

# Walking on Eggshells: Pathways to Equality in Jordan

A Civil Society Perspective  
on the Beijing Declaration Commitments

*Parallel Report by ARDD*

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## Table of Content

<b>Introduction</b>	<b>3</b>
Setting the Stage: 30 Years of Commitment, 30 Years of Change	3
Where Jordan Stands on Gender Equality	4
Purpose of the Report	4
Methodology	5
<b>Section 1: Looking Back, Moving Forward: Assessing Progress and Challenges</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>1. Inclusive Development, Shared Prosperity, and Decent Work</b>	<b>6</b>
Bridging the Gap: Inclusive Development and Decent Work	6
Economic Empowerment Programs	7
Informal Work and Social Protection	7
Stuck in System: From Policy to Practice	7
Gendered roles and realities in the workplace	8
The Unseen Burden: Unpaid Care Work	8
Green Job opportunities are the future?	9
COVID-19's Long-Lasting Impact	9
A reality check on Beijing's commitments	9
<b>2. Poverty Eradication, Social Protection, and Social Services</b>	<b>10</b>
Achievements in accessing social protection and social services	10
Labor Market Exclusion and Healthcare Challenges for Women in Jordan	11
Structural Barriers to Accessing Social Services	11
A Reality Check on Beijing+30 Commitments	12
<b>3. Freedom from Violence, Stigma, and Stereotypes</b>	<b>12</b>
Overcoming Barriers to Protect Women from GBV	13
Rise in Digital Violence: A New Threat	13
Child Marriage and Early Marriages: A Persistent Challenge	14
Data and Accountability Gaps for Effective Policy Implementation	14
A Reality Check on Beijing+30 Commitments	14



<b>4. Peaceful and Inclusive Societies</b>	<b>14</b>
Advancing Localization and Grassroots Peacebuilding Initiatives	15
Structural and Financial Barriers to Inclusive Peacebuilding Efforts	15
A Reality Check on Beijing+30 Commitments	16
<b>5. Participation, Accountability, and Gender-Responsive Institutions</b>	<b>16</b>
Advancing Gender Representation: Progress and Challenges in Political Engagement	17
Strengthening Accountability and Legal Protections for Gender Equality	18
A Reality Check on Beijing+30 Commitments	18
<b>6. Environmental Conservation, Protection, and Rehabilitation</b>	<b>19</b>
Women's Vulnerability to Climate Change	19
Gaps in Legislative and Institutional Synergy	19
A Reality Check on Beijing+30 Commitments	20
<b>Section 2: National Women's Machineries</b>	<b>21</b>
<b>Mechanisms for Coordination with CBOs</b>	<b>21</b>
<b>Section 3: What Role for Civil Society? A Bottom-up Approach</b>	<b>22</b>
<b>1. Inclusive Development, Shared Prosperity, and Decent Work</b>	<b>22</b>
<b>2. Poverty Eradication, Social Protection, and Social Services</b>	<b>22</b>
<b>3. Freedom from Violence, Stigma, and Stereotypes</b>	<b>22</b>
<b>4. Peaceful and Inclusive Societies</b>	<b>23</b>
<b>5. Participation, Accountability, and Gender-Responsive Institutions</b>	<b>23</b>
<b>6. Environmental Conservation, Protection, and Rehabilitation</b>	<b>23</b>
<b>Section 4: What's Next for Beijing? The Road Ahead</b>	<b>24</b>
<b>1. Enhancing Beijing's Commitments in Jordan: Addressing Structural Challenges</b>	<b>24</b>
<b>2. Regional Recommendations for Enhancing Civil Society Engagement and Overcoming Structural Barriers</b>	<b>24</b>
<b>Conclusion: Towards Transformative Changes</b>	<b>25</b>

# Introduction

## Setting the Stage: 30 Years of Commitment, 30 Years of Change

The **Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action (BPFA)**, adopted during the **Fourth World Conference on Women in 1995**, remains one of the most influential global frameworks for promoting gender equality. It establishes strategic objectives across twelve critical areas of concern, urging governments to dismantle structural barriers that hinder women's full participation in public and private life. Over the past three decades, the BPFA has significantly shaped global advocacy, policy reform, and strategies for advancing women's rights.

**As the 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Beijing Declaration approaches, it provides a crucial opportunity to reflect on its relevance, impact, and limitations.** While the platform has driven significant legal and social progress at a global level, it has also been criticized as a Western-centric framework that prioritizes individual empowerment over collective liberation. Feminist activists, particularly from the Global South, have argued that the framework often overlooks the contextual realities of marginalized communities and fails to adequately address intersectional oppressions rooted in colonial legacies. As a result, neoliberal ideals such as individualism, privatization, **and market-driven “empowerment”** have become dominant in gender equality agendas, sidelining more transformative approaches centered on community-driven change, solidarity, and collective power.

These critiques call for a shift toward **a decolonial feminist approach**—one that dismantles Western hegemony in gender discourses, addresses power imbalances, and prioritizes the lived experiences of marginalized communities. A key strategy for advancing this decolonial agenda lies in localization, which **involves redefining global frameworks like the BPFA to reflect the unique socio-political, economic, and cultural realities of local contexts.** Unlike the top-down approach that imposes a “one-size-fits-all” model, localization ensures that women's priorities -particularly those from rural, refugee, and marginalized backgrounds- are reflected in the creation and implementation of gender equality policies. Localization goes beyond mere “adaptation” of global frameworks; **it represents a transfer of power and ownership, positioning local actors-** women-led community-based organizations (CBOs) and grassroots feminist movements **-as co-creators of knowledge and policy.** This localized, bottom-up approach allows for feminist pluralism, allowing diverse perspectives and realities to shape the decision-making process.

**This approach calls for greater synergy between local actors, CBOs, and international platforms to ensure policies are informed by those directly affected.** For example, women in Jordan -especially refugees, rural women, and women with disabilities -face distinct challenges that universalized solutions often fail to address. A decolonial, localized feminist agenda counters international-driven, top-down models of gender equality, calling instead for community-led, participatory approaches. This shift is essential to ensure that global frameworks like the BPFA are rhetorically inclusive and practically transformative.

The **Beijing +30 process** presents a vital moment of accountability, offering a chance for civil society, grassroots movements, and feminist organizations to question state narratives, assess progress, and push for **transformative change.** This reflection comes at a time when the world faces complex, intersecting crises, including the climate emergency, rising authoritarianism, the expansion of artificial intelligence (AI), and protracted armed conflicts in Gaza, Sudan, and Lebanon. These events create new challenges for gender equality, particularly in **refugee-hosting countries like Jordan**, where women bear the brunt of displacement and economic hardship. **Thus, it is essential to evaluate the relevance and adaptability of the Beijing Declaration to address the different needs and realities of women in the global south.**

## Where Jordan Stands on Gender Equality

Jordan's geopolitical position in a region characterized by protracted conflicts, forced migration, and political instability presents distinct challenges for advancing gender equality. Over the past five years, Jordan has demonstrated its commitment to fulfilling BPFA through landmark reforms in areas such as political participation, labor rights, and legal protections. The government established key initiatives, including the Royal Committee to Modernize the Political System, the Economic Modernization Vision, and the Inter-Ministerial Committee for Women's Empowerment, aimed at closing gender gaps in governance, employment, and social protection. Additionally, the National Strategy for Women 2020-2025 (NSW), built by the JNCW<sup>1</sup>, serves as the primary policy framework guiding Jordan's gender equality efforts. Developed in alignment with international commitments, including the BPFA, CEDAW, and the SDGs, the strategy provides a structured approach to addressing legal, economic, political, and social barriers that hinder women's full participation in society.

Moreover, Jordan has introduced a series of legal amendments, including revisions to the election law, social security law, personal status law, party law, and labor law, among others. These reforms aim to strengthen women's rights in employment, political participation, and social protection. Despite these efforts, systemic and structural barriers persist, hindering women's full participation in public life. The World Economic Forum's Global Gender Gap Report (2024)<sup>2</sup> reflects this reality. While **Jordan improved its position from 138th out of 153 countries in 2020 to 123rd out of 146 in 2024**, this progress represents only a modest 5.9% increase in gender parity. Women's political representation in parliament remains low, with women holding 19.6% of parliamentary seats after the 2024 elections<sup>3</sup>. Similarly, women's economic participation remains constrained, as reflected in an unemployment rate of 31% among women in the first quarter of 2024<sup>4</sup>. These figures underscore the need for targeted interventions that move beyond legal reform to address the deeper, systemic barriers to gender equality.

## Purpose of the Report

As a leading human rights and development organization in Jordan, the **Arab Renaissance for Democracy and Development (ARDD)** has been at the forefront of advocating for gender justice, legal empowerment, and policy reforms to advance women's rights. Through comprehensive legal aid, advocacy, and capacity-building initiatives, ARDD collaborates closely with marginalized communities, including refugee women, survivors of gender-based violence, and women in precarious labor conditions. **This report** builds upon ARDD's enduring commitment to human rights and gender equality, ensuring that national progress assessments authentically reflect the lived experiences of the most affected groups. The **Beijing+30 Shadow Report** for Jordan serves as **an independent civil society review** that assesses the country's progress in implementing **the commitments made under the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action (BPFA) over the past five years**. This parallel report provides an **alternative, evidence-based perspective** driven by **grassroots voices and feminist advocacy**. Civil society organizations play a critical role in translating policies into practice, advocating for reforms, and addressing gender inequalities through localized, community-driven approaches. Their contributions are indispensable for contextualizing national achievements and ensuring that policy frameworks align with the lived realities of women across diverse communities in Jordan. This report also represents a collective effort spearheaded by JONAF, a national coalition of civil society organizations committed to advancing gender equality and human rights in Jordan. JONAF's member organizations work across diverse communities, including refugee populations, rural areas, and low-income urban centers, ensuring that this shadow report reflects a broad range of perspectives. By leveraging its grassroots networks, JONAF provides a platform for community-based organizations (CBOs) and women's rights groups to engage in policy advocacy and hold decision-makers accountable for their commitments under the Beijing Platform for Action.

<sup>1</sup> The Jordanian National Commission for Women. <https://www.women.jo/en/strategy-pub>

<sup>2</sup> World Economic Forum, "Global Gender Gap Report" (World Economic Forum, 2020), <https://www.weforum.org/publications/gender-gap-2020-report-100-years-pay-equality/>.

<sup>3</sup> "الوطنية لشؤون المرأة: انتخابات 2024 سجلت أعلى نسبة مشاركة سياسية للنساء في البرلمانات الأردنية"، جريدة الغد، September 16, 2024, sec. أخبار-محلية. <https://alghad.com/story/1811170>.

<sup>4</sup> Department of Statistics, "Unemployment Rate Quarter 2 / 2024," Department of Statistics, October 17, 2024, <https://dosweb.dos.gov.jo/>.

National and regional reports on Beijing+30 highlight legislative progress and institutional reforms, but **they do not always capture the realities of implementation or the everyday struggles of women and marginalized groups**. This shadow report serves as a **civil society accountability mechanism**, ensuring that Jordan's commitments under the Beijing Declaration are assessed through an inclusive, rights-based lens. It centers the voices of women from diverse backgrounds, whose experiences are often underrepresented in official progress assessments. ARDD and JONAF seek to provide a critical analysis that bridges the gap between policy commitments and on-the-ground realities. The report aims to shed light on Jordan's commitments to the Beijing Declaration by evaluating progress, identifying key barriers, and providing evidence-based recommendations. It centers the voices of Jordanian women and civil society, with a focus on the following objectives:

1. Evaluate Jordan's progress across the 6 dimensions as outlined in the Beijing Platform for Action.
2. Identify key barriers and challenges faced by women and girls.
3. Center the voices of civil society, community-based organizations, and local women's groups.
4. Provide evidence-based recommendations that support the realization of gender equality and women's empowerment in Jordan.

## Methodology

**The development of this shadow report is based on a participatory, feminist, and evidence-based approach that draws on diverse qualitative and quantitative data sources. The methodology employed includes three Focus Group Discussions (FGDs), which were conducted with women-led organizations and members of the JONAF<sup>5</sup> network in Amman, Irbid, and Aqaba. 10 Key Informant Interviews (KIIs) were conducted with stakeholders such as representatives of CSOs, CBOs, government officials, gender experts, legal experts, and journalists, including Jordanian women who took part in the Beijing conference in 1995. Moreover, an extensive desk review was conducted, analyzing national reports, official government publications, international reports, and regional analyses. The desk review provided a comprehensive understanding of Jordan's progress and highlighted areas where official data is lacking or inconsistent.**

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<sup>5</sup> JONAF (Jordanian National NGOs Forum) is a network of over 40 Jordanian civil society organizations (CSOs) and community-based organizations (CBOs) founded by ARDD in 2016. It focuses on advocacy, community mobilization, and policy engagement to advance social justice in Jordan.

## Section 1: Looking Back, Moving Forward: Assessing Progress and Challenges

The following sections present a comprehensive assessment of Jordan's achievements framed according to **the 6 dimensions from the BPfA** as outlined by ESCWA<sup>6</sup>. The shift from the 12 Critical Areas of Concern to 6 dimensions allows for a more integrated and holistic analysis of the interconnections between thematic areas of gender equality. The analysis also incorporates the lived realities of women beyond statistical data, drawing on evidence from focus group discussions (FGDs), key informant interviews (KIIs), and insights from civil society organizations (CSOs) and community-based organizations (CBOs).

### 1. Inclusive Development, Shared Prosperity, and Decent Work

The BPfA identified **“Women and the Economy”** as a critical area, emphasizing the need for women's equal access to economic resources, employment opportunities, and the elimination of occupational segregation. The NSW 2020-2025 prioritizes economic empowerment as a core pillar, advocating for gender-responsive labor policies, equal pay, and enhanced social protections, and underscores the importance of ensuring these reforms translate into real economic opportunities for women, particularly in the informal sector. The **ESCWA**, in its **Beijing+30 review**, highlighted persistent challenges in the Arab region, including low female labor force participation and the prevalence of informal employment among women<sup>7</sup>. In Jordan, **women's participation in the workforce remains** critically low at **14.2%**, one of the lowest in the Arab region, even though women outnumber men in higher education, representing 56% of university graduates<sup>8</sup>. While the Beijing+30 Jordanian National Report highlights key advancements in policy reform, interviews with key stakeholders and FGDs with CBOs have revealed a more nuanced picture at the grassroots level.

#### Bridging the Gap: Inclusive Development and Decent Work

Jordan has undertaken significant legislative reforms to foster inclusive development and promote decent work for women. The reforms have focused on promoting equal access to labor markets, ensuring workplace safety, and providing essential social protections. These initiatives have contributed to tangible progress in the country, however, challenges in implementation persist.

*“The legal framework exists, but enforcement is weak, especially in sectors like agriculture and informal labor.”*

Employee, Women-led CBOs

Labor law reforms have been particularly instrumental in advancing gender equality in the workplace. Amendments approved to the Labor Code integrated new protection frameworks against sexual harassment at work, the introduction of equal pay for equal work mandates, and the establishment of maternity and paternity leave schemes. Under the updated **Social Security Law**, maternity leave is now financed by the Social Security Corporation rather than individual employers, which should reduce employer bias against hiring women. In addition, paternity leave was introduced, showing progress toward shared caregiving responsibilities.

<sup>6</sup> ESCWA (United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia) is a regional commission of the UN that supports economic and social development in Arab states through research, policy recommendations, and technical assistance.

<sup>7</sup> “Comprehensive Arab report on progress in implementing Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action thirty years on”. <https://www.unescwa.org/publications/arab-report-progress-implementing-beijing-declaration-platform-action-thirty-years-on>

<sup>8</sup> Thanaa Al-Khasawneh and Julia Hakspiel, “Here Is How Jordan Is Advancing Gender Parity in the Economy,” The Growth Summit: Jobs and Opportunity for All (World Economic Forum, May 2, 2023), <https://www.weforum.org/stories/2023/05/growth-summit-2023-here-are-4-ways-jordan-is-advancing-gender-parity>.

**The flexible work regulation** introduced in 2018 was updated in 2024, allowing employees with caregiving responsibilities,<sup>9</sup> such as parents and those caring for elderly or disabled family members, to request flexible or remote work. While this approach was initially marketed as a benefit for women, the updated law now applies to all caregivers, marking an important shift toward gender-neutral policies. However, in FGDs, participants criticized the lack of implementation of workplace nurseries, with one participant stating, *“Incentives should be offered to business owners to open workplace nurseries. Legal reforms must mandate nurseries based on the number of parents, not just mothers.”*

## Economic Empowerment Programs

Jordan’s Vision 2025 and Economic Modernization strategies have explicitly aimed to increase women’s labor force participation. **The target is to double their participation from 15% to 28% by 2033.** A key component of this strategy is the promotion of Initiatives such as microfinance for micro, small, and medium enterprises (MSMEs). While the Beijing+30 National Report highlights the success of micro-loan programs, data collected from FGDs and KIIs presents a more complex picture. **Many women noted that microfinance projects are unsustainable and place women at financial risk.** Women in Aqaba and Ma’an noted that many microfinance loans are directed toward oversaturated business markets, such as beauty services, cooking, and tailoring. A participant from Aqaba explained, *“These projects often leave women in worse conditions, as they are given small loans to start oversaturated businesses, which lead to bankruptcy and even imprisonment.”* While microfinance institutions are intended to create opportunities, CBOs argue that these programs require stronger due diligence and proper market analysis to avoid oversaturating local economies with identical businesses. Moreover, national-level initiatives often fail to reach women in rural and underserved areas, with participants noting that policies crafted in Amman rarely address the realities faced in marginalized communities and most rarely provide an implementable solution. A CBO director emphasized this issue, stating, *“Policy discussions are often confined to Amman, leaving rural women without a voice in decisions that directly impact their livelihoods.”* This creates a disconnect and highlights the need for a bottom-up approach that engages local communities in the design, implementation, and evaluation of inclusive development policies.

Women have been relying on CBOs to navigate these kinds of processes. In this sense, local CBOs have played a critical role in bridging gaps between national-level policies and local implementation. They offer vocational training, advocate for workplace protections, and assist women in navigating bureaucratic processes to access available resources. During the FGDs, CBOs were proud to show how they provide mentorship to female entrepreneurs, helping them secure micro-loans and develop business skills. One respondent shared the success of a CBO-run cooperative in the northern governorates: *“Through our microfinance program, women now run their businesses producing organic soap, which has become a source of sustainable income for their families.”*

## Informal Work and Social Protection

Despite these efforts, informal labor remains a major challenge in achieving decent work for women. Informal work is typically unregulated and precarious, with no access to health insurance, social security, or pensions. While social security laws now allow informal workers to enroll voluntarily, uptake has been low due to limited awareness and affordability issues. Only 27.9% of working women were insured by social security as of 2017, and labor participation among women has stagnated at 13-15% over the past three years<sup>10</sup>. As one CBO leader put it, *“We need to unionize unorganized workers to ensure they receive social security and health insurance.”*

## Stuck in System: From Policy to Practice

Despite efforts to make the legal framework more gender equitable, **women’s economic participation in Jordan remains unstable and fragmented.** Participants in FGDs emphasized that short-term projects intended to support women’s economic empowerment often fail to generate sustainable incomes.

<sup>9</sup> “2024 مشروع نظام العمل المرن لسنة 2024” (2024), <https://shorturl.at/QturA>.

<sup>10</sup> 2021 «أرضيات الحماية الاجتماعية للنساء العاملات في المشاريع الصغيرة», تضامن, <https://www.sgi-jordan.org/article/5268>



***“They involve us in projects and then leave us. We need jobs with sustainable incomes, not businesses that collapse after a few months.”***

Participant, Amman

This critique stresses a common issue with project-based employment schemes, where women are provided with limited-duration employment opportunities or microfinance loans for ventures that fail to achieve profitability or sustainability. As a result, women keep facing cycles of financial vulnerability and economic precarity.

## Gendered Roles and Realities in the Workplace

Unsafe and discriminatory workplaces continue to be a significant deterrent to women’s economic participation. Participants in FGDs, particularly those in Irbid and Aqaba, highlighted the pervasive issues of sexual harassment, inadequate facilities, and poor transportation options in the agriculture, manufacturing, and retail sectors. Harassment in the workplace limits women’s confidence and hinders their ability to work freely. In addition to workplace safety, occupational stereotyping remains a persistent issue, especially for women in urban areas. Women are often confined to roles in education, caregiving, and traditional crafts like cooking and sewing. These roles are not only underpaid but also undervalued compared to male-dominated sectors such as engineering, construction, and finance. Gender bias in hiring and promotions was also identified as a structural barrier. Women, especially those who are married or pregnant, are often subjected to discriminatory hiring practices. Some employers rationalize this exclusion using the concept of “**guardianship**” (القوامة), which assigns men the role of primary breadwinners, thereby justifying the prioritization of male candidates for job opportunities.

***“Employers assume men are the breadwinners, ignoring that many women now support their families.”***

Participant

## The Unseen Burden: Unpaid Care Work

Unpaid care work remains one of the most persistent barriers to women’s economic participation. While childcare facilities are required by labor law in large companies, participants in FGDs reported that many employers fail to comply with these requirements. Current childcare services are only targeted at infants and toddlers, leaving a significant gap in care for children aged 6 to 12 years old. This challenge was even amplified during the COVID-19 pandemic, which increased women’s caregiving responsibilities and reduced their access to economic opportunities.

***“Every time a mother misses work because she can’t find childcare, we lose an opportunity for progress.”***

Participant, Irbid

While reforms have introduced maternity insurance<sup>11</sup> and paternity leave<sup>12</sup>, **the burden of care still disproportionately falls on women**. Indeed, care responsibilities are often cited as a reason for women to exit the workforce prematurely. Advocacy by CBOs has focused on the need for family-friendly policies and the establishment of accessible workplace nurseries.

11 In 2014, Jordan reformed its Social Security Law to introduce a social insurance-based maternity leave system. This system shifted the financial responsibility for maternity leave from individual employers to a collective fund managed by the Social Security Corporation (SSC).

12 The Jordanian Labour Law was amended in 2019 to grant private sector workers three days of paid paternity leave. This leave is fully funded by the employer and is intended to support fathers during the immediate post-birth period.

## Green Job Opportunities Are the Future?

Jordan's efforts to transition to a green economy present a unique opportunity for women to enter new labor markets. However, women remain underrepresented in green jobs, particularly in rural areas. CBOs raised concerns that green job training programs often fail to consider the different needs of women in rural areas. Many training sessions for jobs in renewable energy, sustainable agriculture, and climate-resilient farming are held in urban centers, making them inaccessible to women living in rural areas. Moreover, women's participation in renewable energy jobs and energy efficiency sectors is limited by a lack of gender-sensitive policies. Women in rural areas are often required to travel long distances for employment opportunities, but without access to affordable and safe transportation, many women are effectively excluded from participating in these emerging job markets. The Jordan National Report highlights the country's commitment to a green economy transition, but FGDs emphasized that rural women are not adequately represented in this shift. The lack of gender-responsive policies in the green economy space is an urgent area for policy intervention.

## COVID-19's Long-Lasting Impact

The COVID-19 pandemic exacerbated the economic inequalities faced by women, especially those in informal labor markets. Emergency response measures largely overlooked the needs of informal workers, many of whom were women. FGDs revealed that the burden of economic hardship disproportionately fell on rural communities where state-led responses were limited. Many women working in the informal sector had no access to unemployment benefits or social protection due to their status as unregistered workers. Often, CBOs stepped in to fill this gap, providing emergency cash transfers, food packages, health services, and legal aid to women affected by COVID-19-related job losses.

*“While the national response was delayed, our local CBO stepped in to provide support before any official aid arrived.”*

Participant, CBOs

The role of CBOs in crisis response highlights their importance in mitigating the negative impacts of health, economic, and social emergencies on women. However, despite their significant role, CBOs report limited access to government support and coordination with women's national machineries, which constrains their capacity to scale up their interventions.

## A Reality Check on Beijing's Commitments

Jordan has taken important steps toward creating a more inclusive labor market for women, with new policies aimed at improving workplace protections, expanding social security, and promoting economic participation. On paper, these changes signal progress. However, the reality for many women remains far from the promise of the **Beijing Declaration. Opportunities are still limited, systemic barriers remain deeply rooted, and laws that could create change are not fully enforced.** Labor force participation is one of the lowest in the region; the informal sector continues to absorb a disproportionate share of working women, exposing them to **precarious working conditions, lack of legal protections, and absence of social security benefits.** Additionally, the **uncompensated burden of unpaid care work remains a structural barrier**, forcing many women out of the workforce or into low-paying, flexible jobs.

Given these ongoing disparities, ARDD's **assessed Jordan's progress on this dimension by 30%**, -reflecting the disconnect between legal commitments and real-world impact. While progress exists, it remains largely symbolic. To align with the original **Beijing commitments**, efforts must shift from **symbolic legal reforms to comprehensive, well-resourced, and enforceable economic policies** that ensure women's full and equal participation in the labor market.

## 2. Poverty Eradication, Social Protection, and Social Services

Poverty eradication, social protection, and access to essential services are fundamental to achieving gender equality, as they shape women's ability to participate fully in economic, political, and social life. The BPfA (1995) recognized that **poverty is not just about income—it is deeply tied to access to education, healthcare, decent work, and social protection**. It called for structural changes that ensure women, particularly those in vulnerable communities, have the resources and opportunities needed to build secure and independent lives. In the Beijing+30 report, ESCWA highlighted the importance of reforming social protection systems to reach marginalized groups. It emphasizes that effective social protection policies are crucial for social cohesion, justice, and the structure of labor markets, assisting individuals in achieving a decent life and enhancing trust in government institutions. **Without these fundamental rights, poverty becomes a cycle that disproportionately affects women, limiting their ability to contribute meaningfully to society and make decisions about their futures.** Participants in FGDs consistently emphasized how poverty and limited access to services are significant barriers for women. Geographic and socioeconomic disparities in Jordan mean that women in remote areas have even fewer opportunities than their counterparts in urban centers, limiting their civic and political engagement. One participant from the governorates highlighted this stark reality by noting that financial constraints often compel women to prioritize their families' needs over personal aspirations, such as running for political office *“As poor people, we cannot afford to run for elections. When they asked me to run, I told them that investing in my son's education was more important than spending money on a campaign.”*

### Achievements in Accessing Social Protection and Social Services

The National Social Protection Strategy (2019-2025), approved in 2019, has been introduced to create a comprehensive and inclusive framework for enhancing social security, social assistance, and social services. The strategy was developed in response to growing socioeconomic disparities and the need to provide targeted support to vulnerable groups, particularly women, children, and low-income families. This initiative outlines three key pillars: (1) ensuring decent work and social security, (2) providing social assistance to marginalized groups, and (3) enhancing social services such as education, healthcare, and family welfare. One of the most notable components of this strategy is the emphasis on supporting women's economic empowerment. Through programs like Estidama++, the government aims to extend social security to women and refugees, offering contribution subsidies and incentives for their participation in the formal economy<sup>13</sup>. Another key development is the transformation of the National Aid Fund (NAF), which has undergone major reforms in recent years. In 2019, the NAF launched a digitalized system to facilitate the registration and delivery of cash transfers. This system now uses e-wallets and bank transfers, enabling beneficiaries to receive financial aid remotely. For women, especially those living in rural or underserved areas, this shift has significantly reduced the barriers to accessing assistance. **CBO representatives noted that digitalization has made it easier for women to access emergency cash assistance, especially during the COVID-19 pandemic, when mobility was restricted, as it allowed for the remote distribution of emergency assistance to over 963,000 workers and 38,000 businesses<sup>14</sup>.**

In the healthcare sector, Jordan has achieved considerable progress in maternal and child health, with 97% of women receiving antenatal care and over 99% of births occurring in health facilities.<sup>15</sup> Between 2021 and 2022, maternal mortality rates decreased from 29.8 to 28 deaths per 10,000 live births.<sup>16</sup> Additionally, initiatives like the Women-Friendly Health Program have strengthened gender-sensitive healthcare, ensuring women have access to comprehensive and quality healthcare.<sup>17</sup>

13 ILO, “Social Protection Country Profile - Jordan,” ILO | Social Protection Platform, accessed February 20, 2025, <https://www.social-protection.org/gimi/ShowCountryProfile.action?iso=JO>.

14 Jordan News, “Social Security Reforms: Unlocking the Potential and Responding to New Norms - Jordan News | Latest News from Jordan, MENA,” *Jordan News*, August 31, 2021, sec. News, <https://www.jordannews.jo/Section-109/News/Social-security-reforms:Unlocking-the-potential-and-responding-to-new-norms-6532>.

15 Department of Statistics, “Population and Family Health Survey 2023,” 2024, [https://dosweb.dos.gov.jo/DataBank/Population/Health/DHS2023\\_Survey.pdf](https://dosweb.dos.gov.jo/DataBank/Population/Health/DHS2023_Survey.pdf).

16 USAID and Ministry of Health, “Jordan's National Maternal Mortality” (The National Maternal Mortality Surveillance & Response System, 2021).

17 For more information about the initiative: <https://hcac.jo/en-us/>.

## Labor Market Exclusion and Healthcare Challenges for Women in Jordan

While Jordan has made progress in these sectors, women are still disproportionately affected by social and cultural barriers that limit their economic opportunities. The concept of “**feminization of poverty**” was first introduced by Diana Pearce in 1978, who observed that women, particularly female-headed households, were disproportionately represented among the poor. **In the context of Jordan, the feminization of poverty remains a critical issue. While official poverty statistics have not been updated since 2010, a recent report by the “Atlas of the Sustainable Development Goals 2023” estimates that 35% of the total population in Jordan—approximately 3.98 million people—are classified as poor**<sup>18</sup>. These figures are not broken down by gender, and the lack of disaggregated data poses challenges in assessing the extent of the feminization of poverty in Jordan. Also, not having **data regarding up-to-date poverty statistics limits the ability of policymakers to design effective poverty reduction strategies and sustainable interventions.**

Moreover, there has been an increase in female-headed households, rising from 12.3% in 2000 to 15.7% in 2019<sup>19</sup> and 17.5% in 2020<sup>20</sup>. Nevertheless, their participation in the labor market has dropped from 8.8% in 2000 to 5.7% in 2019. Moreover, in 2020, almost 27% of families headed by women received assistance from the NAF. However, between 2019 and 2023, the NAF experienced a significant decline in its reach and spending on monthly aid for poor families. The number of beneficiary families dropped from 75,308 in 2019 to 50,819 in 2023, marking a 32.5% decrease. Similarly, the number of individuals assisted decreased from 157,969 to 145,435, a reduction of approximately 7.9%. The total amount spent also sharply declined, from 6,672,574 JOD in 2019 to 3,102,643 JOD in 2023, reflecting a 53.5% decrease. While there were increases in 2020 and 2021, the downward trend resumed in 2022 and continued into 2023, highlighting the Fund’s diminishing capacity to provide support over the years<sup>21</sup>.

Additionally, healthcare services in rural areas remain unevenly distributed, particularly in southern Jordan, where limited access to hospitals and a shortage of health workers create significant risks for maternal and emergency healthcare. In some cases, women have been forced to give birth in ambulances or at home due to a lack of medical staff at local health centers. The need for accountability in public health laws is another concern raised during FGDs, as participants highlighted the difficulty of holding healthcare providers accountable for cases of medical malpractice.<sup>22</sup> Furthermore, the **privatization of healthcare and education** has reduced access to these essential services for the most vulnerable groups, especially women.

## Structural Barriers to Accessing Social Services

Participants from FGDs and KIIs highlighted how certain **social and physical barriers** restrict women’s access to education, healthcare, and public services. One participant emphasized that “some parents refuse to send their daughters to school because of broken streetlights or unpaved roads” which reflects the broader issue of unsafe infrastructure. CBOs from south governorates also reported that many villages lack **paved roads and adequate lighting**, making it unsafe for girls to commute to school, especially during the evening hours. These conditions limit school enrollment rates and reduce opportunities for women and girls to achieve higher levels of education.

Despite the positive rate of maternal and child health, limited access to **sexual and reproductive health services** for adolescent girls still exists. FGDs participants reported that in some communities, young women are required to have a guardian’s permission to see a doctor, which restricts their access to essential health services. Also, they raised concerns about the continued practice of hysterectomies on women with mental disabilities, an issue that persists despite religious and legal prohibitions. These practices highlight the need for stronger **accountability mechanisms** in Jordan’s public health system.

18 Jordan News, “More than One-Third of Jordanians Live below Poverty Line, Report Finds,” Jordan News | Latest News from Jordan, MENA, July 12, 2023, <https://www.jordannews.jo/Section-109/News/More-than-one-third-of-Jordanians-live-below-poverty-line-report-finds-29697>.

19 Jordan Times, “DoS Figures Show Rise in Female-Headed Households,” *Jordan Times*, March 22, 2021, <https://jordantimes.com/news/local/dos-figures-show-rise-female-headed-households>.

20 Jordan Times, “392,300 Families in Jordan Women-Headed — SIGI,” *Jordan Times*, March 16, 2022, <https://jordantimes.com/news/local/392300-families-jordan-women-headed-%E2%80%94-sigi>.

21 The Annual National Aid Fund reports (2019-2023) [https://naf.gov.jo/EN/List/Annual\\_reports](https://naf.gov.jo/EN/List/Annual_reports)

22 ARDD, “The Quality of Health Services and Medical Liability: A Comparative Study Between the Jordanian and Palestinian Legal System,” Public Health and Law in Jordan Series (ARDD, 2022).



## A Reality Check on Beijing+30 Commitments

While Jordan has introduced **social protection reforms and poverty reduction programs**, the reality for many women remains **deeply unequal**. **Access to essential services such as education, healthcare, and social assistance is still shaped by geographic and economic disparities**, leaving women in rural and low-income communities at a distinct disadvantage. The decline in the NAF's reach over the past few years further underscores the shrinking safety net for the most vulnerable, particularly female-headed households, whose economic precarity continues to grow. Healthcare remains inaccessible for many women in underserved regions, with shortages of medical staff and inadequate infrastructure creating life-threatening gaps in care. Similarly, barriers to education, mobility, and legal protections continue to limit women's autonomy, reinforcing the cycle of poverty rather than breaking it.

Given these persistent inequalities, **the progress achieved as per ARDD's assessment was 20%**—reflecting the gap between policy efforts and their real impact on women's lives. While steps have been taken, **poverty reduction strategies remain fragmented and fail to address the structural barriers that keep women economically and socially vulnerable**. To truly meet Beijing's commitments, reforms must go beyond temporary aid and work toward **sustainable, rights-based solutions that empower women as equal economic and social actors**.

### 3. Freedom from Violence, Stigma, and Stereotypes

Ending gender-based violence (GBV) and dismantling harmful stereotypes **are essential to achieving true gender equality**. The **BPfA (1995)** identified **violence against women** as a major obstacle to women's full participation in society, calling for **comprehensive legal frameworks, survivor-centered support systems, and cultural shifts to eliminate gender-based violence and discrimination**. It emphasized that **legal reforms alone are not enough**—addressing the **social norms, stigma, and institutional failures** that enable violence is equally critical. In the Beijing+30 report, ESCWA has highlighted the **persistence of gender-based violence** across the region despite legislative progress. Without **effective implementation and cultural change**, legislative reforms risk remaining **symbolic rather than transformative**.

In recent years, Jordan has introduced key legislative and policy reforms aimed at combating gender-based violence (GBV) and challenging harmful societal norms. While initiatives such as the abolition of Article 308 and the establishment of the Family Protection Unit reflect a strong commitment to gender justice, issues related to enforcement, reporting, and societal stigma remain unaddressed. CBOs and civil society actors have played a critical role in complementing national efforts, advocating for stronger protection, and raising awareness about GBV and its prevention.

Jordan's progress in addressing GBV is most visible in its legal and institutional developments. The abolition of Article 308, which previously allowed rapists to avoid prosecution by marrying their victims, marked a turning point in the country's commitment to gender justice. One participant emphasized the importance of this step, saying: *"Removing Article 308 was a breakthrough, but the work doesn't stop there. Many laws still fail to provide adequate protection for women."* Other notable legislative actions include the establishment of the Family Protection Division under the Public Security Directorate, which now manages cases of domestic violence. This body provides post-trauma counseling and collaborates with CBOs to raise awareness about GBV. The automation of reporting systems, including the integration of a direct transfer to the Family Protection hotline when women call 911, represents a proactive approach to enhancing accessibility<sup>23</sup>. "The automation process has made reporting easier, but access to justice for rural women remains a challenge," noted a CBOs representative.

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<sup>23</sup> Maria Weldali, "Automated System for Handling Domestic Violence Cases in Pilot Phase," *Jordan Times*, January 10, 2023, <https://jordantimes.com/news/local/automated-system-handling-domestic-violence-cases-pilot-phase>.

Women's organizations have also played an essential role in addressing GBV. Their initiatives include integrated support systems that offer legal counseling, psychological assistance, and advocacy for policy amendments. At the community level, family reconciliation offices have been introduced to mediate domestic disputes before they escalate into violence. Training programs for married couples have also been introduced, focusing on fostering healthier family dynamics. An additional achievement is the national shift toward automating the process of GBV reporting.<sup>24</sup> This could expedite the process, and survivors can access support services more efficiently, thereby reducing the emotional burden of reporting abuse. This shift also enables better collection and dissemination of GBV statistics, which helps ensure that policy reforms and prevention programs are evidence-based and responsive to real-world needs.

## Overcoming Barriers to Protect Women from GBV

Despite these advancements, significant challenges remain. Cases of domestic and gender-based violence continue to increase, with reports indicating a rise in domestic violence in Jordan by 38% in 2023 compared to previous years, totaling 58,068 cases<sup>25</sup>. Of these, 80% involved female victims, with spouses identified as perpetrators in 62% of cases. Additionally, women represented the majority of victims in family-related homicides. In 2024 alone, 9 out of 12 family-related homicide victims were women<sup>26</sup>. Legal protections, while improved, often fall short in practice due to weak enforcement mechanisms, insufficient resources, inadequate training among law enforcement officials, and societal resistance, which exacerbate the issue. In Irbid, participants noted that despite a law for protecting domestic violence victims, its application has been ineffective: *"When a woman files a complaint against her abuser, said abuser can file what is called a 'malicious complaint,' which leads to her complaint getting dropped."* Women in rural areas face even greater barriers. **Shelters, legal aid, and psychological counseling** are often inaccessible to women living in remote regions like **Ma'an and Irbid**, where family protection services are limited or entirely absent. This leaves rural survivors more vulnerable to continued abuse. Without nearby shelters or accessible legal assistance, many women have no choice but to remain in abusive environments.

Cultural barriers also persist, perpetuating stigma and discouraging women from reporting abuse, especially in conservative regions. Participants in **Aqaba** noted that many women fear societal shame or stigmatization, which also reflects a lack of trust in authorities. Similarly, a participant in **Amman** shared: *"Many women feel it's better to stay silent than to speak out, especially in rural areas."* Women internalize harmful stereotypes, choosing silence over confrontation. In many cases, survivors and their families prioritize "saving dignity" over legal recourse. The lack of a witness protection program further complicates efforts to hold perpetrators accountable, particularly in cases involving children. Although online courts introduced during COVID-19 have made it easier for young witnesses to testify, systemic protections remain inadequate.

***"Witnesses, especially children, need safeguards to testify without fear,"***

CBO advocate

## Rise in Digital Violence: A New Threat

The surge in **digital violence against women** is another area of concern. During the COVID-19 pandemic, women in public-facing roles, such as journalists and political candidates, faced severe online harassment. A survey revealed that **over half of female journalists in Jordan experienced digital violence**<sup>27</sup>. Participants from Aqaba noted that women candidates for elections were particularly vulnerable, facing harassment and smear campaigns. One participant shared, "I was a candidate for municipal elections during the pandemic, and I faced digital violence because of it."

<sup>24</sup> Weldali.

<sup>25</sup> Zuhour Gharaibeh, "A Slight Decrease in Family-Related Homicides in the First Half of 2024 Compared to the First Half of 2023," *SIGI* (blog), 2024, <https://www.sigi-jordan.org/en/article/6390>.

<sup>26</sup> Gharaibeh.

<sup>27</sup> Maria Weldali, "Over Half of Female Journalists in Jordan Experience Digital Violence, Says Survey," *Jordan Times*, December 27, 2022, <https://jordantimes.com/news/local/over-half-female-journalists-jordan-experience-digital-violence-says-survey>.

## Child Marriage and Early Marriages: A Persistent Challenge

Child marriage remains a persistent issue, particularly in rural areas. Participants from Irbid and Ma'an highlighted how **tribal agreements** often force girls into early marriages, and the **COVID-19 pandemic increased the rate of early marriages**, with economic hardships leading some families to view marriage as a means to alleviate financial burdens. Many girls lack the awareness or autonomy to refuse early marriage, underscoring the need for robust child protection and women's empowerment programs. Participants emphasized that many girls lack the awareness or autonomy to refuse early marriage, which reflects the broader need for **child protection and women's empowerment programs**. Refugee populations, especially Syrian refugees, are disproportionately affected by early marriage. A 2014 UNICEF report revealed that nearly one in three marriages among Syrian refugees in Jordan involved a child under 18, a significant increase from pre-war Syria, where the rate was 13%<sup>28</sup>.

## Data and Accountability Gaps for Effective Policy Implementation

Accurate data on GBV cases remains scarce due to the lack of a national system for data management and tracking femicides. Without an observatory for femicides, it is difficult to monitor trends, understand the root causes, and implement effective responses. One KIIs lawyer stressed, **"We need a more organized system to track child marriage trends and femicides to effectively combat these issues."** Without gender-disaggregated data, it's difficult to evaluate the impact of GBV prevention programs and respond accordingly.

## A Reality Check on Beijing+30 Commitments

Jordan has made legal progress in addressing gender-based violence, but **real change remains slow**. While reforms like the abolition of **Article 308** and automated reporting systems mark important steps, **weak enforcement, social stigma, and lack of survivor protections** continue to leave many women vulnerable. Survivors, especially in **rural areas**, struggle to access **shelters, legal aid, and justice**, while cultural norms push many toward **informal mediation instead of legal action**. The rise in **digital violence and early marriages** further highlights the need for stronger, survivor-centered protections.

With **limited data tracking and accountability mechanisms**, progress remains largely **symbolic rather than transformative**. Given these persistent gaps, we assess the progress by **40%**, reflecting the **urgent need for effective implementation, enforcement, and systemic change** to fulfill **Beijing's commitments**.

## 4. Peaceful and Inclusive Societies

Building peaceful and inclusive societies requires more than policy commitments—it demands real participation, equitable resource distribution, and grassroots leadership. The Beijing Declaration emphasized the vital role of women in conflict prevention, resolution, and post-conflict reconstruction, calling for their equal participation in decision-making at all levels. Women's involvement in peacebuilding and governance is not just a matter of representation; it is crucial for ensuring sustainable, community-driven solutions to conflict and social divisions. ESCWA's Beijing+30 review highlights that while many Arab states have adopted national action plans on Women, Peace, and Security (WPS), gaps in implementation, funding, and meaningful participation persist. The over-militarization of peace strategies, limited engagement with civil society, and the exclusion of refugees and marginalized women weaken these efforts. **Without localized, intersectional approaches, peace and security policies risk reinforcing existing inequalities instead of fostering true social cohesion.** Jordan has demonstrated a commitment to fostering peaceful and inclusive societies through the adoption of international frameworks and national initiatives, notably the **Second National Action Plan** for UNSCR 1325 on Women, Peace, and Security. This plan emphasizes the integration of women into decision-making processes related to security and peace, reflecting an institutional recognition of the critical role women play in these areas. However, while JONAP II establishes a framework for women to act, gaps remain in the plan's implementation, particularly with respect to

<sup>28</sup> Thomas Reuters Foundation, "Child Marriage on the Rise Among Syrian Refugees in Jordan - UNICEF," Operation Data Portal, 2014, <https://data.unhcr.org/en/news/13052>.

meaningful participation, resource allocation, and engagement with civil society actors. The National Strategy for Women aligns with UNSCR 1325 commitments, advocating for women's meaningful participation in peace and security. While Jordan has made progress in institutionalizing gender perspectives within security forces, the NSW highlights the need for stronger investment in grassroots peacebuilding and local women-led conflict resolution efforts. A significant issue highlighted in both KIIs and FGDs is the disproportionate allocation of funds. While the second Jordanian National Action Plan (JONAP II) emphasizes comprehensive peacebuilding, resources have been heavily concentrated on militarization efforts, such as increasing the presence of women in security forces. This funding imbalance weakens the transformative potential of UNSCR 1325, limiting opportunities for grassroots peacebuilding initiatives.

## Advancing Localization and Grassroots Peacebuilding Initiatives

To support the development and implementation of a national action plan for UNSCR 1325, the Jordanian government and other stakeholders adopted a localization approach. This strategy allows civil society organizations involved in the process to adapt the plan's principles to the local context, ensuring they align with the lived experiences and specific needs of women in rural and underserved areas. The localization effort is seen as essential for making the provisions of UNSCR 1325 more practical and actionable at the community level. A critical achievement has also been the recognition of the role of grassroots initiatives in peacekeeping and peacebuilding.

The National Report emphasizes that the establishment of the **Family Reconciliation Offices** -which mediate conflicts and promote peaceful coexistence -has contributed to the resolution of family disputes before they escalate into violence. Workshops and programs have been conducted by local CBOs, especially in areas like Ma'an and Aqaba. In **Ma'an**, for example, workshops have focused on conflict resolution and coexistence, particularly in refugee-hosting areas. These efforts have strengthened social cohesion and facilitated coexistence in areas experiencing high demographic pressure due to refugee influxes.

***“We have led peacebuilding workshops that brought local women and refugees together, creating an environment where dialogue was possible.”***

A CBO participant from Ma'an

Moreover, the government's push toward the **digitalization of governance** has also been seen as a mechanism to increase accessibility to public services and facilitate women's participation. However, as participants in FGDs pointed out, marginalized communities, particularly rural women, face technological barriers that limit their access to these digital services.

## Structural and Financial Barriers to Inclusive Peacebuilding Efforts

One of the most prominent challenges to achieving a peaceful and inclusive society in Jordan is the limited role of women and women-led organizations in shaping the localization process of UNSCR 1325. While civil society organizations have demonstrated their capacity to influence peace and security processes, their engagement is often confined to implementing activities, with limited involvement in decision-making and agenda-setting at the national level.

***“We have the tools to address local conflicts, but our voices are missing when it comes to national strategies.”***

A CBO leader from Ma'an



The marginalization of CBOs in formal peacebuilding mechanisms highlights the structural barriers that limit civil society's influence.

CBOs also face financial constraints and administrative hurdles in accessing funding. Although international funding is available, grassroots organizations have many difficulties securing these resources due to the lack of capacities and the high competition among different organizations. The lack of sufficient resources weakens the capacity of CBOs to conduct comprehensive peacebuilding initiatives and support inclusive societies.

**The inclusion of refugee women in peace processes is another area requiring attention.** Refugee women, particularly Syrians, face intersecting vulnerabilities, such as limited access to social protection, livelihood opportunities, and education. The voices of refugee women are also underrepresented in peacebuilding and conflict resolution initiatives. Participants in Ma'an noted that while there are efforts to support host communities and refugees, few mechanisms exist to bring women from both groups together for shared dialogue. One participant emphasized, *"Host communities and refugee communities are treated separately, but we need to work together to foster coexistence."*

A lack of common language and understanding between the government and constituents also hinders meaningful engagement and participation. **Additionally, challenges in data production stem from competition over mandates, technological limitations, processing capacity, and political motivations regarding data submission. This lack of data leads to project duplication and inefficiency. Current initiatives often fail to be intersectional, neglecting the inclusion of marginalized women, including those with disabilities, in broader projects rather than developing isolated initiatives for these groups.**

## A Reality Check on Beijing+30 Commitments

Jordan's work in integrating women into its peace and security agenda has been significant, but progress on the ground remains limited. While the Second National Action Plan for UNSCR 1325 (JONAP II) sets a strong framework, **women's roles in peace processes are often symbolic rather than transformative. Resources are disproportionately allocated to militarization efforts, leaving grassroots peacebuilding and civil society initiatives underfunded and under-supported.** Local women-led organizations and refugee women remain largely excluded from national decision-making, despite their critical role in fostering coexistence and conflict resolution. Financial and structural barriers further limit their participation, while data gaps and bureaucratic inefficiencies hinder accountability and progress tracking.

Given these ongoing challenges, **we assessed the progress to be 80%** reflecting policy-level commitment but limited real-world impact. To truly align with the Beijing commitments, Jordan **must prioritize funding for community-driven peace efforts**, ensure the inclusion of marginalized voices, and **shift from a militarized approach to one that centers on women's leadership in peacebuilding at all levels.**

## 5. Participation, Accountability, and Gender-Responsive Institutions

Ensuring women's full participation in political life and strengthening accountability in gender-responsive institutions are fundamental to achieving gender equality. The Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action (1995) called for women's equal representation in decision-making roles, fair access to political systems, and institutional mechanisms that uphold gender equality. It emphasized that quotas alone are not enough—real change requires structural reforms, cultural shifts, and institutional accountability to dismantle the barriers that keep women from fully exercising their political and civic rights. ESCWA's Beijing+30 review highlights that while many Arab states have introduced policies to increase women's political participation, these measures often fall short of meaningful influence. Across the region, women's political engagement is frequently symbolic, with deep-seated social norms and weak institutional support limiting their ability to shape policy and governance. Without clear accountability mechanisms and systemic changes, women remain underrepresented in leadership and policymaking roles, reinforcing political exclusion rather than progress.

**During the last five years, Jordan has moved forward in increasing women's political participation and ensuring accountability in gender-responsive institutions through legislative reforms, national strategies, and efforts driven by civil society.** Despite the extensive work, data from FGDs, KIIs, and the national report reveals significant gaps in implementation, social perceptions, and structural inequalities that limit progress. Particularly relevant is the lack of cooperation between national machineries and local CBOs, combined with the superficial application of reforms, which underscores the challenges in achieving meaningful change.

## Advancing Gender Representation: Progress and Challenges in Political Engagement

Over the past years, Jordan has taken substantial steps to promote women's political engagement through measures driven by the Royal Committee to Modernize the Political System<sup>29</sup>, established in 2021. The committee's mandate aligns with Jordan's commitments under the Beijing Platform for Action, the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), and the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW). It developed several key recommendations aimed at creating a more inclusive and participatory political landscape, with a particular focus on gender equality. Based on the Committee's work, in January 2022 the Jordanian Parliament approved a constitutional amendment that explicitly acknowledges women's rights. This amendment added the phrase "Jordanian women" to the title of **Chapter Two of the Constitution**, which now reads "Rights and Duties of Jordanian Men and Women." The amendment process was marked by intense parliamentary debates, reflecting the significance of this development in Jordan's legal and social landscape. The Committee also recommended reforms to the Electoral Law and Party Law and quotas have been increased to ensure women's representation in local councils and parliament. **In 2022, the Municipal Law allocated 25% of provincial council seats to women**, ensuring greater representation at the local governance level. The Electoral Law revision mandated that at least one woman be included among the first three candidates on the political party list. These measures have led to some progress, **with 27 women currently serving in parliament -after the 2024 elections-** increased female representation in judicial positions, and leadership roles within political parties.

However, while these measures have increased the number of women participating in public life, **women's political participation often remains symbolic rather than transformative**, as their roles in governance are frequently limited to meeting quotas or fulfilling a superficial representation of inclusivity. Analyzing the last legislatures, the composition of the Parliament from 2019 to 2024 has seen an increase in the number of women to 20 out of 130 seats, that is, a representation of 15%. However, this presence has not substantially translated into significant policy influence or leadership roles<sup>30</sup>. Other studies indicate that these measures have primarily drawn women into the political arena who might not have run for office otherwise, without necessarily empowering them to effect meaningful change<sup>31</sup>, a claim that has been emerging also from the KIIs and FGDs interviews. Participants from Irbid and Aqaba noted that many women in parliament lack awareness of legislative issues and are often used as props to project an image of inclusivity. One participant from Irbid highlighted: *"When I asked some women about their electoral program, they said, 'Honestly, I don't know; they pushed me to run.'"*

Participants also emphasized the role of societal perceptions in hindering women's participation. Deeply ingrained cultural norms frame leadership as inherently masculine, particularly in rural regions like Aqaba, where women's representation is minimal. A participant noted: "The public still has not fully accepted the notion of women in powerful positions." These findings align with research by the Euro-Mediterranean Women's Foundation, which underscores how patriarchal norms continue to impede women's effective political engagement across Jordan.

*Despite these challenges, the Global Gender Gap Report (2023) records progress, with Jordan improving its rank from 138th to 123rd, driven partly by increases in political representation. However, achieving transformative impact will require moving beyond quotas and addressing structural inequalities within political systems.*

<sup>29</sup> The Royal Committee to Modernize the Political System, established in 2021, introduced comprehensive reforms aimed at enhancing political inclusivity and modernizing Jordan's governance framework. Women's empowerment and youth participation were central themes in the committee's recommendations.

<sup>30</sup> Hayat-Rased, "Reforming Jordan's Gender Quota: Making Space for Women in Parliament," 2019, [https://pdf.usaid.gov/pdf\\_docs/PA00XM2X.pdf](https://pdf.usaid.gov/pdf_docs/PA00XM2X.pdf).

<sup>31</sup> Stefanie Nanes, "'The Quota Encouraged Me to Run': Evaluating Jordan's Municipal Quota for Women," *Journal of Middle East Women's Studies* 11, no. 3 (2015): 261–82.

## Strengthening Accountability and Legal Protections for Gender Equality

The Royal Committee also played a pivotal role in advancing legislative reforms to promote gender equality. Key achievements include amendments to the Labor Law, which mandates the establishment of nurseries in workplaces to support working mothers, and updates to the Social Security Law, which shifted the financial responsibility for maternity benefits from employers to social security. Additionally, gender-sensitive provisions in labor laws now address workplace harassment, marking progress in creating safer environments for women. However, participants from FGDs in **Amman** and **Aqaba** pointed to persistent gaps in ensuring the effective implementation of enforcement mechanisms. This gap in implementation reflects broader systemic issues.

**“Legal reforms are seen as tokenistic; they exist on paper but fail to translate into real change”**

KII participant

One of the most pressing issues remains the inability of Jordanian women married to foreigners to pass citizenship to their children. Despite sustained advocacy efforts by civil society organizations, this legal limitation places families in complex socio-legal situations. The constitutional amendment of 2022, which explicitly recognized women’s rights, highlights the need for alignment between legislative commitments and practical outcomes to overcome this barrier. However, **Human Rights Watch (2018)**<sup>32</sup> reports that **over 400,000 children** are affected by this limitation, restricting their access to public education, healthcare, and formal employment opportunities.

Restrictive inheritance laws and outdated provisions in the **Personal Status Law** also present significant challenges to achieving gender equality. These laws perpetuate unequal treatment in custody, inheritance, and divorce matters. For example, under current inheritance regulations, women receive only **half the share of their male counterparts**, a disparity identified by the **World Bank Gender Data Portal**<sup>33</sup> as a critical constraint on women’s economic empowerment. Participants emphasized that addressing these gaps will require not only legal reforms but also robust enforcement mechanisms and cultural shifts to challenge deeply ingrained norms. This is particularly evident in rural areas, where resources for enforcement are more constrained. International organizations, including **UN Women** and the **International Labour Organization (ILO)**, have collaborated with local organizations to address these gaps. Their efforts focus on capacity-building initiatives for enforcement agencies, public awareness campaigns, and advocacy for policy reforms. Despite these initiatives, further support is needed to ensure sustainability and alignment with local priorities.

### A Reality Check on Beijing+30 Commitments

Jordan has made important legislative changes to increase women’s political participation and expand legal protections, but these reforms have yet to translate into meaningful influence. While quotas have improved women’s representation in parliament, local councils, and political parties, their roles often remain ceremonial rather than transformative. Many women in politics lack access to leadership positions and decision-making power, limiting their ability to drive real policy change. Accountability in gender-responsive institutions also remains weak. Legal gaps persist in critical areas like inheritance laws, nationality rights, and workplace protections, with enforcement mechanisms often failing to deliver real impact. Women in rural areas and marginalized communities continue to face the greatest barriers to participation, reinforcing broader inequalities in governance and public life.

Given these ongoing challenges, **we evaluated the progress with 50%**, reflecting progress in representation but limited structural change. To meet the Beijing commitments, Jordan must move beyond surface-level reforms and ensure that women’s political participation leads to actual decision-making power, supported by stronger legal protections, cultural shifts, and institutional accountability.

32 Human Rights Watch, “Q&A: Status of Non-Citizen Children of Jordanian Mothers | Human Rights Watch,” May 1, 2018, <https://www.hrw.org/news/2018/05/01/qa-status-non-citizen-children-jordanian-mothers>.

33 World Bank, “Gender Equality” (SDG Atlas 2017, 2017), <https://datatopics.worldbank.org/sdgatlas/archive/2017/SDG-05-gender-equality.html>.

## 6. Environmental Conservation, Protection, and Rehabilitation

**Climate change is not gender-neutral—it deepens existing inequalities, particularly for women in vulnerable communities.** The BPfA recognized the **critical connection between women and the environment**, calling for their equal participation in environmental decision-making and access to resources that build resilience against climate-related challenges. Women, particularly in rural and agricultural sectors, are often on the frontlines of environmental degradation, yet their voices remain largely unheard in policy discussions. ESCWA’s Beijing+30 review stresses that while Arab states are increasingly integrating climate action into national policies, the gender dimension is still overlooked. Women remain underrepresented in environmental governance, lack access to climate-adaptation resources, and face barriers to meaningful engagement in conservation efforts. Without **gender-responsive climate policies**, women’s knowledge, contributions, and leadership in sustainability and resilience-building will continue to be sidelined.

In Jordan, the effects of climate change are disproportionately felt by women, particularly in rural and agricultural sectors. **Despite their vulnerability, women can still play a significant role in resilience-building and climate adaptation.** However, as data from FGDs and KIIs reveal, structural barriers, limited engagement, and the lack of synergy between environmental and women-focused organizations limit their ability to give a meaningful contribution to environmental conservation and climate change efforts.

### Women’s Vulnerability to Climate Change

As demonstrated by global trends, women in Jordan are among the groups most affected by climate change due to their roles in agriculture and household-level resource management. In rural areas, women are extensively involved in farming activities and are responsible for securing essential resources, such as water and energy, for their families. Climate change exacerbates challenges in these areas, intensifying women’s workloads and increasing their exposure to environmental risks<sup>34</sup>. Women in rural areas of Jordan are the most vulnerable to climate change as their livelihoods depend on threatened natural resources<sup>35</sup>. FGDs in **Irbid** and **Aqaba** highlighted this situation and how women working in agriculture face heightened challenges in light of the climate crisis. Particularly in **Aqaba**, participants noted that the South experiences severe water scarcity and rising health issues, such as asthma and kidney failure, exacerbated by deforestation and environmental degradation. Despite this, there is still limited awareness about the implications of climate change, particularly in rural areas where agriculture remains a key livelihood. The **ILO** emphasizes the importance of addressing these vulnerabilities by improving work conditions and providing access to resources that can enhance women’s resilience. Similarly, studies by UN Women highlight how women’s contributions to food security during the COVID-19 pandemic underscored their critical role in environmental stewardship.

### Gaps in Legislative and Institutional Synergy

While at a national level, Jordan has made progress in addressing climate change, such as acknowledging global warming in the JONAP II for UN Security Council Resolution 1325, participants noted that climate change is not yet treated as a priority. This perception is underscored by a lack of comprehensive efforts to link environmental challenges with the lived experiences of women, particularly in vulnerable sectors. The disconnect between environmental organizations and women-led Community-Based Organizations (CBOs) further compounds the issue. KIIs revealed that environmental initiatives are often designed and implemented without input from women’s groups, leaving critical gender dimensions of climate change unaddressed. This lack of synergy is further exacerbated by systemic barriers to collaboration. Women-led CBOs often operate at a grassroots level, addressing immediate community needs like water scarcity or sustainable agriculture practices. However, without formal channels of communication or institutional frameworks to facilitate their engagement, these organizations struggle to influence broader environmental policy discussions. Participants noted that women’s groups are frequently

34 UN Women, “Rural Women and Climate Change in Jordan,” 2016, <https://wrw.unwomen.org/sites/default/files/2021-11/UNWomen-RuralWomenJordan-Brief-WEb.pdf>.

35 ESCWA, “Climate Resilient Agriculture: Translating Data to Policy Actions - United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia,” Climate Change and Natural Resource Sustainability, January 2019, <http://www.unescwa.org/publications/climate-resilient-agriculture-translating-data-policy-actions>.



excluded from planning and decision-making processes, even when their contributions are directly relevant to the issues at hand. Participants also highlighted the absence of robust legal frameworks to address the gendered impacts of climate change.

“National machineries struggle to report on the effects of climate change on women due to the lack of data and insufficient engagement with women-focused initiatives.”

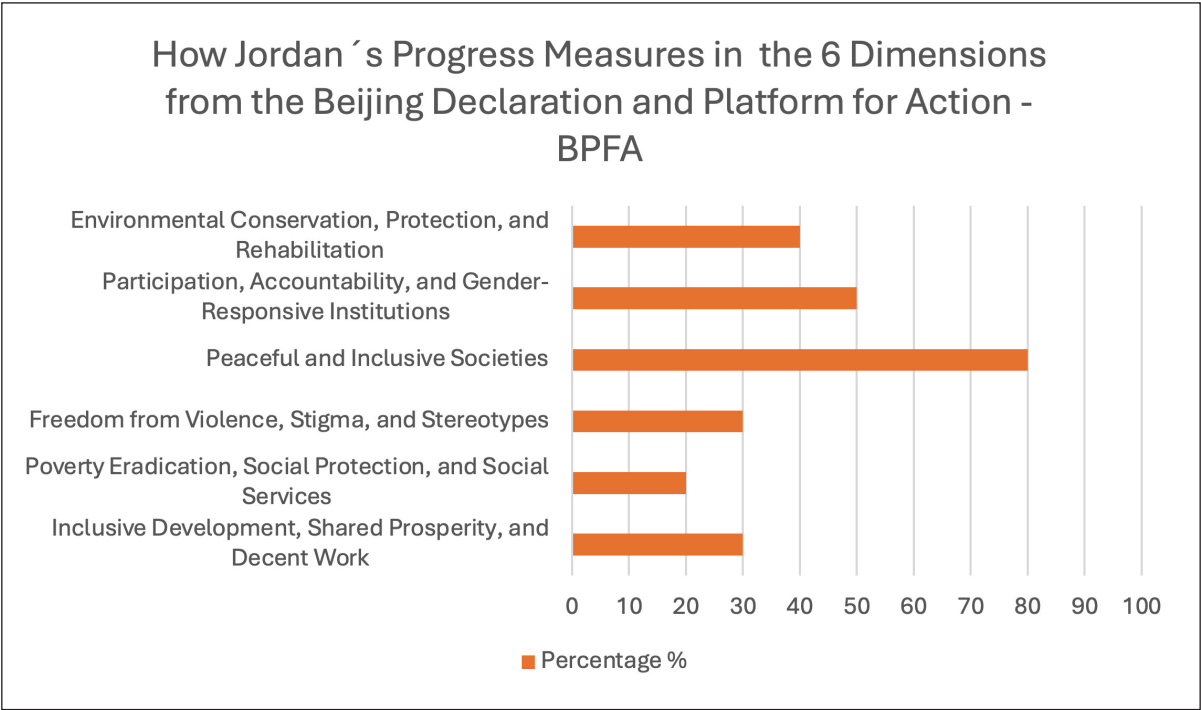
KII participant

Participants in KIIs emphasized that bridging this gap requires intentional collaboration between environmental organizations and women-focused groups. Without targeted policies and improved coordination, opportunities to integrate women into climate action programs are often missed.

### A Reality Check on Beijing+30 Commitments

Recently, Jordan recognized climate change as a national concern, **but women’s role in environmental decision-making remains marginal**. Despite being disproportionately affected women are rarely consulted in policy development or included in climate resilience programs. The disconnect between environmental organizations and women-led initiatives further weakens progress, as grassroots solutions are often ignored in national strategies. The lack of gender-sensitive climate policies and limited collaboration between stakeholders means that women’s experiences and expertise in managing natural resources are underutilized.

For these reasons, **this dimension is estimated the progress to be 40%**, reflecting a growing awareness of climate issues but an ongoing failure to integrate women into meaningful climate action. To meet the Beijing commitments, Jordan must prioritize gender-inclusive environmental policies, strengthen collaboration between environmental and women’s organizations, and ensure that climate resilience efforts address the unique challenges women face.



## Section 2: National Women's Machineries

The institutional framework for advancing gender equality in Jordan is composed of different actors. **The Jordanian National Commission for Women (JNCW)** serves as the central policy-coordinating entity tasked with promoting gender equality and ensuring the alignment of national policies with international commitments, such as the BPFA, CEDAW, and the SDGs. The JNCW operates under the guidance of the Prime Minister and collaborates with key ministries, CSOs, and CBOs to implement gender-sensitive strategies and policies. In addition, the Inter-Ministerial Committee for Women's Empowerment plays a vital role in coordinating efforts across different government ministries. This committee operates **within the framework of the National Strategy for Women (NSW) 2020-2025** and promotes gender-responsive budgeting and gender mainstreaming in all government bodies. However, while these coordination bodies set the agenda for gender equality, their ability to enforce and sustain policy implementation is often constrained by limited financial resources, bureaucratic inefficiencies, and competing national priorities.

CSOs, NGOs, and CBOs play a significant role as implementing partners. These organizations act as intermediaries between national authorities and local communities, particularly in rural and marginalized areas. They are instrumental **in translating policy into practice**, providing direct support to women, and advocating for legal reforms to protect women's rights.

### Mechanisms for Coordination with CBOs

Coordination between key actors is essential to ensure an integrated approach to gender equality. The JNCW acts as the primary mechanism for inter-agency coordination. It establishes working groups and advisory committees that bring together representatives from different stakeholders. Similarly, the Inter-Ministerial Committee for Women's Empowerment aligns efforts across government ministries, ensuring that gender-related policies and strategies are implemented cohesively. Despite the presence of multiple coordination mechanisms, CBOs continue to face significant challenges in influencing gender equality policies effectively. One of the major limitations is financial dependency, as many CBOs rely on project-based funding from international donors, which leads to operational uncertainty and unsustainable programming. This dependency often aligns gender initiatives with donor-driven priorities rather than local needs, reducing the long-term effectiveness of gender equality efforts.

While coordination mechanisms like JNCW and the Inter-Ministerial Committee provide platforms for engagement, many civil society organizations often struggle to see tangible outcomes from their participation. They are invited and consulted on policy discussions, yet **many feel that their contributions do not translate into meaningful influence on decision-making**. This perception stems not from outright exclusion, but from slow implementation, limited resources, and the broader political and institutional constraints that these mechanisms face. As a result, while CBOs play a crucial role in community-based service delivery and advocacy, their impact on shaping national strategies remains limited in practice. A key gap in the current framework is the lack of a **structured monitoring and evaluation system** that ensures that gender equality policies are measured, adjusted, and accountable. The NSW **should be used as a reference point for all monitoring and evaluation of gender equality achievements and challenges**, ensuring that progress is systematically tracked, reported, and aligned with national and international commitments. Without an institutionalized mechanism for accountability, policy implementation risks remaining symbolic rather than transformative.

Additionally, financial and legal independence remains a pressing issue for women's machineries. While JNCW operates under the Prime Minister's Office, its budgetary autonomy is limited, and it continues to rely heavily on donor funding. This reliance undermines continuity in policy execution and weakens the institutional stability of gender equality efforts. To ensure long-term sustainability, Jordan must secure dedicated and sustainable budget allocations for gender equality mechanisms, moving away from short-term, project-based funding models.

## Section 3: What Role for Civil Society? A Bottom-up Approach

The Beijing Platform for Action recognizes civil society as a cornerstone of gender equality advocacy and emphasizes the need for their involvement in policy formulation, implementation, and evaluation. In Jordan, civil society actors act as catalysts for change, contributing to shaping reforms and driving grassroots initiatives that empower women. This section examines their contributions to each of the six dimensions of the BPFA framework, highlighting how their efforts enrich and expand the understanding of gender equality in Jordan.

### 1. Inclusive Development, Shared Prosperity, and Decent Work

In this dimension, civil society has played a pivotal role in promoting women's economic empowerment and addressing barriers to equitable labor market participation. Through targeted advocacy, CBOs have pushed for amendments to labor laws, such as introducing workplace harassment protections and maternity leave reforms. However, their initiatives go beyond advocacy, focusing on capacity-building programs that provide women with skills such as financial literacy, wage negotiation, and business management. These efforts have enabled women to access formal employment opportunities and advocate for fair treatment in workplaces. CBOs have also supported women entrepreneurs through mentorship programs, technical assistance, and market development strategies. For instance, in the northern governorates, women-led cooperatives producing organic soap have become sustainable income sources for families, illustrating how CBOs can foster long-term economic independence. **Despite these achievements, civil society actors highlight the persistent exclusion of informal workers from social protections like health insurance and pensions, advocating for policy changes that ensure equitable access to benefits.**

### 2. Poverty Eradication, Social Protection, and Social Services

CBOs serve as critical intermediaries between marginalized communities and national aid programs, addressing systemic barriers to social protection and poverty reduction. During the COVID-19 pandemic, their grassroots networks ensured the timely distribution of food packages, cash transfers, and healthcare support, particularly in remote areas where government aid was delayed. These efforts exemplify how CBOs can fill critical gaps left by centralized mechanisms. Beyond emergency relief, civil society has worked to address structural inequalities by providing vocational training, literacy programs, and advocacy for improved healthcare access in rural areas. CBOs have successfully engaged local authorities to establish additional health centers and ambulances, directly improving service availability for underserved populations. Their efforts underscore the importance of localized, community-driven solutions in tackling poverty and enhancing social inclusion.

### 3. Freedom from Violence, Stigma, and Stereotypes

CBOs and civil society actors have been at the forefront of advocating for GBV prevention and survivor support. Their advocacy efforts contributed to the abolition of Article 308, which previously allowed rapists to avoid prosecution by marrying their victims. These organizations also provide vital services such as legal aid, psychological counseling, and shelter for survivors of GBV, often in partnership with the Family Protection Division and international organizations. In addition to direct services, CBOs lead awareness-raising campaigns targeting schools and communities to challenge harmful norms and reduce the stigma surrounding GBV reporting. For example, campaigns advocating for GBV education in public schools aim to equip young people with the tools to recognize and prevent abuse. This grassroots approach ensures a sustained cultural shift toward gender equity.

## **4. Peaceful and Inclusive Societies**

Civil society has played a critical role in localizing the Women, Peace, and Security (WPS) agenda under UNSCR 1325. Through grassroots peacebuilding initiatives, CBOs have facilitated conflict resolution workshops and community dialogues in refugee-hosting areas such as Ma'an and Mafraq. These initiatives bring together women from diverse backgrounds to promote coexistence and social harmony, addressing tensions that arise from demographic shifts and resource scarcity. While civil society actors are central to implementing Jordan's National Action Plan (JONAP II) for UNSCR 1325, they often face limited access to decision-making roles. Advocacy efforts have focused on ensuring refugee women's inclusion in peace processes and allocating resources to community-driven peacebuilding initiatives. These actions highlight the transformative potential of civil society in fostering peaceful, inclusive societies.

## **5. Participation, Accountability, and Gender-Responsive Institutions**

Civil society organizations have actively promoted women's political participation and accountability in governance. Their capacity-building programs for women leaders include training on public speaking, advocacy, and campaign management, enabling women to navigate the political arena more effectively. These efforts have contributed to increased representation of women in municipal councils and parliament. Despite progress, civil society actors emphasize the need for formal mechanisms to include their voices in policymaking processes. Many CBOs report being excluded from national decision-making forums, which limits their ability to influence gender-responsive institutional reforms. Bridging this gap requires formalized partnerships between CBOs and national women's machineries, such as the Jordanian National Commission for Women (JNCW).

## **6. Environmental Conservation, Protection, and Rehabilitation**

In the face of climate change, CBOs have emerged as key players in integrating gender into environmental conservation and resilience-building efforts. Their initiatives focus on sustainable livelihoods for women in rural areas, such as promoting organic farming and water-saving technologies. By empowering women to adopt climate-resilient practices, civil society actors enhance community adaptation to environmental challenges. Advocacy for gender-responsive climate policies is another area where CBOs have been instrumental. They push for funding mechanisms that address the specific vulnerabilities of women affected by climate-induced displacement, ensuring that environmental strategies are inclusive and equitable.



## Section 4: What's Next for Beijing? The Road Ahead

To ensure meaningful progress toward gender equality and women's empowerment in Jordan, it is essential to ground our actions in clear, evidence-based, and forward-thinking recommendations. The dimensions identified in the BPFA offer a strategic framework for addressing persistent inequalities and leveraging emerging opportunities. These priorities, which align with Jordan's commitments under the Beijing Platform for Action, the SDGs, and UNSCR 1325, serve as a critical roadmap for transformative change. Recommendations for each of these dimensions are meant **to bridge the gap between policy and practice, amplify the voices of civil society, and address the lived realities of women and girls**. This approach ensures that reforms are comprehensive, inclusive, and responsive to Jordan's socio-political context, driving sustainable progress for gender equality over the next five years.

Recommendations include:

### 1. Enhancing Beijing's Commitments in Jordan: Addressing Structural Challenges

- Dimension 1: "Inclusive Development, Shared Prosperity, and Decent Work". Establish an independent monitoring body to track gender pay gaps and workplace conditions, ensuring compliance with labor laws and gender equity standards.
- Dimension 2: "Poverty Eradication, Social Protection, and Social Services". Develop a comprehensive, gender-responsive social protection strategy that includes targeted financial aid, access to healthcare, and tailored employment opportunities for women.
- Dimension 3: "Freedom from Violence, Stigma, and Stereotypes". Institutionalize a national coordination mechanism that integrates law enforcement, health services, and shelters to provide comprehensive GBV response services.
- Dimension 4: "Peaceful and Inclusive Societies". Guarantee women's participation in security and peacebuilding sectors at high levels and in leadership positions, ensuring their inclusion in formal conflict resolution processes.
- Dimension 5: "Participation, Accountability, and Gender-Responsive Institutions". Strengthen the enforcement of existing gender quotas and enhance accountability mechanisms to ensure compliance, thereby fostering equitable representation in governance.
- Dimension 6: "Environmental Conservation, Protection, and Rehabilitation". Integrate gender perspectives into national environmental policies, ensuring that women have access to climate-related decision-making and economic opportunities in green sectors.

### 2. Regional Recommendations for Enhancing Civil Society Engagement and Overcoming Structural Barriers

- Develop a regional civil society network with funding mechanisms to support women-led organizations in advocating for policy reforms.
- Create a regional framework for the annual assessment of Beijing commitments, ensuring transparent monitoring of progress across countries.
- Develop and enforce regional guidelines for gender-sensitive electoral policies that standardize women's representation across countries.
- Foster partnerships between civil society, the private sector, and governments to promote gender-inclusive economic policies.
- Establish cross-border cooperation for addressing GBV, including legal harmonization, survivor protection mechanisms, and joint awareness campaigns.
- Develop regional gender-sensitive climate policies that integrate women's participation in environmental governance.

## Conclusion: Towards Transformative Changes

As Jordan approaches the 30th anniversary of the Beijing Declaration and embarks on the next phase of its commitment to the Beijing Platform for Action, there is a pressing need to move beyond policy commitments and translate policies into **concrete, transformative action**. While important progress has been made in legislative reform, women's political participation, and labor rights, legal changes alone are not enough. The persistence of systemic barriers, patriarchal norms, and social inequalities requires a shift from symbolic gestures to **deep, structural transformation**. This shadow report, developed through the collaborative efforts of **civil society and grassroots**, provides a **critical, decolonial perspective** on Jordan's progress toward Beijing+30 goals. It challenges the **Western-centric, neoliberal frameworks** that have historically shaped global gender policies, emphasizing that **gender equality cannot be reduced to market-driven empowerment**. Instead, real change must be **rooted in community-driven, participatory, and feminist justice approaches** that reflect the realities of **women in the Global South**.

### Key Takeaways from Jordan's Progress on the Beijing Goals

- 1. Legislative Reforms Have Advanced, but Implementation Gaps Persist.** Jordan has reformed key laws related to labour rights, political participation, and gender-based violence (GBV). However, implementation remains weak, particularly in labour law enforcement, GBV response, and social protections for informal workers. Stronger monitoring and accountability mechanisms are needed to ensure that legal gains translate into lived improvements for women.
- 2. Women's Political Participation is Growing, but Structural Barriers Remain.** Despite an increase in women's representation in parliament, political parties, and municipal councils, systemic obstacles—including political violence against women (PVAW), exclusion from leadership roles, and entrenched socio-political norms—continue to hinder meaningful participation. Electoral reforms, leadership training, and protection mechanisms for women in politics must be strengthened to institutionalize women's influence in governance.
- 3. The Economy is Still Not Working for Women.** Despite policy initiatives to increase women's labour force participation, economic barriers remain deeply entrenched. Limited childcare, workplace discrimination, lack of flexible work arrangements, and inadequate social protections disproportionately push women into informal, low-paid, and insecure jobs. Economic reforms must go beyond microfinance and quotas to ensure decent work, social security, and long-term financial inclusion for women.
- 4. Gender-Based Violence (GBV) Prevention and Response Need Strengthening.** Jordan has made progress in GBV legislation and institutional support, including the abolition of Article 308 and the expansion of Family Protection Units (FPUs). However, reporting barriers, weak enforcement, limited survivor protections, and social stigma continue to undermine progress. A GBV observatory, stronger legal protections against digital violence, and funding for survivor-centered services are critical next steps.
- 5. Women's Leadership in Peace and Security is Underutilized.** Jordan has been a regional leader in UNSCR 1325 implementation, yet women's roles in security, conflict prevention, and peacebuilding remain limited. While JONAP II has institutionalized a framework, funding, and resources are disproportionately allocated to security forces rather than community-led peacebuilding. Expanding women-led mediation networks and redirecting resources to grassroots peace initiatives will be key to ensuring sustainable peace efforts.
- 6. Climate Justice and Women's Leadership in Environmental Policy Must be Prioritized.** Jordan's climate adaptation strategies currently lack a strong gender lens, despite women playing a critical role in agriculture, water management, and sustainability. Ensuring that women have leadership roles in climate governance, access to green jobs, and financial support for climate adaptation will be essential for a truly inclusive environmental strategy.

## The Path Forward: Beyond Symbolic Commitments to Structural Change

The report focuses on the six dimensions identified by ESCWA in its review strategy, offering a strategic roadmap to address gender disparities and support women's empowerment. However, none of this progress can be achieved without **civil society, grassroots organizations, and community-based networks** like JONAF playing a central role. Their proximity to local communities and ability to provide **on-the-ground insights** make them indispensable partners in shaping policies that are reflective of real-world challenges. Their engagement ensures that gender equality reforms are **inclusive, intersectional, and sustainable**, rather than top-down, state-driven mandates. **The recommendations outlined in this report are not merely aspirational goals but actionable steps grounded in evidence and the lived experiences of women across Jordan.** Moving forward, the success of these priorities depends **on coordinated efforts between government institutions, CBOs, civil society, and international partners.** Mechanisms for monitoring, accountability, and resource allocation -such as GBV observatories, oversight of gender-responsive budgeting, and participatory evaluation processes -are critical to ensuring that change is tracked, sustained, and responsive to the needs of women and girls. As Jordan moves into the next phase of Beijing+30 implementation, it has the opportunity to become a regional leader in women's rights and feminist justice. By embedding local, decolonial, and participatory approaches in its strategy, Jordan can move beyond quotas and symbolic reforms to achieve transformative, lasting change. This will not only uplift the status of women but also strengthen the social cohesion, well-being, and economic prosperity of society as a whole.



النهضة العربية الديمقراطية والتنمية  
Arab Renaissance for Democracy & Development

The Arab Renaissance for Democracy and Development (ARDD) was founded in 2008 in Amman, Jordan, to contribute to forming a new renaissance project in the Arab world, grounded in the fundamental issues concerning Arab affairs, within their local, regional, and international contexts, prioritizing independence and authenticity and steering clear of colonial influences. The aim is to realize the aspirations and endeavors of the Arab people for democracy, development, and social justice. This involves active participation in the Arab reform, modernization, and development agenda, influencing public policies that shape transformations in the Arab world and its surroundings. scientific research projects, and practical solutions.

This contribution is facilitated through implementing development programs, scientific research projects, and practical solutions.

ARDD's overarching vision is an Arab world in which all people enjoy fair, inclusive, and sustainable rights and opportunities.

ARDD's work emphasizes feminist, intersectional, and decolonial approaches to advocacy, ensuring that global frameworks are **localized** to reflect the realities of women in Jordan and the Arab region.



The Jordan National NGOs Forum (JONAF) is a network of over 40 Jordanian civil society organizations (CSOs) and community-based organizations (CBOs) established in 2016 by ARDD. Its role in this shadow report has been pivotal, particularly in its monitoring, community mobilization, and advocacy efforts. By leveraging the collective strength of its member organizations, JONAF facilitated direct engagement with key experts, local CBOs, and community actors to ensure that the lived experiences of marginalized women are at the center of this analysis. This collaboration reflects ARDD's long-standing commitment to feminist, participatory, and rights-based advocacy.

Through networks like JONAF and other women-led organizations, ARDD has amplified the voices of women in policy reform processes. By integrating community-driven perspectives into the shadow report, ARDD and JONAF provide an alternative narrative that challenges official government perspectives and calls for transformative, not symbolic, change. In the development of this report, ARDD used an inclusive, participatory, and evidence-based approach that reflects its shared commitment to feminist accountability and justice.



