neglect and abuse and setting strategies and policies for prevention and treatment of child abuse in cooperation with relevant organizations. The unit is aware of the need for inter-sectoral collaboration in order to control child labor and especially labor of street children. The Directorate publishes statistics on child abuse, suicides, and on street

children killed as a result of being hit by motor vehicles.

5.2 Government Programs for Poverty Alleviation

Government direct assistance to the poor is provided through four main programs: (1) the National Assistance Fund; (2) medical care exemptions; (3) food coupons and subsidies, and ; (4) the Development and Employment Fund.

The National Assistance Fund was established in 1986 to serve as the official government body for poverty alleviation. The fund has a board of directors (from governmental and non-governmental agencies) chaired by the Minister of Social Development.

The National Assistance Fund provides direct cash transfer to unemployable and chronically poor households, loans for income-generating activities, vocational training and short term financial assistance for poor households faced with a crisis. Experts agree that the Fund's resources are inadequate to cover all households eligible for assistance. In 1997, 32,000 families received financial assistance but studies estimate that 45,000 families are in need of financial aid.[8] In 1997 the allocations from the fund were JD 21.5 million. Although in 1997 the total number of families who have benefited from the Fund (loans and development projects) since inception are 160,000 families, it is estimated that 800,000 individuals are in need of financial aid (UNICEF, 1997).

Exemptions from paying medical treatment costs at public hospitals are granted by the Ministry of Social Development on the basis of assessment of household income. A sliding scale is used with families earning less than JD 100 per month exempted from all medical treatment expenses. Families earning greater than JD 200 per month receive no medical exemptions thus leaving a substantial portion of Jordanian families in financial crisis in the event of a serious illness or injury to a family member (UNICEF, 1997).

[8] Information in this section is obtained from an interview with the National Assistance Fund director.

Although some 3.8 million Jordanians (85%) are eligible for food coupons from the Ministry of Supply, only 60% of eligible households claim the coupons (UNICEF, 1997). Food coupons entitle recipients to small discounts in the purchase of limited quantities of sugar, powdered milk, rice, frozen chicken and olive oil. The Ministry of Supply controls prices of many other food items.

The Development and Employment Fund (DEF) was established at the end of 1989 to alleviate unemployment and to offset the social hardships of the structural adjustment program. It is aimed at providing technical support and financing projects targeting the poor and unemployed. In the period January 1991 through December 1997, 5437 projects were financed totaling JD 24,677,817. Through these projects, 11,300 employment opportunities were created.[9]

Data are needed on the effectiveness and sustain ability of the micro-enterprises supported by the DEF as little data are presently available. The World Bank raised a number of questions about the effectiveness of DEF in alleviating poverty as the Jordanian economy may already be saturated with goods produced by micro-enterprises (UNICEF, 1997).

In 1998, the Jordanian government will embark on the comprehensive Social Productivity Program (SPP) mentioned earlier in this section. The committee in charge of the program is composed of seven ministries with the Ministry of Planning acting as the coordinator. The SPP program which aims at combating poverty and unemployment has four objectives: (1) restructuring the National Aid Fund; (2) providing under- privileged areas with physical and social infrastructure; (3) improving the creations of the micro-finance network to strengthen small projects by individuals or small groups ; and, (4) providing training to the poor and unemployed. The government has begun the Community Infrastructure Project to provide the most needed social and infrastructure services (housing, roads, schools, electricity and water) to 14 sites in Amman, Ruseifa and Zarqa.

[9] Information was obtained based on an interview with the Director of Studies of the Development and Employment Fund.

5.3 Non-Governmental Programs for Poverty Alleviation

The semi-governmental Zakat Fund and the non-governmental Zakat committees are other important mechanisms for helping the poor in Jordan. The Zakat Fund was established in 1978. As of 1997, the Zakat fund has supported 6500 families (National Assistance Fund, 1997). The Fund provides families with regular financial aid, emergency aid for covering medical costs, loans for income-generating activities and bursaries for schooling.

The General Union of Voluntary Societies in operation since 1958 coordinates and provides regular direct financial and technical support to local cooperative societies, loans to poor households and person with disabilities, and loans and grants to students from poor households. The Noor Al-Hussein Foundation, the Queen Alia Social Welfare Fund, the two largest NGOs in the country, and various other Jordanian and international non-governmental organizations support a variety of community development and income-generating projects aimed at supporting poor households and helping them break out of the poverty cycle (UNICEF, 1997). The United Nations Children's Fund, Canadian Agency for Development, Care International, Save The Children, Near East Foundation, Questscope, Mennonite, and Adventist and Development Relief Agency (ADRA) are some of the non-governmental organizations that work in local community development projects in coordination with the Local Community Development Division of the Ministry of Social Development.

Little information is available regarding the coverage of poverty alleviation programs and to what extent they keep pace with the increasing number of poor families in the country. Ministry of Social Development statistics show that in 1995 only 40% of poor families received some form of assistance. Prior to the newly established Social Productivity Program there was no clear coordinated government policy to alleviate poverty. The emphasis by the government has been on providing direct aid to poor families rather than on rehabilitation. The reason is that most of the income-generating projects lack feasibility studies. The marketing of products from development project is often difficult because of market fluctuations thus resulting in lack of sustainability of projects (National Assistance Fund, 1997). Coordination is needed among governmental and non-governmental organizations to avoid duplication of aid to some families while other vulnerable families remain unreached.

This coordination could be reached by development of a computerized data base of poor families to facilitate networking among various relevant organizations (National Assistance Fund, 1997; Ministry of Social Development, 1993).

5.4 Public Awareness of Child Labor

There is increased public awareness of the phenomenon of child labor in Jordan. Numerous newspaper articles appeared throughout 1997, often on a monthly basis, highlighting the plight of street children, the safety hazards they are exposed to, and the violation of their basic rights for survival, protection and development. Several newspaper articles have also focused on the need for addressing legal and social issues related to child abuse in Jordan.

Although the media has focused on street children, recently the media (printed media and television programs) addressed the plight of children working in different enterprises. Several newspaper articles discussed in length the negative social consequences of child labor and the detrimental effect of child labor on the children's health and development. Human rights activities that include legislators, lawyers, academicians, community professionals and members of the public have increasingly expressed the need for the advancement of legislation on children's rights. Presently, Jordan is in the process of finalizing a comprehensive version of a law on the Rights of the Child. The Law ensures the right of the Jordanian Child to survival, protection, development and participation. Article 71 of the Law prohibits the employment of any child under 16 years of age (Jordanian Law on the Rights of the Child, 1997).

Recently, child labor has been the subject of several research studies by graduate students in Jordanian Universities (Community Medicine and Social Services). Various individual unions have also expressed the need to regulate rather than prohibit child labor because of the relatively high poverty level in the country. There is a consensus from official, non-official organizations, and concerned parties that legislative measures alone are not adequate and that public awareness campaigns are needed for educating parents, teachers, and children on child rights. The upcoming Workshop on Child Labor in Jordan to be

conducted by the Ministry of Labor and the National Task Force for Children hopefully will be effective in mobilizing opinion of the public and the the policy makers in favor of working children and the safeguarding of their rights.

6.0 Conclusions and Recommendations

This study revealed that child labor is prevalent in selected study sites that included urban poverty pockets, refugee camps, and industrial sites in Amman and the neighboring cities of Zarqa and Jerash. The scope of this study did not include children engaged in agriculture, in family enterprises or in domestic labor, occupations in which female children are engaged.

Based on the findings of this study, child labor in Jordan seems to be concentrated in informal sector enterprises and is mostly temporary and seasonal. Child labor in Jordan is a product of poverty, diminishing returns from education, and lack of extra-curricular activities for children. Recognizing the socio-economic context of the phenomenon of child labor in Jordan, and in the presence of a weak economy and high levels of poverty in Jordan, it is unrealistic at the present time to aim at total eradication of child labor. In the short-term, regulation of child labor in Jordan and removing children from exploitative and hazardous work conditions seems more realistic than a total ban on child labor.

Since child labor is a complex phenomenon with multiple underlying factors such as poverty, school-drop-outs, lack of parental education and lack of youth activities, a multidimensional approach is needed for combating child labor. Such an approach requires inter-sectoral cooperation and should combine long term strategies for prevention and regulation with short term strategies to regulate child labor. Long-term measures include improving the quality of education, legislative measures for compliance with the Convention of the Rights of the Child (enforcement of compulsory education and minimum age for employment) and development of effective national and community based programs for alleviating poverty and increasing employment opportunities. Short-term measures focus on regulation of child labor, including seasonal and temporary work, removing children from hazardous and exploitative work conditions, and the training and rehabilitation of working children and linking them with the educational system to break from the cycle of exploitation and abuse.

Short-term and long-term measures for combating child labor should include advocacy and public awareness campaigns to increase awareness of decision-makers, parents, teachers, and children on child rights and on the negative consequences of child labor.

Effective action for controlling child labor should be at all levels of society; (individual, family, community, society at large), and the policy level. Moreover,

intersectoral cooperation (labor, social development, education, planning, and youth) and collaboration among governmental and non-governmental organizations is necessary for an effective convergent approach to combat child labor.

Prior to implementing any solutions to child labor it is important for policy makers and child advocates in Jordan to formulate a clear definition of child labor for policy setting and for developing effective programs to combat child labor. The distinction between 'child labor' and 'child work' is important for the selection and development of policies and strategies incorporating regulations which address work and prohibitions which address child labor. While certain types of work performed by children in Jordan should be redefined as child labor (domestic help, family enterprise, and the agricultural sector), other types of work that is non-strenuous, non-hazardous, and does not interfere with the child's education is reasonable. Thus, it is important that policy makers and relevant parties (including legislators and workers' organizations) recognize that some child work can be good for children's development and allows children to gain skills, self confidence and respect in their families and communities.

Both short- term and long-term measures for regulation and prevention of child labor respectively are presented in the sections below. The aim of the long-term measures is the eradication and total prevention of child labor while the short-term measures aim to regulate child labor so as to remove any negative physical or psychosocial effects on children's health or physical, social and mental development.

6.1 Short-term Measures

1. A national study using probability sampling techniques is recommended to develop accurate statistics, provide a database on the magnitude of child labor nationwide, and on the various occupations children are engaged in. Such a study should be gender sensitive and take into account female employment. Seasonal variation should be accounted for as there is an explosion of child labor during the summer months. The study should involve the active participation and appraisal of children themselves of their working conditions. Such information is necessary for decision makers and for the formulation of an effective national plan for combating child labor.

2. Any future studies on child labor should include in-depth qualitative data that explore the variety of realities faced by working children. Future studies account for hidden

forms of child labor (domestic labor, handicrafts, weaving, and embroidery). Studies on child labor should account for children's views on conditions of work, numbers of hours worked, wages, health and safety aspects, and physical and psychological abuse faced by a working child.

3. Subsequent to the findings of the field survey conducted recently by the Ministry of Labor and the recommended national study, children who work long hours, at night, and in hazardous occupations where they are exposed to dangerous machinery and equipment and to toxic substances and fumes (such as pesticides in agricultural activities) should be removed from such occupations. If the families of such children are destitute, alternative sources of income and /or financial assistance from social welfare agencies should be provided to the families of these children.

4. The Labor Inspectorate Division at the Ministry of Labor should be strengthened. The number of inspectors should be increased and the inspectors should be given specific training on child labor.

5. The work of vendors and street children should be regulated rather than totally banned. Banning of street selling may push children into more exploitative and illicit forms of labor. Permits from the Ministry of Labor can be used to regulate street selling, in terms of hours during the day during which children can sell, and commodities that can be sold. Permits should prohibit the selling of alcohol, drugs, and cigarettes.

6. It is recommended that the Ministry of Social Development in cooperation with the Ministry of Education apply special programs to educate street children and link them with the educational cycle whenever possible. Active participation of street children is important when designing such programs. Educators from the same communities of street children and volunteers can be recruited as educators in programs for street children.

7. Programs are needed for helping older children find suitable employment opportunities during summer holidays. Employment should be compatible with the age, health, skills, and educational and developmental level of the child. Other than workers' unions, volunteers from the private sector and non-governmental organizations can be involved in such programs.

8. Conditions of work should be improved for summer employment and apprenticeship. Measures recommended are: reduction in working hours, implementation of

health and safety measures, improvements in pay, and increased access to relevant education, health services and recreation.

9. The whole system of apprenticeship in Jordan should be revised. Currently, under the present system children are exploited and abused. Children undergoing vocational training in the private sector should be regularly supervised and monitored by a legal formal authority. Long hours of work should be reduced and the wages of apprentices should be raised and made compatible with their hours of work. Workers' unions, the Vocational Training Corporation, the Ministry of Labor and child right activists should develop a revised system of apprenticeship that abides by labor law requirements and CRC articles.

10. Non-formal educational and vocational training programs for school drop-outs should be strengthened and expanded. It is recommended that such programs be subsidized so that the cost is affordable to school drop-outs. Summer camp programs by the Ministry of Education and NGO's should be seriously evaluated and replicated in other communities . Governmental and non-governmental organizations should give special attention and design programs targeted at children who suffer double deprivation (i.e., school drop-outs and unemployed).

11. For child labor programs to be effective, they should have a holistic approach and view the child worker within a comprehensive context (i.e. in the context of the child's need for emotional, intellectual and physical development). Child labor programs should aim not only at improving working conditions (reduction in hours, implementation of health and safety measures, and improvements in pay) but also should aim at increased access to education, proper nutrition, health services, and recreational activities and participation in community life.

12. Public awareness campaigns are needed to increase awareness of policy makers, legislators, employers, parents, teachers, and children themselves on the phenomenon of child labor and its negative impact on children and society. Of utmost importance is parental education and raising the awareness and importance of child care, health, and development. Toward this endeavor, the role of workers' organizations, grass-root organizations for community development projects, and local religious organizations can be activated to include awareness raising of local community members on the issue of child labor and the rights of the child. Expressions of "satisfaction" and "happiness" by a majority of mothers and working children (who work very long hours under adverse conditions) imply

the need for education of parents and children on child rights including the right of the child to leisure and recreation.

6.2 Long Term Measures

1. Integrate child labor programs in national planning for development as well as in national strategies for poverty alleviation (Social Productivity Program) and strategies for improvement of the quality of life for children and their families.

2. Legislative and Policy Measures

Labor

The current labor law in Jordan should be revised to include provisions for children working in agriculture, domestic labor, and family enterprises. These labor categories particularly affect female children who are left highly vulnerable to exploitation and abuse and are deprived of education, leisure, and other rights to which all children are entitled.

The current labor law in Jordan could be improved by including provisions regulating child labor. Seasonal and part-time employment of children below sixteen years of age should be allowed if it does not interfere with the child's education and if working conditions are not exploitative or hazardous. The terms of part-time employment (part-time, holiday/seasonal, summer) of children and conditions of work should be specified in amendments to the labor law. Eventually and when economic conditions improve, a minimum wage for part-time employment of children should be considered.

Education

A mechanism for enforcement of compulsory education in the basic education cycle is needed. Currently, there is no legal mechanism or authority (e.g., by school authorities and counselors and officials of the Ministry of Social Development) to compel parents or guardians to send their children to school.

Educational policies that aim at strengthening non-formal education programs are needed. The cost of these programs must be subsidized to enable employed children to participate in the programs. Flexible programs could be designed so they are tailored to the needs of children employed in different occupations. The programs should be developed by the Ministry of Education with full cooperation and participation of the Ministry of Labor

and the Ministry of Social Development. Partnerships with grass-root non-governmental organizations who recruit teacher volunteers should be seriously considered.

The educational policy of 1992/1993 of automatic promotion which allows any basic cycle student who fails three or less subjects to take make-up examinations rather than repeat the grade should be evaluated and reconsidered. Some principals and teachers interviewed in this study strongly suggested that such a policy perpetuated poor academic performance and provided disincentives for students to study. This practice has resulted in cumulative academic failure for these students which typically culminates in school drop-out.

The Ministry of Education should strengthen and expand tutorial services offered to students weak in certain subject areas. The Ministry should team with non-governmental organizations to recruit and utilize volunteer services to supplement formal services in this regard.

Increasing the public's perceptions of social and economic returns from education requires reforms targeted at education of parents and at improving the economy and increasing employment opportunities. In addition to expanding and strengthening illiteracy eradication programs, education of parents about the benefits of education is required. Significantly raising public and parental awareness and knowledge about the societal benefits and returns from education in Jordan (as well as in other Arab countries) requires reform beyond the bonds of the educational system. Such reforms are required in the areas of personal worth and value, value of time and production, availability of productive employment, technology, organization, and incentives for employment and job performance (good salary and promotion opportunities). Patronage systems which function on elitism must be replaced with more democratic and performance based employment opportunities.

Social Development

Update the Juvenile Act of 1968 (amended in 1983) so as to give legal authority to social workers and other ministry workers to provide follow-up care on cases of juvenile delinquents, neglected or abused children, and children who are forced by their parents or guardians to drop out of school and beg.

The National Assistance Fund Law No. 36 requires updating to allow the spouse or an adult family member to receive financial payment in case of socially deviant behavior of the head of the household (for example, alcoholism or drug-addiction). Currently, the procedure

allowing a family member other than the head of the household to receive financial payment is very complicated.

Policies of the Ministry of Social Development also should give priority to educational and rehabilitation programs for street children (beggars and vendors) and not focus only on delinquent children in probational institutes. The Ministry of Social Development should collaborate with the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Labor to provide educational and rehabilitation programs for children engaged in different types of employment. Educational programs and vocational schemes should be tailored to the age of the children, their sex, and the types of employment in which children are engaged.

Child Rights

Upon finalizing the Jordan Law on the Rights of the Child, policies and actions should be developed and implemented by official and non-official organizations to ensure compliance with all articles of the law including the article on prohibition of child labor. It is recommended that indicators be developed for assessing the implementation of the Jordanian Child Rights Law and for ensuring that the rights enshrined in the law are enjoyed by all children.

Child abuse provisions in the penal code of 1960 should be updated. Article 62(a) which allows parents to inflict physical and other forms of punishment on their children should be amended to prohibit parents from abusing their children. Also, Article 334(2) of the same penal code which states that a complaint from a minor will only be accepted by legal authorities if the minor is in the presence of one of his parents or guardian should be amended. As in most cases, the parent or guardian is the inflictor of abuse, this article should be amended to give the right to the child to file his complaint freely.

3. Advocacy

Advocacy for child rights is necessary to ensure implementation of the various provisions of the CRC and the Jordanian Child Rights Law currently underway. Advocacy also supports monitoring the progress achieved to protect children from economic and sexual exploitation and to promote their basic rights to health, education, and a satisfactory standard of living.

A social action front is needed in the long-term to lobby against child labor and to motivate major actors instrumental in protecting children. The National Coalition for Children (NCC) in Jordan could play a key advocacy and lobbying role in this effort. Individual committees of the NCC such as the legal committee can play a central role in the development and monitoring of indicators following implementation of the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) and the Jordanian Child Rights Law.

Governmental and legislative councils would be the primary targets for lobbying and advocacy for child rights. Non-governmental organizations, workers' organizations, private sector enterprises, families and local communities (including schools and local councils) should also be targeted. It is recommended that advocacy efforts specifically target workers' organizations because they are useful in organizing child workers including domestic workers. They also can document child labor abuse and monitor the effectiveness of enforcement mechanisms. Workers' organizations also could educate children about their rights and refer complaints about violations of the Child Labor Law to the Ministry of Labor.

Advocacy aims at changing the attitudes of government officials and society and at changing cultural values and social norms tolerant of child labor and abuse. Training in the area of child rights at all levels, including judicial and law enforcement, is a key element for effective advocacy and for affecting changes in behavior and social norms at the individual, community, institutional and policy levels. All media channels should be utilized to promote public awareness on child rights and to encourage various partners to participate in protecting children from abuse and exploitation. Other than the parents, the local communities, the government, workers' organizations, local religious organizations and voluntary societies all have an important role to play in protecting children rights.

4. Poverty Alleviation

Because poverty is a key factor in child labor, guaranteeing the social welfare of the poor ensures that poor families no longer are forced to rely on the earnings of their children to meet basic needs. It is recommended that the government of Jordan should plan to extend national assistance and social security benefits to cover all the needy segments of society and to provide general health insurance to cover all citizens.

It is recommended that non-governmental poverty alleviation programs be coordinated with governmental programs , represented by the Social Productivity Program (SPP), in order to have an integrated national strategic plan for poverty alleviation. This

effort should be coordinated with employment/unemployment programs and related national development programs.

It is recommended that national strategies for increasing employment and alleviating poverty focus on increasing the comparability between the outputs of the educational and training systems and the labor market requirements. In this regard, regular information on labor supply and demand is needed. In addition, national strategies should emphasize rehabilitation and training (as is the case in SPP).

Cooperation among non-governmental organizations and ministries is required to avoid duplication of assistance and services to some families while other vulnerable families remain unreached. Databases for poor vulnerable households should be developed and shared by relevant ministries and non-governmental organizations (NGOs). International and local NGOs should establish ties with grass-root initiatives such as Zakat committees to make the distribution of assistance to families of children in especially difficult circumstances (CDEC) more effective.

Micro-enterprises should be designed based on the recommendations of feasibility studies prior to financing. In addition, there is a duplication of such enterprises especially in rural areas. Micro-enterprise programs should include follow-up and evaluation systems and their beneficiaries should be adequately trained. Micro-enterprises and community development projects should emphasize community organization and mobilization in a process of self-empowerment. Such projects should not be dependent on donors. Instead, they should have sustainable and renewable sources of finance through productive projects, contributions of members, and financial institutions.

6.3 Conclusive Summary

Child labor is a product of interwoven multiple factors that require multiple strategies from different sectors and at different levels. Although the Ministry of Labor has the primary responsibility for dealing with child labor, action is needed by other ministries, the parliament, national and international non-governmental organizations, workers' unions, local communities, and individuals to deal with the phenomenon of child labor. In order to be effective, child labor policies and programs should target the following areas; education and training, social welfare services, protected work schemes, advocacy and public awareness raising, regulation and enforcement.

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Appendix A

Master Child Questionnaire

CHILD QUESTIONNAIRE

Date of Interview: ..... **Name of Interviewer:** .....

Site of Interview:
1. Wihdat Camp.
2. Zarqa Camp.
3. Baka'a Camp.
4. Jerash Camp.
5. Nuzha Neighborhood.
6. Naser Neighborhood.
7. Dabaybeh Neighborhood.
8. Tafayleh Neighborhood.
9. Industrial Area:
   a. Marka b. Bayader c. Rimam Valley d. Sahab

FIRST: BASIC INFORMATION:

1. Age: .....
2. Sex: ☐ Female. ☐ Male.
3. Educational Level: .....
4. What is the educational level of the father?
   ☐ Illiterate ☐ Primary ☐ Preparatory
   ☐ Secondary ☐ College Diploma ☐ Bachelor or Higher University Degree
   ☐ Don't Know
5. What is the educational level of the mother?
   ☐ Illiterate ☐ Primary ☐ Preparatory
   ☐ Secondary ☐ College Diploma ☐ Bachelor or Higher University Degree
   ☐ Don't Know
6. Number of brothers at home: .....
7. Number of sisters at home: .....
8. Birth order of the child: .....
9. With whom do you live:
   ☐ Both parents ☐ Father alone ☐ Mother alone
   ☐ Relatives ☐ Stepfather ☐ Step mother
   ☐ Other (Specify .....).
10. Number of other persons that live in your home (if applicable): .....

SECOND: FAMILY AND HEALTH PROFILE:

1. Does your father work? ☐Yes. ☐No.

2. If your father currently works, what is the nature of his employment?

   .....

3. If your father is currently unemployed, why? .....

4. Does your mother work? ☐Yes. ☐No.

5. If the mother works, what is the nature of her employment? .....

6. What is the number of employed brothers that are under sixteen years of age?

   ☐ None. ☐1. ☐ 2.

   ☐ 3. ☐ Greater than 3.

7. What is the number of employed sisters that are under sixteen years of age?

   ☐ None. ☐1. ☐ 2.

   ☐ 3. ☐ Greater than 3.

8. What are the sources of your family's income, specify the income from each source? (You can choose more than one option).

   ☐ Father's employment.

   ☐ Mother's employment.

   ☐ Child labor at home.

   ☐ Child labor outside home.

   Other: (Specify .....).

9. Do you rent or own your house? ☐ Rent. ☐Own.

10. If you rent your house, what is the monthly rent? .....

11. How do you assess your health status?

    ☐ Good. ☐ Fair. ☐ Poor.

    (If the answer is poor, mention why: .....).

12. Does any family member suffer from a health problem or a handicap?

    ☐ Yes. ☐ No.

    (Specify the person and the kind of health problem / handicap).

    .....

    .....

THIRD: EMPLOYMENT CONDITIONS:

1. How old were you when you first started work? .....

2. What was the nature of your first employment? .....

3. How much did you earn when you first started to work? .....

4. When you started work for the first time, was your decision to work by choice or obligatory?

   ☐ By choice. ☐ Obligatory.

5. Mention the causes for going to work for the first time.

   .....

   .....

6. Who encouraged you to start work for the first time?
   (You can choose more than one option).

   ☐ Only me ☐ Father ☐ Mother

   ☐ One of the non working brothers ☐ One of the working brothers

   ☐ A friend ☐ A teacher ☐ A relative

   ☐ Other: (Specify .....).

7. What is the nature of your present employment? .....

8. What is the number of children that work with you in the same field? .....

9. Do you know of any relatives / friends / neighbors that are employed and are under the age of sixteen years? What is their number? (You can choose more than one option).

   ☐ Relatives ..... ☐ Friends ..... ☐ Neighbors ..... ☐ None ..... ☐ Other .....

10. To what extent do you like your work?

    ☐ To a great extent ☐ To some extent ☐ To no extent

11. Do you go to school?

    ☐ Yes. ☐ No.

12. Describe a day in your life.

(Note for the interviewer: Please use the following guidelines):

Health status, mental and psychological well-being, eating pattern, clothing and personal hygiene, communication with family members, relatives, and friends, their social support, transportation means and distance of work-site from residence, free time and recreation, and the extent of satisfaction with life in general and why.

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.....

13. Interviewer's observation and description of child's employment conditions.

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.....

Note for the interviewer: Based on whether the child is an employee or self employed, and whether the child attends school or not, the interviewer chooses the corresponding category from each of the following categories to continue the child interview:

◊ *If the child is an employee (not self employed) and attends school, apply the green questionnaire.*

◊ *If the child is an employee and does not attend school, apply the pink questionnaire.*

◊ *If the child is self employed and attends school, apply the yellow questionnaire.*

◊ *If the child is self employed and does not attend school, apply the blue questionnaire.*

Appendix A1

Child Employee and Attends School Questionnaire

Appendix A2

Child Employee not Attending School Questionnaire

Appendix A3

Child Self-Employed and Attends School Questionnaire

Appendix A4

Child Self-Employed not Attending School Questionnaire

Appendix B

Mothers of Employed Children Questionnaire

Appendix C

Employers of Employed Children Questionnaire

Appendix D

Case Profiles of Employed Children

Appendix E

Jordan Labor Law No. 8 of 1996