

Know Her Rights



Tools of Knowledge

Eliminating Violence Against Women and Girls in Jordan



FOREWORD

Violence against women and girls (VAWG), regardless of its various forms and scale, is an issue of concern to a multitude of people and actors worldwide. As an integral component of human rights, various actors have emphasized the importance of eliminating all forms of violence and discrimination against women and girls, whether it takes place publicly or privately and regardless of its origin and expressions.

In Jordan, an array of international, governmental and civil society actors has committed to advance human rights as a whole across the Kingdom and, most importantly, to further consolidate gender equality, a key component to a just and peaceful society.

One form of violence that is most commonly thought of as VAWG is physical or sexual violence, either occurring within the family or from an unrelated perpetrator. However, rather indistinct expressions of violence, such as controlling behaviors towards women and girls and restrictions on their freedom, add up to what constitutes experiences of SGBV. In Jordan, present socio-cultural variables, such as patriarchal hierarchies, contribute to the continuation of attitudes that perpetuate particular gender roles and overall lay the ground for VAWG as a means of preserving power structures that favor men over women.

Therefore, the pursuit of addressing gender inequality at its core, by engaging all women, men, girls, and boys and enabling societal progress towards an inclusive environment that would empower women and girls

to live free of violence, led to this comprehensive toolkit. Taking into consideration different aspects of the Jordanian society by consulting actors in the government, media, education, and health sectors, this tool aspires to further reinforce campaigning and advocacy, both vital endeavors in addressing women's rights and protection.

The timeliness of the toolkit manifests clearly in the fact that it coincides with two major achievements for women's rights in Jordan: the remarkable abolishment of Article 308, which enabled perpetrators of sexual assault to avoid being penalized provided that they marry the victims and; the signing of the National Action Plan for implementing UNSC resolution 1325 on women, peace, and security alongside the adoption of recommended recent changes to personal status laws. During a time in which more cases of GBV, honor killings, and the spread of violence are being reported and socio-economic welfare systems are deteriorating, ARDD is unceasingly working to advance access to rights for vulnerable and marginalized groups on both the institutional and ground level. Continuing the efforts to further increase awareness on the strategies needed to eliminate VAWG, ARDD aspires for this toolkit to be rendered an indispensable tool to these objectives, laying the foundation for a just, gender-sensitive society.

Samar Muhareb,
CEO of ARDD

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ARDD hopes that this toolkit will serve as a mechanism that educates and sensitizes targeted stakeholders on the multiple forms and impact of violence against women and girls, as well as supports the participatory approach based on human rights and advocacy.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This toolkit aims to sensitize targeted stakeholders in the government, media, education, and health sectors about the multiple forms and impacts of violence against women and girls, as well as promote increased gender sensitivity in the provision of information and services in these sectors. This toolkit was developed in consultation with actors in these sectors, as well as local and international NGOs and civil society organizations.

This toolkit is the first of its kind in Jordan because it targets different sectors and audiences to create a comprehensive guide to eliminating violence against women and girls (VAWG) in Jordan. Although recent achievements were made in women's rights in Jordan, which resulted in policy and legislative changes regarding the legal status and protection of women and girls, further campaigning and advocacy is necessary to address remaining concerns. The timeliness of this toolkit will carry the momentum created from recent achievements to further spread awareness on eliminating VAWG, particularly in sectors such as education and health that are generally less involved in advocacy for women's rights. Furthermore, this toolkit includes an unprecedented and comprehensive legal analysis of laws and policies relating to VAWG to guide advocacy and service delivery efforts.

Divided into two sections, the toolkit aims to facilitate an understanding of VAWG in Jordan and then offer strategies to combat VAWG through the lens of the government, media, education, and health sectors. The first section consists of the first chapter, which provides

an understanding of VAWG through an analysis of the legal frameworks and its gaps. The second section consists of four chapters, targeting government, media, education, and health actors respectively, to offer strategies to combat VAWG in their sectors. Each of these four chapters contains evidence-based information on how actors in these sectors can play a vital role in eliminating VAWG, including examples of best practices and exercises to apply learning. All chapters are color-coded to ease navigation and reading of the toolkit for actors based on their sector and field.

Furthermore, the chapters include key takeaways and messages, as well as boxes outlining commendable campaigns and initiatives, policy highlights, and checklists and activities to promote gender sensitivity. Among the most relevant messages in the toolkit are:

- Actors in all sectors play a role in eliminating violence against women and girls and each sector can promote gender sensitivity in their work and fields;
- The need to prioritize gender sensitivity and the safety and privacy of survivors over concerns about publicity;
- Professionals should consult a civil society organization when concerned about how their work could affect women and girls and survivors of violence.

INTRODUCTION

UNDERSTANDING AND COMBATING VAWG A MATTER OF HUMAN RIGHTS

Violence against women and girls (VAWG) is a grave and pervasive human rights violation. It manifests in a number of ways, including physical, sexual and psychological harm ([UNWomen, 2017a](#)). While the most common form of VAWG is intimate partner violence, other forms of violence against women and girls include: sexual violence and harassment, human trafficking and female genital mutilation (ibid). These are often-discussed forms of violence; however, VAWG also occurs in the form of (1) discriminatory laws and policies, (2) patriarchal and restrictive societal norms, (3) economic violence, and (4) reduced or barred access to justice, high-quality healthcare, or education. Indeed, it is very important to understand that **VAWG is a global phenomenon that is systemic in nature, permeates all levels of society, and is a serious threat not just to the physical integrity, but to the rights and dignity of women all over the world.** Accordingly, it is one of the world's most important human rights issues.

There are a number of international instruments and institutions that work to end VAWG and improve the status of women and girls. The foremost among these is the Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women and Girls (CEDAW). This so-called 'international bill of rights for women' "provides the basis for realizing equality between women and men through ensuring women's equal access to, and equal opportunities in political and public life ([United Nations](#)

VAWG is a global problem of "pandemic proportions."

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[Treaty Collection, 2017](#)). To date, there are 191 state parties to CEDAW (ibid). Under CEDAW, states are obliged to "exercise due diligence to prevent, investigate and, in accordance with national legislation, punish acts of violence against women and to take appropriate and effective action concerning acts of violence against women, and to provide access to just and effective remedies and specialized, including medical, assistance to victims."

While VAWG is often regarded as a problem exclusive to the global south or "developing" states, it cannot be overstated that VAWG is a global problem of "pandemic proportions" ([UNWomen, 2017a](#)). Indeed, women all over the world confront violence in forms such as restricted political rights and representation, economic violence, patriarchal norms and sexual violence. At the political level, globally, as of June 2016, only 22.8% of national parliamentarians were women ([UNWomen 2017b](#)). In Central, East and South Asia, negative perceptions and stereotypes of women's roles often bars them from social spaces and political participation ([SIGI, 2014](#)). Meanwhile, in North and South America, as well as Western Europe, although women's political participation is markedly freer and higher than in other parts of the world, significant room for improvement remains ([UNWomen 2017b](#); [SIGI, 2014](#)). Although some states have tried to rectify women's reduced participation with quotas on the number of women who serve in political positions, many

states across the world have yet to pass such measures ([SIGI, 2014](#)).

Meanwhile, at the economic level, women across the world struggle to access sustainable and dignified livelihoods. Further, when women manage to find gainful employment, they still suffer from a pervasive wage gap that, according to the World Economic Forum, will take at least 200 years to close ([UNWomen, 2017; World Economic Forum, 2017](#)). In South Asia and Sub-Saharan Africa, for example, women have limited opportunities to control property ([SIGI, 2014](#)).

Finally, and most certainly, women all over the world must confront patriarchal and restrictive social norms. Stemming from this, is the pervasive concern of sexual violence. Unfortunately, this violence is often perpetrated by the individuals to whom women are closest: their intimate partners. Indeed, globally, 1 in 3 women will experience intimate partner violence in her lifetime ([UNWomen, 2017a](#)). "Sexual entitlement" a foremost example of patriarchy remains problematic in many parts of the world and is one of the primary reasons perpetrators of rape say they commit these crimes ([SIGI, 2014](#)). Worsening this situation, when women report crimes, they are often threatened, shamed or ostracized - severely reducing their willingness or ability to seek and access justice.

Although violence against women and girls is a worldwide concern, numerous indications suggest that VAWG in the MENA region is particularly troubling.

Indeed, according to the most recent Social Institutions and Gender Index (SIGI) reporting, the status of women and girls in the MENA region is worse than any other region in the world ([SIGI, 2014](#)). Of the 160 states examined as a part of the study, 3 states showed "very high" levels of discrimination against women, namely Yemen (performed the worst of those studied), Syria and Egypt. Meanwhile, Jordan, Iraq, and Lebanon had "high" scores. While Tunisia had a "medium" level and Morocco (who scored the best of all states in the MENA region) had a "low" level, absolutely no Arab state had a "very low" level of discrimination ([SIGI, 2014](#)).

Throughout the Middle East, the situation regarding VAWG is slow to improve owing in large part to the absence of laws that effectively criminalize VAWG, or the presence of laws that, in themselves, constitute a form of violence against women and girls ([Westminster Foundation for Democracy, 2017; SIGI, 2014](#)). Indeed, across MENA, gender-specific laws limit women's access to public spaces, political voice or the exercise of their civil and human rights ([SIGI, 2014](#)). At the same time, personal status laws are often based on customary laws and/or *conservative interpretations* of religious texts (Sonbol, 2003). In cases where legal reform does occur, it is sometimes heavily resisted or insufficiently addresses the full range of conditions contributing to VAWG – as will be shown in the next section of this toolkit.

Underlying these legal challenges are a pervasive set of patriarchal and restrictive social norms. Indeed, across the region, "son bias, [women's] restricted resources

and assets, and [women's] restricted physical integrity" remain in immediate need of being addressed. Further, a World Health Organization study conducted in 2013 found that approximately 37% of women in the Eastern Mediterranean Region and 37% of women in Africa had experienced sexual and/or physical intimate partner violence in her lifetime ([WHO, 2013](#)). Since the Arab Spring and the uprisings that followed, advancements in women's rights have slowed "in the interest of state security" (ibid). In fact, women activists have been intimidated, threatened and even murdered for their work ([Amnesty International, 2016](#)).

In Jordan specifically, socio-cultural factors greatly contribute to violence against women and girls. Indeed, Jordanian society is overwhelmingly patriarchal, whereby decision-making power is largely concentrated in the hands of men responsible for preserving the family's honor. Accordingly, men and boys currently exercise significant control over their female relatives - often times, severely restricting their personal freedom and autonomy (Sonbol, 2003). According to the Population and Family Health Survey conducted in 2012, 36% of women surveyed had experienced sexual and/or physical intimate partner violence in the 12 months preceding the survey ([Population and Family Health Survey, 2012](#)). Meanwhile, a number of women experience subtler - however, equally concerning - forms of violence, such as controlling behavior. In fact, 15% of women surveyed reported that their husbands would not allow them to meet their female friends, and 10% said that their husbands restricted her interaction with her family members (ibid). These forms of violence lead to serious

physical and mental health challenges; nevertheless, they retain widespread support among Jordanians. In a study of their attitudes, a large number of Jordanian men believed that physically beating wives is an acceptable form of punishment given certain conditions ([Al-Badayneh, 2012](#)). Strikingly, in a similar study, Jordanian women also showed a high proportion of support for this form of violence and not only regarded it as justifiable, but beneficial (ibid).

The patriarchal nature of Jordanian society impacts the construction of gender roles: where boys are taught from a young age to be dominant and assertive, meanwhile, girls are taught to be submissive and obedient. This understanding of gender roles leads to asymmetric power dynamics between men and women, which permeate both the public and private spheres. In this asymmetric relationship, women's reduced status is perpetuated through the use of violence, (whether physical, sexual, psychological or economic) in nearly every place they frequent: their home, the streets, academic institutions, workplaces, and beyond. Exacerbating this situation, when women are victims of violence, they are often seen as the instigators of these attacks, rather than the victims of willing and knowing perpetrators of violence.

Indeed, while women and girls are the most direct beneficiaries of efforts to combat VAWG, it is important to understand that **everyone** stands to benefit from societies characterized by gender equity; therefore, **everyone** has an obligation to actively and persistently combat VAWG.

ABOUT THIS PROJECT

Know Her Rights, a project funded by the United Nations Trust Fund to End Violence against Women and implemented by Arab Renaissance for Democracy and Development – ARDD, strove toward fostering the full potential of all women, girls, men, and boys to address the root causes of gender inequality in Jordan.

The Know Her Rights project sought to facilitate a social environment that will better enable women and girls to live a life free from sexual and gender-based violence. Key civil social actors were engaged by collectively identifying the most pressing priorities regarding VAWG in Jordan and jointly developing messages that were put together in a user-friendly toolkit.

To achieve this goal, the project adopted a multi-level approach that incorporated consultations with a diverse group of stakeholders for the production of a tangible toolkit and a subsequent advocacy component that specifically targeted actors and duty bearers in related sectors. Together, these actors have a significant public outreach and have the ability to influence societal norms and overall public policy.

Carrying through this approach, ARDD met with officials and representatives from a multitude of backgrounds and sectors. Aiming to comprehend and collectively identify priorities and messages to be included in this toolkit, ARDD consulted with actors in government, media, education, and civil society in the course of various workshops and writeshops. A significant number

of gender specialists and experts in these fields also provided their feedback with regards to the toolkit on facilitating its understanding and implementation.

As an organization, ARDD works strategically to advocate and campaign for marginalized and vulnerable groups, including women and girls, on a policy and institutional level and through projects targeting these communities in Jordan. Through relentless advocacy and lobbying, actors in the government, media, education, and health sector continue to engage with the organization's objectives. In addition, the organization builds partnerships and coalitions with other NGOs and CSOs to foster a gender-sensitive society. Through these efforts, ARDD continues to contribute to the empowerment of women and girls and to a lasting dialogue with stakeholders and social actors beyond the closing of the project.

About this toolkit

This toolkit is the result of a several-month long consultative process among a variety of stakeholders representing sectors of Jordanian society including the government, the media, the education sector, and representatives from civil society. The process aimed at ensuring the relevance of the messages contained in this toolkit and enhancing its national ownership. The toolkit aims at familiarizing and sensitizing readers with current gaps, challenges and realities of VAWG in Jordan in order to start a social dialogue that can foster positive changes in attitudes toward women and girls, as well as promote legislative and policy changes.

Although the toolkit invokes key societal actors (government, media, education, and health practitioners) to take action, the use of technical terminologies has been purposely avoided in order to enhance wide dissemination of the toolkit's content and messages among different audiences. ARDD has worked closely with social actors to promote messages from the toolkit and changes in attitudes. To this aim, relevant events took place including mobilizing educators to conduct outreach in their communities employing messages from the toolkit; discussing the importance of gender sensitivity in services with government representatives, and developing a collective plan with civil society organizations to operationalize the toolkit.

Furthermore, through a traditional and social media campaign, messages from the toolkit were also able to extend to the broader public audience in Jordan. Indeed, all individuals are responsible for combating violence against women and girls, therefore all individuals should find this toolkit informative, useful and actionable.

About Arab Renaissance for Democracy and Development - ARDD

ARDD applies a holistic approach to help underrepresented and marginalized people find their voice. Since 2008, ARDD's fight against inequity has evolved from legal empowerment to reflect the interconnected structural issues facing the Arab world. Our approaches have since grown to democracy and development mandates, as well as social protection initiatives, among other strategies.

We focus on access to justice, accountability, universal social protection, and gender equality and ultimately aspire to attain regional peace and awaken our cultural legacy. Our vision is to empower the people of the Arab world to create a democratic society where all have access to justice regardless of status.

1 | UNDERSTANDING VAWG IN JORDAN

CHAPTER ONE:

JORDAN'S LEGAL FRAMEWORK AND ITS GAPS



International Laws and Conventions

Striving to Meet the Standards

Jordan ratified the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) in 1992, with reservations to Article 9/2 (on nationality), and Article 16e (on equal rights in marriage). Jordan's reservations to these articles constitute a severe form of violence against women and girls because they undermine the status and dignity of women, as well as the relationship of Jordanian women vis-à-vis the state.

Article 3/3 of Jordan's Nationality Law states that, "any person whose father holds Jordanian nationality shall be considered Jordanian." Under this law, Jordanian women are deprived of this right and are not equal to men in this matter. This constitutes a violation of international conventions and of Article 6/1 of the Jordanian constitution, which stipulates "Jordanians shall be equal before the law. There shall be no discrimination between them as regards to their rights and duties on grounds of race, language, or religion." The word "Jordanians" here refers to both male and female, while at the same time, posing serious challenges to the rights of children of Jordanian mothers and non-citizen fathers. Over 84,000 Jordanian women are married to non-Jordanian men, and together, these couples have around 338,000 children ([Pew Research, 2014](#)). A number of these children encounter barriers to accessing public education, owning property, or obtaining a driver's license. Some are even required to obtain residency and work permits in order to legally reside in Jordan.

In 2014, in resolution number 6415, the Head of the Ministry took a decision (number 6415), which grants these children the same rights as Jordanians with respect to, for example education in public universities, working without work permits, and permission to reside in Jordan www.ardd-jo.org

"Jordan's reservations to these Articles constitute a severe form of violence against women and girls because they undermine the status and dignity of women, as well as the relationship of Jordanian women vis-à-vis the state."

**BOX 1.
A CALL FOR ACTION!
THE NATIONALITY CAMPAIGN
IN JORDAN**

In 2009, a group of activists concerned about the rights of Jordanian women with non-Jordanian spouses, and their children formed a group called, "My Mother is Jordanian and Her Nationality is My Right." The group lobbied the government to pass legislation allowing children of Jordanian mothers and non-citizen fathers to inherit Jordanian nationality. By 2012, the group expanded in size and joined a coalition dedicated to the same end entitled, "My Nationality is the Right of My Family (MNRMF)." In 2014, the government pledged to extend so-called "privileges" to these children, but no action (aside from that mentioned above) has taken place. It is important to stress the point that what the government is considering "privileges" are basic civil and human rights to which each of these children is entitled. MNRMF continues to engage government actors and other relevant stakeholder to drive legal reform so that these rights are reflected under the law ([Jordan Times, 2017](#)).

([Jordan Times, 2017](#)). Yet, this remains insufficient, as these children should not only have equal right to civil rights, but to all public services, as well as the right to political participation through voting. These are not privileges – as considered by the government – for the children of Jordanian women, rather basic civil and human rights that these children are entitled to have. At the time of writing, no legislation has been put forward to grant children of Jordanian mothers and non-Jordanian fathers their full civil and human rights, except for the instructions to implement the Cabinet's 2014 decision on easing regulations for Jordanian women married to non-Jordanians.

Despite calls from the women's movement, national and international communities, and stakeholders within Jordan, the government has expressed that it has no intent on withdrawing the reservation to Article 9/2 or 16e of the Convention ([Relief Web, 2017](#)).

Constitution of 1952

An Unintended Gender Gap

Article 6 of the Jordanian Constitution articulates that "Jordanians are equal before the law without discrimination in rights and duties on grounds of race, language, or religion." However, the constitution does not explicitly prohibit gender-based discrimination, thus leaving a gap for discriminatory treatment of women. Additionally, in the Arabic version of the constitution, the word used for "Jordanians" is the plural, masculine form, as opposed to the plural form that includes men and women.¹ This requires an explanation from the

¹ For more, see Chapter Four on gender-biased language.

Constitutional Court to clarify that the term is used for both males and females. This approach should also be supported by the representatives of the Jordanian Parliament and the Senate.

Family Protection Law of 2017

Breaking the Culture of Silence Surrounding Domestic Violence

Jordan passed a law on protection from domestic violence in 2008, and was the first country in the Middle East and North Africa to do so. Many civil society organizations have worked to submit proposals either to amend this law or to pass a law addressing the objective and procedural obstacles that prevent the application of the law. A draft law was submitted and passed through the legislative channels. As a result, The Protection from Domestic Violence Law No. 15 of 2017 was issued. The law came into effect in August 2017, 90 days after its issue in the official gazette. This law is considered a step forward. However, there is still a long way to ensure that VAWG is adequately and comprehensively addressed within the law.

Among the positive aspects of the new law are:

- Expanding the definition of "family members" to include: relatives to the third degree, relatives through marriage to the second degree, or relatives through marriage to the fourth degree if they are living in the home as stipulated in Article 3b, d, and h of the Family Protection Law.

- Acknowledging the urgency for courts to address cases of domestic violence: the law explicitly declares that domestic violence cases should be given high priority in the courts as they cannot be adjourned for more than 3 days, unless otherwise necessary, and must be altogether resolved within three months, as stipulated in Article 15 of the Family Protection Law;
- Enforcing mandatory reporting: while the previous law (2008) made the reporting of domestic violence cases mandatory, the 2017 law makes explicit that health, education and social service providers both in public and private sectors must report any case of domestic violence, including those cases that involve individuals who are not legally competent or lack legal capacity. Furthermore, in felony cases there is compulsory reporting whether it affects individuals with full and diminished legal capacity (i.e., minors, mentally disable...), while in misdemeanor cases reporting is only compulsory in the case of individuals with diminished legal capacity but it requires consent from individuals with full legal capacity. Also, mandatory reporting furthermore establishes clear punitive action against those individuals who fail to report cases, which is punishable by imprisonment for not more than one week, through a penalty not exceeding 50 JD or both as stipulated in Article of 4/c of the same law. On the other hand, in spite of this positive action towards enforcing the reporting of domestic violence, mandatory reporting is in itself a controversial tool, as it potentially breaches ethical codes of confidentiality in some professions. A breach in confidentiality can have a negative impact on

“Legal instruments that specifically address and combat all other forms of VAWG are required in order to prevent, prosecute, and eliminate violence against women.”

victims of domestic violence searching for medical or psychological help, in addition to the fact that the law does not clearly and explicitly protect the person from legal consequences if the information is found to be untrue. Mandatory reporting in Jordan furthermore remains an insufficient means to overcome the culture of silence surrounding and hindering the reporting of domestic violence cases in the first place, such as lack of high enough standards of confidentiality, or fearing physical retaliation by a victim’s family, etc.

It is important to remember that domestic violence is only one form of VAWG and that further legal instruments that specifically address and combat all other forms of VAWG are required in order to prevent, prosecute, and eliminate violence against women. The Istanbul Convention (2011) is among the strongest international legal instruments in setting standards and mechanisms for combating VAWG.

Penal Code of 1960 and Crime Prevention Law of 1954

Honor and Women’s Bodies

Between January and November 2016, at least 26 women and girls were killed in Jordan in the name of ‘honor’ ([Human Rights Watch, 2017](#)). These killings are wholly unjustifiable and often occur over minor incidents.

Jordan places a high value on family honor. However, the definition of honor is unfairly and disproportionately linked to the actions of females and the incidents

BOX 2. LISTEN TO HER

“The main issue is that we [Jordanians] define honor based on women’s bodies.”

-Dr. Salma Al-Nims,
Secretary-General at
the Jordanian National
Commission for Women

they face. When actions occur that threaten honor, other family members – often males – are considered responsible for restoring honor. The problem is both in what is considered “dishonorable” as well as the fact that the burden of maintaining honor and righteousness falls almost exclusively on the shoulders of women and girls.

Further, some articles within Jordan’s penal code reinforce the unfair burden that women and girls have to uphold family honor. For example, in its previous version, Article 340 of the Penal Code allowed the judge (of court) to reduce the penalty in cases where a man kills or attacks any of his female relatives, if he allegedly catches them committing adultery or in an “unlawful bed.” Far from addressing this burden, amendment to Article 340 has been made to allow women to benefit from a mitigated sentence under similar conditions. “There shall benefit from the same excuse the wife who surprises her husband in the crime of adultery or in an unlawful bed in the marital home and kills him immediately or kills the woman with whom he is fornicating or kills both of them or attacks him or both of them in an assault that leads to death or wounding or injury or permanent disability.” This amendment illustrates an awkward understanding of what is considered equality between sexes under the law. Instead, the law should be reformed in such a way that murder – regardless of the circumstances – is considered murder. Media professionals have undertaken a sensitization campaign to repeal Article 340 altogether (See Best Practice under Media section).

Additionally, article 98 of the penal code was amended, which stipulated that any person who commits a crime

“The burden of being honorable and righteous falls almost exclusively on the shoulders of women and girls.”

in a fit of fury caused by an unlawful or dangerous act on the part of the victim. This amendment prevents any benefits of a reduction in penalty for members of the victim’s family that are complicit in “honor” killings, unless they witnessed the act personally.

Women’s rights activists call for a full review of the Penal Code, in particular articles 292 to 307. Among other issues, Article 305 fails to explicitly criminalize marital rape. That is, the law primarily considers forced sexual intercourse a crime if it occurs outside of marriage, as opposed to considering rape a crime against the bodily integrity and sexual autonomy of the victim regardless of the relationship between the attacker(s) and victim ([ARDD, 2016](#)).

Meanwhile, the recently repealed Article 308 of the Penal Code that exempted perpetrators of rape and other forms of sexual assault from prosecution or punishment, if they agree to marry their victims and remain married for at least five years, is a significant step forward in combating violence against women and girls in Jordan, as it sends clear and strong signals about the state’s intent to protect women and girls from sexual violence. However, the repeal of this law is not enough. It remains important that the societal norms that allowed Article 308 to exist in the first place are also addressed. To this end, social actors within Jordan – including government officials, civil society and others – are working to monitor the situation related to violence against women and girls, as well as submitting an action plan to ensure that the victimization of women and girls is not continued in silence. At the same time, this task force, as well as other social actors in Jordan, must work to abolish any other

discriminatory laws to ensure women and girls' exercise of equal rights.

With regards to the Crime Prevention Law (CPL) of 1954 and its related 'administrative detention', this law has been deemed to undermine the rule of law in Jordan as it allows administrative authorities to initiate procedures against persons who are either about to commit a crime or assist in committing a crime. Additionally, the law allows for detention of anyone deemed "a danger to the people." This law provides discretionary right to administrative authorities for administrative detention and it is often used to detain women threatened by family violence in the name of 'protection,' rather than punish those who threaten women's lives. Additionally, women suspected of "immoral behavior," such as being found alone in the presence of an unrelated male, are also subject to administrative detention. Women can only be released after a male guardian signs a monetary guarantee that he will not harm her. However, many women are still harmed after their release.

Women's rights organizations stand in opposition to the Crime Prevention Law, as it impairs the work of courts and represents a clear infringement on principles of due process in favour of unchecked powers to administrative authorities.

A case from on-the-ground:

"At first being in prison seemed better than the beatings, but I was always afraid and there was nothing there to distract me from the worry. My

BOX 3. A CALL FROM ACTIVISTS! FIGHTING ADMINISTRATIVE DETENTION

Founded in 1998, Mizan Law Group for Human Rights aims to enhance democracy, protect human rights and develop just and humane legislation ([Mizan, 2017](#)). Mizan is among the organizations currently pushing legislative reform to end administrative detention, as well as the violation of civil and human rights caused by the Crime Prevention Law. One in five people, and nearly half of all women in a Jordanian prison are under administrative detention. ([Human Rights Watch, 2009](#); [Jordan Times, 2016c](#)). As explained by Mizan's Executive Director, Eva Abu Halawe, this detention is in direct violation of individuals 7th and 8th amendment rights, which together, grant personal freedom and ban detention without violating the law ([Jordan Times, 2016c](#)). Mizan is calling on the Constitutional Court to amend laws related to the CPL, and for the government to "give priority to the implementation of Jordan's commitment to international treaties that grant equal rights to men and women" (*ibid*).

options were to stay in prison or be married, so I preferred to be marry. A lot of other girls did the same." ([The Guardian, 2016](#)).

As this case illustrates, a number of victims of sexual assault resort to marrying their perpetrators in exchange for release from their supposed 'protective custody.'

Personal Status Law

Unfulfilled Rights and Patriarchal Gender Norms

The 2010 Personal Status Temporary Law (PSL) governs numerous important matters of life, including: marriage, spousal roles, divorce, alimony, custody and inheritance. PSL is primarily based on conservative interpretations of *Shari'a* Law rather than international human rights agreements ([ARDD, 2016](#)), eroding the rights of women and girls. **Among the most pressing gaps in the 2010 Personal Status Temporary Law are those concerning marriage, divorce, and inheritance.**

Family is the core of society in Jordan. Therefore, marriage is largely regarded as critical (and necessary) milestone in an individual's life -especially for women and girls. There is a great deal of social pressure for women and girls to marry, and individuals who do not marry face a degree of stigmatization. At the same time, women's low economic participation leads them to also regard marriage as a means of financial security. These social and economic pressures have a number of implications for the nature of marriages in Jordan.

The first implication is with respect to child marriages.

**BOX 4.
STEPS FORWARD:
TUNISIA'S LEGAL REFORMS FOR
GENDER EQUALITY**

In August 2017, Tunisia's president, Beji Caid Essebsi, called on parliament to amend the state's inheritance laws to promote equality between men and women. Despite some backlash from religious and social conservatives, Essebsi notes his confidence "that Tunisian legislators will be able to strike a balance between gender equality on the one hand and religion and the constitution on the other." At the time of writing, Tunisia has one of the most progressive personal status laws in the MENA region, and sets a good example of how states can uphold religious practices, while at the same time, promoting women's basic rights (Al Monitor, 2017).

While PSL establishes 18 as the minimum age for men and women to marry, the law grants judges discretionary power to permit children not younger than 15 to enter into marriage if they meet a number of conditions; these conditions have been subject to further regulation in 2017 to reorganize the process of granting permission for marriage.² In spite of the conditions established in the regulations, it is important to remember that child marriage constitutes a serious form of violence against girls (and boys) and also exposes girls to additional forms of violence. This is particularly important in light of the fact that marriage is regularly used as a negative coping mechanism for economic security.³ Furthermore, child marriage limits girls' access to complete their education in Jordan, due to a combination of factors, one of which is parents and/or families arbitrarily hindering access for married girls to school, prohibiting their education. In fact, over 10,000 children in Jordan are at risk of being deprived of an education for having entered into child marriages (Al Rai, 2017).

Another relevant issue to consider with regards to marriage that affects brides-to-be regardless of their age concerns marriage contracts. Brides-to-be and their families are often reluctant to include stipulations in their marriage contract that protect their interests, such as restricting men from taking a second wife or guaranteeing the wife's right to continue studying or work outside of the home. They do not include these stipulations because they either don't know that it is their right or because in doing so, they could reduce their marriage prospects.

² A full list of conditions to be met under the new law can be accessed [here](#).

³ More information about child marriage in Jordan can be access [here](#).

Other gaps within the PSL underscore the patriarchal nature of Jordanian society. For example, a Muslim Jordanian man can marry any woman regardless of her religion, while a Muslim Jordanian woman can only marry a Muslim man. Also, under the same law, the testimony of one man equals that of two women. These conditions are often incorrectly justified based on biased interpretations of the religion, and ultimately reduce women and girls' agency over their personal matters and inhibit their access to justice.

As it pertains to guardianship over children after divorce, women are also at a disadvantage. Indeed, mothers must gain consent from their ex-husbands to travel with her children outside of the country and they lose custody upon re-marrying. Yet, none of these restrictive conditions apply to men, however. Guardianship of children after divorce is even more constrained for Christian women married to Muslim men, as they lose custody of their children after they reach 7 years of age (as opposed to 13 years of age as per Shari'a).

Furthermore, although there are a number of provisions within Jordan's inheritance laws, and the Personal Status Law that includes inheritance provisions as well, that favor women equally, if not, more than men, there are still conditions where women inherit less than men. According to Jordan's PSL, men may inherit twice what a woman inherits in: "all degrees of relation (excluding the daughter's children), including sons and daughters and the son's daughters and sons;" cases where the deceased has a son and a daughter (the son will inherit twice that of his sister); cases where a father and mother

survive their child (the father will inherit twice that of the mother); and cases where one party in a married couple dies and does not leave behind anyone entitled to inherit (the husband receives twice from his deceased wife's estate as would a wife receive from her deceased husband's estate ([Jordanian National Commission for Women, 2012](#))).

Another challenge related to women and inheritance is women being pressured to relinquish their entitlements in favor of their male relatives. However, to address this concern, *Shari'a* courts have stopped hearing cases in which women wish to relinquish their inheritance rights until at least three months after the death of the deceased. Doing so affords women the time necessary to make an informed decision, that is free of distress ([Al Bawaba, 2016](#)). An important point as well, stands with regards to discrimination faced by Christian women, as PSL stipulates they must follow *Shari'a* and thus, are discriminated against men in their inheritance rights.

Despite these shortcomings, new revisions to the 2010 PSL are aiming toward positive changes. Among them, the recent establishment of the Alimony Fund is expected to simplify and expedite procedures for women to be able to access alimony and child support payments. The fund is equally accessible to Muslims and Christians in Jordan.

Overall, it is important that Jordan's personal status temporary laws are revised to more closely align with standards and international obligations as it relates

“It is important that Jordan's personal status laws be reformed to more closely align with standards of human rights.”

to human rights and cease becoming a bargaining space among different actors. This in turn requires a fundamental change in the way society views women and girls. As explained by His Excellency, Judge Al-Tarawneh: “Boys and girls, men and women are being raised with different standards [and] we justify negative cultural norms with [religion].”

Labor Law

Overcoming Gender Norms

Women's economic participation in Jordan is very low, and only 10 countries in the world score worse than Jordan in terms of women's economic empowerment ([World Economic Forum, 2016](#)). This is a result of various economic, social and political reasons. However, the most important reason is what is called “economic violence.” Economic violence occurs when an individual has their ability to acquire, use, and maintain economic resources intentionally limited. It is a common form of violence against women and girls. Several provisions within the Jordanian labor law contribute to economic violence, either by perpetuating gender roles or stereotypes, failing to properly protect women in the workplace, or by outwardly discriminating against women.

Articles 67 and 72 of Jordan's labor law perpetuate gender roles with regards to childcare duties among parents. Article 67 says that women are entitled to unpaid leave not exceeding one year in order to take care of their children. Because only women are entitled to time off without consequence, if a child is in need of

care, the mother will most likely stay home. Article 67 is a good example of how the law can both influence, and be influenced by society. Overwhelmingly, Jordanians believe that women are primarily responsible for children, so the law provides protection for mothers; however, by only providing protection for mothers, the law inadvertently perpetuates the role of women as primary caregivers. In reality, both fathers and mothers are responsible for childcare; therefore, both men and women should be provided this right under Article 67.

A similar issue exists with Article 72 of the same law, which says that companies must have onsite daycares if they employ a certain number of women and is stipulated as such: "The employer who employs a minimum of twenty female married employees should provide a suitable place under the custody of a qualified governs to care for the employees' children of less than four years of age provided that the number is not less than ten children." This law is clearly rooted in the idea that women must take care of children. However, by making the law based on the number of women a company hires, employers may be discouraged from hiring women because they know it means they will incur additional costs. Therefore, the law should be based on the number of employees who report having children, not the number of women. Article 67 and 72 of the same Labor Law are examples of well-intentioned laws that should not be repealed but reformed.

Other laws, such as Article 27/a/1, of the Labor Law, contribute to economic violence against women because they fail to protect women in the workplace. While the

**BOX 5.
LISTEN TO HER**

"Violence against women is deciding to hire someone based on the result of a pregnancy test."

- Randa Naffa

article states that women cannot be fired once they reach the sixth month of pregnancy, or if they are on maternity leave, the problem here is that women usually begin showing signs of physical pregnancy around the start of the second trimester. This enables an employer to fire a woman that they notice has become pregnant. The labor law protects against arbitrary discharge, but it does nothing to stop an employer from using any infraction – no matter how insignificant or rectifiable – as justification for firing someone. This means that employers can fire pregnant women under the guise of another infraction.

It is good that the law protects pregnant women. Yet, this protection should be extended to women in all stages of pregnancy. However, firing should only be permissible except in extreme circumstances, such as those outlined in Article 28 of the Labor Law, and with strong evidence to support the firing.

Meanwhile, Article 69 of the Labor Law is an example of a law that actively discriminates against women. The provision grants the Minister of Labor the power to regulate in which industries women can work, and during which hours of the day. Such bans exist because of widelyheld perceptions in Jordan that women are incapable or unsuited for certain jobs, or that if a woman is out late, she must be engaged in some form of immoral behavior. In the first place, women should be able to work in any field of their choosing, because they are just as capable as men. Additionally, women should have the same access as men to economic opportunities so that they can care for themselves and their families.

"Women should have the same access as men to economic opportunities."

It is worth noting that the labor law has been amended in recent years. Still, these amendments remain insufficient. For example, the labor law now includes a provision that any person who is a victim of abuse in the workplace is entitled to leave work and demand compensation. This only applies if the abuse was committed by the employer or a representative of the employer, not to cases where an employee abuses another employee.

Human Trafficking and Related Laws

Toward Protecting Jordanians and Guests of Jordan

According to the Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons,⁴ “trafficking” is the recruitment, transportation, transfer, harboring, or receipt of persons for the purpose of exploitation, when it occurs by any of the following means:

| | |
|---|-----------|
| The threat (or actual use) of force | Coercion |
| The abuse of power | Abduction |
| The abuse of vulnerability | Fraud |
| The exchanging of payments/benefits to garner the consent of a person who has control over another person | Deception |

Human trafficking in Jordan occurs primarily in the form of forced labor and sex trafficking, both of which disproportionately affects women and girls – especially migrants and refugees. Indeed, in 2016, Tamkeen Legal Aid and Human Rights witnessed 159 cases of human trafficking ([Arab Trade Union Confederation, 2017](#)).

It is not uncommon for migrant workers to be brought

⁴ Access the document [here](#).

BOX 6. LISTEN TO HER

“My employer removed all of my clothes and raped me, beat and hurt me physically. I felt lifeless, I couldn’t get up, and I felt so weak. Then he threw me out of the window because he was afraid of his wife. The neighbors took me to the hospital” ([Tamkeen](#)).

to Jordan under the pretense of safe and reliable work, and then to arrive in the country only to find that the conditions to which they agreed would not be honored. At the same time, on the refugee level, abusive conditions in their working contracts are more likely to be accepted, because refugees may feel the pressure to provide for their families, while others – women and girls especially - may get married for economic security. The terms of these marriages are often exploitative and leave women and girls vulnerable to abuse, trafficking, or other forms of violence ([The Guardian 2014](#); [Save the Children, 2017](#)).

While the government of Jordan is internationally recognized in their efforts for combating human trafficking, particularly with the passage of the Anti-Human Trafficking Law of 2009 (AHTL), a number of gaps within Jordanian laws still allow trafficking in persons to continue. The first gap is within Article 2 of the Anti-Human Trafficking Law provides definitions of key terms, but neglects to define “forced labor.” A definition of what constitutes forced labor is important for there to be a clear understanding of when it occurs. According to the International Labor Organization (ILO), forced labor is work “performed involuntarily and under the [threat] of any penalty”([2017](#)). At the same time, the AHTL does not sufficiently criminalize involvement in sex trafficking. Article 8, indicates that perpetrators of human trafficking are to be sentenced to a prison sentence of no less than 6 months. Yet, this can be substituted with a fine of at least 1,000 and not exceeding 5,000 Jordanian Dinars. Neither of these punishments are proportional

**BOX 7.
STEPS FORWARD:
SHELTERS FOR VICTIMS**

In 2015, the government opened the first shelter for protecting victims of all forms of trafficking, where the staff are trained to identify and provide specialized care to victims ([U.S. Department of State, 2017](#)). Additionally, the Karama Shelter is a shelter for victims, including men, women, and children, and falls under the Ministry of Social Development ([OHCHR, 2016](#)).

to the severity of the crime committed. Accordingly, Jordan's sentences for trafficking of persons must be significantly expanded to reflect the fact that these crimes often constitute or resemble slavery – a grave violation of human rights.⁵

The issue of human trafficking also involves other laws in Jordan, such as the Penal Code and the Labor Law - neither of which sufficiently address human trafficking. The Penal Code makes no mention of forced labor, and although the Labor Law mentions that employers cannot force laborers to work “under threat or fraud or duress,” it does not give a clear and broad enough definition of forced labor. Accordingly, both the penal code and labor law define forced labor, and do so in a broad enough way to protect any individuals who work “involuntarily” or under the threat of “any penalty” ([Forced Labor Convention, 1930](#)). Furthermore, these laws should set out the rights and privileges of those who are victims of trafficking, including their ability to access restitution, compensation, rehabilitation, and/or guarantees of non-repetition – all without regard to nationality or socio-economic status.

Additionally, the AHTL, particularly Article 3/a/1, mentions the phrase “polarization of persons.” This is a single legislative vacuum, as the word “persons” means more than one, if the crime is committed against one person, it is not considered a crime of human trafficking even if it fits all other conditions (ARDD Brochure in ATHL).

⁵ The Office of the Higher Commission for Human Rights recommends that punitive measures in response to human trafficking are proportional to the severity of the crime. For more information, see [here](#).

Finally, the Passport Act of 1969 is particularly important when it comes to forced labor because withholding passport is a common practice used to prevent forced laborers from leaving Jordan. Article 23/b/1 has addressed this issue as it criminalized those who were holding passports. In addition, Article 77 of the Jordanian Labor Law criminalized the employer in the event that he holds the employee's supporting documents and stipulates as the following: “In addition to any penalty provided for in this legislation, any employer or manager of an establishment who violates any worker by applying duress, threatening, fraud, or coercion, which includes withholding his travel documents, shall be liable to a fine of no less than one hundred and no more than five hundred Jordanian Dinars. The same penalty applies to the partner, instigator, or accomplice in this use.” A number of Jordanians think that this practice is acceptable, but it is illegal and a serious violation of the rights and freedom of individuals. However, the Passport Act does not make clear whether or not the provisions therein apply to workers. Moreover, the provisions are difficult to prove because there is insufficient and inconclusive evidence that can verify that the passport is with the employer. Such decisions are at the discretion of judges ([Tamkeen, 2015](#)). Accordingly, the Passport Act must be amended to include the protection of workers, and curb a prominent form of violence against women and girls.

“Women should be able to work in any field of their choosing, because they are just as capable as men.”

Dr. Salma Al-Nims

Secretary-General of The Jordanian National Commission for Women

“The toolkit is an important legal reference that helps women’s rights practitioners learn about the design of action programs and intensify efforts aimed at eliminating all forms of violence against women.”

Dima Karadsheh

Gender Consultant

COMBATING VAWG IN JORDAN

CHAPTER TWO:

GOVERNMENT ACTORS



Why is it important to care about combating VAWG?

Historically, the basic functions of governments have been debated and negotiated based on the real or perceived needs of citizens. The shortfall within this needs-based approach is that “needs” are not fixed, but vary from society to society and even from one person to another. Conversely, every individual, by virtue of being human, is in possession of a certain set of rights. Rights, unlike needs, are universal and apply to all individuals at all times. Accordingly, as opposed to prioritizing fulfilling the needs of citizens, governments should instead focus on citizens’ ability to access and exercise their rights.

This rights-based approach not only ensures the well-being of citizens, but promotes the strength and stability of the state. A rights-based approach rests upon 5 pillars: transparency, accountability, participation, equity and equality, and effectiveness and efficiency. Inherent in all of these pillars is a prioritization of eliminating the conditions that enable or contribute to VAWG.

Combating VAWG is intrinsic to the fundamental functions of a government and good governance.

How to combat VAWG

Institute a Rights-Based Approach

Transparency

A rights-based approach starts with government transparency. Transparency refers to the willingness of the government and its agents to share information with citizens and other relevant national and international parties. Citizens are entitled to know the actions of the government or how money is spent. When citizens demand information in either of these regards, they should be met with honesty, rather than hostility. At the same time, all government agencies and institutions act together to benefit citizens. Therefore, transparency necessitates that government agencies are open and honest with one another about their funding, activities, and objectives. Finally, as Jordan is a willing party to a number of international conventions and treaties, it also has an obligation to share information with relevant international stakeholders, such as treaty bodies, regarding its progress against the aims of these agreements. As it relates to VAWG, transparency is particularly important when the government reports to treaty bodies regarding Jordan's progress and against the aims of the Convention on All Form of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW).

Accountability

When citizens and other stakeholders are duly informed about the activities of the government, they are better equipped to hold the government accountable. As it relates to VAWG specifically, promoting accountability ensures that citizens are able to hold government actors

"This rights-based approach not only ensures the well-being of citizens, but promotes the strength and stability of the state."

who violate or do not support the rights of women and girls responsible by voting them out of office and/or seeing that they receive the rehabilitation the law allows. As opposed to viewing accountability as negative, government actors should regard accountability as a means of improving the government, by helping to filter out agents who are not acting in the best interest of the state, while at the same time rewarding those who properly advance civil and human rights.

Participation

In order to have a politically active and informed citizenry that is able to assist and improve the government for the sake of a better state, it is important that all individuals within society are given the opportunities to have their voices heard. Nevertheless, there are some demographic groups in Jordan struggling to fully exercise their political, civil, and economic rights. It is important that government agents actively work to improve participation among these groups. They may do so by:

✓ Increasing Women's Participation

Involve women in developing, implementing, and monitoring laws and policies related to eliminating VAWG. At the same time, space needs to be provided for women to form lobbying groups responsible for advancing their rights. Furthermore, all government bodies should actively increase female representation. Although as of 2009, 16.6% of decision-making positions

"Some societies believe that beating and insulting women is a proof of manhood, and men are not blamed for it. However, women's dignity must be respected and their rights must be recognized, as stipulated by international standards and divine religions."

**Christine Fadoul
Manara For Social Justice
& Human Rights**

**BOX 8.
A CALL FOR ACTION!
LOOKING BACK AT CIVIL SOCIETY
AND WOMEN'S RIGHTS IN JORDAN**

were occupied by women (close to average for most countries in the world), only a small number of women hold high-leadership positions, such as ministers (UNDP, 2012). At the same time, although highly educated women are more likely to join the labor force than their counterparts with fewer years of education, highly educated women still experience the highest level of unemployment (World Bank, 2013).

Therefore, increasing women's participation also means to rise women's employment in the private sector. Consider offering incentives to private firms to hire qualified women to perform jobs effectively. Furthermore, although the public sector is the largest employer of women, certain ministries and institutions have a larger proportion of women than others. For example, while the Ministry of Health employs a significant number of women, the Ministry of Transport does not, owing to societal perceptions that the work in such ministries is inappropriate for women (UNDP, 2012).

Jordan has an opportunity to lead in women's empowerment and involvement. However, this requires political will and an understanding of the importance of female inclusion. As discussed earlier, states that have prioritized women's rights do better than states that do not. Therefore, it is in the best interest of all Jordanians for government stakeholders to increase women's agency and participation.

ARDD is celebrating its 10th anniversary in 2018. ARDD is not alone in its work in protecting and enhancing women's rights, and it is certainly not the first. Among the first organizations specialized in women's rights was the **Jordanian Women's Union**, which is one of the successful organizations in Jordan that has advocated for women's rights since its establishment in 1945. This organization, which is composed of democratically elected individuals, has called on Jordan to raise the marriage age and to scrap Article 308 of the Penal Code. This union also offers social, legal, and psychological services to women through hotline services since 1996. It also offers child visitation services for divorced couples and shelters for survivors of domestic violence and human trafficking.

✓ **Facilitating Youth Empowerment**

Youth are the largest population group in Jordan, with approximately 70% of the population being under the age of 30 (UNDP, 2013a). Nevertheless, youth involvement in the political process is low – either because of frustrations with the current political system or socio-economic barriers that prevent participation (UNDP, 2013b). The government of Jordan must place particular focus on addressing the concerns of youth, while at the same time, providing young people with the tools and space necessary in order for them to facilitate the development of their communities and the state.

✓ **Expanding the Operative Ability of Civil Society**

Although the government has allowed civil society organizations and NGOs to operate, there are still under considerably tight restrictions. In reality, civil society organizations are often better positioned to ensure the delivery of some services, as well as to promote change at the societal level in favor of respecting basic human rights. Still, the supremacy of the government cannot be undermined. Even with the involvement of civil society actors and other stakeholder, the government ultimately retains legitimate authority: a monopoly on the use of force and the ability to impose obligations for Jordanians and those residing in Jordan. Therefore, it is important that government actors do not regard civil society as a subversive adversary, but as a support network that assists the government in fulfilling its obligation to advance and protect civil and human rights.

✓ Broaden Freedoms of Expression

The ability of journalists and activists to report on the human rights situation in Jordan has been routinely restricted ([Human Rights Watch, 2017](#)). Freedom of expression is not only an important human right, but is critical to establishing an informed public that is able to hold the government accountable. It is also important that in regard to political participation, the government make room for women's rights activists to speak out and combat VAWG, while also providing citizens the right to speak out against actions of the government and its agents that contribute to VAWG.

Equity and Equality

Although women's rights discourse often centers around the issue of "equality," it is important to make a distinction between equality and equity. In the context of rights, equality simply means that everyone has the same rights. Equality is important on issues such as nationality, whereby both men and women should have equal ability to pass on their nationality. Equity goes a step further and considers the socio-economic and historical experience of certain people, and what accommodations are needed to ensure that they have the real ability to access their "equal rights." Below are two ways the government can promote equity and equality.

BOX 9. A CALL FOR ACTION! JORDAN PAY EQUITY

In March 2010, ILO and the Jordanian National Commission for Women (JNCW) organized a first policy roundtable on pay equity and recommended the establishment of a focused project on pay equity to contribute to the country's goal of increasing women's participation in the labor market.

In July 2011, the National Steering Committee on Pay Equity (NSCPE) was launched to take the lead in developing and implementing a National Strategy and Action Plan for Pay Equity. The committee is co-chaired by the Secretaries General of the Ministry of Labor (MOL) and JNCW, and includes representatives from other government institutions, trade unions, employers' organizations, professional associations, and civil society. Within the framework of the Jordan Pay Equity, in-depth studies on pay discrimination and documentation of pay discrimination cases have been regularly produced, enhancing awareness on pay discrimination and informing policymakers.
Source: www.jordanpayequity.org

✓ Improve the Legal Framework – Promoting Equality

As discussed at length in the first section of this toolkit, VAWG is a pervasive problem within Jordan's legal framework. The writing of a number of Jordan's laws is discriminatory against women, while other laws insufficiently protect or respect the rights and dignity of women. Together, these laws significantly reduce the status of women and girls and undermine the principles within Jordan's laws and the international conventions, to which Jordan is a party, that call for genuine equality between genders.

Meanwhile, even in instances where laws could protect women, justice sector personnel's actions are inequitable. For example, when an individual is accused of rape, it is common for the focus to be on the actions of the victim that "justified" the attack rather than the actions of the accused. This places an unequal (and unjustifiable) burden on the victim, while seriously disregarding her rights and dignity. Accordingly, it is important that government actors target both the writing *and* application of laws to ensure women's access to justice and combat VAWG. In doing so, priority should be given to a system that embraces a pre-emptive and responsive approach to VAWG. This means establishing laws that aim at preventing instances of violence in the first place, while at the same, ensure that perpetrators are adequately held responsible, and guarantee the full realization of the rights of victims.

**BOX 10.
A CALL FOR ACTION!
MA'AN NASSEL
(TOGETHER WE ARRIVE)**

This local initiative has been lobbying the government for an improved transport system. Regarding VAWG, Ma'an Nassel has called for more available and safer transportation for women as they journey between their jobs and homes. In fact, 40% of women identified lack of safe and reliable transportation as a barrier to pursuing a job, underscoring the importance of Ma'an Nassel's work.

✓ **Establish Gender-Sensitive Workplaces – Promoting Equity**

The public sector is the largest employer of women in Jordan ([UNDP, 2012](#)). Therefore, it is important that the government take active steps towards ensuring that working environments are gender-sensitive. Gender-sensitive does not imply that women are inferior to men, or that women need special privileges. Instead, within the context of Jordan, gender-sensitive means acknowledging that women face a certain set of barriers **because** they are women, and that these barriers must be overcome to combat VAWG and promote equity. Below are ways to promote gender-sensitive workplaces:

1. Close the pay gap: offer men and women with similar experience and qualifications the same pay.
2. Offer equal opportunities for advancement: establish a system whereby all staff – regardless of gender - have equal opportunity for professional advancement and higher salaries.
3. Develop gender-sensitive policies: foster a culture where both men and women are responsible for child care by allowing both men and women leave for family care. Moreover, establish and enforce policies related to sexual assault. When sexual assault concerns are raised, be sure to fully investigate these matters, as well as hold perpetrators

responsible.

4. Establishing gender units: one of its tasks is to participate in drafting strategies and programs to merge the concept of gender in all aspects, including programs and studies, in addition to training and awareness materials. Furthermore, monitor and evaluate systems and prepare reports that include gender sensitive indicators and correspondences to international standards.

Effectiveness and Efficiency

With regard to VAWG, effectiveness and efficiency primarily relate to the government's progress in improving the status of women and girls and adhering to universal human rights standards. In order to ensure the formerly mentioned, government actors need to set goals and monitor state progress. Combating will take commitment from all actors within the government. To ensure that progress is being made in combating VAWG, it is important to establish goals and continuously monitor progress against these goals. Establish indicators such as "the number of women who occupy decision-making positions" to keep track of progress. Previously agreed upon and set deadlines to reach these goals to ensure that they are taken seriously. If goals are set but not met, conduct research to identify the reasons why the goals were not reached and what needs to be improved going forward.

**BOX 11.
MIND THE GAP!
MONITORING DOMESTIC VIOLENCE**

Be careful when establishing indicators such as "the number of women reporting domestic violence cases." Women are less likely than men to seek justice in legal cases. According to the Department of Statistics Justice Sector survey, women are more likely than men to avoid court because of customs and traditions. Women also face additional challenges such as lack of financial resources to pay lawyers and court costs. So, the number of women who actually experience violence is likely much higher than what reports would suggest.

Best Practice

Anti-Human Trafficking Department

On June 4, 2012, the Ministry of Labor and the General Security Administration created a special unit charged with combating human trafficking. This Anti-Human Trafficking Unit is consisted of labor inspection, statistics, management, and human resources departments.

The unit's police officers regularly make surprise visits to inspect human trafficking cases. In 2015, the unit investigated 206 potential trafficking cases and prosecuted 55 of them (U.S. Department of State, 2016). Its success lies in multiple factors such as being responsive to cases and actively cooperating with CSOs.

In December of 2015, an NGO reported an incident involving a Bangladeshi domestic worker being beaten and forced to work by a recruitment agent. The unit immediately intervened and closed down the recruitment agency. Because of its effective and coherent response, the unit receives referrals from a wide range of entities, including its own hotline, law enforcement and labor officials, NGOs, and foreign embassies (ibid).

The Anti-Human Trafficking Unit also allows the CSOs to directly participate in its efforts to combat human trafficking. For instance, the unit partners with CSOs to hold trainings and awareness-raising workshops for government officials. The unit also identifies and refers many trafficking victims to NGO-run shelters.

The Anti-Human Trafficking Unit and the government take recommendations of CSOs and adopt them in their policies. A local NGO reported that law enforcement and prison officials were not sufficiently trained to work with victims. Then, the unit allowed the NGO to assist victims at police stations and prison rehabilitation centers. The NGO was also granted access to assist in repatriation of the victims (ibid).

Apply What You've Learned Conduct a SWOT Analysis

As just discussed, the government's intervention to combat VAWG will take a great deal of planning, strategizing, and coordination. Before doing this, you need to first understand the ability of your own institution to combat VAWG. To do this, you should conduct a SWOT Analysis. SWOT stands for **S**trengths, **W**eaknesses, **O**pportunities, and **T**hreats. Ultimately, the aim is to capitalize on your strengths and opportunities, while mitigating your weaknesses and threats. Once your sector has conducted a SWOT analysis, connect with other sectors to launch a coordinated and well thought-out intervention to combat VAWG.

Instructions: Taking input from individuals of various positions (i.e. ranging from department heads to assistants), as well as individuals of all genders, complete both charts with information true of your sector.

| Strengths | Weaknesses | Opportunities | Threats |
|--|--|---|---|
| What are the strengths within your institution that help to combat VAWG? | What are the weaknesses within your institution that prevent it from combating VAWG? | What opportunities are there for your institution to combat VAWG? | What threats do you or your institution face in combating VAWG? |
| <i>Ex: Understanding of what constitutes VAWG</i> | <i>Ex: Lack of political will to combat VAWG</i> | <i>Ex: Become a global leader in women's empowerment</i> | <i>Ex: Backlash from those who don't support women's rights</i> |

| | Strengths | Weaknesses |
|---------------|--|--|
| Opportunities | How can you make use of your existing strengths to take advantage of opportunities? <i>Ex: By addressing gaps within Jordan's laws that contribute to violence against women and girls.</i> | How can you use existing opportunities to mitigate your internal weaknesses? <i>Ex: By using the fact that Jordan will become a stronger state to encourage law makers to act</i> |
| Threats | How can you use your internal strengths to mitigate the identified threats? <i>Ex: By convincing those who do not support women's rights of the importance of doing so and the benefits that they will see.</i> | In what ways can you mitigate the weaknesses and threats you have identified? <i>Ex: By educating my peers and colleagues about the importance of eliminating VAWG so that they support me.</i> |

COMBATING VAWG IN JORDAN

CHAPTER THREE

MEDIA



Why is it important for the media to care about VAWG?

Many media professionals likely know the importance of accuracy, honesty, and impartiality when reporting the news. **Gender sensitivity** is another important quality. “Gender sensitive” means acting in a way that considers the different experiences and challenges that people face *because* of their gender. You can incorporate gender sensitivity in your reporting, programs and broadcasts, as well as in your workplace.

Generally, Jordanians have a large amount of trust in the media. Around 78% of Jordanians surveyed in a poll conducted by the Center for Strategic Studies said that the Jordanian media is “honest and fair regarding local news coverage.” 73% felt that it successfully reports “both sides of an issue” ([UNESCO, 2015](#)). This means that media professionals are not only an important source of information, but that the information they report is trusted. It is up to them to use their influence to do good for society, and to report the news accurately and fairly.

Even though the media’s job is to inform the public, it must do so in a way that does not cause harm. Whenever they pursue a story, they must be continuously mindful of how certain actions – or a lack of certain actions – can hurt survivors of violence. The media’s first priority is to ensure that they do not cause more harm in the process of reporting the news.

The media is a powerful agent of public perceptions and societal change.

When it comes to reporting violence, the wellbeing and security of victims is more important than getting a story.

How to Combat VAWG

Do's and Don'ts for Gender-Sensitivity when Reporting on VAWG

Reporting on VAWG is different from reporting on other stories. Often, media personnel will interact with individuals who have been victimized. Professional and ethical obligations are thusly enhanced, and media professionals must make sure that their actions and reporting do not further victimize those who have suffered from violence. Here are some things to consider when you are reporting violence against women and girls, or interacting with survivors of violence in your reporting:

DON'T

× **Don't Provide False Hopes about the Outcome of interviews**

Remember that the media sector is not a replacement for the justice sector. It is reasonable that a victim might hesitate to speak to the media, as doing so potentially exposes her to a number of concerns, such as scrutiny and judgement from the community, or (threats of) further violence. In fact, it is possible that speaking to the press can do more harm than good for a victim. At the same time, there is no guarantee that speaking to the media will do anything to bring justice to the victim. Therefore, when telling victims about the outcome of interviews, avoid giving them false hopes or making promises that cannot be kept.

× **Don't Further Stigmatize Victims**

When reporting about victims, some journalists may feel inclined to report on attributes such as professional occupation or nationality in order to intentionally or unintentionally diminish the severity of the attack, depict the victim as adhering to stereotypes or to shift blame on to the victim. In cases where attacks were clearly based on a victim's ethnicity or gender, report these facts in a way that audiences understand that only the criminal is to blame and never the victim. Otherwise, if the nationality, professional occupation, or other features have no implication in the attack, think about the benefits for the victim of including this information.

× **Don't Blame the Victim**

No one "deserves" to be the victim of violence, and no person ever "asks" to be attacked. When violent behavior - such as rape or sexual assault - occurs, the **only** people to blame are those who carried out the attacks. Limit reporting about the victim to relevant facts of a story. The victim's criminal history or sexual preferences are rarely relevant when it comes to reporting VAWG. Therefore, avoid asking questions about these matters or reporting them. Other facts, such as what the victim was doing around the time of the attack or what they were wearing, are unimportant. People can be victimized regardless of what they are doing or wearing. These details are irrelevant and should not be reported.

× **Don't Sensationalize**

Often, journalists choose to focus on the most disturbing parts of a story. This may increase viewership, but it does nothing to bring the victim justice, or contribute to their security and wellbeing. More importantly, they do not adequately inform the viewership of what the problem and its social implications are. Do not mitigate the crime committed, but only report the facts.

DO

✓ **Obtain Consent from Victims Before Gathering a Story**

Being the victim of an attack is traumatic. Never subject a victim to further trauma by pressuring them to provide details. Understand that a victim has the right to choose when – if ever – to tell their story. When obtaining consent, inform victims that they have the right not to answer any question with which they are uncomfortable. Inform them of what you plan to do with their answers and what risks they may encounter by participating. Be open and honest, but provide support to victims and never breach their trust or ethical practices by lying to the victim of a crime.

✓ **Be sensitive during questioning**

Avoid questioning why victims did, or did not do, certain things. This shifts blame away from the person who committed a crime and on the person who was attacked

Only ask questions that help you understand the facts of a story. Furthermore, bear in mind that you are likely not the only person asking the victim questions. People involved in criminal proceedings and those close to the victim may be asking similar questions. This means the victim has to “relive” a traumatic event several more times after it has occurred. Understand that the pursuit of the truth may be slowed or altogether blocked by a victim who is unwilling or unable to recount the details of an event. It is important for you to be patient and place the security and wellbeing of victims over a desire to get a story. If you are unsure about a particular action and the impact that it might have on a victim, consult a local gender-based violence expert who will understand the socio-cultural context, and ensure that you do not cause the victim more harm.

✓ **Provide victims with safe spaces**

Remember that the first duty when dealing with survivors is to ensure that they are not further victimized. You do not want to cause any additional harm. Conduct interviews in private settings so that survivors can speak freely. If they desire the support of a friend or family member, be open to this. Avoid taking photos of victims, and certainly never take a photo of a victim without their consent, or without informing them of what you plan on doing with the photo. Victims have the right to refuse photographs, audio recordings, and video footage. Keep socio-cultural factors in mind at all times. Some topics are taboo and may be uncomfortable to discuss. If you are unsure about the cultural context, and how appropriate certain actions are, consult a local expert or civil society organization before proceeding.

✓ **Give victims a voice**

Only if and when they are ready, give victims the opportunity to speak openly about their experiences. Give them tools to empower themselves and use their experience to prevent similar attacks, support other victims through solidarity, and/or mobilize action at the societal level. Do not exploit victims for a story, but encourage them to be brave and resilient in the face of adversity.

2. Do's and Don'ts for Gender-Sensitive Programming in Media to Combat VAWG

DON'T

× **Don't Stick to or spread gender stereotypes and generalizations**

Do not use language or report stories in such a way that the content reinforces damaging stereotypes, such as those that only men are strong and belong in positions of power, or that women are weak and should not work certain jobs. Remember that women are just as capable as men. Moreover, men are not weak for being victims. Both men and women can be victims of violence and should be treated with dignity and respect. In advertisements (either in print or electronic formats) and other media content (such as news articles, investigative reports, or blogs), prioritize material that shows women in positions of strength and power, as opposed to following the lead of men. Further, avoid material that makes women the object of men's desire. Women's

worth does not rest only in their physical appearance. When men are responsible for violence, do not normalize this behavior by claiming that it is "in the culture" or "normal." Violence should never be normalized and should always be discouraged.

DO

✓ **Mainstream Gender in Media Content**

This entails several responsibilities. The first of which is increased reporting on issues that impact women. Problems such as VAWG should matter to all members of society. Where issues like this don't matter, the media is responsible for increasing visibility and importance of these issues, so that people are motivated to combat them. At the same time, they are responsible for increasing the positive images of women and girls in the media. This does not mean minimizing the contributions of men and boys. However, they should create balanced reporting of the successes of both women and women, and girls and boys in society. At the same time, when reporting on national issues, such as an increase in the price of goods, give special attention to how such issues impact women and girls. Finally, strive to call a balanced number of women and men experts and specialists when reporting on certain issues.

✓ **Drive debate and dialogues, and challenge popular discourse**

When social issues come into the news, do not fear encouraging a debate on these issues. Bring people who have differing views together to debate the impact of

these issues on society. Also, engage opposing parties in dialogues so that understanding can be built. Do not violate the right of those who have differing views to express themselves, but challenge language and beliefs that are not gender-sensitive. Media personnel should be critical of others' views and their own, and be willing to adjust their beliefs and language if they are damaging to a particular gender.

3. Steps for Fostering Gender-Sensitive Workplaces

The principle of gender sensitivity has implications for workplaces, as much as it does for media content. The media should actively strive for a gender-sensitive work environment, which is best for all colleagues, particularly women and girls who might otherwise be marginalized or face hostility. Consider the following when trying to increase gender-sensitivity in workplaces:

✓ **Close the gender gap among media personnel**

As of 2015, Jordan's population had a nearly equal number of men and women ([World Bank, 2017](#)). Nevertheless, the Journalist Association, for example, consists of approximately 700 men and 400 women. The composition of this association may reflect the media sector as a whole. Jordan's gender composition should be reflected among media personnel. This requires significantly increasing the number of women and men presenters and hosts, as well as increasing the number of women in positions "behind the scenes," such as editors, producers, advisors, and directors. In taking these steps,

the media sector will achieve a more representative gender balance among media personnel.

✓ **Develop non-discriminatory policies**

Close the wage gap by offering men and women with similar experience and qualifications the same pay. At the same time, establish a system whereby all staff – regardless of gender - have equal opportunity for professional advancement and higher salaries. Develop gender-sensitive policies related to sick leave and family care. The latter is particularly important as both men and women are responsible for childcare and may need time off. Thereby, it is vital to establish policies that properly handle instances of sexual assault. When someone is accused of sexual assault, investigate the issue fully, and impose disciplinary action where necessary. Remember that victims of sexual assault can be male or female, and all cases of sexual assault should be taken seriously, regardless of the gender of the victim. Create a "gender mainstreaming officer" to ensure that the workplace has established gender-sensitive policies and adheres to them. This officer should ensure continuous gender-sensitivity training for all staff.

✓ **Enhance Accountability of Government Actors and Coordinate with Civil Society to Promote a Gender-Sensitive Society**

Hold government officials accountable for their actions. In addition to reporting on the activities of politicians and the government related to the economy or foreign

affairs, be willing to report on the gender-sensitivity of politicians and national policies. Endorse politicians who promote equality between men and women, believe in women's empowerment, and support women's right to make choices for themselves. Do not normalize gender discrimination or gender insensitivity. When laws are passed that harm a particular gender, challenge the legitimacy of these laws and encourage repeal and reform. When politicians engage in gender discrimination or gender-based violence, direct the public's attention to their misbehavior, and challenge it as behavior that should not be normalized.

If they are ever unsure about their actions, or what to do in a given situation, media personnel can consult a civil society organization who can offer advice on best practices to ensure that they are not harming a particular gender. At the same time, coordinate with civil society to engage in bi-directional knowledge sharing to ensure that the activities of civil society are relevant, and that reporting is gender-sensitive and reflects realities on the ground.

Best Practice

Journalist Leading Campaigns for Legal Reform

Journalists (in coordination with other actors engaged against VAWG) across Jordan have been jointly working on bringing about reforms to the legal framework. In 2017, Jordan made significant reforms to the Family Protection Law, and abolished the controversial Article 308. The success of these efforts is owed in part to journalists, and their unwavering efforts to supply Jordanians with critical information about these laws and their shortcomings. Journalists should continue to coordinate their efforts to bring VAWG to and keep it in the center of public debate and discourse, as well as be a critical source of information that can mobilize change-makers to drive further policy change.

Apply What You've Learned: Complete the Checklist

This check list is designed to help you understand where you are as an advocate for eliminating VAWG. Read the following statements to yourself. If you agree, check the corresponding "agree" box, if you disagree, check the corresponding "disagree" box.

| Self-Checklist for a Gender-Sensitive Media | | |
|---|-------|----------|
| Gender-Sensitive Reporting | | |
| Statement | Agree | Disagree |
| If a woman is wearing revealing clothing, and is attacked, she brought the attack on herself. | | |
| Women should not be out late, or be alone, if they do not want to be attacked. | | |
| Before reporting a story containing VAWG, I need to know what the woman did to be attacked. | | |
| When I interview victims of violence, I should ask as many questions as possible. | | |
| It is okay to pressure victims to speak since I am a journalist and need the information. | | |
| Audiences want the worst details of a story; I should spend a lot of time reporting on those details. | | |

If you agree with any of these statements, you need to rethink the importance of being sensitive in your reporting. Remember that women are never at fault for being attacked. Fault always lies on the person who committed the crime. Further, remember to be sensitive when dealing with victims. They have already suffered a traumatic event; you should never worsen their pain by being disrespectful or insensitive.

| Self-Checklist for a Gender-Sensitive Media | | |
|--|-------|----------|
| Gender-Sensitive Programming | | |
| Statement | Agree | Disagree |
| Women do not contribute much to society, there is no news to report on women's achievements. | | |
| Talking too much about women's achievements will encourage them to leave the home, which is where they belong. | | |
| It is okay to show women as inferior to men, because that is how things are in society right now. | | |
| Men should always be shown as powerful, but it is okay to show women as weak. | | |
| Depicting women as more powerful than men will give people the wrong idea about society. | | |
| When men commit violent acts, it is okay because it is normal in Jordan. | | |
| It is not my responsibility to encourage people with different views to debate and discuss their differences. | | |

If you agree with any of these statements, you need to continue reading about the importance of gender-sensitivity in your programming. Remember that the media has a large influence on society. If you show images of women as inferior, you enforce the idea that women are inferior. There is nothing wrong with women being in positions of power. Depicting women as powerful simply reflects reality. Also, remember that empowering women strengthens society, so you should encourage any messages that aim at empowering women. Never pass violence off as "normal" or part of culture. You always have a responsibility to combat violence, or encourage discussions on violence in Jordan.

| Self-Checklist for a Gender-Sensitive Media | | |
|---|-------|----------|
| Gender-Sensitive Workplaces | | |
| Statement | Agree | Disagree |
| Women are paid less because they do not work as well as men. | | |
| Sexual harassment in the workplace is not a big deal, it is also not my business. | | |
| Men cannot be sexually assaulted, that is something that only happens to women. | | |
| When a person is sexually assaulted in the workplace, she must have done something wrong. | | |
| It is too risky to report on politicians who engage in VAWG, or who do not oppose it. I should not do it. | | |
| Civil society does not do good work, there is no point in working with them. | | |

If you agree with any of these statements, remember that women are capable of doing all of the jobs that men do, and they should be paid equally for doing so. People of all genders can be victims of sexual harassment, and when sexual harassment in the workplace occurs, it should be taken seriously and be fully investigated. Additionally, it is your duty to report on politicians and their actions. Many civil society organizations have close relationship with the community, so you should always be willing to work with them. If you are unsure of something, you can always consult a civil society organization near you.

“This guide is comprehensive and represents a roadmap for media professionals to stand up to gender issues objectively, through facts and empathy, and not through excessive sympathy or expression of emotions and perceptions.”

Hana Al Araj

Media Specialist

COMBATING VAWG IN JORDAN

CHAPTER FOUR

EDUCATION



Who is involved in education?

The education sector consists of a broad range of actors, but one can understand education as taking place in two types of learning environments: formal and informal. The formal environment consists largely of academic institutions, which are organized in terms of learning objectives and times, along with support and thus resulting in a certificate. Meanwhile, informal learning environments consist of homes and the community at large, and is not organized by the same terms. It is important that education reform occur in both types of learning environments.

Why is it important for educators to care about VAWG

When children encounter violence in (or on their way to) school, they may be afraid to come to school and their parents may be scared to send them. Educators are responsible for ensuring that educational environments are safe so that children feel safe while learning.

How to Combat VAWG?

1. Combating VAWG in formal learning environments

The Role of the Curriculum What is a curriculum?

For the purposes of this toolkit, “the curriculum” refers to the body of learning materials, learning objectives, learning outcomes, and evaluative criteria used at all levels of education in Jordan. Education reform is desperately necessary in Jordan, and this process begins

Violence against women and girls reduces enrollment.

by identifying areas in the curriculum that enforce gender roles and stereotypes. There is also the so-called hidden curriculum, which is represented by the values and directions received by students in schools that they are exposed to by the teachers and principals.

This toolkit's recommendations related to curriculum reform are intended to ensure that all people have access to a justice and equality, not threaten Arab society and culture.

The Role the Ministry of Education and Government Stakeholders

The Ministry of Education (MoE) is principally responsible for the design and planning of the curriculum in Jordan. Currently, it is seeking to engage the private sector in the design of materials. The private sector establishes the learning objectives and designs the materials by which students will reach these objectives. Accordingly, the MoE is responsible for ensuring that education does not contribute to VAWG. Meanwhile, other government stakeholders are responsible for supporting the MoE, as well as lobbying for and debating curriculum reform. This reform must be comprehensive and occur on the basis of language, materials, and structure.

Language:

Many languages, including Arabic, have gender-biased qualities. This means that the language favors one gender over others. For example, in Arabic, when referring to a group of people that consists of one

BOX 12. CONSIDER THIS

When changes to the curriculum are proposed or implemented, some people say that "western values" are being forced on them. It is very important to understand that equality, justice, and fairness are not "Western values." States across the Middle East and North Africa have voluntarily become parties to international conventions related to human rights. Adherence to these agreements should not be thought of as Jordan succumbing to western imperialism, but rather, as Jordan actively working to guarantee the basic rights it agreed that *all* human beings should have access to.

On the other hand, by improving the status of women and girls, culture is not being "abandoned." Society and culture are fluid and change over time. Slavery was once common and accepted in the world. Today, it is very well-understood that slavery constitutes a gross violation of human rights. Ending slavery did not "abandon" any culture or "ruin" any society. This is because norms that harm people can be eliminated without eliminating a culture altogether.

man and two women, that group is still referred to with masculine pronouns - *antum* ("you all") or *hom* ("they") - as opposed to gender-neutral pronouns. A good example of this is in the Jordanian constitution which refers to all Jordanians – male and female – as "*urduniyeen*" – a masculine noun. Additionally, Arabic (like other languages) uses both masculine and feminine forms of nouns. The masculine form is often the general form, while the feminine form is based on the masculine form. Thus, *mudeer* (director) becomes *mudeera* if the director happens to be a woman.⁶ (c.f. actor/actress in English.) Given that a director's responsibilities are likely the same regardless of their gender, such distinctions are largely unnecessary. Other forms of biases place burdens on certain genders.

It is important that the curriculum in Jordan does not reinforce these biases. Language often reflects society, but it also influences society. Changing gender-biased language empowers women, as it regards women and men as equal. While changing language may seem extreme, it is entirely possible. The fact that changes such as the pronunciation of the Arabic *ä* (*ata'marbuta*) to change over time, and also shows that changing language does not mean ruining culture. If language can be altered to have gender bias, it most certainly can be modified to combat VAWG.

⁶ (Although it is not uncommon for women in certain positions, such as high ranking government officials, to be called *mudeer*, the gender distinction still exists in written and spoken grammar rules.) These types of distinctions are often unnecessary and redundant given the roles of the director are likely the same, irrespective of the gender of the individual.

Materials:

Stereotypical images of gender, as well as gender-biased language, contribute to VAWG by reinforcing gender roles. Meanwhile, the writing in books and learning materials may create unnecessary distinctions or unequal burdens between genders. The MoE has to guarantee that the reformed curriculum is free of such images and language, while at the same time, works to ensure that all materials (books, worksheets, etc.) depict all people –be they male or female – in a diversity of roles and responsibilities. Women and men should be depicted and written about as equal and having similar personality traits.

Structure:

It is not enough for the curriculum to eliminate gender biases. In fact, the curriculum should also advance the status of women and girls. This means that gender equality and gender sensitivity must be explicitly enumerated as goals of learning objectives and learning outcomes. Boys and girls should be able to identify forms of VAWG – including gender biases and stereotypes - when they encounter them, as well as know the appropriate steps to combat it.

The Role of Teachers

Teachers should not wait until a new curriculum is developed before attempting to combat VAWG. Educators must constantly evaluate the language they use, as well as the language and images in the current curriculum to ensure that they are free of gender bias. If gender biased language is being used, think about the consequences of this language. They should then modify their habits to ensure gender sensitivity. When encountering gender-bias in learning materials, consider doing the following:

Encourage students to question and debate gender roles

Forcing gender roles harms everyone, but particularly women and girls because it limits their ability to improve themselves, or contribute to society. Beliefs, for example, that “a woman’s place is in the home” ignore the many achievements women and girls have made outside of the home. It also limits future generations of women who could improve society and the world.

As an instructor, encourage students to question and debate gender roles and decide whether or not to adhere to them. Encourage students to respect an individual’s decision not to adhere to a gender role, as well as to respect when an individual **freely** (without pressure from society) assumes a gender role. Furthermore, students must be encouraged to think about their use of language and how it can disempower women and girls.

Challenge and eliminate gender stereotypes

Gender stereotypes are never positive, even when they might appear to be. For example, the stereotype that, “men are strong and not emotional” often limits the ability of boys and men to properly handle their emotions. This sometimes results in violence against women and girls. Meanwhile, the stereotype that, “women are weak” ignores history, and ignores the women alive today who are powerful and respected. These stereotypes do nothing to improve society, and are rarely actually rooted in culture. Thus, **ALL** gender stereotypes should be challenged and eliminated. It is especially important that this occurs while children are young, before adolescence, as ideas picked up during this time impact how they mature. Provide students with the space to explore the presence of gender stereotypes in their everyday lives. Also provide them with the tools necessary to effectively challenge and eliminate gender stereotypes.

Promote the value of women and girls

Violence is not just physical or sexual. Laws and societal values that disempower people are also forms of violence. Educators must ensure that youth understand the value of women and girls as human beings. Youth must understand that when the rights and dignity of women are undermined, all members of society have a responsibility to act.

“Integrating the image of women as wise and capable of leading into the curriculum will contribute to creating ambitious generations that reject any discrimination or violence against women.”

Nuha Muhreiz

Women and Local Communities

Empowerment Consultant

The Role of Educators and Administrators

Formal learning environments consist of more than just teachers. All staff employed in formal learning environments have a responsibility to combat VAWG. Do so with the following:

Establish a culture of non-violence

This is the first step in combating violence in all of its forms, including against women and girls. Youth look to adults for guidance. Accordingly, it is their responsibility to set the rule for good behavior. Educators must encourage students to settle disputes without using violence, and to avoid hurtful and hateful language. Additionally, they must model these practices in work and interactions so that students learn by example. Educators should continuously evaluate students’ behavior **and theirs** to ensure that they are fostering a culture of non-violence.

Establish and adhere to disciplinary policies related to violence among students

It is important that schools and learning environments establish clear policies related to violence. When violence occurs, remind students of these policies, and discipline perpetrators accordingly. When a student reports violence, take the matter seriously and investigate it fully.

Establish referral mechanisms for addressing violence

Expand the availability of counseling and referral services so that victims and perpetrators of violence can receive the appropriate treatment. If there is ever uncertainty about to whom to refer an individual who has committed or suffered from violence, consult a civil society organization.

Incorporate gender sensitivity into trainings and on-boarding procedures

To ensure that everyone involved in education has the tools necessary to combat VAWG, gender sensitivity training should be conducted regularly. Additionally, all new staff should be properly informed about gender sensitivity in learning environments, and the policies that have been established related to violence.

Establish and adhere to disciplinary policies related to failures to act

Like students, adults must be held accountable when they are complicit in violence. Clear policies and guidelines must be established so that adults know how to prevent and respond to violence when it occurs in learning environments. Whether a teacher commits an act of violence, fails to prevent it, or inadequately responds to it, disciplinary action must be taken against them.

2. Combating VAWG in formal learning environments

Informal learning environments are those outside of academic institutions. The home, the community, and society at large all constitute informal learning environments. Educators both participate in, and influence, informal learning environments. They must ensure that the lessons children learn regarding VAWG and gender sensitivity are not compromised once they leave formal learning environments. Do so by:

Engaging parents

Parents are another key influence over children's knowledge, attitudes, and practices. Educators must work with parents to ensure that the message of non-violence, and respect for women and girls are instilled in their children. They can join parent-teacher associations so that they can work with parents in the community to positively influence youth. When educators and parents disagree (and they might), remind parents that women deserve rights and dignity, first and foremost, because they are human beings. Engage parents in dialogue about gender equality and gender sensitivity in the community and across Jordan. Finally, encourage parents and students to embrace peaceful, gender-sensitive messages with logic and reason.

Steps for parents instilling an understanding of VAWG in their children:

1. Discuss VAWG

It is very important that parents are capable, comfortable and willing to discuss VAWG with their children. By doing so, children will learn to identify VAWG and combat it. Similarly, it aids in eliminating the social stigma that surrounds violence.

2. Discuss appropriate and inappropriate behavior:

Navigating the appropriate boundaries between women and men and girls and boys can be difficult. Teach children that they should always respect every individual's autonomy over their own body. Every person has the right to disagree of being touched, spoken to, or interacted with in a particular manner. Additionally, bear in mind that what is appropriate for one person, or society, may be inappropriate with another person or society, and that the key is to always respect the will and autonomy of individuals.

3. Discuss peer pressure and societal norms

It is likely that youth in particular will succumb to pressure from their friends to behave in a certain way. Remind children that they do not have to adhere to these norms – especially if they perpetuate violence against other individuals.

4. Monitor TV programs and other fun-time activities

Ensure that your children are not engaging in activities that contribute to VAWG. Although popular culture across the world is rife with images of violence, remind your children that they should never mirror these activities or mindsets in their everyday life. It can not only be a serious crime, but a violation of the basic rights of another individual.

5. Model above all

It is important that parents model the behavior they want to instill. Children often reproduce the behavior that they see or experience from their parents. Hence, it is important the parents do not engage in activities that perpetuate VAWG.

Coordinating with civil society

Many civil society organizations work with educators. Educators should coordinate with a local civil society organization to ensure they are engaging in the best practices to combat VAWG. Report to civil society organizations about the needs and concerns of your community so that they can better plan their interventions. Think of your local civil society organization as a partner to help you improve society, and vice versa. If you are ever unsure about a particular action, or what you should do, or need support, you can always contact a civil society organization.

Lobbying for education improvements

Use your power as a citizen to influence discussions and policies related to education in Jordan. Appeal to politicians and the MoE to drive discussion on what needs to change in education. If you are an employee at the MoE, listen to and coordinate with teachers to get an understanding of what needs to be changed and how.

Apply What You've Learned: Refine the Curriculum

It is not feasible for teachers to wait until education and curriculum reform begins to start combating violence against women and girls. It is important that teachers are able to identify VAWG in the current curriculum, and educate children to do the same. Use the activities below to help you and your students identify and respond to subtle, however common, forms of VAWG.

Activity 1

Instructions: Read the following riddle aloud to students. Without allowing them to talk to one another, give students one minute to brainstorm and write down their answers. After time has elapsed, call on a few students to share their answers.

Riddle: *A father and his son are in a car accident. The father is killed but his son is sent to the hospital. The surgeon comes to the operating room, sees the boy and says: "I cannot operate on this boy, he is my son!" How is this possible?*

A large number of people are unable to correctly solve this riddle. This is because many people are conditioned to believe that the surgeon must be a man. In actuality, the surgeon is a woman, and the boy's mother. Have a discussion with your students about their answers. Encourage a discussion about gender biases, gender roles and gender stereotypes in Jordanian society and the world. How can they combat such forms of VAWG?

Activity 2

Instructions: Read the scenario below to your students. Afterwards, ask them to answer and discuss the questions. If you notice that some students have views that contribute to VAWG, make them aware of the impact of such views and encourage alternative views from other students, and if necessary, interject with your own gender-sensitive opinions.

Scenario: *A Physical Education (PE) teacher has a mixed-sex class. The teacher thinks that males are strong and should engage in a physical activity, but thinks that females have no aptitude for sports. When giving instructions, the teacher tells the males to go play football, while the females are told to do what they please.*

Questions:

1. Why might a teacher think that males are more suited for sports than females?
2. Is there any evidence that supports the teacher's beliefs?
3. Do the teacher's actions contribute to violence against women and girls in society? If yes, how so?
4. How can the teacher improve the PE class to combat VAWG?

Activity 3

Regardless of the subject you teach, women have made significant contributions. Pick 5-10 women who have made contributions to the field you teach. Assign groups of students to each of these women. Students will research the women and their contributions. Afterwards, they must present to the class what they have learned, and how the world is better because of these women's efforts. Students should be quizzed over what they learned in their research and from other students after all groups have presented. Additionally, at the end of term, include questions about women's contributions to instill the value of knowing the information.

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CHAPTER FIVE

HEALTH



Understanding Health

According to the World Health Organization (WHO), “health is a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity” (2017). It is important to understand the multi-dimensional nature of “health” because violence against women and girls is not just physical. In fact, as stated earlier in this toolkit, VAWG can occur in the form of verbal abuse or violation of civil and human rights, both of which can seriously threaten an individual’s mental and social health.

VAWG is, first and foremost, a public health issue.

Why should medical professionals care about preventing VAWG in health

The Hippocratic Oath

When medical professionals take the Hippocratic Oath, they swear to perform their duties with virtue and honor. They also swear to act solely for the benefit of their patients, the relief of suffering, prevention of disease and promotion of health. These pledges oblige them to care about all patients, including – if not, especially – victims of violence against women and girls.

Access to Healthcare is a Human Right

Jordan is signatory of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights. Article 12 of the Covenant states that obtaining “the highest attainable standard of health is one of the fundamental rights of every human being” (WHO, 2006). Access to quality healthcare is not a privilege, available only for wealthy Jordanians, but instead a right held by every individual in Jordan.

Healthcare is a Matter of Public Safety

In addition to being a moral obligation, universal access to healthcare is important for the overall health and safety of Jordanian society. For example, after a recent Polio outbreak in Syria, traces of poliovirus were detected in sewage samples in Jordan. To prevent the spread of Polio throughout the Kingdom (and elsewhere), Jordan – with the support of the international community - conducted multiple polio immunization rounds. As a result, there have been no reports of polio in Jordan – either among Jordanians or refugees. Such incidents underscore the fact that everyone in society stands to benefit from the provision of universal healthcare, because it ensures that all individuals are better able to live fuller, healthier lives.

The Health Sector is Critical in Addressing VAWG

Because VAWG threatens the mental and/or physical health of those who experience it, victims sometimes turn to health facilities for support and care. Where appropriate, health providers also refer victims of VAWG to legal aid or relevant authorities - ideally, helping to prevent future instances of violence. Therefore, the health sector is important not only in helping to treat victims of violence, but also in combating violence.

Access to Health Increases Women's Autonomy

"Autonomy" refers to the ability of individuals to make decisions and subsequently act on those decisions. Complete autonomy for women is a pre-requisite to all forms of women's empowerment and critical in combating violence against women and girls. However, it is also a goal in itself. As it relates to health, women's

autonomy primarily concerns their ability to seek healthcare and select the most appropriate and desirable treatment option. When women's autonomy in pursuing or selecting treatment is limited, it sometimes forces them to make unsafe decisions about their bodies, negatively impacting them and their families.

How Combat VAWG: Increasing Autonomy; Promoting Human Rights

With the above points in mind, there are a number of interventions the government, medical professionals and civil society can pursue that will help to combat VAWG in the health sector.

1. Strategies for the Health Sector

In addition to providing high quality medical services – regardless of gender, class and other factors, medical professionals are primarily charged with ensuring that healthcare facilities are gender sensitive. This can be done through the following:

Familiarizing staff with VAWG

Medical staff must be familiar with the multi-dimensional nature of violence against women and girls, as well as the importance of their role in recognizing the signs, symptoms, and health implications of VAWG. They must also be able to appropriately and sensitively respond to reports of violence and ensure the privacy of victims, without judgment. The principle of 'do no harm' must be continuously utilized throughout this process. In doing so, practitioners should ask themselves:

1. Whether their actions will increase a person's risk of exposure to violence,
2. Whether their actions are minimizing any harms a victim could encounter,
3. Whether their actions are truly for the benefit of victims, and
4. Whether their actions are causing a person to be re-victimized.

Increase the provision of psychosocial support (PSS) services

Recall that VAWG poses challenges to an individual's mental health, and that these challenges may also impede a victim's ability to perform even basic tasks. Health facilities should accordingly be equipped with on-site counselors, social workers, or nurses to psychosocial support services. Ideally, these services should be provided over long periods of time. Yet, even short sessions have proven effectiveness in supporting victims ([World Bank, 2015](#)).

Institute a support system for health practitioners

The stress associated with working in healthcare cannot be understated. Caring for individuals who have experienced horrific events, are seriously injured, or are dying can itself be traumatic. Accordingly, it is important that health practitioners are provided the mental and emotional support that they need to be able to effectively perform their duties and avoid re-victimization.

Increase/maintain the presence of women medical professionals

This is particularly important in practices that related to women's health. Women have understandably shown a tendency to be shy in the presence of male doctors, which has the potential to reduce their willingness to seek healthcare. Additionally, women medical staff may be better suited to fully understand the needs of women patients - both in terms of their general health, and as victims of VAWG. Meanwhile, men may run the risk of re-victimizing suffers of VAWG.

2. Strategies for Government Actors

Strengthen the National Strategy

In 2015, Jordan adopted the National Strategy for Health Sector 2015-2019. The strategy outlined a number of outcomes to be achieved by the end of 4 year period. Therein, these outcomes include the following: (1) good governance that enhances the performance of the health system, (2) health services that better respond to citizen's needs, (3) providing health, financial and social protection for all citizens (universal health care), and (4) investments in the health sector ([World Bank, 2015](#)). While these are commendable, they can be strengthened to more fully combat VAWG.

Concerning investment, the government has to consider putting further resources into cancer research and treatment – particularly breast and cervical cancer. Breast cancer is the most prevalent form of cancer

among women (followed by colon and thyroid cancer), and one of the leading causes of death for Jordanian women ([King Hussein Cancer Foundation, 2011](#)). It is also important that the government, with the help of civil society, encourage and provide support to women to seek breast cancer screenings so that cancer can be detected and treated early. At the same time, the expansion of health coverage and efforts to reduce out-of-pocket costs for cancer and other medical treatments is also necessary.

Furthermore, the government has aimed to provide health, financial and social protection “for all citizens.” However, accepting that access to quality healthcare is a fundamental human right, the government must be willing to consider expanding this aim to *at least* include **all** residents of Jordan between the ages of 0 and 18. As mentioned earlier in the toolkit, certain laws in Jordan, particularly the one prohibiting Jordanian women from passing on their nationality, constitutes a form of violence against women and girls. If universal coverage is afforded to “Jordanians” only, then children of Jordanian mothers and non-citizen fathers will be denied a fundamental human right. It is important, then, that Jordan consider the rights of all legal residents of Jordan.

Finally, as recommended by the World Health Organization, “societies and their health systems need to be better geared to meet women’s health needs in terms of access, comprehensiveness and responsiveness”. In this regard, it is important to consider the value of women-centered health approaches. In a women-centered health approach, a woman’s health is not defined by her reproductive or non-reproductive status, but considers

care from a holistic perspective that extends before, beyond, and parallel to their “fertile” years ([World Health Organization, 2009](#)).

Link Healthcare to Law Enforcement

Combined with healthcare providers, law enforcement can be valuable in helping to prevent further instances of violence. Indeed, law enforcement may be better positioned than healthcare providers to afford victims safety and protection, as well as fully investigate and detain perpetrators of violence so that they get the rehabilitative services the law allows. Accordingly, there will be times where it is necessary to refer a victim of VAWG to law enforcement personnel. This requires that the government ensure comprehensive and recurring training to law enforcement personnel to ensure they are equipped to support victims of VAWG and do no harm.

3. Strategies for Civil Society

Increasing Women’s Health-Seeking Behavior

Women’s legal and human right to the highest attainable standard of health is null if barriers exist that discourage or prevent them from seeking health services. Being the victim of VAWG – particularly rape and domestic abuse – often result in stigmatization from members of the victim’s community and/or shaming and blaming the victim. At the same time, especially in Jordan and the Middle East, individuals who are in need of psychosocial support are wrongly perceived as weak. The intervention

of civil society as agents of social change is particularly important in this regard. Civil society must work to eliminate these social stigmas and remind people that victims never bring attacks on themselves, and that there is no weakness in asking for help.

Establish Safe Spaces and Shelters for Victims

This is especially important in cases where referral to law enforcement is not the safest option for the victim. Safe spaces provide victims with the resources they need to be resilient when facing violence, empower themselves and protect themselves and their children. They provide women and girls with access to services and information, and offer an opportunity to engage other women and build or maintain support networks. Safe spaces and shelters should:

- ✓ **Be designed by women, for women**
Women should be included in the planning, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation of their safe spaces to ensure that they are effective and cater to the needs of the women who will utilize these spaces.
- ✓ **Prioritize the safety and privacy of women**
This entails a number of obligations: first, the safe space should be in an area that is secure and conveniently located, while the hours of operation should ensure that women have easy access to the safe space. Second, if possible, women should be provided transportation costs to encourage visitation. Finally, the safe space should

maintain the highest standards of privacy possible. This means locking away sensitive documentation, as well as ensuring that the staff is trained on confidentiality and the principle of do no harm.

- ✓ **Seek community involvement**
All members of a community must support a safe space in order for it to succeed. Men and boys especially must understand the importance these spaces, and the importance of avoiding them for the benefit of women and girls. Additionally, all relevant stakeholders (traditional leaders, teachers, clerics) should support the safe space.
- ✓ **Achieve multiple ends**
Safe spaces should offer women and girls a wide range of activities related to empowerment, including (if desired): SGVB prevention, confidence and assertiveness training, or food security and livelihoods training. At the same time, the safe space should also be a place where women can meet and socialize. Ultimately, women must have the freedom to determine (and re-determine) the function of their safe space.

4. Strategies for All Actors

The provision of high quality health services that combat VAWG requires action from all stakeholders and changed makers, whether they exist in the government, medical profession or society at large. Here are a number of means everyone can utilize in order to combating violence against women and girls with respect to health:

Promote Healthy Lifestyle Choices

Family Planning

Deciding if to have children, when, and how many is one of the most important decisions women and girls have to make in their lifetime. Although some choose to consult family members, friends, doctors or their faith for guidance, women are ultimately responsible for deciding whether or not to have children. Women should be able to make this decision fully informed, without coercion, and with access to the resources they need to carry out their decisions. It is neither the right nor the responsibility of families, friends or communities to judge women for the decisions they make.

Although, in Jordan, access to family planning services is quite high – especially compared to other countries in the region – there is a lack of diversity in the use of these services. Intra-uterine devices (IUDs) are the most commonly used form of contraception in Jordan. IUDs are considered the most effective means of contraception. However, all other form of contraception should be available for women in conjunction with IUDs. The government should actively remove barriers to women's access to contraception and family planning services. Meanwhile, civil society and healthcare providers should ensure that women and their families are well-aware of the full range of family planning services available.

Establish victim advocate programs/safe referral pathways

When it is safe to refer victims to law enforcement, ensure that they are appointed a victim advocates. Victim advocates are trained professionals who offer victims information, emotional support, and assist them in finding resources or completing required paperwork. They may also accompany victims to court or contact relevant authorities, organizations or service providers on their behalf. However, all victim advocates must be committed to maintaining the highest possible level of confidentiality between victims, and otherwise ensure they do not cause additional harm.

Consider the experience of refugees

It is important that Jordan, as a host of refugees, contributes in all ways possible to the resilience and empowerment of refugees, both for the sake of refugees themselves and for the stability and security of the state. Women refugees in particular face a number of challenges as it relates to health services. Challenges include access to reproductive health services, psychosocial support and safe spaces. The government must work to expand the availability of health services to refugees. In this regard, international actors must substantially increase financial assistance to Jordan so that the country is able to keep pace with heightened demand. At the same time, civil society and health providers must continue to fill services gaps.

Best Practice

National Framework for Family Protection Against Violence

The National Council for Family Affairs established a national framework for the protection of the family from domestic violence in 2006, which is a national reference document that aims at articulating roles, responsibilities, and powers and how governmental and non-governmental institutions deal with cases of domestic violence. The framework was reviewed and an updated version was adopted by the Cabinet of Jordan in 2016 as a national reference to protect families from violence and to oblige all parties concerned to carry out their duties in accordance with its content and their specialties. Furthermore, there should be one body representing governmental and non-governmental institutions that serves as an umbrella for all programs related to family protection against violence. The National Team for the Protection of the Family works under the umbrella of the National Council for Family Affairs. Its mission is to provide technical advice to national projects for the protection of the family supervised by the Council or its partners, as well as to oversee the implementation of the national framework document for family protection and the implementation of the Strategic Plan for Family Protection. Its members include representatives of relevant governmental and non-governmental institutions. In 2016, the National Council for Family Affairs saw a number of successes, including the opening of new family counselling centers and nurseries for children, as well as the production of the Framework for Family Protection against Violence ([National Council for Family Affairs, 2016](#)).

Apply What You've Learned Check Your Response

Nisreen's Story

"My name is Nisreen. My husband and I have been married for seven years, and we have two children ages 4 and 2. About six months ago, my husband started working a second job. Now, he comes home tired and stressed. Whenever he is really angry about work or something I did, he hits me. In the beginning, it was once or twice a week, but now it is nearly every day. I thought to call someone, but he told me that if I go to my family he will tell them that I have been unfaithful, or if I call the police he will run away with the children. I want the abuse to stop and I am worried about my children. I don't know what to do."

1. Can you identify all the forms of violence that Nisreen has been experiencing?
2. Do you think that it is safe to report Nisreen's case to the police? Why / Why not?
3. If Nisreen wanted to be referred to a safe space or shelter, would you know the nearest shelter to you?
4. What would you recommend Nisreen do to protect herself and her family?

Lana's Story

"My name is Lana. Last week, I was raped by a man in my village when I was walking home late. He told me there is nothing anyone would do about it because 'decent girls are not out late.' When I told my parents, they blamed the attack on me and said I brought shame to the family. I wanted to go to the police, but they said this would bring more shame and that I should stay silent. I knew I should go to the police, so I went to make a complaint. I am very sad and I feel like I have no support."

1. What conditions in society contributed to the violence that Lana experienced?
2. Can you identify any mistakes that Lana's family made? If so, what could they have done differently?
3. What would you recommend Lana do?

Dana's Story

"My name is Dana. I just arrived to Jordan from Syria. My husband stayed behind in Syria, so I am alone here with my children. I am struggling to find work, but I am receiving cash assistance from an NGO. I do not have any physical injuries, but I am very stressed and am not sure what to do throughout the day. Sometimes I get frustrated because of my situation and I take it out on my children. I know I shouldn't do this, but I can't seem to help it."

1. Is Dana in need of health services? If so, what kind?
2. Should Dana's concerns be prioritized even though she doesn't have physical injuries?
3. What would you recommend to Dana to help her manage stress?

"The toolkit is important, however it is more important that the users of the toolkit are convinced that this is an important issue. "

Dr. Sawsan Al Majali

Member of the Jordanian Senate

Glossary of Terms

1. Gender

a. "Gender refers to the socially constructed characteristics of women and men – such as norms, roles and relationships of and between groups of women and men. It varies from society to society and can be changed." – [WHO](#)

2. Gender Roles

a. "Gender roles refer to social and behavioral norms that, within a specific culture, are widely considered to be socially appropriate for individuals of a specific sex. These often determine the traditional responsibilities and tasks assigned to men, women, boys and girls." – [UN WOMEN](#)

3. Gender Discrimination

a. "Gender discrimination is defined as: "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 the basis of equality of men and women, of human rights and fundamental freedoms in the political, economic, social, cultural, civil or any other field." [United Nations, 1979. 'Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women'. Article 1]

4. Gender Sensitivity

a. "Gender sensitivity refers to the aim of understanding and taking account of the societal and cultural factors involved in gender-based exclusion and discrimination in the most diverse spheres of public and private life." – [European Institute for Gender Equality](#)

5. Gender Equality

a. "This refers to the equal rights, responsibilities and opportunities of women and men and girls and boys." – [UN WOMEN](#)

6. Gender Stereotypes

a. "Gender stereotypes are simplistic generalizations about the gender attributes, differences and roles of women and men." – [UN WOMEN](#)

7. Gender Bias

a. "Prejudiced actions or thoughts based on the gender-based perception that women are not equal to men in rights and dignity." – [European Institute for Gender Equality](#)

8. Sexual Harassment

a. "Sexual harassment is any unwelcome sexual advance, request for sexual favour, verbal or physical conduct or gesture of a sexual nature, or any other behaviour of a sexual nature that might reasonably be expected or be perceived to cause offence or humiliation to another." – UN SG's bulletin [ST/SGB/2008/5](#)

9. Sexual Violence

a. "Any sexual act, attempt to obtain a sexual act, unwanted sexual comments or advances, or acts to traffic, or otherwise directed, against a person's sexuality using coercion, by any person regardless of their relationship to the victim, in any setting, including but not limited to home and work." – [WHO](#)

10. Human Trafficking

a. **Trafficking in human beings:** Article 3 of the Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, especially Women and Children defines trafficking in persons as follows:

b. "Trafficking in persons shall mean the recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring or receipt of persons by means of the threat or use of force or other forms of coercion, of abduction, of fraud, of deception, of the abuse of power or of a position of vulnerability or of the giving or receiving of payments or benefits to achieve the consent of a person having control over another person for the purpose of exploitation. Exploitation shall include, at a minimum, the exploitation of the prostitution of others or other forms of sexual exploitation, forced labour or services, slavery or practices similar to slavery, servitude or the removal of organs." – Taken From: Prevent, Combat, Protect: Human Trafficking; Authors/editor(s): OHCHR, UNHCR, UNICEF, UNODC, UN Women, ILO

11. Women's Rights

a. Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW):

"CEDAW articulates the nature and meaning of sex-based discrimination and gender equality, and lays out State obligations to eliminate discrimination and achieve substantive equality. The Convention covers not only discriminatory laws, but also practices and customs, and it applies not only to State action, but also State responsibility to address discrimination against women by private actors. The Convention covers both civil and political rights (rights to vote, to participate in public life, to acquire, change or retain their nationality, equality before the law and freedom of movement) and economic, social and cultural rights (rights to education, work, health and financial credit)." – [UN WOMEN](#)

12. Revictimization

a. "Secondary Victimization [Revictimization] is victimization that occurs not as a direct result of a criminal act but through the inadequate response of institutions and individuals to the victim" – UN Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice; Report on the Nineteenth Session (4 December 2009 and 17-21 May 2010), page 11

13. Patriarchy

a. "This term refers to a traditional form of organizing society which often lies at the root of gender inequality. According to this kind of social system, men, or what is considered masculine, is accorded more importance than women, or what is considered feminine." – [UN WOMEN](#)

14. Safe Space

a. "A safe space is a formal or informal place where women and girls feel physically and emotionally safe. The term 'safe,' in the present context, refers to the absence of trauma, excessive stress, violence (or fear of violence), or abuse. It is a space where women and girls, being the intended beneficiaries, feel comfortable and enjoy the freedom to express themselves without the fear of judgment or harm." – [UNPFA](#)

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