



Press Release

Lack of funding leads to the closing of Save the Children Jordan's 12 Makani Centres

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After a substantial loss of funding from international partners all 12 of Save the Children Jordan's Makani Centres will close by the end of August.

For the last three years these centres have provided educational opportunities and non-educational services to thousands of those in need. In 2018 alone, these centres reached more than 9,000 children, giving more than 450 out-of-school children the opportunity to pursue their education.

Located in five governorates around the Kingdom, the Makani program received most of its funding from [the United Nations International Children's Fund](#) (UNICEF). But by September that funding will be withdrawn, shutting down the Makani Centres and ending all benefits to the children.

Benefiting no more

Hasan* is a 14-year-old Iraqi refugee that has been a beneficiary of the Amman Makani Centre for the last two years, but now the future of his formal education is uncertain.

“Before I enrolled in the Makani Centre I was lost, but the centre gave me the chance to be educated. It helped me make friends and settle down in Jordan,” Hasan said. “But now it is closing and I’ll have to stop my education and go back to being lost.”

Hasan is one of the 469 students whose only formal education within Jordan has been through these centres. But despite the abrupt end to his education, Hasan plans to do what he can with what he has learned so far.

“For now I’ll keep trying to learn from the manual I got from the Makani Centre, I’ll work hard and see what I can do at home on my own,” Hasan said. “But I’ll also try my best to find another programme like Makani so that I can continue my education.”

The closing of the programme not only affects thousands of children like Hasan, but also the hundreds of Save the Children Jordan staff in charge of these centres.

A major downsize

From field staff to support staff, it took more than 300 Save the Children Jordan employees to run all 12 centres, all of whom will be unemployed by September. But what worries Mondia

Nusairat, the Makani and Capacity Building Manager, the most isn't the prospect of her unemployment.

“I am worried. I'm worried about my future but I'm more worried about the children's future,” Nusairat said. “We were giving them quality education that would protect them from suffering and poverty, but now we can't that.”

In June, Nusairat was one of the first to be notified that UNICEF, which provides 90 per cent of the Makani program's funds, would be decreasing its financial support. She had no idea that by July 1, all of the aid would be withdrawn, effectively ending the Makani project. UNICEF's actions come in direct result of the US' 2019 international budget.

The cause of the cuts

In February, the US government under the Trump Administration announced its [budget for the 2019 fiscal year](#). This new budget raised funds in sectors such as Veteran Affairs and Defense, but decreased funds from sectors such as the State Department and the Environmental Protection Agency.

The State Department's loss of funding led to the substantial reduction of US non-military foreign affairs spending, which eliminated an account titled “International Organizations and Programs.” This was previously the account the US used to make contributions to UN organizations such as UNICEF.

According to the UN, [the US' new international budget now stands at \\$41.7 billion](#), a 30% cut from the previous budget enacted by the Obama Administration. The news was released in a statement by [Nikki Haley, the US ambassador to the UN, in December 2017](#).

“The inefficiency and overspending of the United Nations are well known,” Haley said. “We will no longer let the generosity of the American people be taken advantage of or remain unchecked.”

With UNICEF's budget being cut, the organisation began withdrawing its support to international NGOs such as Save the Children Jordan, who in turn had to withdraw its support for programs such as the Makani Centres.

At the moment Save the Children Jordan has no plans to replace the Makani program and no funds to revitalize it.