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Sectoral Policy for Promoting Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment

2020-2022

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Developed by the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN Women) within the framework of the Project Institutional Capacity Development of the Ministry of Social Development (MoSD), funded by the Italian Agency for Development Cooperation (AICS)

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DEFINITIONS AND RELATED CONCEPTS

Gender is defined as the distinction between men and women based on their roles, responsibilities and opportunities that are created by cultural aspects, rather than by biological aspects, and is defined by UN Women¹ as “the social attributes and opportunities associated with being male or female, and relationships between women, men, girls and boys, which are constructed through socialization processes”.

Gender mainstreaming is an operational procedure that refers to the systematic inclusion of both men and women priorities and needs into all policies, legislations and procedures to ensure equity between them, as well as considering the impact of these policies, legislations and procedures at all planning stages, including the implementation, monitoring and evaluation, on the respective conditions of both men and women. In other words, gender mainstreaming in policies, plans, programs and budgets means that institutions and organizations become aware of the differences between women and men and their respective needs have been considered to prevent discrimination based on gender and promote justice and equality at all levels and in all domains and make them an integral part of their work, including legislations, policies, procedures, institutional strategies and day-to-day work.

Women’s empowerment means that women are able to manage their lives in a way that enables them to achieve the values and objectives they believe in, and are self-dependent and capable of making or influencing decisions that affect their lives, either collectively or individually. Empowerment is generally a long-term and overlapping process, resulting from an enabling environment that ensures these values and helps to create favorable conditions that provide women and men with the necessary resources, knowledge, the right to expression, political representation and equal representation in the workforce, including leadership positions.

1 UN Women - Training Center, <https://trainingcentre.unwomen.org/mod/glossary/view.php?id=36&mode=leter&hook=ALL&sortkey&sortorder=asc&fullsearch=o&page=1>

Equality between women and men means that all human beings, male and female, are free to develop their abilities and choose their own way of life without any gender-related restrictions. However, this is not to say that women and men are both the same, but rather have equal opportunities, responsibilities and roles. This means equal opportunities for them to live their lives and to access resources. To that end, vulnerable groups with limited capabilities sometimes need to be empowered to access these resources or “promote” them.

Justice generally means equitable treatment of men and women, according to their respective needs. They may be treated equally or differently, but in a way that ensures equality in terms of rights, privileges, obligations and opportunities. In the context of development, equality between women and men always requires taking constructive measures, to make up for the historical and social deprivation of women.

INTRODUCTION

The Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan has put the issue of gender equality as one of the country’s priorities and has made significant progress in several areas and sectors regarding promotion of gender equality and women empowerment. Within the framework of the Government’s commitment to achieve gender equality, the Ministry of Social Development (MoSD) has developed the “Gender Policy Framework” to promote equal opportunities values and achieve gender equality.

As part of the ministry’s vision for creating an advanced institutional environment and specialized human resources in order to achieve the second strategic goal of the ministry’s Strategic Plan 2017-2021, “enhancing the ministry’s capacity and instilling a culture of excellence” and in line with the **Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 5**, “achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls”, the MoSD has embarked on developing and implementing a gender policy.

The MoSD provides social services to the most vulnerable (the poor, elderly, children deprived of family ties, and victims of gender-based violence). Therefore, the gender policy, in alignment with the Government’s Gender Mainstreaming Policy (GMP),

will help analyze the ministry's strategy of action in terms of objectives, action plans, budget, services as well as identify gender gaps and create solutions to achieve justice and gender equality. This shall enhance the ministry's institutional development and increase the productivity and highlight its role in fulfilling the international commitments that Jordan ratified, concerning gender justice, equality and human rights issues.

POLICY OBJECTIVE

This policy, considered as an internal policy for the MoSD, was developed in response to the requirements of the Government's Gender Mainstreaming Policy (GMP) (2020), and the National Strategy for Women in Jordan (2020-2025). It aims to establish and initiate an institutional gender mainstreaming processes in all directorates and departments, thereby, increasing the efficiency of the ministry and its employees and achieving satisfaction and equality among the ministry's staff and service recipients (males and females).

INTERNATIONAL AND NATIONAL COMMITMENTS PROMOTING GENDER EQUALITY AND WOMEN'S EMPOWERMENT

The MoSD bases its work, policies and strategy concerning all the recipients of its services, especially those eligible for social protection, including women and girls, in order to promote gender equality on national frameworks, international conventions, human rights and elimination of violence as well as the following national commitments:

The National Strategy for Women in Jordan: The Government of Jordan sought to develop the National Strategy for Women in Jordan (2020-2025). The strategy priorities have been set in alignment with the Jordanian Constitution, national plans and sectoral strategies such as the Jordan 2025 (A National Vision and Strategy), and on the footsteps of the Renaissance Plan: Government priorities for 2019-2020, the Comprehensive

National Plan for Human Rights 2016-2025, and Jordanian National Action Plan for the Implementation of UN Security Council Resolution 1325 (2000): Women, Peace and Security, Women's Economic Empowerment Plan 2019-2024. The logical framework for the strategy has been linked to national plans and strategies related to women, as well as international obligations and commitments, particularly the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women, the Beijing Platform for Action (BPfA), the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) Agenda 2030, namely SDG 5 "achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls", in addition to the goals related to other objectives. Thus, this strategy shall become Jordan's road map to achieve gender equality and women's empowerment, to be implemented through the executive and legislative authorities in collaboration with national institutions, civil society organizations and the private sector.

Government of Jordan's Gender Mainstreaming Policy (GMP) (2020): Gender mainstreaming policy institutionalizes and formalizes the government's efforts to incorporate gender into all stages of designing, implementing and reporting the government's work and procedures. This policy is designed to support the process of meeting both national and international commitments in promoting equity, equality and justice, while taking into account diversity, equal opportunities and participation (inclusiveness). In addition, this policy is aimed at complementing the Government's ongoing implementation of targeted intervention initiatives.

The Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW): Jordan signed the CEDAW Convention on March 12th, 1980, and ratified it in July 1st, 1992, with reservations made on Article 9 (2) concerning citizenship, and Article 16 (1), paragraphs c, d and g concerning marriage, family relations, housing and mobility right.

The International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights: The States Parties to the present Covenant undertake to ensure the equal right of men and women to the enjoyment of all economic, social and cultural rights set forth in the present Covenant (Article 3).

UN Security Council Resolution 1325 (2000): In 2000, the United Nations, through the Security Council, recognized not only the special impact of conflicts on women but also the need to include women as active stakeholders in conflict prevention and resolution.

UN General Assembly Resolution No. A/RES/66/130 2011: Urges States to enhance the political participation of women, to accelerate the achievement of equality between men and women, and to promote and protect the human rights of women, in all situations, including in situations of political transition.

Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action (BPfA): It calls on Governments, the international community and civil society, including non-governmental organizations and the private sector, to take strategic action in the areas of poverty, education and training, health care, violence, armed conflicts, economy, power and decision-making, institutional mechanisms for the advancement of women, human rights, access to mass media, the environment and the girl child. It also urges States to strengthen the role of women and ensure equal representation of women at all decision-making levels in national and international institutions.

Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development: The fifth goal seeks to achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls, specifically with regard to eliminating all forms of violence against all women and girls in the public and private spheres, including trafficking and sexual and other types of exploitation.

RELEVANT PARTNERS TO PROMOTE JUSTICE, GENDER EQUALITY AND WOMEN'S EMPOWERMENT

Group	Characteristics	Relevance to promoting justice, gender equality and women's empowerment
The Inter-Ministerial Committee on Women's Empowerment and Gender Equality (IMC)	Responsibility for follow-up on women's empowerment issues (policies and strategies at the ministerial level.	Making policy decisions and developing strategies to ensure the empowerment, protection and enforcement of women's rights, to combat violence and discrimination against women.
The Jordanian National Commission for Women (JNCW)	Preparing legislations, passing relevant laws and approving the national general budget.	Advocate for Government accountability.
Civil Society Organizations (CSOs)	Work in the field of human rights and women's empowerment, in various areas of development and in the domain of protecting women from violence.	Work directly on issues of promoting gender equality and justice and the empowerment of women in their various programs, through education, capacity-building, lobbying, advocacy, women's organization, development of studies, legal representation, provision of sectoral services, monitoring and documentation of violations of human rights, particularly women's rights.

Group	Characteristics	Relevance to promoting justice, gender equality and women's empowerment
The League of Arab States / Department of Women, Family and Children	Follow-up on international/regional meetings, decisions and declarations, strategies, policies relating to women's empowerment and gender mainstreaming, with the ministries and mechanisms related to women's empowerment. Participation in Arab World conferences and committees held in the field of women's empowerment and gender mainstreaming.	Develop national gender-responsive policies and strategies in line with Arab World strategies. Follow-up on the recommendations of Arab World statements and reports issued, and their integration into Arab World strategies.
United Nations Entity for Gender Equality & the Empowerment of Women (UN Women)	Agreement with the MoSD to support issues of women's empowerment at the service recipients level. In addition to enhance Institutional Capacity Development (ICD) on gender mainstreaming of the Ministry.	Support, enable and build the capacity of the Gender Department in the MoSD to activate and improve its role in the areas of development in general, as well as in the area of gender mainstreaming. UN organizations support the government of Jordan to build its institutional capacities to enable them to fulfill their international obligations, especially those relating to the promotion of women's rights and combating violence against women.

POLICY PRINCIPLES

At the institutional level

- Mainstreaming the gender perspective into all the policies, procedures and action plans of the Ministry.
- Ensuring non-discrimination on the basis of gender in the services provided to employees, and the public, and in all administrative, financial and executive procedures and regulations.
- Preventing any unethical acts, practices or actions that deepen gender discrimination, and holding transgressors individuals accountable by developing appropriate institutional accountability mechanisms based on transparency and justice.
- Ensuring developing gender-responsive budgets.
- Establishing administrative, legal, operational and procedural institutional processes that support equal participation of both women and men in decision-making and ensure equitable access to career development opportunities.
- Mainstreaming gender into the ministry's monitoring and evaluation system through the integration of a gender perspective within the institutional performance indicators.
- Develop institutional procedures to enhance gender mainstreaming across all fields of work of the ministry's directorates and departments.

At the programmatic level

Mainstreaming gender into all projects, initiatives and activities supervised, implemented, financed or funded by the ministry through all institutional and programmatic procedures, including planning, implementation, monitoring, evaluation, recruitment and financing.

ADMINISTRATIVE AND INSTITUTIONAL PROCEDURES FOR POLICY IMPLEMENTATION

- Ensure providing sufficient human and financial resources to mainstream gender in all areas of the Ministry's work.
- Assign a dedicated team from all directorates to lead the gender mainstreaming process in a systematic way.
- Disseminating this policy document, explaining and clarifying it to all Ministry's employees, making it available to them, and facilitating access to it.
- Remove all administrative, executive and procedural barriers, including any practices that limit the participation of both women and men in decision-making processes and ensure equal and fair access to career development opportunities.
- Cooperate and coordinate with the Department of Statistics (DoS) on a regular and systematic basis, to regularly collect, analyze and disseminate data that address relevant gender issues and enhance gender mainstreaming.
- Identifying the responsible internal party within the ministry for reviewing, monitoring and evaluating the implementation of this policy.
- This policy was formulated in 2020 and will be reviewed and evaluated by the assigned internal party appointed by H.E. The Minister of Social Development every two years.

