

Disability Inclusive Development Jordan Situational Analysis

Version II - June 2020

The Institute of Development Studies (IDS) has prepared Situational Analyses (SITANs) which synthesise the most recent existing literature and evidence on factors that impact on the lives of people with disabilities in each of the six UK Aid funded Disability Inclusive Development (DID) countries to better inform the DID programme implementation in each country. For more information about how the situational analyses were conducted see page 28.

This situational analysis addresses the question of: “what is the current situation for persons with disabilities in Jordan?”

DID operates in six countries: Kenya, Tanzania, Bangladesh, Nigeria, Nepal and Jordan

These SITANs can be used throughout the programme, by all those involved in it, in order to better understand the current context and available evidence. This will help lead to better informed projects within the different thematic areas and help with situating these different projects within the wider country context. Where the Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities has recommendations from the concluding observations on the country, these have been integrated in relevant places to ensure that the UN CRPD is at the heart of the SITANs.

Where possible, the SITANs also flag up gaps in evidence which the DID programme may be interested in addressing. As living documents they will be updated each year to include newly published evidence and to reflect any adaptations in areas of interest in the programme. The earliest version of the SITAN was dated 12 April 2019 and reflects the context in each country before the programme was implemented there. The annually updated SITANs may begin to reflect what has occurred during the programme implementation phase, which can support MEL efforts.

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Contents page

1. SUMMARY OF KEY INFORMATION	3
2. COUNTRY OVERVIEW	9
3. NATIONAL POLICIES	9
National Development Plan	9
UN CRPD and national disability policies	10
Employment and livelihood policies	12
Social Protection policies	13
Education policies	14
Health policies	15
4. THE SITUATION FOR PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES	15
Disability prevalence	15
Attitudes towards disability and disability stigma	16
Disability and poverty	17
Disability and livelihoods/work	18
Disability and social protection	18
Disability and education and training	19
Disability and transport/public accessibility	23
Disability and health	23
Access to assistive devices and assistance	24
Organisations supporting people with disabilities	25
Humanitarian situations	26
5. HOW THE SITANS WERE CONDUCTED	28
REFERENCES	30
ANNEX 1 - FEEDBACK AND COMMENTARY ON THE SITAN FROM CONSORTIUM PARTNERS	34

1. Summary of key information

Country overview

Jordan is an Arab nation in Western Asia on the east bank of the Jordan River. It has a population of 10 million people. Life expectancy is 74.4 years. Over 90 percent of the population live in urban areas. Health and education expenditure as a percentage of GDP is 8.1 and 3.6 percent respectively. GDP was \$89 billion in 2017. Over three quarters of the labour force work in the services sector. The Syria and Iraq crises continue to affect Jordan, in terms of large refugee influx, disrupted trade, and in lower investments.

National policies

National Development Plan

'Jordan 2025' is a long-term national strategy that includes more than 400 policies for implementation by the public and private sector, as well as civil society. It sets out a vision for an integrated economic and social framework to underpin economic and social policies based on providing opportunities for all. It promotes the rule of law and equal opportunities, increasing participatory policy making and sustainability.

UN CRPD

Jordan ratified the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) in March 2008 and submitted an initial report in October 2012. The report found high levels of political support for persons with disabilities. After signing the CRPD, Jordan took a number of steps to address disability inclusion including forming a royal commission in 2006 to draft the national strategy, publishing the Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act in 2007, and establishing a Higher Council for Persons with Disabilities as an independent national institution responsible for policymaking and planning.

A shadow report on the implementation of CRPD in Jordan was written in 2017. It found that some laws were inconsistent with the CRPD and lacked effective and necessary measures to empower persons with disabilities. The Shadow report recommended that Jordan ratified the Optional Protocol to the CRPD to promote the support and legal protection of the rights of persons with disability. It also recommended a review of all national legislation, policies and strategies. It recommended financial penalties be imposed violations. It was suggested that the Labor Law in particular needed reviewing as a loophole allows employers to evade recruitment of persons with disability. The shadow report also recommended the drafting of a new national strategy as well as a mechanism for monitoring and addressing discriminatory practices against persons with disabilities.

National disability legislation

A Provisional Act for the Welfare of Disabled People was passed in 1989. In 1993 the Act for the Welfare of Disabled People came into existence. This Act was reviewed and was replaced by The Disabled Individuals Rights Act (31) 2007. In 2016, the Higher Council for People with Disabilities conducted a legislative review of the Disable People Rights Act (31) 2007, and drafted a new law that focuses the rights of persons with disabilities. The new law was endorsed by the Jordanian Lower House in May 2017. Joint task forces have been established with various ministries in order to prepare the requisite national action plans. The law covers anti-

discrimination moving beyond a medical angle of disability. It also introduces the concept of informed consent, which gives citizens with disabilities the right to decide. The new Law also emphasizes the importance of raising public awareness of the rights of people with disabilities. To be protected and benefit from the rights enshrined in the Law, a person must be deemed to be disabled and be Jordanian citizen.

Employment and livelihood policies

In 2007, reducing the unemployment of people with disabilities was among the targets of King Abdullah II's new strategy for persons with disabilities. Under the old Disabled Individuals Rights Act (31) 2007, a quota was set to ensure inclusive workplaces. Organisations with between 25 and 50 members of staff were required to have one person with disability employed. For organisations with over 50 members of staff, four percent of employees were required to have disabilities. There are no known sanctions for non-compliance of the quota system.

Under the new Law (20) of 2017, discrimination based on disability in the workplace is prohibited. The Ministry of Labour and Vocational Training Corporation, and the Higher Council for People with Disabilities, are mandated to develop policies, strategies, plans and programmes related to work to facilitate equal opportunities. In addition, while the quota system from the previous Law continues, more detailed reporting will ensure compliance. Under the new Law, the Development and Employment Fund (in coordination with the Higher Council for People with Disabilities) allocates loans and develops occupational opportunities. While the new disability law is regarded as progressive, other legislation is problematic. The 2017 Shadow Report highlights some concerns and reports that some laws are inconsistent with CRPD principles. Loopholes in the labour law facilitates discriminatory practices for recruitment. Some progress has been made to address concerns. The Jordan Economic Growth Plan (JEGP) 2018 – 2022 aims to put Jordan on a sustainable growth trajectory. JEGP includes an aim to integrate persons with disabilities into the labour market by making job opportunities inclusive.

Social Protection policies

There is no national policy for social protection in Jordan, but the general principle is affirmed in the Jordanian Constitution. Jordan's social protection programmes include social assistance and social insurance. The National Aid Fund (NAF) provides cash transfers to 7.5 percent of the Jordanian population. The Ministry of Social Development manages social assistance services and benefits to over 20,000 people per year with disabilities and other vulnerable groups. Of these, approximately 20 percent are believed to have disabilities and benefit from \$12.5 million of budget per year. In total Jordan has an average annual expenditure on social assistance of 3.4 percent of annual public spending, which is regarded as strong for the region.

Education policies

Under the old disability law (31) from 2007, the rights of children with disabilities to education are articulated. These rights were reaffirmed under the new law (20) from 2017. The Ministry of Education (in association with the Higher Council for the Rights of Disabled Persons) is mandated to produce disability inclusive policies as well as providing accessibility solutions in public and private educational institutions. They also have a responsibility for revising educational curricula to be disability inclusive. The Law caps fees for enrolment in higher education at public institutions for persons with disability at 25 percent.

Health policies

In 2007, King Abdullah II's strategy for persons with disabilities aimed to improve health awareness and access to services people with disabilities. Under the new disability law of 2017, hospitals are required to ensure accessibility within five years. In addition all staff must receive inclusion training. The Ministry of Health, in coordination with the Higher Council for the Rights of Disabled Persons, is required to issue insurance and an identity card for each person with a disability. The insurance covers most treatment.

The situation for people with disabilities

Disability prevalence

Despite limited data, in 2018 disability prevalence was estimated to be between 11 and 15 percent. Older estimates of disability prevalence range from 1.23 percent to 13 percent. Previous prevalence rates have found to be similar for males and females. Official prevalence estimates for the Arab region are far lower than accepted global estimates. With regards to refugees in Jordan with disabilities, in 2016, an estimated 2.36 percent of registered refugees had a disability, although the real number is likely to be significantly higher. One study found that 30 percent of Syrian refugees in Jordan had specific physical or intellectual needs.

Attitudes towards disability and disability stigma

The majority of people from Jordan have a positive perception and attitude towards people with disabilities. However, negative attitudes towards people with disabilities do persist from some people. Having a disability may be regarded as shameful. Cultural issues may result in people with certain types of disabilities being hidden away. Refugees with disabilities may be particularly affected. Discrimination may extend to relatives of the person with a disability. Stigma may be a barrier to accessing education. However, there is some evidence that negative attitudes are not universal and some examples of highly positive attitudes towards people with disabilities. In Jordan people with physical impairments are more likely to be described as disabled (due to their visibility), than people with other impairments.

The new disability law (20) of 2017 combats negative attitudes to persons with disability by requiring the use of respectful terminology, requiring media outlets to adhere to being disability inclusive, train journalists and persons in the media industry, as well as working with religious groups to promote the rights of persons with disabilities.

Disability and poverty

Women and refugees with disabilities who are also poor appear to be particularly marginalised in Jordan. Under the new disability law (20) of 2017, to address the impact of poverty on persons with disability, the Development and Employment Fund (in coordination with the Higher Council for People with Disabilities) facilitates loans to finance projects for persons with disabilities and promote anti-poverty projects, programmes and other occupational opportunities.

Disability and livelihoods/work

In 2014 over 16 percent of persons with disabilities were employed, compared to over 36 percent of the whole population who are employed. Only 4.8 percent of women with disabilities were employed, compared to 23.8 percent of men with disabilities. In 2017, the employment rate

among men with disabilities was nearly 33 percent, compared to over 61 percent for men without disabilities. The employment rate for women with disabilities was over 5 percent, compared to over 13 percent for women without disabilities. The employment rate for persons with disability was just below 1 percent in the public sector and 0.5 percent in the private sector. The labour force participation rate is significantly lower for refugees with disabilities compared to those without disabilities. The situation is worse for women compared to men.

Disability and social protection

There are various social protection schemes in place in Jordan including old-age pensioners disability supplement, a Care Cash Assistance scheme, as well as unconditional cash transfers. The Ministry of Social Development is responsible for the 'Handicapped Affairs' programme which assists 4,000 persons with disabilities with 8.9 JD million. The programme is designed for citizens, but refugees can access it in some cases.

Disability and education and training

Most children with disabilities (between 85 and 95 percent) continue to be excluded from the general education system, with cultural stigma and a lack of funding presenting barriers to their inclusion. In 2011 over 7,000 students with disabilities were known to have entered primary and secondary education in Jordan (roughly half male and half female). Nationally, over 700 schools have students with disabilities. Ajlun governorate has the lowest percentage of children with disabilities in school. Over 35 percent of persons with disabilities in Jordan are illiterate, compared to 11 percent of the total population. 40 percent of females with disabilities were found to be illiterate, compared to 32 percent of males with disabilities. Educational attainment was found to favour males with disabilities at all levels of education, compared to females with disabilities.

Disaggregated reporting on education for refugee children with disabilities is limited. In host communities, 49 percent of children with disabilities attend school, compared to 64 percent of children without disabilities. In camps, 48 percent of children with disabilities attend formal education compared with 52 percent of children without disabilities. Children with disabilities in host communities face a greater risk of being excluded than children in camps. In 2015 nearly 2000 children were assisted in camps with inclusive and psychosocial services. In the Za'atari camp (where it is estimated that 9 percent of children have disabilities), Mercy Corps has run an education programme for over 1,000 children with disabilities. Half of the children had no previous access to school. By 2015 over 50 schools had been made more disability inclusive, nearly 1,000 teachers were trained on inclusive education, and parents/children and communities were given support.

Almost half of school aged children with disabilities who were not attending formal school were found to have had dropped out at some point during 2011. Dropout rates have slowly been reducing since 2011 but are still a concern. The main reasons for non-attendance of schools include physical inaccessibility of school, lack of specialist education services, family expectations, overcrowded classroom, distance to school, safety fears, concerns over the child's functional difficulties, psychological distress, and refused entry.

Further and higher education

As noted above, the new Disability Law (20) of 2017 caps enrolment fees in public institutions at 25 percent of the normal cost for persons with disabilities. Attitudes of higher education faculty members towards students with disabilities were found to be positive. However, faculty members were unfamiliar with the disability legislation and lacked specialist training.

Disability and transport/public accessibility

The majority of people with disabilities experience a lack of accessibility in public places in Jordan. Even when places are accessible, transport between them is often not. Under the new Law (20) of 2017, within 10 years all public facilities must be accessible. Traffic and public transportation must be accessible within 5 years. The law also requires polling stations be made accessible. Refugees with disabilities in Jordan face many potential barriers to inclusion in community and family life. They may live in cheaper housing that is physically inaccessible. They may also face discrimination and accessibility barriers when using public transport.

Disability and health

Jordan offers social health insurance to persons with disabilities yet an estimated third of Jordanians with disabilities are not covered. Many medical centres now accessible and their staff well trained yet challenges around transportation to the facilities remain. Health data focusing on the needs of people with disabilities in Jordan is lacking. With regards to the Syrian refugees, the number of people with a disability due to conflict (both physical and psychological) is believed to be significant. Data suggests that there is unmet demand for health services from refugees with disabilities in Jordan. Certain impairments and a lack of assistance may result in some refugees with disabilities not accessing health services. An estimated seven percent of refugees suffering from non-communicable diseases also have an impairment. Mental health is a big concern. In 2014 nearly 20,000 consultations for mental health disorders were reported one camp alone, with 27 percent of them being for severe emotional disorder.

Access to assistive devices and assistance

Jordan lacks the infrastructure to deliver assistive technology to those who need it. In the Arab region, if there is more than one individual with disability in same family, a male is likely to take priority with regards to accessing assistive technology. The unmet demand for assistive technology also exists for refugees with disabilities in Jordan. Unofficial Syrian-run groups have emerged to provide services. However, many have been shut down due to fears of militant links. There is also a concern over quality control and appropriate levels of qualifications. Generally, assistive devices are provided by humanitarian organisations. There may be long delays for access and a mismatch between supply and demand.

Organisations supporting people with disabilities

The most significant organisations supporting people with disabilities in Jordan is the Higher Council for Persons with Disabilities. It is an independent national institution responsible for policymaking and planning. Another relevant organisation is the Equality Association for Persons with Disabilities, which is an organisation for persons with disabilities that was established in 2013. It works mainly on challenging stereotypes. I am a Human Society for Rights of People With Disabilities is another relevant organisation. It was established in 2008 with a goal of

achieving the development of persons with disabilities in all economic, social, legal, political and cultural aspects.

Humanitarian situations

The lack of data on refugees with disabilities in Jordan is a challenge. The data that does exist is often not disability disaggregated. By 2018 it was estimated that there were nearly 750,000 refugees in Jordan, of which nearly 90 percent were from Syria. 80 percent of the refugees live in urban areas. Despite efficient registration services, it is possible that Jordan has many hundreds of thousands of unregistered refugees. Disabilities are often not recognised or recorded at registration. Prevalence of disability among refugees varies. In 2013 it was estimated that 10 percent of Syrian refugee children living in camps had a disability. No data was found for children with disabilities in host communities. In 2014, of the 700,000 refugees in Jordan, 154,000 were believed to have impairments or disabilities. One estimate suggests that 20 percent refugees were affected by physical, sensory or intellectual impairment, while one in seven were affected by chronic disease. Many injuries have resulted directly from the Syrian conflict. Older people are disproportionately affected as needing special assistance. Children who are refugees were found to be twice as likely as the general refugee population to report signs of psychological distress. In addition to the Syrian refugees, Jordan is also host to refugees from other fragile and conflict affected states, including Palestine and Iraq. Under the new disability law (20) of 2017, in a crisis, the Public Civil Defence, in coordination with the Higher Council for Persons with Disabilities must provide emergency services in a disability inclusive way. However, the law is only applicable to Jordanian citizens.

COVID 19

The COVID-19 crisis has triggered disproportionate risks and barriers for people with disabilities living in humanitarian settings in Jordan, although it is recognised that the situation is still developing and the evidence is limited. The data that does exist suggests that COVID-19 has made it even more challenging for people with disabilities to access health care, maintain medical treatment, access rehabilitation care and social support services.

Main report

2. Country overview

Jordan is considered to have 'high human development' and ranked at 102th out of 189 countries on the Human Development Index. The population is 10 million. Life expectancy at birth is 74.4 years. Expected years of schooling is 11.9. Gross national income per capita (2011 PPP) is \$8,268. Those who are working but live on less than PPP \$3.10 a day (described as the working poor) is 1.8 percent of total people employed. A very low proportion (0.1 percent) of the population live below the income poverty line of PPP \$1.90 a day. The employment to population ratio is 33.4 percent (UNDP 2020).

In 2020, 91.4 percent of the population lived in urban areas. The population is heavily concentrated in the west, and particularly the northwest, in and around the capital of Amman. A sizeable, but smaller population is located in the southwest along the shore of the Gulf of Aqaba. The total fertility rate is 3.04 children born per woman. GDP was \$89 billion in 2017. Health expenditure is 8.1 percent of GDP and education expenditure is 3.6 percent. Jordan's economy is among the smallest in the Middle East, with insufficient supplies of water, oil, and other natural resources, underlying the government's heavy reliance on foreign assistance. Other economic challenges for the government include chronic high rates of unemployment and underemployment, budget and current account deficits, and government debt. The Jordanian labour force was an estimated 2.295 million in 2017. In 2013 an estimated 78 percent of the labour force worked in the services sector, 20 percent worked in industry and only 2 percent worked in agriculture (CIA 2020).

In the last 10 years Jordan has introduced structural reforms in education, health, as well as privatisation and liberalisation. Other recent reforms cover income tax, business regulations, insolvency and the public procurement framework. Trade with its neighbours has been revitalised (especially in the case of Iraq). The external environment is challenging in Jordan. Adverse regional developments, in particular the Syria and Iraq crisis, continue to affect Jordan, which has experienced an unprecedented refugee influx, disrupted trade routes, and in lower investments and tourism inflows. Continued regional uncertainty and reduced external assistance will continue to put pressure on Jordan. Jordanian economic growth was sluggish in 2019. Real GDP grew by 1.9%. Unemployment is rising, reaching 19.1 percent in 2019 compared to 18.6 percent in 2018 (World Bank 2020).

3. National Policies

National Development Plan

'Jordan 2025' is a long-term national vision and strategy. It is not a detailed government action plan. It includes more than 400 policies or procedures that should be implemented through a participatory approach between the government, business sector and civil society. Jordan 2025 charts a path for the future and determines the integrated economic and social framework that will govern the economic and social policies based on providing opportunities for all. Its basic principles include promoting the rule of law and equal opportunities, increasing participatory policy making, achieving fiscal sustainability and strengthening institutions. The most important goal that Jordan 2025 seeks to achieve is improving the welfare of citizens and the basic services provided to them, to create a balanced society where opportunities are available to all and the gap between governorates is bridged. The vision puts Jordanian citizens in the heart of

the development process; success and failure are measured by the extent of the progress made at the level of individuals, and therefore the welfare of the community (INFORM 2019).

UN CRPD and national disability policies

UN CRPD

The UN CRPD was ratified by Jordan on 31 March 2008. The implementation of the Convention by State Parties is monitored by the Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UN 2015). Jordan participated in all the meetings related to the CRPD and was at the forefront of the 77 countries supporting the substantiation of the Convention (Rutherford 2014).

Jordan was obliged to submit regular reports to the Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities on how the rights were being implemented. The initial report from Jordan was received by the Committee in October 2012 and was published in 2015. It found that in Jordan the rights of persons with disabilities enjoy political support at every level, which intensified with the drafting of the Convention. To support the rights detailed in the Convention, the Government took the following political measures:

- Formation in 2006 of a royal commission to draft the national strategy on the rights of persons with disabilities.
- Adoption of the National Strategy for Persons with Disabilities, 2007-2015.
- Publication of the Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act (No. 31 of 2007).
- Establishment of the Higher Council for Persons with Disabilities as an independent national institution responsible for policymaking and planning. The Higher Council for Persons with Disabilities was established pursuant to article 6 of the Act on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (No. 31 of 2007). The Council works on the interests, designs policies, and unites efforts to improve the living conditions of persons with disabilities and facilitate their integration in society. Article 7 of the Act sets out the functions and powers of the Council, and include (relating to persons with disabilities): drafting policies, proposing legislative amendments, participating in efforts to realise the goals set out in international instruments and treaties (UN 2015).

A shadow report on the status of implementation of CRPD in Jordan was written in 2017 and submitted to the 17th Session of the UN Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities by the Information and Research Center - King Hussein Foundation, Identity Center, and the I am a Human Society for the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. It was produced in cooperation with Persons with Disabilities Organisations in Jordan (Information and Research Center et al 2017).

The Shadow Report from 2017 found that various Jordanian laws lack effective and necessary measures to empower persons with disabilities. Some national laws are argued to be inconsistent with CRPD principles. It is suggested that discrimination against persons with disability, and passive violations of their rights are evident in Jordan and play a role in their marginalisation. In terms of general recommendations, the Shadow report recommends the following:

- Jordan ratifies the Optional Protocol to the CRPD to promote the support and legal protection of the rights of persons with disability.
- National legislation must be reviewed and discriminatory provisions that impede persons with disability rights must be repealed.
- National policies and strategies must include the rights of people with disabilities.

- Financial penalties must be imposed against anyone who violates the requirements of the National Building Code. Existing schools and universities must be refurbished to facilitate access to students with disabilities.
- Texts governing legal competence must be amended in such a manner as to achieve full recognition of persons with disability rights before the law. Civil Code and Personal Status Code provisions related to impediments to legal competence must also be amended. Paragraphs in the Electoral Law that deny the right to vote and stand for election to persons with mental disability must be repealed.
- Legislative texts and measures must be enacted to require governmental and private agencies to stipulate in their publications reasonable methods for people with disabilities to access their information, data and statistics in an equitable manner.
- A legal loophole (Article 13 of the Labor Law) that allows employers to evade recruitment of persons with disability must be addressed. The law must guarantee persons with disability their right to work.
- A new national strategy for persons with disability must be adopted.
- A mechanism must be established to monitor, address and eliminate violations and discriminatory practices against persons with disabilities (Information and Research Center et al 2017).

National disability legislation

The year 1981 was declared as the International Year of the Disabled, prompting Jordan to deliver a major enhancement in services provided by the education, health, and public sectors. In 1989, a Provisional Act for the Welfare of Disabled People was passed. In 1993, the provisional bill was passed and the Act for the Welfare of Disabled People came into existence. Jordan was awarded the Franklin Delano Roosevelt International Disability Award in 2005. A key factor in achieving the award was Jordan passing disability legislation in 1993 that recognised that people with disabilities needed legal protections and social opportunities (Rutherford 2014). The 1993 Act was reviewed and replaced by The Disabled Individuals Rights Act (31) in 2007, after King Abdullah II announced a new strategy to address some of the challenges faced by persons with disabilities including access to employment and health (Al-Zboon & Hatmal 2016, Curtis & Geagan 2016, Rutherford 2014).

In 2016, the Higher Council for People with Disabilities conducted a legislative review of the Disable People Rights Act (31) of 2007 and drafted a new law that focuses the rights of persons with disabilities. (Information and Research Center 2017). The new law on the Rights of People with Disabilities was endorsed by the Jordanian Lower House in May 2017 (HCD 2019). According to follow-up from Jordan to the concluding observations of the UN Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, the new law is recognised as a modern and progressive piece of legislation that complies with international human rights instruments ratified by Jordan, including the CRPD (UN 2018). The law has a clear anti-discrimination provision and is based on a broadened definition of disability. The law was reported as being the most advanced law of its kind in the Arab region (Azzeh 2017). The new law introduces the concept of informed consent, which gives citizens with disabilities the right to decide for themselves after receiving enough information about the consequences of each of their decisions. This allows citizens with disabilities the right to make their own decisions (Dupire 2018 a). The 2017 Law on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities states that a person with a disability, or the legal guardian of a child with a disability, must freely consent to “every action, procedure, or legal measure to be taken regarding their rights or freedoms after being notified, in a way that he/she understands the

content, results, and impacts thereof”, which underscores the autonomy and inherent dignity of people with disabilities to be treated like anyone else (Human Rights Watch 2017).

With regards to violence, the new law not only holds those who abuse persons with disabilities accountable, but also those who restrict them from enjoying their rights. Muhannad Azzeh, secretary general of the Higher Council for People with Disabilities stated that “The new legislation perceives those with disabilities in a new way by adopting a definition of disability that takes into account the physical barriers that hinder their ability to lead a normal life,” as the previous law only considered the “pure medical angle of disability, without giving much notice to the physical and behavioural barriers that stand in the way of those with disabilities... the country is obligated to explore all means and tools to acquaint people with disabilities of the consequences of any of their decisions and allow them to practice their legal capacity as citizens” (Azzeh 2017, p.1).

The new Law introduces a robust legislation offering rights and protection to persons with disability in education, healthcare and workplace, amongst other things. The Law also emphasizes the importance of raising public awareness of the rights of people with disabilities. For the purposes of the Law, a person is deemed to have a disability if he/she has a long-term incapacity (i.e. a disability lasting for a minimum of 24 months from treatment or rehabilitation) in physical, sensual, mental, psychological or neurological functions resulting in preventing that person from performing basic life activities or exercising their rights and basic freedoms independently. In order for the person with a disability with long-term incapacity to enjoy the protections and rights granted by the Law, they must be Jordanian citizens and obtain an “identification card” that encompasses personal identification as well as details pertaining to the disability, its nature and degree (Salaita and Abourah 2017).

Under the Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act No. 20 of 2017 a partnership was formed between the Higher Council and various bodies, that is to be responsible for the coordination and cooperation for the purpose of implementing the Act. Joint task forces have been established with the Ministry of Education, the Ministry of Health, the Ministry of Social Development, the Ministry of Communications and Information Technology, the Ministry of Labour and the Municipality of Greater Amman in order to prepare the requisite national action plans (UN 2018).

Employment and livelihood policies

In 2007, King Abdullah II announced a new strategy for persons with disabilities. Among other targets, the plan aimed to reduce the unemployment rate among people with disabilities (Rutherford 2014).

Jordan’s Law No. 31 on the Rights of Disabled Persons (2007), Article 4/3 sets a quota to ensure persons with disability are not excluded from the workforce. It states that for organisations with 25 and 50 members of staff, one person with disability must be employed. For organisations with over 50 members of staff, four percent of employees must have disabilities (ESCWA/League of Arab States 2014). According to an International Labour Organization report from 2019, despite the binding quota system in Jordan for people with disabilities in employment, there are no sanctions for non-compliance (ILO 2019).

Under the new Law (No. 20) (2017), the exclusion of a person from work, training or the opportunity of progression in their careers based on, or due to, their disability is prohibited. Additionally, given that work is deemed an essential right for persons with disability, no job listing can require that the applicant be free from any disability. The Ministry of Labour and Vocational Training Corporation, in coordination with the Higher Council for People with Disabilities, are mandated to incorporate measures that guarantee assimilation of persons with disabilities into

the policies, strategies, plans and programmes related to work, vocational and technical education in order to facilitate equal opportunities, as well as preparing vocational training curricula in Braille. In addition, the quota system for the employment of persons with disabilities depending on the size of the corporation, whether public or private, is reaffirmed. Corporations employing 25 to 50 individuals must hire at least one person with a disability. In the event the corporation employs more than 50 individuals, up to 4 percent (or as decided by the Ministry of Labour) of such corporation's workforce must consist of persons with disabilities. To ensure compliance with such requirements, the Law requires that private institutions prepare periodic reports to the Ministry of Labour relating to the number of employees who have disabilities, the nature of their work, the salaries they obtain and the accessible facilities and services offered to them. Under the new Law (No. 20) (2017), the Development and Employment Fund (in coordination with the Higher Council for People with Disabilities) is responsible for allocating loans to finance projects, as well as encouraging the designing and executing anti-poverty projects leading to occupational opportunities (Salaita and Abourah 2017).

A Shadow Report written in 2017 found that some laws are inconsistent with CRPD principles. For example, a legal loophole (Article 13 of the Labor Law) allows employers to evade recruitment of persons with disability. The authors of the Shadow Report argue that as it stands, the law does not guarantee persons with disability their right to work. The report calls on the government to develop mechanisms to monitor, address and eliminate violations and discriminatory practices against persons with disabilities (Information and Research Center 2017).

The Jordan Economic Growth Plan (JEGP) 2018 – 2022

The JEGP is comprised of economic, fiscal and sectoral strategies. It aims to put Jordan on a sustainable growth trajectory and ensure its economic resilience in the face of regional turmoil. A successful implementation of JEGP will double the economic growth of Jordan over the coming five years, at the minimum, in spite of ongoing regional turbulence. One of the factors needed to implement JEGP is the spreading of a culture of entrepreneurship and self-reliance through self-employment programs. This includes integrating persons with disabilities into the labour market by creating job opportunities for them through activating articles of the labour law that emphasize creating an environment that is inclusive to persons with disability (Economic Policy Council 2018).

Social Protection policies

There is no national policy for social protection in Jordan. However, article six of the Jordanian Constitution affirms legal protection for motherhood, childhood and the elderly, and cares for the youth and people with disabilities. Jordanian laws do not specify a particular entity to act as an umbrella for social protection services in the country. However, Jordan's social protection programmes include social assistance (cash and/or in-kind support provided to vulnerable individuals or households) and social insurance (which includes all the actions conducted to mitigate risks associated with unemployment, illness, disability, work-related injury and old age, such as health insurance or unemployment insurance). The National Aid Fund (NAF) is at the core of Jordan's social protection system. It provides cash transfers to almost 100,000 households (7.5 percent of the Jordanian population) and to 271,000 individuals (2013), in addition to other minor benefits for people with disabilities among others. The Ministry of Social Development manages a range of social assistance services and benefits to people with disabilities and other vulnerable groups. It offered services to 23,000 persons in 2014. Of these,

4,000 persons benefited from the “Handicapped affairs”¹ programme, which provides and supervises care, rehabilitation, and diagnostic centres and shelters to youth with disabilities as well as adults. This programme is responsible for operating a total of 27 centres and affiliated with over 100 centres in the private sector. The budget for this programme is 8.9 million Jordanian Dinars (\$12.5) (Zureiqat and Abu Shama 2015).

Jordan has ratified the ILO Convention on Minimum Standards of Social Protection, 1952 (No. 102). However, there are still many conventions on employment and health care yet to be ratified, to align the national system with international standards. Moreover, the progressive liberalisation policies that have recently been implemented are arguably jeopardising the improvement and expansion of social protection in Jordan. Despite this Jordan is considered a strong player in terms of social protection in the MENA region, with an average annual expenditure on social assistance being estimated to be approximately 3.4 percent of annual public spending (Röth, Nimeh & Hagen-Zanker 2017).

Education policies

Under the Law (No. 31) on the Rights of Disabled Persons (2007), children with disabilities in Jordan have the same rights as their peers without disabilities in terms of education through the adoption of inclusive education (Al-Dababneh, Al-Zboon & Baibers 2017). This right was reaffirmed under the new Law (No. 20) (2017), which prohibits any educational institution from excluding any individual based on, or due to, their disability. In the event an educational institution fails to accommodate to the needs of persons with disabilities, including but not limited to accessibility and availability of Braille, the Ministry of Education shall be obliged to offer such persons with alternative solutions or institutions. Additionally, the Ministry of Education (in association with the Higher Council for the Rights of Disabled Persons) has among others, the following responsibilities:

- Incorporating the educational requirements for persons with disability into public policies, strategies and educational programmes;
- Acceptance and integration of persons with disability in educational institutions;
- Providing accessibility solutions in public educational institutions, and ensuring that private educational institutions provide the same. The Ministry of Education shall not license any private educational institution which fail to offer such solutions; and
- Revising educational curricula and integrating awareness on the rights of persons with disability and their inclusion in society.
- The Law further incentivises the involvement of persons with disabilities in education by setting a cap to the fees for enrolment in public institutions for higher education at 25 percent (Salaita and Abourah 2017).

According to Prince Mired, president of Higher Council for the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, there remains a large gap between education policy and practice with regards to including children with disabilities in the education system (Jordan Times 2019).

The 2020 Global Monitoring Report details inclusive education requires horizontal collaboration to share information, set standards and sequence support services, however implementation is often thwarted by a lack of coherence. In Jordan, the ministries of education and social

¹ N.B. It is recognised that the term *handicapped* has a negative connotation for many people, and the accepted term is *person with a disability*.

development set separate standards for licensing and accrediting special education centres, is problematic. The 2017 disability law aimed to resolve these challenges. The 10-year strategy to implement the law includes developing inclusive school standards and curriculum development standards (UNESCO 2020).

Health policies

In 2007, King Abdullah II announced a new strategy for persons with disabilities. As well as strengthening participation in the economy for persons with disabilities, the plan also aimed to strengthen early detection and health awareness programmes, as well as establish more healthcare centres to service people with disabilities (Rutherford 2014).

Hospitals and medical centres are required, under the new Law (No. 20) (2017), to ensure that their facilities are accessible to persons with a disability. The Jordanian government has emphasized the importance of adhering to this obligation. Failure to comply could result in a loss of licence. All hospitals and medical centres are required to rectify their status as per the provisions of this Law within a maximum of five years. All medical, technical and administrative staff working in hospitals are also required to receive training for effective communication with persons with disabilities (including seeking their informed consent for medical procedures, and supplying leaflets in Braille), as well as methods for detecting and handling physical and mental abuse. In securing the availability of healthcare to persons with disability, the Ministry of Health, in coordination with the Council is required to issue an insurance card for each person with a disabilities with an identification card. The insurance covers medical and rehabilitation services, including medical surgeries, medication, artificial limbs, hearing and visual aids, physiotherapy, psychological and behavioural treatment. The Law ensures that insurance companies do not exclude persons with disabilities from medical or life insurances based on, or due to, their disability. Any such condition is made void under the Law (Salaita and Abourah 2017).

4. The situation for people with disabilities

Disability prevalence

As of 2018 disability prevalence in Jordan is estimated to be between 11 and 15 percent. Older estimates of disability prevalence range from 1.23 percent to 13 percent. The disability prevalence rate for people over 65 years old is 13.9 percent, despite this group representing 6 percent of the total population. 84 percent of persons with a disability live in an urban area (Thompson 2018). There are almost 500,000 children with disabilities under the age of 18 in Jordan (Jordan Times 2019).

Reliable data on persons with disabilities in Jordan is limited. According to a Government of Jordan census from 2004, 1.23 percent of the population in Jordan has a disability, while the HCD estimate is 13 percent (not including refugees) (UNHCR 2016). Historically, in 2007 Jordan reported a disability prevalence rate of 1.9 percent. This was comparable to neighbouring Syria, where a 1.4 percent disability prevalence rate was reported (Amnesty International 2016). By 2010 the disability prevalence rate in Jordan was 1.9 percent (1.6 percent in females, 2.2 percent in males). 41 percent of persons with disabilities were female and 59 percent were male. By comparison, in the Arab region, Sudan was found to have the highest disability prevalence (4.9 percent), and Qatar the lowest (0.4 percent) (ESCWA/League of Arab States 2014). Official prevalence figures for disability in the Arab region are far lower than the 15 percent global disability prevalence rate estimated by the World Health Organization (Amnesty International 2016).

In 2016, UNHCR recorded 2.36 percent of refugees registered in Jordan with a disability. In the context of Jordan, where hundreds of thousands of civil war refugees reside, the number with disabilities is expected to be significantly higher (UNHCR 2016). In 2018, an article in the Jordan Times reported that despite the lack of exact figures, the HCD estimates that 11 to 15 per cent of the population suffers from disabilities, amounting to over 1,100,000 people. It also quotes a representative of UNICEF Jordan who states that with the start of the Syrian crisis, Jordan witnessed an increase in the number of people with disabilities and an estimated 30 per cent of Syrian refugees in Jordan having specific physical or intellectual needs (Dupire 2018 a).

Using census data from 2015, Jordan was reported to have a disability prevalence rate of 2.7 percent. The rate for females was 2.7 percent and the rate for males was 2.8 percent. The disability prevalence rate in people over 65 years old was 13.9 percent, despite this same group only representing 6 percent of the total population (ESCWA 2017). In 2015, UNICEF Jordan reported supporting the Government in designing and delivering their Census. After successful advocacy to include a disability module in the Census for the first time in the country, substantial technical assistance was provided. The testing of the module brought out a more realistic picture of people with disability at 13 per cent (UNICEF 2015a).

A report that focused on Syrian refugees in Jordan found that 16 percent of them have chronic health failure. About one in five of the Syrian refugees attribute their problem to the war in Syria or the flight to Jordan. There is no functional disparity reported for vision, hearing and communication between refugees and the general population. However, Syrian refugees have above-average problems with memory and concentration. Difficulties with personal care and mobility challenges affect 4 and 10 percent of refugees respectively, which is twice as high as for the Jordanian population. Children with disabilities make up a substantial share of the total number of people with disabilities because there are many more children than elderly in the overall population: 19 percent of people with a disability are aged 5 to 19; 26 percent are aged 20 to 39; 19 percent are in their 40s; 15 percent are in their 50s; and 22 per cent are 60 years or older (Tiltnes, Zhang and Pedersen 2019).

Attitudes towards disability and disability stigma

A study that compare public attitudes towards people with different impairments found that about 64 percent of the 499 participants had positive perception and attitude towards disability. Participants had more positive attitudes towards physical disabilities followed by auditory, visual, and lastly, intellectual disabilities. Positive attitude towards people with disabilities in Jordan are mainly attributed to cultural components associated with religion and traditions in certain geographical areas in Jordan (Darawsheh 2020).

Men with disabilities in Jordan are often ridiculed by other men in the community (Pearce 2015). Women with disabilities are also often marginalised, prejudged, and discriminated against and they may experience more stigma than men. Impairment and disability are often linked to shame. This negative connection may extend to the entire family of the person with a disability (Jalal and Gabel 2014).

A study that assessed the views and attitudes of dentists in Jordan towards persons with intellectual disabilities reported highly positive attitudes toward persons with intellectual disabilities (Al-Zboon & Hatmal 2016). In Jordan, visibility is an important criterion for what constitutes disability and people with physical impairments are more likely to be described as disabled, than people with other impairments (Jalal and Gabel 2014).

A particularly significant issue in Jordan that reduces social cohesion is the stigma surrounding disability. Cultural issues may result in people with certain types of disabilities being hidden

away. Communication barriers are another challenge for those with hearing or speech impairments, and sometimes those with intellectual disabilities. Refugees with disabilities may face a heightened risk of exclusion while living in Jordan. They may face discrimination in every day situations, for example when using public transport (Crock et al 2015). Refugee children with disabilities trying to access education may face attitudinal barriers from parents (UNICEF 2015b). Stigma was found to be one of the barriers to refugees with disabilities accessing education in Jordan (Culbertson et al 2016). Attitudinal barriers may be keeping refugee children with disabilities out of school as families may fears that other children will not accept a child with disabilities (UNHCR 2013). Inclusive education is vital for refugee children with disabilities, but identification of needs remains a challenge. Further research focusing on identification and vulnerabilities in Jordan is needed (UNICEF 2013).

Under the new Disability Law (No. 20) (2017) in order to combat stigma revolving around disability and the role of persons with disabilities in society and local communities, the Law requires media and religious awareness by obliging the Media Commission, Jordanian Press Association and other media and journalistic institutions to the following, amongst others:

- Advocate for the rights of persons with disabilities and use of terminology that is respectful to them;
- Refuse licensing or renewals thereof of any media outlets, including online media presence, unless they are optimised to be accessible for persons with disabilities; and
- Train journalists and persons in the media industry on how to positively address issues pertaining to persons with disabilities and the stereotypes associated with them.

Under the new Law, the Ministry of Awqaf and Islamic Affairs and the Council of Churches are required to promote the rights of persons with disabilities and their acceptance in society as part of the general religious rhetoric. Additionally, religious curricula shall be revised, in coordination with the Ministry of Education, to instil the values of diversity and acceptance (Salaita and Abourah 2017).

In its concluding observations on the initial report of Jordan, the Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities recommended that the State party should:

- Amend its legislation to explicitly prohibit denial of reasonable accommodation as discrimination against persons with disabilities in all areas and ensure sanctions for non-compliance.
- Raise awareness about the duty to provide reasonable accommodation, among, inter alia, employers and service providers.

Disability and poverty

Poor women with disabilities in Jordan suffer greater discrimination than other groups (UN 2015). Refugees with disabilities are another vulnerable group. If they are poor they are likely to live in cheaper housing that is located on higher levels of buildings or on hills. The physical inaccessibility of buildings and neighbourhoods is an obstacle to societal participation (Crock et al 2015). Under the new disability Law (No. 20) (2017), to further encourage the financial independence of persons with disabilities, the Development and Employment Fund (in coordination with the Higher Council for People with Disabilities) shall, amongst others, allocate a percentage of facilitated loans to finance projects for persons with disabilities and their families, as well as promote the participation of organisations concerning persons with disabilities and

local communities in designing and executing anti-poverty projects, programmes and other occupational opportunities (Salaita and Abourah 2017).

Disability and livelihoods/work

In 2014 in Jordan, 16.1 percent of persons with disabilities were employed, 1.7 percent were unemployed and 82.2 percent were not economically active. By way of comparison to the total population of Jordan, 36.6 percent were employed, 4.4 percent were unemployed and 59 percent were reported as not being economically active. Only 4.8 percent of women with disabilities were employed, compared to 23.8 percent of men with disabilities. For refugees with disabilities, the labour force participation rate is halved for women with disabilities and is drastically reduced for men (Tiltnes, Zhang and Pedersen 2019).

According to the Higher Council for Affairs of Persons with Disabilities, in 2015, 9.9 percent of people with disabilities aged 15 and above in Jordan were unemployed but actively looking for jobs, while those working constituted 7.7 percent (Jordan Times 2015b). In 2017, for people between 15 and 64 years old, the employment rate among men without disabilities was 61.4 percent, compared to 32.8 percent for men with disabilities. The employment rate for women without disabilities was 13.5 percent and only 5.2 percent for women with disabilities (ESCWA 2017).

In 2017 it was reported that the employment rate for persons with disability was lower than 1.0 percent in the public sector and 0.5 percent in the private sector (Information and Research Center 2017).

In its concluding observations on the initial report of Jordan, the Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities recommended that the State party should:

- Repeal discriminatory legislation and regulations in order to eliminate the concept of “medical fitness” and ensure individualised assessments are conducted to determine suitability for bona fide occupational requirements.
- Raise awareness among employers and the general public on the right of persons with disabilities to work.
- Promote the employment of persons with disabilities in the private and public sectors, including through affirmative action and the adoption of regulations governing reasonable accommodation.

Disability and social protection

There are various social protection schemes in place in Jordan. For example, old-age pensioners with a person with a disability in their family may be eligible for a dependent’s supplement. This amounts to 12 percent of the pension. In addition, under the Handicapped Care Cash Assistance scheme, regular payments may be made to families that consistently care for a family member with a disability who suffers a chronic mental illness (ESCWA 2017, Röth, Nimeh & Hagen-Zanker 2017). As many as 7,100 families benefited from the scheme by way of unconditional cash transfer in 2010 (ESCWA 2017). Among the various social safety nets implemented by the Jordanian Ministry of Social Development, the Handicapped Affairs programme provides and supervises care, rehabilitation, and diagnostic centres and shelters to 4,000 persons with disabilities. The budget is 8.9 JD million. This programme is only targeted at Jordanians, but in certain situations, refugees can access it, for example, if women or children have been subject to

abuse (Zureiqat and Abu Shama 2015). In 2013, 7 percent of abuse cases that were reported involved Syrian refugees (Röth, Nimeh & Hagen-Zanker 2017).

The Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act 2007 includes the right of persons with disabilities to receive support services to achieve integration and participation. This includes monthly assistance to persons with disabilities in accordance with the National Assistance Fund Act (UN 2015). The Ministry for Social Development which administers the National Aid Fund, currently deals with 12,000 cases of people with disabilities (Jordan Times 2015a, ESCWA 2017). This corresponds to approximately 12 percent of all National Aid Fund beneficiaries (ESCWA 2017). Refugees are not eligible for cash assistance from the National Aid Fund (Röth, Nimeh & Hagen-Zanker 2017). The Social Development Minister Reem Abu Hassan has called for the establishment of a specific national fund to focus on the needs of persons with disabilities (Jordan Times 2015a).

Disability and education and training

In the 2020 Global Education Monitoring report, it states that Jordan acknowledge that most of their schools were not well prepared to practice inclusion, as insufficient measures had been taken for transport, access and safe use of the physical environment and for curricula harmonisation. This was especially the case in basic education (UNESCO 2020).

According to the Ministry of Education, 7,239 students with disabilities entered primary and secondary education in 2011 (3,640 male and 3,599 female) (UN 2015). In an interview with the Jordan Times in February 2019, Prince Mired, president of Higher Council for the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (HCD), stated that the majority of children with disabilities are excluded from the general education system, with between 85 and 95 percent being educated in isolation from the community, if they receive education at all. Many children with disabilities are shut inside their homes due to cultural stigma, or put in special centres for people with disabilities. A lack of budget and funding shortfalls are among the barriers to the successful implementation of inclusive education (Jordan Times 2019).

According to the Higher Council for Affairs of Persons with Disabilities, in Jordan, only three percent of children with disabilities receive a proper education (Jordan Times 2015a). Also, children with disabilities in Jordan represent approximately three percent of all school going aged children (UNICEF 2015b). The number of students with special needs in schools was very low. 746 schools were found to have students with disabilities. Only 0.13 percent of students with disabilities are in school (however it is not clear whether this refers to the percentage of the total population or the total number of school children). The lowest percentage was found to be in Ajlun governorate (0.06 percent) and the highest percentage was found to be in Mafraq governorate (0.26 percent) (UNICEF 2017).

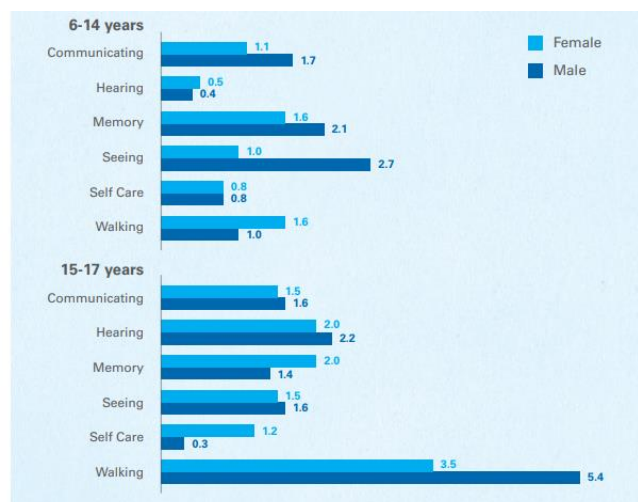
As many as 35.3 percent of persons with disabilities in Jordan are illiterate, compared to 11 percent of the total population. 45.7 percent of persons with disabilities have attained below secondary education, compared to 49.3 percent of the total population. 40 percent of females with disabilities were found to be illiterate, compared to 32 percent of males with disabilities. Educational attainment was found to favour males with disabilities at all levels of education, compared to females with disabilities (ESCWA/League of Arab States 2014).

Syrian refugee children

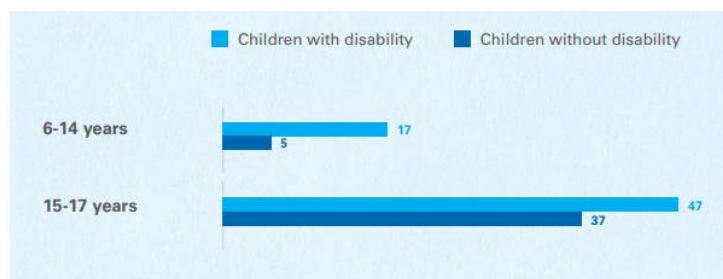
Disaggregated reporting on education for refugee children with disabilities is limited. In host communities there is a greater risk of children with disabilities being excluded from the system

than in camps (Culbertson et al 2016). Children with disabilities are known to be one of the most marginalised and excluded group of children. 17 percent of children with disability are not attending school from 6-14 years compared to 6 percent for children with no disability. 100 percent of the children with disability do not have any access to early childhood education program. For children between 15- 17 years 47 percent for children with disability do not access education compared to 37 percent for children with no disability (UNICEF 2018).

Type of disability by age and gender experienced by Syrian refugee children in host communities in Jordan (percent) (UNICEF, 2018, p.37)



School enrolment and disability for Syrian refugees in host communities in Jordan (percent) (UNICEF, 2018, p.39)



In Jordan, in 2015 UNICEF supported 1,983 children (793 male, 1,190 girls) with inclusive and psychosocial services. 48 percent were Syrian and 52 percent were Jordanian. In the Za'atari refugee camp, Mercy Corps has run an education programme for 1,100 children with disabilities. Half of these children had no previous access to school. Research based on a Joint Education Needs Assessment reported that 9 percent of children in Za'atari refugee camp are reported to have disabilities, difficulties and/or chronic illnesses, while in the host communities disabilities reportedly affect only three percent of school-aged children. In addition, in host communities, 49 percent of children with disabilities attend school, while 64 percent of children without disabilities attend school. In Za'atari, 48 percent of children with disabilities attend formal education compared with 52 percent of children without disabilities (Culbertson et al 2016).

By the end of 2015, 55 double-shifted schools were improved and made more inclusive of children with disabilities. In addition, 951 teachers were trained on inclusive education and parents/children were guided with rehabilitative sessions. 7,476 community members were encouraged to encourage the education of children with disabilities. Through these efforts, 2,093 children with disabilities were integrated into formal schools. In addition, children with severe disabilities were supported with home schooling opportunities (UNICEF 2015 a).

In 2013, a Joint Education Needs Assessment (JENA) was undertaken in Za'atari Refugee Camp (UNHCR 2013). As Handicap International were planning an accessibility assessment in Za'atari, the preliminary findings were made available so they could be included in the JENA, which does not give a complete representation of the needs and barriers faced by children with disabilities. Handicap International's preliminary data show that children with disabilities generally do not go to school due to physical and attitudinal barriers to accessibility. The table below shows a breakdown of identified school going children with a disability in the Za'atari camp.

Breakdown of identified school going children with a disability in the Za'atari camp (UNHCR 2013, p.34).

Type of disability	0-5 years old			6-18 years old			TOTAL
	Girls	Boys	Total	Girls	Boys	Total	
Moving	13	25	38	29	50	79	117
Moving and speaking	-	1	1	1	6	7	8
Moving and hearing	-	-	-	1	-	1	1
Moving and learning	-	1	1	-	-	-	1
Moving, speaking, hearing					1	1	1
Moving, speaking and learning	-	-	-	-	1	1	1
Moving, speaking and seeing				2	2	4	4
Unspecified	1	5	6	1	9	10	16
TOTAL	14	32	46	34	69	103	149

A JENA report from 2015 found that 3 percent of school aged children sampled had at least one disability. The highest proportion of children with a disability can be found in Jerash (3.8 percent) and the lowest in Aqaba (1.1 percent).

The JENA reported that less than half (46 percent) of children with disabilities were attending formal education. However, it should be noted that as the sample was drawn from the overall population the number of children with disabilities was not high enough to enable generalisation of findings at any conventionally accepted level of statistical significance. The most commonly stated reason for not attending formal education across all age-groups was that the school was not physically accessible. The data reveals a trend with younger children with disabilities more likely to be attending formal education compared to older peers. Girls were found to be more likely to attend formal schooling than boys. Girls with disabilities in the 6-11 age-group were twice

as likely to be receiving a formal education (65 percent) compared to boys in the 12- 17 age-group (33 percent) (UNICEF 2015b).

In terms of reasons for non-attendance, girls aged 6-11 with a disability reported that the most common reasons included physical inaccessibility of school; lack of specialist education services; or family expectations. Boys between 6-11 years old most often said to not be attending because the school was not physically accessible or that there was a lack of specialist education services. The main reasons why girls aged 12-17 with a disability did not attend school are because the school was physically inaccessible, that they were suffering psychological effects, or that specialist education was lacking. This is illustrated in the following figure. Boys between 12-17 years old were said to not be attending due to the school not being physically accessible, that specialist education services needed were not available, or that they were suffering psychological effects (UNICEF 2015b).

Almost half of school aged children with disabilities who were not attending formal school were found to have had dropped out at some point during 2011, after which drop-out rates had steadily reduced. In 2012 and 2013, a slight pickup was seen in the second quarter, which saw the highest proportion of dropouts in both years (UNICEF 2015b).

A factsheet produced by Humanity and Inclusion (2018) reported that for refugee children with disabilities in Jordan aged 13 and over, 19 percent did not attend school and cannot read or write, compared to 6.7 percent of children without a disability. For the same age group, 3.4 percent of children with disabilities did not attend school but can read and write compared to 1.4 percent of children without disabilities. 61.3 percent of children with disabilities had attended primary school, compared to 67.7 percent of children without disabilities. For children aged between 6 and 12 years old 88.8 percent of children with disabilities attend school regularly (4-5 times/week) compared to 91.2 percent of children without a disability. 10.0 percent of this age group with disabilities had never attended or had dropped out compared to 6.9 percent of children without disabilities. In terms of gender, 5.8 percent of girls with disabilities had never enrolled, compared to 10.1 percent of boys with disabilities. For comparison, 5.4 percent of girls without disabilities had never enrolled compared to 6.2 percent of boys without disabilities. For children with disabilities aged 6 to 12 years, the most significant barriers to education for those enrolled was overcrowded classrooms (25.4 percent); distance to school (>2km) (20.1 percent); and safety fears (10.1 percent). For those who had dropped out or had not enrolled, the most significant barriers were the child's functional difficulties (20.8 percent); the child's psychological distress (20.8 percent); and refused entry (12.5 percent) (Humanity and Inclusion 2018).

Further and higher education

The new Disability Law (No. 20) (2017) incentivises the involvement of persons with disabilities in higher education by setting a cap to the fees for enrolment in public institutions at 25 percent of the normal cost (Salaita and Abourah 2017).

A study from 2013 focused on the attitudes of higher education faculty members towards inclusion of students with disabilities at one large public University in Jordan found that the majority of faculty members have positive attitudes toward inclusion of students with disabilities. However, the majority of the faculty members were found to be unfamiliar with the disability legislation in Jordan and not trained to teach students with disabilities (Abu-Hamour 2013).

In its concluding observations on the initial report of Jordan, the Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities recommended that the State party should:

- Recognise inclusive education as the guiding principle of the education system, in line with its general comment No. 4 (2016) on the right to inclusive education.
- Adopt the draft law on the national plan for inclusive education and involve persons with disabilities — more specifically children — through their representative organisations, in its adoption and implementation.
- Allocate sufficient financial and human resources to ensure the provision of individual support and reasonable accommodation to enable children with disabilities, including intellectual disabilities, to receive quality inclusive education on all curricula.
- Ensure systematic collection of data, disaggregated by age, sex, impairment and location, on the enrolment and dropout of children with disabilities in both mainstream and special education schools.

Disability and transport/public accessibility

People with disabilities face discrimination and face a lack of accessibility in public places, schools, universities, and streets (Jordan Times 2015a). Despite many medical centres in Jordan being physically accessible and their staff adequately trained, challenges exist regarding transportation of patients with disabilities to each centre (Curtis & Geagan 2016). Under the new Law (No. 20) (2017), it is required that all public facilities, including tourist and religious venues, rectify their status to ensure accessibility to persons with disabilities and comply with the conditions of the Law within one year of the effective date and finalise by no later than ten years. Occupancy permits or licenses will no longer be issued to public or private buildings unless they comply with accessibility requirements stipulated under the Law. With respect to traffic and public transportation, new methods must be implemented within five years to ensure the safety of persons with disabilities. This includes introducing audible traffic lights, and allowing for accessibility in taxis and public buses. The Law exempts certain categories of services for persons with disabilities from tax, subject to certain conditions. Generally, these services include accessibility tools, buses, and private vehicles, hospitals and medical centres in Jordan are required to ensure that their facilities are accessible to persons with disabilities. In addition, the Law also requires the accessibility of polling stations and providing sign language interpreters, in addition to permitting the companionship of caretakers to ballot boxes (Salaita and Abourah 2017).

Refugees with disabilities in Jordan are found to face many potential barriers to inclusion in community and family life. If they are poor they may only be able to afford to live in cheaper housing that is located on higher levels of buildings or on hills. The physical inaccessibility of buildings and neighbourhoods is an obstacle to societal participation (Crock et al 2015). Syrian refugees with disabilities in Jordan are to face discrimination when using public transport (Crock et al 2015) The lack of access to transport is believed to be one of the reasons that refugee children with disabilities fail to access education in Jordan (Culbertson et al 2016).

Disability and health

Jordan has freely extended Social Health Insurance to persons with disabilities. Coverage should in theory be 100 percent, yet around a third of Jordanians with disabilities are not covered (ESCWA 2017). In Jordan, almost all of the 225 Makani Medical Centers are physically

accessible and their staff are trained to address the needs of persons with disabilities. However, challenges around transportation limits the number of beneficiaries with disabilities each centre assists (Curtis & Geagan 2016). Data is lacking from subsectors within the field of health. For example, there are no national studies of the dental needs of individuals with disabilities in Jordan (Al-Zboon & Hatmal 2016).

With regards to the Syrian refugee population in Jordan, the number of people with a disability due to injuries from the Syrian conflict is believed to be significant. The conflict has undoubtedly increased the prevalence of physical and psychological disability. The psychological traumas resulting from the conflict have caused mental health problems for many Syrian refugees in Jordan. It is challenging to quantify the increase in disability prevalence due to differences by each country in measuring the disability prevalence rates. Data from Ramtha hospital suggests that 90 percent of the Syrian patients admitted required physiotherapy after major surgery in addition to strong-post operative care and counselling. However, UNHCR data suggests that only 63 percent of Syrian refugees with disabilities had received either surgical treatment, rehabilitation, or psychological support of assistive devices in Jordan. The data that exists suggests that there is unmet demand for health services from refugees with disabilities in Jordan (Amnesty International 2016). The Jordan Response Plan reported that 394 persons with specific needs, including disabilities, received rehabilitation services in the first three months of 2013. Of the 394 persons, 80 were located in urban areas. This highlights the challenge of capacity to decentralise services and reach vulnerable refugees settled throughout Jordan (UNHCR 2013).

UNHCR may not be identifying all refugees with visual impairments in Jordan. Researchers working with refugees in Jordan, noted an absence of people with vision impairments. Some vision testing of refugees is known to be taking place within camps in Jordan. However, a general lack of assistance for people with visual impairment was reported, with the suggestion that donors may favour addressing severe or urgent medical conditions, leaving those with long-term, non-life-threatening conditions with unmet needs (Crock et al 2015).

An estimated seven percent of refugees suffering from non-communicable diseases also have an impairment (HelpAge & HI 2014). Mental health is a concern for refugees in Jordan. 19,511 consultations for mental health disorders were reported in 2014 in the Za'atari camp alone. Of these, 17 percent were for epilepsy/seizures, 27 percent for severe emotional disorder and 8 percent for psychotic disorder) (Health Sector Working Group 2015).

In its concluding observations on the initial report of Jordan, the Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities recommended that the State party should:

- Enact legislation explicitly recognising the right of persons with disabilities to enjoy all private health insurance services covered by private insurance companies on an equal basis with others.
- Integrate the human rights-based model of disability into the training curriculum of all health professionals, emphasizing that medical services and treatment to persons with disabilities should be provided with the free, prior and informed consent of all persons with disabilities.

Access to assistive devices and assistance

Despite an increasing number of initiatives implemented to raise awareness on accessibility for people with disabilities in Jordan, there is still a lack of basic infrastructure to ensure people can access assistive technology and participate in society (Dupire 2018 b). In the broader Arab region

(including Jordan), if there is more than one individual with disability in same family, a male with disability is likely to take priority with regards to accessing assistive technology (Al-Zboon & Smadi 2015).

In Jordan, unofficial Syrian-run groups have formed to address conflict related needs of people. However, the Jordanian government keeps shutting down these groups, due to fears of links with Syrian militant groups. There is concern that unregistered or unqualified doctors may be attending to refugees with disabilities. The quality of assistive aids including prosthetic limbs provided cannot be guaranteed (Crock et al 2015).

Assistive devices including wheelchairs and prosthetics are generally provided by humanitarian assistance organisations. Individuals who benefited from these services reported long wait periods. One report found that despite people having their needs evaluated by an organisation, they waited over a year to receive assistive devices (Curtis & Geagan 2016). UNHCR data suggests that only 63 percent of Syrian refugees with disabilities had received either surgical treatment, rehabilitation, or psychological support of assistive devices in Jordan. The data that exists suggests that there is unmet demand for health services from refugees with disabilities in Jordan (Amnesty International 2016).

Organisations supporting people with disabilities

The Higher Council for Persons with Disabilities is an independent national institution responsible for policymaking and planning that was established following the passing of the Rights of Persons with Disabilities act in 2007. The Council is an independent national institution that supports persons with disabilities, defends their interests, designs policies, and unites efforts to improve the living conditions of persons with disabilities and facilitate their integration in society (UN 2015).

The Equality Association for Persons with Disabilities is an organisation for persons with disabilities established in 2013 in Amman, Jordan as result of a Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) led initiative: The Disability Equality Forum (DET Forum). The DET Forum has conducted three capacity-building workshops in Amman, Jordan with the aim of building the capacity of persons with disabilities to become certified DET trainers. Seven of the DET trainers decided to establish an organisation for persons with disabilities with the mandate to promote the rights of persons with disability. The Equality Association works mainly in areas of challenging stereotypical approaches towards disability. The Organization has worked with a wide range of partners providing DET training to the Chamber of Commerce and Industry, the Tax Department, the Hashemite University, the King's Academy among others. All training workshops include follow up activities in order to ensure that the trainees implement a follow up project, which contributes towards removing forms of social discrimination against persons with disabilities (Curtis & Geagan 2016).

According to the Guide to Civil Society Organisations in Jordan website (2019), the following are among the active organisations for persons with disabilities in Jordan:

- **I am a Human Society for Rights of People with Disabilities** - Established in 2008 with a goal of achieving the development of persons with disabilities in all economic, social, legal, political and cultural aspects. The organisation works with all categories of persons with disabilities and aims to advance the integration of persons with disabilities into all social activities and the development of qualified people with disabilities.
- **Asahab Al Himam Association for the disabled** – Established in 2011 with the goal of providing assistance to people with special needs.

- **AI - Hamraa Association for People with Special Needs** – Established in 1996 with the goal of providing care for people with special needs.
- **Lawrence Society for People with Special Needs** – Established in 2011 with the goal of providing care for special needs.
- **Deya Al Shoubak Association for People with Disabilities** – Established in 2014 with the goal of providing care for people with special needs.
- **Ento Mena Charitable Association for People with Disabilities** – Established in 2016 with the goal of providing rehabilitation and training of persons with disabilities and supporting the rights of persons with disabilities.
- **Wa Bashir Al Sabereen Association for People with Disabilities** – Established in 2015 with the goal of providing assistance for people with special needs.
- **Association of specialized associations of disabled people** – Established 2011 with the goal of supporting associations of persons with disabilities in Jordan.
- **Association of the white window for people with disabilities** – Established 2011 with the goal of empowering people with disabilities

Humanitarian situations

The lack of accurate data focused on refugees in Jordan which is disaggregated by disability and other characteristics poses a challenge. In Jordan, vulnerability assessments and information sharing has the potential to produce rich disaggregated data. Greater cooperation between government, specialist international organisations and local organisations for people with disabilities will improve the way data on persons with disabilities is identified and recorded (Crock et al 2015).

In 2014 an estimated 700,000 refugees were believed to be in Jordan (The Health Sector Working Group 2015). In 2015, the UNHCR estimated that 620,000 Syrian refugees were in Jordan. Government estimates are closer to 1.4 million (Crock et al 2015). By 2018 it was estimated that there were 740,160 refugees in Jordan, of which 657,628 (88.8 percent) were from Syria. 81.1 percent of the refugees live in urban areas. 140,002 refugees live in camps (Za'atari - 78,994, Azraq - 53,967, Emirati Jordanian Camp - 7,041) (UNHCR 2018). It is possible that Jordan has many hundreds of thousands of unregistered refugees (Amnesty International 2016). Despite relatively efficient refugee registration services which are operational in Jordan, disabilities are often not recognised or recorded (Curtis & Geagan 2016). Accurate data is lacking and often not disaggregated by gender, age and disability type.

Data on prevalence of disability varies depending on the source. A UNICEF desk review from 2013 estimated that up to 10 percent of Syrian refugee children had a disability (UNICEF 2013). This estimate was largely in line with WHO and UNHCR global data from that time. Data was from refugees living in camps. No data was found for Syrian refugee children with disabilities in host communities (UNICEF 2015b). In 2014, of the 700,000 refugees in Jordan, 154,000 were believed to have impairments or disabilities (The Health Sector Working Group 2015). Data collected in 2014 found that 4 percent of Syrian refugees assessed in Jordan had a disability. In addition, 3 percent of school aged children and 3.4 percent of youth (18-24 years old) had at least one disability. 9 percent of the total assessed population were currently injured or chronically ill, including persons with disabilities (UNICEF (2015b).

Research investigating the number and needs of Syrian refugees with special needs (defined as those with impairment, injury and chronic disease) in Jordan and Lebanon found that of 3,202 participating refugees, 30 percent had specific needs with 45 percent of these refugees reporting

problems in accomplishing simple daily living activities. One in five refugees were affected by physical, sensory or intellectual impairment, while one in seven were affected by chronic disease. One in 20 suffered from injury, of which 80 percent had resulted directly from the conflict. The report also found that older people accounted for 10 percent of refugees with specific needs. This age group makes up 4-5 percent of the refugee population suggesting that they are disproportionately affected (HelpAge & HI 2014). This under-representation of persons with disability in UNHCR's registration database is acknowledged by Health Sector Working Group (2015). As many as 77 percent of older refugees were found to have specific needs. 65 percent of older refugees showed signs of psychological distress, while children who are refugees were found to be twice as likely as the general refugee population to report signs of psychological distress (HelpAge & HI 2014).

In 2015, 25.9 percent of Syrians in Jordan were estimated to have an impairment (Crock et al 2015). However, it should be recognised that there are significant overlaps of people experiencing impairment, injury and chronic disease. In 2016, UNHCR recorded that 2.36 percent of refugees registered in Jordan had a disability (UNHCR 2016). This figure is disproportionately low when compared to a general population that had not been displaced by war (Curtis & Geagan 2016). The disability prevalence rate for Syrian refugees in Jordan may be closer to 10 percent (Mercy Corps 2017).

A pilot study conducted by the UNHCR, focusing on 98 refugee households in Jordan used the Washington Group questions. The results yielded a 25 percent increase in identification of disabilities, from 2.36 percent to 27.55 percent. From the cohort of 98 households, 27 individual cases of persons with disabilities were identified (UNHCR 2016). In 2016 the total registered population in Azraq camp was 53,838. Of these there were 1,222 people with disabilities living in the camp of which 36.6 percent are children (UN 2016). A Vulnerability Assessment Framework (VAF), that formed part of a Comprehensive Vulnerability Assessment, reported that 16 percent of refugee households in Jordan have the presence of pre-existing medical conditions (e.g. disabilities or chronic illnesses) that have a negative impact (Ministry of Planning & International Cooperation 2018). The draft 2019 framework reported that this figure had increased to 35 percent (Ministry of Planning & International Cooperation 2019).

An article published in the Jordan Times drew on information from UNICEF which estimates that 30 percent of Syrian refugees in Jordan have specific physical or intellectual needs (Dupire 2018 a). As hundreds of thousands of Syrian refugees fleeing the war reside in Jordan, the number of people with disabilities in reality is likely to be significantly higher than current estimates (UNHCR 2016). In addition to the Syrian refugees, it should be noted that Jordan is also host to refugees from other fragile and conflict affected states, including Palestine and Iraq (Curtis & Geagan 2016).

Under the new Law (No. 20) (2017), the Public Civil Defence, in coordination with the Council must provide emergency services in a manner which accommodates to the needs of persons with disabilities, including personnel with the ability to communicate through sign language. However, the law is only applicable to Jordanian citizens (Salaita and Abourah 2017).

In its concluding observations on the initial report of Jordan, the Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities recommended that the State party should:

- take into account the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction (2015-2030) in adopting and implementing a comprehensive emergency and disaster risk reduction strategy and protocols that are fully inclusive of and accessible to persons with disabilities, including refugees with disabilities.
- The Committee also recommends that the emergency hotline service be made accessible to persons with disabilities, particularly deaf persons, via the independent technologies platform.

COVID-19

The COVID-19 crisis has triggered disproportionate risks and barriers for people with disabilities living in humanitarian settings. Limited evidence is available on the impact of COVID-19 on persons with disabilities in countries like Jordan. Evidence that does exist suggests that COVID-19 has made it even more challenging for people with disabilities to access health care, maintain medical treatment, access rehabilitation care and social support services. Data gathered by HI in Jordan suggests that 88 percent of persons with a physical impairment and with current medical needs reported that due to COVID-19, they could not go to the hospital either for their regular checks or for additional medical needs. The crisis is also having an impact on support networks, with 79 percent of households which have children or adults with disabilities not receive external support in the last 3 months and another 79 percent designated food as their top need, mostly because of a lack of money (HI 2020).

5. How the SITANS were conducted

A non-systematic literature review has been conducted for each country within the time and resources available, covering both academic and grey literature, focusing on a number of areas, including the general situation for people with disabilities in each county and the four focus areas of the DID programme: health, education, livelihoods and stigma and discrimination.² Searches of publicly available English language literature for each thematic area have been conducted through academic databases, search engines and websites which host grey literature. As disability and development is an under researched area, much of the available literature and evidence is grey literature published by governments and organisations working in the countries, rather than academic literature. Also, the most recent and up to date evidence comes in the form of journalism or press releases. Some of the evidence presents contradictory findings, especially in relation to disability prevalence.

The most recent well-evidenced literature was selected for synthesis in the SITANS to provide those working on the DID programme with an overview of the current situation in the country to help with the design of the interventions. As a time lag sometimes exists between evidence being gathered and then published, the SITANS are living documents, which will be updated annually to reflect newly available evidence. Having the SITANS as living documents also means they can

² The Bangladesh, Kenya, and Nigeria SITANS have adapted and made more relevant to DID's themes, the SITANS written earlier for three of the four countries in the UK Aid funded Inclusion Works! programme, which focuses on issues relating to formal employment, in order not to duplicate efforts. Nepal and Tanzania SITANS have been written from scratch. The Jordan SITAN draws on a K4D helpdesk report on disability inclusion in Jordan.

be adapted to reflect new areas of interest to the programme, or areas to be developed further, throughout its implementation. As people in the different countries use and engage with the SITANs in the project planning processes in the countries, they will have the opportunity to feedback on the SITANs based on their current experiences (helping deal with the time lag issue) and provide useful internal evidence which is not available publicly. Feedback on the content of the SITANs is thus incorporated in two different ways:

- 1) Highlighting published material that can be incorporated into the main text.
- 2) Unpublished commentary that is added under 'Annex 1 - Feedback and commentary on the SITAN from consortium partners'.

The SITANs have been reviewed by a gender expert from IDS to ensure that gender/intersectionality are well reflected, where possible.

DID SITANs:

Thompson, S. (2020). *Bangladesh Situational Analysis*. Disability Inclusive Development.

Thompson, S. (2020). *Jordan Situational Analysis*. Disability Inclusive Development.

Thompson, S. (2020). *Nigeria Situational Analysis*. Disability Inclusive Development.

Rohwerder, B. (2020). *Kenya Situational Analysis*. Disability Inclusive Development.

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Rohwerder, B. (2020). *Tanzania Situational Analysis*. Disability Inclusive Development.

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Annex 1 - Feedback and commentary on the SITAN from consortium partners

No feedback or commentary was provided by the DID partners for the 2020 version of the SITAN.