



The United Nations Country Team Common Country Assessment of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan



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JORDAN

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Acronyms and Abbreviations

ANC	Anti-Natal Care
CAT	Convention against Torture and Other Cruel Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment
CBO	Community-Based Organisation
CCA	Common Country Assessment
CCAC	Climate and Clean Air Coalition
CCPR	International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights
CED	Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance
CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women
CERD	International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination
CESC	International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights
CFF	Concessional Financing Facility
CMHS	Community Mental Health Services
CMR	Child Mortality Rate
CMW	Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families
CPI	Corruption Perceptions Index
CPR	Contraceptive Prevalence Rate
CRC	Convention on the Rights of the Child
CRDP	Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities
CSO	Civil Society Organization
DAO	Delivering as One
DOS	Department of Statistics
DRM	Disaster Risk Management
DRR	Disaster Risk Reduction
DPT	Diphtheria, Pertussis, Tetanus
EC	European Commission
EDI	Education Development Index
EDI	Early Development Instrument
EDP	Executive Development Plan
ERfKE	Education Reform for the Knowledge Economy
ESCWA (UN)	Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia
DoS	Jordan Department of Statistics
EU	European Union
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the UN
FCTC	Framework Convention on Tobacco Control
FDI	Foreign Direct Investment
FP	Family Planning
FTA	Free Trade Agreement
GAM	Greater Amman Municipality
GCC	Gulf Cooperation Council
GDI	Gender Development Index
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GEF	Global Environmental Facility
GEM	Gender Empowerment Measure
GER	Gross Enrolment Rate
GII	Gender Inequality Index
GNI	Gross National Income
GODP	Governorate Development Plan
HDI	Human Development Index
HDR	Human Development Report
HIES	Household Income and Expenditure Survey
HIV	Human Immunodeficiency Virus
HPI	Human Poverty Index
HPC	Higher Population Council
HR	Human Rights
HRD	Human Resources Development
IATF	Inter-Agency Task Force mechanism
ICT	Information Communication Technology

ICCPR	International Convention on Civil and Political Rights
ICPD	International Conference on Population and Development
IDPs	Internally Displaced Persons
IEC	Independent Electoral Commission
IFAD	International Fund for Agricultural Development
ILO	International Labour Organization
IMF	International Monetary Fund
IMR	Infant Mortality Rate
INGO	International Non-governmental Organization
IOM	International Organization for Migration
IT	Information Technology
JAH	Jordan Affordable Housing Programme JD/JOD Jordanian Dinar
JHDR	Jordan Human Development Report
JNFW	Jordanian National Forum for Women
JNCW	Jordanian National Commission for Women
JPFHS	Jordan Population and Family Health Survey
JRP	Jordan Response Plan
JUH	Jordan University Hospital
KAH	King Abdullah Hospital
KG	Kindergarten
LAMP	Literacy Assessment and Monitoring Programme
LDU	Local Development Unit
LPG	Liquid Petroleum Gas
MAF	MDG Acceleration Framework
MCH	Maternal and Child Health
MD	Millennium Declaration
MDG	Millennium Development Goals
MDGR	Millennium Development Goals Report
MENA	Middle East and North Africa
mhGAP	Mental Health GAP Action Programme
MH	Mental Health
MHPSS	Mental Health and PsychoSocial Support
MTR	Mid-Term Review
MSW	Municipal Solid Waste
MWI	Ministry of Water and Irrigation
MMR	Maternal Mortality Rate
MoE	Ministry of Education
MoEnv	Ministry of Environment
MoH	Ministry of Health
MoI	Ministry of Interior
MoJ	Ministry of Justice
MoL	Ministry of Labour
MOMA	Ministry of Municipal Affairs
MoPIC	Ministry of Planning and International Cooperation
MoPSD	Ministry of Public Sector Development
MoSD	Ministry of Social Development
MP	Member of Parliament
MSME	Micro Small and Medium Enterprise
NAF	National Aid Fund
NBSAP	National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan
NCDs	Non-Communicable Diseases
NCFA	National Council for Family Affairs
NCHR	National Centre for Human Rights
NEPCO	National Electric Company
NFCL	National Framework on Child Labour
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
NHDR	National Human Development Report
NRP	National Resilience Plan
ODA	Overseas Development Assistance

OECD	Organization of Economic Cooperation and Development
O&M	Operations & Maintenance
PHC	Primary Health Care
PoA	Plan of Action
PPP	Purchasing Power Parity
PSG	UN Peer Support Group
PVE	Prevention of Violent Extremism
RBM	Results-Based Management
RC/HC	UN Resident Coordinator/ Humanitarian Coordinator
RH	Reproductive Health
RMS	Royal Medical Services
3RP	Regional Refugee and Resilience Plan
SC	Steering Committee
SDG	Sustainable Development Goal
SHS	Secondhand Smoke
SGBV	Sexual and gender-based violence
SME	Small and Medium Enterprise
SNAP	Support to National Action Planning to Reduce Short-Lived Climate Pollutants
SOPs	Standard Operating Procedures
SPF	Social Protection Floor
SSC	Social Security Corporation
SVA	Health Sector Vulnerability Assessment
TFR	Total Fertility Rate
TVET	Technical and Vocational Education and Training
UAE	United Arab Emirates
UDHR	Universal Declaration of Human Rights
UN	United Nations
UNAF	United Nations Assistance Framework
UNCT	United Nations Country Team
UNDAF	United Nations Development Assistance Framework
UNDG	United Nations Development Group
UNDSS	United Nations Department for Safety & Security
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNEP	United Nations Environment Programme
UNFCCC	UN Framework Convention on Climate Change
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
UN-HABITAT	UN Centre for Human Settlements
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UNIDO	United Nations Industrial Development Organization
UNISDRUN	International Strategy for Disaster Reduction
UNODC	United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime
UNOPS	United Nations Office for Project Services
UNRGs	UN Results Groups
UNRWA	United Nations Relief and Works Agency
UNSC	United Nations Security Council
UNSCR	United Nations Security Council Resolution
UNPF	United Nations Partnership Framework
UNSS	UN Special Session
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
UPR	Universal Periodic Review
USD	United States Dollar
VAF	Vulnerability Assessment Framework
WB	World Bank
WFP	World Food Programme
WHO	World Health Organization
WTO	World Trade Organization
ZENID	Queen Zein Al Sharaf Institute for Development

Executive Summary

Jordan is an upper middle-income country of a high human development rate, ranked 80 among 188 countries.¹ Between 1980 and 2014, the Gross National Income (GNI) per capita increased by around 24 percent.² During the same period of time, the average life expectancy at birth and mean years of schooling also increased by 7.8 and 6.8 years, respectively. As these measures indicate, Jordan's long-term trends across a spectrum of economic and social measures have generally been positive.

However, there are deeper, underlying – past and current - challenges and issues that deserve a more thorough analysis than what the indicators alone reveal. Hence, this Common Country Assessment (CCA) attempts to conduct such an analysis.

The 2010 Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) Report presented a mixed, but overall favorable picture of progress. It illustrated Jordan's considerable efforts exerted towards meeting most of the MDG targets. By 2010, the MDG 2 "Achieve universal primary education" had been achieved, and the attainment of MDG 5 "Improve maternal health" and MDG 6 "Combat HIV/AIDS, malaria, and other diseases" was deemed possible. Targeted policy actions were also highlighted to achieve each of the MDG 1 "Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger", MDG 3 "Promote gender equality and empower women", MDG 4 "Reduce child mortality" and MDG 7 "Ensure environmental sustainability".

Just beyond the mid-point of the 15-year MDG programme, Jordan faced a succession of major, exogenous factors that affected its development trajectory. The global financial recession started to take effect starting 2008. In 2010, Jordan was faced with the repercussions of the "Arab Spring".

Ongoing regional instability - linked to Syria, Iraq, Yemen, Lebanon and Libya – has impacted on the tourism sector, and energy supply lines were disrupted - both hurting the treasury equally hard. In 2011, Jordan began to deal with the impact of the Syrian crisis, with over 630,000 registered and 750,000 unregistered refugees having arrived by 2015.³ Ever since, Jordan has also had to contend with the quietly rising spectre of violent extremism.

By the time the final 2015 MDG was reckoning and while Jordan was making significant progress in achieving some of the MDGs in education and healthcare, there remained 'unfinished businesses' in a number of important areas in which the country had fallen short of its development targets. These areas relate particularly to poverty reduction, employment, gender parity and the environment.⁴ Ever since, the Government has, in various statements, indicated that such areas will receive more intensive UN support during the 2018 – 2022 period of time.⁵

One of the key lessons learned from such a 15-year reflection is that, whilst planning for achieving growth, prosperity and sustainable development over the medium to long term so as to establish the nation's vision and development direction, there are -nevertheless - significant exogenous risk factors that need to be considered and handled with care and realism.

The recent period has demonstrated that largely unpredicted events have encompassed the Kingdom with greater frequency and effect. Regional instability and national vulnerabilities have resulted in multiple domestic impacts, felt in the interconnected political, institutional, economic, social and environmental domains. Strengthening resilience in all these matters shall, therefore, become the central feature of all activities pursued within the framework of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) going forward.

1- P.2 HDR 2015, Work for Human Development, A Briefing Note for countries on the HDR - UNDP

2- P.7 HDR 2015, Work for Human Development, A Briefing Note for countries on the HDR - UNDP

3- Department of Syrian Refugees of the Public Security Department of Jordan (PSD)

4- P.3 Jordan MDG Report 2015 (Final)

5- UN Steering Committee, Minutes of 1st August 2016 & Address of H.E. Imad Fakhoury,

Minister of Planning & International Cooperation to the UN Strategic Prioritization Retreat of 10 November 2016

In terms of the analytical highlights of recent performance, the MDG 1 related poverty rates with such large development variations between governorates, representing the foremost economic and social challenges confronting the Kingdom.⁶ Despite high economic growth witnessed until 2009, there is still a considerable concern that poverty and unemployment have remained deeply entrenched.⁷ The scourge of such structural unemployment, especially among Jordanian youth and women, represent a key issue that feature prominently in the respective gender and prosperity sections of this Assessment. New issues have also begun to emerge, including the quality of education, skills mismatch and growing burden of non-communicable diseases (NCDs), accounting for as many as 76 percent of total deaths in Jordan.

Amounting to around 14 percent, Jordan has a relatively low head-count poverty rate despite the fact that up to one third of its population experiences transitions into poverty during the same year. Whilst access to social services is highly available, there is considerable variability in quality. That is due to respective funding and delivery mechanisms employed, especially in the healthcare sector.⁸ Public dissatisfaction exists as well, due to the risk of poverty, lack of job market dynamism and increased cost of living.⁹ There is a more general sense that Jordan should be doing better. Hence, faithfully implementing the 2030 'Leave No-One Behind' Agenda will be challenging against this backdrop.

In comparison with other countries, Jordan is starting from a very low base, in terms of its poor natural resource endowment, lack of fertile land and extreme scarcity of water. Predictions of increasing climate change impact only serve to make the situation more challenging. Over the past 55 years, the Jordanian population has grown by more than 10 times, amounting to almost 10 million¹⁰, of which the largest increase has been witnessed during the last decade. From a sustainability perspective, this would heighten the fragile nature of the relationship that exists between the 'People' and 'Planet'.

The Jordanian population is relatively young and very urban in composition. Hence, more than the half (52.2 percent) of Jordanians are under the age of 25.¹¹ The majority of the population live in towns and cities, of which 60 percent reside within Amman and the three governorates adjacent thereto.¹²

From a human rights perspective - which is so integral to development-, there has been a gradual succession of constitutional refinements over the years. Jordan is usually at the forefront of the region's countries. Progress has brought elements of various national, social, economic and political laws closer to the principles and norms of the central human rights conventions and declarations. Legislative, institutional and policy alignments have followed - although at a varied pace - in some cases with ambiguity. In others, complete implementation or enforcement thereof has not necessarily taken place as the discussion in the relevant sections below seeks to highlight.

To its great credit, Jordan has proven to be remarkably resilient to upheavals and shocks since its independence, 70 years ago - and continues to be so. Positioned within a volatile region, the Kingdom has demonstrated considerable hospitality in accepting refugees from a succession of surrounding conflicts. This is evidenced by a non-Jordanian population of nearly 3 million people, which constitutes around 31 percent of the entire population.¹³

Within the current refugee crisis context and through the generosity of the Jordanian government and people, as well as the international and national humanitarian aid programme and efforts exerted by the Syrian refugees themselves, most refugees have had access to resources and services, and humanitarian standards have successfully been met.

6- P.7 Executive Development Plan 2016 - 2018

7- P.172 Executive Development Plan 2016 - 2018

8- P.iii World Bank - Systemic Country Diagnostic, February 2016

9- P.1 World Bank - Systemic Country Diagnostic, February 2016

10- Actual figures are just over 9.5 million, Population and Housing Census 2015

11- Jordan Department of Statistics, 2015

12- P. 4 Jordan Decent Work Country Diagnostic, ILO, July 2016

13- Executive Summary, General Population and Housing Census 2015: Around 2.1 million Palestinians and around 636,000 Egyptians also live in Jordan, plus a smaller number of people from other origins. In addition, Jordan is currently host to 1.4 million Syrian refugees

More recently, the Jordan Compact - endorsed at the London Conference in February 2016 - opened the path for job creation and livelihood opportunities for Syrian refugees. This has constituted a turning point for restoring dignity, self-reliance and hope to the lives of hundreds of thousands of Syrian refugees in Jordan. At the same time, the Compact offered the prospect of dynamism and growth to Jordan's economy.

With the advent of 2017, the Syrian crisis enters its seventh year. Hence, the absorptive capacities of Jordanian institutions and communities have become much stretched. Many refugee households have now entered a cycle of asset depletion, with savings exhausted and levels of debt increased. In this respect, the 2015 Vulnerability Assessment Framework (VAF) found that 86 percent of refugees are now living below the Jordanian poverty line of JOD 68 per capita a month.¹⁴



At the global level, the international community has acknowledged that Jordan is providing an international public good in hosting such a large cohort of refugees. The fiscal impact of the Syrian crisis on the government's 2015 budget has been estimated at US\$ 1.99 billion per annum¹⁵, broken down by some of the primary sectors as follows:

- The education cost of Syrian students in public schools amounts to US\$ 193 million;
- The health cost of public health services for Syrians amounts to US\$ 220 million;
- The National Electric Company (NEPCO) debt, attributed to the Syrian population, amounts to US\$ 263 million;
- The total water cost for Syrians amounts to US\$ 506.5 million;
- The public works annual share of costs, attributed to Syrians, amounts to US\$ 244 million;
- The municipal services total cost for Syrians, excluding those in camps, amounts to US\$ 7.15 million.

14- 9 Inter-Agency, Baseline Report, Vulnerability Assessment Framework, May 2015, available at <http://data.unhcr.org/syrianrefugees/download.php?id=8844>

15- P6 Comprehensive Vulnerability Assessment 2016

The long-term presence of the Syrian refugees in Jordan can be seen as – both – a challenge and an opportunity. However, it is important to mention that the vast majority of Syrian refugees are very or extremely vulnerable.¹⁶ The poverty rate of Syrian refugees is higher in Jordan than in Lebanon and thus, there is evidence that poverty among refugees has increased by several percentage points between 2013 and 2015.¹⁷

Out of 655,014 Syrian refugees in Jordan,¹⁸ some 208,321¹⁹ are school-aged children.²⁰ By the end of the 2014-2015 school year, some 129,354 Syrian refugee children were enrolled in public schools in camps and host communities, placing considerable pressure on an over-stretched public education system.²¹ The remaining 97,132 children were out of formal education.

With respect to the Kingdom's longer term economic development prospects, Jordan is a relatively small service-based economy. Whilst the economy has been a relatively successful destination for foreign investment, it generally lacked a sufficiently strong, diverse, competitive, job-creating dimension that has yet been able to permeate deeply into and across the entirety of the Jordanian society. It is estimated that up to 50 percent of Jordanians are working in the informal economic sector.²² Gradual and systematic rationalization of this sector would enable more and more people to benefit from national welfare schemes, and, incrementally, begin to contribute a tax share to the treasury, however modestly. This would also help in strengthening the social contract.

With a growing population, an even larger cohort of young people enter the labor market each year. High rates of unemployment persist, amounting to an average of 15.9 percent in the third quarter of 2016²³. However, the problem is particularly serious among young people and women, with over one third of youth being unemployed.²⁴ ²⁵ At almost twice the global average, 58.5 percent of graduated youth have been unemployed for over a year.²⁶ For the next five years, the growth is estimated to reach around 3 to 4 percent²⁷. Hence, structural unemployment can be expected to continue.

According to the ILO, the Jordanian economy will need to create approximately 57,000 new jobs every year for the next seven years to successfully absorb new Jordanian entrants into the labor market. This would, in turn, require a sustained annual growth rate of 6.1%. The real GDP growth reached only 3.1% in 2014 and is projected at 2.5% in 2015.²⁸

Projected growth, amounting to around 3 to 4 percent will, therefore, be insufficient for significant poverty reduction.²⁹ Many of sustainable growth challenges are inextricably represented in the 'People', 'Prosperity' and 'Planet' axes of discussions, outlined in respective sections of this CCA. For a nation like Jordan, the lack of mineral resources or other natural advantages, prosperity, stability, and well-being depends almost entirely on successfully unlocking the talents and enterprise of its people.

At the heart of this challenge, the competitiveness and productivity of its industries, quality and effectiveness of its public services, and welfare of its families and communities depend on the availability of a well-educated and highly-skilled population. Since its establishment, Jordan has invested in education and skills as a national priority, which - for a long while - witnessed Jordan exceeding that of other countries in the region.³⁰ Nevertheless, the last decade has seen its education status slip.

16- P.9 Government of Jordan/UN Needs Assessment Review 2014

17- Need source. P.4 UNHCR 3RP Syrian Crisis Mid-Year Report 2016 <http://www.3rpsyriacrisis.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/09/3RP-Mid-year-Report-Final.pdf>

18- UNHCR refugee registration data, June 2015/14 October 2016

19- 208,321 School-aged children (5 – 17 years old) (106,951 boys and 101,370 girls) estimated to be 36 % of total registered refugee population in Jordan.

20- 111,658 boys and 114,828 girls

21- Ministry of Education, Enrolment Data School Year 2014/2015, November 2014

22- The impact of Syrian refugee crisis on the labor market in Jordan, ILO and FAFO, 2015

23- Jordan Economic Monitor, fall 2016

24- Jordan Economic Monitor, fall 2016

25- P. 4 Draft MDG Report – 2015, Jordan states unemployment as high as 34.3 percent for 15-19 year olds

26- "Labor Market Transitions of Young Women and Men in Jordan." V. Barucci & N. Mryyan, ILO. June 2013

27- P.iii World Bank – Systemic Country Diagnostic, February 2016

28- P. 14 Jordan Decent Work Country Diagnostic, ILO, July 2016

29- For a more detailed discussion, see P.iii World Bank – Systemic Country Diagnostic, February 2016

30- Human Resource Development Strategy 2016 - 2025

Jordan must, therefore, reverse this trend. The ultimate key to unlocking the Kingdom's true growth potential lies in unwavering commitment to full implementation of its 'National Human Resource Strategy' (2016 – 2025). Hence, this would require investing systematically in the future 'knowledge economy', through a sustained focus on quality education and talent, while developing stronger direct links with the various labor market's demands in key growth sectors and highlighting equality of access for women.

A further important source of wealth creation for Jordan will be identified at the local level. Hence, a more assertive and accelerated thrust towards decentralization and devolution will, simultaneously, empower and enable access to resourcing and development possibilities at sub-national levels and among communities. This will, therefore, help drive greater ownership, responsibility and engagement among stakeholders, enabling them to address development and poverty challenges through locally-generated solutions. Local partnership structures between public, private and community bodies should also be encouraged to tackle priority local issues, including water, energy, service provision, natural environment and social cohesion.

Moreover, Jordan undergoes a number of quite, severe tests with respect to gender equality and women's empowerment. The Kingdom's lowly position - across a number of universal gender indicators - provides a reflection of its poor, current status as well as of the formidable scale of the task that lies ahead. For example, Jordan ranks 99 among 146 countries in the gender inequality index,³¹ and 140 among 145 countries in the global gender gap index.³² Hence, Jordan's rank has been falling steadily from its 92nd position in 2006.³³ The rate of economic participation by Jordanian women represents one of the lowest rates in the world and is considered a massive lost opportunity for Jordan.³⁴ Furthermore, the Kingdom is ranked as the 142nd country in terms of economic inequality in the global gender gap index, indicating a high and troubling prevalence of violence against women in Jordan.

In terms of governance performance, the transparency and accountability of a range of independent global and regional indices present a mixed picture. Jordan performs relatively well, compared to its Arab peers, but appears more at the mid-table side at the international level. In this respect, public confidence and engagement in the democratic process is lacking, as demonstrated at the September 2016 parliamentary elections in which a low level of voter turnout was witnessed (36.1 percent of the electorate). Therefore, it is noteworthy to mention that too few youth participate in the political process, either as a result of their own apathy or lack of belief in the system to bring about change.

It is also quite apparent that Jordan depends on international assistance. This would, therefore, make the Kingdom one of the largest middle income country recipients of foreign grants in the world, even prior to the Syrian crisis and the humanitarian financial appeals that have been ever made since then.³⁵

Jordanians, in private business, often criticize the international community for providing too much aid, which could be translated into something of a 'resource curse' since it reduces the need for the Government to undertake the reforms that might more readily accelerate development and stimulate economic growth.


31- P.22 Executive Development Plan 2016 - 2018

32- P.17 Global Gender Gap Report 2015 – World Economic Forum

33- <http://reports.weforum.org/global-gender-gap-report-2015/economies/#economy=JOR>

34- P.33 Executive Development Programme 2016 – 2018

35- P.5 World Bank – Systemic Country Diagnostic, February 2015



Moving forward and given a protracted crisis environment - which is likely to endure for the foreseeable future-, the next UN partnership framework of assistance, covering the 2018 – 2022 period of time, will need to take these factors into consideration carefully, and - as stated at the outset - from a more realistic and robust risk management perspective. A more fully-integrated refugee and resilience-based response should, therefore, strive to strengthen the relationship between the shorter-term (humanitarian) and medium to longer-term (development) assistance. However, the door of opportunity to tap into humanitarian financing so as to strengthen the Kingdom's resilience will not remain open much longer.

In this regard, further consideration and support should now be allocation for the creation of a unitary humanitarian and development cooperation and coordination mechanisms, aimed at addressing better integration and resilience programming. Hence, the Jordan Response Plan (JRP) constitutes the entry point and goes only so far in this regard. Sector working groups, such as those constituted to serve the JRP purpose and show a broad-based participation, need to transcend the refugee responses and address development priorities, as well. Within the UN re-energized UN Results Groups, the Government and development partners need to invest with longer-term outcomes in mind. In line with the four main pillars of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, these Results Groups can also make a concrete contribution towards achieving the “Delivering as One” objective.

Introduction

This Common Country Assessment (CCA) constitutes an analysis of Jordan's development situation, prepared by the UN Country Team (UNCT) in consultation with national and international partners. It strives to identify and analyze important trends in priority national development issues, achievements, opportunities and challenges. It also seeks to highlight the level of institutionalization and implementation of the universal principles of human rights and other core development goals that have been entered into force during international conferences and summits.

This CCA also refers to Jordan's progress achieved against the targets and goals of the Millennium Declaration (MD) and the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) set for the 15-year period that has just ended (2000 – 2015). As the global development policy perspective has evolved and broadened, the UNCT for Jordan decided that it was important to frame the current CCA in line with the global 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (2016 – 2030).³⁶ Hence, the structure of this Assessment set out below is based upon the five areas as follows:

1. People (Human and Social Sectors)
2. Prosperity (Economic Sector)
3. Planet (Environment Sector)
4. Peace, Justice & Strong Institutions (Governance Sector)
5. Partnerships (Strategic Coordination & Resourcing for Development)

The CCA considers the core programming principles of the UN as cross-cutting themes, which relate particularly to the human rights, gender equality and accountability fields. Human rights are also considered as a core feature of the CCA. A dedicated section below provides a comprehensive review of all of the major human rights bases conventions and protocols to which Jordan is a partner. Additional reference is also made to human rights in the various other sections of the CCA, as a foundational principle.

Along similar lines, recurrent emphasis has also been placed on the 2030 'Leave No-One Behind' Agenda principle. Furthermore, an attempt has been made to join and knit together the common challenges of sustainable development with these resilience efforts. Particular reference to accountability has also been made in the section below so as to explore the comparative advantages of the United Nations.

This CCA has been prepared at a time when there was a renewed, global and national commitment to UN reform and to 'Delivering as One' (DaO). DaO aims at drawing upon the collective strengths of all UN Agencies, Funds and Programmes in each country so as to improve the effectiveness of their contribution to the achievement of nationally and internationally-agreed goals. This entails working under an increasingly harmonized approach with the Government, private sector, and civil society partners. The Government of Jordan has formally requested that Delivery as One become an operational reality within the next cycle of UN programming in Jordan (covering the 2018 – 2022 period of time). Hence, the UNCT is responding to the same, through the systematic implementation of a series of Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) to fulfil such requirement, as well as implementation of an action-oriented roadmap for DaO within the Jordanian context.³⁷

This CCA precedes the development of the next United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF), which is a 5-year strategic framework covering the primary in-country activities of the UN system. The UNDAF brings the UN, along with its partners, together under one nationally-owned strategy, fully aligned to the national development priorities and through which the full and combined range of UN and partners' expertise can be drawn. The next UNDAF for Jordan will be designated the United Nations Partnership Framework (UNPF) (2018 – 2022).

36- http://www.un.org/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=A/RES/70/1&Lang=E

37- <https://undg.org/home/guidance-policies/delivering-as-one/standard-operating-procedures-non-pilots/>

Common Country Assessment Preparation

In April 2015, the UNCT in Jordan, consisting of 17 resident agencies³⁸ and 2 non-resident UN agencies³⁹ adopted a 'Roadmap' for the preparation of the next UNDAF. The Roadmap anticipated the need for ensuring adjustment in line with the new 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, as well as for advancing further progress along the "Delivering as One" objective. Three sequential activities were, therefore, pursued:

1. UNDAF 2012 – 2017 Evaluation (June – August 2016).
2. Preparation of the CCA (September – October 2016).
3. Formulation of the UNDAF or 'Partnership Framework' (2018 – 2022) (October 2016 – February 2017).

In terms of the first milestone above, the first draft of the UNDAF evaluation report - undertaken by an independent consultant – was issued to all major stakeholders in August 2016 for consultation.

Subsequent feedback and observations resulted in the formulation of a revised draft by the end of September 2016. Key lessons learned from that evaluation have helped in the preparation of current CCA.

Amongst the lessons learned from such an evaluation is to know that the UN works better in a focused, strategic and collaborative manner on high priority areas of national significance. Through this means, the UN can best harvest the added value of its coordinating and convening roles, in ways that could achieve scaled-up, long-term impact.

During the upcoming 2018-2022 cycle, the UN will face a particular responsibility to ensure that humanitarian and resilience investments are better integrated and manage to lever longer-term structural reforms, lest this significant opportunity be lost. Stronger adherence to the application of the principles of development cooperation effectiveness - now established as part of the Global Partnership for Sustainable development – will need to come more swiftly to the fore of its work, requiring a more strategically oriented UNCT that 'Delivers as One'.

As the UNCT takes stock of these findings, it also seeks to realign with the newly-articulated priorities, set forth by the Government of Jordan. The current 2012-2017 UNDAF is based on six main focus areas, as follows: i) Enhancing Systemic Reforms; ii) Ensuring Social Equity; iii) Providing Equitable Quality Social Services; iv) Investing in Young People; v) Preserving the Environment; vi) Ensuring Refugee Protection and Assistance.

Meanwhile, the CCA process started with a short 'issues paper' that was commissioned to an independent consultant by the UNCT in late August 2016. Following a round of written, thematic consultations in September with the newly-configured Results Groups of the UNCT, mirroring the new 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, a first draft of the CCA was prepared. The core findings of the Assessment were tabled during the course of a series of thematic discussions, held at the technical level with leading Government counterparts in mid-October. The first CCA draft was, then, internally issued by the UNCT to the UN Peer Support Group (PSG) by the end of October 2016. Internally-received feedback were, subsequently, drawn into a revised draft, issued to Government counterparts and development partners in December 2016. The CCA was finalized in January 2017.

38- Resident UN agencies: UNDP, UNESCO, UNFPA, UNICEF, UNHCR, UNODC, UNRWA, UNOPS, UNWOMEN, OCHA, UNHABITAT, IOM, FAO, WFP, WHO, ILO, World Bank.
39- Non-resident UN agencies: UNEP, UNIDO

It is important to mention that the CCA draws heavily from a considerable knowledge base of high quality analysis that has been conducted in Jordan. The majority of studies referenced are Government-led. Where sources were apparent, they have been carefully footnoted. Principal texts consulted are listed as follows:

- 1) Vision 2025
- 2) The Executive Development Programme (2016 – 2018)
- 3) The Jordan Compact
- 4) The Jordan Response Plan (2016 – 2018)
- 5) The Governorate Development Plans
- 6) The General Population and Housing Census 2015
- 7) The Jordan MDG Report 2016 (Final)
- 8) Jordan Department of Statistics (DoS) (various studies)
- 9) The Comprehensive Vulnerability Assessment 2016
- 10) Jordan Decent Work Diagnostic, ILO, July 2016
- 11) World Bank – Systematic Country Diagnostic, February 2016 and Country Partnership Framework for Jordan, 15 June 2016
- 12) Jordan Poverty Reduction Strategy (2013 – 2020)
- 13) Demographic Dividend Policy Paper, Higher Population Council
- 14) Various Human Development Reports (HDRs)
- 15) National Youth Survey, UNICEF, UNFPA 2015
- 16) National reports submitted to the various Human Rights Treaty Bodies, including the Universal Periodic Review (UPR)
- 17) Jordan National Employment Strategy 2011-2020
- 18) National Innovation Strategy 2013-2017
- 19) National Policy and Strategy for Science, Technology and Innovation 2013-2017
- 20) Arab Sustainable Development Report
- 21) World Bank – Jordan Economic Monitor
- 22) National Human Resource Strategy 2016-2025

Comparative Advantages and Risks for the United Nations in Jordan

In a middle-income country context and albeit its presence in a region of periodic upheaval and conflict, the United Nations retains a strong position in Jordan, offering a series of broad, comparative advantages in terms of strategic and operational support for humanitarian, resilience and long-term national developments. These comparative advantages are based on an analysis of strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats. A reference to the same has been identified within the Mid-Term Review (MTR) of the UNDAF (2012 – 2017) conducted in June 2014, the UNDAF evaluation of August 2016, and consultations with Government and development partners in October 2016 during the formulation of this Common Country Assessment, as well as the Strategic Prioritization Retreat, involving all major development stakeholders in November 2016.

In overall terms, the United Nations is a trusted, long-term partner and an honest broker - valued for its inclusive, neutral, independent and collaborative engagement. The UN is appreciated for providing a robust, comprehensive and increasingly-integrated partnership support across a range of disciplines, covering the humanitarian, resilience, development and governance arenas. Hence, the UN assistance reinforces Government leadership, ownership and coordination of policies and programmes at both national and sub-national levels.

The Syrian crisis, which broke out in 2011 and had significant repercussions on Jordan, demonstrated UN's agility to respond swiftly and decisively to the crisis. The UN engaged directly into the refugee response through rapid upscaling of the humanitarian presence and establishment of the Inter-Agency Task Force (IATF) mechanism. Simultaneously, the UN supported the Government in the establishment of the Host Communities' Support Platform (HCSP), which has - subsequently - become the Jordan Response Platform, as well as in the creation of task force sub-structures in key affected sectors through which the Government's own response could be marshalled. Hence, the UN support was provided for the initial 2014 National Resilience Plan (NRP), which has - eventually - morphed into a rolling 3-year Jordan Response Plan (JRP).

With the ongoing, regional conflict in Syria and Iraq and the spillover effect upon Jordan, no current evidence shows that the UN is a direct target for any extremist or terrorist groups. Since the dynamics of this regional conflict are changing, the UN personnel are now finding themselves operating in an uncertain and threatening environment, especially at the dangerous northeastern border with Syria, where humanitarian organizations are delivering aid to the Syrian IDPs under the protection of the Jordanian Military Forces.

At a regional level, the UN was able to provide strategic coordination, while collaborating with the international community to convene a succession of annual humanitarian conferences at which a combined policy, as well as resourcing and appeal response could be assembled into the Regional Refugee and Resilience Plan (3RP). The 3RP guided work in neighboring countries to Syria, as well as local communities and governments hosting refugees, such as Jordan.

The MTR of the UNDAF (2012 – 2017) demonstrated UN's ability to align to rapidly-changing environments, by integrating the refugee and Jordanian hosting communities within a reconfigured UNDAF, which sought to combine the humanitarian, resilience and development dimensions of the UN programme assistance. Meanwhile, the functions of the Humanitarian Coordinator and the UN Resident Coordinator were merged into the same, one RC/HC role.

Hence, UN's significant support, provided to formulate the Jordan Response Plan, paved a new way for addressing protracted displacement issues, starting off with a small, but game-changing concept: to recognize that the Syrian crisis in Jordan was, at once, a humanitarian and a development challenge, and that a holistic, unfragmented, response was required. Upon the development of the 3-year 2016-2018 JRP, the protracted nature of the crisis has been accepted and assistance has been provided to the Government in order to shape a longer-term framework for addressing the Syrian crisis, in conjunction with its own national, development goals and plans.

At the same time, the JRP challenged donors to provide predictable, multi-year funding. It has also set the stage for the Jordan Compact. Only with a multi-year and costed national plan for addressing the Syrian crisis in place, could the Jordan Compact be negotiated, with donors ready to provide real cost-sharing solutions for the 'global public good' in a variety of concrete ways, including the provision of grants, concessional lending and new trade deals. In return, the Government of Jordan has taken a politically-courageous step to test a theory: Will opening the labor market to refugees and encouraging entrepreneurs among them constitute a win-win solution for both refugee families and the Jordanian economy as a whole?

Within that context, the United Nations was able to demonstrate its considerable, comparative advantages, in terms of core mandated areas, such as:

- Leadership and coordination of humanitarian responses;
- Convening power among partners, in support of the Government;
- Policy and issue advocacy;
- Technical expertise and support;
- Institutional strengthening and capacity development; and
- Engagement in and support of direct service delivery in areas and sectors experiencing greatest stress.

All in all, a significant human rights-based contribution was made by the UN to help absorb and respond adequately to the shock of a huge, forced international population migration. These proven foundations also provide a basis for the comparative advantages of the UN to go forward.

Whilst attention has been diverted towards seeking a comprehensive refugee and resilience response, the world - more broadly - passed another significant milestone in its comprehensive development, for which the UN has also been at the forefront. Hence, this reflected the transition from the framework of the Millennium Declaration and Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

In Jordan, the UNCT has been exerting comparative advantages in support of the Government to mainstream the SDGs, alongside that of human rights and international norms. Indeed, the political commitment for the SDGs in Jordan is high. The Government has been a champion of the SDG agenda regionally and globally. However, the mixed track record of implementation of the MDGs shows that translating the SDGs from targets into impact will not be easy.

Along with implementation challenges and operational bottlenecks, which are well-acknowledged by the Government⁴⁰, exogenous economic vulnerabilities and regional instabilities also constituted the ultimate cause of slower-than-planned progress towards overall MDG attainment. These, too, represent the greatest risk to the SDGs. Hence, greater economic, financial - including fiscal-, environmental, political, and institutional - including service delivery - resilience is required to deliver the SDGs. However, the greatest of all risks is insecurity in the external environment.

40- Refer to the Government's own acceptance of implementation challenges as contained in the Vision 2025 and Executive Development Programme in the respective analysis below

As a result of continuous technical support provided by the UNCT, MOPIC developed a bold, 9-step Roadmap for the implementation of the 2030 Agenda at the national level. As a first step, the Roadmap envisages the identification and mainstream of nationally-tailored SDG targets and indicators into national planning, especially with respect to the 2016-2018 Executive Development Plan (EDP). Post-2015, UNCT-led consultations with the civil society helped in generating the Roadmap - officially acknowledging an active role for civil society in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda. The Roadmap also recognizes the important role of women in the implementation of the SDGs, as continuously stressed by the UNCT and the Jordanian National Commission for Women.

As a result of the collaboration with MOPIC in the preparation of the Roadmap and in a letter, dated May 2, 2016, the Minister of Planning & International Cooperation requested the UN's support in the implementation of such a Roadmap. To that end, the UNCT Jordan endorsed the joint strategy for implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, encompassing three key areas of support, namely: a) Mainstreaming the SDGs into national plans and monitoring systems; b) Capacity development for effective implementation and data collection/monitoring; c) Advocacy and awareness raising. The 2016-2017 action plan for the implementation of the strategy includes about 20 joint and individual agencies' activities for a total amount of nearly USD 700,000. The strategy also places particular focus on the active involvement of a broad range of stakeholders, and adds a section on the linkage with the Delivering as One approach and the need to have a SDG-compliant, UNDAF cycle.

From a practical perspective, the UN's comparative advantage in collectively supporting the Government in its pursuit to achieve the SDGs will be important in the number of functional areas, namely:

1. Ensuring SDG prioritization and interlinkage between SDG areas;
2. Ensuring monitoring and evaluation, including appropriate disaggregation of data;
3. Empowering and supporting Governorate Development Plans in the integration and implementation of the SDGs at the local level;
4. Reaching consensus with the Government on the 'unfinished businesses' of the MDGs, in particular data issues in the healthcare sector, for reporting purposes;
5. Ensuring that SDGs are properly costed and has been allocated with sufficient budgets;
6. Building partnerships, including public-private partnerships for SDG acceleration, either nationally or locally, in line with the operationalization of SDG 17, resourcing or financing for development; and
7. Identifying and mobilizing opportunities for upscaling citizen and community level participation in the SDGs as advocates and active agents for change at the neighborhood level.

The comprehensive and integrated nature of the SDG platform also plays a significant role in strengthening the 'Delivering as One' approach, which has now been adopted by the UNCT for Jordan.

The 2018 – 2022 UNPF is based on how the UN translates this new, operating principle into practice. Hence, the UN is better coordinating its programming through a results group structure, led by a UNCT Head of Agency representative that reports directly to the UNCT, as well as to an annual Joint UN/Government of Jordan Outcome Board. Each UN Results Group is aligned with and dedicated to meeting the requirements of one of the main pillars of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, as follows:

Results Group 1: 'People'

Results Group 2: 'Prosperity'

Results Group 3: 'Planet'

Results Group 4: 'Peace, Justice & Strong Institutions'

The Paris Agreement on Climate Change and the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction represent two additional areas of poignant challenge to Jordan, which - in addition to localizing the SDGs into data and monitoring - will require special attention of the UN over the upcoming period.

Furthermore, the United Nations comparative advantages relate to:

- The ability to strategize and scale up integrated humanitarian, resilience and development initiatives that directly relate to the priority development challenges, identified within this CCA. This would, thereby, ensure the synergy of the core and complementary competencies of the UN system in Jordan, including the tapping of non-resident agency expertise.
- Effective targeting, aimed at meeting the priority needs of particular, social and geographical poverty pockets or other inequities that exist among vulnerable or marginalized groups. Hence, this would draw on UN's comparative advantages in its pursuit of 'Leaving No-One Behind' and 'Reaching the Farthest, First'. It also ensures the development of a rights-based approach, aimed at helping to ensure that principles of equity, accountability, transparency, empowerment and participation are mainstreamed across all of the UN intervention areas.
- The UN's approach to resilience strengthens institutional systems and capacities at all levels. This is important for ensuring national ownership and sustainability. From a practical perspective, the UN is able to provide managerial and technical competences and show dependable professionalism.
- The UNCT, drawing on its extensive network of the wider regional and global organizational structure and reach, is able to convene platforms for dialogue and showcase best practices, including those of Jordan itself, within the regional and global communities of practice. Last but not least, opportunities for highly beneficial South-South exchange and cooperation are available.
- A strong orientation towards knowledge management, learning and achievement of results, underpinning national systems in the process.

Notably, the measure of success for the United Nations in Jordan will not necessarily be the dollar value of its resources - as highlighted above. It will, however, reflect the United Nations' ability to mobilize international and national resources around Jordan's humanitarian and development priorities and the degree to which successful 'resilience-based' initiatives are effectively scaled up.

Other areas of more specific comparative advantages, offered by the United Nations in Jordan, include:

1. The long-term engagement to strengthen governance systems and institutions, particularly with respect to human resource capabilities;
2. The strengthening and acceleration of the decentralization process at the governorate, municipal and district levels;
3. The important linkages between international treaties and normative national, legal frameworks discussed in human rights conventions, set out in section above;
4. The support provided to constitutional, parliamentary, judicial, electoral and administrative reforms;
5. The enhancement of core principles, such as those related to inequality, inclusion, human rights and gender at all levels;

6. The enhancement of responsiveness and access to citizen-centered services;
7. The engagement in and strengthening of dialogue and systems, in support of the prevention of violent extremism;
8. The promotion of partnerships with non-government institutions and commissions, the private sector, academia, and the media, as well as particularly with community-based and civil society organizations; and
9. The facilitation of multi-sectoral 'convergence' approaches for multiple SDG gains.

Finally, the technical scope of the UN system is extensive. Technical support is provided in areas of agriculture, social protection - in particular to women, children and youth, people with disabilities, including psychosocial disabilities -, education, health, urban management, cultural heritage protection and management, freedom of expression and access to information, bio-diversity, migration, natural resource management, waste management, employment training, livelihoods, water and sanitation, disaster risk management and climate change, industrial policy etc. Hence, the UN exercises considerable comparative advantages and, through the 'Delivering as One' approach, is increasingly able to leverage the linkages that exist between and across all these sectors.

Jordan – Basic Facts

The Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan is a relatively small, yet strategically-located semi-arid country, at the crossroads of Asia, Africa and Europe. The Kingdom lies on the East Bank of the Jordan River and is bordered by the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia to the east and south, Iraq to the northeast, Syria to the north, Israel, Palestine and the Dead Sea to the west and the Red Sea to the southwest.

Jordan is a constitutional monarchy, with a King that holds broad executive and legislative powers. The nation is divided into 12 governorates and its Parliament consists of two chambers, namely: the Jordanian Senate and the House of Representatives. The 65 members of the Senate are directly appointed by the King, whilst the 130 members of the House of Representatives are elected through proportional representation in 23 constituencies for a 4-year election cycle. Minimum quotas exist in the House of Representatives for women (15 seats – note: however, women won 20 seats in the 2016 election), Christians (9 seats) and Circassians and Chechens (3 seats). Three constituencies are allocated for the Bedouins of the northern, central and southern Badias.

Jordan became a member of the United Nations on December 14, 1955. It is a founding member of both the Arab League (March 22, 1945) and the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (September 25, 1969).

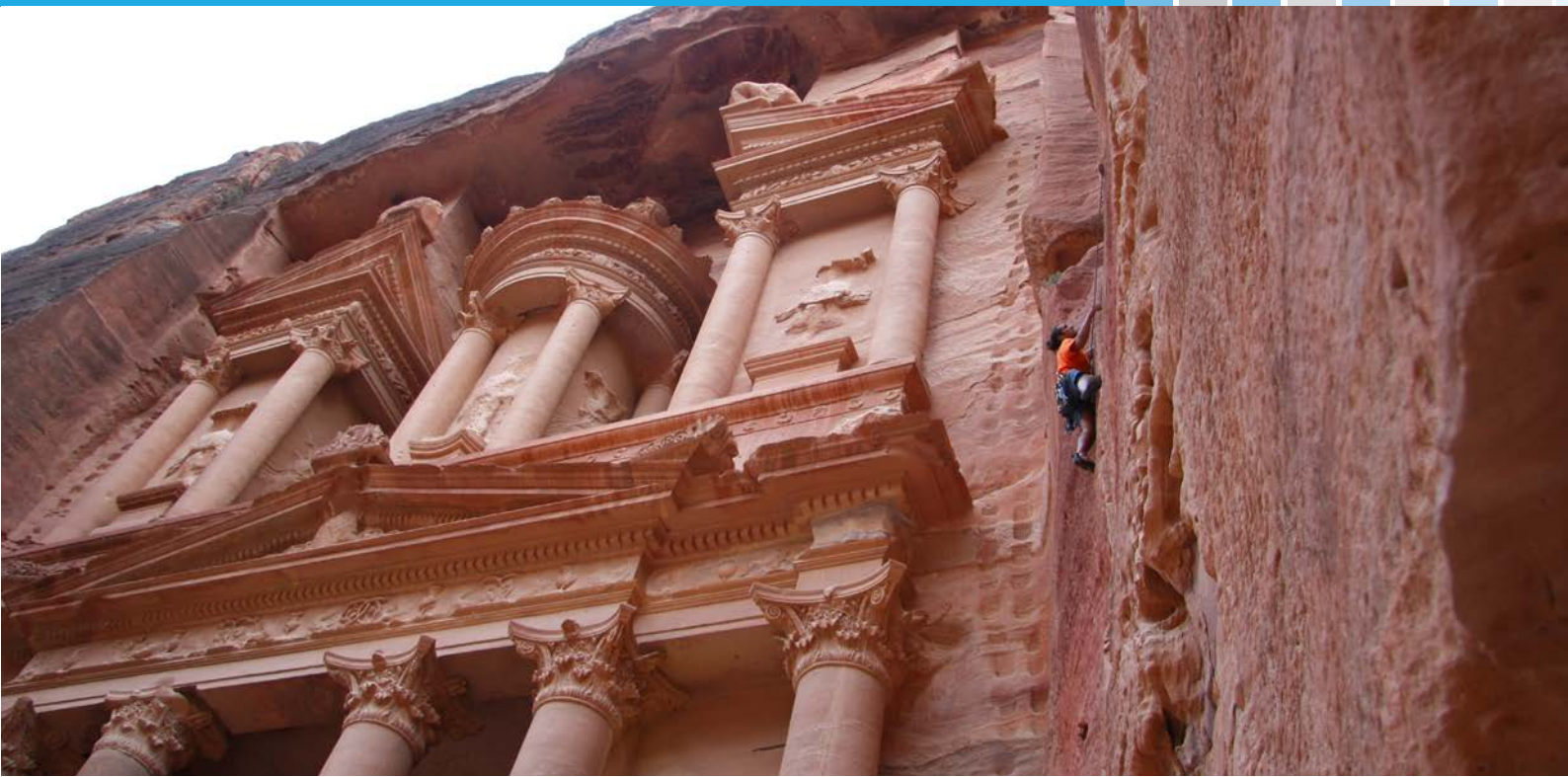
Jordan's total population, as reported in the 2015 Census, is 9,531,712.⁴¹ This number has multiplied more than 10 times over 55 years. Whereas, the largest increase happened during the last decade, especially since 2011. The number of Jordanians amounts to 6,613,587 people, accounting for around 69.4% of the total population, whilst non-Jordanians constitute 2,918,125, or 30.6% of the total population.

The Jordanian population is young, with more than half (52.2 percent) being under the age of 25. Hence, the youth (of 15-24 years) constitute 16 percent of the working-age population.⁴² The majority of Jordanians live in urban cities, with 60 percent living within Amman and the three governorates adjacent thereto.⁴³

41- Pb Executive Summary, General Population and Housing Census 2015, Main Results

42- Jordan Department of Statistics, 2015

43- P. 4 Jordan Decent Work Country Diagnostic, ILO, July 2016



Sunni Islam is the dominant religion in Jordan, practiced by around 92 percent of the population. Jordan upholds an open, tolerant and inclusive posture towards people of other faiths and backgrounds, with Muslims coexisting with an indigenous Christian minority. Up until very recently, Jordan was considered to be among the safest of Arab countries in the Middle East, and has managed to avoid long-term terrorism and internal instability. However, few terrorist-related incidents that took place in 2016 have somewhat started to change this reality. Hence, the Government has swiftly taken security measures to seek to prevent similar incidents from happening again.

Jordan is a country that has witnessed high human development rates, despite its upper middle-income economy regimen. Traditionally, the Jordanian economy has been a relatively successful destination for foreign investment. However, uncertainties, related to neighbouring conflicts, closure of trade routes and stiffer competition from the Gulf countries, have emerged. The Country also benefits from 'medical tourism' as a result of its relatively well-developed health sector. However, a relatively poor natural resource endowment and extreme scarcity of water represent a manner of challenges.

The total number of households in Jordan amounts to 1,977,534, making an average household size of 4.8 persons. The population of the Governorate of the capital, Amman, exceeds 4 million persons. The percentage of married males (aged 13 years and above) and females is 54 and 57 percent, respectively. Whereas, the average marriage age of Jordanians is 25.5 years for males, compared with 21.2 years for females.⁴⁴

The vast majority of Jordanian children (girls and boys) of 6-15 years are enrolled in schools at similar ratios for males and females (95 percent). 78 percent of the school age cohort enrolled in governmental educational institutions are Jordanians, while non-Jordanians make up 22 percent of the total number. The percentage of non-Jordanians enrolled in educational institutions in the private sector accounted for 28 percent. Whereas, total illiteracy rate of the total population in Jordan (aged 13 years and above) is 9.1 percent, while the rate for Jordanians is 6.7 percent.⁴⁵

Around 55 percent of the population is covered by health insurance, while the percentage for Jordanians is 68 percent. Economic participation rates vary between males and females, noting that 71 percent of males are economically active, compared to only 21 percent for females.⁴⁶

44- P.c Executive Summary, General Population and Housing Census 2015, Main Results
45- P.c Executive Summary, General Population and Housing Census 2015, Main Results
46- P.c Executive Summary, General Population and Housing Census 2015, Main Results

The National Policy Environment in Jordan

Vision 2025

The Jordan Vision 2025 Strategic Plan provides a 10-year framework for guiding reform and development. The Plan aims at addressing the needs and utilizing the capacity of four pillars, namely: citizens, society, private sector and government. At the citizen level, the focus is placed on education, health, employment and economic participation. At the societal level, emphasis is placed on ensuring the cohesion of Jordanian society, primarily by reducing poverty. The Plan recognizes that the business sector's conditions have worsened over time, in comparison with other countries.

The Plan envisions placing much attention on improving the quality of the business environment to attract investment, particularly by enforcing laws fairly and equally. The Plan also projects the need to improve access to finance, and encourage creative entrepreneurship among SMEs to improve Jordan's competitiveness in local and export markets. Whilst the Government is driving the process, the Plan recognizes that successful reform requires the commitment of all stakeholders, private sector, civil society and individual citizens to their part.

Key issues have been identified and included the growing pressure on educational infrastructure due to population growth and in-migrations, requiring extra financial resources, as well as low rates of employment - especially among women and youth - and inequality across the governorates. The fragility of the Jordanian natural resources, especially water, energy, land and food are all raised as major constraints to development.

The Executive Development Programme (EDP 2016 – 2018)

The longer-term Vision 2025 is operationalized through rolling, multi-year Executive Development Programmes. The objectives of the EDP are divided into national and sectoral goals. Among the national objectives is the achievement of a better development balance across governorates and decentralization. Hence, the engagement of a generation of youth - capable of creativity and innovation to increase the Nation's productivity - is also a priority area, as is the improvement of the quality of and access to services by citizens. Central to the EDP is the goal of reducing poverty and unemployment levels and building an effective social protection system. Achieving a sustainable growth rate with equitable living standards for all citizens is an often-stated objective. To that end, the Kingdom recognizes the need to continue creating an inviting investment environment, capable of attracting foreign capital and promoting local investments. Each of these national objectives has its own metric to measure progress.

The EDP objectives are divided into 26 developmental sectors and 121 government organizations, implementing 1831 projects. The important role of the private sector is well recognized, as development in strategic sectors will require local and foreign private sector investments. Progress towards achieving sectoral objectives is measured through a total of 567 indicators, falling within the scope of responsibility of ministries and other government institutions to achieve and track.

The Jordan Compact

The Jordan Compact, which has been agreed upon at the London Conference on the 4th of February 2016, supports Jordan's contribution in hosting Syrian refugees. The international community agreed to increase grant financing, introduce new concessional lending facilities, increase private investment in Jordan, and extend preferential trade terms in Europe to support jobs and manufacturing activities in Jordan. In return, the Government committed to easing labour restrictions on Syrian refugees, improving the business and investment climate, and continuing on structural reforms as defined in the IMF Extended Fund Facility.

The intended benefits of this 'holistic' package are:

- (i) Growth and jobs for Jordan, as well as economic benefits for European companies;
- (ii) Livelihood opportunities for Syrian refugees;
- (iii) Pre-investment opportunities to ensure the reconstruction of Syria;
- (iv) Lower donor costs as the need for humanitarian assistance declines; and
- (v) Opportunities to address the refugee problem [for Europe] at its source.

The Agreement significantly lowers the rules of origin restrictions governing Jordanian trade with the EU, allowing the exports of goods, composed of 70% non-local items for 10 years. The Agreement covers 18 industrial and developmental zones in Jordan. In addition, no less than 15% of the manpower in any factory exporting to the EU by virtue to this Agreement should be Syrian. This rate will be raised to 25 percent during the third year. After reaching the goal of providing 200,000 jobs for Syrian refugees, the "Rules of Origin" will also be applied to other industries across the Kingdom.

The Compact calls for 50,000 Syrians to be employed in 2016 and up to 200,000 in the coming years. In an effort to encourage the legal employment of Syrian refugees, the Government of Jordan also enacted two 3-month 'grace periods', during which the work permit and other related fees of Syrians would be waived. Furthermore, a 1-year moratorium on foreign workforce employment of non-Syrians was initiated in January 2016. In addition, several other policy adjustments (such as allowing the use of a Ministry of Interior ID card rather than a passport) were made to ease the hiring of Syrians. As of November 1, 2016, 33,000 Syrians had been issued with work permits during 2016. The UN and the World Bank are providing assistance to the Ministry of Labor on further capacity strengthening and reforms.

A new programme in collaboration with the IMF, valued at USD 700 million to carry out continuing fiscal adjustment and structural reforms, was concluded in August 2016. Furthermore, development partners have indicated commitments amounting to US\$ 264 million in key sectors.





Support to “Accelerating Access to Quality Formal Education”: Together with the Ministry of Education (MoE), the UN is targeting some 81,000 Syrian refugee children who remain out of school, of which 50,000 are eligible to attend formal education and 31,000 require learning opportunities and pathways back into the formal system, wherever possible. As of September 2016, and based on the accelerating plan developed by MoE, it is estimated that 75,000 more Syrian children will receive an education through the Ministry of Education (50,000 in formal education and 25,000 in the non-formal catch up program).

A joint World Bank/UN/Islamic Development Bank Concessional Financing Facility (CFF) was approved in April 2016, with an initial pledging event for the CFF raising US\$ 140 million to underwrite loans for Jordan and Lebanon at concessional financing rates (equal or close to IDA-level lending rates). The objective of the CFF is to raise a total of US\$ 1 billion in grants over the next 5 years in order to provide Jordan and Lebanon with around US\$ 3-4 billion in concessional financing to support refugees and host communities in key sectors such as jobs, education, health and infrastructure.

The Jordan Response Plan (2016 – 2018)

The JRP was initially designed as a 1-year plan for 2015 and has now been modified to become a 3-year rolling plan for 2016-2018. Hence, the JRP “seeks to bridge the divide between resilience and humanitarian systems and reconcile the programming objectives, funding mechanisms and operating systems that often run parallel to each other in addressing short-term people-centred needs, in addition to medium and longer-term systemic and institutional considerations.” The orientation of the JRP is described as a resilience-based approach, incorporating both gender and environment markers.

The JRP was designed to serve as the comprehensive response of the Government of Jordan to the protracted Syrian crisis, which has forced hundreds of thousands of Syrian women, girls, boys and men to flee their homes and seek asylum in Jordan. Through a combination of the generosity of the Jordanian government and people, international and national humanitarian aid programme, and efforts exerted by the refugees themselves, most refugees have had access to resources and services, and humanitarian standards have been met. With the Syrian crisis entering its seventh year, the absorption capacity of Jordanian communities have become stretched. Many refugees have now entered a cycle of asset depletion, with savings exhausted and levels of debt increased. The Vulnerability Assessment Framework (VAF) has found that 86 percent of refugees are now living below the Jordanian poverty line of JOD 68 per capita a month.⁴⁷

47- 9 Inter-Agency, Baseline Report, Vulnerability Assessment Framework, May 2015, available at <http://data.unhcr.org/syrianrefugees/download.php?id=8844>

The fiscal impact of the Syrian crisis on the government's 2015 budget has been estimated at US\$ 1.99 billion per annum⁴⁸, broken down by some of the primary sectors as follows:

- The education cost of Syrian students in public schools amounts to US\$ 193 million;
- The health cost of public health services for Syrians amounts to US\$ 220 million;
- The National Electric Company (NEPCO) debt, attributed to the Syrian population, amounts to US\$ 263 million;
- The total water cost for Syrians amounts to US\$ 506.5 million;
- The public work annual share of costs, attributed to Syrians, amounts to US\$ 244 million; and
- The municipal services total cost for Syrians, excluding those in camps, amounts to US\$ 7.15 million.

The resilience approach gives recognition to the fact that humanitarian and life-saving interventions alone are insufficient to meet the needs of and mitigate the risks that host communities face. Approximately 79 percent of refugees reside in hosting communities, as opposed to 21 percent in camps. Hence, a more integrated approach that simultaneously and coherently addresses short, medium and long-term needs is required. The resilience approach intends to:

1. Optimize existing resources by investing in more durable solutions and avoiding parallel mechanisms;
2. Strengthen infrastructures and national capacities that are more sustainable over the long term;
3. Strengthen the capacity of individuals, host communities and states to cope with and recover from possible future shocks;
4. Reduce the cost of international response in the medium term.

Governorate Development Plans

One of the main challenges going forward is to be able to reflect the above resilience approach within the current draft of Governance Development Plans that has been formulated. At the same time, efforts exerted to prioritize and sequence investments in priority development programmes into which the SDGs are integrated need to be considered, as well. Implementation, as mentioned above, represents one of the most problematic areas. Last but not least, the allocation of scarce budgetary resources within a tight fiscal envelope is an additional challenge. Notwithstanding these issues, the Governorate Development Plans represent an important tool through which the national development programmes of the Government can be localized, in line with the efforts exerted towards ensuring the decentralization and empowerment of local authorities.

Jordan & the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development

Between September 25 – 27, 2015, world leaders attended the Sustainable Development Summit at the United Nations Headquarters in New York during which the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development was adopted by virtue of a UN General Assembly Resolution.⁴⁹ A Plan of action was, thereby, launched for people, planet and prosperity, seeking to strengthen universal peace and freedom.

The Plan's greatest stated challenge is to eradicate poverty in all its forms and dimensions, including extreme poverty and indispensable requirement for sustainable development. All countries and stakeholders, acting in collaborative partnership, agreed to implement this Plan and thus, 'Leave No-One Behind'.

48- P.6 Comprehensive Vulnerability Assessment 2016

49- Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development – Resolution Adopted by the UN General Assembly, 25 September 2015.

Accompanying the Plan were 17 Sustainable Development Goals⁵⁰, indicating the scale and ambition of the new universal Agenda. Building on the Millennium Development Goals and completing what has not been achieved yet, the SDGs seek to realize the human rights of all, achieve gender equality and ensure the empowerment of all women and girls. In Jordan, a transition plan from the MDGs to the SDGs was put in place. This analysis draws heavily on the final MDG Report for Jordan.

One of the key lessons learned from the MDGs is that such goals were approached overwhelmingly from their own individual sector perspective. Also, the SDGs are increasingly understood to be integrated and indivisible, and balance the three dimensions of sustainable development: the economic, social and environmental one. Since the goals and targets are applicable over the next 15 years and the Government of Jordan has taken up a leadership position with respect to their implementation, the UNCT in Jordan has been similarly moved to align its CCA and emergent UN Sustainable Development Partnership Framework (2018 – 2022) with its pillars and principles:

1- People

“We are determined to end poverty and hunger, in all their forms and dimensions, and to ensure that all human beings can fulfil their potential in dignity and equality and in a healthy environment.”⁵¹

2- Prosperity

“We are determined to ensure that all human beings can enjoy prosperous and fulfilling lives and that economic, social and technological progress occurs in harmony with nature.”⁵²

3- Planet

“We are determined to protect the planet from degradation, including through sustainable consumption and production, sustainably managing its natural resources and taking urgent action on climate change, so that it can support the needs of the present and future generations.”⁵³

4- Peace

“We are determined to foster peaceful, just and inclusive societies which are free from fear and violence. There can be no sustainable development without peace and no peace without sustainable development.”⁵⁴

5- Partnership

“We are determined to mobilize the means required to implement this Agenda through a revitalized Global Partnership for Sustainable Development, based on a spirit of strengthened global solidarity, focused in particular on the needs of the poorest and most vulnerable and with the participation of all countries, all stakeholders and all people.”⁵⁵

The interlinkages and integrated nature of the Sustainable Development Goals are of crucial importance in ensuring that the purpose of the new Agenda is realized. If these ambitious goals are attained across the full extent of the Agenda, the lives of all will have been profoundly improved and the world will have been transformed significantly for the better.

50- And 169 targets. See deeper into the CCA as to the 17 SDGs and the updated reference document to which the 169 indicators derive

51- P.2 Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development – Resolution Adopted by the UN General Assembly, 25 September 2015

52- P.2 Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development – Resolution Adopted by the UN General Assembly, 25 September 2015

53- P.2 Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development – Resolution Adopted by the UN General Assembly, 25 September 2015

54- P.2 Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development – Resolution Adopted by the UN General Assembly, 25 September 2015

55- P.2 Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development – Resolution Adopted by the UN General Assembly, 25 September 2015

In the run up to the Sustainable Development Summit of September 2015, Jordan had been a leading proponent of the emergent Agenda, both globally and regionally. Likewise, since its adoption, Jordan continues to exercise its leadership for the purposes of implementing the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda. For these purposes, the Ministry of Planning & International Cooperation has adopted the following multi-point plan:

1. Intensify efforts to raise awareness of the importance of the sustainable development goals and objectives, and ensure the participation of everyone to achieve national development priorities and maintain sustainability.
2. Ensure the integration of the goals and targets of sustainable development at the national level. This has required a mapping of the objectives, policies, initiatives and indicators of the Executive Development Program (2016 – 2018)⁵⁶. This is leading to a determination of the degree of agreement, gaps and shortcomings, as well as the intersections between the various development sectors. Hence, further actions are anticipated to identify and adopt the classification of performance indicators at a national and local level, as well as to take respective gender indicators into consideration.
3. Root and connect respective goals, targets and indicators for sustainable development at the governorates level. This is in progress and will require working through the selection of pilot governorates, applying the experience, and then rolling the learning and application out to all areas.
4. Ensure that capacity building and technical support will be sought by the Government in the areas of integration, adaptation and harmonization of these goals, targets and indicators at the national and local levels.
5. Ensure that monitoring and evaluation will be pursued with MOPIC working collaboratively with the Performance Unit in the Prime Ministry. This aims at building up a national system that will incorporate EDP and enable progress reports to be issued broadly on a web-enabled, Government-based dashboard.
6. Provide enhanced data sources which, in turn, will require additional technical and financial support to the Department of Statistics in order to provide statistical data on sustainable development in a consistently, high-quality and timely manner.
7. Ensure that appropriate levels of funding are provided to achieve the SDGs, through MOPIC's close coordination with the Ministry of Finance and the General Budget Department. This will help tie EDP (SDG) outputs within the national, ministry and governorate budgets of the Country. This level of programming and budgetary integration represents an important step forward and will help direct resources towards achieving the goals of sustainable development. It will also help in identifying funding gaps that need priority support from domestic revenues of the international community. The initiative will assist in the development of the medium-term budgetary framework through which funding efforts are mobilized and assistance to support the implementation of medium to long-term development priorities and outcomes is provided.
8. Ensure that the foundations have been established for an institutional framework that supports SDG coordination. It is noteworthy to mention that MOPIC is leading the planning process that will support the Supreme National Commission for Sustainable Development in fulfilling its leadership as a National Steering Committee. This enables coordination across all 17 SDGs, provided by all relevant ministries and agencies.

Hence, the formulation of the United Nations Partnership Framework in Jordan (UNPF) for the next five years, covering the 2018 – 2022 period, will be directed towards achieving the goals and objectives of the SDGs, related to national development priorities.

⁵⁶- The EDP is the National Social & Economic Development Plan

Progress and Status of Human Rights in Jordan

While all UN General Assembly Member States are party to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, Jordan has also ratified a draft of others, many of which have direct relevance to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and individual SDGs. A summary of the current status of Jordan's adherence to the core human rights treaties and protocols is provided below.

In overall terms, Jordan is making reasonable progress. Over the years, a gradual succession of constitutional refinements have brought elements of various social, economic and political laws closer to the principles of the central human rights conventions and declarations. Legislative, institutional and policy alignments have followed, although in some cases, there appears to be some ambiguity, and in others, complete implementation or enforcement has not necessarily followed.

The speed of transition from convention into law varies greatly. For example, the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) was incorporated into Jordanian law soon after ratification, whilst others have become law much later due to delayed endorsement by Parliament.

Whereas, the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) was signed in 1980, ratified in 1992 and entered into national law after publication of a notification in the official Gazette in 2007.^{57 58}

Jordan's Constitution guarantees the equality of rights for all citizens and provides the foundation for safeguarding the human rights, "Jordanians are equal before the law. No discrimination is permissible between rights and duties [on grounds] of race, language and religion."⁵⁹ Reference to non-discrimination on the basis of sex is, however, missing from this Article. The National Charter is – nonetheless – more specific, as it specifies that all Jordanians, both men and women, are equal before the law, without distinction as to rights and duties.⁶⁰

The Personal Status Law - now – includes the equal rights of both men and women - aged 18 and above – to enter into marriage without prior, parental approval. Women now also have the equal right to divorce their husbands. However, a number of laws and regulations still contain provisions contrary to gender equality principles. For example, the Personal Status Law grants men and women different rights within marriage and limits married women's right to work; whereas, the Civil Service Code discriminates between male and female employees in family benefits, and the Social Security Corporation Law discriminates between men and women in the right of their families to inherit their retirement pay. Article 3 of the Jordanian Nationality Law defines a Jordanian as a person "who was born to a father with Jordanian nationality." Consequently, Jordanian women married to foreigners do not have the right to grant their children the Jordanian nationality.

Jordan has followed up on its reporting obligations to relevant treaty bodies despite the fact that the regularity of reporting varies between different ratified conventions. Jordan's latest status, reports and issues pertaining to the major human rights treaties are as follows:

Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (CAT) – Ratified on November 13, 1991 (a):

Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture (CAT-OP):

Jordan's third periodic report on the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (CAT/C/JOR/3) was submitted in July 2014 and considered by

57- The reservation to CEDAW, Article 15, Paragraph 4 (On women's residence with their husbands) was lifted in 2009

58- The Passport Law was amended in 2003 to give women the right to procure their own passports freely, thus recognizing their right to freedom of movement

59- Constitution of Jordan (1952), Article 6, Paragraph 1

60- The eighth principle of the National Charter states "Jordanian men and women are equal under the Law. There shall be no distinction between them in rights and obligations regardless of difference in race, language or religion."

the Committee against Torture at its 1374th and 1377th meetings (see CAT/C/SR.1374 and 1377), held on November 20 and 23, 2015. The Committee noted the procedural safeguards, set out in the Code of Criminal Procedure. However, concerns were raised about the absence of an explicit provision on the right to have access to a lawyer immediately upon arrest, the interrogation of detainees without the presence of a lawyer “in case of urgency”, and the prohibition of communication with a detainee for a renewable period of up to 10 days. The Committee also raised concerns on the continuous recourse to administrative detention, the existence of special courts and the continuous use of coerced confessions or statements as admissible evidence in courts. Jordan’s follow-up report is due to be submitted by December 9, 2016.

International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (CCPR) – Signed on June 30, 1972 and ratified on May 28, 1975:

Second Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, aiming at the abolition of the death penalty (CCPR-OP2-DP):

Jordan’s most recent periodic report on the International Covenant on Civil and Political Right (CCPR/C/JOR/5) was submitted - in Arabic - in July 2016.

Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance (CED):

Jordan has not yet reported on the Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance.

Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) – Signed on December 3, 1980 and ratified on July 1, 1992:

Jordan’s sixth periodic report, issued with respect to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW/C/JOR/6), was submitted in June 2015. The report reviews the progress achieved in complying with international commitments to uphold human rights since submission of the fifth periodic report at the end of 2009 – commitments relating to the rights of women to participate in economic, social, cultural and political development, as well as in public life. It is also noteworthy to mention that the UNCT and civil society’s shadow reports have also been prepared.

The report will be considered by the Committee in its 66th session in February/March 2017. Key issues to be addressed include the lack of comprehensive, non-discrimination legislation, the protection of refugee and asylum-seeking women and girls, the functioning of the national complaints mechanism, the capacity of the National Commission and the national machinery adopted for the advancement of women, as well as the legislation to eliminate all forms of violence against women and measures taken to enhance women’s participation in political and public life, amongst others. However, discriminative provisions persist in the Penal Code, such as Article 308 allowing a rapist to avoid persecution if the latter agrees to marry the victim, and Article 340 on honor killings. The Sisterhood, a global association aimed at tracking women’s rights issues in the Country, noted a 53 percent rise in such killings in 2016, with 26 “honor” killings so far this year, compared to 17 cases in 2015.

International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (CERD) – Ratified on May 30, 1974 (a):

A combined 18th, 19th and 20th periodic report on the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (CERD) was submitted in July 2016.

International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (CESCR) – Signed on June 30, 1972 and ratified on May 28, 1975:

Jordan's sixth periodic report on the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights was submitted in December 1997.

Jordan has not yet signed or ratified the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families (CMW).

Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) – Signed on August 29, 1990 and ratified on May 24, 1991:

Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the Involvement of Children in Armed Conflict (CRC-OP-AC) – Signed on September 6, 2000 and ratified on May 23, 2007:

Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the Sale of Children, Child Prostitution and Child Pornography (CRC-OP-SC) - Signed on September 6, 2000 and ratified on December 4, 2006:

Jordan's combined fourth and fifth periodic reports on the Convention on the Rights of the Child were submitted in March 2013, and considered by the Committee at its 1877th and 1878th meetings, held on May 26 and 27, 2014. Key issues that were highlighted included the considerable delay in adopting the Children's Rights Bill, the draft law on juvenile justice, the general cuts in national budget that threatened the progress achieved in children's development, the discrimination against children born to a Jordanian mother and a non-Jordanian father, and the violence against children including corporal punishment and honor killings. The sixth periodic report is due to be submitted by June 22, 2019.

Jordan's first periodic report on the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the Involvement of Children in Armed Conflict was submitted in January 2013 and considered by the Committee at its 1879th meeting, held on May 27, 2013. The Committee welcomed the various positive measures taken in areas relevant to the implementation of the Optional Protocol.

Recommendations provided by the Committee included the need to put in place an institutional mechanism for effective coordination, to ensure that the principles and provisions of the Optional Protocol are widely disseminated among the general public, to provide training on the provisions of the Optional Protocol, to review and raise the age for voluntary recruitment of public security officers to 18 years, and to explicitly prohibit and criminalize the recruitment and use of children under 18 years of age in hostilities by the armed forces and non-State armed groups as well as the recruitment and use of children by security companies.

Jordan's first periodic report on Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the Sale of Children, Child Prostitution and Child Pornography was submitted in January 2011 and considered by the Committee at its 1878th meeting, held on May 27, 2013. Some of the recommendations the Committee made included developing a national plan of action, aimed at addressing specifically all issues covered by the Optional Protocol, as well as adopting firm and immediate measures to ensure the effective enforcement of the legal prohibition of child marriage, as well as revising and bringing respective Criminal Code into full compliance with Articles 2 and 3 of the Optional Protocol.

Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) – Signed on March 30, 2007 and ratified on March 31, 2008:

The Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and its Optional Protocol (A/RES/61/106) were adopted on December 13, 2006. The Convention entered into force on May 3, 2008 and as of December 2016, the CRPD and Optional Protocol were subject to 168 and 92 ratifications/accessions, respectively. The Convention is intended to serve as a human rights instrument with an explicit, social development dimension. It adopts a broad categorization of persons with disabilities and reaffirms that all persons with all types of disabilities must enjoy all human rights and fundamental freedoms.

The Convention clarifies and qualifies how all categories of rights apply to persons with disabilities, and identifies areas where adaptations have to be made for such persons to effectively exercise their rights. It also highlights areas where such rights have been violated and where protection of rights must be reinforced.

Furthermore, the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and its 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), building on the principle of 'Leaving No-One Behind', emphasize the importance to adopt a holistic approach to achieving sustainable development for all. The SDGs explicitly include disability and persons with disabilities. In this respect, disability is referenced in multiple parts of the SDGs.

Accordingly, it was of great importance to build on the already-commenced efforts as part of the Arab Decade of Disabled Persons (2004-2013), which established a set of regionally-agreed principles and objectives to guide national efforts in Jordan on disability, and show progress in this respect. The elevation of the rights perspective of disability - through the CRPD and the SDGs - has significant implications on Jordan as well as the UN System, as guided by the United Nations Charter and the obligation to help States Parties to human rights treaties to meet their obligations towards the realization of human rights.

Jordan ratified the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities on March 31, 2008, thereby expressing its commitment to implementing respective provisions in order to protect the rights of persons with disabilities and ensure their full enjoyment of human rights and fundamental freedoms. Upon signature and ratification of the Convention, the Government took the following political measures to support these rights:

- Formation in 2006 of a Royal Commission to draft the National Strategy on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities;
- Adoption of the National Strategy for Persons with Disabilities (2007-2015);
- Publication of the Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act (No. 31 of 2007);
- Establishment of the Higher Council for Persons with Disabilities as an independent national institution, responsible for policymaking and planning.

Jordan's first periodic report on the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities was submitted in October 2012. The report has yet to be considered by the Committee. A National Strategy for Persons with Disabilities for 2007 – 2015 was, therefore, developed.

However, implementation of the Strategy has been limited. One major issue is that the definition of disabilities in legal provisions and policies continues to be based on medical and welfare views without transitioning into a model, based on human rights principles and those set forth within the International Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. Further observations on the rights, access and opportunities provided to persons with disabilities are made below under the sections on poverty, health, education and prosperity.

Progress against People Trafficking

In 2009, following the ratification of the United Nations' Palermo Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Jordan passed an anti-trafficking law, translating the international trafficking definition into a national law, and laying the institutional grounds to ensure its implementation, notably through the establishment of an inter-ministerial National Anti-Trafficking Committee.

Plan of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD):

In 2013, the Higher Population Council launched the “The Second National Report on Evaluating the Progress in Implementation of the Plan of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development”. The Report reflects on Jordan's national achievements, in accordance with each of the eight main domains of the ICPD Plan of Action (PoA) which are namely, population and sustained economic growth and sustainable development specifically in the areas of alleviating poverty, expanding food security, enhancing environment resources management, improving solid waste management, and minimizing disparity.

In relation to the post-2014 Plan of Action, Jordan renewed its own commitment to the importance of taking deliberate action for promoting sexual and reproductive health, including family planning programs, through the provision of quality information and services, especially to marginalized groups. This aims at reaching the peak of the demographic window of opportunity by 2030 and sustaining achievements.

Relevant United Nations Security Council Resolutions (UNSCR)

UNSCR 1325 on Women, Peace and Security: A national plan of action was developed in this regard through a consultative process.

UNSCR 2250 on Youth, Peace & Justice: Jordan pushed the Agenda for SCR 2250. For example, a global meeting took place in 2015 in Amman, before the Security Council adopted the Resolution. This is the first resolution that deals specifically with the role of young people in issues of peace and security. Hence, the Resolution represents an important landmark for the recognition of the positive role young people can play in conflicts and post-conflict settings. The most important fact about this Resolution is that it is legally binding. For instance, the title of Resolution is “Maintenance of International Peace and Security” which is a reference to Chapter 7, Article 39 in the UN Charter. Security Council Resolutions under Chapter 7 are binding on Member States.

This global policy framework was adopted on the premise that long-lasting peace cannot be built, without protecting the lives and dignity of young people, and meaningfully engaging them in building peace and security. It explores how conflict impacts young people's lives and what must be done to mitigate its effects, as well as how youth can be involved in creating peaceful communities.

UNSCR 2250 is important because it supports a new, positive narrative about youth, providing them with recognition, legitimacy and visibility on the international, political scene. It urges Member States to increase inclusive representation of young people in institutions and improve mechanisms for the prevention and resolution of conflict so as to counter violent extremism. It calls for an increase in political, financial, technical and logistical support to enhance the participation of youth in peace efforts, while taking their needs into account. On the ground, it promotes youth representation and participation, and fosters partnerships around peace and security. Practically, it provides tools for countering violent extremism and ensures global accountability.

The Rights to Health and Education

The rights to health and basic education, set out in various conventions, continued to be pursued centrally so as to ensure the attainment of the MDGs and SDGs alike. The general extension of health and education services across the Nation has been achieved for some time now. This includes the access to free and compulsory basic education for both girls and boys. However, respective assessments, carried out below, show existing regional and social inequalities. In this respect, special attention is paid, so that qualitative aspects of these core services can be addressed. The protection and – most particularly - participation rights enshrined in the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) will need to continue to be monitored closely.

Progress continues to be made in regard to the performance of public Social Protection programmes and the Social Protection Floor which was put in place during the previous UNDAF cycle. As has been noted below in the poverty analysis section, cash transfers were used to replace an inefficient fuel subsidy, and other benefits and emergency cash assistance programmes - channelled through the National Aid Fund (NAF), the Zakat Fund, and the Ministry of Social Development (MoSD) with better coordination - are still required. Government efforts have been focused on reducing broad-brush subsidies. The adoption of tested approaches should also enable better targeting of assistance provided to poor people in need.

International Environmental Agreements

Jordan has entered into a number of international, environmental agreements that require the basic environmental rights of its citizens to be ensured. While there is no single legal international text that directly covers environmental rights in their totality, obliging State Parties to ensure legal follow-up, three elements can be considered as integral to any human rights. These elements include:

The general right to a clean and safe environment included in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights;

The right of working to protect the environment and which is directly linked to political and civil rights in addition to the right of assembly and public action through popular organizations;

The right of access to environment-related information and participation in decision-making.

The Ministry of Environment is the national focal point for the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), along with several other public sector agencies, enjoying environment-related mandates. As in a number of other cases, better inter-ministerial coordination is needed to ensure effective implementation thereof.

In 2012, Jordan joined the Climate and Clean Air Coalition. It is an active partner in the CCAC Assembly and the Working Group. In January 2015, the CCAC approved the funding of an institutional strengthening project, carried out under SNAP (Supporting National Action and Planning on Short-Lived Climate Pollutants).

In 2005, The Government signed the Hyogo Framework for Action on Disaster Risk Reduction, so as to tackle the latest situation regarding the national implementation plan, since Jordan's vulnerability to a range of environmental hazards and challenges is significant, including its position on the Dead Sea Fault Line.

Jordan is one of the countries adopting the New Urban Agenda at HABITAT III, the United Nations Conference on Housing and Sustainable Urban Development⁶¹, representing a new framework that lays out how cities should be planned and managed to best promote sustainable urbanization. The conference aims at “reinvigorating” the global political commitment to the sustainable development of towns, cities and other human settlements, both rural and urban.⁶²

Jordan’s fifth national report on the implementation of the Convention on Biological Diversity was submitted in September 2014⁶³. The Kingdom has also completed its National Biodiversity Strategy and Action plan (NBSAP)⁶⁴. A particular focus by the Government of Jordan is currently placed on the Nagoya Protocol on Access to Genetic Resources and the Fair and Equitable Sharing of Benefits Arising from their Utilization⁶⁵ under the Convention on Biological Diversity. However, the status of biodiversity in Jordan remains limited and is facing numerous challenges and constraints.

Tobacco Convention

Jordan submitted a report on its implementation of the Framework Convention on Tobacco Control in April 2014. The next report is due to be submitted in early 2018.

Beyond the core of international conventions set forth above, Jordan is also an active member of the global development community, participating in most major, global and regional conferences over the recent decades. Primary elements of these evolving global agendas and declarations have found their way into the national plans and policies – the most recent of which include the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda and the UNFCCC climate change imperatives. As can be seen above, Jordan submits periodic treaty progress reports as per respective requirements. Among others, Jordan is a party to:

- The World Health Assembly resolutions, such as those on health promotion and healthy lifestyles, mental health, prevention of violence, youth health, as well as prevention of mental, neurological and psychosocial disorders;
- The Arab Charter on Human Rights, the Cairo Declaration on Human Rights in Islam and outcome declarations;
- Declarations of a number of regional conferences on a broad spectrum of developmental issues, focusing on different societal and age groups;
- The Beijing Platform for Action (1995) - approved without reservations -;
- The Outcome Declaration of the UN Special Sessions on Children and HIV/AIDS;
- The agendas and frameworks emerging from many environmental conferences, including the UN Environment Assembly, supporting a resolution at its 2nd meeting in May 2016 on protection of the environment in areas affected by armed conflict (Resolution 2/15)⁶⁶.

61- Quito, 17-20 October

62- The product of that reinvention, along with pledges and new obligations, is being referred to as the New Urban Agenda. That agenda will set a new global strategy around urbanization for the next two decades

63- <https://www.cbd.int/doc/world/jo/jo-nr-05-en.pdf>

64- <https://www.cbd.int/doc/world/jo/jo-nbsap-v2-en.pdf>

65- <https://www.cbd.int/abs/doc/protocol/nagoya-protocol-en.pdf>

66- http://www.unep.org/about/sgb/cpr_portal/Portals/50152/2-15/K1607252_UNEPEA2_RES15E.pdf

Convention on the Status of Refugees.

While the Kingdom is not party to the 1951 Convention on the Status of Refugees, its approach vis-à-vis the large incoming refugee populations has been exemplary. For much of the duration of the Syrian crisis, Jordan maintained an open border, and sheltered more than 700,000 refugees coming from Syria, Iraq, Sudan, Somalia and other countries. Despite the prolonged nature of the conflict and limited national resources available to address its impact, Jordan has, progressively, adopted respective policies that ensure that the rights of refugees are respected, including the access to education, livelihoods, safety and security, as well as the provision of material assistance required to meet basic needs. Jordan has, closely and effectively, cooperated with national and international humanitarian actors to address refugee and host community needs, impacted by the crisis. Despite being non-Party to the Refugee Convention, Jordan continues to interpret and, in some instances, to amend law and procedure in ways favorable to the protection of refugees, including on issues concerning civil status documentation, education, medical care, and employment.

Jordan became a party to the Mine Ban Treaty in 1999, with the National Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Law coming into force in April 2008.

Pillar 1. People

“We are determined to end poverty and hunger, in all their forms and dimensions, and to ensure that all human beings can fulfil their potential in dignity and equality and in a healthy environment”⁶⁷

Pillar 1 – The human, or social sector, contains the people-centred SDGs. Since the overall and most challenging stated aim of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development is that of eradicating poverty such that no one is left behind, special significance is attached to this sector. The assessment that follows is broken down into the sub-sectors encompassing the SDGs, as follows:

SDG 1 - No Poverty;

SDG 2 - Zero Hunger;

SDG 3 - Good Health & Well-Being;

SDG 4 - Quality Education;

SDG 5 - Gender Equality; and

SDG 10 - Reduced Inequalities (Which is discussed within each of the areas above).

In overall terms and with regard to respective poverty indicators, Jordan’s Human Development Index (HDI) value for 2015 was 0.748 — which puts the Country in the high human development category — at position 80 out of 188 countries.⁶⁸ Jordan has fallen three places, compared to the previous two years. In overall terms, this represents an increase of 25.8 points since 1980. In the same period, life expectancy at birth increased by 7.8 years, while mean and expected years of schooling increased by 6.8 and 1.6 years, respectively. Whereas, the Gross National Income (GNI) per capita increased by about 24.1 percent between 1980 and 2014.⁶⁹ The broad brush trends are, therefore, favorable and should bode well for the future.

67- P2 transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development – Resolution Adopted by the UN General Assembly, 25 September 2015

68- P2 HDR 2015, Work for Human Development, A Briefing Note for Countries on the HDR - UNDP

69- P7 HDR 2015, Work for Human Development, A Briefing Note for Countries on the HDR - UNDP



Similarly, Jordan has made significant progress in some of the MDGs, notably in the education and healthcare sectors. However, some unfinished businesses remain in a number of areas in which the Country fell short of the targets. These targets are particularly related to poverty reduction, as well as employment and gender parity.⁷⁰ Hence, these areas are considered as strong candidates to receive more intensive priority and support by the UN during the upcoming 2018 – 2022 period.⁷¹

Stock-taking progress against the MDGs represents some important risk management lessons to be learned within the context of this CCA for the SDG Agenda going forward. For example, the 2010 MDG report illustrated Jordan's considerable progress towards meeting most of the MDG targets. By 2010, MDG 2 had been achieved, and the achievement of MDG 5 and 6 was deemed possible. Targeted policy actions were also highlighted to achieve MDG 1, 3, 4 and 7.

Since the production of that 2010 MDG report, Jordan and the surrounding region have, however, witnessed significant economic and social change, as a fresh set of unanticipated challenges came to the fore. The 2008 Global Financial Recession took full effect, while in 2010 Jordan was faced with the repercussions of the “Arab Spring”, manifesting a number of challenges in creating cogent policy directions for the Country. Regional instability severely impacted on the tourism sector, one of Jordan's key industries and revenue earners. At the same time, one of Jordan's undiversified energy supply lines were massively disrupted, hurting the central treasury equally hard.

In 2011, Jordan started to deal with the impact of the Syrian refugee crisis, with over 655,000 registered Syrian refugees having arrived by 2015, and up to 750,000 unregistered refugees entering the borders as of early 2014.⁷² At the MDG timeframe mid-point, Jordan was broadly on track to achieve the majority of its MDG targets, but by the two-third points around 2010, it became increasingly apparent that - faced with multiple major exogenous challenges - a different development trajectory would need to be adopted.

Despite these challenges, the Government has clearly maintained a policy position, with persistent poverty rates at the national and local levels constituting the foremost social challenges confronting the Kingdom, coupled with such large development variations between governorates.⁷³ There is also considerable concern that - despite the high economic growth witnessed until 2009-, poverty and unemployment remained deeply entrenched.⁷⁴ The scourge of such structural unemployment, especially among Jordanian youth and women, is discussed extensively in the respective gender and prosperity sections below.

70- P.3 Jordan MDG Report 2015 (Final)

71- UN Steering Committee, Minutes of 1st August 2016

72- Department of Syrian Refugees of the Public Security Department of Jordan (PSD)

73- P.7 Executive Development Plan (2016 – 2018)

74- P.172 Executive Development Plan (2016 – 2018)

No Poverty

As the 2013 – 2020 Jordan Poverty Reduction Strategy and the Jordan MDG Report 2015 attest, poverty is a complex and multi-dimensional phenomenon.⁷⁵ The latest poverty-related documented figures for Jordan were extracted for the year 2010, making it difficult to effectively measure the Country's progress on eradicating poverty⁷⁶ at the end of the MDG process. Despite these shortcomings, the poverty profile of the Kingdom is set out in the paragraphs immediately below.

Available data show that abject poverty - which is equal to an expenditure of \$474.50 per individual per annum (or \$39.5 per individual a month) - has historically been very low in Jordan and continues to be so, standing at a rate of 0.32% in 2010. However, the abject poverty rate, along with the total number of poor households falling below it, has steadily been rising since 2002. Abject poverty stood at a rate of 0.21%, rising to 0.25% in 2006, and to 0.26% in 2008, before reaching its current rate.⁷⁷ This puts the total number of households, experiencing abject income poverty in 2010, at 2,206, which equates to 19,540 individuals. Such an increase coincides with factors, outlined in the introduction to this Section and associated with the multiple impacts of each of the 2008 financial crisis, regional instability from 2010, and the 2011 Syrian crisis. All of these factors, combined with a growing population, mean that the abject poverty rates in Jordan appear to have reverted to and even exceeded their 2002 levels.⁷⁸

When looking at absolute poverty, defined by the United Nations as 'a condition characterized by severe deprivation of basic human needs, including food, safe drinking water, sanitation facilities, health, shelter, education and information'⁷⁹ and set at an expenditure of US \$1,149 per individual per annum (or \$95.7 per individual per month), the figures stand at 14.4% in 2010. This amounts to a total of 118,995 households (or 876,590 individuals) experiencing income poverty across the Country.⁸⁰ In 2002, the absolute poverty figures stood at 14.2%, falling to 13% in 2006, and then rising to 13.3% in 2008. This indicates that absolute poverty decreased by about 1% between 2002 and 2008. The 2010 absolute poverty rate, however, cannot be directly compared to those registered in 2002, 2006 and 2008, since they were calculated using the bottom 20% of the population as a reference group, while the 2010 poverty line calculation used the bottom 30% of the population as a reference group in order to better reflect consumption patterns.⁸¹

According to the Government calculations, set out in the Jordan Poverty Reduction Strategy (2013-2020), the absolute poverty rate in Jordan did - in fact - fall during the 2002 to 2010 period, with an increased rate of reduction during the 2008-2010 period. Despite this fall, the total number of households under the absolute poverty line has steadily increased.⁸²

The World Bank also mentioned the fragility of Jordan's relatively low head-count poverty, which remains at around 14 percent, since up to one third of the population experiences transitions into poverty during a year. Furthermore, the lower quintile household expenditures will be squeezed by gradual adjustments in energy and transport costs. Although access to social services is highly available, there is considerable variability in quality due to financing and delivery mechanisms adopted, especially in the healthcare sector.⁸³ Hence, there is considerable public dissatisfaction with the risk of poverty, the lack of job market dynamism and the cost of living⁸⁴, and a more general sense that Jordan should be doing better. Hence, faithfully implementing the 2030 'Leave No-One Behind' Agenda will be challenging against this backdrop.

75- P.6 Jordan Poverty Reduction Strategy (2013 – 2020)

76- P.13 Jordan MDG Report 2015 (Final)

77- P.13 Jordan MDG Report 2015 (Final)

78- Jordan Poverty Reduction Strategy (2013-2020)

79- Para 10 World Summit for Social Development - Programme of Action

80- P.13 Jordan MDG Report 2015 (Final)

81- P.13 Jordan MDG Report 2015 (Final)

82- P.13 Jordan MDG Report 2015 (Final)

83- P.iii World Bank – Systemic Country Diagnostic, February 2016

84- P.1 World Bank – Systemic Country Diagnostic, February 2016

In terms of the regional poverty profile, variations in the 2010 absolute poverty rate considerably differ by governorate, from as little as 11.4% in Amman to as high as 26.6% in Ma'an. Whilst the highest poverty rate was seen in the governorate of Ma'an, the highest total numbers of poor were seen in the cities of Amman (36,892 households or 268,545 individuals), Irbid (22,381 households or 163,933 individuals), and Zarqa (17,866 households or 128,055 individuals); reflecting their far greater populations. The lowest total numbers of poor people were observed in the governorates of Tafilah (1,772 households or 14,244 individuals), Jerash (1,786 households or 11,998 individuals) and Madaba (2,704 households or 23,347 individuals).⁸⁵

The highest poverty rates exist in rural areas (16.8 percent), compared to urban ones (13 percent) despite the fact that the sheer number of poor citizens in urban areas is much higher. Whereas, the number of people at risk of poverty is approximately double those numbers⁸⁶. Pockets of poverty, where rates are 25 percent or above, exist in 27 locations.⁸⁷ Hence, greater policy coordination and integration of measures and approaches, and sharpening of the poverty reduction target for 'final mile' impact are, therefore, required.^{88 89}

According to the 2010 poverty study, Jordanian children and youth experienced poverty more than any other age groups. Most of the poor are below the age of 25, and 67.2 percent of those in the poorest quintile were under 25 years of age. Families with three or more children were more likely to be poor than families with fewer children (poverty rate of 7.1 percent among families with no children, compared to 28 percent among families with three or more children).⁹⁰

With respect to children protection and child labor combat, the expansion of the National Framework to Combat Child Labour (NFCL) is required to be updated and applied to all children in Jordan. Hence, the promotion of stronger linkages between humanitarian actors and national institutions efforts to collaboratively combat child labor should remain a priority. This implies the adoption of a more robust system to identify, withdraw, support and rehabilitate children for the National Framework to Combat Child Labour to prove its effectiveness.⁹¹

With regard to disability and while significant steps have been taken to strengthen national institutions and laws, data also indicated that persons with disabilities continue to suffer a considerable disadvantage. Hence, women with disabilities continue to experience marginalization and more limited opportunities in having access to decent work opportunities and quality education, in comparison to their peers.

In relation to social safety nets and social protection measures, Jordan has, in 2014, introduced a new social security law in a progressive attempt to address some of the main challenges and improve access to the formal social welfare system. This included some notable milestones in the area of social protection. The pension system was, therefore, expanded to include self-employed citizens, and the new law also introduced unemployment insurance benefits and maternity insurance.⁹²

This important development made Jordan the first country in the Middle East to boast a maternity insurance scheme, providing maternity cash benefits (even though the Social Security Law of 2010 had previously introduced these provisions, it was a temporary law). It is noteworthy to mention that the new law has been introduced in line with international labor standards. Jordan has, also, ratified the 1952 Social Security (Minimum Standards) Convention No. 102, making it the first country in the Middle East to have ratified this flagship social security convention.⁹³

85- Jordan MDG Report 2015 (Final)

86- P.172 Executive Development Plan (2016 – 2018)

87- Pockets of poverty are present in the following Governorates: Ma'an (6), Mafraq (6), Ajloun (3), Aqaba (3), Karak (3), Balqa (2), Irbid (2), Tafilah (1), and Zarqa (1) P.172 Executive Development Plan 2016 - 2018

88- P.176 Executive Development Plan 2016 - 2018

89- P.7 Jordan Poverty Reduction Strategy (2013 – 2020)

90- Jordan Poverty Reduction Strategy (2013 - 2020)

91- P.37 Jordan Decent Work Country Diagnostic, ILO, July 2016

92- P.30 Jordan Decent Work Country Diagnostic, ILO, July 2016

93- P.30 Jordan Decent Work Country Diagnostic, ILO, July 2016

The use of cash transfers - as compensation for the 2011 removal of fuel subsidies - also represented an ambitious reform proposal. Yet, the Government was able to carry this through, while maintaining the belief that the transfer would only be active when oil prices were high. The information base, developed for an extensive means-tested safety net, is now in place, and this will be further strengthened upon the completion of the National Unified Registry.⁹⁴

However, one of the principal social protection mechanisms - the unemployment insurance scheme - still needs to be reformed to provide greater income security to unemployed persons. By the Government's own admission, a large swathe of working population is still not covered by any social protection scheme. According to SSC figures, between 27 and 36 percent of Jordanian workers hold contracts without any form of social insurance specified.⁹⁵ As per the JRP, the Government is, therefore, faced with the dual challenge of expanding the scope and reach of its income security programmes for persons of active working age, whilst also providing basic needs assistance to Syrian refugees and host communities affected by the crisis.⁹⁶

Efforts have been made by the Government, supported by the UNCT over the recent UNDAF, to promote a more comprehensive approach to the social protection floor in Jordan.⁹⁷ Hence, there is a current need to ensure the financial sustainability of the social security system in the long run. This will, therefore, enhance the coherence of its pension system and better harmonize public and private social security pension schemes in order to minimize inefficiencies. These measures will help prevent people from falling into poverty and guarantee the portability of benefits across various schemes. Hence, an SPF coordination mechanism needs to be established to ensure that no overlapping or collision of benefits happens and thus, make sure that no person - eligible to a benefit - will be left behind.⁹⁸ Adherence to this principle becomes a critical element of the 'Leave No-One Behind' goals of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.



94- P.30 Jordan Decent Work Country Diagnostic, ILO, July 2016

95- According to the JRP, over half (52 percent) of Jordanian workers in fact hold contracts without any form of social insurance specified, whereas another 40 percent of the workforce is in informal employment. Of these receiving social insurance, less than half (40 percent) are eligible for insurance against work injuries, whilst a mere 19 percent old age, disability and death insurance, and only 5 percent have insurance against unemployment. Just over half (55 percent) of working women receive maternity insurance. The working poor, who in fact constitute more than half (55.2 percent) of the working-age population living below the poverty line, are ineligible for support from the National Aid Fund. For the unemployed, Jordan also still lacks any employment guarantee schemes that would guarantee employment for a certain number of days paying minimum wage.

96- P.37 Jordan Decent Work Country Diagnostic, ILO, July 2016

97- P.18 Jordan United Nations Development Assistance Framework (2013-2017)

98- P.37 Jordan Decent Work Country Diagnostic, ILO, July 2016

The long-term presence of Syrian refugees in Jordan can be seen as both a challenge to poverty and an opportunity alike. However, emphasis must first be placed on the fact that the vast majority of Syrian refugees are very or extremely vulnerable.⁹⁹ The poverty rate of Syrian refugees is higher in Jordan than in Lebanon, and there is evidence that poverty among refugees has increased by several percentage points between 2013 and 2015.¹⁰⁰

Not all Syrians are poor. A number of refugees comes with requisite skills that can be utilized for productive purposes, and not necessarily at the expense of their Jordanian counterparts. An enlarged population brings additional demands for goods and services, and although this may initially incur inflationary pressure, the market is adept at adjusting in response to additional demands.

Underlying Causes of Poverty in Jordan

- Within Jordan, there are several structural causes that conspire to keep a segment of the population in poverty, and a considerable cohort of the population within a zone of vulnerability.
- Jordan is a relatively small, service-based economy that lacks a sufficiently strong, diverse, competitive, job-creating dimension that has yet been able to permeate deeply into and across the entirety of the Jordanian society. Jordan's prosperity is also stymied by a very poor, natural resource endowment. Projected growth, in the range of 3 to 4 percent, will be insufficient for significant poverty reduction going forward.¹⁰¹ Many of the challenges are, thereby, inextricably linked to the Prosperity and Planet pillar discussions outlined below. Jordan's key solution, as identified in the National Human Resources Strategy (2016 – 2025) is through investing deeply and systematically in education and talent.
- A mindset exists¹⁰² whereby Jordanians are reluctant to take up jobs in the lower vocational sectors, as they are considered too menial. Young people especially would seem to prefer unemployment to the stigma of working in these areas (Culture of shame). This is an impediment and a lost opportunity, linked to the prosperity and natural resources - including agricultural - sections below.
- Closely associated with the point above, is the challenge of expectation – for it is widely viewed as being the duty of the Government to provide a job or vocation in life rather than the enterprise of the individual to search it out. Whilst enterprise and aspiration do exist within young people, these attributes are not always accompanied by practically-oriented, problem solving, critical thinking and life skills that enable the youth to succeed. Hence, the Government has, traditionally, occupied a rather-patriarchal posture towards providing jobs in the past – one that it cannot be sustained – providing a strong link to the 'Strong Institutions' sector set out below.
- The Government has long been the beneficiary of significant forms of donor assistance. Hence, it has not always had to face some of the tough fiscal choices that are still needed to tackle underlying attitudes and expectations, which actually serve to hold the country back from realizing its true potential. A number of Jordanians that are considered 'smart', in this regard, have been inspired to work overseas. Whilst this generates significant remittances by return as well as a potential source of domestic investment, it, nevertheless, also counts as a 'brain drain' on the national economy given the fact that their entrepreneurial flair is directed elsewhere.¹⁰³ A more dynamic public sector would also translate into a more enterprising private sector, and could lead to a more productive environment for holding public-private partnerships.

99- P.9 Government of Jordan/UN Needs Assessment Review 2014

100- Need source. P.4 UNHCR 3RP Syrian Crisis Mid-Year Report 2016 <http://www.3rpsyriacrisis.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/09/3RP-Mid-year-Report-Final.pdf>

101- For a more detailed discussion, see P.iii World Bank – Systemic Country Diagnostic, February 2016

102- Sometimes expressed as a societal norm, value-system or at the level of culture

103- Migrant remittances have recently gain more attention among the international community through being factored into the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG). The Target 10.c. (By 2030, reduce to less than 3 per cent the transaction costs of migrant remittances and eliminate remittance corridors with costs higher than 5 per cent) requires a number of aspects to be taken into consideration to understand the links between these private funds and development. Remittances are often conflated with diaspora investment, savings and other financial transactions. Therefore, remittances and diaspora engagement are a key element to the contribution of sustainable development. According to the Ministry of Labor, the size of Jordanian diaspora was 782,000 people in 2013, mainly residing in GCC, USA and West Bank & Gaza. Furthermore, the size of remittances reported by Jordan Central bank was 3,798 billion in 2015. This means that remittances have an early growth of 2.6 per cent between 2014 and 2015, and increased 36 per cent over the past 10 years. This implies recognizing the mutual effects of migration on development and of development (policies and practices) on migration. Indeed, migration is seen as the outcome of enhanced development (e.g. increased freedoms), as a driver of development (when people acquire skills, knowledge, financial capital through migration and have the opportunity to develop their full potential), but also as an inherent consequence of development-related initiatives, such as the effects of trade, evolution of agriculture, urbanization or other trends and policies that lead to migration or displacement.

- With the Jordanian population increasing significantly, there are too few ‘appropriate’ jobs being created against the volume of entrants to the job markets each year. Whereas, many of those who do enter the job market do not possess required skills and qualifications (linking to SDG 4 on education below). The Country is yet to mobilize itself to succeed so as to benefit from a demographic dividend as a result of the youth bulge. Youth - as seen from the discussion above - are too often falling into apathy, ambivalence, vulnerability, unemployment and poverty.
- In terms of direct poverty eradication policies and measures and whilst some good work has been accomplished, there has so far been an insufficient investment and sharpened policy focus on those ‘left behind’. Those most at risk appear to be present within a significant number of pockets, either rural or urban in character, or in marginalized social groups¹⁰⁴.
- There is insufficient ‘policy to action’ work being undertaken as to how Jordan will best take advantage of its demographic dividend. The latent talents, creative energies and skills of young people have not been fully considered to help break into areas of poverty reduction, social transformation and SDG attainment. Meanwhile youth, who should be at the forefront of dynamism, will continue to represent an untapped source of social and economic progress that could be better harnessed.
- A more assertive thrust of decentralization (under the peace, justice and strong institutions section below) will help accelerate access to further possibilities at sub-national levels and among communities. This would, therefore, help drive greater ownership, responsibility and engagement among stakeholders to be able to address development and poverty challenges through local solutions. Local partnership structures between public, private and community bodies should be encouraged to tackle priority local issues, including water, natural environment and social cohesion-related matters.
- Fundamental to the ‘Strong Institutions’ section below, citizen participation in policy making has mostly been lacking. The policy distance between the policy makers in Amman and the poorest and most vulnerable is too great. Hence, closer proximity, reach out, engagement of the poor through much stronger relations with civil society and community-based organisations, would enhance the quality of participatory policy making and – undoubtedly - its efficacy alike.
- Whilst efforts are being made to reform subsidy and welfare programmes, including the adoption of a more comprehensive approach to the social protection floor to ensure a better targeting for those most in need, these have so far not gone far enough. A considerable number of ‘inclusion errors’ remain apparent and social welfare system are still deemed inefficient.
- There is a large and - somewhat - unchartered informal sector in Jordan. Gradual, but systematic rationalization of this sector would allow more and more people to benefit from national welfare schemes, and, incrementally, begin to contribute a tax share to the treasury, however modestly. This would also help strengthen the social contract.
- One of the greatest challenges keeping Syrian refugees in Jordan poor is their legal access to a livelihood.¹⁰⁵ Whilst the Compact represents a significant breakthrough, its full implementation is required to address the challenge and the impact of increased legal work on poverty reduction, and welfare needs to be monitored and assessed.
- Jordan has also seen an increase in the urban community from 79 percent in 1995 to 83 percent in 2013, which has also given rise to a number of adverse outcomes, such as the increasing poverty and unemployment.¹⁰⁶ Given the very high population residing in cities, better urban management schemes could rapidly lead to gains in poverty reduction.

¹⁰⁴- Can we be more specific in terms of the names of particular social groups that are marginalized?

¹⁰⁵- Adoption of the Jordan Compact in London in February 2016 seeks to address this, but it is still too soon to gauge the effectiveness of such an approach

¹⁰⁶- P.4, The Third National Report on the HABITAT in cooperation with UN Program for Human Settlements, Sep. 2014

Zero Hunger

The MDG 1.3 target for Jordan, representing under 5 percent of the population being under-nourished, has been reached.¹⁰⁷ From the 1990-1992 baseline, 5.5 percent of Jordan's population was, at that time, undernourished. This rate increased to 6 percent in 2002-2003, returning to less than 5 percent of total population in the period 2008-2015.¹⁰⁸

Despite the progress achieved since the early 90's, Jordan is facing formidable challenges to maintaining and improving food and nutrition security in the country. The growing population, scarce and fragile natural resource base for food production, extreme water scarcity, degraded and marginal lands, frequent incidence of drought and high dependence on food imports all conspired to form major, long-term structural impediments to food security and nutrition. In addition, conflict and civil insecurity in neighbouring countries also posed serious challenges to trade and food security in Jordan. The high inflow of refugees, occurring as a result of the protracted crisis in Syria, compounds the problem further for both food supply and distribution infrastructure, resulting in increased local prices.¹⁰⁹

These challenges are structural in nature and make the Jordanian population highly vulnerable to internal and external fluctuations in food prices, supplies and supply lines. To address these challenges, the Government of Jordan, in cooperation with the UN, is formulating a national food security strategy, geared towards ensuring greater food security and resilience. This will seek to build further on the MDG gains in the SDG period ahead. The strategy will seek to better address the various food security risks and dimensions and act as an important policy instrument towards fulfilling a multi-sectorial approach to enhance food security and nutrition across the Kingdom.¹¹⁰

Underlying Causes of Food Insecurity in Jordan

Jordan faces a chronic challenge in several aspects of the 'supply chain' for food security, inextricably linked to the discussions and conclusions drawn in the 'Planet' section, set out under Pillar Four below:

- There is a close relationship between the 'Zero Hunger' SDG target and the whole of the 'Planet' section set out below, as well as the land use planning issues discussed in the 'Strong Institutions' section. Jordan's endowment of resources, in terms of land and water, is poor by comparison to most countries. In addition, there has been a deterioration of Jordan's natural resource base. Some of this is down to inefficient management and some others occurred as a result of natural features of desertification and increasingly climate change. This represents a risk of contest and conflict, as greater numbers of people, from an ever-increasing population, attempt to derive a food supply, and in some cases, a livelihood, from a shrinking resource base.
- The domestic agricultural sector is capable of supplying only around 10 percent of the basic food needs of the population. This means that the Kingdom is 90 percent dependent on the import of basic foodstuffs. In turn, the Country is highly vulnerable to increases in global food prices, which impacts on both local market prices and negatively on the national balance of payments deficit. The agricultural sector is not a major source of productivity or employment, nor do Jordanians particularly aspire to work in the sector. Despite high domestic unemployment, the agricultural sector is, however, dependent on migrant labor.

107- FAO Hunger Map 2015 cited on P.4 in the Jordan Draft MDG report

108- P.46 State of Food Insecurity in the World (SOFI) report for 2015, IFAD, FAO, WFP

109- P.18 Jordan MDG Report 2015 (Final)

110- P.18 Jordan MDG Report 2015 (Final)



- There is a naturally-close connection between agricultural land, food and water. Of concern, the agriculture sector is a major consumer of water – a further underlying cause of risk and insecurity. Although Jordan is also the fourth most water scarce country in the world, it has witnessed decades of under-investment in the water sector. This, in turn, has led to an out-of-date and inefficient water distribution system, hampered by leakage, theft, excessive consumption and inappropriate levels of subsidy.
- Underlying some of these concerns is the prospect for greater work moving forward around the SDG 12 on ‘Responsible Consumption’, in particular for water, with further implications for households, industrial and agricultural users.
- Food consumption habits are also to blame for nutritional deficiencies and their health impacts, with children and youth consuming more ‘junk food and drinks’. Greater emphasis is needed to be placed on food quality control. In addition, smoking habits are seriously detrimental to health.
- Halting the spread of urban areas over agricultural lands is critical to the sustainability, given the fact that agricultural land is very limited in supply (7.8 percent of the area of the country) and vital for food security and local rural economies to thrive. Hence, policy frameworks and enforcement action to prevent the unplanned expansion of urban areas over agricultural land need significant strengthening.
- More generally, food security is also linked to issues of economic access, as well as factors, such as levels of education and social status of the household. These are strong underlying factors that need sharpened and more targeted poverty reduction measures.



Good Health & Well-Being

Regarding population health, the overall average life expectancy at birth has been stable at 74.4 years during the 2007 - 2013 period of time (increased for males from 70.6 years in 2006 to 72.4 in 2013 and 72.4 for females in 2006 to 76.7 in 2013)¹¹¹.

Jordan also made significant progress in reducing the under-five mortality rate between 1990 and 2013. Under-five mortality has declined by 46 percent since late 1990s, from 37 deaths per 1,000 children to 19 deaths per 1,000 children¹¹² in 2013.

¹¹¹- National Health Sector Strategy/NHSS (2016-2020)

¹¹²- Levels and trends in child mortality. Report 2014. Estimates developed by the UN Inter-agency Group for Child Mortality Estimation. New York: United Nations Children's Fund; 2014 (http://www.childmortality.org/files_v19/download/unicef-2013-child-mortality-report-LR-10_31_14_195.pdf). P.5 HDR 2015, Work for Human Development, A Briefing Note for countries on the HDR - UNDP

The neonatal mortality rate accounts for 66 percent of under-five deaths in Jordan. The leading causes of under-5 mortality are acute respiratory infection (10.0%), prematurity (28.0%), intrapartum-related complications (10.0%), and congenital anomalies (23.0%). The neonatal mortality rate is 11.2 (per 1,000 live births in 2013). Inequity is associated with socio-economic status and mother's education level, ranging from 15 deaths per 1,000 live births for children of women with higher education to 25 per 1,000 with only preparatory education. The rate is almost three times higher in the poorest wealth quintile than the wealthiest at 29 per 1,000 and 11 per 1,000, respectively.¹¹³

Under-5 mortality is nearly three times higher among children in the poorest households (29 deaths per 1,000 live births), compared to the wealthiest ones (11 deaths per 1,000 live births). Even though a vast majority of Jordan's residents live in urbanized areas, geographic variation in child health outcomes remains a concern.¹¹⁴ Under-5 mortality rates are higher in the south of Jordan (26 per 1,000) than in the north (19 per 1,000) and central regions (20 per 1,000); and varies by governorate from 16 deaths per 1,000 live births in Ajloun to 31 deaths per 1,000 live births in Tafilah.

Vaccination coverage in Jordan has increased by 7% - from 87% of children fully immunized in 2007 to 93% in 2012. 94% of children were vaccinated against measles, including children who have received either the measles or the MMR vaccine. Coverage for the first and second doses of DPT is slightly higher (about 99% for both) than that for the third dose of DPT (98%). DPT and polio vaccines are often administered at the same time so they have similar coverage. The 2012 Population and Family Health Survey in Jordan has illustrated that 32% of children under-five suffer from anaemia, 8% from stunting and 2% from wasting, and 3% are underweight while 4% are overweight.¹¹⁵

As an indication of the success of the immunization programme in reaching out to all population sub-groups, vaccination coverage is high regardless of background characteristics. However, the proportion of vaccination cards (80%) is lower in 2012, compared to data from the 2007 JPFHS (90%).¹¹⁶ Vaccination coverage is lower among children of birth order six and higher. Vaccination coverage is also lower among children in the South, and the Badia.

Geographically, vaccination coverage varies from 79% of children in Ma'an to of 96% in Jerash and Zarqa. Children of mothers with no education show relatively lower vaccination coverage (70%) than children of mothers with preparatory or higher education (94-95%). There are also differences in vaccination coverage by household wealth quintile. Children in the poorest households are least likely to be fully vaccinated (89%), while children living in households in the middle wealth quintile are most likely to be fully vaccinated (97%).

113- JPFHS 2012

114- JPFHS 2012

115- NHSS (2016-2020)

116- Jordan Population and Family Health Survey 2007

The primary aim of MDG 5 was to improve maternal health, therein reducing the maternal mortality ratio by three-quarters between 1999 and 2015, and ensuring universal access to reproductive health. The maternal mortality ratio declined between 1990 and 2013 from 86 to 50 maternal deaths per 100 000 live births. In a study conducted by Jordan Higher Population Council (2007-2008), the maternal mortality ratio is 19 per 100,000 live births. A process to verify the discrepancy is currently on-going. In terms of access to reproductive health, almost all women (99%) in Jordan receive professional antenatal care and give birth at a medical facility, with three in four births delivered by a doctor. 76% of women make seven or more antenatal care visits during the course of their pregnancy. Post-natal care for the mother within the critical first two days after a delivery was accessed by 82% of mothers in 2012. This percentage is higher among women aged between 20 and 49 years old, as well as among mothers of first-order births, women in rural areas in the South region and in Aqaba, women with higher education and women in the highest wealth quintile.

Women who were pregnant with their first child were also more likely to receive almost all components of antenatal care, and women with secondary or higher education are more likely to have received almost all routine tests than women with less education. A higher proportion of women in the highest wealth quintiles received comprehensive antenatal care, compared to those in lower wealth quintiles. Urban women were more likely than rural women to receive comprehensive antenatal care. Whereas, women in the central part of Jordan and the non-Badia areas are more likely to receive comprehensive antenatal care than women in the north and south regions and in the Badia.

This is not the case for vulnerable/low-educated women and women from other population groups, and it is not at all universal for post-natal care services. Not all women have equal access to Anti-Natal Care (ANC) services. Mothers, with no education, are 12 times more likely not to have any ANC visits than mothers with average education. Registered Syrian refugees show particular inequity, with one study finding that only half of pregnant women in Za'atari and only 30 percent of pregnant refugees in host communities were receiving ANC.

It is noteworthy to mention that the reduction of maternal mortality ratio by three quarters has been achieved,¹¹⁷ although the latest figures are drawn from 2007 and still need to be verified¹¹⁸. The latest figures, published by the UN, record the MMR at 50 deaths per 100,000 live births¹¹⁹, while the Government states the MMR is at 19.1.¹²⁰ The 2013-2017 Jordan Ministry of Health Strategic Plan commits Jordan to continue pursuing MDG 5 by reducing the maternal mortality rate to 12 deaths per 100,000 cases.

Whereas, the rate of prevalence of contraceptives has increased to 61% when last measured, up from 40.2% in 1990, but still short of the MDG target of 65.8%.


In order to achieve demographic opportunity, Jordan is committed to decreasing the total fertility rate, which has reduced from 4.5 in 2000 to 3.2 in 2013, but still ranks as one of the highest in the region. The Government intends to achieve this through collective national efforts to improve access and quality of reproductive health services and family planning. However, further efforts are required to ensure more informed decision-making is available to the population, covering marriage, child bearing, and complete scope of reproductive health issues.

117- (x) Trend in maternal mortality: 1990 to 2013. Estimates by WHO, UNICEF, UNFPA, the World Bank and the United Nations Population Division. Geneva: World Health Organization; 2014 (http://www.childmortality.org/files_v19/download/unicef-2013-child-mortality-report-LR-10_31_14_195.pdf)

118-

119- Table E, P.6 HDR 2015, Work for Human Development, A Briefing Note for countries on the HDR - UNDP

120- P. 145 Executive Development Plan (2016 – 2018)



While knowledge of basic family planning requirements is almost universal in Jordan, only 31.5 percent of youth aged between 15 and 24 years old have heard of reproductive health. Hence, more efforts need to be utilized to target this age group. Notwithstanding this apparent contradiction, the percentage of women using a contraceptive method is 61% of currently married women, with 42% using modern methods and 19% using traditional ones. The IUD is the most widely adopted modern method (21%), followed by the pill and male condom.

Overall, the use of any method among currently-married women has increased substantially in the last two decades, from 40% in 1990 to 56% in 2002, 59% in 2009, and finally to 61% in 2012. Since 1997, the increase has been steady but not as substantial as ever. Between 1997 and 2012, contraceptive use increased by just 15%¹²¹.

As expected, the use of contraception means increases steadily with women's education, ranging from 46% among women with no education to 65% among women with secondary education. However, it declines to 59% among women with higher education. It is also noteworthy to mention that the use of traditional methods increases steadily with all levels of education, from 14% among women with no education to 21% among women with higher education. Additionally, contraceptive use rises from 58% among women in poorest households to 64% among women in the fourth wealth quintile, and then falls slightly to 63% among women in the richest households.

Adolescents and youth lack of information and decision-making power about their bodies. The rejection to introduce reproductive health awareness education in schools has contributed to this, together with the lack of adolescents and youth tailored health services. Youth are also at risk of accidents, nutritional issues, smoking, drugs, and uninformed marriage decisions.

Gender-based violence has been significantly mounting, according to statistics provided by Family Protection Department. The reported cases have doubled during the 2007- 2011 period of time.

Communicable diseases remain a public health concern, especially with the resurgence of some diseases, exacerbated by the significant population increase brought about by forced migration to Jordan from Syria and elsewhere in the region since 2011. Accommodating the immediate and long-term needs of refugees has had an impact on Jordan at multiple levels. A measles outbreak occurred in 2013, affecting Syrian, Jordanian, and Iraqi children, and there are increasing cases of imported leishmaniasis. The threat of polio since the Syria (2013) and Iraq (2014) outbreaks continues and forces all countries in the region, including Jordan, to conduct several rounds of supplementary immunization.

During 2013-2014, about 34,314 cases of communicable diseases have been reported among Syrian refugees; of which 95% were diarrhoea cases. There have also been increasing cases of tuberculosis diagnosed amongst Syrians, including multi-drug resistant cases.

The prevalence rates of HIV/AIDS remain very low, and do not pose a significant risk to Jordan. According to the 2012-2013 Global AIDS Response Progress Report for Jordan, Jordan continues to have a low prevalence HIV epidemic. The total number of HIV and AIDS cases, registered between 1986 and 2013, is 1,026 (28% Jordanians and 72% non-Jordanians), and the cumulative number of deaths among people living with HIV at end of 2013 was 107 (78% males and 22% females). The cumulative number of HIV and AIDS cases, registered for Jordanians by 2013, is 283 (80% males and 20% females), while the total number of HIV and AIDS cases registered in 2013 for Jordanians was 19 (84% males and 16% females). Jordan is the first country in the Arab region to adopt a national policy on HIV and AIDS and World of Work in 2013. This marks an important step towards a comprehensive national response and the protection of rights at work in Jordan.

Growing burden of NCDs and injuries is of huge concern to achieve the commitments of the UN Political Declaration for the Prevention and Control of NCDs. Jordan has undergone a significant epidemiological transition towards non communicable diseases (NCDs) in recent years as a major cause of mortality and morbidity. Furthermore, Jordan is also experiencing a changing demographic profile, with increasing burden on national health care systems and services. There is a high burden of NCDs among refugees with high costs of secondary and tertiary care.

NCDs account for 76 percent of total deaths in Jordan and diabetes is estimated to be responsible for up to 7 percent of the total number of deaths, after cardiovascular diseases (35 percent), cancers (15 percent) and injuries (11 percent).¹²² According to respective studies conducted in 2009, up to 700 deaths per annum are also attributed to outdoor air quality,¹²³ associated with industrial emissions and vehicular traffic. This number is expected to grow, given increasing levels of air pollution and particulates in the atmosphere. National NCDs response shows signs of fragmentation within the health sector on service and governance levels, including planning and coordination, both in terms of key institutions involved and disease groups. Overall, there is little systematic involvement of all sectors relevant for a national NCDs response.

Determinants of poor health and unhealthy behaviors, such as tobacco use and unhealthy diets, are becoming increasingly prevalent in Jordan and are contributing to increased incidence of NCDs. Hence, addressing NCDs and chronic malnutrition (micronutrients deficiencies which also cause NCDs on the long run) and reducing behavioral risk factors, which are the major determinants for the development of cardiovascular diseases, diabetes cancer and chronic respiratory diseases, are a stated government top priorities in the health sector.¹²⁴

Tobacco is a major public health challenge in Jordan. Nearly 1 in 3 adults (29%) smoke cigarettes, while 1 in 5 (20.7%) of youth aged between 13 and 15 years old report having smoked argileh (also known as shisha waterpipe, narghile, or hookah).¹²⁵ Males use tobacco more than females; however, the sex difference is less marked among young people. While cigarettes remain the predominant form of tobacco product consumed by adults, argileh smoking is increasing in popularity among youth and young adult males and females.

Exposure to second-hand smoke (SHS) is also prevalent. 2010 estimates indicate that 68% of men and 47% of women were exposed to SHS. Among youth, aged between 13 and 15 years old, over half (51%) of them reported being around others who smoke in places outside their home, and 54% live in homes where others smoke in their presence. In 2007, tobacco consumption is significant even among health professionals. In this respect, 44% of nursing students were current smokers, and over 16% were also using other tobacco products.¹²⁶

122- (WHO 2014)

123- http://www.who.int/quantifying_ehimpacts/national/countryprofile/jordan.pdf?ua=1

124- Ministry of Health/WHO 2015 – Jordan 2025 – Towards National and Strategic Vision

125- Dar-Odeh, N., Bakri, F., Al-Omiri, M., Al-Mashni, H., Eimar, H., Khraisat, A. (2010). Narghile (waterpipe) smoking among university students in Jordan: Prevalence, Pattern and Beliefs, Harm Reduction Journal

In its 2012 Global Report on Mortality Attributable to Tobacco, the World Health Organization (WHO)¹²⁶ estimated that - for the year 2004 - tobacco was responsible for 12% of all deaths among people over 30 years of age in Jordan. Thus, about 1 out of every 8 deaths was caused by tobacco. Tobacco-attributable deaths were higher among men (196 per 100,000 men) compared to women (14 per 100,000 women), reflecting the gender differences in tobacco consumption.¹²⁷

Most tobacco-attributable deaths are due to chronic NCDs, with the tobacco-attributable death rate from NCDs about 35 times, compared to that for communicable disease.¹²⁸ Within this group, tobacco imposed the largest death burden on respiratory diseases (34% of all deaths), cancers (18%), and cardiovascular diseases (13%).¹²⁹

Cigarettes are the most popular tobacco product in Jordan, accounting for more than 97% of volume. Per capita consumption increased from 829 pieces in 2006 to 1,372 pieces in 2012, excluding contraband.¹³⁰ Trade reports estimated that 12% of the market was contraband in 2006.¹³¹

No recent data on mental illness prevalence in Jordan are available however, mental disorders account for 13% of the total global burden of disease. Stigma towards mental illness prevents patients from seeking treatment and widens the gaps for services.

Mental health (MH) services in Jordan are, somewhat, limited, mainly relying on expensive tertiary care in psychiatric hospitals instead of cost-effective primary health and community-based care. Child and adolescent mental health services are even more lacking. The primary health care (PHC) system is widely distributed, encompassing all governorates, including peripheral areas. However, the MH component is not well integrated within its services.

Through the Mental Health Gap Action Programme (mhGAP), WHO supported 45 PHC centres in 9 Jordanian governorates (including in the north: Irbid, Ma'raq, Jerash, and Ajloun; in the center: Amman, Zarqa, and Balqa; and in the south: Tafilah, Ma'an, and Karak), with approximately 180 primary health care staff. There is also a dearth of specialized HRH, including doctors and nurses, where the ratio of psychiatrists and nurses per 100,000 population does not exceed 10 and 0.04, respectively. Furthermore, mental illnesses are not usually covered by insurance in the private sector, which exacerbates the problem.¹³²

An assessment of the mental health and psychosocial support needs of displaced Syrians in Jordan¹³³ revealed that only 13.3% of Syrians with expressed MH problems indicated receive the needed support to address these problems. The study also found that displaced Syrians in Jordan experience a variety of Mental Health and PsychoSocial (MHPSS) problems, including distress, sadness, fear, anger, nervousness, disinterest and hopelessness.

In June 2016, WHO finalized a national, situational analysis and a roadmap of the mental health situation in Jordan, and is currently working with MOH and partners on updating the Mental Health National Action Plan.

In terms of disability and based on the 2010 UNDP data and the ESCWA and League of Arab States' report, disability prevalence in Jordan accounted for 1.9% of total population in 2010. Whereas, the WHO and the WB estimate that approximately 15% of the world population lives with disability, which is remarkably low given the widespread occurrence of risk factors and disability causes in the Country.

126- WHO (2009), Jordan Global Youth Tobacco Survey 2009, Geneva: World Health Organization

127- WHO (2012), WHO Global Report: Mortality Attributable to Tobacco, Geneva: World Health Organization

128- DHS, 2002, 2007, 2009, 2012 Demographic and Health Surveys Jordan

129- GHPSS (2007), Jordan Global Health Professionals Surveillance System 2007, World Health Organization

130- Eriksen, M., Mackay, J., & Ross, H. (2012), The Tobacco Atlas, New York, NY: World Lung Foundation, American Cancer Society

131- ERC Group. (2009), World Cigarette Survey

132- NHSS (2016-2020)

133- WHO, MOH, IMC and EMPHNET, 2014

This may be explained by the use of census data for measuring disability along with other factors, such as the presence of social stigma, which may discourage people from reporting disabilities, and therefore explain the very low disability prevalence. In respect of the disability type, 18.2% of cases diagnosed are due to locomotor issues, while 15.9% resulted from loss of vision, 15.5% from physical and health problems, 7.6% from multiple disabilities and 6.1% from mental problems.

Furthermore, the scope of implementation of the disability strategy has been limited. One major issue lies behind the fact that the definition of disabilities in legal provisions and policies continues to be based on medical and welfare views, without transitioning into a model, based on human rights principles and those set forth within the International Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. Finally, it is noteworthy to mention that it would be of great importance if data collection methodologies, especially censuses, aim at producing more accurate, detailed and comparable data on persons with disabilities.

Jordan has one of the most modern, but fragmented health systems in the Middle East. Its health system is a complex amalgam of three major sectors: Public, private, and donors. The public sector consists of two major public programs that finance as well as deliver care, consisting of the Ministry of Health (MOH) and the Jordanian Royal Medical Services (RMS). Other smaller public programs include several university-based programs, such as the Jordan University Hospital (JUH) in Amman and the King Abdullah Hospital (KAH) in Irbid.

Each of the health care subsectors has its own financing and delivery system, reflecting directly on the delivery of services among these sectors. Problems related to accessibility, equity, duplication of services, poor coordination among major providers, unregulated private sector, limited quality improvement programs, and inappropriate health information system are the main challenges facing all providers of health care in Jordan.

In Jordan, the health expenditure per capita remains high when compared with other upper middle-income countries. The size of the total health expenditure as a percentage of GDP has gradually decreased from 9.52% in 2009 to 7.58% in 2012, to come up again to 7.89% in 2013. The public health spending on health is also relatively high.¹³⁴

Moreover, pocket health expenditure increased from 26% of total health expenditure in 2012 to 28.8% in 2013, putting a certain segment of population at the risk of impoverishment. The proportion of expenditure on medicines, out of total health expenditure, has dropped from about 36% in 2008 to 26.75% in 2012 and to 26.6% in 2013. Whereas, spending on secondary healthcare services - in hospitals - accounts to about 75.5% of the public sector expenditure. The lower share of expenditure on primary health care calls for increase of allocations.

Providing primary, secondary and tertiary health care services to hundreds of thousands of new arrivals exacerbates the vulnerabilities of underprivileged segments of the population, and limits their access to basic services in the most affected governorates. The health sector has been particularly impacted, with extra costs brought about by the Syrian refugee crisis alone, estimated at over \$US 532 million during the 2016 – 2018 period of time.¹³⁵

Of great concern, Syrians refugees have stopped receiving free access to healthcare since November 2014, due to funding constraints. As a result, the percentage of Syrians, suffering from non-communicable diseases who were unable to access medication or health services, doubled from 24 percent in 2014 to 58 percent in 2015, due to payment inability¹³⁶. Current humanitarian funding is, therefore, supporting access to essential health services in primary and secondary care.

134- National Health Sector Strategy (NHSS 2016-2020)

135- Jordan Response Plan 2016 – 2018 – Executive Summary

136- According to the JRP, 86 percent of refugees live below the Jordanian poverty line.

The continuous arrival of refugees in Jordan continues to place ever-increasing demands on the national health system and its ability to deliver health services. The Health Sector Vulnerability Assessment identified a need for an additional 2,886 hospital beds and 22 comprehensive medical centres in Jordan, with 69% of additional hospital bed capacity and 83% of additional comprehensive health centre capacity required to cope with the impact of refugee access on the health system.

There are shortages of human resources for health, particularly in nursing and medical specialties, with variable availability across the Country. The SVA identified a need for an additional 1,022 doctors and 2,031 nurses in Jordan, with 88% and 90% of respective additional capacity required to cope with the additional burden of refugee access to the health system.¹³⁷

Jordan has high calibre health staff, however the numbers of these professionals were affected by the Syrian crisis. The ratio of doctors per 10,000 population has dropped from 28.6 before the Syrian crisis to 23.4 after the crisis, while nurses' ratio dropped from 44.8 to 36.6.¹³⁸

Since more than three decades, access to Universal Health Coverage became a strategic target for all successive governments in Jordan. A vision, strategy and roadmap to achieve universal health coverage by 2025 have recently been developed by a dedicated task force, led by the Ministry of Planning and International Cooperation. Results from Census for the Population and Housing in 2015 showed that health insurance coverage was 55% among the population and 68% among Jordanian citizens.

All citizens benefit from the Ministry of Health subsidized services. In addition the Ministry of Social Development provides poor citizens with health insurance. The Ministry of Health provides expensive medications, free of charge for patients who suffer from certain medical conditions (certain infectious diseases, cancer, kidney diseases, tuberculosis, AIDS, and addiction to alcohol and drugs) regardless of their ability to pay. Children, aged under six years old, can get insured free of charge. Meanwhile, pregnant women and elderly are also entitled to get health insurance from the Government at a subsidized premium.

A significant proportion of workers in the informal economic sector suffer from high, out-of-pocket expenditure for health-related matters, which as mentioned above, could drag them into poverty. Jordan has not yet developed a standardized poverty and vulnerability system, nor has it standardized means testing for the poor, which would serve to improve their access to healthcare services. Improving means-testing and extending health insurance so as to ensure reaching out to the poor, including the working force, is therefore necessary to enhance access to essential health care.¹³⁹

Regarding quality and despite the fact that enormous efforts are exerted towards including more facilities in the accreditation program, there is still a lack of necessary financial resources to include more public centres and hospitals program, as well as a lack of national clinical guidelines and protocols, coupled with a disparity in the quality of health services provided at the subsectors and different geographic regions level.¹⁴⁰

137- Ministry of Planning and Cooperation (MOPIC), Health Sector Vulnerability Assessment (SVA), 2015

138- The Impact of the Syrian Crisis on the Health Sector in Jordan: Challenges and Proposed Health Policies, Conference on «Refugees in Jordan: A Question of Society and the Media», Jordan Media Institute in collaboration with the Norwegian Institute of Journalism, the Dead Sea: 8-10/12/2014

139- P.30 Jordan Decent Work Country Diagnostic, ILO, July 2016

140- According to the JRP, 86 percent of refugees live below the Jordanian poverty line.

Underlying Causes of Poor Health in Jordan

- Despite the improvements witnessed in some of the MDG areas, inequity in maternal and child health indicators still persists. Hence, the results achieved should be capable of being maintained, strengthened and closely monitored.
- Jordan's burden of mortality and morbidity from NCDs is increasing. This necessitates the strengthening of the governance of NCDs response to achieve the commitments of the UN Political Declaration for the Prevention and Control of NCDs. This would strongly position NCD interventions under the Jordan 2025 "Towards National and Strategic Vision" and the 2016-2018 Executive Development Plan. An inter-sectoral National Action Plan on NCDs - currently missing - would include surveillance, prevention and reduction of risk factors, including tobacco use, and heightened awareness raised on the fact that the Nation's health is primarily linked to an unhealthy diet, physical inactivity and health care interventions at primary healthcare level. Personal lifestyle choices feature prominently in the health programme, with existing gaps being exacerbated by the refugee influx. Air quality deterioration, especially in cities, is, therefore, having an impact on health and thus, is considered a rising concern.¹⁴¹
- The reduction of tobacco prevalence in Jordan requires a solid alignment of national tobacco control laws with the WHO Framework Convention on Tobacco Control (WHO FCTC), as well as with the international treaty ratified by the Government of Jordan in August 2004, and a full implementation of the six components of MPOWER policy measures so as to guide the enforcement of Jordanian policies and laws. Hence, the WHO FCTC Protocol to eliminate illicit trade in tobacco products should, therefore, be ratified by the Country.¹⁴²
- Achievements in mental attitudes and behaviours have been noted regarding mental health. The roadmap for strengthening the mental, poor health system, including downsizing tertiary care in favour of secondary and primary care, promoting bio-psychosocial model and multi-disciplinary approach, and strengthening the governance in mental health, should, therefore, be implemented.
- The challenge of implementation, coverage and delivery of services within the health sector remains. The service is not yet fully universal and is very fragmented. The influx of Syrian refugees has caused additional constraints on the use of available resources. A roadmap to achieve universal health coverage by 2025 should, therefore, be implemented.
- High-quality, private sector medical healthcare, 'tourism' services are offered to regional citizens on their ability to pay, yet the Jordanian population do not yet have equitable access to quality, health care services.
- The privatisation and business orientation of the health sector could be a driver of innovation, cost recovery and reform. However, concerns also exist for ensuring health services, and quality health services are provided for those who actually need them.
- According to the latest WHO data published in May 2014, road traffic accidents deaths in Jordan reached 1,411 or 6.13% of total deaths – an ever-increasing number. The age-adjusted death rate is 25.00 per 100,000 of population, ranking Jordan 36 in the world.¹⁴³
- The lack of preventive, youth-friendly services and the disconnection between adolescents and health professionals mean that young people do not gain access to the right services at the right time or in the right manner, which is self-defeating.

141- <http://www.jordantimes.com/news/local/air-quality-monitoring-system-launched>

142- The six components of MPOWER, <http://www.who.int/tobacco/mpower/en/>

143- <http://www.worldlifeexpectancy.com/>



Quality Education

For a nation like Jordan, the lack of mineral resources or other natural advantages, prosperity, stability, and wellbeing depend almost entirely on the talents and enterprise of its people. The competitiveness and productivity of its industries, the quality and effectiveness of its public services, and the welfare of its families and communities all depend on the availability of a well-educated and highly-skilled population. For these reasons, investment in education and skills has been a national priority since the establishment of the Kingdom. Over many years, the progress of education in Jordan exceeded other countries in the region, in both quality and quantity.¹⁴⁴ Yet, despite this well-stated intent, the last decade has seen its education status slip.

¹⁴⁴ Human Resource Development Strategy (2016 – 2025)

Jordan successfully achieved MDG Goal 2.1, ensuring that, by 2015, children everywhere, boys and girls alike, were able to complete a full course of primary schooling. This has, therefore, enabled Jordan to succeed as having one of the lowest numbers of young people without a primary school education in the MENA region. The vast majority of children go to primary school, with the net enrolment ratio in primary education having risen significantly, from 86.7% in 1990 to 98% according to the most recent figures. Jordan is now as close as it has ever been to full, nationwide enrolment. Furthermore, the percentage of students starting grade one and reaching the last grade of primary education has risen from 92.2% to 99% over the same period of time.¹⁴⁵

In 1999, gender parity in education was achieved and has ever since been maintained. More recently, girls have, however, begun to outnumber boys in primary school, in all the governorates, and most markedly in Madaba. If later figures confirm this trend, it will be essential for Jordan to work to ensure that boys are not left behind in the education system.¹⁴⁶

But while Goal 2 has been met for Jordanian children, the picture is very different with respect to Syrian refugee children in Jordan.¹⁴⁷ ¹⁴⁸ Out of 655,014 Syrian refugees in Jordan,¹⁴⁹ some 208,321¹⁵⁰ are school-aged children.¹⁵¹ By the end of the 2014-2015 school year, some 129,354 Syrian refugee children were enrolled in public schools in camps and host communities, placing considerable pressure on an over-stretched public education system.¹⁵² The remaining 97,132 children were out of formal education.

Up to 97 percent¹⁵³ of Syrian, school-aged children are at high risk of non-attendance. Although formal education is free, households pay for transportation and education materials (stationery and clothing). Many refugee households cannot cover the costs of education due to their increasingly-fragile financial situation, with children living in northern and eastern regions being particularly affected.¹⁵⁴ ¹⁵⁵ Some refugee households are increasingly dependent on child labor to supplement their income, as adolescent boys and girls report feeling pressured to earn money to support their family, and adolescent girls pressured to undertake additional domestic duties or marry early.¹⁵⁶

Literacy rates in Jordan have been high for a number of years and continue to witness further incremental improvement. The literacy rate of 15-24 year olds stood at an impressive 97.4% in 1990 and rose to 99.1% in 2008. Since then, that level has been maintained. The 2014 Literacy Assessment and Monitoring Programme (LAMP) found that 80% of the total population has a literacy performance level of 2 or higher.¹⁵⁷

Despite a generally-impressive educational record in Jordan, a number of concerns are being relayed regarding longer-term matters that will impact the future socio-economic trajectory of the country for decades to come. These, for example, include the following:

- The quality of education, lack of teacher policy framework, as well as competency-based teaching and learning, and learner-centred pedagogy and curriculum;
- The sector-wide education policy and planning: Lack of education sector plan upon completion of ERFKE II and capacity building needs for sector-wide, evidence- based policy making;

145- P.21, P.18 Jordan MDG Report 2015 (Final)

146- P.21, P.18 Jordan MDG Report 2015 (Final)

147- P.21, P.18 Jordan MDG Report 2015 (Final)

148- See further P.31 Comprehensive Vulnerability Needs Assessment 2015

149- UNHCR Refugee Registration Data, June 2015, October 2016.

150- 208,321 school-aged children (5 – 17 years old - 106,951 boys and 101,370 girls) estimated to represent 36 % of total registered refugee population in Jordan.

151- 111,658 boys and 114,828 girls

152- Ministry of Education, Enrolment Data, School Year 2014/2015, November 2014.

153- Inter-Agency, Baseline Report, Vulnerability Assessment Framework, May - October 2015, available at <http://data.unhcr.org/syrianrefugees/download.php?id=8844>

154- See also WFP, Initial Findings, Comprehensive Food Security Monitoring Exercise, June 2015

155- Inter-Agency Baseline Report, Vulnerability Assessment Framework, May 2015: Northern Region 85.6 %, Eastern Region 82.4 %, Za'atari 94.8 % and Azraq 86.8 %,

156- Education Section Working Group, Access to Education Syrian Refugee Children and Youth in Za'atari Camps, Joint Education Needs Assessment (JENA) Report, September 2014

157- P.21, Jordan MDG Report 2015 (Final)

- The life skills teaching and learning, including peace and citizenship education;
- The insufficient investment in school infrastructure;
- The mismatch between qualifications and labor market needs; and
- The widening learning gaps, existing between socio-economic groups.¹⁵⁸

With respect to educational inequalities, only 16 percent of girls from poorer households were at or above level 2 in mathematics, compared to 57 percent of girls from richer households in 2009. These income disparities negatively affect the educational attainment of children of lower income groups, resulting in increased school drop outs and entry into child labor. The inadequacy of inclusive activities for persons living with disabilities is also reported.

With respect to all levels of education quality, there is a widely-acknowledged view that Jordan has struggled to maintain the high standards¹⁵⁹ it had set over the past couple of decades, and has since lost ground to other countries, evidenced by:

- A decline in basic primary school level outcomes reported¹⁶⁰ such that 22 percent of students in grades 1 to 3 were unable to read either Arabic or English letters.¹⁶¹
- A decline in Jordan's international ranking in mathematics and science was witnessed between 2007 and 2013.
- The British Legatum Prosperity Index pointed out to a decline in education, ranking the Country at 64th in 2013, compared to 45th in 2011.¹⁶²
- The 2010-2011 Arab Knowledge Report identified weaknesses in four skills among Jordanian students, namely knowledge, problem-solving, information technology use, and written communication.¹⁶³
- School to work transition strategies and employability skills, as per the recent demographic dividend policy paper.

Jordan's 2014 Education Reform for Knowledge Economy Second-Phase Report identifies the following obstacles to the educational reform that Jordan is working towards achieving:

- The pressure placed by the Syrian refugee crisis on the Jordanian education system's over-stretched educational infrastructure;
- The quality of education with the need to focus on competency levels of teachers, enabling them to meet the demands of the 21st century classroom;
- The students' performance levels in key fields such as reading, math and science;
- The cost of maintenance for ICT integration, and the need for rapid transition to new technology are financially-prohibitive, calling for a reinvigoration of a public-private partnership in the field of ICT in education;
- The improved action planning and better use of existing infrastructure;
- The investment in vocational education and training, better linking education to higher education and the labor market.

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159 World Bank – Systemic Country Diagnostic, February 2016

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161 Recent study conducted by the Ministry of Education and USAID

162 Legatum Prosperity Index

163 Arab Knowledge Report (2010/2011): Preparing Future Generations for the Knowledge Society

The lack of sufficient early childhood opportunities has resulted in 27 percent of Jordanian children not being ready to learn in one or more of the Early Development Instrument (EDI) domains in accordance with the 2014 Early Learning Readiness study, with 11.2 percent of children not being cognitively or linguistically ready to learn.

The Human Resource Development Strategy of Jordan (2016 – 2025) identifies a number of recurring themes,¹⁶⁴ which can be summarized as follows:

- The education administration tends to be centralized and fragmented;
- The quality assurance measures are not routinely enforced;
- At the K-12 level in particular, the teacher quality has declined;
- The lack of adequate pre-service and in-service training;
- The outdated teaching methods persist at all educational levels;
- The insufficient research and planning efforts exerted;
- The parents' lack of an active role in their children's learning journey;
- TVET and teaching, held in low regard;
- The minimal engagement of employers;
- The lack of funding and innovation;
- The kindergarten expansion has not been fully seized.

As young Jordanians proceed through their studies, they, too, report an inconsistent quality of education. This ultimately results in a lower value being attributed to educational opportunities. This is especially true in vocational education, which is not a popular choice for students. Hence, less than 3 percent of youth participate in TVET¹⁶⁵ and only 28 percent of youth, aged between 14 and 15, have thought of pursuing vocational education¹⁶⁶. Students with the lowest grades are directed to the vocational stream, which negatively stigmatizes vocational education despite the job market's growing needs. Meanwhile, the Government is seeking to increase enrolment in TVET. Access to TVET and more generally to tertiary education is notably low for Syrian refugee youths.

There is also a well-documented mismatch between educational skills and certificates and the labor market's demands, reducing the employability prospects of young people. There is also an engrained, stereotyped educational path for girls that limits their options for participation in the labor market.

Of the people with disabilities, 40% were illiterate and 32% enjoyed read-only abilities (compared to 11% among total population in Jordan). This represents a clear shortfall within educational authorities to ensure that every citizen's rights and access to education are provided.

To conclude this section on education, it is also perhaps worth quoting from the National Assessment Report of Sustainable Development in Jordan for 2015.¹⁶⁷ It identified a number of additional challenges facing the education sector, including:

- A high percentage of rented schools (36%);
- Limited financial resources for providing appropriate educational environments, due largely to a limited allocation for education in the national budget, wherein net government expenditure on education is only 2.3% of GDP;
- Inconsistent educational output with labor market needs;
- A weak correlation between the outcomes of scientific research and requirements of the development process;
- Lack of life skills-based peace and citizenship education.

164- P.11, The Human Resource Development Strategy of Jordan (2016 – 2025)

165- The Labour Market – The Case for Vocational Training in Jordan, UNDP 2014

166- Jordan's National Youth Survey 2015

167- Khasawneh, M, National Assessment Report of Sustainable Development in Jordan, 2015

Underlying Challenges to the Quality of Education in Jordan

- The decline in quality of public primary education can be attributed to several factors, including suboptimal teacher qualification, as well as weak and irrelevant curricula, uninspiring and unhealthy school environments, outdated teaching methods, and school and educational management policies hindering progress.¹⁶⁸
- The alienation of parents from school management, weak linkage of schools to the local community, community life and in secondary schools, lack of engagement of the private or technical sectors in promoting a vision in young people as to their future prospects.
- The neglect of a more open approach to active learning, and the development of critical thinking and problem solving skills, not just for their future professional life, but also for the development of stronger social skills.
- The lack of sports, music and cultural education through the school curriculum, as well as the lack of facilities.
- The quality, diversity, competitiveness and resilience of the economy, which ultimately depend on the quality of young Jordanian minds entering the labor market. However, the educational system, which should be the long-term driver of growth and prosperity within the knowledge economy, is not quite fully fit for purpose.
- The education sector is absolutely fundamental to the future economic and social success of the Kingdom, yet attempts to introduce reforms for a more progressive education are being met with resistance. For example, modernizing the curricula, challenging gender stereotypes and integrating innovation/ICT and ensuring closer involvement of the private sector in supporting student transitions to the job market.
- A new vision of Jordan is needed for the young to embrace and for teacher re-training to inspire them.

Gender Equality

Jordan undergoes a number of quite, severe tests with respect to gender equality and women's empowerment. The Kingdom's lowly position - across a number of universal gender indicators - provides a reflection of its poor, current status as well as of the scale of the task that lies ahead. For example, Jordan ranks 99 among 146 countries in the gender inequality index,¹⁶⁹ and 140 among 145 in the global gender gap index.¹⁷⁰ Jordan's ranking has been falling steadily from its 92nd position in 2006.¹⁷¹

On the one hand, Jordan has made remarkable achievements in terms of increasing educational attainment levels among its working-age population, particularly among women since 2000. The share of graduates among the working-age population has almost doubled from 8.4 percent in 2000 to 15.1 percent in 2015, and the share of female graduates among the working-age population almost tripled during the same period of time. As a result, the share of Jordanian women graduates among the younger generation (aged between 20 and 39 years old) in the working-age population even surpassed that of their male counterparts.¹⁷²

¹⁶⁸- Jordan MDG Report 2015 (Final)

¹⁶⁹- P.22, Executive Development Plan (2016 – 2018)

¹⁷⁰- P.17, Global Gender Gap Report 2015 – World Economic Forum

¹⁷¹- <http://reports.weforum.org/global-gender-gap-report-2015/economies/#economy=JOR>

¹⁷²- Department of Statistics 2015



On the other hand, expansion in education supply has not been met with a commensurate expansion in labor market demand, and gender parity in educational levels among youth has not yet been translated into better labor market outcomes for women.¹⁷³ Whilst this needs to be addressed, a new policy approach is required to create and facilitate an appropriate environment that diversifies the range of opportunities open to young women and provides the means for safe and affordable mobility to and from the workplace.

The rates of economic participation by Jordanian women is one of the lowest in the world and considered a massive lost opportunity for Jordan.¹⁷⁴ Jordan is specifically ranked as the 142nd country for economic inequality specifically in the global gender gap. Comparing rates of employment, 59.7 percent of males are economically active, compared to only 12.6 percent of women.^{175 176}

As per Vision 2025, the Government is seeking to almost double female participation in the workforce over the coming decade to reach 27% of women in employment, in line with MENA average¹⁷⁷. This would, therefore, add considerably to economic growth, better utilize available human resources, improve family well-being and expand the tax base. To successfully achieve this target, policies have to address the cultural, legal and institutionally-discriminatory practices that underlie the record-low female participation rates in the labor market.¹⁷⁸

According to ILO and if the dual gap in entrepreneurship and labor force participation was eliminated, the GDP of Jordan may be boosted by around 28 percent, which translates into an increase of US\$ 10.6 billion. A related challenge is that of wage discrimination, whereby female wages are 67 percent lower (GNI per capita beings US\$ 3,587 for women and US\$ 18,831 for men)¹⁷⁹ than male wages on average for all jobs – thus representing a major imbalance.¹⁸⁰

173- P.9, Jordan Decent Work Country Diagnostic, ILO, July 2016

174- P.33, Executive Development Programme (2016 – 2018)

175- P.33, Executive Development Programme (2016 – 2018)

176- In comparison, the averages in MENA region were 76 percent for males and 27 percent for females, whereas the global averages were 77 percent for males and 51 percent for females

177- Vision 2025

178- P.30, Jordan Decent Work Country Diagnostic, ILO, July 2016

179- Table D, P.5 HDR 2015, Work for Human Development, A Briefing Note for Countries on the HDR - UNDP

180- P.22, Executive Development Plan (2016 – 2018)

Women's under-representation in the labor market can be attributed to several factors. Less than 10 percent of women from poorer backgrounds and with lower levels of education enter the labour force, as against almost 70 percent of young female graduates and 50 percent of young females with post-secondary education.¹⁸¹ Married women tend to remain outside of the labor force, with the 'marital-status gap' in labor force participation (the relative difference in labour force participation between married and never married women) standing at around 24 percent.¹⁸²

Moreover, the formal labor market is segmented along gendered lines, with opportunities for women primarily based in the civil service, particularly health and education. In addition, women are disproportionately represented in the informal labor market. This means that they are often working without security, social protection and far lower wages than their male counterparts. On average, they earn 88.3 piasters for every one Jordanian Dinar (JOD) a man earns.¹⁸³

Women are much more concentrated in studies related to humanities, with very little presence in scientific courses or in technical fields in general. Moreover, a pending UN study finds that – despite the fact that – issues, such as transportation and day care, present challenges to women. A greater inhibitor is societal perceptions of women's employment focusing on women's traditional roles, child care duties and domestic work. In some cases, it is shameful for men to have to ask women to work as it suggests that they are unable to provide necessities for their families.¹⁸⁴

A recent study by the National Council for Family Affairs (NCFA) refers to the reasons of women's weak participation in the labor market. These included: (i) the absence of an encouraging and enabling environment for women work especially with the current economic situation and the increase of unemployment; (ii) the weak progress in health and education sectors, which constitute the major sectors for women employment; (iii) the participation in sectors that witnessed rapid economic development due to a common believe that women are less productive at work than men; (iv) the weak match between women educational backgrounds and market needs; (v) weak work benefits for women especially in private sector; (vi) lower pay for women compared to men; and (vii) gender role beliefs that address man as bread winner and prioritize men in jobs and work.

Official figures in Jordan suggest that the pay gap by sector is 41.3 per cent in manufacturing, 27.9 per cent in health and social work, and 24.5 per cent in education. Moreover, Jordanian legislation has no provisions giving rights to equal remuneration for work of equal value or prohibiting discrimination, contributing to the pay gap.¹⁸⁵

Whilst cultural discrimination discourages lower-skilled women from taking up jobs at a hotel or a factory or in locations that are geographically distant or working night shifts, practical factors also have a significant bearing. For example, as cited immediately above, transportation difficulties, including frequent delays in public transportation, unreliability, high cost, as well as limited services to place of residence, further exacerbate these cultural challenges. These challenges are more acute in areas outside of Amman, including Mafraq, Ruseifeh, South Shouneh and Sahab, where half of employers surveyed in a 2014 study confirmed transportation difficulties were a driving factor for youth, including female youth, to quit their jobs.

181- World Bank, 2013, Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan; Jordan Country Gender Assessment, Economic Participation, Agency and Access to Justice in Jordan

182- Ibid

183- World Economic Forum, 2015, Available at: <http://reports.weforum.org/global-gender-gap-report-2015/economies/#economy=ISL>

Labor Watch Jordan, 2015, available at: http://www.phenixcenter.net/uploads/ar_phenixcenter.net_635706471933727575.pdf

UNDP, 2013, Available at: <http://www.undp.org/content/dam/jordan/docs/Publications/Gov/The%20Informal%20Sector%20in%20the%20Jordanian%20Economy-jo.pdf>

United Nations Statistics Division (UN STAT), 2014, available at: http://unstats.un.org/unsd/gender/Mexico_Nov2014/Session%202%20Jordan%20paper.pdf

184- 185 Forthcoming UN Women/REACH Assessment on Women and Employment, Jordan

185- 186 ILO (2013)

On the legal front and even though Article 72 of the Labor Law renders the provision on day-care in the workplace compulsory, it is still, however, not prevalent. Jordanian women are, therefore, still deprived of the structural, social support services necessary to promote their participation in the workplace. Hence, research clearly show a negative association between the presence of young children and the probability of female employment.¹⁸⁶

Compounding this issue, women are perceived - amongst employers - as less productive than men, and face significant restrictions to become entrepreneurs.¹⁸⁷ For example, while banks claim that their credit schemes are gender-neutral, female entrepreneurs state that they are much more likely to be discriminated against when seeking credit lines and loans.¹⁸⁸ A woman has, therefore, to obtain her husband's permission to open a business. Barriers are, particularly, applicable to married women, whereby the public sector employment serves as the only 'socially-acceptable' source of employment for them.

The participation of Jordanian women in the political and electoral sphere is equally low and peripheral, with social norms and cultural traditions representing primary, causal factors that restrict the opportunity for women's full and effective participation in democratic institutions and political processes.

As a result, the gender gap in the public sector - in overall terms - stands at 36.8 percent¹⁸⁹ and at 18.8 percent in the private sector. However, women make up only 11 percent of Government ministers, 12 percent of parliamentarians, 12 percent of professional unions' council members, 19 percent of diplomatic corps, 30 percent of political parties' members and 35.5 of municipal councils' members. Lack of congruity between educational attainment and economic participation exists across the MENA region.

With a view to enable more equal inclusion, a number of special legislative and policy measures that facilitate opportunities have been taken to promote political participation by, and representation of, women. Since 2002, a quota system of reserved seats has guaranteed a minimum representation of women in elected offices. Currently, the parliamentary quota is at 15 seats, and similar systems of reserved seats require a minimum of 25 percent of municipal councils' members and 10 percent of governorate councils' members to be women.

Once elected, certain women MPs have been able to achieve a significant level of profile, as a leading representative of women in politics. In general, these women tend to play a marginal role within parliamentary committees in proposing policy measures or during debates. Hence, the Parliament and the IEC have adopted strategic policies to promote the mainstreaming of women, with the IEC seeking to improve the number of women recruited as electoral officials, as well as to ensure the role of women in voter education activities. At the basic level, women's equal participation in political life remains problematic. While there are more women registered voters than men, a fewer number of them actually participate as voters and thus, seek to join political offices.

Regulations, relating to political party funding tied to the participation of women, have also had little impact, with few political parties including women in their senior leadership or as a relevant proportion of their membership, targets of their activities or policy development. While there has been a range of initiatives in support of women's political participation - most notably those led by the Jordanian National Council for Women (JNCW) - there are few legal or practical measures that provide official incentives for women to stand as candidates, participate as political activists, and engage in consultation on policy development.

In line with the target to achieve Goal 5 and Goal 16 of the SDGs, it will be important for Jordanian democratic institutions to ensure that women and groups, representing women, are provided with the adequate space and opportunity to participate in, and gain access to inclusive political processes.

186- P.10, Jordan Decent Work Country Diagnostic, ILO, July 2016

187- Ibid

188- Ibid

189- Despite the fact that 68.4 percent of teachers are women

This will, therefore, require specific support for measures that promote equal opportunities for women to seek and enjoy elected offices, and which facilitate information sharing and consultation to ensure legislators and administrators promote gender equality and facilitate the empowerment of women in the decision-making process.

Jordan witnessed a high and troubling prevalence of violence against women. Some women's rights activists argue that the issue of violence against women constitutes 'the missing MDG,' and there has, therefore, been significant mobilization and advocacy by many actors to ensure its inclusion in the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

The 2012 Jordan Demographic and Health Survey revealed that one third of surveyed women (ever-married women, aged between 15 and 49 years old) had experienced physical violence since the age of fifteen. The Survey also showed that 13% of women had experienced physical violence in the past twelve months. The prevalence of violence is higher among divorced, separated or widowed women (57%) than among women who are currently married (33%).¹⁹⁰

The same Survey also found low rates of reporting violence (41 percent) and extremely low rates of reporting sexual violence (5 percent). Of those who report violence, 84 percent of women report to family members, while only 2 percent report violence to the police.¹⁹¹ Moreover, as refugee vulnerability increases, refugees - and in particular female refugees - are facing greater risks to violence, abuse and exploitation - most commonly in the form of domestic violence and early marriage. There is some data to suggest that issues of trafficking are increasing, particularly in response to increased vulnerability. With respect to child marriage and according to the 2015 Census, 3.7 percent of 13-17 year old girls are married.¹⁹² This includes 2 percent of Jordanian girls and 13 percent of Syrian girls of this age group. Among Palestinians, nearly 3 percent of girls are married and 32 percent of all Syrian marriages registered in 2014 involved a girl under the age of 18, reflecting an annual increase in child marriage related to the hardships the Syrian families are facing in Jordan.¹⁹³

Syrian refugees, particularly women, face increased vulnerability. Data indicate that, in addition to psychosocial stress, difficulty in meeting basic needs and acclimatization to a new community, women face issues of domestic violence, which continue to take the form of sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV) most commonly reported, both inside and outside camps.¹⁹⁴ Sexual violence is assumed to be under-reported due to stigma and fear of retribution.¹⁹⁵

In overall terms, there is a particular need to ensure that the principles of gender equality and non-discrimination constitute an integral part of the entire, national legal and regulatory framework. This would help in directly eliminating tangible barriers that limit the capacities of women to enter and remain within these three spheres of life. At a macro-level, there is a need to design policies based on accurate understanding of structural inequalities and a range of failures that perpetuate the exclusion of and discrimination against women.

In an attempt to begin to address gender equality, ensure the empowerment and participation of women socially, legally, politically and economically, and guarantee their rights to a life free of all forms of violence and discrimination, the Cabinet has, therefore, endorsed the 2013 - 2017 National Strategy for Women.¹⁹⁶ Critical and sustained support is, however, required to enable its full implementation. A comprehensive approach is, therefore, required to remove structural and legal barriers that limit women's participation in the economic, political and social life in the Kingdom.

190- P.27, Jordan MDG Report - 2015 (Final)

191- P.27, Draft MDG Report - 2015

192- P.22-23 Census - 2015

193- [http://www.unicef.org/mena/UNICEFJordan_EarlyMarriageStudy2014\(1\).pdf](http://www.unicef.org/mena/UNICEFJordan_EarlyMarriageStudy2014(1).pdf)

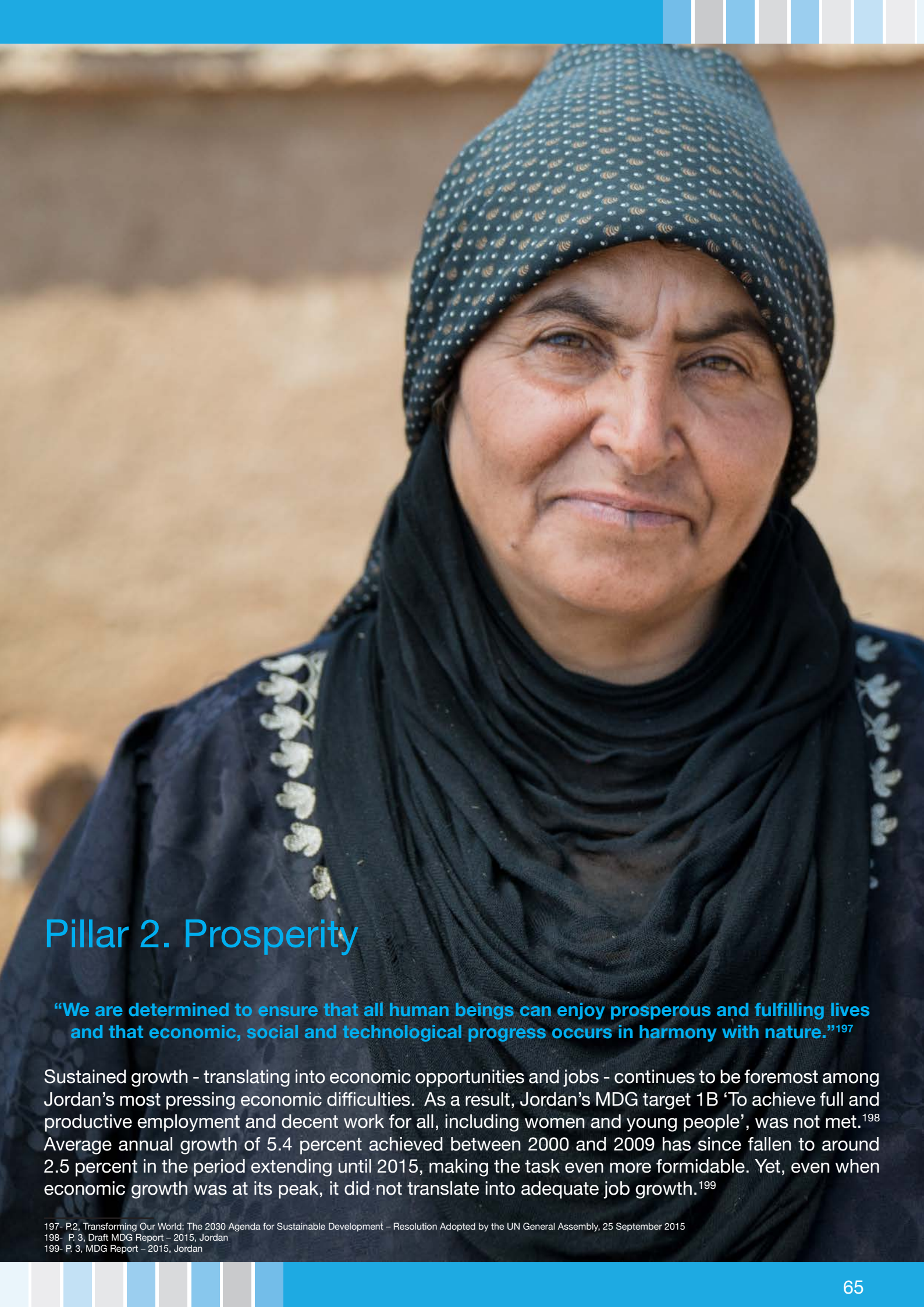
194- <http://data.unhcr.org/syrianrefugees/documents.php?page=1&view=grid&Country%5B%5D=107&Search=%23gbvims+2015%23>

195- P.27, Jordan MDG Report - 2015 (Final)

196- P.28, Draft MDG Report - 2015

Underlying Gender Challenges in Jordan

- The increased equality of access for women to political, economic and enhanced social spheres collides with applicable social and cultural norms, mindsets and value system in Jordan. These social norms imply that women carry a disproportionate burden of unpaid home and family care work. It also limits women's mobility. That is in addition to religious and social belief systems that deem political work particularly inappropriate for women.
- Allied to the cultural challenge above, there are practical inhibitors (mainly related to transport and childcare) and barriers that prevent women from engaging or sustaining a stronger social, economic and political role in society.
- The Constitution needs to reflect the universal human rights premise of gender equality as the highest legal basis for the dignity of women to begin to be fully realized.
- The gender-determined education specializations, implying that women's choices are out of line with market demands. Sometimes, this includes female preference for low-paid jobs in the shrinking public sector. This is most likely due to the fact that these jobs are less demanding on their time and thus, allow for more flexibility to attend to the responsibilities of motherhood and home care. Added to this are embedded notions of what jobs are "suitable" for women - both for women themselves as well as for their fathers and husbands.
- An under-developed, entrepreneurial sector in general, and in particular, for women.
- The perceived levels of safety within the workplace, particularly in the private sector, as exacerbated by the relative frequency of sexual harassment in the workplace. While the Labor Code criminalizes sexual harassment in the workplace, this is only valid in the case of harassment by an employer and not by a fellow employee. Jordan's 2010 CEDAW Shadow Report also indicates that few women report sexual harassment for fear of being held responsible.
- A low awareness and education on marriage and child bearing, which lead girls to either forced or uninformed, early marriage.
- A high prevalence of domestic violence in general, as well as an increasing prevalence of all forms of GBV among host and refugee communities.
- The political realm of the 'One-Man-One-Vote' Law of 1993 fostering a more tribal and familial electoral framework and favoring the candidacy of men over women.
- The women's low participation in economic activity impacts their decision-making capacities, including political participation-related decisions.
- Despite the Jordanian Government's attempts to bolster the number of women in politics through quotas or political appointments, women - who gain access to such positions - often continue to lack popular support. This is reinforced by a lack of support by women of other women, evidenced by the Jordan Center for Social Studies' polling, which found that only 11% of women vote for women candidates.
- Most recently, a decision has been made to remove the 15% quota of seats for women in governorate councils, as part of the decentralization bill, which is likely to negatively impact women's political participation.



Pillar 2. Prosperity

“We are determined to ensure that all human beings can enjoy prosperous and fulfilling lives and that economic, social and technological progress occurs in harmony with nature.”¹⁹⁷

Sustained growth - translating into economic opportunities and jobs - continues to be foremost among Jordan's most pressing economic difficulties. As a result, Jordan's MDG target 1B 'To achieve full and productive employment and decent work for all, including women and young people', was not met.¹⁹⁸ Average annual growth of 5.4 percent achieved between 2000 and 2009 has since fallen to around 2.5 percent in the period extending until 2015, making the task even more formidable. Yet, even when economic growth was at its peak, it did not translate into adequate job growth.¹⁹⁹

197- P.2, Transforming Our World: The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development – Resolution Adopted by the UN General Assembly, 25 September 2015

198- P. 3, Draft MDG Report – 2015, Jordan

199- P. 3, MDG Report – 2015, Jordan

Rates of employment are determined within a broader economic climate. For example, Jordan's narrow export base has been affected by the global slowdown, regional volatility (in particular, Syria, Iraq and Egypt) and stiffer regional competition in key sectors, principally from the Gulf countries. Over the past 5 years, GDP growth has hovered at around 3 percent, down from 7 or 8 percent in the preceding 5 years.²⁰⁰ ²⁰¹ Public debt has been increasing²⁰² up, significantly from less than JOD 10 billion in 2009 to over JOD 21 billion by the end of June 2015.²⁰³ Similarly, the trade deficit has been increasing year on year, in particular since 2004.²⁰⁴ ²⁰⁵

Jordan is a predominantly, service-dominated economy, with services constituting 66.4 percent of GDP, and industry²⁰⁶ representing 29.8 percent of GDP in 2014. Over the past decade, employment has decreased in both the agriculture (-2.3 percent between 2004 and 2014) and industry sectors (-7.2 percent), whereas the share of employment in the services sector has increased by 9.9 percent.²⁰⁷

During the 2010-2014 period, volumes of FDI have reduced by between a third and a half of their former 2006 – 2009 levels.²⁰⁸ Low levels of domestic private investment and labor market segmentation between public and private, formal and informal sectors, and the respective roles of Jordanian males, females and migrants in the market²⁰⁹ further serve to stifle dynamism and enterprise. Hence, the public sector is excessively large and accounts for almost 40 percent of the labor force.²¹⁰

The total closure of land trade and transit routes with Syria and Iraq took place in April and July 2015, respectively,²¹¹ knocking back trade. Among other challenges are security, public sector bureaucracy, lack of ready-made finance for SMEs to expand, high energy and production costs, and lack of qualified skilled labor, in particular within technical sectors. All these factors present impediments to a more conducive, growth-oriented investment climate.²¹² ²¹³ Jordan has also been struggling to maintain progress in the international indicators for competitiveness, ease of doing business and economic freedom.²¹⁴

With a growing population, an even larger cohort of young people enter the labor market each year. High rates of unemployment persist - an average of 12.2 percent in 2015.²¹⁵ The problem is particularly serious among young people and women, with the rates of youth unemployment as high as 28.8 percent.²¹⁶ ²¹⁷ At almost twice the global average, 58.5 percent of graduated youth have been unemployed for over a year.²¹⁸ For the next five years, growth is forecast to reach the 3-4 percent range²¹⁹, and thus, structural unemployment can be expected to continue. Furthermore, men with a higher education are less likely to be unemployed.²²⁰

It is estimated that only 36.4 percent of the Jordanian working-age population is economically active.²²¹ That means that 63 percent, or around 2.6 million people of work age are inactive. This would, therefore, represent a huge brake on the Nation's development potential and imply the general reluctance of large segments of the Jordanian population to work in the agricultural and construction

200- P. 12, Executive Programme (2016 – 2018)

201- P.2, IMF Program Note, Jordan, 3 April 2015: records growth at 2.6 percent in the same period. Meanwhile, the World Bank reports growth down to 2.4 percent in the Spring Economic Monitor for Jordan, but then rebound to just over 3 percent in the 2016 – 2018 period

202- P.2, IMF Program Note, Jordan, 3 April 2015

203- P. 13, Executive Programme (2016 – 2018)

204- P. 17, Executive Programme (2016 – 2018)

205- Figure 1, P.22, Executive Programme (2016 – 2018)

206- Industry comprises value added in mining, manufacturing, construction, electricity, water, and gas. Services include value added in wholesale and retail trade (including hotels and restaurants), transport, and government, financial, professional, and personal services such as education, health care, and real estate services.

207- P.13, Jordan Decent Work Country Diagnostic, ILO, July 2016

208- Graph on P.60 of Executive Programme 2016 - 2018

209- P. 52, World Bank – Systemic Country Diagnostic, February 2015

210- P.121, Executive Programme (2016 – 2018)

211- P. 4, World Bank Country Partnership Framework for Jordan, 15 June 2016

212- P. 17, Executive Programme (2016 – 2018)

213- P. 43, Executive Programme (2016 – 2018)

214- P. 60 – 1, Executive Programme (2016 – 2018): Jordan remained 64th out of 144 in the Global Competitiveness Index for (2014-15); Jordan fell in rank in the Ease of Doing Business Report of 2015 to 117 out of 189 (dropping in 7 index areas); Jordan slightly improved its position in the Economic Freedom Index for 2015

215- Table G, P.7 HDR 2015, Work for Human Development, A Briefing Note for Countries on the HDR - UNDP

216- International Labor Organization -Recent statistics

217- P. 4, Draft MDG Report – 2015, Jordan states unemployment as high as 34.3 percent for 15-19 year olds

218- "Labour Market Transitions of Young Women and Men in Jordan." V. Baruccucci & N. Mryyan, ILO, June 2013

219- P.iii World Bank – Systemic Country Diagnostic, February 2016

220- Ibid

221- P. 122, Executive Programme (2016 – 2018). Whereas P.3 of the Draft MDG Report for Jordan 2015 states the current rate of employment, standing at 33.1 percent of the total population

sectors²²², or - for example - in blue collar jobs or within the textile and garments sectors, which are currently dominated by migrant workers (70 percent). These factors represent a serious challenge to full employment, and limit the Jordanian economy's ability to absorb the growing annual flow of new job seekers, estimated at 100,000 annually.²²³

There is a well-documented mismatch between aspirations, skills and educational qualifications and the labor market's requirements. This, combined with Syrian refugees, Libyan and Egyptian labor are perceived as the main reasons behind the surging domestic unemployment rates compared to other countries.^{224 225} In fact, structural unemployment and weak labor market governance in Jordan predate the refugee crisis. As stated above and even in times of strong economic growth, this did not successfully translate into job creation in terms of required numbers and quality.

In 2013, the Jordanian economy generated 48,571 net new jobs, the majority of which were in wholesale trade and retail (20.4 percent), the public sector, (14.7 percent), transformative industries (12.3 percent) and education (11.4 percent). The majority of these jobs (61.1 percent), however, were not high-skill, but rather medium and lower-skill jobs that required a secondary degree or below.²²⁶ One of the most concerning indicators recorded in the Vision 2025 document is the high unemployment rate recorded among university graduates.²²⁷

This increase witnessed in the share of high-skilled graduates among the unemployed suggests weak labor market demand for high-skills, failing to absorb the increase in the share of graduates in the economy. This is confirmed by the share of high-skilled Jordanians who opt to leave Jordan all together to work in knowledge economies, where their skills could be utilized.²²⁸ Subsequently, as many as 500,000-600,000 highly-skilled Jordanians are estimated to be employed in the Gulf states, the majority of whom are in Saudi Arabia (32 percent) and the UAE (24 percent).^{229 230}

At the other end of the labor spectrum, an important part of the Jordanian economy rests on the migration of labor force, mainly from Egypt and South-Eastern Asia, primarily to work in domestic and agricultural settings, as well as in other sectors. Migrant workers account for 20 percent of the labor force. Labor migration is organized through a highly-criticized sponsorship system (Kafala), which places the migrant in a situation of dependence on their own employer. The latter applies for the worker's residence and work permit, which cannot be renewed without the employee's presence. The Kafala system, in use in several Middle-Eastern countries, is regularly condemned as "slavery-like", as well as a major cause of migrant workers' vulnerability to forced labor and trafficking. Jordan has shown great advances on this since the ratification of the United Nations' Palermo Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons.

With respect to the structure of the Jordanian economy, it is noteworthy to mention that the private sector is unable to create the amounts and types of jobs necessary when the majority of enterprises in Jordan are micro, private enterprises, with less than 10 employees. Whereas, large firms, with a hundred or more employees, constitute less than 1 percent of all firms, despite the fact that they account for 75 percent of all revenue and 25 percent of private-wage employment.

This has, therefore, led to the situation reported above, wherein Jordan exports its own high-skilled labor, whilst integrating foreign lower-skilled, lower-paid workers into its own labor force. As a result, lower-skilled jobs in the private sector, with little benefits or contribution of tax, constitute the majority of jobs being created and employ foreign workers. Meanwhile, graduate unemployment and emigration rates among Jordanian graduates remain high.²³¹

222- P. 121, Executive Development Programme (2016 – 2018)

223- P. 121, & P. 122 Executive Development Programme (2016 – 2018)

224- P.121, Executive Development Programme (2016 – 2018)

225- According to the 2015 Census, the number of Libyans in the country account for 22,700 and Yemenis for 31,163 people

226- P.13, Jordan Decent Work Country Diagnostic, ILO, July 2016

227- P.26, Vision 2025

228- Whereas this brain drain is a loss to the economy, according to World Bank calculations it has also made Jordan one of the highest remittance recipients globally (\$3.8 billion in 2015)

229- P.13, Jordan Decent Work Country Diagnostic, ILO, July 2016

230- It is estimated that a total of 734,000 Jordanian live abroad according to the MoL

231- P.14, Jordan Decent Work Country Diagnostic, ILO, July 2016

One of the negative consequences of this ‘job-poor’ growth has been the large rate of inactivity. Over half the working age population in Jordan (64.5 percent) was not economically active in 2015, with female inactivity rates (87.6 percent) amounting to more than double their male counterparts (41.5 percent).²³²

Hence, the Jordanian economy will need to create approximately 57,000 new jobs every year for the next seven years to successfully absorb new Jordanian entrants into the labor market.²³³ This would, in turn, require a sustained annual growth rate of 6.1 percent²³⁴, when real GDP growth reached 3.1 percent in 2014, and is projected at 2.5 percent in 2015. As per its own 2025 Vision, by 2025, Jordan aims at reaching a real growth rate of 7.5 percent.²³⁵

In order to achieve its growth target, Jordan has identified and prioritized specific clusters to spur growth and employment. These include construction, manufacturing, engineering and housing, transportation and logistics, tourism, healthcare and health tourism, energy and renewable energy, information technology and innovation, agriculture, as well as educational and financial services.²³⁶ However, the lack of a functioning, inter-ministerial approach to coordinate the sector focus has prevented it from fulfilling its promises.

One of the more unusual aspects of the Jordanian economy is the size of its public sector. It alone accounts for 20 percent of GDP and 27 percent of annual government expenditure - one of the largest public sector shares in the world. It also serves as the single, largest employer of Jordanian workers, and has marked the largest expansion in employment over the past decade (an 8.2 percent increase) to reach 26.3 percent in 2015. The public sector wage premium,²³⁷ the prevalence of permanent contracts (among 97 percent of all government workers), and more generous social protection provisions have further reinforced the labor market segmentation between public and private sector employees.²³⁸ The public sector has, thereby, continued to play the role of ‘employer of last resort’, with the share of public sector employment in overall employment continuing to increase over the past decade.²³⁹

There are also large discrepancies between the unemployment rates between governorates, with Tafilah and Ma’an accounting for 15.4 percent each, and Zarqa and Amman accounting for 10.2 percent and 10.3 percent, respectively.²⁴⁰

High disparities in economic activity and employment rates can be found when comparing data on persons with disabilities on total populations. Persons with disabilities report substantially lower levels of employment than their peers without disabilities. In 2010, among the total population, 36.6% were employed, 4.4% were unemployed and 59% were not economically active. Among persons with disabilities above the age of 15, 16.1% were employed, 1.7% were unemployed and 82.2% were not economically active.

There is a large, informal sector operating in Jordan. It is estimated that up to 50 percent of Jordanians are working in the informal economy sector²⁴¹. This predominantly includes the retail, construction, and agriculture sectors - the latter two sectors identified by Vision 2025 among the fastest-growing sectors in the Kingdom. Jordanians are generally reluctant to work in these areas.

232- P.14, Jordan Decent Work Country Diagnostic, ILO, July 2016

233- The National Employment Strategy (2011-2020): An Update and Future Directions”

234- The National Employment Strategy (2011-2020): An Update and Future Directions”

235- P.15, Vision 2025

236- P.15, Vision 2025

237- Even though employees in the public sector, on average, earn higher wages than those in the private sector, it is interesting to note that the premium is higher for lower-skilled public sector employees and lower for their higher-skilled counterparts in the public sector, with implications on talent retention.

238- P.13, Jordan Decent Work Country Diagnostic, ILO, July 2016

239- P.20, Jordan Decent Work Country Diagnostic, ILO, July 2016

240- P.121, Executive Development Programme (2016 – 2018)

241- The Impact of Syrian Refugee Crisis on the Labor Market in Jordan, ILO and FAFO, 2015

Within this informal sector, working conditions and occupational safety and health are weakly administered due to the lack of outreach of social partners, weak social dialogue and weak capacity of the Government to enforce labor standards.²⁴² They offer limited access to social protection or health insurance and little, if any, tax is generated from them. The informal sector does, however, provide a safe haven for some freelancer women working from home, supplementing the household income, albeit often below the minimum wage.

That being said, Jordan has taken important steps to reduce labor market segmentation between the informal and formal sectors, as well as between nationals and migrants. For instance, the percentage of Jordanians registered with the Social Security Corporation (SSC) increased from 61 percent in 2009 to 73 percent in 2013, and that of non-Jordanians from 29 percent in 2009 to 44 percent in 2013. In the garment sector, the second Sectoral, Collective Bargaining Agreement, which will be explored in further detail in subsequent sections, was also signed in 2015. This confirms increased protection, as well as the structural integration of non-Jordanians in the formal labor market.^{243 244}

The low employment rate has, negatively, affected the rate of child labor. According to the 2016 National Child Labor Survey, around 2 percent of children are involved in child labor (69,661 children), with 44,917 being engaged in hazardous forms of child labor.²⁴⁵ Over 80 percent of working children are Jordanian, while just under 15 percent are Syrians and 5 percent belong to other nationalities.

In regard to granting work permits to Syrian refugees, the Jordan Compact²⁴⁶ seeks a break-through to turn this crisis into a development opportunity.²⁴⁷ Hence, the EU trade concessions and development of 18 Special Economic Zones²⁴⁸ may help to facilitate exports to EU markets, provided that the manpower is 15 percent Syrian, raising to 25 percent after 3 years. After reaching 200,000 jobs for Syrian refugees, the 'Rules of Origin' will be applied to other industrial zones across the Kingdom.²⁴⁹

The Compact - as described in the Opening Section of the CCA - recognizes that the Kingdom has assumed a heavy burden due to its hosting of refugees, and is carrying out a global, public good. The latest refugee influx - due to the war in Syria - has stretched already-limited resources and imposed severe stress on Jordan's economy, host communities, fiscal position and public services. In return, new investment in Jordan is needed from external and internal sources. Hence, attracting businesses and stimulating economic growth and job opportunities improved access to the EU market. Therefore, the access to macro-economic support is represented through its three core elements:

- 1) Turning the Syrian refugee crisis into a development opportunity that attracts new investments and creates new job opportunities, by opening up the EU market with simplified rules of origin;
- 2) Rebuilding Jordanian host communities by adequately financing the 2016-2018 Jordan Response Plan; and
- 3) Mobilizing sufficient grants and concessionary financing to support the macroeconomic framework and address Jordan's financing needs.

242 P.21, Jordan Decent Work Country Diagnostic, ILO, July 2016

243 Jordan - The National Employment Strategy (2011-2020): An Update and Future Directions, ILO (2015)

244 P.22, Jordan Decent Work Country Diagnostic, ILO, July 2016

245 Hazardous labor is one of the worst forms of child labor. According to the ILO Convention concerning the Prohibition and Immediate Action for the Elimination of the Worst Forms of Child Labour (Article 3(d)), hazardous work is "work which, by its nature of the circumstances in which it is carried out, is likely to harm the health, safety or morals of children."

246 Adopted at the conference on Supporting Syria and the Region in London on the 4th of February 2016

247 P. 1, World Bank Country Partnership Framework for Jordan, 15 June 2016

248 P. 1, World Bank Country Partnership Framework for Jordan, 15 June 2016

249 Notes of the Meeting to Sign the World Bank Strategic Partnership Framework (2017 – 2022)



Finally, the link between the cost of housing and household expenditures has been rising. For example, the Jordanian population increase, combined with the influx of Syrian refugees, have placed a squeeze on the availability of affordable housing, which has contributed to rent inflation. The Government has sought to innovate a solution via the Jordan Affordable Housing (JAH) Programme so as to aim at delivering 30,000 small-sized housing units - priced between JOD 15,000 and 16,000 per unit - that could be purchased by Jordanian families earning between JOD 300 and 500 per month. The units are being designed so that they can be expanded in the future, or merged together over time. Both refugees and vulnerable Jordanian families will have access to those units on a market rental basis. The scheme is intended as a large-scale public/private solution, including mortgage finance and private sector capital²⁵⁰ for the delivery of 30,000 housing units.²⁵¹

250- The estimated cost of the scheme is JOD 450 million or around \$600 million

251- P.10, Jordan Affordable Housing Programme Report – March 2015, supported by UN-HABITAT

Underlying Causes of Challenges to Economy in Jordan

- Regional issues of instability, outside the Government of Jordan's control-related and long term security risks, have inhibited both foreign and domestic investment. The closure of borders with Syria and Iraq has had a negative impact with these two closest trading partners.
- A lack of sufficient diversification and competitiveness within the primary productive sectors, which is also encumbered by bureaucracy and red-tape. Jordan's competitiveness does not compare with gulf countries.
- A gap exists between the larger corporations and SMEs into which Jordanian SMEs have been unable to grow, either through a lack of access to finance or a more limited posture of risk taking.
- The labour market is not performing well, in terms of quality and quantity. The current market is saturated and there is a well-documented mismatch between required skills and supplied ones.
- Jordanians find some of the key employment-generating sectors, such as construction, industry or agriculture, unappealing and are reluctant to gain employment there, whilst others expect the Government to be providing jobs for them in the public sector.
- The mindset to find work, solve problems, persevere, and be assertive is not always present. The culture of entitlement must be overcome.²⁵² Hence, the life skills, strong work ethics, tools to cope, as well as confident enterprising need to trump those of apathy, ambivalence and passiveness.
- Education standards, whilst still good, are perceived to be falling and have not kept pace with the demands of a thriving 'knowledge economy'. The overall quality of skilled labor entering the market is assessed to be below average. Jordanian students are not graduating with a sufficiently, rigorous problem-solving, enquiry mindset.
- Jordan's infrastructure is not as modern or efficient as can be found in the region, and levels of innovation and technology use have been described as acceptable or mediocre, but not great.
- Some of the best Jordanian business talent are both investing and operating overseas, especially in Gulf countries where gains are more lucrative, causing a brain drain on the local economy.
- The high operating costs, in particular energy, represent a challenge, and so, too, is the urban infrastructure.
- Cities, considered as the engine of growth and innovation, are not being capitalized on. Although urbanization is acknowledged as a major driving force, urban policy and investment are absent from national development strategies and sectoral policies for economic transformation. National economic policies tend to focus on employment in general and do not link jobs to cities and towns. There is insufficient support for private sector growth opportunities at the Governorate level. There is also a lack of integrated spatial, economic and social planning at the national, regional and local levels to provide a coherent planning framework and achieve a better balance of social, economic and physical development.

- The need for upscaling public/private partnerships that offer risk-sharing and win-win opportunities.
- The economy is over-centralized in Amman, Irbid and Aqaba. Outside of these areas, opportunities are more limited.
- The lack of women's participation in the workforce is significantly constraining the GDP (See also the Gender Section above).
- There is no intermediary activity through which the practical skills and knowledge of young people can be tapped. Transition strategies into the working environment are not well managed. Once young people complete their studies, they try to enter the employment market. However, for a sizeable proportion that do not manage to secure a job, they just seem to fall off the cliff.
- The potential of creative/cultural industries has, still, to be fully explored and exploited, particularly as an important contribution to youth and women employment as well as a source of resilience for vulnerable communities.
- Although only 2 percent of the workforce is employed in the agricultural sector, there are still opportunities here. However, the lack of a culture of cooperation or cooperatives, which can help promote the sustainable economic foundations of agriculture in many countries, has not been leveraged in Jordan. As a result, the Country is being left behind in this sector.

Pillar 3. The Planet

“We are determined to protect the planet from degradation, including through sustainable consumption and production, sustainably managing its natural resources and taking urgent action on climate change, so that it can support the needs of the present and future generations.”²⁵³

From an environmental perspective, Jordan faces increasing vulnerabilities and risks arising out of its limited natural resources, enhanced by the impact of climate change on its fragile natural and cultural assets. Whilst Jordan’s MDG 7 target of ensuring environmental sustainability was not met yet, the goal to halve the proportion of the population without sustainable access to safe drinking water²⁵⁴ and basic sanitation were both accomplished.²⁵⁵ However, the target on biodiversity loss was not achieved, although some progress has been made in this respect.

Notwithstanding the low availability of water resources, Jordan had been able, by 2008, to connect 98.41% of houses and community clusters to public water networks. The Government has been consistent in its comprehensive efforts exerted to meet those important targets. In this respect, the World Bank data indicate that, while the proportion of population with sustainable access to improved water sources stands at 97% - with a slight drop from the 99% target in 2015-, the proportion of households using an improved sanitation facility has significantly grown beyond the set target of 70%, to reach 98.6% of Jordanian households.²⁵⁶

Hence, despite some progress made and associated with the MDGs, there are a number of significant concerns in this sector. Scarcity of water, limited agricultural land, deforestation, over-grazing, desertification, soil erosion, land degradation, pollution, waste management and limited preparedness strategies against environmental risks, as well as ongoing concerns about biodiversity loss²⁵⁷ constitute some of the primary concerns. A rapidly-growing population, accompanied by unplanned urban growth - sometimes over agricultural land - and long-term, climate change implications represent quite a daunting conspiracy of challenges to the Kingdom and have a detrimental impact on ecosystem services, which are vital to and support social and economic development. As a result, Jordan imports most of its food and energy supplies, exposing it further to price fluctuations.



253- P.2, Transforming Our World: The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development – Resolution Adopted by the UN General Assembly, 25 September 2015

254- 97 percent of the population have access to water sources

255- 98.6 percent of the population have improved access to sanitation services, significantly beyond the target of 70 percent

256- World Development Indicators| World DataBank: <http://buff.ly/1NZ3EUJ>

257- See 5th National Report on Biodiversity (2014)

The most serious of all environmental challenges is the chronic shortage of water. Jordan is ranked as the fourth most, water-poor country in the world.²⁵⁸ A gradual downward trend of average annual precipitation is creating conditions whereby rainwater is not sufficient to replenish the groundwater supplies. Jordan withdraws approximately 25 to 30 percent more water than its resources can supply. As a result, groundwater levels have rapidly declined, compounded by over-use - and pollution - of the main aquifers in the north of the Country. Per capita annual renewable water resources are far below the threshold of severe water scarcity.²⁵⁹ The massive refugee intake has placed yet further demands for drinking water.

Additionally, the absence of a coherent, national spatial strategy integrating the socio-economic and physical planning to guide, regulate and control development, along with the needed regulatory framework and inadequate coordination between sectoral, physical and environmental planning activities, have resulted in improper locations of development sites and conflicting land uses, which have eventually had a negative impact on the limited natural resources, including water.

Up to 60 percent of water supply²⁶⁰ is reported to be lost through leakage, as a result of outdated distribution infrastructure and insufficient allocations to O&M. Water rationing is imposed in parts of the Kingdom on a bi-weekly and monthly basis, allocated as such: 120 litres of water per capita in urban areas, 80 litres of water in sub-urban regions, 30 litres of water in Azraq camp, 35 litres of water in Zatari, and 9 litres of water at the Berm. Development partners pursue piecemeal projects in the sector, whilst a more coordinated sector-wide approach is needed. Water remains a subsidized good in what is, currently, a financially-unsustainable sector. A new tariff system is needed, ensuring affordable prices for the most vulnerable while penalizing the overuse of fresh water by bigger users. Hence, the overuse of fresh water occurs in general, and in particular in the agricultural sector – considered to be the heaviest user-, where treated wastewater would suffice.

Direct sanitation to households covers 60 percent of the population.²⁶¹ Three major constraints exist to the sanitation sub-sector. Firstly, the limited capacity of treatment plants to treat sewage water in sufficient quantity and quality. Secondly, the increasing demand on sewage services due to population expansion, in particular in urban areas. Thirdly, a more general lack of capacity and efficiency within the sewage network.²⁶²

Jordan contributes very little to global emissions of greenhouse gasses,²⁶³ yet is likely to be affected thereby. As the population doubles over the next two decades and the impact of climate change becomes more pronounced through more uncertain and variable levels of precipitation, Jordan's vulnerability to environmental risks is forecast to increase.

Jordan enjoys a rich biodiversity due to its strategic location and topographic diversity. The Kingdom contains four different biological zones; each zone has its internationally-recognized plant and animal elements. Furthermore, there are eleven natural reserves with a total area of 1,431 square kilometres. Areas of natural reserves account for about 4% of the total area of Jordan. Since 2009, three new protected areas were established, namely Yarmouk, Fifa and Qatar.²⁶⁴

258- P. 284, EDP (2016 – 2018)

259- P. 52, World Bank – Systemic Country Diagnostic, February 2015

260- P. 288 of the EDP (2016 – 2018) states 'high losses'

261- P. 287 of the EDP (2016 – 2018) states, 'the percentage of houses serviced with sewage is expected to rise from 58 percent in 2013 to 63 percent in 2017'

262- P. 288 of the EDP (2016 – 2018)

263- Estimated to be 3.6 metric tonnes per capita in 2011, up from 2.3 in 2006

264- P.44, Jordan MDG Report 2015 (Final)

In overall terms, the quality of Jordan's soil is low and there is a gradual, but discernible trend towards degradation of land resources. Principally, this is imposed by fluctuations of rainfall with resultant desertification, coupled with an inadequate management. Protected areas of forest, which cover 2 percent of the landscape, have been the subject of illegal logging, resulting from high energy costs, representing a source of income generation for sale, and current crisis. Deforestation is, therefore, happening, and forest fires periodically wreak havoc. As with land degradation, desertification and deforestation, the threat to biodiversity increases.

Despite the stability and progress witnessed in advancing environmental sustainability and biodiversity, there are deepening concerns about biodiversity loss occurring in the territory.²⁶⁵ The Fifth National Report on Biodiversity of September 2014 indicated that a number of natural terrestrial and aquatic habitats in Jordan have been lost, affecting the faunal composition of these areas. Biodiversity remains exposed to several threats that have led to a sharp decline in most of the Jordanian flora and fauna numbers, including the extinction of several species.²⁶⁶ A body of work in Jordan and Egypt is currently studying and adapting the Hema System to ensure natural resource conservation to new governance systems in order to promote healthy, rangeland development.

Several recent studies predict the negative impact of climate change on Jordan. Possible changes include rising temperatures and decreasing rainfall, which will lead to a decrease in surface water sources and groundwater, reduce agricultural productivity and have multiple health impacts. Controlling biodiversity depletion in Jordan remains a difficult and complicated issue, due to water scarcity and increasing pollution of water, soil and air, coupled with other potential, negative impacts of climate change. Despite a slight improvement with terrestrial and marine protected areas -covering 1.4% of the total area of Jordan in 2014, compared to 0.44% in 2004 as noted above - populations of endangered species continue to decline significantly.²⁶⁷

Development pressures and urbanization are also contributing to land degradation. Climate change's predictions to a rise in temperatures and decrease in rainfall, as noted, are also having effect upon reduced agricultural production.

Within the context of land use planning, the urban component in Jordan has evolved substantially in recent decades, with 80 percent of the population now urbanized. For instance, new planning methods have been introduced by various actors, including municipal governments and economic zone authorities, with a gradual move towards stakeholder participation and environmental and social impact analysis. However, the laws and regulations, governing physical planning in Jordan, have not been brought up to date.

Modern urban transportation options remain undiversified and contribute to pollution and inefficiency. The limited introduction of mixed use developments towards planning for individual motorized transport rather than accessibility has led to increasing passenger kilometres travelled per capita, and a vicious cycle; where in an effort to address congestion, the increasing numbers of private motorized vehicles are sought to be accommodated by building more and more roads and infrastructure which, in turn, are soon overwhelmed by the rise in the numbers of vehicles.

Today, the planning system in Jordan is characterized by legal, institutional, and spatial fragmentation.²⁶⁸ Urbanization has occurred in the absence of inter-sectoral planning or coordination²⁶⁹ and, at times, of fertile land. The location of some major projects, including refugee camps, has not given sufficient consideration to infrastructure, transportation, water supply or to the effect on the pollution of aquifers.

265- Jordanian Fifth National Report under the Convention on Biological Diversity, 2014

266- Jordanian Fifth National Report under the Convention on Biological Diversity 2014

267- P. 81, 2014: Jordanian Fifth National Report under the Convention on Biological Diversity, Ministry of Environment, Amman, Jordan

268- AECOM Study, P.3 2010

269- CCA discussion group comments revealed that municipalities have outdated master plans, with little enforcement and no multi-sectoral approach. For example, each Ministry, such as transportation, agriculture, water, environment etc., has its own plan, but there is a general lack of integration. Land for industrial development (SEZs) and land for housing are not well-zoned and not necessarily encouraged in the most suitable locations where access to other services and infrastructure can best accommodate.

With regard to waste management, Jordan witnessed improvement in collecting solid waste, which accounted for 70% and 90% coverage in urban and rural areas, respectively. There are twenty-three landfills, including one allocated for hazardous waste and another for industrial waste, of which only one qualified to WHO standards. As for hazardous chemical waste, Jordan is committed to reducing its production and ensuring safe removal of waste in an environmentally-friendly manner.

To address this issue, a comprehensive, national solid waste strategy was launched in March 2015, including both a short-term plan for quick interventions at the municipal level, along with a long-term plan to be implemented by 2020. Furthermore, in August 2015, the Parliament passed the new municipalities' law, which laid the necessary legal foundations to move the decision-making process from the central Government to the localities, giving more autonomy to municipalities. This will have a direct, positive impact on solid waste management and service delivery processes.

Hazardous and chemical waste require better specialized management and separation from general waste. Hence, up to 70 percent of general and household waste is salvageable for recycling purposes, yet the Kingdom has been slow to seize on the recycling option in order to reduce its waste burden and thus, the opportunity it yields for sustainability.

Nor is there, yet, a fully-responsible appreciation of the requirement for those producing waste to dispose of it carefully, lawfully and sustainably. For example, despite a booming health sector that profits from 'health tourism' in the region, there is some concern that improper consideration of hazardous waste and associated disposal costs, risks or impacts is taking place. Chemical waste, such as that created through phosphates and cement need to be featured within the cost of production and not left as a public good to be cleaned up at the Government's expense.

Energy poses a further significant challenge for Jordan due to the Kingdom's lack of local, commercial sources of energy and dependence on imports. Currently, Jordan imports about 97 percent of its energy, mainly a mix of crude oil, petroleum products and natural gas.²⁷⁰ Locally-generated renewable energy only contributes to a very small proportion, but has significant potential to grow. The Kingdom's energy bill is, therefore, high and variable and thus, represents a challenge to households and investors alike, representing up to 60 percent of operating costs in the mechanized industrial and manufacturing sectors.

Underlying Challenges to 'The Planet'

- There has been a deterioration of Jordan's already-meagre natural resource base, including desertification, deforestation and biodiversity loss. This would, in turn, represent a risk of contest and conflict, as greater numbers of people derive a livelihood from a shrinking asset base and a related loss of ecosystem services.
- The agricultural sector does not constitute a major source of productivity or employment, nor do Jordanians aspire to work in agriculture. The sector is in need for modernisation and better organization, and is deemed as a major consumer of water.
- The Kingdom suffers from chronic water scarcity. Average annual precipitation is falling, and rainfall is not sufficient to replenish the ground water supplies. Moreover, difficult transboundary issues to manage exist as well. Over-use of fresh water occurs where recycled or treated wastewater would suffice.
- The absence of a coherent, national spatial strategy integrating the socio-economic and physical planning to guide, regulate and control development, along with the needed regulatory framework and inadequate coordination between sectoral, physical and environmental planning activities, have resulted in improper locations of development sites. This leads to conflicting land uses, which eventually have negative impact on the limited natural, heritage resources including water, agricultural lands, etc.
- Decades of under-investment in the water sector has led to an out-of-date and inefficient water distribution system, hampered by leakage, theft, excessive consumption and inappropriate levels of subsidy.
- The increase in population from natural growth and refugee intake has placed increasing demands for drinking water.
- The need for greater responsible and sustainable production and consumption (SDG 12) both at the industrial and agricultural levels and by individual consumers.
- The need for greater responsible consumption (SDG 12).



Pillar 4. Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions

"We are determined to foster peaceful, just and inclusive societies which are free from fear and violence. There can be no sustainable development without peace and no peace without sustainable development."²⁷¹

271- P.2, Transforming Our World: The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development – Resolution Adopted by the UN General Assembly, 25 September 2015

Sustainable Development Goal 16 calls on Member States to “Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all, and build effective, accountable, and inclusive institutions at all levels”.²⁷² In particular, SDG 16.6, commits to “develop effective, accountable and transparent institutions at all levels”,²⁷³ and SDG 16.7 aims to “ensure responsive, inclusive, participatory and representative decision-making at all levels”.²⁷⁴

These goals recognize and demonstrate the importance of strengthening participatory, inclusive, and accountable decision-making processes and institutions for the achievement of peaceful and sustainable development outcomes. Hence, SDG 16 establishes the developmental basis for programmes to strengthen inclusive, political processes through engagement with parliaments, elections, and political parties, as well as through civic participation.

In addition to SDG 16 and inclusive, participatory and representative institutions, Goal 5 of the SDGs has specific aims to achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls, including, target 5.5, to “ensure women’s full and effective participation and equal opportunities for leadership at all levels of decision-making in political, economic and public life”²⁷⁵ and target 5.c, to “adopt and strengthen sound policies and enforceable legislation for the promotion of gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls at all levels.”²⁷⁶

Jordan’s vision aims at achieving a prosperous, resilient, and inclusive – green – economy, through deepening transparent and comprehensive reforms. This includes carrying out consultations with all stakeholders, namely civil society organizations, women’s interest groups, youth organizations, and disability interest groups so as to ensure inclusiveness in development planning and receipt of benefits.²⁷⁷ Jordan has also actively promoted the inclusion of youth in decision-making processes at all levels, including through its sponsorship of Security Council Resolution 2250/2015.

Jordan is a constitutional monarchy, with a King that holds wide executive and legislative powers. Jordan is divided into 12 governorates and its Parliament consists of two chambers, namely the Jordanian Senate and the House of Representatives. The 65 members of the Senate are directly appointed by the King, whilst the 130 members of the House of Representatives are elected through proportional representation in 23 constituencies for a 4-year election cycle. Minimum quotas exist in the House of Representatives for women (15 seats – note: however, women won 20 seats in the 2016 election), Christians (9 seats) and Circassians and Chechens (3 seats). Three constituencies are allocated for the Bedouins of the northern, central and southern Badias.

Jordan has pursued a longstanding commitment to ensure the reform of political processes that seek to strengthen the democratic nature of institutions and facilitate the inclusion and participation of all sectors of society. Since the resumption of elections in 1989 and the legalization of political parties in 1991, a series of initiatives have taken place to promote a roadmap for political reform at all levels. These have included the 2005 National Agenda and the 2011 National Dialogue Committee.

Fresh impetus to carry out the reform process occurred in early 2011 at the time of the ‘Arab Spring’ with the publication of six ‘Discussion Papers’ by His Majesty King Abdullah II between 2012 and 2016.²⁷⁸ These Papers outline a vision on measures to strengthen the accountability and effectiveness across a core group of democratic institutions and processes, including the Parliament, elections, political parties and citizens’ participation, especially youth participation, rule of law and civil state.²⁷⁹

272- P.20, Report of the Inter-Agency and Expert Group on Sustainable Development Goal Indicators (E/CN.3/2016/2/Rev.1) (Final list)

273- P.21, Report of the Inter-Agency and Expert Group on Sustainable Development Goal Indicators (E/CN.3/2016/2/Rev.1) (Final list)

274- P.21, Report of the Inter-Agency and Expert Group on Sustainable Development Goal Indicators (E/CN.3/2016/2/Rev.1) (Final list)

275- P.8, Report of the Inter-Agency and Expert Group on Sustainable Development Goal Indicators (E/CN.3/2016/2/Rev.1) (Final list)

276- P.9, Report of the Inter-Agency and Expert Group on Sustainable Development Goal Indicators (E/CN.3/2016/2/Rev.1) (Final list)

277- P. 41-42, Vision 2025

278- http://www.kingabdullah.jo/index.php/en_US/pages/view/id/244.html

279- First Discussion Paper: «Our Journey to Forge Our Path Towards Democracy»; Second Discussion Paper: «Making Our Democratic System Work for All Jordanians»; Third Discussion Paper: «Each Playing Our Part in a New Democracy»; Fourth Discussion Paper: «Towards Democratic Empowerment and Active Citizenship»; Fifth Discussion Paper: «Goals, Achievements and Conventions: Pillars for Deepening Our Democratic Transition»

Within the ongoing context of increasing levels of regional instability, the Jordanian policy towards broadening participation and deepening democratic institutions is also viewed as a bulwark for preventing violent extremism. These sentiments come in line with recent United Nations statements, namely “We must refocus our priorities, strengthen our application of justice, and rebuild the social compact between the governing and governed”²⁸⁰, and “The creation of open, equitable, inclusive and pluralist societies, based on the full respect of human rights and with economic opportunities for all, represents the most tangible and meaningful alternative to violent extremism...”²⁸¹

Although the signals of continuing progress in the reform agenda are still present with some important steps forward in this direction having been taken, the general pace of reform appears to have slackened, as recorded in the 2016 UN Jordan evaluation report, “... as to whether systemic reforms have genuinely been enhanced is at best a partial gain, and questionable in some quarters.”²⁸²

In terms of governance performance, the transparency and accountability of range of independent global and regional indices present a mixed picture, with Jordan achieving relatively well, as compared to its Arab peers, but appears more at the mid-table side of the international level:

- The 2014 Arab Democracy Index²⁸³ of the Arab Reform Initiative ranked Jordan second in the state of democratic reforms out of nine Arab countries surveyed.
- The 2015 Global Democracy Index showed Jordan to be 120th out of 167 countries.²⁸⁴ Jordan ranked first among the Arab states and 78th globally in the Human Freedom Index in 2015²⁸⁵ out of 152 countries.
- Jordan came as the 45th out of 168 countries in the Corruption Perceptions Index (CPI) issued by Transparency International in 2015²⁸⁶ (where 168th is most corrupt).
- In the 2016 Press Freedom Index maintained by Reporters without Borders, Jordan ranked 135th out of 180 countries worldwide²⁸⁷ and 5th out of 19 countries in the Middle East and North Africa region. Jordan's score was 44 on a scale from 0 (most free) to 105 (least free). The report added that «The Arab Spring and the Syrian conflict have led the authorities to tighten their grip on the media and, in particular, the Internet.”
- Accountability and transparency challenges exist in the judicial sector. Public participation in the effectiveness of the judiciary in terms of case management (delays), correctional facilities and enforcement of court decisions were also highlighted in the recent World Justice Project Report on Jordan.²⁸⁸

Among the main priorities of the Political Reform Agenda is the focus on reforms that seek to strengthen public confidence in political processes, in the deepening of democratic, accountable and responsible institutions and in a further implementation towards decentralization at the governorate and municipal levels.

Key challenges to be addressed include low levels of public confidence in elected and representative institutions, low participation in elections, limited institutional capacities and resources, low inclusion of women and youth in political processes, weak political parties, negative public attitudes towards political parties, limited education and awareness of reform issues, as well as limited engagement and consultation on policy development.

280- P.3, Plan of Action to Prevent Violent Extremism - Report of the Secretary-General, December 2015

281- P.3, Plan of Action to Prevent Violent Extremism - Report of the Secretary-General, December 2015

282- UNDAF (2013 – 2017) - Evaluation Report - Outcome One: Enhancing Systemic Reforms

283- 2014 Arab Democracy Index IV

284- Economist Intelligence Unit - Democracy Index 2015: 'Democracy in an age of anxiety'

285- P.16, The Human Freedom Index 2015

286- Table Of Results: Corruption Perceptions Index 2015, Transparency International

287- Reporters without Borders - Data of press freedom rankings for 2016

288- WJP Index 2016, <http://data.worldjusticeproject.org/#groups/JOR>

Overcoming these obstacles will be key for Jordan to achieve both political reforms as well as targets set by SDG 16, so as to ensure progress towards effective, accountable and transparent institutions, and responsive, inclusive, participatory and representative decision-making at all levels.

Taking elections as an example, a key priority, and a continual challenge aims at building an effective framework for the holding of inclusive, credible and transparent elections. Jordan has experienced a regular series of multi-party elections, with parliamentary elections taking place eight times between 1989 and 2016, and with municipal elections held five times from 1995 to 2013. The next parliamentary elections will be in 2020, while elections for municipal and local councils, as well as for new governorate councils, are expected in the summer of 2017.

Jordan has experienced a series of changes occurring to electoral legislation, with eight different election laws enacted between 1989 and 2016, all appearing shortly before each election event. Until recently, the conduct of parliamentary elections has been marked by a series of controversial electoral policies and practices – related to the choice of electoral system, the delineation of electoral boundaries, the assignment of seats to electoral districts, the role of governmental institutions in the management of elections, the process of voter registration, and the impact of corrupt practices such as vote-buying in electoral campaigning – all of which undermined public confidence and trust in the electoral process. Many of these problems have also been mirrored within municipal elections.

Initial measures to reform the legal framework were introduced by the 2012 Election Law, and were consolidated by the 2016 Election Law that established an entirely-new electoral system and a stronger basis for electoral safeguards and regulation of campaigning. Nevertheless, election stakeholders, including national and international observer groups, have identified that further improvements occurring to the legal and regulatory framework for parliamentary elections must, therefore, be considered. Changes to the framework for elections at the municipal and governorate levels were also introduced in 2015 and will be tested in 2017.

The establishment of the IEC in 2012 marked a significant watershed for elections in Jordan. The independent body has constitutional and legal authority to manage elections with “trust, integrity and impartiality”.²⁸⁹ Stakeholders and election observers widely commended the IEC for its role in the implementation of the 2013 parliamentary elections, and remarked upon consequential improvements in the IEC’s administration of the 2016 parliamentary elections.

Since its establishment, the IEC has demonstrated a commitment towards its institutional and capacity development, through training and undertaking continual reviews of operational and procedural frameworks. The dynamics behind IEC preparations for the 2016 elections showed important efforts of openness, transparency and engagement with stakeholders that appear to have rewarded the IEC with a high level of public confidence in the integrity of its work.

Nevertheless, there continues to be an identified need for building the capacity of the IEC to work as a modern and professional election management body, with effective, specialized operational and logistical capabilities, enabling the latter to prepare for and implement the 2017 municipal and governorate council elections, as well as the 2020 parliamentary elections. This positioning is especially relevant, given the IEC’s strategic goal to develop itself as an agency having the ability to demonstrate public accountability, institutional independence, collaborative partnerships, professional excellence, and sustainable operational capacity.

²⁸⁹ Independent Electoral Law, 2012

The 2016 parliamentary elections saw a turnout of 36 percent. Although this marked an increased level of participation from previous elections, it continues to demonstrate a relatively-low level of citizen engagement in elections. Levels of public awareness and understanding of the broader political process are limited, and the provision of an effective civic and voter education that is able to engage and inform all sectors of society is a gap to be filled. Also, limited engagement of stakeholders in consultation on electoral legislation and regulations highlighted the need for inclusion of key actors at every stage of the electoral cycle.

The bicameral Jordanian Parliament (Majlis al-Umma) is composed of an elected House of Representatives (Majlis al-Nuwaab) and an appointed Senate (Majlis al-Aayan). The current Parliament²⁹⁰ is the eighteenth since the establishment of parliamentary institutions under the 1947 Constitution. Under the current Constitution of 1952, as amended, the Parliament has authority to review and vote on draft legislation, prepared by its executive body, including draft laws initially proposed by parliamentarians.

The Parliament also has financial oversight powers, exercised through budgetary and taxation controls, and can hold Ministers to account through interpellation. Each House is responsible for determining its own Rules of Procedure, with parliamentary sessions conducted in public. However, there is always a possibility for private sessions, and no obligation are put in place to conduct public sessions for committees or to engage in formal consultation with stakeholders.

The House of Representatives is directly elected for a four-year mandate. The current Members of Parliament (MPs) were elected in September 2016 under a new electoral system that reduced the size of the House, from 150 seats in the 17th Parliament to the current 130 seats. Of the 2016 intake, 30 percent of MPs are new to their role as parliamentarians. Members are supported by a Secretariat, with significant experience in parliamentary work. For the 18th Parliament, both legislators and staff have demonstrated a commitment to strengthening their technical capacity and understanding to carry out the legislative, oversight and representative functions of Parliament.

A key element of this role will be the way through which the Parliament builds on previous and comparative experiences to strengthen its role in budgets reviews and draft legislation. The House has an established committee structure that enables the detailed review of draft legislation, and a new Research Centre to provide support to the work of MPs, especially in their role within Committees. Nevertheless, the Parliament's capacities for supporting MPs and Committees, through the conduct of consultation with stakeholders or provision of independent policy analysis and expert research on legislative topics, remain limited.

A key aim of the political reform process in Jordan is highlighted in the fact “that the people elect representatives to make important public decisions on behalf of the country as a whole.” This vision of a dynamic and engaged parliament faces the significant challenge of low levels of public confidence in parliaments as an effective institution that primarily serves the interests of the whole country and its peoples on an issues and agenda basis, over and above the narrower interests of its members or their respective constituencies.

This will, therefore, require substantial efforts by the new Parliament to strengthen its institutional capacities for outreach to and engagement with individuals and stakeholder groups, leading directly to enhanced levels of transparency, openness and access to information and data. It will also need to ensure further opportunities for interactions with citizens in the work of Parliament through educational and awareness raising initiatives, and to improved levels of public access to Parliament, parliamentarians and the parliamentary process. A crucial step will be to strengthen the framework by which Parliament engages with citizens and interested groups through effective and responsive consultation on its work, including the matter through which it can constructively define its identity and address public concerns.

²⁹⁰- As of October 2016

One important area for the new Parliament is to study different ways to engage on the promotion and achievement of Sustainable Development Goals. Parliament has a key role on SDGs, through parliamentary oversight of executive action on the SDG Agenda, in reviewing and adopting legislation on areas where reform is required to realize the implementation of SDGs in Jordan, and in promoting debate and consultation on the SDG agenda. In line with SDG 16, the Parliament will also be responsible for demonstrating and measuring the extent by which it takes steps to develop as an effective, accountable and transparent institution that enables the decision-making process to become responsive, inclusive, participatory and representative.

The transformative nature of the SDG Agenda will, and to a great extent, depend on the participation of young people who represent an estimated quarter of the population. However, there has been a very limited level of practical inclusion and engagement of young persons in political processes. With a constitutional age restriction of 30 years for candidacy to the Parliament, young people are rarely visible in political life. Hence, few effective structures are put in place to enable young voices to be heard during policy development.

There have been some important attempts at extending inclusion of young people in the political process, such as the lowering of voting age to those aged 17 years and voter education efforts; however, efforts to facilitate dialogue or provide civic education have tended to be targeted at specific groups, such as university students, and have generally not involved representatives of the many young Jordanians who are not in education or who are unemployed. This has, therefore, contributed to high levels of apathy towards political issues amongst young people, demonstrated by the low level of participation by young voters (20 percent) in the 2016 elections, in comparison to the national average of 36 percent.



Beyond the instability of the region surrounding the Country, Jordan currently faces major challenges in addressing radicalization and extremism within its own borders. Conservative estimates indicate that 1,500 to 2,100 Jordanians are fighting with radical groups, making the Kingdom the highest exporter in per capita terms. The implications of this phenomenon are dangerous, as these Jordanian fighters will likely serve as a deterrent to peace and stability in their own country, regardless of their return. A focus on enhanced political participation, particularly of young men and women, would help give voice to citizens' opinions and concerns, as well as a stake in the policies of their government.

Jordan has made clear commitments in this area, through its sponsorship of UNSC Resolution 2250/2015 to increase inclusion of youth in decision-making processes at local and national levels. A key element of this approach recognizes that exclusion of young Jordanians from more mainstream political processes implies risks of radicalization, violence or violent extremism. Hence, it will be important to ensure that young people and youth-led organizations are provided with the space and opportunity to participate in and have access to inclusive political processes through information sharing and consultation on policy development and implementation.

Parliament and political parties can play a relevant role in facilitating open dialogue. To this extent, efforts will also be needed to raise awareness of political processes – the role of Parliament, the work of MPs, the electoral process, etc. – through enhanced measures for openness and accessibility by key actors, especially the Parliament and the IEC, including the adoption of improved civic education materials and use of digital media.

Jordan's 2008 ratification of the UN Convention on Rights of Persons with Disabilities establishes a commitment for inclusion of persons with disabilities in political processes, including specific provisions related to elections. These provisions fall within the mandate of the Higher Council for Affairs of Persons with Disabilities. Significant efforts have been made to promote inclusion in policy and decision-making processes, including the preparations of draft legislation with specific provisions on the role of the Parliament, IEC and political parties. While the IEC has taken measures to facilitate physical access to electoral process, there continues to be considerable scope to improve broader issues of access for persons with disabilities, as well as for groups representing them, so as to engage in Parliament activities and participate in political affairs.

In terms of public administration reforms and performance of the Government's core institutions, it has long been recognized that good governance is the cornerstone of successful, social and economic development. Most critically, good governance aims at strengthening the social contract between government institutions, communities and the people. Indeed, there are challenges too, and Jordan has its particular share thereof.

The public sector suffers from overemployment, inefficiency and low levels of productivity.²⁹¹ The over-inflated and unwieldy size of the public sector stifles and dilutes its ability to incentivize good performance with a strong results orientation.²⁹² ²⁹³ Furthermore, governance systems suffer from low institutional capacities, particularly in human resource capabilities below that of the leadership level.²⁹⁴ A perceived lack of transparency and public accountability²⁹⁵, combined with under-developed communication and outreach capabilities, can serve to undermine the Government's credibility, creativity and excellence.

The Government acknowledges that greater dynamism is required in the public sector. One of the proposals - currently at hand - implies the opportunity for far greater utilization of e-governance services in a practical manner that serves the needs of its citizens.²⁹⁶ And, similar to the electoral

291- P.40, Vision 2025

292- P.22, World Bank Country Partnership Framework for Jordan, 15 June 2016

293- P. 94, Executive Development Plan (2016 – 2018). This also states that there are 120 institutions, departments and ministries.

294- P. 94, Executive Development Plan (2016 – 2018)

295- P. 4, World Bank Country Partnership Framework for Jordan, 15 June 2016

296- P. 42 & P.94, Executive Development Plan (2016 – 2018)

challenges confronting the Government and Parliament as outlined above, greater consultative and participatory approaches are also needed in policy dialogue and service delivery arenas. The latter also entails the mobilization of stronger relations with the private sector and civil society, as partners in development, in line with the resolutions adopted at the third International Conference on Financing for Development.²⁹⁷

Jordan depends on international assistance, making it one of the largest middle-income country recipients of foreign grants in the world.²⁹⁸ Since 1960 and on a per capita basis, Jordan has received ODA amounting to 500%, compared to what has been received by Egypt, to 180% to what has been received by Lebanon and to 330% to what has been received by Syria. In 2014, Jordan received net ODA amounting to USD 385 per capita, compared to USD 163 and USD 40 received by each of Lebanon and Egypt, respectively. Jordanians, in private business, often criticize the international community for providing too much aid, which translates into something of a 'resource curse', since it reduces the need for the Government to undertake the reforms that might, more readily, accelerate development and stimulate economic growth.²⁹⁹

The World Bank also suggests that Jordan's development partners have unwittingly been complicit in their contribution to the stasis, due to a proliferation of fragmented, cherry-picked donor projects that offer the appearance of addressing important structural challenges, while actually postponing essentially-needed reforms and thus, leaving the policy component as a shell.³⁰⁰ The future orientation of ODA might be, more squarely, based on a mix of principles and approaches that have more recently emerged from the Busan Partnership for Effective Development Co-operation,³⁰¹ the Addis Ababa Action Agenda³⁰² and the Communiqué for the first High-Level Meeting of the Global Partnership,³⁰³ all of which place greater emphasis on the importance of development partnership and domestically-generated sources of revenue as a primary source of long-term, sustainable development financing.

Nowhere are these much-needed reforms more evident than at the sub-national level, where governorate and municipal public services, in particular in outlying municipalities are reported to have been in a state of disrepair for decades.³⁰⁴ Under-resourced and under-empowered municipalities face mounting pressure to continue to deliver effective and quality municipal services, address housing deficiencies, and induce local economic development and social cohesion within communities.³⁰⁵ The greatest capability requirements are recorded in those municipalities where 85 percent of Syrian refugees reside, where in particular, capacity strengthening for development planning, service delivery and project execution, and more effective coordination and communication mechanisms are required.³⁰⁶

In Jordan, the sub-national, governance system is composed of (i) governorate-level administrations, and (ii) single-tier, municipal authorities. It is best described as a centralized power with local coordination. Governorates remain fairly dependent on the central Government and its various line ministries. The Governor, nominated by the Council of Ministers and appointed by the King, reports to the Minister of Interior. The Governor's functions have a large security-related role and another growing one in planning for socio-economic development, without an independent budget to support sub-national programming.

Line ministries are represented at the governorate level, through directorates, which have limited autonomy in planning and execution, except for certain functional units and state agencies that have great authority at the sub-national level.³⁰⁷ Heads of Directorates sit in the Executive Council, chaired

297- United Nations – Third International Conference for Financing for Development, Addis Ababa, 13-16 July 2015

298- P.5, World Bank – Systemic Country Diagnostic, February 2015

299- Productive Local Engagement – UN RC/HC on Development Cooperation in Jordan, Paul Lundberg, May 2016

300- P.xi, xii & xiv, World Bank – Systemic Country Diagnostic, February 2015

301- The Busan Partnership for Effective Development Co-operation: <http://www.oecd.org/development/effectiveness/busanpartnership.htm>

302- <http://www.un.org/esa/ffd/>

303- <http://effectivecooperation.org/2014/03/draft-communication-for-the-first-high-level-meeting-of-the-global-partnership/>

304- P.2, UNDP, Municipal Needs Assessment Report, 2014

305- P.59, UNDP, Municipal Needs Assessment Report, 2014

306- P. 62, UNDP, Municipal Needs Assessment Report, 2014

307- This category comprises of line ministry agencies or state-owned public service enterprises with higher levels of autonomy than classic line ministry directorates; they often operate in parallel to municipalities as service providers

by the Governor, representing a coordination platform. The Governor is also supported by an Advisory Council, consisting of up to 25 appointed members³⁰⁸ which has a limited role in policy-making and implementation, and no direct accountability links to citizens.

The Law of Municipalities, as amended in 2011, defines municipalities as ‘a local institution vested with financial and administrative independence’, alluding to some level of decentralization. The total number of municipalities, in Jordan, has been reduced from 328 in the early 2000’s to 100, today. Municipalities are classified into four categories from A to D,³⁰⁹ depending on the location and size of population. They are governed by a Municipal Council, which is elected every four years, with 25 percent of the seats assigned to women. An elected Mayor chairs the Municipal Council and acts as a Chief Executive over the Municipal Administration, with the assistance of a Municipality Director, appointed by the Ministry of Municipal Affairs (MOMA)³¹⁰.

Municipalities have 29 areas of responsibility,³¹¹ which relate to standard urban services, such as cleansing, street lighting, construction and maintenance of roads, slaughterhouses, markets, public parks, libraries and town planning. Municipalities also have a general, local development mandate. According to said Law, water supply and sanitation do not constitute municipal functions. However, municipalities often try to address deficiencies in these governmental-run services, through their own initiatives³¹².

The municipalities’ sources of income consists mostly of own revenues (including from investment projects), state budget transfers, loans from the Cities and Villages Development Bank, and - in rare cases - donor grants. Municipalities frequently fail to meet local needs, due to inadequate financial resources, as well as the limited technical capacity. In general, municipalities have a very low capital investment capacity, and budgets are overwhelmingly used for operating costs.³¹³

The central, supervisory authority over the sub-national governance system is shared between the Ministry of Interior (MOI) at the governorate level (including district and sub-district levels) and MOMA at the municipal, local level. Hence, the Ministry of Planning and International Cooperation (MOPIC) plays a significant role in local development planning. Line ministries remain fully in control of service delivery facilities in their respective sector.

At the local level, development planning is shared between numerous actors under the leadership of MOPIC, MOI and MOMA. In the public sector, expenditures are planned and executed, either by the central Government or by municipalities. Only 3 percent of the Government’s total expenditures are expended at the municipal level³¹⁴, equivalent to only 1 percent of the GDP, registering the lowest level in the region³¹⁵. Moreover, no coherent framework for urban planning that can ensure sustainable socio-economic development at the national and sub- regional levels exists.

Hence, planning is carried out chiefly, through vertical lines with top-down control and centralized budgets. Attempts to increase local development planning through horizontal lines have gained momentum at the governorate level, and in some cases at municipal level, with the intent of involving local populations in a more direct way³¹⁶. Local Development Units (LDUs), staffed by MOI, are present in governors’ offices, and similar units, supported by MOMA, are also functioning in approximately 40 municipalities. LDUs are meant to play a key role in information management, research, planning and monitoring so as to support local policy-making and implementation procedures.

308- Consisting of MPs, mayors, civil society organizations, community-based organisations, private sector, etc.

309- Category A: Center of governorates and/or with more than 100,000 people; Category B: Centers of district (Liwa) and/or with a population of 15,000 to 100,000; Category C: Center of sub-districts (Gadha) and/or populations from 5000 – 15000; Category D: Those covering less than 5000 people (CCA)

310- At least for larger municipalities (A and B)

311- They used to have 39 before, including the areas of education, health and water

312- E.g. Operating water/sewage truck services for residents in municipality against fee (income generation)

313- In average, 17% of their annual expenditures (EU, 2013)

314- Figures for 2010, excluding the special zones of Amman, Aqaba and Petra, governed by different arrangements. Source: EU, 2011

315- This stands in sharp contrast to worldwide averages of almost 40 % in federal countries and 22 % in unitary countries

316- Mostly in the context of donor-funded projects

Moreover, the Jordanian civil society plays a limited formal role in Government-led, local development planning, except in locations where externally-supported community development initiatives take place. This is partially due to the fact that there are no clear policies, procedures, or institutionalized mechanisms for citizen participation. These organizations do, however, play a very important role in community life, by providing assistance to the most vulnerable and through service delivery (especially in public health, early childhood education, literacy, as well as women and children's rights-related areas) and local development.

Community-based organizations (CBOs) enjoy good ratings among citizens,³¹⁷ and are seen as more responsive to citizens' needs than State institutions, whether local or national. Hence, the civil society is represented in Governorate Advisory Committees and can play an influential role at the grassroots level, through interaction with municipal councils on issues of concerns to local citizens³¹⁸. The civil society is also contributing to greater integrity of governance systems by undertaking independent social accountability initiatives. Some NGOs have more clout, thanks to the patronage of members of the royal family, granting them greater flexibility, access to financial resources, capacity, as well as advocacy power.

Over the past two decades, the local governance and local development system in Jordan witnessed a slow transition movement towards decentralization. Initial attempts to accelerate decentralization aimed at achieving, among others, greater participation in public sector policy-making and implementation procedures, as well as improving the social auditing of the public sector's performance. The Arab Spring and economic crisis, unfolded after 2009, made the Government hold back on political and fiscal decentralization. Hence, priority shifted in favor of strengthening administrative deconcentration at the governorate level, mostly for development planning, and building municipal, managerial capacities. More recently, the Government has showed reinvigorated interest in pushing decentralization reform forward, supported by the EU.³¹⁹ The first municipal elections were held in August 2013, under a newly-revised Law of Municipalities,³²⁰ and - for the first time in Jordan - the supervision of an Independent Elections Commission. It is noteworthy to mention that the turnout rate was low (31.5 percent of registered voters) due to several factors, including the boycott of certain political parties and voter apathy.

Hence, the newly-elected Municipal Councils have the potential of enhancing the profile of municipalities in service delivery and local development. They could, therefore, significantly contribute to strengthening the social compact in Jordan at the local level. However, these Councils are facing a huge challenge when taking over bankrupt, bloated and dysfunctional municipal administrations. These issues are further compounded in the northern areas by challenges that come with hosting large numbers of refugees.

The Government has mainly approached administrative deconcentration from the local development planning angle, whereas governorate administrations still have limited executive and financial powers. Attempts have been made to reconcile vertical and horizontal planning streams regarding the distribution of roles between MOPIC, MOI and MOMA. MOPIC has, since, spearheaded the production of Governorate Development Programmes (GODPs) in an attempt to address the disconnection between centralized, vertical sectorial planning streams and horizontal, intersectoral area-based planning efforts. The intentions were also set to achieve more citizen participation in and local grounding of decisions on public investments, in order to boost local economic development and to increase job creation.

317- 79% trust partially or fully CBOs to deal with community needs (survey of 400 citizens in 5 municipalities, Jan 2013, Global Communities)

318- It is worth to be noted, though, that there are no formal obligations on municipalities to engage local civil society and communities in the planning and budgeting exercise, nor are there obligations to report to local residents on performance of the Municipality

319- The EU has pledged EUR 4.5 million for 2014 in support of the Government's decentralization strategy

320- Law No. 13 of May 2011, as amended in January 2012

GODPs define mid-term development objectives to be supported by the national investment budget. They aim at identifying local communities' priority needs and encouraging the private sector, civil society and other development partners to help address these needs. Furthermore, a Governorate Development Fund has been set up by MOPIC to collect funding for needs, unmet by the national budget and estimated at US\$ 100 million. Some donors, most particularly the GCC countries, have already contributed to this Fund. Line ministries are also now required to align their yearly and mid-term investment plans with the GODPs' priorities.

With respect to the capacity of municipal administrations, several recent situation analysis³²¹ paint a rather, stark picture of a municipal sector in distress:

- Only a portion of the 29 functions assigned to Municipal Councils by law are routinely performed by municipalities. Approval ratings of municipal authorities are declining, resulting in further disconnection between municipalities and their local constituency, resulting in a low turnout at the recent, local elections.
- Municipalities have insufficient, administrative and technical capacities, which are mostly due to patronage-based, rather than merit-based hiring of municipal staff³²². This has, therefore, led to a bloated workforce with limited qualifications. Not all municipalities have organizational charts and job descriptions are not often used. Furthermore, the management is concentrated in the hands of the Mayor, with insufficient checks-and-balances by the Municipal Council.
- Financial management practices are basic and lead to inefficiency in service delivery and funds management. They do not support accountability. MOMA is currently working on a regulatory framework for guiding municipalities in their administrative duties, while also upgrading information management systems for financial management.
- Municipalities often lack equipment, capacity, logistical and transportation means to ensure the delivery of municipal services and to maintain their existing assets.
- Municipalities suffer from severe financial constraints. Salary spending consumes an excessive share of municipal budgets and debt service has become unsustainable for many municipalities.³²³ The generation of revenue is constrained by legislation and vested interests³²⁴, which would leave municipal authorities with little, if any, investment capacity.

Significant disparities exist between regions and municipalities, in terms of capacities and performance. The Greater Amman Municipality, which benefits from a unique, legal status in the country, has made major strides in becoming a modern and efficient local authority more capable to answer its residents' needs. A few other municipalities have also benefitted from direct, capacity-building support through donor-funded projects and have made progress. However, successful initiatives have yet to be scaled up to all municipalities.

Against this backdrop of short to medium-term challenges, the Government has been incrementally pursuing an agenda of decentralization and devolution. A new Municipalities Law stipulates the establishment of local councils to enhance citizen representation therein, and a Decentralization Law devolves financial and planning authority at the governorate level and stipulates the establishment of an elected, governorate council.³²⁵

321- See in particular: Brief note related to programming of the forthcoming thematic programme "Civil Society Organisations and Local Authorities" (2014-2020) (EU, 2013); The Quest for Decentralizing Government in the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan: Some Preliminary Findings of a Situation Analysis (EU, 2011)

322- National statistics show that 76% of municipal employees have not completed high-school

323- Against an international benchmark of 15% (EU, 2011)

324- For example, in many municipalities, the rental value used for the calculation of property tax was not updated since 2002

325- P. 4, World Bank Country Partnership Framework for Jordan, 15 June 2016

Emphasis must also be placed on a relatively, new phenomenon that rightly finds its way to discussions within the 'Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions' mainstream – that of prevention of violent extremism (or PVE). Jordan's neighbour - Syria - has become one of the biggest countries in the world, in terms of foreign fighters, with their numbers continuing to increase. Syria has, now, therefore become the training ground of choice for today's violent extremists. Extremists' groups, operating from Syria, have become increasingly good at recruiting fighters from all over the Arab region and the world, including from Jordan, through campaigns often related to sectarian issues and cyber space use.

Despite the fact that Jordan constitutes one of the few countries in the region that is still blessed with stability, some Jordanians are actively contributing to the growth of fighters in neighboring countries. Although actual numbers are not known yet, conservative estimates indicate anywhere around 1,500-2100 Jordanians are fighting with radical groups. This makes the Kingdom the highest contributor in per capita terms.³²⁶ Other sources place Jordan at a much higher level still. The implications of this phenomenon are potentially dangerous, as these Jordanians will likely be a deterrent to peace and stability in their own country, regardless of whether they return back or not. Hence, it is critical to work with local population in order to support efforts to address the causes of their radicalization in the first place.

Hence, national authorities are trying to control the growth of radicalism and violent extremism in the Country. A new counterterrorism law was approved in June 2015, providing authorities with sweeping new powers, criminalizing participation in foreign jihads, and affording the Government's wide, legal space to imprison citizens who lend ideological and recruitment support to terrorist organizations.

The King of Jordan has, himself, been speaking at international and global forums on the importance of fighting radicalization and violent extremism. His Majesty's agenda for fighting radicalization centers around re-establishing the essence and shared spirit of respective faiths and creeds, changing the current discourse and stopping the spread of hate speech, as well as using communication to counter extremists, and providing zero tolerance for intolerance. His Majesty also called on all communities and countries to come together in a collective, consciousness and common cause.

The drivers and enablers of radicalism and violent extremism are multiple, complex and context-specific. Despite differences in root causes of violent extremism and radicalization due to national contexts, common processes, drivers and enablers operating at the individual, group, community, national, regional and global levels can be identified to explain the complex phenomenon of radicalism and violent extremism. As such, complex constellations of diverse factors converge to produce violent extremism and radicalism.

The most important recruitment channel, in terms of effect on the youth, is the social media glamorizing the struggle, and providing disillusioned youth with role models and an opportunity to interface with extremist groups. For the majority of the recruits, life in Jordan is a disappointment to be compensated by joining radicalized groups and receiving legitimacy, power, inclusion, and social status.

326- <http://icsr.info/2015/01/foreign-fighter-total-syriairaq-now-exceeds-20000-surpasses-afghanistan-conflict-1980s/>

Given the above, it is very important for prevention efforts to focus on:

- 1) Widening opportunities at the individual level, and creating forums for youth to build individual identities and positive family connections;
- 2) Strengthening community-based alternatives and social/community networks so as to build on the societal and economic assets that youth present, especially at the local level and within localized, social enterprises;
- 3) Supporting projects that address governance gaps, including transparency, accountability and availability of services, as well as opinions and participation;
- 4) Supporting, educating and partnering with peaceful, local actors, especially mothers, religious leaders and the media;
- 5) Supporting action-oriented research, involving youth and resulting in cultural, sports and music opportunities, as well as social and economic enterprise opportunities at local, decentralized levels; and
- 6) Building local machineries at the municipal level to ensure community participation, including youth, and to present models of accountability and transparency.



Underlying Challenges to Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions

- About 5 years ago, political reforms had picked up a pace, but are now moving slowly again. Within the context of reforms, there is inadequate outreach to the involvement of civil society and citizens, most particularly women and youth. This applies to the national and local levels. Stronger engagement with the private sector is, therefore, also needed.

- The increasing numbers of young people are at risk of being marginalized, politically, socially and economically, and further, alienated from the mainstream.
- The public confidence and engagement in parliamentary elections is lacking. This was demonstrated at the September 2016 parliamentary elections, which showed a low level of voter turnout (23 percent of the electorate). Too few youth participate in the political process, either as a result of their own apathy or lacking belief in its ability to bring about change. The electorate remains insufficiently informed or educated about the importance of elections. Parliament still runs essentially along historically-derived tribal lines, is perceived to be occupied by those with strong parallel business interests, and has not yet evolved or matured into a body that is able to exercise oversight or hold Government fully to account. As one focus group respondent commented “tribalism is still the fabric of our society”, politics and discourse based on an agenda of issues still need to supersede the tribal dimension.
- In terms of national and local institutions’ quality and professionalism, the underlying concerns relate fundamentally to three issues. The first issue being the political will to drive forward reform programmes to implementation. There is no shortage of reform strategies or programmes– however, the drive and determination to implement them is lacking. Whereas, the second issue being that of capacity within the institutions themselves. One of the major underlying challenges of national institutions is having the quality of personnel needed in core functions to be able to successfully implement programmes. The third issue being that of internal public investment via the national budget from own revenues deemed too small and not commensurate to the challenges.
- The Government, in some quarters, is seen to have become donor-dependent. Domestic revenues, generated from internal taxation, are not sufficient. There is a suggestion that - with a ready supply of donor funds - ministries have not been sufficiently challenged to expedite their reform programmes in search of much-needed efficiencies, innovation etc. Instead, capacity or resource substitution has taken place, which has provided a series of short-term fixes and - at the end of the day - does not insist upon a more internally-driven reform agenda. Some ministries depend on a significant, unsustainable injection of ODA. Hence, greater efforts must now be placed on domestic sources of revenue generation. This will require reform of the taxation system, extending the range of individuals subject to tax and tackling the large informal sector. Greater transparency and accountability will assist the Government to drive up standards in public life and services.
- There is an underlying challenge in relation to the implementation of the decentralization law, that the delivery of services is being devolved but without the commensurate levels of budget. There is a significant capacity constraint at the local level which is looming.
- The absence of a coherent framework for national urban planning, aiming at achieving a better balance of social, economic and physical development across country, which also entails having proper hierarchy between national, regional and local plans, has resulted in a disconnection between physical and economic planning, and inequalities in distributing the benefits and available opportunities for development across the Country.
- From a human rights perspective, one of the major underlying concerns is that of access to justice in a way that could guarantee a legal, due process to all people, in addition to that of a demand for legal aid or pro-bono assistance, which the Bar Association is able to offer, but in which demand outstrips supply. Legislation in this area is in need of renewal. Hence, the judiciary system is not entirely independent, and public trust or confidence in judiciary is not strong.

- The limited access to information and freedom of expression trends are not positive. Journalists practice a high-degree of self-censorship, with a number being periodically detained. The Government is certainly willing to engage and cooperate, however - in reality - there is often ambiguity over integration and language included within legislation that seeks to protect the right of expression. In terms of access to information, some progress has been achieved, such as in the 2007 Law. Critics maintain that this Law is not yet well implemented, and too much information - which could be in the public domain - is deemed to be 'classified'.
- In progressing the Universal Periodic Review (UPR), it has been observed that despite Jordan's best efforts to maintain its accordance with the UPR in a number of cases, national legislation is not fully in line with international standards.
- One of the greatest risks confronting Jordan is that it is becoming more deeply infected by instability and destabilizing affects, witnessed in Syrian and Iraq. Despite being a bastion of relative stability to date, Jordan is, nevertheless, one of the main sources of foreign fighters to the conflict in neighbouring territories. Under the leadership of the King, the Government has sought to stem the flow and has, therefore, launched its own Prevention of Violent Extremism and Counter-Terrorism strategies, including a National Action Plan related to UNSC Resolution 1325.³²⁷
- Within the scope of the PVE, it has been observed that national security may become more important than human security. There is a need for a carefully- nuanced and calibrated balance. There may be a risk of 'over-securitizing' the agenda. There is concern that PVE becomes a new buzz word, which leads to a profusion of uncoordinated projects and initiatives. There is a larger risk that Jordanian youth (and the wider population) come to perceive that this new thrust of development measures are only being undertaken as a means to avert them from engaging in unsavoury activities.
- There is still a quiet, limited space for civil society in Jordan. On the one hand, Government appears concerned by the service delivery role that is being performed by a number of NGOs. While on the other hand, some NGOs appear to have been granted considerably more funds than a ministry budget line has for a similar activity. A number of NGOs appear to be performing the role of sub-contractors to the international community, carrying out service delivery functions, each with considerable operating costs, but are not building capacity or transferring skills to the Ministry or local directorates. This is being viewed as an opportunity lost. There are also similar issues of accountability and transparency, affecting the civil society. This would, therefore, lead to the occurrence of tension in some instances, requiring some aspects of reconciliation.

³²⁷- <http://jordan.unwomen.org/en/digital-library/publications/8/a-national-dialogue-on-unscr-1325-women-peace-and-security-in-jordan-a-resolution-in-action>



Pillar 5. Partnerships

“We are determined to mobilize the means required to implement this Agenda through a revitalized Global Partnership for Sustainable Development, based on a spirit of strengthened global solidarity, focused in particular on the needs of the poorest and most vulnerable and with the participation of all countries, all stakeholders and all people.”³²⁸

The international community continues to demonstrate a strong and diverse partnership with the Government of Jordan. Current levels of gross Official Development Assistance,³²⁹ being channelled to Jordan, have increased over recent years, from US\$ 1.4 billion in 2012 and US\$ 1.6 billion in 2013, reaching almost US\$ 3.0 billion in 2014. During the 2013-2014 period, the average ODA was 35% in favour of the humanitarian sector and 29% for social infrastructure and services. The remainder being allocated to education, health and the economic sectors. Leading donors over the 2013-2014 period include the US (US\$ 864 million), the UAE (US\$ 418 million) and the EU (US\$ 217 million).

The UNDAF evaluation exercise made a valuable recommendation when stating, “UN partnerships with all major stakeholders, including Government, major development partners, private sector and civil society could be strengthened at the strategic level in light of SDG 17 in order to mobilize the support from all major sectors for the over-arching aims of the 2030 development agenda in Jordan.” This will be particularly important as partnership coordination for humanitarian and resilience programming currently comes together around the instrument of the JRP. However, there is no such strategic coordination mechanism for development partners engaged in longer-term development assistance, for example, around the EDP or more generally in support of Vision 2025. This will need to be addressed by the UNCT within the context of the next UNPF (2018 – 2022).

Conclusions & Next Steps

The United Nations is currently formulating its next five-year programme of assistance to Jordan - the United National Sustainable Development Partnership Framework (UNPF 2018 – 2022). This Framework will be crafted along the lines of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and thus, will be based on the five areas of poverty, people, planet, peace (justice and strong institutions), and partnerships, as discussed above. In particular, it will seek to take a more integrated approach to sustainable development and resilience, and - at the same time - pursue the DaO prerogative of the United Nations in Jordan.

There will be many challenges that lie ahead. Chief among these, as highlighted in this CCA, will be that of devising strategies and programmes that satisfactorily address the inter-connected and multi-faceted issues confronting the Kingdom across each of the five substantive areas mentioned. These issues cut across regional instability and threats posed to insecurity, strengthened effective governance, poverty reduction and economic inclusion, unemployment, gender, inequalities, youth and environmental concerns. Hence, it is no longer possible to design discrete projects within any one pillar of the humanitarian or development arenas in isolation. Agile and integrated approaches to programming are, therefore, required.

At the same time, the risks are greater than at any time in the past. If recent reflection on the past 15 years of the MDG era is anything to go by, future exogenous events and domestic circumstances will also periodically arise to challenge the development trajectory and assumptions that have been drawn. Awareness has already been drawn to the fact that at its current level, growth will not be sufficient to create the conditions necessary to propel the Kingdom forward in the manner needed to satisfy the annual stream of job-seekers. Even when growth was in the 7% range during the 2000-2007 period, its impact on poverty reduction was limited. More creativity, innovation and dynamism is, therefore, needed to catalyze development futures for a wider cohort of social and economic participants in Jordan.

Alternative strategies and policies, unlocking the Kingdom's human development potential, are needed – especially those that promote the full engagement of women and youth in the life of Jordanian society. Reference is made to some of these areas in the analysis above, including more progressive education and training, accelerated decentralization, political and judicial reform, women's empowerment, stronger local development policies and partnerships, as well as PVE. Policy and programme interventions will need to be designed to tackle many of the underlying issues identified in this CCA and be capable of going to scale.

For its part, the United Nations has pledged to step up its advocacy, policy, programming and convening leadership role to support the Government and people of Jordan to meet the challenges and maximize the development prospects of the Nation. Drawing on its partnership approach, the UNCT will work tirelessly through consultation and coordination with the full extent of development partners from the international community, private sector and civil society to ensure that the maximum, possible range of expertise and resources is channelled into the development and resilience efforts to ensure the Kingdom's benefits.



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