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Middle East and North Africa  
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# WOMEN'S Political Participation in JORDAN



اللجنة الوطنية الأردنية لشؤون المرأة  
The Jordanian National Commission for Women



OECD

BETTER POLICIES FOR BETTER LIVES



# WOMEN'S POLITICAL PARTICIPATION IN JORDAN:

BARRIERS, OPPORTUNITIES AND GENDER SENSITIVITY OF  
SELECT POLITICAL INSTITUTIONS

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- Inclusive Development and Job Creation
- Enhancing Economic Governance
- Competitiveness and Integration

This report was drafted in the framework of the three year regional MENA Transition Fund project: “Towards inclusive and Open governments: Promoting women’s participation in parliaments and policy-making.” The project supports Egypt, Jordan, Morocco and Tunisia to foster inclusive growth and good governance by maximizing women’s integration in public life and the policy-making process. Further, by leveraging open government policies and mainstreaming gender perspectives in parliamentary and local council operations.

## THE JORDANIAN NATIONAL COMMISSION FOR WOMEN



The JNCW is a semi-governmental committee and reference authority for all official bodies in Jordan in relation to women’s affairs. The Commission systematically works to promote the status of women, empower them, and achieve their equal and full participation in all spheres of life. The JNCW works toward eliminating gender-based discrimination in Jordan’s laws, policies, programs and national strategies using a participatory approach involving national institutions, civil society, and organisations concerned with women’s issues in and outside of Jordan. The JNCW is chaired by HRH Princess Basma Bint Talal and is the OECD’s core partners for implementation of the MENA Transition Fund Project on promoting women in parliaments and policy-making.

- Find more information on the OECD's work to support gender equality and related working fields here:  
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- Find more information on the MENA-OECD Governance Programme:  
<http://www.oecd.org/mena/governance/aboutthemenaoecdgovernanceprogramme.htm>
  
- Find more information on JNCW's work at <http://www.women.jo/>



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- Representatives from the Ministry of Planning and International Cooperation (MOPIC)
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## ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

AWO	Arab Women’s OrganisationOrganization
CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women
CSO	Civil Society OrganisationOrganization
EMB	Electoral Management Body
ICCPR	International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights
ICESCR	International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights
IAF	Islamic Action Front
IEC	Independent Election Commission
IRCKHF	King Hussein Foundation Information and Research Centre
GBV	Gender Based Violence
GCC	Gulf Cooperation Council
GFJW	General Federation of Jordanian Women
HASHD	Jordanian People’s Democratic Party
HASAD	Reform and Renewal Party
JNCW	Jordanian National Commission of Women
JNFW	Jordanian National Forum for Women
MENA	Middle East and North Africa
MOMA	Ministry of Municipal Affairs
MOPIC	Ministry of Planning and International Cooperation
MOPPA	Ministry of Political and Parliamentary Affairs
MP	Member of Parliament
NGO	Non-Governmental OrganisationOrganization
NSJW	National Strategy for Jordanian Women
OECD	OrganisationOrganization for Economic Cooperation and Development
PR	Proportional Representation
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
VAW	Violence Against Women Women

## INTRODUCTION

Jordan has taken a number of steps to reform its legal and institutional framework in order to promote women's greater inclusion in politics and increase their overall political participation at the national and local level. Ratification of international conventions whose principles underpin gender equality (i.e. CEDAW, ISECR, ICCPR) and safeguard women's rights have been a starting point. In 1991, the government established the Jordanian National Commission for Women (JNCW), a national authority on women's affairs. The JNCW, along with civil society, other women's associations and activists have pushed for substantial legal and social reforms to equalize and increase women's participation in all spheres of life, especially with regard to civil liberties, personal status, access to employment, and political participation. Making headway on these issues in Jordan has been an uphill battle. But, the increase of women elected to decision-making roles is an indication that times are changing. Some notable amendments to laws pertaining to women's rights – in which female MPs have been vocal supporters of – have amplified the gender equality agenda in Jordan and increased momentum for the amelioration of further laws to eliminate gender discrimination (e.g. proposed amendments to the Labour Law, Personal Status Law).

The 2016 repeal of Article 308 in the Penal Code (aka “Marry the Rapist Law”) seems to have marked a turning point for Jordan. Winning the fight to overturn this long-contested article opened up new horizons, in terms of what could be achieved in the future, and deepening relationships between stakeholders. The lead-up to parliament's decision to repeal rather than to amend Article 308 fostered greater cohesion among civil society groups in their advocacy efforts who resolutely fought together for repeal. This case shed light on what can be considered a burgeoning democratic ecosystem – with media, civil society, and MPs enmeshed in debate and consultation with one another to reach conclusions

Jordan's transition to a parliamentary democracy and decentralized governance serve as opportunities for women to increase their political voice and stake an equal claim to decision-making positions in what have historically been male-dominated arenas. Government institutions are on a path to adhere to a new set of standards – underpinned by transparency, accountability and equality. King Abdullah II Ibn al Hussein's series of discussion papers create the backdrop for Jordan's transformation to a “civil state”, and the Jordanian National Commission for Women – the driver for elevating women's status.

The sixth discussion paper goes beyond the equal opportunities and non-discrimination clause in Jordan's Constitution (Article 6), and highlights the importance of citizen's “equal rights and duties...without any discrimination based on religion, language, colour, gender, race, class, political affiliation or intellectual views.” The fourth discussion paper highlights the need for equality in political opportunities and the King's praise of women's achievements in the 2013 parliamentary elections drives home the point that increasing women's representation in political life is part in parcel to Jordan's democratic transition. The government has also made a commitment within the 2013-2017 National Strategy for Jordanian Women (NSJW) to provide “more fair and better opportunities to ensure the active and

effective participation of women,” as well as to “gradually and deliberately” increase their representation in various authorities and sectors to no less than 30% -- whether elected or appointed.

Ensuring equal opportunities speaks not only to increasing women’s representation, but enabling their full and equal participation after election and within political institutions too. While Jordan is making good progress, it goes without saying – indeed for every country – that there’s room for improvement. This report will highlight women’s overall representation in decision-making roles – but also looks beyond the numbers to assess whether Jordanian women do indeed enjoy equal opportunities before, during and after elections. This is buttressed by an analysis of possible measures to foster greater gender equality, make Jordan’s political institutions work well for both men and women, and support women’s increased participation in policy-making.

In terms of women’s representation in decision-making bodies legislated quotas (i.e. reserved seats) were introduced at the national (2003) and municipal level (2007) and have played a key role in increasing women’s representation in parliament and local councils. The quota system has helped women from rural/remote areas run for elections for the first time and gain political experience. A decade ago, women represented 6.4% of the House of Representatives and 12.7% of the Senate (IPU, 2017). Today, they make up 15.4% of both houses of parliament (IPU, 2017). Women now fill an unprecedented proportion of municipal and governorate council seats (28.8%) following the August 2017 elections and it was a female candidate, in the Ramtha local council, that secured the highest number of votes in the country (8,807)<sup>1</sup>.

The increased representation of women in parliament and local councils paves the way for a more even-keeled perspective on the social, economic and political development of Jordan. The OECD has found that women’s performance as MPs is perceived to be very good by the public – evidenced in their active participation and work with their constituencies. Their very presence has been instrumental in shifting negative perceptions about women in leadership and giving other women the motivation and confidence they need to pursue elected office themselves.

Progress is being made, but change is incremental, and women are still far from reaching parity with men in elected offices, or a “critical mass” (i.e. 30% representation) within either house of parliament to straightforwardly impact debate and votes. A parliamentary committee for Women and Family Affairs, as well as a women’s caucus exists, both of which are great starting points, but they are at a nascent stage of development. From the OECD’s assessment – it is not clear that the parliamentary committees systematically measure progress toward gender equality or integrate evidence-based assessments of gender impacts and considerations into the policy cycle. The same goes for the work of the Secretariat and other committees, as well as for human resource management. The women’s caucus serves as a vehicle for networking and support between female MPs, but when it comes to clearly defined policy goals, there appears to be little traction and not a clear consensus among members, even on issues pertaining to women’s rights.



The work continues to amend discriminatory provisions in laws and ensure that women have the same opportunities as men to participate in public life and decision-making. Despite Constitutional guarantees of equal opportunities and non-discrimination – women’s *de jure* rights do not align with *de facto* ones. Increasing the overall representation of women in decision-making bodies will be crucial to shifting the status quo and ensuring that women’s rights – and the needs of society as a collective – are met.

Though the tide is shifting, and women are becoming increasingly involved in political life with each new election – they face specific barriers in accessing political office. While some challenges are specifically related to campaigning and the electoral process, others are more entrenched, placing women at a disadvantage throughout their lifetimes. Various obstacles – often interwoven – include restricted access to financial resources, curbed civil liberties, gender stereotypes, and traditional social norms. Once elected, some barriers remain, resulting in women being excluded from leadership posts within parliament, relegated to soft-portfolios, subjected to higher levels of media scrutiny than male colleagues, and expected to carry the double burden of unpaid care-work along with their position.

Institutionally speaking, neither gender targets or quotas exist for leadership posts *within* parliaments, local councils, the political executive, or within the Independent Elections Commission (IEC). Rarely are these types of measures articulated or applied within political party manifestos or activities. Beyond special temporary measures, modernisation of internal parliamentary rules, procedures and norms (i.e. in Human Resources Management, the Secretariat, committees, the plenary, Codes of Conduct) is needed to explicitly ensure a positive environment for both men and women and strike a gender balance in leadership. A good deal of political will to do so exists within the parliament, especially within the Secretariat, but limited know-how and resources for change serve as barriers. MPs and members of the Secretariat are stretched thin time-wise, as are monetary resources. Open and regular dialogue to elucidate differential experiences of men and women within the parliament, as well as the reasoning behind and importance of adopting gender-sensitive measures to support women’s increased participation (beyond numbers) is a cogent way to stimulate change that can be driven by men and women alike.

Jordanian women do not lack education, ambition or talent. The proportion of female candidates increases with each election and women comprise a greater share of registered voters than men (54% vs. 46%)<sup>2</sup>. Women’s education in Jordan ranks among the highest of all countries in the Middle East North Africa, including Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries<sup>3</sup>. Yet, these factors have not parlayed into their equal inclusion in decision-making bodies, which set the budgets, policies and laws that govern their lives and opportunities. The severity of obstacles faced in accessing political office also differs among demographics of women – with a clear divide between the urban elite and the rural poor.

Considering that women make up half of the population, achieving gender balance in decision-making bodies is a simple prerequisite to democratic governance. Identifying both the barriers and opportunities to women’s greater inclusion is necessary to inform policy and undertake targeted actions to dismantle barriers and get more women to

the decision-making table.

A core component of the three-year regional OECD-MENA Transition Fund project on “Promoting women’s participation in parliaments and policy-making,” is conducting a country-based, peer-reviewed assessment of the existing opportunities and current challenges faced by women candidates. The purpose of this report is to present the findings of this assessment, with a view to identifying targeted policy recommendations that can be implemented to accelerate progress towards gender equality and women’s political empowerment in Jordan. Recommendations are based on findings of the assessment and international good practices.

This report presents both the enabling factors and obstacles in the election of more women to parliament and municipal councils. A second assessment analysed the parliament’s workplace operations, processes, internal procedures and policy-frameworks through a gender lens. The report reviews Jordan’s current legal framework, including adherence to international standards, and assesses the existence and effectiveness of the country’s institutions in promoting women’s political participation. Legal, institutional and social norms that serve as barriers to women’s political participation are highlighted in chapters 1, 2 and 4.

Information on the methodology used for the OECD’s assessments can be found in the following section and Appendices, as well as information on the OECD assessment team. An approximate list of those who participated in interviews and focus group discussions precedes this introduction, after the Table of Contents.

## ASSESSMENT METHODOLOGY, TEAM AND PARTICIPANTS

### Purpose of the report

Under the framework of the Transition Fund project on “Promoting women’s participation in parliaments and policy making,” two peer-reviewed assessments were conducted in Jordan. First, an assessment of the opportunities and challenges encountered by women when participating in political and electoral processes – as candidates in national and local elections in March 2016 (see Annex 1). Second, an assessment in May 2018 analysing parliamentary workplace operations, processes, internal procedures and policy-frameworks through a gender lens (see Annex 2).

Assessment tools have been devised covering four key pillars of activity to promote women’s political participation:

- **Support the development and implementation of robust legal frameworks** and administrative arrangements that facilitate women’s participation. This includes relevant reforms to constitutions, gender equality laws or party by-laws, and policy actions such as setting numerical targets for women in leadership positions with temporary special measures (TSMs) and reforming party statutes.
- **Expand the pool of qualified and capable women to run for election**, including through initiating programmes that boost women’s confidence and capacity to lead, enhancing their campaign strategies and techniques and promoting linkages with supportive CSOs.
- **Transform gender norms so that women are accepted as legitimate and effective leaders** including through developing campaigns that sensitize the media and electorate on the need for women in public life at all levels.
- **Support women leaders in gender-sensitive political institutions**, including parliament, political parties and electoral management bodies (EMBs), to attract, promote and retain women leaders, and highlight the constructive contribution they make to decision-making.

These four pillars form the basis of the assessment tools used to determine the existing barriers and opportunities for prospective female candidates, as well as the gender sensitivity of parliament as a workplace, employer and legislative body -- alongside a range of interview questions. For Jordan, both assessments were supplemented with specific questions pertaining to Jordan’s context – e.g. laws on parliamentary and municipal elections, decentralisation, the Independent Elections Commission (IEC), political parties and the Codes of Conduct and internal rules and procedures of the Jordanian Parliament.

## Assessment methodology

In both March 2016 and May 2018, an assessment team consisting of OECD experts on gender mainstreaming and gender equality and senior peers from OECD and MENA countries, conducted a fact-finding mission to gather relevant information. Expert peers joining the missions included Annemie Neyts-Uyttebroeck, Minister of State in Belgium and former Member of the European Parliament; Gihan Abou-Zeid, Egyptian Gender Expert, Founder of Salema for Women's Empowerment, and Women and Human Rights Activist; and Silvan Koch-Mehrin, former Member of the European Parliament & Founder of the Women Political Leaders Global Forum (WPL).

The assessment team engaged a diverse range of stakeholders in meetings and interviews to ensure a reflective discussion and enhance the legitimacy of the assessment process by considering a plurality of views. The OECD peer review missions have a double outcome: information gathering and advocacy for women's increased participation in public life (per the OECD's 2015 Recommendation on Gender Equality in Public Life) by sharing experiences and information with interview partners about what is possible and what already exists in other parliamentary environments throughout the MENA region and in OECD countries. Key stakeholders and participants, included:

- Electoral management practitioners (including ministers, commissioners, election staff)
- Members of parliament and members of local government/councils
- Political party members and candidates for election
- Civil society organizations and gender activists
- Academics that monitor women's electoral participation
- Election opinion researchers
- Media journalists and other election commentators, including on social media
- Representatives of international and regional organizations
- Representatives from the Ministry of Political and Parliamentary Affairs (MOPPA), the Ministry for Planning and International Cooperation (MOPIC), and the Ministry of Municipal Affairs (MOMA)

Interviews were conducted with the assistance and advice of the project's Steering Group and the Civil Society Organisation (CSO) Advisory Group setup to provide valuable input and guidance for project implementation. Selected respondents reflected different approaches and perceptions towards women's participation in policy making.

## Report structure

This report presents the findings and conclusions of the OECD, in accordance with the assessment tools presented in Appendix 1 and 2. Following an overview of the legal (Chapter 1) and institutional (Chapter 2) frameworks promoting women's political participation in Jordan, this report will give an account of the current and actual representation

of women in Parliament and local councils (Chapter 3). Finally, this report will discuss the new opportunities and the remaining obstacles women still face (Chapter 4). Findings of the gender sensitive practices assessment which focuses largely on the gender sensitivity of the parliament as an institution, employer and policy-maker – both for MPs and members of the Secretariat are found throughout this report.

Action-oriented recommendations addressing key stakeholders can be found at the end of the report. These recommendations aim to foster gender-sensitive political institutions (e.g. IEC, parliament) that enable women's equal participation in political life, decision-making and leadership.

## KEY FINDINGS

- Notable progress has been made in the past 15 years to increase women’s representation in elected decision-making bodies in Jordan, but the rate of change is slow – It could be accelerated by addressing discriminatory social norms and adopting temporary special measures for women outside of the quota. Policy-makers’ awareness of these alternative measures (e.g. zipper lists) is low and the use of alternative measures in place of, or in tandem with the current 15-seat quota, should be further explored.
- In terms of gender-sensitive legislation, for some, the debate about identifying differential impacts and treatment of men and women – or introducing special measures for women – was perceived antithetical to Article 6 of Jordan’s Constitution which states that that “all Jordanians are equal before the law,” and that there shall be “no discrimination.” This debate is at its early stages in Jordan and reviewing the approaches and good practices from throughout the region used to identify existing discriminatory social norms and to level the playing field for women in decision-making would be useful.
- Women’s quotas at the national and local level have played a strong role in increasing women’s representation in decision-making bodies and have given women in rural areas the opportunity to serve in local councils and parliament for the first time. Quotas have been instrumental for women to “get their foot in the door” and prove their merit resulting in more women winning elections, outside of the quota, with each new election;
- The average rate of change for the past three elections (i.e. since the quota was increased to 15 reserved seats in 2010) is 3.01%. Unless there are any setbacks or backlashes,, it means it will be another 12 years before women reach a critical mass within parliament (i.e. 30%) and more than 30 years before gender parity is achieved
- The current quota allocation for women in the House of Representatives is disproportionate to voter populations within Jordan’s 15 governorates and does not provide a reserved seat for each of the 23 electoral districts. This is a disadvantage to women candidates running in the more populous districts of Amman, Zarqa and Irbid which account for 70% of the voter population and over half of female candidates in the 2016 Parliamentary elections, but only 3 of the 15 reserved parliamentary seats;
- Electoral reforms introduced between 2015-2016 have been a step toward democratization, paramount to curbing voter fraud and addressing important issues such as vote-buying. Still, more could be done to increase women’s opportunities to run for election, get political party support , and participate in electoral committees;
- Electoral Laws, Executive Instructions for Elections and the Political Parties Law generically refer to equality without explicitly referring to “gender” or addressing gender-based barriers/issues;
- The new Open List Proportional Representation system has created an incentive for political parties to include women on their lists, but not more than one. Due to historical context, political parties are still considered a new phenomenon in Jordan

and tribes constitute major political actors that rival their influence. As political parties are still developing, they provide little support to women and public awareness of political party platforms is low. Special measures are needed in the Political Parties Law and Electoral Law to encourage parties to include more women in party leadership and on electoral lists.

- Women in Jordan face restricted access to and control over productive financial resources which creates substantial financial barriers to entering elections as candidates and running competitive campaigns. Childcare and costs for caring for relatives can also be a factor deterring women from running for office;
- Even with newly introduced campaign spending limits – interviewees purported significant disparities between the amount of money spent by women on electoral campaigns versus men in Jordan;
- The support of family and/or husbands is an essential factor to women’s desire or ability to run for election;
- Women’s ability to be elected to local councils and the experience gained in serving their communities as local councilors bode well for them in terms of gaining the support of their tribe, family and voters when running for parliamentary elections;
- Women who challenge gender stereotypes, are knowledgeable about their rights and laws, and are persistent in sharing the political stage with men tend to be more successful in elections;
- Mobility challenges can be limiting to both women’s economic opportunities and their political participation. Transportation, restrictions on freedom of movement imposed by husbands and social expectations of how women should behave limit their ability to gain financial independence, garner the experience needed to be viewed as attractive candidates, and run competitive campaigns. These barriers are more pronounced in rural areas and within Jordan’s Southern governorates.
- The pre-eminence of traditional gender roles (e.g. women should not work and focus on family care, politics is a male domain etc.) and expectation that working women are wholly responsible for family-care discourages female political participation;
- Civil Society and Women’s Associations play a strong role in identifying and supporting potential female candidates in Jordan through advocacy and training, but resources are limited, and efforts tend to be centralized in Amman which leaves out women in rural areas;
- For all reforms and progress related to women’s issues, the JNCW is crucial: as semi-governmental body, closely related to the Royal Court and convening force for civil society organizations across Jordan working on women’s and human rights issues.
- The royal family is seen as open-minded and progressive -- role-models for change – and can be an ally in the continued development of gender sensitive laws and supporting the increased political participation of women. From all stakeholders interviewed – it was clear that ultimate leadership resides with the Royal Court – an ‘invisible hand’ that discreetly intervenes

in decision-making. But, in Jordan's quest to become a functioning parliamentary democracy – action toward increasing women's political representation and participation should, in principle, be driven by government institutions themselves – especially parliament.

- The reliance on personal relationships and patronage systems (i.e. “wasta”) often poses a challenge to women's political participation and creates additional barriers to their participation in political processes. Even if people feel empowered in the abstract, their options and incentives for action are limited without the provisions of meaningful opportunities to engage in the political system.
- Harassment and gender-based discrimination are difficult issues to discuss and acknowledge in Jordan. Nonetheless, there was recognition that finding ways to help those suffering harassment would be important and identifying discrimination should be done.
- There is scope for significantly more work to be done for the Jordanian parliament to become more gender-sensitive, but there is a strong desire to implement change in the secretariat, high level of competency and willingness to do so. OECD peer-intervention proved crucial to opening candid discussions and exploring potential solutions. Members of the Secretariat are seeking further cooperation, training and exchange of information and experiences.
- The existence of a Women and Family Affairs Committee in both houses of Parliament and a women's caucus are strong points, but neither have mechanisms to systematically provide accountability and oversight for gender equality initiatives or mainstream gender into the policy-cycle. Other Parliamentary committees see it as the role of the women and family affairs committee to review legislation with a gender lens, as opposed to a practice that should be systematically adopted across all sectors.
- Members of the Senate seem to have strong general knowledge of gender equality and application of gender mainstreaming mechanisms – albeit, use of gender audits in legislative review is rarely used and not in a systematic manner by either the lower or upper house. Rather, use of gender mainstreaming mechanisms is personality driven and initiated by individuals – as opposed to a generally accepted or understood practice.





# CHAPTER 1

## Legal framework for women's political participation

### About

Jordan has a mixed legal system based on civil, customary and Islamic law<sup>4</sup>. As of 1976, civil law shifted from an Ottoman "Madjella" model to one inspired by the French Civil Code coupled with aspects of Islamic tradition<sup>5</sup>. Matters of personal status (e.g. marriage, divorce, child custody, inheritance etc.) are under the jurisdiction of relevant religious courts (e.g. Christian or Shairia)<sup>6</sup>. As such, women's civil, political and economic rights have shifted overtime depending on the dominant legal system. Since 1974, women have had the right to vote, run for election, and hold or be appointed to public office (Constitution, 22§1-2). Over the past few decades, Jordan has amended its Constitution and laws to increase women's political rights and participation in alignment with international commitments. However, *de jure* rights remain out of step with *de facto* ones largely due to socio-cultural norms that both influence discriminatory laws and are perpetuated by them.

Though women's political rights are fully guaranteed by the Constitution and in the spirit of international commitments, full application of these rights is deeply subject to gender-based obstacles. Throughout OECD interviews, there were often references to the respect and equality afforded to women within the Qur'an, as well as within the Constitution, with the assumption that because it is written, it must be so. Anecdotal and empirical evidence, however, reveal contrary outcomes: women do not enjoy the same opportunities as men in the political realm. Deeper reflection and dialogue is thus required on whether interpretation and practices measure up to the equality that is espoused.

Women's equal access to political participation lies at the core of democratic governance. This chapter will explore the legal steps Jordan has taken to close gender gaps in women's political empowerment, with a special emphasis on electoral and political party laws. It will also highlight loopholes to the realisation of women's full participation in public life by providing an overview of discriminatory laws that not only curb Jordanian women's ability to participate in politics, but their opportunities throughout their life. Suggestions on how the legal framework may be improved so as to facilitate women's increased political participation are provided throughout the chapter.

## INTERNATIONAL COMMITMENTS

Jordan has acceded to several international conventions that convey women's political rights. They include the UN Convention on the Political Rights of Women, the UN Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against women (CEDAW), and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR)<sup>7</sup>. In addition, commitments have been made to advance gender equality and women's empowerment in line with the Sustainability Development Goals (SDGs) and the Beijing Platform for Action (BPFA).

Alike most MENA countries, Jordan has drawn reservations to CEDAW. Current reservations concern article 9§2 which relates to the rights of a women to convey her nationality to a foreign husband and children; and articles 16§(c) (d) and (g) relating to a woman's rights after divorce, custody and guardianship of children, and a women's right to choose a family name, profession or occupation. Jordan has withdrawn its previous reservation to article 15§4 on freedom of movement and a wife's freedom to choose her own domicile.

Given the reservation to article 9§2, Jordan's Nationality Law does not provide women with the same rights as men to acquire or confer their nationality to a foreign spouse or to children with a foreign spouse. In 2014, the government announced that children of Jordanian mothers and foreign fathers will be able to access free public services such as education, private property ownership, and greater employment opportunities, but will still be barred from obtaining full citizenship<sup>8</sup>. Given the high refugee population in Jordan, mixed refugee families are not uncommon, and the current nationality law directly affects more than 65,000 Jordanian women and an estimated 500,000 children<sup>9</sup>. This restriction will directly impact the ability of both male and female children (and male foreign spouses) to ever participate in the political process— as voters, members of political parties or candidates. Nationality rights are a sticky topic in Jordan and disagreement over the current state of play is simmering. Several interviewees identified the very topic as a hindrance to advancing women's rights, in that policy-makers steer away from discussing equal rights between men and women for fear it will drum up renewed debate about nationality rights.

The reservations to various aspects of Article 16 of CEDAW also impact women's political participation. In more conservative areas of Jordan, women's freedom of movement is restricted. Interviews with women in Ma'an and Karak governorates confirmed that for women, activity at night is viewed as taboo, thus limiting their opportunity to partake in social networking events that could boost their voter base or participate in "door-knocking" – a method to directly connect with constituents, learn about their needs and garner votes. A theme often brought up by past and prospective female candidates was the threat of divorce by their husbands if they chose to run for election or if they were not successful in winning. Given that alimony is not guaranteed, and Muslim men enjoy greater rights than women in terms of custody and guardianship of children – the threat of a divorce and the severe consequences it can bring can be a decisive factor in women not participating in the political process.

Contradictions remain between the international agreements Jordan is party to and existing discriminatory measures within domestic laws (i.e. personal status, nationality, right to work etc.). Perhaps the best-placed committee within Parliament to make suggestions to remedy incongruities between Jordan's domestic and international law would be the Public Freedoms and Human Rights Committee in the House of Representatives. Nevertheless, this did not seem to be a priority for members of the committee and suggestions for amendments to laws are rarely, if ever, put forward by MPs themselves. Instead, the OECD found that the majority of draft legislation and amendments proposed – up until this point – are submitted by the government. In fact, MPs do not take advantage of their power to draft and propose legislation. Nevertheless, at the request of 10 MPs, a debate on any topic can be called in the plenary – a tool that could be highly effective for sparking conversation about important topics – like gender-based discrimination in laws or improvements to the Electoral and Political Parties Law to increase women's representation in decision-making bodies.

## CONSTITUTIONAL REFORMS

In March 2011, a Royal Reform Committee was tasked with reviewing and articulating a list of suggestions for Constitutional reform. The 2011 Constitutional Amendments included several articles addressing judicial, legislative, and executive powers such as:

- Establishment of an independent constitutional court;
- Establishment of an independent commission to oversee elections in the place of the Ministry of Interior with electoral contestations handled by the judiciary;
- Enhancement of civil liberties (e.g. criminalisation of any infringement on rights and public freedoms, prohibition of torture in any form, ensured privacy and curtailed censorship etc.)
- Limitations on the government's power to issue temporary laws in the absence of parliament;
- Limiting the State Security Court's jurisdiction to cases of high treason, espionage, and terrorism;
- Limitation on the government's ability to dissolve parliament without also resigning.”<sup>10</sup>

While hailed by many for an increased emphasis on civil liberties and democratisation, these amendments fell short of the demands for greater gender equality. A sticking point for women's rights activists is Article 6 which guarantees that all Jordanians are equal before the law and bars discrimination with regards to rights and duties on the grounds of race, language and religion – but not explicitly for gender.

During the amendment process of 2011, the constitutional committee debated adding gender to the non-discrimination clause and elaborating that equal opportunities are for both men and women, as opposed to “all Jordanians”. Stakeholders who were apart of this process informed the OECD Assessment Team that these amendments were originally endorsed – even by the royal family – but changed last minute for alleged religious and political reasons.<sup>11</sup>

## Box 1

ARTICLE 6 OF THE THE CONSTITUTION OF THE  
HASHEMITE KINGDOM OF JORDAN

1. Jordanians shall be equal before the law. There shall be no discrimination between them as regards to their rights and duties on grounds of race, language or religion.
2. The Government shall ensure work and education within the limits of its possibilities, and it shall ensure a state of tranquility and equal opportunities to all Jordanians.

*Source : Constitution of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan (2011)*

## DOMESTIC LAWS

### Personal status law

Aspects of Jordan's Personal Status Law (Law No. 36/2010, hereinafter PSL) are in direct contradiction to Article 6 of the Constitution that declares all citizens equal. The PSL governs all matters of marriage, spousal roles, divorce, alimony, custody and eligibility to inheritance. The law undermines women's agency in that it does not provide Muslim women or those married to a Muslim man with the same rights as men in any of the aforementioned areas. Girls are more susceptible to forced or child marriage than boys, with girls aged 15-17 accounting for 13.2% of all registered marriages between 2005-2013<sup>12</sup>. The marital age is set at 18 but can be lowered at the discretion of a court. A male that wishes to marry below the age of 18 must seek permission from the Department of Minority Affairs. The law also governs parental authority and inheritance in a way which promotes differential treatment towards women<sup>13</sup>.

Access to finance and capital is highly important for funding a political campaign. A topic raised by participants during the assessment was the unequal control men have over the use and sell of property. Even if women do own property themselves – such as a land – their decision and ability to sell is often influenced by men. Male husbands and guardians can forbid their wives or female relatives from working if it is perceived that doing so would be harmful to the family. Married women's ability to object to her husband's decisions tend to only be valid if certain conditions (e.g. surrounding divorce, right to work etc.) were articulated in a couple's marriage contract. In more urban areas it is less taboo for women to work, but the fact remains that Jordan has one of the lowest labour force participation rates among women both in the MENA region and the world (14%). Women's curtailed rights to work significantly reduce their experience and exposure to the community – limiting opportunities to expand their credentials and build qualities deemed attractive in a candidate. One interviewee pointed out a paradox: social norms restrict women's ability to make decisions in their own home, but serving in public office requires leadership and decision-making for communities at large. The result is that women, to a greater degree than men, must prove that they are capable of leadership and

making sound decisions – but that is difficult to do without having the same opportunities as men to gain experience. Though Jordan’s new electoral law strictly forbids the offer of any types of bribes in exchange for votes – cash, in-kind or otherwise – it is a practice that still appears to occur and is often difficult to track. Beyond cash, men’s deeper connections to the business community gives them leverage in terms of what they can offer when campaigning – business perks, jobs, favours etc. to garner more votes. These social practices undermine women’s ability to be perceived as legitimate leaders and to run competitive political campaigns.

## Violence Against Women (VAW)

Jordan does not have a comprehensive law on Violence Against Women (VAW), but was the first country in the region to issue a law on domestic violence. The Family Protection Law (Law No. 6/2008) narrowly defines domestic violence and lays out a legal framework to prevent and address it, including guidelines for relevant stakeholders (e.g. law enforcement, healthcare workers etc.) who handle domestic violence cases. The law introduced new protections for women, including temporary restraining orders, but stops short of criminalising domestic violence<sup>14</sup>. Though social awareness of domestic violence is increasing, it is rarely reported due to family pressure not to and fear that police will not handle cases adequately<sup>15</sup>.

In August 2017, the Jordanian House of Representatives finally approved the repeal of Article 308 in the Penal Code which allowed rapists to evade criminal prosecution by marrying their victims<sup>16</sup>.

It is difficult to determine the overall level of violence perpetrated against women who seek to run for election or are serving in public office. However, interviews revealed anecdotal evidence of political violence against female candidates. One woman described a situation where another male family member was seeking election in the same district as her. Family members insisted that she withdraw her name as a candidate, even offering a cash payment to induce her. When she did not accept, family members resorted to physical intimidation and at the height of familial conflict over her decision to run, she was hospitalised after a family member hit her with their car. Another female participant who successfully won election described ensuing marital discord due to her success and public exposure which resulted in domestic violence and eventually divorce. Another previous candidate spoke about her campaign posters being defaced and obscene words written across her picture.

There is not an explicit legal framework addressing political violence against women, let alone various forms of VAW. The Jordanian government’s Population and Family Health Survey indicates that VAW is often socially accepted (70% of women in Jordan think wife-beating is justified in some cases) and 47% of women who were brave enough to report violence did not seek any type of help<sup>17</sup>. Given the social stigma surrounding VAW, it is logical to presume that gender-based political violence is also underreported and problematic.

## Employment and access to resources

There are no provisions in the Labour Code specifically outlawing discrimination on the basis of gender in employment or stipulating that men and women should receive equal pay. A total of 39 amendments have been proposed to Jordan's Labour Law and the Senate's Labour and Social Development Committee is leading the way to review amendments through a gender lens and garner feedback from various CSOs. JNCW has played a strong role in review of legislation and provision of suggested amendments to ensure women and men have the same rights and opportunities. Some proposed changes include adding provisions on equal pay for equal work, mandating transparency of payments made, and mandating that businesses with 20 or more *female and male* employees must provide childcare facilities. The current law only mandates this for businesses that employ more than 20 women.

Under the Civil Code, women in Jordan have the same rights as men to own and dispose of land and non-land assets, enter into financial contracts, and apply for credit without the permission of their husband or a male guardian. However, in practice, financial institutions rarely issue loans to women without the guarantee of their husband or a male relative. For Muslim women or those married to Muslim men – their overall autonomy over financial decisions is restricted by the gender roles assigned to husbands and wives in the Personal Status Law where husbands are deemed responsible for finances. Data from Jordan's Central Bank demonstrates men's disproportionate control over and access to money: in 2015, men accounted for 72.7% of overall deposits and 82.8% of all loans in monetary share<sup>18</sup>.

A topic frequently visited during the OECD's assessment was that of female candidate's access to funding for their campaigns. Many women described resorting to taking out loans – through their husbands or from families – to finance them. They described strong pressure from husbands and families to win as a contingency for providing or signing off on loans. Several described going into debt, being spurned by family members for losing an election and facing marital problems over money spent on an unsuccessful campaign. Others pointed out that the monetary costs of a campaign discourage women from running for election, especially for mothers who worry about taking money away from their children.

# ELECTORAL AND POLITICAL PARTIES LAW

## Electoral Law and Guidance

Law No. 11/2012, also known as the “Consolidated Law on the Independent Elections Commission” established the IEC to oversee and manage parliamentary, municipal, and any other elections mandated by the Council of Ministers (Article 4A). Amended in 2015 (Law No. 46/2015), the law imbues the IEC with “legal personality and financial and administrative independence.” According to the law, all procedures and decisions performed by the IEC are to be in a “manner of transparency, integrity and impartiality.” Article 6 outlines selection, appointment and composition of the Board of Commissioners – four members in total – appointed for a non-renewable period of six years. Both speakers of parliament, the president of the Judicial Council and the Prime Minister draw up a list of suggested commissioners and the King appoints them by royal decree. Commissioners must be above the age of 40 (Article 9).

The IEC sets its own budget, pending approval by the government, and is charged with various duties, including adopting a security plan during campaign and election time. The various duties and authorities of the IEC are enumerated in Article 12 of the law. There are certain areas where the IEC has an opportunity to play a stronger role in ensuring gender sensitivity of electoral processes and to empower women’s political participation. For instance, emphasising gender balance within Executive Instructions or providing specific provisions on gender in election coverage by the media. Executive Instructions provided on “Electoral Campaigns Publicity” and on the establishment of electoral district committees for the 2016 parliamentary and 2017 municipal elections could have included explicit language on ensuring non-discrimination based on gender and promoted gender balance in committee composition. This would have created alertness to women’s underrepresentation in electoral administration and differential treatment of women candidates by the media. A 2017 study by the Council of Europe on “Media Coverage of Elections with a Specific Focus on Gender Equality,” highlights the often-biased coverage of male and female candidates, as well as the strong influence the media has on voter opinion. The study provides over a dozen examples of national regulatory and self-regulating mechanisms and practices that can be adopted by countries and media groups to improve gender portrayal in media coverage (see Box 2.) Jordan’s focus on gender-sensitive media coverage of elections has so far been project-based, with CSOs working with international partners to host capacity building and seminars. The IEC, as a recognised national authority, could bolster existing efforts and contribute to change in media culture by providing a set of tools and guidelines for the media, and /or inserting specific provisions on gender for election coverage within Executive Instructions.



## Box 2

## GENDER-SENSITIVE AND BALANCED ELECTORAL MEDIA COVERAGE

The Council of Europe's "Study on media coverage of elections with a specific focus on gender equality" recommends looking at the evolution of the media landscape and to identify risks and opportunities to further promote gender equality during electoral coverage. The study provides examples of guidelines that can be used by countries, EMBs and media outlets to ensure "fair, balanced, and impartial media coverage during electoral periods," while maintaining and respecting the media's editorial independence.

**Some examples cited in the report:**

**Morocco:** The High Authority for Regulation of the Audiovisual Media in Morocco (HACA) put together a monitoring tool to analyse audiovisual media through a gender lens and signed a convention in March 2017 to promote the culture of gender equality in and through audio-visual media.

**Italy:** A 2012 Law ("Par condicio di genere") requires the media to provide balanced representation of women and men in election campaign coverage.

**France:** The 2014 Law on Gender Equality mandates the National Audiovisual Council (CSA) "to respect women's rights in the audio-visual field," with special attention paid to the way women are portrayed with a view to "combating stereotypes, sexist prejudice, degrading images, and violence against women." In 2015, the High Council for Equality between men and women (Haut Conseil à l'Égalité entre les femmes et les hommes) published guidance on "Communication without sexist stereotypes."

**Canada:** In 2008, the Canadian Association of Broadcasters (CAB) created an Equitable Portrayal Code to overcome "unduly negative portrayal and stereotyping in broadcast programming, including commercial messages, based on matters of race, national or ethnic origin, colour, religion, age, gender, sexual orientation, marital status or physical or mental disability."

**Sweden:** Prognosis71 is an online gender equality tracker that monitors social media interactions and gender equality through algorithms. See <http://www.prognosis.se/>.

**UNESCO:** A 2012 publication on Gender Sensitive Indicators for Media provides a framework to gauge gender-sensitive media operations and content, not only during electoral periods, but on a regular basis.

*Source : Committee of experts on Media Pluralism and Transparency of Media Ownership (MSI-MED), accessed by <https://rm.coe.int/study-gender%20equality-in-media-coverage-of-elections/1680776164>.*

*HCEfh (2015) « Guide pratique pour une communication publique sans stéréotype de sexe » Haut Conseil à l'Égalité entre les femmes et les hommes, accessed by [http://www.haut-conseil-egalite.gouv.fr/IMG/pdf/hcefh\\_guide\\_pratique\\_com\\_sans\\_stereo\\_vf\\_2015\\_11\\_05.pdf](http://www.haut-conseil-egalite.gouv.fr/IMG/pdf/hcefh_guide_pratique_com_sans_stereo_vf_2015_11_05.pdf).*

*CAB (2008) Canadian Association of Broadcasters' Equitable Portrayal Code, accessible by <http://www.cbsc.ca/codes/cab-equitable-portrayal-code/>.*

*UNESCO (2012) Gender-Sensitive Indicators for Media: Framework of Indicators to Gauge Gender Sensitivity in Media Operations and Content, accessible by <http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0021/002178/217831e.pdf>.*

The IEC is also tasked with issuing a detailed final report for each election process, setting up temporary committees for specific tasks, raising awareness on the importance of participating in political life and the election process, and proposing draft legislation or expressing opinions on any draft laws relevant to the work of the Commission or to the electoral process.

All these responsibilities provide ample opportunity to mainstream gender considerations throughout organisational practices to ensure election processes, monitoring and reporting adopt a gender lens and are gender sensitive. The IEC's ability to form specialised committees, set its own budget and raise awareness provide an opportunity to earmark funding for gender equality activities. Namely, to create and resource a committee on gender equality (or similar) that ensures gender is mainstreamed throughout the organisation and electoral processes (e.g.

education/training provided to polling station attendants and district electoral committees, selection of temporary workers to assist the IEC before/after elections, provision of gender analysis in reporting etc.). Such a committee could organise awareness raising to encourage more women to participate in politics – be it as candidates, district electoral committee members, or working at polling stations during elections. Executive guidance on the formation of district electoral committees should encourage or mandate gender balance. These committees are central to supervising elections in each district and serve as branches of the IEC. Including more women in oversight and management of the electoral process increases the likelihood of recognising gender-bias or discriminatory activity that may otherwise fly under the radar.

According to the Integrity Coalition for Election Observation Report (2016), “women’s representation in the election committee was 17%, in the election committees’ offices 8%; in the polling and counting committees and support teams 25%; and in the special committees 21%,” and none of these committees were headed by women. Yet, women’s representation among youth volunteers and election observers was high. Nearly 15,000 men and women applied for accreditation through an electronic system to be observers and in the end, women represented 40.6% of the IEC’s observation units<sup>19</sup>. Women also represented 45% of the more than 10,000 youth that volunteered to assist the IEC in its outreach and education programmes<sup>20</sup>. The strong turn-out of female youth volunteers and women seeking to serve as election observers indicates that women are interested in playing a stronger role in the political process, but their keenness to participate is not translating into more formal roles via leadership and members to IEC’s various election committees.

At the highest level – the Board of Commissioners and the committee tasked with suggesting names of potential Commissioners is not gender-balanced. All members of the selection committee are men: The Prime Minister, speakers of Parliament and the president of the Judicial Council. In 2016, three male commissioners and one female commissioner were appointed to a six-year term. However, their appointment occurred after the Commissioners appointed in 2012 were prompted to provide their resignations, ahead of parliamentary elections and before the expiration of their six-year term. The original make-up of IEC Commissioners was slightly more balanced than the current, consisting of two female commissioners and three male commissioners in 2012. Women’s unequal input into the important decisions undertaken by the IEC neglects the perspectives, experience and talent that women can bring to the table. In turn, it can have a negative effect on the overall gender sensitivity of the organisation and electoral processes, as well as formulation of policies that could increase women’s political participation in the country.

## **Law on the Election of the House of Representatives**

The Law on the Election of the House of Representatives (Law No. 6/2016) represents the eighth electoral law adopted in Jordan since 1986<sup>21</sup>. A quota – initially reserving 6 seats for women in the House of Representatives was first introduced in 2003 via Temporary Law No. 11/2003<sup>22</sup>. A 2010 amendment of the Election Law raised the number

of reserved seats for women from 6 to 15, amounting to 10% of the 150 seats in the House of Representatives at the time. For the 2016 parliamentary elections, the total number of seats in the House of Representatives was reduced to 130, but the 15 reserved seats for women was kept in relation and equal to the overall number of governorates (inclusive of North, South and Central Badia) in the country (Law No. 6/2016, Art. 8B). The 2016 Electoral Law replaced the Single Non-transferable Vote (SNTV) mechanism (aka “one man, one vote” system) with an Open List Proportional Representation (PR) system. This change introduced the principle of multiple votes (absent since 1992) with the aim of improving the representation of large urban areas, but the new system is also more conducive to women’s political participation<sup>23</sup>.

Electoral systems have an important gendered effect on women’s political engagement and probability of winning<sup>24</sup>. Comparative studies show that countries applying a PR system have an increased number of women in their parliaments compared to countries that apply a majority or plurality system<sup>25</sup>. In an Open List system, voters can express preference for particular candidates on a party list, as well as parties and studies show a correlation in women’s increased participation as candidates in PR systems<sup>26</sup>. Indeed, the total number of female candidates for parliamentary elections did increase by 17% between the 2013 and 2016 elections<sup>27</sup>. Based on the new system, female candidates can win parliamentary representation in two ways: first, through the regular candidacy lists if they secure enough votes to acquire a seat; second, candidates can win seats through the quota system, which is applied according to the percentage of votes female candidates receive out of the total number of votes cast in their governorate under a “Best-Loser System”<sup>28</sup>.

The country’s electoral districts, which in accordance with the 2012 Electoral Law numbered forty-five, were both reduced and reformed by the current law. Each of the Kingdom’s governorates constitutes a district, except for Amman, Irbid and Zarqa which are divided into five, four and two districts respectively. Additionally, candidates must organise themselves onto candidacy lists, of no more than ten and no less than three candidates each. Quotas for the Christian, Circassian/Chechen minorities are preserved with nine seats for Christians, and three for their Circassian/Chechen counterparts. Similarly, the Bedouin in the Northern, Central and Southern Badia zones maintain their three seats per-zone allocation<sup>29</sup>. Though the total number of reserved seats for women matches the number of governorates, allocation is disproportionate when voter population is considered. **Three governorates – Amman, Irbid and Zarqa – encompass 11 of the 23 voting districts, account for around 70% of all voters in the country and 53% of female candidates.** They are the only governorates that must share their one reserved seat for women across their districts. In more direct terms – this is if to say 3 seats for women represent 70% of voters, and the other 12 seats reserved for women represent 30% of voters.

While it is important that all governorates have women’s representation in parliament and the 15 reserved seats in relation to 15 governorates should stay intact, women’s representation in the larger governorates is diminished by this allocation. The new districting arrangements provide an opportunity to increase the number of reserved seats for women to 23, in sync with the total number of electoral districts. Still – 15 or 23 reserved seats is still far from

achieving an adequate representation of women in parliament and falls short of the government's commitment within the 2013-2017 National Strategy for Jordanian Women's (NSJW) to - "gradually and deliberately" increase women's representation to no less than 30%," in all elected and non-elected posts. In the spirit of fairness, if seats reserved for women were based both on ensuring each governorate has female representation in parliament and relative to overall electoral district voter population, then reserved seats for women should be increased in several electoral districts – namely, all five Amman Districts, Irbid Districts 1 and 4, Zarqa District 1 and in the Balqa and Karak Electoral districts where registered voter population exceeds 150,000 people.

A campaign spearheaded by JNCW in 2016 to change Article 8 of the then draft law to increase the women's quota to 23 seats was unsuccessful in the parliament. Nevertheless, efforts continue -- headed by the JCNW -- to amend the electoral law, ensure ample time is allotted in parliament to debate the issue, and to give women's groups a stronger voice in discussions.

Given that the women's quota is sometimes viewed as "discriminatory" or a form of tokenism, Jordan could consider adopting a "gender neutral electoral quota" in tandem with reserved seats, or as an alternative them that would be perceived as more equitable (i.e. 50/50, 60/40, or 70/30 electoral lists whereby no more than a certain percentage of an electoral list can be comprised of one gender) with sanctions for non-compliance. Other measures viewed as more equitable and that can also increase the probability of women's success include the adoption of zipper lists (alternating male and female nominees), horizontal and/or vertical parity (as has been done in Tunisia), rules on 'heads of lists', and limiting preferential votes (e.g. one vote for a woman, one for a man).

Figure 1: A Snapshot of the 2016 Parliamentary Elections in Jordan

Electoral Districts	Women candidates	Total Candidates	Women candidates (%)	Total female candidates by governorate	Total Registered Voters	Registered voters by Governorate (%)	Female Voters (%)	Parliamentary Seats contested by governorate (inc. 1 reserved seat for women)	Governorate share of parliamentary seats	Women's guaranteed share of parliamentary seats (based on 15 reserved seats)
Irbid 1	12	83	14.5%	15.9%	750662	18.1%	52	20	15%	5%
Irbid 2	9	43	20.9%				54			
Irbid 3	8	38	21.1%				54			
Irbid 4	11	45	24.4%				57			
Ajloun	7	28	25.0%	2.8%	101483	2.5%	56	5	4%	25%
Jerash	8	39	20.5%	3.2%	108040	2.6%	56	5	4%	25%
Mafraq	7	32	21.9%	2.8%	95470	2.3%	57	5	4%	25%
Badia North	11	30	36.7%	4.4%	84376	2.0%	57	4	3%	33%
Zarqa 1	19	93	20.4%	11.1%	582258	14.1%	51	13	10%	8%
Zarqa 2	9	44	20.5%				52			
Amman 1	13	74	17.6%	26.2%	1559330	37.7%	51	29	22%	4%
Amman 2	12	75	16.0%				50			
Amman 3	12	64					52			
Amman 4	11	53	20.8%				52			
Amman 5	18	90					53			
Badia Central	13	45	28.9%	5.2%	56350	1.4%	56	4	3%	33%
Balqa	18	110	16.4%	7.1%	298659	7.2%	53	11	8%	10%
Madaba	11	48	22.9%	4.4%	106733	2.6%	54	5	4%	25%
Al Karak	14	89	15.7%	5.6%	167945	4.1%	55	11	8%	10%
Al Tafleeh	8	40	20.0%	3.2%	54885	1.3%	57	5	4%	25%
Ma'an	5	27	18.5%	2.0%	53349	1.3%	54	5	4%	25%
Badia South	8	31	25.8%	3.2%	64309	1.6%	56	4	3%	33%
Aqaba	8	31	25.8%	3.2%	55877	1.3%	52	4	3%	33%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>252</b>	<b>1252</b>	<b>21.4%</b>		<b>4139726</b>		<b>53.9%</b>	<b>130</b>		

Source: UNDP (2016) Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan Parliamentary Elections 2016: Frequently Asked Questions

\*\*As can be seen from the figure above, the preponderance of voters and contested parliamentary seats are within the Irbid, Zarqa and Amman governorates. Despite that these three governorates account for 70% of registered voters, 47% of parliamentary seats and 53% of female candidates (in 2016 elections), women's guaranteed share of parliamentary seats via the women's quota is low in comparison to other governorates and disproportionate to registered voters and female candidates.

Jordan adopts a “resign-to-run” model, whereby any public servants must resign at least 60 days before election day if running in parliamentary elections and at least 10 days from the commencement of candidacy for municipal elections. There are safeguards in adopting such a model – in that it protects against the possibility of a public servant unduly using the influence of their office to extract campaign donations, misuse government staff or resources to campaign or neglect the duties of their office while focusing on campaigning. On the downside, this model can be a disadvantageous as it requires a candidate to sacrifice their livelihood (i.e. income and employment) to run for office. The period between when elections are called by Royal Decree (after dissolution of parliament) and election day gives little time for deliberation (typically 1 to 2 months) before one would need to submit their resignation. This can result in a smaller and less competitive candidate pool, leaving out more experienced and eligible candidates with public service experience that are unwilling to take the risk of losing both their job and an election.

In a roundabout way, this rule also limits women more so than men. Voters often look for established community engagement and work experience as qualifiers for a candidate’s eligibility for office and in turn, their vote. Women’s labour force participation in Jordan is among the lowest of countries in the Middle-East North Africa region (14%) – but it is within the public sector that 52% of Jordanian women are employed. Further, in stark contrast to overall representation in other fields of work, women are well-represented within the judiciary – government posts that would be privy to the resign-to-run rule (OECD, 2014a). They account for 57% of positions in administrative courts alone. Where men’s work experience and engagement in the business community – outside of government – is more widespread, many women would rely on their public service credentials to boost their qualifications as a candidate. In this way, the resign-to-run rule can indirectly suppress qualified women’s participation as candidates.

Since countervailing measures already exist to curb the potential issues of not having a resign to run rule, its necessity is questionable. For example, the use of any property or equipment owned by government ministries, departments and official public institutions for electoral publicity is already prohibited.

Lastly, the age requirement set to run for parliament – 30 years old – bars the greater inclusion of youth in decision-making processes. The majority of lower-house or unicameral parliaments around the world set the minimum age to run at between 18-24 years old<sup>30</sup>. Global statistics also show that the gender imbalance between younger MPs tends to be less, averaging 60:40 percent, male to female worldwide<sup>31</sup> while the gender gap in the aggregate is much higher at 76:24 percent, male to female<sup>32</sup>. Decreasing the eligibility age in Jordan could increase the overall number of female candidates too, with younger women more willing to defy gender stereotypes than their older counterparts.

## **Municipalities Law**

A women’s quota was first introduced at the local level in 2007 when Jordan revised its Municipalities Law to include a 20% quota for women in municipal councils. This quota was raised to 25% in 2011. The latest Municipalities Law (Law no. 41/2015) endorsed by Parliament in August 2015, established a new structure for municipal governance,

including the establishment of directly elected local and governorate councils, in addition to municipal councils. The law maintains and applies a 25% quota for both local and municipal councils and introduces a 10% women's quota for governorate councils. The law also states that, "If the number equal to this percentage is not available to fill the seats from among the council members, the Minister shall appoint them within the limits of this percentage from among women voters registered on the voter lists in the municipality's area."<sup>33</sup> The reasoning behind applying a lower quota for governorate councils is unclear as opposed to a standard 25% quota across the board is unclear. The same measures mentioned in the previous section – aimed at increasing women's probability of being elected (i.e. zipper lists, horizontal/vertical parity etc.) – are also applicable to and should also be considered at the municipal level.

Echoing the previous section – the minimum limit set to run for municipal elections is age 25 which reduces the potential pool of young candidates, especially young women who are more able to engage before having children. In OECD interviews, objections to lowering the age of candidacy requirements tended to generalise about the lack of preparedness of youth to take part in decision-making and the need for them to gain an education first. Yet, it was youth – many below Jordan's age eligibility to run for municipal and parliamentary elections -- that propelled the Arab Spring through their tech savviness and use of social media -- a potent example of their ability to engage politically, mobilise and influence decision-making.

### **Executive Instructions for Electoral Campaign Publicity and Formation of Electoral District Committees**

Ceilings for campaign spending were introduced for the first time for the 2016 parliamentary elections. Given that income inequality is markedly higher between governorates as opposed to urban vs. rural areas<sup>34</sup>, the total amount that can be spent by a candidate is determined by governorate and the total number of registered voters per electoral district (Guidelines for Electoral Campaigns Publicity, Art. 14, hereinafter "GECP"). For the largest governorates – Amman, Zarqa and Irbid – campaign spending is limited to 5 JOD per voter within a given electoral district. For all other governorates, spending is maxed at 3 JOD per voter, per district.

This means that campaign spending can differ within governorates themselves. For example, in Zarqa district 1 – the spending ceiling is as high as 2.25 million JOD but is maxed at 658,000 JOD in Zarqa District 2. The introduction of campaign spending ceiling is positive for women who typically have far less resources than male candidates to run a campaign. One female MP interviewed shared that she spent around 60,000 JOD (85,000 USD) on her campaign in Jerash, but was up against male competitors who spent upwards of 1 million JOD (1.4 million USD). Interviewees concluded that money often trumps qualifications and women without money cannot run for office, given limited political party support and resources.

Figure 2 : Approximate Campaign Spending Ceilings for Electoral Districts

Electoral districts	Campaign spending ceiling (JOD)
Irbid 1	1632580
Irbid 2	726310
Irbid 3	571625
Irbid 4	822795
Ajloun	304449
Jerash	324120
Mafrq	286416
Badia North	253131
Zarqa 1	2252995
Zarqa 2	658295
Amman 1	1452675
Amman 2	2004110
Amman 3	1212160
Amman 4	1247745
Amman 5	1879960
Badia Central	169044
Balqa	895977
Madaba	320199
Al Karak	503835
Al Tafileh	164655
Ma'an	160152
Badia South	192810
Aqaba	167643

Candidate registration for parliamentary elections and obtaining permission for campaign advertising comes at a cost. Each candidate must pay a non-refundable 500 JOD (700 USD) fee to register. Electoral lists are required to pay 2000 JOD (2,800 USD) for insurance to abide by the provisions of electoral publicity. Though refundable – insofar as candidates do not violate publicity rules – the entry costs are high. This is especially so considering that the average annual GNI per capita (Atlas method) is 3,920 JOD<sup>35</sup>. The registration fee alone could account for 13% of the average Jordanian's yearly income. This represents a significant barrier to women entering elections given their restricted access to productive resources and finance. It also perpetuates a particular demographic of candidates – those who are rich or have solid benefactors. Temporary special measures could be adopted to increase female candidate registration – such as waiving or reducing candidacy fees for women until more of a gender balance is struck between overall candidates. Another possibility is to provide a reduction in up-front insurance costs for lists that contain three or more women – which would incentivize a higher number of women on electoral lists and political party support.

## Guidelines for the Formation of Electoral District Committees (Executive Instructions No. 2)

Election committees consisting of eight members are formed in each electoral district that provide oversight and guidance for the electoral process. Executive Instructions (No. 2) for 2016 and 2017 outline guidelines for the formulation of these committees. None of the guidelines for the 2016 parliamentary elections or 2017 municipal and governorate elections indicated that committees should be gender-balanced. Given the oversight role of these committees, a lack of gender balance or women on the committees can lead to a gender bias in application of electoral rules and procedures. Either mandating or encouraging gender-balance within the text of Executive Instructions has the value of increasing awareness of women's underrepresentation and drawing special attention to remedying it.



## Law on Political Parties

The law covering political parties in Jordan has fluctuated in the past and continues to, with efforts by the Ministry of Political and Parliamentary Affairs (MoPPA) to calibrate a law that supports development of political parties and dismantles citizen's fears of a party-based parliamentary government. The most recent Law on Political Parties (No. 39/2015) was passed in June 2015, extensively changing the definition, registration, and supervision of parties. A political party requires 150 founding members (down from 500 previously) and formation of party cannot be based on "religious, sectarian, ethnic, faction, or on a discriminatory basis caused by gender or origin," stating that parties should be formed on the basis of citizenship and equality (Article 5). This clause essentially bans an all-women's political party.

The "Party Affairs Committee" from within the Ministry of Political and Parliamentary Affairs (MOPPA) considers applications for party formation and oversees compliance with provisions of Law No. 39/2015. Funding of political parties must wholly depend on Jordanian financial resources and any grants or donations accepted by Jordanian persons or corporations must be identified and announced. No cash or in-kind funding or grants can be received from a foreign state or agency. To what degree the latter rule applies is unclear. For instance, many civil society organisations in Jordan depend on donor funding to facilitate their activities. Thus, it would seem that contributions to a political party from a Jordanian woman's association that receives support from a foreign entity could, by proxy, be viewed as a violation of the law. Further clarification on this point would be helpful to adherents.

Given that the law requires political parties to provide party by-laws and detailed records of revenue and expenses – it is an opportunity for MoPPA to further impose or encourage gender balance within party leadership and in candidate selection within by-laws. There are currently no requirements for political parties to report on women's empowerment activities, support of female candidates or internal party quotas. MoPPA could incentivise political parties to include activities aimed at women's increased political participation and leadership by making such activity a contingency for the approval of a political party application; mandating that references and examples of how women's political participation will be enhanced be included in party by-laws; and by awarding government funding to those that meet certain criteria – e.g. establishing voluntary political party quotas within party leadership and for candidate selection/support; support of a women's wing in the party; or providing training and support to women candidates.

MOPPA recently added a financial clause to Law No. 39 which gives 50,000 JOD to political parties with at least 10% female party membership, obtained in two instalments – the first after 6 months and the second after 12 months with sustained levels of female membership. Other financial incentives being considered include adding 10,000 JOD for parties that form coalitions and another 5,000 JOD for those that form a congress. While this approach is positive in that it will incentivise political parties to abide by a 10% threshold of female members – it would remain ambiguous as to whether or not the female members are active or supported to fully take part in party activities and sets the bar low for female representation. Tying financial incentives to political party support of female members as electoral candidates would be a more straightforward way of ensuring women's increased political participation and representation.

## Box 3

## OECD AND REGIONAL EXAMPLES OF PUBLIC FUNDING FOR POLITICAL PARTIES

There are several ways in which countries across the OECD and the MENA region have incentivised political parties to include more women on lists and/or support their political empowerment, such as the provision of public funding where candidate quotas are respected and earmarking public funding for gender equality provisions.

Some countries tie the allocation of public funding to the enforcement of electoral quotas. Public funding gives parties the financial incentives to meet the quota target or penalises them if they fail to meet the agreed proportion of women candidates or elected representatives.

**France:** If the gender difference among candidates is larger than 2%, the public funding is reduced by 3/4 of this difference for the offending political party.

**Ireland:** Parties lose 50% of their funding if they have less than 30% of candidates of any gender (rule introduced in 2012). The law provides for an increase from 30% to 40% of candidates, after 2020).

**Italy:** For European Parliament elections in 2004 and 2009, neither sex should exceed 2/3 of candidates selected for the party lists. If this provision was not implemented, the public campaign subsidy to the political party was reduced in proportion to the number of candidates exceeding the maximum allowed (up to 50%). The withheld amount was disbursed as a 'premium' to those parties adhering to the law.

**Portugal:** Parties that do not have a balance between the genders among its candidates can lose between 25% and 80% of its public funding.

**Republic of Korea:** Female candidate nomination subsidies are distributed to political parties based on the ratios of the National Assembly seats held and the votes polled.

**Finland:** All parties allocate 12 per cent of their annual party subsidy to support women's wings.

**Slovenia:** Women's wings may acquire public funding for special projects and programs.

**Ireland:** A requirement on spending on promotion of women's participation is included in the general direct public funding.

**Italy:** At least 5% of funds provided to political parties must be used for activities to increase the participation of women in politics.

**Republic of Korea:** 10% of public funding to political parties must be used for "the political development of women".

**Mexico:** Each party has to devote 2% of their yearly regular public funding to the training, promotion and development of women's leadership.

**Morocco:** Law No. 403.09 — a joint decision by the Minister of Interior and the Minister of Finance and Economy — created a Support Fund dedicated to promoting women's representation, with the possibility of up to 200,000 MAD (21,000 USD) awarded per project (Article 2, ¶4).

## Voting

Women gained suffrage in 1974 and account for more than half (52.9%) of registered voters in Jordan. The votes of women and men alike are strongly influenced by tribes and families who choose which candidates to support and expect all members of the family and tribe to vote accordingly. Even if a voter lives in Amman or outside of their voting district, it is common for them to return home to vote for candidates where their family or tribe resides. In past

elections – 2013 parliamentary elections for example – all voters were required to have a “voter identification card.” Block applications for voter ID cards – typically for a family were permitted, with male relatives often submitting them on behalf of female family members. There were reports of men withholding women’s voter ID cards until they pledged to vote for a particular candidate or preventing her from voting altogether. Participants from different governorates in the OECD assessment confirmed this and spoke about cases where husbands used intimidation tactics, such as asking their wives to put their hand on a Quran to swear they will vote in a particular way.

Vote buying was an issue often raised in discussions with the OECD Assessment team too. Interviewees confirmed that it was common practice – especially in poorer regions of Jordan. Given that poverty disproportionately affects women in Jordan, it also makes them more susceptible to vote-buying. Some tactics described, were candidates splitting a 50 JOD bill – giving a voter 25 JOD before voting and 25 JOD after showing proof they voted as they said they would (e.g. taking a picture of the ballot, a watchman deployed at polling stations etc.). Given the predominance of the practice, voters often expect something in exchange for their vote which can create additional hardship for women running for election who are financially strapped or have far less means to buy votes or give favour or in-kind gifts in comparison to their male competitors.

A welcome change to the 2016 electoral law was eliminating the need to apply for or present a voter ID card to vote. Voter lists are now automatically generated by the CSDB. This change reduced the ability for husbands to withhold their wife’s voting cards, forgery of ID cards and voter fraud tied to the manipulation of voter lists in past elections.<sup>36</sup> The electoral law strictly forbids intimidating another person to vote a particular way or vote-buying. The introduction of polling station protocols, training of staff and guidelines on who is permitted to be within polling stations has helped to curb voter intimidation<sup>37</sup>. Nevertheless, the practice goes on. To address the infringement by family, tribe and clan leadership on a voter’s ability to freely choose whom they will vote for – a past IEC Commissioner suggested the introduction of awareness campaigns with clear messages, such as “your vote is your own.” In this way, women will not feel obliged to vote for who their father, brother or husband tells them to and or who their tribe asks them to.

For the 2016 parliamentary elections, the IEC took measures to involve young volunteers in outreach and education programmes, capitalising on their penchant for social media. Of the more than 10,000 volunteers, nearly half were young women and the voter turnout for those age 35 or under was 45% forming a new benchmark for Jordan<sup>38</sup> and indicating young women’s growing interest in the political process.

## NATIONAL STRATEGY FOR JORDANIAN WOMEN

Since 1996, the Jordanian National Commission for Women (JNCW) has been preparing and updating the National Strategy for Jordanian Women (NSJW)<sup>39</sup>. The most recent NSJW is for 2013-2017. Its vision reads:

“ A Jordanian woman empowered socially, legally, politically and economically, able to carry out her various tasks and roles, enjoying equal value, dignity and rights, participating actively in the building of all pillars of society; a powerful force towards developing Jordan to be a democratic country enlightened by Islamic tolerant teachings, committed to international conventions and distinguished regionally and internationally” ”

– Vision of 2013-2017 National Strategy for Jordanian Women 2013-2017

Since the beginning, a participatory approach has been used and the 2013-2017 NSJW was prepared in coordination with official institutions, NGOs, academia, media centres and international women’s organisations and endorsed by the Council of Ministers. The various components of the strategy cover human security, political empowerment, economic empowerment, media and information and communications technology (ICT), integration of gender in policies and legislation, development of institutional capacity for those working on women issues and the popular culture on women empowerment. There are three overarching themes of the 2013-2017 NSJW – the second of which is women’s political empowerment and greater participation in public life. The general objective of the NSJW under this theme is “Providing better and fairer opportunities to ensure women’s active participation and reaching – in a gradual deliberate way – to a percentage of representation no less than (30%) as minimum in all policy-making and decision-taking positions in various authorities and sectors and in different councils and elected and appointed bodies.”<sup>40</sup>

Some of the objective relevant to Theme 2 and outline in the 2013-2017 NSJW include:

- Creating a supportive legislative and policy-making context;
- Increasing women’s participation in senior positions in the public sector;
- Increasing women’s representation in elected positions (including professional associations, political parties, etc.);
- Building women’s capacities and knowledge;
- Nurturing a supportive social context for gender equality;
- Reinforcing networking and partnerships and supporting women in parliamentary and local council elections.

The NSJW provides guidance to public sector institutions to promote the rights of women within their given sectors. Based on the pillars of the national strategy, the Jordanian National Commission for Women (JNCW) has adopted the

draft Action Plan for the implementation of UN Resolution 1325 and The National Coalition strategy for supporting women in Elections (2013 – 2017). It aims to meet targets set by the National Strategy for Women regarding women's participation in leadership and decision-making positions through six strategic objectives.

Additionally, the 2006-2015 National Agenda which aimed to reform public administration in Jordan included women's participation in the public sector as a main strategic goal. Some of its main principles dedicated to women's empowerment and gender equality included:

- Ensure equality and remove all forms of discrimination against women in Jordanian laws and legislation; Eliminate all wrongful social practices against women and correct negative stereotyping that undermine their rights;
- Increase women's contribution to the economy and ensure that they become 'partners' with men in the development process;
- Support an increase in women's representation in elected councils;
- Ensure a reasonable share for women in social decision-making positions;
- Reconfirm the principle of equal opportunity regardless of gender.

## CHAPTER 2

# Institutional framework for women's political participation

### About

*Effective institutions need to be put in place to successfully and comprehensively implement the regulations and policies set out in a country's given legal framework. The effectiveness of policies promoting gender equality – such as increasing women's participation and representation in politics – is contingent upon the quality of public administration<sup>41</sup>. The OECD's 2015 Recommendation on Gender Equality in Public Life (GEPL) promotes a government-wide strategy and "whole-of-society approach" to gender equality reform. The GEPL Recommendation, among other things, places clear emphasis on improving equal access to public leadership for women and men from diverse backgrounds. Critical to the achievement of this objective is "an effective institutional framework, with clearly defined roles for all actors to advance gender equality and co-ordination mechanisms to ensure sound implementation of gender equality visions and strategies."<sup>42</sup>*

*Institutions promoting gender equality or that can directly have an impact on women's participation in public life are varied – i.e. electoral management bodies (EMBs), government entities, media and civil society. Government institutions can take different forms: from single ministries (e.g. the Palestinian Authority's Ministry for Women's Affairs) to combined portfolios (e.g. in Algeria, Morocco and Tunisia), or separate governmental institutions such as gender units, or parliamentary committees on gender equality. Regardless, all play an important role in advancing women's increased representation in decision-making and efforts to do so need to be clearly coordinated. This chapter highlights some of the core institutions in Jordan that play a role in promoting women in policy-making.*

## THE INDEPENDENT ELECTIONS COMMISSION (IEC)

While the current Electoral law and Law No. 46/2015 on the IEC were a step in the right direction for democratising elections and providing a platform for multiple and minority interests – the OECD assessment team found that the renewed system does not go far enough to add opportunities for women's political participation. Though progress has been made, there appear to be room for improvement in terms of meeting Jordan's international commitments with regards to women's greater gender equality and political participation. Rather than adhering to international standards

of setting women's quotas at 30% minimum, Jordan has adopted a 25% quota for municipal councils, 10% quota for governorate councils and reserved 15 (11.5%) of 130 seats in the House of Representatives for women. Asked why there was a difference across the spectrum – the answer from interviewees was synonymous: as power, money and prestige increase, the quotas assigned to women to access those positions decreases. Serving on a municipal council for instance, is not paid, not prestigious, and less powerful, whereas parliamentarians are imbued with power, high pay, exposure and good benefits.

The financial means for the IEC to promote women's greater participation in electoral processes appeared less of an issue than human capital. Law No. 46/2015 indicates that all staff used by the IEC in preparation and monitoring of elections must be chosen by the Civil Service Bureau. While the IEC can refuse staff, it was indicated that it was difficult to do so and reduced the IEC's overall autonomy in choosing the most suitable staff. Further, ministries are reluctant to loan their best staff to the IEC for the several months needed to prepare for elections.

Though there is funding for media campaigns – the IEC needs public relations talent to design and produce materials (TV, print etc.) that appeal to and reach 4 million voters. Though a government entity, the IEC must pay for radio and TV ads to be broadcast on State television. Waiving fees for the IEC for broadcasting via state-run channels could generate cost-savings, which in turn, could resource other awareness-raising campaigns.

Government officials interviewed expressed a need for comparative studies on how to halt “black money” and vote-buying in elections. While spending caps were legislated in the 2016 Electoral Law, political parties are barred from receiving funding outside of Jordan, and vote-buying is strictly forbidden – all the aforementioned came up as barriers to women running for elections in OECD interviews.

## **THE JORDANIAN NATIONAL COMMISSION FOR WOMEN (JNCW)**

The Jordanian National Commission for Women (JNCW) is a semi-governmental body created in 1991 to serve as a reference authority on women's affairs, empower women, and promote gender equality in all spheres of life. It is the central agency gender-focused institution in Jordan. All governmental agencies need to refer any decisions or actions which would have a direct impact on women to JNCW before implementation. The mission of the JNCW includes “making tangible and positive changes for the protection of women and upgrading their status to achieve active and equal participation alongside men in all aspects of life.”

As such, the JNCW's mandate is to revise and develop policies, plans and legislation to ensure equality and eliminate discrimination against women. It advocates on different issues through building consensus and coalitions with civil society (e.g. campaign for increasing the women's quota in the Election Law in 2016.) JNCW carries out capacity-building programs for women candidates for the parliament, governorates and local councils. It also provides capacity-building for elected women at the three levels to develop their communication and lobbying skills, and their ability to mainstream gender in legislation and planning.<sup>43</sup>

Chaired by H.R.H Princess Basma Bint Talal, the JNCW's board consists of 22 members from relevant ministries, the national councils and institutions and the civil society. In 2009, the Women's Complaints Bureau was established within JNCW to collect information on violence against women and provide legal aid to victims. To drive forward its mandate, the JNCW has established several networks and working groups, as well as produced studies and guidance on particular subjects. They include, for example, the Network on Violence Against Women, an NGO Coordinating Committee, a Legal Working Group, analytical studies on the progress of Jordanian women and gender in the private sector, and legal guides on marriage and the rights of working women under Jordan's Labour Law.

Establishment and monitoring of a National Strategy for Jordanian Women (NSJW) is also under the purview of the JNCW. The most recent NSJW (2013-2017) clearly outlines gender gaps in decision-making positions in the country and priority areas for increasing women's overall representation. However, specific government entities – such as the IEC – and the role they should play, as well as recommendations for how they can meet the goals of the NSJW and coordinate with the JNCW are not clearly defined. Doing so can spur more targeted action and catalyse progress. The government's Inter-Ministerial Committee on women's empowerment and gender equality, established in 2015, will be key in coordinating efforts.

**For all reforms and progress related to women's issues, the JNCW is crucial.** Its quasi-governmental stature allows close relations with civil society and women's associations, while at the same time, remaining close to top-tier decision-makers and the opus of power through its governing board, the IMC and close relations to the Royal Court. It is a convening force for women's rights issues in Jordan with the ability to host discussions and cajole consensus among CSOs and activists on important issues – such as amendments to the Labour Law and Personal Status Code. This alliance and coalition of CSOs is used to compel government or parliament to act.

The central role JNCW played in organising activists and an ardent advocacy campaign to abolish Article 308 in Jordan's Penal Code (i.e. "marry the rapist clause") – in a matter of days and through a WhatsApp group -- is a testament to this. The campaign to repeal Article 308 is emblematic of JNCW's advocacy efforts which capitalises on multiple platforms of advocacy – e.g. WhatsApp, social media vehicles like Twitter and Facebook, petitions, parliamentary sit-ins, media interviews and lobbying both Parliament and the Royal Court. Despite the zeal of JNCW which employed all of the aforementioned methods in the quest to repeal Article 308, it ultimately seemed to be the Royal Court that pressured parliamentary leadership to vote and repeal the article behind the scenes. While the outcome was a victory for women's rights – it indicates that the pressure civil society puts on parliament is often not enough and that the highest level of political will is needed to make the government and parliament act on sensitive issues. Indeed, political reform is needed to move past this modus operandi.

Nevertheless, the buzz that JNCW managed to create around the Article 308 almost surely guaranteed that parliament, previously reluctant to do so, had to come to a decision on the topic, and the force of the women's movement, with JNCW at its helm, attracted the Royal Court's attention which resulted in the abolition of the clause, as opposed to its amendment.



## GOVERNMENT GENDER FOCAL POINTS

The Inter-Ministerial Committee (IMC) on women's empowerment and gender equality in Jordan was established in 2015 to provide leadership, coordination and accountability for action across government on achieving commitments related to women's human rights within Jordan's Vision 2025 and other national priorities and planning documents. The IMC is at the ministerial level with a rotating chair and includes the membership of the Secretary General of the Jordanian National Commission for Women (JNCW). The current chair is the Minister of Social Development (as of 2018). The IMC reflects the political will of the government to ensure cross-cutting gender mainstreaming within government practice and executive plans. As the country's central national women's machinery, the JNCW heads the Task Force on Gender Equality and Mainstreaming within the Executive development program, and is mandated to lead and coordinate the process of mainstreaming gender within planning frameworks. Through its mandate the JNCW has established gender focal points within government, and many ministries have moved forward with establishing women or gender divisions and directorates.

Due to the leadership and guidance of JNCW, the majority of ministries have gender units within them to mainstream gender in their activities and raise awareness about gender equality within their sectors, including Ministry of Municipal Affairs, the Ministry of Labour<sup>44</sup>, Ministry of Planning and International Cooperation (MOPIC)<sup>45</sup>, Ministry for Justice, Ministry of Social Development, and the Ministry of Political and Parliamentary Affairs (MoPPA). In cooperation with JNCW, they work to make progress in specific areas that limit women's overall political agency and participation. Through the support of the Takamol-USAID gender program gender audits have been carried out in 9 ministries and another 4 ministries are underway in 2018. Those audits are carried out with the technical support of a lead gender expert, but implemented by gender teams within the ministries trained by the gender expert.

The Ministry of Political and Parliamentary Affairs (MoPPA) concentrates on "involving society in the political development process" with a focus on women and youth elements<sup>46</sup>. MoPPA aims to create political development through government programs based on Six Axes, one of which includes modernising laws related to women and youth. The Ministry includes a Women's Affairs Unit which is propitious to ensuring gender is mainstreamed throughout the six axes of focus (e.g. financial support to parties based on conditionalities, programming to enhance political party culture, developing political life etc.). The Ministry also plans to conduct a gender audit of government Ministries, with the support of USAID, to see if there are discrepancies in trainings, positions and appointments. Such an audit will be key to informing gaps and informing policies and programming. Given the parliament's role as an oversight body and MoPPA's executive role, the audit will not include parliament.

## POLITICAL PARTIES

During Jordan's more than 30-year ban on political parties, tribes filled the void, linking the state to society. Though there is vocal support by the Royal Court and government (i.e. MOPPA) for establishing a political party culture, residual fear from this historical context has left Jordanians – men and women alike – reluctant to engage. Tribes continue to constitute major political actors in Jordan and carry more influence than political parties themselves. Of the 20 female members within the 18th House of Representatives, only four are members of political parties. In general, public awareness of political party platforms is low and there is room to strengthen political parties in Jordan. Family, clan and tribal connections reign supreme in determining one's political standing and that holds true for leadership of political parties too, or whether one would align with a political party at all<sup>47</sup>.

Certainly, shifting from a tribal-led to a party-led political system will be a process, as will the evolution of political party platforms and by-laws. A party-led system has greater potential of increasing opportunities for women's political participation as tribes are more likely support male leadership. Political parties also provide a platform for members to advance within decision-making bodies and power in numbers.

The strongest and best resourced parties tend to be more conservative Islamist parties. Consequently, the Muslim Brotherhood and Islamic Action Front (IAF), for example, have more successful in applying possibilities that stem from the women's quota and creating a power-base for its members. Both the Muslim Brotherhood and IAF see the women's quota as potential to increase their overall number of parliamentary seats. In the 2016 parliamentary elections, the IAF nominated 18 female candidates and there are plans to introduce a quota with the party by-laws for women. The IAF has also established a women's wing of the party, but to prevent segregation, has also ensured women members sit on each party committee – setup to mirror the committees that are within parliament itself. There are also promising developments within other parties too, whose acumen will be tested in future elections. The newly established National Jordan Appraisal Front has appealed to women who make up 62% of its nearly 14,000 registered members and comprise 40% of top level administration. One focus of the party is on the development of female leadership – beyond those that exhibit clear qualifications – to train and nurture women and youth's engagement in political life. Women also make up 40% of the Reform and Renewal (HASAD) Party's membership that was established in 2015 and conducts workshops, lectures and seminars on female political participation. Representatives of political parties expressed dismay about the varied political engagement of women and cited that government measures mandating a certain percentage of women in political party leadership and/or as members (higher than the anticipated 10%), could be extremely beneficial.<sup>48</sup>

Despite these positive developments, existing political party by-laws tend to refer to equality in a generic way – with no emphasis placed on gender, clear agenda on how goals can be achieved, or specifying targeted measures to increase women's political participation or representation<sup>49</sup>. A 2016 study of political parties deduced that even for parties that give attention to women's issues in their platforms, a closer look reveals that they “generally reflect a traditional understanding of women's role.”<sup>50</sup>

The Jordanian People's Democratic party (HASHD), led by a former female MP and the first party to have a woman as its leader, has integrated gender in party by-laws.<sup>51</sup>

Figure 3 : A Sample of Jordanian Political Parties, Movements, Coalitions and Initiatives that references support to women and/or gender equality

Political Party	Year Established	Stated goals that reference "gender" and "women"
Jordanian Democratic Popular Unity Party	1990	"Deepen the social revolution, especially in terms of <b>gender</b> equality,"
Jordanian People's Democratic party (HASHD)	1993	"Equality for <b>women</b> and the preservation of their rights."
The National Constitutional Party	1997	"Empowering <b>women</b> and youth to assume their active role in political and socio-economic life, as all are partners in the country in a common indivisible partnership"
The United Jordanian Front Party	2007	"The right of <b>women</b> to participate in the political life must be admitted in harmony with the Jordanian principles inspired from the Constitution of Jordan, the National Charter, and the directives of the rational Hashemite Leadership."
Al-Hayat (Life) Jordanian Party	2008	"Highlight the role of <b>women</b> and supporting their participation in all fields" "All members of the Jordanian Community be equally served notwithstanding <b>gender</b> , upbringing, or religion."
The Arab Renewal Movement	2011	"Full citizenship" under the "Jordanian identity" umbrella is the main pillar for civil coexistence; accordingly, all Jordanians regardless of their origins, religions, sects, or creeds are citizens with full equality before the Constitution and the law whether they are men or <b>women</b> ." "The role of women must be activated in all the walks of life; it is a basic action of advancement. The social life in Jordan must be politically, economically, and culturally based on full equality between men and women. Therefore, all cultural and legislative directives to enhance the role of women in society must be supported. Their right to assume the highest positions in the State on equal footing with men must be maintained. The movement will accept no excuse for the failure to realize this goal"

Source: Identity Centre (2014), "Map of Political Parties and Movements in Jordan 2013/2014," accessible by <http://identity-center.org/en/node/263>.

Note: This figure is based on the latest open-source information available from 2014 and does not reflect all of Jordan's current political parties. This sample of information is based on the political parties subject to the Identity Centre's study, which included the evaluation of 20 political parties, 19 political movements (Hirak), and six coalitions, and three initiatives.

Affiliates of civil society that work toward women's great political participation indicated that political party and women's campaign platforms are often vague, do not articulate a clear agenda or why they should be elected. There appears to be a clear need for building the capacities of potential female candidates to establish strong policy platforms, improve overall communications and outreach to constituents, and capitalise on female-specific strengths. Empowering women politically and developing a pipeline of future female leaders will require work with women individually and with political parties themselves. The JNCW, civil society and international organisations can and do play a role in equipping women

to run effective campaigns, but resources are limited. There is scope for MOPPA to earmark funding for training potential female candidates or provide monetary incentives for political parties to adopt training programmes aimed at women's political empowerment.

## PARLIAMENT

A “gender-sensitive parliament” is defined as one which responds to the needs and interests of both men and women in its structures, operations, methods and in its work.<sup>52</sup> Making parliaments work for both men and women requires viewing them not only as a law-making entities – but also as employers and role-model to society at large.

Parliaments play a critical role in championing gender equality and having certain mechanisms within them can ensure sufficient and effective oversight so the gender equality work does not stall or fade from the legislative agenda.<sup>53</sup> The Jordanian parliament has a Women and Family Affairs Committee (in both houses), as well as a women's caucus. Both can be effective bodies for mainstreaming gender considerations into the policy cycle, ensuring women's equal participation is supported, and creating solidarity among female MPs and others who support greater gender equality. While the existence of these entities is already a good sign, there is scope for significantly more work to be done for the Jordanian parliament to become more gender-sensitive.

### Parliamentary environment, internal rules and resources

As an institution, the Parliament and MPs are poorly equipped in terms of infrastructure. MPs offices tend to have an “open door policy,” meaning that anybody can walk in/out, which at times can be detrimental to work flows. MPs have hardly any hardware-infrastructure, and little to no assistance for research. This lack of basic work infrastructure can be more problematic for women who almost exclusively carry the double burden of their full-time parliamentary mandates and family care. It does not come as a surprise that very few female MPs stay longer than one parliamentary mandate in the lower house. This means that knowledge and experience get lost, which is fundamental for being able to influence decisions and reform procedures. This comes to a large advantage to male MPs, who continue to “run the show”.

The Senate, as the upper house in Jordanian politics, is clearly highly respected and recognized in Jordan. The appointed members are all distinguished personalities with prior accomplishments. The financial equipment for the work of the Senate, and the individual Senators, is not questioned (different to the lower house), and the Senators enjoy a higher degree of independence than MPs. Most Senators are of an age that is past child-raising and are financially well-off enough to delegate household-work to others, so they can focus on their parliamentary mandate. While the double-burden of balancing work and family-life is of less relevance for female Senators, not all seem to want to use their possibilities to influence public perception, legal procedures and legislative possibilities.

The communication between MPs and members of the Secretariat in the lower house, outside of administrative issues, is limited. Female staff members noted the lack of communication with female MPs but expressed a desire to establish stronger relationships and work together to identify women's specific needs and lobby for change. Both female MPs and female staff felt it was up to women to preserve and lobby for their rights and expected minimal help from male colleagues. It is worth noting, however, that the OECD held meetings with parliamentary staff from across directorates that evolved into open discussions where women candidly shared their negative experiences --- something that came as a surprise to male colleagues who in the end, were adamant about finding ways to address the needs and concerns of their female colleagues. Men themselves began to share stories as well, such as the impact gender roles have had on their freedom to invest more time into fatherhood. Indeed, the prevailing sentiment among men present was that they could not help if women do not speak out. The value of creating a space for regular and open dialogue between male and female colleagues -- without fear of reprisal and to raise awareness and empathy quickly became apparent. The presence and intervention of OECD peers proved crucial to fostering such an open dialogue which ventured into topics such as the future provision of a breast-feeding space within parliament, installing diaper-changing stations -- in both male and female bathrooms as a subtle reminder that parenting is for both men and women, as well as unconscious and overt gender bias in day-to-day work.

For MPs -- and female MPs with children especially -- having the time to get up to speed on the many issues they are expected to know about and vote on without research assistance is a serious challenge. Current and former female MPs spoke about the overwhelming pressure to perform their many functions and the need for advisors and research assistance to help shoulder responsibilities and respond to needs in a proper and informed manner. As decentralisation is relatively new in Jordan, both MPs and the average Jordanian often confuse the role of parliament with that of municipal and governorate councils, viewing the role of MPs as service providers as opposed to legislators. This confusion can put pressure on MPs to respond to individual and localised requests, which may divert their attention away from legislation and national priorities.

There is not a tradition of the Secretariat providing research support to MPs. Nevertheless, members of the Secretariat interviewed by the OECD -- composed of staff with dynamic competencies -- were keen to take on a more concrete role with regards to supporting MPs with research, legislative review and their committee work in order to broaden their understanding of parliamentary issues and put their skills to use. The keenness of Secretariat members to take on more substantive responsibility could be a win-win for MPs and for staff. For gender analysis of proposed amendments or draft legislation, it could make sense for the parliament to centralise this research and provide MPs with information. This should include the ability for individual MPs to seek specific research with the proviso that any information produced would then be available for all MPs to use.

It was also the topic of substantive work that revealed some practices within parliament -- that can be considered at times, discriminatory -- in terms of the authority and access granted to male vs. female staff when it comes to assignments and

attending committee meetings. Several female staff mentioned that the presence of male directors in the Secretariat is accepted in meetings, but women directors are sometimes not invited.

In this context, there is scope for an association or structure within parliament to represent the needs of employees, as well as to investigate and find remedies for staffers who feel they may be treated unjustly. The parliament's Behavior and Code of Conduct Committee provides recourse for members of parliament, but only for violations under the parliamentary dome and does not extend to members of the secretariat. Currently, any complaints go through the hierarchy of the secretariat – from heads of divisions, to directors, to the Secretary-General who ultimately passes them on to the Speaker, if need be, who makes a final decision. The OECD is unclear on what complaints, if any, have been filed and if and how they were resolved. A better approach would be an independent complaints system that provides anonymity, that is more specialized regarding discrimination or sexual-harassment. Interviews and subsequent OECD workshops with MPs and staff revealed that harassment and discrimination are difficult issues to discuss and acknowledge in Jordan, as well as understanding what constitutes sexual harassment. Nonetheless, there was recognition that finding ways to help those suffering harassment would be important and identifying discrimination should be done. Exercises that provided anonymity in sharing personal stories of harassment (i.e. writing experiences on post-it notes) revealed that women who were mute on the topic in group discussions all had uncomfortable stories to share.

The Parliament's Code of Conduct was last updated in 2015 and governs deputies of the parliament. Article 2 states that everyone should be dealt with objectively in order to enhance citizens' confidence in the parliament. Article 3 notes an obligation of deputies to "defend the rights of citizens and non-discrimination between them and not to accept any action that violates or detracts from those rights." While the current Code of Conduct emphasises the obligation of MPs to behave in a decent manner and be respectful of others, it could be expanded to say that any language and behavior deemed sexist will be penalized. Article 109 of the Internal Rules and Procedures that refers to prejudicial or indecent speech or acts could be amended in the same vein. A Code of Conduct to govern parliamentary staff was established and enacted in 2017. Article 7 directs all staff to "respect the rights of others with no exception" and to treat others with "respect, neutrality and subjectivity with no discrimination based on race or gender or religious beliefs or social status or age or any other form of discrimination."

A 2014 video of male MPs screaming at former female MP Hind Al-Fayez to sit down and making negative remarks about the women's quota during a plenary debate went viral and illustrated the sometimes-aggressive behaviour women MPs endure. Some female MPs and staff interviewed by the OECD said they had experienced being interrupted or cut-off by male colleagues mid-sentence during meetings and debates. Though this behaviour is by no means practiced by all men, there are regular enough occurrences to make women feel uncomfortable and less respected within parliament. On a positive note, women felt supported by the Speakers who have in the past, reprimanded male MPs for inappropriate or sexist speech. In 2017, during a plenary discussion on Article 11 of Jordan's Law on Domestic Violence, one male MP who considered proposed changes to go against Jordanian tradition remarked that "each time a husband slaps his wife on the cheek he has to work 40 hours or get imprisoned at home."

## Recruitment, Promotion and Women’s Representation within Leadership Roles

Parliamentary staff and MPs (except for Senators) are governed by the Civil Service Law. Article 4 of the by-laws state that civil service is based on “Equal opportunity through non- discrimination based on gender, race, religion or social status,” and that hiring, appointments (Article 41) and selection for training and scholarships (Article 119) should be in accordance with this concept of equal opportunity, as well as based on merit, eligibility, and competitiveness<sup>54</sup>. Likewise, the rights, obligations and responsibilities of civil servants are meant to be in accordance with equal opportunity (Article 4c). To the OECD’s knowledge, there are not specific measures within Human Resources Management (HRM) policy to support the recruitment or promotion of more women within the Secretariat, or specific targets to ensure gender balance at all levels. Women can take up to 90 consecutive days of paid maternity leave (Article 105), and there is a provision for two days paid paternity leave in Article 98(b). Article 105(a) of the Civil Service Law permits nursing mothers time for breastfeeding, but there are currently no dedicated facilities within parliament for breastfeeding. In 2017, drastic changes were made to the Civil Service Bylaw which introduced a system of flexible working hours, including part-time, to make employment more family-friendly.<sup>55</sup>

In terms of women’s representation within parliamentary leadership – thus far – a woman has never served in the role of Speaker or Vice-Speaker. Women have held the role of Assistant to the President in the House of Representatives, but the current five-member Permanent Bureau (18th House of Representatives) is composed of all men. The five-member Permanent Bureau of the Senate is composed of four men and one female assistant to the Speaker. As in the lower house, a woman has never held the position of Speaker or Vice-Speaker in the Senate.

There are seven parliamentary blocs in the House of Representatives with 15 of the 20 female members belonging to one of them. The Mubadara Bloc was previously led by a female MP, but currently, all seven are led by men. Women’s representation in parliamentary blocs is as follows:

- 0 of 7 parliamentary blocs is headed by a woman
- 1 of 7 has both a female media spokesperson and Director (‘The Reform Bloc’)
- 1 of 7 has a female rapporteur (‘Appraisal Parliamentary Bloc’)
- 2 of 7 have a female representatives in Parliament’s Executive Office (‘Appraisal Parliamentary Bloc’ & ‘Watan Bloc’)

Two of 16 committees in the Senate are chaired by women – the Women and Family Affairs Committee and the Labour and Development Committee. In the lower house, only one of 20 committees – the Women and Family Affairs Committee is chaired by a woman. As can be seen from the figures below, committee leadership positions – be it Chair, Vice-Chair or Rapporteur are rarely occupied by women (see Figure 4 and Figure 5). Asked why this is the case – interviewees often allude to women not putting themselves forward for the positions or lack of specialized knowledge needed to fulfill the role. Aside from existing female Chairs and contrary to the latter, the names of specific female MPs were frequently mentioned by interviewees who attested to the strength of their character and competency, but none

of those mentioned are leading parliamentary committees. It is unclear if this is the case because they are not putting themselves forward, defer to or do not want to contest male leadership, or are not getting the votes to be elected to the position.

MPs cannot be members of more than two committees. Due to this rule and there only being 20 female MPs, there are currently four committees with no female representation, but there are others – such as the Committee on Education and Culture and the Committee on Women and Family Affairs that have a disproportionate number of women. Women’s 73% representation in the latter committee illustrates male MP’s lack of interest in sharing responsibility for gender equality outcomes. Women appear to be receptive to and welcome men’s involvement and contribution to gender equality issues, but are less inclined for men to share leadership on the Women and Family Affairs Committees. Division of committee work demonstrates the disadvantage of women’s low numbers in parliament where certain issues – i.e. energy, labour, social development, finance etc. – do not benefit from a woman’s perspective in core committee work because there simply aren’t enough women to go around.

*Figure 4. Women’s representation in Parliamentary Committees within the House of Representatives (2007-2016)*

Year	# of Committees	Ratio of Female to Male Chairs	Ratio of Female to Male Vice-Chairs Committees	Ratio of Female to Male Rapporteurs	Ration Female: Male Membersr	# and % of Committees without female representation	
2007	15	0:15	--	1:14	7:131	10	67%
2010	15	1:14	--	3:12	13:126	3	20%
2012	20	3:17	2:18	7:13	14:146	12	60%
2016	20	1:19	2:18	4:16	39:220	4	20%
<b>Women’s average representation overtime</b>		<b>6.70%</b>	<b>10%</b>	<b>20.40%</b>	<b>9.60%</b>	<b>41.80%</b>	

Source: El Kharouf and Mohammad Al-Jribia, (2017), “The Evolution of Women’s Political Participation in Various Public Offices in Jordan,” *Journal of Social Sciences*, <http://thescipub.com/PDF/jssp.20179.22.pdf>; DOS, 1993-2013. Database of the Department of Statistics. Amman, Jordan.



Figure 5. Women’s Representation in Parliamentary Committees (18th House of Representatives)

2nd Session - 18th parliament					
Name of Committee (20 TOTAL)	Female	Male	Female Chair	Female Vice Chair	Female Rapporteur
	Membership ratio	(% representation)			
Legal Committee	2 of 11	18%			✓
<b>Finance Committee</b>	0 of 11	0%			
Committee on Economy and Investment	1 of 11	9%			
Foreign Affairs Committee	4 of 11	36%			
Administrative Committee	1 of 11	9%			
Committee of Education and Culture	5 of 11	45%			
Youth and Sports Committee	2 of 11	18%			
National Steering Committee and Information	3 of 11	27%			
Health and Environment Committee	1 of 11	9%			✓
Committee on Agriculture and Water	1 of 11	9%			
<b>Committee on Labor, Social Development and population</b>	0 of 11	0%			
<b>Committee on Energy and Mineral Resources</b>	0 of 11	0%			
Committee on Public Services and Transport	1 of 11	9%		✓	
Tourism and Antiquities Committee	3 of 11	27%			✓
Committee on Public Liberties and Human	2 of 11	18%			
<b>Palestine Committee</b>	0 of 11	0%			
Rural and Badia Committee	1 of 5	20%			
System and Behavior Committee	1 of 11	9%			
Commission on Integrity, Transparency and Fact Finding	3 of 11	27%			
<b>Committee on Women and Family Affairs</b>	8 of 11	73%	✓	✓	✓
<b>Total</b>			<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>4</b>
			<b>5%</b>	<b>10%</b>	<b>20%</b>

To provide a more even-keeled representation of women across the board as committee members and in positions of committee leadership, there is scope for the parliamentary bureau to vocally encourage women’s participation and support revisions to the Internal Rules and Procedures. Support from the parliament’s hierarchy can go a long way in changing attitudes about women’s leadership, building female MP’s confidence, and fostering greater acceptance of gender-balanced leadership. Specific targets for ensuring greater gender balance in leadership posts and encouraging women’s progression and equal participation within parliament could be articulated within the parliament’s Internal Rules and Procedures. For instance, mandating that the percentage of Committee leadership should, at the least, be equal to or greater than women’s overall share of parliamentary seats. So, if women make up 15% of parliament and there are 20 committees, then 3 (15%) of the committees, at the minimum, must be chaired, vice-chaired and rapporteured by a woman. Further, that at least one woman must be on the election ballot for the roles of first and second deputy and the Speaker’s two assistants (Article 16). This would allow female MPs the opportunity to grow their leadership skills and guarantee their participation in leadership.

## Gender Mainstreaming within the parliament

The Jordanian Parliament does not have an overarching Gender Equality Policy or devised a strategic plan that includes gender equality outcomes. Some preliminary project-based work has been done by the King Hussein Foundation Information and Research Centre (IRCKHF) on gender mainstreaming with the parliament's Centre of Legislative Studies and Research<sup>56</sup>. Two training manuals, one on social research methodologies and another on gender mainstreaming were produced in English and Arabic. Though the latter could benefit from the inclusion of practical country examples, it provides a solid starting point and overview of important concepts. Nevertheless, staff and MP's knowledge of existing materials was low to non-existent. Capitalising on and disseminating work that has already been done comes at little cost to the parliament and should be done, but embedding principles of gender equality and comprehension of gender mainstreaming tools – how to apply them and when – will require training and exchange of good practices and experiences. A 2016 report culminating from IRCKHF's project with the parliament noted that “several factors led to the lack of mechanisms to ensure the formulation and amendment of gender-sensitive legislation...poor knowledge of the concept of gender among MPs...misconceptions regarding the concept gender...and poor representation of women MPs in permanent committees.”<sup>57</sup>

Perhaps because of a combination of time constraints and know-how, MPs do not exercise their right or power to draft and propose legislation and currently, all legislation is proposed by the government. Debate is thus legally limited only to the amendments proposed. While JNCW regularly reviews laws and proposes amendments to the government to ensure compliance with CEDAW and eliminate gender discrimination, the Women's Caucus and Women and Family Affairs Committee could do so internally, providing greater leeway for debate, revision or enactment of newer, more comprehensive laws. As it stands – with no systematic mechanism or guidelines for conducting gender impact assessments, reviewing amendments through a gender lens is exercised on an individual MP basis and driven by a handful of tenacious personalities within the parliament. Though commendable and valuable by any regard, the approach is not sustainable in the long-term as MPs come and go. At the minimum, the parliament could develop checklists by which to assess legislation from a gender perspective. Workshops led by MPs that have successfully conducted gender impact assessments of legislation would also be beneficial for passing on practical knowledge.

### Women's Caucus and Women and Family Affairs Committee

Article 60 of the parliament's Internal Rules entrusts the Women and Family Affairs Committee to “study laws and matters related to women, family and children and follow-up the policies, plans and programs necessary for social, cultural, economic and political empowerment of women.” The degree to which the committees in the House of Representatives and Senate are fulfilling these functions is unclear. Interviews with the leadership of both committees did not reveal any specific laws currently under review, plans to do so, or specifics of oversight conducted.

The Women's Caucus, first formed in August 2013, provides a platform for female MPs to unite on policies to promote

gender equality and women's greater inclusion in decision-making roles. A stated goal of the women's caucus is to lobby for the repeal and amendment of laws discriminatory to women<sup>58</sup>. Nevertheless, not all women follow a feminist agenda and interviewees highlighted the challenge caucus members have faced in setting a common agenda or set of priorities with varying attitudes for each topic (e.g. exceptions to minimum marital age, changes to the Personal Status Code etc.). Although there are some points of agreement, interviewees suggested that disagreement occupies conversations. The Caucus faces an uphill battle to get laws passed, with only 20 members. The support of male MPs is crucial to advancing agreed up on goals, but their obstinance to promote or for some, to even consider progressing gender equality, is a major barrier. Caucus members must lobby heavily to gain enough votes, in combination with theirs, to pass legislation. Male and female MPs alike attested that identifying male champions of change and forming alliances would be crucial for long-term success. One interviewee estimated that less than 10 male MPs in the lower house could be consistently relied upon to vocally support women's rights and goals of the women's caucus.

“ We cannot deny the masculinity of the political work in Jordan and the masculinity of the parliament with men constituting the majority of its members...many {members} say that women do not have a cause and they obtained more rights than they should and women's rights advocates are destroying families. We are often facing these templates of accusations. ”<sup>59</sup>

– A member of the Jordanian House of Representatives

Jordanian citizens' lack of trust in the parliament reduces the likelihood of qualified women -- endowed with more resources and skills to run a successful -- to make the choice to give up their career to run for parliament. Some professional women interviewed by the OECD assessment team doubted their ability to invoke real change in parliament and preferred instead to stick to social activism or activity within the business community. A poll conducted by IRI in 2016 found that only 29% of Jordanians believe Jordan's parliament is effective<sup>60</sup>. This indicates that trust in government will need to be rebuilt and increasing women's representation in parliament can be a means to that end. OECD research shows a correlation between women's increased presence in parliaments and increased public trust.<sup>61</sup>

Ahead of the next parliamentary elections, expected to take place in 2020, both the Women's Caucus and Women and Family Affairs committees could be powerful agents of change for lobbying for special measures to improve gender balance within parliament and in local councils. This can include adding new rules and gender-neutral quotas for electoral lists in the Election Laws; reigniting the debate on increasing and more evenly distributing reserved seats for women; and amending legislation on decision-making positions made by appointment (e.g. members of the Senate, Governors) so as to introduce or endorse gender balance as criteria. The membership of the Women's Caucus and Women and Family Affairs Committee may be small -- but only 10 MPs are needed to push for the opening of a plenary discussion or debate on specific topics<sup>62</sup>. This tactic has successfully been used in the past by a coalition of female MPs to regarding gender equality legislation (i.e. to re-open debate on Article 11 of the Law on Domestic Violence).

## Box 4

## THE PARLIAMENT IN JORDAN

Jordan has a bicameral legislature, the National Assembly (Majlis Al Umma). Members of the 130 seat House of Representatives (Majlis Al-Nuwaab) serve four-year terms and are elected via an open-list proportional representation system. Candidates must be Jordanian citizens and at least thirty years of age. Fifteen seats – one for each governorate and Badia districts (North, South, and Central) are reserved for women; nine for Christians, and three each for Chechens and Circassians.

The Senate (Majlis Al-Aayan) is composed of 65 members (never more than half of the total number of seats in the House of Representatives). Senators are appointed by the King from designated categories of public figures. Senators serve four-year terms and must be at least forty years of age and formally have served in senior government or military positions. The King grants both executive and legislative powers. Though the Senate is regarded as more elite, it has had little actual influence on the legislative process. The House of Representatives is vested with more legislative power, balanced with Executive power.

For the 2016 parliamentary elections, the voting age was set at reaching 18 years of age, 90 days prior to the election date (Law No.6). Suffrage has been universal since 1974, when women were enfranchised. All Palestinian refugees who have adopted Jordanian citizenship enjoy equal voting privileges with Transjordanians.

## CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANISATIONS

Due to political parties being banned throughout most of Jordan's history, civil society structures, such as labour unions and professional associations have been the main outlet for organised political participation. Civil society structures such as women's clubs and associations, as well as women's sections of professional unions, have proven historically successful in strengthening women's political participation<sup>63</sup>.

Women's advocacy organisations play a major political role whereby they are active in parliamentary elections, developing programmes, holding training sessions, workshops and lectures to prepare women for the elections and train them in using strategies that will support their campaigns. This involves training them on how to run for election, to fund election campaigns, to locate networks of volunteers and administrative staff for their campaigns (including legal advisers, media officials and those responsible for volunteers) and to coordinate media and public relations<sup>64</sup>. These organisations also provide networking opportunities for women where they can find support and share experiences, connections and resources with one another.

Some women's advocacy organisations – particularly at the local level – focus efforts more on self and family-empowerment as a pre-requisite for political empowerment. The OECD team met with the head of such an organisation in Jaresh who championed this approach, as well as including women's husbands in discussions in order to change their minds about gender roles and shift their support to their wife's empowerment. The purpose was to ensure that women understand their rights and that they can be independent in their thoughts. Rather than focusing on the term "equality," the organisation construed the conversation toward the positive impact women's empowerment can have on families and society. Efforts were also aimed at socialising children from a young age to be inclusive.

The OECD assessment team gathered a difference in overall acceptance of women's organisations in the Northern vs. Southern provinces of Jordan. Interviews in Karak and Ma'an often indicated male hostility toward women's organisations – especially ones providing services for domestic violence. A representative of a women's organisation in Jaresh described the difficulty faced in trying to establish sister branches in Southern governorates and being prevented from doing so by men. As such, civil society organisation's approach to empowering women in Southern governorates tends to be subtler. For instance, private cascade training through the "Cup of Coffee" programme. In this case, a woman hosts coffee for a group of other women in her home to discuss politics and educate them about their rights. In turn, those who attended host their own coffee gathering with a group of new women and on and on. Approaches such as these may raise less eyebrows and can be effective in reaching many women over time.

## MEDIA

According to media monitoring carried out by the Global Media Monitoring Project, in the broadcast media, while women represented the majority of presenters (93%) and reporters (61%), women were the subject of news reports in just 13% of cases<sup>65</sup>. A study by the Jordan Media Institute (JMI) found that women's issues are under-reported across a range of media in the Kingdom. Women MPs and those who have ran for parliamentary elections described being marginalised by the media. From their experience, they felt that the media boxed women in – often focusing on their roles as mothers and reinforcing gender stereotypes. One female MP commented that the media is not interested in hearing women speak about economics, trade etc. and only airs stories when female politicians speak about women's issues.

The Electoral Law and Executive Instructions on Elections do not contain any provisions on ensuring equal media coverage between men and women during elections. During interviews, former female candidates insinuated that the media would not cover women's campaigns unless paid. Nevertheless, during the 2016 parliamentary elections, the Prime Minister decided to grant one free minute of air-time for both male and female candidates to present their electoral program on Jordanian TV, the state broadcaster for Jordan.<sup>66</sup>

# CHAPTER 3

## Women's representation in political life

### At the level of Parliament

Women obtained the right to run for office in 1974, but it was not until 1989, that women ran for parliament. They represented 2% of the candidates, were supported by no political parties and none were successful in being elected.<sup>67</sup> In 1993, Toujan Faisal became the first woman elected to Jordan's lower house of parliament as she obtained one of the seats reserved for Chechens and Circassians. It was not until the first quota (6 reserved seats) was introduced in 2003 that women began to make headway. Ever since, the level of representation of women in the lower house of Parliament has been steadily increasing. In the latest 2016 parliamentary election, women obtained 15.4% of seats, the highest level of representation to date (see Figure 6). Based on data available from the IPU (2018), Jordan ranks 11th among MENA countries in terms of women's representation in lower or single houses of Parliament.

Figure 6. Women's regional representation in lower or unicameral houses of parliament (%)

Rank	Country	Chamber (Lower House/ Unicameral)	Women MP's
1	Tunisia	Majlis Nawwab ash-sha'ab	31.3%
2	Sudan	Majlis Watani	30.5%
3	Israel	Knesset	27.5%
4	Algeria	Al-Majlis Al-Chaabi Al-Watani	25.8%
5	Iraq	Council of Representatives of	25.3%
6	Mauritania	Majlis Watai Itihadi	25.2%
7	United Arab Emirates	Al Jamiya-Al-Watani Itihadi	22.5%
8	Morocco	Majliss-annouwab	20.5%
9	Saudi Arabia	Majlis Ash-Shura	19.9%
10	Libya	Majlis Al-Nuwaab	16.0%
11	Jordan	Majlis Al-Nuwaab	15.4%
12	Egypt	Majlis Al-Nuwaab	14.9%
13	Syrian Arab republic	Majlis Al-Chaab	13.2%
14	Qatar	Majlis Al-Shura	9.8%
15	Bahrain	Majlis Al-Nuwaab	7.5%
16	Lebanon	Majlis Al-Nuwaab	3.1%
17	Kuwait	Majlis Al-Nuwaab	3.1%
18	Oman	Majlis Ash-Shura	1.2%
19	Yemen	Majlis Al-Nuwaab	0%

Source: IPU Open Data (2018) <https://data.ipu.org/>

In Jordan's history, a total of 50 women have served in the House of Representatives, but only a handful have served more than once: 8 women have served two terms, 3 women have served three terms, and only 1 woman – Ansaf Al Khawaldeh from Tafileh – has served four terms, but not consecutively (see Annex 3).

Figure 7. Women's Representation in Jordan's House of Representatives (1993-2016)

House of Representatives	Year of election	Total Number of MPs	Number of Female MPs	Women's Representation (%)
11th	1989	80	0	0%
12th	1993	79	1	1.3%
13th	1997	80	0	0%
14th	2003	110	6	5.4%
15th	2007	110	7	6.4%
16th	2010	120	13	10.8%
17th	2013	150	18	12%
18th	2016	130	20	15.4%

Source: IPU Election Archives for Jordan: *Majlis Al-Nuwaab (House of Representatives)*

Women's representation in the Senate has hovered between 12-15% for the past 15 years. Historically, Jordan has had 30 female Senators, a little over half of which (17) have been appointed for only one term. Senator Leila Sharaf has served an impressive 8 terms and Senators Salaw Al Masri, Wejdan Al Saket and Nawal Al Faouri have served six terms (see Annex 4).

Article 36 of the Constitution concerning the appointment of Senators can lead to favouritism for men as selection is based on "present or former Prime Ministers, ambassadors, speakers of the House of Representatives, Presidents of the Court of Cassation and of civil and Sharia Courts, retired military officers, representatives who have been elected at least twice and other personalities who enjoy the confidence of the people." Given that many of these posts have never been held by a woman and in others – their presence is nil (e.g. Sharia Courts) or very small (e.g. military, ambassadorships, elected twice to the House of Representatives), it significantly reduces the likelihood of a woman being appointed as a Senator. For example, between 1969 to 2002, Jordan had only two female ambassadors in its history and as of 2014, only two women were appointed as ambassadors in Jordan's foreign service.<sup>68</sup>

Figure 8. Women's Representation in the Jordanian Senate

Senate	Total Number of Senators	Number of Female Senators	Women's Representation
16th	40	1	2.5%
17th	40	2	5%
18th	40	3	7.5%
19th	40	3	7.5%
20th	55	6	10.9%
21st	55	6	10.9%
22nd	55	7	12.7%
23rd	55	7	12.7%
24th	60	9	15%
25th	60	10	16.7%
26th	75	9	12%
27th	65	9	13.8%

Source: Inter-parliamentary Union (IPU) Election Archive & The Jordanian Senate, <http://www.senate.jo/ar/page/معلومات-المجالس-السابقة>

Both the 2016 parliamentary elections and 2017 local elections resulted in an increase of women in decision-making bodies, as well as overall number of candidates. Electoral reforms played a big role but could have gone further.

In the 2016 parliamentary elections – changing from a “one man, one vote” system to open list proportional representation provided incentive for political parties to include women electoral lists given that the women’s quota allowed the possibility of getting more than one candidate elected on a single list. It also allowed voters to mark their preference for candidates on individual lists rather than seats being assigned to candidates in the order they are marked on lists as was the case in the 2013 elections. On average, 88% of lists included at least one female candidate, 3% included none and only a handful of lists included more than one woman (See figure 9 and 10)<sup>69</sup>. Still, without any special measures to increase women’s political representation on electoral lists – i.e. minimum number of women on lists, gender parity, alternating names etc. – the incentive to include more than one woman on a list and for political parties to support female candidates was not strong enough. Only around 10% of political party lists were comprised of more than 30% women in the 2016 elections. In the case of Tunisia, where there are no reserved seats, but instead mandated vertical and horizontal parity on electoral lists – women gained a much larger share of parliamentary seats (currently 31.3%). **Maintaining one reserved seat per governorate to ensure female representation from all areas of Jordan in Parliament and adopting special measures on parliamentary electoral lists in tandem, could dramatically accelerate women’s overall representation in the House of Representatives.**

One electoral list, “Get Together” in the Balqa district ran the highest number of women on any list – 5 out of 9.<sup>70</sup> The “Women of Jordan” electoral list ran the only all-women’s list (3 in total) in Amman’s 5th electoral district. Three of the seven party lists that included no women at all were in the Ma’an electoral district<sup>71</sup>. The OECD assessment team visited



the Ma'an governorate and held interviews with past and prospective female candidates there. A clear distinction between women's overall economic well-being and freedom of movement was noted in Northern (e.g. Ajloun, Jaresh, Amman) versus Southern governorates (e.g. Ma'an, Karak) by the assessment team. Women in the North appeared to more empowered, while those in the South were more bound by conservative ideologies about women and men's roles, especially regarding politics. For example, when discussing possible ways for female candidates to reach out to their constituents other than physically visiting them – women in Ma'an regarded less direct measures, such as calling potential female voters on the phone or use of social media as inappropriate. Women in Jaresh and Ajloun felt less inhibited in this regard and enjoyed greater family support in their bid for election and interest in community engagement.

Overall, 252 (21.2%) out of 1252 candidates for parliamentary elections were women, a big increase compared to the 191 women candidates in the 2013 election.<sup>72</sup>

Figure 9. Women's Representation on 2016 Parliamentary Electoral Lists

		Total Percentage
Electoral Lists with no women	7	3%
Electoral Lists with 1 woman	199	88%
Electoral Lists with 2 women	17	8%
Electoral Lists with 3 women	2	1%
Electoral Lists with 4 women	0	0%
Electoral Lists with 5 women	1	0%

Source: UNDP (2016) Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan Parliamentary Elections 2016: Frequently Asked Questions, <http://aceproject.org/ero-en/regions/mideast/JO/jordan-election-faq>.

Figure 10. Percentage of women candidates on 2016 parliamentary electoral lists

Women's %	
0-10%	14 list
11-20%	134 list
21-30%	52 list
31-40%	13 list
41-50%	5 list
51-60%	1 list
61-70%	1 list
71-80%	1 list
81-90%	0 list
91-100%	1 list

Source: UNDP (2016) Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan Parliamentary Elections 2016: Frequently Asked Questions, <http://aceproject.org/ero-en/regions/mideast/JO/jordan-election-faq>.

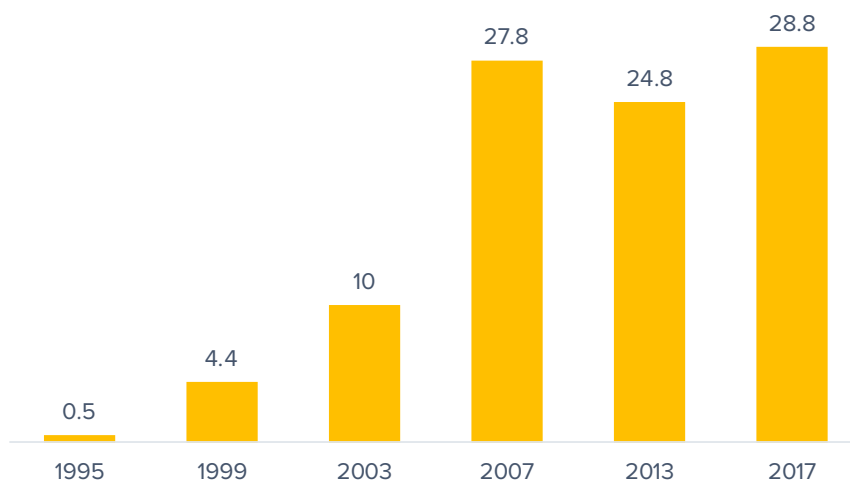
\*\* The majority of lists (59%) included between 11-20% of women among candidates, followed by 23% of lists that included between 21-30% of women candidates. The "Get Together" list from Balqa District included the most female candidates on any lists – 5 out of 9; the "Women of Jordan" was the only all women's list in Amman District 5

## At the local level

Traditionally, local elections are more important for people living outside of the major cities. They are primarily a way to secure the family or clan interests and though less prestigious, are perceived as more effective than parliament. Through the initiative of Princess Basma Bint Talal, 99 women were appointed to municipal committees to prepare for 1995 elections which opened the doorway for women to participate as candidates at this level for the first time<sup>73</sup>. Nine of twenty women succeeded in being elected and the government appointed an additional 19 women to municipal councils.<sup>74</sup>

Given Jordan's new Decentralisation Law – municipal, local and governorate councils are imbued with more decision-making power and play a decisive role in the development of the country. As such, women's increased inclusion is of prime importance and can be a stepping stone for them to higher positions of power. Women's representation in local councils has nearly tripled in the past 15 years. Like parliament, women's representation in local councils jumped once quotas were introduced in 2007 (see Graph 3) and have risen ever since. In 2013, women's representation within local councils increased to 35.9% (345 of 961 seats) after the introduction of the 2011 Municipalities Law.<sup>75</sup>

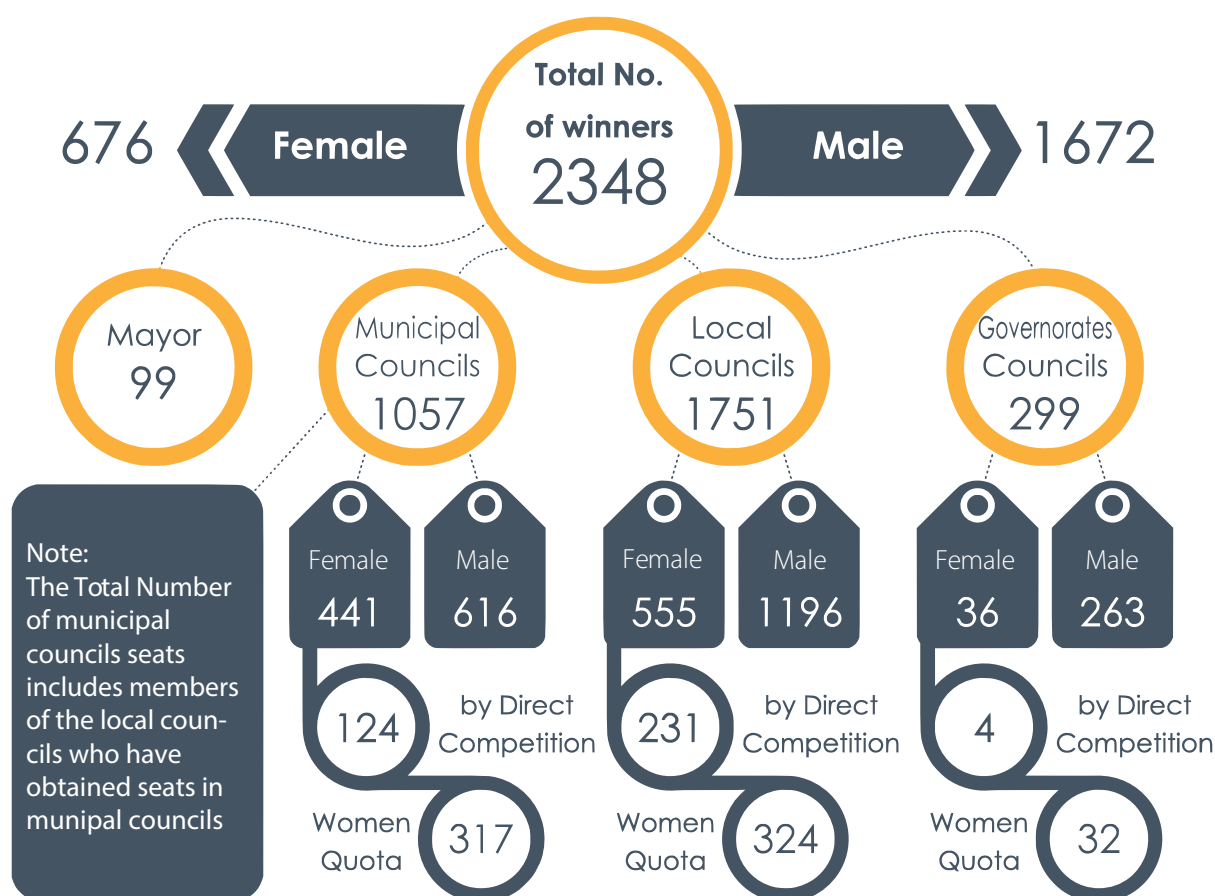
*Graph 1. Evolution of the level of female representation in the Municipal councils (%)*



Source: Amal Mohammad Ali El Kharouf and Mohammad Al-Jribia,(2017), "The Evolution of Women's Political Participation in Various Public Offices in Jordan," *Journal of Social Sciences*, <http://thescipub.com/PDF/jssp.2017.9.22.pdf>.

Unlike previous elections where only municipal counsellors were directly elected, the 2015 Decentralization Law provided for local and governorate councils to be elected and appointed. Women’s quotas were ambiguously set at 25% for local and municipal councils and 10% for the more powerful governorate councils. Collectively women won 28.8% of all local council seats – a number that appears lower than 2013 outcomes, but when disaggregated by council level (i.e. municipal, local, governorate) shows that women, again, increased their overall representation. At the municipal level women account for 41.7% of seats, at the local level 31.7%

Figure 10. Gender distribution of the results of elected councils elections, direct competition, and women quota seats



Source: Al-Hayat Centre (2017), "RASED Analysis on the Representation of Women in Municipal and Governorate Council Elections 2017," <http://www.hayatcenter.org/uploads/2017/09/20170907131130en.pdf>.

## At the level of political parties

The Jordanian Communist party was the first to include women as members, starting in the 1950s, followed by the nationalist parties and the Ba'ath Party<sup>76</sup>. The latest statistics from MOPPA from January 2017 indicate that women's representation within political parties is 35% on average. A 2013 study by the United Nations Development Program, reported 26%, hence women's representation as political party members is on the rise<sup>77</sup>. Nevertheless, women frequently move between parties and the duration of their membership tends to be short-lived<sup>78</sup>. In a sample of 28 political parties, 72.7% of female members remained so for 5 years or less and only around 9% stayed with their political party for more than 11 years<sup>79</sup>. A 2016 study recorded women's participation as founding members of parties at 9% (372 women out of 4,116 founders) for those subject to the study<sup>80</sup>. It also disaggregated women's participation as founding members by partisan movement: The Islamist Movement (6%), the Leftist Movement (5%), The Arab Nationalist Movement (6%) and the Centrist Movement (11.5%)<sup>81</sup>. Women are especially underrepresented at the leadership level of political parties. Only three of 49 registered political parties in Jordan are led by women. They include:

- Stronger Jordan political party – led by Former Member of Parliament, Rula Al Hroub
- HASHD political party – led by Former Member of Parliament, Abla Abu Elbeh
- Jordanian National Political Party- led by Muna Abu Baker

The lack of female leadership within political parties has important consequences for the overall number of women selected to represent their parties and run for elections.

# CHAPTER 4

## Remaining Obstacles to Women's Political Participation

### About

*In spite of the government's adoption of women's quotas and reference to the importance of women's increased political participation, women's representation in decision-making bodies and overall political participation remains low. The relative absence of women in Jordan's political life is not only driven by legal and institutional barriers, but also discriminatory social norms and economic inequality between men and women. This chapter will provide an overview of these types of barriers that continue to limit women's ability and desire to fully participate in public life.*

### Political Will

Government can be a role-model for women's increased representation in public life, especially by choosing women for high-level appointments. Though women's representation in the political executive has increased, they remain the minority. The same goes for other prominent positions within public institutions such as the judiciary, military, and higher education.

The OECD team found that temporary special measures introduced to increase women's overall representation in decision-making bodies are often viewed as "favours" or "gifts" to women, as opposed to their right with regards to equal opportunities guaranteed in Jordan's Constitution. The use of quotas remains controversial in Jordan, as is the case in most countries. Given that quotas are understood as "special temporary measures", it is a common misconception – in Jordan and other countries the OECD has assessed in the region – that they are no longer needed after one or more election cycles if women's representation has increased. This logic presumes that since women's representation has increased, it will only continue to do so, and the quota is no longer needed. This type of thinking is a risk factor that disregards the significant influence social norms have on women's political opportunities and the time needed to realise change. Moving past the stage of quotas as a token gesture to genuine equality takes time. Examples from within the region and in OECD countries shed light on the outcome of prematurely removing quotas. Egypt, for example, introduced its first quota for women (reserved seats) in 1979, keeping it in place until after the 1984 elections before cancelling it. In the 1979 and 1984 elections women made up 8% of parliament, but after cancellation of the quota, their representation dropped to an average of 2% and remained unchanged for decades until the quota was reinstated in the 2010 and 2015 parliamentary elections. Women's representation in the Egyptian parliament has now reached the unprecedented level of 15%.

Quotas are only one ingredient to producing normative change. They can guarantee women's inclusion in political

decision-making bodies – but quotas alone are not enough. Long-term change requires increasing social-awareness of the value of gender-balanced representation – to yield policies, budgets and public services that meet the needs of women and men alike. There are some solid ways that the King, Jordanian government and parliament could exhibit political will for the promotion of women in policy-making. For instance, ensuring a 50/50 ratio for top-level government appointed positions – such as appointing half women and half men to the Senate or to Ministerial posts.

### **Cultural, social and economic barriers**

The perception in Jordan that women and girls need guardianship and protection often translates into restrictions on their freedom of movement, social engagement and civic participation, particularly in rural areas. Women, as such, often remain on the side-lines, disinclined to engage in politics<sup>82</sup>. The low levels of female voter participation can be an indicator of such a sentiment: during the 2016 elections, only 32% of eligible female voters voted.<sup>83</sup>

The 2014 OECD-CAWTAR report notes that “participation in economic life can provide women with more access to and control over resources, enabling them to fulfil individual aspirations with regard to their private and public lives by enhancing their bargaining powers in their families and societies.”<sup>84</sup>

Touched upon in earlier chapters, women in Jordan have restricted access to productive financial resources and tend to have less financial means and independence compared to men. This is largely due to the remaining discriminatory provisions in matters of personal status which often limit their ability to participate in the workforce, make financial decisions, access finance and inherit. Interviewees noted that even for women who do work, in some cases, their salaries are sent to their husbands.

There is a societal expectation that women are the primary caretakers of children and family. The pressure for women to mainly devote their time to family and household duties can limit their ability to undertake activity outside of the home, engage with their community and build qualifications to be a successful candidate. Women who ran for past elections described feeling tension between family responsibilities and their political participation and found it difficult to reconcile the two. The OECD team noted that the decision for women to run for election or not – and even whom to vote for – is often influenced by her husband. Qualified women may choose not to run for an election to appease their husband and maintain familial harmony.

Despite the increase in levels of higher education attainment among women in Jordan, the educational system often reinforces stereotypical gender roles inhibiting the capacities and opportunities of women. This phenomenon prompts women to occupy jobs that are considered “appropriate” according to traditional social standards which in turn can reinforce occupational segregation. Politics is often viewed as a male domain and is often perceived by women as connected to protests and conflict. Higher standards also seemed to be placed on women for them to be deemed eligible as candidates.

Money can be a big barrier for women, especially for parliamentary elections. The combined cost of registration fees and running a campaign are steep. Many women reported that they rely on their husbands or families to co-sign for loans to fund their campaigns and can spend years paying them off. Raising money through fundraising can be especially difficult for women. While many male competitors have strong ties to the business community and can garner donations in this way, women's integration in the private sector is minimal. In Jordan, women account for only 1.3% of members of Chambers of Commerce.<sup>85</sup>

Depending on the area, women are also limited in the types of fundraising techniques they can employ in comparison to men. In more conservative areas of Jordan, it is socially taboo for women to go to door to door campaigning, host private dinner parties, call potential voters on the phone, utilise social media, or partake in events at night where networking opportunities are more abundant. For women who have more personal freedom to do the aforementioned, transport can be a limitation. One female candidate who ran for the 2013 parliamentary elections described the difficulties she faced in voter outreach without a car and how time-consuming it was for her to go from house to house on foot. After campaigning for long hours and in bad weather, she came down with pneumonia. Another women who successfully won her election, described the difficulty of balancing family, work and her position as a council member, especially without transportation to go to and fro.

Limited resources have forced women to get creative and find ways to run cheaper, but still competitive campaigns. Use of social media to articulate one's campaign platform and reach more voters was one tool women employed. Women's knowledge of online fund-raising platforms (e.g. Fundly) was low or non-existent in Jordan. Online fundraising, or 'crowdfunding' are tools that are relatively new, but becoming increasingly mainstream in OECD countries and a gamechanger for fundraising. Likewise, social media, the internet and mobile technology can be powerful tools for women candidates to raise campaign funds, avoid the stress of loans and dependency on family for money, and circumvent mobility or face-to-face communication barriers. Online outreach for campaign donations – or the use of mobile phone payment technology (e.g. Square) – can allow candidates to quickly and easily collect small donations that can add up to substantial amounts. This type of technology revolutionised campaign funding in the United States' 2012 Presidential election, with 41% of all Barack Obama's campaign funds derived from small donations. Time-saving technology – such as Mail Merge – can allow candidates to form a list of supporters whom they can bulk email to provide campaign updates or ask for donations, but on a personalised basis (e.g. addressing each supporter by their name). Training programs ran by civil society and women's organisations to prepare women for elections should incorporate sessions on fundraising that address and finds solutions to the gender-based social barriers women running for election face.

## Box 5

## USING ONLINE AND MOBILE TECHNOLOGY FOR CAMPAIGN FUNDRAISING

**United Kingdom:** During the 2015 parliamentary elections, the Labour Party hosted an online fundraising drive by sending emails to party supporters urging them to donate small sums, with buttons that people could click (e.g. £5, £10 or £20). Emails were sent by well-known members of the party and personally addressed recipients by name. The campaign raised more than £1million

**Fundly:** An online crowdfunding platform that can be used to raise funds for a cause, project, event or campaign. Fundly can be connected to a user's Facebook account to capitalise on one's social network and is widely used by non-governmental organisations, small businesses and individuals – including political candidates – to raise funds. The platform allows users to post photos and videos, send emails and updates to donors, and for campaigns to be easily viewed on mobile phone browsers. Globally, Fundly has provided a vehicle for raising \$34 billion USD for users, \$25 billion of which has been derived from peer-to-peer lending. See: <http://fundly.com>.

**Crowdpac:** An online platform open for use by candidates, causes and grassroots groups to raise funds. The site provides an easy template for users both for 'conditional campaigns' and direct campaign donations. Potential candidates can test the waters of their popularity via "Start Running" pages that enable them to collect credit card backed pledges of support (of any amount) that turn into real donations once their pledge is met or their candidacy is confirmed. The sites are free to setup and users receive 100% of donor's contributions, with donors paying a small credit card fee (e.g. 30 cents) or providing an optional tip to Crowdpac for the service. The website has been used by local candidates from across the United States in the lead-up to the 2018 mid-term parliamentary elections. See [www.crowdpac.com](http://www.crowdpac.com).

**Square:** A company that provides free magstripe readers (connectable to iPads) and in conjunction with a downloadable app (Square Point of Sale), that enables for direct and contactless payments. A systems used by small businesses -- this method and technology is now being used to easily collect one-time campaign donations (e.g. door-to-door) of any amount in the field. The cost to the user is minimal (e.g. 2.75% per transaction) with no monthly or long-term commitments. See <https://squareup.com/>.

## Religion

Within OECD interviews references to the respect granted to women within Sharia Law and Islam was often referred, but there was a presumption that this was indeed the case de facto without deeper reflection as to whether the respect afforded to women in the Quran is interpreted and practiced accordingly in government policies, laws and jurisprudence.



# Opportunities

Opportunities for women's greater political inclusion were also identified over the course of the OECD's assessment. Some are rooted in changes to the legal framework surrounding elections, and others are based on the positive experiences of women who were successfully elected to parliament or local councils. They can be summarised as follows:

- The women's quota in parliament paired with the Open List Proportional Representation system provides an incentive for political parties to include women on their electoral lists to increase the chances of winning more than one seat in parliament;
- Quotas for women provide an opportunity for women to get their foot in the door and gain valuable policy-making experience, but also to increase their numbers in decision-making bodies in order to influence policy, and serve as role-models, breaking down negative perceptions about women's ability to lead;
- Successful female candidates asserted that knowledge is power – meaning staying abreast of changes in laws and of current events;
- A woman's ability to run for election and success is often contingent up on her family or husband's support. A women's association in Jareh described awareness campaigns on the valuable contribution women can make to their communities and in leadership roles, specifically targeting families in order to increase their support of female family members running for elections;
- Getting elected within municipal and local councils can be a great way to prove competency and build relationships with the community as they are vectors for public service delivery. This can build a woman's qualifications and exposure for running for higher posts, such as governorate councils or Parliament;
- Social media can be an excellent tool for reaching out to constituents when resources are limited for on the ground campaigning (e.g. transportation) or to invest in printed publicity.

# RECOMMENDATIONS

- Withdraw existing reservations to CEDAW and work toward amending discriminatory provisions in domestic legislation, with careful attention given to Jordan's Personal Status Code;
- In accordance with the mandate of the Jordanian National Commission for Women, ensure that all draft laws and government policies pertaining to women's issues or gender equality are reviewed by JNCW in advance of being sent to Parliament or before their enactment.
- Amend Article 6 of the Constitution to clearly identify non-discrimination of rights and duties based on gender, as well as equal rights and opportunities to both men and women.
- Consider increasing the 15 reserved seats for women in the House of Representatives to ensure each electoral district has one reserved seat for a woman, or to calculate reserved seats in a way that is proportionate to the voter population in Jordan's 12 governorates and three Badia regions – ensuring that all have at least one reserved seat for a woman – and that the most populous governorates (i.e. Amman, Zarqa, Irbid) have more than one reserved seat for women.
- The women's quota is sometimes viewed as "discriminatory" or a form of tokenism. Consider adopting special temporary measures in tandem with, or as an alternative to the the women's quota that would be perceived as more equitable – such as "gender neutral quotas" (i.e. 50/50, 60/40, or 70/30 electoral lists whereby no more than a certain percentage of the list is comprised of one gender) with sanctions for non-compliance.
- Consider introducing national electoral lists in parliamentary elections as a measure to supersede tribal influence over district electoral lists and boost female candidate's likelihood of winning more seats.
- Extend the 25% women's quota applied to municipal and local councils to governorate councils to ensure continuity and that women's representation is increased at all levels of political decision-making;
- In addition to or as an alternative to women's quotas, introduce temporary special measures on electoral lists to increase the number of women on lists and the probability of their success. Some possible measures to consider are: candidate quotas mandating a certain percentage of women on lists, a rule that states no more than 70% of a list can be composed of either gender, zipper lists, horizontal and/or vertical parity, rules on 'heads of lists', and limiting preferential votes (e.g. one vote for a woman, one for a man).
- Consider introducing temporary measures to waive or reduce candidate registration and insurance fees for women

in elections to reduce their entry barriers and incentivize political parties to include more women on their lists;

- Introduce or encourage gender parity as a criterion in high-level government appointments to non-elected positions to demonstrate the government's commitment to increasing women's participation in public life and encourage prioritization of gender parity in political decision-making (e.g. Constitution, Article 36 on appointment of Senators)
- Include provisions within Electoral laws and executive instructions that address media coverage of elections based on gender and ensure that male and female candidates receive equal media coverage;

### **Ministry of Political and Parliamentary Affairs (MOPPA)**

- Increase Jordan's political culture, confidence in political parties, and youth engagement in decision-making by reconsidering current limitations within the Political Parties Law – for e.g. by lowering the 18 year-old age threshold for becoming a political party member and removing the ban on college students from joining political parties;
- Establish effective networks between political parties, CSOs, and international organisations to encourage political party development, build their overall capacities and gender-sensitivity of political party agendas (MOPPA could spearhead or play an important role in such a programme).
- Provide incentives to political parties to be more inclusive of female membership and leadership, as well as supportive of female candidates in campaigns. Measures adopted could include making state funding contingent upon political party sponsorship of training and development programs for women candidates, adopting voluntary gender quotas or including a certain percentage of women on electoral lists, as opposed to a certain percentage of women as members;

### **Independent Elections Commission (IEC)**

- Mainstream gender throughout Law No. 12/2012 on "Consolidation of the IEC," as well as in accompanying electoral laws and Executive Instructions provided to municipalities, districts and governorates for the preparation and monitoring of elections.
- Encourage gender balance in all electoral committees formed, at all levels (e.g. from the selection committee tasked with suggesting appointees to the King, to IEC Commissioners, to district electoral committees and sub-committees at polling stations);
- Create awareness-raising campaigns around themes such as the importance of women's' political participation the strong contribution women make to decision-making, as well as "your vote is your own" so that women do not

feel inclined to vote in the way their husband, family or tribe dictates. Awareness-raising can also focus on the de-normalization of ‘vote-buying’ and inform voters of the strict consequences of participating;

- Consider forming a specialised committee on gender equality tasked with ensuring all IEC documents, legal opinions, reports, workplace practices and electoral processes are gender sensitive, as well as to formulate awareness raising campaigns targeting women’s increased political participation as candidates, voters and electoral staff;
- To increase youth engagement in Jordan’s formal political institutions – especially that of young women – considered reducing the eligibility age to run for election to parliament and municipal councils from age 30 and 25 to age 18 for both.

### **Jordanian National Commission for Women (JNCW) and Civil Society**

- In the next National Strategy for Jordanian Women (NSJW), include “gender-sensitivity of electoral processes” as a core objective with the roles of relevant stakeholders clearly articulated (e.g. IEC, MOPPA, MOMA, Parliament, political parties etc.) and guidelines provided on how best to implement suggested measures;
- Incorporate use of social media and online fundraising platforms in training programmes for potential female candidates to equip them with cost-effective tools for running their campaigns. Discussions on financial management of a campaign and alternative options for funding outside of loans would also be beneficial;

### **Jordanian Parliament**

- Mainstream gender throughout existing internal rules and procedures to ensure that emphasis is placed on equal opportunities for women and men within parliament and that all communication, documents and laws contain gender-sensitive language. In tandem, consider devising an overarching gender equality strategy for the parliament and/or including gender equality outcomes in the parliament’s Strategic Plan.
- Develop checklists to assess legislation from a gender perspective, ex-ante and ex-post.
- Collate gender-disaggregated data collected by various government ministries to underpin evidence-based assessments of the gender impacts of laws and budgets.
- Consider setting specific targets or rules within Internal Rules and Procedures to provide greater opportunities for women to serve in parliamentary leadership roles and guarantee that women’s representation in committee leadership does not fall below their overall representation in parliament. For e.g. mandating that women’s percentage of Committee leadership (Chair, Vice-Chair, and Rapporteur) must be equal to or greater than women’s overall share of parliamentary seats and that at least one woman must be on the election ballot for the roles of First and Second

## Deputy and Speaker Assistants

- Expand parliament’s current Code of Conduct to adopt a zero-tolerance policy for sexual harassment and endorse a culture of non-discrimination
- Create a body within parliament to receive suggestions, complaints and to investigate and address gender-based discrimination and harassment – ensuring anonymity, protection for whistleblowers, and equal recourse provided for both MPs and members of the Secretariat.
- Adopt concrete measures within parliament to ensure that men and women – both MPs and members of the Secretariat – enjoy the same opportunities for work assignments, promotion, to serve in leadership posts, and to represent the parliament in the media, official delegations and within parliamentary committees
- Host regular dialogue between male and female colleagues on “making parliament work for men and women” – exploring unconscious bias, how to overcome it, and to identify problem areas and remedies to ensure a fair and amiable workspace for men and women alike.
- Disseminate established training tools on gender mainstreaming across all directorates in the Secretariat and to MPs themselves.
- Create or identify gender focal points within each Directorate, or a stand-alone unit within the Parliamentary Secretariat with the aim of building awareness and providing training and support to MPs and staff on gender mainstreaming tools to measure the differential impacts of laws and budgets on men and women, as well as to embed gender considerations into all levels of the policy-cycle. Ensure focal points and/or the gender unit is comprised of staff with specific expertise on gender mainstreaming and its application in a parliamentary setting.
- Establish a “family room” in the Parliament. In addition to the actual use for breastfeeding or related purposes, it will stir discussion around the topic of women in politics and creating a space conducive to staff with families.
- While the female MPs have a women’s caucus, which is recognized, it would be useful to build a network between the female women employees of the Parliament. These employees stay longer in Parliament than most female MPs and can have an important role to play in transforming the parliament into a more genders-sensitive institution and workplace.
- Perform regular self-assessments of the gender-sensitivity of parliament using the OECD’s assessment (see Appendices) or other established ones in order to identify areas that need attention, find solutions and track progress overtime. This can be buttressed by perception surveys disseminated to staff and MPs (on the basis of anonymity) – cheaply and easily facilitated and monitored through software like SurveyMonkey.

## APPENDICES

## APPENDIX 1 : ASSESSMENT 1A, GENDER-SENSITIVE PARLIAMENTS

Assessment 1a: Gender-sensitive parliaments			
Dimension/Area	Sub-Components	Stakeholder(s)	Interview Guide Used
Sharing responsibility for gender equality outcomes	Equality of participation and leadership	MPs, Political parties, CSOs,	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>What proportion of all parliamentary seats do women hold?</li> <li>What factors have enabled the election or appointment of women to parliament/local government? What obstacles hinder women's greater representation?</li> <li>Are women elected or appointed through a temporary special measure (e.g. reserved seat) perceived in the same way as those elected through an open competition with men?</li> <li>What percentage of leadership positions do women hold?               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>What positions do women hold?</li> <li>How are those positions allocated – i.e. what criteria are used?</li> </ul> </li> <li>Are any measures used to guarantee women are in positions of leadership in the parliament/local government body?               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>If yes, what are they?</li> </ul> </li> <li>What committees do women tend to participate in?               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Are they chairs of any committees?</li> </ul> </li> <li>By what criteria are travel opportunities (e.g. study tours/parliamentary delegations) for MPs allocated?               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Is there an agreement that these be distributed equally between men and women?</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
	Male champions of change	Male MPs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Have men been involved in initiating or co-sponsoring legislation on gender equality?               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>What gender equality issues do men tend to champion?</li> </ul> </li> <li>How regularly do men take the floor to debate gender equality issues?               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>How often do men raise their constituents' gender equality-related concerns?</li> </ul> </li> <li>How receptive are women to men's involvement in, and contribution to, gender equality issues?</li> <li>Could, and should, men and women share the leadership of parliamentary committees/bodies on gender equality?</li> <li>Are men included on study tours or delegations on gender equality or gender mainstreaming?</li> </ul>
	Commitment from political parties	Political parties, gender experts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>How gender sensitive are political parties?               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Do their manifestos include gender equality as a policy objective?</li> <li>Are women in senior positions of leadership? Do women lead any political parties?</li> <li>Do any parties have 'women's wings'?</li> <li>How are gender equality issues mainstreamed into policy decisions?</li> </ul> </li> <li>Does the parliament/local government body have an overarching Gender Equality Policy?               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>If yes, how is the Policy implemented, monitored and evaluated?</li> <li>If not, is there scope to design a Gender Equality Policy?</li> </ul> </li> <li>Has the parliament/local government body devised a Strategic Plan that includes gender equality outcomes?</li> </ul>
	Commitment from political parties	Political parties, gender experts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>How gender sensitive are political parties?               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Do their manifestos include gender equality as a policy objective?</li> <li>Are women in senior positions of leadership? Do women lead any political parties?</li> <li>Do any parties have 'women's wings'?</li> <li>How are gender equality issues mainstreamed into policy decisions?</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

Policy and legal frameworks	Commitment from political parties	Gender equality policies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Does the parliament/local government body have an overarching Gender Equality Policy? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>If yes, how is the Policy implemented, monitored and evaluated?</li> <li>If not, is there scope to design a Gender Equality Policy?</li> </ul> </li> <li>Has the parliament/local government body devised a Strategic Plan that includes gender equality outcomes?</li> </ul>
	Policies to eliminate discrimination, sexism and harassment	MPs, parliamentary staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Does the parliament/local government body have policies to ensure that the workplace is free from discrimination, sexism and harassment? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>If yes, how were these policies developed (e.g. were gender experts brought in for advice)?</li> <li>If not, is there scope to develop these kinds of policies?</li> </ul> </li> <li>Is there a code of conduct? Is it used effectively to monitor behavior in plenary debates? Who is responsible for monitoring behavior in accordance with the code? Are there any penalties? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Does the code refer to gender-based stereotypes? How could the code be more gender-sensitive?</li> </ul> </li> <li>Is there a mechanism to address complaints of harassment and discrimination? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Have any complaints been made? How were these resolved?</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
	Policies to eliminate discrimination, sexism and harassment	MPs, parliamentary staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Does the parliament/local government body have policies to ensure that the workplace is free from discrimination, sexism and harassment? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>If yes, how were these policies developed (e.g. were gender experts brought in for advice)?</li> <li>If not, is there scope to develop these kinds of policies?</li> </ul> </li> <li>Is there a code of conduct? Is it used effectively to monitor behavior in plenary debates? Who is responsible for monitoring behavior in accordance with the code? Are there any penalties? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Does the code refer to gender-based stereotypes? How could the code be more gender-sensitive?</li> </ul> </li> <li>Is there a mechanism to address complaints of harassment and discrimination? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Have any complaints been made? How were these resolved?</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
	Gender Equality Laws	MPs, National women's machinery (or government department officials dealing with GE), CSOs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>What national laws ensure gender equality?</li> <li>How are gender equality-related laws initiated or amended in parliament? Is there a need to improve this process?</li> <li>How does parliament ensure that existing and proposed laws comply with the Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination against Women, United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 and other international or regional gender equality obligations?</li> </ul>
Procedural change	Mainstreaming gender equality in the parliamentary process	MPs, parliamentary staff, gender experts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Does the parliament/local government body dedicate time in the plenary to debate gender equality concerns?</li> <li>How are written and oral questions to government on gender equality issues received by ministers (e.g. taken seriously, answered on time, disregarded, responded to with incomplete answers, etc.)?</li> <li>Is gender equality mainstreamed in the budget and the budget oversight process? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>If yes, what budgetary outcomes have been achieved to date?</li> <li>If not, what obstacles prevent a gender analysis of the budget (e.g. insufficient expertise, lack of political will, etc.)</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
	Creating mechanisms of gender equality oversight	MPs, parliamentary staff, gender experts, CSOs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>What mechanisms or structures are used to mainstream gender equality in the work of the parliament? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Is there a dedicated committee on gender equality or a women's parliamentary caucus?</li> <li>Are there gender focal points?</li> <li>Is there a dedicated gender desk or unit to provide information and advice?</li> <li>Is there a need to establish one or more of the above mechanisms or structures?</li> </ul> </li> <li>What tools has the parliament created for gender mainstreaming? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Has the parliament developed checklists by which to assess legislation from a gender perspective?</li> <li>Does the parliament have access to sex-disaggregated data and if so, how is it used?</li> <li>Have any other tools proved useful in mainstreaming gender equality concerns in the work of the parliament?</li> </ul> </li> <li>How effective are the bodies responsible for gender equality in the parliament? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>What relationships do they have with national women's machinery, civil society organisations, the private sector, the media, others?</li> <li>Do they have sufficient powers to work effectively?</li> <li>How well resourced (i.e. staff, meeting room, budget) are they?</li> <li>What changes have they been able to make in support of gender equality?</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

Cultural and workplace sensitivity	Understanding of gender equality	MPs, parliamentary staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>In general terms, how is gender equality perceived in the parliament/local body?               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Are there measures taken to enhance understanding of and support for gender equality?</li> <li>What other measures would be useful in enhancing this understanding for gender equality (e.g. training, professional development, engagement with civil society)?</li> </ul> </li> <li>How would you describe the culture (language, customs, dress code)?</li> <li>Are there discriminatory and derogatory stereotypes about women in politics?               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>If yes, how do you think these could be eliminated?</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
	Work/life balance	MPs, parliamentary staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Do the parliament/local government body's conditions of work allow MPs to balance work and family obligations?               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Do sitting hours allow MPs to spend enough time with their family?</li> <li>Are MPs given sufficient parental, maternity or paternity leave?</li> <li>What happens to an MP's vote while s/he is on parental leave?</li> </ul> </li> <li>Does the building cater to MPs or staff with babies and small children (e.g. is there a child care centre or a family room; is there a room for breastfeeding mothers; are nannies allowed in the building; are babies allowed in the chamber)?</li> </ul>
	Equality in facilities and work space	MPs, staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Can the parliament/local government body be considered a gender-sensitive work space?               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>What criteria determine the allocation of office space and equipment?</li> <li>Is there agreement that these should be allocated equitably among men and women?</li> <li>Do the names of rooms in the building reflect the contribution and leadership of both men and women?</li> <li>Has the artwork in the building been commissioned by both male and female artists?</li> </ul> </li> <li>Has the parliamentary building ever been reviewed from a gender perspective?               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Are basic facilities such as rest rooms easily accessible for both men and women MPs and staff?</li> <li>Are dining facilities equally open to men and women?</li> <li>Where do women MPs tend to congregate? Are these areas the same as those occupied by men? If not, why is there a difference?</li> </ul> </li> </ul>



## APPENDICES

## APPENDIX 2 : ASSESSMENT 2A, EXISTING OPPORTUNITIES AND CURRENT CHALLENGES FACED BY WOMEN CANDIDATES

Assessment 2a: Existing opportunities and current challenges faced by women candidates			
Dimension/Area	Sub-Components	Stakeholder(s)	Interview Guide Used
Conducive electoral framework	Gender sensitive laws and policies	Ministers, MPs, CSOs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Does the Constitution guarantee equal rights for men and women? If yes, what specific provision guarantees their equality? When were these written into the Constitution?</li> <li>Do any laws relating to the election and regulation of political parties include references to women and gender equality? If so, provide name of law, and key provisions.</li> <li>What electoral system is used and are there any implications for women of using that system?</li> <li>Have any temporary special measures been enshrined in legislation (Constitution, electoral law) to ensure women's political participation?</li> <li>What have been some of the barriers to the passage of gender sensitive electoral policy and legal frameworks (e.g. lack of political commitment, resistance from 'extremist' sections of the legislature, other – please specify)?</li> </ul>
	Gender sensitive political party internal regulations	Party representatives/ leaders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Do any political parties have platforms on gender equality, or dedicated sections on gender equality in their manifesto?</li> <li>Are there any (financial, political) incentives for political parties to place women in electable positions?</li> <li>Have political parties adopted any measure (quota, target) to promote women to leadership positions within the party (i.e. not simply as candidates)?</li> <li>Do any political parties publish information (statistics, names, term length) on women in internal leadership positions?</li> <li>Do any political parties have women's wings? Are these wings considered effective mechanisms by which to channel gender equality concerns into party discussions and decisions?</li> <li>How do parties include the views, interests and needs of women in their party? How are these views represented in regulations, policies or political commitments?</li> <li>What measures are used by political parties to encourage women's political participation (e.g. outreach to voters, training and mentoring, etc.)?</li> </ul>
	Gender sensitive electoral arrangements	EMBs, gender experts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Does the EMB collect sex-disaggregated data on women's political participation – as registered voters, as voters who turned out, as candidates, as elected representatives? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>If so, has this data been published and kept over time (for trend analysis)?</li> <li>If not, what obstacles prevent the collection of this data? Are there any legal barriers to the collection of data? Is data collection planned in the future?</li> </ul> </li> <li>Has any research been conducted on the 'electability' of women candidates versus men?</li> <li>How prevalent are practices like 'vote buying' or 'family voting'?</li> <li>Are there campaign related codes of conduct? If so, does the code of conduct refer to gender discrimination, sexual harassment or other gender equality issues?</li> <li>What opportunity does the EMB have to participate in post-election reviews? If so, has the EMB provided lessons learned on the participation of women in the election, as voters and candidates, including recommendations for future elections? Were these recommendations heeded?</li> <li>Are there laws or regulations related to sexual harassment, intimidation, violence or discrimination against women candidates and voters? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>If so, who or what body is responsible for administering these laws and ensuring accountability?</li> <li>Are reports of these kinds of incidences collected and analysed?</li> <li>What recommendations would you make to ensure women participate safely and free of violence?</li> </ul> </li> <li>Would you consider the electoral management body to be gender sensitive (e.g. does it have women in leadership positions, is there a gender equality policy or strategic plan, do women staff have access to training opportunities, are all staff trained in gender mainstreaming, are staff able to balance work and family)?</li> </ul>

Women have capacity to run	Technical capacity	CSOs, current and former women and men MPs, International organisations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>How influential is money in political campaigns?</li> <li>Are there regulations that make the allocation of public funding dependent on political parties' fulfilment of gender equality requirements (e.g. women are on the electoral list, women are in leadership positions in the party)?</li> <li>Does the EMB regulate (and/or provide any public information on) any aspect of public campaign funding, such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Banning contributions from specific sources such as foreign donors for political parties and/or candidates;</li> <li>Limiting the length of the campaign period; or</li> <li>Requiring that all financial donations to political parties and candidates be disclosed?</li> </ul> </li> <li>What were women MPs' experiences in fundraising? What were the major challenges and how were these overcome?</li> </ul>
	Supportive networks created	Women MPs, CSOs, academics, supportive media reps	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(To women MPs) Where has your strongest support come from? What makes it so powerful to you? How do you keep this relationship alive? (To others) How do you support women elected representatives? What do you need from the relationship? Do you consider it an equal partnership? In what ways is the partnership sustained (e.g. gender equality proposals are made and passed in parliament, other – please specify)?</li> </ul>
Electorate values women's political participation	Increased community awareness of gender equality	CSOs, EMBs, International organisations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Have any research reports been produced on the community's acceptance of women in public life? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>If so, what changes are evident over time?</li> </ul> </li> <li>How would you describe the status of women in the country? Is it broadly the same across the country, or are there differences by region, urban centres, by socio economic status, race, religion, etc.?</li> <li>What are some of the key barriers to women's political participation – social, economic, cultural, religious?</li> <li>What programs have been run by civil society organisations in promoting women's political participation? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>How effective has this advocacy been?</li> </ul> </li> <li>Do civil society groups monitor elections and raise gender equality concerns in this process?</li> <li>Have EMBs promoted gender equality when conducting voter outreach campaigns?</li> <li>What other groups are involved in voter education, and do they mainstream gender equality issues in their curriculum?</li> </ul>
	Women vote	EMB, Political parties	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Are there known obstacles in the voter registration process that are disadvantageous to women (e.g. need for photographic identification or documentation to prove eligibility to vote; times and places of registration are difficult to attend, cultural traditions, other – please specify)? If so, has the EMB sought to overcome these?</li> <li>Are there known obstacles to women voting? Do these differ at national and local levels?</li> <li>What do political parties do to encourage women's voting?</li> </ul>
	Media promotes gender equality	Media, MPs, CSOs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>How favourably do media organisations report women's participation in elections?</li> <li>Have any research reports been written on media coverage of women in elections? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>If so, how often were women candidates reported in the election coverage compared to men candidates?</li> <li>What was the content of these reports (policy proposals, dress and presentation, other – please specify)?</li> </ul> </li> <li>Are media organisations included in CSO trainings on gender equality?</li> </ul>

Electorate values women's political participation	Media promotes gender equality	Media, MPs, CSOs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>How favourably do media organisations report women's participation in elections?</li> <li>Have any research reports been written on media coverage of women in elections? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>If so, how often were women candidates reported in the election coverage compared to men candidates?</li> <li>What was the content of these reports (policy proposals, dress and presentation, other – please specify)?</li> </ul> </li> <li>Are media organisations included in CSO trainings on gender equality?</li> </ul>
	Media promotes gender equality	Media, MPs, CSOs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>How favourably do media organisations report women's participation in elections?</li> <li>Have any research reports been written on media coverage of women in elections? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>If so, how often were women candidates reported in the election coverage compared to men candidates?</li> <li>What was the content of these reports (policy proposals, dress and presentation, other – please specify)?</li> </ul> </li> <li>Are media organisations included in CSO trainings on gender equality?</li> </ul>
	Political leaders promote gender equality	Party leaders, MPs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>How have political leaders demonstrated their commitment to gender equality and women's participation in elections (i.e. appointing women to positions of leadership; committing to the passage of gender equality legislation; promoting gender equality in the community; other – please specify)?</li> <li>What more could political leaders do to prove their commitment?</li> </ul>
Women leaders contribute to gender equality policy making	Political leaders promote gender equality	Women apply leadership skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>How active are women in parliament (or local government bodies)? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Have laws been passed to ensure greater women's political participation because of the women currently in parliament?</li> <li>Do they advocate and pursue other gender equality reforms – please specify?</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
	Political institution is receptive to women leaders	Senior parliamentary staff, MPs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>How well are women received when they stand up in parliament and make a speech? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Is there silence or are there more interjections than usual; are women heckled for what they are wearing?</li> </ul> </li> <li>Does the legislature have a mechanism to mainstream gender equality issues, such as a women's caucus, a parliamentary committee on gender equality, a technical unit or library service on gender equality, or a network of gender focal points?</li> <li>Is this (or all of these) institution(s) considered effective? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>What outcomes have they produced?</li> <li>How well do women and men work together in these bodies?</li> <li>What are the major challenges to the passage of gender equality outcomes?</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
	Political institution is receptive to women leaders	MPs, CSOs, Political leaders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Have women in the legislature mentored other aspiring women candidates? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>If so, what has been the experience of the women mentoring, and being mentored?</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

## APPENDICES

## APPENDIX 3 – HISTORICAL LIST OF FEMALE MEMBER OF THE JORDANIAN HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

	Name	Parliament
1	Tojan Faisal	12th Parliament
2	Nuha Maaytah	13th Parliament
3	Adab Soud	14th Parliament
4	Ansaf Al Khawaldeh	14th, 15th, 17th , 18th Parliament
5	Dr. Hayat Al Masimi	14th, 18th Parliament
6	Zakieh Al Shamayleh	14th Parliament
7	Dr. Falak Al Jamani	14th, 15th, 17th Parliament
8	Nareeman Al Rusan	14th, 15th, 16th Parliament
9	Amneh Al Gharaghir	15th, 17th Parliament
10	Tharwat Al Amer	15th Parliament
11	Hamdieh Al Qwaider	15th, 17th Parliament
12	Reem Abed Al Razaq	15th Parliament
13	Reem Badran	16th Parliament
14	Asma Rawadieh	16th Parliament
15	Huda Abu Ruman	16th Parliament
16	Kholoud Al Marahleh	16th Parliament
17	Rudayna Al Otti	16th, 17th Parliament
18	Wafaa Bani Mustafa	16th,17th, 18th Parliament
19	Amal Rfou	16th Parliament
20	Salma Al Rabadi	16th Parliament
21	Abla Abu Elbeh	16th Parliament
22	Samia Olaimat	16th Parliament
23	Abla Abu Elbeh	16th, 17th Parliament
24	Samia Elaimat	16th Parliament
25	Myassar Al Sardieh	16th, 17th Parliament

	Name	Parliament
26	Tamam Al Reyatti	16th, 17th Parliament
27	Dr. Mariam Al Lozi	17th Parliament
28	Rula Al Hroub	17th Parliament
29	Nayem Al Ajarmeh	17th Parliament
30	Fatimah Abu Abta	17th Parliament
31	Fatin Klaifat	17th Parliament
32	Dr. Reem Abu Dalbuh	17th, 18th Parliament
33	Najah Al Azeh	17th Parliament
34	Kholoud Khatatbeh	17th Parliament
35	Hind Al Fayyez	17th Parliament
36	Shaha Abu Shosheh	17th, 18th Parliament
37	Dr. Sabah Al Shaar	18th Parliament
38	Randa al Shaar	18th Parliament
39	Dr. Safa Al Momani	18th Parliament
40	Fadieh Abu Qadoura	18th Parliament
41	Intisar Hijazi	18th Parliament
42	Dr. Dima Tahboub	18th Parliament
43	Muntaha Al Boul	18th Parliament
44	Manal Dmour	18th Parliament
45	Haya Al Shibli	18th Parliament
46	Zainab Al Zubaid	18th Parliament
47	Maram Al Hissa	18th Parliament
48	Olia Abu Hlayel	18th Parliament
49	Rasmieh Al Kaabneh	18th Parliament
50	Ibtisam Al Nawafleh	18th Parliament

## APPENDICES

## APPENDIX 4 – HISTORICAL LIST OF FEMALE MEMBERS OF THE JORDANIAN SENATE

	Name	Senate House
1	Leila Sharaf	16th, 17th, 18th, 20th, 21st, 22nd, 23rd, 24th Senate House
2	Nailah Al Rashdan	17th Senate House
3	Reema Khalaf	18th Senate House
4	Sobhie Al Maani	18th, 19th, 20th Senate House
6	Olia Abu Tayyeh	19th, 24th Senate House
7	Enam Al Mufti	20th, 21st Senate House
8	Salwa Al Masri	19th, 20th, 21st, 22nd, 25th, 26th Senate House
9	Mai Abu Al Samen	20th, 21st, 25th, 26th Senate House
10	Ruwaida Al Maaytah	20th, 22nd Senate House
11	Wejdan Al Saket	20th, 21st, 22nd, 23rd, 24th, 25th Senate House
12	Nawal Al Faouri	21st, 22nd, 23rd, 24th, 25th, 26th
13	Haifa Abu Ghazaleh	22nd, 23rd, 26th Senate House
14	Janait Al Mufti	22nd, 25th, 26th Senate House
15	Tamam Al Ghoul	23rd Senate House

	Name	Senate House
16	Amal Al Farhan	23rd, 24th Senate House
17	Nadia Bushnaq	23rd Senate House
18	Nermeen Harbi	24th Senate House
19	Suhair Al Ali	24th Senate House
20	Reema Batshoun	24th Senate House
21	Maha Al Khateeb	24th Senate House
22	Samar Al Haj Hassan	25th Senate House
23	Haifa Al Najaar	25th Senate House
24	Leila Abu Hassan	25th Senate House
25	Intisar Jardaneh	25th Senate House
26	Amneh Al Zubi	25th Senate House
27	Asma Khader	26th Senate House
28	Raedah Qutob	26th Senate House
29	Taghreed Hikmat	26th Senate House
30	Emile Nafa	26th Senate House

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44 The Directorate of Women within the Ministry of Labour is tasked with: 1) Providing legal and social protection for working women; empowering women economically and reintegrate them into the local market; and raising awareness of the community regarding the role of women in economic development and regarding their rights and responsibilities as provided by the Labour Law.

45 The Gender Unit within the Ministry of Planning and International Cooperation has the following mandate: Build the capacity of the personal of the Ministry on gender mainstreaming and analysis; Build the capacity of the Gender focal points in close cooperation with JNCW; and serve as focal point for donors and facilitate the work on gender between the Ministry and other institutions.

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