



Gender-Based Violence against Women in Jordanian Society

"The Governorates of Zarqa and Mafraq as a Model"

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Contents

Introduction.....	3
Chapter One: Study Work Plan.....	7
General Objective of the Study.....	7
1- Importance of the Study	7
2- Scope of the Study.....	7
Target Groups of the Study.....	7
3- Methodology of the Study	8
4- Hypotheses of the Study.....	8
5- Questions of the Study	9
6- Operational Definitions	9
Chapter Two: Protection of the Rights of Abused Women under International Standards and National Laws.....	10
First: International Protection against Violence against Women	10
Second: National Protection of Women's Rights against Violence	14
Legal Obligations Incumbent upon the State to Protect Women from Gender-Based Violence...	17
Chapter Three: The Actual Situation regarding the Concepts, Manifestations and Causes of Gender-Based Violence against Women in the Governorates of Zarqa and Mafraq	20
First: The Concept of Violence against Women.....	20
Second: Causes of Violence against Women in the Governorates of Zarqa and Mafraq.....	23
Fourth: Effects of Violence against Women.....	26
Chapter Four: Public Policies for the Protection of Women from Violence	27
First: Services Provided to Abused Women by Governmental Institutions	27
Second: Services Provided to Abused Women by Non-Governmental Institutions.....	29
Chapter Five: Economic Empowerment Programmes as One of the Solutions for Reducing Manifestations of Domestic Violence in General and Violence against Women in Particular	32
First: The Concept of Women's Economic Empowerment.....	32
The Experience of the National Centre for Human Rights in Implementing the Economic Empowerment Programme side by side with the Legal Empowerment of Women.....	34
Recommendations.....	37
References	38

Introduction

The right of women to protection from violence enjoys wide recognition in human rights law and in the relevant international and regional instruments. Article 25(2) of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights provides that "Motherhood and childhood are entitled to special care and assistance. All children, whether born in or out of wedlock, shall enjoy the same social protection". The same applies to Articles 10 and 3 of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights.¹ Paragraph 23(1) of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights affirms the importance of protecting the family, which it regards as the natural and fundamental group unit of society, while Article 3 of the same Covenant provides that the States Parties undertake to ensure the equal right of men and women to the enjoyment of all civil and political rights set forth therein. In addition, economic and social rights are guaranteed under the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women of 1979, the Convention on the Political Rights of Women of 1954 and the specialised declarations on the protection of women from violence, most notably the Declaration on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women of 1967 and the Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women of 1993, which this study addresses in a dedicated section.

In keeping with international standards, the Jordanian Constitution guarantees legal protection for women subjected to violence in Article 6, which provides that "Jordanians shall be equal before the law with no discrimination between them in rights and duties, even if they differ in race, language or religion", and affirms that "the family is the foundation of society, its pillars being religion, morals and patriotism; the law shall protect motherhood, childhood and old age, shall care for young people and persons with disabilities, and shall protect them from abuse". Furthermore, the National Charter of 1991 provides that "Jordanians, men and women, are equal before the law with no discrimination between them in rights and duties". Legal protection is also provided under numerous national laws, including the Protection from Domestic Violence Law, the Penal Code, the Personal Status Law, the Labour Law and many other laws that provide, directly or indirectly, for the protection of women's rights, as this study will discuss in a dedicated section.

On the other hand, statistical estimates point to rising rates of violence against women in all its forms in Jordanian society. According to the statistics of the Family Protection Department for 2016, the number of cases committed against women, and of victims, handled by the Family Protection Department reached (3146) cases. In addition, statistics of the Public Security

¹Article 10 of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights provides: "The widest possible protection and assistance should be accorded to the family, which is the natural and fundamental group unit of society, particularly for its establishment and while it is responsible for the care and education of dependent children. Marriage must be entered into with the free consent of the intending spouses. Special protection should be accorded to mothers during a reasonable period before and after childbirth. During such period working mothers should be accorded paid leave or leave with adequate social security benefits." Article 3 of the same Covenant affirms the equal right of men and women to the enjoyment of all economic, social and cultural rights set forth in the Covenant.

Directorate revealed that (37) murders of women were committed during the period from 1/1/2016 to 31/12/2016.²

The records of Dar Al-Wifaq Al-Usari (the Family Reconciliation House) of the Ministry of Social Development³ revealed that an average of three abused women are admitted to the House daily. The House's statistics also showed that the majority of women benefiting from its services are of Jordanian nationality, at a rate of 75 per cent, and were subjected to physical violence by the families they care for or live with. The statistics further indicated that some women receiving the House's services brought their children with them during their stay at the House, and that the number of such children reached 192 in 2016.

At another level, the findings of one specialised study on violence against women⁴ showed that the general characteristics of abused women in Jordan are as follows:

- 70% of women subjected to violence fall within the 20–39 age group.
- 52% of women subjected to violence are housewives.
- 75% of women subjected to violence have a low level of education.
- 74% of women subjected to violence did not seek to file complaints with the competent authorities.

Although the Jordanian Constitution provides for equality in rights and duties, and although the legislation concerned with the protection of women has done them justice in many areas, numerous gender-specific gaps to the detriment of women still exist at the level of legislation, policies and practices, which aggravate gender gaps. This study has identified the gaps that impede the protection of women from gender-based violence at both the legislative and the practical levels, and has sought to put forward a number of recommendations regarding the need to develop the relevant legislation.

On the basis of the foregoing, and proceeding from the objectives of the National Centre for Human Rights in protecting and promoting human rights in general, and those of groups in need of protection and care in particular, the Centre has, from 2012 until 2017, sought to shed light on gender-based violence as one of the issues from which women in Jordan suffer, and which has had a direct and indirect impact in undermining the rights of women guaranteed by the Jordanian Constitution and by the international standards ratified by Jordan. In 2012 the Centre 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

²According to statistics of the Public Security Directorate received by the National Centre for Human Rights.

³<http://www.almadenahnews.com/article/>

⁴For further information, see the study of the National Council for Family Affairs: *The Reality of Violence against Women in Jordan*, 2008.

Rights Institutions", held in Amman from 5 to 7 November 2012. The Conference adopted the Amman Declaration and Programme of Action, which includes the regional action plans endorsed by the regional working groups of national human rights institutions, to serve as a procedural guide for their work in the field of protecting and promoting the rights of women and girls and gender equality. The Programme of Action assigns specific tasks to national human rights institutions, namely: reviewing national legislation that discriminates against women in rights or in treatment; monitoring policies through analysis and evaluation; monitoring and documenting violations of women's rights and working to eliminate them; holding governments to the implementation of their obligations relating to women's rights at the national and global levels; and activating the role of national institutions by strengthening coordination between them and all international and national partners, including partnership with civil society organisations. Upon the conclusion of the Conference, the Centre published the "Amman Declaration" on its website in Arabic and English and through various media outlets. It also prepared an introductory brochure on the Declaration, which was distributed to the local community through 89 visits to remote areas, during which violations of women's rights were monitored and documented; a report thereon was submitted to the Council of Ministers, which circulated it to the relevant ministries and bodies. In addition, a specialised project on the protection of women and girls from gender-based violence was implemented in two phases. The first phase of the project, which ran from 2012 to 2014, aimed at raising legal awareness of the rights of abused women and girls guaranteed under the international standards ratified by the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, as well as awareness of the relevant national laws. Six governorates were targeted: Amman, Irbid, Ma'raq, Jerash, Ma'an and Karak. Work was also undertaken to submit a specialised policy paper on the draft Child Law and to implement numerous national initiatives aimed at raising awareness of the rights of women and children.⁵ The second phase, which ran from 2015 to 2017, was a phase dedicated to two governorates, namely Ma'raq Governorate and Irbid Governorate, as a result of the finding of the first phase of the project that the governorates of Zarqa and Ma'raq are among the areas with the most widespread manifestations of domestic violence in general and of violence against women in particular, owing to the nature of the social, economic and demographic changes that those two governorates have witnessed and continue to witness. In its second phase, the project sought to raise awareness of and educate about national rights and international standards, and to build the capacities of the competent bodies⁶ to provide social, economic, psychological, legal and security services to abused women, as well as to raise awareness of women's rights among the male relatives of women and members of the local community in the areas targeted by the project. The project then proceeded to offer one of the effective solutions for reducing gender-based violence against women by implementing a

⁵For further information on the achievements of the first phase of the project, see the project summary on the website of the National Centre for Human Rights.

⁶The project targeted: the Public Security Directorate / Family Protection Department / Ministry of Education / Ministry of Social Development / specialised civil society organisations.

specialised programme for the economic empowerment of abused women, in the Centre's belief that the economic empowerment of women and the easing of the burden of difficult economic and living challenges constitute one of the pillars of family stability and of the elimination of manifestations of violence against women. This matter will be addressed in detail in one of the chapters of this study.

Accordingly, and on the basis of the practical outcomes reached by the National Centre for Human Rights in addressing the problem of gender-based violence against women, this study comes to shed light on the reality of gender-based violence against women by identifying and analysing the differences in the relations between men and women, identifying the causes and forms of imbalance in the relationship between the two parties, and adjusting that relationship through legislative, social and economic proposals. This will be done by reflecting the experience of the National Centre for Human Rights in analysing the causes and forms of gender-based violence against women, reviewing the role of official and non-official bodies in providing services to abused women, and demonstrating the importance of economic empowerment programmes, side by side with legal empowerment, in remote rural areas in order to raise the standard of living of families suffering from family problems caused by low income, the absence of a breadwinner and difficult environmental and social challenges.

The study will accordingly seek to answer the following question:

What is the reality of gender-based violence against women in the governorates of Zarqa and Mafraq?

Chapter One

Study Work Plan

General Objective of the Study

To set out the actual situation of gender-based violence against women in the governorates of Zarqa and Mafrq.

1- Importance of the Study

1. It is a specialised study based on field findings from the ground that reveal the actual situation of gender-based violence practised against women in remote rural areas. It is one of the outputs of a specialised project implemented by the National Centre for Human Rights to eliminate gender-based violence in particular, and it differs completely from previous studies, most of which focused on domestic violence and violence against women in general.
2. This study presents the actual situation of gender-based violence against women by offering interpretations from legal, sociological and human rights perspectives, in accordance with the international standards ratified by the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan.
3. This study presents one of the solutions for reducing gender-based violence against women in remote rural areas, namely economic empowerment programmes, and the importance of such programmes in alleviating the burden of poverty and unemployment rates and in providing a moderate income that helps improve the standard of living of families in general, and of female-headed households in particular.

2- Scope of the Study

The governorates of Zarqa and Mafrq, specifically in the following areas:

Mafrq Governorate	Rawdat Al-Amira Basma Focus group sessions were held at Al-Yusr Charitable Society	Al-Khalidiya Focus group sessions were held at Khalidiya Ladies Society	Al-Mushrefa Focus group sessions were held at Al-Mushrefa Development Society
Zarqa Governorate	Umm Al-Sulaih Focus group sessions were held at Umm Al-Sulaih Development Society	Bereen Focus group sessions were held at Bereen Charitable Society	Al-Hallabat Al-Gharbi Focus group sessions were held at Al-Hallabat Al-Gharbi Society

Target Groups of the Study

1. Women subjected to violence and female heads of household: 120 women.
2. Providers of social and psychological services, being social workers from the Ministry of Social Development and civil society organisations: 200 social workers.
3. Representatives of the Family Protection Department and the Public Security Directorate: 136 male and female representatives.
4. Members of the local community⁷ in the areas targeted by the project: 84 male and female citizens.
5. Male relatives of women: 80 men.

3- Methodology of the Study

The following methodology was adopted to describe the reality of gender-based violence against women:

1. Reviewing the relevant national legislation containing provisions that discriminate between the sexes.
2. Reviewing national studies that analyse the problem of violence against women.
3. Applying the descriptive-analytical method to the focus groups held by the Centre for the target groups, numbering 35 focus groups, each lasting 3–4 working days of discussion.

Sources of Field Information for the Study

Representatives of the Public Security Directorate and the Family Protection Department
Representatives of relevant civil society organisations
A sample of social workers and psychologists at the Ministry of Social Development
Members of the local committees ⁸ in the governorates of Zarqa and Mafrq

⁷For the purposes of this study, "members of the local community" means the representatives of the areas targeted by the project on the protection of women from gender-based violence implemented by the Centre, comprising social workers, religious leaders, mukhtars (local notables) and members of civil society organisations providing services to women and children.

⁸Local committee: the committees established by the National Centre for Human Rights during the implementation of the project on the Protection (2) of women from gender-based violence in the areas targeted by the project, which are the same areas targeted by this study. There are six local committees, each composed of 14 members representing the Family Protection Department, the Public Security Directorate, social workers and psychologists in the area, some heads and members of societies providing services to women in those areas, and the mukhtar or whoever acts in his place, together with a municipal council member.

4- Hypotheses of the Study

First: There is an inverse relationship between women's low legal awareness of their rights guaranteed by the Jordanian Constitution, national laws and international standards and the increase in gender-based violence against women.

Second: There is a direct relationship between increased awareness among women's relatives of the role of women in work and economic production, together with a change in the stereotypical image of women's role, and the elimination of violence practised against women.

Third: There is an inverse relationship between weak economic empowerment and the increase in manifestations of violence against women.

5- Questions of the Study

1. What are the concepts and forms of gender-based violence prevalent in the governorates of Zarqa and Mafrqa?
2. How have the relevant international standards and national laws guaranteed the protection of women from gender-based violence?
3. What is the level of awareness of abused women of their legal rights guaranteed by national laws and international standards?
4. What is the nature of the services provided by official and non-official bodies to abused women?
5. Can economic empowerment be one of the effective solutions for reducing manifestations of violence against women?

6- Operational Definitions

Gender-based violence: All violent acts the commission of which results in harm to another, and whose victim is a woman or girl because she is female, motivated by gender bias, owing to differences in roles (rights, duties and obligations), relations, responsibilities, images and status of women and men, which are determined socially and culturally through the historical development of a given society and are all susceptible to change.

Discrimination: For the purposes of this study, the concept of "discrimination against women" set out in the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) has been used, namely: "any distinction, exclusion or restriction made on the basis of sex which has the effect or purpose of impairing or nullifying the recognition, enjoyment or exercise by women, irrespective of their marital status, on a basis of equality of men and women, of human rights and fundamental freedoms in the political, economic, social, cultural, civil or any other field".

Chapter Two

Protection of the Rights of Abused Women under International Standards and National Laws

First: International Protection against Violence against Women

There is no doubt that the protection and promotion of women's rights has long been a matter of concern to the international community. This concern has manifested itself in two principal forms. The first is general in nature and is reflected in numerous general international instruments containing principles on the protection and promotion of human rights in general, including the protection of women's rights as human beings; here we emphasise the International Bill of Human Rights, which we shall address in some detail below. The second lies in the establishment of numerous international and regional instruments, as well as international bodies and mechanisms, directly concerned with women's rights, as will be set out below.

This chapter presents the general and special international protection of women's rights as follows:

First: General International Protection of Women's Rights

The Preamble to the Charter of the United Nations⁹ contains the declaration of the peoples of the international Organization reaffirming their faith in fundamental human rights, in the dignity and worth of the human person and in the equal rights of men and women. In addition, Article (2) of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights provides that "Everyone is entitled to all the rights and freedoms set forth in this Declaration, without distinction of any kind, such as race, colour, sex ...". Likewise, Article (2) of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights provides that the State shall guarantee the rights recognised in the Covenant, and Article (10) of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights also affirms that: "The widest possible protection and assistance should be accorded to the family, which is the natural and fundamental group unit of society, particularly for its establishment and while it is responsible for the care and education of dependent children. Marriage must be entered into with the free consent of the intending spouses. Special protection should be accorded to mothers during a reasonable period before and after childbirth. During such period working mothers should be accorded paid leave or leave with adequate social security benefits."

Second: Special International Protection of Women's Rights

⁹Signed at San Francisco on 26 June 1945.

There are numerous United Nations instruments that directly protect and promote women's rights, whether by way of international conventions, declarations or international resolutions, as set out below:

A. International Conventions

- **Convention on Consent to Marriage, Minimum Age for Marriage (1964):**¹⁰ This is an international agreement through which the States Parties undertake a legal obligation relating to the exercise by their nationals of political rights. What distinguishes this Convention is that it was the first time that the principle of equality between men and women in standing for and voting in elections was applied. The Convention contains three fundamental rights: (1) the right of women to vote in all elections on equal terms with men;¹¹ (2) the right of women to be eligible for election to all elected bodies;¹² and (3) the right of women to hold public office established by national law on equal terms with men.¹³
- **International Convention on Consent to Marriage, Minimum Age for Marriage and Registration of Marriages:** Through this Convention, legal measures were called for to specify a minimum age for marriage, as well as the official registration of all marriages by the competent authority.
- **Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (1979):**¹⁴ An overview of the provisions of this Convention shows that the principles of equality and non-discrimination together constitute the governing principles of the Convention. Article 1 of the Convention¹⁵ defines discrimination in general and detailed terms, and, in direct succession, Article 2 of the Convention¹⁶ affirms the international

¹⁰Opened for signature and ratification by General Assembly resolution of 7 November 1962; entry into force on 9 December 1964.

¹¹Article 1 of the Convention on the Political Rights of Women, adopted and opened for signature, ratification and accession by United Nations General Assembly resolution 640 (VII) of 20 December 1952: "Women shall be entitled to vote in all elections on equal terms with men, without any discrimination."

¹²Article 2: "Women shall be eligible for election to all publicly elected bodies, established by national law, on equal terms with men, without any discrimination."

¹³Article 3: "Women shall be entitled to hold public office and to exercise all public functions, established by national law, on equal terms with men, without any discrimination."

¹⁴Adopted and opened for signature, ratification and accession by United Nations General Assembly resolution 34/180 of 18 December 1979.

¹⁵"For the purposes of the present Convention, the term 'discrimination against women' shall mean any distinction, exclusion or restriction made on the basis of sex which has the effect or purpose of impairing or nullifying the recognition, enjoyment or exercise by women, irrespective of their marital status, on a basis of equality of men and women, of human rights and fundamental freedoms in the political, economic, social, cultural, civil or any other field."

¹⁶"States Parties condemn discrimination against women in all its forms, agree to pursue by all appropriate means and without delay a policy of eliminating discrimination against women and, to this end, undertake: (a) To embody the principle of the equality of men and women in their national constitutions or other appropriate legislation if not yet incorporated therein and to ensure, through law and other appropriate means, the practical realization of this principle; (b) To adopt appropriate legislative and other measures, including sanctions where appropriate, prohibiting all discrimination against women; (c) To establish legal protection of the rights of women on an equal basis with men and

obligations incumbent upon the States Parties in combating discrimination on the basis of sex, stressing that the States Parties must take all appropriate legislative, administrative, judicial and institutional measures to give effect to this general obligation and ensure its application in practice. The Convention then affirms, in other provisions, the call for equality between men and women on the basis of gender or sex. This has made the Convention unique among international human rights conventions in general in its emphasis on the principle of gender equality. The Convention affirms the importance of legal equality and equal opportunities in Article 2, regarding it as a duty of the States Parties to embody the principle of equality in their national constitutions or laws, and calls for the adoption of legislative measures, including penal measures, and for doing everything in their power to ensure the full development and advancement of women so that they may exercise and enjoy their human rights on an equal basis with men.

B. International Declarations and Conferences

A close examination of international instruments, and specifically international declarations, shows that most declarations relating to women's rights link the two concepts of violence and discrimination against women, since they are overlapping concepts in terms of their causes and triggers and ultimately lead to one result, namely the diminution of women's enjoyment of the rights guaranteed to them internationally. Therefore, out of the international community's concern to reject discrimination and violence against women, it issued a separate declaration for each concept, through which it calls upon States to combat discrimination and violence against women by all legal, administrative, judicial, social and cultural means and measures, as follows:

- **Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women of 1993:**¹⁷ Article 1 of the Declaration defines violence against women as "any act of gender-based violence that results in, or is likely to result in, physical, sexual or psychological harm or suffering to women, including threats of such acts, coercion or arbitrary deprivation of liberty, whether occurring in public or in private life". Article 2 provides: "Violence against women shall be understood to encompass, but not be limited to, the following:
 - (a) Physical, sexual and psychological violence occurring in the family, including battering, sexual abuse of female children in the household, dowry-related violence,

to ensure through competent national tribunals and other public institutions the effective protection of women against any act of discrimination; (d) To refrain from engaging in any act or practice of discrimination against women and to ensure that public authorities and institutions shall act in conformity with this obligation; (e) To take all appropriate measures to eliminate discrimination against women by any person, organization or enterprise; (f) To take all appropriate measures, including legislation, to modify or abolish existing laws, regulations, customs and practices which constitute discrimination against women; (g) To repeal all national penal provisions which constitute discrimination against women."

¹⁷ Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women of 1993 (adopted by the United Nations General Assembly in its resolution 48/104 of 20 December 1993).

marital rape, female genital mutilation and other traditional practices harmful to women, non-spousal violence and violence related to exploitation;

(b) Physical, sexual and psychological violence occurring within the general community, including rape, sexual abuse, sexual harassment and intimidation at work, in educational institutions and elsewhere, trafficking in women and forced prostitution;

(c) Physical, sexual and psychological violence perpetrated or condoned by the State, wherever it occurs."¹⁸

Article 4 of the Declaration¹⁹ affirms the obligations incumbent upon States in combating violence against women, regarding it as a form of discrimination that curbs women's ability to enjoy their rights and freedoms. Since violence is a form of discrimination, whether direct or indirect, which may take the form of individual or collective conduct in public or private life, the said Article affirms that States shall endeavour to include penal, civil, labour and administrative sanctions in domestic legislation against those who harm women by inflicting violence upon them, and shall work to provide just remedies that open access to the mechanisms of justice for women who are subjected to violence.

In the light of the foregoing definition of violence and of the obligations incumbent upon States, the Declaration affirms that the prevalence of certain social and cultural patterns and social customs that entrench the idea of the inferiority or superiority of either sex constitutes a form of violence resulting in discrimination against women in all fields.

- **Declaration on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women of 1967:**²⁰ The Preamble to the Declaration states that discrimination against women is incompatible with human dignity and with the dignity of women, who are the basis of the welfare of the family and of society, prevents their participation, on equal terms with men, in the political, social, economic and cultural life of their countries, and is an obstacle to the full development of the potentialities of women in the service of their countries and of

¹⁸Article 2 of the Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women of 1993.

¹⁹For further detail, see Article 4 of the Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women, adopted by the United Nations General Assembly in its resolution 48/104 of 20 December 1993, which provides for the following: (1) to ratify or accede to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women or withdraw reservations to that Convention; (2) to refrain from engaging in violence against women; (3) to exercise due diligence to prevent, investigate and, in accordance with national legislation, punish acts of violence against women, whether those acts are perpetrated by the State or by private persons; (4) to develop penal, civil, labour and administrative sanctions in domestic legislation to punish and redress the wrongs caused to women who are subjected to violence; women who are subjected to violence should be provided with access to the mechanisms of justice and, as provided for by national legislation, to just and effective remedies for the harm that they have suffered; States should also inform women of their rights in seeking redress through such mechanisms; (5) to consider the possibility of developing national plans of action to promote the protection of women against any form of violence, or to include provisions for that purpose in plans already existing, taking into account, as appropriate, such cooperation as can be provided by non-governmental organizations, particularly those concerned with the issue of violence against women.

²⁰Adopted and proclaimed by United Nations General Assembly resolution 2263 (XXII) of 7 November 1967.

humanity. Article 1 of the said Declaration²¹ also condemns discrimination against women as a fundamental cause of offence against human dignity. In addition, the full realisation of women's rights and the combating of discrimination in constitutional and legal texts is required, as affirmed by Article 2 of the Declaration.²²

Once again, we see that the Declaration on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women came to affirm what was affirmed by the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, and by the Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women, in calling for the rejection of discrimination and violence against women and for combating them by all legal, judicial, social and cultural means through the imposition of a number of legal obligations upon States. This shows that discrimination and violence against women are among the elements that most violate women's rights and prevent their enjoyment of the human rights guaranteed to them under international conventions and declarations.

- **Beijing Declaration issued by the World Conference on Women of 1995:** This Declaration came to affirm the equal rights and inherent human dignity of women and men and the other purposes and principles enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and other international human rights instruments, and to ensure the full implementation of the human rights of women and of the girl child as an inalienable, integral and indivisible part of all human rights and fundamental freedoms, through the full and effective implementation of strategies for the advancement of women.

The Declaration affirms the importance of women's empowerment and their full participation on the basis of equality in all spheres of society, their equality in rights and opportunities, and their sharing with men on the basis of harmonious partnership between them, as critical to their well-being and that of their families as well as to the consolidation of democracy; in addition to the importance of the economic empowerment of women, the provision of social justice, and the achievement of equal opportunities and the full and equal participation of women and men as agents and beneficiaries of people-centred sustainable development.

Second: National Protection of Women's Rights against Violence

Article 6 of the Jordanian Constitution guarantees the equality of Jordanians before the law in rights and duties, even if they differ in race, language or religion. Numerous relevant laws have been amended. Although the Jordanian Constitution provides for equality in rights and duties, and although the legislation concerned with the protection of women has done them justice in

²¹Article 1 of the Declaration: "Discrimination against women, denying or limiting as it does their equality of rights with men, is fundamentally unjust and constitutes an offence against human dignity."

²²"All appropriate measures shall be taken to abolish existing laws, customs, regulations and practices which are discriminatory against women, and to establish adequate legal protection for equal rights of men and women, in particular: (a) The principle of equality of rights shall be embodied in the constitution or otherwise guaranteed by law; ..."

many areas, numerous gender-specific gaps to the detriment of women still exist at the level of legislation, policies and practices, which aggravate gender gaps. This study has identified the gaps that impede the protection of women from gender-based violence at both the legislative and the practical levels, and has sought to put forward a number of recommendations regarding the need to develop the relevant legislation, among them (the Penal Code, the Nationality Law, the Personal Status Law, the Social Security Law, the Labour Law and the Civil Service Bylaw, etc.), as will be set out below:

A. National Protection under the Laws

The Penal Code is one of the most important laws guaranteeing the protection of women from gender-based violence. Through it, the Jordanian legislature has provided protection for women from all forms of violence by increasing the penalties for a number of offences, including indecent assault, seduction, debauchery, violation of the sanctity of places reserved for women, promise of marriage coupled with defloration, and indecent fondling. The legislature has also been keen not to apply discretionary mitigating circumstances where an offence against honour is committed against a person, male or female, who had not completed eighteen years of age at the time of the offence, and the offender had completed eighteen years of age. However, the Centre considers that there are some cases of unjustified discrimination between husband and wife in the Jordanian Penal Code, among them the provisions of Article 340²³ on the mitigating excuse, which requires, for the wife to benefit from the mitigating excuse, that she surprise her husband committing adultery in the marital home only, unlike the man, who benefits from the excuse in any place where he surprises and catches his wife in the act of adultery. It would have been more appropriate for the legislature, in order to achieve gender equality, to delete the phrase "in the marital home" contained in paragraph 2 of Article 340.

As for the Temporary Social Security Law No. 1 of 2014, the Centre considers that this Law contains numerous provisions that reinforce the concept of the dependent woman. This is reflected in Article (81),²⁴ which provides for depriving the beneficiaries of the pension of the insured person, pensioner or incapacity pensioner — his unmarried, widowed and divorced

²³"1. Any person who surprises his wife, or any of his female ascendants, descendants or sisters, in the act of committing adultery or in an unlawful bed, and kills her immediately, or kills the person committing adultery with her, or kills them both, or assaults one or both of them in an assault resulting in a wound, harm, permanent disability or death, shall benefit from the mitigating excuse. 2. The same excuse shall benefit a wife who surprises her husband in the act of committing adultery or in an unlawful bed in the marital home, and kills him immediately, or kills the woman committing adultery with him, or kills them both, or assaults one or both of them in an assault resulting in a wound, harm, permanent disability or death."

²⁴"Subject to the provisions of Article (79) of this Law, the share of the pension shall be paid to the entitled persons set out below in accordance with the following conditions: ... 2- The widow of the insured person, pensioner or incapacity pensioner, and his unmarried, widowed and divorced daughters and sisters at the time of death; the share of any of them shall be suspended upon her marriage and shall be restored to her in the event of her divorce or widowhood. 3- The husband of the deceased insured woman, female pensioner or female incapacity pensioner, provided that he suffers from total incapacity and has no wage from work, income from a profession or other retirement pension equal to his share of his deceased wife's retirement or incapacity pension; if such wage, income or retirement pension is less than his entitlement from that pension, he shall be paid the difference between them, and the remainder of the pension shall be distributed to the other entitled persons according to the shares set out in Schedule No. (4) annexed to this Law without taking the husband into account in that distribution."

daughters and sisters at the time of death — in the event of marriage, divorce or widowhood. **On the other hand, the Civil Service Bylaw of 2013 and its amendments of 2014** are not free of some provisions that truly constitute discrimination against women, including Article (25) of the Bylaw, which provides: "(a) A married employee shall be entitled to a monthly family allowance of (20) dinars, including a widowed or divorced employee if he has children not exceeding (18) years of age. (b) The family allowance shall be paid to a female employee if her husband is disabled, or if she is the breadwinner of her children, or if she is divorced and does not receive legal maintenance for her children, and they are not more than (18) years of age." The Centre considers that this Article discriminates between men and women in granting the family allowance, granting it in the first place to the married male employee but not to the female employee, or to the female employee only if her husband is disabled, or if she is the breadwinner of her children, or if she is divorced and does not receive legal maintenance for her children; it would be more appropriate to provide for equality between men and women here. **As for the Protection from Domestic Violence Law of 2016**, it also contains a number of standards for protecting women from violence, such as reporting and making it mandatory in certain cases, the requirement that the Family Protection Department respond immediately to every report or complaint from any source, securing the necessary services for the victim, providing protection for witnesses and informants, settling disputes under judicial supervision by a court competent to settle disputes, introducing alternative penalties such as community service, and providing rehabilitation services for the victim and the perpetrator. However, the Centre finds that Article (2) thereof, in defining family members as ("the persons mentioned in Article 3 of this Law who reside in the family home"), should rather have deleted the phrase ("who reside in the family home"), since violence may come from a brother or from the husband of a divorced woman, and violence may occur between divorced spouses. **Likewise, the Jordanian Nationality Law No. 6 of 1954 and its amendments** regulates the granting of nationality to the citizens of Jordan, but it deprives Jordanian women of the right to grant nationality to their children from a foreign father or to their foreign husband, and gives this right to Jordanian males only. Article (3) of the Law provides that: ("The following shall be deemed Jordanian nationals: ... 3- Any person born to a father holding Jordanian nationality. 4- Any person born in the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan to a mother holding Jordanian nationality and a father of unknown nationality or stateless, or whose paternity has not been legally established"). Article 11 of the Law provides that: ("If a foreign widow or divorcee marries a Jordanian, her children born before the marriage shall not acquire Jordanian nationality by reason of such marriage alone").

Likewise, the Civil Retirement Law No. 34 of 1959 and its amendments contains some provisions that expressly involve discrimination against women and differentiation between women and husbands, including Article (15/a) of the Law, which provides: ("The Council of Ministers may decide to refer an employee to retirement if he has completed twenty years, and a female employee if she has completed fifteen years, of service accepted for retirement"). It would be more appropriate for any employee to be referred to retirement upon completing

twenty years, without distinction between men and women. Discrimination between male and female employees is impermissible, as it contravenes the provisions of the Constitution and of the international conventions ratified by the Government; moreover, the family burdens placed on women diminish after (20) years of service, and this deprives women of the opportunity to obtain the retirement benefits accruing from long service. Article (31) of the Law also discriminates between male and female employees; it provides: ("The following persons shall be deemed members of the family of the deceased employee or pensioner who are entitled to a retirement pension, gratuity or compensation under the provisions of this Law: (a) the wife or wives; (b) sons who have not completed seventeen years of age; (c) unmarried, widowed or divorced daughters; (d) the widowed or divorced mother; (e) the father, provided that the deceased was unmarried and the sole breadwinner of his father"). Husband and wife should both be regarded as beneficiaries of the entitlements without discrimination, since they are received in return for service rendered by the employee; the original text deprives the female employee's husband of benefiting from her retirement entitlements. Both parents should be regarded as persons who may be supported, since the reason for dependency — old age and inability to cope with daily burdens — is the same for both; and paragraph (e) should be deleted, since its purpose or justification no longer exists, as it entrenches discrimination in dependency in favour of the unmarried male and makes it impossible to apply the provision to the unmarried female.

The Centre considers that Article (33) of the Law should be repealed; it provides: ("The retirement pension shall be discontinued for wives, daughters and mothers upon their marriage, provided that their entitlement shall be restored to them if they become widowed or divorced, and upon their marrying a second time the pension shall be discontinued permanently. Daughters and mothers who were married at the time of the death of their father or son and did not then benefit from the pension of the person they inherit from, and who subsequently became widowed or divorced, shall receive their share from the date of widowhood or divorce in accordance with the provisions of this Law"). This constitutes a clear violation of the content of international conventions that prohibit discrimination on the basis of marital status, since the original text discontinues the retirement pension for the wife and daughters upon their marriage. On the other hand, this Article clearly contravenes the causes giving rise to obligations and the acquisition of rights established in the Civil Law and in legal theory, which stress that a legal right must not be revoked or affected on the basis of the persons addressed by the legal rule.

Article (34) of the Law provides: ("The retirement pension shall not be discontinued for a female employee who has acquired a retirement pension for her service in the event of her marriage; and if she dies, her pension shall pass to those entitled to it in accordance with the provisions of this Law if their need is proven and it is also proven that the female employee was directly responsible for supporting them"). This provision contravenes the characteristics of the legal rule as being general and abstract and marked by equality in order to achieve justice,

since the existence of a legal provision that discriminates between legal positions despite the identity of cause and factual situation constitutes a legislative deviation. Under this provision, a male employee may bequeath his retirement pension, gratuity or compensation to his wife and family members without any restriction or condition, whereas a female employee bequeaths her retirement pension only upon fulfilment of conditions, namely that they are in need and that she was their breadwinner; this constitutes discrimination in the legal position of those addressed by the legislative rule.

As for the field of women's employment, the Jordanian Labour Law regulates the legal provisions and rights of working women; however, it still contains some provisions that are unfair to and discriminatory against women, including Article (27/a/1) of the Law, which provides: "(a) Subject to the provisions of paragraph (b) of this Article, an employer may not terminate the service of a worker, or serve notice on him of termination of his service, in any of the following cases: 1. a pregnant working woman as of the sixth month of her pregnancy or during maternity leave"). It would therefore be more appropriate to protect working women from termination of service on account of pregnancy without limiting this to the sixth month, but rather for the entire period of pregnancy. There is also Article (69) of the Law, which provides: ("The following shall be determined by decision of the Minister after obtaining the opinion of the competent official bodies: (a) the industries and occupations in which the employment of women is prohibited; (b) the times during which women may not be employed and the cases excepted therefrom"). This Article constitutes a restriction on women's right to work and their freedom to choose suitable work; the choice as to the type and conditions of work should therefore be left to them, as should the provisions restricting the right to choose working hours suitable to them, even if at night. Article (70) of the Labour Law provides: ("A working woman shall be entitled to maternity leave on full pay before and after childbirth for a total period of ten weeks, provided that the period of such leave falling after childbirth shall not be less than six weeks, and her employment before the expiry of that period is prohibited"). Therefore, since the Social Security Law has introduced maternity insurance as one of the social insurances, and maternity leave is no longer a burden on the employer, it has become a pressing necessity, and in the best interests of the child, that such leave be not less than three months, with not less than eight weeks after childbirth.

Legal Obligations Incumbent upon the State to Protect Women from Gender-Based Violence

Jordan is among the States that have been early to become original parties to international human rights conventions in general and to the international conventions on women in particular. As soon as a State Party ratifies a convention and publishes it in its Official Gazette, the State becomes bound to fulfil a set of obligations arising from the right to protection of women from violence and to take all appropriate measures that ensure the actual and genuine

enjoyment by individuals of the rights guaranteed under the convention,²⁵ in order to eliminate violence against women by any person, organisation or institution. In addition, the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women affirms the international obligations incumbent upon States in the field of eliminating violence against women through the following:

To refrain completely from engaging in any form of violence against women by exercising due diligence to prevent, investigate and, in accordance with national legislation, punish acts of violence against women, whether those acts are perpetrated by the State or by private persons; to develop penal, civil, labour and administrative sanctions in domestic legislation to punish and redress the wrongs caused to women who are subjected to violence, and to provide compensation to women for such harm — women who are subjected to violence should be provided with access to the mechanisms of justice and, as provided for by national legislation, to just and effective remedies for the harm they have suffered, and States should also inform women of their rights in seeking redress through such mechanisms; to consider the possibility of developing national plans of action to promote the protection of women against any form of violence, or to include provisions for that purpose in plans already existing, taking into account, as appropriate, such cooperation as can be provided by non-governmental organisations, particularly those concerned with the issue of violence against women; to develop, in a comprehensive way, preventive approaches and all those measures of a legal, political, administrative and cultural nature that promote the protection of women against any form of violence, and ensure that the re-victimisation of women does not occur because of laws insensitive to gender considerations, enforcement practices or other interventions; to include in government budgets adequate resources for their activities related to the elimination of violence against women; and to facilitate and enhance the work of the women's movement and non-governmental organisations and cooperate with them at local, national and regional levels. In the light of a review of the foregoing international texts, this study affirms that the general legal obligations incumbent upon the State comprise a number of matters, as follows:

1. Legal Measures

The State must take effective legal measures, including making available laws against violence against women providing for penal sanctions, civil remedies and compensatory provisions to protect women from violence, including protection from violence within the family

²⁵The Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women affirms the legal obligations of the State to protect women from all forms of discrimination through its undertaking: (a) to embody the principle of the equality of men and women in their national constitutions or other appropriate legislation, and to ensure, through law and other appropriate means, the practical realization of this principle; (b) to adopt appropriate legislative and other measures, including sanctions where appropriate, prohibiting all discrimination against women; (c) to establish legal protection of the rights of women on an equal basis with men and to ensure the effective protection of women through competent tribunals; (d) to refrain from engaging in any act or practice of discrimination against women; (e) to take all appropriate measures to eliminate discrimination against women by any person, organization or enterprise; (f) to take all appropriate measures, including legislation, to modify or abolish existing laws, regulations, customs and practices which constitute discrimination against women; (g) to repeal all national penal provisions which constitute discrimination against women.

environment or the workplace. Training judicial and law enforcement personnel and government officials in gender sensitivity is essential for the application of the provisions of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women.

The Jordanian legislature has done well to harmonise numerous national laws with the relevant international standards on the protection of women from violence; however, we still witness numerous legislative violations affecting the rights of Jordanian women. This is due to the weak application of the national laws that protect women from violence, the length of litigation in family cases, and women's ignorance of the rights guaranteed to them by the Jordanian Constitution and national laws.

2. Preventive Measures

International recommendations have focused on the need to give education programmes the utmost attention as one of the preventive means aimed at changing attitudes regarding the roles of women and men in public and private life, including taking measures to ensure that the media respect women and promote respect for them.

At the national level, this study considers that preventive measures in the media in this field are still timid. Their pace rises for a short period on social media when a crime or a case of domestic violence is committed, while the official media still show weakness in their awareness-raising and educational programmes on combating violence against women, lacking specialised programmes to enable media professionals and media outlets to recognise the seriousness of the phenomenon of violence and its impact on women's rights and family rights.

3. Protective Measures

These comprise the care services that must be available to protect women from violence, including shelter, counselling, rehabilitation and support services for women victims of violence.

These protective measures emphasise two types of protection:

The first relates to **care-based protection**, which includes providing basic services to abused women, such as food, shelter, clothing, treatment and care. These services are available at the national level in Jordan through Dar Al-Wifaq Al-Usari of the Ministry of Social Development and some civil society organisations; however, it is hoped that these services will be provided at the regional level in all governorates of the Kingdom through the establishment of branches of Dar Al-Wifaq Al-Usari.

The other type of protective measure is **rehabilitative protection**, meaning the provision of psychosocial support programmes, adjustment programmes and social reintegration programmes. These programmes still show shortcomings at the practical level, as there is no official body that follows up the cases of abused women after they leave protection centres, and there is no legislative provision on this matter.

This study recommends the establishment of an institution concerned with providing rehabilitation services to victims of domestic violence under a specialised legislative provision.

Chapter Three

The Actual Situation regarding the Concepts, Manifestations and Causes of Gender-Based Violence against Women in the Governorates of Zarqa and Mafraq

This part of the study sets out the concepts of gender-based violence prevalent in the governorates of Zarqa and Mafraq, together with the causes of the spread of violence against women in those governorates, and then sets out the effects arising therefrom.

First: The Concept of Violence against Women

There is no doubt that there is no comprehensive and exclusive definition of violence against women in the international standards instruments on women's rights. Some have defined violence as discrimination, as set out in Article (2) of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women; some have defined it as a form of deprivation and isolation, as in the definition of the United Nations General Assembly; some have defined it as violence practised on the basis of sex, as set out in the Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women; and some have defined it on the basis of its serious health effects, as in the definition of the World Health Organization. The United Nations Population Fund has defined violence on the basis of the imbalance in power relations between men and women, with violence being directed specifically at women. We set out those definitions in some detail below:

The concept of violence against women in the Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women:²⁶ any act of gender-based violence, motivated by gender bias, that results in, or is likely to result in, physical, sexual or psychological harm or suffering to women, including threats of such acts, coercion or arbitrary deprivation of liberty, whether occurring in public or in private life.

The concept of violence against women in the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women: a form of discrimination against women, comprising any distinction, exclusion or restriction made on the basis of sex which has the effect or purpose of impairing or nullifying the recognition, enjoyment or exercise by women, irrespective of their marital status, on a basis of equality of men and women, of human rights and fundamental freedoms in the political, economic, social, cultural, civil or any other field.

The concept of violence against women in the General Assembly:²⁷ economic deprivation and isolation that cause serious harm to the safety, health or well-being of women.

²⁶See Article (1) of the Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women, adopted by the United Nations General Assembly in its resolution 48/104 of 20 December 1993.

²⁷General Assembly resolution 58/147.

The concept of gender-based violence according to the World Health Organization: any harmful act perpetrated against a person's will and based on socially ascribed differences between males and females, which constitutes a violation of a number of universal human rights protected by international instruments and conventions.

The concept of violence in the United Nations Population Fund: violence in which both women and men are involved, which results from the imbalance in power relations between women and men, and which is directed specifically at a woman because she is a woman, or affects women disproportionately. It includes psychological, physical and sexual practices, such as threats, torture, rape and deprivation of liberty within and outside the family, as well as practices led by the State or political groups.

From this we observe that the basis of violence against women is sex-based, being a manifestation of the unequal power between men and women, which is reflected in aspects of public and private life leading to violations against women that are almost grave.

For the purposes of this study, gender-based violence against women is defined as:

All violent acts the commission of which results in harm to another, and whose victim is a woman or girl because she is female, motivated by gender bias, resulting in harm or suffering to the woman or girl, directly or indirectly, through various means, whether by deception, threat, exploitation, harassment, compulsion, punishment, coercion or arbitrary deprivation of liberty and rights, such acts being based on sex discrimination, whether occurring in public or in private life.

By putting a question to the target groups in the focus groups about what the concept of violence against women means to them, it became clear to the researcher that the concept of violence against women has several perceptions and forms²⁸ among the target groups, divided as follows:

(A) Definitions based on the effects of violence on the woman herself, as follows:

- **Physical violence:** violence based on the deliberate use of force, including beating, branding and burning, punching and biting, pulling hair, and breaking some body parts.
- **Verbal violence:** violence based on the use of words, expressions and phrases causing psychological and moral pain, including cursing, insulting, humiliation with obscene words, and belittling.

²⁸Article (2) of the Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women refers to the forms of violence as follows: (a) Physical, sexual and psychological violence occurring in the family, including battering, sexual abuse of female children in the household, dowry-related violence, marital rape, female genital mutilation and other traditional practices harmful to women, non-spousal violence and violence related to exploitation; (b) Physical, sexual and psychological violence occurring within the general community, including rape, sexual abuse, sexual harassment and intimidation at work, in educational institutions and elsewhere, trafficking in women and forced prostitution; (c) Physical, sexual and psychological violence perpetrated or condoned by the State, wherever it occurs.

- **Emotional violence:** violence based on disregard for the self of the other, including deprivation, ignoring, non-recognition of roles, abandonment, and isolation and confinement away from family, relatives and friends.
- **Sexual violence:** any sexual act or attempt to perform sexual acts against the will of the other, including rape, marital rape and sexual harassment in private or public life.

(B) Definitions based on fields, namely:

- **Economic violence:** any act that results in depriving a woman of her financial rights, whether of her wages from work, enslavement, depriving her of inheritance, failure of her guardians to provide maintenance for her, or her inability to own property.
- **Cultural and social violence:** violence based on inherited cultural patterns and images, customs and traditions that result in depriving women of the enjoyment of their rights.
- **Legal violence:** discriminatory acts and practices that find support in the domestic legislation adopted by the State to regulate relations between individuals, especially relations between men and women.
- **Political violence:** depriving women of their political rights guaranteed by the Jordanian Constitution, national laws and international standards, such as the right to vote and stand for election, political participation and the holding of leadership positions.

(C) Definitions based on the setting of violence, including:

- **Violence within the family:** including domestic violence to which a woman is subjected within her family.
- **Violence within the community:** violence to which a woman is subjected outside the family, which may be perpetrated by strangers in the street, and includes violence in workplaces.

This study affirms that the following factors are among the fundamental pillars for analysing the concept of gender-based violence:

1. Identifying and analysing the overlapping relations between men and women, whether within or outside the family.
2. Identifying the causes and forms of imbalance in the relationship between men and women arising from personal, social, legal and rights-related causes.
3. Modifying and developing the relationship between the sexes by adopting the foundations of justice and equality between them in accordance with the relevant international standards and national laws.

It should be stressed that practical experience in the areas targeted by the study has demonstrated an imbalance in the relationship between the sexes in private and public life, to

the detriment of women, in the distribution of power, resulting in men occupying a superior position while women take a secondary position in society. The researcher explains this from a sociological perspective: the concept of gender focuses on social roles, which are part of the social theory known as structural functionalism. This theory excludes the concepts of power and conflict from its explanation of social phenomena. The gender framework attributes the issue of violence against women to an imbalance in the balance of power and influence in the family environment and the public sphere, and the proponents of this theory call for working to redistribute power by reviewing the distribution of roles and opportunities on a fair basis between the sexes.

From another perspective, it became clear to the researcher that most of the targeted groups confuse the two concepts of sex and gender. They were fully convinced that there is no difference between the two concepts: gender for them is "social sex", and it is also "women". It must therefore be stressed that a scientific distinction must be drawn between the two concepts. The following definitions were used in awareness-raising among the target groups:

Sex	Gender
The set of bodily, physiological and biological characteristics specific to males and to females; innate and not susceptible to change (static).	Differences in the roles (rights, duties and obligations), relations, responsibilities, images and status of women and men, which are determined socially and culturally through the historical development of a given society; acquired and susceptible to change (dynamic).
Biological differences between men and women	Social roles performed by men and women
Do not change over time	Changes over time and is influenced by many factors
The differences between women and men are the same throughout the world	The differences vary according to race, colour, social class, religion, culture, age and marital status

Second: Causes of Violence against Women in the Governorates of Zarqa and Mafraq

The phenomenon of violence against women in Jordanian society has long been regarded as a phenomenon linked primarily to the prevailing social culture, a stereotypical culture based on the equation of "authority and submission": the authority of males over females in return for the submission and obedience of women to men. This equation is entrenched through the existing discrimination against women and the division of roles between the sexes in the

various spheres of private and public life. This culture determines the methods of family and educational upbringing and the set of customs, traditions and behaviours prevailing socially. This culture towards women has been justified as a form of protecting them and preserving their true role in the family; however, social changes have required a reconsideration of that culture and of some customs and traditions that deprive women of the enjoyment, exercise and practice of human rights and fundamental freedoms.

Comment No. (11) of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women in its General Recommendation No. (19) affirms that the causes underlying all forms of gender-based violence against women, whether verbal, physical or psychological, all contribute to keeping women in subordinate roles and contribute to their low level of political participation and to their lower level of education and employment opportunities.²⁹

At the level of practical experience, this study revealed that the main causes of the spread of the types of violence against women in the governorates of Zarqa and Mafraq are the following:

First: Personal Causes relating to Women and Men

The findings of the study revealed that psychological illnesses and drug and alcohol abuse are among the main causes of the commission of violence against women in particular and the family in general, and that these causes have been used as one of the principal justifications by the abuser for his violent behaviour towards his wife, children and family, owing to his suffering from frustration.³⁰ Most women reported a considerable rise in the prevalence of alcohol and drug abuse in the areas targeted by the study. On the other hand, illiteracy and women's low legal and rights awareness constitute one of the causes of the violence inflicted upon them; the study revealed the extent of women's weak awareness of the rights and legal protections guaranteed to them by the Jordanian Constitution, national laws and the relevant international standards. Despite the spread of awareness-raising programmes carried out by civil society organisations, the matter still requires more effort and a call for coordination and cooperation among the competent bodies concerned with providing awareness and training programmes for women on their legal rights. Added to this are family upbringing and education³¹ based on the glorification of male authority, accompanied by the absence of marital

²⁹For further information, see General Recommendation No. (19): Violence against Women, Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women, eleventh session, 1992, Human Rights Library, University of Minnesota.

³⁰The frustration–aggression theory, one of the theories of psychology, holds that failure and inability to satisfy certain human needs of the individual may cause him to reach a state of frustration, which may lead him to engage in violent behaviour towards others. However, the researcher considers that this theory cannot be generalised, since not every frustrated person is violent: frustration is a personal trait that can disappear by treating the person and working to meet his basic needs. This theory is one of those that form a link between psychoanalytic theory and the frustration–aggression theory: the drive towards aggression is a psychological drive, but the drive to attack does not necessarily result in aggressive behaviour, since the self may be disciplined through methods of venting and encouragement, and the urge to resort to aggression thus disappears.

³¹Social learning theory assumes that people learn violence in the same way as they learn other patterns of behaviour, by observing the behaviour of others and matching it with their own. According to the social scientist Bandura, this learning takes place through two main sources: the family and the subculture. The process of learning violence takes place within the family: some families encourage their children to engage in violent behaviour and demand that they

dialogue as a means of resolving family problems; most Jordanian families in general apply male authority³² in upbringing within the family environment, which reinforces the stereotypical image of the roles of women and men in both private and public life.

Article (5/a/b) of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women calls upon the ratifying States to undertake to work to modify the social and cultural patterns of conduct of men and women with a view to eliminating ideas of the inferiority or superiority of either of the sexes and reducing stereotyped roles for men and women, while also stressing that sound family education includes a proper understanding of maternity as a social function (a reproductive role) and is a shared responsibility of both parents.³³

This study calls for a review of the family counselling and educational programmes provided by official bodies and some specialised civil society organisations, and urges the adoption of modern educational methods in keeping with the requirements of contemporary life and the level of civilisational and cultural progress, through the adoption of modern methods of family upbringing.

Second: Economic and Environmental Causes

The study revealed deteriorating economic and environmental conditions and the extent of the spread of poverty and unemployment, and the inability of the father, husband or brother to support his family in the areas targeted by the project. This has resulted in the husband, father or brother resorting to harsh treatment of women as one of the ways of venting psychological suffering and symptoms of depression and illness. Most women reported that poor economic conditions, represented by poverty, unemployment and hunger, have resulted in social crimes that led in some cases to the killing of women and children, or to the attempted suicide or flight of the husband, and in other cases to the absence of the father and to alcohol and drug abuse.

Third: Harsh Environmental and Social Conditions

The environment and harsh living conditions are among the causes of gender-based violence against women in the governorates of Zarqa and Mafraq. Most women living in remote villages reported that the geographical distance from the vital centres of life — health centres, markets, recreational facilities, educational institutions and workplaces — was among the factors supporting and encouraging men to commit violence against women. The family's refusal to allow their daughter or wife to go to places of work or education has led to depriving her of her most basic rights; indeed, it has extended to subjecting her to violence if she continues to

not be victims of violence, and some regard violent behaviour as a means of obtaining their needs, resulting in children who are highly hostile and aggressive.

³²The social theory known as masculinity and violence explains violence as a reaction to beliefs inherited by males that they have higher and greater rights than others. This theory holds that domestic violence is caused by the stereotypical roles of men and women, which enables males to use various methods of violence against women.

³³For further information, see Article (5/a/b) of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women.

demand her rights to education and work. Among the causes of violence against women revealed by the study that stem from environmental conditions is forcing women to have abortions owing to the unavailability of a female gynaecologist in nearby health centres, the husband's unwillingness to have any doctor follow up his wife's health condition, and his refusal, on the other hand, to allow his wife to go to places outside the village to receive the care necessary for her health. This has in some instances led some husbands to force their wives to have abortions on the basis of justifications rooted in the culture of shame.

In this regard, the researcher considers that men cannot be held responsible for abusing women because of environmental and economic conditions; rather, it is primarily a social responsibility attributable to the failure to improve the quality of the public services provided to communities in remote villages. The study revealed an absence of recreational facilities for children and families, as well as a shortage of markets near where people live in remote villages. Added to this is a shortage of the necessary equipment in health centres in remote village areas, most importantly the provision of a female gynaecologist in health centres located within easy reach of village residents. In addition, there is an absence of legal oversight over the work of unlicensed midwives in their performance and their commission of crimes against humanity, and an absence of oversight over the work of health centres in remote villages.

Returning to the social causes of violence against women, the study showed that one of the main causes of the commission of violence against women is the increase in cases of polygamy and the resulting effect in increasing the causes of family breakdown and the husband's abandonment of his basic role towards his family, which in most cases has led him to leave his children homeless in the streets and force them to work.³⁴

Fourth: Effects of Violence against Women

Gender-based violence is a violation of the human rights of women and of the family alike, which prevents women from the actual enjoyment of their fundamental rights and freedoms, such as the right to work, the right to education, the right to health, the right to participation and expression of opinion, and the right to life and personal security. This perpetuates women's dependence on men in all spheres of private and public life.

At the level of private life, gender-based violence leads to an increase in manifestations of family breakdown and related family problems and their effects on children.

As for the level of public life, the effects of gender-based violence lead ... This study does not attempt to highlight the effects of violence against women in the governorates of Zarqa and

³⁴There is a specialised study on school dropout prepared by the National Centre for Human Rights in 2017, which revealed the causes and factors of this phenomenon and the effects arising from it. To view the study, please visit the Centre's website.

Mafrq specifically, since they are the same effects in all areas and societies,³⁵ given that women are among the groups most in need of protection.³⁶ Nevertheless, this study will attempt to set out the most important effects resulting from violence against women, as follows:

1. **Physical effects:** physical violence results in injuries or disabilities, or perhaps loss of life.
2. **Health effects:** numerous international and global reports³⁷ and local studies have proven that women's continued exposure to violence leads to direct effects on their health, such as unsafe abortion, depression, drug and alcohol abuse, smoking, prostitution, homicide and suicide.
3. **Family and economic effects:** most importantly family breakdown, increased likelihood of family crimes, child homelessness, child labour, increased school dropout, and women working in the informal sector for meagre wages and in an inappropriate work environment.
4. **Psychological effects:** abused women suffer from behavioural and verbal disturbances and chronic conditions such as depression, withdrawal, loss of self-confidence and of trust in others, inability to form relationships, and the adoption of hostile methods in dealing with others.

³⁵Through an analysis of the concept of discrimination set out in CEDAW, the effects of violence are expressly stated as impairing or nullifying the recognition, enjoyment or exercise by women, irrespective of their marital status, on a basis of equality of men and women, of human rights and fundamental freedoms in the political, economic, social, cultural, civil or any other field — in all fields.

³⁶This term is used in human rights concepts to indicate that women are among the vulnerable groups, alongside children, older persons and persons with disabilities, who suffer discrimination in rights by reason of their weakness and sex and their inability to claim their rights for physical, social and age-related considerations.

³⁷For further information, see the World Health Organization report (2002).

Chapter Four

Public Policies for the Protection of Women from Violence

As indicated earlier in this study, the Jordanian Constitution and the relevant national laws guarantee national protection for abused women, and the State is responsible for providing the institutions concerned with delivering services to women in general and to abused women in particular. In this part of the study we shall attempt to set out the most important roles of governmental and non-governmental institutions concerned with providing institutional services to abused women:

First: Services Provided to Abused Women by Governmental Institutions³⁸

Jordan has taken broad steps in numerous services provided to protect women from gender-based violence that guarantee the realisation of and respect for the rights of abused women at the level of policies, legislation and economic, social and awareness-raising programmes. These have contributed to advancing the provision of care and treatment programmes for abused women, in addition to diversifying the counselling and rehabilitation programmes and services directed at women provided by governmental bodies and civil society organisations, violence against women being a shared national responsibility. In this chapter we set out the most prominent services provided by governmental and non-governmental institutions to abused women; despite their large number, this study has addressed the roles of the bodies that provide permanent services to abused women:

1. **Family Protection Department:** The Family Protection Department is competent to provide services to abused women through coordination with all governmental and non-governmental bodies and through a participatory approach, with a view to reducing crimes of violence throughout society. To that end, the Department provides the following legal services:
 - ❖ Receiving complaints from abused women against any member of their families, and taking legal action in cases requiring legal and judicial intervention.
 - ❖ Receiving cases of sexual assault against both sexes and of all ages, regardless of kinship.
 - ❖ Hearing the statements of females by a female police officer in private interview rooms for women.
 - ❖ The Department has qualified social researchers to deal with cases of domestic violence, specialised in conducting family counselling sessions and family

³⁸For further information on the role of the institutions concerned with providing services to women, please see the Centre's report entitled "Amman Declaration" of 2013, published on its website.

reconciliation sessions, in addition to conducting field visits to cases handled within the Department without the need to refer them to the judiciary.

- ❖ Medical examinations of victims are carried out at the forensic medicine clinic within the Department, without the need to transfer them to public hospitals, in order to spare them any psychological suffering and to preserve the privacy and confidentiality of the case, in addition to the presence of psychiatrists in this field within the clinic.

2. **Ministry of Social Development / Dar Al-Wifaq Al-Usari:**³⁹

The Ministry protects abused women through a centre specialised for such cases called the Integrated Services Centre for Combating Domestic Violence, "Dar Al-Wifaq Al-Usari". This centre provides care and protection services to abused women and their children under 12 years of age, in addition to providing integrated medical services through specialised doctors present at the House, and providing legal aid to women who have been subjected to violence. As for the social services provided by the House, these include awareness-raising and psychological and social counselling services, in addition to family reconciliation between the disputing parties within the family environment. On the other hand, Dar Al-Wifaq provides cash and in-kind services to abused women and follows up cases after they leave the House.

3. **Ministry of Health:**

In the field of eliminating all forms of discrimination against women, safeguarding the rights of the child, promoting equality between women and men, countering any discrimination between them and strengthening women's status, the Ministry of Health undertakes the following:

First: Continuing the health efforts made to improve the quality and quantity of health services provided to women and children, to counter discrimination against women and to eliminate all types of violence against women, girls and children, in line with international standards, through the Directorate of Maternal and Child Health, which is responsible for the following tasks:

1. Drawing up policies and setting detailed and executive plans and objectives for women's and children's health services in primary health care centres throughout the Kingdom, and following up their implementation.

³⁹Within the framework of the protection of women, the National Centre for Human Rights commends the Government's response to its recommendation to establish Dar Karama for victims of trafficking, affiliated to the Ministry of Social Development, which was opened on 12/9/2015 and began receiving beneficiaries pursuant to Article Seven of the Prevention of Trafficking in Persons Law No. 9 of 2009, with the aim of providing all services (social, psychological, health, economic and shelter). Previously, such women were received at Dar Al-Wifaq Al-Usari. The number of beneficiaries received at Dar Karama for victims of trafficking in persons in 2016 reached (51) beneficiaries of various nationalities.

2. Technical supervision, monitoring and evaluation of the women's and children's health services provided.
 3. Building technical capacities and improving the quality of women's and children's health services through the preparation of standards, guidelines and service delivery protocols, and training health personnel thereon.
 4. Developing the information system and indicators for women's and children's health services, including conducting studies and research.
 5. Raising the level of awareness and involving the community in the field of women's and children's health.
 6. Coordination and cooperation with all bodies concerned with women's and children's health locally, regionally and globally.
4. **National Council for Family Affairs:** a national institution concerned with drawing up national policies in the field of the family, which has carried out its work since 2005. It developed the National Strategy for Family Protection 2005–2009, and it also established a specialised governmental and semi-governmental national team on family protection issues, whose most important achievement was the issuance of the National Team for Family Protection against Violence Bylaw No. (33) of 2016,⁴⁰ which undertakes the oversight and supervision of the implementation of national directives and policies on family protection from violence and the commitment of national institutions thereto, so that they serve as their reference in preparing their institutional plans in the field of protecting the family and its members. It should be noted that the National Centre for Human Rights is a member of this team pursuant to the provisions of the Bylaw.
5. **Jordanian National Commission for Women:** Through the Women's Complaints Office established in 2009, the Commission receives complaints from women who have been subjected to, or are threatened with, violence or discrimination, whether in public or private life. It provides listening services, legal, social and psychological consultations, and presents the proposed services to the complainant.

Second: Services Provided to Abused Women by Non-Governmental Institutions

1. **Jordanian Women's Union:** a national non-governmental institution providing counselling, preventive and advisory services to abused women, in addition to hotline services for receiving complaints from all governorates of the Kingdom, as well as child hosting and family counselling. It also provides services for receiving families at the temporary shelter and provides housing for abused women after their problems have been resolved.

⁴⁰Published on page (1487) of issue No. (5387) of the Official Gazette dated 16/3/2016.

2. **Family Awareness and Counselling Centre:** a non-governmental institution affiliated to housewives in Zarqa Governorate, which provides assistance to families in all social, psychological and educational fields through awareness-raising and education programmes and cooperation with the competent bodies.
3. **Sisterhood Is Global Institute (SIGI/Jordan):** a non-governmental institution that provides assistance to families, whether psychological, social, health, legal or economic, by adopting the philosophy of emphasising that the recognition of women's rights is a necessity for development, peace and humanity.
4. **Society for Victims of Domestic Violence:** one of the societies that provide health, counselling and psychological services and organise programmes to support victims of family crimes.

Analysing the role of non-governmental institutions in providing their services to abused women, we see that non-governmental institutions provide counselling, advisory and awareness-raising services and legal aid to abused women.

Despite the multiplicity of governmental and non-governmental references providing assistance to abused women, practical experience has demonstrated — according to the views of the abused women covered by the study — the absence of follow-up and evaluation mechanisms for the services provided by the various bodies concerned at all levels, in the absence of networking, coordination and national participatory work programmes to eliminate the problem of domestic violence in general and violence against women in particular. The governmental bodies concerned with receiving complaints from abused women keep their own records without coordinating with the non-governmental bodies, which also keep their own records.

On the other hand, the absence of legal frameworks that promote participatory work has led to the weak utility of the free legal aid provided by some competent bodies in the face of the enormous number of cases related to the problem of violence against women. The Centre considers, through the findings of the project on the protection of women from gender-based violence, that the issue of reducing or eliminating the phenomenon of **violence against women still constitutes a major challenge for the various bodies, as the findings of the project revealed the persistence of the following problems:**

1. The continued practice of violence against women and girls at a high rate in most Jordanian villages.
2. The practice of manifestations of violence of all types, whether verbal, physical, psychological, economic or social, in the various villages visited, and at the same time the unwillingness of women and girls subjected to violence to file any complaints against their relatives with any governmental body.

3. Rising rates of recorded cases of early marriage of girls under the pretext of financial inability to support family members, which has resulted in rising divorce rates within Jordanian society.
4. The recording of some cases of violence against children by women, the reason for which is the spread of the phenomenon of polygamy in the villages of Mafraq and Zarqa, which has led to women assuming responsibility for raising children under difficult economic and social conditions.
5. The weak role of civil society organisations in raising awareness of the dangers of violence against women and girls, through the failure to hold legal, religious and social awareness programmes aimed at showing how to deal with violence directed against women and girls.

Building on the foregoing, the researcher calls for strengthening the role of governmental and non-governmental institutions in following up and monitoring programmes for protection and prevention from domestic violence in general and violence against women in particular. This should be done by developing clear national visions with specific application to activate participatory work among the competent bodies, whether in drafting legislation or adopting policies, in addition to providing specialised legal and rights programmes for victims of domestic violence by institutionalising free legal aid programmes between governmental bodies and civil society organisations, and by intensifying economic empowerment programmes for abused women and women in remote village areas.

Chapter Five

Economic Empowerment Programmes as One of the Solutions for Reducing Manifestations of Domestic Violence in General and Violence against Women in Particular

In the belief of the Jordanian State that programmes for the economic and social empowerment of abused women are among the programmes that reduce this phenomenon, the Council of Ministers issued a decision on 31/7/2016 to form a ministerial committee⁴¹ to follow up the women's empowerment axis included in the Government's executive work plan. The axis of women's economic empowerment aims to advance women's participation in the various sectors and to enable them to overcome the challenges they face.

First: The Concept of Women's Economic Empowerment

Although the issue of women's economic empowerment has gained international attention over the past few decades through efforts to mainstream women's issues into development policies by moving from a welfare-based approach to one aimed at empowering women, barriers based on gender discrimination remain among the most prominent factors impeding women's economic empowerment. This has been clearly reflected in the constitutions of some Arab nations, their policies and the practices followed by their institutions.⁴²

A review of the various literature addressing women's economic empowerment shows that most of it agrees that women's economic empowerment is the process that contributes to reducing the wage gap between the sexes by removing the barriers impeding women's advancement in all legal, economic and social fields, and by urging an increase in employment opportunities for women, facilitating their access to bank loans and strengthening their economic participation in taking decisions on their own projects without any obstacles.

On the other hand, the Beijing Conference of 1995⁴³ and the United Nations International Conference on Population and Development held in Cairo in 1994 framed the normative

⁴¹It is worth noting that the committee's membership includes the Minister of Political and Parliamentary Affairs, the Minister of Planning and International Cooperation, the Minister of Municipal Affairs, the Minister of Labour, the Minister of Communications and Public Sector Development, and the Secretary-General of the Jordanian National Commission for Women.

⁴²For further information, see the study on women's control over economic resources and access to financial resources issued by the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA) – United Nations.

⁴³The concept of economic empowerment is referred to indirectly in Strategic Objective (F.1), which is defined as promoting women's economic rights and independence, including access to employment, appropriate working conditions and control over economic resources, as well as in paragraph (b) of the same objective, which aims to facilitate women's equal access to resources, employment, markets and trade, by urging governments to encourage and support women's self-employment and the development of small enterprises, and to strengthen women's access to credit and capital on appropriate terms equal to those of men, through the upscaling of institutions dedicated to promoting women's entrepreneurship, including, as appropriate, non-traditional and mutual credit schemes, as well as innovative linkages with financial institutions. For further information, see the text of the Beijing Declaration published at the following website: <http://hrlibrary.umn.edu/arabic/BeijingDeclPI.html>

framework for the concept of women's empowerment, which was defined as the ability to take decisions, acquire skills and bring about change.

The Jordanian Constitution guarantees economic and social rights for both sexes alike through Article (): "The State shall ensure work and education within the limits of its possibilities, and shall ensure tranquillity and equal opportunities to all Jordanians", and Article 23 also provides that "Work is the right of all citizens, and the State shall provide opportunities for work to all Jordanians by directing the national economy and raising its standards".

These constitutional principles have been translated into numerous national laws, most importantly the legislative provisions contained in the Civil Law No. (43) of 1976 and its amendments,⁴⁴ the legislative provisions of the Personal Status Law No. 36 of 2010,⁴⁵ the Labour Law No. (8) of 1996 and its amendments⁴⁶ and the Civil Service Bylaw No. (30) of 2007 and its amendments.⁴⁷ At the level of national strategies, the National Employment Strategy 2011–2020 stresses the need for young people to undertake productive entrepreneurial projects in the various regions of the Kingdom and to establish start-up projects. Likewise, the National Poverty Reduction Strategy for the years 2013–2020 is one of the strategies seeking to provide decent work, pursue equality and empowerment, raise the standard of living and improve social welfare.

On the basis of the foregoing, the Centre, through the project on the protection of women from gender-based violence funded by CARE International / Jordan, implemented a programme on the economic empowerment of women, in the Centre's belief that the economic empowerment of women and the achievement of an independent income for them have a great positive impact on the status of women within their families and in society. It also contributes to family prosperity and the reduction of family problems, makes women less dependent on men, and thereby increases their participation in society and their ability to take decisions in both public and private life.

⁴⁴Article 1012 of the Law provides that an owner may carry out all dispositions permitted by law, unless his disposition is seriously harmful or contrary to the laws relating to the public or private interest.

⁴⁵The Law affirms the financial independence of women in Article 320: "Each spouse shall have a financial estate independent of the other; each of them shall remain the owner of his or her property independently of the other."

⁴⁶The Law affirms the rights of working women and the guarantee and protection of those rights in the work environment on the basis of equality between men and women in all rights and duties. It grants them: the right to unpaid leave to devote themselves to raising their children or to accompany their husbands; an hour for nursing; the obligation of an employer employing not less than 20 women to provide a suitable place in the care of a qualified nanny to look after the working women's children; a prohibition on dismissing a pregnant woman as of the sixth month of her pregnancy or during maternity leave; in addition to granting her maternity leave on full pay before and after childbirth of up to ten weeks, and other provisions protecting the rights of working women.

⁴⁷The Bylaw provides for guaranteeing the principles and values of equal opportunities through non-discrimination on the basis of sex, race, religion or marital status, and justice and equal opportunities in the treatment of employees with regard to their rights, duties and job responsibilities. The Bylaw has placed male and female employees on an equal footing in entitlement to the cost-of-living allowance, technical allowances, incentives and bonuses.

The concept of economic empowerment adopted by the programme implemented by the Centre is: the ability of women to establish small, home-based and micro projects and to secure a stable source of income for themselves by equipping them with the skills necessary to manage their own projects, namely purchasing, marketing, project planning and costing skills.

The Experience of the National Centre for Human Rights in Implementing the Economic Empowerment Programme side by side with the Legal Empowerment of Women

The implementation of the programme for the economic empowerment of women took two and a half years in a number of remote areas: Rawdat Al-Amira Basma, Al-Khalidiya area, Al-Mushrefa area, Umm Al-Sulaih area, Bereen area and Al-Hallabat Al-Gharbi area.

Groups Targeted by the Project

1. Housewives: widows, divorcees, female heads of household and poor women (with differences among the women in social, economic and educational characteristics and marital status).
2. Unemployed young women aged 22–35 years.
3. Male relatives of women in the target areas.

Main Objective of the Programme

Raising women's legal and rights awareness of the economic and social rights guaranteed to them by international standards and national law, in addition to equipping the target groups with the skills and expertise necessary for preparing small projects and micro home-based projects, with the aim of offering solutions to poor families that faced family problems owing to poor living conditions, so as to overcome those problems, create a source of income for those families and ease the intensity of family disputes.

Training Topics Covered by the Programme

Training under the economic empowerment programme was divided into two main parts:

Part One: addressed the theoretical framework in terms of the relevant international standards and the governing national laws. This consisted of raising awareness of what the Jordanian Constitution guarantees with respect to the rights to work, education, health and other economic and social rights, proceeding from Article 6 of the Constitution: "Jordanians shall be equal before the law ...". Detailed awareness was raised on the relevant governing national laws, most importantly the Labour Law, the Social Security Law, the Civil Retirement Law, and the Registration and Licensing Bylaw, among others, in addition to awareness of the provisions of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW).

Part Two: addressed the practical application of the skills of preparing home-based and micro projects. In-depth training was provided on the fundamentals, challenges and difficulties of

designing small projects, micro projects and home-based projects that contribute to increasing the income of poor families. Training was also provided on the skills of marketing, networking, persuasion and advocacy for the product, and on communicating with societies and organisations that can fund small and home-based projects. Financial grants provided by CARE International / Jordan were given to the women who received the training for the practical implementation of the projects.

Provision of Grants to Women Targeted by the Economic Empowerment Programme

The National Centre for Human Rights, through the project on the protection of women from gender-based violence and in cooperation with the project's main donor, provided small grants to women in the rural areas and remote villages targeted by the project, with the aim of encouraging the establishment of small projects and micro projects. The projects implemented by the women through the project were classified as follows:

- 1- **Agricultural and food production projects:** raising livestock and poultry; growing vegetables, grains, citrus and aromatic herbs; producing vinegar, mushrooms, jam, sesame and dried herbs, etc.
- 2- **Small industries meeting the needs of the local market in the public and private sectors:** printing, food processing, leather, furniture, chalk, uniforms, children's dolls, bags, wool mattresses, candles, soap, etc.
- 3- **Service projects in demand in the local market:** photography, restaurants, health, education, dry cleaners, beauty and hairdressing salons, general maintenance workshops, general services offices, etc.

Outputs of the Programme

First: General Characteristics of the Target Groups

Social characteristics:

1. Most of the women targeted by the programme were marked by suffering from family breakdown due to reasons relating to divorce, death or abandonment, etc.
2. The large size of the families of the women targeted by the training, especially female-headed households, where the average family size ranges between 6 and 8 members.
3. The severance of social relations between the women and their first-degree relatives for several reasons, including family disputes and the geographical distance of their place of residence, the unwillingness of abused women to communicate with their families for personal reasons, and the low educational level of female heads of household.
4. Some women suffer from chronic diseases, fractures and allergies, the treatment provided to them by health centres is insufficient, and they are unable to buy medicine from private pharmacies.

5. In view of the heavy presence of Syrian refugees in the areas targeted by the project in Mafraq Governorate, the Jordanian residents of the area have not benefited from the assistance provided by the various international bodies, which provide and allocate assistance to Syrians only, which has generated hatred and resentment among the residents of those areas.

Economic characteristics:

1. The spread of manifestations of extreme poverty among the targeted families owing to the absence of a stable source of income for the women other than the income they receive from the National Aid Fund, the Zakat Fund or Tkiyet Um Ali; most women, at a rate of not less than 95%, complained of the insufficiency of the money they receive from those sources.
2. High unemployment in the target areas: most of the female graduates aged 22–35 who were trained complained that they had not obtained work for more than ten years since their graduation.
3. The inability of women to repay the loans granted to them by the Women's Support Fund, the Iradah Programme of the Ministry of Planning and other bodies concerned, owing to the high interest charged on them. This has weakened the economic empowerment programmes provided by governmental bodies. Although women and girls may obtain loans from the Women's Lending Fund or revolving loans to implement their own projects, such as dairy, cheese-making or poultry projects, women and girls face the following difficulties:
 - A- The insufficient value of the credit loans obtained by women for the proper implementation of such projects.
 - B- The high interest on these loans, which is not commensurate with the deteriorating economic situation of women and girls.
 - C- The lack of marketing means to help women and girls market the products of their projects, owing to their lack of marketing skills, which ultimately leads to the failure of the project.
 - D- The use by some women of these loans for personal purposes, such as buying furniture or the marriage of one of their children, rather than for establishing projects.

Second: Development Problems Impeding Economic Empowerment Programmes in the Areas Targeted by the Project

1. The scarcity of development projects in all the areas targeted by the project.

2. The absence of specialised maternal and child centres and the ineffectiveness and inadequacy of the existing health centres.
3. The absence of recreational facilities for children.

Recommendations

Legislative Axis:

- Harmonising the national legislation governing the protection of women from violence with international standards, most importantly the Protection from Domestic Violence Law, the Social Security Law, the Penal Code, the Civil Retirement Law and the Nationality Law.
- Taking gender into account when drafting and amending national laws, in application of the principle of gender justice.

Protection from Violence Axis – aims at:

- Investing in the existing policies, programmes and procedural plans relating to family protection at the national level and their adoption by decision-makers in government ministries and non-governmental institutions, particularly with respect to programmes for protection from domestic violence and programmes for the care and rehabilitation of abused women.
- Effective and permanent coordination based on the principle of effective participation among all parties in government ministries and non-governmental institutions, to ensure the quality of the services provided to victims of domestic violence in all fields that meet their needs in terms of the efficiency and adequacy of the service and its providers and the extent to which service seekers benefit.
- Raising the level of media discourse in all its forms on the nature of domestic violence, its dimensions and its impact on the family from a gender perspective.

Economic and Social Axis – aims at:

- Improving the social and economic environment of the Jordanian family and enabling its members to meet their various needs by investing in economic empowerment projects based on small, micro and micro-credit projects.

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