



Evaluation of Global Affairs Canada's Contribution to the Middle East Strategy



Final Report

Prepared by the Diplomacy, Trade and
Corporate Affairs Division (PRE)

Global Affairs Canada

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Acronym List

AMMAN	The Embassy of Canada to Jordan	MES	The Middle East Strategy
BERUT	The Embassy of Canada to Lebanon	PSOPS	Peace and Stabilization Operations Program
BGHDD	The Embassy of Canada Office to Iraq	PRA	International Assistance Evaluation Division
CFLI	Canada Fund for Local Initiatives	PRE	The Diplomacy, Trade and Corporate Evaluation Division
CSE	Communications Security Establishment	RIE	Rapid Impact Evaluation
CSIS	Canadian Security Intelligence Service	UN	United Nations
DND	Department of National Defense	WTRP	Weapons Threat Reduction Program
ERBIL	Office of Canadian Embassy, Erbil		
ESA	Middle East Relations Division		
ESD	Middle East Bureau		
GAC	Global Affairs Canada		
GC	Government of Canada		
GENEV	Multilateral Representation Geneva		
GSRP	Global Security Reporting Program		
IDP	Internally Displaced People		
ISTBL	Consulate General of Canada, Istanbul, Turkey		

Executive Summary

Middle East Strategy Overview

The Middle East Strategy (MES) was announced in 2016 as a **\$2.18 billion dollar, whole-of government commitment to respond to** the protracted conflicts in **Syria** and **Iraq** and address the destabilizing effects in **Jordan** and **Lebanon**.

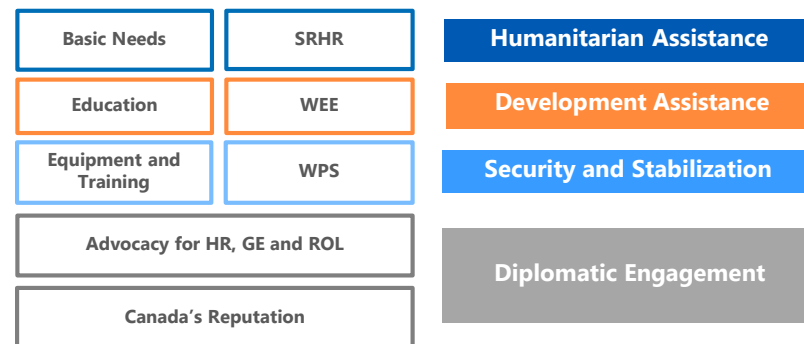
The Corporate, Trade and Diplomacy Evaluation Division (PRE) conducted an evaluation of MES to assess the extent to which Global Affairs Canada (GAC) contributed to the expected results of the Strategy from FY2016/17-FY2018/19 across its four pillars: humanitarian assistance, development, security and stabilization and diplomatic engagement. The evaluation was requested by the Middle East Relations Division (ESA) on short notice to inform the Strategy renewal process. As such, it was not intended to be a comprehensive summative evaluation but rather a **high-level utilization-focused assessment of Global Affairs' contribution to MES**. Scoping and data collection were conducted from **January to April 2019**.

Key Evaluation Findings

The evaluation found that MES **substantially increased GAC's presence** in all four target countries. The additional resources provided through the Strategy **strengthened Canada's engagement** in the region in the following ways:

- The flexible multi-year funding enabled by the Strategy **increased the capacity of humanitarian partner organizations** (such as the UN and World Food Program) to adapt to evolving crises and meet the basic needs of the most vulnerable.
- Development programming provided through MES made **notable contributions to the quality of education systems** and the **promotion of women's economic empowerment (WEE)**.
- Funding through development and humanitarian programming **positioned Canada as a leader** among donors in advocating **for sexual and reproductive health rights (SRHR)**.
- MES greatly **expanded GAC's activities in the region**, under the Peace and Stabilization Operations Program and the Counter-Terrorism Capacity Building Program. These activities **supported security forces' training and equipment needs** and **increased women's role in peace and security (WPS)**.
- Diplomatic efforts increased Canada's **engagement in Syria**, expanded Canadian advocacy for **human rights (HR), gender equality (GE) and rule of law (ROL)** and sustained Canada's **strong reputation** as a donor and member of the Global Coalition Against Daesh.

Key Results Areas Under MES



Realities on the ground, however, and the rapidly evolving nature of the crises in the region, affected the Department's ability to fully implement programming in areas such as **livelihoods and economic opportunities** (i.e. Lebanon, Iraq, Syria), **local government capacity to deliver social services** and **decentralization** (i.e. Iraq). Due to the reassertion of control by the Syrian regime, Canada's ability to achieve its desired **political outcomes in the country was limited**. In addition, MES had **limited impact on countering violent extremism**.

While most staff agreed that MES had strengthened Canada's visibility and programming in the region, there was limited evidence that the Strategy provided clear direction for diplomatic engagement in the region. In addition, the pressure for programs to staff positions, establish offices and spend allocations under tight timelines impeded the up-front strategic planning required to optimize coherence and plan for the sustainability of Canada's efforts.

Summary of Recommendations

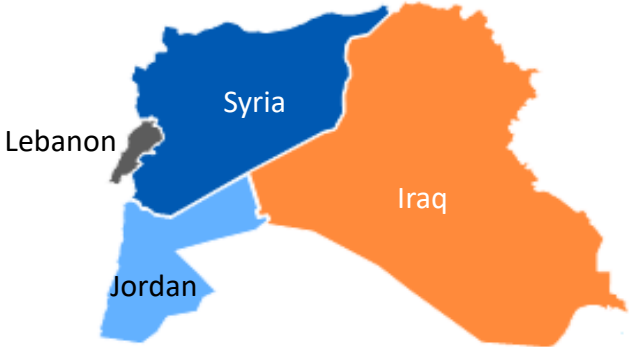
With the Strategy undergoing renewal in 2019, it is recommended that programming:

- **focus** efforts on areas of strength;
- **engage** in joint strategic planning to leverage results;
- **plan** for sustainability of results and an exit strategy if required; and,
- **strengthen** the diplomatic pillar.

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Middle East Strategy Overview



In recent years, the **protracted conflicts in Syria and Iraq** and the increased violence, terrorism and population displacement in the Middle East, have had a destabilizing effect on neighbouring **Lebanon** and **Jordan**.

The Government of Canada (GC) saw the need for an **integrated** and **comprehensive** approach to respond to the evolving crises in the region and, in February 2016, announced The Whole-of-Government Strategy to Support the Global Coalition Against Daesh and Broader Engagement in Iraq, Syria, Jordan and Lebanon, hereafter referred to as the **Middle East Strategy (MES)**. Canada is one of few donors to introduce a regional strategy in the Middle East that coordinates across multiple lines of effort.

The Strategy’s objectives, at the time of its announcement, were to: **(1) Strengthen** Canada’s role as a multilateral player in international peace and security efforts; **(2) Respond** to the needs of the most vulnerable; and **(3) Help address** longer-term drivers of violence and instability in the region.

The ultimate goal of the Strategy was to **increase the security** of Canada and Canadians, **enhance stability and security** in the region and **reduce the vulnerability** of conflict-affected populations, communities and states.

MES committed up to **\$2.18 billion** in funding over three years (2016-19) to Global Affairs Canada, the Department of National Defence, the Canadian Security and Intelligence Service and the Communications Security Establishment. A **total of \$1.35 billion** was committed for GAC, which included both new funding and a reallocation of existing funding:

	New Funding	Reallocated Funding	Total MES Funding
Humanitarian Assistance	495M	345M	840M
Development Assistance	90M	180M	270M
Peace and Stabilization Operations Program (PSOPs)	25M	68M	93M
Counter-terrorism Capacity Building Program (CTCBP)	15M	30M	45M
Weapons Threat Reduction Program (WMD)	0	7M	7M
Global Security Reporting Program (GSRP)	0	0	0
Diplomatic Engagement	90M	0	90M

A breakdown of funding disbursements by program in the years preceding the Strategy and over the course of the Strategy can be found in **Annex A**.

Evaluation Purpose and Scope

The purpose of this evaluation was to assess the extent to which **Global Affairs Canada (GAC) has contributed to the achievement of expected results under the Whole-of-Government Middle East Strategy from FY2016/17-FY2018/19.**

The evaluation was **conducted on short notice** and **under tighter timelines** to inform the Strategy renewal process. As such, efforts were made to **balance breadth and depth** while validating results from program monitoring and progress reports. The evaluation serves as a high-level and focused overview of results achieved under MES. Evaluation scoping, data collection and analysis were conducted between **January and April 2019.**

Recently completed evaluations of programs that received funding through MES were also relied upon to provide evidence. These included:

- 2017 Weapons Threat Reduction Program Evaluation
- 2018 Peace and Stabilization Operations Program Evaluation
- 2018 Global Security Reporting Program Evaluation
- Evaluation of the UNFPA Response to the Syria Crisis

The International Assistance Evaluation Division (PRA) was also consulted. Findings from **completed and ongoing evaluations** on international assistance programming in the region were incorporated in the report.

Programs delivered by other Government of Canada departments (OGDs) involved in MES were **not evaluated** due to time and logistical constraints. However, OGD stakeholders were consulted to garner their insights on GAC's engagement in the region.

The evaluation focused primarily on **results and outcomes achieved by GAC**, as requested by the Program, while considering questions of relevance, design and delivery to a limited extent. The objective was to provide the **most useful information for decision-makers**, without providing a comprehensive statement on the Middle East Strategy.

Evaluation Resources

The evaluation was **conducted in-house using the Diplomacy, Trade and Corporate Division's (PRE) resources.**

The services of a **technical advisor** on the Middle East were engaged in order to provide subject matter expertise and guidance on the evaluation and to draft a contextual literature review as a companion piece to the evaluation. In addition, a **methodological advisor** was consulted to assist the evaluation team in implementing the Rapid Impact Evaluation methodology.

The primary point of contact for the evaluation was the **Middle East Relations Division (ESA)**. The evaluation also consulted other divisions in the department and missions in the field related to the Strategy. Mission staff assisted PRE in identifying, and arranging interviews with, regional stakeholders and representatives of like-minded countries during site visits.

Evaluation Areas of Focus

The Evaluation focused on **GAC activities** under four priority areas targeted by the Strategy. Evaluation questions can be found in **Annex A**.



Humanitarian Assistance

Key GAC activities under the Strategy:

- Helping crisis-affected families meet their basic household needs (food, water and shelter and emergency relief items)
- Supporting humanitarian partners throughout the region to improve access to social and public services
- Supporting vulnerable and conflict-affected households to re-establish decent livelihoods



Development / Building Resilience

Key GAC activities under the Strategy:

- Improving the quality and sustainability of social services such as education, water and sanitation
- Fostering economic growth and employment through entrepreneurship, vocational training, business support, skills development and job creation
- Helping local institutions to build, maintain and rehabilitate infrastructure and manage natural resources
- Strengthening accountable and effective governance practices at the national and sub-national levels



Security and Stabilisation

Key GAC activities under the Strategy:

- Actively participating in the four civilian lines of effort in the Global Coalition Against Daesh:
1) Stemming the flow of foreign terrorist fighters; 2) Cutting off Daesh's access to financing and funding; 3) Supporting stabilization activities; and 4) countering Daesh's narrative
- Increasing capacity of local partners to counter terrorism and extremism
- Combatting the proliferation of Weapons of Mass Destruction
- Enhancing Security Intelligence Functions



Diplomatic Engagement

Key GAC activities under the Strategy:

- Providing crucial information and advice to decision makers
- Advancing and communicating key Canadian positions such as human rights, gender equality, rules-based international order and accountability at high-level meetings and events
- Strengthening partnerships with regional governments and international organizations
- Social media outreach
- Delivering a communications strategy to spread awareness of the MES and Canada's work in the region

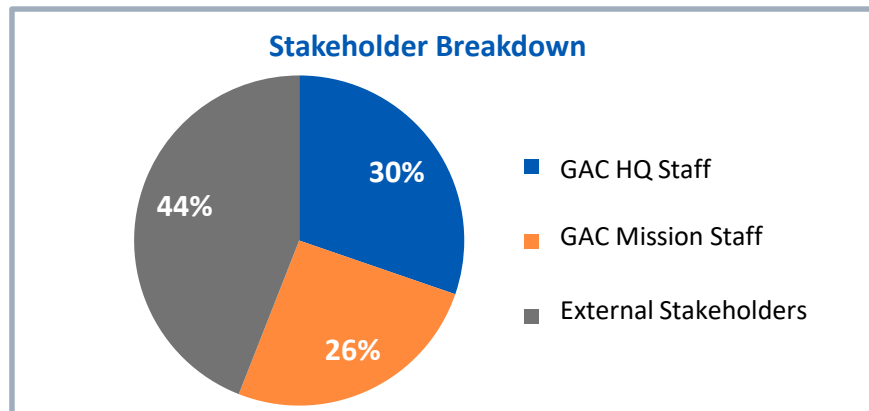
Methodology

The **evaluation employed a mixed-methods approach**, which included in-person interviews with GAC staff at HQ and at missions, and external stakeholders. Other methods included onsite observations, document review including recent and ongoing evaluations, literature review and workshops with academics. Sources were triangulated across multiple lines of evidence to maximize the reliability of findings and provide additional context.

In-Person Interviews

The evaluation team employed purposeful sampling to engage a range of stakeholders involved in the design, implementation and delivery of the MES. Interviews were conducted with **32 GAC staff at Headquarters, 29 GAC staff at the missions** in Iraq (BGHDD and ERBIL), Lebanon (BERUT), Jordan (AMMAN), Geneva (GENEV) and Istanbul (ISTBL), and **51 external stakeholders** from International Organizations and NGOs, project beneficiaries, local governments and diplomats from like-minded countries.

Interviews with stakeholders were based on the **Rapid Impact Evaluation (RIE)** methodology, a structured method for assessing the initiative's incremental impact, relative to a **hypothetical situation** i.e. counterfactual. Additional details on RIE can be found in **Annex B**.



Stakeholders who engaged in the RIE interviews were provided with a list of outcome statements related to MES and relevant to their area of work. They were asked to assess on a scale of 0-3:

- The **probability** of the statement being true within three years taking into consideration the efforts of all donors in the region, including Canada's and context specific factors (i.e. structural, political and cultural barriers).
- The **importance** of GAC's contribution to that outcome. Interviewees were asked to take into consideration the efforts of other donors contributing to the outcome and rank GAC's contribution accordingly.

Given the multitude of options available for programming in the region, the **assumption** was that Canada should focus on those areas where there is a reasonable chance of success and where Canada is an important contributor.

GAC stakeholders were also asked to provide the same ratings for a **counterfactual**, a hypothetical situation in which MES was not implemented, and Canada instead operated on a business-as-usual approach. **This allowed for some analysis of the incremental value** of additional funding and strategic direction under MES. GAC Stakeholders were given concrete examples of what the business-as-usual approach was prior to MES.

Traditional RIE attempts to measure impact by comparing probability and importance scores for the "program intervention" (i.e. MES) to scores for the counterfactual situation (i.e. no MES) in order to calculate net change in effects. Due to concerns about the complexity of the environment and concerns about attribution, **this study considered scores for the probability of the outcome and the importance of GAC's contribution separately.**

The RIE component of interviews was used as a **proxy measure** of Canada's contribution to the MES outcomes. Both GAC and external stakeholders were asked to **provide justification for their scores** through open-ended discussions which provided additional context and nuance to the ratings.

Methodology cont'd



Document Review

The evaluation team conducted an extensive review of more than **80** Program and external documents to inform the evaluation.

Document review provided **background and contextual** information on the political dynamics in the Middle East, drivers of conflict and instability in the region and key programming trends. The evaluation team also attended the Canadian Foreign Service Institute training on **Understanding the Dynamics of the Middle East**, which provided the team with relevant academic literature on topics in the region.

Program planning and reporting documents also provided insight into **Program performance and results achieved**. Documents included:

- The MES Strategic Results Framework
- The MES Performance Measurement Framework
- MES logic models
- MES annual and bi-annual progress reports and self-assessment scores
- MES project lists
- Analytical products and foreword thinking pieces (i.e. Gender Stocktaking Exercise, Forecasting Needs in the Middle East etc.)
- Integrated Conflict and Fragility Analyses
- Country Visions Statements
- Academic literature on trends in the Middle East
- Public databases
- Completed evaluations of programs receiving funding through MES (i.e. 2017 WTRP Evaluation, 2018 PSOPS Evaluation, 2018 GSRP Evaluation, Evaluation of the UNFPA Response to the Syria Crisis, draft Jordan Case Study in the ongoing PRA International Humanitarian Assistance Evaluation)
- Other relevant program documents



Field Visits

The Evaluation Team conducted visits to missions in **Amman**, Jordan, **Beirut**, **Lebanon**, and **Baghdad** and **Erbil**, Iraq to engage stakeholders at mission and in the region for interview assessments. The team also conducted on-site visits to **6** specific projects and initiatives to see results achieved. Field visits to Syria were not possible due to security concerns, however, GAC staff working in the **Syria Hub** were engaged in the evaluation during the field visit to Beirut, Lebanon. Implementing partners working in Syria were also contacted either in person or by phone during the other field visits.



Literature Review

A review of open-source and internal research on **trends in key program sectors** in the Middle East was prepared for PRE by a consultant. The review provided context to Canada's programming in the region and aided in identifying areas of alignment (and non-alignment) between the Strategy's activities and realities in the region.



Workshops with Academics

Two groups of academics from the **development and humanitarian field** (4 academics) and **security and stabilization field** (3 academics) were invited to a workshop at GAC to gather subject matter expert opinions on the expected results under MES and verify outcome assumptions. Academics were selected based on their familiarity and background knowledge on the topics of the Middle East Strategy.

Evaluation Limitations and Mitigation Strategies

Timing

Limitation

Given the **short timeline for the evaluation**, it was not possible to conduct a full, comprehensive assessment of all activities under the Middle East Strategy, and any potential unintended consequences. Timing also limited the ability to conduct an in-depth project review or value-for-money analysis.

Mitigation

The evaluation scope was limited to **GAC activities** under the Strategy to provide the most useful, high-level information required by GAC program management. OGDs were consulted to garner their insights on GAC's contribution and provide context for the Strategy. The MES evaluation also drew upon existing sources where possible, such as **annual and bi-annual progress reports** and **recently completed thematic or program evaluations** of related GAC programs, such as 2017 WTRP Evaluation, 2018 PSOPS Evaluation, 2018 GSRP Evaluation, Evaluation of the UNFPA Response to the Syria Crisis, draft Jordan Case Study in the ongoing PRA International Humanitarian Assistance Evaluation.

Attribution

Limitation

The complexity of the programming environment in the Middle East, the number of actors involved and the geopolitical factors at play made it **difficult to attribute changes in any given outcome to GAC's intervention alone**.

Mitigation

The report identified program results by outcome area, but **avoided making causal claims** that directly attributed changes to program activities. A range of different stakeholders were engaged in the RIE component of the evaluation methodology to ensure different perspectives were captured in the scoring. Probability and importance scores for the program intervention were reported separately from scores for the counterfactual situation to avoid concerns about attribution.

Attribution

Measurement

Limitation

Some stakeholders may have had difficulties in providing assessments as per the RIE method or may not have had sufficient knowledge of MES programming to confidently quantify its impact as per RIE methods.

Mitigation

The evaluation team only asked stakeholders about **relevant outcomes** based on their area of expertise. For example, stakeholders working on security and stabilization were only asked to provide scores for outcomes related to their field. Evaluators carefully guided stakeholders through the assessment process to arrive at a **common understanding** of the process, and used reliable elicitation techniques to obtain narrative information to supplement scores.

How to Read this Report

Each page of this report follows a similar format with up to three charts and a narrative section.

1. The **outcome statement** is provided in the first paragraph in **blue**. The statements are worded to reflect an ideal situation in order to measure progress. It was neither the goal of MES, nor the expectation of the evaluation that these outcomes could be fully achieved in **three years**. This time frame was chosen because much of the impact of Canada and other international partners' work in response to the crises might not be realized immediately.

2. **Probability chart:** Shows the **probability** that an outcome statement would be true in each country within three years, taking into consideration the **contribution of all donors** and country context.

0= zero likelihood
1= low likelihood
2= moderate likelihood
3 = high likelihood

3. **GAC contribution chart (GAC Staff):** Shows the **average rating by GAC staff** of the importance of GAC's contribution to an outcome statement under MES, as compared to the counterfactual (i.e. "business as usual"). Separate scores for each country are provided if there were notable differences and if data quality allowed.

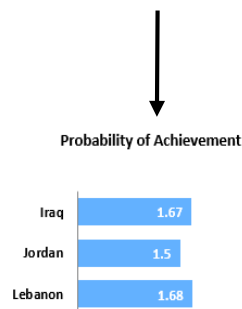
0= no contribution
1= minor contribution
2= moderate contribution
3 = major contribution

4. **GAC contribution chart (External Stakeholders):** Shows the **average rating by external stakeholders** of the importance of GAC's contribution to an outcome statement under MES. External stakeholders were not asked to rate the counterfactual situation due to their lack of familiarity with Canada's contribution prior to MES.

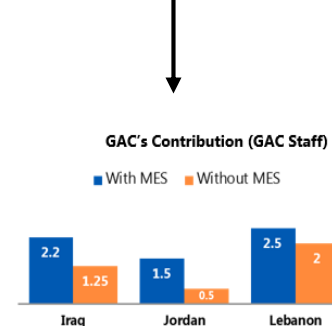
5. **Narrative section:** Provides additional qualitative **information and rationale** for the scores provided on an outcome, based on interviews with stakeholders, document and literature review and workshops with academics.

Example of Report Page

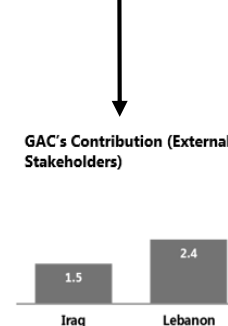
2. Probability of Achieving Outcomes: All Donor Contribution



3. Average Rating: GAC Contribution (GAC Staff)



4. Average Rating: GAC Contribution (External Stakeholders)



Stakeholders saw a **moderately low probability** (1.62) that **refugees and other conflict-affected people would have their basic needs, including food, water, hygiene, and emergency services, such as education and health met** within the next three years. Reasons for pessimism included the **overwhelming level of need** (i.e. Syria), donor fatigue after eight years of conflict and access issues. Uncertainty about

results to GAC's contribution in isolation. That said, unearmarked funding helps Canada meet its international commitments as a humanitarian donor, such as Grand Bargain commitments. In most cases, humanitarian organizations did not have significant dependency on Canadian funding, but were under-funded overall. Any reduction in support therefore, would have compromised their ability to meet the needs of the target populations.

1. Outcome Statement

5. Narrative Section

Note: Where possible, probability and importance scores are broken down by country. Although the evaluation team spoke with several stakeholders on Canada's engagement in Syria across the four areas, separate scores were unavailable for most areas of engagement, due to the limited sample of score assessments. Other sources were used to provide context to Canada's engagement in Syria, including: program reporting by ESA on results for Syria, external sources (such as the Evaluation of UNFPA's response to the Syria crisis), and interviews with GAC staff and external stakeholders based in Jordan and Lebanon.



Humanitarian Assistance

Background

The Syria conflict has resulted in one of the worst humanitarian crises of our time, one which continues to challenge the international community and national actors in responding to meet even the most urgent and immediate basic needs of those affected.

As of March 2019, UNHCR had registered **671,551 Syrian refugees** in Jordan, **1,001,051** in Lebanon and **253,672** in Iraq.¹ An overwhelming number of refugees live outside of camps, hosted in different localities and in different communities.²

Iraq has also faced its own internal crisis resulting in **5,912,286** Internally Displaced People (IDP) from January 2014 to June 2019.³ While reconstruction is underway, the ability of the central government to deliver services and provide infrastructure remains uneven requiring continued humanitarian support from donors.

Iraq, Jordan and Lebanon have a long tradition of providing protection and assistance to large numbers of refugees and other vulnerable populations, based on their geographic proximity to neighboring conflicts and long-standing traditions of hospitality, ethnic linkages and established religious solidarity. But eight years into the crisis, **host countries are under strain**. Restrictions on residency and labour policies impede refugees' access to opportunities for self-reliance, forcing families to resort to unsafe or exploitative work to meet their basic needs. Among refugees, women, girls, boys, adolescents, youth, the elderly, unaccompanied and separated children and persons with disabilities are the most vulnerable.⁴

Access to sexual and reproductive rights and gender-based violence remained major issues in the region, with displacement shown to increase the risk of victimization, particularly among unaccompanied and separated boys and girls and socially marginalized groups.⁵ Child marriage rates have also increased since 2011, with rates possibly up to four times higher among Syrian refugees today than among Syrians before the crisis.⁶

Addressing this violence remains extremely challenging for the international community due to widespread acceptance of violence, fear of retaliation and religious beliefs; as well as systemic reasons, such as humanitarian funding gaps, mobility restrictions and difficulties in accessing safe shelters and services.⁷

Canada's Engagement under MES

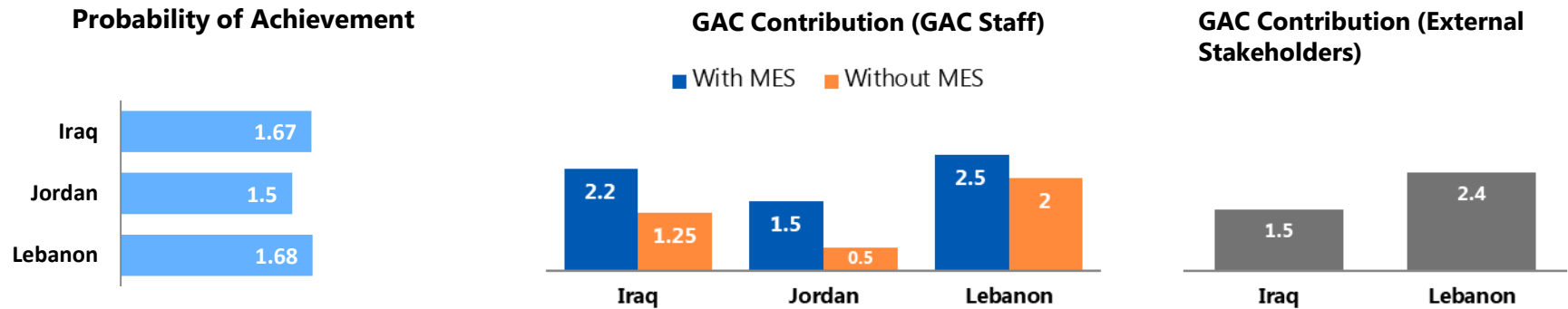
Canada's humanitarian assistance focused on providing protection and shelter interventions; food security; health (including reproductive health), water, sanitation and hygiene to conflict-affected people in the four Strategy countries.

The bulk of GAC funding under MES (62%) went to humanitarian assistance. MES committed \$840M to this pillar, of which \$495M was new funding. While Canada has been an important humanitarian donor since early in the crisis, prior to MES, the provision of multi-year funding agreements enabled by the Strategy for both the United Nations and NGO partners helped partners better respond to the evolving needs of the population. Canada was also one of the few donors to provide funding on a **flexible and un-earmarked basis**, that is, partners could use funds for any humanitarian purpose within the designated country.

Highlights: Humanitarian Assistance

- Canadian funding under MES contributed to the World Food Program (WFP), which in 2017 provided emergency food assistance to:
 - **Syria:** 5.3 Million Syrians in all 14 governorates, representing 75% of the target of 7M
 - **Iraq:** 2 million people and 56,000 Syrians
 - **Jordan:** About 500,000 Syrian refugees in camps and host communities
 - **Lebanon:** Close to 759,00 vulnerable people, including 688,000 Syrian refugees, 16,400 Palestinian refugees from Syria and 52,400 vulnerable Lebanese
- Canadian funding to UNICEF helped the organization to reach **1.3M** in Syria and **1.8M** in Iraq with essential WASH services through water trucking, construction/repair of sanitary facilities, and water monitoring. This was **89%** of UNICEF's target.
- Funding to UNICEF enabled it to meet its targets in Syria in terms of providing sustained protection and psychosocial support programs. UNICEF met **50%** of its targets in Iraq, **67%** in Jordan and **39%** in Lebanon.

1. Multi-year humanitarian funding helped partners to respond to basic needs and gaps in other donor funding



Stakeholders saw a **moderately low probability** (1.62) that **refugees and other conflict-affected people would have their basic needs, including food, water, hygiene, and emergency services, such as education and health, met** within the next three years. Reasons for pessimism included the overwhelming level of need (i.e. Syria), donor fatigue after eight years of conflict and access issues. Uncertainty about the trajectory of the crisis also presented challenges to longer-term planning. For example, in Iraq, the majority of IDPs have returned home but there were serious challenges for the return of the remaining IDP population including documentation issues, protection issues and security concerns.⁸ A few stakeholders noted that it was possible that women and children would return to Syria while men remained in order to avoid conscription. It is widely accepted that the current conditions in Syria are not conducive to the voluntary, safe, dignified and informed return of Syrian refugees. The situation in Syria remains a protection crisis and humanitarian assistance to persons in need is currently delivered on the basis of assessed needs and not on the basis of status (e.g. returnee).

Stakeholders viewed GAC's contribution to this outcome under MES as **moderate** (2.12) overall. In general, Canada continues to be well-regarded as a **principled, flexible, predictable and needs-based donor** in the region. Stakeholders at GAC were more likely to rate the Department's contribution as higher compared to external stakeholders, particularly in Iraq. Given the nature of Canadian humanitarian assistance funding to multilateral partners, which is often unearmarked, it is difficult to attribute results to GAC's contribution in isolation. That said,

unearmarked funding helps Canada meet its international commitments as a humanitarian donor, such as Grand Bargain commitments. In most cases, humanitarian organizations did not have significant dependency on Canadian funding, but were under-funded overall. Any reduction in support therefore, would have compromised their ability to meet the needs of the target populations.

However, **Canada' provision of multi-year flexible funding enabled by MES was universally lauded by partners.** They noted that the flexibility afforded by the Canadian model was vital in that it allowed them to respond to evolving crises and address serious funding gaps due to delays or depletion. It also allowed for the retention of high-quality staff and decreased administrative costs associated with regular recruitment and orientation of new staff typical with yearly grants. Finally, **multi-year funding enabled delivery models that would not have been available otherwise.** For example, UNFPA was able to implement a peer-to-peer delivery model based on Canada's long-term support to invest in the necessary up-front capacity building. UNFPA was also able to engage in under-funded areas such as gender-based violence and reproductive health. Multi-year humanitarian funding was often cited by GAC staff as a reason why **GAC's contribution was greater with MES** compared to the counterfactual.

While multi-year funding provided recipient organizations with administrative predictability and allowed for some innovation, **it did not fundamentally change the type of work being done.** Recipients still need to demonstrate to donors such as Canada how they prioritize multiyear, flexible humanitarian funding to address the most acute needs of beneficiaries.

Success Story- Cash Consortium in Iraq

Canada's early funding laid the foundations for the establishment of the **Cash Consortium for Iraq (CCI)** which harmonized the work of several NGOs providing cash assistance to conflict-affected populations in the country, including Mercy Corps, the International Rescue Committee, the Norwegian Refugee Council and the Danish Refugee Council.

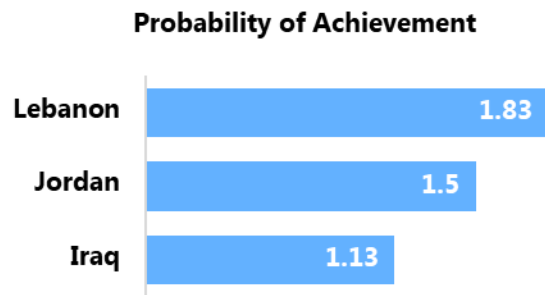
Prior to the establishment of the CCI, coordination around cash programming was weak. The CCI developed harmonized tools and approaches and a cohesive multi-purpose cash assistance strategy. For example, the CCI established multi-purpose cash assistance vulnerability assessments and was able to maximize assistance to vulnerable households through this modality to meet basic needs.

Over the course of the 15-month project funded by GAC, the CCI was able to meet the needs of **2,941 vulnerable households—achieving 101% of its targets** for one-off cash assistance and **176%** of its targets for multi-month cash assistance. As a result, beneficiaries across the target governorates in Iraq noted a significant improvement in access to key non-food items such as clothing, fuel and basic household items.



The Cash Consortium for Iraq has reached 2,941 vulnerable households with cash assistance across six governorates improving their ability to meet basic needs.

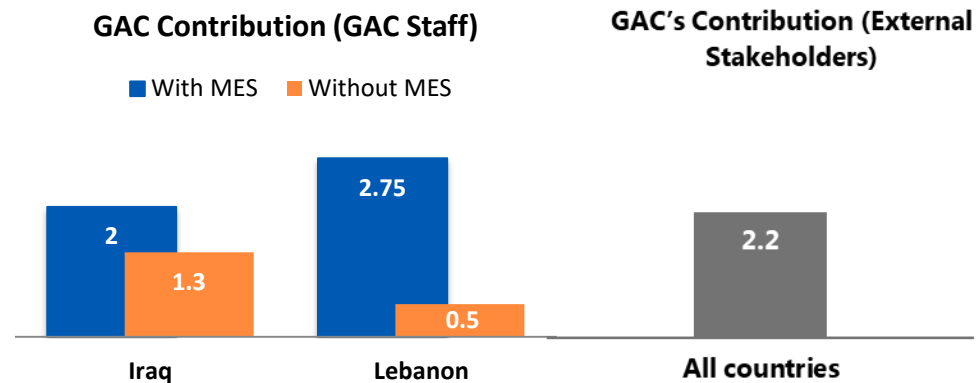
2. MES positioned Canada as a leading donor for the sexual and reproductive health services sector but the level of support from the donor community is still not commensurate with the overwhelming need



The probability that **women and girls would have access to quality sexual and reproductive health services** across the region was rated as **moderately low** by stakeholders (1.43).

Social and cultural norms related to women’s sexual and reproductive health were seen as the most significant impediment for women accessing these services, particularly in Iraq. It was noted that access challenges were more pronounced for women and girls living **outside of refugee camps** and particularly in rural areas, because of their inability to band together and advocate for services. Uncertainty around the trajectory of the refugee and IDP situation in the region made it difficult for interviewees to predict whether this need would be met in the near future.

GAC was seen by all stakeholders to have a **moderate contribution** to this area under MES (2.23). GAC stakeholders were slightly more likely to rank the Department’s contribution higher and there was a notable increase compared to the counterfactual (i.e. no MES). This difference was particularly pronounced in **Lebanon**, which was also scored by all stakeholders as the country with the highest probability of achieving this outcome. The **multi-year funding** provided by Canada through MES was a key reason why GAC staff rated Canada’s contribution as higher with MES.



GAC and external stakeholders noted that multi-year funding allowed for **long-term, integrated and innovative projects** such as engaging families, including men and boys, with the understanding that in many cases, women’s health decisions were made by families.

Partners emphasized that having multi-year funding was important for this activity because of the time required to engage with and sensitize families. With Canada’s support, UNFPA was able to reach **10,000 men and boys** through this program, however, it is too early to determine whether these efforts resulted in attitude or behaviour changes. In addition, Canada’s support to UNFPA enabled the organization to provide mobile facilities for ante-and post-natal care, family planning and education. UNFPA facilities reached 660,000 beneficiaries across the region. In Iraq, Canadian funding to UNFPA represented 40% of the organization’s budget, which was made possible under MES. Several key informants described **Canada’s impact in this area exceeded expectations compared to the amount of funding**.

Key informants described SRHR as an area in which few other actors were actively involved, making **Canada’s work particularly important** in terms of leading by example and “allowing doors to open for others”. Canada was valued by partners for its **strong position** on the inclusion of gender equality and focus on women and girls in its development and humanitarian programming.



Development / Building Resilience



Background

While Humanitarian Assistance focused on meeting immediate basic needs, MES also delivered programming to lay the foundations for **longer-term recovery** under the Development/Building Resilience pillar of the Strategy. This included promoting access to services, inclusive governance and economic development. Like all programming under MES, development assistance projects featured a focus on women and girls.

Each country presents **specific challenges** with regard to the provision of development assistance. Jordan remains highly dependent on stable, predictable external assistance in order to support sustainable livelihoods, education and employment, particularly among refugee communities. Hampered by a slowing economy and political challenges, the state lacks the capacity to support livelihoods.⁹ There is a significant risk that reduction in aid would destabilize the country and with it, the broader region.¹⁰ On a more positive note, the Jordanian government remains open to resilience-focused programming, and to increasing opportunities for education, employment and services for displaced people. Notably, the Jordan Compact, signed in 2016, committed Jordan to improving access to education and legal employment for its Syrian refugees in exchange for funding, loans and preferential trade agreements with donor countries.

The situation is somewhat more challenging in Lebanon. The country currently has the highest proportion of refugees relative to the local population in the world. In recent years, anti-refugee political rhetoric and public resentment have escalated, particularly among the Christian community, amid concerns that the long-term presence of this predominantly Sunni Muslim population would unbalance the denominational makeup of the country. Public pressure has prompted the Government of Lebanon to adopt positions that do not support programming for refugees. The official position is that refugees should return to Syria as soon as possible, and the government has adopted measures to restrict refugees access to legal residency and employment.

Challenges in Iraq derive from a general lack of progress in government implementation of significant reforms relating to livelihoods, economic justice, and women's empowerment. Syria was generally described by stakeholders as a very challenging environment for development programming and stakeholders noted significant difficulties in identifying partners and finding projects to support.

Canada's Engagement under MES

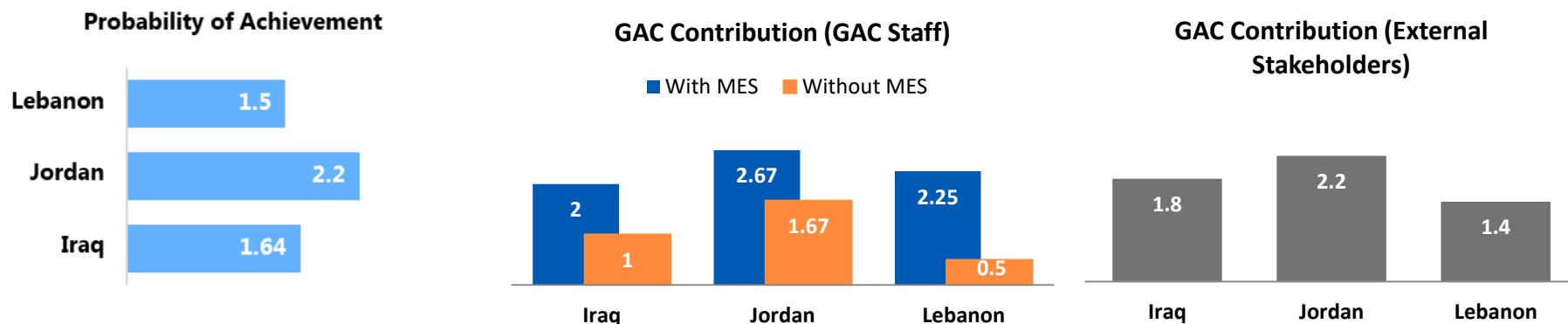
MES committed \$270M for development assistance, including \$90M in new funding. This represented 20% of the total Department's MES funding. While Canada already had a strong relationship with the Government of Jordan and a record of providing bilateral aid, the additional development funding provided through the Strategy positioned **Canada as one of the top donors for the education sector in Jordan.**

The development programming in Lebanon and Iraq was funded entirely through MES. Canada's development assistance in Lebanon and Iraq in the years prior to the strategy was minimal. MES more than doubled funding for development assistance in Iraq and more than tripled funding for Lebanon compared to the total funding disbursed in the three years prior to the Strategy. Significant time and effort were required to establish development programs and identify projects and implementing partners. As a result, projects in Lebanon and Iraq did not get off the ground until anywhere from six months to two years into the strategy, which limited the results achieved during the Strategy's timeframe.

In Lebanon, the MES positioned Canada as the fourth largest donor to the Lebanese government's national education plan: "Reaching All Children Through Education". In Iraq, **Canada is one of the only donors involved in resilience building activities**, a key outcome area of MES, which focus largely on promoting institutional and financial decentralization. However, stakeholders described Canada's involvement as not fully rolled out at the time of the evaluation.

In Syria, there was no development assistance funding disbursed in the three years prior to the Strategy. Development assistance to Syria under MES was minimal. Going forward, Canada is not prepared to provide reconstruction assistance to Syria.

3. MES funding to the education sector supported major improvements to education quality and system capacity



Overall, stakeholders in the four countries were **not optimistic** (1.69) concerning the probability that **children, particularly refugee children, would have access to good quality education**. Stakeholders in Jordan were, however, more optimistic (2.2).

GAC's contribution to this area under MES was rated by all stakeholders as **moderate** (2.21), with GAC stakeholders being more optimistic. It is not surprising that GAC's contribution was rated highest in Jordan by all stakeholders, as the bulk of MES efforts on education were focused on that country and the additional development funding provided through the Strategy positioned **Canada as one of the top donors for the education sector in Jordan**. The fact that Canadian funding in this area was not directly tied to the Syrian humanitarian response, as was the case for other donors, **allowed Canada to engage in areas that may not otherwise have been addressed**, such as education quality, system capacity and decentralization of the education system.

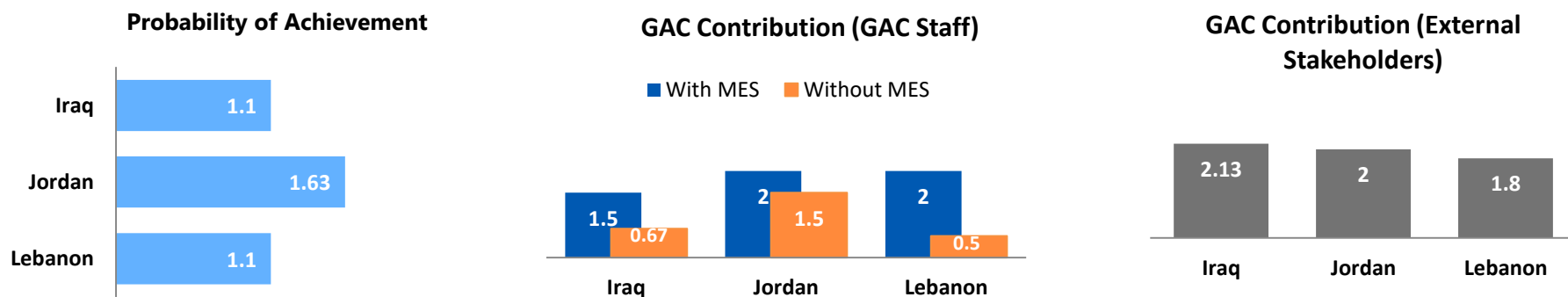
Notably, MES allowed Canada to expand its general budget support in Jordan, enhancing the capacity of the Ministry of Education and increasing the likelihood that results would be sustained. Due to GAC's contributions to the sector, the Canadian Embassy in Jordan was able to push for an additionality clause in the budget support agreement to ensure that Canadian funding earmarked for the Ministry of Education would lead to a corresponding increase in total expenditure allocations

from the central government. Another valued aspect of Canada's budget support was the provision of block grants to schools. Education partners noted that this improved service delivery through decentralization; schools were empowered to identify their own needs and invest accordingly. This provided schools with the flexibility to undertake crucial work, in the areas of school maintenance, teacher training and gender mainstreaming.

GAC's contribution to this area prior to MES and after MES **increased the most in Lebanon**, where there was no official development program prior to the Strategy. Canada's support to education under MES was delivered through UNICEF and supported the Lebanese education agenda through the Reaching All Children Through Education (RACE II) five-year plan, which aims to improve access, quality, and systems of education. **MES positioned Canada as the fourth largest donor to this Action Plan**. Interviewees noted that others contributed heavily to increasing access but that Canada was one of just two donors focusing on quality of education and capacity and system strengthening. **GAC's contributions in these areas were described as modest but important**. Respondents also mentioned the value of the donor coordination group that Canada was able to co-chair with the introduction of the Strategy. Secondary and tertiary education was cited as a major gap for all donors, as enrollment continues to be low and the majority of donors are not engaged.

Education was not a priority for development programming in Iraq or Syria under MES.

4. Systemic barriers hindered GAC's programming on livelihoods



Respondents were **quite pessimistic** (1.18) when asked whether it was probable that **displaced and conflict-affected people in the region would have access to livelihoods and economic opportunities**. Though likelihood was rated as somewhat higher in Jordan, where refugees were legally entitled to work in the formal labor force, their actual access to work was limited by Jordan's poor and deteriorating economy and high unemployment rates. Furthermore, it remained difficult for refugees to obtain legal residency and work permits—the process required extensive documentation and involved navigating bureaucratic procedures.¹¹

In Lebanon, interviewees saw **very poor prospects** for improved access to livelihoods in the country as the refugee population was only legally entitled to work in three sectors (i.e. agriculture, construction and cleaning services). The Lebanese government, facing mounting public pressure, cracked down on businesses to regulate the work of Syrians. Employers were required to prove that they first tried to find Lebanese workers; maintain a 10:1 ratio of Lebanese to Syrian workers; and sign a "pledge of responsibility".¹² This made hiring refugees a risky and onerous process for employers. In Iraq and Syria, access to livelihoods and economic opportunities were **severely limited** by the ongoing instability in both countries which restricted movement and reduced economic activity.

Canada was seen by all stakeholder interviewees to have a **moderate effect** (2) on access to livelihoods and economic opportunities in the region under MES. Partners rated the Department's contribution

significantly higher than Global Affairs staff in **Iraq**. Nonetheless, Canada was described as a relatively small donor in economic development compared to the U.S and E.U.

MES-funded projects increased access to livelihoods and economic opportunities **significantly** according to GAC stakeholders, in comparison to GAC's contribution prior to the Strategy. This was most pronounced in **Lebanon** and **Iraq**, where there were no established development programs prior to the Strategy. Projects supported vocational training, support for women's cooperatives in rural areas and job fairs. For example, in Jordan more than 23,000 youth graduated from vocational programs funded by Canada. **Often, projects supported livelihoods while also achieving other objectives.** For instance, a UNDP project in Irbid, Jordan, established a community-based re-use and recycling center, which provided employment for 100 women in the surrounding community, while simultaneously addressing solid waste management. A Cowater-led project in Jordan improved energy efficiency in schools while also providing economic opportunities for local populations.

While strong results were achieved at the project level, **Canada's efforts were curtailed by political and economic realities**. In Lebanon, the aforementioned regulatory frameworks and laws governing refugee participation in the labor market were cited as reasons why **Canada was not having a larger impact on this outcome**. In Iraq, the public sector continued to dominate the employment landscape, and there were few opportunities in the private sector. In Syria, there was only a small livelihoods component in humanitarian and development projects.

Success Story- Mashreq Conference on Women's Economic Empowerment in Lebanon

In support of the Middle East Strategy, Canada, under the auspices of Lebanese Prime Minister Saad Hariri, co-organized the **Mashreq Conference on Women's Economic Empowerment (WEE)** with the World Bank and the International Finance Corporation to provide a forum for discussion of challenges and opportunities for women's economic empowerment in Lebanon, Jordan and Iraq. The conference took place in Beirut on January 19, 2019 and brought together high-level government representatives from the three countries and from the broader region (including the Secretary General of the League of Arab States and several Ministers and MPs), the international community and private sector and civil society actors.

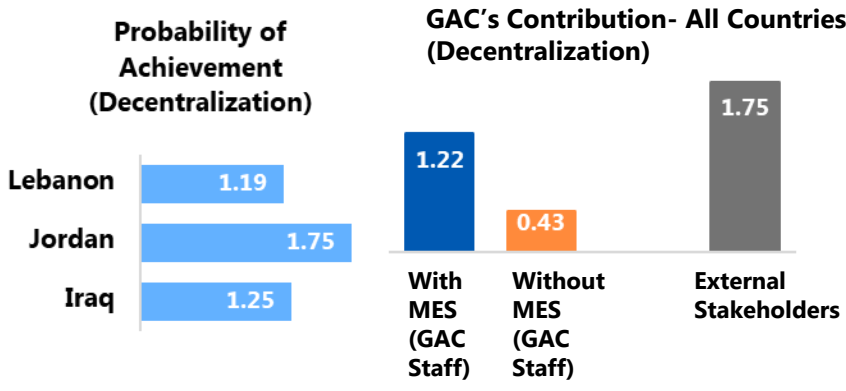
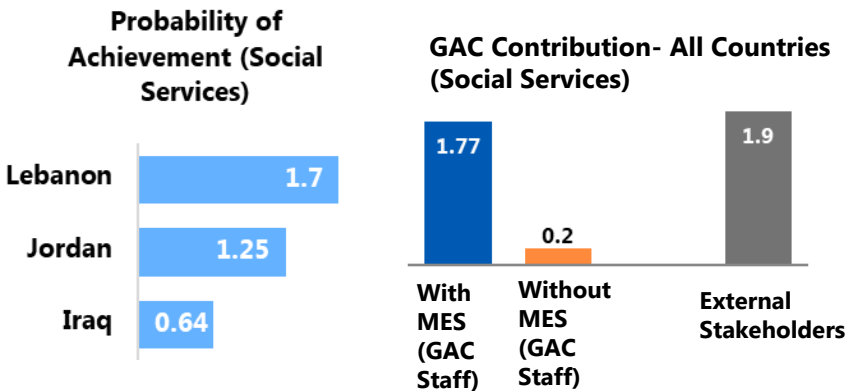
A series of panel discussions took place which highlighted the need for a **holistic approach to women's economic empowerment** which leverages partnerships between public and private sectors and civil society. The governments of Lebanon, Jordan and Iraq each presented their **National Action Plans for WEE** at the conference setting five-year targets to increase women's participation in their respective labor forces. **Canada also committed \$10M** for the World Bank's new **Mashreq Gender Facility** which will provide resources and expertise to the three countries to aid in the implementation of their national plans. Norway has since pledged US \$3M, while other donors have shown interest to possibly join in future funding cycles.

The conference **raised the profile of Canada as a leading donor** in the area of gender equality and women's economic empowerment in the region. It was widely acknowledged that without Canadian funding and support, the conference and the start up of the Mashreq Gender Facility would not have taken place.



The Ambassador of Canada to Lebanon (far right) attended the Mashreq Conference to demonstrate Canada's support for women's economic empowerment.

5. A lack of political will has hindered progress in social services and governance



Stakeholders had **negative views** about the state of social services across the region, and were pessimistic about the probability (1.13) that **local governments/ municipalities would have the resources and training they need to deliver social services and manage resources effectively across the country** within the next three years. **Likelihood ratings were, unsurprisingly, lowest in Iraq.** In Lebanon, the government’s general position was that Syrian refugees were temporary residents and would not be integrated into society; this dis-incentivized government investment in long-term social service delivery solutions. In Iraq, corruption of the central and local governments was perceived to be the most significant barrier to ensuring that social services and resources were managed effectively.

Stakeholders generally perceived **Canada’s contribution to this outcome to be low** (1.78) as well, given the political and structural barriers in the region. Nonetheless, GAC staff perceived Canada’s contribution to be significantly greater with MES compared to the counterfactual. The creation of development programs in Iraq and Lebanon through MES was often cited as a reason for the perceived increase in GAC’s contribution to this outcome. In Jordan, results from projects supporting municipalities were more positive. For example, Canada supported the identification and delivery of 69 sub-projects to support municipalities in improving their services in waste management, renewable energy and infrastructure. In addition, about 2 million people (25% of whom are refugees) in 33 municipalities north of Jordan benefited from new landfill sites; and 5,711 households were able to access rehabilitated water systems.

Interviewees felt the **probability was low** (1.26) that **significant progress would be made on decentralizing federal responsibilities to local governments** because this was not seen as a priority for any of the central governments in the four countries of focus. Decentralization was initially an important objective in **Iraq** as the central government had committed to devolving some federal responsibilities to regional governments in the 2005 constitution. Unfortunately, there had been limited progress on this at the time of the evaluation due to what respondents described as a **lack of political will**. The failed 2017 referendum for Kurdish independence further weakened the relationship between the central Baghdad government and Kurdistan Regional Government and undermined negotiations on decentralization.¹³ In addition, the protracted formation of the central government following the 2018 national elections led to delays in implementation of government priorities.

Canada was perceived by all stakeholders to have a **minor effect** (1.38) on this outcome in the region as a whole and a **minor effect** (1.6) in Iraq where the majority of decentralization work was done under MES. GAC staff perceived the Department’s contribution to be greater with MES compared to the counterfactual since this was not a priority prior to the Strategy. Several implementing organizations and government officials noted that this was **an area where Canadian expertise, based on experience with federalism, would be welcome in the future.**



Security and Stabilization

Background

There is **ongoing risk of conflict or instability** in each of the four countries covered by MES.¹⁴ Social tensions, a lack of opportunities, and weak governance continue to compromise long-term stability, increase the risk of violence and create conditions conducive to the emergence of existing or new extremist groups.

The protracted civil war in **Syria** has devastated the country and inflicted violence, loss of life and trauma on countless people. Communities and governments struggle to meet basic human needs, economic opportunities are scarce, and uncertainty about the future pervades. This volatile situation remains an ideal recruiting environment for extremists.

In **Iraq**, the dismantling of the Ba'athist Iraqi regime created a security and governance vacuum, the effects of which are still having consequences for stability in the country today. Tensions between Shi'a-Sunni, Kurdish-Arab, and other groups persist and the weak sense of national identity has led to fracturing between regions. The effectiveness of the state security apparatus has been compromised by fragmented command and control structures, limited accountability, and poor interaction with the judiciary. Marginalized groups continue to turn to non-state ethnic militias for protection.

While **Jordan** and **Lebanon** are considered more stable, and the risk of large-scale armed conflict in the near future is low, the two countries remain at elevated risk of destabilization. Intractable issues such as systematic discrimination against refugees, economic stagnation, and dissatisfaction persist, and could lead to an increase in extremism in these countries. Analysts estimate Jordan hosts some **9,000 to 10,000** jihadi sympathizers.¹⁵ More than 2,000 Jordanians have officially traveled to Iraq and Syria to join Daesh and other extremist groups.¹⁶

Canada's Engagement under MES

MES committed \$145M to security programs at GAC, including \$40M in new funding. GAC security programming represented 11% of total funding committed under MES. Canada's efforts under the Security and Stabilization pillar of MES aim to consolidate military gains against Daesh and to strengthen social stability and security. Global Affairs' principal lines of effort were delivered by the Counter-Terrorism Capacity Building Program (CTCBP), Peace and Stabilization Operations Program (PSOPs), the Weapons Threat Reduction Program (WTRP) and the Global Security Reporting Program (including one additional Kuwait-based officer funded through MES).

MES **significantly increased the budget of CTCBP** in the region, which allowed the program to engage in broad scale and longer-term projects. Prior to MES, CTCBP projects in the region were funded through the Global Fund Envelope which only allowed the Program to implement small isolated projects and inhibited strategic regional planning. MES allowed the program to focus on priority areas and engage in targeted programming. MES also funded two additional resources at HQ for CTCBP to cover programming in the Middle East. Similarly, **incremental funding to PSOPS allowed the Program to implement more ambitious projects** and to strengthen its monitoring activities. It also allowed the Program to fund a stabilization advisor for Baghdad to enhance Canada's capacity to support the Stabilization Secretariat.

The WTRP did not receive additional funds through MES, but Program Stakeholders noted that the Strategy informed their priority-setting processes, and provided some clarity as to how their projects could align with the GC's overall engagement in the region.

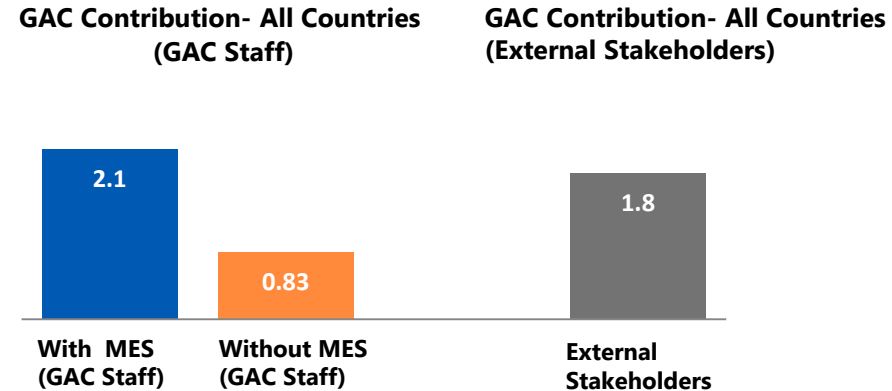
MES also **funded a dedicated position in AMMAN to oversee PSOPS and CTCBP** programming in Jordan, Syria, Iraq and Lebanon. This allowed Canada to engage more meaningfully in the security and stabilization sector in Jordan and Lebanon, reduced the work burden on political officers and increased Canada's visibility in the sector. Funding for security program activities in Syria significantly increased under MES (49.41M under MES compared to 5.16M in the three years prior).

6. GAC's provision of equipment and training modestly improved security forces' capacity to operate

Stakeholders rated **moderately low** (1.5) the probability that **security forces would have the equipment and training they needed** within three years. Rankings were consistent across Iraq, Lebanon and Jordan both within GAC and externally. There was consensus that **equipment and training needs remained significant** and that major improvements in these areas would **require significantly more time and resources**. Respondents noted that given the high costs of equipment and scarcity of resources, governments tended to prioritize outfitting certain security forces over others (e.g. military over police), so capacity among the latter remained low. In addition, stakeholders noted that there are still gaps in training, particularly for women.

Stakeholders described **GAC's contribution to this outcome under MES as moderate** (2.04), however, it should be noted that much of the work done in this area was through DND and/or RCMP, and therefore not captured through this evaluation. GAC stakeholders noted that there was a **significant increase** in the Department's contribution to this area under MES in comparison to the situation prior given that MES **significantly increased the budget of CTCBP and incremental funding to PSOPs allowed for more ambitious projects**. GAC Annual Reports and interviews highlighted some specific results achieved:

- In Jordan, CTCBP reported that 26 male and female Gendarmes (paramilitary security agency) had been trained in tactical medical and response skills, representing 31% of its target for 2018. **The training was deemed very useful by participants.**
- GAC supported DND's provision of cold weather equipment and training to the Lebanese Armed Forces (LAF), which was described by partners as a major success which **drew upon Canada's specific strengths in cold weather operations** and raised its profile among donors.
- PSOPS supported a UNDP Municipal Policing Project in Zahle municipality in Lebanon, which aimed to professionalize the police force and improve its capacity to serve the local population. Participants expressed that following the training, they felt better able to respond to requests for help from vulnerable groups such as women and refugees, and that they noticed **greater trust between the police and the community.**

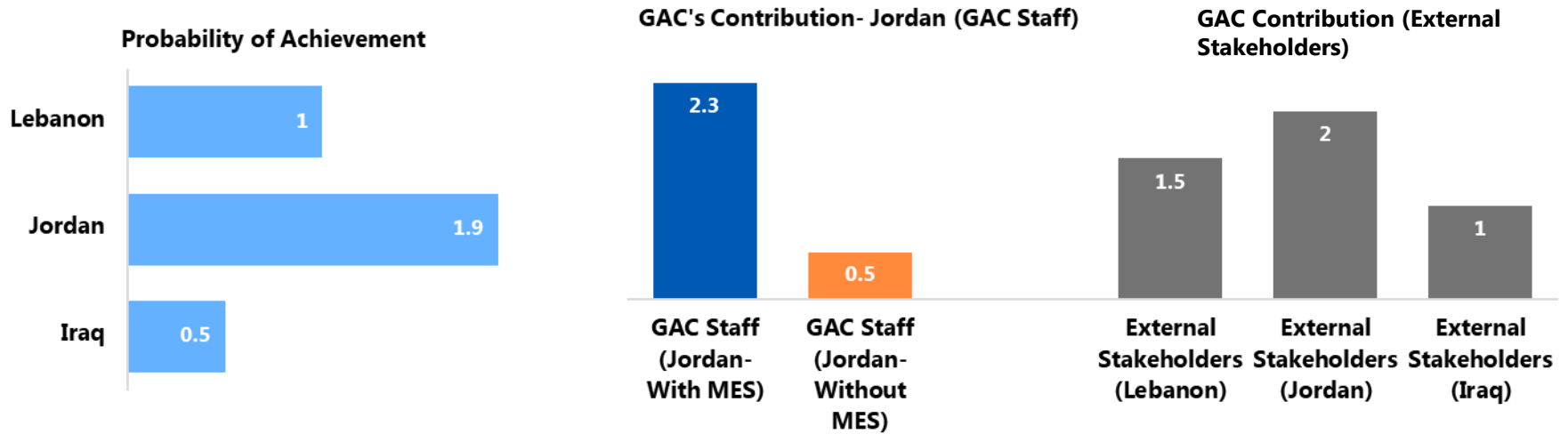


While MES enabled GAC to increase its capacity-building efforts significantly, **Canada's overall contribution remained modest compared to that of other donors**. The U.S and U.K, in particular invested heavily in training and equipment and were highly visible as a result.

Stakeholders noted a number of challenges associated with the provision of training and equipment. Some expressed a need for caution to ensure that Canada is not equipping or supporting organizations (for instance, in Iraq), with records of human rights abuses. **Ensuring sustainable results** was also a major challenge due to significant turnover within regional security forces, particularly among women. GAC partially addressed this issue by focusing on building internal capacity- for example through train-the-trainer initiatives.

Given these challenges, academics suggested that Canada could gain a better return on investment by **focusing more on community-based initiatives** such as the Municipal Policing project described earlier. In addition to the security benefits that these projects confer, they also build an enduring sense of purpose and well-being in the communities.

7. MES supported small but important improvements to border security



Stakeholders found the probability unlikely (1.31) that **national borders in the region would be secure (from foreign fighters, smuggled goods etc.)** within three years. The likelihood was rated **significantly higher in Jordan**, where border security has been improving steadily, and **lower in Iraq** where borders were described as still extremely porous, a situation being exploited by organized crime for the smuggling of drugs and human trafficking. Currently, the Iraqi government lacks the resources and capacity to secure its national borders.

GAC's contribution to improving border security within Jordan, Lebanon and Iraq was rated by all stakeholders as **minor** (1.8) overall, but higher in Jordan. GAC staff perceived the Department's contribution to border security to be **significantly higher** with MES compared to the counterfactual since the additional funding for CTCBP allowed the program to focus on broader scale and longer term projects in this area. Funding under the MES also established a **dedicated position** in AMMAN to oversee PSOPS and CTCBP programming in Jordan and Lebanon. This has allowed Canada to engage more meaningfully in the security and stabilization sector in the region. Specific activities in this area under MES included the provision of equipment or monitoring at ports of entry (WTRP) and training and equipping of security forces at borders (CTCBP).

Overall, however, **GAC's investment in the area was small** compared to that of the U.S and U.K who invested hundreds of millions of dollars in border security improvements.

Specific results achieved from MES-funded border security projects included:

- In Jordan, the CTCBP delivered a Zodiac water craft and training to the Jordanian Maritime Counter-Terrorism Unit to provide protection for Jordan's 26 kilometres of coastline. The Program also supported the AIRCOP project, which provided airport staff with training on how to identify suspicious passengers. Outcomes from these projects were not available at the time of the evaluation.
- In Jordan, WTRP supported the government's goal to secure 100% of its borders against trafficking of nuclear materials. Radiation Portal Monitors were installed at key airports and land borders, and 100 operators and 5 maintenance teams were trained in their use. The Program also supported the addition of 170 known bomb maker profiles to INTERPOL, which enables the detection and interception of these individuals when they cross borders.

8. Improvised Explosive Devices (IEDs) and Explosive Remnants of War (ERWs) remain a serious threat requiring a massive sustained effort for their clearance



Stakeholders in Iraq saw a **very low probability** (0.71) that **the threat from IEDs and ERWs would be significantly reduced** within three years, and also saw **GAC's contribution under MES to be minor** (1).

In Iraq, stakeholders noted a **high level of contamination** from the conflict with Daesh and legacy minefields from prior conflicts in the country. In addition to mines, Daesh often used improvised booby traps in houses and buildings in occupied villages.¹⁷ Widespread minefields have prevented the return of internally displaced persons (IDPs) to their communities and prevented the cultivation of the land in rural areas.¹⁸

In addition to the quantity of explosive material, those involved in clearing fields faced a number of challenges:

- security threats and risks of conflict were ever-present;
- working in Iraq often required obtaining special permissions and accreditations to gain access to target areas;
- working conditions could be grueling with temperatures of 40 degrees Celsius for 7 months of the year and cold and wet weather during the winter;
- a lack of infrastructure due to the conflict; and
- prohibitive equipment and insurance costs.

Despite the challenges, interviewees noted that **Canada's work in clearing ordnance had made a notable difference** in affected peoples' lives and for the safety of communities, enabling displaced people to return to their homes and resume normal life. Clearing priority areas,

such as schools and surrounding areas, improved safety for children and allowed them to return to their studies.

Respondents noted that **Canada' value added derived from its coordinated multi-pillar approach** to mine action that involved, for instance, PSOPs supporting clearance, humanitarian assistance supporting victims and delivering risk education to increase awareness among local populations, and development supporting institutional capacity for explosive hazard management. This was described as an effective example of MES promoting a coherent engagement across departmental lines of business.

PSOPs received funding through MES to work with NGOs, local security forces and experts to survey, assess and clear areas of explosive devices. As of May 2019, **18.5 million square meters** had been cleared by all coalition partners in Iraq, including Canada. This constituted **72%** of the target, and was rated as "moderate progress" by program stakeholders. An additional **227,372 square meters** were cleared with combined funds (Canada, U.S, Germany and Denmark).

Approximately **12,800 people** (6,016 men/boys and 6,784 women and girls) benefited from clearance activities. This far exceeded PSOPs own targets and received a program **self-assessment score of 4/5** or "exceeded" from those involved in the projects.

However, the total area cleared remains a **marginal proportion of the total contaminated area**, and stakeholders emphasized that achieving significant progress across Iraq and Syria would **require a massive investment and much longer (10+years) time frame** given the staggering scale of the problem and the immense costs associated with clearing ordnance.

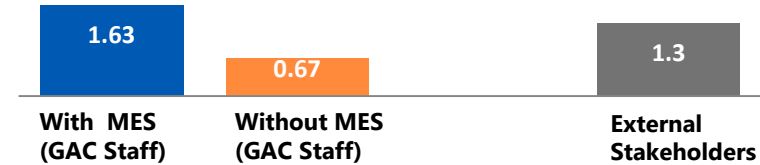
9. GAC's campaigns to counter violent extremism reached a broad audience, but results were unclear

Stakeholders rated the **probability low** (1.27) that the statement: "**Few people hold violent extremist views**" would be true within three years. They noted that while the overall proportion of people within Jordan, Lebanon and Iraq holding extremist views was low, vulnerability to radicalization to violence would continue if the underlying grievances and issues that gave rise to Daesh do not get addressed. There is little evidence to show that the proportion of people holding violent extremist views or sympathies has decreased over the past years but stakeholders noted the **challenges in measuring this result**. For example, there are no defined standards for how to measure impact in this area and there are numerous intervening variables that could affect the outcome.¹⁹ Academics noted that it was also difficult to determine whether messaging aimed at countering violent extremism was being consumed by the right people i.e. those at risk of radicalization.

Stakeholders described **Canada's overall contribution as relatively minor** (1.41), noting that while Canada has made a difference at the project level, the overall effect on violent extremism within the countries was unsurprisingly minimal. Examples of activities undertaken by Canada included:

- Establishing a **Rebuttal Unit** in Iraq to produce and disseminate analysis-based alternative narratives. The Unit shared 200,000 media pieces (600% over of the target) that have been viewed around 500,000 times).
- **Training to partners** to provide skills and knowledge to protect communities from violent extremism. Among those who completed the training, 100% of participants felt more knowledgeable about how to use social and traditional media to counter violent extremism, and 75% felt better able to identify violent extremist narratives and strategies.
- **Online countering radicalization to violence activities**, which achieved a 40% penetration rate to Iraqi audiences, and 3.2 million Facebook followers.
- **Digital literacy** for women and families in Jordan to help them understand and recognize early signs of violent extremism in their homes or communities.

GAC Contribution- All Countries
(GAC Staff)



GAC Contribution- All Countries
(External Stakeholders)

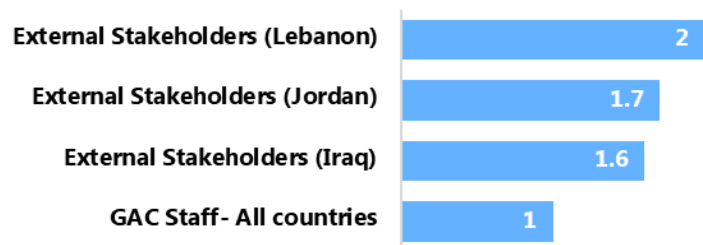
Having a dedicated CTCBP officer in the field, funded by MES, enabled GAC to chair and participate in donor coordination group on the topic and to focus on critical gaps such as prisons, which are fertile grounds for radicalization to violence. However, implementing organizations stressed that effectively countering violent extremism would require a **comprehensive, coordinated approach that addresses the myriad drivers of violent extremism**. Research shows that the drivers of extremism can vary widely across countries.²⁰ For example, in Iraq, the majority of those who supported or joined Daesh did so out of lack of economic opportunity and insecurity rather than belief in the ideology. Political actors in Iraq exacerbated the problem by systematically attacking and marginalizing minority groups and preventing them from accessing public services.

By contrast, poverty did not necessarily correlate with violent extremism in Jordan, as fighters came from diverse economic and social backgrounds and may have been more motivated by sectarian reasons (i.e. a desire to protect fellow Sunnis). In Lebanon, violent extremism was often driven by political reasons (i.e. support for or opposition to the Syrian regime).

Given the resources needed to address all of these drivers, research and some stakeholders suggested that to be effective, Canada should focus its efforts on its areas of strength, namely **women's empowerment**, and **inclusive governance** rather than areas such as direct alternative messaging.

10. GAC's projects increased women's role in peace and security

Probability of Achievement

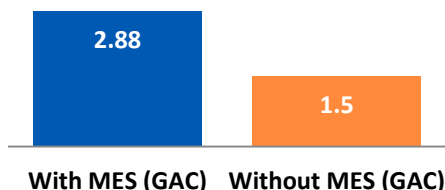


Overall, stakeholders saw a **low likelihood** (1.53) of **women being regularly involved in peacebuilding** in the target countries within three years. Interestingly, **partners saw this outcome as more likely to occur than GAC staff**. Discussions for this outcome focused on a broad range of areas that contribute to peacebuilding and fall under the Women, Peace and Security agenda including women's inclusion in security apparatuses, meaningful participation in peace negotiation processes and decision-making ability in political arenas. The main challenges to realizing this outcome were related to cultural barriers, safety concerns and discriminatory laws and legislation which limited the ability of women and women's groups to meaningfully engage.

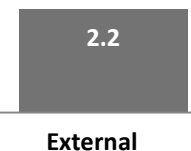
GAC, through MES, made a **major contribution to involving women in the peace process** (2.43), according to both internal and external stakeholders, making this **one of the notable successes of MES**. Canada was regularly praised as a **leader in promoting, supporting and advocating** for women's involvement in peace and security on multiple fronts.

In Jordan, GAC provided funding and support for the launching of the implementation of the Jordanian National Action Plan (JONAP) on UNSCR 1325 Women, Peace and Security. A conference was organized by the Government of Jordan and UN Women, alongside Canada and other donors, to prepare partners for the implementation of JONAP, promote understanding of roles and responsibilities and raise awareness of accountabilities. Jordan's adoption of JONAP in December 2017

GAC Contribution- All Countries (GAC Staff)



GAC Contribution- All Countries (External Stakeholders)



helped align Canada's work in this area with government priorities and led to some successful initiatives. For example, CTCBP supported tactical and first aid training to the Jordanian Gendarmerie (paramilitary security force) and promoted recruitment of women to the organization. Partly as a result, the Jordanian Gendarmerie, set a target of 5% female Gendarmes.

In Lebanon, CTCBP supported projects that trained Lebanese women to contribute to border and airport security infrastructure and equipment, prison reform, international cooperation in criminal matters against foreign terrorist fighters and other areas.

In Syria, PSOPs established "Women's Points", offices attached to Syrian Civil Defence Offices where women volunteers could manage their operations and provide a safe place for beneficiaries to receive services. The **31** Women's Points established represented **62%** of the target, which was considered a reasonable achievement given the challenges associated with working in Syria.

For PSOPs, the focus was on empowering women to promote social stability and community-based conflict resolution. The Program delivered training to 211 Lebanese women (**105% of target**) on topics related to civil rights, tolerance, social cohesion and leadership. Training participants provided positive feedback on the training, noting that it had **improved their leadership capacity and ability to resolve conflicts**.

MES Success Story: Training of Female Gendarmes



Canada supported the Stabilization Network in Jordan to deliver a training program to help integrate female officers into operational roles in the Jordanian Gendarmerie. The training program also enhanced the tactical capacity of the paramilitary force to deal with situations involving females as either victims or perpetrators.

Senior officers noted that as a result of the training, the Gendarmerie was better able to conduct tactical searches since cultural norms in Jordan prohibit the searching of female suspects by male security officers. Women participants also expressed greater confidence in their ability to take on operational tasks and reported an increase in their tactical and first aid skills.

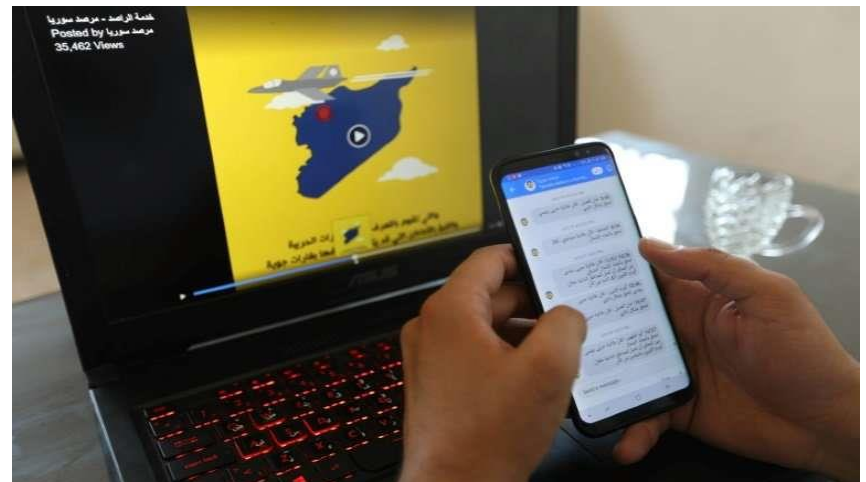
"In particular, women Gendarmerie personnel weren't able to handle a pistol prior to the training; now after the training they can handle the pistol with complete confidence."

Brigadier-General Moutasim Abu Shattal, Assistant to the General Director for Operations.

Success Story - Sentry Warning System

Sentry Syria, developed by Hala Systems, is an indication and warning system that alerts civilians to impending air strikes in Syria. Funded in part by Canada through PSOPS, the system predicts risk areas for potential airstrikes and then validates information on the location of warplanes through multiple sources, including remote sensing technology, artificial intelligence, internet sources and human observers. Warnings are then sent out on social media and peer-to-peer messaging platforms roughly 8 minutes before the impending attack to allow civilians to take cover. Research has demonstrated that the number of airstrike fatalities has gone down by 27% in areas where the technology has been employed.

In addition, the data generated by Sentry Syria has been used by the UN and other countries to corroborate claims of chemical attacks and airstrikes across Syria. The system has also been relied upon by the Syrian White Helmets to identify areas where there may be injured civilians in need of medical attention.





Diplomatic Engagement



Diplomatic Engagement

Background

Despite the ongoing chaos in the Middle East, **the direct threat to Canada is considered low**. While conflicts threaten regional stability and international security in general, Canada and Canadian interests have not, to date, been adversely affected to a major degree.²¹ **Canada's economic interests in the region are also limited**. While Canada has greatly increased its trade presence in the region over the past twenty years, and has signed a free trade agreement with Jordan, total exports to the four countries covered by the Strategy totalled just \$297M USD in 2017-18, placing the region as a whole just outside the top 50 among Canada's partners. Canada is an active participant in the Global Coalition Against Daesh and is one of few members to have contributed to all lines of effort, but as a middle power, its efforts are unlikely to be the difference-maker. Given the **absence of urgent security or economic motivations**, Canada has a degree or latitude in terms of the objectives it seeks to accomplish.

Canada's Engagement Under MES

MES provided \$90M for GAC's diplomatic engagement, which consisted of **entirely new funding**. This represented 7% of total GAC MES funding, however, Canada's diplomatic engagement played a key role across program areas. Most key informants agreed that **MES had strengthened Canada's presence** through the creation of additional political staff positions, which bolstered analysis and reporting, provided information for decision-makers, and increased Canada's visibility in the region and among the donor community. However, staff were **less certain that MES provided clear strategic direction to political staff working in the region, or conveyed a coherent plan for engagement across the other pillars** (humanitarian, development and security). Several respondents noted that the MES primary focus on combatting Daesh and alleviating suffering from the Syrian Crisis created some uncertainty as to the aims of diplomatic engagement in the target countries. They noted that they would have benefitted from increased guidance from HQ on how they could employ diplomatic tools to support the goals of the MES.

The **breadth of the Strategy** and myriad of projects with numerous activities, goals and objectives made it difficult to identify common threads across pillars (with some exceptions, such as women's empowerment). Overall, respondents generally described the **diplomatic pillar as the least clearly articulated of the four**.

In 2018, Canada appointed its **first resident ambassador to Iraq** since 1991. The objectives were to support the central government's efforts to counter Daesh; promote and advocate for national and community-level reconciliation processes; temper sectarian conflicts; and increase

governance and service delivery, particularly to vulnerable people. Political staff in Iraq were encouraged to collaborate with civil society organizations and international organizations such as the United Nations to achieve these results.

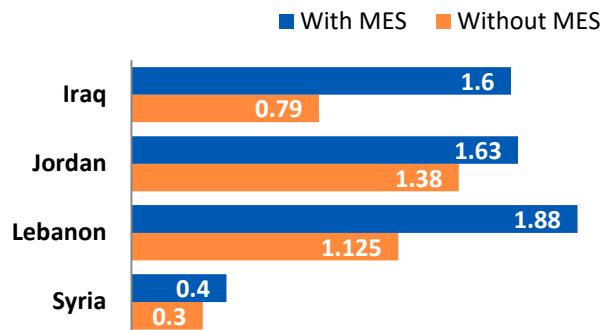
As a result of MES, the Beirut-based **Syria Hub consolidated its team with Canada-based and locally-based staff members**. The team advocated for accountability and respect for human rights in Syria, by engaging with organizations like the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW), and supported the prosecution of war crimes through the Commission for International Justice and Accountability (CIJA) and the International Impartial and Independent Mechanism (IIIM).

In Lebanon, the primary diplomatic objectives related to helping the country handle a massive influx of refugees. To this end, political staff advocated for protection, supported efforts to mitigate social tensions and promote the resilience of institutions and communities. **The resettlement of Syrian refugees in Canada, while not related to the Strategy, was seen positively in the region**, and provided credibility to Canada's advocacy efforts concerning refugees.

Canada and Jordan have a strong history of cooperation in the areas of security, development, trade and humanitarian assistance. Consensus among respondents was that **MES did not fundamentally change the nature of Canada's engagement in the country, but provided additional resources and increased visibility**. It was noted that much of the important diplomatic work in Jordan (i.e. the Israel-Palestinian conflict, economic stagnation, unemployment, etc.) was not related to MES, which focused more narrowly on the Syrian response.

11. MES strengthened GAC's position in advocating for Canadian values

Probability of Achievement (GAC Staff)

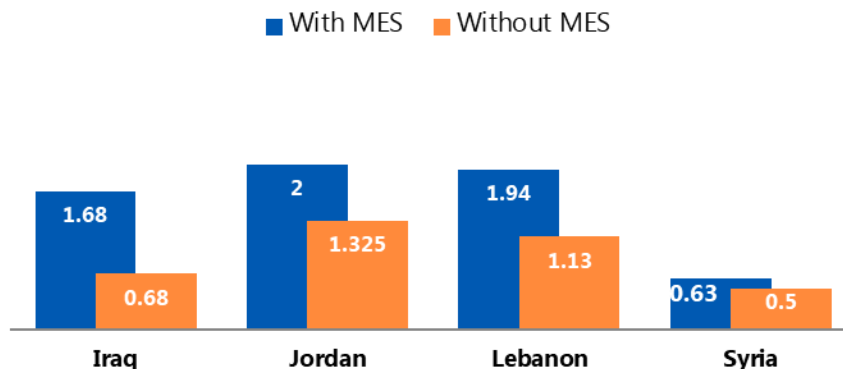


GAC stakeholders stated that the probability was **moderately low** (1.38 overall) for **Canadian values, such as rule of law and gender equality, to be widely reflected by the regional countries' official positions** within the next three years. **The probability was rated somewhat higher in Lebanon**, which, based on Global Indices, ranks higher in accountability and gender equality than the other Strategy countries.

Respondents noted progress made to date for this outcome. For instance, the governments of Jordan, Lebanon and Iraq are at different stages of development/ implementation of their National Action Plans for the implementation of UNSCR 1325 (Women and Peace and Security) and promoted respect for human rights and equality in official positions. However, respondents had concerns that recipient countries' official positions were often adopted to "tell donors what they wanted to hear" and did not reflect the social or political realities in these countries. For the most part, these remained patrilineal, conservative societies and respondents considered it unlikely in the short term that values like gender equality would be widely accepted across society.

Canada was generally seen to be very active in its advocacy efforts, particularly on gender equality and the rule of law. MES was seen to have less of an effect on this area since Canada was already active in promoting Canadian values in the region prior to the Strategy. The notable difference was in Syria and Iraq, where MES significantly increased diplomatic resources.

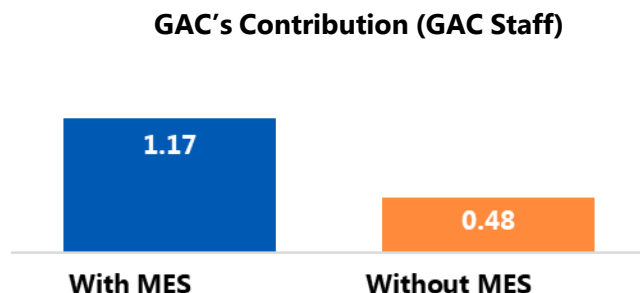
GAC Contribution (GAC Staff)



In **Iraq**, political staff regularly advocated for gender equality and women's rights through direct advocacy with ministers and parliamentarians, through the Canada Fund for Local Initiatives, social media advocacy, civil society, and as the Coalition Focal Point for Gender in the Stabilization Task Force. In **Lebanon**, political and development staff, alongside the HOM, met regularly with different Lebanese ministers, the Prime Minister's office, armed forces and various ministries to discuss and promote Canadian priorities and positions. In **Jordan**, political staff advocated for women's empowerment through MES special projects like the JONAP implementation conference and Canada Fund for Local Initiatives (CFLI) projects, as well as in person and online advocacy. Respondents also noted significant success in influencing how refugees were treated in the country.

It was emphasized that Canada's and other donors' ability to influence the regional governments was closely linked to the provision of funding and aid to the country. In that sense, **the additional funding provided through MES notably improved Canada's bargaining position.** Apart from the Strategy, **Canada's resettlement of nearly 60,000 refugees was also seen to be an important** facilitator for its efforts and significantly increased Canada's moral and expert authority in this area.

12. MES ensured a consistent Canadian presence in the Syrian peace process



Respondents **rated low** the likelihood that “**political solutions to ongoing conflicts in the region would be achieved**” within the next three years. The evolution of the conflict in Syria over the course of the Strategy led to shifting power dynamics in the country making it highly unlikely that political solutions favoured by Canada (i.e. regime change) would be achieved.

GAC respondents rated **Canada's contribution as minor** to this area (1.17). Evidence on the results of Canada's efforts was limited, due to the inherent difficulties in measuring the effects of diplomatic work. Interviewees noted some challenges that may have hindered GAC's effectiveness in the peace process. These included being an early voice for regime change in Syria, and the policy of non-engagement with the Syrian regime which imposed limits on the extent of Canada's engagement.

Canada's activities within the peace process included participation in **regional and multilateral initiatives** such as the UN-led Intra-Syrian peace talks in Geneva; **advocacy work** on ceasefires and human rights through the International Syria Support Group (ISSG) Task Force meetings in Geneva; and **promotion of Canadian positions** with Syrian opposition through the High Negotiations Committee (HNC) meetings in Riyadh and other initiatives.

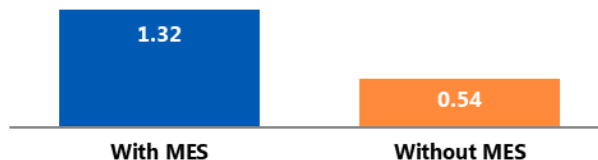
MES provided the resources needed for Canadian diplomats to be **visible and present at international fora**, enabling them to advocate consistently on sustainable peace, the inclusion of women's and opposition voices in the peace process, and comprehensive humanitarian access. Some, though not all, interviewees also expressed the view that MES provided a consistent and coherent message for diplomatic engagement and **provided clarity on Canadian priorities in regards to Syria**.

Canada's decision to avoid military involvement in Syria, its welcoming policy towards refugees and unwavering support for defenders of human rights (e.g. White Helmets) provided Canada with credibility and influence, even if it was a secondary actor within the peace process, as compared to the U.S or Turkey.

While not directly related to the peace process, respondents did note that Canada's diplomatic efforts yielded modest results in **securing humanitarian access**. For instance, political staff in Amman participated in year-long efforts to ensure humanitarian access at the Berm, on the border with Syria, and the mission was a founding member of a HOM-level working group on Durable Solutions for Refugees, chaired by the UN. A collective demarche (Australia, Japan, Switzerland) resulted in two deliveries of humanitarian assistance from the Jordan side of the border. This allowed for children to be screened for malnutrition, enabled the delivery of non-food items such as winterization items, hygiene kits and school supplies, and provided polio vaccines for more than 10,000 children.

13. MES had a minor effect on investigation and prosecution of international crimes

GAC's Contribution (GAC Staff)



Respondents saw a **moderately low likelihood** (1.43) that **international crimes would be effectively investigated and prosecuted** within the next three years which is not surprising given the time needed to build legal cases.

In Iraq, the Central government exerted national sovereignty over its prosecutions, limiting the international community's capacity to engage. Respondents felt that it was unlikely that cases in Iraq would be referred to the International Criminal Court (ICC). A significant challenge identified by interviewees was that the government of Iraq did not have the necessary legislative frameworks in place for fair prosecution or adequate resources to uphold human rights requirements in line with international standards. Rule of law in Iraq remains well below the standard for the region with little improvement since 2011. Currently, large scale prosecutions of those suspected to be involved with Daesh have begun under the Government's Counter Terrorism Act, without proper investigation, due process or legal recourse for the accused.²¹ Respondents saw little appetite for the reconciliatory or restorative justice promoted by the International community.

GAC, under MES was seen to have a **minor contribution** (1.43) on ensuring effective investigation and prosecution of war crimes. Nonetheless, most respondents felt it was **important to engage in this sphere** to defend the rules-based international order and

principles of accountability. GAC stakeholders felt that Canada's ability to engage in this area was **significantly increased by MES**, in comparison to the counterfactual situation since the Strategy outlined this as a priority in the region.

Canada's support consisted primarily of providing funding to organizations collecting and compiling evidence, however, the results of these efforts will likely not be apparent for many years.

A notable example cited by respondents was Canada's support and funding to the Commission for International Justice and Accountability (CIJA) in Iraq, including through the PSOPs programming with CIJA. Canadian funding to this organization aided in the France-German investigation and arrest of several Syrian citizens suspected of crimes against humanity, including a high-ranking official in the Assad Syrian regime.

In Syria, Canadian political staff in the Syria Hub, supported the establishment of the UN International, Impartial and Independent Mechanism ("Triple IM") through a demarche and also provided funding. The Triple IM is mandated to gather information and evidence to prepare case studies for court, including the ICC and Syrian National Courts, in order to procure justice for victims of crimes.

14. MES improved Canada's already excellent reputation in the region, but communications could be further improved

Probability of Achievement (GAC Staff)



GAC respondents saw a **very high likelihood (2.8)** that **Canada would continue to enjoy an excellent reputation in the region, as a donor, multilateral partner and member of the Global Coalition Against Daesh** over the next three years. MES made a **sizeable improvement to the already strong Canadian brand**. Respondents noted that Canada had been well-regarded in the region prior to the implementation of the Strategy. In Iraq, its non-involvement in the 2003 U.S-led invasion contributed to a positive view among Iraqi government officials and citizens. The resettlement of 59,000 Syrian refugees in Canada as of March 2019 was also seen positively in the region, and provided credibility to Canada's advocacy efforts concerning refugees. Regional media regularly contrasted Canada's welcoming stance towards refugees with that of other countries who were clamping down.

MES enabled diplomatic staff to leverage the good reputation of Canada and enhance its visibility through international fora through the hiring of additional staff and hosting of more events. As examples, the **Embassy in Amman** conducted advocacy and information events on Canada's work in landmine clearance, the environment, education, human rights and gender equality. The **Beirut Mission** participated in multiple multilateral meetings with UNHCR and UNRWA and in donor coordination meetings on security and Palestinian refugees. The mission also initiated and co-chaired both the bilateral donor coordination group and gender donor working groups. The **Syria Hub** attended 65 coordination meetings and 83 meetings with stakeholders, partners, diplomats and the opposition. In particular, stakeholders noted that the increased presence of Canada in **Baghdad** significantly boosted awareness of Canada's activities and contributions, though it may take some time for reputational benefits to become more apparent.

GAC's Contribution (GAC Staff)



Interviewees noted that **MES contributed to Canada's reputation within the Global Coalition** by signaling to the international community and to the region that the Coalition's activities were a high priority for Canada. Under the direction and funding provided by MES, **Canada was able to contribute to all lines of effort identified by the Global Coalition- making it one of the only members to do so**.

Canada communicated its efforts through a mix of diplomatic events, advocacy, traditional and social media promotion. **MES created a dedicated communication resource** for the Middle East which allowed the Communications Branch to create and update MES website and conduct field visits to the region to document results. MES allowed the Department to be more proactive in its communications output across the region and promote multiple lines of Canadian effort. At mission, **staff were active in communicating results of MES** on social media platforms. As a result, MES publications on Facebook and Twitter **exceeded the average reach** of the Department's other publications between October 2017 to March 31, 2018.

MES also led to the creation of the Syria Hub based in Beirut, with an additional two Canada-based staff and one Locally Engaged staff member, which allowed for expanded public diplomacy and engagement on Syria. The devolution of authorities for the Syria Hub twitter account from the Communication Branch at GAC HQ was mentioned as a best practice that enabled the team to be more responsive in its messaging.

Despite these improvements, several respondents noted **more needed to be done** in terms of branding Canadian projects to raise awareness that funding and support were provided. Respondents noted that despite the significant efforts to date, the average person in the Middle East or in Canada would have no idea about Canada's efforts under MES. There were few concrete suggestions for improvement, although some mentioned highlighting projects benefitting local populations (and not just refugees), making a more concerted effort to be in the public eye, and having more high level visits to the region.

Success Story- Rescue and resettlement of the Syrian White Helmets

Canada's diplomatic efforts were crucial in the evacuation of 422 members of Syria's White Helmets and their families in July 2018.

Funded by Canada and other donors, the White Helmets, officially known as the Syria Civil Defence, are a group of local first responders who formed at the beginning of the conflict to provide emergency response to communities across Syria, including search and rescue efforts and emergency first aid.

In July 2018, the White Helmets appealed to Canada's Executive Coordinator for Syria to help evacuate members of the group that were trapped in Southern Syria and facing imminent threat from the Syrian regime. In an operation co-ordinated in part by the Embassy of Canada to Jordan and supported by Germany, the U.K and the U.S, Israel agreed to open its border and transfer the evacuees to Jordan for resettlement in third party countries. **To date, Canada has resettled 117 members of Syria's White Helmets and their families.**

Canada has been a staunch supporter of the White Helmets over the course of the conflict in Syria and has called for global leadership to support the group of first responders.

"Canada has supported the work of the White Helmets by helping them to expand, train more volunteers, train more women and save more lives. We have a moral obligation to assist the endangered members of this civil defence group and their families."

- The Honourable Chrystia Freeland, October 19, 2018



A member of the White Helmets embraces a White Helmet representative in Canada upon arrival at the international airport.

15. The Middle East Strategy increased consultation and collaboration across business lines, but there was potential for more strategic planning to ensure sustainability of results and leveraging of synergies

The Middle East Strategy was seen by the majority of interviewees to **encourage coordination and information sharing** across business lines as it established some common outcomes and indicators upon which multiple lines of business were required to report regularly. Several coordination bodies were created under the auspices of the Strategy to facilitate coordination and bring together key stakeholders at GAC and partner departments involved in the Strategy. These included:

- The **Secretariat (ESA)**: Convened regular coordination group meetings at the working level. The Middle East Relations Division also encouraged regular country-specific coffee group meetings at the working level to bring together colleagues working across programming and policy areas to share updates and information.
- The **Analysis and Performance Measurement Unit (ESA)**: Coordinated results reporting across the programs, updated briefing notes, developed fact sheets on the four MES countries and key thematic areas, and conducted research and analysis on trends and future needs in the region including the development of products such as the Gender Stocktaking Exercise and the Integrated Conflict and Fragility Analyses for the four countries under MES.
- The **Security and Defence Relations Focal Point (IGR)**: Organized regular meetings to bring together GAC civilian lines of effort, communications, geographic desks and DND to share information, plans and updates.

While there was a general sentiment that the Strategy has encouraged consultation and information sharing across business lines, it had **not markedly increased formal strategic planning with regards to programming**. Certain strategy-wide areas of focus, specifically gender equality and governance, provided common themes for engagement, but generally, each pillar or business line **continued to operate independently**, consulting on an informal basis as needed.

The main barriers to greater strategic planning and cross-pillar coherence identified by interviewees were not related to the Strategy itself but **departmental processes and structures**, as well as persistent cultural divides between program areas. For example, the **different funding mechanisms and approval processes** across programs detracted from effective collaboration. In particular, the **lack of flexibility** to transfer allocated funding under the Strategy between programs was seen to limit opportunities to be responsive to the changing needs on the ground as the crises evolved, and inhibited GAC from doing integrated programming.

The roll-out of the MES and associated timelines also contributed to an environment that made integrated strategic planning difficult. At the time the Strategy was approved, some programs were well-established in terms of staff and planned programming, whereas others were required to start from scratch, which meant staffing **new positions in the field, setting up new offices, and identifying implementing partners and projects**. Time constraints compelled programs to focus on spending their own allocations during the first fiscal year rather than to plan strategically with other programs. The free balance was minimal after the second year of the Strategy leaving little space for programs to consider complementarity between their projects in order to build upon results achieved and plan for the eventual transitioning of projects.

The last iteration of the Strategy's logic model in 2018 **identified outcomes where there were complementarity** between multiple programs and cross-cutting themes, such as WPS and GE. This demonstrated that there was an effort in later years to make some strategic links between programs under the Strategy. Interviewees noted that many of the outcomes under the Strategy were in fact complementary across business lines. For instance, effectively countering extremism (Security Pillar) required recognizing and addressing its root causes, such as lack of economic opportunity (Development Pillar). These links were recognized and reflected in MES frameworks and documents, but the prevailing view among staff was that **the full potential of these synergies had not been realized**.

Conclusions

The Middle East Strategy **substantially increased Global Affairs Canada's presence in Jordan, Lebanon, Iraq and to a lesser extent, vis-à-vis Syria.**

- Under the Humanitarian pillar, MES **enabled flexible, multi-year funding** to implementing partners, which allowed them to plan longer term and provided them with the agility to address gaps and crises as they emerged. Canada was seen as a leader among donors in advocating for **Sexual and Reproductive Health Services.**
- Under Building Resilience, GAC had **high-profile success in the areas of education system quality**, particularly in Jordan, where MES allowed for greatly expanded budget support to the Ministry of Education. MES also made notable contributions the promotion of **women's economic empowerment.**
- Under the Security pillar, GAC's major contribution was to **advocate for and involve women in peace and security** on multiple fronts. There were also small, but well-regarded contributions in the areas of capacity building for security forces and border security. MES funding allowed GAC security programs to engage in more targeted and ambitious programming in priority areas over a longer time frame. The creation of a dedicated position in AMMAN to oversee both programs allowed Canada to enhance its leadership role on security issues.
- Under the Diplomatic pillar, MES led to the **establishment of a resident embassy and the accreditation of a Canadian Ambassador to Iraq** which increased Canada's presence on the ground. MES also allowed for the **creation of the Syria Hub** which coordinated a whole of Syria approach and sustained Canada's presence in the Syrian peace talks. GAC's ability to **advocate for human rights, gender equality and rule of law** in the region was further enabled by MES since funding gave Canada added credibility. The Strategy also increased Canada's visibility through online and traditional media campaigns.

Overall, MES **helped Canada maintain its excellent reputation as a donor and member of the Global Coalition Against Daesh** by providing the resources needed to engage across each of the Coalition's lines of effort.

Areas in which Canada's work may have had less of an effect included **livelihoods and economic opportunities** (Lebanon, Iraq and Syria) increasing **local government's capacity to deliver social services, decentralization** (in Iraq), achieving **political solutions** to conflict (Syria), **investigation and prosecution** and **countering violent extremism.** While GAC's contribution to achieving these outcomes was **greater with MES** than it likely would have been without it, the overall progress made on these outcomes was limited. This was not due to the ineffectiveness of GAC programming, but rather to a combination of systemic factors, short-time horizon and perhaps also to the **breadth of the Strategy**, which limited significant investment or depth of engagement in any one area.

While diplomatic efforts yielded notable successes, the pillar **was perceived to be the least clearly articulated one within MES**, with most political staff noting that while MES increased resources, they were not accompanied by **clear guidance from HQ** as to the overall approach to the country or region. Indeed, while MES was considered to be a strong framework for programming, some felt that **departmental constraints** made joint strategic planning a challenge, both within and across government departments.

The situation in the Middle East has evolved significantly since the implementation of the Strategy, particularly as the regime in Syria continues to reassert control, Daesh has been territorially defeated in Iraq and Syria, and other partners have adapted their own strategies. Situations have taken different turns in Iraq, Syria, Jordan and Lebanon and each struggles with their own context specific challenges. Canada is expected to continue to have an important role as a donor, multilateral partner and member of the international community. **Clearly defining this role and the priorities for the next years will be important in developing and guiding GAC's future trajectory in the region.**

Men and Boys as Victims of Sexual Violence and Exploitation

Sexual violence targeting men and boys was not addressed in this report, however, it emerged as a **major concern** over the course of the evaluation. Given the Government-wide commitment to applying **Gender-based Analysis Plus** (GBA+) to its programming, this very important issue bears some consideration.

Global Affairs Canada placed the needs of women at the forefront of its work across all four pillars, and this approach was lauded for its coherence, consistency and its success in positioning **Canada as a global champion for gender equality**. Promoting sexual and reproductive health and rights and combatting gender-based violence were notable successes of the Middle East Strategy.

However, some stakeholders raised the question about what Canada -and the international community in general- is doing to address the needs of **male survivors of sexual violence**. While women and girls remain the primary targets of sexual violence worldwide, recent research focusing on the Syria crisis has brought to light the ubiquity and brutality of violence towards men and boys within conflict-affected settings, including in camps, detention centres and countries of asylum. Recognizing this reality, the Evaluation of the UNFPA response to the Syria Crisis (2011-2018) highlighted the need for a more consistent approach to the inclusion of men and boys in gender-based violence programming in the region.²³

External surveys conducted within the target countries showed that 19.5% to 27% of male respondents confirmed having experienced unwanted sexual contact as boys, while a survey in Jordan found **refugee boys were perceived as more at risk than girls**, due to the latter's increased access to public spaces, and perceptions that sexual assault of boys is less grave a crime. These figures are likely a vast underestimate due to societal norms, stigmas and taboos around discussing these issues.²⁴



Unfortunately, even among service providers and donors, **gendered perceptions of gender-based violence as a primarily women's' issue persist** and service providers remain ill-equipped and under-funded to serve male survivors. The psychological, physical, economic and community impacts of violence may be different for men and boys, but are equally devastating as they are for female survivors.

The recent **UN Resolution 2467** recognizes, for the first time, men and boys as targets of sexual violence, and a UN report on sexual violence advocates for a **multi-sectoral and intersectional approach to gender-based violence**. Canada's prioritization of GBA+ means that staff are well-trained and aware of the differing needs of men, women, boys, girls and others; and in the ways in which a person's identity may affect the drivers, risk and impact of, sexual violence.

Having this expertise, government wide, provides a useful point of departure should Global Affairs Canada or other departments consider further integrating male victims of sexual violence into their programming priorities in the Middle East and other conflict-affected regions.



Recommendations

Recommendations

1

Recommendation 1: Focus on areas of engagement in which Canada has added value.

It is important that the Middle East Strategy strike the right balance between breadth and depth of engagement. While engaging across all pillars of the Coalition did yield reputational benefits, narrowing the scope of future programming to focus on those areas in which Canadian expertise and funding **clearly add value** may lead to **stronger and more sustainable results**. Given the limited resources and number of actors engaged in the region, Canada cannot do everything, and attempting to do so might pull resources from areas in which more significant investments might be warranted.

2

Recommendation 2: Promote joint planning and integrated programming across business lines.

The Middle East Strategy should place **greater focus** on the strategic linkages between business lines and consider opportunities to plan more strategically up-front, and to **transition** and **adapt** programming as conditions change on the ground. The Strategy should also consider adopting **flexible funding mechanisms** to allow for more integrated programming.

3

Recommendation 3: Plan for sustainability of results and an exit strategy, if required.

Ensuring sustainability of results achieved under the Middle East Strategy and progress toward its ultimate outcome **requires long-term planning** that extends far beyond the life of the Strategy. Significant resources were invested at the outset of the Strategy to establish new programs and physical infrastructure in the region, indicating Canada's intention to remain for a longer period of time. If this is the case, programming should be accompanied by a coherent narrative on Canada's end goals in Iraq, Lebanon and Jordan, as well as exit strategies for Syria and other countries as and where appropriate. Programming should be calibrated to reflect Canada's timeline for engagement and consideration should be given to the eventual transition of projects to local partners.

4

Recommendation 4: Strengthen the Diplomatic Pillar.

The Diplomatic Pillar of MES has the potential to be a **driver of coherence** across Canada's engagement in the region. The promotion of Canadian values and foreign policy priorities cuts across humanitarian, development and security and stabilization work. The Strategy should more **clearly articulate** the high-level objectives of Canada's diplomatic engagement in the region and convey a coherent narrative for engagement that links with Canada's foreign and national interests across pillars. This includes clear guidance from HQ to missions on areas of strategic interest to Canada and expected results.



Management Response and Action Plan

Management Response and Action Plan

Recommendation 1: Focus on areas of engagement in which Canada has added value

It is important that the Middle East Strategy strike the right balance between breadth and depth of engagement. While engaging across all pillars of the Coalition did yield reputational benefits, narrowing the scope of future programming to focus on those areas in which Canadian expertise and funding **clearly adds value** may lead to **stronger and more sustainable results**. Given limited resources and the number of actors engaged in the region, Canada cannot do everything, and attempting to do so pulls resources from areas in which more significant investments might be warranted.

Program Response
<p>Management Update: The Middle East Strategy (MES) cuts across the work of numerous branches/bureaux within GAC.</p> <p>We agree that we need to narrow the scope of programming going forward. For the first iteration of the Strategy (2016-19) the circumstances, needs, and expectations of our partners in the region were very different. Working with the Global Coalition and our domestic partners, we have gained knowledge, built stronger partnerships, and credibility. The evaluation confirms our own intuition that for the next iteration of the Strategy we need to capitalize on the work previously accomplished, focus our footprint, and rebalance our efforts from reactive programming to more directed and strategic engagement that demonstrates value and sustainable results.</p> <p>The second iteration of the Strategy, which sunsets in 2021, includes a tighter focus on stabilization efforts. Going forward, we will continue to assess recent events in the region, clearly identify key areas of priority and resources required, and consult with other government departments and our missions. This includes having frank discussions about programming effectiveness and re-assessing where Canada has truly had value-added and/or there is a realistic prospect to do so. The objective is to inform decision making and develop more focussed programme investment plans in order to identify and make recommendations to support the Government’s strategic policy objectives and priorities to renew Canada’s engagement in the region beyond 2021.</p> <p>As a member of the Global Coalition, we do need to balance our priorities with those of other members. On occasion, it means that Canada may not always lead in areas that are a priority for Canada. Moreover, we are subject to internal domestic constraints. For instance, for the second iteration (2019-2021) of the Strategy, we did not have the latitude to reduce our humanitarian engagement, as we had to help meet global commitments for humanitarian assistance.</p> <p>We have similar constraints on our ability to move funds from one pillar to another. Treasury Board Secretariat authorizes us to transfer funding allocations within each pillar but not from one to another. The observations of the evaluation are valid and we intend to consider them for any third iteration of the Strategy, if anything to ensure elements of flexibility.</p>

Recommendation 1 cont'd

Program Response	Lead (Division/Bureau)	Timeline for Implementation
<p>1.1. GAC will continue to work with DND and key members of the Global Coalition to ensure Canada's overall military and civilian security engagement are adapted to and address evolving needs and conditions on the ground. This includes active contribution in the four Coalition working groups on stabilization, foreign terrorist fighters, terrorist financing, and countering extremist narratives, which provide forums for effective coordination with partners. Similarly, police deployments through the Canadian Police Arrangement, WTRP, CTCBP and PSOPs programs will continue to explore and pursue areas of highest potential impact based on discussions with partners and stakeholders on evolving needs as well as the assessment of demonstrated results on completed or advanced initiatives.</p>	<p>IRG, IRP, IDC, IDT, IGA, IGR</p>	<p>ESA will seek input, at least bi-annually, from responsibility centres regarding the implementation of their respective programmes</p> <p>To be followed up on by PRE until the sunset of the current MC in 2021.</p>
<p>1.2. Monitoring & Reviewing/Adapting (Working-Level): The Middle East Relations division (ESA) is monitoring, reviewing and updating its existing process and tools used by MES partners to report on programme performance semi-annually, namely the Strategy's Logic Model and Performance Measurement Framework (PMF). ESA will follow up with partners who are not meeting their targets to identify solutions to address them, where possible. ESA coordinates a planning group to review the performance measures and results. A semi-annual and annual progress report are prepared that also serves as a benchmark to revise targets and adjust accordingly. The information is shared across the pillars (FPDS, development, humanitarian, and security) to support their analysis and decision-making of individual programmes.</p>	<p>ESA in collaboration with Strategy partners at GAC</p>	<p>MES Secretariat within ESA plans, updates, monitors, and reviews MES weekly. The MES working group meets monthly.</p>
<p>1.3 Reviewing/Adapting (Senior Management): ESA organizes, as deemed appropriate, steering committee meetings at the director and DG level to discuss performance measures, results, and the implementation of the Strategy. The meetings are an opportunity to address challenges and opportunities and discuss any need to re-direct priorities and programming within the existing constraints of the Strategy. The MES Secretariat will organize, semi-annual steering committee meetings with concerned management at GAC to discuss the findings of the semi-annual performance reporting and facilitate decision-making based on which programming is effective at delivering results, how to address challenges and seize opportunities under the Middle East Strategy.</p>	<p>ESA and senior management from divisions and branches at GAC involved in the Strategy</p>	<p>Quarterly or bi-annually</p>

Recommendation 2: Promote joint planning and integrated programming across business lines.

The Middle East Strategy should place **greater focus** on the strategic linkages between business lines and consider opportunities to plan more strategically up-front, and to **transition** and **adapt** programming as conditions change on the ground. The Strategy should also consider adopting **flexible funding mechanisms** to allow for more integrated programming.

Program Response
<p>Management Update: We agree with the recommendation and observations in the evaluation for the 2016-19 iteration of the Strategy. Linkages between each business line for the initial Strategy were less developed, partly due to the variable status of programming operations. Development and humanitarian programming had well developed work plans and staff complements for the region prior to 2016. As a result, they were able to adapt quickly to meet the programming needs of the Strategy. Security/Stabilization programming in the region was more nascent and needed ramping up. The diplomatic pillar was a little more fluid, working to support ramping up and delivery of programming. This was one of the lessons learned that we retained as we moved forward with the renewal of the Strategy for the 2019-21 period.</p> <p>We agree on the need to undertake greater strategic planning up-front in order to adapt programming, when possible, to address new circumstances. Since the evaluation, we have revised the Logic Model for the Strategy as well as the Performance Management Framework, namely to facilitate joint and integrated planning across all pillars of the Strategy. Moreover, since late 2018, there have been increased efforts by programme managers to meet more frequently to undertake integrated planning. This includes preparing draft strategic frameworks covering all assistance in each of the MES countries.</p> <p>Going forward, we are building on the work model established by the development programme to support the MES implementation and facilitate the ability to adapt programming conditions as they change on the ground. Specifically, we are piloting a new approach for the diplomatic engagement pillar that aims to contribute to greater engagement across all priority areas under the Strategy. This includes a Logic Model specific for diplomatic engagement; work plans by country; and Strategic Framework and Monitoring Plans to support each mission in their planning processes.</p> <p>We took note of the evaluation report suggesting that we consider adopting flexible funding mechanisms to enable more integrated programming. We have and continue to do this when possible. For example, in the absence of available PSOPs funding in 2019, the department approved development programming to support stabilization objectives in Iraq. However, our discretion is limited in transferring funding from one business line to another as opposed to within a business line.</p>

Recommendation 2 cont'd

Program Response	Lead (Division/Bureau)	Timeline for Implementation
<p>2.1 Planning: With GAC Strategic Frameworks for international assistance in place, ESA will work with all GAC Strategy partners to enable them to develop country-level plans for all four countries. This will include country-level logic models, performance measures, and investment plans. The purpose will be to establish programming objectives and priorities for the following fiscal year and to better align programming objectives across business lines. Partners will review their performance indicators and targets in the Strategy's performance measurement framework to ensure that their targets align with their strategic frameworks.</p>	<p>ESA in collaboration with Strategy partners at GAC</p>	<p>Starting in March 2020</p> <p>Thereafter, annually in February</p>
<p>2.2 ESA convenes monthly meetings of the MES Working Group – an intra-departmental committee to review progress in implementing the Strategy across business lines and adapt measures accordingly.</p>	<p>ESA and Program Partners</p>	<p>Monthly</p>
<p>2.3 ESA is developing an integrated action plan to strengthen processes and approaches to advance Gender Equality (GE) across all pillars of the Strategy. The objective is to ensure accountability, track progress, and intensify efforts to advance GE, identify gaps, build staff and implementing partners' capacity and identify opportunities for further collaboration among program partners.</p>	<p>ESA</p>	<p>Annually, end of calendar year.</p>

Recommendation 3: Plan for sustainability of results and an exit strategy, if required.

Ensuring sustainability of results achieved under the Middle East Strategy and progress toward its ultimate outcome requires **long-term planning** that extends far beyond the life of the Strategy. Significant resources were invested at the outset of the Strategy to establish new programs and physical infrastructure in the region, indicating Canada’s intention to remain for a period of time. If this is the case, programming should be accompanied by a coherent narrative on Canada’s end goals in Iraq, Lebanon and Jordan, as well as exit strategies for Syria and other countries as and where appropriate. Programming should be calibrated to reflect Canada’s timeline for engagement and consideration should be given to the eventual transition of projects to local partners.

Program Response
<p>Management Update: The second iteration (2019-21) of the Strategy focusses on ensuring the quality and sustainability of capacity-building initiatives recognizing that certain expected outcomes could take many years to materialize. We have taken a calibrated approach. Initially, in 2016-19, we stepped up programming efforts with funding to build our knowledge base, partnerships, and credibility. The investments in programming to-date have enabled GAC to develop a network and assert Canadian presence. Going forward, we want to capitalize on these gains so that the Government of Canada can build and coordinate enduring relationships to respond to existing and future crises and geo-strategic dynamics, reflecting Canada’s longer-term objectives in the region.</p> <p>We agree with the recommendation that we need to assess the need for any phase-down of our enhanced engagement in Syria and other countries. We have observed that given the complexity of the region, it will draw us back in and, therefore, while programming priorities may shift, we need to maintain a suitable level of engagement in the region to ensure that the investments previously made are not sunk costs. Thus, moving forward, we will recognize the gains made with a view to assess how best to rebalance Canadian engagements from the heavy emphasis on programming in response to the Daesh and Syrian crises in order to build stronger relationships in the region. This could involve reducing and reallocating incremental funding to focus on long-term diplomacy. This comprehensive approach entails a concerted effort, working with trusted, highly experienced partners to integrate humanitarian, development, stabilization, security, and military efforts wherever possible to generate long-term gains. These are all issues we intend to assess as we set our sights on recommending options for renewing the Strategy beyond 2021.</p>

Recommendation 3 cont'd

Program Response	Lead (Division/ Bureau)	Timeline for Implementation
<p>3.1 In preparation for the next Memorandum to Cabinet, the Middle East Bureau will consult with key partners, including mission heads, to identify and confirm Canada's long-term interests and objectives in the broader Middle East region and to inform the Government's decision-making regarding strategic policy objectives and programming priorities beyond 2021.</p>	ESD/ESA	Winter/Spring 2020
<p>3.2 Annual country strategy frameworks will help determine long-term desired outcomes in each country and serve to adjust programming yearly towards those outcomes.</p>	ESA	Strategic frameworks: annually, starting in March 2020

Recommendation 4: Strengthen the Diplomatic Pillar

The Diplomatic Pillar of MES has the potential to be a **driver of coherence** across Canada's engagement in the region since the promotion of Canadian values and foreign policy priorities cuts across humanitarian, development and security and stabilization work. The Strategy should more **clearly articulate** the high-level objectives of Canada's diplomatic engagement in the region to promote a coherent narrative for engagement that links with Canada's foreign and national interests across pillars. This includes clear guidance from HQ to missions on areas of strategic interest to Canada and expected results.

Program Response

Management Update: Through weekly conference calls, ESA is engaging with missions (FPDS and Development teams) in the region providing updates and seeking feedback on the Strategy, ensuring strategic linkages across the pillars. The Director, DG and ADM also have regular calls with our heads of mission in the region to discuss policy and operational issues and to ensure that their work in implementing the Strategy aligns with government priorities. The MES Secretariat within ESA also organises regular meetings of the whole-of-GAC MES working group to draw on links between each pillar. We also organize regular conference calls with the FPDS programme managers at missions to review their work so that they can conduct advocacy work, relationship building, and provide HQ with timely analysis and intelligence.

While there are multiple channels of communications, we are attempting to articulate more clearly the priorities of the diplomatic engagement pillar under the MES. ESA organized a workshop for all FPDS managers in the region in January 2020. Because of that workshop, we are developing a logic model for diplomatic engagement, preparing draft work plans that FPDS in the field can use to tailor to their specific needs. We are developing diplomatic engagement monitoring plans that clearly identify targets/milestones we are expecting the FPDS to achieve (including working across GAC streams and Strategy pillars). This revised approach will be in place as of 1 April 2020. It will serve as a pilot and, if effective, implemented more broadly in any renewed Middle East Strategy beyond 2021.

Recommendation 4 cont'd

Program Response	Lead (Division/Bureau)	Timeline for Implementation
<p>4.1 The Middle East Relations Division will deliver a customized training workshop to missions in Iraq, Syria, Jordan and Lebanon on Results-Based Management (RBM) in diplomatic engagement. This workshop to provide an introduction on RBM concepts and approaches for political/policy officers. The workshop to also include a consultation with missions on the priorities and objectives of the diplomatic engagement pillar within the Strategy and identify solutions to improve planning and reporting by missions on progress, they have achieved under the Strategy, using the strategic frameworks and performance measurement framework.</p>	<p>ESA lead with support from ELC</p>	<p>Regional workshop delivered in January 2020</p>
<p>4.2 ESA and missions involved in the Strategy are reviewing the Strategy's diplomatic engagement pillar to ensure it captures the work and priorities of missions. ESA also intends to pilot the development of work plans and Strategic Framework and Monitoring Plans to support their diplomatic engagement activities in support of the Strategy.</p>	<p>ESA and Strategy missions (BGHDD/ER BIL, BERUT/SYRI A HUB, AMMAN, HAGUE, PRMNY, GENEV)</p>	<p>March 2020</p>
<p>4.3 GAC has created new Middle East Strategy positions within its multilateral missions in New York, Geneva, and The Hague. These positions will strengthen Canada's ability to better understand the views and intentions of key influencers; provide proactive analysis/reporting and advice to Ministers and Senior management; contribute to shaping the multilateral agenda and effectively advocate and promote a coherent narrative on crosscutting areas in accordance with Canadian priorities.</p>	<p>ESA PRMNY GENEV HAGUE</p>	<p>Positions deployed in September 2019</p>
<p>4.4 ESA and the Foreign Affairs Strategic Communications Division (LCF) have established a communications plan and are developing products to help Strategy partners and missions to advocate on MES priorities and promote the MES achievements. This includes updating the MES website, social media posters and a public annual report.</p>	<p>ESA, LCFA and Strategy partners</p>	<p>Communications plan: updated quarterly</p> <p>Communications products: developed on a need basis</p>



ANNEXES

The following tables show funding disbursements in Canadian dollars for the fiscal years preceding the Middle East Strategy (highlighted in blue) and the fiscal years that cover the Middle East Strategy period (highlighted in orange).

Table 1: Humanitarian Assistance Funding Disbursements from 2013/14 to 2018/19*

	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19
Jordan	23.97	96.76	40.99	59.9	72	43.49
Lebanon	62.08	42.5	53.34	56.8	61.45	54.65
Iraq	62.47	45.01	44.74	63.6	40.15	35.96
Syria	107.57	59.01	64.8	96.2	102.75	128.35
Regional	0	0	0	3.5	3.65	0.35
TOTAL	256.09	243.28	203.87	280	280	262.8

*To address both fiduciary and operational risk, the balance of the \$840M committed under MES was disbursed in 2019/20.

Table 2: Development/ Building Resilience Funding Disbursements from 2013/14 to 2018/19

	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19
Jordan	0.04	2.67	7.1	6.2	12.3	13.3
Lebanon	10	0	0	8.9	10	15.6
Iraq	16.38	31.26	38.31	59.89	69.23	60.28
Syria	0	0	0	4.81	3.39	5.45
Regional	0	0	0	0	0.21	0.55
TOTAL	26.42	33.93	45.41	79.8	95.13	95.18

Table 3: Security and Stabilization Funding Disbursements from 2013/14 to 2018/19

	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19
Jordan	0	5.71	11.39	16.16	17.8	18.44
Lebanon	1.11	0.2	2.67	2.7	6.01	7.34
Iraq	25.76	7.01	11.2	5.75	3.35	4.84
Syria	0.6	0.21	4.35	18.77	13.03	12.61
Regional	0	0	0	4.07	6.69	6.38
TOTAL	27.47	13.13	29.61	47.45	46.88	49.61

Peace and Stabilization Operations Program Funding Disbursements from 2013/14 to 2018/19*

	2013/14*	2014/15*	2015/16*	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19
Jordan	10,624,001.68	0	4,152,603	0	89,106	174,171
Lebanon	950,000.00	0	784,374	960,329	3,158,150	2,899,216
Iraq	0	5,541,237	10,377,226	14,498,447	16,443,734	20,268,861
Syria	86,654.40	206,979	5,652,932	16,712,414	8,672,347	14,459,885
TOTAL	11,660,656.08	5,748,216	20,967,134	32,171,190	28,363,336	37,802,134

*Note: Funding from 2013/14- 2015-16 was dispersed through the Global Peace and Security Fund

Weapons Threat Reduction Program Funding Disbursements from 2013/14 to 2018/19

	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19
Jordan	59,869	40,233	938,817	0	0	1,575,449
Lebanon	15,341,626	5,895,527	699,619	0	0	0
Iraq	25,658	36,728	826,702	0	0	205,000
Syria	10,000,000	0	6,142,800	2,000,000	2,375,000	0
Regional	0	0	0	0	0	844,552
TOTAL	25,427,153	5,972,488	8,607,938	2,000,000	2,375,000	1,780,449

Counter-terrorism Capacity Building Program Funding Disbursements from 2013/14 to 2018/19*

	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19
Jordan	0.22	3.22	10.84	3.33	3.24
Lebanon	0	1.15	7.60	2.90	4.27
Iraq	5.16	1.72	18.09	0.87	0.14
Syria	0	0	0.24	0.98	0.02
TOTAL	5.38	6.09	36.77	8.08	7.67

*Note: Financial data for FY2013/14 was unavailable. The table above also does not include the Department of National Defence Op Impact projects that CTCBP supported since this was outside the scope of the evaluation.

The Evaluation assessed the **impact of GAC's contribution to the Strategy** based on the outcomes in the MES logic model and performance measurement documents. Relevant stakeholders were asked the following questions:

Relevance/ Coherence

1. Is Canada's work in the Middle East, through MES, aligned with the needs and priorities of (a) coalition partners; (b) countries in the region; (c) conflict-affected populations?
2. Are activities under the four priority areas coherent i.e. are they mutually reinforcing and not working at cross-purpose?

Performance- Humanitarian

3. Do conflict-affected populations, especially women and girls, have access to humanitarian assistance to meet their basic human needs, including food, water, hygiene, and emergency services such as education and health?
4. Do conflict-affected populations, especially women and girls, have access to quality health care and sexual and reproductive health services?

Performance- Development

5. Do children, particularly refugee children, have access to good quality education?
6. Do displaced and conflict-affected populations have access to livelihoods and economic opportunities?
7. Do local governments/ municipalities have the resources and training they need to deliver social services and manage resources effectively across the country?
8. Has significant progress been made on decentralizing federal responsibilities to local governments?

Performance- Security, Stabilization and Intelligence

9. Do security forces have the equipment and training they need to perform their duties?
10. Are national borders secure from foreign fighters, smuggled goods and other threats?
11. Has the threat from improvised explosive devices (IEDs) and explosive remnants of war (ERWs) been reduced?
12. Are extremist ideologies being countered effectively?
13. Are women regularly involved in peacebuilding efforts?

Performance- Diplomatic Engagement

14. Are Canadian values, such as the rule of law and gender equality, reflected in the regional countries' official positions?
15. Has progress been made in finding political solutions to ongoing conflicts in the region?
16. Have international crimes been effectively investigated and prosecuted?
17. Does Canada have a good reputation in the region as a (a) donor; (b) multilateral partner; (c) member of the Global Coalition Against Daesh?
18. Are Canadian priorities in the areas of security, peacebuilding, humanitarian assistance and development well-understood in Canada and the Middle East?

Rapid Impact Evaluation (RIE) is a focused and reliable method to determine an initiative's incremental impact through the collection and analysis of assessments. It has been used in pilot projects across the Government of Canada.

The advantages of this method are that it:

- ✓ Can be completed **quickly** and at **low-cost**
- ✓ Provides **quantitative measures of impact**
- ✓ Is effective in **complex, multi-system settings**
- ✓ Promotes legitimacy of findings by engaging **diverse internal and external perspectives**
- ✓ Provides **clear information** to decision-makers
- ✓ Allows different versions of a program to be compared using the **counterfactual**
- ✓ Supports **innovation and experimentation** within GAC

Additional materials on RIE can be found here:

- Guide to Rapid Impact Evaluation, Centre of Excellence for Evaluation of the Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat:
<https://www.canada.ca/en/treasury-board-secretariat/services/audit-evaluation/centre-excellence-evaluation/guide-rapid-impact-evaluation.html>

This method was useful for the Middle East Strategy evaluation for four reasons:

- 1** Performance data for the Strategy was comprehensive and was reported regularly through Annual Reports or other products. There was less need (and insufficient time) for the evaluation team to collect and compile this data. The RIE allowed for **validation and elaboration** of the performance information collected by ESA.
- 2** There are a wide range of stakeholders involved in the implementation of the Strategy, including those from Global Affairs Canada, other Government Departments, Civil Society, International Organizations and others. RIE provides a **systematic way to obtain assessments** from each of these groups.
- 3** RIE is particularly effective at ascertaining **incremental impact** through its use of theoretical counterfactuals. MES provided incremental funding to existing GAC Programs and activities.
- 4** The evaluation had to be completed within a **short timeframe** in order to meet deadlines. RIE typically takes between two and six months.

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