



اللجنة الوطنية الأردنية لشؤون المرأة  
The Jordanian National Commission for Women

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## **1) Guiding Questions and responses**

- *Since the adoption of the 2030 Agenda, what progress has been made in ending discrimination against women and girls in laws, policies and practices and what are good practice examples by governments and other stakeholders to achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls?*

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### **1. Legal Amendments:**

- Parliamentary Elections Law (2016) which increased the percentage of seats allocated for women from 10% to 11.5%. Following the elections the percentage of elected female MPs reached 15.3%, which is also the same percentage in the King appointed Senate.
- Decentralization Law (2015) allocated 10% of the elected seats for women on governorate boards and one third of the 15% appointed seats.
- Amendment to the Military Retirement Law (2015) giving women equal rights in appointment and career advancement.
- Regulation governing the Maintenance Loan Fund, in 2015 which aims at expediting the payment of adjudicated maintenance in case of non-payment.
- Regulation governing Shelters for Women in Danger,
- Regulation allowing working flexible hours, part time and from home which benefits men as well as women giving care to family members (children, elderly or with disabilities).
- People with Disabilities Rights Law (2017) and
- Protection from Domestic Violence Law (2017); both laws were proposed to replace earlier laws in order to provide more effective protection for people with disabilities and older members of the family, women, girls and children.
- The parliament is currently reviewing a proposed amendment of the Penal Code submitted by the cabinet which includes: 1) the abolishment of article 308 which allowed the rapist to avoid persecution and/or evade punishment when he marries his victim and 2) the amendment of article 98 to exclude those committing murders in a fit of rage to benefit from mitigating penalty if they claim that "rage" is caused in the name of honor.

### **2. Institutional frameworks:**

- The Ministry of Planning and International Cooperation (MOPIC) is the leading the process of the localizing of the SDGs targets with the UN Resident and Humanitarian coordinator in Jordan. The Jordanian National Commission for Women (JNCW) is recognized as the principle body charged with policy coordination for gender equality.
- In order to ensure improved alignment, and to emphasize a commitment to all SDGs within national priorities, the implementation of the 2030 Agenda builds on existing framework and mechanisms, which are further refined to allow for better harmonization as needed.
- The Jordanian National Commission for Women is already a member in the Higher Steering Committee headed by the Prime Minister which endorses long terms plans

such as “Jordan vision 2025” and operational plans such as the Executive Development Programmes, and also endorses outputs from the National Higher Committee for Sustainable Development.

- The **National Higher Committee for Sustainable Development** was established in 2001 following the announcement of the MDGs and is headed by the Minister of Planning and International Cooperation. In March, 2017, to improve alignment with Agenda 2030, its membership was expanded to include the Secretary General of the Jordanian National Commission for Women in addition to other relevant independent organizations such as the National Center for Human Rights and Coalitions of Civil Society organizations and youth organizations.
- Also two additional working groups were established in addition to the 17 working groups on the Executive Development Program: 1) The Gender Equality and Mainstreaming Working group headed by the SG of the Jordanian National Commission for Women and 2) The Civil Liberties and Human Rights Working group headed by the General Commissioner of the National Center for Human Rights.
- As per the recommendation of JNCW and MOPIC the Gender Equality and Mainstreaming Working group included relevant ministries, national organizations, main women civil society organizations, CSOs that have initiated efforts on SDGs and specifically SDG5 and the General Budget Department and the Department of Statistics. The working group will lead the coordination efforts for the adoption of SDG5 and the integration of all targets related to gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls within the Executive Development Program, and monitor implementation and progress.
- The Terms of Reference for the Working group was developed in consultation with the ESCWA and UNWOMEN to ensure the effectiveness of its work. Technical support by UNWOMEN and ESCWA will be provided to enhance the capacity of the team and relevant sub-teams in order to be able to carry out their mandate.
- With the technical assistance of ESCWA, UNWOMEN JO CO and UNWOMEN Arab States regional office a series of consultation sessions around goal 5 and the 11 other goals which include gender targets will be carried out. The participatory process involves governmental organizations, and civil society organizations including youth and vulnerable groups. The outcome of this exercise would feed into the government setting of the Jordanian National targets within the 2030 Agenda as well as the review of the National Jordanian Women Strategy (2013 – 2017).
- The process will serve two purposes: first adopting the same gender indicators that were adopted through the 2030 agenda and aligning the strategy targets which are usually reviewed every 5 years with the timeline for the agenda. In this manner, the engagement of the civil society in setting the National women strategy and its monitoring and evaluation frame work will by default feed into the national monitoring process for the implementation of the 2030 Agenda.

- As a first step towards integrating the Agenda 2030 within national planning frameworks, the Jordanian National Commission carried out a mapping exercise for SDG5 and other relevant targets in Agenda 2030, across its international commitments (namely CEDAW and Beijing Platform), and the main relevant national planning frameworks namely the Executive Development Program (2016 – 2019), the National Women Strategy (2013 – 2017), the National Comprehensive Human Rights Plan (2016 – 2025) and the draft National Action Plan for the implementation of UNSCr1325.
- The exercise served as an important tool to:
  1. Link Jordan’s international commitments within one framework to simplify the process of monitoring progress in preparation for the different reporting cycles,
  2. Identify gaps within the main development planning frameworks and women related strategies and plans.
  3. A master document for consultation and consensus building with the civil society and the government.
  4. A master document for adopting the relevant national indicators on SDG5 and relevant targets.
- JNCW in collaboration with the Department of Statistics has worked on categorizing SDG5 indicators following the guidelines provided by UNDESA. The work is still in progress as this is a process that is still in process at the global and regional level.
- These indicators are serving as baseline indicators for national efforts and were also used by the Government of Jordan in preparation for its Voluntary National report to be presented at the High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development (HLPF).
  
- *What are key recommendations to ensure the gender-responsive implementation of the 2030 Agenda and how can accountability for gender-responsive implementation of the SDGs be enhanced?*
  - Institutional arrangements that empower key national machineries for women within national planning mechanisms to mainstream Goal 5 and other gender target within the other goals, within National Plans, strategies and policies, and to lead the process in monitoring progress and reporting.
  - Institutional arrangements for monitoring implementation and progress should be inclusive and sustainable with cross national and sub-national representation from civil society organizations and local groups, specifically women and youth groups.
  - Adopting the SDGs 2030 at the sub-national level through an inclusive and gender-responsive approach. Jordan is embarking on its first decentralization elections in August, where Governorate boards will be elected. It is planned to pilot the adoption of SDGs 2030 including Goal5 in a number of Governorate Development Plans. JNCW in cooperation with UNWOMEN will be supporting building the capacities of those boards on gender-responsive planning and budgeting.

- Strengthening national statistical system that includes gender indicators as adopted by the SDGs and improving data collection tools and surveys to be able to provide needed gender data and sex-disaggregated data.
  - Developing a unified national monitoring and evaluation system that reflects the alignment of national plans and strategies with the SDGs.
  - Allocating financial resources towards gender-responsive implementation through Gender responsive budgeting as well as mobilization of international donor resources towards achievement of Goal5.
  - Adopting inclusive and participatory methods that ensure nation-wide awareness and knowledge of the SDG Agenda 2030 as well as building a sense of national ownership.
- *What are successful multi-stakeholder partnerships at the global, regional, national and sub-national levels for accelerated gender-responsive implementation of the SDGs? What made the partnerships successful?*

At the global level:

- The United Nations approach in leading global production and exchange of knowledge and experience is playing a major role in supporting countries like Jordan in adopting appropriate measures, mechanisms and processes for implementing the SDGs at national and subnational levels. UNWOMEN as a global entity is providing technical and financial support to JNCW through its regional and country offices to carry out its mandate and specifically in relation to the implementation of Goal5 and gender mainstreaming within the other SDGs.

At the regional level:

- The Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA) in collaboration the UNWOMEN Office for the Arab States and the Women and Family Directorate, the League of Arab States, is playing a key role in the Arab region by providing advisory services and technical support to member States, particularly in the elaboration and implementation of national development plans addressing sustainable development in all its dimensions. During the Seventh Meeting for the Women Committee in ESCWA (consisting of all national women machineries in the Arab States) a sub-committee for “Achieving Gender Equality through Agenda 2030) was established.
- ESCWA has been providing technical assistance to strengthen the knowledge and capacities in the field of development in the Arab region in general, and in relation to gender equality in particular. The Jordanian National Commission for Women is a member of the sub –committee on gender equality and has attended all relevant capacity workshops provided by ESCWA in the past year.
- ESCWA and UNWOMEN JO CO continue to support JNCW in its efforts to build national capacities for the implementation of GOAL5 and mainstreaming gender in the other SDGs; and support the establishment of sustainable mechanisms for inclusive planning and monitoring of implementation.

### At the National level:

- JNCW is working closely with the government and civil society organizations to ensure a representative and inclusive adoption and implementation of SDGs 2030 within national planning frameworks. The **National Committee for Sustainable Development** includes relevant ministries, semi-governmental organizations, civil society coalitions and organizations, independent commissions, and parliamentarians. While the structure is allowing diversified representation at the national level, it is also involving main technically responsible authorities for planning, providing data and costing in the process at all levels.
- The **Gender Equality and Mainstreaming Working group** is also representative of all relevant governmental and technical organizations as well as civil society organizations. The working group will: 1) coordinate with the other 17 working groups to ensure the successful mainstreaming of gender within their work , 2) work through its Department of Statistics representation with the special unit within DOS on the categorization of the SDGs indicators, provision of gender indicators and sex-disaggregated data and improving data availability and quality. 3) work through its General Budget Department representation to continue the cooperation with the Ministry of Finance to ensure the adoption of Gender responsive budgeting and linking it to the SDGs within the Executive Development Program, in addition to mobilization of resources towards implementation of GOALS and 4) Ensure the inclusive monitoring of implementation and progress.
- Partnership with civil society organizations (Women, youth and Human rights) will be further fostered through the creation of sub-committees, which include representation of civil society organizations and relevant governmental gender focal points whom have been trained on mainstreaming gender in planning and policy making, with technical support provided by an appointed gender expert who will facilitate peer support and review to ensure their effective contribution to the process at the governmental level.

## **2) Key Challenges and responses**

- In the context of the 2030 Agenda, it is recognized that many Arab Countries are facing unprecedented challenges caused by armed conflicts and political instability. Thus, considering the consequences of war on women and girls are expected to be taken into consideration in strategies towards the 2030 Agenda. This does not only apply to conflict-stricken countries, but also those hosting large number of refugees. Thus, as the Agenda places significant emphasis on security under SDG16 which clearly mentions UNSCr1325 on Women, Peace and Security and refers to refugees as a vulnerable group of people that should be protected, Jordan is in the final stages of endorsing its National Action Plan for the implementation of UNSCr1325 which aims at achieving 4 outcomes relating to increasing women participation in peace and security, providing gender-responsive services and protection for refugee women and girls as well as enhancing women capacity and contribution towards efforts of prevention of violent extremism.

- Social attitudes/practices and stereotyping of gender roles within the household and public/private spheres as well as dominant informal institutions are all affecting abilities to achieve change at the legislative, institutional and social levels. Thus, national wide policies for changing social attitudes and stereotyping of women need to be adopted through education, media and cultural production and interaction in collaboration between the government, the private sector and civil society organizations. Religious leaders and female religious lecturers (wai-that) are also targeted to be effectively engaged with men and women in local communities towards changing social attitudes.
- While Jordan is engaging in integrating the SDGs Agenda 2030, within its Executive Development Program, it remains to be seen how Human Rights based approach will be adopted within the program. While economic empowerment and access to education, health and protection services are at the core of the Executive Development Program (EDP) 2016 -2019, issues related to eliminate all forms of discrimination against women still seem to be elusive. This needs creative solutions within the EDP or adopting them through other binding frameworks, such as the Comprehensive National Plan for Human Rights. Indeed, the National Strategy for Women will have such target at its core but mainstreaming it within other national frameworks remains important.
- Availability of sex-disaggregated data as well as data specifically related to Goal5 indicators remains a challenge. This is affecting the ability to provide sufficient base-line indicators and setting targets for gender equality among the relevant goals. Jordan is closely engaged with the global and regional efforts towards increasing the availability of data. At the national level, the Sustainable Development High Committee headed by the Ministry of Planning and International Cooperation is working closely with the Department of Statistics and all relevant institutions in order to provide more data and develop nationally relevant methodologies to provide TierIII indicators. JNCW is also working with ESCWA and LAS in order to enhance the availability of gender indicators and sex-disaggregated indicators.
- Funding for development remains a challenge for the Kingdom which has been suffering from increasing budget deficit in the past decade. Jordan continues to seek international support to increase its resilience and ensure the continuation on its development past at the same time. Gender responsive budgeting can provide better and efficient allocation of budget to ensure the integration of gender equality and women and girls empowerment within the national development frameworks. It might not demand higher allocation but more efficient and equally distributed allocation. The General budget department and the Jordanian National Commission for Women have been working towards adopting gender-responsive budgeting tools since 2012. While some progress has been achieved latest assessment of the 2016 budget revealed that allocation of budget towards women empowerment remains low and there is an urgent need to develop the capacity of planning and budgeting teams within the ministries with gender analysis and budgeting skills.