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**IN BRIEF:**

## MAKING EVERY WOMAN AND GIRL COUNT IN JORDAN

### THE ISSUE

A national assessment on gender statistics in Jordan was conducted in 2019, revealing three interrelated challenges:

- Gender statistics had not been included in Jordan's national statistics legislation, or in a National Strategy for the Development of Statistics (NSDS). There was a lack of coordination between government institutions on statistical production, in particular when it came to gender statistics and sex- and age-disaggregated data.
- There was limited institutional capacity for production, research and training on gender statistics in both the national statistics office as well as line ministries. Jordan also faced challenges in technically demanding areas, such as measuring time-use on unpaid care and domestic work, as well as violence against women (VAW) and its costs.
- There was limited analysis of statistical data, limited use of statistics by most policymakers and decision-makers and there were limited means used to disseminate data in a timely way.

### WOMEN COUNT RESPONSE:

- **Creating an enabling environment:** UN Women formalized a partnership with the Department of Statistics (DOS) that has sought to develop the country's first NSDS and establish formal coordination mechanisms to bring together key actors in the national statistical system (NSS). Gender data are now recognized as a key priority in the National Strategy for Women (NSW) and the Gender Mainstreaming Policy.
- **Increasing data production:** The technical capacities of DOS have been strengthened, enabling it to conduct the first-ever economic costing of VAW survey and to reprocess existing data to fill critical data gaps on agriculture and women's economic empowerment. A minimum set of Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) gender-related indicators has also been adopted.
- **Improving data accessibility and use:** Gender statistics knowledge products have been developed and used, including a Country Gender Equality Profile and several rapid gender assessments (RGAs) on the impact of COVID-19, to inform policies and improve the monitoring of normative commitments on gender equality.

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*"I think [the RGA] was an important document that provided data at the time that we could refer to, use and build on for conclusions and for our own arguments. ... that's why rapid assessments with analysis are so important, with recommendations and looking at the structural reasons behind them, that will really impact change."*

## Salma Nims, Secretary General, Jordanian National Commission for Women

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### KEY RESULTS

Since the Women Count project kicked off in Jordan in 2019, there have been important efforts to improve gender data production and use. Key results include:

#### 1. Creating an enabling environment

- **The Government of Jordan now recognizes gender data as a key priority in national policies and strategies and has signaled its commitment to continue these efforts.** A National Gender Mainstreaming Policy and a National Strategy for Women were endorsed by the Government in 2020, with language institutionalizing sex-disaggregated data collection. The Gender Mainstreaming Policy seeks to ensure that all information can be analysed from a gender perspective and can inform decision-making, planning, implementation and reporting processes. Moreover, Women Count efforts supported the inclusion of an objective on gender statistics and a gender-related SDG indicator on data collection within the NSW in Jordan (2020–2025). In 2021, UN Women, DOS and the Ministry of Planning and International Cooperation (MoPIC) formalized their partnership through a Memorandum of Understanding to support efforts to improve the regular production of gender statistics in Jordan and to strengthen the policies and practices that govern the production and use of gender statistics, including by developing a national strategy for gender statistics. This demonstrates the Government of Jordan's long-term commitment to strengthening the enabling environment around gender statistics.
- **An Institutional Capacity-Development (ICD) Committee is building gender mainstreaming infrastructure and fostering greater coordination.** Established in 2019, the ICD Committee is a national coordination mechanism that seeks to integrate gender equality and women's empowerment tools and approaches in policies and planning across DOS, which now mainstreams gender statistics across all

its work – not only that of its dedicated Gender Unit. Moreover, DOS is now implementing its first internal gender mainstreaming policy with UN Women's technical assistance and ongoing work is underway to create specific procedures based on this policy, including on gender mainstreaming training, gender-responsive budgeting, and on gender balance within working committees across DOS. The ICD technical gender team at DOS has also fostered greater coordination with the Jordanian National Commission for Women (JNCW), which contributed to the successful conduct of the first VAW costing survey.

#### 2. Increasing data production

- **The Government of Jordan is now better able to monitor the SDGs from a gender perspective.** Thanks to the Government's adoption of a minimum set of gender-related SDG indicators, developed jointly by UN Women, DOS and JNCW, all gender-related data for the SDGs will be collected in a repository at DOS. This will help the JNCW and other policymakers to inform policy decisions. This is also paving the way for the inclusion of 67 gender-related SDG indicators (out of 230 SDG indicators, distributed among 14 of the 17 SDGs) in the action plan for Jordan's NSW and its second Voluntary National Review (VNR) report.
- **The first-ever survey on the economic cost of VAW in Jordan is expected to herald new legislation and lead to a more effective allocation of state resources.** Jordan's first-ever Violence against Women and its Economic Cost Survey was conducted in 2021 in partnership with UN Women, DOS, JNCW, the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA) and the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA). A key innovation of this survey was the inclusion of questions on the monetary impact of VAW in Jordan, which will provide the first-ever costing data when results are released in 2022. This data will not only encourage and enable the Government of Jordan to

take evidence-based and effective action to eradicate VAW, but assist Jordan in meeting its SDG commitments, particularly the targets on VAW identified in SDG 5 (5.2 and 5.3). The expected legal and policy reforms will also lead to a more effective allocation of state resources, in line with the findings of the gender-responsive budgeting analysis, with a stronger emphasis on prevention. The Jordanian legal system still lacks legislation criminalizing VAW in all settings.

- **Statistical literacy skills and knowledge are improving among data users and producers.** UN Women, in close cooperation with ESCWA and the DOS Gender Statistics Unit, organized six workshops on gender statistics attended by 99 participants in 2021, and has offered professional mentoring. Post-training surveys indicate that participants' knowledge of gender statistics increased from 22.9% pre-assessment to 98.6% post-assessment. The ultimate goal of this training is to increase the availability of gender data to better inform programming, budgeting, research and advocacy on gender equality, women's empowerment and the SDGs. Some workshops have built capacities on gender data for ICD oversight, while others have served to validate and launch reports. These events have sought to enhance national capacities among government ministries, non-governmental institutions, civil society, international organizations, research and academic centres on gender statistics and improve their ability to analyse existing data.

### 3. Improving data accessibility and use

- **Data use is improving, with analysis of census data informing national policies and planning.** As part of the mentoring process, DOS and UN Women supported trainees to reprocess existing data from the agricultural census and the economic establishments census to produce two analytical papers on the reality of women and men in agriculture and economic establishments. The agricultural analysis enabled DOS to compile and publish data on SDG 5.a.1 (a) and 5.a.1 (b) for the first time. Findings revealed that 52% of women in rural areas are employed in agriculture – a data point that was used to improve programming by adding an output on 'capacity-building for agricultural digitization and the promotion of social inclusion for youth and women in green agricultural skills' in the action plan for the National Agricultural Development Strategy 2020–2025. Meanwhile, the paper on economic establishments called for amendments to the

Labour Code to allow more flexibility in regulating the relationship between employers and workers, create a safer environment for women's employment, and regulate the labour market for greater impact – recommendations that were used to develop the action plan for the Government's Economic Priorities for 2021–2023.

- **Normative processes are better informed through Jordan's first Country Gender Equality Profile (CGEP).**

Developed through a participatory process led by UN Women with key partners such as DOS and JNCW, the CGEP has become a primary source for evidence-driven advocacy, decision-making, programming and budgeting for national stakeholders, international development partners and the UN system. Taking into consideration the diversity between women and men (age, income level, migratory status, disability, geographic location, education level, etc.), the CGEP seeks to consolidate gains on gender equality and overcome bottlenecks at the national, sectoral and grass-roots levels. The report findings have informed both Jordan's second VNR report and the national plan of action for the NSW. The CGEP pointed to a lack of gender data and called for increased investments in data to track progress on the SDGs, as a result of which DOS has taken the concrete step of including additional questions in the original Demographic and Health Survey questionnaire (to take place in the second half of 2022) to track more gender-specific SDG indicators.

- **Data on COVID-19 are being used to inform policy action and responses.** The results of Jordan's national RGA served as a catalyst to accelerate the Government's approval of Regulation No. 93 of 2020 on social protection related to maternity insurance, to empower working mothers economically and keep them in the workforce. The Public Institution for Social Security provided cash benefits to working mothers to enable them to return to work after childbirth, and to secure care for their children in nurseries or at home and allowed government-registered child-care centres to receive direct cash benefits to cover operating costs. RGA data were also used to update the UN Social and Economic Framework to put in place additional protection measures and essential services, including to ensure that shelters for survivors of gender-based violence and clinical treatment for rape remained open and accessible during lockdowns,

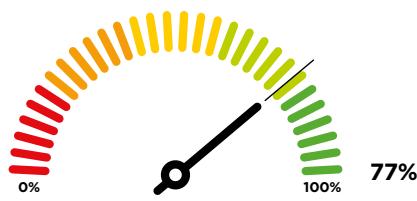
while increasing funding support for gender-based violence services in general and for local women's civil society organizations in particular. Based in part on the RGA findings, the JNCW also worked with UN Women to develop an Addendum to the NSW and to align it with the Government's Executive Programme.

## FUTURE PLANS<sup>1</sup>

UN Women's work on gender statistics in Jordan will continue to be guided under the MoU with DOS and MoPIC in 2022 and onwards. Given challenges in implementation under Phase I, support will be provided as needed in Phase II through the Arab States Regional Office. Activities to be undertaken include:

- Developing a national strategy on gender statistics.
- Establishing a formal coordination mechanism to bring together different actors within the NSS to work on gender statistics.
- Reprocessing existing data to fill data gaps around women's economic empowerment.

**FIGURE 1**  
**Measuring Progress during Phase I**



Progress was the result of strengthened partnerships and the improved technical capacities of the NSO, enabling the first-ever economic costing of violence against women and effective use of gender data. In 2021, 100% of targets were met by the project.

- Developing a gender data portal to improve access to SDG gender data.
- Producing and disseminating the economic cost of VAW survey report.

<sup>1</sup> Plans for Phase II are in the process of being finalized.