

# ON MY OWN:

Protection challenges for unaccompanied and separated children in Jordan, Lebanon and Greece.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

### 6.1 Jordan

#### Access to services

##### Government of Jordan

- Pending regularisation, ensure that all UASC, regardless of location, can access essential assistance (specifically healthcare) and formal education regardless of their registration status
- Access to legal documentation - and hence to services - should be facilitated for UASC in general and for separated children under legal guardianship or foster care in particular
- Family members of individuals facing deportation orders should be allowed access to humanitarian actors for the provision of protection and assistance information to facilitate informed decisions

##### Humanitarian actors

- Raise awareness of available services for UASC amongst host and refugee communities
- Conduct protection monitoring focusing on the cultural, integration and gender issues faced by separated children under legal guardianship or foster care to help identify protection concerns to better inform humanitarian assistance
- Implement projects addressing access to shelter issues for UASC
- Provide additional resources for youth access to health education in the camps and in host communities
- Ensure UASC with disabilities can access specialised services
- Increase UASC access to psychosocial support
- Prioritise UASC residing in ITS due to significant barriers in accessing basic services
- Ensure UASC receive adequate psychosocial support in Azraq camp, especially in Village 5 where large numbers reside

#### Child labour and exploitation

##### Government of Jordan

- Ensure national legislation and its implementation continues to develop in line with

the CRC principle of the best interests of the child

- Strengthen support of social protection programmes and assistance to address specific needs of children at risk of Sexual and Gender Based Violence (SGBV) and SGBV survivors

#### **Humanitarian actors**

- Expand outreach, awareness raising and protection for those who report abuse and exploitation in order to reduce and eliminate cases
- Prioritise cash modalities as a tool for UASC protection. Increased access to income would reduce resorting to negative coping mechanisms
- Offer vocational training to UASC
- Conduct focus groups discussions with UASC to better understand their needs and interests
- Conduct further research to better understand why some Syrian refugees do not want to obtain work permits (known reasons include the fear of losing access to assistance or resettlement, the ability to obtain informal work without a permit, and that permits may not provide protection against exploitation and abuse in workplaces)
- Distinguish strategies in response to child labour between ITS, camp and host community environments due to the unique protection challenges present in each area

### **Legal status and documentation**

#### **Government of Jordan**

- Strengthen the ongoing Urban Verification Exercise (UVE) to ensure comprehensive access for UASC to services, expand self-reliance and legal work and slow the growth of the undocumented UASC population
- UASC potentially subject to deportation should have an opportunity to contest the evidence against them, through judicial review
- UASC apprehended by police should be reunited with their families in line with the best interests of the child, instead of forcible separation from their families and relocation to Azraq camp reception areas

#### **Humanitarian actors**

- Raise awareness of the legal framework of Jordan with regard to children's rights, labour law and the employment of minors

## **6.2. Lebanon**

### **Shelter and alternative care**

#### **Government of Lebanon**

- Provide child protection-sensitive practice training courses to the Internal Security Forces (ISF), as the first point of contact with UASC
- Ensure the presence of a lawyer to assist UASC detained in police stations, if UPEL social workers are unavailable

- Promote clear selection criteria for residential care

#### **Humanitarian actors**

- Advocate for the availability of child-friendly waiting rooms at the ISF premises
- Raise awareness within the government of alternative care options
- Establish an oversight mechanism containing monitoring procedures for alternative care

### **Child labour and exploitation**

#### **Government of Lebanon**

- Provide ISF, border patrols and those working directly with UASC with capacity building and training on adequate and safe assessment of UASC
- Identify alternatives to detention and arrest
- Ease restrictions on movement for 15-17 year old UASC to enable their access to services
- Abolish the curfew system imposed discretionally by some municipalities

#### **Humanitarian actors**

- Integrate livelihoods and education programming, for instance via vocational opportunities that prioritise UASC
- Empower women in female-headed households of separated children through cash assistance and skills training
- Negotiate with shawish and employers to mitigate the impact of child labour

### **Legal status and documentation**

#### **Government of Lebanon**

- Establish a mechanism with juvenile judges that does not depend on each judge but surpasses judiciary appointments and harmonises the approach to focus on protection rather than the irregularity of residency permits

#### **Humanitarian actors**

- Harmonise the approach of UN bodies and partners in addressing the needs of UASC and establish an inter-agency referral mechanism that takes into consideration the specific vulnerabilities and challenges faced by UASC

## **6.3. Greece**

### **First screening and age assessment**

#### **Government of Greece**

- Provide adequate training to immigration officials to identify signs of abuse and exploitation among new UASC arrivals, and to sensitively verify kinship relationships of children on the move
- Ensure child protection officer presence at hotspots, during the registration phase

- and in all reception facilities hosting UASC
- Ensure the age assessment process follows procedure, taking into account the child's mental well-being and avoiding all risks of violation of physical integrity

### **Protective custody/detention**

#### **Government of Greece**

- Ensure detention of UASC who enter the country irregularly is always a last resort measure and occurs for the shortest period of time necessary
- Appoint trained and independent translators to facilitate effective communication
- If transfer to community-based apartments is not an option, move UASC away from the general population to child-friendly spaces within camps

### **Guardianship, shelter and alternative care**

#### **Government of Greece**

- Provide adequate training to guardians to safeguard the best interests of UASC and strengthen the legal guardianship system to immediately appoint well-trained individuals

#### **Humanitarian actors**

- Increase the number of shelters or community-based apartments for UASC so as to provide alternatives to administrative detention

### **Asylum, deportation and relocation**

#### **Government of Greece**

- Ensure that UASC receive accurate, timely and accessible information regarding their rights and the support available to them
- Improve family tracing and family reunification procedures, always prioritising UASC

### **Exploitation and abuse**

#### **Government of Greece**

- Establish specialised shelters to assist UASC victims of exploitation and abuse
- Provide child-centred training to authorities who interact with vulnerable UASC

#### **Humanitarian actors**

- Increase the awareness and understanding of the local community in order to facilitate the detection and prevention of exploitation of UASC
- Establish telephone hotlines for UASC victims of exploitation and abuse
- Raise awareness among UASC on the risks of exploitation and abuse as well as the available protective resources
- Prioritise cash modalities as a tool for UASC protection in order to reduce negative coping mechanisms