

# Security and Justice Challenges for **YOUTH** **IN JORDAN**



Jan  
2021

**Entry-Points for  
Community-Based  
SSG/R Programming**

# Table of Content

Youth Security and Safety Vulnerabilities	4
Drivers of Security Issues	11
Youth-Security Sector Engagement and Relationship in Jordan	14
Global Lessons from Local Security Mechanisms	17
Other Donor Youth-Related Programming (2018-2022)	20
List of interviews	21
References	21

# YOUTH IN JORDAN

## INTRODUCTION

The UK mandated ISSAT to identify security and justice challenges facing the youth in Jordan, in order to provide the UK with programming opportunities on community based SSG/R. This task included a rapid scoping of the safety, security and justice challenges facing youth in Jordan, a description of the ways in which youth and the security sector can meet and engage, and an account of international examples of youth-security sector engagement mechanisms.

The role of youth in peace and security is defined in the UNSC 2250 of 2015, which clarifies the importance of youth participation, protection, prevention, partnerships, and reintegration for sustainable peace and security (UNSC 2250, 2015). Significantly, this resolution was adopted under Jordan's leadership.

Definitions of youth vary. The UN definition counts all individuals between 15 and 29 as youth (UNSC 2250, 2015), while the League of Arab States extends the upper limit to 35 years. Broadly, this report works along the UN definition of youth but notes both the cultural significance of the divergence and the methodological challenges embodied in the lack of disaggregation by age by many of the sources used.

By both definitions, Jordan's youth is a very significant demographic segment. By one count made in 2018, 70% of Jordan's population is under thirty (Milton-Edwards, 2018). Jordan's youth mortality rate is low for a Lower Middle Income Country (LMIC) and is falling (OECD, 2018), and young Jordanians consider themselves very healthy on the whole (GYHI, 2017), but this age group faces significant safety challenges.

Statistically, the greatest threats to the safety of Jordanian youth are violence – in the form of sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV), and through bullying at school. Cyber bullying, drug abuse, mental health problems, access to justice challenges, violent extremism, irregular migration and public order events are threats to youth safety and security. The socioeconomic, healthcare and political ramifications of COVID-19 have, in different ways, exacerbated these challenges. This report identifies some fundamental drivers of youth insecurity. These include the country's poor economic performance, barriers to youth political and civic engagement, the conflict in Syria and Iraq, and unequal access to education.

This study is based on desk-based research and seven semi-structured interviews with donors, international organisations and national practitioners working on youth and security issues in Jordan. The research was carried out over the first half of November 2020.

This report is, by design, an initial scoping effort and aimed



Image: Mount Nebo, 2021 © Levi Meir Clancy, Unsplash.

to the mandating donor. Its findings are indicative and not conclusive. All its evidence is secondary and most of it is qualitative. The evidence can be particularly weak in terms of disaggregating youth of different nationalities. For instance, it may well be that certain groups – such as the youth component of migrant populations from for example South Asia or the Gulf countries, as well as and other labour migrants – have remained invisible in this research. In this spirit, these findings should form the basis for further research. It is with these limitations in mind that the report proposes a tentative hierarchy of security and safety challenges, placing those forms of everyday violence as the most pressing for the most youth in Jordan.

This report makes an initial outline of the ways in which youth in Jordan perceive and interact with the security sector. Youth, like most Jordanians, give extremely positive answers about the state's security and defence actors in surveys. As usual, there is cause to examine survey findings closely in light of factors such as freedom of speech and trust in research actors, and interviewees suggest that this relationship is more distant, more complex and less trustful at the local level, where traditional and tribal ties emerge more strongly.

This report outlines the ways in which youth and the security and justice sector engage. It also provides constructive comparison with common elements of the security engagement mechanisms in use in other parts of the world. These elements cover contextual analysis, linking local mechanisms to national mechanisms, representation and plurality, and contribution to conflict resolution. Alone, these are insufficient for building better relationships between the security sector and the community. These elements must be supported by institutional changes, notably more significant local police presence, adapted resourcing, partnership with the civil society and establishment of ways to ensure protection of vulnerable groups and prevent undue influence, in addition to wider accountability measures.

# **YOUTH SECURITY AND SAFETY VULNERABILITIES**







Image: Jordan, 2018 © UN Women

**One in four women** in Jordan had experienced domestic violence

## YOUTH SECURITY AND SAFETY VULNERABILITIES



### GENDER AND SEXUAL BASED VIOLENCE, DOMESTIC VIOLENCE AND HONOUR CRIMES

Youth in Jordan face a risk of being subjected to SGBV, domestic violence and other forms of gender-based harassment. Jordanian society is very patriarchal and gender-based violence is a widespread problem (UNFPA, 2020). Even before the COVID-19 pandemic, one-quarter of women in Jordan had experienced domestic violence, which are mostly (90%) carried out by male partners (UNFPA, 2020). These numbers are also found among young women, where one in four of married young women (15-29 years old) experienced domestic violence (Gausman et al., 2020). A majority of our interviewees confirmed that women are usually reluctant to report such crimes, as it is very sensitive.

Women therefore tend to not seek assistance from formal authorities because of shame, fear of stigma, social pressure or lack of protection. Reporting to formal authorities may also have repercussions for the woman's family, including her and her family's reputation. Sometimes a woman is not even aware that such crimes constitute gender-based violence (Jordan GBV Task Force, 2020; UNFPA, 2020). Transgender people, people in same-sex relations or women with disabilities are doubly marginalised (Interview, J01011). Girls can be at risk of early marriage (before age of 18), and those numbers are on the rise. These girls and young females are more at risk of violence compared to those married after their eighteenth birthday (UNICEF, 2019).

The criminal code in Jordan falls short of prohibiting these types of crimes. For example, marital rape is not

considered a crime, and crimes motivated by 'honour' usually receive milder sentences. Killing someone is a crime in Jordan, however, if family honour was established as a driver, it can be used to mitigate the sentence from capital punishment to a few years or months incarceration (Kaplanian and Gill, 2019)<sup>1</sup>. Some NGOs provide support, with very little formal and legal support by the security and justice institutions, to female victims of violence. During the COVID-19 pandemic, virtual support platforms were established and received positive feedback by users; however, discrepancies in awareness and access to security and justice provision are visible across localities (UNFPA, 2020).

Family honour and the 'shame culture' generate multiple forms of violence that particularly target women and girls. Jordan has one of the world's highest rates of honour killings (Gausman et al, 2020). The government previously had a dedicated special police force under the Family Protection Department, within the Public Security Directorate (PSD), with a mandate for preventing and investigating honour killings, domestic violence, sexual abuse and child violence. This police force was created at the end of the 1990's to serve closer to the people. Later, this police force was transformed to a special legal branch. Its existence does show that the Jordanian authorities are aware of the particular crimes towards women, but in practice this is not very effective (Sarhan, 2019). Instead, informal and tribal structures continue to heavily influence social and political values, as well as, day-to-day life standards with regards to gender-based violence, sexual-based violence and domestic violence.

<sup>1</sup> For more information, see Jordanian Criminal Code Articles 98 and 340.

## VIOLENCE IN SCHOOLS

In 1981, the Jordanian Ministry of Education banned corporal punishment in schools. However, students continue to experience high levels of emotional and physical abuse at school, as well as at home (UNICEF, 2017). Indeed, interviewees reported that violence at school was a real and everyday problem facing many youths and children in Jordan (Interview, JO1014). Violence is reported to occur in the form of student-on-student, teacher-on-student and student-on-teacher (Alzyoud et al, 2016). No national statistics reflecting on the scale of the problem are available. However, the organisation Gender and Adolescence Global Evidence (GAGE) is in the process of gathering baseline data on the issue. GAGE's ongoing quantitative-qualitative approach estimates that 44% of Jordanian young adolescents experience violence in schools (GAGE, 2019).

Violence is also gendered, in the sense that there are different trends in the way that it affects boys and girls. While boys tend to experience it on the way to school and risk more severe beatings from teachers, girls report verbal abuse and harassment (GAGE, 2019). Other research on bullying in Jordanian schools indicates that boys are more likely to be bullied, and that adolescents with low socioeconomic status or illiterate fathers were more likely to be victims. (Shahro-ur et al., 2020). Being bullied may also correspond with lower academic performance in some students (Shaheen et al., 2018).

Cyber bullying and cyber harassment are other forms of harassment and violence towards youth which have

Research shows that women tend to feel somewhat secure when walking alone at night; however, our consultations have shown that perceptions of insecurity tend to increase when at home. According to the 2019 national records, an 8% increase in reported SGBV crimes was observed (Euro-Med Human Rights Monitor, 2020). A 2020 study by UNFPA highlights that 69% of young women state that violence has increased during the pandemic, especially physical and emotional abuse. The same study indicates that one in five girls has experienced domestic violence since the beginning of the COVID-19 the pandemic. This finding should be caveated by a possible decrease in reporting during the pandemic due to close proximity between family members under lockdown. The COVID-19 lockdown policy has also further complicated access to protection and justice services by state institutions for women and girls (UNFPA, 2020 and Interview, JO1011). Jordan has developed 'The Jordanian National Action Plan for the implementation of UN Security Council resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security (2018-2021) (JONAP). JONAP focuses on the role of women in security sector reform and peace operations, in preventing violent extremism, responding to female refugees in Jordan, and finally by building a culture of peace, justice and gender equality with a focus on youth and preventing gender-based violence. Implementation is overseen by the Inter-Ministerial Committee on Women's Empowerment, which is chaired by different ministries in rotation. Accountability of the implementation of JONAP lies with the Prime Minister's office. Donors' interest in the UNSCR 1325 agenda is very high in Jordan and JONAP continues to receive strong donor support (UN Women, 2017).

**Cyber  
bullying**  
is another form  
of harassment  
and violence  
towards youth



Image: Jordan, 2019 © Zibik, Pixabay.

increased during the COVID-19 period. One in five girls, between the ages of 10 to 17 years, stated that this is the most prevalent form of violence during the COVID-19 pandemic (UNFPA, 2020; Interview, JO1014). Increasingly, youth are using digital technologies to cyber bully either alongside other forms of harassment taking place in schools, or separately. Cyber bullying and blackmailing might also be a part of gender-based violence, for example, where men and male youth blackmail young women and female youth, by posting pictures of them without their hijab or wearing ‘inappropriate clothing’ (JO1011). Cyber bullying is not exclusive to schools and takes place in other parts of society and youth environments.

Students are not the only target of violence in schools, and violence from students against teachers is also recorded, with one study interpreting the causes to be “teachers, school administration, school environment, media, and family [moral] conditions” (Alzyoud et al, 2016). This finding is corroborated by GAGE, which found that students use violence against teachers who do not award them good grades (GAGE, 2019). Teacher fatigue, which lowers teachers’ performance in terms of academics and pastoral duties is a factor in violence (Alzyoud et al, 2016). Due to wage stagnation and real value loss, many teachers are obliged to take other jobs, which is a major source of the fatigue (JO1014). There is also a culture of stigma around being bullied, where students feel ashamed to seek help (Shahrour et al., 2020).

It is worth emphasising that national statistical and quantitative data on the problem of violence against children in Jordan is not available. It is probable that underreporting occurs given the stigma around being bullied and the acceptance of the culture of bullying by some families. A review of the literature on child abuse in Jordan (a wider but interlocking issue) published between 2000-2020 suggests that Jordan has comparable figures to other developing countries (Khatib, 2020). However, it is also notable that violence against children has a new salience not just in the perspectives of interviewees, but also in the national media. The kidnapping and mutilation of a 16-year-old Jordanian in Zarqa on 15 October, where the victim was sexually assaulted, had his hands amputated and his eyes gouged (Naar, 2020), incited nationwide disgust and underscored interest in combating violence against children.

On a programmatic level, the Ministry of Education and UNICEF started working on reducing violence in schools in 2009 with the ‘Together Towards a Safe School’ campaign; their programme entitled Tarbiyeh (Arabic for ‘education’ or ‘upbringing’) appears to be ongoing (UNICEF, 2017).

Into the darkness, 2016 © Ander Burdain, Unsplash



**Interlocutors  
identified  
drug abuse  
as a significant and  
rising issue**

## DRUG CRIME AND SUBSTANCE ABUSE

In terms of the risk to youth from criminality, interlocutors identified drug abuse as a significant and rising issue, indicating that recreational drugs are becoming more widespread amongst youth. It appears that three illicit drugs are the most used among youth: hashish (marijuana resin), ‘captagon’ (Fenethylline: a codrug of amphetamine and theophylline but often comprising other substances) and ‘joker’ (synthetic cannabinoids) (Interview JO1014).

Unfortunately, there is little data available on substance abuse disaggregated according to age, but there is a set of evidence that points to the nature and scale of drug abuse in the population as a whole. In addition to the three aforementioned controlled substances, heroin, benzodiazepines and alcohol are frequently abused drugs (Yasin, Bulatova and Wazaify, 2020). In terms of non-prescription drugs, which tend to be those most abused by 26 to 50-year-old Jordanians, community pharmacists in Amman, Irbid and Zarqa report that the most frequently abused are cough and cold preparations followed by systemic nasal decongestants, and to a lesser extent simple analgesics, antihistamines, laxatives, and alcohol (Wazaify et al., 2017, p. 3)<sup>2</sup>. The lack of data on how drug related harms among youth should also highlight the need for more research on this area.

<sup>2</sup> Older Jordanians (50 years and above) tend to be more likely to abuse prescription drugs, including benzodiazepine sedative hypnotics followed by anticholinergic anti-Parkinson drugs, certain ophthalmic preparations (cyclopentolate, naphazoline, and antazoline), and pregabalin (anti-epileptic).



Jordan is traditionally mainly a transit country for drugs, but drug crime is increasing. Public Security Directorate (PSD) crime statistics between 2014-2018, reported incidents of drug trafficking have risen by the considerable amount of 346 percent (Walsh, 2019). At least one illicit drug factory has been shut down recently in Jordan. In January 2018, authorities closed a facility making amphetamine-based pills and apprehended its operators (VOA, 2018). This marks a change towards Jordan becoming a production site within the larger amphetamine production chain that stretches to Europe and other parts of Asia. Jordanian authorities appear to be increasingly aware of this threat, announcing a rehabilitation clinic for youth in December 2018 (Kayed, 2018). However, this problem does not seem to have yet caught donor's interests, especially in connection with a wider security and justice angle.

## EMERGING FORMS OF CRIMINALITY IN THE COVID-19 PERIOD

COVID-19 has added a strain on the Jordanian youth's future outlook. The pandemic has also revealed new forms of criminality. Domestic violence, petty crimes, extortion, blackmail, illicit drug trafficking, as well as, cyber-crime have increased significantly. Due to loss of job opportunities, many have become involved in drug trafficking and smuggling to gain income (Interview, JO1012).

During the COVID-19 period, there has been an increase in cyber-crime as more daily life moved to online platforms and social media. Jordanian youth are among the most frequent users of social media (96%) in the MENA region (Arab Barometer, 2019). Despite the efforts of the Cybercrime Unit (CCU) and the updated cybercrime law in 2015, Jordanian capabilities to obtain digital evidence, investigate and resolve the crimes remains very limited.

The recent 'Zarqa crime' (the aforementioned mutilation of a youth) was reported by international media and has embarrassed national authorities. It has brought to the front of the scene a different type of criminality related to gang activity, which could also be linked to activities of extortion and blackmail targeting small shop owners in particular. These gangs are perceived to be composed of young men who could be pushed into this role due to deteriorating socio-economic conditions with a possible link to violent extremism in certain regions.



Image: Petra, 2020 © Leon Wu, Unsplash.

## MENTAL HEALTH

Broadly, Jordanian youth do not report themselves to be unhealthy in psychosocial terms. On average, Jordanian youth are more satisfied with their lives than youth in other LMICs, even while they are less happy than youth in OECD countries (OECD Development Centre, 2018). In line with international levels, university students report moderate levels of depression, severe levels of anxiety, and moderate levels of stress (Dalky and Gharaibeh, 2019). According to the Global Youth Wellness Index, almost 9 in 10 Jordanian youths think they are in perfect health – a number matched in the world only by the youth of China (GYWI, 2017).

However, certain segments of Jordanian youth face particular psychosocial health challenges. Refugees may be more likely to suffer distress than those in the host population, even if by small amounts (International Medical Corps, 2019). For instance, a 2013 study revealed that adolescents living in the Za'atari refugee camp struggled with grief, fear, and sadness, in addition to suffering from witnessed and perceived violence within the camp (UNICEF & International Medical Corps, 2014). Urban refugees report more distress than those in camps, and both Jordanians and refugees with no formal education show more distress than those with formal education (International Medical Corps, 2019).

There is stigma around talking about mental health problems in Jordan, and this is affected by gender, with girls and women more impacted than others (Gearing et al., 2015). Almost one third of barriers to mental health-care are cultural or stigma based (Gearing et al., 2013). A major problem for wellbeing among both Syrians and Jordanians is economic instability – common to both camp and urban settings (International Medical Corps, 2019), a driver that is likely to increase in magnitude given Jordan's economic outlook.





Zaatari refugee camp, 2014 © Dominic Chavez, World Bank.

## VIOLENT EXTREMISM AND RADICALIZATION

Violent extremism carries much weight in donors' security analysis and programming in Jordan. And although far more youth are affected by bullying and SGBV than violent extremism, it remains a significant threat, nonetheless. Generally, there are a multitude of factors leading to youth radicalisation. Some of the most common factors are, for example, the deteriorating socio-economic conditions and poor future. Lack of accountability and wide-spread perceptions of private and public sector corruption, as well as dysfunctional household structures, weak social cohesion; and unbalanced gender roles also contribute to youth radicalisation (Wana Institute, 2017b).

The lack of access to common public spaces where young men and women can engage on matters of shared interest could also be a factor contributing towards more radical or violent extremism. It is by no means enough to be simply 'young and idle'. Social networks, as well as powerful radical messaging have also been decisive factors in youth radicalization in Jordan (Mercy Corps, 2015a). A US-funded project operating in several Jordanian cities has supported the development of safe spaces online and offline for Jordanian youth. By providing safe spaces for youth to meet, the project contributes to creating a sense of belonging and personal agency for youth. The project is supported by a digital component which increases support for community-driven, youth-focused programming, encouraging overall participation in communi-

ty-led efforts. The online campaign promotes awareness around community issues, increases support for dialogue around community efforts, advocates for the role of youth in increasing community resilience and cohesion, raises awareness of the importance of unity and social identity, tells stories about Jordanian people, culture, and society, and engages the page's followers in polls and questions to better understand and serve the beneficiary community (Interview JO1015).

Donors are very active in the field of Prevention of Violent Extremism (PVE) in Jordan. Programming seeks to address the root causes through, for instance, providing professional and vocational training (Interview, JO1010; Interview, JO1014; Wana Institute, 2017a). Donor support to counter-terrorism programming in Jordan in the shape of downstream security assistance, is an area of considerable activity. Notably, the PSD does not have a PVE strategy that is open and accessible. An action plan to prevent violent extremism does exist but it remains confidential (European Commission, 2020).

In Jordan, youth vulnerability to recruitment into ideologies and organisations of violent extremism is higher in certain places. Reportedly, Zarqa, Irbid, Ma'an and Salt have produced the majority of Jordanian fighters in the Syrian and Iraq conflict (Speckhard, 2017), although this report does not substantiate that claim. In addition to Karak, these areas have a traditional adher-

ence to Salafi thought (Yom and Sammour, 2017). Generally, there is a complex of factors in play in making youth vulnerable to radicalization including poverty, since Ma' and Irbid are two of Jordan's poorest cities, although Irbid is wealthier. State capacity short-fall is also a factor and most of Jordan's mosques without state-assigned imams are in disadvantaged cities (Yom and Sammour, 2017). The absence of a state-assigned imam in a mosque means that the government has less control over the messaging.

Radical thoughts and beliefs are reportedly prevalent in refugee camps with almost half (46.7%) of Syrian youth refugees found to have radical thoughts and beliefs (Al-Badayneh et al., 2017). With a sample of 714 respondents with average of 16 years old, 65% male and 35% female, Al-Badayneh et al. found three explanations for this figure; firstly due to personal causes such as age, gender and mental health such as low self-confidence; secondly, due to socio-economic personal and family situation, such as income and education level; and thirdly, societal explanations such as lack of social cohesion. Around one in three of the respondents had been subjected to violence and almost half of the sample had participated in a fight with other youth. (Al-Badayneh et al., 2017).

## ACCESS TO JUSTICE AND JUVENILE JUSTICE

Youth tend to request judicial support for matters concerning family issues, neighbourhood conflict, employment and accidents. While youth tend to request judicial support for matters concerning family issues, neighbourhood conflict, employment and accidents, they tend to do so less than other age groups, which points to a gap in access to and justice provision. (Hiil, 2017). The justice system presents many particular concerns for women, as their testimonies in personal status courts only count for half that of a man. In criminal and administrative courts women's testimonies are considered equal to men's (Euro-Med, 2018).

Justice institutions acknowledge the fact that criminality among youth is increasing while they do not have sufficient capability to handle such cases. A new juvenile justice law was introduced in 2014 by the Ministry of Social Development. The new law introduced for example alternative sanctions such as community services. The new law also introduced juvenile units among some authorities such as police, courts, detention centres etc., but challenges remain in terms of unequal geographical access and insufficient trained staff members. Additionally, not all cases involving youth and children are handled by such specialised units. The new law also introduced a so-called 'conciliation judge' to resolve issues through alternative sanctions, as well as an 'implementation judge' with the aim to follow-up on these alternative sanctions (Interview, JO1017). The Jordanian Ministry of

## A new juvenile justice law was introduced in 2014 by the Ministry of Social Development

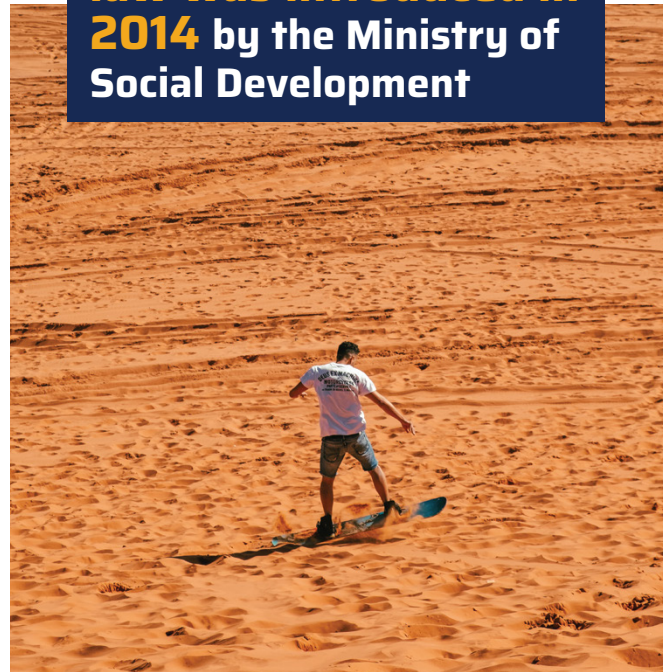


Image: Wadi Rum, 2019 © Andrea Leopardi, Unsplash.

Justice opened a 'one-stop-shop' for juveniles in a dedicated building in Amman two years ago. It incorporates police, attorney general's staff and specialised juvenile judges. The aim is for youth to increase their access to justice services and ensure their right in privacy by segregating them from other convicted persons or criminals in other courts. Further, the construction and equipment were adapted to secure juvenile's integrity (Interview, JO1017).

Despite the new law, youth are often subject to discrimination and violations of rights and guiding principles of the Rights of the Child<sup>3</sup>, in the formal system (UNICEF, 2018). Lack of formal juvenile justice structures and equal access to justice for youth encourages this age group to turn to informal justice mechanisms instead. Informal justice mechanisms are almost always used for family or individual matters (Hiil, 2017). However, biases against women persist in the informal justice mechanisms especially through tribal processes, which are loaded with prejudices and gender bias (Wana Institute, 2015).

Interviewees converged on the need for justice reform in Jordan that would harmonize informal justice mechanisms with the formal sector, ensuring human rights compliance and gender equality. Particular attention needs to be invested in migrant and refugee community members, as well as in developing skills in reconciliation and mediation techniques, amongst the staff responsible for juveniles at the Ministry of Social Development, police and judiciary to better handle youth with special needs and the perpetrators and victims of juvenile crime (Interview, JO1017).

<sup>3</sup> As set out in the convention on the Rights of the Child (1989)

## CONFLICT AND FLIGHT

Conflict and flight from conflict are a major driver of insecurity for refugee youth in Jordan. Youth make up half of the migrant community in Jordan (WFP, 2020). Around 650,000 Syrian refugees are registered with UNHCR, equal to 10% of Jordan's current population (UNHCR, 2020). Estimates assume that, in addition, there is around 1 million unregistered Syrian refugees reside in Jordan. Other large refugee communities are of Iraqi and Yemeni origins. There are 67,000 Iraqi refugees and 11,000 Yemeni refugees registered with UNHCR in Jordan, with the vast majority of them settled in the Capital Governorate (UNHCR, 2019). Jordan is considered as an attractive country of destination for migrants from Arab countries (Jordan Response Plan for the Syria Crisis 2020-2022) and as such Jordan hosts a broad variety of migrants, from asylum seekers to labour migrants. Most Syrian refugees live in urban settlements, but Za'atari camp is home for around 70,000 refugees, making it Jordan's fourth largest 'city' (WFP, 2020).

The situation in refugee camps is particularly concerning with widespread SGBV crimes, lack of proper documentation and discrimination. Donors programmes engage migrant youth through educational, sports and cultural activities, as well as vocational and professional training. Donor programmes with this group also include support to business development, legal support and other related activities. Despite much donor focus on educational programs in refugee camps, girls' participation lags behind.

Criminal activity amongst migrants and refugees in camps due to frustration over living conditions is of high concern. The infiltration of camps by unregistered persons or criminal groups is a common phenomenon. Many such incidents are not formally reported to the police, partly because of lack of police presence in camps, and so are adjudicated by community security mechanisms (UNODC, 2016).

The Jordanian government is not deporting people currently, but many migrants have lost their regular status and have been pushed towards employment in the informal sector. Having incomplete documentation is particularly common to refugee youth since most left Syria before the legal age limit. As a consequence, they may never have been registered and in adulthood it becomes more difficult to register births, marriages and deaths. Lack of identity documents also increase risks of arrest, detention and deportation. It also hinders freedom of movement and access to work, education, health and social services (NRC, IRCKHF and IBC, 2016). This situation results in increased legal, physical and socioeconomic vulnerabilities. For instance, in a situation common to other refugee-hosting countries in MENA, fear of being arrested and deported for having incomplete documents means that some youth confine themselves to their homes. Poverty among refugees is also a factor in early marriages, including barriers to education and the labour market (NRC, IRCKHF and IBC, 2016).

**Around 650,000 Syrian refugees are registered with UNHCR**

## YOUTH POLITICAL PARTICIPATION

In the past two years, protests and demonstrations have become a more common feature of Jordanian political life. Issues that continue to generate protests include Jordanian gas deals with Israel, Israeli annexation of the West Bank, the US-Israeli 'Deal of the Century'<sup>4</sup>, Israel's normalisation agreements with Gulf states, renewed fears of the prospect of watan badeel<sup>5</sup>, as well as a cluster of economic grievances including government austerity measures and International Monetary Fund conditions (including those affecting teachers' pay), new tax measures, unemployment, affordability of living and general human dignity, as well as tighter regulation of the border economy.

<sup>5</sup> These contentious issues affect youth and bring them into demonstrations. The Jordanian security sector's public order capacity (performed mostly by the Gendarmerie prior to its merger with the PSD) is excellent relative to surrounding states. However, there remain safety issues for youth (both protestors and police officers) in terms of exposure to the crowd dynamics of large protests, which have become more volatile in the last year, and in relation

to exposure to public order techniques including tear gas use. Human Rights Watch has reported a hardening of state response to protests – tracking an increase in arrests of demonstrators and anti-corruption campaigners; the organisation also points to the use of gag orders, harassment and arrests to limit media coverage (HRW, 2020). In 2018, a Brookings publication claimed that security agencies particularly targeted student leaders such as those in the National Campaign for the Rights of Students: members complain that they are treated as enemies of the state rather than participants in civil society and lack platforms to engage civically (Milton-Edwards, 2018). Youth political activism has changed in Jordan since 2011, a moment that enlivened political consciousness and saw the emergence of the hiraq ('movement'). The hiraq emerged as a civil resistance movement with reform demands and saw an increase in youth initiatives and organisations. These broader socio-political movements among youth may have given way to more specific and single-issue campaigns – such as the 'My Citizenship' campaign to advocate for maternal citizenship rights (Harris, 2015).

<sup>4</sup> This term was used by proponents of the proposal developed between President Trump and Prime Minister Netanyahu, officially titled 'Peace to Prosperity: A Vision to Improve the Lives of the Palestinian and Israeli People'

<sup>5</sup> Arabic for 'alternative homeland', this is the term given to the idea that Palestinians might abandon the cause of Palestine east of the Jordan River and 'capture' Jordan as their homeland.



# **DRIVERS OF SECURITY ISSUES**







Image: Amman, 2019 © Dimitris Vetsikas, Pixabay.

## Socioeconomic factors are a key driver of youth insecurity in Jordan

### DRIVERS OF SECURITY ISSUES



#### DETERIORATING SOCIOECONOMIC CONDITIONS AND UNEMPLOYMENT

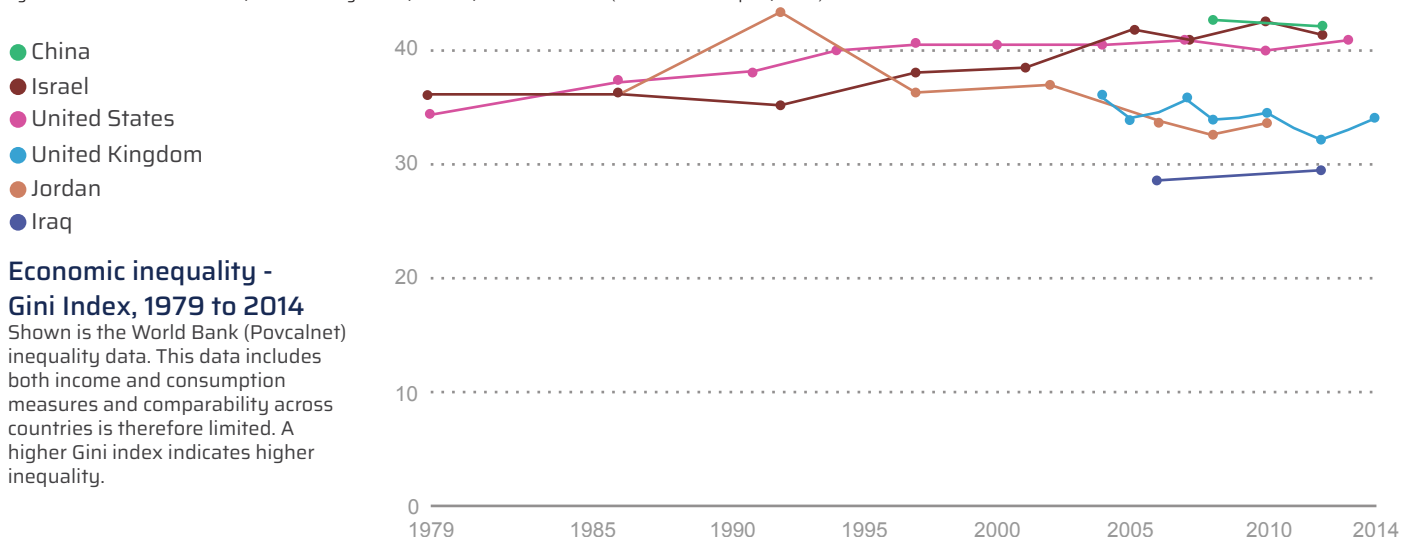
Socioeconomic factors are a key driver of youth insecurity in Jordan. In 2019, 37.28% of youth in total were reported unemployed (World Bank, 2019)<sup>7</sup>. Out of these, youth male unemployment<sup>6</sup> was 34.25% and youth female unemployment was 50% in 2019<sup>8</sup> (World Bank, 2019). (These figures reflect the fact that there are fewer women eligible to be considered as unemployed.). The total youth unemployment rose to 50% by the last quarter of 2020 (World Bank, 2021).

Almost nine in ten women and men in Jordan aged between 10 to 49 years believe the COVID-19 pandemic will affect their economic situation badly and potentially lead to increased poverty. What is striking is that 85.5% of girls and boys aged between 10-17 years are also

concerned about their economic situation due to COVID-19 (UNFPA, 2020).

Socioeconomic inequality in Jordan is medium for its MENA neighbourhood, which is nonetheless the most unequal region in the world (Alvaredo et al, 2018). Jordan's Gini Coefficient stands at 31.8, putting it somewhere in the middle in global rankings and in a comparable position to the U.K. Jordan has low inequality, in their conditions as poor, between urban and rural populations, with some variation between governorates. Amman and Jarash have the highest per capita expenditure, with Ma'an and Ajlun being the lowest (UNDP and UNICEF, 2015). Those in the Badia communities and camp dwellers are disproportionately more represented in the lower levels of income distribution (UNDP and UNICEF, 2015).

Figure 1. The Gini index of Jordan, two of its neighbours, the U.K., China and the US (Roser & Ortiz-Ospina, 2020)



#### Economic inequality - Gini Index, 1979 to 2014

Shown is the World Bank (Povcalnet) inequality data. This data includes both income and consumption measures and comparability across countries is therefore limited. A higher Gini index indicates higher inequality.

<sup>6</sup> Out of male labour force ages 15-24, ILO estimate

<sup>7</sup> Out of female labour force ages 15-24, ILO estimate

<sup>8</sup> The OECD ventures three causes of poor youth unemployment: first, the mismatch between graduates' skillsets and those skills required by the labour market (a cause of high unemployment among university graduates); second, the low capacity of the private and public sector to absorb new market labour entrants; and third the lack of national policy and programming that supports a school-to-work transition, including vocational training and career guidance (OECD, 2015).

Around three-quarters of Jordanian youth feel that Jordan is governed in the interests of the few (Centre for Insights in Survey Research, 2019), and the economy is a prime driver of protests and demonstrations, which expose youth to the handful of aforementioned risks. Poverty and unemployment can be one factor, amongst many, that lead Jordanians to join violent extremist groups (Harper and Scotti, 2018). Nevertheless, research on patterns of Daesh and Jabhat al-Nusra recruitment of Jordanians emphasises the importance of social networks, powerful messaging (Mercy Corps, 2015a) and identity politics (Harper and Scotti, 2018). Lack of future economic opportunities affects youth's psycho-social health as they find it increasingly difficult to envisage their future and life milestones, including marriage and family (International Medical Corps, 2017). It is Jordan's poor economic performance that is the largest spoiler for the country's score in the Global Youth Wellness Index (GYWI, 2017).



Image: Jordanian Parliament, 2018 © Ahmed Adbu, Jordan Press.

## LACK OF INSTITUTIONAL INCLUSIVENESS

One of the key drivers of youth recruitment into violent extremist groups is the poor participation of youth in mainstream public policy, governance and decision-making processes (Arab Barometer, 2019a). This lack of involvement in decision making starts at family level and extends to national level. In the personal sphere, youth are discouraged from making their own life decisions because of social norms which require them to follow family decisions. This is further increased by poor financial income and ability for financial independence. However, according to Arab Barometer 2019 Youth Report, 55% of Jordanian youth believe that the husband (father or head of the household) should have the final say in most matters (Arab Barometer, 2019a).

When it comes to politics at the local and national level, youth in Jordan lack opportunities and knowledge of the political landscape and how to influence policies and decisions. The institutional framework for youth engagement involves several institutions but lacks coherence (OECD Development Centre, 2018). Only 25% of youth say that they are interested in politics (Arab Barometer, 2019a). Certain forms of youth participation are underdeveloped, such as direct involvement in designing and elaborating activities and access to engagement information and tools (OECD Development Centre, 2018). Additionally, Jordan has a minimal tradition of civic volunteering, another factor in low youth engagement (Interview, JO1011).

Youth are discouraged from electoral voting because of widespread perceptions of corruption and lack of democratic norms and structures. Corruption is widespread in Jordan, which adds to youth perception around unjust societal structures. Furthermore, the

minimum age limit for political candidacy is 30 years old for parliament and 25 years old for municipal councils (Nima Strategic Intelligence, 2018). In the 2016 parliamentary elections, only a quarter of eligible youth aged 17-24 actually cast a vote, which is a significant shortfall. Lack of civic education could also be a factor in a deteriorating sense of community contribution and service (JO1014).

Low wages for teachers are generating a need for teachers to seek additional employment elsewhere, causing general fatigue and lack of access (JO1014). The current protest movement by teachers disputing wage cuts and demanding increases, may well signal a disaffection with the system with consequences for teaching performance. As mentioned, poor school performance is a factor in violence at schools.

Inequality of access to education by children with disabilities, refugee children and children involved in early labour is a challenge in Jordan. Many schools have created double shifts to absorb Jordanian children and Syrian refugees, this is causing additional strain on the system (JO1014). Boys are more likely to drop out of school because of issues such as violence or bullying, whereas girls are more likely to be kept at home because of household duties.

**55%**  
of Jordanian youth believe  
that the husband should have  
the final say in most matters

# **YOUTH-SECURITY SECTOR ENGAGEMENT AND RELATIONSHIP IN JORDAN**







**9 in 10 Jordanian youth have a great deal or quite a lot of trust in the Police**

Amman, 2019 © OHCHR

## YOUTH-SECURITY SECTOR ENGAGEMENT AND RELATIONSHIP IN JORDAN



### YOUTH ATTITUDES: NATIONAL TRUST AND LOCAL DISCREPANCIES

Surveys on attitudes towards the state security and defence sectors generate positive responses in Jordan. Around nine in ten Jordanian youth have a great deal or quite a lot of trust in the police, while eight in ten are satisfied or very satisfied with the government's provision of security and order, and seven in ten find it easy or very easy to get help from public security when needed (Arab Barometer, 2018). Other surveys corroborate this general result (Zogby Research Services, 2018; Centre for Insights in Survey Research, 2019). Furthermore, according to a national survey, youth trust the state security sector more than their tribe, the judiciary and tribal leaders (Centre for Insights in Survey Research, 2019). This would indicate that the average Jordanian youth feel safe, trust the police and are willing to seek help from them, going to them before going to other actors.<sup>9</sup>

Perception surveys reflect on the popularity of the armed forces (the PSD, Gendarmerie and JAF) in the national imagination, which is tied to the armed forces' role in seminal moments of Jordanian history. However, on the local level, this relationship becomes more complex. At the local level, there is a stronger community inclination towards traditional structures or tribal leaders. This is coupled with lower levels of understanding and knowledge of local state security and justice providers.

Depending on the sources of insecurity, personal and family cases tend to prioritise traditional or tribal avenues. Against this backdrop, a general sense of

caution informs youth's relationship with internal security forces. Perceptions of possible interference in personal lives and communications were expressed by several interlocutors. A disconnect might also be detectable between state security services and community security needs. Whilst the state might focus on general security and safety issues, very little room exists in Jordan for youth to influence state security forces' contribution to their community's needs. The culture of community 'service' appears to be a foreign concept to state security actors. The lack of community inclusiveness could be increasing the sense of marginalisation of Jordanian youth, putting the social contract under strain.

### STATE-COMMUNITY LOCAL SECURITY MECHANISMS

The Public Security Directorate (PSD) has sought to achieve rapprochement between the police and the local community through many initiatives. In the 1980s, a local security committee was established in every police station across Jordan. This was intended to represent the local community, including men, women and youth and support police officers in their duties. The aim was to create community-state partnerships and deal with any local unrest, discontent or conflict. The broader aim was to engage with the community, serve the community while being overseen by the police chief.

In reality, despite some geographic exceptions, youth are often unaware of these committees' which often consist of elderly and retired public or security officers. Meetings are often ad hoc and take place outside working hours, thus perceived to be additional work (Interview, JO1011;

<sup>9</sup> As usual, there is cause to examine survey findings closely in light of factors such as freedom of speech, freedom of expression and lack of confidence.



Interview, JO1012). Whilst these committees are intended to serve the community, they seem to have a stronger allegiance to PSD.

At the national level, Jordan's Community Policing Department (CDP) is part of the PSD. It is attached to every police station across the country. It is composed of approximately 300 officers (private NCO and commissioned) (Interview, JO1011). It supports community engagement activities and local policing (Interview, JO1012).

The UK has supported the Jordanian police to increase community policing structures in Syrian refugee camps and host communities, as well as other aspects of policing. In addition to the UK, other donors, in collaboration with Jordanian authorities, have supported increased community policing structures and approaches in refugee camps. Similar programs have also been implemented in host communities in border areas in Jordan.

The 'Friends of the Police' initiative is a Jordanian programme that aims to attract civilian engagement with the Jordanian police. It targets youth, amongst other groups. The aim of this program is to strengthen the relationship among civilians and the police apparatus and to create leaders among the community who can support the police structures, spread knowledge, engage communities and solve conflicts. (Interview, JO1012).

Another initiative is the 'Community Champions' program which aims to improve social cohesion, community safety and awareness, and which encompasses the participation of women. A few other community-based mechanisms exist such as the 'Community Peace Centres', which were established by the PSD in 2015 to fight radicalisation and violent extremism through increased human and institutional capacity. They also organise de-radicalisation and reintegration programs. Japan and UNODC have been supporting this process (The Jordan Times, 2017; BBC, 2015). However, their success has been questioned and the European Commission are recently beginning to work on a project with the aim to develop the Community Peace Centres efficiency (European Commission, 2020).

Another mechanism is the donor-funded 'Municipal Local Prevention Networks', set up with support from Denmark and also funded by the Netherlands. These are local bodies found in Al-Karak, Irbid, and Zarqa (as well as three regions in Lebanon) with the aim to deliver local initiatives and build social cohesion against violent extremism. These networks are locally owned bodies, facilitated and consisting of local practitioners such as faith leaders, NGOs, government officials, teachers, social workers and community police officers. They meet on a monthly basis to discuss factors and behaviours of risk and share good practices and experiences (Strong Cities, 2020).

## INFORMAL SECURITY AND JUSTICE MECHANISMS

Tribal security and informal justice mechanisms are widespread in Jordan. The tribal leader is almost exclusively a man and the group follow a hierarchical order. The tribe system has a very long history and still plays a crucial role in the security and justice space in Jordan. The electoral and parliamentary system in Jordan may increase the relevance of tribal affiliation in the political process. In certain cases, access to public services is facilitated through tribal arrangements. However, today's youth may be freer from tribal constraints than their parents because of different socio-political situations (Rowland, 2009).

The tribe is an important party in resolving conflicts in Jordan (Rowland, 2009). Tribal security and justice mechanisms are particularly used in individual, family or community matters - areas where government structures also tend to be weak to resolve disputes or solve crimes (Interview, JO1011). In that sense, the tribal structure is the primary instance before the governmental justice and rule of law processes. Jordan lacks free, universal and accessible legal aid despite efforts by some NGOs. As a result, the tribal system is often the first instance for judicial matters. Women tend to prefer tribal and local structures if reporting problems or crimes. However, they are often excluded from appearing at tribal justice processes, prohibited to speak before a man or select members of the group, and can be excluded from taking part in formulating agreements and being a member of the tribes' deciding board (Wana Institute, 2015).

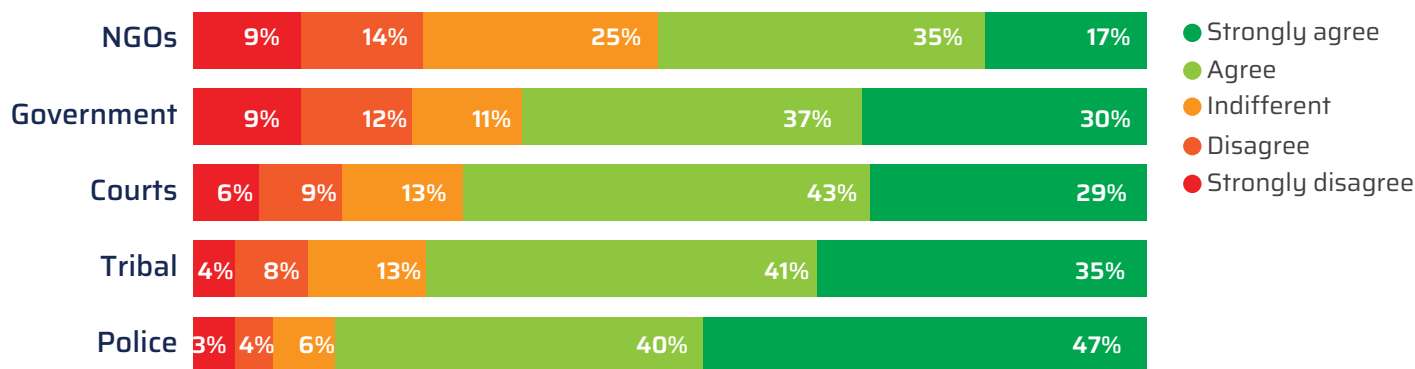
However, informal justice services are not limited to tribal mechanisms, Jordanians seek neighbours, peers or community elderly for resolving personal conflict. Only 20% of youth prefer formal resolution mechanisms to informal mechanisms (Hiil, 2017).



**Tribal security and informal justice mechanisms are widespread in Jordan.**

Image: Petra, 2019 © Alex Azabache, Unsplash.

## INSTITUTIONAL TRUST



Source: Rodrigo Núñez et al., 2017

## FORMAL AND INFORMAL MECHANISMS: ADVANTAGES AND DISADVANTAGES

Jordan has well developed formal and informal judicial mechanisms which both serve various purposes. Currently, national discourse, as well as donor assistance seem to converge towards a need to start harmonising the formal and informal sectors, including finding common grounds, identifying linkages for case forwarding and clarifying human rights commitments, as well as the key issue of national oversight and accountability. The below is an indicative list of what emerged during the research and interviews. The UK might wish to deepen analysis through a dedicated study around complementarities and linkages between formal and informal mechanisms.

### Formal mechanisms:

#### Advantages:

- Institutions and the legal framework are relatively well developed;
- Access to justice is generally fair, albeit with some geographical and gendered limitations;
- Jordanians trust state judicial institutions to a large extent; with discrepancies at local levels;
- Jordanians have very high trust in law enforcement actors such as the police.

#### Disadvantages:

- Youth are less inclined to report crimes to the formal system;
- Youth can be discriminated against in the formal system;
- Absence of free legal aid and the legal processes lengthy;
- Perceptions of widespread corruption, undue influence hampers trust and engagement by the youth;
- Lack of awareness by youth of opportunities and entry-points to access and contribute to formal mechanisms.

### Informal mechanisms:

#### Advantages:

- The informal structures are intimately anchored in the social, economic and political spheres in Jordan and many families are part of a tribe;
- Jordanians, including youth, have easy access to a widespread tribal safety net and a feeling of community cohesion;
- Informal structures are perceived to have a quick turnaround in almost any matter which makes it a timely choice to consult (Yom, 2014);
- Tribal structures can be more relevant and culturally accepted than certain aspects of the state legal and judicial system.

#### Disadvantages:

- Lack of common standards and records;
- Discriminatory practices;
- Lack of oversight and accountability;
- Questionable human rights compliance;
- The deeply rooted shame and honour culture has a particular impact on girls and females and is punitive of particular practices in their private and sexual life.

# **GLOBAL LESSONS FROM LOCAL SECURITY MECHANISMS**





Jordan, 2018 © Craig Boudreaux, Unsplash.

## GLOBAL LESSONS FROM LOCAL SECURITY MECHANISMS



ISSAT studied a number of local security mechanisms around the world to draw out lessons for the Jordanian context. These mechanisms come from varied contexts, with a majority (but not totality) from fragile, conflict and post-conflict affected settings, with the ambient level of tension and societal trauma are markedly higher than in Jordan. In addition to the presence of conflict, it is important to emphasise that these case study contexts are different in many aspects from Jordan. However, the essential goal of these mechanisms – which is to bring the security sector and the community into a closer, more productive and more mutual relationship – remains the same. From this review, four themes stand out that are common to community/state security sector engagement mechanisms that may have applicability to Jordan.

The local security mechanisms studied in this report may be formal or informal. Informal structures may be less politicised but may at the same time enjoy less legitimacy (Odendaal, 2011). Some mechanisms were set up as a whole-society approach in the absence of formal government structures, or included communal structures in a specific area, for example the police. They have all been an important tool to create a platform for dialogue, as well as increase legitimacy and representation. However, in fragile and conflict affected environments, the risk was that some have shifted into the control of local militias, which further diminished state legitimacy and engender a cycle of violence (ODI, 2019). Whilst this might not be applicable to Jordan, risk of local security mechanisms, community focused or hybrid, being hijacked by other political dynamics is usually very high and should be analysed based on the local context.

### VALUE OF COMMUNITY SECURITY COMMITTEES FOR COMMUNITY RECONCILIATION

In Northern Ireland, where the Northern Ireland Conflict had deeply undermined relations between the security sector and parts of the population, the Good Friday Agreement (1998), established the ‘district policing partner board (DPPB)’ ensuring police-community consultation at the local level. On a monthly basis, the DPPB would meet with the local police commander over local concerns.

In another context, in North Macedonia, after the conflict of the early 2000s, ‘municipal committees for intercommunity relations (CICR)’ were established to institutionalise inter-ethnic dialogue and allow minority community views to be taken into account.

In Peru, partly in response to the legacy of the conflict between ‘Sendero Luminoso (Shining Path)’ and the government, and partly in response to the insecurity connected to the narcotics economy, community security committees were created between police and municipalities (Zech, 2015).

### LINKAGE TO THE NATIONAL LEVEL IS KEY

The current local security mechanisms in Jordan are set up under the national police structures. Other similar cases are, for example, the police structures in Kosovo and Northern Ireland that were also created as a decentralised endeavour to create local governance structures, while remaining linked to national agendas. In Kosovo the ‘Municipal Community Safety Councils’ were set up in order to increase communal safety and



security and are governed under the Federal Police, the Ministry of Internal Affairs and Ministry of Local Government Administration. In Northern Ireland, the DPPBs and the national Northern Ireland Policing Board were linked through annual meetings, regular seminars and other events.

In the case of Kosovo and Northern Ireland, the federal police and government set up rules on frequency of meetings, reimbursements etc. to govern and administer these mechanisms. Such regulations were not identified in the Jordanian case.

## EMPHASIS ON REPRESENTATION AND ENSURING PLURALITY

One of the core aims of any local security mechanism is the inclusion of all segments of the community in order to create the right framework for conflict resolution. The Jordanian Local Security Committees seem to fall short of properly targeting youth groups, resulting in an over-representation of older, often retired public servants or police officers in these committees. Similar challenges can be seen elsewhere. In the case of Kosovo, the regulation of the 'Municipal Community Safety Councils' sets out the need to include all community members, whilst maintaining a gender balance. However, in reality, the councils often lacked proper engagement of women, with only 50% achieving appropriate balance.

A positive example is reflected in Northern Ireland, where DPPBs designed to be broadly representative of the district in terms of religion, gender, age and cultural background. The chair of the DPPB would be held by an elected member and rotated between parties on yearly basis. This worked well and helped overcome intercommunal tensions.

In North Macedonia, the 'National Committee for Inter Community Relations' includes a representative number of ethnic Albanians, Turks, Vlachs, Romas, Serbs and Bosniaks. The communities meet in a national group rather than on a local level. The Municipal Committees for Intercommunity Relations' are representative bodies of ethnic communities that legally must ensure the municipal council is aware of how decisions under consideration will affect the relationship between these communities. As such, they institutionalise local inter-ethnic dialogue and ensure minority community views are taken seriously by the council.

## CONFLICT-RESOLUTION TOOLS

The focus on overcoming intercommunal tensions and conflicts is also common to local security mechanisms. Interviews indicate that the Jordanian local security



Image: Petra, 2020 © Mike Swigunski, Unsplash.

mechanisms were not primarily set up with a core aim of conflict resolution, as is the case elsewhere such as in Kenya, Burundi or Northern Ireland. However, often local security mechanisms are generated through a peace accord such that they are designed as local peacebuilding platforms. The types of local mechanisms usually serve as a communal safety net and support network rather than a hierarchical decision-making body.

The UK-funded Mercy Corps programme in Jordan is a type of conflict resolution mechanism for youth. This programme delivers conflict resolution skills training that youth can acquire to de-escalate tensions between groups and increase social cohesion and resilience (Mercy Corps, 2015b).

Another example of Jordanian local community mechanisms for safety and security include the 'Municipal Prevention Networks', which brings together a wide range of community actors to increase social cohesion and prevent violent extremism among youth. A more state-led mechanism are the 'Community Peace Centres', set up by the PSD in 2015 to prevent violent extremism among youths (European Commission, 2020).

Similarly, the 'Youth Centres' that were set up in Kyrgyzstan in 2013 had the aim of overcoming feelings of injustice, economic and social grievances and lack of trust in institutions to enhance social cohesion, knowledge in political and social rights and to train in conflict resolution mechanisms. It also included a youth leadership program and fostered youth participation in political affairs. Another example can be drawn from the Kenyan 'Wajir Peace and Development Committees', an informal dispute mechanism set up to overcome violence clashes in the Wajir region which was marked by issues such as poverty and high unemployment among youth. Tribes and clans, including youth, were trained in conflict resolution skills, and together with the set-up of a conflict early warning team, the committee was enabled to develop the Wajir region and increase economic and social stability (Issifu, 2018).

## INSTITUTIONAL CHANGES ARE NECESSARY

Local security mechanisms alone do not necessarily achieve sustainable conditions for security or peace, certain institutional changes are required. First is the **empowerment of local police commanders**. When communities bring their security and safety concerns to the police, the local police commander must be sufficiently empowered to react swiftly and efficiently. Dealing with a local security concern (for instance reckless driving) may require a local commander to modify a general policy (e.g. enhanced road safety enforcement activities) and to use resources in different ways than normal (e.g. allocating more patrols to traffic duty). Without such empowerment of local leaders by senior officers to modify policy and rebalance resource use, even if the local commander listens to and understands his community, there is little she or he can do practically.

Linked to this is the necessary condition of **proper resourcing**. The very act of participating in a community - security sector engagement mechanism requires the use of human and material resources. Actions that arise from the discussions in the mechanisms will likely also require extra resourcing. A common request of communities is increased foot patrols, which are often not provided due to limited human resourcing plans. Furthermore, a common requirement for coordinating the mechanisms is a community engagement officer, who should have certain soft skills, and who must be resourced. Without proper resourcing, even if a local commander is empowered, he or she will not be able to follow up on resolutions from the mechanism. Extra resources are also commonly required to train police officers - and sometimes community members - in consultative and cooperative working methods.

Ideally, setting up such mechanisms will empower (or at least propitiate) youth and the community as a whole by bringing them closer to security decisions. However, there is a danger that this mechanism can be dominated or even abused by powerful groups within the community. Interests or groups that are able to mobilise effectively may be able to assert their interests over weaker groups. Sometimes these are legitimate concerns, but in fact do not address any problems substantially. For instance, a consortium of local businesses may be able to get a local police station to move along peddlers from outside their shops, but these peddlers may set up to the neighbouring precinct or neighbourhood. For such instances, local police commanders **should be supported by mechanisms that allow them to understand their community from different angles and from different groups' perspectives**. In addition to a community-police committee, this might include carrying out community assessments, or appointing liaison officers for particular communities - be they religious, gender, ethnic or otherwise.

**Local commanders should also be protected from undue influence by the support of their leadership.** Such undue influence can also come from above. For instance, a rich restaurant owner may lean on senior police leadership to require local leadership overlooks his delivery drivers violating one-way traffic. This way around illustrates the need for **wider accountability mechanisms** so that the local police commander is not left vulnerable.

A common request of communities is **increased foot patrols**



Image: Amman, 2021 © Hisham Zayadnh, Unsplash.

**OTHER DONOR  
YOUTH-RELATED PROGRAMMING  
(2018-2022)**

---







Image: Wadi Musa, 2019 © Anton Lecock, Unsplash.

## OTHER DONOR YOUTH-RELATED PROGRAMMING (2018-2022)



Key donors supporting youth empowerment and meaningful contribution to society in Jordan are Canada, EU, Germany, Norway, UNICEF, UAE, UK, UNDP and USAID. This chapter provides a snapshot of activities.

UNICEF focuses on youth education, ensuring equitable access and improved quality. UNICEF's portfolio also includes COVID-19 response, support and review of policies for youth inclusion, youth access to services and child protection systems. It is also targeting vulnerable youth and social protection mechanisms.

UNDP has a vast portfolio in Jordan. It focuses on youth as beneficiaries under its PVE programming. In addition, UNDP supports reviewing socio-economic policies, decentralisation and local government reforms, Rule of Law, social cohesion and inclusive political processes, all of which include youth as beneficiaries.

USAID has several programs related to education and training for youth in basic life skills, literacy and enhanced behaviours and attitudes for the job market. These programs also focus on the labour markets to enable better structures. They have also been working on private sector engagement for youth and various business-related programs.

Norway, through its development agency NORAD, has been working on projects related to inclusive and improved education for Syrian refugees and vulnerable Jordanians, and a program to create safer learning environments. The Norwegian Refugee Council has several programs on access to justice and promotion of human rights for Syrian refugees, both in camps and in Jordanian host communities.

Canada supports economic development for Syrian refugees, promoting innovation and entrepreneurship. Canada also has several programs focusing on women

such as support to the JONAP, promoting women's economic development, empowering women for peace-building, and a project to protect female journalists.

Canada is also active in community cohesion and participation through several programs such as the 'Municipal Services and Social Resilience project' and 'Technological bridges for Citizens Engagement'.

The US is working on elections through its Election and Political Participation program and a dedicated Rule of Law program with the aim to increase transparency and efficiency. Its Youth Power program aims to build youth capacity for decision-making through training courses and internships cultivating essential life skills and active economic and political contribution.

The EU supports border authorities, civil society and media. Its programming also builds accountability, local government capacities and provides assistance to the Jordanian Community Peace Center. The latter has just recently materialised into a Twinning Action Grant, focusing on PVE. Most EU support comes under the European Neighbourhood Instrument (ENI) and the EU External Investment Plan as well as TAIEX and SIGMA cooperation. Support is also channelled through the EU Regional Trust Fund in Response to the Syrian Crisis.

Germany has a number of regional programs to increase social and political participation which include Jordan. A special Rule of Law program in Jordan targets youth by building their skills through training. Germany also supports building transparency through its 'Citizens' Voice' program - enhancing open government through public communication and media ecosystems. Other noteworthy programs in that area are: 'Supporting local dialogues, regional exchange and prevention capacities of Sunni religious and social actors' and 'Strengthening and networking the digital society'. They also have a community policing program to combat violent extremism. This program mainly focuses on building capacity among stakeholders and staff in the management and assistance in a special rehabilitation centres for juveniles.



## LIST OF INTERVIEWS

Number	Interview	Date	Code
1	Donor	28.oct	JO1010
2	Implementing Agency	05.nov	JO1011
3	International Organisation	29.oct	JO1012
4	International Organisation	02.nov	JO1013
5	Implementing Agency	04.nov	JO1014
6	Implementing Agency	04.nov	JO1015
7	Donor	11.nov	JO1016
8	Implementing Agency	12.nov	JO1017

Front cover image: Amman, 2021 © Hisham Zayadnh, Unsplash.

## REFERENCES

- Al-Badayneh, D. (2017) Strains and Radicalization Among Syrian Youth Refugees in Jordan. *International Journal of Scientific Research*.
- Al-Husseini, A., Wazaify, M. and Van Hout, M. C. (2018) 'Pregabalin Misuse and Abuse in Jordan: a Qualitative Study of User Experiences', *International Journal of Mental Health and Addiction*, 16(3), pp. 642-654. doi: 10.1007/s11469-017-9813-4.
- Alzyoud, M. S., Al-Ali, A. S. and Tareef, A. O. B. (2016) 'Violence against Teachers in Jordanian Schools', *European Scientific Journal*, 12(10), pp. 223-239.
- Arab Barometer (2018) 'Data Analysis Tool - Arab Barometer'. Available at: <https://www.arabbarometer.org/survey-data/-data-analysis-tool/> (Accessed: 5 November 2020).
- Arab Barometer (2019a) Youth in Middle East and North Africa. Available at: [https://www.arabbarometer.org/wp-content/uploads/ABV\\_Youth\\_Report\\_Public-Opinion\\_Middle-East-North-Africa\\_2019-1.pdf](https://www.arabbarometer.org/wp-content/uploads/ABV_Youth_Report_Public-Opinion_Middle-East-North-Africa_2019-1.pdf)
- Arab Barometer (2019b) Jordan Country Report. <https://www.arabbarometer.org/countries/jordan/>
- Facundo Alvaredo, Assouad, L. and Thomas Piketty (2018) Measuring Inequality in the Middle East 1990-2016: The World's Most Unequal Region? *World Inequality Lab*. <https://wid.world/document/alvaredoassouadpiketty-middle-east-widworldwp201715/>
- BBC (2015) Inside Jordan's fight against home-grown extremism. 26 May 2015. Available at: <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-32782439>
- Centre for Insights in Survey Research (2019) Public Opinion Survey: Residents of Jordan March 21-April 16, 2019. *International Republican Institute*.: [https://www.iri.org/sites/default/files/wysiwyg/jordan\\_poll\\_novem\\_25.pdf](https://www.iri.org/sites/default/files/wysiwyg/jordan_poll_novem_25.pdf) (Accessed: 3 November 2020).
- Dalky, H. F. and Gharaibeh, A. (2019) 'Depression, anxiety, and stress among college students in Jordan and their need for mental health services', *Nursing Forum*, 54(2), pp. 205-212. doi: 10.1111/nuf.12316.
- European Commission (2020) Twinning Fiche: Support to the Community Peace Centre's efforts to prevent radicalisation leading to violent extremism in Jordan. <https://webgate.ec.europa.eu/europeaid/online-services/index.cfm?ADSSChck=1594985919690&do=publi.detPUB&orderby=upd&nbPubliList=15&orderbyad=Desc&page=1&aoref=169758&searchtype=QS&userlanguage=en>

- Euro-Med (2018) Jordan - Situation Report on Violence against Women. <https://euromedrights.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/03/Factsheet-VAW-Jordan-EN.pdf>
- Euro-Med Human Rights Monitor (2020) Women in Jordan: Continuing Violence and Absent protection. <https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/jordanwomenen.pdf>
- GAGE (2019) Adolescent experiences of school violence in Jordan: insights from GAGE Jordan qualitative researchers, GAGE. <https://www.gage.odj.org/multimedia/adolescent-experiences-of-school-violence-in-jordan-insights-from-gage-jordan-qualitative-researchers/> (Accessed: 2 November 2020).
- Gausman.J., Othman.A., Dababneh.A., Dabibe.M., Hamad.I., Daas.I., Langer.A. (2020) A social-ecological examination into the research, policy and health service delivery environment related to early marriage and sexual and gender-based violence among youth in Jordan. *BMC International Health and Human Rights*, 20:16
- Gearing, R.E., Schwalbe, C.S., MacKenzie, M.J., Brewer, K.B., Ibrahim, R.W., Olimat, H.S., Al-Makhamreh, S.S., Mian, I., Al-Krenawi, A., (2013). Adaptation and translation of mental health interventions in Middle Eastern Arab countries: a systematic review of barriers to and strategies for effective treatment implementation. *Int J Soc Psychiatry* 59, 671-681. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0020764012452349>
- Gearing, R.E., MacKenzie, M.J., Ibrahim, R.W., Brewer, K.B., Batayneh, J.S., Schwalbe, C.S.J., (2015). Stigma and Mental Health Treatment of Adolescents with Depression in Jordan. *Community Ment Health J* 51, 111-117. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10597-014-9756-1>
- GYWI (2017) Jordan | The Global Youth Wellbeing Index. <https://www.youthindex.org/country/jordan> (Accessed: 3 November 2020).
- Harper, E. and Scotti, F. (2018) Reconceptualizing the drivers of violent extremism: an agenda for child & youth resilience. *Terre des Hommes and Wana Institute*, p. 21.
- Harris, M. (2015) Jordan's youth after the Arab Spring. Lowy Institute for International Policy. Available at: <https://www.jstor.org/stable/resrep10167> (Accessed: 4 November 2020).
- Hiil (2017) Justice Needs and Satisfaction in Jordan. [https://www.hiil.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/07/JNS-Jordan-2017\\_EN-Online.pdf](https://www.hiil.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/07/JNS-Jordan-2017_EN-Online.pdf)
- International Medical Corps (2017) Understanding the Mental Health and Psychosocial Needs, and Service Utilization of Syrian Refugees and Jordanian Nationals: A Qualitative & Quantitative Analysis in the Kingdom of Jordan. <https://www.google.com/url?sa=t&rct=j&q=&rc=s&source=web&cd=&ved=2ahUKEwiWisYHjuvsAhWSoVwKHSb2CZAQFjACegQIARAC&url=https%3A%2F%2Fdata2.unhcr.org%2Fen%2Fdocuments%2Fdownload%2F62036&usq=AOvVaw32Q-sP2zfVZyylhxn-rVa4>
- International Medical Corps (2019) Utilization of Mental Health and Psychosocial Support Services Among Syrian Refugees and Jordanians - Jordan. <https://reliefweb.int/report/jordan/utilization-mental-health-and-psychosocial-support-services-among-syrian-refugees-and> (Accessed: 4 November 2020).
- Issifu (2018) Local Peace Committees in Africa: The Unseen Role in Conflict Resolution and Peacebuilding
- Jordanian Criminal Code (1960), with amending texts 2001-10-02 (JOR-2001-L-61365) Provisional Law No. 54 of 2001 amending the Penal Code, and 1996-12-17 (JOR-1996-L-46969) Law No. 11 of 1996 to amend the Penal Code [https://www.ilo.org/dyn/natlex/natlex4.details?p\\_lang=en&p\\_isn=79914&p\\_country=JOR&p\\_court=179&p\\_classification=01.04&p\\_classcount=6](https://www.ilo.org/dyn/natlex/natlex4.details?p_lang=en&p_isn=79914&p_country=JOR&p_court=179&p_classification=01.04&p_classcount=6)
- Jordan GBV IMS Task Force (2020) Annual Report 2019. <https://resourcecentre.savethechildren.net/node/17623/pdf/f/75705.pdf>

Jordan Islamic Bank (2018) JIB holds a police friends&#39; Training Course for its employees in the northern governorates. 26 March, 2018. <https://www.jordanislamicbank.com/en/content/jib-holds-police-friends-training-course-its-employees-northern-governorates> (Accessed: 6 November 2020)

VOA (2018) Jordan Shuts Down Illegal Drug Factory | Voice of America - English. <https://www.voanews.com/world-news/middle-east-dont-use/jordan-shuts-down-illegal-drug-factory>

Kaplanian, C. and Gill, A. (2019) 'Honour Killings in Jordan', *International Journal of Criminal Justice Sciences*, 14(2), pp. 355-375.

Kayed, M. (2018) New addiction rehab centre for youth announced as Kingdom records steep rise in drug cases, *Jordan Times*. <http://www.jordantimes.com/news/local/new-addiction-rehab-centre-youth-announced-kingdom-records-steep-rise-drug-cases> (Accessed: 4 November 2020).

Khatib, A. J. A. (2020) 'A Comprehensive Review of Research on Child Abuse in Jordan', *Child Care in Practice*, 0(0), pp. 1-12. doi: 10.1080/13575279.2020.1765144.

Kheirallah, K.A., Cobb, C.O., Alsulaiman, J.W., Alzoubi, A., Hoetger, C., Kliewer, W., Mzayek, F., (2020). Trauma exposure, mental health and tobacco use among vulnerable Syrian refugee youth in Jordan. *Journal of Public Health* 42, e343-e351. <https://doi.org/10.1093/pubmed/fdz128>

Mercy Corps (2015a) From Jordan to Jihad: The Lure of Syria's Violent Extremist Groups. Available at: <https://www.mercy-corps.org/research-resources/jordan-jihad-syria-extremist-groups> (Accessed: 6 November 2020).

Mercy Corps (2015b) Seeking Stability: Evidence on Strategies for Reducing the Risk of Conflict in Northern Jordanian Communities Hosting Syrian Refugees.

Middle East Institute (2014) The Popular Committees of Abyan, Yemen: A Necessary Evil or an Opportunity for Security Reform?. <https://www.mei.edu/publications/popular-committees-abyan-yemen-necessary-evil-or-opportunity-security-reform>

Milton-Edwards, B. (2018) 'Marginalized youth: Toward an inclusive Jordan', *Brookings*, 6 June. <https://www.brookings.edu/research/marginalized-youth-toward-an-inclusive-jordan/> (Accessed: 2 November 2020).

Naar, I. (2020) Teenager's hands chopped off, eyes gouged as horror crime rocks Jordan's Zarqa, *Al Arabiya English*. <https://english.alarabiya.net/en/News/middle-east/2020/10/15/Teenager-s-hands-chopped-off-eyes-gouged-in-horror-crime-rocks-Jordan-s-Zarqa> (Accessed: 5 November 2020).

NAMA Strategic Intelligence (2018) Not too young to run. October 20, 2018.

NRC, IRC-KHF and IBC (2016) A Future in the Balance. How the conflict in Syria is impacting on the needs, concerns and aspirations of young people across the Middle East. <https://www.nrc.no/globalassets/pdf/reports/a-future-in-the-balance---syria.pdf>

Odendaal, A., 2011, An Architecture for building peace at the local level: a comparative study of local peace committees. [https://www.un.org/en/land-natural-resources-conflict/pdfs/UNDP\\_Local%20Peace%20Committees\\_2011.pdf](https://www.un.org/en/land-natural-resources-conflict/pdfs/UNDP_Local%20Peace%20Committees_2011.pdf)

ODI (2019) The role and impact of local citizen security councils as a challenge to criminal violence: lessons from Michoacán

OECD (2015) Key Issues affecting Youth in Jordan - OECD. Available at: <https://www.oecd.org/countries/jordan/youth-issues-jordan.htm> (Accessed: 6 November 2020).

OECD Development Centre (2018) Youth Well-being Policy Review of Jordan. Paris: EU-OECD Youth Inclusion Project, p.129. [https://www.oecd.org/dev/inclusivesocietiesanddevelopment/Youth\\_well\\_being\\_policy\\_review\\_Jordan.pdf](https://www.oecd.org/dev/inclusivesocietiesanddevelopment/Youth_well_being_policy_review_Jordan.pdf).



Open Society Initiative (2005) Police-Citizen Cooperation Works in Peru, UN Congress Told. <https://www.justiceinitiative.org/newsroom/police-citizen-cooperation-works-peru-un-congress-told> (Accessed: 6 November 2020).

OSCE, 2019, Municipal Community Safety Councils (MCSCs) 2018–2021. <https://www.osce.org/mission-in-kosovo/413195>

PHE (2014) Advice for prescribers on the risk of the misuse of pregabalin and gabapentin. Public Health England. [https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/385791/PHE-NHS\\_England\\_pregabalin\\_and\\_gabapentin\\_advice\\_Dec\\_2014.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/385791/PHE-NHS_England_pregabalin_and_gabapentin_advice_Dec_2014.pdf)

Rodrigo Núñez et al. (2017) Justice Needs and Satisfaction in Jordan 2017: Legal problems in daily life. The Hague: Hiil Innovating Justice [https://www.hiil.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/07/JNS-Jordan-2017\\_EN-Online.pdf](https://www.hiil.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/07/JNS-Jordan-2017_EN-Online.pdf) (Accessed: 6 November 2020).

Roser, M. and Ortiz-Ospina, E. (2013) 'Income Inequality', Our World in Data. Available at: <https://ourworldindata.org/income-inequality> (Accessed: 22 January 2021).

Rowlands, J. (2009) Democracy and the Tribal System in Jordan: Tribalism as a Vehicle for Social Change

Sahran, Taghreed M Abu (2019) Family Protection Department (FPD) in Jordan: The Legal Arm to Protect Women and Children from Violence, Exploitation, and Abuse. Journal of Humanities and Social Sciences. <http://www.opastonline.com/storage/2020/01/family-protection-department-fpd-in-jordan-the-legal-arm-to-protect-women-and-children-from-violence-exploitation-and-abuse-jhss-19.pdf>

Shaheen, A. M., Hammad, S., Haourani, E. M., Nassar, O. S. (2018) 'Factors Affecting Jordanian School Adolescents' Experience of Being Bullied', Journal of Pediatric Nursing, 38, pp. e66–e71. doi: 10.1016/j.pedn.2017.09.003.

Shahrour, G., Dardas, L.A., Al-Khayat, A., Al-Qasem, A., (2020). Prevalence, correlates, and experiences of school bullying among adolescents: A national study in Jordan. School Psychology International 41, 430–453. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0143034320943923>

Siren (2020) Policing Support and the Jordanian National Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security <http://sirenassociates.com/case-studies/policing-support-and-the-jordanian-national-action-plan-on-women-peace-and-security/> (Accessed: 12.11.2020)

Strong Cities network (2020) SCN in Lebanon and Jordan <https://strongcitiesnetwork.org/en/scn-lebanon-jordan-6-prevention-networks-established/> (Accessed: 12.11.2020)

The Jordan Times (2017) Facility to train PSD personnel in deradicalisation inaugurated. 22 August, 2017. <https://www.jordantimes.com/news/local/facility-train-psd-personnel-deradicalisation-inaugurated>

UNDP and UNICEF (2015) Socio-economic inequality in Jordan. Amman: UNDP. <https://www.jo.undp.org/content/jordan/en/home/library/poverty/socio-economic-inequality-in-jordan-report.html>

UNFPA (2020) Daring to Ask, Listen, and Act: A Snapshot of the impacts of COVID-19 on Women and Girls' rights and sexual and reproductive health. <https://data2.unhcr.org/en/documents/details/77499>

UNICEF & International Medical Corps (2014) Mental Health Psychosocial and Child Protection for Syrian Adolescent Refugees in Jordan. <https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/finalIMCUNICEFupdatingassessment.pdf>

UNICEF (2017) Jordan: Evaluation of the Ma'an (Together) towards a Safe School Environment Programme 2009-2016 - Jordan | Evaluation database, UNICEF. [https://www.unicef.org/evaldatabase/index\\_102660.html](https://www.unicef.org/evaldatabase/index_102660.html) (Accessed: 4 November 2020).

UNICEF (2018) Situation Analysis of Juvenile Justice. <https://www.unicef.org/jordan/media/361/file/Situation%20Analysis%20of%20Juvenile%20Justice%20System%20in%20Jordan.pdf>

UNICEF (2019a) LOCAL GOVERNANCE AND SUSTAINING PEACE - Guidance Note.

UNICEF (2019b) A Qualitative Study on the Underlying Social Norms and Economic Causes that Lead to Child Marriage in Jordan. <https://www.unicef.org/jordan/media/1796/file/Jordan-Reports.pdf>

UNICEF (2020) Education: Inclusive and quality education for every child. <https://www.unicef.org/jordan/education>

UNODC (2016) Regional Programme for the Arab States (2016-2021). <https://www.unodc.org/middleeastandnorthafrica/en/regional-programme-framework/regional-programme-2016-2021.html>

UNSC 2250 (2015) on Youth, Peace and Security. [https://www.un.org/en/ga/search/view\\_doc.asp?symbol=S/RES/2250\(2015\)&referer=/english/&Lang=E](https://www.un.org/en/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=S/RES/2250(2015)&referer=/english/&Lang=E)

UN Women (2017) Jordanian National Action Plan for the Implementation of UN Security Council resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security 2018 – 2021. <https://jordan.unwomen.org/en/digital-library/publications/2017/12/jordanian-national-action-plan>

Walsh, A. (2019) A Way Forward for U.K.-Jordan Security Cooperation. Beirut: Carnegie Middle East Centre. <https://carnegieendowment.org/sada/80304> .

Wana Institute, 2015, Tribal Dispute Resolution and Women's Access to Justice in Jordan. <http://wanainstitute.org/sites/default/files/publications/Tribal%20Dispute%20Resolution%20and%20Women%E2%80%99s%20Access%20to%20Justice%20in%20Jordan.pdf>

Wana Institute, 2017a, Examining Psychological Drivers of Radicalisation in Jordan <http://wanainstitute.org/sites/default/files/publications/Examining%20Psychological%20Drivers%20Of%20Radicalisation%20-%20Full%20Report.pdf>

Wana Institute, 2017b, Trapped between destructive choices: Radicalisation Drivers <http://wanainstitute.org/sites/default/files/publications/Trapped%20Between%20Destructive%20Choices%20-%20Final%20English.pdf>

Wazaify, M. et al. (2017) 'Jordanian community pharmacists' experience regarding prescription and nonprescription drug abuse and misuse in Jordan – An update', *Journal of Substance Use*, 22(5), pp. 463–468. doi: 10.1080/14659891.2016.1235734.

World Bank (2019) Unemployment, youth total (% of total labor force ages 15-24) (modeled ILO estimate) - Jordan | Data. Available at: <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SL.UEM.1524.ZS?locations=JO> (Accessed: 6 November 2020).

Yasin, H., Bulatova, N. and Wazaify, M. (2020) 'Patterns of Substance Use among Patients in Addiction Rehabilitation in Jordan.', *Substance Use & Misuse*, 55(7), pp. 1035–1044. doi: 10.1080/10826084.2020.1722697.

Yom, S. Tribal Politics in Contemporary Jordan: The Case of the Hirak Movement, *Middle East Journal*, Vol. 68(2)

Yom, S. and Sammour, K. (2017) 'Counterterrorism and Youth Radicalization in Jordan: Social and Political Dimensions | Near East South Asia Center', *Combating Terrorism Centre Sentinel*, 10(4). <https://nesa-center.org/counterterrorism-and-youth-radicalization-in-jordan-social-and-political-dimensions/>

Zech, S. T. (2015) 'Autonomous Security Provision in Peru – Political Violence at a Glance', *Political Violence at a Glance*, 23 June. <https://politicalviolenceataglance.org/2015/06/23/autonomous-security-provision-in-peru/> (Accessed: 6 November 2020).

Zogby Research Services (2018) Middle East Opinion. <https://static1.squarespace.com/static/52750dd3e4b08c252c723404/t/5c0fcb2e758d461f72dc37ca/1544538926539/2018+SBY+FINAL+WEB.pdf> (Accessed: 27 December 2018).



## DCAF Geneva Headquarters

P.O.Box 1360  
CH-1211 Geneva 1  
Switzerland

✉ [info@dcaf.ch](mailto:info@dcaf.ch)

☎ +41 (0) 22 730 9400

---

**[www.dcaf.ch](http://www.dcaf.ch)**

---

🐦 [@DCAF\\_Geneva](https://twitter.com/DCAF_Geneva)