



Knowledge hub
-
Collection of best practices

Summary of the best practice

1. Title of the best practice (e.g. name of policy, programme, project, etc.) *

Maharati "Skills Building" training

2. Country or countries where the practice is implemented *

Jordan

3. Please select the **most relevant** Action Track(s) the best practice applies to *

- Action Track 1. Inclusive, equitable, safe, and healthy schools
- Action Track 2. Learning and skills for life, work, and sustainable development
- Action Track 3. Teachers, teaching and the teaching profession
- Action Track 4. Digital learning and transformation
- Action Track 5. Financing of education

4. Implementation lead/partner organization(s) *

Generation for Peace, Ministry of Youth

5. Key words (5-15 words): Please add key descriptive words around aims, modalities, target groups etc. *

Life skills, vulnerable adolescents and young people, government mainstreaming, 21st century skills, problem solving, change makers

6. What makes it a best practice? *

The programme focuses on the teaching of a comprehensive set of life skills - often overlooked in the school system - through experiential and practical learning. It has also been successful in System strengthening and capacity building of Ministry of Youth (MoY) staff and frontline workers from government youth centres, which will allow for the institutionalisation and sustainability, and well as increased reach of the programme

Description of the best practice

7. Introduction (350-400 words)

This section should ideally provide the context of, and justification for, the practice and address the following issues:

- i) Which population was affected?
- ii) What was the problem that needed to be addressed?
- iii) Which approach was taken and what objectives were achieved? *

Jordan is a youthful country with 63% of its population under the age of 30. Every year 100,000 young people start looking for job opportunities. Thirty-two per cent of young people aged 15-30 years are unemployed. The situation for girls is even more challenging, as Jordan has the third-lowest female labour force participation rate in the world. Moreover, 1.3 million Syrians have been seeking refuge in the country since 2011.

Youth face many social problems that can affect their future prospects. Youth from the most vulnerable areas do not have access to recreational opportunities, and only access knowledge from the rigid school system. This contributes to youth lacking necessary skills such as critical thinking, problem solving, communication, which in turn disadvantages them when trying to access the labour market. In addition, in the recent years, Jordanian youth faced serious and increasing cases of violence.

As a result, and to contribute to long-term social development and economic growth in Jordan, in 2017 UNICEF partnered with the Ministry of Youth (MoY) and Generations for Peace to streamline UNICEF's Life Skills framework for adolescents, 'Maharati' in Arabic, and embed 'sports for peace' modules with the aim of encouraging healthy lifestyles among young people and their active participation in their communities and the national economy. Integrated into all 200 MoY youth centres nationwide, Maharati invests in adolescent education and civic engagement opportunities. Specifically, it ensures that the most vulnerable adolescent girls and boys are equipped with a comprehensive set of skills that allow them to transition into a productive, engaged, and resilient adulthood. Maharati follows UNICEF's Life Skills Manual that offers key life and employability skills, financial literacy, social innovation (UPSHIFT18), and human-centred design through 160 hours of training (30 hours per module) for adolescents and youth.

In 2021 UNICEF and Generations for Peace started working toward a system-strengthening approach that ensures the implementation of Maharati within MoY strategic plan and providing an enabling environment which caters for young people's emerging needs. This would also ensure the sustainability of the programme within national institutions. This holistic approach will support all adolescents to develop and reach their full potential, including acquiring new skills for employability and personal empowerment—especially girls, refugees, and adolescents with disabilities who are most at risk of long-term unemployment. This can strengthen their economic resilience, thereby contributing to a more inclusive national economy.

8. Implementation (350-450 words)

Please describe the implementation modalities or processes, where possible in relation to:

- i) What are the main activities carried out?
- ii) When and where the activities were carried out (including the start date and whether it is ongoing)?
- iii) Who were the key implementation actors and collaborators? (civil society organizations, private sector, foundations, coalitions, networks etc.)?
- iv) What were the resources needed (budget and sources) for the implementation?

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Improving the skills of vulnerable and at-risk youth is an important aspect of the Maharati “Skills Building” programming model. The transferable skills component helps adolescents and youth (10- 24 years old) develop practical and technical skills and knowledge that can shape their personalities and improve their future prospects. It also ensures their healthy adaptation of new situations, developments, and challenges in addition to involving them in the process of making life changing decisions.

The Maharati ongoing activities have been designed according to the skills framework which is tailored to the competency level of young people, and the needs of adolescents and youth according to age and social context, considering their personal preferences. The content was framed into packages and implemented in innovative ways that aim to build and develop a generation of adolescents who are independent, conscious, and self-reliant, offering a combination of knowledge, skills and examples from life situations.

The content is carried out in what should be equivalent to 24 hours of training sessions in each level, with skills and activities varying according to each level. The package mainly focuses on transferable skills taught through practical activities, which integrate life skills and Sports For Peace activities, financial skills and social innovation activities, as well as the UNICEF Adolescent Kit for Expression and Innovation kit. The goal is to prepare youth to develop effective and sustainable solutions for problems in their community and become active members and change makers in society. The facilitator adapts the materials and modifies the methods depending on participants’ needs and education levels, as well as delivery modality (onsite or through digital means of communication, or blended / hybrid education). All the necessary training material is adapted accordingly and available in different formats, to respond to facilitators’ diverse needs.

9. Results – outputs and outcomes (250-350 words)

To the extent possible, please reply to the questions below:

- i) How was the practice identified as transformative? (e.g., impact on policies, impact on management processes, impact on delivery arrangements or education monitoring, impact on teachers, learners and beneficiary communities etc.);
- ii) What were the concrete results achieved with regard to outputs and outcomes?
- iii) Has an assessment of the practice been carried out? If yes, what were the results? *

The programme followed a robust measurement and evaluation framework which supports continuous learning and adaptation and aims to identify and promote good practices, as well as demonstrate impact and sustainability. Monitoring, Evaluation, Accountability, and Learning were prioritised to guarantee a participatory approach to programming, ensure transparency of results and maximise learning opportunities to strengthen its accountability to beneficiaries, donors, and other stakeholders. The following are some examples of the results of one cycle of the programme; this also shows the indicators measured, what they mean, and how results were calculated.

During 2021, more than 1370 initiatives were implemented across all governorates. The result of the analysis indicates that the percentage of target group youth expressing life satisfaction following participation in the programme is 43%, whilst the percentage of target group youth expressing increased community engagement is 58%. The percentage of target group youth expressing increased teamwork is 60%, while 61% reported improved problem solving skills, 57% reported increase communication skills, and 50% improved problem solving skills.

Early participation in life skills and citizen education in childhood and adolescence has been shown to increase the likelihood of girls and boys remaining engaged in education and employment, particularly those experiencing high vulnerability or marginalisation. For example, Maharati programmes increased girls' confidence and sense of belonging by demonstrating how to be an active community citizen as well as a daughter, wife, or mother. More than 60% of all boys and girls who completed the programmes were later involved in or led civic engagement initiatives that addressed issues important to them and their communities.

The programme that is implemented by the Ministry of Youth is helping improving the quality and recognition of youth-work, non-formal learning, and volunteering within government entities and youth centres. Moreover, it enhanced synergies between government and organizations working with and for youth. Throughout the implementation of the programme, GFP and UNICEF built the capacity of 628 MoY youth workers; 557 trainers (395 F and 162 M); 299 outreach workers (Female 164; Male 135); 13 field coordinators, 11 support staff who allowed delivering the programme to more than 120,000 young people (56% females), focusing on the most marginalized participants, including refugees, out of schools, girls, and people with disabilities.

Since 2018, Maharati programme conducted 9 cycles each year; these cycles consisted of 24 hours each in 200 youth centres across the Kingdom. The modality of implementation included online, onsite, and hybrid.

10. Lessons learnt (300 words)

To the extent possible, please reply to the following questions:

- i) What were the key triggers for transformation?
- ii) What worked really well – what facilitated this?
- iii) What did not work – why did it not work? *

Recognizing and tackling the barriers that prevent adolescent girls from participating in life skills programmes has been key for the success of the programme.

Involving girls' families in skill-building, for example, has helped to reduce high dropout rates.

Programmes were designed to include time and resources to raise community awareness about the benefits of enrolment, build relationships, and encourage parents and families to enrol their daughters.

Life skills programme coordinators purposefully held activities in MOY-supported youth centres, which lead often conservative communities to perceive these spaces as trustworthy and safe for girls.

Programme implementers also made clear which activities would be organised in mixed groups and which would be female-only sessions led by female trainers and facilitators, which gave families confidence in the safety of these spaces.

Facilitators also invited families to participate to overcome further reluctance.

11. Conclusions (250 words)

Please describe why may this intervention be considered a “best practice”.

What recommendations can be made for those intending to adopt the documented “best practice” or how can it help people working on the same issue(s)? *

System strengthening and capacity building of MoY staff and frontline workers is a priority to ensure that Maharati facilitators and youth trainers can respond to emerging needs for adolescents and youth, such as digital access and literacy, in an innovative manner. They focus on three main learnings in the programme:

1. Training alone will not have an impact; however, when combined with an ongoing mentoring and support relationship, the impact can be multiplied.

2. One-time contributions will not have a long-term impact. The inputs must consist of a series of ongoing activities that are sustained over several months in order for behaviour change effects to emerge and persist; and

3. A commitment to ensuring skills-building is a mandatory component of the standard school curriculum, rather than the school system just providing traditional educational avenues.

To reach the most vulnerable young people, gender-sensitive processes, inclusive learning environments, context-responsive skill training, and 21st Century-focused curricula are required. A strategic, forward-thinking approach can provide adolescents with the knowledge, skills, and opportunities they need to become active, resilient citizens who are socially, civically, and economically engaged.

12. Further reading

Please provide a list and URLs of key reference documents for additional information on the “best practice” for those who may be interested in knowing how the results benefited the beneficiary group/s. *

<https://www.generationsforpeace.org/en/maharati-programme-to-reach-188-jordan-youth-centres/>