



FIRST SHADOW REPORT

**Submitted by the National Centre for Human Rights to the Committee on the
Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW)**

(Sixty-Sixth Session)

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The Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan

GENERAL INFORMATION

The National Centre for Human Rights of Jordan respectfully submits to the esteemed Committee its First Shadow Report on the Sixth National Periodic Report of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan concerning the implementation of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), covering the reporting period from 2009 to 2014. This Shadow Report is submitted pursuant to the mandate conferred upon the Centre under the National Center for Human Rights Law No. (51) of 2006, which vests the Centre with the authority to promote, protect, and monitor human rights and fundamental freedoms; to monitor the human rights situation in the Kingdom and verify compliance with applicable human rights standards; to receive, examine, and address complaints concerning alleged violations; and to follow up on the adoption of the measures necessary to remedy such violations, including seeking their amicable resolution or referring them, where appropriate, to the competent executive or legislative authorities or to the competent judicial bodies, with a view to bringing such violations to an end and redressing their consequences. The Law further mandates the Centre to promote a culture of human rights and to provide legal advice and assistance to persons in need thereof.

It should be noted that this Report was prepared through a consultative process involving Jordanian civil society organizations, in particular those working in the field of women's rights. To this end, NCHR convened a round-table consultation on 21 November 2016. The observations and recommendations emerging from that consultation were duly considered and, where appropriate, incorporated into the final Report.

ARTICLES (1–6) OF THE CONVENTION

Jordan continues to maintain its reservations to paragraphs (c), (d) and (g) of Article (16) of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, concerning marriage and family relations, as well as to Article 9(2) concerning women's equal right to confer their nationality upon their children.

The continued maintenance of these reservations is inconsistent with Article (6) of the Constitution of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, which provides that "Jordanians shall be equal before the law, with no discrimination between them as regards their rights and duties on grounds of race, language or religion".

With regard to the Personal Status Law, Personal Status Law No. (61) of 1976 was repealed and replaced by the Temporary Personal Status Law No. (36) of 2010. The latter introduced a number of new chapters and sections governing legal capacity and its impediments, guardianship over the person and property, tutorship, wills, inheritance, *takhāruj* (renunciation of an inheritance share in consideration of compensation), and the detailed rules applicable thereto. The Temporary Law also introduced a number of substantive reforms that constituted significant legislative progress, particularly in relation to the rights of women and children. These reforms addressed, inter alia, child custody, visitation rights, *istizāra* (temporary hosting of a child by the non-custodial parent), and the travel of a child in custody, in addition to other

issues that had long given rise to practical difficulties for families in general, and for women and children in particular. Notwithstanding these positive developments, the Law continues to contain a number of legislative shortcomings and gaps. These include, in particular, the following:

1. Article (14/b) empowers the competent judge, subject to the approval of the Chief Islamic Justice (*Qāḍī al-Quḍāh*), to authorize the marriage of a person who has attained the age of fifteen years, in accordance with the instructions issued by the Chief Islamic Justice Department. The Centre reiterates the necessity of bringing the national personal status legislation into full conformity with international human rights standards and the Kingdom's obligations under the relevant international conventions and to restrict the scope of exceptions.
 2. Article (61/b) maintains the provision that a husband may not withdraw his consent to his wife's employment except for a legitimate cause and provided that such withdrawal does not occasion her harm. The Centre considers that this Article should be repealed in order to safeguard women's rights and promote their participation in the labour market.
 - With regard Article (308) of the Penal Code, Jordan accepted, during the consideration of its Second National Report under the Universal Periodic Review mechanism before the Human Rights Council on 24 October 2013, the recommendation to repeal this Article and of any legislation discriminating against women. The Centre consistently recommended the repeal of the said Article in its annual reports; however, the said Article remains in force to date.
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VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN

With respect to the measures adopted to protect women from violence, these comprise legal protection measures and awareness-raising initiatives. The Centre and civil society organizations continue to undertake efforts to implement awareness-raising programmes aimed at protecting women from violence. Nevertheless, there remains a need to expand such programmes and target both women and men, particularly in remote and underserved areas, as well as in schools, universities, and shelters for victims of violence.

Accordingly, the Centre considers that addressing violence against women continues to face a number of challenges, the most significant of which are as follows:

1. The persistence of certain social customs and traditions that normalize or tolerate violence against women and regard it as an acceptable practice;
2. The existence of certain legislative provisions that discriminate against women;
3. The fragmented efforts of the relevant institutions, which fail to provide a comprehensive and accurate picture of the scale of the problem at the national level. This is attributable to the absence of a unified definition of violence adopted by these institutions, as well as the lack of a national monitoring system for cases of violence. Consequently, it remains difficult to determine the prevalence of violence against women in Jordan. Each institution reports statistics on violence

against women based on the cases it has monitored and the women victims of violence who have sought its services; moreover, a woman subjected to violence may have approached more than one institution.

With regard to legal protection, the Law on Protection from Family Violence was promulgated in 2008 with the aim of preserving the family unit and introducing alternative sanctions to custodial penalties. However, a careful review of the Law by the National Centre for Human Rights revealed the following:

1. The scope of application of the Law is limited. Although Article (3) provides a broad definition of family members, the Law requires that the perpetrator of the offence reside with the victim in the family home. Consequently, its provisions do not apply to family members who reside in separate dwellings;
2. The expansion of the powers conferred upon judicial police assistants, insofar as the Law grants them the authority to suspend prosecution proceedings without judicial oversight, which is inconsistent with the principle of separation of powers. This raises serious concerns regarding the broadening of the powers of judicial police assistants and the unjustified restriction of the powers vested in judicial authorities, as represented by the Public Prosecutor and the Court of First Instance;
3. Although the Law confers upon the court and the Family Protection Department the authority to refer cases to family reconciliation committees and family counselling sessions, as well as the authority to issue protection orders for the resolution of disputes, and provides for the establishment of family reconciliation committees by decision of the Minister of Social Development, the Law has not been implemented to date;
4. The Law grants members of the Family Protection Department a range of precautionary protection measures of an exceptionally serious nature that are difficult to apply in practice, the most significant of which is the prohibition of the respondent from entering the family home for a period not exceeding 48 hours;
5. The Law does not confer any authority upon the Public Prosecutor and makes no reference to him. Instead, it refers exclusively to the Director of the Family Protection Department, its members, and the court, effectively vesting the powers of the Public Prosecutor in the Director of the Family Protection Department and its members.
6. The Law addresses violence against women within the family context only and does not encompass all forms of violence.

With regard to the provision of shelter, cases of violence are handled by the Family Protection Department, in cooperation with the Ministry of Social Development, through qualified specialists assigned to the protection sections located in most governorates of the Kingdom, in addition to the provision of shelter and a safe environment offering integrated services to victims of violence through the Girls' Care Home in Russeifa and the Adolescent Girls' Home in Amman, which undertake the rehabilitation of those who have attained the age of 18 years.

The Family Reconciliation House (Dār al-Wifāq al-Usarī al-Usarī) likewise operates as a center providing integrated services to victims of family violence. In 2013, the House was awarded the United Nations Public Service Award in the field of the protection of women. The services provided by the House include hosting services, social services, psychological counselling, and medical and therapeutic services. A branch has also been established in Irbid, in addition to the main premises in Amman. Furthermore, a programme has been implemented to protect girls who are absent from their families from being exposed to violence, by suspending their transfer to the Women’s Correction and Rehabilitation Centre and receiving them instead at the Family Reconciliation House. To date, however, no branch of the Family Reconciliation House has been established in the Southern Region. In this regard, the Centre recommends the establishment of a branch of Dār al-Wifāq al-Usarī in the Southern Region.

The table below sets out the number of offences of violence committed against women in 2014, in comparison with 2013, based on the data issued by the Family Protection Department of the Public Security Directorate:

Year	Sexual assault	Physical assault	Number of female victims
2013	785	1,319	2,128
2014	717	1,496	2,270

With respect to offences committed on so-called “honour” grounds, such offences are excluded from benefiting from the mitigating excuse provided for in Articles (97) and (98) of the Jordanian Penal Code when committed against a person who has not attained fifteen years of age, whether male or female. This position has been affirmed by the Court of Cassation, which held that the application of Article (98) of the Penal Code to so-called honour crimes is contrary to law where it is applied without verifying the fulfilment of the conditions set forth in Article (340), as the special provision takes precedence over the general provision. Furthermore, the mitigating excuse was not applied during the years 2010 and 2011, nor in any judgments rendered by the courts.

The statistics of judicial decisions issued in homicide cases in which it was alleged that the act had been committed on honour grounds, and in which mitigating causes were applied, indicate that the penalty imposed was in no instance less than 10 years. In 2013, the courts considered ten cases committed on honour grounds; in one of them the death penalty was pronounced, and in another a sentence of 20 years’ imprisonment with hard labour. The Law Amending the Penal Code of 2011 likewise intensified the penalties for offences of physical and sexual violence, such as rape, indecent assault, abduction, and acts contrary to public decency. NCHR calls for the repeal of Article 308 of the Penal Code, and for the waiver of the personal right not to be admitted as a ground for mitigation of penalty where the perpetrator and the victim belong to the same family up to the fourth degree, or where the victim is a minor.

TRAFFICKING IN WOMEN

The National Centre for Human Rights has monitored the actions of public prosecutors and the competent authorities in prosecuting and sanctioning the perpetrators of such offences. NCHR welcomes the Government's decision to accede to the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime of 2000 and the Protocols thereto, particularly the Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children, on 30 April 2009. The Centre further welcomes the promulgation of the Anti-Human Trafficking Law No. 9 of 2009, which addressed prevention, protection, and prosecution. During 2008 and 2009, the Centre participated in the preparation of the Law through its membership of the committee entrusted with drafting it, as well as through its participation in the technical committee responsible for preparing regulations governing a shelter, in cooperation with the Anti-Trafficking Unit established by the Ministry of Labour, the Public Security Directorate, and the Ministry of Justice.

It is pertinent to note that, prior to the establishment of Dār Karāma in 2015, cases of victims of trafficking in persons were received at the Family Reconciliation House of the Ministry of Social Development, in a section separate from that designated for victims of family violence. However, the staff assigned to victims of trafficking in persons were the same staff responsible for dealing with victims of family violence, and the reception capacity available for victims of trafficking at Dār al-Wifāq al-Usarī was limited to four beds only. With the increase in the number of victims of trafficking in persons, the establishment of Dār Karāma, dedicated specifically to such victims, became necessary, together with the need for specialized staff to address their specific needs. Affiliated with the Ministry of Social Development, Dār Karāma was opened on 12 September 2015 in Amman only. Beneficiaries are received pursuant to Article Seven of the Anti-Human Trafficking Law No. 9 of 2009, with the aim of providing them with comprehensive services, including social, psychological, health, economic, and other services. The capacity of the House is 35 beneficiaries among victims of trafficking in persons. Children and men who are victims of trafficking in persons may also be received; however, no cases involving the sheltering of a child or a man have been recorded to date.

The table below sets out the number of victims of trafficking in persons received at the Family Reconciliation House (Dār al-Wifāq) during the years 2014 and 2015, based on the statistics of Dār Karāma / Ministry of Social Development:

Nationality	Beneficiaries, 2014	Beneficiaries, 2015
Bangladeshi	19	15 (6 received at <i>Dār al-Wifāq al-Usarī</i> and 9 at <i>Dār Karāma</i>)
Filipino	1	5 (4 received at <i>Dār al-Wifāq al-Usarī</i> and 1 at <i>Dār Karāma</i>)
Kenyan	3	3 (3 received at <i>Dār al-Karāma</i>)
Ethiopian	4	1 (received at <i>Dār al-Karāma</i>)
Sri Lankan	2	1 (received at the Family Reconciliation House)

Nationality	Beneficiaries, 2014	Beneficiaries, 2015
Jordanian	1	—
Syrian	2	—
Grand total	32	25

ARTICLES (7–9) OF THE CONVENTION

The year 2010 witnessed the promulgation of the Temporary Election Law for the House of Representatives No. (9) of 2010, which represented certain progress in comparison with the Temporary Election Law No. 34 of 2001 and its amendments, particularly with respect to increasing the number of seats allocated for the representation of women to twelve seats. The Centre observed, however, that the Law remained subject to criticism due to its failure to achieve equality among female candidates across the various electoral districts, as the comparative assessment for the purpose of determining the successful candidates was based on the number of votes obtained by each candidate divided by the number of voters in the sub-district, rather than at the governorate level. Achieving justice and equality among candidates required that the number of votes obtained by each candidate be divided by the total number of votes cast by voters in the governorate, rather than by reference to the number of sub-districts.

At that time, the number of women members of the Chamber of Deputies increased to 13 Jordanian women, one of whom was elected through competitive means, out of a total of 120 members of the Chamber, representing approximately 11%. In 2012, the number of seats allocated for the representation of women increased to fifteen seats pursuant to the provisions of the Chamber of Deputies Election Law of 2012. Elections were held in 2013, following which the number of women members of the Chamber of Deputies increased to 18 Jordanian women, three of whom were elected through competitive means, out of a total of 150 members of the Chamber, representing 12%.

With regard to the Senate, women held 9 seats out of a total of 75 seats in 2013, representing 12%, compared with 6 seats out of 60 seats, representing 10%, in 2011. In 2016, the Chamber of Deputies Election Law No. 6 of 2016 maintained the number of seats allocated for the representation of women at 15 seats out of a total of 130 seats.

It is pertinent to note that the demands of the Centre, together with those of numerous civil society organizations, were not taken into consideration during the deliberations on the current 2016 draft Election Law before the legislative authority. These demands included the allocation of one seat for women in each electoral district, thereby increasing the number of seats allocated for women's representation to 23 seats.

The year 2011 likewise witnessed the promulgation of the Municipalities Law No. 13 of 2011, by virtue of which the proportion of the quota allocated to women in municipal councils was increased from 20% to 25%. Accordingly, in 2013, women obtained 345 seats out of a total of 961 municipal council seats, representing 35.9%. The allocation of women's seats was distributed as follows: 282 seats through the quota system, 51 seats through free competition, and 12 seats by appointment due to the absence of female

candidates. Subsequently, the Municipalities Law No. 41 of 2015 was promulgated, maintaining the proportion of the quota allocated to women in municipal councils at 25%.

The Political Parties Law of 2012 was promulgated, Article (6) thereof provides that: “the number of founding members of any party shall not be less than five hundred persons from seven governorates, provided that the number of women among them shall not be less than 10% and that the proportion of founders from each governorate shall be 5%.” In 2015, the previous Political Parties Law was repealed and Political Parties Law No. 39 of 2015 was promulgated, abolishing the quota requirement and establishing equality between men and women with respect to party membership.

The Centre considers it necessary to increase the proportion of the women’s quota in municipalities to 30% as an interim measure, and thereafter to continue efforts towards achieving equal representation of men and women in all executive councils and political parties.

With regard to the participation of women in the judicial corps, women’s representation has increased, with the number of women judges rising in 2014 to 175, compared with 142 in 2013, thereby bringing their proportion of the total number of judges to 18%, after having previously stood at 15.5%. A Jordanian woman was also appointed as a judge for dispute settlement at the International Dispute Settlement Court.

In the field of the Sharia and ecclesiastical judiciary, however, no woman judge has been appointed, despite the availability of qualified women holding advanced academic degrees in the fields of Sharia and law. The religious courts likewise have no female employees.

The share of women in the Council of Ministers increased to 18% following the ministerial reshuffle effected in March 2015, representing the highest proportion of women’s representation in the history of the Jordanian Council of Ministers. This compared with 11.1% in the preceding Council of Ministers.

Two women were also appointed to the Board of Commissioners of the Independent Election Commission on 23 April 2014, thereby increasing the proportion of women’s participation in the Board to 40%, after having stood at zero per cent in the Commission’s first Board. In 2016, however, only one woman was appointed upon the formation of the Commission’s third Board, reducing the proportion of women’s participation in the Board to 20%, after it had reached 40% in the second Board of the Commission.

The proportion of women’s representation in the Board of Trustees of the National Centre for Human Rights likewise increased to 38%, compared with 14% previously.

With regard to the Nationality Law, Article (9) of the Nationality Law and its amendments No. 6 of 1954 provides that: “the children of a Jordanian are Jordanians wherever they are born”. A proper construction of these provisions, in accordance with the recognized rules of interpretation, indicates that the children of a Jordanian mother enjoy Jordanian nationality. This is because, according to the plain purport of the provision stating that “the children of a Jordanian are Jordanians,” the masculine form, wherever used in general and unrestricted terms, denotes both the male and the female alike. The Centre has

previously recommended, in its annual reports, the withdrawal of the reservation to Article (2/9). These recommendations resulted in the issuance of Council of Ministers Decision No. 6415 of 9 November 2014, approving a package of facilitations for the children of Jordanian women married to non-Jordanians in the following fields: basic and secondary education, health insurance, employment, ownership and investment, and the issuance of identification cards.

Instructions governing the implementation of the above-mentioned Council of Ministers' decision have been issued, setting out the conditions for the eligibility of the children of Jordanian women married to non-Jordanians to benefit from the aforementioned facilitations. The Council of Ministers has further emphasized the necessity for all departments and institutions to work towards implementing these instructions. The Centre reaffirms the necessity of withdrawing the reservation to Article (2/9) of the CEDAW Convention, in conformity with Article (6) of the Jordanian Constitution.

ARTICLE (10): THE RIGHT TO EDUCATION

The National Centre for Human Rights developed a National Plan for the Dissemination of a Culture of Human Rights for the years 2013–2016, which was submitted to His Majesty the King. The Plan included numerous activities aimed at integrating human rights concepts and promoting their assessment, targeting the school and university education sectors, employees of official institutions across the three branches of authority (legislative, executive, and judicial), as well as civil society. The Centre continues to seek the provision of the necessary funding for the implementation of the Plan, in cooperation with the relevant entities, foremost among them the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Higher Education.

The statistics relating to literacy and adult education indicate that the illiteracy rate among males and females reached 6.7% in 2013, with the illiteracy rate among females standing at 10% and that among males at 3.5%. The figures also indicate a decline in literacy programmes in 2013, as the number of literacy centers decreased to 509 centers, compared with 543 centers in the preceding year. The total number of learners enrolled in these centers, across both sexes and all levels, amounted to 5,763 learners, compared with 6,150 learners in the preceding year. It is noteworthy that the age group most represented among those enrolled in these centers is the 45-years-and-above age group.

The Programme continues to face the challenge of insufficient financial support, as the remuneration of teachers participating in the Programme amounts to 1.6 dinars per hour,

in addition to the fact that such teachers are not covered by social security or health insurance.¹

ARTICLE (11): THE RIGHT TO WORK

The Civil Service Regulation does not provide for temporary special measures in accordance with paragraph (1) of Article (4) of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women; it has, however, established equality between male and female employees in most cases. An amended Civil Service Regulation No. 96 of 2014 was promulgated and published in the Official Gazette on 16 October 2014. Article (106/c) thereof provides for granting a female employee, in the event of the death of her husband, leave for a period of one month. Paragraph (b) of Article (25) was likewise amended to read as follows: the family allowance shall be paid to a female employee where her husband is incapacitated, where she is the provider for her children, or where she is divorced and does not receive lawful maintenance in respect of her children, provided that their ages do not exceed 18 years.

The Center affirms the necessity of incorporating into the Civil Service Regulation provisions requiring official institutions to provide nurseries for the children of female employees, thereby contributing to an increase in women's participation in economic life. The Centre likewise affirms the necessity of disbursing the family allowance to female employees under the same conditions applicable to male employees, in conformity with the provisions of Article 12 of the Convention.

The Steering Committee for Pay Equity was constituted in 2011, the National Centre for Human Rights is a member thereof. It aims at strengthening cooperation for the purpose of implementing the National Action Plan on Pay Equality between men and women, and at coordinating activities for the achievement of equal remuneration for work of equal value, through the submission of recommendations to the Chamber of Deputies for the amendment of legislation by the insertion of a dedicated provision affirming pay equity, and through working towards the implementation of awareness programmes for the local community concerning the necessity of pay equity. The Committee has recorded the existence of recurrent violations in certain employment sectors (particularly in private education), consisting in compelling those employed therein, and especially the females among them, to sign receipts attesting to the receipt of their wages in full, whereas in reality they receive them in reduced and fragmented form. This occurs at times through coercion, at times through exploitation, at times through the threat of dismissal, and at times accompanied by a high rate of violations relating to the wages of overtime work and work on public holidays. As regards the field of maternity protection and workers with family responsibilities, it has been established that the period of maternity leave under the Labour Law is shorter than maternity leave under the provisions of the Civil Service Regulation and under the International Labour Organization Convention on Maternity

¹ For further information, please refer to the Report on the Situation of Human Rights in the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan for the year 2013, p. 103.

Protection, and that employers fail to comply with the obligation imposed upon them by law to provide nurseries.

ARTICLE (12): THE RIGHT TO HEALTH

No legislative initiatives have been undertaken to amend the Penal Code so as to permit lawful abortion, whether the pregnancy occurs outside or within marriage. The National Centre for Human Rights and civil society organizations have undertaken numerous efforts aimed at protecting women from sexual violence, including cases resulting in pregnancy arising from rape or incest. In this context, numerous consultative meetings have been convened with the competent religious authorities and civil society organizations.

The National Centre for Human Rights has monitored the conditions of women in remote and underserved areas through field visits to 67 villages across all governorates of the Kingdom. The Centre observed a high birth rate, with some families comprising more than five children. This was found to be attributable to prevailing social attitudes favouring larger families or the birth of a male child, as well as to the limited availability of awareness programmes on reproductive health and the use of contraceptives.

The National Centre for Human Rights recorded, during its numerous visits to remote areas, a number of observations concerning the services provided by government health centers, the most prominent of which were: (a) shortages of medicines and, in certain centers, the unavailability of some childhood vaccines; (b) the lack, in certain centers, of maternal health services for pregnant women; (c) shortages of medical personnel, non-compliance with official working hours, and the absence of medical staff on certain days; (d) the remoteness of certain health centers from the places of residence of beneficiaries; and (e) the unavailability or insufficiency of certain medical equipment in some health centers.

ARTICLE (13): THE ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT OF WOMEN

There is no legislation preventing women from exercising their right to own property; the law establishes equality between men and women with respect to property ownership. The challenge, however, lies in prevailing customs, traditions, and social attitudes that deprive women of the effective enjoyment of this right.

Notwithstanding the recognition of women's inheritance rights under Islamic Sharia and the affirmation of those rights in the Personal Status Law, as well as the implementation of numerous awareness-raising programmes, the persistence of certain customs, traditions, and social practices continues, in some cases, to prevent women from exercising their right to inheritance. It is therefore essential to continue raising awareness among both women and men of women's right to inheritance and to its enjoyment in accordance with the provisions of Islamic Sharia. This, in turn, requires the continuation

and expansion of awareness-raising programmes by all relevant entities concerning women's rights.

In this regard, the Centre affirms the necessity of amending the provisions of the Civil Service Regulation governing family allowances, so that the family allowance is granted to female employees under the same conditions applicable to male employees.

ARTICLE (14): RURAL WOMEN

With a view to assessing the actual situation of women in remote areas, the Women's Rights Unit of the National Centre for Human Rights conducted visits to 67 villages across all governorates of the Kingdom. Meetings were held with women from the local communities in each village. These meetings revealed that women face the following challenges and human rights violations:

(a) Women in most of the above-mentioned areas played no effective role in municipal and parliamentary elections other than exercising their right to vote, which was often exercised under the direction or pressure of relatives to vote for candidates of their choosing. Women also encountered difficulties in accessing polling stations, which were generally located outside their villages. In addition, women were discouraged from standing as candidates in elections, as they often lacked the opportunity to exercise an independent and free choice. The dominance of men, prevailing customs, traditions, and social practices, together with inadequate services and limited means of transportation, continued to impede the effective exercise by women of their right to stand as candidates in municipal and parliamentary elections. Furthermore, women's limited financial resources constituted an additional obstacle to exercising that right, alongside the absence of awareness-raising programmes on women's rights by both civil society organizations and official institutions.

(b) The low level of awareness among women of their rights generally, and their limited knowledge of the means by which those rights may be claimed, have resulted in their limited participation in public life, if not their complete absence therefrom. This is attributable to the failure of official institutions, particularly those concerned with women's affairs, to reach these areas and discharge the role expected of them, as well as to the limited role of civil society organizations in reaching rural and Badia areas.

(c) The absence of recreational facilities, such as parks, public libraries, and children's playgrounds, in most of the areas visited, compelling children to play in the streets.

(d) The high rate of unemployment, attributable to the absence of private-sector investment projects in these areas, in addition to the scarcity or absence of transportation services connecting these areas with neighboring cities and other areas where employment opportunities are available.

(f) The inadequacy of health-care services provided to women, reflected in shortages of medical personnel and medicines at health centers, as well as the unavailability of specialists in gynecology and obstetrics.

The Centre has issued a series of recommendations, including urging the Government and the relevant authorities to work towards improving the level of services in municipalities, villages, and other areas, in a manner that promotes local development and raises the economic standard of their inhabitants, thereby enhancing women's enjoyment of their rights.

Furthermore, in 2012, the Centre prepared a study entitled *The Situation of Rural Women and Their Right to Adequate Food*. The study aimed to assess the situation of rural women and the realization of their right to adequate food. It concluded that rural women bear primary responsibility for food production to meet the needs of their families through household gardening and livestock rearing, yet often lack the necessary skills to carry out such activities in a productive manner, relying instead on inherited experience and personal initiative that do not meet the required level of technical knowledge.²

THE OPTIONAL PROTOCOL

The Centre has consistently called, through its annual reports on the human rights situation in Jordan, for the ratification of the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women. The Centre has also addressed the Prime Ministry urging the ratification of the Optional Protocol. The Government's response to the recommendation for ratification was that Jordan had not accepted this recommendation during the second cycle of the Universal Periodic Review before the Human Rights Council. Nevertheless, the Centre continues to recommend that the Jordanian Government ratify the Optional Protocol.

DISADVANTAGED AND MARGINALIZED WOMEN

With regard to the situation of refugee women and their exposure to violence, no distinction is made between Jordanian women and refugee women who are subjected to violence. Accordingly, refugee women are provided with the same services, including health and reproductive health care (pre-pregnancy care, antenatal care, postnatal care, the provision of family planning methods, and other related services), as well as, where necessary, shelter and hosting services, including food, clothing, legal, psychological, and social support, at the Family Reconciliation House of the Ministry of Social Development in Amman. In 2013, the Family Reconciliation Center (Dār al-Wifāq al-Usarī) received 116 Syrian women, while the Girls' Care Home in Russeifa provided care and protection to four refugee girls. In view of the concentration of refugee women, particularly Syrian women, in the Northern Region of Jordan, an additional branch of Dār al-Wifāq al-Usarī was established in Irbid Governorate in 2015. It is further anticipated that another branch will be established in the Southern Region.

² For further information concerning this study, please refer to the Report on the Situation of Human Rights in the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan for the year 2012, p. 182.

NCHR conducts visits to Syrian refugee camps to monitor the conditions of refugees therein, prepares reports on their economic, social, and cultural conditions, and submits recommendations to the relevant authorities with a view to improving their living conditions.

THE ROLE OF THE NATIONAL CENTRE FOR HUMAN RIGHTS IN THE PROTECTION AND PROMOTION OF THE RIGHTS OF WOMEN

NCHR accords particular attention to women's issues since its establishment and has progressively strengthened its institutional focus on the promotion and protection of women's rights through the establishment of the Women's Rights Unit on 1 May 2010. The Unit is responsible for monitoring and documenting violations of women's rights, in cooperation with the Centre's Monitoring and Complaints Unit, and for following up on the human rights situation of women by receiving complaints and requests for assistance submitted by women and civil society organizations concerned with women's rights. Complaints are received through personal interviews—which remain the primary means of communication—as well as by facsimile, electronic mail, newspapers, and the Centre's hotline. The Centre examines complaints, determines the appropriate course of action, and either refers them to the competent authorities or addresses them directly through engagement with governmental institutions, national bodies, and civil society organizations. The National Centre for Human Rights also conducts monitoring visits to the Family Reconciliation House, centres for persons with disabilities and older persons, centres for girls in conflict with the law, shelters, temporary detention centres, and women's correction and rehabilitation centres, and submits reports and recommendations to the relevant authorities with a view to addressing any violations identified.

As regards the subject matter of the complaints, they relate to a range of alleged human rights violations, including violations of the right to freedom of movement, the right to humane treatment, the right to asylum, the right to work, the right to an adequate standard of living, the right to physical integrity, the right to participation in public and political life, and the right to health care.

It is pertinent to note that the Centre is currently developing its website and upgrading a dedicated electronic case management system for the processing of complaints and the operation of the hotline, with a view to ensuring the provision of effective legal protection while further strengthening the Centre's capacity to receive, process, monitor, and follow up on such cases.

- The National Centre for Human Rights hosted the Eleventh International Conference of the International Coordinating Committee of National Institutions for the Promotion and Protection of Human Rights on “The Human Rights of Women and Girls: Promoting Gender Equality: The Role of National Human Rights Institutions”, held in Amman from 5 to 7 November 2012. The Conference adopted the Amman Declaration, which incorporates the regional action plans developed by the regional working groups of national human rights institutions.

It is envisaged that the Declaration will serve as a practical framework to guide the work of national human rights institutions worldwide in the promotion and protection of the rights of women and girls and the advancement of gender equality. The Amman Declaration provides a comprehensive framework for the promotion and protection of the rights of women and girls. Accordingly, the accompanying Plan of Action assigns specific responsibilities to national human rights institutions, including the following:

1. Reviewing national legislation that discriminates against women in terms of rights or treatment, and monitoring policies through analysis and evaluation.
 2. Monitoring and documenting violations of women's rights and working towards their elimination.
 3. Ensuring that governments fulfil their obligations concerning women's rights at the national and international levels.
 4. Strengthening the role of national institutions by enhancing coordination among them and with all international and national partners, including through partnerships with civil society organizations.³
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- The Centre has implemented numerous awareness-raising programmes for judges, lawyers, and public prosecutors during the period 2009–2010 and thereafter. It has also published the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women in booklet form and distributed it through its training programmes to personnel working in governmental and non-governmental institutions, lawyers, public prosecutors, judges, and university and school students throughout all governorates of the Kingdom. The Convention has also been made available on the Centre's website through the National Observatory for Women's Rights. Through the signing of a memorandum of understanding with the Ministry of Education, the Centre contributed to the integration of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women into school curricula. The Centre also receives visits from schools affiliated with the Ministry of Education and conducts awareness-raising sessions on the Convention for students. Notwithstanding these efforts, there remains a pressing need to expand awareness-raising programmes and extend their coverage to all governorates, particularly remote and underserved areas. Further efforts are also required to strengthen the integration of the principles and provisions of the Convention into school and university curricula.

³ For further information, please consult the electronic site of the Centre: www.nchr.org.jo

- In 2015, the Centre published the study “Female Inmates of the Correction and Rehabilitation Centers in Jordan: Between International Standards and Practical Reality”, which had been prepared in 2014. The study examined the conditions of female inmates in correction and rehabilitation centers and assessed the extent to which those conditions complied with international human rights standards in general, and with the international standards governing the treatment and rights of persons deprived of their liberty in particular. On the other hand, the said study highlighted the adverse consequences of the policy of administrative detention, including its detrimental impact on detainees, their families and children, as well as on correction and rehabilitation centers themselves, particularly in terms of the financial burden imposed on the State. It further found that administrative detention lacks adequate legal safeguards and constitutes a clear infringement of the guarantees of due process and the right to a fair trial.

The study further criticized the practice whereby correction and rehabilitation centers are used, in certain cases, as shelters for women placed in administrative detention purportedly for the protection of their lives, emphasizing that such a practice is incompatible with international human rights standards. In addition, the study identified the limited engagement of the private sector in supporting services provided to female inmates, particularly post-release rehabilitation and reintegration programmes. It further highlighted the inadequate staffing levels in correction and rehabilitation centers relative to the inmate population, particularly the shortage of qualified social workers and medical and mental health professionals.⁴

- In 2012, the Centre implemented the Himaya (Protection I) project, entitled Protection of Women and Young Girls from Gender-Based Violence, in cooperation with CARE International. Building on the outcomes of that initiative, the Centre subsequently implemented Himaya (Protection II).
- In 2013, the Centre implemented the project “Strengthening the Role of Youth and Women in Political Participation” across all governorates of the Kingdom. The project's activities engaged local communities, including both women and men, and focused on raising awareness of women's equal right to vote and to stand for election without undue influence or interference with the exercise of their independent political choice. As part of the project, the Centre produced and distributed a brochure promoting the right to vote for both women and men and published a reference guide entitled “Guide to the International and National Standards Relating to the Right to Vote”. During 2013 and 2014, the Centre also implemented a project to promote electoral reform in the context of the parliamentary and municipal elections through the campaign “Through Public Participation, Reform is Achieved”. The campaign sought to enhance public awareness of women's electoral rights and to promote respect for those rights, particularly by encouraging recognition of women's right to participate freely and equally in the electoral process.

For further details regarding this study, see Report on the Situation of Human Rights in the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan for the Year 2015, p. 221.

- The Centre participates in the work of the Economic and Social Council through the Committee on the Economic and Social Empowerment of Women, which contributes to the formulation of public policies aimed at advancing the economic and social empowerment of women. Through its participation in the Committee, the Centre has consistently emphasized the importance of implementing awareness-raising programmes targeting local communities, including both women and men, to promote women's participation in sustainable development, with particular focus on remote and underserved areas. In addition, under the “Female Inmate” project, funded by the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN Women), the Centre developed and published a booklet on the rights and responsibilities of female inmates. The booklet was designed to raise awareness among female inmates of their rights and obligations and was distributed in correction and rehabilitation centers throughout the Kingdom.
- In May 2012, the Centre established the National Observatory for Women’s Rights on its website as a specialized institutional mechanism for monitoring and promoting the protection of women’s rights. The Observatory was established pursuant to a Memorandum of Understanding on Combating Violence against Women concluded between the Centre, the Ministry of Social Development, the Ministry of the Interior, the Family Protection Department, and the Jordanian National Commission for Women
- The Centre prepares its Annual Report on the Situation of Human Rights in the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, which documents and analyses human rights violations, including violations affecting women, children, older persons, and persons with disabilities, across all areas of human rights.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Strengthen the application of the Convention by the Jordanian courts. This requires enhancing awareness among judges, lawyers, and the public to promote the effective invocation and application of the Convention, ensure its primacy over conflicting domestic legislation, and facilitate its direct applicability and enforcement within the national legal system.
2. Ratification of the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women.
3. Support and empower women economically and socially by expanding employment opportunities, enhancing their skills and capacities in line with labor market requirements, and ensuring that such opportunities and programmes reach women in remote and underserved areas.
4. Adopt additional temporary special measures, including quota systems and other affirmative action measures, to enhance women’s participation and integration in education and the economy, while continuing to provide incentives to promote women’s employment and advancement in the private sector.
5. Intensify awareness-raising programmes on women’s and children’s health throughout all governorates of the Kingdom, with particular focus on remote and underserved areas.
6. Ensure the provision of appropriate and accessible health-care services for women, with particular attention to women with disabilities and refugee women.
7. Develop a national plan to increase women’s participation in the management of public affairs by raising the proportion of seats allocated to women under the quota system in the Chamber of Deputies, enhancing women’s representation in

senior leadership positions within State institutions, and considering amendments to the laws governing labor and professional associations to expressly provide for the allocation of dedicated seats for women on the boards of trade unions.

8. Appoint women judges within the sharia and ecclesiastical judicial corps and the Constitutional Court, and increase the recruitment and appointment of women in religious courts and the Iftaa Department.
9. Encourage the Government and relevant authorities to enhance the quality and accessibility of services provided in municipalities and villages, with a view to promoting local development, improving the socio-economic conditions of their residents, and ensuring a positive impact on women's enjoyment of their rights.
10. Build the capacities of civil society organizations and enhance the role of the media with a view to empowering women in local communities.
11. Amend national legislation to ensure its consistency with international human rights obligations and to promote equality between women and men, including the Penal Code, the Personal Status Law, the Labor Law, and the Nationality Law
12. Build the capacities of, and provide support to, institutions working on women's empowerment and gender mainstreaming.
13. Withdraw the reservations to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW).