



# **COUNTRY ASSESSMENT**

## **JORDAN**

**UNITED NATIONS**

**2011**

## Acronyms and Abbreviations

<b>ACC</b>	Anti-Corruption Commission
<b>ANER</b>	Adjusted Net Enrolment Rate
<b>AR</b>	Annual Review
<b>ASEZA</b>	Aqaba Special Economic Zone Authority
<b>ASRO</b>	Arab States Regional Office
<b>BCR</b>	Basic Completion Rate
<b>BMI</b>	Body Mass Index
<b>CA</b>	Country Assessment
<b>CAMRE</b>	Council of Arab Ministers Responsible for the Environment
<b>CBD</b>	Convention on Biological Diversity
<b>CCA</b>	Common Country Assessment
<b>CCS</b>	Country Cooperation Strategy
<b>CDC</b>	Centre for Disease Control
<b>CEDAW</b>	Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women
<b>CMHS</b>	Community Mental Health Services
<b>COP 15</b>	Copenhagen Conference on Climate Change
<b>CMR</b>	Child Mortality Rate
<b>CPR</b>	Contraceptive Prevalence Rate
<b>CRC</b>	Convention on the Rights of the Child
<b>CRDP</b>	Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities
<b>CSO</b>	Civil Society Organization
<b>DAO</b>	Delivering as One
<b>DOS</b>	Department of Statistics
<b>DPA</b>	Department of Palestine Affairs
<b>DRM</b>	Disaster Risk Management
<b>DRMMP</b>	Disaster Risk Management Master Plan
<b>DRR</b>	Disaster Risk Reduction
<b>DPT</b>	Diphtheria, Pertussis, Tetanus
<b>EC</b>	European Commission
<b>EDI</b>	Education Development Index
<b>EDP</b>	Executive Development Plan
<b>EPI</b>	Expanded Programme on Immunization
<b>ERfKE</b>	Education Reform for the Knowledge Economy
<b>ESCWA</b>	Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia
<b>ETF</b>	Education Training Foundation
<b>EU</b>	European Union
<b>FAO</b>	Food and Agriculture Organization of the UN
<b>FDI</b>	Foreign Direct Investment
<b>FP</b>	Family Planning
<b>FTA</b>	Free Trade Agreement
<b>GAM</b>	Greater Amman Municipality
<b>GCC</b>	Gulf Cooperation Council
<b>GCCA</b>	Gender and Climate Change Alliance
<b>GCEP</b>	General Corporation for Environmental Protection
<b>GDI</b>	Gender Development Index
<b>GDP</b>	Gross Domestic Product
<b>GEC</b>	Global Environmental Conventions
<b>GEF</b>	Global Environmental Facility
<b>GEM</b>	Gender Empowerment Measure

<b>GER</b>	Gross Enrolment Rate
<b>GII</b>	Gender Inequality Index
<b>GSHS</b>	Global School Health Survey
<b>GNI</b>	Gross National Income
<b>HCCD</b>	Higher Council for Civil Defense
<b>HCY</b>	Higher Council for Youth
<b>HDI</b>	Human Development Index
<b>HDR</b>	Human Development Report
<b>HHC</b>	Higher Health Council
<b>HIES</b>	Household Income and Expenditure Survey
<b>HIV</b>	Human Immunodeficiency Virus
<b>HPI</b>	Human Poverty Index
<b>HPC</b>	Higher Population Council
<b>HR</b>	Human Rights
<b>HRBAP</b>	Human Rights Based Approach to Programming
<b>HRD</b>	Human Resources Development
<b>HUDC</b>	Housing and Urban Development Corporation
<b>IDA</b>	Iron Deficiency Anemia
<b>IDD</b>	Iodine Deficiency Disorder
<b>IDB</b>	Industrial Development Bank
<b>IAF</b>	Islamic Action Front
<b>ICT</b>	Information Communication Technology
<b>ICCPR</b>	International Convention on Civil and Political Rights
<b>IFAD</b>	International Fund for Agricultural Development
<b>ILO</b>	International Labour Organization
<b>IMF</b>	International Monetary Fund
<b>IMR</b>	Infant Mortality Rate
<b>INGO</b>	International Non-governmental Organization
<b>IOM</b>	International Organization for Migration
<b>IT</b>	Information Technology
<b>ITU</b>	International Telecommunications Union
<b>IUCN</b>	International Union for the Conservation of Nature
<b>IUD</b>	Intra-uterine Device
<b>JAIMS</b>	Jordan Aid Information Management System
<b>JCR</b>	Jordan Cancer Registry
<b>JD</b>	Jordanian Dinar
<b>JHDR</b>	Jordan Human Development Report
<b>JNFW</b>	Jordanian National Forum for Women
<b>JPFHS</b>	Jordan Population and Family Health Survey
<b>JTI</b>	Jordan Traffic Institute
<b>JU</b>	Jordan University
<b>JHDR</b>	Jordan Human Development Report
<b>HPC</b>	Higher Population Council
<b>JNCW</b>	Jordan National Commission for Women
<b>JOHUD</b>	Jordan Hashemite Fund for Human Development
<b>KG</b>	Kindergarten
<b>KAP</b>	Knowledge Attitude and Practice
<b>LPG</b>	Liquid Petroleum Gas
<b>MAF</b>	MDG Acceleration Framework
<b>MCH</b>	Maternal and Child Health
<b>MD</b>	Millennium Declaration
<b>MDG</b>	Millennium Development Goal
<b>MDGR</b>	Millennium Development Goals Report

<b>METAP</b>	Mediterranean Environmental Technical Assistance Programme
<b>MENA</b>	Middle East and North Africa
<b>mhGAP</b>	Mental Health GAP Action Programme
<b>MH</b>	Mental Health
<b>MHI</b>	Military Health Insurance
<b>MMA</b>	Ministry of Municipal Affairs
<b>MTR</b>	Mid-Term Review
<b>MSW</b>	Municipal Solid Waste
<b>MWI</b>	Ministry of Water and Irrigation
<b>MMR</b>	Maternal Mortality Rate
<b>MoE</b>	Ministry of Education
<b>MoEnv</b>	Ministry of Environment
<b>MoH</b>	Ministry of Health
<b>MoI</b>	Ministry of Interior
<b>MoJ</b>	Ministry of Justice
<b>MoL</b>	Ministry of Labour
<b>MoPIC</b>	Ministry of Planning and International Cooperation
<b>MoPSD</b>	Ministry of Public Sector Development
<b>MoSD</b>	Ministry of Social Development
<b>MSME</b>	Micro Small and Medium Enterprise
<b>NAF</b>	National Aid Fund
<b>NAP</b>	National Action Plan
<b>NBSAP</b>	National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan
<b>NCFA</b>	National Council for Family Affairs
<b>NCHR</b>	National Centre for Human Rights
<b>NCSCM</b>	National Centre for Security and Crisis Management
<b>NDC</b>	National Dialogue Committee
<b>NER</b>	Net Enrolment Rate
<b>NGO</b>	Non-Governmental Organization
<b>NHDR</b>	National Human Development Report
<b>NIP</b>	National Implementation Plan
<b>ODA</b>	Overseas Development Assistance
<b>OECD</b>	Organization of Economic Cooperation and Development
<b>PCBs</b>	Poly Chlorinated Biophenyls
<b>PERSGA</b>	Regional Organization for the Conservation of the Environment of the Red Sea and The Gulf of Aden
<b>POP</b>	Persistent Organic Pollutants
<b>PHC</b>	Primary Health Care
<b>PPP</b>	Purchasing Power Parity
<b>PSG</b>	Peer Support Group
<b>QIZ</b>	Qualified Industrial Zone
<b>RBM</b>	Results Based Management
<b>RH</b>	Reproductive Health
<b>RMS</b>	Royal Medical Services
<b>ROWA</b>	Regional Office for West Asia
<b>SC</b>	Steering Committee
<b>STI</b>	Science, Technology and Innovation
<b>SME</b>	Small and Medium Enterprise
<b>TFR</b>	Total Fertility Rate
<b>TSG</b>	Technical Support Group
<b>TVET</b>	Technical and Vocational Education and Training
<b>UDHR</b>	Universal Declaration of Human Rights
<b>UN</b>	United Nations

<b>UNCT</b>	United Nations Country Team
<b>UNDAF</b>	United Nations Development Assistance Framework
<b>UNDG</b>	United Nations Development Group
<b>UNDP</b>	United Nations Development Programme
<b>UNEP</b>	United Nations Environment Programme
<b>UNFCCC</b>	United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change
<b>UNESCO</b>	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
<b>UNFPA</b>	United Nations Population Fund
<b>UN-HABITAT</b>	United Nations Centre for Human Settlements
<b>UNHCR</b>	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
<b>UNICEF</b>	United Nations Children’s Fund
<b>UNIDO</b>	United Nations Industrial Development Organization
<b>UNISDR</b>	UN International Strategy for Disaster Reduction
<b>UNODC</b>	United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime
<b>UNOPS</b>	United Nations Office for Project Services
<b>UNRWA</b>	United Nations Relief and Works Agency
<b>UNSS</b>	UN Special Session
<b>USAID</b>	United States Agency for International Development
<b>USD</b>	United States Dollar
<b>VPD</b>	Vaccine Preventable Diseases
<b>WB</b>	World Bank
<b>WFP</b>	World Food Programme
<b>WHO</b>	World Health Organization
<b>WHO-CEHA</b>	World Health Organization – Centre for Environmental Health Activities
<b>WPC</b>	Women Protection Centre
<b>WTO</b>	World Trade Organization
<b>ZENID</b>	Queen Zein Al Sharaf Institute for Development

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, governed since 1999 by His Majesty King Abdullah II, is among the most strategically placed in the Arab Region – geographically and politically.

This Country Assessment, which aims to inform the preparation of the upcoming United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) for Jordan, has analyzed a broad range of issues relevant to the current socio-economic and political situation in the country. The context in which this exercise was conducted was marked by considerable uncertainty about how several ongoing global, regional and domestic events and ongoing national reform processes will impact upon the country.

The level of progress achieved by Jordan on several fronts has been positive and a solid foundation exists for further advancement of development objectives and priorities. Despite its high vulnerability to regional volatility and its shortage of natural resources, Jordan is currently classified as an upper middle income and high human development country. This Country Assessment highlights areas which will need further reinforcement and which, with necessary streamlining, can contribute to sustaining the existing progress levels and building further upon them.

The findings, proposed priorities and the recommendations of the Country Assessment will be reviewed with stakeholders during the Strategic Prioritization Retreat as the next step in the formulation of the UNDAF for the period 2013-2017.

### **The Main Findings of the Assessment**

Political will at the highest level has been translated into practical efforts towards developing human resources as reflected clearly in considerable progress on many socio-economic indicators. Several positive legislative, policy and institutional development measures have helped to align national systems more closely with the principles of agreed Human Rights Conventions and other agreed global and regional Agendas. Still there is scope for further improvement. Various Treaty Body Monitoring Committees have identified pending issues in this regard. Among others, these include the need to incorporate agreed Conventions into national laws, remove some contradictions between different laws and remaining gender related legal inequities and direct more attention to the rights of marginalized groups.

Political and economic reform efforts undertaken over the last two decades have not fully resulted in concrete structural changes, the effective enhancement of people's participation and representation in governance, or major economic benefits for the weakest sections of society. In 2011, increased attention was paid to these issues. Constitutional amendments were approved by King Abdullah II as agreed upon by the Upper and Lower Houses of Parliament. The electoral reform proposals are currently under Parliamentary review. The outcome of the reform process will determine the extent to which Jordan moves towards more tangible democratization, a more productive workforce, better social protection for the most vulnerable and hence a more stable and secure future.

Jordan's population is still predominantly very young, 37% of Jordanians are children below 15 years of age, but the numbers and percentage of young people is increasing leading to a "youth bulge". They will continue to require basic health and education services and employment opportunities. Population projections predict a 'demographic window of opportunity' in anticipation of the possible substantial reduction of the ratio of its

dependent population compared to the adult productive age groups. This implies positive longer-term prospects of higher economic productivity. This will also constitute a major challenge for advance preparedness to ensure both the availability of enough gainful employment options for the growing workforce and capacity development of young people to effectively meet future market demands. ‘Arab Spring’ related developments have also highlighted the need for a sharpened and holistic focus on developing the human capital of adolescents and young people. Jordan has the ability to play a pioneering role in this respect.

Following decades of relative economic and political stability, Jordan has recently witnessed fluctuations in its economic indicators with rising levels of inflation, poverty, uneven trade patterns and stagnating unemployment rates.

Broad government, UN and donor partnerships are in place around diverse development themes and particularly for the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). While there has been much progress towards MDG achievement, the degree of success varies between different targets and indicators, and between some achievements at the overall national and sub-national levels. Different levels of further fine tuning of plans, additional resource allocations, capacity development, knowledge generation and coordination may still be required for the MDGs, but relevant implementing institutions are in place.

While the MDG 1 target of the number of people below the abject poverty line has been met, there are widening income disparities with inflation affecting household consumption and expenditure patterns and straining the coping capacities of the lower and middle-income groups. The government has raised subsidies to reduce pressures on household budgets. With this, the burden on the national budget has progressively escalated. Financial resources have also been constrained by the still high population growth rate and are further challenged by the need to provide humanitarian and protection services to large refugee and other groups, which include Palestine Refugees, vulnerable Iraqis and other nationalities escaping conflict situations in their homelands. The unrest in neighbouring countries could place a further burden on the economy and delivery of services.

The universal primary education goal has been met in quantitative terms and with respect to gender parity in enrolment. This can be largely attributed to every child having free access to compulsory basic education. This has also raised both male and female literacy levels significantly. However, retention begins to decline after grade 5 and especially at the secondary education stage, with higher dropouts recorded among boys. Educational statistics also record inter-governorate disparities in enrolment.

Access to education and the emergence of a large youth population completing secondary and tertiary education has not translated into effective economic productivity due to the mismatch between qualifications acquired and the demands of the labour market. The preference for jobs in the over-subscribed public sector rather than in the private sector also continues. Unemployment rates are therefore high, especially among women and young adults. On the other hand, large numbers of expatriate workers are employed in low paid jobs that are not attractive to nationals because of the working conditions. Despite the ambitious targets of the Employment Policy, it is questionable whether this will lead to a significant rise in labor participation rates. If employment figures do not rise, it is likely to pose a major challenge over the long term, possibly resulting in increased requests for reform initiatives by an inactive and frustrated workforce.

Despite progress in women’s economic and political participation, gaps remain, particularly in the decision-making domain at the national level. Yet, the increasing number of female municipal councilors signal prospects of positive change, as do positive measures recently in place for capacity development of female councilors and the affirmative action taken to effect a significant improvement in the numbers of young women enrolling in the Judiciary Institute. These developments confirm that substantial progress in women’s participation will depend on a combination of attitudinal change towards women’s role in the public sector, improvement of administrative regulations and systems to ensure an enabling environment.

The impressive advances in controlling morbidity and mortality in general and with respect to communicable diseases in particular have stagnated in recent years. Concerns with regard to unhealthy lifestyles, environmental factors and the increase in non-communicable diseases also need to be addressed. Moreover, neo-natal mortality rates and maternal deaths post-partum call for further attention. Inter-governorate disparities also exist in many health indicators.

The environment continues to pose major challenges due to Jordan's geo-physical features. The acute water scarcity limits human settlement to a confined land area and implies the imminence of further desertification. Declining agricultural productivity in the sparsely populated rural areas, which lack alternate economic opportunities, have resulted in high rates of rural-urban migration to densely populated and inadequately planned urban areas. This continues to increase the demand for basic service provision for a continuously increasing urban population, especially as the majority of the large Palestine refugee group and vulnerable Iraqis have settled in the three predominantly urban governorates.

Available data highlight the existence of sub-national disparities in Jordan's human development indicators as a result of the country's skewed settlement patterns. The government aims to address sub-national disparities by reinforcing decentralized governance and planning approaches. Governorate-specific executive development plans are to be developed with a special emphasis on improving local conditions for economic activities and also addressing disparities in health and educational status. A special Governorate Development Fund has been instituted for this. If effectively designed and implemented, with a focus on the most disadvantaged groups at the local level, these initiatives can contribute to more urban-rural equity, reduction of rural-urban migration and much improvement in local level indicators, which in turn would improve national development.

The shortage of local energy resources and the high cost of energy imports impose a heavy burden on the national budget. There are also inherent risks related to potential disruption of the import channels. The continued degradation of existing natural resources due to inadequate waste management, deforestation and biodiversity depletion threatens already vulnerable economic and food security conditions and health and nutrition indicators in the affected areas. The effects of climate change are already becoming visible. The potential risk of environmental hazards is also exacerbated by the country being situated on an earthquake fault line, coupled with the absence of comprehensive disaster risk reduction and mitigation plans at national and local levels, for both environmental and man-made disasters.

Several special initiatives are ongoing to accelerate the momentum towards achieving the Millennium Development Goals. The country's commitment to achieving the MDGs by 2015 is well recognized and supported by its UN and donor agency partners. Jordan is one of 10 countries selected by the UN to participate in the Millennium Development Goals Acceleration Framework. Under this, a joint Government-UN project entitled, 'Food and Nutrition Security towards Poverty Alleviation' is underway to meet the relevant target of MDG 1, Eliminate Extreme Hunger and Poverty. A similar joint programme addresses MDG 7, Environmental Sustainability, focusing specifically on 'Adaptation to Climate Change.' Additional acceleration plans aimed at other MDGs and involving wider stakeholder participation would further improve Jordan's chances of optimum progress towards meeting these goals.

The broad areas that emerged through this Country Assessment as key discussion points for the determination of priority themes for inclusion in the UNDAF 2013-2017, include:

**Enhancing Systemic Reform:** Institutional reform, decentralization, strengthening people's participation capacity, improving transparency and accountability with the objective to improving the performance of political, economic social, administrative systems and processes.

**Ensuring Social Equity:** A reinforced focus on development of the human capital, including towards enhanced productivity, human rights promotion (in particular for women and children), decentralized planning to reduce



disparities between governorates, genders and less advantaged groups and acceleration of progress towards the MDGs.

**Investing in Young People:** A holistic approach to addressing the health, education, employability, civic engagement and protection issues of various sub-groups within this large population, which will be entrusted with determining the country's future coping capacity, sustaining its progress and ensuring its security.

**Preserving the Environment:** Integrated water resource management, renewable energy, transition to a green economy, sustainable tourism, community-based conservation and sustainable use of ecosystem, adaptation to climate change and youth entrepreneurship in environmental excellence and disaster risk reduction.

From within these broad priority areas, the UNDAF 2013-2017 will focus on a few elements that correspond to the UN Country Team's comparative advantages. The objectives of any of the selected priorities will best be met by ensuring due attention to an adequate level of integration of gender equality, age differential and localized approaches, in addition to attention paid to the most marginalized groups and fostering the participation of community groups in local development initiatives.

Finally, in view of the uncertainty of the current context, there is a critical need for the next UNDAF to incorporate an appropriate degree of flexibility to facilitate adaptation as per the changing situation, including through reviews conducted annually or more often, if the need exists.

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## CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

### UN Reform: Key Country Programming Mechanisms

The UN reform process reflects a strong global commitment to the Delivering as One Objective. This aims to draw upon the collective strengths of all UN Agencies, Funds and Programmes in each country to improve the effectiveness of their contribution to the achievement of nationally and internationally agreed development goals by working under a harmonized approach with governments and civil society partners.

The UN Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) is the common strategic framework covering country specific activities of the UN system, in cycles of 5 years each. It brings all partners together under one nationally owned strategy, which can draw upon the full range of UN expertise, thereby facilitating harmonization and alignment of programmes and related operational procedures.

The basis for the UNDAF is provided by a Country Assessment (CA) that precedes it and provides an impartial forward looking analysis of the country's development situation. Prepared by the UN Country Team (UNCT) in consultation with national partners, it identifies and analyzes trends in key national development issues, achievements, opportunities and challenges. It particularly highlights the status of progress towards achieving the goals and targets of the Millennium Declaration (MD) and the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), in addition to the level of institutionalization of the principles of human rights instruments and other agreed development goals set at international conferences and summits.

Through all stages of the CA and UNDAF formulation processes, attention is accorded to five fundamental UN country programming principles - a human rights based approach to programming (HRBAP), gender equality, environmental sustainability, capacity development, and results based management (RBM).

### The 2011 Jordan Country Assessment - Preparation Process and Methodology

The UN Country Team (UNCT) in Jordan consists of 14 Resident agencies<sup>1</sup> and 5 Non-Resident UN agencies.<sup>2</sup> While member agencies collaborate on periodic UNDAF planning and review exercises, and jointly support some programmes, the Jordan UNCT is not among the Delivering as One (DaO) pilot countries or a DaO self starter. Jordan's current UNDAF 2008-2012 is built around three main focus areas - Poverty and Social Services, Governance, and Healthy and Sustainable Environment.

The Mid-Term Review (MTR) of the 2008-2012 UNDAF began in December 2010 and concluded in February 2011 with a Validation Workshop on the MTR findings and recommendations. A Steering Committee (SC) and a Technical Support Group (TSG) were established by the UNCT to guide, oversee and manage the CCA/UNDAF preparation processes. The Road Map of roll out activities prepared by the SC and endorsed by the UNCT, the Regional undg and the Peer Support Group (PSG) was presented to the UNCT's main coordinating partner - the Ministry of Planning and International Cooperation (MoPIC) by the end of March 2011. A three-day in-country CCA/UNDAF workshop in April 2011 brought together national partners and UN staff to discuss approaches and identify future opportunities, which could help to enhance the relevance and cohesion of programme partnerships resulting in more efficient and effective development assistance to Jordan through the next UNDAF.

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<sup>1</sup>Resident UN agencies: UNDP, UNESCO, UNFPA, UNICEF, UNHCR, UNIDO, UNRWA, UNOPS, UNWOMEN, UNHABITAT, IOM, FAO, WFP, WHO.

<sup>2</sup> Non-Resident UN agencies: ESCWA, IFAD, ILO, UNEP, UNODC

The CA process involved consultations with various stakeholders, in addition to analysis of the most recent in-country assessments and studies, mostly dating from 2008 onwards, with some from earlier years to identify trends. Particularly important references were Jordan's National Agenda 2006-2015, which is the Government's overarching medium-term development framework document encompassing strategic approaches in diverse sectors, the National Executive Development Plan 2011-2013, the Second National Millennium Development Report (MDGR) 2010, the National Human Development Report (NHDR) 2011, Population and Family Health Surveys 2002, 2007 and 2009, and various Department of Statistics (DoS) studies. Other Government documents consulted included some sector strategies, national reports submitted to the various Treaty Bodies and their concluding observations. A considerable volume of fairly recent reports of thematic studies and publications undertaken by other Government institutions, National NGOs, the World Bank, USAID, and UN agencies, provided valuable information also helping to identify issues of concern and opportunities emerging after the finalization of the National Agenda in 2005. The main reference points for statistical information were the MoPIC and DoS.

A consultant was engaged at the end of June 2011 to review all documents and pull together various inputs into a comprehensive Country Assessment. Additional country reports commissioned in 2011 by the Regional Offices of UNEP and UNWomen on Environmental Sustainability and Gender Equality, respectively, became available in July. The first draft of a UNDP Jordan Political Economy study was received in August and is currently being finalized. A UNWomen consultant came on board in August to support the mainstreaming of gender issues throughout the CA/UNDAF process.

Two UN Programming Principles workshops were organized by the UNCT to build the capacities of UN staff and national partners. These workshops helped to build rapport between UN staff and government and NGO partners, furthering understanding of each others' work. They also facilitated exchange of views on the next UNDAF and identification of current national priorities. Several other experts and informed individuals from diverse backgrounds were consulted, including from government ministries, civil society organizations (CSOs) and members of the donor/lender community in Jordan. A round table discussion was conducted with two youth groups, ensuring representation from varied economic and educational backgrounds, urban and rural areas, and those belonging to vulnerable groups such as those living with disabilities. All Heads of UN agencies and some programme specialists were consulted individually. Consultants conducting the support studies met a range of experts and practitioners in their respective fields.

An on-line survey to assess the UNCT's comparative advantages was conducted internally within the UNCT and externally with a total of 169 respondents drawn from UN, Government, Civil Society and donor agencies.

Maximum care was taken to ensure the representation of diverse stakeholder groups and at different levels. The 2009 UNDAF Annual Review (AR), as well as the UNDAF MTR served as entry-points to re-engage Government partners in the CA/UNDAF preparation process. National stakeholders, both Government and NGO, as well as UNCT members were present in most related workshops. All major training workshops and meetings that collectively involved partners, were conducted bilingually with simultaneous translation from Arabic to English and vice versa to ensure effective engagement of all participants.

The UNCT received the benefit of comments/suggestions from the Regional/UNDG and PSG on the Road Map in addition to technical support and feedback on the Terms of Reference (ToRs) prepared for the CA/UNDAF process. Further inputs included:

- Financial support by the undg Development Operations Coordination Office;
- UN Staff College facilitation of the UNDAF Road Map workshop, mid-April 2011;
- UNAMI and Regional UNDP, UNEP, UNWomen facilitators for the two training workshops on the five country programming principles (30 May – 2 June and 3-5 July);
- Sponsorship of an Environmental Study by UNEP's Regional Office;

- Gender Equality Assessment Report by UNWomen and a Political Economy Study by UNDP Jordan;
- Regional Peer Support Group (PSG) review and comments on the Roll Out Plan;
- PSG Regional Workshop on RBM–UNDAF roll-out countries, 6-9 June in Cairo;
- Training of one UN staff by UNEP and UNDP Regional Bureau for Arab States on Environmental/Disaster Risk Reduction/Climate Change Mainstreaming in the CCA/UNDAF process;
- PSG Review of the first draft of the CA, with advice received early September on required revision.

This CA was informed by the guiding principles of the Millennium Declaration and in particular the fundamental need to underpin all development on an intrinsic respect for human rights. The document focuses on the main thematic areas of the MDGs, with particular emphasis on aspects that need more acceleration towards Goal achievement. These are discussed in the larger context of a range of contextual issues, past development trends and future prospects, including with reference to Jordan’s commitments to Human Rights Conventions, environmental and other agreements.

The CA particularly focused on issues of concern related to national socio-political and economic scenarios, gender and youth development and environmental challenges. Sub-national gaps and equity issues were also reviewed along with the vulnerability of marginalized groups, such as those living with disabilities. Based on the findings, key thematic areas meriting attention in the next UNDAF were identified. The selection of these priorities was based on their potential impact on the country’s future development in the medium and long term, the urgency of the need to address them, and their relevance to the UN mandate and comparative advantages. Capacity strengths and weaknesses of institutions and communities are indicated, though briefly due to the non-availability of a comprehensive related knowledge base. Suggestions are provided for capacity development to strengthen the role and contribution of non-government entities the private sector and the media with regard to rights based initiatives and improved coordination of initiatives. Knowledge gaps on key issues are identified and areas of research recommended.

## **The Country Context**

The Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, which attained full independence in 1946, is a constitutional monarchy headed by His Majesty King Abdullah II since 1999. It is located in the heart of the Middle East. It has common land borders with Iraq, Syria, Saudi Arabia, Israel and the Occupied Palestinian Territory. Being one of the most strategically positioned countries in the Region, geographically and politically, makes it vulnerable to external political and economic influences.

The country’s total area is about 89,342 square kilometers. It is almost entirely landlocked, except for a 30 km seacoast on the Gulf of Aqaba. It faces a number of environmental challenges including a severe water shortage, lack of sources of energy, extensive deforestation, biodiversity depletion and encroaching threats associated with climate change.

Muslims constitute approximately 92 % of the population, Christians 6%. Arabs are predominant among the ethnic groups, with others including Circassians, Chechens and Armenians. There are also several minority groups belonging to nomadic and semi-nomadic gypsy communities, each with their own cultural traditions. Jordan provides an enabling environment for them to safeguard their own cultures. A culture rooted in Arab values and a shared language contributes to a spirit of harmony between various religious and ethnic groups, while the law also caters to religious differences.

Until its abolition in 1975, tribal law was accepted as equally legitimate as civic law. Almost four decades down the line, both positive and some negative influences of tribal attitudes continue, generally shaping attitudes and systems across the board, particularly in remote areas. Gender differential norms underlie social conditioning as does the observance of strict family discipline.

Jordan's population, currently about 6.2 million with a male/female ratio of 102:100, reflects a youth bulge, with 37% of the population under age 15 and 57% below 30 years.<sup>3</sup> Due to concerted reproductive health policies and programmes, the rising age of marriage, and higher education and awareness levels, especially among women, there has been a slow but steady decrease in the traditionally high natural increase, with the growth rate reaching 2.2% in 2009.<sup>4</sup> If this remains stable the population is projected to number an estimated 13 million by 2030.<sup>5</sup>

Mortality declines have been fast due to the expanded outreach of basic, primary and maternal health services. The infant mortality rate (IMR) declined to 23/1000 in 2009 and the crude death rate (CDR) to 7/1000 in 2007.<sup>6</sup> Drops in mortality have translated into increased life expectancy for both males and females, 71.6 years and 74.7 years respectively by 2009.<sup>7</sup>

The number of children born per woman has declined to 3.8 children, but the Total Fertility Rate (TFR) has stagnated at this level for the last five years.<sup>8</sup> The contraceptive prevalence rate (CPR) among married women has increased considerably in the last two decades, estimated at 59% in 2009, with 42 % using modern and 17% traditional methods.<sup>9</sup> However, like the TFR, the CPR has been stagnant over the last five years. The unmet need for family planning has hovered around 12% since 2007.<sup>10</sup> The estimated average size is 5.4 members.<sup>11</sup>

The population is very unevenly distributed across the country. 9% of the population lives in the Southern Region which covers 5.1% of the country's area and is rich in natural and economic resources. 63% lives in the Middle Region which encompasses only 16% of the total area.<sup>12</sup> Internal rural-to-urban migration, as well as immigration have contributed to rapid urban growth, 83% by 2009. The three predominantly urban governorates of Amman, Irbid and Zarqa account for about 72% of the total population.<sup>13</sup> The rest are scattered in sparsely populated rural areas.<sup>14</sup> These settlement patterns are associated with their own specific developmental challenges, identified by national Population and Family Health Surveys, and recorded in Jordan's 2010 MDG and 2011 HDR Reports.

Jordan has limited natural resources and is heavily reliant on external aid and remittances from Jordanians working abroad. Its economy is very vulnerable to global and regional market volatility. Unemployment rates are high, especially for women and youth. Wide income disparities exist between various groups and at sub-national levels.<sup>15</sup>

Among all countries in the Region, Jordan has ratified the highest number of international Human Rights and Environmental Conventions. It has invested heavily in the development of its human resources. As a result, despite its scarcity of natural resources, it is currently ranked as an upper middle income and high human development country.

Among 189 countries for which the Human Development Index (HDI) was calculated in 2010, Jordan ranked 82<sup>nd</sup>, and 8<sup>th</sup> among 17 Arab countries. In 2009, it was placed at 96<sup>th</sup> out of 109 countries on the Gender Empowerment

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<sup>3</sup> Department of Statistics, (DoS) "Jordan Population and Family Health Survey 2009", op.cit

<sup>4</sup> ibid

<sup>5</sup> Jordanian Higher Population Council (JHPC), "The State of Jordan's Population 2011,"

<sup>6</sup> DoS, "Jordan Population and Family Health Survey 2009"

<sup>7</sup> DoS, "National Commission for Women, "Women and Men in Figures: Jordan 2010"

<sup>8</sup> Department of Statistics (DoS), "Jordan Population and Family Health Survey," (JPFHS) 2009

<sup>9</sup> ibid

<sup>10</sup> Jordanian Higher Population Council (JHPC), "Population Opportunities Policy Brief"

<sup>11</sup> DoS data

<sup>12</sup> Jordanian Higher Population Council/UNFPA, "The State of Jordan's Population Report", 2010,

<sup>13</sup> ibid

<sup>14</sup> ibid

<sup>15</sup> Ministry of Planning and International Cooperation/UN: "Keeping the Promise and Meeting Aspirations: Jordan's Second MDG Report", 2010

Measure (GEM).<sup>16</sup> Governorate level variations have been recorded as per overall ranks as well as on diverse socio-economic indicators.<sup>17</sup>

The cycle of pro-democracy uprisings sweeping countries in the Middle East Region since December 2010, termed the ‘Arab Spring’, have triggered much increased and more visible demands for political and economic changes in Jordan. The protests have however been limited in scale and were non-violent unlike those in neighbouring countries. In response the Government has taken steps to reduce the effects of rising prices on the limited family resources of lower income groups, in addition to establishing committees to develop constitutional and economic reform proposals, which are currently under legislative review. The recommended constitutional amendments were approved by His Majesty King Abdullah in September 2011.

The Kingdom’s strategic geo-political position makes it especially vulnerable to the situation in neighbouring countries, as evident from the fallout of the long-standing Arab-Israeli conflict and the 2003 war in Iraq, resulting in large influxes of refugees. Should the present instability in Syria escalate further there could be an influx of refugees from across the border and the possibility of negative trade related implications.

Upcoming events related to the Palestinian bid for statehood and the UN response, following the September 2011 UN General Assembly session, hold prospects of developments which may result in more political uncertainties within the Region and in Jordan.

There also remains the likelihood that the current global and regional economic crises sweeping financial markets and countries may be further aggravated affecting external aid to Jordan, as well as its trade prospects. Moreover, the rising incidence of crises in the least developed countries could divert donor attention from Jordan. Given the country’s considerable dependence on foreign aid, any significant decline in this would negatively impact diverse development aspects in the country, including investment, employment, economic growth and funding for social development projects, possibly fueling further unrest.

This assessment was therefore undertaken at a time of momentous changes taking place globally and in the Region in particular, the effects of which are very visible in Jordan. Clarity on how these changes will affect Jordan are not likely to become immediately visible. The current context is marked by high levels of uncertainty about how future development scenarios could play out in Jordan, with a corresponding uncertainty about how this will affect the UN’s role in Jordan in the short and medium term.

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<sup>16</sup> MoPIC/UNDP, “Jordan Human Development Report 2011, Small Business and Human Development.”

<sup>17</sup> *ibid*



## CHAPTER 2: HONOURING INTERNATIONAL COMMITMENTS

Jordan's Constitution (1952) promises equality of rights for all citizens and provides the foundation for safeguarding the human rights of its citizens. Article 6, Paragraph 1 states that "Jordanians are equal before the law. No discrimination is permissible between rights and duties [on grounds] of race, language and religion." Reference to non-discrimination on the basis of sex is missing from this Article. Women activists have recommended that this be added but this is not among the latest constitutional changes currently being discussed by the Parliament. The National Charter is more specific in this respect, since it specifies that all Jordanians, both men and women, are equal before the law, without distinction as to rights and duties.

### **Adherence to the Principles of Key Human Rights (HR) Conventions**

While all UN General Assembly Member States are party to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, Jordan has also ratified many others, including those which have special relevance to the MDGs and particularly to the Millennium Declaration.<sup>18</sup> Some of these were ratified with reservations expressed on some articles that were considered to be incompatible with national laws and/or religious principles. While the Kingdom is not a party to the 1951 Convention on the Status of Refugees, its approach to the large incoming refugee populations has been exemplary.

Over the years, constitutional amendments have redefined the elements of various social, economic and political laws bringing them closer to the principles of various human rights conventions and declarations of key UN and other global and regional conferences and summits. Legislative, policy, strategic and institutional changes have been undertaken accordingly, albeit with some aspects still remaining to be addressed.

**Legislative/legal action:** Some Conventions were incorporated into Jordanian law soon after ratification, e.g., the Convention on the Rights of Disabled Persons (CRPD), while action on a few others came long after ratification due to delayed endorsement by Parliament. 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. The reservation to CEDAW Article 15, Paragraph 4 (concerning women's residence with their husbands) was lifted in 2009. 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.

The legal framework has been amended several times to align it with several requirements of various international Conventions, though full harmonization needs more follow-up. In the context of the International Convention on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), there has been gradual progress towards fostering the political participation rights of citizens, though some restrictions on media freedom are still in place. Work towards further constitutional reform is currently underway, with the outcome likely to become visible before the end of 2011. The Penal, Juvenile, Personal Status Law and Nationality Laws have been reviewed and partially amended. New laws have been enacted, for example the Law on Domestic Violence and the Law on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. The Juvenile Justice Law is currently with the Cabinet for endorsement and forwarding to Parliament. Several principles of ILO Conventions 138 and 182<sup>19</sup> have been incorporated into the Labour Law and the National Employment Policy. However, the draft Child Rights Law, which has undergone several redrafts since 1996 is again being revised.

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<sup>18</sup> Annex 2

<sup>19</sup> Note: Convention 138 (minimum age) and 182 (exploitative child labour)

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.<sup>20</sup> A notable amendment to the Personal Status Law includes the equal rights of both men and women aged 18 and over to enter into marriage without prior parental approval<sup>21</sup>. Women have also been given the equal right to divorce their husbands, so unlike as per the previous, law consent by the husband is no longer required. <sup>22</sup>

Some laws and regulations still contain provisions contrary to gender equality principles. For instance:

- The Personal Status Law grants men and women different rights within marriage and its dissolution and limits married women's right to work.
- The Civil Service Code discriminates between male employees 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.<sup>23</sup>
- 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 give their children Jordanian nationality. Women's rights groups have lobbied against this for many years but the government has maintained a firm position on this on political grounds. It is currently considering granting all civil rights to children affected by this Law. This move would facilitate their access to education and other basic services, but they will still be deprived of Jordanian nationality and full constitutional rights.<sup>24</sup>
- The Penal Code continues to be the subject of much debate because it sets a very low age of criminal responsibility. Moreover, though as per the amended Article 340 of the Penal Code<sup>25</sup>, 'honour' crimes' are no longer considered to be justified, perpetrators continue to benefit by being able to invoke mitigating circumstances included in Articles 97 and 98.<sup>26</sup>

**Policy/Strategy Development:** The synergistic ideals of the CRC, CEDAW and the Millennium Declaration have increasingly informed Jordan's recent policies and plans, including the National Agenda, the National Executive Development Programme, the National Plan of Action for Children, as well as several other national Strategies,<sup>27</sup> though these do not always go far enough in incorporating rights perspectives.

Necessary **institutional mechanisms**<sup>28</sup> focusing on particular groups such as children, women, youth, or to address issues such as labour, environment, justice, social welfare, etc., have been put in place and several existing ones restructured. Additionally, the National Centre for Human Rights (NCHR) was established in 2002 with the mandate to monitor government accountability in all matters relating to human rights, including the enforcement of laws. It is also charged with recommending legislative amendments in line with the spirit of the constitution and international instruments, especially in matters relating to public freedoms.

**Capacity development** of institutional mechanisms and individuals has included a variety of aspects, though this requires much stronger and more regular action, due to the frequent turnover of personnel, including at senior levels.

**Awareness about human rights principles** has been fostered to an extent through the media and particularly through workshops and conferences on related themes. Human rights education has also been introduced in some public sector schools though not as part of the regular curriculum.

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<sup>20</sup> Bazalgette,E./UNWoment ASRO, "Gender Equality Assessment," May 2011 draft

<sup>21</sup> (Article 5, Temporary Law No.82, 2001)

<sup>22</sup> Bazalgette,E./UNWoment ASRO "Gender Equality Assessment," May 2011 draft

<sup>23</sup> ibid

<sup>24</sup> Bazalgette,E./UNWoment ASRO "Gender Equality Assessment," May 2011 draft

<sup>25</sup> (Article 126, Paragraphs B and G, Temporary Amended Law)

<sup>26</sup> Bazalgette,E./UNWoment ASRO, "Gender Equality Assessment," May 2011 draft

<sup>27</sup> Note: These include among others - national Strategies for Women, Early Childhood , Family, Poverty Alleviation, Education, Health

<sup>28</sup> Annex 4

**The knowledge base** on developmental issues has gradually been enhanced especially in terms of gender and sub-national disaggregation of data on basic socio-economic indicators. Since the statistical focus is not necessarily rights based, related gaps remain. A stronger focus on qualitative aspects and causal analysis, with more focused planning based on the analysis of such data is recommended by several analysts and Treaty Body Monitoring Committees. Moreover, data and information gaps exist<sup>29</sup> with respect to various vulnerable groups, specific age groups particularly adolescents and youth, as well as on the differential situations of rural and urban issues. The situation on the informal sector is also under-researched.<sup>30</sup>

The rights to health and basic education contained in various Conventions have been furthered through wide scale expansion of the outreach of health services, and access to free and compulsory basic education for both girls and boys, though enrolment and retention gaps need to be filled and qualitative aspects reinforced. The protection and particularly participation rights enshrined in the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) need much stronger age-group and gender differentiated attention, for instance with respect to those the primary school, pre-adolescent and adolescent groups, as well as the most marginalized and vulnerable.

To improve the well being of less advantaged groups a variety of public **Social Protection** programmes have been put in place at a very high cost to the public exchequer. These include:<sup>31</sup>

- Cash transfers, including monthly benefits and emergency cash assistance through the National Aid Fund (NAF), the Zakat Fund, and the Ministry of Social Development (MoSD);
- Active Labor Market Programmes, including skills training through the Vocational Training Corporation, National Training and Employment Project, and National Company for Employment and Training; microfinance programmes provided by multiple market oriented and subsidized providers; job search assistance and special programmes for unemployed women through the Ministry of Labour (MoL);
- Business support services and microenterprise development through the Enhanced Productivity Programme;
- Social Care Services provided by the MoSD in collaboration with other government and non-government providers;
- In-kind transfers including education based programmes such as school feeding, and support for poor tertiary level students, housing programmes for the poor, and health related programmes;
- Community Based Interventions, provided by the Enhanced Productivity Program, for social infrastructure (roads, health centers, community centers, schools, water treatment plants);
- General subsidies, including on liquid petroleum gas (LPG) and bread;
- Work related social insurance, particularly pensions, through Social Security Corporation and civil service and military pensions;
- Health insurance, particularly the Civil Health Insurance Programme and Royal Medical Service Insurance schemes.

A 2011 assessment<sup>32</sup> of these programmes identified several areas of improvement. These included the uneven coverage of school based safety nets none of which go to secondary school students, significant expenditures on untargeted subsidies, the exclusion of the most vulnerable, inadequate protection of children, as well as gender disparities in coverage.<sup>33</sup> The assessment recommends filling of some critical gaps in the analysis of existing data and suggests the further evaluation of these initiatives “to identify the level of actual benefit accrued to those most in need, especially as many subsidies benefit the population in general and not just the poorest groups.” Another suggestion is to conduct a cost-benefit analysis “to enable better and more coherent planning and targeting, in addition to reducing wastage of government resources on groups which do not need such support.”<sup>34</sup>

## **Jordan and International Environmental Agreements**

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<sup>29</sup> CRC, CEDAW Committee observations

<sup>30</sup> Bazalgette, E./UNWomen ASRO, “Gender Equality Assessment,” May 2011 draft

<sup>31</sup> Blank, L./MoSD/UNICEF “The Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan: Social Protection Review” Draft, January 2011

<sup>32</sup> Blank, L./MoSD/UNICEF “The Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan: Social Protection Review” Draft, January 2011

<sup>33</sup> *ibid*

<sup>34</sup> *ibid*

Jordan is a party to many international environmental agreements<sup>35</sup> 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, which obliges State Parties to legal follow up, three elements can be considered as integral to any human-rights approach to environmental governance:<sup>36</sup> These include:

- The general right to a clean and safe environment included in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) and the Millennium Declaration (MD) which cover environment related rights in general;
- The right of working to protect the environment which is contained in both the MD and the UDHR, and 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.

In addition to the 1995 Environmental Law, Jordan has numerous regulations, specifications and standards for environmental quality as well as diverse planning frameworks on environmental aspects, but remains without a comprehensive overall strategy. The Ministry of Environment (MoEnv) established in 2003 is the national focal point for climate change issues and the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), with several public sector agencies also having environment related mandates however implementation mechanisms need better coordination as confirmed at the February 2011 workshop organized by the UNDAF Environment Technical Group to discuss alignment of national environmental policies with Global Environmental Conventions (GECs).

There was consensus among workshop participations that disconnected approaches constrain identification of cooperation and realization of cumulative benefits.<sup>37</sup> It also identified synergies between different international agreements that could benefit from the development of a coherent and integrated national policy, relevant legislation and institutional frameworks. The need for harmonized approaches towards awareness raising, education, training and information exchange, and more meaningful public participation in monitoring and enforcement was also stressed.

The 2011 National Environmental Summary confirmed the need for more private sector participation and attention to the effective engagement of community women and marginalized groups in environmental initiatives. It also pointed out that monitoring of water and air quality conducted by various public and research institutions was rarely connected to decision making processes. It therefore recommended the formulation of a comprehensive monitoring system, along with easy public access to results available with the relevant environmental data gathering entities.<sup>38</sup>

It is a matter of concern that the Government signed the Hyogo Framework of Action, the blueprint for Disaster Risk Reduction<sup>39</sup> in 2005, however the formulation of a national implementation plan for this has not been formalized, despite Jordan's vulnerability to potential hazards due to its environmental challenges and position on the Dead Sea Fault Line.<sup>40</sup>

## **Meeting Treaty Body and Environmental Reporting Requirements**

Jordan has followed up on its reporting obligations to relevant treaty bodies, though the regularity of reporting varies for different ratified Conventions, a case in point being the fourth report to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) Committee, which was submitted in 2009, 10 years after the third report.<sup>41</sup> The first national report on CRC implementation was submitted to the Committee on the Rights of the Child in Geneva in 1993, the second periodic report in 1998, the third report in 2005. The fourth and fifth reports are being produced jointly for

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<sup>35</sup> Annex 3

<sup>36</sup> Wardam.B/UNEP ROWA, "National Environment Summary" (NES), 2011

<sup>37</sup> Wardam.B./ROWA, "National Environment Summary, (NES), August 2011

<sup>38</sup> Bazalgette, E./UNWomen ASRO, "Gender Equality Assessment: Country Report Jordan," May 2011 draft

<sup>39</sup> Note: Principles of the Hyogo Framework of Action - Governance, Risk Identification, Increased Knowledge, Reducing Risk Factors, Strengthening Preparedness

<sup>40</sup> Information Note received from the UNDP Country Office August 2011

<sup>41</sup> Jordanian National Centre for Human Rights (NCHR) "2009, 2010 Annual Reports,"

submission by the end of 2011. The third and fourth periodic reports to the CEDAW Committee were submitted as a combined document in 2005 and the fifth report in 2009 through a participatory process led by the Jordanian National Commission for Women (JCNW). This report, which will be reviewed by the CEDAW Committee in February 2012 details efforts being exerted to align laws with CEDAW and the Beijing Platform for Action to eliminate discrimination against women.<sup>42</sup> A civil society shadow report has also been prepared.

The country has reported on implementation against environmental agreements, to a greater extent than other countries in the Region. Jordan's initial National Communication to the UNFCCC submitted in 1998 was the first report of its kind by a developing country. The second report was produced in 2009 and the third report drafted in 2011. In 2010, Jordan was one of only two Arab countries to submit a report to the UNFCCC on its Copenhagen Programme of Action linked to COP 15.<sup>43</sup> The country's 4<sup>th</sup> National Report on Biodiversity was submitted to the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) Secretariat in 2009.<sup>44</sup>

### **Main observations of the HR Treaty Monitoring Bodies on Jordan's State Party Reports**

Many of the Kingdom's implementation measures - legislative, legal, institutional, strategy development, programmatic and those focused on capacity development - have been welcomed by the various Treaty Body Monitoring Committees to which it has submitted reports. The Committees have also raised some concerns recommending stronger remedial action.<sup>45</sup> The more general ones relate to the lifting of reservations on various Conventions, entering ratified Treaties into law, enhancing political rights, regularizing temporary laws, expediting follow-up on the enactment of pending laws, removing restrictions on freedom of expression, improving the information base on marginalized groups, and removing discriminatory practices especially in the gender perspective.<sup>46</sup>

There has been a specific and recurring emphasis by various Treaty Bodies on the need to raise the very low age of criminal responsibility, remove the clause in the Nationality Law that discriminates against women married to foreigners depriving their children of the right to Jordanian nationality, ending the judicial discretion which allows under-age marriages of girls and review of the Labour Law to ensure equal rights and benefits for female employees and protection against harassment. Stronger efforts are recommended to address violence against children and women, and the adoption of a comprehensive proactive strategy to foster the inclusion and other rights of especially vulnerable groups, particularly those living with disabilities. Many Treaty Bodies have also recommended awareness raising to promote a culture that is more supportive of women's equality and empowerment.<sup>47</sup>

Within the country human rights activists have also highlighted these and other challenges<sup>48</sup> still needing redress to ensure the complete and equitable fulfillment of rights, especially of the most vulnerable and marginalized groups. Most of these have also been pointed out by the NCHR in its various annual reports. Some of these are:

- The low quality of education and the mismatch between vocational, general and higher education with the demands of the labour market reducing the employability prospects of young people;
- The stereotyped education for girls that limits their options for participation in the labour market;
- Wide income disparities negatively affecting the educational attainment of children of lower income groups, resulting in increased school drop outs and entry into child labour;
- The inadequacy of inclusive activities for persons living with disabilities and other marginalized groups;
- Regional variations in access to education, basic services, adequate infrastructure and economic options;
- Limitations on the freedom of expression;

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<sup>42</sup> Bazalgette, E/UNWomen ASRO, "Gender Equality Assessment: Country Report Jordan," May 2011 draft

<sup>43</sup> The UN Climate Change Conference held in Copenhagen in 2009

<sup>44</sup> Wardam, B/UNEP ROWA, "National Environment Summary" (NES), August 2011

<sup>45</sup> Observations of various Treaty Bodies, NCHR reports

<sup>46</sup> Observations of various Treaty Bodies, NCHR reports

<sup>47</sup> *ibid*

<sup>48</sup> *ibid*

- Inadequate involvement of citizens, and particularly women and youth, in governance at both national and local levels;
- Lack of focus on building the capacities of young people for civic engagement and responsible citizenship to prepare them for effective future participation in the political process;
- The inadequate attention to the health concerns of pre-adolescents and adolescents;
- The existence of social norms and inadequate gender responsiveness of policies and administrative rules that limit women's full participation in public life;
- Discriminatory legal provisions such as the weak punitive provisions for perpetrators of 'honour' killings, and the disparity in the Nationality Law regarding the rights of men and women in terms of passing on their nationality to their children if they marry a non-national;
- Gaps in the juvenile justice and custodial systems and inappropriate detention practices;
- The non-adherence to the Tobacco Convention despite the fact that tobacco has been declared as a major contributing factor to the profiling of Jordan's non-communicable disease epidemiology.

### **Jordan's Approach to Agendas set at International and Regional Conferences**

As an active member of the global development community, Jordan has participated in most major global and regional conferences in recent decades, adopted elements of their outcome declarations into its national plans, or developed new comprehensive Action Plans based on the relevant Agendas while also submitting periodic progress reports as per requirements. Among others, Jordan is a party to:

- World Health Assembly Resolutions, such as on Health Promotion and Healthy Lifestyles, Mental Health, Prevention of violence, Youth Health, Prevention of mental, neurological and psychosocial disorders;
- The Arab Charter for Human Rights, the Cairo Declaration on Human Rights in Islam, and the outcome Declarations of a number of Regional Conferences on a broad spectrum of developmental issues focusing on different societal and age groups;
- The Beijing Platform of Action for Women (1995) (approved without reservations);
- The agenda of the International Conference on Population and Development (1994) with reservations on some of its clauses;
- The Outcome Declaration of the UN Special Sessions on Children and HIV/AIDS;
- The agendas and frameworks emerging from many Environmental Conferences.

### **Regional and Multi-lateral Alliances**

Jordan is a member of the League of Arab States and the Organization of Islamic Countries (OIC) and there is a strong possibility of its joining the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC). This is the subject of much current debate around the possible socio-economic benefits to Jordan, as well as the potential risks. It is not clear where the process will lead, but it could at least establish for Jordan favourable treatment within the block of oil rich Gulf countries and enhance employment opportunities for its workforce. The procedural requirements for Jordan's membership are now being studied by a GCC Committee.<sup>49</sup>

Jordan has actively pursued regional cooperation in environmental management. The main platform for regional coordination is the Arab League's Council of Arab Ministers Responsible for the Environment (CAMRE). Regional and bilateral agreements have also been reached with other Arab countries based on the CAMRE proceedings and recommendations. Among the most effective and sustainable regional agreements to which Jordan has contributed significantly is the Regional Organization for the Conservation of the Environment of the Red Sea and the Gulf of

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<sup>49</sup> [http://www.oxfordbusinessgroup.com/economic\\_updates/jordan-membership-pending](http://www.oxfordbusinessgroup.com/economic_updates/jordan-membership-pending)

Aden (PERSGA).<sup>50</sup> Trade agreements that have enhanced market access have been entered into with the World Trade Organization, the European Union, the United States, and at the regional level.

Jordan is a signatory to the Paris Declaration adopted in 2005 and has accordingly committed itself to implementing the principles of the Declaration. Development Partners in the country, as well as the UN system, seek to promote national leadership and ownership of the projects and programmes funded by them, as well as ensure that these are aligned to national priorities. The overall development assistance provided to Jordan by donors, other development partners and the UN is in line with the priorities laid out in the National Agenda and the Executive Development Programme. To date, Jordan has implemented two of the three Organization of Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) Paris Declaration Monitoring Surveys, namely the 2<sup>nd</sup> survey in 2008, and the 3<sup>rd</sup> and final survey that was completed in early 2011. These surveys have allowed Jordan to track national progress in alignment with the Paris Declaration principles.

These surveys have given Jordan high ratings for the level of government ownership with a more modest rank for donor alignment and harmonization and for managing for results. To strengthen its performance on these indicators, Jordan has initiated several programmes designed to increase the coordination of aid programs and build national capacities. In 2007, the Government-Donor Coordination Working Groups were created in 11 priority sectors to encourage dialogue between the Government and donors. Similarly, the Jordan Aid Information Management System was recently created to manage donor-funded projects and increase transparency. Aid predictability has remained static, while the use of national systems has improved considerably since 2007. These measures demonstrate the priority Jordan's increased concern for regular government-donor dialogue, programme transparency and improved planning. A UN-Donor Lender Working Group is also functional, in addition to several UN-government- donor technical working groups around governance, environmental and social development themes.

### **The United Nations Millennium Declaration (MD)**

The UN Millennium Summit in the year 2000 was a defining moment in the global development discourse. It witnessed the 189 Member States of the General Assembly reaffirming their commitment to the purposes and principles of the UN Charter, and the Summit's Outcome Declaration that defined a global development agenda and reiterated commitment to fundamental principles and values including for enhanced international relations. These included the rights to freedom and equality of opportunity for both men and women, equity and social justice for all, the spirit of solidarity between nations, respect for nature and shared responsibility for the vulnerable and less advantaged.

To realize the MD's vision a core group of medium-term concrete Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and targets were set to be achieved by each country and the international community by 2015. In addition to their relevance to the UHDR and the MD, all MDGs are related to one or more rights and obligations contained in major Human Rights Conventions and/or the Outcome Declarations of landmark Global Summits and Conferences.

### **Progress towards achieving the MDGs<sup>51</sup>**

There is clear evidence of Jordan's strong political will to support this agenda, as demonstrated by the results achieved to date. The country had already achieved good results in terms of wide-scale extension of access to education and health services however as of the year 2000 the government refined its social, economic, educational, health and environmental strategies where indicated, to accelerate the momentum towards full achievement of the MDGs.

Jordan's second MDG Progress Report (MDGR 2010) presents a considerable but varying degree of progress towards the achievement of the goals. It also highlights shortcomings against some indicators, as well as sub-national disparities

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<sup>50</sup> Wardam.B/UNEP ROWA, "National Environmental Summary" 2011, op.cit

<sup>51</sup> Annex 5

in achievement. It points out areas which need to be strengthened, the required acceleration rate to meet the deadline, and indicators against which full achievement is doubtful. The Report's overall conclusion is that the overall pace of progress can be considered satisfactory, since Jordan has either achieved or is in the process of achieving several goals, some by 2015. The factor which it considers as most likely to hinder full achievement by 2015 is the possible negative fallout from the global economic crisis that could affect the country's coping capacity.

The MDGR notes better progress towards the Goals that were translated into executive programmes with measureable outputs, wider coverage for the targeted groups and sustainable funding (e.g. education), than for those which require structural measures, such as synchronization of related policies (e.g. for environmental sustainability). Achievement was also noted to have been more rapid during the early part of the decade, subsequently slowing down and in some cases leveling off.<sup>52</sup> It also recommends adaptation of some indicators to the reality of Jordan's current level of progress.

### **Goal 1: Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger**

This Goal was considered to have been achieved and even exceeded since the proportion of the population living on less than one US dollar per day had been halved, and those below the abject poverty line were less than one per cent in 2008 compared to 6.6 % in 1992. Yet efforts to maintain this level are considered at risk as any economic downturn could result in the large percentage of households close to the poverty line easily slipping below.<sup>53</sup> In addition income inequality remains a concern. The real income dropped by 8% for the richest quartile, and by 8.5% between 2002 and 2006 for the poorest quartile indicating a wider poverty gap, with the poor becoming poorer.<sup>54</sup> Poverty levels are higher in governorates with lower population density but the largest numbers of the poor (57%) are concentrated in the more densely populated larger urban governorates.<sup>55</sup>

Though a separate poverty analysis does not exist for Palestine refugees it can be assumed that, like other Jordanians, an estimated 13.3% or more of these refugees also live under the Jordanian absolute poverty line, with those from Gaza 1.6 times more likely to be poor compared to other refugees as they are excluded from public sector jobs and more formal employment.<sup>56</sup> Similarly those Iraqis living in Jordan who do not have a residency permit find it difficult to obtain a work permit, and their existing resources such as remittances and savings are not enough to cope with the high cost of living.<sup>57</sup> 40-60% of those working informally often perform manual labour, risking possible detention and exploitation by employers in terms of low and irregular wages.<sup>58</sup> Future pressures arising from population growth as well as reduced external aid due to future international financial crises could affect the availability of government resources, also impacting the humanitarian assistance to refugee populations in the country.

Achievement of the second target by lowering the unemployment rate to 3-5% by 2015 is considered impossible," as difficulties persist in reducing female and male employment from their current rates of 24.1% and 10.3% for females and males respectively.<sup>59</sup>

Due to rising inflation, families have had to allocate increased funds to cover their urgent needs for fuel, transport and telecommunication by curtailing expenditure on basic food items. Spending on education dropped from 7% of total household spending, in 2006 to 5.1% in 2008.<sup>60</sup> The reduced spending on necessary food items impacts negatively on family, and particularly child, health and well-being, since poor nutrition affects both physical and mental growth,

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<sup>52</sup> MoPIC/UN, "Keeping the Promise and Achieving Aspirations: Second Millennium Development Report -Jordan", 2010

<sup>53</sup> *ibid*

<sup>54</sup> World Bank, "Poverty Update – Jordan", 2009

<sup>55</sup> MoPIC/UN, "Keeping the Promise and Achieving Aspirations: Second Millennium Development Report - Jordan", 2010

<sup>56</sup> UNRWA Jordan Field Office information note received July 2011

<sup>57</sup> UNHCR Jordan Office information note received August 2010

<sup>58</sup> *ibid*

<sup>59</sup> MoPIC/UN, "Keeping the Promise and Achieving Aspirations: Second Millennium Development Report -Jordan", 2010

<sup>60</sup> *ibid*



while the need for higher expenditures on education reduces access, affecting the right to education and related development options.<sup>61</sup>

## Goal 2: Achieve Universal Primary Education

This goal has been largely achieved by providing free and compulsory basic education opportunities to almost all school age children in Jordan. An estimated 99%<sup>62</sup> of 6-11 year old children that enroll in grade 1 complete grade 5. However, the MDGR cautions that this does not mean that all 99% are actually enrolled, “because the capacity of the education system to cover this number has not been measured.” There is also little information about the extent to which educational access is restricted for vulnerable groups, notably those living with disabilities and children of women married to foreigners, nor for children among the new influx of refugees driven into Jordan by unrest in neighbouring countries. Moreover, 2008/2009 school year data indicate disparity among the governorates on basic education.<sup>63</sup>

The dropout rate recorded in the earlier grades is marginal, though education statistics indicate that these are on the rise, primarily due to high opportunity costs imposed on families by economic factors, overcrowding of schools, and disconnect between what is taught in school and what students are tested on prior to the school leaving stage.<sup>64</sup> This is supported by the steady downward trend of the Adjusted Net Enrolment Ratio (ANER)<sup>65</sup> over the past decade and could have an impact on the ultimate achievement of MDG2.<sup>66</sup>

At practically all educational levels, more boys than girls leave the education system without completing the school year, starting with basic education grades 6, 7, and 8. The most vulnerable stage is post basic education (age group 16-18 years) where education is not compulsory. The latest available secondary level (grades 11 and 12) enrolment rates were for the Net Enrolment Rate (NER) 60.7% for boys and 72.2% for girls, and the Gross Enrolment Rate (GER) 76.3% for boys versus 80.4% for girls.<sup>67</sup> The economic cost of boys remaining in school throughout secondary education is weighed against their financial contribution to the family and other influencing factors.<sup>68</sup> A 2006 study found that 69% of students of UNRWA schools leave the education system for good, while others transfer to government schools which have better facilities, or because UNRWA schools do not provide secondary education.<sup>69</sup> Diverse socio-economic reasons were mainly identified for the drop out of Palestine refugee girls, and poor educational achievements and the need to work for boys.<sup>70</sup>

Access to all levels of education is protected by the Constitution, yet the quality of education remains a significant area of concern, and varies between public and private sector institutions. The increasing enrolment in private schools creates a duality in the quality of education accessed that also affects future opportunities.<sup>71</sup>

Due to equal gender enrolment and fairly high levels of retention in basic education, illiteracy among the 15-24 year age group is almost eradicated. Illiteracy has also declined with shrinking gender gaps among camp based Palestine refugees served by UNRWA, with lower rates for women than men in the 15-24 year age group.<sup>72</sup> Literacy rates for young people are mostly similar across governorates but overall illiteracy rates remain higher for females, and in rural areas. Access to formal and/or informal modes of education ensures the acquisition of basic reading and writing

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<sup>61</sup> *ibid*

<sup>62</sup> *ibid*

<sup>63</sup> *ibid*

<sup>64</sup> MoPIC/UN, “Keeping the Promise and Achieving Aspirations: Second Millennium Development Report -Jordan”, 2010

<sup>65</sup> Note: Adjusted Net Enrolment Ratio (ANER) - Total number of pupils of the official primary school age group who are enrolled at primary or secondary education levels, expressed as a percentage of the corresponding population.

<sup>66</sup> UNESCO. (2011) Institute for Statistics, Paris, UNESCO

<sup>67</sup> MoPIC/UN, “Keeping the Promise and Achieving Aspirations: Second Millennium Development Report -Jordan”, 2010

<sup>68</sup> *ibid*

<sup>69</sup> Koen.S./UNRWA Jordan Field Office, “Assessment of Students Leaving UNRWA Schools,” 2006

<sup>70</sup> Strous. K./UNRWA Jordan Field Office, “Assessment of Students Leaving UNRWA schools,” 2006

<sup>71</sup> UNESCO Paris, “Education for All Global Monitoring Report: The Hidden Crisis - Armed Conflict and Education”, 2011

<sup>72</sup> *ibid*

skills,<sup>73</sup> but being barely literate can severely limit employability options, especially as these are in short supply even for educated youth.<sup>74</sup>

The Report suggests that the achievement of the universal primary education indicator does not address either the quality of education or the level of achievement of basic learning competencies, and cautions that the high enrolment and retention figures may have been influenced by the automatic promotion policies in place. It suggests that Jordan adopt an indicator to measure achievement against the Basic Completion Rate (BCR), and that though the number of dropout is low, this issue should be targeted to prevent this group from falling into the category of illiterates.

### **Goal 3: Promote Gender Equality and Empowerment of Women**

Basic and secondary education enrolment data reflects a very high female/male ratio of 97/100 with some variations according to the level and stream of secondary education. The female to male ratio (FMR) in basic, general secondary and academic secondary education stood at 96, 110 and 118 females per 100 males respectively in 2009. In higher education, females outnumber males, particularly in public universities where higher scores on the secondary school leaving certificate test determine access. Yet, a significant gender gap remains in female enrolment in vocational training – 65 for every 100 males. This could be a reflection of cultural perceptions of women’s role, resulting in a higher preference for academic rather than vocational skills for girls, as well as access issues such as the distant location of vocational schools from their places of residence.<sup>75</sup> Palestine refugee women in camps are also generally better educated than their male peers at all ages under 35 years of age.<sup>76</sup>

Greater educational access does not mean equality in the field of study or necessarily translate into equal employment opportunity for Jordanian women in general, or for Palestine refugee women. By 2009 women’s participation rate in the non-agricultural labour market was only 14.9%, compared to 64.8% for men.<sup>77</sup>

While the mismatch between educational qualifications and skills acquired with labour market needs affects both males and females, the latter face additional social and attitudinal constraints. On average, women are unemployed longer than their male counterparts holding equal or lesser education credentials.<sup>78</sup> They specialize at university in mathematics, science and information technology (IT) at the rate of two percentage points higher than males,<sup>79</sup> but constitute merely 25% of the workforce in ICT and are typically assigned to non-technical positions.<sup>80</sup> Stereotyping is also reflected in that women are the majority in schools of education and men predominate in programmes specific to engineering and construction. Employment choices for young women are often determined by social norms, with families wanting them to work close to home and/or in single sex working environments such as teaching, preferably in the public sector which has shorter working hours and is perceived to offer better job security.<sup>81</sup>

The Civil Service Code that otherwise treats men and women equally discriminates between male employees and female employees with respect to family benefits, as does the Social Security Law regarding the right of families of men and women to inherit their retirement pay. On the positive side, both the Labour Law and the Civil Service Law now contain specific articles and pertinent regulations concerning violence against women in the workplace.<sup>82</sup>

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<sup>73</sup> ibid

<sup>74</sup> Khawaja.M, Tiltne.A.A., “On the Margins: Migration and Living Conditions of Palestinian Camp Refugees in Jordan,” 2002, FAFO report

<sup>75</sup> MoPIC/UN, “Keeping the Promise and Achieving Aspirations: Second Millennium Development Report -Jordan”, 2010

<sup>76</sup> UNICEF MENA Regional Office, “The Situation of Palestinian Children in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, Jordan, Syria and Lebanon”, 2010

<sup>77</sup> DoS, data

<sup>78</sup> MoPIC/UN, “Keeping the Promise and Achieving Aspirations: Second Millennium Development Goals Report -Jordan”, 2010

<sup>79</sup> DoS data

<sup>80</sup> Majacher-Teleon, Agnieszka, Olfa Ben Slimenc/ European Training Foundation, “Women and Work in Jordan: Case study of Tourism and ICT Services.” 2009, (p28)

<sup>81</sup> ibid

<sup>82</sup> MoPIC/UN, “Keeping the Promise and Achieving Aspirations: Second Millennium Development Goals Report -Jordan”, 2010

An increase was recorded in female borrowers from microcredit funds (not banks) - from 24% in 2000 to 55% in 2008 - reflecting a growing trend among females towards small-size enterprises and self employment.<sup>83</sup> Still, while the small and medium-sized enterprises include over 90% of all enterprises in Jordan, female entrepreneurs are only 3.9% among Jordanian entrepreneurs.<sup>84</sup> Constraining factors include their lack of information about loan and borrowing facilities, weak knowledge of supply and demand dynamics, and their inability to access traditional sources of collateral.<sup>85</sup> Women are also at a relative disadvantage with respect to access to resources and the type of resources accessed that are key determinants of women's potential for self employment and their decision making status. Their share in land ownership is only 15.1% of the total, and they are 42.9% of holders of securities (shares).<sup>86</sup>

As in most countries, work in the non-formal sector where women are often concentrated, is not taken into account in national labour participation data, resulting in lack of attention to related problems faced by the relevant workforce.<sup>87</sup> The government is reported to be considering amending zoning regulations in favour of individual home based workers.<sup>88</sup>

Women's weak political participation is globally acknowledged as a major impediment to their equality of access to resources, and participation in decision making on issues of national interest. The Jordanian Constitution gives women equal rights to vote and to participate as members of elected political bodies. In practice they remain under represented in elected and appointed bodies, despite the application of quotas. Mainly because of set quotas, they are currently 10.8% of the House of Representatives, 15%, of the appointed members of the Senate, and hold 27.4% of municipal council seats (20% through quota and 7% elected directly including one mayor), compared to 10% in 2003.<sup>89</sup> Women are also appointed as ministers in the Cabinet, with the proportion varying between successive governments. In 2011, they constitute only 7% of Cabinet members, compared to 15% in the previous government.

The overall percentage of women holding public and independent functions such as - legislators, senior officials and managers, is only 1.5%.<sup>90</sup> They comprise 17.2% of diplomatic corps staff, including ambassadors.<sup>91</sup> A few women are represented in senior positions in the judicial system.<sup>92</sup> With affirmative action, which led to their higher enrolment in the Judicial Institute, the percentage of women within the judiciary reached 8.8% in 2010, and is expected to triple in the next two years.<sup>93</sup>

#### **Goal 4: Reduce Child Mortality**

In 2009, the proportion of children immunized against measles was 103%, and 110% of the 12-23 month-olds also received their mumps, measles, and rubella vaccines. Similarly, immunization coverage of polio and TB reached 103% and 109% respectively. The above 100% coverage is due to the inclusion of non-Jordanian children currently living in Jordan, particularly Iraqi children, in the national immunization programme.<sup>94</sup>

Positive health policies and the extensive outreach of primary health interventions including compulsory child immunization and universal health insurance have combined to reduce the Under Five Mortality Rate (U5MR) to 28/1000 in 2009 – at an average annual decrease of 0.55/deaths per 1000 live births. This is a slower rate than in the pre-2002 period. This is similar to global mortality trends which indicate that further reduction becomes more difficult

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<sup>83</sup> *ibid*

<sup>84</sup> MoPIC/UNDP, "Jordan Human Development Report 2011: Small Business and Human Development"

<sup>85</sup> MoPIC/UN, "Keeping the Promise and Achieving Aspirations: Second National Millennium Development Goals Report – Jordan", 2010

<sup>86</sup> MoPIC/UN, "Keeping the Promise and Achieving Aspirations: Second National Millennium Development Goals Report -Jordan", 2010

<sup>87</sup> UN Women Arab States Regional Office, "Gender Equality Assessment Country Report –Jordan" (Draft) May 2011

<sup>88</sup> Feedback received during a meeting with MoPIC on 21/09/2011

<sup>89</sup> 5<sup>th</sup> CEDAW report, para. 67

<sup>90</sup> DoS data, quoted in UNDP information note received July 2011

<sup>91</sup> MoPIC/UN, "Keeping the Promise and Achieving Aspirations: Second National Millennium Development Goals Report – Jordan," 2010

<sup>92</sup> *ibid*

<sup>93</sup> Bazalgette, E./UN Women Arab States Regional Office, "Gender Equality Assessment Country Report, Jordan", May 2011 draft

<sup>94</sup> MoPIC/UN, "Keeping the Promise and Achieving Aspirations: Second National Millennium Development Goals Report – Jordan," 2010

once the rate drops beyond a certain level. To meet the target by 2015, efforts will need to be redoubled to reduce the U5MR by an annual average of 2.5 deaths/1000 live births.<sup>95</sup>

The Infant Mortality Rate (IMR) declined to 23/1000 in 2009, averaging an annual decline similar to the U5MR. To meet the IMR target by 2015, progress needs to be accelerated by instituting strategic interventions, specifically focusing on the neo-natal period to reduce the IMR by up to 1.95 deaths per thousand live births annually. There is also the need to guard against any slide back, given the reported rise in child mortality between 2007 and 2009, though this could be attributed to data errors arising from the very low number of child deaths.<sup>96</sup> To focus more attention to the neo-natal stage, the MDGR recommends that a national neonatal mortality rate (NMR) indicator be added to MDG4 with a specific goal (proposed: 7.5 deaths per 1000 live births) set for achievement by 2015.<sup>97</sup>

Results of the 2007 and 2009 Population and Family Health surveys reveal governorate based differences in infant and child mortality rates. This underscores the importance of improving the quality and accessibility of vital statistics and routine records on births and deaths in order to supplement the important data provided by household based and other surveys.<sup>98</sup>

### **Goal 5: Improve Maternal Health**

The Maternal Mortality Rate (MMR) fell to 19 deaths per 100,000 live births by 2009. Hence, Jordan is expected to achieve the required reduction in maternal deaths by 2015, and may even go beyond the target should the MMR continue to fall at the current rate. According to the MDGR, 84% of expectant mothers have 6 or more prenatal health care visits throughout their pregnancy, 96% through physicians. Reproductive health services are offered free of charge at government health centres to all women, including the non-Jordanians.<sup>99</sup>

The exact MMR for registered Palestine refugee women is not known, but assessment of records of women coming to the health centres indicates that the MMR had increased from 22.4/100,000 in 2002 to 27.7/100,000 in 2008.<sup>100</sup> In the past most camp-dwelling refugee women registered late for pre-natal care, but this has improved with timely registration of cases rising from 50 to 70% in the last seven years.<sup>101</sup>

A 2008 Maternal Mortality Study<sup>102</sup> indicates that the Southern Region accounts for 15.8% of the total maternal mortality in the country, though just 9% of the population lives in the region. The study also found that 63.2% of maternal mortality occurring in the post natal period, with 63.2% of maternal mortality primarily attributed to post-partum causes, and that 53.9% of the deaths could have been avoided with timely diagnosis and/or treatment. Despite the availability of services delays in seeking care, possibly result from a lack of knowledge among the women and their families of the risk factors that necessitate professional care.<sup>103</sup>

Given the high incidence of maternal deaths at the post-partum stage (70%), the MDG Report recommends the adoption of a new indicator to the set of Target 2 indicators: “Percentage of women receiving postnatal care (2-4 visits).<sup>104</sup>

Further progress in women’s reproductive health will require attention to persisting challenges, such as delayed access to post-partum care, high fertility levels, the inadequate increase in contraceptive prevalence rates and the stagnating

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<sup>95</sup> *ibid*

<sup>96</sup> MoPIC/UNDP “Jordan Human Development Report 2011: Small Business and Human Development”

<sup>97</sup> MoPIC/UN, “Keeping the Promise and Achieving Aspirations: Second National Millennium Development Goals Report – Jordan,” 2010

<sup>98</sup> *ibid*

<sup>99</sup> MoPIC/UN, “Keeping the Promise and Achieving Aspirations: Second National Millennium Development Goals Report – Jordan,” 2010

<sup>100</sup> UNICEF MENA Regional Office, “The Situation of Palestinian Children in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, Jordan, Syria and Lebanon”, 2010

<sup>101</sup> UNRWA Jordan Field Office information note received July 2011

<sup>102</sup> Higher Population Council, “National Maternal Mortality study 2007-2008”. Report published 2009

<sup>103</sup> MoPIC/UN, “Keeping the Promise and Achieving Aspirations: Second National Millennium Development Goals Report – Jordan,” 2010

<sup>104</sup> *ibid*

unmet need for family planning. Moreover, it is also important to target specific groups, for instance by paying more attention to the male role in family planning and further reducing the rate of under-age marriages of girls.<sup>105</sup>

### **Goal 6: Combat HIV/AIDS, Malaria and other diseases**

Available records indicate a limited prevalence of HIV/AIDS in Jordan with the total number of cases reported till 2009 being 713 (81% male) giving a ratio of one case per 10,000 citizens. According to WHO this could be an underestimation as the prejudice of many people towards those infected with HIV/AIDS may have deterred test taking.<sup>106</sup> The age group distribution among the reported cases was 26% aged 20-29, 34% aged 30-39, and 14% among the 40-49 years old. Among these, 22% of the cases are believed to have been infected within the country.<sup>107</sup> Despite the small number of cases, Jordan has taken measures to prevent further escalation. Services include provision of anti-retroviral drugs to all infected persons.

The draft of the National HIV/AIDS strategy for 2012-2016 that is currently being finalized, notes that in Jordan, as in the wider Region, socio-cultural and religious norms and family values place very high importance on virginity and abstinence from sex before marriage, especially for girls, while extramarital sex is highly condemned. In this context, contacts between boys and girls, or young men and women, are subject to specific social rules and restrictions, which to some extent protect them against HIV, STIs and other sexual and reproductive health problems.<sup>108</sup> On the other hand, these taboos may contribute to unsafe sexual practices [especially] among young people,<sup>109</sup> arising from lack of knowledge about the risks due to the lack of reproductive health education.

Despite the taboo on premarital or extramarital sex, anecdotal evidence and focus group discussion findings indicate that it is not uncommon for young men and women to have their first sexual contact prior to marriage putting them at risk.<sup>110</sup>

Tuberculosis rates were roughly halved between 1990 and 2009<sup>111</sup>. The current estimated rate is 6/1000 persons, while the malaria incidence was reduced to 0.8 per 100,000 by 2009.<sup>112</sup>

However, increasing rates of non-communicable and lifestyle related chronic diseases pose a growing threat, as they create ever greater pressure on the curative health system that could divert resources from MDG related health aspects. There are growing concerns about the growing prevalence of childhood obesity and the rise of non-communicable diseases, including cancer, respiratory diseases and hypertension.<sup>113</sup>

The incidence of certain forms of cancer, particularly lung cancer is strongly associated with tobacco smoking. Cancer is now a public health problem in Jordan. In 2008 the crude incidence rate of all cancers among Jordanians was 67 per 100,000 population (64 males, 71 females).<sup>114</sup> Breast cancer, which is the most common type of cancer overall accounted for 15.32% of the total new cancer cases in 2004.<sup>115</sup> The widespread prevalence of smoking among adults and youth has been recorded, as well as the lack of physical exercise among all age groups.<sup>116</sup> Given the high prevalence of cancer and respiratory diseases in the country, there is an urgent need to re-position tobacco control in the public imagination and in the mind of decision-makers, employers and workers alike.<sup>117</sup>

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<sup>105</sup> *ibid*

<sup>106</sup> *ibid*

<sup>107</sup> Jordan's report to the United Nations General Assembly Special Session UNGASS on HIV/AIDS, 2010

<sup>108</sup> Jordan's Draft National HIV/AIDS Strategy

<sup>109</sup> Information note received from UNFPA Country Office in August 2011

<sup>110</sup> *ibid*

<sup>111</sup> MoPIC/UN, "Keeping the Promise and Achieving Aspirations: Second National Millennium Development Goals Report – Jordan," 2010

<sup>112</sup> *ibid*

<sup>113</sup> MoPIC/UN, "Keeping the Promise and Achieving Aspirations: Second National Millennium Development Goals Report – Jordan," 2010

<sup>114</sup> Jordanian Cancer Registry(2008) (Tarawneh et al., 2008)

<sup>115</sup> Information note received from the WHO Country Office in August 2011

<sup>116</sup> *ibid*

<sup>117</sup> *ibid*

The prevalence of mental health problems, especially depression, within chronic disease is very high in the country. For instance depression's prevalence is 10% in the general population and 29% in people who suffer from hypertension.<sup>118</sup> Mental health (MH) services in Jordan are limited, relying mainly on expensive tertiary care in psychiatric hospitals instead of cost-effective primary health and community-based care. The MH component is not integrated into the extensive primary health care (PHC) network which encompasses all governorates including peripheral areas. Shifting of focus from tertiary care to primary and community MH care would increase availability, accessibility and quality of care, in addition to bringing MH services closer to where people live and work. Community services would allow the provision of treatments in a least restrictive manner, and help to decrease stigma and violations of human rights.<sup>119</sup> Jordan has also been selected by WHO as the first out of six countries to implement the global Mental Health Gap Action Program (mhGAP), which aims to upscale services for mental, neurological and substance use disorders and to reduce the big treatment gap through integrating mental health in the primary health care system.<sup>120</sup>

### **Goal 7: Ensure Environmental Sustainability** *(Please also see Chapter 3)*

Though a couple of Goal 7 targets have been achieved, overall the timely achievement of Goal 7 appears difficult given the daunting challenges. These relate to the acute water scarcity, high and still rising energy demand and prices, the shortfall on the sanitation target, biodiversity depletion, deforestation levels, increasing pollution of air and ground water, inadequate waste management, prospects of climate change and global warming, in addition to the potential repercussions of the financial crisis on the implementation of mega environmental preservation projects.<sup>121</sup> According to 2009 DoS data, basic energy consumption in 2008 increased by 47.1% compared to 2000, while the population increased by 21.4% during the same period.<sup>122</sup>

After its accession to the Montreal Protocol on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer, Jordan has fulfilled its commitment to ban the consumption of ozone-depleting substances and replace them with environmentally-friendly materials. It has also adopted numerous policies to limit CO<sub>2</sub> emissions.<sup>123</sup> No radical change has been noted in the volume of greenhouse gas emissions, particularly carbon dioxide emissions, but greenhouse gas emissions are likely to be considerably reduced in case of further expansion in the replacement of crude oil and heavy fuel with natural gas.<sup>124</sup>

Another positive development relates to access to potable water as notwithstanding the low availability of water resources, by 2008 Jordan had been able to connect 98.41% houses and community clusters to public water networks.<sup>125</sup> The proportion of the population with a connection to a sewage network also increased from 48% in 2001 to 62.2% in 2008, but at this rate, achievement of the target of 70% use by 2015 appears improbable.<sup>126</sup>

Several recent studies predict the negative impact of climate change on Jordan. Possible changes include rising temperatures and decreasing rainfalls, which will lead to a decrease in surface water sources and groundwater, reduce agricultural productivity and have multiple health impacts.<sup>127</sup>

Controlling biodiversity depletion in Jordan remains a difficult and complicated issue, due to water scarcity and increasing pollution of water, soil and air in addition to the other potential negative impacts of climate change.<sup>128</sup>

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<sup>118</sup> *ibid*

<sup>119</sup> *ibid*

<sup>120</sup> *ibid*

<sup>121</sup> MoPIC/UN. "Keeping the Promise and Achieving Aspirations: Second National Millennium Development Goals Report – Jordan," 2010

<sup>122</sup> Wardam.B./ROWA, "National Environment Summary, (NES), August 2011

<sup>123</sup> *ibid*

<sup>124</sup> *ibid*

<sup>125</sup> MoPIC/UN. "Keeping the Promise and Achieving Aspirations: Second National Millennium Development Goals Report – Jordan," 2010

<sup>126</sup> *ibid*

<sup>127</sup> Wardam.B./UNEP ROWA, "National Environment Summary", 2011

<sup>128</sup> *ibid*

Despite a slight improvement with terrestrial and marine protected areas covering 1.4% of the total square area of Jordan in 2008, compared to 0.44% in 2004, the numbers of endangered species continue to decline significantly.<sup>129</sup>

## **Goal 8: Develop a Global Partnership for Development**

Global and country level partnerships remain critical for the achievement of the MDGs. Jordan has been proactive in joining global initiatives and partnerships. It has acceded to the World Trade Organization (WTO) and entered into partnership agreements with major economic blocs such as the European Union (EU). The country has taken steps to improve the national investment climate for foreign and national investors and established partnerships with Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) to achieve the MDGs and sustain the gains achieved. Several donors and UN agencies are providing support to achieve one or more of the MDGs. Yet, despite the effectiveness of several partnerships and the enactment of supportive legislation, challenges associated with the level of economic exposure, high debt levels, and potential impacts of the global financial and economic crisis cannot be ignored.

## **Declared National Priorities**

Several ongoing and past initiatives reflect Jordan's commitment towards aligning its laws, policies, institutions and operating mechanisms with agreed Human Rights and Development agendas as detailed out above. The MDGs have received priority attention in the Government's sectoral strategies as well as in the National Agenda and Executive Development Programme.

Since many of the goals relate to basic development priorities adopted by the government over past decades, national strategies exist in all MDG areas such as for Poverty Alleviation, Health, Nutrition, Education, Women's Empowerment, HIV/AIDs, etc. These have been translated into Programmes of Action and resource allocations have been maintained, particularly for health and education. Declaring environmental sustainability as a major priority Jordan has instituted plans to relieve the pressures imposed by water scarcity on the economy and environment, improving water supply services, limiting wastage of natural resources and preventing the loss of biodiversity.<sup>130</sup>

Though different levels of further fine tuning of plans, additional resource allocations, capacity development, knowledge generation and coordination may still be required for the various Goals, basic related implementing bodies are in place, as well as relevant statistical systems. Broader public-private partnerships are being fostered in support of MDG achievement and special Government-UN initiatives are underway to accelerate the momentum towards MDG 1 and MDG 7 through attention to food security and climate change respectively as mentioned in Chapter 1 of this Assessment. The Government is also keen to develop similar acceleration frameworks for other MDGs, particularly goals 4 and 5.

Besides affirmative action to increase women's enrolment in the Judicial Institute, other special initiatives have been launched to accelerate progress towards women's equality and empowerment. For instance in 2008, to develop the capacity of female municipal council members, as well as to increase the percentage of female members of elected councils, and promote communication and experience sharing among these members, the JNCW launched the Female Municipal Council Members Knowledge-based Network in collaboration with the Local Governance and Enhancing Popular (Grassroots) Participation Programme and the Jordanian National Forum for Women (JNFW).

## **Key Human Rights, Environmental and MDG Related Challenges**

Jordan's pending international Human Rights Conventions and Environmental agreement related challenges include closing of the remaining gaps in the full alignment of laws and policies with the fundamental principles of the various Conventions and agreements and taking appropriate action on the recommendations and observations of treaty bodies

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<sup>129</sup> *ibid*

<sup>130</sup> Wardam.B/UNEP ROWA, "National Environment Summary," 2011

and global and regional environmental agencies. The Human Rights related challenges mentioned above need special attention to remove remaining disparities between genders, age groups and improve the situation of vulnerable and marginalized groups starting by building up the knowledge base. Environmental challenges require consistent attention to various environmental themes especially those with stronger implications for desertification, pollution, and reduction of agricultural productivity. These include inadequate waste management, inappropriate water and energy use and deforestation, which cause environmental deterioration, economic losses, impact negatively on the lives of community groups, and avoid disaster risks. The effects of the frequent turnover of staff need to be addressed by focusing on organization wide capacity building to ensure continuity of conceptual and operational approaches, rather than focusing on training of a few key individuals.

The overall MDG related challenge is to accelerate progress towards 2015 by eliminating sub-national and other disparities against all goals. Another is to sustain the momentum of efforts to ensure that the progress towards 2015 is not perceived as the end-date of current initiatives, but as a milestone in a continuum of progressively reinforced initiatives. Key Goal specific challenges are:

- **MDG 1: Eradicate Extreme Poverty and Hunger**

Preventing families living near the poverty line from slipping below it, and reducing unemployment rates and income disparities;

- **MDG 2: Achieve Universal Declaration**

Converting the quantitative gains in education into human capital development;

- **MDG 3: Promote Gender Equality and Empower Women**

Changing social attitudes towards women's public and productive roles;

- **MDGs 4 and 5: Reduce Child Mortality/Improve Maternal Health**

Addressing neonatal and post-partum mortality;

- **MDG 6: Combat HIV/AIDS, Malaria and Other Diseases**

Ensuring that health gains are not lost because of unhealthy lifestyles;

- **MDG 7: Ensure Environmental Sustainability**

Strengthening environmental conservation efforts including by inducting a people-centred focus in related plans.



## CHAPTER 3: KEY THEMATIC PRIORITIES

**Political and Economic Reform** issues were not part of Jordan's public policy debate in the early decades after independence. The first few decades after independence did not witness much political activity in Jordan with only one election being held in 1957, followed by some 35 years of martial law. The Government's welfare and human resource development policies induced considerable satisfaction among the people until 1989 when austerity measures were introduced as part of conditions set by the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the subsequent rise in prices triggered some public dissatisfaction. The next elections were held in 1989 followed by the end of martial law. The last two decades have witnessed periodic demands for reform, as well as State-led initiatives towards this.<sup>131</sup>

After having enjoyed many years of stability, the fallout from the 'Arab Spring' and the spate of democratic uprisings within its neighboring countries is having impact on Jordan. After January 2011 protests coordinated by workers rights activists have been held fairly regularly in several Jordanian cities, especially after Friday prayers. These have generally been peaceful and their nature has not been as extreme as in other countries. Those demanding political and economic reform include diverse groups such as civil society and human rights activists, professional groups, in addition to people affected by higher costs of living, and youth frustrated by the lack of employment opportunities and the inadequate space for national decision making. The demands have focused on political, constitutional and economic reforms, a more representative parliament, an elected national government, prosecution of the corrupt, progressive taxation, and the reduced role of security services.<sup>132</sup>

The space for public reform has also grown significantly in Jordan, with positive State responses in terms of establishing advisory committees on political and economic reform issues. H.M. King Abdullah II has highlighted the need for comprehensive reform stressing that "economic reform will not achieve its objectives, if it is not accompanied by political reform that ensures the highest level of participation in decision making, through effective institutions that are capable of working transparently and objectively to multiply our achievements."

### Political Reform

Despite more than 20 years of political reform, the escalation of efforts in Jordan of popular demands for political and economic change indicate that reform poses a continuing challenge, as previous efforts have not achieved their goals. Parliament remains open, elections are held, political parties operate, and civil society continues to expand. However, expectations have not been fully met. Political liberalization would help foster channels through which demands could be voiced, create better governance, enhance civil and political liberties, and ease dissatisfaction.<sup>133</sup>

### Political Institutions and Processes

Parliament, elections, political parties and civil society are considered the primary contributing factors to the provision of more open channels for citizens' participation towards more responsive governance.

Jordan is a Constitutional Monarchy. The shift towards full democratization has been gradual and still continues. The King is the constitutional Head of State, the Chief Executive and the Commander-in-Chief of the armed forces, and has other wide ranging constitutional powers, including the authority to appoint and dismiss the Prime Minister.<sup>134</sup>

A bi-cameral parliamentary system has been adopted in accordance with the provisions of the 1952 Constitution. The Lower House 'Majlis *al-Numwab*', (Chamber of Representatives) consists of 120 members elected for four-year terms.

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<sup>131</sup> Saif. Ibrahim, "Political Economy Analysis for Policy Dialogue and Programming," (PEA): The Case of Jordan," August 2011 draft, unpublished (on file with UNDP Jordan Country Office)

<sup>132</sup> *ibid*

<sup>133</sup> UNIFEM Jordan, "Towards Political Empowerment of Jordanian Women", 2006

<sup>134</sup> *ibid*

Quotas have been set to ensure the participation of groups who may have less chances of winning open elections. For minorities there are nine for Christians and three on ethnic/cultural grounds for (Chechen/ Circassians).<sup>135</sup>

Laws are proposed by the Council of Ministers for the approval by Parliament, which also has the right to propose the promulgation of laws. Decisions are taken by a majority vote in each house. The King's approval is essential for any law to come into effect. He can also pass provisional, or temporary, laws that remain in force until ratified or refused by Parliament. Since there is often a backlog of laws to be debated by the two houses, several temporary laws (including some relating to gender equality) are currently in effect.<sup>136</sup>

Elections are based on a principle of one person one vote (irrespective of sex, since 1974), within electoral districts that are perceived by many as not reflecting the actual demographic distribution of the population. The Electoral Law has undergone changes in 1993, 2001, 2003, 2007 and 2010. The voting age has been progressively reduced to allow the participation of larger numbers of young people. The 2007 amendment of the Electoral Law extended universal suffrage to those 18 years and above. Those aged 30 and above are also eligible to contest elections.

Jordan is divided into 13 electoral regions, equivalent to the country's 12 governorates plus the 'Bedouin region', which includes Bedouins of the north, central and southern parts of Jordan. The 13 regions are further divided into 45 electoral constituencies of varying sizes. Demarcation of electoral districts involves creation of multi-member districts in the cities, and small, single-member districts in outlying governorates. As a result the rural governorates are over-represented compared to city dwellers, despite the far greater numbers of the latter.<sup>137</sup>

The 2010 Electoral Law also established "invisible districts" or "virtual sub-districts." Voters can cast their ballot for any candidate (in any sub-district), but candidates compete only against other members in the sub-district. When contestants declare their candidacy, they technically at least, do not know who their competitors will be. This benefits those who know where other candidates are running and thus can choose to compete in districts with weaker candidates. It is widely believed to lead to manipulation of the system.<sup>138</sup>

The conduct of elections by the Executive branch with inadequate oversight having come under criticism, the 2010 Electoral Law strengthened the role of the judiciary in election oversight, and allowed for domestic and international monitors. The 2010 elections were therefore better conducted than those in 2007, also because of a public campaign by the Ministry of Political Development to increase voter turnout, reduce vote-buying and increase women's participation.

Women have had the right to vote and stand for elections since 1974, but men are clearly over-represented in Parliament compared to women.<sup>139</sup> Before the introduction of a gender quota of six seats in 2003, only two women MPs were elected. With the quota, women's representation increased with six female MPs elected in 2003 and 2007, all on reserved seats and 13 elected in 2010, 12 against the quota of reserved seats and one on a general seat. These are allocated by a special electoral panel if no woman is elected.<sup>140</sup> Women run in the general elections, along with male candidates. The 12 reserved seats are then distributed to the top 12 women who do not win their seats outright. The list of "top 12 women" is determined according to the percentage of votes each woman receives in her sub-district, rather than as the absolute number of votes she receives.<sup>141</sup> Members of the Upper House *Majlis, al-Ayan* (House of Notables), are appointed by the King. This can include women nominated by the King but there is no specific quota.

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<sup>135</sup> UNIFEM Jordan, "Towards Political Empowerment of Jordanian Women", 2006

<sup>136</sup> Bazalgette, E, UN Women ASRO, "Gender Equality Assessment – Jordan Country Report," May 2011 draft

<sup>137</sup> Saif, Ibrahim, "Political Economy Analysis for Policy Dialogue and Programming," (PEA): The Case of Jordan," August 2011 draft, unpublished (on file with UNDP Jordan Country Office)

<sup>138</sup> Lust, Hourani and Al Momani, quoted in the Political Economy Study

<sup>139</sup> Husseini, R., "Jordan's Female Parliament Representation", 2011, <<http://www.womendialogue.org/magazine/jordan>>

<sup>140</sup> *ibid*

<sup>141</sup> Lust, Hourani and Al Momani, quoted in the draft "Political Economy Analysis for Policy Dialogue and Programming," (PEA): The Case of Jordan," August 2011 draft, unpublished (on file with UNDP Jordan Country Office)

It is difficult for women to be elected for general seats due to the still lingering belief that men are more suited for public office. The next elections will confirm whether attitudes towards women's political participation have changed since 60% of the respondents of a 2004 poll declared that given the choice of equally qualified male and female candidates, they would vote for the male, because men were more suited as members of parliament, judges, and political party leaders, etc.<sup>142</sup>

The unequal population sizes in electoral districts give an edge to women from smaller (rural) districts, compared to perhaps more experienced and qualified women from the more populated urban districts.<sup>143</sup> Higher representation of rural populations in parliament is promoted as necessary as they are resource-poor and more heavily dependent on the State services. Whatever the rationale this skews parliamentary representation and affects voter turnout rates, estimated at 80% in rural districts and an estimated 12% in cities in the 2010 elections.<sup>144</sup>

### **Decentralization of Governance Processes**

The governance style in the country was initially highly centralized, but a degree of decentralization through governorates and municipalities has evolved over time. The 12 governorates are grouped according to three regions—the North region (Irbid, Jarash, Ajloun, and Mafraq), the Central region (Amman, Zarqa, Balqa, and Madaba), and the South region (Karak, Tafielah, Ma'an, and Aqaba). Each governorate is headed by a governor nominated by the Ministry of Interior (MoI) and approved by the Cabinet.<sup>145</sup>

According to the revised Municipal Law, the 300 plus municipalities were merged into the present 99, of which six cover the Greater Amman area.<sup>146</sup> Municipalities are classified into 4 categories according to location and population size.<sup>147</sup> The 2007 Municipal Law reintroduced popular election of municipal counselors and mayors in the municipalities, with only the Amman Municipal Council comprising 50% each of elected and appointed members, while the mayor is also appointed.<sup>148</sup>

The municipalities are decentralized with regard to policy-making, administrative and fiscal autonomy as per the provisions of Law No 14 (2007). Municipal resources are derived from three sources: (i) a series of local taxes and service fees, including property tax; (ii) transfers from the State of the equivalent of a 6% tax on the refined petroleum products, 40% of the tax on purchase of vehicles, and the proceeds of road traffic fines; and, (iii) borrowing from the Cities and Villages Development Bank.<sup>149</sup>

To ensure women's participation in local government it was originally mandated to have one woman in each village council, through appointment if none were elected. Five women were elected as councilors in 2003, so another 94 were appointed. The 2007 Law enhanced the quota for women, allocating a minimum of 211 seats (20% of the total) for them. A subsequent intensive campaign by the Jordanian National Commission for Women (JCNW) to sensitize women on their right to vote and contest elections led to women's active participation in the 2007 Municipal elections – 51% of all who voted and 18.4% of candidates. This time 238 women became municipal councilors, 20 of them

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<sup>142</sup> UNIFEM, "Towards Political Participation of Jordanian Women," 2006

<sup>143</sup> Hussein, Rana, Jordan's female Parliament Representation, WoMen Dialogue,

<http://www.womendialogue.org/magazine/jordan%E2%80%99s-female-representation-parliament>; "Analysing Political Reality of the Electoral Map and the Seats Reserved for Women in the Kingdom", 2010

<sup>144</sup> David, 2011 quoted in the draft "Political Economy Analysis for Policy Dialogue and Programming," (PEA): The Case of Jordan," August 2011 draft, unpublished (on file with UNDP Jordan Country Office)

<sup>145</sup> Bazalgette, E./UN Women Arab States Regional Office, "Gender Equality Assessment Country Report, Jordan", May 2011 draft

<sup>146</sup> United Cities and Local Governments/ World Bank (2008) *Decentralization and local democracy in the world: First UCLG Global Report Global Observatory on Local Democracy and Decentralization*, [www.cities-localgovernments.org](http://www.cities-localgovernments.org)

<sup>147</sup> Note: Category A: those located in the centre of governorates and/or with more than 100,000 people. Category B: those located in the sub-governorates (Liwa) or with a population of 15,000 to 100,000. Category C: located in the sub-sub-governorates, or with populations from 5000-15000. Category D: those covering less than 5000 people

<sup>148</sup> Bazalgette, E./UN Women Arab States Regional Office, "Gender Equality Assessment Country Report, Jordan", May 2011 draft

<sup>149</sup> *ibid*

being elected outside quota,<sup>150</sup> possibly indicating the beginnings of change in societal attitudes and the confidence levels of women. The outcome of the end-2011 Municipal elections will shed further light on this assumption.<sup>151</sup>

## Political Parties

There are currently 34 political parties in Jordan, of which 18 are officially registered and 16 currently in the process of registration.<sup>152</sup> They represent diverse ideologies, with many being extensions of Palestinian parties that originated in reaction to the Palestinian-Israeli conflict, or pan-Arabist or pan-Islamist parties that emerged in the context of foreign oppression.<sup>153</sup> Their focus is mainly on foreign rather than domestic policy, and with respect to domestic matters more on political rather than economic issues. Most parties are organizationally weak, unable to mobilize popular support and incapable of channeling citizens' demands, and mostly one-man shows except for the IAF,<sup>154</sup> the political arm of the Muslim Brotherhood.<sup>155</sup> Reasons for their weakness include the inadequacy of opportunities to evolve having been banned for many years and subsequently being subject to operational restrictions.<sup>156</sup> The parties also find it difficult to develop in a context where the parliament's legislative role is limited.

Moreover, the influence of the traditional tribal nature of Jordanian society underlies its social as well as political behaviour. Often termed "tribalism", identity politics plays a key role in Jordan fundamentally influencing the demands for change and possibilities of reform. Individuals see themselves as members of groups and form blocs in which they support each other socially, economically or politically. Believing that Members of Parliament are most likely to respond to constituents on the basis of personal ties voters support members of their tribes, families, neighbourhoods or ethnic groups expecting them to provide services as needed, or those having good ties with the government in view of their greater ability to deliver resources.<sup>157</sup>

Arguably the most controversial component of the current electoral law is the one-person, one-vote law introduced in 1993 that weakened political parties and strengthened independent (and largely conservative) candidates. This requires voters to cast ballots for one representative even in multi-member districts, replacing a system in which they cast as many votes as there are seats in multi-member districts.<sup>158</sup> This has strengthened the role of identity politics. Earlier voters had as many votes as seats in multi-member districts; thus, they could vote both for candidates whose political ideologies they agreed with and for candidates with whom they had personal ties. Now they have to choose one candidate. Votes were divided as larger numbers of candidates began to contest per seat, with individuals encouraging their friends, family and others with personal ties to contest elections. This has contributed to large turnover between successive parliaments with those elected generally unable to meet demands for services, and candidates winning by small vote margins being fairly easily defeated in subsequent ones.<sup>159</sup> This results in substantial numbers of inexperienced parliamentarians being elected each time.

## Emerging Youth Activism

The increased involvement of young people is a special aspect of the current political scenario being played out on the street of Jordanian cities and rural areas. As early as the year 2000, Jordan's first Human Development Report noted some emerging signs of social stress and alienation among them due to shortage of economic options and the inadequacy of support systems to help them deal with the complexities of a fast-changing world. They are beginning to relate this to national political perspectives and forming stronger views. The change is being brought about by higher

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<sup>150</sup> JNCW: "Jordan's 5<sup>th</sup> CEDAW Report", 2009

<sup>151</sup> Bazalgette, E./UN Women Arab States Regional Office, "Gender Equality Assessment Country Report, Jordan", May 2011 draft

<sup>152</sup> Al Majali, K, "Youth and Political Parties", *Dustur*, 2011, quoted in the Political Economy Study

<sup>153</sup> Jarrar 2011, Assawana 2009, quoted in the Political Economy Study

<sup>154</sup> Dr. Nawaf Al Tell, Director of the Center for Strategic Studies

<sup>155</sup> *ibid*

<sup>156</sup> Al Ghad News Report, "Jordanian Youth Fear Joining Political Parties", 2010

<sup>157</sup> Lust, Democratization piece quoted in the Political Economy study

<sup>158</sup> Saif, Ibrahim, "Political Economy Analysis for Policy Dialogue and Programming," (PEA): The Case of Jordan," August 2011 draft, unpublished (on file with UNDP Jordan Country Office)

<sup>159</sup> Lust, Democratization piece; Lust, Hourani and Al Momani JOD, also give the statistics on the number of candidates for seats over time.

educational levels and exposure to the wide availability of international media, in particular the fast expanding access to internet based social networking. Regional 'Arab Spring' related events have further stimulated their interest in political dialogue and activism.

### **Recent Political Reform Initiatives**

The Jordan First campaign was the first initiative under H.M. King Abdullah II that attempted to articulate a comprehensive vision of economic and political reform. The Committee charged to develop this was composed primarily of government officials, parliamentarians and private sector leaders, but not opposition party representatives. Its output did not live up to the promises of a new economic and social contract between the State and society.<sup>160</sup>

The National Agenda Committee established in 2005, which included members of leading opposition parties examined three independent areas in a holistic manner, namely Economic and Social Policies, Basic Rights and Freedoms, and Services and Infrastructure. The Committee came to a clear agreement about economic reforms, but not on political reforms, particularly on a new election law or the extent to which political reform should be pursued. Despite this, the National Agenda contains a vision close to which can transform the socio-economic scenario also contributing to political stability.<sup>161</sup>

In response to popular demand, His Majesty's establishment of Task Forces in March 2011 was the latest serious attempt to deliberate on political reform aspects and recommend amendments to the Constitution as a whole, as well as to the electoral process and political parties. These Committees included:<sup>162</sup>

**The National Dialogue Committee (NDC)** which represented diverse groups including opposition parties, academics and civil society, and was charged with drafting recommendations for a new Elections Law, and a new Political Parties Law. Some of its recommendations include:

- Deleting the 'one person one vote' Law;
- Erasing the invisible districts;
- Establishing a list-based electoral system;
- Dividing the Kingdom into electoral districts which are based on the number of governorates;
- Increasing the number of members of Parliament from 120 to 130;
- Increasing the women's quota, and maintaining all other quotas for the Circassians/Chechens, and Christians.

**The Royal Commission for reviewing the Constitution** recommended reform to bring Jordan closer to the concept of a constitutional monarchy by balancing the power between the State, and the Parliament, and limiting the King's absolute power.

Both committees submitted their reports in July and August 2011, respectively. The proposed Elections Law aimed to ensure broader representation and a more transparent electoral process, while the new Political Parties Law was designed to develop higher levels of political maturity among the parties. After a Parliamentary review and approval of the proposals the Parliament submitted the proposed amendments to His Majesty who has given his approval.

On 29 September, His Majesty approved the constitutional amendments submitted to him by Parliament. These included among others:<sup>163</sup>

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<sup>160</sup>Saif. Ibrahim, "Political Economy Analysis for Policy Dialogue and Programming," (PEA): The Case of Jordan," August 2011 draft, unpublished (on file with UNDP Jordan Country Office)

<sup>161</sup> Saif. Ibrahim, "Political Economy Analysis for Policy Dialogue and Programming," (PEA): The Case of Jordan," August 2011 draft, unpublished (on file with UNDP Jordan Country Office)

<sup>162</sup> Saif. Ibrahim, "Political Economy Analysis for Policy Dialogue and Programming," (PEA): The Case of Jordan," August 2011 draft, unpublished (on file with UNDP Jordan Country Office)

- The establishment of a standing Constitutional Court entrusted with ensuring that all legislation conforms with the Constitution; and with providing authoritative and binding interpretations of constitutional provisions;
- The establishment of an independent Commission to conduct and oversee elections;
- Lowering of the eligible age for candidature to the Lower House of Parliament from 30 to 25 years to enhance the participation opportunities for young people;
- According the ordinary courts the mandate and competence to adjudicate contested election results;
- Ensuring that civilians can only and exclusively be tried before civilian courts.

## Economic Reform

The Government of Jordan has undertaken considerable economic reform in the last two decades positively affecting economic indicators, with periodic setbacks partially resulting from factors related to regional volatility and international economic crises. However, the Jordanian economy is also faced with structural challenges such as high rates of budget deficit, current account deficit, public debt, unemployment and poverty. The rising prices of food, fuel, clothing and other basic items and a drop in the prices of housing and other goods and services, have raised the inflation rate. Other economic challenges mentioned by the EDP 2011-2013 are unstable economic growth, foreign investment fluctuations, worker remittances fluctuation, sensitivity of the economy to external shocks especially oil and food prices, lower savings rates and structural imbalances in the production sector.<sup>164</sup>

Jordan's initial State-led economic model included a significant government role in productive activities, involvement in trade, determining prices and imposing high rate of protection on domestic industries. With this the Jordanian economy registered a solid growth rate and the country invested heavily in developing its human capital which became one of its key sources of foreign currency through worker's remittances.

Jordan's natural resources include potash, phosphate, and uranium. Its reserves of oil shale, which are considered among the world's richest stockpiles face problems of exploration because it requires heavy use of water, which is in very short supply. The lack of local energy resources drains a considerable part of the national budget. In addition to scarcity of natural resources, there are issues of "shortage of freshwater, relative scarcity of arable land, and the acceleration of desertification, soil degradation and deforestation."<sup>165</sup>

The manufacturing share has increased over recent years because of the establishment of Qualified Industrial Zones (QIZs), but the economy continues to be dominated by the services sector, which makes up about 50% of GDP, nearly 70 % if government services are included. Services account for 78 % of economic activity (77 % for men and 86% for women). The public sector employs 38.6% of the workforce and almost half of all employed females (48.2%).<sup>166</sup> Public sector reform is also being initiated and is aimed at improved working conditions and remuneration of civil servants. There are simultaneous plans to compensate for the wage disparity between the public sector and the higher paid semi-public institutions, by reducing the benefits of the latter which would affect some 4000 of their employees, who are protesting against the decision.<sup>167</sup>

The rate of economic growth at constant prices has increased steadily over time reaching 8.8 % in 2008.<sup>168</sup> With an average annual growth rate of 12.8 % since 2005, the Gross National Income (GNI) stands at USD 3,875 per capita in

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<sup>163</sup> Royal Commission for Reviewing the Constitution Report, August 2011

<sup>164</sup> Jordan National Executive Development Program 2011-2013

<sup>165</sup> Wardam.B./ROWA, "National Environment Summary, (NES), August 2011

<sup>166</sup> MoPIC/UNDP, "Jordan Human Development Report: Small Business and Human Development, 2011

<sup>167</sup> Saif. Ibrahim, "Political Economy Analysis for Policy Dialogue and Programming," (PEA): The Case of Jordan," August 2011 draft, unpublished (on file with UNDP Jordan Country Office)

<sup>168</sup> DoS, "Jordan Population and Family Health Survey 2009, op.cit

2011. This helped to reduce the debt to GDP ratio.<sup>169</sup> The per capita income has registered a steady average growth rate of about 6 % since the year 2000, with the per capita income at current prices at USD 4,208 in 2009.<sup>170</sup>

The government is also trying to curtail perceived high levels of corruption in the public sector, including through the establishment of the Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC) to pursue corrupt government officials. In 2009, the ACC Chief Commissioner cited graft, *wasta* (favouritism), ignoring regulations, and services being provided to favored individuals, among the most pervasive forms of corruption in the nation. The Commission has drafted a “National Anti- Corruption Strategy for the years 2008- 2012,” to address the problem.<sup>171</sup>

Jordan liberalized its trade regime significantly during its WTO accession process. Quantitative barriers to imports and tariffs were eliminated or reduced on a multilateral or regional basis, opening Jordan to world markets. Simultaneously, the government obtained preferential market access for Jordanian exports through bilateral trade initiatives. Under the EU’s neighbourhood policy Jordan enjoys strong political, security, economic and cultural relations with the European bloc. Besides trade incentives, this translates into significant funds for Jordanian projects.<sup>172</sup> The Department of Statistics (DoS) recently reported a 47.5 % increase in exports to the European Union (EU) in the first four months of 2011, compared to the same period in 2010, while imports from the EU increased by 13%. Nevertheless, trade policies are unlikely to solve the problem entirely, given the small size of the Jordanian market and low incentives to develop domestic industrial production.<sup>173</sup>

The trade deficit is financed primarily by worker’s remittances and Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) inflows, both of which being external and beyond the control of Jordanian policy makers, render the country very vulnerable to exogenous shocks and regional changes. The export composition is largely unchanged, particularly if exports from QIZs are excluded. The high propensity to import consumer goods means the higher the income, the higher the deficit. However, there is significant potential to further expand exports to Arab countries.

The chronic trade deficit and unchanged structure of the economy indicate that trade liberalization has not contributed much to improving the trade balance or establishing new industries that can overcome constraints of the limited domestic market. It has also contributed to only a modest improvement in Jordan's economy, with little impact on job creation or the basic structure of the economy.<sup>174</sup>

The country is heavily donor dependent with the United States and European Union providing both direct budget support and funds for projects. Several other multi-lateral and bi-lateral donors provide debt relief, grants in aid and loans. Foreign aid in 2010 totaled about USD 1.13 billion, while the prospects for 2011 also seem bright with the State Budget likely to be bolstered by high levels of Arab and foreign aid expected to reach USD 2 billion in the aftermath of the Arab Spring. Independent national economists question Jordan’s heavy donor reliance because it renders the economy particularly vulnerable to external shocks affecting donor countries, and diverts the government’s attention from creative ways to develop indigenous alternatives.<sup>175</sup>

Pressure on foreign reserves continues, as does Jordan’s vulnerability to international prices. For instance, in 2008 when food and oil prices soared and Jordan experienced 8% inflation most price increases had originated outside the country.<sup>176</sup>

The Government, which has traditionally controlled most community services, began moving towards a free market economy in the early 1990s, under a structural reform agreement with the IMF.<sup>177</sup> As a result of the privatization

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<sup>169</sup> MoPIC, “Comments on Paris Declaration Monitoring Survey draft Country Report”, 2011

<sup>170</sup> Ibid

<sup>171</sup> MoPIC/UNDP, “Jordan Human Development Report: Small Business and Human Development, 2011

<sup>172</sup> Jordan Business Magazine July 2011 issue

<sup>173</sup> Saif. Ibrahim, “Political Economy Analysis for Policy Dialogue and Programming,” (PEA): The Case of Jordan,” August 2011 draft, unpublished (on file with UNDP Jordan Country Office)

<sup>174</sup> MoPIC/UNDP, “Jordan Human Development Report: Small Business and Human Development, 2011

<sup>175</sup> Jordan Business Magazine July 2011 issue

<sup>176</sup> ibid

process and the adjustment of investment regulations, Jordan's FDI has become a significant source of growth as of the last decade. In 2006, it reached a staggering USD3.5 billion or 22.7% of GDP, and in 2009 yielded USD2.4 billion or 9.5% of GDP.<sup>178</sup> This has resulted partially from lucrative incentive schemes for investors in Jordan, including tax exemptions and holidays, in addition to non-financial incentives.<sup>179</sup>

However, privatization has not brought about a positive distributive impact, partly because of the weakness of institutions such as anti-trust laws, consumer protection agencies, labor unions and syndicates, which could monitor performance, regulate relationships between owners and consumers, and represent the interests of small- and medium-enterprises.<sup>180</sup> Moreover, the freeze on public sector employment and privatization of State-owned enterprises, reduced employment opportunities, especially for the poor who depended on such work and for women and their families who prefer for them to work in the public sector.<sup>181</sup>

Jordan has a rich cultural heritage that attracts many tourists. After potash mining, revenues from the tourism industry are among the most important elements of Jordan's economy. The tourism industry is subject to global events and regional instability. Nevertheless, in 2011 tourism accounted for 12.4% of the GDP.<sup>182</sup> The number of visitors increased by 48% between 2004 and 2010 with a comparative increase in revenues. However, recent 'Arab Spring' related unrest in the region has contributed to a decrease in the number of tourists from Europe and the US. Another related fallout is that because of the unsettled political situation in Libya, Yemen, Syria and Egypt, the normally thriving medical tourism sector that usually receives on average some 242,00 foreign patients annually, earning USD one billion, is likely to record a 25 % drop in patients and revenues by the end of 2011.<sup>183</sup>

The viability of tourism as a major sector in Jordan's economy is directly correlated to the protection of the rich cultural heritage as well as the natural environment, which requires sustained interventions of the government and the international community. An ambitious new Tourism Strategy launched in July 2011, targets large scale growth of the tourism industry. It also promises the opening of 25,000 jobs in the next five years, with a 15% increase targeted in the employment of female workers, which currently stands at 10% of the total. Yet the achievement of these targets is uncertain since the influx of tourists to Jordan has already been affected by the turmoil in the region, because most tourists have normally combined visits to Jordan as part of tours to other countries, and the likely perception among some that there is an equal level of unrest in all countries in the region.<sup>184</sup>

The remittances from Jordanians working abroad in white collar jobs, which are an important source of income, have remained steady at an average of 13.9 % of GDP.<sup>185</sup> At the domestic level, 335,000 non-national workers are officially employed in Jordan, while the total estimated number of migrant workers is 600,000.<sup>186</sup> These migrant workers are largely low skilled, mostly working in the production, agriculture and services sectors, with 2009 statistics confirming that almost 90% of registered foreign workers were in fact illiterate. Only 0.53% foreign workers have a bachelor's degree or higher qualification.<sup>187</sup> The overwhelming majority are Egyptians (70% in 2009), followed by Indonesians, Sri Lankans and Filipinos.<sup>188</sup>

This situation is partly the result of Jordan not creating jobs consistent with the skilled Jordanian labour market, for instance in construction or services. These are not acceptable to Jordan's youth as they are low-paid, lack decent working conditions and there is low social value associated with them. Jordan's open labour market policy seems geared to the

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<sup>177</sup> *ibid*

<sup>178</sup> World Bank Indicators 2011

<sup>179</sup> Saif. Ibrahim, "Political Economy Analysis for Policy Dialogue and Programming," (PEA): The Case of Jordan," August 2011 draft, unpublished (on file with UNDP Jordan Country Office)

<sup>180</sup> *ibid*

<sup>181</sup> Bazalgette, E/UNWomen ASRO, "Gender Equality Assessment: Jordan Country Report", May 2011 draft

<sup>182</sup> Ministry of Tourism "Jordan National Tourism Strategy 2011-2015", 2011

<sup>183</sup> Jordan Business Magazine July 2011 issue

<sup>184</sup> Jordan Business Magazine, September 2011 issue

<sup>185</sup> MoPIC/UN, "Keeping the Promise and Achieving Aspirations: Second Millennium Development Report -Jordan", 2010

<sup>186</sup> MoPIC/UNDP, "Jordan Human Development Report: 2011: Small Business and Human Development"

<sup>187</sup> MoPIC/UN, "Keeping the Promise and Achieving Aspirations: Second Millennium Development Report -Jordan", 2010

<sup>188</sup> ILO Global Jobs Pact Country Scan



needs of big businesses that benefit from cheap labor, and the desire of the middle and upper classes desiring cheap domestic help.<sup>189</sup> Continuing to keep wages at low levels also helps the largest, labour-intensive businesses rather than Jordanian workers. Jordanians are at a disadvantage when compared to expatriate workers who are willing to work longer hours and thus seen as more productive, and often accept lower wages.<sup>190</sup> At the same time, remittances and foreign aid help to cushion the effects of low-wage imported labor, allowing Jordanian workers (and their families) to avoid feeling the pain of these policies.<sup>191</sup>

The creation of Qualified Industrial Zones (QIZs) has boosted domestic and foreign investment in the local industry which produces textiles, aerospace, defense and ICT items, pharmaceuticals, and cosmetics. These are intended mainly for export, under trade agreements with the US and are expected to contribute to the reduction of Jordan's public Debt-to-Gross Domestic Product (GDP) ratio.<sup>192</sup> However the QIZs are not contributing to enhanced employment opportunities for Jordanians who are discouraged by the low wage structure, long working hours and difficulties of daily commuting problems. Therefore, more immigrant than national workers are employed in the QIZs also, where according to ILO, working conditions are very inadequate.<sup>193</sup> The National Employment Policy stresses placement of nationals in jobs currently taken up by expatriate labour, at the rate of 45 % by 2020, and 50% by 2030.<sup>194</sup>

While absolute poverty has decreased, wide income inequities remain among groups and governorates. 13.3 % of the population is considered to be below the poverty line.<sup>195</sup> The number of the poor has not increased however, they have not been lifted above the official poverty line either. Poverty is disproportionately suffered by Jordanians in rural governorates, but the bulk of the poor live in the densely populated urban areas.<sup>196</sup> Food and electricity prices have steadily risen, straining the budgets of poorer households, which spend 48% of their income on food, and rural families for whom food expenses represent 58% of their income.<sup>197</sup> Other important challenges facing Jordan are the wide gap between living standards and employment options in urban and rural areas and the continued underdevelopment of SMEs.<sup>198</sup>

Jordan has also witnessed a squeeze of middle income groups. According to the 2008 Household Income and Expenditure Survey (HIES), income declined and expenditures increased, making middle income groups feel worse off.<sup>199</sup> This explains why these groups (e.g., doctors, teachers, engineers) are taking a leading role in the protests to demand better working conditions and political reforms.<sup>200</sup>

Agricultural production provides little related employment opportunity either directly or indirectly, consequently threatening food security in rural areas.<sup>201</sup> The government has adopted several support programmes and projects to dilute the negative impact of price inflation on the poor, and maintained a functional social safety net assistance framework. Nevertheless, the rising international food prices have increased food expenditures at the household level and lay a heavy burden on the government to meet the rising subsidy costs of wheat.<sup>202</sup>

**Unemployment** remains high, about 12-14% overall, according to official figures, hovering around the same rates irrespective of the growth rates registered for the GDP. Youth, including educated youth, experience high unemployment, with those aged 20-29 making up nearly 61% of the total unemployed. In absolute numbers this

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<sup>189</sup> MoPIC/UN, "Keeping the Promise and Achieving Aspirations: Second Millennium Development Report -Jordan", 2010

<sup>190</sup> CSS survey for the MoL presented to the PM of Jordan.

<sup>191</sup> MoPIC/UN, "Keeping the Promise and Achieving Aspirations: Second Millennium Development Report -Jordan", 2010

<sup>192</sup> Economy Watch "Economic Indicators for Jordan 2010"

<sup>193</sup> Bazalgette, E./UNWomen ASRO; Gender Equality Assessment: Jordan Country Report", May 2011 draft

<sup>194</sup> Jordan Business magazine July, 2011 issue

<sup>195</sup> DoS/WFP, "Poverty Analysis" 2010, based on 2008/9 HIES data"

<sup>196</sup> MoPIC/UNDP, "Jordan Human Development Report: 2011: Small Business and Human Development"

<sup>197</sup> *ibid*

<sup>198</sup> Saif. Ibrahim, "Political Economy Analysis for Policy Dialogue and Programming," (PEA): The Case of Jordan," August 2011 draft, unpublished (on file with UNDP Jordan Country Office)

<sup>199</sup> Yasmine T. 2010, Income Distribution and the Middle Class in Jordan, Economic and Social Council.

<sup>200</sup> Saif. Ibrahim, "Political Economy Analysis for Policy Dialogue and Programming," (PEA): The Case of Jordan," August 2011 draft, unpublished (on file with UNDP Jordan Country Office)

<sup>201</sup> Bazalgette.E./UNWomen Arab States Regional Office (ASRO), "Gender Equality Assessment", (Draft) May 2010

<sup>202</sup> Information Note received from the WFP Jordan Office in August 2011

constitutes an estimated 105,000 unemployed in this age group, 43 % for males and 63 % for females. Young university graduates unable to find work despite registered economic growth are leading demands for change. This poses a serious challenge to the county especially given the demographic and developmental dynamics associated with the ‘youth bulge’. Unemployment rates for women are particularly high. Their participation in the labor market is much lower than that of men, the female unemployment rate being 24.1% in 2009. Urban unemployment rates were 10.1% for men and 23.3% for women in 2009, and have been relatively constant in the last three years. In rural areas, female unemployment reached 28.1%, compared to 23.3% in the urban areas. The overall unemployment rate in rural areas was an estimated 14.8% in 2009, compared to 12.5% in urban areas. The heavy reliance of rural areas on public sector employment, combined with declining public sector, helps to explain why recent protests often originates there.<sup>203</sup>

**Taxation:** Domestic taxes had a minor role in boosting government revenue in the past. The adjustment programme introduced sales tax in 1992 as an integral element of economic and subsidy reduction. This slowly evolved into a value added tax (VAT), reflecting a shift in taxation toward indirect taxes levied on consumption, rather than progressive income taxes. By 2010, sales taxes constituted nearly 67 % of the tax revenue, while income taxes made up only 21 %. Thus sales tax which applies almost equally on most goods and services manifests a significant change in the relationship between tax payers and the government.<sup>204</sup>

**Savings** normally constitute the resources allocated to investment. The fact that individual wages are in general below expenditure levels influences the overall level of savings in the country. With low levels of income, savings and investment, economic problems will be difficult to resolve without a dramatic change in the dynamics of the economy.<sup>205</sup>

The State resorts to continuously high **public spending**, which translates into high budget deficits. Government expenditures in Jordan were around USD 8.1 billion in 2010, while government revenues and grants amounted to USD 6.6 billion, leaving a USD 1.5 billion deficit or 5.6% of GDP. Excluding the raised influx of grants pledged by Saudi Arabia, the deficit would be around USD 2 billion or 7.7%.<sup>206</sup>

The Government continues to provide **subsidies** to a broad segment of the population, not simply the poor, and these are quickly maintained or sometimes enhanced when talk of their removal threatens political stability. The latest instance was in 2011 following public unrest that emerged following the ‘Arab Spring’ events, with the government responding by instituting new subsidies, increasing old ones, and raising public sector compensations. This decision is expected to cost the government nearly USD 200 million with the costescalating further if international prices of wheat, flour, fuel and gas increase.<sup>207</sup>

The National Agenda estimated that more than 80% of the expenditures on subsidies are off target and called for restructuring subsidies. Yet successive governments have avoided addressing these issues due to political sensitivities. As long as foreign aid continues to provide stop-gap assistance in times of crises, this is unlikely to change. Restructuring subsidies would also require institutional capacity to allow direct subsidies to the needy rather than subsidizing commodities. This capacity does not currently exist and, in the absence of sufficient pressure for reform, is unlikely to develop.<sup>208</sup>

**Political institutions** that are a necessary foundation for economic reform still need further capacity. Institutions such as unions and civil society organizations that can potentially defend labour rights, remain weak contributing to the persistence of low wages, poverty and income inequality. Less than 10% of employees subscribe to officially sanctioned

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<sup>203</sup> MoPIC/UNDP, “Jordan Human Development Report: 2011: Small Business and Human Development”

<sup>204</sup> Saif. Ibrahim, “Political Economy Analysis for Policy Dialogue and Programming,” (PEA): The Case of Jordan,” August 2011 draft, unpublished (on file with UNDP Jordan Country Office)

<sup>205</sup> Saif. Ibrahim, “Political Economy Analysis for Policy Dialogue and Programming,” (PEA): The Case of Jordan,” August 2011 draft, unpublished (on file with UNDP Jordan Country Office)

<sup>206</sup> *ibid*

<sup>207</sup> *ibid*

<sup>208</sup> *ibid*

labour unions which are largely personalized and weak vis-a-vis employers. No new unions have been formed in the last 10 years. The vast majority of labour activity in recent years has therefore taken place outside of unions. This weakens the employees' ability to improve their wages and benefits. The decision-making role of Consumer Associations is also limited.<sup>209</sup>

The contribution of the Ministry of Public Sector Development, mandated to ensure that government institutions focus on their core functions, remains to be maximized. The Audit Bureau which has a significant role in monitoring public spending and in suggesting best practices, issues regular reports however, there is no certainty that the recommendations of its reports will be followed up. The newly established Office of the Ombudsmen and Anti Corruption Commission are following up on citizens' complaints, an attempt to combat corruption in the public sector. These institutions have weak internal capacity and insufficient financial resources to effectively carry out their mandates. Though their laws guarantee their total independence, independent evaluation reveals varying degrees of political intervention. There is also a need for better coordination of their efforts, including through development of a unified policy to avoid operational overlap. Their interaction with potential stakeholders also needs improvement, as does the availability and accessibility of their reports to the public, as this currently requires special permission from the institutions that prepare the reports.<sup>210</sup>

### **The National Approach to Addressing the Low Employment Rates**

Initiatives have been underway since 2003 to transform public education through the use of technology as a catalyst to innovate and help the country move into the knowledge economy. This includes a World Bank funded initiative, the Education Reform for Knowledge Economy (ERfKE) is now in its second phase (USD 600 million).<sup>211</sup>

Jordan's Science, Technology and Innovation (STI) has been characterized by substantial increase in the number of institutions engaged in higher education and scientific research as the country is engaged in a process of modernization to build a knowledge-based economy. Currently the Higher Council for Science and Technology is reviewing Jordan's science, technology and innovation strategy (2012-2015) to assess the gaps and future areas of growth and opportunity in the science and technology sector.<sup>212</sup> A new Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) strategy is also under formulation.<sup>213</sup>

Positive measures taken or planned recently to help overcome labour market difficulties include a number of initiatives to promote small and medium enterprises. For example:

- **An upcoming National Programme to fund small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) across the country.** The Programme to be implemented by MoPIC and the Ministry of Industry and Trade seeks to encourage financial institutions to facilitate loans to SMEs, particularly those located in outlying governorates. The Fund to cover this programme amounts to USD 630 million, most of it designated for loan guarantees, with emphasis on job creation for women. SMEs in Jordan currently receive only 10% of the overall credit facilities extended by commercial banks. Under this programme, loan guarantees will be allocated to cover around 85 % of the overall amount of the loan.<sup>214</sup>
- **A USD 210 million Governorate Development Fund set up at His Majesty King Abdullah's directive.** The Fund which will be operated by the government in partnership with civil society organizations seeks to create jobs and enhance the living conditions of citizens across the Kingdom through a public-private partnership. USD 35 million has been allocated to this Fund for 2011. The remaining amount will be part of 2012 budget. The government is currently working on establishing a proper management mechanism for the

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<sup>209</sup> Ibid

<sup>210</sup> Ibid

<sup>211</sup> Saif. Ibrahim, "Political Economy Analysis for Policy Dialogue and Programming," (PEA): The Case of Jordan," August 2011 draft, unpublished (on file with UNDP Jordan Country Office

<sup>212</sup> Information Note received from the UNESCO Jordan Office in August 2011

<sup>213</sup> Ibid

<sup>214</sup> Information note received from UNDP Jordan in October 2011

Fund and developing priority governorate level projects in consultations with CSOs and local communities. Most of the Fund will be allocated to development of projects and SMEs to curb unemployment in the governorates.<sup>215</sup>

In 2011 the government formed an Economic Dialogue Committee. The Committee's report includes some general recommendations mostly focused on short term approaches to boost economic growth to overcome immediate difficulties, but not a comprehensive approach on how to tackle the long terms challenges facing the Jordanian economy.<sup>216</sup>

## **The Needs & Potential of Young People**

Jordan's youthful population represents its most valuable developmental asset while also posing multiple challenges to ensure the realization of the innate potential of this group. Attention to youth issues in Jordan had surfaced as early as the year 2000 when the first National HDR was dedicated to youth. The first Arab Human Development Report (2002) drew further attention to their needs and perspectives through subsequent action were more at the level of discussion and debate. Recent 'Arab Spring' related developments have signaled the need for urgent attention to both the potential of young people as well as the implications of neglecting their genuine needs.

## **The Numbers**

Jordan is currently experiencing a youth bulge and though the ratio of children below 15 years of age has been decreasing over recent decades,<sup>217</sup> the population will remain predominantly youthful for several years, with a manifold increase in the numbers of the young and their health, education and employments needs. Population projections do indicate that Jordan is approaching a demographic window of opportunity, whereby the dependency ratio will decrease significantly and reach its lowest rate between 2030 and 2035, which means that the size of the working age population (15-64) will be significantly higher than the dependent population (children and the elderly). The year when this opportunity reaches its peak depends on future TFR trends.<sup>218</sup> This poses a major challenge to ensure appropriate educational access and health service coverage for large child populations, as well as adequate opportunities for decent work for the growing number of entrants into the labour market. The Ministry of Planning and International Cooperation (MoPIC) and the Higher Population Council have developed a policy document on the demographic window of opportunity and a framework to ensure monitoring of its implementation within the EDP.

## **Social Conditioning**

Besides determining the level of the family's physical well being, the home environment plays the greatest role in shaping lifelong attitudes, as relationships between family members influence a child's emotional and psychological development and approach to life and other people. Most young Jordanians in rural and urban areas have the benefit of a secure family environment, minimum years of schooling and a relatively smooth entry into young adulthood. Basic social influences can be defined as close tribal and kinship ties and patriarchal norms within homes and communities. The father is the authority figure, but the status of the mother in the parental relationship, her self-perception, and her style of home management are also critical influences on a child's personality development.

Gender stereotyping is a key element of social conditioning, as is observance of strict family discipline. This is reflected in reports of domestic violence against women and verbal, physical and psychological violence against children at

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<sup>215</sup> *ibid*

<sup>216</sup> Saif. Ibrahim, "Political Economy Analysis for Policy Dialogue and Programming," (PEA): The Case of Jordan," August 2011 draft, unpublished (on file with UNDP Jordan Country Office)

<sup>217</sup> DoS, "Jordan Population and Family Health Survey 2009"

<sup>218</sup> Jordanian Higher Population Council, "The State of Jordan's Population 2011", "The Demographic Opportunities in Jordan: A Policy Document" 2009

home and in schools, and also among children themselves, both girls and boys.<sup>219</sup> Freedom of expression is generally not encouraged, and parental decisions prevail even as young people approach the age of decision-making to select academic disciplines, careers or life partners.<sup>220</sup>

Son preference has declined significantly, and now exists only among a few conservative groups who believe that “sons are the family’s source of strength, they will carry the family’s name to future generations and contribute more to family income.”<sup>221</sup> However, girls and boys are equally cared for in infancy and childhood, though gender stereotyping by both parents is evident from an early age. Preferred behaviors for girls are docility, modesty, proficiency in domestic tasks and service to the family. They are generally brought up to understand that a good marriage is their primary aim in life, and that they must guard themselves from the risks inherent in the public space. Boys are taught that it is their duty to provide for the family and guard the family’s honour. The more conservative and less educated parents socialize sons to discipline their sisters if they move out of acceptable gender roles.<sup>222</sup>

Values internalized through early social conditioning influence inter-generational gender relationships as reflected in the division of household tasks. Most Jordanian women handle all childcare and domestic tasks, even when they work outside the home. Lack of personal resources has traditionally affected women’s decision-making within the household, but there are indications of change, with more joint decision-making between couples including on family planning, household expenditure and social interaction. More young women are also reported to be taking independent decisions on the use of their earnings. The fact that couples are more educated and married at more mature ages is considered to have contributed towards this.<sup>223</sup>

Assisting in household tasks is predominantly the daughters’ role. Girls have less freedom in decision-making about their lives and participation in activities outside the home. Restrictions on their mobility increase as they approach adolescence, while such restrictions are softened for boys of similar or younger ages. On the other hand, boys are encouraged to be tough and manly, discouraged from showing their emotions, and are under greater pressure to start working at earlier ages.<sup>224</sup> Belief in gender segregated roles is strong among both girls and boys with many believing that male decisions should prevail in every respect, though these attitudes are slowly changing, especially among girls who attain higher education. However, access to public spaces such as markets, youth centres and other recreational facilities is still more limited for young women than for men.<sup>225</sup>

## Health Prospects

Positive and proactive primary health care policies and the extended outreach of services have ensured the survival and good health chances for Jordanian children. This has also affected disease patterns with a shift from communicable to non-communicable diseases, though nutritional and environmental health issues still persist, and traffic accidents and injuries are increasingly reported. However, unlike the younger age groups, the health needs of adolescents have not received much attention. Community mental health services (CMHS) for adolescents and children are unavailable at any level of care, except for one outpatient clinic at Jordan University Hospital and two outpatient clinics at the Royal Medical Services for severe cases. Otherwise, health services for adolescents are provided only by a very limited number of NGOs and on a very small scale.

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<sup>219</sup> Jordanian National Commission for Women (JNCW)/WHO Centre for Family Violence Prevention, “Status of Violence against Women in Jordan, 2008, National Council for Family Affairs (NCFA)/World Bank, “Jordan Country Study of Disadvantaged Children”, 2002, NCFA/UNICEF, “Domestic Violence in Jordan: Knowledge, Attitudes and Reality”, 2008

<sup>220</sup> NCFA/UNICEF, “Children of Jordan: A Situation Analysis”, 2006/2007

<sup>221</sup> Nemech A. Al-Akour, Mohammad K., Yousef K. Edgar D.: “Sex Preference and Interest in Preconception Sex Selection: A Survey among Pregnant Women in the North of Jordan”, 2009

<sup>222</sup> CEDAW Report, CCA 2006

<sup>223</sup> DoS, JPFHS 2009

<sup>224</sup> NCFA/UNICEF, “Children of Jordan: A Situation Analysis”, 2006/2007

<sup>225</sup> DoS, JPFHS 2002

Healthy lifestyles during adolescence are essential to maintain their well being and avoid the risk of developing chronic diseases later in life.<sup>226</sup> Among the risk behaviors associated with socioeconomic transition and urbanization (both features of Jordanian society), are excessive dietary fat intake, sedentary lifestyles, tobacco and drug use, and psychosocial stress.<sup>227</sup>

The focus on the health seeking behavior of adolescents being fairly recent in Jordan, there has been inadequate research on their health and nutritional status and practices however studies conducted in recent years have come out with similar findings. Available information is already giving rise to concern about growing levels of obesity, poor nutritional habits, and low healthy lifestyles awareness, resulting from the inadequacy of health education and services specifically geared to their needs.

Nutritional behavior, especially among school students, is currently a major health issue in Jordan. A 2009 study of 12-17 year old male and female students in Irbid, found inappropriate dietary patterns such as excessive intake of fast food, sweets and carbonated drinks to have been influenced by aggressive media marketing and the availability of fast food at school canteens.<sup>228</sup> The study refers to available global evidence about psychologically induced dietary practices and disorders among teens when they are unable to accept physical changes during puberty. It discovered almost half the respondents using laxatives and diet pills to decrease body weight. Possible contributing factors were considered to be increased exposure to western advertising, the media push for a new culture of ultra thin ideal body size, and the easy access to products professing to assist with weight loss.<sup>229</sup>

The study concludes that Jordan seems to be undergoing a transitional phase in that school children have sedentary lifestyles with more empty energy and high fat foods which are likely to lead to a major chronic disease burden. Already chronic non-communicable diseases such as coronary disease, diabetes, hypertension and cancer have become the main public health problems in Jordan.<sup>230</sup> Obesity is increasing among children and adolescents, but under-nutrition also exists. A study conducted among a sample of 3,849 Jordanian adolescents (10-17 years) in the greater Amman area found 13% to be overweight, while 8% were obese, and 30% of the sample studied was underweight.<sup>231</sup> Another sample school survey conducted among children between 6 and 12 years of age in public and private schools in the North of Jordan found 19.4 % to be overweight and 5.6 % obese.<sup>232</sup>

Recent school based surveys including the Wellness Appraisal study and the 2007 Global School Health Survey (GSHS)<sup>233</sup> which studied adolescents in grades 8-10, found that while the students considered themselves to be in good health, the majority had poor dietary and oral hygiene habits and had undergone only infrequent oral and physical checkups. Other disturbing findings of the GSHS were that 58.6% of students did not have a source of clean water for drinking at school, 33.3 % did not have a place to wash their hands before eating at school and 72.2 % did not have clean toilets or latrines at school.<sup>234</sup> These figures underscore the need to ensure sanitary school environments, in addition to promotion of home environments conducive to instilling healthy practices among adolescents.

**Smoking** among the young warrants special attention in Jordan. The 2007 GSHS found that 15.6% of students had smoked on one or more days in the past 30 days (22.7 % males and 8.7% females), and 20.8% had used some form of tobacco. Interim results of a 2009 survey<sup>235</sup> showed that 11.5 % of Jordanian children in the age group 13-15 smoke cigarettes, the smoking rate being 17.4 % for boys and 6.6 % for girls. Despite the high health risks, *nargileh* (water

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<sup>226</sup> Haddad, L.G.,Oweis, Mansour,A, “Wellness Appraisal among Adolescents in Jordan: A Model from a Developing Country”, 2009

<sup>227</sup> ibid

<sup>228</sup> Haddad, L.G.,Oweis, Mansour,A, “Wellness Appraisal among Adolescents in Jordan: A Model from a Developing Country”, 2009

<sup>229</sup> ibid

<sup>230</sup> ibid

<sup>231</sup> WHO and MOH. “Food and Nutrition in Jordan”, 2010

<sup>232</sup> Khader, Y, et al. Overweight and Obesity Among School Children in Jordan: Prevalence and Associated Factors. *Maternal Child Health J*; 13:424–431, 2009

<sup>233</sup> Centre for Disease Control (CDC)/WHO, “Global School Health Survey”, 2007

<sup>234</sup> Ibid

<sup>235</sup>WHO/UNICEF: Global Youth Tobacco Survey 2009 (draft report)

pipe) use is a popular social activity in Jordan with 27% of male children and 16% of female children between 13-15 smoking *nargileb* respectively. The prevalence of smoking among adults, peer pressure and the absence of a ban on smoking in public places may have been possible influences.

**Accidents and injuries** constitute the second leading cause of death in Jordan with an average 383.6 accidents per day. In 2010, 140,014 road traffic accidents were reported, resulting in 17,403 injuries and 670 fatalities (an estimated 60% increase since 2001).<sup>236</sup> Injuries occurred more commonly in the age group 15 to 30 years of age and deaths in the 0-11 and 50 plus age groups. There is no information on accidents caused by drivers below the legal age for driving or on disabilities caused by traffic accidents.<sup>237</sup>

Minimizing the frequency of accidents therefore remains critical for reducing deaths and the burden of injuries, and also for curbing avoidable spending. Jordan has taken measures towards this, including by establishing a Central Traffic Institute, and instituting bans and penalties for irresponsible driving behaviour, but the enforcement needs strengthening.<sup>238</sup>

### **Sexuality and Reproductive Issues**

During the transition from childhood to adulthood, young people face key physical, mental, psychological and social changes, particularly with regard to gender relations and sexuality, which is particularly challenging in a socio-cultural context where sexuality is a taboo topic. In Jordan and the wider region, conservative socio-cultural and religious norms and family values place very high importance on virginity and abstinence from sex before marriage – especially for girls – while extramarital sex is highly condemned. In this context, contacts between boys and girls or young men and women are subject to specific social rules and restrictions, which to some extent protect against HIV, STIs and other sexual and reproductive health problems. On the other hand, societal taboos on sexuality may contribute to unsafe sexual practices [especially] by young people.<sup>239</sup>

A recent study among 1,022 female and 865 male students at four universities in Balqa Governorate revealed that 22% of respondents admitted having ever practised sex, while 15% reported being (currently) sexually active.<sup>240</sup>

Results of the 2007 JPFHS demonstrate the vulnerability of young married women (15-24 years) to HIV/AIDS, as 71% had never discussed HIV prevention with their husband. While general awareness of HIV was high (99% having heard of AIDS), comprehensive knowledge about AIDS was very low at 13%. When asked about ways to prevent HIV infection, limiting sexual intercourse to one uninfected partner was mentioned by 85%, only 53% mentioned condoms, and 37% abstaining from sex. Furthermore, 78% of married women (15-24 years) had not heard of STIs (apart from HIV), while only 11% could mention one or more STI symptoms in men or women.<sup>241</sup>

For school-going children, HIV/AIDS education has led to improved awareness. A 2007 school based survey<sup>242</sup> found that 84.9% of students had ever heard of HIV/AIDS and 56.1% had been taught in their classes about HIV/AIDS. Approximately 55% knew how to avoid HIV/AIDS, and 75.2 % knew that not having sexual intercourse outside the bond of marriage was a means of protection.<sup>243</sup>

The peer-to-peer manual prepared by the MOH entitled ‘Youth Educational Manual with Focus on HIV’ will be used with the most vulnerable adolescent groups including school dropouts, child labourers, children living or working on

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<sup>236</sup> Road Traffic Institute. “Traffic Accidents in Jordan,” 2010.

<sup>237</sup> UNICEF, “Situation Analysis of Children Data Sequel,” 2010

<sup>238</sup> UNICEF, “Situation Analysis of Children Data Sequel,” 2010

<sup>239</sup> Draft HIV/AIDS Strategy

<sup>240</sup> MoH National Aids Programme 2008

<sup>241</sup> DoS,/MACRO Jordan 2008

<sup>242</sup> Centre for Disease Control (CDC)/WHO, “Global School Health Survey”, 2007

<sup>243</sup> *ibid*

the streets and intravenous drug injectors. The MOE plans to incorporate HIV/AIDS information in the school curricula.<sup>244</sup>

Surveys among adolescents show particularly low awareness about **reproductive health** aspects. The first comprehensive national KAP Survey found 42 % of those aged 15-19 (48 % boys, 35 % girls) unable to explain the meaning of reproductive health.<sup>245</sup> In the same survey 33 % adolescents could correctly identify three signs of male puberty and 25% of female puberty.<sup>246</sup> During another survey only 3.7 % of young males and 1.3 % of young females mentioned condom use as a method of HIV/AIDS prevention.<sup>247</sup>

Adolescents also report low parental attention to preparing children for physiological and psychological changes during puberty. Based on these findings, the Higher Population Council in cooperation with the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Higher Education have introduced population issues and reproductive health education at different levels of primary and secondary education and included them in mandatory courses in the Private and Public Universities.<sup>248</sup>

MCH services are targeted to married females, while for unmarried young men and women there are no clear age-specific strategies addressing reproductive health. These services are not designed to facilitate their access to reproduction related health information and services, thus affecting their ability to protect their reproductive and sexual health. During a 2005 Survey<sup>249</sup> the picture that emerged of the preferred ideal health centre was that of a well located, spacious, smoke-free, clean and comfortable building, within easy reach of homes. The concept of a good health provider was a “qualified person of the same sex who has good communication skills, is caring, respectful, non-judgmental and ensures confidentiality”, the last being a key concern, especially for girls due to social sanctions against unmarried girls visiting reproductive health centres.<sup>250</sup>

In Jordan, almost all births occur within marriage so age at first marriage is an important indicator of exposure of under-age girls to the risk of pregnancy and childbirth. Among the respondents of the 2009 JPFHS, the proportion of married girls aged 15-19 was 2.5 %, compared to 6% in 1990. The JPFHS also found 16% of girls to have been married by age 18, the legal age of marriage. Among women aged 20-24, about one per cent were married by age 15, 10% by age 18, and 23% by age 20, which is closer to the national median age at first marriage for women, 22.4 years. Families who marry off their daughters early do so mainly because of the high social value assigned to marriage, religious sanctioning of early marriages, fear that delay may cause adolescents to get involved in illicit relationships, and the desire to relieve pressure on limited family incomes.<sup>251</sup> While the legal age of marriage is 18 years for both girls and boys, the law allows judicial discretion to determine exceptions to the rule. The 2009 JPHS notes a clear positive correlation between the level of female education, family income, as well as the age of marriage and motherhood. Women with higher education marry almost five years later (median age 24.7 years) compared to age 20.2 years for the uneducated.<sup>252</sup>

In 2009, only 3.2% of teenage girls were found to have already given birth, and another 1.4% was pregnant with their first child.<sup>253</sup> Teenage childbearing is more common among women with no education (1.8%) and among the poorest households (5%).<sup>254</sup> Teenagers who had begun childbearing ranged from 0.2 % among those aged 15 years, almost 2% among the 16 year olds, and 6% among the 17-18 year age group.<sup>255</sup> By age 19 one in ten were likely to have become

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<sup>244</sup> Information note received from the UNICEF Jordan Country Office in August 2011

<sup>245</sup> DoS/UNICEF, “Jordanian Youth: Their Lives and Views”, 2002

<sup>246</sup> *ibid*

<sup>247</sup> Johns Hopkins Centre for Communications Programme/Jordanian National Population Commission, “Knowledge, Attitudes and Practices on Reproductive Health and Life Planning”, 2008

<sup>248</sup> Information Note received from UNWomen Jordan August 2011

<sup>249</sup> UNFPA “Needs Survey: Knowledge Gap and Misconceptions of Reproductive Health and Sex Education among Youth in Jordan”, 2005

<sup>250</sup> *ibid*

<sup>251</sup> DoS, “Jordan Population and Family Health Survey 2009”

<sup>252</sup> *ibid*

<sup>253</sup> *ibid*

<sup>254</sup> DoS, “Jordan Population and Family Health Survey 2009”

<sup>255</sup> *ibid*



mothers or pregnant with their first child. Levels of teenage pregnancy vary slightly by urban-rural residence (5% urban: 4% rural).<sup>256</sup>

Contraceptive use was also found to be lowest among young married girls aged 15-19 (27%).<sup>257</sup> Those in the younger age cohorts use contraception to space births, relying on the pill and condom, compared to older women who use more permanent methods after attaining their preferred number of children.<sup>258</sup> Although teenage marriage and fertility rates remain low, those who have begun child bearing have the highest family planning needs mainly due to provider biases and cultural pressures to prove fertility.<sup>259</sup>

## **Educational Opportunities**

As Jordan's MDGR 2010 indicates, almost all Jordanian children are enrolled in basic education with the majority continuing up to the preparatory level.<sup>260</sup> Gender parity has been achieved at the primary education level and the dropout rate is marginal, though figures do indicate a trend that demonstrates rates are on the rise, primarily due to high opportunity costs imposed on families by the economic downturn of the previous years, overcrowding of schools, and disconnect between what is taught in school and what students are tested on prior to the school leaving stage. This is supported by the steady downward trend of the Adjusted Net Enrolment Ratio<sup>261</sup> over the past decade and could have an impact on the ultimate achievement of MDG2.<sup>262</sup> Access to all levels of education is protected by the Constitution, yet the quality of education is uneven between public and private sector institutions. The increasing enrolment in private schools creates a duality in the quality of education that is delivered and affects the opportunities that children will have later in life.<sup>263</sup>

At the pre-primary level, where enrolment is only at 33% (47% are girls), 90% of those enrolled are in private facilities.<sup>264</sup> It is widely accepted that access to early child care and education has a positive effect on the early formative years of a child's development so access to quality instruction, as well as nutrition, contributes significantly to cognitive development and therefore advantage of children in later years of schooling. At the primary level, 33% of enrolment is in private school, which is generally regarded as providing a higher quality education and is economically out of reach for the majority of the population.<sup>265</sup>

The quantitative access to education has been achieved, though pockets of low enrolment exist. Jordan is now facing the challenge of reorienting education to human capital development. In terms of education and employment, the youth bulge that Jordan is currently experiencing is an opportunity to jump-start its economic potential, with students being taught skills that encourage diversification in the market such as private sector development in terms of Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) and Science, Technology and Innovation(STI)-focused industries.<sup>266</sup>

University graduates on average can take up to three years to secure their first job, and even then the job may be little related to a student's field of study. The curriculum hardly reflects the skills needed to contribute to the local and global economy, or to developing critical thinking skills. The curriculum is still based on rote learning and not on a student centered learning approach. Pre- and in-service professional development for teachers is not well formulated.

With a third of the student population educated in private schools, there is a parallel system of learning that advantages one group over another and there is a real concern for Jordan to provide a quality education to all.

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<sup>256</sup> *ibid*

<sup>257</sup> *ibid*

<sup>258</sup> *ibid*

<sup>259</sup> DoS, "Jordan Population and Family Health Survey 2009"

<sup>260</sup> MoPIC/UN, "Keeping the Promise and Achieving Aspirations: Second Millennium Development Report - Jordan", 2010

<sup>261</sup> Note: Adjusted Net Enrolment Ratio (ANER) - Total number of pupils of the official primary school age group who are enrolled at primary or secondary education levels, expressed as a percentage of the corresponding population

<sup>262</sup> UNESCO Institute for Statistics, 2011, Paris

<sup>263</sup> UNESCO Paris, "Education for All Global Monitoring Report: The Hidden Crisis- Armed conflict and Education", 2011 (p302).

<sup>264</sup> *ibid*, (p286).

<sup>265</sup> UNESCO Paris Institute for Statistics (UIS), "Statistics in Brief: Education in Jordan", 2010

<sup>266</sup> Information Note received from the UNESCO Jordan Office in August 2011

The focus on Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) at the upper secondary level offers the opportunity to address skills gap, but only 15% of upper secondary students are enrolled in TVET, 38% of them females.<sup>267</sup> Participation of females in TVET is generally focused toward domestic activities instead of a trade or a more technically oriented field. A new TVET strategy is being formulated by the government to address the gaps in content and enrolment.<sup>268</sup>

Young people's access to and involvement in sports and other recreational activities within and outside school was also found to be low.<sup>269</sup> The shortage of such opportunities is a likely reason, in addition to television viewing being a highly preferred recreational activity, according to an earlier survey<sup>270</sup>, as well as the heightened interest in internet based social networking. The 2007 GSHS found that 39.3% of students spent three or more hours daily on sedentary activities and that males were more physically active than females.<sup>271</sup>

## Employability Options

Youth unemployment poses a considerable challenge as youth unemployment rates (15-24%) are more than double the over-all unemployment rate (12 %), reaching 27% in 2009.<sup>272</sup>

According to figures released in 2011, 50.1% of unemployed Jordanians in 2010 were in the 15-24 year age bracket.<sup>273</sup> The exclusion of such large numbers of the young from the labour market deprives the country of valuable economic resources, besides causing social and economic distress for the young people and their families. There is evidence that prolonged unemployment affects their ability to integrate fully into society due to feelings of inadequacy.<sup>274</sup>

The 2011 National Human Development Report mentions a variety of factors contributing to unemployment. These include lack of job opportunities, low employability potential due to the mismatch between skills acquired and labour market requirements, or the unwillingness to take on jobs below the level of education or skills levels or those that involve long working hours, distant commutes or insufficient remuneration.<sup>275</sup> The overwhelming preference for the already over-subscribed public sector jobs due to the perceived security and benefits they offer appears to be a major reason for young men and women not opting for private or informal sector jobs, or for setting up their own small or medium scale businesses.<sup>276</sup> Stimulation of the entrepreneurial spirit among the young, which has not received due attention is now becoming essential, along with the need to provide a conducive environment for this. The Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSME) Survey<sup>277</sup> found some 23 % of surveyed MSME employees to be aged 19-25, compared to the national average of 20.4 % in the 15-24 year group.<sup>278</sup> This may be a small beginning, but with further research on the determinants of this development, the lessons learned could be used to replicate the experiences on a wider scale.

Perceptions about the respective socio-economic value of various employment options, which are influenced by parental attitudes, are further determined by the tight entry regulations of the education systems in terms of the marks obtained in secondary education. For young women choices are further limited by social norms, family priority for their working close to home, and/or in single sex working environments such as teaching, preferably in the public sector.<sup>279</sup>

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<sup>267</sup> UNESCO Institute for Statistics, 2011, Paris

<sup>268</sup> Information Note received from the UNESCO Jordan Office in August 2011

<sup>269</sup> DoS/UNICEF, "Jordanian Youth: Their Live and Views," 2002

<sup>270</sup> *ibid*

<sup>271</sup> CDC, WHO: Global School-based Health Survey 2007

<sup>272</sup> Information note received from ILO August 2011

<sup>273</sup> DoS 2010

<sup>274</sup> MoPIC/UNDP, "Jordan Human Development Report: 2011: Small Business and Human Development"

<sup>275</sup> *ibid*

<sup>276</sup> *ibid*

<sup>277</sup> MSME Survey Report 2010 (*I DID NOT HAVE THE FULL REFERENCE FOR THIS. UNDP OR UNFPA TO PLEASE PROVIDE*)

<sup>278</sup> MoPIC/UNDP, "Jordan Human Development Report: 2011: Small Business and Human Development"

<sup>279</sup> MoPIC/UNDP, "Jordan Human Development Report: 2011: Small Business and Human Development"

The majority of unemployed male Jordanians have degrees equivalent to or less than a secondary school education indicating that low educational levels “trap male youth in a vicious cycle of unemployment and poverty.”<sup>280</sup> This is likely to apply especially to males who dropped out of school joining the category of child labourers, not just missing out on education, but also becoming vulnerable to various types of exploitation.<sup>281</sup> Employability options are further limited for young people of ex-Gaza origin because they do not have Jordanian citizenship, which constrains their access to higher education.<sup>282</sup>

### **Civic Engagement and Leadership Development**

Opportunities for children, adolescents and young people to participate meaningfully in decision-making on issues that affect their lives are limited, as freedom of expression and critical thinking are not encouraged, especially at younger ages, at home, in schools or in community activities.<sup>283</sup> The lack of civic engagement opportunities leave them unprepared for effective participation during young adulthood, while the foundation for this has not been properly laid by school councils in the past.<sup>284</sup>

Several measures have been put in place over the last three years to ensure a more instrumental role for students in school management. New instructions approved by the Ministry of Education in 2010 and disseminated through official papers require students and parents to participate in the development and endorsement of School Annual Development Plans. The rules also require the allocation of budgets by schools for the work of the School Councils, in addition to supporting the role of the teachers responsible for facilitating the work of the Councils. Furthermore, capacity building of MOE staff has taken place to support the operationalization of the instructions.<sup>285</sup>

The participation of youth in NGO activities has been mostly as beneficiaries, or as participants in ad-hoc activities that do not foster meaningful management or decision-making skills. However, there are more recent initiatives of adolescents and young people being involved in planning, e.g., their current involvement in the preparation of Jordan’s CRC Report. The Children’s Parliament has served as a forum for interaction between children from diverse backgrounds as well as a means of building their communication and planning skills. The Children’s Municipal Council associated with the Greater Amman Municipality provides a formal mechanism where children can voice their views at the local authority level.<sup>286</sup> UN and donor funded projects also provide young people training in leadership and management skills, and Youth Groups are being organized around development issues. Moreover, there are clear signs of political consciousness emerging among them.

### **Special Vulnerabilities**

There are certain groups of children and adolescents with a high degree of vulnerability to neglect, abuse and exploitation. They include those living without parental care, in hardship due to displacement, statelessness or loss of national status, child labourers, juveniles in conflict with the law, those living with one or more forms of disability, those drawn into addiction to drugs, and the victims of psychological, physical or sexual abuse including those exploited for commercial purposes such as young sex workers.

As mentioned in Chapter 2, acquisition of a **nationality** is not automatic for all children born in the Kingdom. This results in depriving such children of their rights to education and other services and entitlements.

The number of **children living without their immediate family** is relatively small in Jordan, because when the birth parents cannot care for the children the extended family takes over. Children without parents or other family

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<sup>280</sup> MoPIC/UNDP, “Jordan Human Development Report: 2011: Small Business and Human Development”

<sup>281</sup> NCFA/UNICEF Jordan, “Children of Jordan: A Situation Analysis,” 2006/2007

<sup>282</sup> UNRWA Jordan internal report

<sup>283</sup> *ibid*

<sup>284</sup> *ibid*

<sup>285</sup> Information Note received from the UNICEF Jordan Country Office in August 2011

<sup>286</sup> *ibid*

caregivers are looked after by governmental, private or NGO institutions. The range and quality of services in these institutions vary. Most basic shelter, food and clothing needs are met, but with less attention to psychological and social counseling, recreational aspects, and integration into the community. Their schooling is arranged but their academic achievement has been found to be low. Their feelings of rejection by their families often turn into alienation. At adolescence, the need for psychological support and counseling becomes more acute, with increased insecurity at the prospect of leaving the institution to enter an unfamiliar world.<sup>287</sup>

There is a lack of information on their lives once they leave these institutions. Marriage prospects for orphans, especially if they were born out of wedlock, and particularly for such girls, are also low as the family background is a major consideration for suitors and their families.<sup>288</sup> Much more information is needed regarding care within institutions that provide services for orphaned or abandoned children. Issues which need to be examined include the overall capacity for these institutions, the quality of care standards by which they operate, their work load and support needs, could also provide valuable information about the needs of such children and how to best integrate them into society once they leave the institutions. Furthermore, tracking child progress into adulthood and integration into society (e.g. through case studies on adult orphans who lived in these shelters) can shed light on changeable challenges that these children may face early on but that have a life-long impact if unaddressed.<sup>289</sup>

**Child labour** issues have become visible only in the last decade. The most recent Child Labour Survey<sup>290</sup> estimated 1.9% of the age group 5-17, to be working full time or combining work with schooling, with boys constituting 90% of the total. More boys were found to be wage earners than girls who were mainly unpaid family helpers. There is considerable under-reporting about children's work in the informal sector, tourism, agriculture, as helpers in family businesses or as domestic help. The average working day of a child labourer who works full time can extend up to eight or nine hours. Working children are also highly vulnerable to verbal, physical, and sexual abuse by employers and older colleagues, and in some forms of work to accident related injuries.<sup>291</sup> A 2009 MoL/JOHUD study of 2,150 child labourers aged 7 to 17 found 96% of the workers to be male working in strenuous and sometimes hazardous conditions. 39% of the children were involved in auto repair work, 25% in sale and trade, 13.5% collected recyclable garbage, 13% worked in carpentry or with blacksmiths, and 13 % in restaurants or coffee shops. Children also reported receiving low wages. 4% of the sample were "home bound girls" who had been removed from school, but researchers considered this to be a low estimate as a result of under-reporting.

Push factors, which are not always poverty based, force **children on the streets** to work or in some cases also live there. In Jordan, children do not live on streets, but are mostly found operating in cities as beggars or vendors of small items near busy traffic intersections. They usually have a home to return to and a family that may be the motivating force for their presence on the street. A 2002 study identified problems affecting children on the streets such as early and unprotected sexual experiences, violence and neglect at the hands of adults and peers, substance abuse, pressure to earn income, encounters with the law, and lack of schooling.<sup>292</sup> According to the MoSD in 2009, 46% of street children were in Amman, 14% in Zarqa and 11% in Irbid. The MoSD registered 460 cases of beggars in 2008 and 407 in 2009. These numbers are based only on street children detained by MoSD patrols, so the actual numbers could be higher.<sup>293</sup>

Many children tend to get involved in anti-social activities that they feel can fill a gap in their lives, which puts them **in conflict with the law**. Most of them are involved in petty offences such as theft, fighting, or assault, and many are school children. According to the MoSD, there were 6,452 cases of juvenile delinquency registered in courts in 2009, 96.3 % of them males, 64 % of them were school children (compared to 62 % in 2008). 9 % were younger than 12 years of age, but most were in the 15-18 age group. Reasons driving such behaviour included ignorance (72 %), peer

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<sup>287</sup> NCFE/UNICEF, Report of Focus Group discussions for "Children of Jordan: A Situation Analysis. 2006/2007"

<sup>288</sup> UNWomen, Jordan Country Office

<sup>289</sup> Asas.W, UNICEF, "Children in Jordan 2010 Data Sequel"

<sup>290</sup> DoS/ILO, "Child Labour in the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan", 2008

<sup>291</sup> *ibid*

<sup>292</sup> NCFE/World Bank, "Study of Disadvantaged Children in Jordan", 2002

<sup>293</sup> Asas.W/UNICEF Situation Analysis 2010 Data Sequel

pressure (19 %), and ‘improper upbringing’ (4 %). Statistics reveal that juvenile offenders include orphans, children of broken homes, deserted by their mothers, and a few from polygamous households, but the majority are children living with both parents. These children require law enforcement systems sensitive to their specific needs. Steps taken in this direction in Jordan include the formulation of a draft Juvenile Justice Law which is currently under Parliamentary review.<sup>294</sup>

The extent of **violence against children, adolescents and young women** has been recorded by recent studies. For instance, a 2007 NCFA/UNICEF study identified the spread and nature of violence against children and suggested a gender-bias. At home, emotional verbal abuse was very common (70%), along with severe punishment (reported by 34 % of children). More girls (23%) than boys (14%) experienced some form of bodily harm as a result of punishment at home. Much violence (including mild sexual abuse) was found to occur in neighbourhoods. 71% students reported verbal abuse by teachers and principals, 57% reported severe physical punishment by teachers/principals, and 28% minor sexual abuse by other students. At schools, boys reported physical abuse and minor sexual abuse substantially more frequently than girls.<sup>295</sup> School based violence was also confirmed by another national study conducted in 2009. In the study, 40 % of students reported being hit by a teacher.<sup>296</sup> Harassment and violence by children against other children is also reported at public and UNRWA schools. School managers in UNRWA schools express concern about sexual harassment in school latrines.<sup>297</sup>

The number of **young people addicted to drugs** is not known, but a recent sample study of school children in the North found that though they were generally aware of the dangers of substance abuse in-depth knowledge regarding the effects of substance abuse and how to seek help was lacking.<sup>298</sup> According to the Anti-Narcotics Department, from 1995-1999, among the 407 cases treated at its National Centre for the Rehabilitation of Addicts, adolescents and young people below 29 years of age constituted between 57% and 66% of the total, 94% of whom were males. Drug offences reported at college and university in the last three years include 752 Jordanians and 313 non-Jordanians.

Information on the exact number of **children and young people with disabilities** in Jordan is not available. Still based on findings of sample surveys, it can be assumed that they are likely to constitute the largest group of the marginalized, with the vulnerability likely to be compounded for those of poorer and especially refugee groups.<sup>299</sup> For them educational, sports, and other social inclusion and developmental options are limited, including because of physical access.<sup>300</sup> From childhood they feel a sense of inadequacy, in addition to the pain of negative social attitudes and exclusion, and the fact that people focus on their disability rather than the abilities they may possess.<sup>301</sup> In many cases, they tend to withdraw from mainstream social interaction and suffer from a high sense of insecurity about their future, especially as they approach adolescence and young adulthood.<sup>302</sup> Both sexes with disabilities have additional protection needs compared to other young people, with girls becoming more vulnerable as they enter adolescence.<sup>303</sup> Attitudes towards family members with disabilities are changing, but still fraught with underlying feelings of shame and reluctance to admit their existence.<sup>304</sup>

### Sub-National Disparities

The Jordanian landscape includes both physical diversity and governorate level socio-economic disparities. Sub-national data confirm governorate-level variations in life expectancy, literacy rates, access to modern infrastructure and the quality and quantity of public services. The physical features of the different types of governorates have clearly

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<sup>294</sup> MoSD, “Achievements of the Directorate of Social Defense”, 2009 report quoted in the UNICEF 2010 Situation Analysis update

<sup>295</sup> Elayyan, K. Violence against Children in Jordan, 2007 (UNICEF, NCFA)

<sup>296</sup> Al-Habashneh, M, et al. UNICEF/MOE. “Together towards a Safe School Environment”, 2009

<sup>297</sup> UNRWA Jordan internal report

<sup>298</sup> Haddad, L, et al. Knowledge of Substance Abuse Among High School Students in Jordan. *Journal of Transcultural Nursing* 21(2); 143–150, 2010

<sup>299</sup> NCFA/UNICEF, “Children of Jordan: A Situation Analysis. 2006/2007”

<sup>300</sup> *ibid*

<sup>301</sup> Focus group discussions with adolescents for the NCFA/UNICEF Situation Analysis

<sup>302</sup> *ibid*

<sup>303</sup> NCFA/UNICEF, “Children of Jordan: A Situation Analysis. 2006/2007”

<sup>304</sup> *ibid*

played a critical role in determining their development status, though in some instances the variations are not significant such as in basic education enrolment and literacy rates. The previous lack of area specific plans has also contributed to creating regional inequities.

The more densely populated urban areas have clearly benefited from the relative ease of provision of public sector basic services and access to employment opportunities, much more than the predominantly rural governorates because of their scattered settlement patterns. Jordan's 2011 National Human Development Report (NHDR) confirms this. It also mentions the under-developed business environment which constrains the growth of small firms, and the absence of medium sized enterprises as primary reasons for poor economic performance by the smaller, more rural, governorates.

The NHDR highlights disparities according to a number of indicators and overall human development status. Though it does not go into an in-depth casual analysis, except in the context of its main theme, small business and human development, it concludes that "Governorates with high concentration of economic activity are also high in terms of human development better performers on economic indicators generally score better on other human development aspects also."

To illustrate this point, the NHDR 2011 gives examples of Aqaba and Balqa which have a high number of medium-sized enterprises and some of the lowest illiteracy rates (13.2% for Aqaba and 13.6% for Balqa), the lowest unemployment rates and the highest number of vocational training apprentices, among all governorates except for Amman. On the other hand, Mafraq, which scored lowest on literacy among the 15-24 year olds, gross enrolment and educational attainment, also had the highest poverty incidence.

Disparity also exists among the governorates on basic education net enrolment rates (NERs) as 2008/2009 school year data indicates that the highest NERs were achieved in Karak, Madaba, Tafileh and Ajloun governorates, close to the national average (97.5%) in Amman and Zarqa, while those in Irbid, Mafraq, Jerash, Ma'an and Aqaba fell below the national average, particularly among males.<sup>305</sup>

Over 80% of the medium-sized enterprises are located in three highly urbanized governorates of Amman, Irbid and Zarqa, which jointly account for just over 80% of the country's employment, and over 70% of the nation's population in less than one-third of the country's geographic area.<sup>306</sup> These governorates also have high human development scores on several indicators, with a similar pattern emerging in other governorates having a high number of medium enterprises.<sup>307</sup> This indicates the close relationship between population density, the availability of conducive business environments, and the success potential of businesses due to the ease of marketing because of the proximity of end-consumers. The shortage of adequate public transportation networks, which constrains daily commuting of residents of rural governorates to cities for work partially explains Jordan's structural unemployment.<sup>308</sup>

A comparison of the Human Development Indices (HDI) developed for the 2011 NHDR<sup>309</sup> shows Amman mostly at the top of the list with an overall HDI index of 0.802 and Mafraq generally at the bottom with a HDI value of 0.729. The ranks of these two governorates were found to be similar for the Gender Development Index (GDI), with Amman mostly topping the list and Mafraq remaining at, or close to, the bottom of the list. HDI and GDI ranks have not changed for Amman over the years, while the only change for Mafraq in the last 10 years has moved down from 11<sup>th</sup> to 12<sup>th</sup> place as per the GDI.<sup>310</sup>

The HDI showed that Amman had the highest GDP rank with an index of 0.697, while Madaba and Mafraq had the lowest ranks with 0.610, and 0.616 index values respectively, due to inequality between female and male achievements

<sup>305</sup> MoPIC/UN, "Keeping the Promise and Achieving Aspirations: Second Millennium Development Report -Jordan", 2010

<sup>306</sup> MoPIC/UN, "Keeping the Promise and Achieving Aspirations: Second Millennium Development Report -Jordan", 2010

<sup>307</sup> *ibid*

<sup>308</sup> *ibid*

<sup>309</sup> Annexes 6,7

<sup>310</sup> MoPIC/UNDP, "Jordan Human Development Report: 2011: Small Business and Human Development"

in the three GII dimensions. For life expectancy, Balqa ranked first, while Mafraq ranked last. On both adult literacy and educational attainment, Amman ranked the highest and Mafraq the lowest.<sup>311</sup>

Poverty indicators range from 8.3% for Amman to 31.9% for Mafraq, compared to the national average of 13.3%. Regardless of the fact that Mafraq's population is only about a ninth that of Amman, and the size of the population affected negatively is relatively small, they merit priority attention to make sure that their basic rights are met equally with other citizens. There are also other governorates very near Mafraq's status, with Ma'an and Tafileh, having 24.2% and 21.1% poverty incidence rates, respectively.<sup>312</sup>

Because of the marked differences in the population sizes of the governorates and their varying growth rates, the demographic opportunity is also predicted to reach them at different times, first Amman and probably last in Tafileh, the governorate with the smallest population, though Aqaba is also not likely to peak before 2030.<sup>313</sup>

The 2007 and 2009 JPFH Surveys describe other inter-governorate variations on a number of demographic aspects which have a bearing on human development indicators. These include differences in child mortality rates, levels of stunting and rates of immunization, anemia and mortality among children, women's nutritional status and use of modern contraceptive methods, their participation in waged employment, their exposure to the three major categories of mass media, the age at which young women start childbearing, their decision making status and the incidence of domestic violence. The 2002 JPFHS also specified disparities in the distribution of services, but the subsequent relevant updated information is not available.

The prevalence of low birth infants (less than 2.5 kgs) in 2007 was 11%, with the highest number of low birth weight babies recorded in the South Region, 15% followed by 11.3% in the Northern Region and 10.4% in the Central Region. The rural prevalence of low birth weight was 13% compared to 10.7% urban.<sup>314</sup> This suggests the critical need for close monitoring of low birth weight babies in the early months.

Statistics also indicate a strong correlation between stunting and area of residence. Children in rural areas are considered to be more susceptible to chronic malnutrition than their urban peers<sup>315</sup>. While Amman has relatively low infant mortality rates, the North, South and rural areas all show increased rates of mortality.<sup>316</sup>

Other recorded regional differences are in:

- Women's health seeking behavior related to pre natal and post natal care is higher in the urban and central regions compared to the rural and Badia areas, as well as in the Northern and Southern regions;
- Contraceptive prevalence rates are lower in the Badia and rural areas, as well as Karak, Mafraq and Ma'an governorates, with high prevalence of traditional contraceptive methods remains high;
- Rates of unmet family planning needs are highest in Ma'an, Karak, Aqaba and Mafraq governorates;
- Levels of access to female reproductive health care providers, particularly in rural, poor and remote areas.

## Environmental Sustainability

Jordan's environmental challenges, high rates of population, rapid and poorly planned urbanization, and heavy dependence on imported energy resources combine to create socio-economic and environmental pressures likely to overshadow Jordan's development processes for years to come. Scarcity of natural resources is coupled directly with the vulnerability and uniqueness of precious ecosystems and habitats that warrant special conservation, including

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<sup>311</sup> *ibid*

<sup>312</sup> MoPIC/UNDP, "Jordan Human Development Report: 2011: Small Business and Human Development"

<sup>313</sup> Interview with the Secretary General of the Higher Population Council reported in the Jordan Business Magazine September 2011 issue

<sup>314</sup> DoS, Jordan Population and Family Health Survey 2007"

<sup>315</sup> MoPIC/UN, "Keeping the Promise and Achieving Aspirations: Second Millennium Development Report –Jordan," 2010

<sup>316</sup> MoPIC/UNDP, "Jordan Human Development Report: 2011: Small Business and Human Development"

through sustainable development efforts.<sup>317</sup> Climate change will affect Jordan through higher temperatures, shorter wet seasons, more erratic rain and rising sea levels. Meeting increased demand, protecting and developing new water resources, hydropower loss and ecosystem damage could represent a cost of between one to 7% of GDP.<sup>318</sup>

Given Jordan's high level of urbanization, the limited availability of urban information disaggregated to city level presents a major challenge to the development of evidence based city plans that integrates environmental considerations.<sup>319</sup>

Poorer and more vulnerable community groups are most affected by environmental degradation. Moreover, since "Vulnerability is determined by the type of resources on which individuals depend, the availability of these resources, and, crucially, by the entitlement of individuals and groups to mobilize these resources."<sup>320</sup> "Rural women are more vulnerable than men due to gender-based limitations in access to resources when performing their productive, reproductive and community roles."<sup>321</sup>

## Climate Change

According to Jordan's Second National Communication Report to the UNFCCC, (based on emission inventory statistics from 2000) Jordan contributed only 20.14 million tons of carbon dioxide, equivalent of Greenhouse Gas Emissions to the atmosphere. The main contributing sectors were energy, including transport (74 %), wastes (13.5 %), industrial processes (7.9 %), land use change, forestry (3.7 %) and agriculture (0.9%). The collective damage caused by carbon dioxide emissions from motor vehicles amounted to about USD 183.6 million annually.<sup>322</sup>

Analysis of available climate change data (1961-2005)<sup>323</sup> reveals progressively heightened maximum and minimum temperatures by between 0.3 - 2.8C. This is in parallel to an observed 5-20 % decrease in precipitation at most meteorological stations, with only two of the 19 stations showing a precipitation increase of 5-10 %. Warming was found to be stronger during the summer, while less warming is projected for the winter, but possibly with more extreme weather events, such as heavy rain and flooding. Climate change projections show an increase in temperatures of less than 2C by the year 2050, which could contribute to extreme weather patterns such as floods and droughts.<sup>324</sup>

The results of a 2009 Vulnerability Assessment<sup>325</sup> predicted the strong possibility of diverse detrimental effects of climate change, including significant impact on water resources due to decreasing precipitation and changes in spatial and temporal distribution, also severely affecting the amounts of monthly surface run-off in Yarmouk and Zarqa River Basins.<sup>326</sup>

The Assessment predicted considerable impact on agriculture, especially on the rain-fed variety, with further deterioration of arid and semi-arid rangelands, with major negative impact on the livestock sector and overall food production. It also identified potential health risks such as physiological disorders, skin rashes, and dehydration, eye cataracts, in addition to damage to public health infrastructure, deaths and injuries.<sup>327</sup>

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<sup>317</sup> Wardam.B/UNEP ROWA, "National Environment Summary", 2011.

<sup>318</sup> Information note received from UNHabitat September 2011

<sup>319</sup> *ibid*

<sup>320</sup> Lambrou.Y, Laub.R, FAO Gender and Population Division, "Gender Perspectives on the Conventions on Biodiversity, Climate Change and Desertification", 2004

<sup>321</sup> *ibid*

<sup>322</sup> Namrouqa.H, "Auto Emissions Key Factor in Poor Air Quality", Report, quoted in the Jordan Times and the 2011 NHDR

<sup>323</sup> Jordan Ministry of Environment, "Second National Communication to the UNFCCC," 2009

<sup>324</sup> *ibid*

<sup>325</sup> Jordan Ministry of Environment, "Second National Communication to the UNFCCC," 2009

<sup>326</sup> *ibid*

<sup>327</sup> *ibid*



Yet, climate change plays only a secondary role within the National Water Strategy 2008-2022. The most critical climate change impact could occur with the temperature rising by more than 2% without a precipitation increase. According to climate models, even a 20% increase in precipitation will not compensate for the temperature increase.<sup>328</sup>

“The most important measures for mitigating climate change will be increasing the use of renewable energy, and reforestation, as well as halting the rate of deforestation. Adapting to climate change will affect agriculture, food security and water management in rural areas.”<sup>329</sup>

“For many years there has been the assumption that the negative impacts of climate change and the efforts to mitigate them have similar effects on both women and men. However, the world has progressively recognized that women and men experience climate change differently, and that gender inequalities worsen women’s coping capacity. It has also been acknowledged that women are important actors of change and holders of significant knowledge and skills related to mitigation, adaptation, and the reduction of risks in the face of climate change, making them crucial agents in this area. Consequently, there is an urgent need to adopt a gender-responsive approach towards climate change policy making and programming.”<sup>330</sup>

Despite the traditional involvement of rural women in several aspects of environmental preservation they have not been the focus of environmental policies and strategic frameworks, due to inadequate recognition of their potential contribution to environmental conservation, or the impact of the environment on their lives. Jordan is the first Arab country attempting to integrate gender aspects into its Climate Policy and a JNCW/MoEnv project was launched in mid-2011 in collaboration with the International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN) and the Global Gender Alliance for Climate Change (GGACC).<sup>331</sup> This pioneering initiative can lead to an increased recognition of women’s important role in environmental conservation as providing guidelines for their engagement in other environmental initiatives.

## **Water Scarcity**

Jordan is the world’s fourth most water-scarce country in terms of availability of water resources per capita,<sup>332</sup> so water shortage is the country’s biggest environmental threat, which also puts its development at risk. The per capita share of available water decreased from around 3,600 cubic meters per annum in 1946 to less than 150 cubic meters per annum in 2008. This is severely lower than the World Water Poverty Line of 1,000 cubic meters per annum and is likely to decline further, especially if the current total fertility rates persist, or if the country faces further migration movements.<sup>333</sup>

Water scarcity puts basic needs, especially food security, at risk for communities which depend primarily on subsistence farming, reducing economic prospects, particularly in areas without adequate alternate employment options. It reduces hygiene and sanitation levels among the poor, especially if household sanitation facilities are below par increasing the vulnerability, especially of children, to disease, besides affecting nutritional sufficiency.<sup>334</sup> Inadequate availability of water puts an extra burden on women who need water for multiple household tasks. “Degradation of water sources is a usual consequence of drought and natural disasters. Children and pregnant women are particularly susceptible to diseases that thrive in such conditions, such as diarrhea and cholera. Furthermore, because of their roles in relation to household water supply and domestic chores, women are particularly at risk for such diseases.”<sup>335</sup>

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<sup>328</sup> Wardam.B/UNEP ROWA, “National Environment Summary”, 2011

<sup>329</sup> IUCN/UNDP/GCCA “Training Manual on Gender and Climate Change”

<sup>330</sup> Ibid

<sup>331</sup> Jordanian National Commission for Women

<sup>332</sup> Ministry of Environment, “The State of the Environment in Jordan,” 2009 (Arabic version)

<sup>333</sup> Wardam.B/UNEP ROWA, “National Environment Summary”, 2011

<sup>334</sup> UNEP/WHO, “Healthy Environments for Healthy Children”, and UNICEF “Children of Jordan: A Situation Analysis” 2006/2007

<sup>335</sup> Ibid

Water scarcity is exacerbated by pollution, which is a threat to public health. Sources of pollution include inadequate and inefficient management of domestic wastewater, uncontrolled disposal of industrial waste, leaking from solid waste landfills and seepage from excessive use of fertilizers and pesticides.<sup>336</sup>

Key water management issues in Jordan relate to water allocation patterns. Currently agriculture uses the majority of water resources with trends reflecting decreasing amounts. The National Water Strategy and water related policies focus on enhancing domestic water allocation, gradually substituting the supply to agriculture by good quality treated wastewater. The high cost of water supply arises from several factors. Amman currently receives only 24% of its water requirements from local resources, 35% from the Jordan Valley, 31% from Madaba and Karak, 6% from Zarqa. It takes 15% of all electricity generated in Jordan to pump such amounts of water from low elevations. The huge cost and effort is also subject to about 45% of non-accounted for water lost to leakages in the pipe system or through illegal pumping from wells.<sup>337</sup>

A major contextual challenge lies in water shortages not considered in the context of urban water supplies. The urban sprawl in Jordan has resulted in immensely costly (and therefore undesirable) demand for water supply infrastructures in low-density urban areas. Cities can have very high water connection rates per length of piping infrastructure if cities are denser and more compact. In this context there is a clear need for more compact Jordanian cities to reduce per capita urban expenditures on services delivery infrastructures. These are aspects that need medium and long-term planning for urban retro-fitting, and are acknowledged worldwide as urban interventions that bear fruit in the longer term.<sup>338</sup>

Two mega projects are under consideration to alleviate Jordan's water scarcity. The DISI Water Conveyance Project is expected to pipe water to Amman from the DISI aquifer in the south of Jordan by 2013. A feasibility study is currently being conducted for the Red Sea-Dead Sea Water Conduit Project, which if implemented would pump water from the Red Sea into the Dead Sea. This would be desalinated for drinking purposes but also be used to produce hydro-electricity.<sup>339</sup>

## **Waste management**

Major sources of hazardous wastes in Jordan are<sup>340</sup> energy production, Persistent Organic Pollutants (POPs) from electricity distribution companies, uncontrolled combustion and waste incineration, medical wastes from hospitals, laboratories and research centers, transport, car batteries, agricultural wastes and pesticides. Solid and liquid industrial waste has had a particularly hazardous impact on water resources particularly on Zarqa river negatively affecting irrigated agriculture in the Jordan Valley. The total solid waste generated daily is about 2,850 tons, of which the Greater Amman Area accounts for 2000 tons.<sup>341</sup>

Current collection rates of urban and solid wastes are estimated at 90% and 70% respectively. There are 20 dump sites in Jordan, of which only the Ghabawi landfill meets sanitary requirements. The hazardous waste landfill in Swaqa 125 km south of Amman, receives wastes generated in factories, hospitals, universities and research centres. These are neutralized, chemically treated and then kept in lined ponds. Safe disposal remains a concern as most municipalities (except Amman) discharge solid waste into open dump sites with no lining, leachate management or biogas collection. Besides polluting the environment, this holds major health risks for people in neighbouring localities,<sup>342</sup> especially in the poorer parts of densely populated urban areas where children normally play in the streets.

## **Energy conservation and production**

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<sup>336</sup> WHO Country Cooperation Strategy for Jordan 2007

<sup>337</sup> Wardam.B./UNEP ROWA, "National Environment Summary", 2011

<sup>338</sup> Note received from UNHabitat September 2011

<sup>339</sup> Wardam.B./ROWA, "National Environment Summary, (NES), August 2011

<sup>340</sup> The World Bank, "Towards Sustainable Development: Jordan's Country Environmental Analysis", 2010

<sup>341</sup> Wardam.B./UNEP ROWA, "National Environment Summary", 2011

<sup>342</sup> *ibid*

In 2008, heating accounted for 61% of household level energy use and this figure continues to rise.<sup>343</sup> The high cost of importing energy puts a heavy burden on the public budget already constrained by running costs and subsidies. The major indicator for energy efficiency is energy intensity, which for Jordan in 2005 was 0.210 tons/US much higher than USA and France, reflecting sub-optimal efficiency. With the peaking of oil prices in 2008, the cost of importing energy (oil, fuel and natural gas) reached JD 2.76 billion. Moreover, Jordan is also vulnerable to unforeseen surprises in the energy supply chain. For instance, when the natural gas supply from Egypt stopped for 40 days because of an explosion hitting the natural gas delivery pipeline in early February 2011, Jordan had to use its fuel oil reserves at an additional cost of USD 2.2. million. During another interruption in April, again caused by a pipeline explosion, Egypt raised the price of its gas further burdening the Jordanian budget. To respond to the escalating energy demand Jordan has announced its intention to develop a nuclear power programme by the year 2020 and to capitalize on its oil shale resources. Both programmes are likely to have severe environmental consequences, and thus need careful monitoring.<sup>344</sup>

## Land Use Management

Another key environmental vulnerability in Jordan is associated with land degradation and the state of terrestrial semi-arid ecosystems and habitats. Desertification threatens the arid and semi-arid areas, and the irrigated regions of the highlands and the Jordan valley that have also been affected by soil salinization and land degradation due to low precipitation and excessive grazing.<sup>345</sup>

Land use patterns in Jordan at present are: 90.4 % pastures, 5.6% agricultural land, 1.9% public facilities, 0.8% natural forests, 0.75% registered forests, and 0.6 wetlands. Improper plowing of pastures in low precipitation areas to produce cereals has led to soil erosion due to loss of plants that cover the ground.

The city of Amman is a clear example of rapid and exponential growth that defies sustainability criteria. Its area had increased from 52 km<sup>2</sup> in 1952 to 1,680 km<sup>2</sup> by 2007. This is bigger than Berlin, Moscow and Los Angeles, but its density is much lower. This results from the previous lack of formal urban planning. The resultant demand for extensive infrastructure services and networks means higher costs and more disturbances to natural conditions and systems. The urban expansion outside Amman is even more detrimental for environmental sustainability. The rapid expansion of municipality areas is driven by social pressures to include outlying areas in urban planning zones which raises the value of such land. This has resulted in the spread of sparsely populated areas with the constraints related to providing utilities and basic services to widely dispersed populations contributing to depletion of natural resources and raising service delivery costs. Most of these communities do not have access to modern sewage systems and use cesspools. Since these are not connected to the wastewater network they cause groundwater pollution, also posing health risks. Wastewater collection and treatment systems are in any case overloaded and their effluents do not meet national standards.<sup>346</sup>

Jordanian cities will need urban planning interventions that stop further undesirable urban sprawl, promote more compact cities and urban retrofitting to create more poli-centric urban configurations and make cities more resilient. Such interventions will only bear fruit in the longer term, but are required to assure future urban sustainability, along with promotion of improved intra-urban mobility options. Adequate disaster risk assessments are essential for risk mapping and formulating Disaster Resilient Urban Plans are also essential to achieve disaster risk reduction and mitigation. Education and capacity development on climate change need serious attention.<sup>347</sup>

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<sup>343</sup> DoS/WFP 'Poverty Study' based on 2008/2009 HIES data

<sup>344</sup> Wardam.B/UNEP ROWA, "National Environment Summary", 2011

<sup>345</sup> Wardam.B/UNEP ROWA, "National Environment Summary", 2011

<sup>346</sup> WHO Country Cooperation Strategy (CCS) 2007

<sup>347</sup> Information Note received from UNHabitat September 2011

## The threatened biodiversity

The natural biodiversity is threatened by habitat destruction and fragmentation, unsustainable agricultural practices such as extensive farming and agricultural waste, diversion of water from use of biodiversity resources towards anthropogenic (human-influenced) uses, uncontrolled urbanization, and industrial pollution.<sup>348</sup>

Fish and coral reefs in the Gulf of Aqaba are unique and diverse, with some 150 different species of coral reefs and 450 types of fish found only in this area. The decline in Jordan's wildlife, which affects mainly large populations, is also threatening several species of birds, reptiles, freshwater fish, marine invertebrate and vertebrate.<sup>349</sup>

Flora is also diverse with 2,300 species from 152 families identified in the country, 100 of these indigenous to Jordan. 76 species are endangered, with 18 of these on the world's list of endangered species. Plant diversity is facing a dramatic decline due to habitat loss and degradation, leading to the isolation of many species, which in turn results in loss of their genetic diversity and a high risk of extinction. Between 200 to 250 plant species are nationally rare and 100 to 150 species are threatened.<sup>350</sup>

Despite reforestation efforts, natural and man-made forests jointly cover less than one per cent of the total land area. Forests face severe impacts as a result of poverty (i.e., cutting of trees to provide heating for poor local residents due to high oil prices), and massive investments in tourism and other sectors in scenic forest areas. Other threats are encroaching crop cultivation, overgrazing, water scarcity and salinity.<sup>351</sup>

There are seven natural reserves in Jordan and five more under establishment. Two (Dana and Mujib) are UNESCO declared Biosphere Reserves. There are also 28 grazing reserves and one 7 km marine reserve along the beaches of Aqaba. In 2011, IUCN identified 12 important Plant Areas (IPAs) in Jordan that warrant special conservation status, namely Ajloun, Azraq, Bayer, Burqu, Dana Nature Biosphere, Preserve, Karak, Mujib, Safawi, Salt, Umul Qais and Wadi Rum. In June 2011, the Wadi Rum Protected Area was listed as a UNESCO World Heritage Site.<sup>352</sup>

The productivity of rangeland, a crucial source of livelihood for most of the rural poor, has dropped by about 50 % in the last 15 years, primarily due to overgrazing and encroaching urbanization. An estimated 17,705 tons of forage valued at about USD 4.9 million is lost annually due to overgrazing. Should this trend continue unabated, desertification is imminent.<sup>353</sup>

“Local-level biodiversity is maintained through knowledge and know-how of both women and men. In effect, because of gender-based roles in rural livelihoods, women and men acquire and transmit different and complementary knowledge.”<sup>354</sup> “This knowledge pertains to domestic plant and animal genetic resources, which are the basis of both the productivity and adaptability of agricultural systems, and also to wild and semi-domesticated sources, which offer safety nets in case of food scarcity.”<sup>355</sup> Depending on the role of women and men, their knowledge will be applied to different functions in livelihoods. In many regions, men concentrate on cash crop cultivation, women concentrate on subsistence agriculture as well as household-related tasks such as care to family members and food preparation. Thus, failure to integrate women's biodiversity knowledge in each of these functions has an impact on household-level food security and nutrition. Failure to target both sexes in biodiversity conservation results inevitably in a loss of knowledge

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<sup>348</sup> Wardam.B/UNEP ROWA, “National Environment Summary”, 2011

<sup>349</sup> *ibid*

<sup>350</sup> *ibid*

<sup>351</sup> IUCN: "Important Plant Areas of the South and East Mediterranean Region: Priority Sites for Conservation", 2011, IUCN Center for Med. Cooperation

<sup>352</sup> Ministry of Environment, "Fourth National Report for the Convention on Biological Diversity", 2009

<sup>353</sup> Wardam.B/UNEP ROWA, “National Environment Summary”, 2011

<sup>354</sup> Huisinga Norem et al “ Biodiversity and Climate Change: Perceptions of Men and Women” 1993, as quoted in “Gender Perspectives on the Conventions on Biodiversity, Climate Change and Desertification” , 2004

<sup>355</sup> Kozeil, McNeil 2002 as quoted in “Gender Perspectives on the Conventions on Biodiversity, Climate Change and Desertification” , 2004

of local and international relevance, as well as producing a gender bias in policies and programmes that may be detrimental to the functions that women perform.”<sup>356</sup>

## **Disaster Risk Reduction**

The nature and multiplicity of Jordan’s environmental challenges and its location on an earthquake fault line makes it very vulnerable to possible hazards which can easily turn into disasters. The scale and impact of any disaster depends upon the level of preparedness of governments and community groups to understand the risk factors and relevant mitigation approaches; monitor the situation to predict the potential imminence of hazards; and institute timely preventive measures to guard against hazards turning into disasters. Moreover, to ensure timely warning and effective communication with at risk or affected communities the preparedness and response capacity of the mass media often becomes critical.

Several laws have been enacted over time to manage risks of possible hazards in the country, while some general laws also include references to this, e.g., the 1952 Constitution. Responsibilities for disaster management and mitigation in Jordan are spread widely among many ministries and Government agencies. This multiplicity of laws combined with the scattering of functions has resulted in a proliferation of regulations which are not brought together as a coordinated whole. For Amman a networking system does exist between the different agencies, but inter-agency coordination needs strengthening through the establishment of a Coordination Unit at the Amman Municipality.<sup>357</sup>

Besides the Arab Strategy for Disaster Risk Reduction, several stand-alone national strategies exist, including a Water Strategy and an Emergency Preparedness Strategy for the Control of Communicable Diseases and Epidemics. The latter identifies the responsibilities of the MoH and Health Directorates for epidemic surveillance, controlling the cause, and the treatment of infected persons, in addition to guidelines in emergency situations for the distribution of food, medications, vaccines and safe water. A Disaster Risk Management Master Plan (DRMMP) for Earthquake Risk Reduction was also prepared for the Greater Amman Municipality (GAM) in 2009, based on the first ever seismic risk assessment and analysis in Jordan by national experts. A second DRMMP was designed for Aqaba after the completion of a seismic risk assessment, and two studies on social vulnerability and social impact. International Aid agencies with mandates requiring a humanitarian response focus have their individual organization specific strategies.

What is missing is a comprehensive national level multi-sectoral plan, which incorporates city and governorate level plan components, encompassing basic principles to reduce risk, set mitigation measures and propose actions to be followed in times of disaster to cover all aspects of safety, security and well-being. On disaster risk reduction, mitigation, adaptation and emergency preparedness enough accumulated international knowledge is available. There also exists considerable national level expertise that the General Directorate of Civil Defence and the National Centre for Security and Crisis Management (NCSM) can draw upon to finalize a strategy and a plan on which they have been working for several years. Essential elements of such a plan would normally include code effectiveness, infrastructure, resilience, operational standards, specialized training and competency building in enhancement of safety standards for high risk areas, pre-positioning of supplies/reserves, development or enhancement of early warning system, better construction regulations etc.,

In addition to technical and operational aspects, the guidelines also need to include people centered approaches by encouraging civil society involvement in DRR initiatives.

Prior knowledge of the situation on the ground related to potential environmental hazards is critical. To develop disaster risk reduction and mitigation approaches at community level, research is needed not only on the physical features but also in terms of behavior patterns, people’s coping skills, as well the special needs and vulnerabilities of

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<sup>356</sup> Lambrou,Y, Laub,R, FAO Gender and Population Division, “Gender Perspectives on the Conventions on Biodiversity, Climate Change and Desertification” , 2004

<sup>357</sup> EMI/UNDP Jordan, Amman Disaster Risk Management Plan, 2009

communities and sub-groups such as children, youth, women, the disabled, the elderly and the indigent. It is only then that meaningful decentralized disaster risk reduction and management plans can be developed and put in place. When the population is displaced due to natural disasters there still remains a need for vulnerability analysis to ensure the relevance and effectiveness of response efforts. In addition to, developing community profiles and mapping the potential support services within and around the high risk areas, other important elements of preparedness are creating awareness of the risks among children through schools, as well as among the general public, also instituting other preventive and response measures at local level.

### **Key Challenges**

**Political Reform:** Previous reform efforts have achieved only partial success due to structural issues such as the country's sensitive geo-political position in the region. This makes it highly dependent on exogenous political and economic influences and external aid. Informal political arrangements and the deep rooted identity politics foster fundamental divisions in societal demands for reform initiatives. The capacity of political parties and members of parliament and municipal councilors – both male and female – are weak and relevant regulations and processes are still being streamlined. The skill building of women and youth needs special attention to enable their effective political participation. The approval of the political reform proposals by His Majesty at end of September 2011 will require considerable follow up efforts to ensure practical and meaningful implementation.

**Economic Reform:** Overall despite several achievements, Jordan continues to suffer economic problems, despite growth. It has not achieved a major restructuring of its economy, as it remains heavily biased toward the service sector and reliant on imports and vulnerable to external influences/fluctuations. Worker productivity has not increased, domestic expenditures remain high (particularly on general subsidies) and budget deficits continue. It thus continues to witness wide fluctuations in earnings as well as high trade imbalances and budget deficits. There are also widening inequalities, persistent poverty among many groups, and double-digit unemployment rates. Economic reforms have not led to improved living standards for the vast majority of Jordanians to the extent expected by the people, resulting in public dissatisfaction.

**Youth:** Considerable work is required to develop a holistic policy and improved and enhanced services for youth, which take into account the needs of different age cohorts and maintains an adequate focus on gender concerns as well as those of vulnerable and marginalized sub-groups among youth. Such planning will be constrained if a comprehensive knowledge base on youth related issues is not in place. Major challenges relate to the integration of the concerns of youth into mainstream health policies and services, enhance the relevance and quality of education, fostering gender sensitivity and promoting healthy lifestyles and responsible citizenship among them. The Government and some CSOs have begun to address several of these issues recently however these efforts still need to be taken to scale.

The 'Demographic Opportunity' is expected to bring various "social and economic benefits, which if not handled appropriately can take the form of challenges, especially if the post 'Arab Spring' activism continues to prevail. Prior preparation, planning, and monitoring of these changes creates opportunities that occur in conjunction with the continued decline in fertility rates." Related efforts will also need to deal with adolescent concerns about puberty related physiological and psychological changes, enhance reproductive health awareness and promote the small family norm through age and culturally appropriate approaches.

Lack of remedial action to address the situation of vulnerable groups among the young, can result in lifelong deprivation for them. Given the strong influence of families in shaping personalities and behavior patterns ensuring appropriate behavior change communication strategies remains a major challenge.

**Sub-national Disparities:** The main challenge is to effect a balance between governorates and urban-rural areas in terms of access to services and economic options, thus ensuring both the rights of the populations of disadvantaged areas and groups, and enhancing prospects of success of the government's reform policies, and MDG achievement.

An associated challenge is the development of decentralized situation analyses and integrated plans in partnership with relevant communities – male and female, including youth.

The Government's decentralization plans include the development of governorate level EDPs that will require more comprehensive information to ensure evidence based planning. Some governorate level information exists on quantitative disparities, but not about the lower district levels. Further research including mapping of existing local facilities and factors which have contributed to better performance in some areas and a causal analysis of under-development in others, would provide a solid basis for the preparation of governorate level development plans.

**Environmental Sustainability:** Future development scenarios for Jordan continue to be heavily based on water scarcity and the high energy costs and the general scarcity of natural resources. The country is highly susceptible to food and commodity price fluctuations. With a future expected to be dominated by food crises Jordan is likely to be hard hit by associated consequences.

The Government is seeking solutions for water and energy shortages through mega projects (Red Sea Canal, Disi Water Conveyer, nuclear power generation, oil shale exploration etc.,) but such technical solutions may not provide adequate sustainability without taking the human factor into consideration. Environmental initiatives would benefit from encouragement of co-management of natural resources with the concerned communities and take into consideration the impact of environmental initiatives on the quality of human life.<sup>358</sup>

To respond to fast escalating energy demands Jordan intends to develop a nuclear power programme by the year 2020, besides capitalizing on its oil shale resources. Both initiatives are associated with negative environmental consequences that must be monitored and minimized. The environmental gains of reforestation are significant, including for biodiversity conservation and prevention of natural hazards. Serious attention is therefore required to realize the plantation prospects for 13% of Jordan's land area.<sup>359</sup>

Proper management of land development in urban areas has been recently addressed through new strategic city plans prepared by various cities. The revitalization of the urban cores of Salt, Madaba, Jerash and Karak is an effort to order and balance land use management and development across urban centres in Jordan and to shift growth away from Amman.<sup>360</sup> The result of this initiative remains to be seen.

Although some inter-ministerial committees have been formed to tackle inter-sectoral environmental challenges such as water, climate change, agriculture, etc., the coordination element needs much improvement. Jordan's vulnerability to environment related risks and thus to potential related hazards and disasters pose a critical challenge given the absence of updated and holistic Disaster risk reduction and mitigation plans at either national or sub-national levels.<sup>361</sup>

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<sup>358</sup> Wardam B/UNEP ROWA, "National Environment Summary", 2011

<sup>359</sup> Wardam B/UNEP ROWA. "National Environment Summary", 2011

<sup>360</sup> Information Note received from UNHabitat in September 2011

<sup>361</sup> Wardam B/UNEP ROWA. "National Environment Summary", 2011

## CHAPTER 4: PARTNERSHIPS FOR DEVELOPMENT

Jordan's National Agenda places great stress on public–private partnerships, strengthening the role of civil society organizations and the media, equality of rights to social justice and opportunities and human resource development. It also emphasizes social inclusion, transparency and accountability of development processes. There are increasing efforts towards inter-sectoral coordination between public sector agencies, setting up of autonomous coordinating institutions, and, associating national NGOs, international organizations and the private sector with policy and planning efforts.

While the Ministry of Planning and International Cooperation (MoPIC) has the key role of coordinating policy planning and monitoring of national development initiatives, a host of government and semi-government entities have important supporting functions as per their mandates. All have contributed to Jordan's impressive human development progress in their respective fields, with non-government entities and international agencies also providing support. Overall, an encouraging vitality is emerging in partnership initiatives in the country. The range of development oriented partnerships encompasses much diversity of focus and scale. Good results have been achieved in the development of policies and strategies, especially around issues that have had the benefit of highest level political commitment and leadership, though coordination at the follow-up implementation and monitoring stages needs further streamlining and regularization.

### **The Non-government sector**

The political and economic liberalization of the last twenty years has allowed the emergence of civil society in Jordan.<sup>362</sup> There are civil society organizations of various denominations in Jordan including national NGOs, professional and faith-based groups, and small CBOs and thematic alliances, in addition to coalitions that bring non-state actors (NSAs) and state actors together to discuss areas of common interest. There are also considerable variations in their conceptual orientation, geographical outreach, membership, mandate and operational styles. There is a wide spectrum across these groups in their engagement with and ability to influence public policy, with grassroots oriented organizations largely concentrating on local issues and service provision, rather than broader policymaking, and NSAs having “potential for significant impact in the public policy arena.”<sup>363</sup>

### **Civil Society and National NGOs**

The work of professional organizations and human rights activists has brought high level attention to recommendations generated from issue oriented studies, workshops and conferences on human rights issues. Non-governmental actors have participated in advocacy and mobilization on previously sensitive and invisible issues such as child abuse, domestic violence, child labour, and discriminatory clauses in laws such as the Nationality Law and the Penal Code. Several NGOs in Jordan work in support of freedom of the press and media. Besides the good work undertaken by NGOs in their respective areas of work, the increasing trend towards networking on policy issues has extended the outreach of awareness creation and advocacy efforts. This has increased the visibility of sensitive issues, enriched national planning, influenced legislative and policy reform, and helped to leverage resources.<sup>364</sup>

Jordanian NGOs operate at different levels and deal with issues ranging from awareness creation and advocacy on issues of concern of marginalized groups, fund raising, service provision at grassroots level, and as resource institutions for training of government and NGO trainers and service providers. They play key roles in planning at different levels, disseminating public health messages, running preventive and curative maternal and health, besides educational services, including for ECD, female literacy and special education facilities. Because of the many points of intersection

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<sup>362</sup> Curtis, R./the Humanist Institute for Co-operation with Developing Countries/the Amsterdam Institute for Social Science Research  
Paper 7, June 2010

<sup>363</sup> Williamson, W., Hakki, H., European Consultants Organisation/EU, Executive Summary, “Mapping Study of Non-State Actors in Jordan”  
2010

<sup>364</sup> NCFI/UNICEF, Children of Jordan: A Situation Analysis,” 2006/2007



between women's and children's rights, many agencies undertake joint advocacy for both groups and/or provide combined or complementary services for them. Some have pioneered protection interventions for children and women setting up innovative pilot schemes to address their needs and joining hands with government and other partners to extend the coverage of such services. Some NGOs have the benefit of patronage of members of the royal family, giving them greater flexibility of operation, access to financial resources and overall capacity.

The positive effect of civil society partnerships on coverage and outputs has been registered in field-oriented initiatives such as Better Parenting, Community Development and CBR programmes. A Government-civil society partnership is developing for environmental governance. The MoEnv has established a coordination system with environment focused NGOs involving them in the design and implementation of most MoEnv policies and plans.<sup>365</sup> The recent emergence of new NGOs with modern and specialized structures promises to change the landscape of the environmental civil society in Jordan with a better focus on youth, entrepreneurship and centers of excellence around technical specializations.<sup>366</sup> Jordan's legal and institutional conditions are generally suitable for environmental activism as many civil society organizations are emerging to protect the environment, with many independent research and community organizations also joining forces. A new generation of youth is embracing sustainability concepts both at academic levels and professional career levels.<sup>367</sup>

Some of the more prominent national NGOs are women led and have a predominantly female membership. The majority of alliances for women comprise the more educated, urban women who are well placed to access decision-makers at national and international levels. They are also extending their outreach to local levels and focusing on community development in general and women's empowerment in particular. At the grassroots level, within the CSOs, women are much less visible, especially in leadership and management roles.

While NGOs are providing good services in their individual spheres of interest and geographical locations, many have limited outreach, maintain hierarchical structures, and approaches that are predominantly welfare oriented and based on top down service provision. There is considerable donor dependency, competition for resources and insufficient coordination. Programme approaches are not adequately harmonized or complementary and often include competitive activities across the NGOs.

## **Community Groups**

Jordan has a very strong tradition of family and tribal ties which were historically the mainstay of local development, and still constitute safety nets for the more vulnerable elements. However, communities gradually took on a more passive role as the benevolent influence of the State grew as the provider of all services, in some cases supported by the larger NGOs. Participation of the people themselves and especially of women, youth and children has not been fully activated, but there are small beginnings of change because of emerging community based activities. Besides large NGOs with a nationwide scope or with close ties to government agencies, scores of small CBOs now provide a range of services at local level. Most of these are led by existing community leaders, and without adequate attention to the meaningful involvement of women and to young people's civic engagement.

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<sup>365</sup> Wardam.B/UNEP ROWA, "National Environmental Summary", August 2011

<sup>366</sup> *ibid*

<sup>367</sup> *ibid*

## Young people

While the participation of Jordanian children and adolescents in a few children's organizations such as the Scouts and Guides has continued for years, efforts to give them a voice in national and local affairs are fairly recent and small scale. A common characteristic of urban and rural NGOs has been the minimal participation of adolescents and youth, especially at the management levels, because of the lack of focus on developing a second line of leadership. However there are now increasing, though still small-scale efforts to build up their analytical, communication and participation skills, and to provide them participatory opportunities. The functioning of school councils is being reinforced. Youth groups are being formed and their capacity developed primarily by NGOs, often with donor and/or UN support. These are small but important initiatives. Since rather than merely dealing with them as beneficiaries of services, they are preparing young people for future leadership roles, and demonstrating the value of partnering with them as resources for development including for MDG achievement.

Youth led NGOs are also more likely to absorb progressive ideas and build these into their thinking and operational agendas. For instance the director of one youth NGO argues that CSOs should focus on three S's:<sup>368</sup>

- Structure to enable organizations to reach out to and mobilize individuals at the grassroots level;
- Strategy which includes a consistent focus determined by organizational goals, rather than changing Agendas according to available, external funding;
- Sustainability by developing indigenous sources of donations from the community, institutions and philanthropists that free the organization from external influence.

Accomplishing the latter requires changing the national donor mentality in terms of a shift from a nearly exclusive focus on giving to faith-based charities to one that incorporates broader issues of development, research and education, and replacing the practice of donating basically during the month of Ramadan to a more consistent pattern of giving on a philanthropic basis.<sup>369</sup>

## International Voluntary Organizations

Several international NGOs (INGOs) actively support Jordan development activities in diverse fields including the developmental and humanitarian. Their support is provided with and through local NGOs, in the form of grants, technical, capacity development and commodity support basically at project levels.

International volunteer organizations such as the US Peace Corps and the European Voluntary Service have worked in Jordan for some years though the number of their volunteers in the country is still relatively small.<sup>370</sup> Volunteerism is spreading in Jordan, helping to foster inclusion among some marginalized groups, especially those living in poverty pockets, as well as the young, while building employment and life skills. The United Nations Volunteers (UNV) programme which has gradually expanded, has contributed towards this through mobilization of national and foreign volunteers to assist the development efforts of government institutions, local NGOs and UN agencies.<sup>371</sup> This and other volunteer development programmes need to be documented as possible models for replication.

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<sup>368</sup> Interview with Dr. Sami Hourani, Director of Leaders of Tomorrow, 17 July 2011, quoted in "The Political Economy Analysis" 2011

<sup>369</sup> *ibid*

<sup>370</sup> MoPIC/UN, "Jordan's Human Development Report: Small Business and Human Development" 2011,

<sup>371</sup> MoPIC/UN, "Jordan's Human Development Report: Small Business and Human Development" 2011,

## The Private Sector

Private sector financing has played a key role in supplementing Jordan's public sector education and health facilities, particularly in urban areas. It is prominent in both the financing and the delivery of health services. Many individuals including those covered by public health insurance, purchase services through direct out-of-pocket payment, or through specific arrangements under their insurance schemes. The MoH through its Civil Insurance Plan has begun contracting procedures with the private sector which constitutes a large share of the country's medical expertise and technological capacity.<sup>372</sup> Its quality of services attracts large numbers of foreign patients, especially from neighbouring countries, and this medical tourism is a significant source of national revenue.<sup>373</sup> Private education covers an estimated one third of the country's needs and includes kindergarten, basic, secondary and higher education. Day care services are also provided mostly by the private sector.<sup>374</sup> However, access to quality health and education services is constrained for lower income groups.

Barring a few exceptions, in general the private sector's role in support of non-commercial community services is yet to evolve fully. Although various corporations have been actively involved in high-profile fundraising events or campaigns, only a few have given attention to tangible field project support, or attended to restructuring of their organizational approaches to avoid negative social or environmental impact. A case in point is the unrealized role of the private sector in environmental sustainability due to the sector's reluctance to implement voluntary environmental management options, or to support environmental organizations.<sup>375</sup> Adherence to the provisions of Labour Laws by industries also needs reinforcement to ensure improved working conditions and remuneration for male and female workers to attract more national labour. There is a relatively low level of awareness about the CSR concept among Jordanian companies.<sup>376</sup> Also on the institutional side, there is a general lack of know-how and expertise on how to convey the message to businesses, and to assist them in translating general awareness into in day-to-day activities. There is an urgent need to develop best practice cases adapted to the Jordanian context, leading to a better understanding of CSR among the SME community and improving the position of SMEs in a global value chain context.<sup>377</sup>

## The Media Role

The Jordanian Constitution (1952) states that "All Jordanian citizens have the freedom of expressing their opinions whether verbally, in writing and illustration, or through other means within the bounds of the law." A Press and Publications Law is currently under review so the extent to which it will remove some restrictions on freedom of expression remains to be seen.

Jordan has a diverse media landscape with active print outlets (One English and seven Arabic daily newspapers, 25 weeklies and 10 magazines), 19 radio stations, one public and three private TV stations.<sup>378</sup> In terms of audience, 45.9 % of the 15 plus age group read newspapers,<sup>379</sup> and 67.8 % are active radio listeners.<sup>380</sup> Newspaper readership is lower in rural settings (30-40%) and less than 20 % in some areas where literacy rates are low among women.<sup>381</sup> Further information on patterns of media outreach can help the design of targeted information and behavior change communication approaches.

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<sup>372</sup> Information note received from the WHO Country Office received August 2011

<sup>373</sup> *ibid*

<sup>374</sup> Information note received from UNESCO Jordan in August 2011

<sup>375</sup> Wardam.B/ROWA, "National Environment Summary", 2011

<sup>376</sup> MoPIC/UN, "Jordan's Human Development Report: Small Business and Human Development" 2011,

<sup>377</sup> *ibid*

<sup>378</sup> Media Sustainability Index (2009): Jordan. <http://www.irex.org/resource/jordan-media-sustainability-index-msi>, 2011

<sup>379</sup> Harris Interactive/IREX "Jordan Media Survey", 2009 <http://www.irex.org/resource/jordan-media-survey> [09.08.2011]

<sup>380</sup> Harris Interactive/IREX "Jordan Media Survey – Internet (2010): New Media – Quantitative Survey Offline. Part III

<sup>381</sup> MoPIC/UNDP, "Jordan's First Human Development Report", 2000

There has been much progress in the information and communication technology (ICT) field. Computer ownership rose from 16.4 % of households in 2002, to almost 50% in 2009.<sup>382</sup> The number of internet users grew exponentially from 600,000 in 2005 to 1.75 million in 2010.<sup>383</sup> With access to national and international satellite channels and widening access to the internet, media choices are constantly expanding. There are now 20 online, only-news websites (JMS-I 2010),<sup>384</sup> and according to the Arab Social Media Report an extensive and growing use of social networks in Jordan such as Facebook and Twitter. In May 2011 there were 1.4 million Jordanian users, 77 % aged between 15-29 and 59 % male.<sup>385</sup> ICT advancement in the country and the fast expanding engagement of the population in web based social networks are still to be explored for developmental purposes, for instance in effectively engaging young people in constructive developmental discourse, building their critical thinking or productive skills, or providing them career counseling and guidance. Research in Jordan, as elsewhere, has noted the influence of the media on the young, including in terms of dietary practices, which are leading to unhealthy lifestyles.<sup>386</sup> Another point of concern vis-à-vis international standards is the gender imbalance among media workers (some 81% men against 19% women).<sup>387</sup> Without the induction of more qualified female media professionals especially at decision making levels and the gender sensitization of male media practitioners this is likely to continue to affect the appropriate representation of women's issues by the media.

In addition to entertainment and advertising, the main focus of the official electronic and most print media in Jordan, as in most countries in the region, has traditionally been on the activities of senior official figures, besides the ongoing conflicts in parts of the Region.<sup>388</sup> In the past, news reports have tended to be events driven, and descriptive, rather than investigative or analytical, giving inadequate attention to issues directly affecting ordinary citizens.<sup>389</sup> More recently the Jordanian media is becoming sensitized to the challenges facing the country, projecting issues of developmental concern, becoming a proactive information seeker on such issues, and generating its own stories without having to rely on official press releases to start this process.<sup>390</sup>

Compared to several countries in the region, media in Jordan is relatively more independent and characterized by political, cultural and social diversity.<sup>391</sup> A complicated (and frequently conflicting) legal framework combined with political considerations has constrained substantive progress in media reform and there is a growing scepticism among media professionals and experts about the possibility of significant change in the short-term. Following progress towards further democratization of the media sector in May 2011, a new National Media Strategy was prepared by the National Dialogue Committee, but only partial amendment of some of its proposals was approved instead of comprehensive legal reform of the whole framework covering media and press freedom,<sup>392</sup> to the disappointment of media practitioners.

Democratic development of Jordan is inseparable from securing conditions for a free and pluralistic media environment. This is even more critical given the current political developments. H.M. King Abdullah II has repeatedly highlighted the importance of media freedom and pledged action on this. However, complex and often conflicting legal provisions combined with political and/or security considerations have constrained substantive progress in media reform.

The National Agenda discusses the freedom of the media in the context of its role as the “fourth authority”, and aims to ensure that “laws are in line with international human rights principles, guaranteeing freedoms of speech and

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<sup>382</sup> JPFHS 2002,2009

<sup>383</sup> International Telecommunication Union (ITU)

<sup>384</sup> Harris Interactive/IREX, “Jordan Media Survey – Internet”, 2010 New Media – Quantitative Survey Offline. Part III.

<sup>385</sup> Arab Social Media Report, Issue 2 (2011), Dubai School of Government available on <http://www.dsg.ac/portals/0/ASMR2.pdf>

<sup>386</sup> Haddad.L.G, Oweis.A, Mansour.A, “Wellness Appraisal among Adolescents in Jordan: a Model from a Developing Country,” 2009

<sup>387</sup> Houry M., Public Policy Research. Social Marketing – JMI – Journalist Training Needs Assessment

<sup>388</sup> NCF/A/UNICEF, “Children of Jordan: A Situation Analysis”, 2006/2007

<sup>389</sup> *ibid*

<sup>390</sup> *ibid*

<sup>391</sup> UN (United Nations) (2009): Jordan: National Profile of the Information Society in Western Asia. New York: United Nations. Available on: <http://www.escwa.un.org/wsis/reports/docs/Jordan-09-E.pdf> [09.08.2011]

<sup>392</sup> Ognian. Z, Background Paper “Recommendations for Improving Media Law, Policy and Regulation in Jordan in accordance with UNESCO’s Media Development Indicators”, May 2011

media.<sup>393</sup> Yet, there is still much ground to be covered for media organizations to become effective human rights advocates and organs for results-oriented public education, and meaningful projection of the human rights of women, children and marginalized groups. Their ability to do so depends on the manner in which their capacity is built up, and the degree to which are allowed autonomy of operation.

## UN and Donor Agencies

Jordan's relationship with the international aid community has continued to be close and strong for many decades. Many international agencies have offices in the country, while some provide support through their regional offices or headquarters.

The Bretton Woods Institutions have had a marked influence in shaping the Kingdom's approach to structural reform. Other contributing to policy and strategy development include a group of major multi-lateral and bilateral donors.

Jordan's UN partners include those with Jordan specific Country Programmes and UN Regional offices for the Middle East and North Africa Region which back-stop multi-country programmes. Four of the latter are resident in Jordan, namely UNICEF, UNWomen, UNHabitat, and the WHO Centre for Environmental Health Affairs (CEHA). Others such as ESCWA, ILO and UNEP provide support through their Regional Bureaus. Jordan is also host to the UNRWA Headquarters and the UN Assistance Mission for Iraq.

In view of the many common areas of interest among them, and to avoid duplication of efforts and resources, several mechanisms have been established by both the Jordanian Government and the donor community to improve coordination in the interest of aid effectiveness. The MoPIC in cooperation with the European Commission (EU) and the UN Resident Coordinator system has set up the 'Jordan AID Information Management Systems' (JAIMS) on its website, to provide information on all ongoing development projects in the country. The MoPIC has also established other coordination structures through different thematic groups in diverse areas, while a donor/lender group has been set up to facilitate coherence of approaches. Several other mechanisms were established to facilitate coordination among different international and national partners working with specific groups, for examples the Iraqis in Jordan. This reflects the importance the Government and the donor community place on coordination among national and international development partners.

Income and development levels determine the global funding priorities of UN and donor countries. Jordan is classified as an upper middle-income country and has a fairly advanced level of human development. As such in terms of budget allocations Jordan is not a priority country for the UN and some bilateral donors. Provision of access to technical knowledge and expertise, as well as to markets, is considered more relevant to the country. Apart from the substantial inputs of UNRWA's Jordan Field Office for services to Palestine refugees, UN agencies are not major financial contributors to either development or humanitarian programmes in Jordan. Their value for Jordan is linked to their capacity to provide technical assistance and policy advice, for instance on approaches to meet international human rights obligations and on issues such as governance and economic reform, aspects of social and human development; environmental sustainability; gender equality and empowerment, and disparity reduction in general. They are also appreciated for their advocacy capacity and being able to work at both national and local levels. A survey<sup>394</sup> conducted in parallel to this Country Assessment identified four major categories of the UN's comparative advantages as follows:

- **Ability to advocate for and promote global norms and standards, inclusive and participatory development, ratified human rights instruments, the Millennium Declaration and the MDGs.** The UNCT can speak confidently on these matters upon which policies and legislation for national development

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<sup>393</sup> NCFA/UNICEF, "Children of Jordan: A Situation Analysis", 2006/2007

<sup>394</sup> Annex 8: Comparative Advantages survey of the UN system in Jordan.

can be based, push on issues and in areas where national progress is falling behind, and be a complement the efforts and assistance of other development partners in the Kingdom.

- **Ability to leverage global expertise, provide impartial policy advice, based on international experience, technical expertise and best practices, in support of national leader- and ownership.** The UNCT offers a range of expertise in the areas of development and humanitarian assistance combined with access to regional as well as global technical knowledge and experience, including South-South cooperation. The UN can in this regard offer best practices and share lessons learned from other countries for ‘tried-and tested’ evidence-based recommendations.
- **Neutrality, impartiality, broad-based partnerships across sectors, and the ability to convene diverse stakeholders and build consensus on sensitive issues.** The UNCT is able to build consensus towards shared development goals, particularly the MDGs, and promote approaches to policy and programmes. It also has a defining role in facilitating dialogue on sensitive issues.
- **Ability to leverage resources beyond regular donors.** The UNCT in Jordan has over the years demonstrated its track record in mobilizing resources not only from the donor community but also from the private sector or, where the UN seal of neutrality and transparency is required, channel funds itself. One clear example of the latter is in the context of humanitarian assistance, the UNCT is able to mobilize resources through e.g. Flash Appeals, Humanitarian Action Plans and Consolidated Humanitarian Action Plans.

There are close ties between the UN agencies and their respective partner ministries, with an increasing trend towards inter-agency planning with the government, in some cases resulting in joint programmes between two or more agencies. Support for MDG achievement cuts across all agency programmes. UN partnerships with government and NGOs are also growing at national and sub-national levels. All partner initiatives are based on an analysis of development challenges and opportunities, and designed as per the respective mandates and comparative advantages of the particular agency, and around mutual synergies in the case of joint programmes. Inter-agency theme groups facilitate periodic knowledge sharing, joint analysis and strategy and plan development.

The joint preparation by MoPIC and UN agencies, of Jordan’s 2004 and 2010 MDG Reports are important landmarks in collaborative MDG monitoring by national and international agencies, as are the series of Jordan’s Human Development Reports which also involved a range of stakeholders. Jordan’s 2010 MDGR terms the preparation of the report through a close partnership between over 80 entities, government, civil society and the UN, gives the message that “achieving the MDGs is a societal mission and project.”

Within the broad framework of the three main thrusts of the current UNDAF (2008-2012), i.e., Poverty and Social Services, Governance, and Healthy and Sustainable Environment, some associated issues identified for joint UNCT action include food security, adaptation for climate change and disaster risk reduction, and social protection.

Jordan is one of 10 countries selected to participate in the UNDP Millennium Development Goals Acceleration Framework” (MAF). For this, the Government and the UN team are focusing on MDG 1, through a joint Government-UN Interagency initiative entitled ‘Food and Nutrition Security towards Poverty Alleviation’. Another multi-partner effort is the Adaptation to Climate Change project which brings together WHO and MOH, FAO and the Ministry of Agriculture, UNESCO and the Ministry of Water and Irrigation (MWI), UNDP and the MoEnv.<sup>395</sup> The UN-Government partnership is being further reinforced to accelerate progress towards the other Goals through the current UNDAF with efforts to continue through the UNDAF 2013-2017.<sup>396</sup>

## **Key Common Areas of Focus of the International Community**

While different international agencies have diverse development interest some elements cut across the programmes of many, since such programmes are designed to address critical national areas of interest. In recent years the

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<sup>395</sup> Mentioned earlier in Chapter 2. Participating agencies include MoSD, the Jordan Social Security Council, ILO, WHO, UNICEF, UNDP.

<sup>396</sup> MoPIC/UN, “Keeping the Promise and Achieving Aspirations: Second Millennium Development Report -Jordan”, 2010

commonalities have included: Governance at national and decentralized levels; Systems and Economic Reform; education, health, population policies and reproductive health, environmental sustainability. There are also social justice related issues such as - income and regional disparities; the rights of children, women, and those of especially vulnerable groups.

**Systemic Reform Initiatives:** Technical support provided for upstream policy and plan development focuses on areas of Democratization including decentralization to the governorate and municipality levels, economic diversification, employment generation and fiscal efficiency, poverty alleviation, improvement of vocational and technical education and entrepreneurship development. Most of these have a particular focus on women and youth, though relevant implementation strategies are not always evident.

**Environmental Sustainability:** The focus on Water is common to all major donor and many UN agendas, while adaptation to climate change and support for the adoption of the Green Economy approach is also emerging. Several donors are also focusing on energy related issues. Areas of environmental support vary from large infrastructural projects, to policy and strategy development, and promotion of improved coordination mechanisms to address a number of issues.

**Social Development** related programmes basically cover MDG related health, nutrition, education and poverty and disparity reduction aspects. Related efforts which involve government and NGO partnerships focus at national level on advocacy, knowledge generation, policy and strategy development, networking and coordination aspects, as well as planning and implementation at the local level.

**Social Justice encompasses:** Advocacy for legislative, policy and planning, as well as strengthening of related institutions, and implementation mechanisms, to harmonize national systems to principles of ratified Human Rights Conventions, with particular emphasis on the removal of discriminatory conditions for women, children and the marginalized. Social Protection as a cross cutting approach is being approached through the multi-agency Social Protection Floor initiative.

**Youth issues:** While several agencies have begun to focus on adolescent and youth development for about a decade, this is now fast emerging as a major common priority. These are gradually beginning to be addressed in the context of adolescents and young adults include: health seeking behavior; reproductive health; educational quality; employability options; civic engagement and preparation for political participation.

Improved **integration of gender equality and women's empowerment** was adopted as a cross-cutting approach in the current UNDAF, in view of its potential multi-dimensional impact, and human right implications. This seems to have undergone somewhat of a fade out effect, particularly with respect to Environment related initiatives.

## **Key Challenges**

Capable multi-disciplinary partnerships will be key to translating Jordan's commitments to Jordan's ideals for macro-level progress, and in the interest of real impact on the lives of its people, including MDG achievement, sustaining the gains and building upon the progress achieved. The milestone year of 2015 for MDG achievement will coincide with the mid-point of the upcoming UNDAF 2013-2017. Existing alliances will therefore need to be strengthened and new ones fostered to accelerate progress. Areas of reinforcement include: the induction of a stronger rights orientation; sharpening of planning, implementation and monitoring skills of the main stakeholders; development of approaches to enhance the participation of all societal groups; and regularization of coordination processes. The role of private sector and media also needs much enhancement. A critical underlying requirement is to enhance age group and gender oriented responsiveness of initiatives keeping in mind the special needs of particularly vulnerable groups.

High turnover of government staff at all levels is a major challenge which delays important decisions, the formulation and approval of policies, strategies and plans of action, and consequently also implementation. The harmonization of the number of existing coordination mechanisms is another major concern.

Women, adolescents and young people are still treated as passive beneficiaries of development due to gender and age biases inculcated from early childhood and the procedural regulations of many stakeholders. Making young men and women more equal partners in development is particularly important for Jordan as the age-group represents more than half of the nation's population. For this to happen, attitudes must change about their potential to contribute, so that avenues for participation are opened to them. The best way to do so is to empower them to demonstrate that partnership with them will add value to development planning and outcomes. Preparation for effective participation must start early and continue

The developmental role of CSOs is critical in remote areas where outreach of government services faces practical constraints, but commitment to community participation is still not fully institutionalized as a fundamental element of development. Very few regional and grassroots groups have been engaged in national decision-making processes. Substantive long term efforts are needed to extend the enabling process to all rural and remote communities, and ensure that these organizations engage women, young people, and marginalized groups effectively.

A major challenge exists in getting private sector corporations to share more effectively in Jordan's development efforts by focusing their Corporate Social Responsibility mandates on key national priorities, for instance through more proactive contributions to the government's efforts to enhance the labour force participation of women and youth, and observing environmental sustainability regulations. Optimizing the media role for development is still challenging due to the still inadequate social consciousness among media owners and practitioners, the restrictions the media works under and low gender parity among media professionals.

Despite the growing cooperation trend among international agencies more streamlined joint project planning, information sharing and monitoring, is indicated to maximize development outcomes and optimization of the use of available human, institutional and financial resources. Knowledge networking needs to be regularized on thematic and emerging issues of concern through thematic reviews, the issuance of theme papers, and by timely sharing of research study reports and training material. Besides the development of common strategic frameworks, and networking on programmatic issues, it would be useful to affect synergies in implementation standards and processes, as well as monitoring and evaluation tools.



## CHAPTER 5: CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Jordan's socio-economic achievements have been positive despite its vulnerability to external shocks, shortage of natural resources, and the still high, but declining, population growth rate, which has resulted in an unusually high dependency ratio. The country's progress towards MDGs achievement is particularly laudable, though like all countries some gaps still need to be addressed. Several reform plans have been implemented, with varied levels of success. Though some challenges persist, appropriate approaches to address them can convert challenging situations into longer term, more sustainable gains.

### Challenges and their Causality

The challenges facing Jordan's future development arise from issues which exist at three levels:

- **Structural issues or root causes.** These are for instance the country's geographical location, environmental features, shortage of natural resources, the tribal background, and regional political dynamics.
- **Systemic or underlying issues** which arise from the structural factors. These include the uneven settlement patterns due to environmental factors, such as water scarcity, severe energy dependency, a fragile economy, heavy dependence on external aid, vulnerability to regional economic and political influences, and the slow pace of development of political parties and institutions. Other issues include patriarchal family norms and attitudes towards the role of women in the public domain, educational and parenting patterns which do not encourage critical thinking or freedom of expression, the nature of its laws, policies, administrative systems and institutional mechanisms.
- **The effects of systemic issues.** These are manifested in the stagnating fertility and contraceptive prevalence rates, sub-national disparities in access to resources and differentials in human development indicators, women's low participation in the labour force and in public decision-making, inappropriate lifestyles among the young and their lack of preparedness to take on political and leadership responsibilities.

This is not to imply the absence of positive influences that have contributed to progress on many aspects of life in Jordan. There is a high level of political commitment to the development of human resources. Many progressive laws and policies address economic and social aspects and basic institutional mechanisms are functional. There has been a quantum leap in access to health, education, basic services and new technologies. Living standards have improved in general. Access to national and international media and new technologies continues to expand. There is increasing attention to youth issues and to reducing gender, sub-national and other disparities. The momentum towards democratization and decentralization is being accelerated. The abovementioned are opportunities and entry points for the UNCT to build further on its partnership with diverse national stakeholders.

### The UN's supportive role in addressing the main developmental challenges in Jordan

It is clear that addressing structural issues is beyond the scope of the UN team, but it can help to tackle the underlying issues and also the visible manifestations of the situation. The main challenges associated with these issues are:

- Full alignment of laws, policies, and implementation mechanisms and procedures with agreed human rights treaties and other international agreement, including on environmental sustainability;
- Developing optimal institutional capacities of mechanisms charged with furthering human rights;
- Reinforcing the knowledge base to fill existing quantitative and causal analysis gaps, and developing capacities to use this for planning;
- Strengthening of political institutions and members of parliament and municipal councilors for development of agendas and effective engagement in legislative process;

- Strengthening good governance principles of transparency, participations and accountability in state- civil society relationships;
- Reducing disparities – income, gender, age group related, sub-national and marginalized groups;
- Leadership and management skill development of women, young people and civil society organizations to contribute effectively to political and social development processes, at both national and sub-national levels;
- Encouraging civic participation;
- Developing effective strategies for behavior change;
- Addressing high population growth rates and fertility stagnation;
- Development of comprehensive multi-dimensional strategies for youth development including in preparation for the demographic window of opportunity;
- Qualitative improvement of the educational system including its relevance to the labour market;
- Sustaining the gains in child and maternal health and effective promotion of healthy lifestyles to prevent the rise of non-communicable diseases;
- Enhancing the capacity of women and youth to benefit from diversified employability options;
- Strengthening the role of the private sector for job creation and promotion of the entrepreneurial spirit;
- Encouraging research and investments in renewable energies to bridge the gap in energy dependency;
- Supporting the free flow of information, ideas and communication;
- Enhancing the role of culture in development also linked to income generating activities.
- Ensuring coordination and monitoring of environmental initiatives and preparation of a holistic disaster risk reduction plan.
- Strengthening aid coordination and effectiveness amongst donors and the GOJ.

This Country Assessment identified indications that the current context in Jordan is different in several respects from the time of the “2006 Assessment”, resulting in the emergence of a new set of development priorities. From a range of contextual issues, a short list of the key thematic areas are recommend for more concentrated attention. The criteria adopted for determining this short list includes:

- The respective degree of relevance to the current situation;
- The level of risk in not addressing them;
- Their potential impact in effecting positive change;
- The existence of opportunities that can be used to bring about the required positive impact;
- Relevance to the UN mandate and;
- The comparative advantage of the UNCT and synergies among UN agencies that could facilitate the maximum support to achieve the UNDAF objectives.

## **The identified priority areas are:**

**Enhancing Systemic Reform:** Institutional reform, decentralization, strengthening people's participation capacity, improving transparency and accountability with the aim to improve the performance of political, economic, social, and administrative systems and processes.

**Ensuring Social Equity:** A reinforced focus on development of human capital (in particular women and children), including towards enhanced productivity, human rights promotion, decentralized planning to reduce disparities between governorates, gender and less advantaged groups and acceleration of progress towards achieving the MDGs.

**Investing in Young People:** A holistic approach to addressing the health, education, employability, civic engagement and protection issues of various sub-groups within this larger population group, which will be entrusted with determining the country's future coping capacity, sustaining its progress and ensuring its security.

**Preserving the Environment:** Integrated water resource management, renewable energy, transition to a green economy, sustainable tourism, community-based conservation and sustainable use of ecosystem, adaptation to climate change and youth entrepreneurship in environmental excellence and disaster risk reduction.

From within these broad priority areas, the UNDAF 2013-2017 will focus on a few elements which correspond to the UNs teams comparative advantages. The objectives of any of the selected priorities would best be met by ensuring due attention to an adequate level of integration of gender equality, age differential and localized approaches, in addition to attention to the most marginalized groups and fostering the participation of local community groups in local development initiatives.

### **Enhancing Systemic Reform**

Much depends on the outcome of the ongoing political and economic reform processes and the manner in which the economic and social justice ideals of the National Agenda are translated into reality by Executive Development Programmes. This is especially important in the context of the "Arab Spring" phenomenon. The economic and social justice ideals of the National Agenda are critical to ensure equal rights, especially for the most vulnerable, ensure a decent standard of living, good health, education, meaningful employment opportunities. The adoption of positive approaches will not only benefit overall governance, but will result in feelings of inclusion, ownership and social justice contributing to national stability.

Planning of macro-economic policies and programmes will also benefit from consideration of the impact of various macro-economic policies on the real income of those whose livelihood options may be negatively affected by the macro policies; for instance, the communities in areas affected by land degradation and facing food insecurity. Poverty alleviation approaches will have better outputs if they are localized and developed in consultation with local communities rather than under a one size fits all approach. Involvement of women and young people in such consultation will help to ensure that their concerns receive due attention. Enhanced labour force and political participation of women and young people will optimize the contribution of more than two-thirds of its human resources, towards the economy, also improving chances of sustainability of socio-economic gains achieved, and of further progress.

Focused attention on sub-national disparity reduction in terms of the availability of employment options would impact positively on the economic and political situation. This would help to reduce the rural-urban gap in poverty, unemployment and other socio-economic conditions; thus stemming the flow of rural to urban migrants by providing employment opportunities close to home, alleviating unrest and contributing to the development of private enterprises and self employment. This would also be in line with the government's move towards decentralized development.

While national stakeholders will be in the driving seat to institute macro political and economic reform, the UNCT can assist through reinforced advocacy and capacity development of members of parliament and municipal councilors, both male and female. It can help to develop strategies for economic diversification, job creation, and entrepreneurship promotion, in addition to contributing to research and formulation of governorate level development plans that focus on the greater participation of women and youth in local development activities. This will not require starting from scratch since opportunities exist to build upon previous and ongoing initiatives of various resident agencies, in addition to the availability of national expertise and that of UN regional bureaus specializing in governance, poverty alleviation, employment generation, entrepreneurship development, gender equality, among other areas.

## **Ensuring Social Equity**

Optimum institutionalization of Human Rights principles into national laws, as part of the legislative reform process would further serve the interest of social justice. Some sensitive and complex issues, especially those related to children, adolescents, young people and women, as highlighted in Chapter 2, will need to be addressed.

This will require adoption of a broad social development framework which incorporates stronger integration of human rights, gender equality principles and elimination of various disparities as essential elements of all programmes. In addition to enhancing local ownership of activities relating to the implementation of the conventions, community participation in local initiatives encourages political commitment to the causes being promoted and creates efficient feedback mechanisms.

All rights issues have economic as well as developmental implications at the family, community and national levels. Projecting these issues in the context of their economic and development implications could help to further the acceptance of the need to address them. Another essential requirement would be to affect necessary legislative and policy measures and put in place supporting mechanisms and approaches to fully realize the Constitutional principles of freedom of expression, including by building the capacity of the media and ensuring its independence of operation.

Action planning for marginalized groups, who are not likely to benefit from generalized approaches, would benefit from more causal analysis of vulnerabilities, improvement of technical expertise and financial resources and development of strategic frameworks. Initiatives to fill information gaps on the socio-economic indicators of refugee groups living in Jordan would facilitate proper planning and service provision to ensure that their basic rights are being met and that any gaps in their socio-economic indicators do not negatively affect the overall human development in the country.

A more inclusive approach towards the preparation of the reports submitted to various Treaty Bodies and wide circulation of the reports, along with the observations and conclusions of the Treaty Bodies on the reports, could contribute to widening knowledge on rights issues and generating support from additional quarters. This communication strategy for this will need careful designing to avoid possible back lash from conservative elements.

Jordan's state of progress towards the MDGs offers the opportunity to move towards higher levels of development. Moreover, the principles underlying the MDGs will still be relevant after 2015. The national 2010 MDG report therefore suggests a proactive approach to sustaining the gains and moving on to an "advanced developmental level." This requires a declaration of renewed commitment from the highest level and also a sharper focus on the micro level by developing decentralized profiles as a basis for targeted attention to critical issues at the sub-national level, including behaviour change and behavior design thinking strategies affecting lifestyles of all levels of society.

With positive advances towards achieving quantitative MDG outcomes, sharpened attention is now required towards achieving the qualitative aspects. These include improving the quality of education, enhancing health-seeking behaviors to diagnosis non-communicable diseases, furthering of women's participation in the public space, promoting environmentally friendly practices of macro-economic measures and communities, and approaching poverty alleviation

policies which go beyond the poverty line focus to take into account family size and dependency level, in addition to diverse consumption needs.

Since the MDGs are inter-related, the approach towards the Goals should be holistic within an overall strategic framework with sub-strategies for the component goals designed to be mutually reinforcing rather than addressing each Goal as a standalone objective. A cohesive framework is therefore needed. Related sectoral plans need to be pulled together and the points of intersection identified with all stakeholders associated in a well coordinated manner, so that it is perceived as a national priority. If well designed and delivered, this can have a multiplier effect that positively influences healthy lifestyles, responsible citizenship, gender relations, respect for human rights and the environment, and social integration skills. While focusing on practical measures to accelerate progress on MDG achievement in order to achieve the social justice objective of the National Agenda, it is important to perceive the MDGs in the context of inter-relationships between the principles underlying the various Conventions and the Millennium Declaration. This should guide the adoption of approaches which are age appropriate and conscious of the different situations of people as per their place of residence, income and educational levels, particular vulnerabilities, as well as their potential to contribute to national progress.

Further joint strategic planning between national stakeholders and the UNCT towards the 2015 MDG deadline and beyond must start now with a more thorough analysis of the success factors, as well as reasons for identified shortfalls. The challenges relating to the achievement of each individual Goal have been well identified in development terms. The UNCT is now required to advocate for and facilitate the induction of concepts of inter-relatedness among the Goals that highlights the human rights aspects of the Goals and their respective indicators in terms of gender equality and equity among groups keeping in mind the human rights challenges highlighted in Chapter 2.

### **Investing in Young People**

Priority attention is needed to develop a holistic, age appropriate human resource development approach towards young people that encompasses the multiple dimensions of their lives – health, education, economic productivity, approach to gender relations, and responsible citizenship. Developing the human capital of youth and widening their participation options would help to fulfill their developmental rights and pay multiple dividends by providing Jordan with more knowledgeable and skilled human resources. The UNCT will be required to play a major role in helping the country move towards these objectives. For this to happen, it is necessary to take the views of different youth groups into consideration as a basis for planning age appropriate strategies, which are linked to mainstream development programmes rather than being addressed only through separate interventions, though in some cases specific initiatives would also be required. Besides more sub-group focused research, targeted capacity development will also be required of youth and planners and service providers.

The internalization of positive socio-cultural attitudes and behavior towards, for instance, gender sensitivity, healthy life styles, respect for the environment, and small family norm, also has a better chance of success if these are adopted or reinforced at early ages. Starting with the younger age groups and moving up through the various education tiers the quality of education will need concentrated attention, coupled with awareness raising and behaviour change communication to foster healthy and positive lifestyles, gender responsiveness and respect for human rights and the environment. The focus on developing responsible citizenship and leadership skills and providing civic engagement opportunities will need to be reinforced and extended to all areas to develop capacities for effective political participation.

Enhancement of employability skills requires both job creation and innovative redesign of vocational and technical education curriculum based on market surveys. The points rating system which determines the entry of school dropouts into various academic disciplines needs to be re-examined with aptitudes also being factored in. Career counseling, a critical missing element needs to be introduced towards the end of the basic education cycle in partnership with the Chamber of Commerce and Industry. Communication approaches should also address parents considering their strong deciding influence on educational specializations and employment choices with little regard

for individual aptitudes and market demands. To change the heavy preference for already over-subscribed public sector jobs, interaction of parents and youth could be arranged with successful young entrepreneurs to highlight the benefits of small and medium enterprises. Entrepreneurship promotion would also be furthered by wider scale media projection of the existing support services and how to avail them.

Redoubled efforts will be required to promote the small family norm to ensure the timely peaking of the 'window of opportunity'. The extent to which Jordan can benefit from this window of opportunity depends on the country's ability and preparedness to reduce the total fertility rate, provide basic health and education services, develop health lifestyles among children and youth and foster their civic engagement. Other important prerequisites would be promoting behavior change communication and behavior design thinking to prepare young people for responsible political participation, as well as initiatives to generate employment for the increasing percentages of young men and women entering the labour market.

### **Preserving Environmental Sustainability**

The success of the government's environmental conservation efforts and progress towards full application of the Green Economy principles is expected to influence the state of its future economy, in addition to the preservation of its rich cultural heritage and an environment which provides livelihood options and increased levels of comfort to local communities. It would also help to avoid the risk of environmental hazards which could lead to major disasters and negatively impact both the national economy and the lives of communities. Appropriately designed environmental initiatives could also positively affect people's lives also contributing social justice through proactive interventions addressing the quality of life of community groups – male, female, children, and the marginalized.

The Government is developing mega projects to address environmental issues, some of which will need to be planned and monitored closely to rule out possibilities of negative side effects. Moreover, gaps in environmental protection need to be filled expeditiously to check further damage to the environment and community health and livelihoods. This requires better monitoring of industries to ensure adherence to environmental regulations, improvement of waste management, reforestation, better land use management, general environmental awareness and education, in addition to ensuring food security through provision of alternatives to agricultural activities in areas where the scope for this is diminishing. A major determinant for the overall success will be improvement of coordination aspects.

Good experience has been gained through joint programmes for food security and climate change initiated under the current UNDAF. The overall approach to environmental sustainability can be further improved by the UNCT by strengthening the knowledge base (including at local levels) on the differential relationships of men and women with varied aspects of the environment and the environmental impact on the health and coping capacities of these groups, more attention to the design of participatory and coordinated conservation approaches, design of targeted organizational and community-based capacity development approaches, providing coordination and networking forums, developing techniques and tools to monitor existing and new industrial, tourism and environment specific initiatives to identify their impact on the economy, the environment and on people's lives.

A positive recent development is the Government's interest in greening the economy. A Scoping Study undertaken this year is providing the basis for assessing the way forward to developing a strategy for greening six sectors, namely: energy, transport, water use, waste management, agriculture and food, and sustainable tourism.

The emphasis on local-level participation is the foundation for engendering sustainable development policies, as priorities and contributions of both women and men are taken into consideration from the grassroots level upwards. Gender mainstreaming in local level environmental development initiatives should be seen as a means of increasing efficiency in Convention implementation, through better governance, higher participation and enhanced involvement of all segments of affected populations. Essential related measures include:

- Research and documentation to bridge the knowledge gap on environmental and climate change issues;

- Enhancement of the gender sensitivity of environmental management through induction of clear gender responsive policies and project objectives;
- Capacity development of related institutions and community infrastructures to better integrate the concerns and participation of men and women in environmental initiatives;
- Development of a comprehensive Disaster Risk Management and Mitigation Plan.

### **Special Cross cutting Concerns**

- **Engendering Development**

The impact of women's role on development at the family level came across very clearly during a review of documents for this analysis, for instance in terms of the impact of female education on women's age of marriage and motherhood, their levels of contraceptive use and their approaches towards social issues. While there was also much evidence about the advancement of Jordanian women in various fields, their significantly lower participation in economic and political matters as compared to men also became clear, as did the social, legal and administrative constraints affecting them.

Initiatives towards women's empowerment and gender equality can be cultivated through a comprehensive set of inter-linked approaches based upon the considerable progress on women's health and education and to a lesser extent on their entry into the labour force and the political arena. Since neglect and violation of the human rights of women and other vulnerable groups are surface manifestations of problems stemming from complex and deep-rooted societal norms, better designed behaviour change strategies will be required to address such attitudes and also to positively influence healthy lifestyles among the general public.

Communication approaches will have better outcomes if they are accompanied by practical measures that address the underlying and structural factors which constrain women's labour force participation, for instance, by removing discriminatory legal, employment and civil service regulations, as well as gender stereotyping elements in the educational system and adopting gender responsive approaches in employment policies and the design of related support services. For this to happen, it will be necessary for the UNCT to help build a better knowledge base on women's actual contribution to family and national life, the practical constraints limiting their participation, adapting service rules and support systems to enhance their participation and changing negative mindsets.

## **Reinforcing Planning and Implementation Capacities**

### **• The Evidence Base for Planning**

Notwithstanding the considerable knowledge base built up through research and the establishment of monitoring systems and data bases, the documents reviewed for this assessment<sup>397</sup> have highlighted several areas which require further attention to update and/or reinforce the knowledge base. More causal analysis, as well as further disaggregation of data by age, and gender, vulnerable groups and region would reinforce the evidence base for planning. This Assessment would have benefited further from the availability of further solid updated well analyzed information and age and gender disaggregated data on some issues, particularly on the situation of marginalized and vulnerable groups such as those living with disabilities, and their access to opportunities. Other under-researched areas appeared to be the actual impact of environmental factors on community groups (male, female and children) and their potential role in Jordan's environmental preservation efforts.

### **• Institutional Capacities**

Developing institutional capacities at national and sub-national levels, especially around relatively new areas of programming would yield better and longer term benefits with increased stability of tenure of the concerned personnel within relevant institutions at both national and sub-national levels. Frequent staff turnover negatively affects both policy and strategy development as well as field implementation. Along with efforts to improve evidence-based planning, implementation, monitoring and reporting capacities at national and sub-national levels it is essential to focus on the technical aspects of new areas of programming, for instance the development of approaches to target vulnerable populations and grant them the same rights as the national average, or developing initiatives addressing young people. This will require more innovative approaches for data generation and use, and with the improvement in indicators, also refinement of routine administrative records and their use to identify disparities and provide early warning of the beginning of any decline in socio-economic indicators.

### **• Partnerships**

Partnerships between government agencies, NGOs and international agencies are steadily expanding and being reinforced. Collaborative initiatives are achieving good results but need further improvement, especially with respect to information sharing, joint planning, harmonized advocacy approaches and regularized and inclusive coordination.

An enabling process has begun for some community groups to acquire capacity to handle their local problems. Much stronger efforts are needed to correct knowledge and capacity imbalances, to induct a conscious focus on the rights issues of children, young people and women and to take the enabling process for them to scale.

### **• Risks of Disasters and Humanitarian Emergencies**

Jordan is highly vulnerable to refugee influxes due to population movements resulting from regional volatility and the risks of environmental hazards. It is therefore of critical importance to develop overarching emergency preparedness plans which take a technically sound and people centred approach to potential environmental and conflict related risks, also defining coherent coordination structures at national and local levels.

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<sup>397</sup> Note: Specifically noted in Chapters 2 and 3.



## **ANNEXES**

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## ANNEX 2: Human Right Conventions

Source: University of Minnesota, Human Rights Library (<http://www1.umn.edu/humanrts/research/ratification-jordan.html>)

Conventions Ratified and/or Signed by the Government of Jordan	Signature	Ratification	Accession	Succession	Entry into Force
International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights of 1966	30 Jun 1972	28 May 1975	-	-	3 Jan 1976
International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights of 1966	30 Jun 1972	28 May 1975			23 Mar 1976
International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination of 1965			30 May 1974		
Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women of 1979	3 Dec 1980	1 Jul 1992			
United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime	26 Nov 2002				
Supplementary Convention on the Abolition of Slavery, the Slave Trade, and Institutions and Practices Similar to Slavery			27 Sep 1957		
Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment of 1984			13 Nov 1991		
Convention on the Rights of the Child of 1989		23 Jun 1991			
Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities	30 Mar 2007	31 Mar 2008			
Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the involvement of children in armed conflicts	6 Sep 2000				18 Jan 2002
Convention concerning the Prohibition and Immediate Action for the Elimination of the Worst Forms of Child Labour		20 Apr 2000			
Right to Organize and Collective Bargaining Convention		12 Dec 1968			
Convention concerning Forced or Compulsory Labour		6 Jun 1966			
Equal Remuneration Convention		22 Sep 1966			
Abolition of Forced Labour Convention		31 Mar 1958			
Discrimination (Employment and Occupation) Convention		4 Jul 1963			
Employment Policy Convention		10 Mar 1966			
Convention against Discrimination in Education		Ratified			
Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide			3 Apr 1950		
Rome statute of the International Criminal Court	7 Oct 1998	11 Apr 2002			
Geneva Convention for the Amelioration of the Condition of the Wounded and sick in Armed Forces in the Field		29 May 1951 Ratif./Acc.			
Geneva Convention for the Amelioration of the Condition of Wounded, Sick and Shipwrecked Members of Armed Forces at Sea		29 May 1951 Ratif./Acc.			
Geneva Convention relative to the Treatment of Prisoners of War		29 May 1951 Raif./Acc.			
Protocol Additional to the Geneva Conventions of 12 August 1949, and Relating to the Protection of Victims of International Armed Conflicts (Protocol I)	12 Dec 1977	1 May 1979 Ratif./Acc.			
Protocol Additional to the Geneva Conventions of 12 August 1949, and relating to the protection of Victims on Non-international Armed Conflicts (Protocol II)	12 Dec 1977	1 May 1979 Ratif./Acc.			
International Convention Against the Taking of Hostages			19 Feb 1986		
International Convention for the Suppression of the Financing of Terrorism	25 Sep 2001	28 Aug 2003			
International Convention for the Suppression of Financing of Terrorism	24 Sep 2001	28 Aug 2003			
International Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of Crimes Against International Protected Persons			18 Dec 1984		
Convention on the Privileges and Immunities of the United Nations			3 Jan 1958		



### ANNEX 3: List of Environmental Agreements to which Jordan is a signatory

Environmental Agreement	Date	****
Ramsar Convention of Wetlands of International Importance	1971	
Convention on the Protection of African-Euro-Asian Migratory Waterfowls	1971	
Convention on the Protection from Marine Pollution by Dumping of Wastes and other Matter	1972	
Protocol of 1978 related to the International Convention for the Prevention of Pollution from Ships	1978	
Convention Concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage	1975	
Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES)	1979	
Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals	1979	
Secretariat for both the Vienna Convention and the Montreal Protocol for the Protection of the Ozone Layer	1987	
Basel Convention on the Control of Trans-boundary Movements of Hazardous Wastes and their disposal	1992	
UN Framework Convention on Climate Change	1993	
Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD)	1994	
UN Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD)	1996	
UN Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD)	2000	
Kyoto Protocol on Climate Change	2003	
Rotterdam Convention on Prior Informed Consent Procedure for Certain Hazardous Chemicals and Pesticides in International Trade	2004	
Stockholm Protocol on Persistent Organic Pollutants (POPs)	2004	

## ANNEX 4: Institutional Mechanisms to further Human Rights

Institution	Year of Establishment	Mandate
The Jordanian National Commission for Women (JCNW)	1992	
The Family Protection Department (FPD)	1997	
The Child Safety Programme at the Jordan River Foundation	1998	
Child Labour Unit	2001	
The National Centre for Human Rights	2002	
Family Shelter	2007	
The Higher Council for the Affairs of Persons with Disabilities	2007	

**1992** - The Jordanian National Commission for Women (JCNW) established the national mechanism for promotion of women's issues. It works through a Secretariat and an array of subsidiary networks of government bodies and NGOs. A Parliamentary Working Group on Women's Issues has also been set up.

**1997** - The Family Protection Department (FPD) set up as the main institution responsible for dealing with cases of violence and abuse against children and women.

**1998** - The Child Safety Programme at the Jordan River Foundation, launched as the institutional framework for protecting children at risk of abuse and raising public awareness on issues of violence against children.

**2001** - A Child Labour Unit set up at the Ministry of Labour (MoL)

**2001** - The National Council for Family Affairs (NCFA) set up for advocacy, situation monitoring and coordination of child and family related issues, review of relevant legislation, recommending amendments where indicated, and the formulation of policies and strategies.

**2001** - The Ministry of Youth and Sports transformed into a Higher Council for Youth (HCY) to ensure enhanced attention to adolescents and youth.

**2002** - The National Centre for Human Rights established with the mandate to: monitor government accountability in all matters relating to human rights, including the enforcement of law; recommend legislative amendments in line with the spirit of the constitution and international instruments, especially in matters relating to public freedoms. A Committee on Women and Children has been established within it to ensure due attention to their concerns.

**2007** - The first Family Shelter inaugurated.

**2007** - The Higher Council for the Affairs of Persons with Disabilities created, along with the National Fund for Supporting Persons with Disabilities under Law 31/2007 which covers multi-sectoral support aspects, and special incentives and exemptions for persons living with disabilities and their families.

A Human Rights and Family Affairs Directorate established within the Ministry of Justice, with a mandate to examine and monitor domestic violence cases, and contribute to the development of judicial investigation criteria and mechanisms to enhance awareness about domestic violence issues. Also responsible for identifying the human rights related training needs of judges, legal assistants, and senior court management cadres including in relation to women's rights.

The Ministry of Social Development has progressively undergone policy and administrative reforms to broaden its concepts and enhance its capacity to deal with emerging concern about the protection needs of particularly vulnerable groups.

## ANNEX 5: Millennium Development Goals status – 2010

Indicators	Years					
	1992 1990	2002 2001	2006	2008	2009	2015
<b>Goal 1: Eradicate Extreme Poverty and Hunger</b>						
Proportion of population below extreme poverty line	6.6	4	2.3	0.25	-	3.3
Poverty gap ratio	5.3	3.3	2.8	2.6	-	2.7
Share of poorest 20% quintile in overall consumption	6.5	6.9	7.7	11.2	-	10
Employee's per capita share of GDP in Jordan/JD	5430	4732		6652	6606	
Employment-to-population ratio	34.4	34	32.7	34.5	35	
Proportion of own-account and contributing family workers in total employment	19.2	18.9	-	15.5	15.9	
Prevalence of underweight children under 5 years of age (%)	6.4	4.4	-	-	1.9	3.2
Proportion of population below minimum level of dietary energy consumption	6.6	4.0	2.3	-	-	3.3
<b>Goal 2: Achieve Universal Basic Education</b>						
Net enrolment ratio in basic education	86.7	96.2	97.6	97.6	97.6	100
Proportion of pupils starting grade 1 who reach 5 grade	92.2	96	99	99	99	100
Literacy rate of 15-24 year-old	97.4	98.72	-	99.1	99.1	100
<b>Goal 3: Promote Gender Equality and Empower Women</b>						
Ratio of girls to boys in basic education	94	96	96	96.3	97.8	100
Ratio of girls to boys in secondary education	105	102	104	104	110	100
Ratio of girls to boys in tertiary education	104	112	-		107	100
Share of women in wage employment in the non-agricultural sector	11	14.4	13.8	15.7	16.2	50
Proportion of seats held by women in national parliament	-	-	5.8	6.4		*
<b>Goal 4: Reduce Child Mortality</b>						
Children under five mortality rate per 1,000 live births	39	27	-	-	28	13
Infant mortality rate (0-1 year) per 1,000 live births	34	22	-	-	23	113
Proportion of 1 year-old children immunized against measles	85	95.2	-	-	103	100
<b>Goal 5: Improve Maternal Health</b>						
Maternal mortality ratio per 100,000 live births	48	-	-	-	19	12
Proportion of births attended by skilled health personnel (%)	87	99	-	-	99	100
Contraceptive prevalence rate	40.2	55.8	-	-	59.3	65.8
Adolescent birth rate	7.4	4.3	-	-	4.7	2
Antenatal care coverage (at least one visit and at least four visits)	80.2	98.6	-	-	98.8	100
Unmet need for family planning	22	11		12	11	-
<b>Goal 6: Combat HIV/AIDS, Malaria and other Major Diseases</b>						
Proportion of population with advanced HIV infection with	100	100	100	100	100	100

access to antiretroviral drugs						
Tuberculosis incidence rate per year per 100,000 population	14	6.4	-	-	6	-
Proportion of tuberculosis cases detected and cured under directly observed treatment short course	60	77	-	-	86	100
<b>Goal 7: Ensuring Environmental Sustainability</b>						
Proportion of land area covered by forest	0.44	0.84		0.90		*
Carbon dioxide emissions, total, per capita and per \$1 GDP (PPP)	2.2	-	2.3	-	-	
Consumption of all Ozone-Depleting Substances in ODP metric tons	100	7	-	-	-	
Proportion of terrestrial and marine areas protected	0.14			1.4		*
Proportion of species threatened with extinction						
Mammals	-	11	-	10.3		
Birds	-	0.2	-	1.6		
Reptiles	-	5	-	7.8		
Amphibians	-	25	-	-		
Vascular plants	-	5	-	1		
Proportion of population using an improved drinking water	92.8	97	98.1	98.4		*
Proportion of population using an improved drinking water source	92.8	97	98.1	98.4		*
Proportion of the population using improved sanitation facilities	48	60.1		61.15		70
<b>Goal 8: Develop a Global partnership for Development</b>						
Ratio of external debt to GDP	-	74.6	-	22.5	21.7	*
Average custom tariff applied	-	13.1	11.5	10.8	-	
FDI to GDP (%)	-	5.4	15.8	12.5	9.6	
Mobile cellular telephone subscriptions per 100 population	-	20.8	-	94.3	96.5	*
Telephone Lines per 100 population	-	57	-	30.7	26	*
Personal computers per 100 population	-	9.8	-	39.3	54.3	*
Internet users per 100 population	-	4.8	-	21.6	25.8	*

Source: Second national Millennium Development Goals Report – Jordan 2010

## ANNEX 6: Human Development Index by Governorate

Governorate	Life expectancy Index		Education Index		GDP Index		Human development Index		Human Development Index – New Method	
	2002	2008	2002	2008	2002	2008	2002	2008	2002	2008
Amman	0.733	0.804	0.831	0.88802	0.609	0.623	0.724	0.772	0.719	0.763
Balqa	0.773	0.797	0.847	0.90934	0.572	0.633	0.731	0.78	0.721	0.771
Zarqa	0.817	0.78	0.841	0.90792	0.59	0.61	0.749	0.766	0.74	0.756
Madaba	0.798	0.797	0.849	0.91686	0.606	0.632	0.751	0.782	0.743	0.773
Irbid	0.768	0.718	0.784	0.85447	0.565	0.616	0.706	0.729	0.698	0.723
Mafrq	0.747	0.786	0.843	0.89976	0.583	0.635	0.724	0.773	0.716	0.766
Jarash	0.793	0.79	0.851	0.91796	0.584	0.637	0.743	0.782	0.733	0.773
Ajloun	0.752	0.731	0.81	0.89701	0.611	0.645	0.724	0.758	0.719	0.751
Karak	0.712	0.733	0.845	0.90792	0.597	0.622	0.718	0.754	0.711	0.745
Tafeila	0.73	0.77	0.789	0.87926	0.573	0.628	0.697	0.759	0.691	0.752
Ma'an	0.828	0.782	0.844	0.86217	0.618	0.652	0.763	0.765	0.756	0.76
Aqaba	0.775	0.799	0.846	0.9113	0.621	0.697	0.747	0.802	0.741	0.798
Jordan	0.785	0.78	0.833	0.9288	0.656	0.697	0.767	0.802	0.754	0.796

## ANNEX 7: Gender Related Development Index

Governorate	Life expectancy Index		Adult literacy index		Gross enrolment index		Educational attainment index		GDP index	
	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male
<b>Jordan</b>	<b>0.782</b>	<b>0.818</b>	<b>0.886</b>	<b>0.959</b>	<b>0.926</b>	<b>0.852</b>	<b>0.899</b>	<b>0.923</b>	<b>0.4453</b>	<b>0.7467</b>
Amman	0.758	0.803	0.921	0.97	0.931	0.861	0.924	0.934	0.518	0.777
Balqa	0.783	0.825	0.857	0.947	0.89	0.835	0.868	0.91	0.473	0.696
Zarqa	0.775	0.82	0.903	0.967	0.917	0.806	0.908	0.913	0.409	0.721
Madaba	0.758	0.803	0.872	0.942	0.913	0.905	0.886	0.93	0.494	0.674
Irbid	0.775	0.82	0.872	0.966	0.949	0.872	0.898	0.935	0.429	0.718
Ma'raq	0.715	0.723	0.786	0.908	0.913	0.823	0.828	0.88	0.418	0.699
Jarash	0.767	0.807	0.862	0.948	0.917	0.856	0.888	0.917	0.464	0.713
Ajloun	0.77	0.812	0.857	0.947	0.972	0.931	0.895	0.942	0.505	0.708
Karak	0.708	0.755	0.836	0.935	0.927	0.917	0.866	0.929	0.517	0.715
Tafeila	0.73	0.738	0.828	0.941	0.988	0.926	0.881	0.936	0.486	0.694
Ma'an	0.747	0.793	0.802	0.927	0.939	0.878	0.848	0.911	0.465	0.703
Aqaba	0.758	0.807	0.866	0.937	0.866	0.713	0.866	0.862	0.443	0.727

## ANNEX 8: Comparative Advantages survey of the UN system in Jordan

### 1.1. Definition & Approach

The UN system in Jordan defines comparative advantage(s) as having (1) the mandate to act, (2) the capacity to act, and (3) being positioned to act. Within this definition, not all the elements are equally important. Mandates are significant, capacity is more important, and positioning is the most important element in determining comparative advantage. Beyond mandates there must be capacity – staff, resources, expertise and an established track record of success, but even these in themselves are not sufficient. The UN system must be seen, objectively, as being better able to act than any other development actor in the country on a specific issue.

In Jordan, the UN system plays a critical role based on the legitimacy of its capabilities as an organization that delivers development as well as humanitarian assistance to Jordan. The UN system needs to be flexible enough to respond to existing as well as emerging needs in Jordan, as well as advocate global standards and norms. It should focus on providing assistance where it is the best able to demonstrate leadership including cross-cutting areas such as youth, gender equality, human rights, and environmental sustainability - and withdraw from areas where it is less inclined to lead. Focus should be on national priorities in which the UN's capacities to deliver results exceed those of other development partners and the value added of the UN system often lies in harnessing the full range of capabilities under its umbrella in a coordinated and collaborative manner.

In order to identify the comparative advantages of the UN System in Jordan, the UN Country Team, in line with the 2010 UNDAF Guidelines, conducted an internal and external assessment including a SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats) in order to address and establish comparative advantages.

The SWOT analysis, which constituted the internal element of the assessment, was supplemented by an external electronic survey with partners, over the course of August.

From the two emerged the identification of four common comparative advantages specific to the UN System Jordan, namely;

- ***Advocating and promoting global norms and standards, inclusive and participatory development, ratified human rights instruments, the Millennium Declaration and the MDGs.*** The UNCT can speak confidently on these matters upon which policies and legislation for national development can be based, push on issues and in areas where national progress is falling behind, and be a complement the efforts and assistance of other development partners in the Kingdom;
- ***Ability to leverage global expertise, provide impartial policy advice, based on international experience, technical expertise and best practices, in support of national leader- and ownership.*** The UNCT offers a range of expertise in the areas of development and humanitarian assistance combined with access to regional as well as global technical knowledge and experience, including South-South cooperation. The UN can in this regard offer best practices and share lessons learned from other countries for 'tried-and tested' evidence-based recommendations.
- ***Neutrality, impartiality, broad-based partnerships across sectors, and the ability to convene diverse stakeholders and build consensus on sensitive issues.*** The UNCT is able to build consensus towards shared development goals, particularly the MDGs, and promote approaches to policy and programmes. It also has a defining role in facilitating dialogue on sensitive issues;
- ***Ability to leverage resources beyond regular donors.*** The UNCT in Jordan has over the years demonstrated its track record in mobilizing resources not only from the donor community but also from the private sector or, where the UN seal of neutrality and transparency is required, channel funds itself. One clear example of the latter is in the context of humanitarian assistance, the UNCT is able to mobilize resources through e.g. Flash Appeals, Humanitarian Action Plans and Consolidated Humanitarian Action Plans.



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