

SYNTHESIS REPORT

A NATIONAL DIALOGUE ON UNSCR 1325

# WOMEN, PEACE, AND SECURITY IN JORDAN: A RESOLUTION IN ACTION



اللجنة الوطنية الأردنية لشؤون المرأة  
The Jordanian National Commission for Women

 UN  
WOMEN 

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WOMEN, PEACE, AND  
SECURITY IN JORDAN:  
A RESOLUTION IN ACTION



**UN WOMEN AND THE JORDANIAN  
NATIONAL COMMISSION FOR WOMEN**

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# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Government of Jordan has committed to accelerating the adoption of a National Action Plan (NAP) on United Nations Security Council Resolution (UNCSR) 1325 passed in 2000 on women, peace and security (WPS) and subsequent resolutions.<sup>1</sup>

In support of that, the Jordanian National Commission for Women (JNCW), in collaboration with the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN Women) and with generous support from the Government of Japan, has initiated a participatory NAP drafting and adoption process. To set the basis for the NAP, a national dialogue on WPS was undertaken in early 2016 across the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan consisting of 10 national and local consultations. This dialogue sought to: raise awareness of WPS issues; generate commitment of local partners, stakeholders and champions of WPS issues; and support the definition of priorities and recommendations for a Jordanian NAP on UNCSR 1325 and its subsequent resolutions.

Approximately 250 stakeholders participated in the dialogue process, including government officials (local and national), police and military representatives, academics, tribal leaders, religious leaders, representatives from non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and refugees. Stakeholders included women and men representing a cross-section of people.

The dialogues identified a number of potential priority areas for the NAP, including increasing women's participation in peacekeeping and peacebuilding and enhancing women's leadership and engagement in the national response to the Syria refugee crisis, with an emphasis on issues of protection and the prevention of gender-based violence. Preventing violent extremism was also highlighted as a priority in several of the consultations.

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“Security cannot be achieved in any country unless women are able to enjoy personal security—including security within their homes. Women in society—and in particular, women in Arab societies—are the key to international security at large.” —*Imam and Preacher, Ministry of Religious Affairs, Karak*

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<sup>1</sup> This commitment made by the Government of Jordan at the Global Gender Summit, held at the UN General Assembly in September 2015.

# BACKGROUND

Jordan is a regional and global leader in international peace and security, primarily as a provider of peace-keeping troops and as an interlocutor and broker of peace. Jordan has consistently remained one of the top 20 contributors of UN Peacekeeping Troops to UN operations over the past 10 years. In recognition of this, and in its role as a non-permanent member of the Security Council for the term 2014-2015, the Government of Jordan committed to drafting a NAP on WPS—hereafter referred to as the “NAP on UNSCR 1325”, shorthand for the full breadth of WPS resolutions passed by the UN Security Council since 2000. Building on UNSCR 1325, the WPS agenda highlights the needs of women and girls in conflict, as well as the need to include them in all peace and security-related processes, including those related to work on preventing violent extremism. The aim of the NAP process in Jordan is to strengthen Jordan’s role as a global provider of expertise in peace and security while also



strengthening its internal structures, policies and responses to the Syria crisis. Specifically, the NAP will identify the key gender equality and women’s rights issues in Jordan within the area of peace and security, outlining a time-bound, costed and manageable set of priorities for action. The implementation of a NAP on UNSCR 1325 is a critical part of Jordan’s “Step It Up for Gender Equality” commitment, which was presented at the 2015 Global Women Summit.

To implement this commitment, the Government of Jordan tasked the JNCW with the development of the NAP. To this end, in 2010 the JNCW established the National Coalition for the Implementation of UNSCR 1325, a consultative body consisting of all government line ministries, the military, UN partners and civil society actors. The Coalition aims to support the development and implementation of the NAP and will provide a platform and mechanism for identifying and prioritizing gender-related interventions and integrating them into national budgets. Moreover, the NAP process will support a policy dialogue on issues of WPS. In 2015, the Government of Jordan recommitted to passing a NAP on UNSCR 1325 at the Global Gender Summit held at the UN General Assembly. This commitment reinvigorated the work of the Coalition, relaunching the NAP drafting process.

## BOX 1

### The International Women, Peace and Security Agenda

The WPS agenda is framed by eight Security Council resolutions: UNSCR 1325 (2000); UNSCR 1820 (2008) and UNSCR 1888 (2009) re-emphasizing the importance of ending sexual violence in conflict; UNSCR 1889 (2009) focused on the need of empowering and protecting women in the aftermath of conflict; UNSCR 1960 (2010), which established a monitoring and reporting mechanism for sexual violence in conflict; UNSCR 2106 (2013) calling for accountability for sexual violence in conflict and economic empowerment of women in post-conflict contexts; UNSCR 2122 (2013) addressing the gaps in the implementation of the WPS agenda; and UNSCR 2242 (2015) focused on the inclusion of women and their perspective in preventing violent extremism.

# CONSULTATIONS ON UNSCR 1325

In early 2016, a series of participatory consultations were held across Jordan with a wide range of stakeholders to identify and define priorities and develop recommendations for the Jordan NAP on UNSCR 1325. Participants had the opportunity to discuss peace and security concerns in Jordan and make recommendations to address these concerns, particularly with regard to women's roles in promoting peace and security in Jordan.

A first dialogue was held in Amman, followed by **eight local dialogues** with participants from nine governorates: this included **seven community dialogues** in Zarqa, Mafraq, Karak, Ajloun and Jerash, Ma'an, Amman and Madaba, and Irbid; and a **consultation with refugees** in Mafraq. A final national discussion was also held in Amman to launch this dialogue process.

The local dialogues additionally sought to identify promising local champions to be engaged in the development of the NAP and its implementation. A total of 250 participants took part in the consultations: approximately 60 per cent were women and 40 per cent were men. Of the participants, more than 40 per cent represented NGOs and international NGOs, 27 per cent were state actors and 22 per cent were Syrian refugees; youth NGOs representatives and other stakeholders were also represented. The dialogues engaged **diverse stakeholders**, including officials, community leaders, representatives of the Public Security Directorate, women and youth organizations, municipality council members, a parliamentarian, academics, and tribal and religious leaders. Government officials were represented by the ministries of Interior, Islamic Affairs, Education and Foreign Affairs; the Prime Ministry; and

the Youth Directorate attached to the Higher Council of Youth. Supporting agencies of the National Coalition for the Implementation of UNSCR 1325 also attended some of the local-level dialogues, including the UN High Commissioner on Refugees (UNHCR), UN Population Fund (UNFPA) and UN Women. Representatives of international NGOs who are active in the WPS field also took part in the national dialogues. The dialogues were generally supported by the governor of each area, who helped to secure the attendance of different stakeholders.

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*“This Resolution is a pledge—a charter for us Muslims. Islam instructs us to fulfill pledges; hence it is binding for us.” —Sheikh from Amman Greater Municipality*

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The **facilitation methodology** for dialogues was flexible and adaptive, creating equal space for the voices of men and women to be heard. Participants were introduced to WPS concepts and engaged in practical exercises that raised issues related to WPS and identified local threats to peace and security through a gender perspective. Additionally, the role of women and different actors in reducing these tensions were discussed.

The final discussion in this series took place on 28 February 2016 in the form of a **national, senior-level consultation**, in which results from the governorate-level consultations were presented to senior stakeholders engaged in peace and security work in Jordan.

# KEY ISSUES

Five key issues were raised during local consultations:

- **Refugee crisis:** The Syrian refugee crisis was identified as a major challenge that Jordanians perceive to have negatively impacted the economy, particularly in Mafraq and Zarqa, which are hosts to large populations of refugees outside the more affluent capital of Amman. Some challenges mentioned by participants were: increased unemployment, limited work opportunities for Jordanians, overcrowded schools and health facilities, and increased rent prices. Participants stated that lower dowries for Syrian women compared to Jordanian women has increased polygamy, leading to Jordanian men engaging in second marriages to Syrian women refugees. Meanwhile, Syrian participants in the refugee dialogue listed economic hardship, limited access to health care, high rent costs, child labour, lack of unification of families and fear of deportation as key challenges. Female non-state actors in Zarqa stressed the need to integrate Syrian refugees into local communities by facilitating them to work in a regulated manner and fostering greater social cohesion. Stakeholders in Zarqa also recommended engaging Syrian refugees more generally in localized dialogues, particularly through NGOs, in order to discuss local problems through participatory approaches.
- **Gender-based violence:** Participants identified key challenges such as early marriage, sexual harassment, and the prevalence of traditions and customs that devalue women.



- **Women's lack of equal opportunity:** Participants cited discrimination against women; limited engagement by women in positions of leadership in the peace and security field; limited opportunities for economic, political and community participation; and lack of equal access to justice as being key challenges.
- **Political violence:** Some participants mentioned threats of political violence, including tribal conflict, violent extremism and sectarian conflict. Violent radicalization was mentioned several times throughout the discussions as a main threat to peace and security. Participants discussed how communities—particularly women—could counter violent radicalization. It was noted that women have an important role in preventing their family members from joining radical groups. Media was also identified as having an important role to play in countering radicalization.
- **Human security:** Broader human security issues were commonly discussed, including poverty, unemployment and health care.

Throughout the dialogues, two of the most common concerns raised were the economic situation and the refugee crisis in Jordan—and the perceived interlinkages between these issues. Both men and women focused heavily on these issues: **significantly, poverty and unemployment were mentioned as overarching threats to security in all local dialogues.** This runs counter to some indications<sup>2</sup> in Jordan that suggest that those using violence for radical ends are not, in fact, driven by economic means but by other factors such as ideology and a sense of belonging. Nonetheless community perceptions see unemployment as a serious potential threat to stability.

Facilitators noted differences in the issues raised by women and men. **Women were more likely to raise issues of gender-based violence.** Female non-state

<sup>2</sup> Based on discussions with the security sector and other PVE actors in Jordan from evidence collected from those who have returned from fighting for extremist movements outside Jordan.



and state actors in Zarqa and Karak referred to increased behaviors such as sexual harassment in the streets as a key threat faced by local communities. In addition, female non-state actors in Karak, Mafraq, Amman and Ajloun underlined familial and social issues such as an increase in divorce rates, family disintegration (including domestic violence), polygamy and early marriage as significant threats to their communities. Male state actors and female non-state actors in Mafraq, as well as female non-state actors in Ajloun, referred to the prevalence of early

marriages as a “new” tradition that devalues women and linked it to the influx of refugees.

Furthermore, female and male **non-state actors in Karak, Irbid and Amman** tended to define the threats to their communities as linked to society’s views on women’s roles and barriers to the realization of women’s rights including marginalization, limited women’s empowerment programmes, society’s negative perception of women’s roles, limited awareness of rights, limits on women’s participation, and lack of equal opportunities and justice.

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“Society often claims that women are not capable of working in security sectors and sees these roles as being shameful for women. The issue isn’t religious but solely cultural. However, this stigma is gradually disappearing.” —*Policewoman from Irbid*

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# PRIORITIES AND RECOMMENDATIONS

In response to the issues and challenges raised, participants suggested the following recommendations, which were grouped into two categories: priority areas and cross-cutting themes.

## Priority areas

Priorities were categorized around the four pillars of UNSCR 1325, taking into account that some of the recommendations raised by participants were not relevant to UNSCR 1325 or realistic for Jordan as a country not in conflict. Overall, the dialogue found that given the security situation in Jordan and the nature of its involvement in peace and security, a Jordanian NAP should focus on the **participation pillar**, as well as **the recovery and relief pillar** as a response to the refugee crisis. **Protection and prevention** of gender-based violence were highlighted as key issues to be mainstreamed across the different NAP activities.

### A. Participation

- i) Increase the number of women in the security sector including the police and military, and encourage women to participate in peacekeeping missions.
- ii) Increase the number of women participating in peacemaking and peacebuilding. Include women in negotiation processes with regional actors.
- iii) Raise the awareness and capacity of Jordanian women leaders (community, economic, political and civil society) to engage in issues of peace and security in Jordan and to advocate for the greater involvement of women throughout this.

### B. Recovery and relief as a response to the refugee crisis

- i) Train women and civil society on women's legal rights in order to better support refugee families.

- ii) Increase the capacity of organizations working with Syrian refugees to support women who experience gender-based violence (including sexual harassment).
- iii) Train professionals—including women—to provide psychological support to refugees to enable same-gender counselling for female refugees.
- iv) Conduct awareness raising activities on family planning and early marriage.
  - Ensure compulsory primary education for girls.
  - Increase religious awareness of early marriage among refugee families through Imams and female preachers.
- v) Increase the provision of health care to Jordanians and refugees by establishing additional local health centres and encouraging the provision of more health services by international NGOs, particularly for surgeries and operations.
- vi) Provide economic support for refugees to ensure human security and decrease child labour, while also ensuring economic support to Syrians does not come at the cost of Jordanian employment. Facilitate better access to vocational training for Jordanian and Syrian women and allow Syrian youth to enroll in universities or vocational training at a low cost.
- vii) Increase integration and social cohesion between Syrians and Jordanians.
- viii) Encourage international NGOs and/or UNHCR to provide assistance for rental costs to refugees and provide vulnerable Jordanians with expanded social protection services.
- ix) Take steps to ensure the refugees feel they can safely remain in Jordan until the security situation allows them to return to their home

countries. Facilitate the reunification of refugee families who are split between camps and communities.

The groups agreed that these issues cannot be addressed solely by the NAP and will require aid and support from a wide variety of actors. Those aware of the 2016-2018 Jordan Response Plan for the Syria Crisis noted that it must be linked to the NAP—amplifying and identifying key gender priorities from the Jordan Response Plan as they relate to peace and security. It was emphasized that innovative actions must be taken to provide jobs and work opportunities for both Jordanian and Syrians.

## Cross-cutting themes

### A. Prevention and protection from gender-based violence

- i) Provide enhanced family counseling services through local or international civil society organizations and increase the services of family protection units to decrease domestic violence.

- ii) Where possible, promote female workers as front-line service delivery workers to try and mitigate sexual exploitation and gender-based violence. Monitor organizations that provide support to women who experienced sexual and gender-based violence to ensure they provide quality services delivered in a secure environment.

### B. Capacity building and awareness raising

- i) Use media campaigns to increase social awareness on women's roles in peace and security (also mentioned under "Participation"), in particular the image of women in peacekeeping as role models, through success stories of Jordanian women who have participated in such initiatives.
- ii) Linked to the above, raise men's awareness about the importance of women's participation in peacekeeping efforts. Participants in the Irbid, Ajloun, Ma'an and Amman consultations underlined this need. They stressed the need for men to change their perspectives and contribute to changing society's perspective by demonstrating acceptance for women's participation in peace and security work.



- iii) School and university curricula should include issues of WPS.
- iv) Strengthen religious leaders’—including *Imams*’ and women preachers’—understanding of WPS and empower them to spread messages supporting the WPS agenda in Jordan.

### C. Civil society and community engagement

- i) Create a coalition of civil society organizations working on WPS and enable coordination among them.
- ii) Activate civil society organizations’ roles in combating radicalization and violent extremism.
- iii) Ensure communities are engaged in promoting and operationalizing WPS (including in rural areas), for example through engaging community-based organizations in the implementation of the NAP and building their capacity to engage women in all aspects of peace and security work, including prevention of violent conflict, resolving violent disputes at the local level, etc.

Participants in the dialogues stressed that Jordanian communities residing in the border regions, especially women and children, are greatly affected by the **limitations of border security**.

The discussions at the national level also referenced the **UN Security Council Resolution 2250 on Youth, Peace, and Security**, issued in December 2015, and stressed the need to link it to UNSCR 1325 in order to activate youth’s role in peacebuilding, conflict prevention and countering violent extremism.

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“Women have proved their capabilities to work in security sectors, and we encourage more women to engage.” —*Policewoman from Irbid*

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In addition to the list above, participants identified key areas for work on gender equality and women’s rights on issues outside of those topics covered by UNSCR 1325 and its subsequent resolutions. To enable women to participate more equitably in society, female and male state and non-state actors in Karak, Amman, Irbid, Ajloun and Ma’an stressed the need to strengthen **community dialogues on women’s issues and advocate for the realization of women’s economic and political rights**. They also underlined the need to: eliminate discriminatory legislation, correct incorrect perceptions that devalue women, enable women to occupy decision-making positions, showcase women’s achievements, present women role models, and share women’s experiences and success stories. Participants in these dialogues addressed the above recommendations to NGOs and official and non-official media in particular.

# KEY RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE JORDANIAN NAP

Global practice demonstrates that building a NAP on UNSCR 1325 with a clear focus and manageable number of priority areas facilitates the likelihood of its adoption and implementation. Based on the dialogue process, national actors are calling for a Jordan NAP on UNSCR 1325 to cover the following issues, which can be grouped under two pillars:

- 1. Participation.** Participants cited this as a key priority given the relatively low number of Jordanian women in the field, particularly in decision-making positions. Recommendations regarding participation were addressed to the Government of Jordan, calling for an increase in the number of women deployed in peacekeeping forces and peacemaking processes and an increase in the number of women working in the police and military sectors.
- 2. Relief and recovery in response to the refugee crisis.** Given the very high number of refugees received in Jordan the relief pillar is essential. Consultations generated concrete recommendations addressed to state institutions, civil society organizations and international NGOs. The recommendations focus on meeting the direct needs of refugees and host communities, emphasizing service delivery for women, and further ensuring sufficient protection and support for female refugees, while building the capacities of civil society organizations and local community-based organizations to assist refugees and build social cohesion. Furthermore, the recommendations call for promoting women as agents in relief and recovery initiatives.



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“Such dialogues are key to strengthen women's role and promote supportive positive culture about women in societies.” —*Participant from Ma'an*

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**Prevention and protection from conflict-related sexual and gender-based violence was noted as a cross-cutting issue**, including through pre- and post-deployment trainings for peacekeepers, ensuring accountability for sexual and gender-based violence, and providing reliable and secure counselling, medical and other services for survivors of conflict-related sexual and gender-based violence. The participation of international relief organizations in the national dialogue was a great opportunity to convey the perspectives of Jordanian nationals and Syrian refugees regarding the aid they receive from the international community as well as their suggestions for addressing the key problems with this assistance. The recommendations stressed the need for greater coordination among the different stakeholders engaged in providing relief, underlining the importance of adopting a participatory approach. The need for clear information channels was also underlined. Additionally, discussions repeatedly requested greater monitoring of local organizations providing aid to refugees in order to eliminate gender-based violence perpetrated by their staff. There was a consensus about appointing more women aid workers in these organizations to provide services to women refugees, with the acknowledgement that women, like men, can also be perpetrators of gender-based violence.

Beyond the specific recommendations developed above, a further recommendation emerged from the process that will be useful in the next steps of the NAP development: conduct further awareness raising and **capacity building activities** targeting local communities and leaders, including religious leaders. These activities will enable communities to further engage in response efforts to the refugee crisis, including

combating gender-based violence. Linked to this, specific awareness raising on WPS and how local communities can participate in NAP implementation is critical to sustain their involvement in promoting peace and security in Jordan. This will also facilitate localization of the NAP. Local female leaders, civil society organizations and community based organizations should take the lead in engaging their communities. In the short term, regularly update diverse stakeholders, particularly non-state actors, **on the NAP drafting process** and offer the space for them to **provide feedback and influence its content. Establish institutional links** between the **Jordan Response Plan and the Jordan NAP on UNSCR 1325** where relevant and overlapping. Linked to this, ensure **institutional links** between the **Executive Plan of the current Jordanian National Strategy for Women** and the **Jordan NAP on UNSCR 1325**. Ensure that the NAP on UNSCR 1325 is linked to the national budgeting process.

Many participants were introduced to concepts of WPS and to UNSCR 1325 and its subsequent resolutions for the first time through these discussions. They were eager to learn about these ideas while engaging in discussions about local threats to security and envisioning local interventions to promote and activate international WPS commitments. Consultations identified security threats to local communities and defined priority areas and recommendations for the NAP on UNSCR 1325 and created a path for the greater involvement of local communities in future WPS initiatives and policy making, which will help ensure buy-in for the NAP and that it remains grounded in the local context.



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UN Women supports UN Member States as they set global standards for achieving gender equality, and works with governments and civil society to design laws, policies, programmes and services needed to implement these standards. It stands behind women's equal participation in all aspects of life, focusing on five priority areas: increasing women's leadership and participation; ending violence against women; engaging women in all aspects of peace and security processes; enhancing women's economic empowerment; and making gender equality central to national development planning and budgeting. UN Women also coordinates and promotes the UN system's work in advancing gender equality.



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