



A Mapping of the Institutional Framework of Human Rights Protection and Promotion in Jordan

With the support of:

THE DANISH
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List of Abbreviations

CVDB	Cities and Villages Development Bank
GANHRI	Global Alliance of National Human Rights Institutions
HCPD	Higher Council for People with Disabilities
HPC	Higher Population Council
HUDC	Housing & Urban Development Corporation
IACC	Integrity and Anti-Corruption Commission
IEC	Independent Elections Commission
IMC-WE	Interministerial Committee for Women Empowerment
JNCW	Jordanian National Commission for Women
KII	Key Informant Interview
MC	Media Commission
MOFAE	Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Expatriates
MoH	Ministry of Health
Mol	Ministry of Interior
MoJ	Ministry of Justice
MoL	Ministry of Labor
MoPPA	Ministry of Political and Parliamentary Affairs
MoSD	Ministry of Social Development
MoY	Ministry of Youth
NCFA	National Council for Family Affairs
NCHR	National Center for Human Rights
NCIHL	National Committee for International Humanitarian Law
PM Office	Prime Minister Office
UNHRC	UN Human Rights Council
UPR	Universal Periodic Review

Executive Summary

Jordan's commitment to human rights protection and promotion is enshrined in its constitution, guaranteeing civil, political, social, and economic rights. Jordan has ratified most core human rights conventions and is reporting to the UN Human Rights Council (Universal Periodic Review) and to the relevant UN Treaty bodies. At national level, Jordan has developed a national human rights plan and set up a whole institutional framework of public actors to implement its commitment to human rights.

The institutional landscape in charge, directly or indirectly, of protecting and promoting human rights is complex as it involves public actors of different natures, belonging to the three branches of power: executive, legislative and judiciary power.

The purpose of this mapping is to give an updated, extensive, and structured picture of this institutional landscape. The mapping covers the main state actors in charge of human rights protection and promotion in Jordan: government ministries, ministerial committees, independent institutions, and the Constitutional Court. The mapping looks primarily into what are the public structures in place in Jordan and which mandate do they have in terms of human rights protection and promotion. Some analytical developments as to the actual role of these actors are incorporated in the mapping where possible. They include a presentation of relevant policies and actions carried out by these actors.

To gain a comprehensive understanding of this landscape, the research employed a multifaceted methodological approach. This involved a thorough desk review of relevant literature, legislation, reports, and official documents. Additionally, targeted data collection was conducted through interviews with key stakeholders.

Ministries:

While Jordan does not have a single ministry solely dedicated to human rights, the responsibility to carry out the human rights action of the state is effectively shared across various government bodies. Examples of these ministries, include:

- The Ministry of Foreign Affairs is in charge of championing Jordan's human rights record on the global stage and submitting reports to international organizations.
- The Ministry of Justice is responsible of spearheading legal reforms, combatting human trafficking, and raising public awareness about human rights.
- The ministry also contributes to developing strategies, policies, and national efforts related to combating human trafficking and monitoring their implementation in collaboration with relevant entities, as well as coordinating with concerned parties for the rehabilitation of inmates in correction and rehabilitation centers.
- The Ministry of Interior is in charge of safeguarding human rights in detention facilities and promoting human rights compliant law enforcement practices.
- The Ministry of Labor works to protect worker rights, including those of women and migrant workers, through regulations and inspections and preserving security and public order.
- The Ministry of Political and Parliamentary Affairs is responsible for raising awareness of civil and political rights, with a particular focus on women's and youth political participation.
- The Ministry of Youth is responsible for empowering young people and advocating for their rights through various initiatives.
- The Ministry of Health is responsible for ensuring a fair and accessible healthcare system.
- The Ministry of Social Development provides comprehensive assistance to those in need.

The Prime Ministry's Human Rights Unit acts as the central supervisory authority in all issues related to human rights, ensuring collaborative efforts and international engagement. Individual ministries then address their specific human rights domains. This approach ensures that human rights are promoted across various sectors in Jordan.

Ministerial Committees

Jordan's human rights framework extends beyond individual ministries. To ensure coordinated efforts, Jordan utilizes a two-pronged approach with Ministerial Committees: Legislative and Administrative.

Legislative Committees: Established by law or Bylaw, these committees address specific human rights duties with a long-term focus. They are structured to be inclusive, incorporating various stakeholders like civil society organizations, independent institutions (e.g., National Center for Human Rights), and relevant public entities. This broad membership aims at fostering a comprehensive approach to tackling specific human rights challenges. These committees include:

- The National Committee for the Prevention of Human Trafficking, chaired by the Minister of Justice, formulates policies, which coordinates efforts to combat trafficking, and oversees victim assistance programs.
- The Committee for the Assistance Fund for Victims of Human Trafficking, chaired by the Secretary-General of the Ministry of Justice for Judicial Affairs, which facilitates support for trafficking victims.
- The Supervisory Committee on Shelters for Women at Risk, led by the Secretary-General of the Ministry of Social Development, which ensures effective operation and supervision of shelters, focusing on rehabilitation and support services.
- The Council of Information, chaired by the Ministry of Culture, promotes access to information and transparency, with a significant role in addressing information requests and fostering a culture of openness.

Administrative Committees: Formed through administrative decisions, these committees offer greater flexibility in promoting human rights. Their membership is typically streamlined to representatives from ministries whose functions intersect with the committee's mandate. This focused structure allows for swift communication and coordinates action between ministries on pressing human rights issues. For instance:

- The Inter-Ministerial Committee for Women's Empowerment spearheads gender equality initiatives, endorsing key strategies and plans for women's advancement.
- The Human Rights Committee at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs is a permanent body responsible for overseeing the preparation of national human rights reports for submission to international bodies.
- The Committee for the Follow-up on Human Rights Recommendations is a permanent committee responsible for ensuring the ongoing implementation and communication of recommendations related to international human rights obligations.
- The Government Coordination Team for Human Rights, comprised of liaison officers from various ministries, supports the implementation and monitoring of human rights initiatives nationwide.
- the Committee for Aligning National Legislation with International Conventions, led by the Minister of Justice, ensures alignment of national laws with international human rights standards, facilitating amendments to existing laws for greater compliance with international standards.
- The National Criminal Justice Committee, chaired by the Secretary-General of the Ministry of Justice for Judicial Affairs, has developed the Criminal Justice Strategy for the years 2023–2026.

This two-tiered system of Legislative and Administrative Committees aims at ensuring a well-rounded and adaptable response to the evolving landscape of human rights challenges in Jordan.

Independent Institutions

This section dives into Jordan's approach to human rights beyond the executive branch, highlighting the whole architecture of independent institutions in Jordan working directly or more indirectly with human rights. These institutions are categorized as reporting to Parliament or non-parliamentary reporting institutions.

Reporting institutions submit annual reports to Parliament, ensuring transparency and accountability. These institutions include:

- The National Center for Human Rights (NCHR) is a key institution in Jordan, established by law according UN Paris Principles to monitor and address human rights violations. It is overseen by a Board of Trustees and a General Commissioner and enjoys legal and financial autonomy. The NCHR works to promote human rights principles, investigate complaints, and issue annual reports on the state of human rights in Jordan. It also engages in legislative processes and prepares reports for international human rights bodies. Despite its efforts, the NCHR faces challenges such as a backlog of complaints and the need for more qualified personnel.
- The Independent Elections Commission (IEC) was established in 2011, it is a legally and financially independent body responsible for overseeing all parliamentary, municipal, and other designated elections. The IEC is governed by a Board of Commissioners appointed by the King and enjoys broad powers to set election dates, manage voters, oversee political parties, and educate the public. To ensure transparency, they report on elections.
- The Higher Council for Disabilities (HCPD) works to improve the lives of persons with disabilities. This independent body sets policy, investigates complaints, and monitors compliance with disability laws. They publish annual reports and have a committee addressing workplace discrimination. While successful, the HCPD faces challenges like limited engagement from concerned public entities on their recommendations.
- The Integrity and Anti-Corruption Commission (IACC) fights corruption and promotes integrity. It is independent, investigates complaints, enforces anti-corruption laws, and educates the public. They work with the judicial system to prosecute corruption cases, protect whistleblowers, and promote transparency and accountability in government operations. The IACC issues annual reports detailing their work and achievements.

Non-parliamentary reporting institutions operate independently but collaborate with government bodies. These institutions include:

- The National Council for Family Affairs (NCFA) is a Jordanian an independent entity working to improve family life. Established in 2001, it focuses on policy creation, family support programs, and collaborating with other groups on child protection and elderly care. The NCFA has played a role in creating laws like the Child Rights Law and amending others like the Penal Law. They also monitor and report on the status of children's rights in Jordan.
- The National Committee for International Humanitarian Law (NCIHL) is an independent entity dedicated to promoting awareness and understanding of international humanitarian law. Established in 2016, it collaborates with others to develop policies, educate Jordanians, and cooperate with international organizations on these issues. The NCIHL contributes to and monitors the implementation of international humanitarian law.
- Housing and Urban Development Corporation (HUDC) helps Jordanians access affordable housing. Established in 1992, they offer programs with subsidized plots and easy payment options for low- and middle-income families, young people, and public sector employees.

- The Cities and Villages Development Bank (CVDB) helps fund development projects in Jordanian cities and villages. Established in 1985, they provide long-term loans to local authorities at favorable rates. They also provide expertise and training to these local groups, as well as managing the government funds allocated to them. The CVDB has helped finance infrastructure, production projects, and income-generating investments for municipalities.
- The Jordanian National Commission for Women (JNCW) is the body working on women's rights in Jordan. Established in 1992, they focus on integrating women's issues into policies and laws, combating discrimination, and promoting women's participation in society. They collaborate with others on research, awareness campaigns, and legal reform. The JNCW also compiles information on women's rights for Jordanian reports to national entities and international organizations.
- The Higher Population Council (HPC) focuses on population issues and development, proposing policies, conducting research, and raising awareness. The HPC works with other ministries and NGOs on these issues. Established in 2002, they aim to achieve sustainable development with a focus on gender equality, youth empowerment, and access to information.
- The Media Commission (MC) is responsible for regulating and developing the media sector. Established with financial independence, they create media strategies, license media outlets, and ensure adherence to regulations. They also promote responsible journalism and handle public complaints about media content.

The Constitutional Court:

The Constitutional Court of Jordan, established in 2011 as an independent body, safeguards Jordan's legal framework by reviewing the constitutionality of laws and bylaws and interpreting the constitution itself. While its focus is national legislation, international influence finds its way in. The Court cannot directly address international treaties and conventions, but it has drawn upon human rights conventions to shed light on Jordanian constitutional rights in its rulings. This approach is further exemplified by two key decisions. One decision clarified that international agreements between the government and private entities are not international treaties, exempting them from parliamentary approval. Another significant decision ensured that Jordanian laws cannot contradict the commitments made in international treaties ratified by Jordan, demonstrating a commitment to upholding international obligations.

Introduction

The historical context of human rights in Jordan is characterized by a progressive evolution that has been influenced by various internal and external factors. The timing of human rights developments in the Jordanian case holds significance, particularly in relation to the reign of the late King Hussein and his endeavors to foster a climate of modernization. Jordan incorporated human rights into its constitution of 1952. This constitution aimed to ensure that Jordanian citizens have civil, political, social, and economic rights in accordance with the principles of human rights law. This was further enhanced by ratifying most core human rights conventions with limited reservations.¹ Currently, there is a clear manifestation of the culture of respecting human rights on the governmental level. Efforts are being made to modify existing legislation or establish new legislation that aligns with international human rights norms.² Despite the absence of a provision defining the legal value of international treaties, the Jordanian judiciary has established that treaties transcend national laws whether the treaties were approved by Parliament³ or did not need this approval⁴. The Constitutional Court also affirmed that it is not permissible to issue a law that contradicts the obligations established by a treaty ratified by law.⁵

Since the ascension of the throne by King Abdullah II in 1999, there has been a persistent focus on the promotion of human rights, which has been instrumental in the advancement of democracy and governance. This has been achieved through various political reforms, such as constitutional amendments and electoral reforms, as well as some strengthening of political parties. Furthermore, there has been a significant improvement in women's rights over the past two decades, as evidenced by numerous legal reforms, initiatives to enhance female representation, empowerment programs, and measures to address gender-based violence.⁶

The second chapter of the Jordanian Constitution of 1952 delineates the fundamental rights and obligations. However, it does not specify a particular entity that is responsible for protecting and advancing human rights, which was the prevailing practice during that period. The duty to safeguard human rights in Jordan lies with multiple public institutions, necessitating a collaborative endeavor by the State.

As in any country, Jordan's human rights record is not perfect: there are constraints on civil liberties, and significant human rights issues remain.⁷ However, an increasing number of national human rights actors, including state actors, are working toward a more open and just social and political environment.

The pivotal role and importance of various ministries and independent institutions in integrating human rights into social, economic, and political domains cannot be overstated. Since 1948, with the adoption of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, Jordan has made

1. Jordan ratified the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination, International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment, Convention on the Rights of the Child, and Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. Jordan did not ratify Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families and International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance.

2. Yousef Fayezi Al-Dalabih (2024), Examining the Evolution of Government Initiatives and Policies Promoting Human Rights in Jordan: A Model Analysis of King Hussein Bin Talal's Reign (1999-1953 AD), *Kurdish Studies*, Volume: 12, No: 1, pp. 3713-3706

3. Article 2/33 of the Jordanian Constitution of 1952 states "Treaties and agreements which involve financial commitments to the Treasury or affect the public or private rights of Jordanians shall not be valid unless approved by the National Assembly. In no circumstances shall any secret terms contained in any treaty or agreement be contrary to their overt terms".

4. See, for example, Court of Cassation Decision No. 1999/599 "International conventions take precedence over the provisions of domestic laws" as well as Court of Cassation decision No. 2003 /3965 "The jurisprudence and the judiciary of all countries of the world, including Jordan, agree on the transcendence of international conventions and treaties over internal laws, and that the provisions of any internal law that conflict with these international conventions and treaties may not be applied.

5. The Constitutional Court, Explanatory Decision No. 2020/1.

6. Ronza Abu Rumman and Jihad Hamdan (2022), Conceptual metaphors in political discourse: evidence from the speeches of King Abdullah II of Jordan, *Dirasat: Human and Social Sciences*, Volume 49, No. 5

7. Human rights in Jordan - Amnesty International, last visited 23 May 2024.

significant efforts in prioritizing and addressing human rights concerns. Jordan has joined numerous international human rights conventions and treaties and participates actively in the reporting and follow-up processes put in place by these treaties. By signing and ratifying these agreements, Jordan not only enhances its international reputation but also sends a clear message to all concerned national actors about its dedication to upholding international standards of justice and dignity for its people. The initiation of a national comprehensive plan for human rights (2016 – 2025)⁸ by the government underscores this commitment. This plan developed on the basis of recommendations from a national consultation on human rights in collaboration with the public security directorate and independent institutions, prioritizes the improvement of human rights in various sectors including law enforcement, prisons, foreign worker affairs, and support for the disadvantaged. Despite the importance of the national plan, its implementation and monitoring have been hindered by several factors, including the unstable regional climate characterized by conflicts in the surrounding countries. Nonetheless, Jordan's ongoing efforts to uphold and protect the rights of all individuals can be documented in some areas, such as constitutional and legislative amendments to enhance the rights of women, children, and persons with disabilities, as well as the government's engagement with civil society to implement UPR recommendations.

This mapping explores the institutional framework of human rights protection and promotion in Jordan. By identifying the relevant public institutions and looking into their mandate, this mapping seeks to provide structured and detailed insights for stakeholders interested in understanding the institutional setup established in Jordan to advance human rights in the country. In addition, the mapping includes some analysis of how public actors actively engage in promoting and protecting human rights, through looking into government policies, programs and initiatives.

Methodology

To gain a comprehensive understanding of the complex Jordan's human rights institutional landscape, the mapping employed a multifaceted methodological approach. This approach combined a thorough desk review and data collection, through interviews with the key actors. This took place in the period January-April 2024.

Desk review

The desk review involved gathering and analyzing relevant literature, legislation, policies, reports, and other official documents pertaining to human rights within the Jordanian context. The purpose of the desk study was to cover the existing legal framework and document, to the extent possible, the practices of the relevant actors.

Data collection from key actors

To gain deeper insights into the actual work of these actors, the research team conducted Key Informant Interviews (KIIs) with representatives from key entities actively involved in human rights protection efforts. In some cases, where recording was not preferred, written questions were shared instead.

8. Ministry of Interior: plan2025-2016 (moi.gov.jo), last visited 23 May 2024.

On the basis of the desk study, only the most relevant state actors were selected to carry out interviews. To streamline communication and minimize bureaucratic delays, the team collaborated with the Head of the Human Rights Unit at the Prime Ministry. Interview questions were submitted to the Unit's office, which then facilitated their distribution to the relevant ministries. Responses were received from the following:

- Prime Ministry – Human Rights Unit
- Ministry of Interior
- Ministry of Justice
- Ministry of Social Development
- Ministry of Foreign Affairs
- Ministry of Labor

The team also conducted interviews with representatives from the following independent institutions:

- National Center for Human Rights (NCHR)
- Integrity and Anti-Corruption Commission (IACC)
- Higher Council for Persons with Disabilities (HCPD)
- Higher Population Council (HPC)
- National Council for Family Affairs (NCFA)
- Jordanian National Commission for Women (JNCW)

Some of these institutions preferred not to have their interviews recorded. In these cases, the detailed interview transcripts or responses were provided to the institutions for their review and approval before finalization.

Furthermore, the draft sections pertaining to the Independent Election Commission and the Ministry of Political and Parliamentary Affairs have been presented to these entities for review to ensure accuracy and to verify that the information obtained from the desk review is up-to-date.

Structure

This mapping explores this complex human rights architecture, analyzing it from four primary institutional perspectives:

1. a mapping of the diverse and complex functions of Jordanian **ministries** in the protection and promotion of human rights.
2. an overview of government committees dedicated to human rights, focusing on their role in fostering coordination and synergy among efforts to protect and promote human rights
3. a mapping of the crucial function of **independent institutions** in enhancing the protection and promotion of human rights. These entities serve as vital mechanisms for oversight, ensuring that the government is held responsible and advocating for the rights of all Jordanians. The mapping takes into account the different types of independent institutions existing in Jordan.
4. a section on the central and specific mandate of the Constitutional Court and its implications, through pivotal rulings, for the protection of human rights within the legal system of Jordan.

1. Ministries



1. Ministries

Ministries in Jordan are formed by a Bylaw that is approved by the Council of Ministers, in accordance with Article 120 of the Jordanian Constitution.⁹ The rationale for this is to grant the executive authority with adaptability in establishing, consolidating, or eliminating ministries in accordance with the government's vision and emerging circumstances.

Ministries are regarded as the fundamental embodiment of executive power. As per the constitution, the responsibility for this power is given to His Majesty the King and is carried out by his ministers. The executive authority comprises the King, the Council of Ministers, and the ministers. According to the Constitution, parliamentary oversight is exercised over the government as soon as it obtains the necessary confidence to perform its duties. This oversight includes various methods of scrutiny, such as questioning, investigation, and the ability to vote for a lack of confidence in a specific minister or the entire government.¹⁰

The Council of Ministers is tasked with overseeing all national and international matters of the state, excluding those specifically assigned to another individual or entity by the constitution or any legislation. Ministers are accountable for overseeing and handling all matters pertaining to their respective ministries. The Council can also ratify and join international conventions that do not need the approval of the parliament.¹¹ As a result:

- Some international human rights treaties are ratified by the Council of Ministers: International Covenant on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights (ICESCR), International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (ICERD), Convention Against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman, or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (UNCAT), Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) and the Arab Charter on Human Rights (ACHR).
- Some others are ratified by Parliament: Convention on the Rights of the Child and the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

Through the 2016–2025 Comprehensive National Plan for Human Rights, the Council of Ministers has promoted and protected human rights. The goals of this comprehensive national human rights plan include reforming the national legislation to comply with the constitution and international human rights conventions Jordan has ratified, developing, and improving national policies for the protection and promotion of human rights and fundamental freedoms and reinforcing the role played by civil society institutions and non-governmental organizations in this field, and the role the National Center for Human Rights.¹²

Jordan does not have a dedicated ministry exclusively focused on the advancement and safeguarding of human rights. Instead, the responsibilities related to human rights are integrated into the mandates of various ministries. The overarching objective is the implementation of the constitutional provisions outlined in the chapter titled “Rights and Duties of Jordanian Men and Women.” The collaborative efforts between ministries are evident in the formation of committees entrusted with diverse responsibilities concerning human rights. The following sections offer an overview of the key roles assigned to these ministries in the field of human rights and illuminate the collaborative mechanisms facilitated by the committees.

9. Article 120 of the Jordanian Constitution states “The administrative divisions of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, the establishment of the Government Departments, their classification, designations, the plan of operations and the manner of the appointment of civil servants, their dismissal, their discipline, supervision and the limits of their competence and powers shall be determined by Bylaw issued by the Council of Ministers with the approval of the King.”

10. Articles 53-28 of the Jordanian Constitution.

11. As per Article 2/33 of the constitution, only treaties and conventions that have financial obligations towards the Treasury or impact the rights of Jordanian citizens, whether public or private, require the parliament's approval.

12. Comprehensive National Plan for Human Rights – Prime Ministry (pm.gov.jo), last visited 17 July 2024.

It is worth noting that all ministries' work intersects with human rights issues. However, the focus here is on the most prominent ministries, particularly those assigned specific tasks through various laws. Nevertheless, the role of ministries not included in this study, such as the Ministry of Environment, the Ministry of Education, the Ministry of Local Government, the Ministry of Agriculture, and others, cannot be overlooked.

1.1 The Prime Ministry

The Prime Ministry's objectives focus on strengthening the government's decision-making processes, streamlining the activities and operations of various ministries, and effectively monitoring the implementation of decisions issued by the Prime Minister and the Council of Ministers. Additionally, it seeks to oversee and track government effectiveness, enhance communication, coordination, and cooperation with state entities, citizens, and the media.¹³ Furthermore, it is tasked do actively safeguards and advance human rights in the Kingdom through the Human Rights Unit, which is an essential part of the administrative framework of the Prime Minister's Office.¹⁴ This unit is under the administrative purview of the Secretary-General of the Prime Ministry¹⁵ and is responsible for carrying out various tasks, which include:¹⁶

1. Coordination with ministries, departments, and relevant entities regarding human rights issues, as well as working on proposing the necessary amendments to the texts of various national legislations in accordance with the constitution and laws in force.
2. Follow-up on the implementation of the National Comprehensive Human Rights Plan, follow up on complaints received from national institutions and local, regional, and international civil society institutions, and follow up on their reports regarding the human rights situation in Jordan.
3. Following up on the implementation of the recommendations and concluding observations issued by the UN treaty bodies and the Human Rights Council.
4. Strengthening cooperation and partnership with local, regional, and international civil society institutions, adopting projects and supporting the government in activities related to human rights, participating in meetings, conferences, and workshops, maintaining communication channels with them, and discussing and maximizing memorandums of understanding and partnership.
5. Working on following up on the periodic reports required to be submitted by the official authorities in the Kingdom to the Human Rights Council, UN bodies, treaty and non-treaty committees, specialized agencies, and bodies of the international system, and submitting their results to the Prime Minister and providing him with the concluding observations and recommendations of these committees.
6. Developing the necessary plans for the development and empowerment of the skills of the unit's employees and members of the human rights coordination, and building their technical, scientific, and practical capabilities by preparing and implementing rehabilitation and training programs and plans internally and externally in coordination with the relevant entities.
7. Developing the necessary mechanisms to follow up on the implementation of the recommendations of the National Human Rights Center's annual and ongoing reports and the reports of the monitoring visits carried out by the center in accordance with the provisions of its law and other national, regional, and international reports.
8. Continuous coordination with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs regarding the human rights file and relations with various international entities according to the rules and procedures followed diplomatically and strengthening the role of the Permanent Committee on Human Rights and cooperating with it.
9. Carrying out any other tasks assigned related to the Unit's work in the field of human rights.

13. Strategic Objectives and Core Values - Prime Ministry (pm.gov.jo), last visited 23 May 2024.

14. Article (3) of the Administrative Organization Structure for the Prime Ministry Bylaw No. 2022 /7, issued in the Official Gazette No 5767 on 2022/1/5, page 247.

15. Ibid. Article (4/b)

16. Ibid. In 2019, the Prime Minister issued an updated functions for the unit and became in force.

Based on the foregoing, one of the unit's objectives is to analyze legislation and laws and assess their conformity with the principles outlined in international human rights conventions to which Jordan is a party. The unit's role also entails overseeing the periodic reports that Jordanian government entities must submit to the United Nations Human Rights Council and other United Nations treaty bodies. Furthermore, the unit maintains ongoing communication and cooperation with international and national organizations working in the field of human rights.

The Unit also plays a pivotal role in the Universal Periodic Report (UPR) of the UN Human Rights Council as it heads the government team that engages in discussions with the civil society and other stakeholders to draft the national report. It is committed to a consultative approach in accordance with the requirements of the UPR. It holds multiple meetings with the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, academics, labor unions, official institutions, civil society organizations, and non-governmental organizations. The aim of these meetings is to discuss the progress made in implementing accepted recommendations, listen to additional opinions and proposals. The national report is prepared in consultation with stakeholders such as civil society organizations, non-governmental organizations, and independent national institutions.¹⁷ These responsibilities have been further reinforced by official circulars issued by the Prime Minister, requiring ministries, institutions, and government departments to provide the government's human rights coordinator with periodic reports on the implementation of recommendations accepted by Jordan during the Universal Periodic Review (UPR) process.¹⁸ These circulars have highlighted the importance of prioritizing these recommendations.

It is worth noting that between 2014 and 2023, the position of the government's human rights coordinator was established. However, the creation of this position did not lead to any changes in the structure of the Prime Minister's Office, and the position has remained vacant since April 2023.

The Prime Minister's office expresses keen interest in the recommendations and observations delineated in the annual reports of the National Center for Human Rights. The ministries, institutions, and government departments are urged to take into account these recommendations and strive to implement them. A comprehensive report is published concerning the progress of public entities in implementing these recommendations and distributed to the Prime Minister, the President of the Senate, the Speaker of the House of Representatives, the Chief Justice/President of the Judicial Council, and the Grand Mufti, as well as the Board of Trustees of the National Center for Human Rights.¹⁹

1.2 Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Expatriates

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Expatriates plays a pivotal role in promoting global security and peace by participating in negotiations and agreements with relevant parties, creating favorable conditions for peacekeeping forces, and mobilizing international and regional efforts to support refugees and share the burden of hosting them while advocating for human rights. Additionally, the Ministry contributes to proposing amendments to existing laws to ensure greater alignment with international standards set forth in agreements ratified by Jordan.²⁰

MOFAE's organizational structure comprises various directorates, such as the Directorate of Human Rights and the Directorate of International Organizations. These directorates are under the administrative authority of the Secretary-General of the Ministry.²¹

17. Human Rights Council, Working Group on the Universal Periodic Review, thirty-first session, 16–5 November 2018, National report submitted in accordance with paragraph 15 (a) of the annex to Human Rights, Council resolution 1/5, Jordan, (A/HRC/WG.31/6/JOR/1), 23 August 2018, paragraphs 4-3.

18. See, for example, the Prime Minister's circular number 880/18/11/1 issued on January 2017 ,8, and Prime Minister's circular number 13098/18/11/1 issued on April 2014 ,15

19. Prime Ministry Website: Government Coordination Reports on Human Rights, at Government Coordination Reports on Human Rights (pm.gov.jo), last visited 23 May 2024.

20. MOFAE Website: Overview of the MOFAE (mfa.gov.jo), last visited 23 May 2024.

21. Articles 4 and 5 of the Administrative Organization System of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Expatriate Affairs No. 2023/73.

The Directorate of International Organizations has a crucial role in multiple domains, such as peacekeeping operations, collaborating with the UN on refugee protection, and offering political and financial assistance to the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees (UNRWA).²²

The Directorate of Human Rights plays a central role in safeguarding human rights in Jordan. It presents regular reports to the UPR and UN treaty bodies and contributes to the drafting of the national report for the UPR.²³ Their recent achievements showcase this commitment. The Directorate successfully facilitated discussions on the Kingdom's sixth periodic report on the Convention on the Rights of the Child and the second and third periodic reports on the Arab Charter on Human Rights. They further submitted the fourth periodic report on the Convention against Torture, with the discussion with the UN Committee against Torture tabled in October 2024. Most notably, the Directorate recently completed discussions on Jordan's fourth universal periodic report before the UN Human Rights Council in Geneva in January 2024.

The Ministry's tasks encompass the development and execution of foreign policy, the representation of the kingdom on an international level, the administration of diplomatic relations, and the safeguarding of the rights and interests of Jordan and its citizens overseas. The goals do not encompass the promotion and safeguarding of human rights.²⁴

According to a key informant, the MOFAE does not have a designated mechanism for receiving complaints. However, they have established a specialized unit to handle complaints, primarily related to consular transactions and procedural issues regarding the operation of consulates abroad.²⁵

1.3 Ministry of Justice

The Ministry of Justice plays an important role in promoting and protecting human rights, facilitating access to justice, strengthening the judiciary, and safeguarding rights and freedoms. Accordingly, the Ministry is tasked with supporting the judicial system, enhancing capacities, raising awareness, and reviewing legislation. Additionally, it collaborates with civil society and international organizations.²⁶

MoJ's organizational structure consists of multiple directorates, one of which is the Directorate of Human Rights.²⁷ This directorate is administratively connected to the Secretary-General for Judicial Affairs.²⁸ The directorate is additionally subdivided into four departments: the Gender Department, the Human Trafficking Prevention Department, the Inspection and Monitoring of Rehabilitation Centers Department, and the Rights and Liberties Department.²⁹

MoJ has implemented several measures to enforce the provisions of the National Comprehensive Plan for Human Rights 2016-2025. These measures encompass a thorough review of existing laws and the implementation of legal frameworks to ensure their alignment with the Jordanian constitution and international conventions ratified by Jordan. The legislation that went through this review process includes the Penal Law, Criminal Procedure Law, Labor Law, and Political Parties Law.³⁰

22. MOFAE Website: Directorate of International Organizations (mfa.gov.jo), last visited 23 May 2024.

23. Ibid.

24. Article 3 of the Administrative Organization Structure of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Expatriate Affairs No. 2023/73.

25. Information provided by MOFAE, March 2024.

26. MoJ Website: Directorate of Human Rights (moj.gov.jo), last visited 5 June 2024

27. Article 3 of the of the Administrative Organization Structure of the Ministry of Justice No. 2022/2.

28. Article 5 of the of the Administrative Organization Structure of the Ministry of Justice No. 2022/2.

29. MoJ Website: Directorate of Human Rights (moj.gov.jo), last visited 5 June 2024.

30. See the actions taken by ministries, institutions, and government departments regarding the implementation of the provisions of the comprehensive national plan for human rights, at Prime Ministry Website: Government Coordination Reports on Human Rights, at the Prime Minister website Government Coordination Reports on Human Rights (pm.gov.jo) , last visited 5 June 2024.

Moreover, as per Legal Aid Bylaw No. 119/2018, the Legal Aid directorate at the Ministry of Justice is mandated to formulate the requisite documents for endorsement by the Minister of Justice, provides recommendations for the approval of legal aid petitions to the Minister of Justice, and manages the documentation and progress of court cases.

1.4. Ministry of Interior

The establishment of the Ministry of Interior coincided with the formation of the first central government in East Jordan in 1921. Over the years, its name has been associated with the process of building the modern institutions of the Jordanian state.

The core mission of the Ministry is to maintain security, societal peace, and public order, protect lives and public and private property, and contribute to the provision of services in accordance with the applicable laws and regulations.

The Ministry of Interior established the Human Rights Directorate in October 2006 as part of its administrative structure to protect and promote human rights.³¹ The directorate is under the administrative purview of the ministry's Secretary-General³². The Directorate of Human Rights is composed of four departments: the Department of Human Rights Organizations, the Department of Human Trafficking Prevention, the Department of Rehabilitation Centers, and the Department of Family Protection³³. The responsibilities of the directorate include monitoring reports from local, Arab, and international organizations that address human rights in Jordan, preparing responses, and analyzing studies that are related to human rights issues. It also gives special attention to correctional and rehabilitation centers as it actively investigates complaints submitted by the National Center for Human Rights (NCHR) regarding these facilities. It also plays an active role in formulating and implementing national strategies and policies aimed at preventing human trafficking, while also coordinating its efforts with relevant entities. The ministry cooperates with official authorities to facilitate visits to detention and rehabilitation centers by human rights organizations, ensuring openness and responsibility. Additionally, the directorate supervises the Higher Committee for Rehabilitation and Reform, highlighting the significance of rehabilitating and safeguarding the rights of prisoners. The ministry conducts routine visits to these facilities to evaluate services and address any issues, demonstrating its dedication to promoting and protecting human rights in Jordan.³⁴

Administrative governors apply the Crime Prevention Law No. 7 of 1954³⁵ to maintain public security and order, thereby protecting the rights of individuals and society. This law grants administrative governors the authority to order administrative detention for the purpose of investigating suspected criminals in accordance with the Code of Criminal Procedure. Additionally, an administrative governor may require a suspect to post bail or sign an undertaking to ensure good behavior.

The administrative governor is responsible for maintaining public security, peace, and order, protecting public and private property, and ensuring the effectiveness of services provided, given their role as the head of the public administration in their geographical jurisdiction. According to the ministry, the administrative governor embodies the ministry's motto of "Security, Governance, and Development" by maintaining comprehensive security, preserving public order and safety, preventing crime, protecting public freedoms, upholding the rule of law, ensuring justice, promoting decentralization, coordinating the provision of public services, and preserving the environment.³⁶

31. Article 3 of the Administrative Organization Structure of the Ministry of Interior No. 2019/10.

32. Article 4/B of the Administrative Organization Structure of the Ministry of Interior No. 2019/10.

33. Mol Website: Directorates of the Mol (moi.gov.jo), last visited 5 June 2024.

34. Mol Website: Directorates of the Mol (moi.gov.jo), last visited 5 June 2024.

35. The Crime Prevention Law No. 1954/7 is an extension of the Crime Prevention Law that was enacted in 1927, while Jordan was under British mandate. This law marked the initial implementation of extraordinary legislation that conferred judicial authority upon the administrative governor. The objective was to bolster British dominance and curtail the actions of revolutionary movements in Jordan and Palestine.

36. Information provided by Mol, June 2024.

The Mol can receive complaints from citizens through the governors, in accordance with the provisions of the Crime Prevention Law. To further enhance transparency and access to legal representation, the Mol has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the Jordan Bar Association. This agreement allows lawyers to attend the interrogation sessions of detainees held administratively under the provisions of the Crime Prevention Law.

The Mol take a proactive approach to human rights and the rule of law. Through ongoing training for governors and administrative rulers, they emphasize best practices in law enforcement and the importance of individual rights, equality, and accountability.

To ensure program effectiveness, they collaborate with national and international civil society organizations for diverse perspectives including the NCHR. This partnership keeps training relevant to evolving challenges in human rights and law enforcement.

Recognizing the seriousness of social violence, domestic violence, and child abuse, the Ministry joined forces with the National Council for Family Affairs to create a comprehensive guide for staff. This guide ensures a unified approach and empowers staff with clear procedures to handle these sensitive matters, prioritizing victim safety and well-being.

It should be noted that the Mol plays a crucial role in overseeing the right to public assembly by directly overseeing administrative governors. The Public Assembly Law confers upon Jordanian citizens the entitlement to convene public assemblies for the purpose of deliberating upon matters pertaining to the public policy of the state. Notification for conducting a public assembly or arranging a march must be submitted to the administrative governor no later than forty-eight hours prior to the scheduled time.³⁷

It is important to acknowledge that the Administrative Courts have the authority to review all administrative decisions made by the Mol.

The Ministry of Interior oversees the General Security Directorate, a legal entity directly linked to the Minister of Interior.³⁸ Among its units are the Gendarmerie and the Civil Defense Directorate. The directorate's primary responsibilities include maintaining law and order, preventing crimes, enforcing laws, managing prisons, responding to disasters, regulating traffic and events, protecting vital installations, ensuring building safety, preventing fires, and public awareness.³⁹ The directorate consists of 36 departments and units, including the Family and Juvenile Protection Department, which is primarily responsible for enforcing the Protection from Domestic Violence Law No. 15 of 2017 and the Juvenile Law No. 32 of 2014.

In 2005, the directorate established a Transparency and Human Rights Office, initially named the Grievances and Human Rights Office. This was renamed the Transparency and Human Rights Office in 2014, and in 2020, it was placed under the jurisdiction of the Public Security Judiciary Directorate.⁴⁰

The office serves as an oversight body to protect citizens' rights, receiving and investigating complaints against law enforcement officers for misconduct or human rights violations. It also collaborates with government organizations and civil society groups focused on transparency. The office conducts regular and surprise inspections of detention centers to ensure humane treatment of detainees. It monitors reports issued by domestic and international human rights organizations and provides responses. Complaints can be filed directly to the Director of

37. Article 4, Public Assembly Law No. 2004/7. According to article 3, exempts specific types of meetings from the notification requirement to hold public assemblies. These exemptions include meetings of charitable and voluntary associations, companies, chambers of commerce and industry, municipalities, and clubs, as long as they are related to achieving their goals and adhere to the regulations governing their work. Professional meetings held by unions are also exempt, given they are aligned with their objectives and comply with relevant regulations. Licensed political parties can conduct meetings within their headquarters under the conditions outlined in the Political Parties Law. Additionally, seminars and media programs organized by official media institutions, meetings within university premises, meetings for celebrating national and religious occasions, and meetings held during elections are exempt, provided that the Ministry of Interior is informed at least one week before such events occur.

38. Article 3, Public Security Law No. 38 of 1968.

39. Article 4, Public Security Law No. 38 of 1968.

40. Public Security Directorate website (www.psd.gov.jo), Transparency and Human Rights Office, last visit 17 July 2024.

Public Security. The office promotes transparency through media outreach and participation in relevant activities. Additionally, it develops human rights training programs to align police work with international standards.⁴¹

Complaints can be submitted via phone, email, or the website, and these channels are promoted through social media. The office is divided into three sections: Governance and Transparency, Complaints and Reports, and a Human Rights Training Center.⁴²

The directorate aims to establish the training center as a regional hub and has integrated human rights into training curricula and mandatory promotion exams. Passing the human rights component of the exam is now a requirement for promotion.⁴³ In 2022, the Director of Public Security ordered the establishment of transparency and human rights departments in units and departments with direct public contact, such as correctional facilities, police stations, and departments of criminal investigation, narcotics control, driver and vehicle licensing, traffic, and refugee affairs.⁴⁴

1.5 Ministry of Labor

The vision of the Ministry of Labor is to achieve an effective labor market with qualified and productive national labor, attracting talent in a stable and safe work environment. This includes regulating and developing the labor market according to best practices, ensuring justice and equal opportunities, promoting entrepreneurship, marketing expertise abroad, and establishing an integrated system of effective standards, policies, and monitoring tools in collaboration with all partners.

In adherence to the provisions of the Jordanian Labor Law No. (8) of 1996 and its amendments, the Ministry aims to create a safe and healthy work environment, oversee labor and employment matters, and ensure fair wages and safe working conditions to protect workers from any exploitation or violations of labor law provisions. This is to achieve full protection of fundamental human rights.

The MoL's mandate is also directly aiming at the protection of fundamental human rights for workers. This is carried out skills training and employment services empowering individuals with the tools they need to access job opportunities and fulfilling the right to work. Additionally, initiatives focused on safe working conditions and potentially fair wage standards ensure workers are protected from exploitation and have access to a dignified livelihood.⁴⁵

The Jordanian Labor Law empowers MoL to carry out inspection duties⁴⁶ through labor inspectors in order to strengthen and safeguard workers' rights.⁴⁷ The main objectives of these inspections are as follows:⁴⁸

- Verification of the application of legal provisions related to working conditions and the protection of workers during their work.
- Providing technical information and advice to employers and workers regarding compliance with legal provisions.
- Encouraging collaboration between employers and their associations on one hand, and workers and their unions on the other hand, to improve human relations and contribute to economic development.

41. Public Security Directorate website (www.psd.gov.jo), Duties of the Transparency and Human Rights Office, last visit 17 July 2024.

42. Public Security Directorate website(www.psd.gov.jo), Departments of the Transparency and Human Rights Office, last visit 17 July 2024.

43. Committee Against Torture, Fourth Periodic Report Submitted by Jordan Pursuant to Article 19 of the Convention, 2021, paragraph 22.

44. Al Mamlaka News, Public Security: Transparency and Human Rights Departments Begin Work in Several Directorates, last accessed July 2024 ,17.

45. Ibid.

46. Article 5, Labor Law No. 1996/8.

47. Article 3, Labor Inspectors Bylaw No. 1996/56.

48. Article 5, Labor Inspectors Bylaw No. 1996/56.

- Ensuring safety and occupational health conditions at workplaces.
- Gathering information related to labor market regulation, including the number and categories of workers, their training needs, and any other matters concerning employment conditions.

In line with the directives of His Majesty King Abdullah II aimed at addressing the issues of Jordanian working women and job seekers, and in alignment with the state's public policy to develop clear and specific measures for advancing women at the national level, the Ministry of Labor established an independent directorate within the ministry in 2006 under the name "Women's Work and Gender Directorate." This directorate operates under the Assistant Secretary-General for Operations and consists of two departments:

1. Women's Economic Empowerment Department.
2. Women's Awareness Department.

The establishment of this directorate reflects the Ministry's belief that comprehensive and sustainable development cannot be achieved without the active and productive participation of women and girls in all sectors and fields. The directorate aims to achieve key objectives, including:

- Enhancing the participation of women and girls in the labor market within a decent and safe work environment that ensures gender equality in opportunities.
- Supporting the economic empowerment of women and girls across all sectors by integrating gender considerations into legislation, agreements, policies, and budgets.
- Raising awareness about women's work-related issues and the rights guaranteed to them under labor laws.

The purpose of these measures is to establish a comprehensive and encouraging workplace for women, with a focus on equal opportunities and financial empowerment in diverse industries.

Additionally, the Directorate of Foreign Labor and the Directorate of Domestic Workers, which are under the administrative supervision of the Assistant Secretary-General for Operations, have the purpose of overseeing and regulating this workforce and handling grievances against private sector entities or recruitment agencies.⁴⁹ This emphasis on the protection of migrant workers is essential, as they are the most susceptible to exploitation. Additionally, other systemic issues raise human rights concerns that necessitate ongoing attention, not only for Jordanians but for all workers in Jordan.

1.6 Ministry of Political and Parliamentary Affairs

The Ministry of Political and Parliamentary Affairs (MoPPA) strives to enhance cooperation between the legislative and executive branches, and to elevate the level of coordination between the two authorities in a manner that ensures the smooth flow of work between them in accordance with the constitution and applicable legislation. Additionally, the ministry seeks to expand the base of participation in political and public life by broadening the scope of participation in the decision-making process, deepening dialogue with political parties and civil society institutions, and consolidating the principles of good governance and the rule of law.⁵⁰

Furthermore, the MoPPA is committed to developing policies that contribute to consolidating democratic values and activating them within the framework of political pluralism, empowering political parties, and supporting the participation of women and youth in political and party life. Additionally, the ministry works to enhance communication channels with civil society institutions, aligning with best practices to achieve sustainability, development, and improvement. The MoPPA also works to organize and develop its relationship with civil society institutions and to empower women and youth to participate in political and public life through specialized partnerships, programs, and training initiatives aimed at increasing youth and women's participation in political life.⁵¹

49. Ibid.

50. MoPPA Website: About the Ministry, last visited 14 June 2024

51. MoPPA Website, The Directorates, last visited 14 June 2024

Finally, reinforcing the participatory approach aimed at representing all segments of society and achieving justice and equal opportunities, the ministry contributes to the realization of numerous national strategic objectives for women, youth, and human rights.⁵²

1.7 Ministry of Youth

The Jordanian government prioritizes youth inclusion in public life, recognizing their potential beyond just sports and activities. According to the National Youth Strategic Plan (2019-2025), the Ministry of Youth (MoY) plays a key role in this by empowering youth participation, fostering a supportive environment to youth, building the capacity of youth for their effective participation and fostering a Culture of Tolerance.⁵³

MoY is mandated to actively advance and protect human rights through a range of initiatives. These initiatives encompass the availability of an extensive manual called “Know Your Rights” on its website, the dissemination and execution of the national strategy for human rights (2016-2025), and the creation of a public service bureau to streamline assistance for all, with particular attention to the elderly and individuals with special needs. The ministry also establishes collaborative partnerships with international organizations and charities, with the objective of utilizing youth centers to serve a wide range of groups, including individuals with special needs and refugees. The ministry’s commitment to raising awareness and addressing human rights issues, especially those pertaining to youth, poverty, and unemployment, is demonstrated through regular workshops, lectures, and the continuous monitoring of reports from the National Center for Human Rights.⁵⁴

The MoY places particular importance on UN Security Council Resolution 2250, which addresses youth from the perspective of international peace and security. This is especially significant given that the resolution was initiated by His Royal Highness Crown Prince Al Hussein bin Abdullah II of Jordan.⁵⁵ This has had a direct impact on the ministry’s strategies⁵⁶ and activities.⁵⁷

1.8 Ministry of Health

The Ministry of Health (MoH) strives to establish a comprehensive healthcare system that improves the well-being of individuals and communities. The mandate of this ministry is closely linked to issues pertaining to the right to health and the right to life.

The ministry aims to provide safe, inclusive, and fair preventive, therapeutic, rehabilitative, and palliative health services with fairness, excellence, and effectiveness. Additionally, it assumes a regulatory and supervisory function of services pertaining to the well-being and security of the population, cultivating productive collaborations with pertinent organizations. The ultimate objective is to attain all-encompassing healthcare coverage, establishing a robust and stable society that benefits from all-inclusive healthcare services.⁵⁸

As part of the comprehensive human rights national plan for 2015-2025, the Ministry

52. Information provided by the Ministry of Political and Parliamentary Affairs, July 2024.

53. Ministry of Youth, The National Youth Strategic Plan (2025-2019), Amman, p 6. Also, Ministry of Youth, The Institutional Strategic Plan for the Ministry of Youth (2024-2021), Amman, p 7.

54. Jordan News Agency (Petra), Ministry of Youth Actions and Follow-ups in the Field of Human Rights., November 2016 ,7, last visited 14 June 2024.

55. The United Nations Security Council unanimously adopted Resolution 2250 on «Youth, Peace, and Security,» marking a historic first. This resolution aims to enhance youth participation in peace and security efforts and urges member states to explore ways to increase the meaningful representation of young people in decision-making processes at all levels, with the goal of preventing and resolving conflicts. For more information, please refer to the UN Website, Security Council adopts historic resolution on youth, peace and security at Jordan’s request, last visited 17 July 2024.

56. Ministry of Youth, National Youth Strategy 2025-2019, p. 3

57. For instance, in June 2023, the Minister of Youth launched a training program aimed at developing Jordan’s national plan for implementing UN Resolution 2250 on «Youth, Peace, and Security.» This program is being implemented by the MoY and peace and security liaison officers in government institutions. The Jordan News Agency, Ministry of Youth launches a program to activate the UN resolution on youth, peace, and security, last visited 17 July 2024.

58. MoH Website: Vision, Mission, and Values of the Ministry, last visited 14 June 2024.

of Health has executed pivotal actions, such as electronically distributing the plan to health directorates and hospitals across the entire country. A comprehensive nationwide immunization campaign targeting children under the age of 5, irrespective of their nationality, was carried out to combat polio. Additionally, the Rotavirus vaccine was incorporated into the national immunization program. In addition, the ministry formulated a medical liability legislation⁵⁹, and played a pivotal role in ensuring the availability of COVID-19 vaccines not only for Jordanian citizens but also for all foreign residents in Jordan. Informational posters were distributed in the five most widely spoken languages among non-Jordanian workers to promote awareness and encourage vaccination registration.⁶⁰ MoH also put forth a framework for accrediting healthcare establishments in Jordan.⁶¹

MoH has enacted administrative measures to safeguard and advance human rights, which include the creation of an internet-based platform for lodging complaints pertaining to human rights and Health.⁶² The Directorate of Legal Affairs has implemented significant initiatives, including the establishment of a dedicated human rights and international conventions department. The department is responsible for receiving, following up, studying, and addressing any issues related to human rights related to health, providing recommendations as needed.⁶³ Additionally, the Directorate of School Health underwent a comprehensive restructuring in 2018 to effectively address the health needs of students.⁶⁴ In addition, the Directorate of Awareness and Health Information is responsible for creating and implementing awareness campaigns across different media platforms.⁶⁵ The Directorate of Health for Persons with Disabilities and Mental Health, which was established in 2018, consists of two primary divisions.⁶⁶

The Directorate of Women's and Children's Health oversees the technical aspects of maternity and childhood departments in primary and comprehensive health centers affiliated with the Ministry of Health. The directorate consists of seven departments, including the Domestic Violence Department, Women's Health Department, Children's Health Department, Information and Supply Department, Family Planning Department, Supervisory Support Department, and the Training and Internal Supervision Department. The current number of primary health centers is 513, providing family planning and maternal and child health services. Most of these centers offer free family planning services to Jordanian and Syrian refugee women through various modern contraceptive methods, including intrauterine devices, implants, condoms, injections, and combination oral contraceptives. Counseling on the use of these methods is also provided by staff in these departments. Primary healthcare centers offer services for pregnant women, postpartum care up to 40 days after childbirth, and post-abortion care.⁶⁷

1.9 Ministry of Social Development

The Ministry of Social Development (MoSD) in Jordan is committed to delivering comprehensive assistance to individuals in need, focusing on safeguarding, support, and advancement with inclusive and equitable strategies to foster social development. Through a range of initiatives and programs, MoSD seeks to address various societal challenges, including gender-based violence, juvenile delinquency, domestic violence, and the welfare of persons with disabilities. These challenges are closely linked to the protection of human rights.⁶⁸ The following mapping of the MoSD's mandate is clustered by main areas of intervention.

59. In accordance with that, Law No. 2018/25 on Medical and Health Responsibility was issued.

60. Universal Periodic Review, National Report submitted pursuant to Human Rights Council resolutions 5/1 and 21/16 – Jordan, 16 November 2023, (A/HRC/WG.45/6/JOR/1), paragraph 127.

61. As a result, Healthcare Institutions Accreditation Bylaw No. 2016/105 was issued.

62. Anyone can file a complaint through this link on MoH Website, last visited 14 June 2024.

63. Jordan News Agency (Petra), The establishment of a dedicated department for human rights within the Ministry of Health, 18 April 2012, last visited 14 June 2024.

64. For instance, its Student Public and Dental Health Services Program was made available to elementary school students in grades 1 through 10 across all governorates in Jordan. MoH Website, School Health Directorate, last visited 14 June 2024.

65. MoH Website: Health Awareness and Media Directorate, last visited 14 June 2024.

66. MoH Website: Directorate of Health for People with Disabilities and Mental Health, last visited 14 June 2024.

67. Information and Research Center King Hussein Foundation, Rights of recipients of sexual and reproductive health services and the most vulnerable individuals in Jordan: Gaps in practice, unpublished.

68. MoSD Website: The Strategic Plan for the Ministry of Social Development (2026-2022), Amman, p 9, last visited 14 June 2024.

a) Associations Oversight and Support: MoSD plays a crucial role in implementing and overseeing Associations Law No. 51/2008. The Associations Registry, established within the MoSD, is managed, and overseen by the Associations Board, chaired by the MoSD, and including representatives from various ministries. The registry is responsible for several tasks, including approving the registration of associations, determining the relevant ministry, evaluating the performance and activities of associations in coordination with relevant ministries, issuing an annual report on the status of associations in the Kingdom, developing plans and programs to improve the conditions of associations, managing the Associations Fund, supervising it, and addressing any conflicts between associations through the formation of committees. Additionally, the registry issues necessary instructions to regulate its operations and coordinates the relationship between the registry's secretary and the relevant ministries in accordance with the applicable laws and regulations.⁶⁹

According to data provided by MoSD, Jordan has a total of 6,698 registered associations operating under the provisions of the Associations Law. The Department of Associations' Records plays a crucial role in overseeing various tasks outlined by the law, including reviewing requests for amendments to associations' bylaws, monitoring potential risks related to anti-money laundering and terrorism, and facilitating the approval process for foreign funding. Over the period spanning from 2017 to 2022, a total of 1,152 requests for foreign funding were granted approval. Additionally, the Associations Support Fund has extended support to approximately 1,940 associations, amounting to a total disbursement of 4,607,600 Jordanian dinars during the same timeframe.

b) Women's Protection and Support: MoSD, under the Minister's authority as recommended by the Secretary-General, has the power to create shelters for women in danger. These shelters are designed to offer temporary protection and housing until the underlying issues are resolved or threats are eliminated. These shelters provide a wide range of services that include social, economic, psychological, medical, counseling, cultural, and legal assistance for the people they help. In addition, the initiative involves establishing a specialized database to efficiently organize information regarding the women who are receiving these services. The ministry's dedication to protecting and assisting women at risk is demonstrated through this all-encompassing strategy.⁷⁰

According to the Domestic Violence Protection Law, settlement conditions⁷¹ carried out by the Family and Juvenile Protection Department in family conflicts cannot occur until a social and psychological study is conducted by the social and psychological specialist at the MoSD. The renewal of the settlement is contingent upon the evaluation of the specialist's opinion.⁷² The competent court possesses the jurisdiction to implement various measures in response to domestic violence, including compelling the offender to engage in public service, imposing restrictions on their access to specific locations, or mandating the involvement of the conflicting parties in psychological or social rehabilitation programs or sessions, as recommended by the specialist's report.⁷³

MoSD oversees the operations of three shelters: Reconciliation House, Dar Amneh, and Karameh Shelter for Women Survivors of Trafficking. To gain entry into government shelters, individuals must be referred by the Family and Juvenile Protection Department and governors at the ministry of interior.⁷⁴ In 2022, according to statistics from the MoSD, 981 women sought shelter due to gender-based violence. During the same period, 951 women successfully reintegrated back into their families after receiving support from these shelters. Furthermore, MoSD aided in the successful reintegration of 128 women who were at risk into the community. Additionally, the Karameh Shelter for Victims of Trafficking managed 134 cases throughout the year.

69. Articles 5, 4 and 22, Associations Law No. 2008/51.

70. Articles 3 and 4, Shelters for Women at Risk Bylaw No. 2016/171.

71. In the context of the Domestic Violence Protection Law, «settlement» refers to the resolution of family conflicts through agreements or mediated solutions facilitated by the Family and Juvenile Protection Department.

72. Article 8, Domestic Violence Protection Law No. 2017/15.

73. Article 11, Domestic Violence Protection Law No. 2017/15.

74. Article 9, Shelters for Women at Risk Bylaw No. 2016/171.

c) Juvenile Justice and Protection: The Juveniles Law mandates the establishment of an Office of Behavior Monitor, which is affiliated with the Ministry of Social Development in every court that handles juvenile cases.⁷⁵ When commencing investigations involving juvenile offenders, the Behavior Monitor provides a comprehensive written report to the Public Prosecutor. The report contains details pertaining to the juvenile's circumstances, family, and the surrounding conditions, encompassing material, social, and environmental aspects in which the juvenile was raised. This encompasses information regarding the juvenile's educational institution and scholastic accomplishments. The Behavior Monitor must submit additional reports to the court as necessary.⁷⁶ The Behavior Monitor has the authority to lodge a complaint with the police on behalf of the minor,⁷⁷ attend the minor's trial, and offer support to the minor in case there is incriminating evidence against them.⁷⁸ In addition, the Behavior Monitor supervises the juvenile if the court determines that they should be placed under judicial supervision. If the Behavior Monitor recommends it, the judge can also exercise the power to place the juvenile in a care facility.⁷⁹

d) Child and Elderly Welfare: The Directorate of Family and Childhood is tasked with safeguarding and providing for at-risk children, guaranteeing a satisfactory quality of life that fulfills their developmental, psychological, and educational requirements. This is accomplished by implementing either institutional or alternative family care for families who are unable to provide care. The Directorate concurrently focuses on upholding the dignity of elderly individuals who require social and residential services, while also exercising supervision over elderly care homes and day clubs. In addition, the Directorate oversees the operation of nurseries, designs early childhood programs, and encompasses five departments: Nurseries, Elderly and Disabled Care, Alternative Family Care, Follow-up Care, and Childhood Protection Homes. Each department is assigned distinct responsibilities that encompass overseeing childcare facilities, formulating legislation, and collaborating with pertinent authorities to deliver comprehensive services.⁸⁰

The statistics furnished by the MoSD for the year 2022 provide insight into the ministry's endeavors in this domain. Notably, the ministry facilitated a conducive milieu for the custodial care of 2,217 juveniles in conflict with the law. These individuals were accommodated within specialized rehabilitation facilities, wherein they were exposed to a spectrum of integrated programs encompassing psychological, educational, scientific, social, and vocational dimensions. Concurrently, the ministry addressed a total of 7,308 cases through its juvenile police division. Moreover, 77 children were successfully integrated into foster families, while 156 elderly individuals availed themselves of the services rendered by residential care institutions supported by the MoSD.

e) Disability Support and Integration: The Directorate of Family and Childhood is dedicated to the protection and care of children in need of protection and support, ensuring a decent standard of living that meets their developmental, psychological, and educational needs in their best interest. This is achieved through residential care or alternative family care, which addresses the needs of families unable to have children while simultaneously fulfilling the need for family care and the right of children to live in a safe environment.

The Directorate also focuses on preserving the dignity of elderly individuals who require social or residential care services through the Elderly Care Account, which funds programs aimed at this group. Additionally, the Directorate is concerned with nurseries and the development of early childhood programs.⁸¹

75. Article 10, Juveniles Law No. 2014/32.

76. Article 11, Juveniles Law No. 2014/32.

77. Article 12, Juveniles Law No. 2014/32.

78. Article 22, Juveniles Law No. 2014/32.

79. Article 24, Juveniles Law No. 2014/32.

80. MoSD Website: Technical Units, last visited 16 June 2024.

81. Ibid.

The data provided by the MoSD for the year 2022 is evidence of the achievements of the directorate in relation to individuals with disabilities. The data indicates that a total of 570 individuals with disabilities utilized the residential services provided by the ministry. In addition, a total of 880 individuals with disabilities received significant advantages from the inclusive day-care services that were offered. In addition, the ministry supervised the participation of 1,085 individuals with disabilities in projects carried out by private and voluntary organizations. In addition, 1,016 individuals with disabilities received services obtained from centers in the private and voluntary sectors.

2. Coordination of the Executive: the ministerial committees



2. Coordination of the Executive: the ministerial committees

In Jordan, Ministerial Committees have been set up to play a key role in coordinating human rights efforts. These committees come in two forms: Legislative Committees, established by law and tasked with specific, compulsory duties, and Administrative Committees, formed by administrative decisions to address specific human rights issues with greater flexibility in structure and function. This section will delve into these committees, exploring their compositions and the role they play.

2.1 Committees established by Law

This section presents the most significant committees established by law or bylaw, outlining their roles in activating and enhancing the human rights protection system as defined by relevant legislation.

a) The National Committee for the Prevention of Human Trafficking

According to the Anti-Trafficking of Persons Law No. 9/2009, the National Committee for the Prevention of Human Trafficking is chaired by the MoJ. The committee includes members such as the Secretary-General of the MoJ, the Secretary-General (SG) of the MoI, the Secretary-General of the MoL, the General Commissioner of the NCHR, a representative from the MOFA, a representative from the MoSD, a representative from the Ministry of Industry and Trade, a representative from the MoH, a senior officer from the General Security Directorate, and the Secretary-General of the National Council for Family Affairs.⁸²

The committee is tasked with several responsibilities, including formulating public policy to prevent human trafficking, developing necessary plans for its implementation, overseeing its application, reviewing relevant legislation, coordinating between official and non-official entities involved in preventing human trafficking crimes, issuing a national guide containing guidelines and educational materials related to its work, disseminating awareness among employers and stakeholders involved in recruiting workers, studying international, regional, and local reports related to preventing human trafficking and taking necessary actions, and collaborating with all official and non-official entities to implement necessary physical, psychological, and social recovery programs for victims and those affected by human trafficking crimes⁸³. The committee was also responsible for drafting the National Strategy and Action Plan for Combating Human Trafficking in the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan 2019-2022.⁸⁴ Furthermore, the committee endorsed the National Strategy for Combating Human Trafficking for the years 2024 to 2027. This comprehensive national plan aims to foster integration and collaboration among all official and non-governmental entities to strengthen efforts in prevention, protection, prosecution, and international cooperation in addressing the challenges posed by human trafficking. Additionally, an updated national standard operating procedure for handling victims of human trafficking was launched, which includes indicators for identifying various forms of exploitation and clearly defines the roles and responsibilities of each entity involved in addressing cases of human trafficking.⁸⁵

82. Article 4, Anti-Trafficking in Persons Law No. 2009/9

83. Article 5, Anti-Trafficking in Persons Law No. 2009/9

84. MoJ Website: The National Strategy and Action Plan for Combating Human Trafficking in the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, last visited 14 June 2024.

85. Al Dustour Newspaper, Oman hosts the 5th Government Forum to Combat Human Trafficking in the Middle East, Wednesday, 17 April 2024, last visited 17 July 2024.

b) Committee for the Assistance Fund for Victims of Human Trafficking

The Secretary-General of the MoJ for Judicial Affairs chairs the Committee for the Assistance Fund for Victims of Human Trafficking, established under Bylaw No. 6/2023⁸⁶. Among its main tasks are making necessary decisions regarding providing assistance to victims and approving the disbursement of funds from the Fund according to allocated expenditures. Expenditures include the voluntary return of victims to their countries or any other country of their choice, immediate translation and legal advice, and urgent expenses received from the Anti-Trafficking Unit at the General Security Directorate⁸⁷. There is also representation from the MoJ in the Committee for the Sheltering of Victims and Those Affected by Human Trafficking Crimes, as per Bylaw No. 30/2012.⁸⁸ The committee is tasked with developing plans, programs, and methods of operation for these shelters. It conducts regular visits and inspections, approves social, psychological, cultural, religious, guidance, and rehabilitation programs.⁸⁹

c) Supervisory Committee on Shelters for Women at Risk

The supervisory committee on shelters, headed by the Secretary-General of the MoSD, is composed of representatives from the ministries of Interior, Justice, Health, the Department of Chief Justice, the Public Security Directorate, and two experts from civil society organizations. The committee's primary responsibility is to formulate strategies, initiatives, and operational procedures for the shelter. They are also in charge of supervising the execution of these plans and assessing their effectiveness in alignment with the authorized overarching policy. In addition, the committee regularly visits and inspects the shelter. It also approves the shelter's social, psychological, religious, counseling, and rehabilitation programs. The committee establishes one or more subcommittees, such as an evaluation committee, and defines their tasks and authorities in a formation decision. These subcommittees provide recommendations to the main committee⁹⁰. It should be noted that admissions to the shelters should be voluntary.⁹¹

d) The Council of Information:

The Access to Information Law No. 47/2007 establishes an Information Council, headed by the Ministry of Culture and composed of the Information Commissioner⁹², the Secretary-General (SG) of the MoJ and the Mol, the SG of the Higher Media Council, the Director-General (DG) of the General Statistics Department, the DG of the National Information Technology Center, the Director of Moral Guidance in the Armed Forces and the General Commissioner for Human Rights.⁹³ The council may invite any person with expertise and experience to attend its meetings without having the right to vote when making decisions.⁹⁴

The Information Council holds several responsibilities. These include ensuring the provision of information to requesters within the confines of the law, addressing and resolving complaints from information requesters in accordance with specified instructions, adopting information request forms, issuing publications, and engaging in activities to foster a culture emphasizing the right to knowledge and information access.⁹⁵ The National Library Department provides

86. Article 4, the Assistance Fund for Victims of Human Trafficking, established under Bylaw No. 2023/6.

87. Article 5, the Assistance Fund for Victims of Human Trafficking, established under Bylaw No. 2023/6.

88. Article 7, the Sheltering of Victims and Those Affected by Human Trafficking Crimes Bylaw No. 2012/30.

89. Article 8, the Sheltering of Victims and Those Affected by Human Trafficking Crimes Bylaw No. 2012/30.

90. Articles 6 and 7, Shelters for Women at Risk Bylaw No. 2016/171.

91. Article 10, Shelters for Women at Risk Bylaw No. 2016/171.

92. The Information Commissioner is also the Director-General of the National Library Department and is responsible for various tasks, including preparing information request forms, formulating instructions related to complaint acceptance and settlement procedures, receiving complaints, and conducting administrative and professional procedures necessary to execute the assigned tasks (Article 6, Law No. 2007/47)

93. Article 3, Law No. 2007/47.

94. Article 5/c, Law No. 2007/47.

95. Article 4, Law No. 2007/47.

the necessary administrative and professional services to fulfill the tasks and responsibilities assigned to the council and the Information Commissioner under this law.⁹⁶

According to the 2020 report from the Information Council, a total of 8,534 information requests were submitted to various government entities. The Information Council reports that 8,436 of these requests were addressed and only 99 requests faced refusal based on the provisions of the law.⁹⁷ Their data also shows that the applicants formed a diverse group with 14% identified as journalists, 61% as researchers, and 25% as ordinary individuals.⁹⁸

2.2 Committees established by Administrative Decisions

Another set of committees is established through administrative decisions, each led by one of the ministries and featuring representatives from other ministries. These committees are entrusted with specific missions related to human rights, reflecting a collaborative and multi-ministerial approach to address diverse aspects of human rights in Jordan. This section will provide detailed insights into the composition, roles, and missions of these committees.

a) Inter-Ministerial Committee for Women's Empowerment

The Interministerial committees are created by the Prime Minister and consist of several ministers, with the Prime Minister designating the leading minister for each committee. This approach was applied in the establishment of the Interministerial Committee for Women Empowerment (IMC-WE) in 2018, demonstrating resilience across different administrations. Notably, the leadership of this committee has rotated among the MoSD, Ministry of Planning and International Cooperation, and MoPPA. A constant presence in this committee is the Jordanian National Commission for Women (JNCW), collaboratively ensuring government development plans align with the JNCW's National Strategies for Women⁹⁹.

The IMC-WE provides a horizontally and vertically integrated structure that can help streamline the Government of Jordan's efforts in advancing women empowerment and gender-sensitive planning, for Women Peace and Security agenda and beyond.¹⁰⁰

IMC-WE has endorsed the National Strategy of Women (2020-2025), and the Executive Plan for the National Strategy for Women in Jordan and referred to the Council of Ministers. It should be noted that these 2 documents were prepared by JNCW. IMC-WE has also endorsed Gender Integration Policy in 2020 and the Women Empowerment Strategy within the Economic Modernization Vision in 2022.¹⁰¹ It has also approved the general framework of the second Jordanian National Action Plan for the Implementation of UN Security Council Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace, Security (2022-2025) to be approved by the Council of Ministers.

The achievements of IMC-WE can be attributed to the dynamic leadership it has witnessed

96. Article 6/b, Law No. 2007/47.

97. According to Article 12 of Law No. 2007/47, officials are prohibited from disclosing certain information, including confidential documents from other countries, anything that could harm national security, internal discussions before decisions are made, personal data protected by law, private communications with government departments, details impacting negotiations, ongoing investigations, and commercially sensitive information.

98. National Library Website: Information Council 2020 report, last visited 14 June 2024.

99. HRH Princess Basma Bint Talal website: The Jordanian National Commission for Women, last visited 14 June 2024.

100. UN Women Jordan, The Inter-Ministerial Committee for Women's Empowerment convenes partners for the annual Programme Board meeting of Jordan's National Action Plan on UN Security Council Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace, and Security, 2020. [<https://jordan.unwomen.org/en/news/stories/2020/july/the-imc-for-womens-empowerment-convenes-partners-for-the-annual-programme-board-meeting-of-jonap>] last visited 22 January 2024.

101. JNCW Website: The most significant achievements in the journey of women during the reign of His Majesty King Abdullah II, 2023, last visited 14 June 2024.

over the years. Through strategic guidance and collaborative efforts, IMC-WE has been able to effectively navigate complex challenges and drive meaningful progress in advancing women's empowerment agenda in Jordan.

b) Human Rights Committee at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Expatriates

According to the Jordanian MOFAE, the Permanent Committee for Human Rights was established in 2006 as a permanent committee under its chairmanship and with the membership of relevant ministries and governmental bodies. The Committee serves as the national mechanism for drafting and preparing periodic human rights reports for treaty bodies¹⁰², and for reviewing any reports on the human rights situation in Jordan issued by international non-governmental organizations similar to the annual reports or specific reports issued by Amnesty International, Human Rights Watch, and the U.S. Department of State. The latest of these efforts was the preparation of the national report for the United Nations Human Rights Council under the Universal Periodic Review (UPR) of Human Rights.¹⁰³

c) The Follow-up on Human Rights Recommendations Committee

Established in 2016 by the Prime Minister's decree as a permanent, the Committee for Follow-up on Human Rights Recommendations plays a vital role in safeguarding human rights in Jordan. Led by the Head of the Human Rights Unit within the Prime Ministry, the committee brings together representatives from 22 key ministries. This strategic composition ensures participation from ministries most intricately involved in human rights issues, such as MOI, MOSD, MOFA, MoL, MoJ and MoPPA.

The committee's core mission is to foster continuous and effective communication on all human rights recommendations. It acts as a central hub, facilitating ongoing dialogue with all relevant ministries, institutions, and departments. This communication encompasses recommendations issued at various levels – national, Arab regional, and international – ensuring a comprehensive approach to human rights in Jordan.

Beyond communication, the committee is mandated to actively monitor the implementation of the National Human Rights Plan. It keeps a close eye on the recommendations emanating from the UPR conducted by the Human Rights Council, as well as the NCHR. Additionally, the committee serves as a bridge between the government and civil society organizations (CSOs). By reviewing observations and recommendations from CSOs concerned with human rights issues and cases, the committee promotes a collaborative environment for tackling these concerns.

The establishment of the Permanent Committee underscores Jordan's commitment to strengthening its human rights framework. Its aim is to foster a more institutionalized approach, ensuring coordinated and unified official efforts towards upholding human rights. This aligns with the royal directives that emphasize the importance of adhering to the best standards in legislation, policies, and best practices in the human rights domain.

The committee convenes on a regular basis and when significant reports are issued on the state of human rights in Jordan. These reports may include the US State Department's report on human rights, concluding observations from UN treaty bodies, and reports by prominent international NGOs like Amnesty International and Human Rights Watch.

102. Committee on the Rights of the Child (2021), Sixth periodic report submitted by Jordan under article 44 of the Convention, CRC/C/JOR/6, Human Rights Committee (2017), Consideration of reports submitted by States parties under article 40 of the Covenant, Jordan, CCPR/C/JOR/5, Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (2016), Consideration of reports submitted by States parties under article 9 of the Convention, Combined eighteenth to twentieth periodic reports of States parties, CERD/C/JOR/20-18, last visited 14 June 2024.

103. Examples of these reports include, Human Rights Council (2024), Working Group on the Universal Periodic Review Forty-fifth session 22 January–2 February 2024 National report submitted in accordance with Human Rights Council resolutions 1/5 and 21/16- Jordan, A/HRC/WG.45/6/JOR/1, last visited 14 June 2024.

d) The Government Coordination Team for Human Rights

Established in 2014 by the Prime Minister, the Government Coordination Team for Human Rights is designed to play a role in supporting the government's human rights agenda. Its extensive network comprises about 130 liaison officers from across ministries and government institutions, supporting the implementation and monitoring of human rights initiatives throughout the country. Headed by the Director of the Human Rights Unit at the Prime Ministry, the team ensures a coordinated approach to upholding human rights across various government sectors.

The team works on three main objectives:

- highlight human rights advancements in legislation, legal frameworks, policies, implemented practices, and procedures.
- secure alignment between Jordanian societal values and the fundamental respect for human rights.
- ensure that all legislation and decisions made within ministries and institutions are compliant with international human rights covenants and treaties.

The Government Coordination Team for Human Rights also serves as a primary source consulted when preparing international and regional reports that track the development of human rights within the Kingdom. The team actively collaborates with the NCHR and other relevant organizations to offer human rights training courses for its members.

The team's approach extends beyond broad training sessions. They strategically target specific groups of liaison officers for focused awareness campaigns when necessary. For instance, upon the issuance of the Law on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities in 2017, liaison officers from ministries and public institutions involved in construction received specialized training. This targeted approach ensured these entities understood their crucial role in adapting buildings, roads, facilities, and other public and private spaces to meet the specific needs of people with disabilities, in accordance with established building codes.

e) Committee for Aligning National Legislation with International Conventions

In 2018, the Prime Minister made the decision to establish a committee led by the MoJ with the purpose of examining the framework of international human rights conventions, conducting a comparative analysis with national legislation, and evaluating the necessity for modifications or revisions to ensure conformity with international conventions. The primary objective of the committee is to examine the congruity between national legislation and international and regional human rights conventions ratified by Jordan.

The committee comprises several ministers (MoPPA, Ministry of Awqaf and Islamic Affairs, Minister of State for Legal Affairs), the President of the Legislation and Opinion Bureau, the Government Coordinator for Human Rights, the Secretary-General of the Higher Council for Persons with Disabilities, the General Commissioner of the NCHR, the Secretary-General of the National Council for Family Affairs, the Secretary-General of the JNCWA, the President of the Jordanian Bar Association, a Parliament representative, and a judiciary representative.

f) The National Criminal Justice Committee

This committee is chaired by the Secretary-General of the Ministry of Justice for Judicial Affairs by a decision of the Prime Minister. The committee includes in its membership a number of representatives from official and non-official entities. The Criminal Justice Strategy for the years 2023–2026 has been approved, which includes three pillars (an aware environment to reduce the spread of crime, efficient and effective investigation and criminal case management procedures, and an effective reform and rehabilitation system contributing to reintegration). An executive plan has been prepared, including a set of objectives, activities, and projects to implement the strategy's pillars.

According to the MoJ, the committee holds meetings and has formed a technical committee comprising representatives from the concerned bodies. The primary objective of the technical committee is to conduct an examination of national legislation and evaluate its alignment with international conventions that Jordan has formally ratified. Subsequently, recommendations are presented to the initial committee. The authors are aware that recommendations made by this committee have resulted in amendments to several laws. These amendments include: the amendment of the Labor Law to enshrine the principle of equal pay for work of equal value and to prescribe a penalty for gender wage disparity. The Companies Law has also been amended to take into account women's representation on the boards of directors of public joint-stock companies. The Penal Law was also amended to render the system of alternatives to penalties of deprivation of liberty more consistent with international norms by expanding the use of such alternatives, as well as the powers of the penalty execution judge. Finally, the Legal Aid Bylaw was amended to expand the scope of the legal aid system.





3. Independent Institutions



3. Independent Institutions

Independent institutions have also been established in Jordan to participate in the monitoring and protection of human rights. Some have been constitutionally mandated, while others have been instituted by laws, bylaws, or the Council of Ministers.

In this section, these institutions will be showcased, categorizing them into two distinct groups: parliamentary and non-parliamentary reporting institutions.

In Jordan, the parliamentary reporting institutions are required, by the law that establishes them, to submit their annual report to both the Parliament and the executive branch, hereby allowing for the parliament to use the findings of these reports to hold the government accountable. Their establishment demonstrates a will to incorporate human rights considerations into the activities of the parliament.

In contrast, non-parliamentary reporting institutions function autonomously from the legislative branch and derive their authority from laws, bylaws, or executive decisions. Although they may engage with the parliament and other governmental bodies, their main methods of reporting and oversight typically involve external mechanisms. These mechanisms include interacting with civil society, international organizations, and specialized committees. This set-up enables non-parliamentary institutions to concentrate on particular human rights issues with greater expertise and adaptability, supplementing the broader supervisory roles of parliamentary bodies.

Each type of institution plays a distinctive role within the country's legal and institutional framework for the protection and promotion of human rights.

3.1 Parliamentary Reporting Institutions

Several independent institutions follow a systematic reporting process by submitting their yearly reports to both the House of Representatives and the Senate. The institutionalized approach, which is incorporated in the legislation that established these entities, serves multiple purposes.

First and foremost, these institutions promote accountability by providing a detailed report of their activities, ensuring transparency and compliance with their mandates. This method of reporting also provides the Parliament with a detailed comprehension of the present state of human rights, allowing legislative authorities to carefully evaluate the effectiveness of existing laws and policies in protecting human rights. Moreover, this reporting framework functions as a surveillance mechanism for overseeing the actions of the executive authority. Through regular presentations of their findings to the Parliament, these institutions actively contribute to a system of checks and balances, which guarantees that the executive branch conforms its actions to human rights principles and legal frameworks.

Overall, by actively involving themselves with the legislative branch, these institutions can strengthen their independence, demonstrating a dedication to openness and a readiness to have their work examined by parliament. This mutually beneficial relationship guarantees a strong and comprehensive structure for safeguarding and advancing human rights within the nation.

a) The National Center for Human Rights

The National Center for Human Rights (NCHR) was established in 2003 and under law its current law No.51/2006 is considered an independent institution. The NCHR's prominent role lies in monitoring and addressing human rights violations and public freedoms in the Kingdom, actively seeking to halt any infringements on these rights.¹⁰⁴ The NCHR is established in conformity with the UN Paris Principles.¹⁰⁵ The NCHR has been accredited with Status A by the Global Alliance of National Human Rights Institutions (GANHRI) for three consecutive cycles,¹⁰⁶ signifying its full compliance with the Paris Principles.¹⁰⁷

The supervision and administration of the NCHR are overseen by a board of trustees, not exceeding twenty-one members, appointed by a royal decree upon the Prime Minister's nomination.¹⁰⁸ The chairman and members are appointed for a renewable term of four years, based on royal decree and the Prime Minister's assignment.¹⁰⁹ The board's responsibilities include formulating and monitoring policy implementation, approving annual work plans, enhancing the center's activities and evaluating their effectiveness, endorsing the annual human rights report, working on income generation, strengthening relationships with similar institutions, approving budgets and final accounts, appointing auditors, and issuing necessary instructions for center management. Additionally, the Board supervises the various human rights activities conducted by the NCHR, ensuring alignment with established policies and objectives.¹¹⁰

The General Commissioner of the NCHR is appointed by a decision of the Council of Ministers based on the nomination of the Board of Trustees for a renewable term of three years, subject to royal decree.¹¹¹ The General Commissioner is entrusted with a range of duties, including enforcing the center's policy and overseeing the implementation of the Board's decisions. The Commissioner is mandated to play a crucial role in monitoring and addressing human rights violations and public freedoms in the Kingdom, handling complaints, and conducting necessary investigations. The Commissioner must work towards resolving instances of human rights infringement through various means, monitors complaints and violations until resolution, and documents these cases for inclusion in the NCHR's annual report. Additionally, the Commissioner is mandated to guide citizens on their constitutional rights through communication channels, assist in legal recourse, and disburse necessary expenses to halt rights infringements, subject to budget availability.¹¹²

The NCHR operates independently in conducting its intellectual, political, and humanitarian activities related to human rights, without being subject to questioning regarding actions within its specified mandate outlined in the law. Additionally, the law safeguards the NCHR by prohibiting any inspection of its headquarters and branches in the Kingdom without a judicial order, in the presence of the competent public prosecutor. The NCHR must be duly notified, and a representative invited to attend the inspection, rendering any action contrary to this provision null and void.¹¹³

104. Article 7, Law no.2006/51.

105. The Paris Principles ('Principles Relating to the Status of National Human Rights Institutions') set out the minimum standards that NHRIs must meet in order to be considered credible and to operate effectively.

106. GANHRI was established in 1993 as the International Coordinating Committee of National Institutions for the promotion and protection of human rights (ICC). It has been known as the Global Alliance of National Human Rights Institutions (GANHRI) since 2016 and is a member-based network organization that gathers National Human Rights Institutions (NHRIs) from all around the world.

107. Report of the GANHRI Sub-Committee on Accreditation (SCA), February and March 2023, SCA-Report-First-Session-2023-EN.pdf (ohchr.org), p.36: "The National Center for Human Rights (JNCHR) Recommendation: The SCA recommends that the accreditation status of the JNCHR be maintained", last visited 6 June 2024.

108. Article 13, Law no.2006/51.

109. Article 13, Law no.2006/51.

110. Article 14, Law no.2006/51.

111. Article 16, Law no.2006/51.

112. Article 17, Law no.2006/51.

113. Articles 3 and 6, Law no.2006/51.

The Commissioner is assigned additional responsibilities under various laws, such as serving as a member of both the Information Council¹¹⁴ and the National Committee for the Prevention of Human Trafficking.¹¹⁵ The NCHR also undertakes the responsibility of receiving grievances and directing instances to the Anti-Trafficking Unit within the Public Security Directorate.

The NCHR aims to achieve several objectives in the realm of human rights protection and promotion. These include bolstering human rights principles inspired by the inclusive message of Islam and Arab cultural values, reinforcing constitutional rights, and adhering to international conventions. Additionally, the NCHR strives to solidify human rights principles, rejecting discrimination based on race, language, religion, or gender. It actively promotes a democratic approach, aiming to establish a balanced model with political pluralism, adherence to the rule of law, and the assurance of economic, social, and cultural development. Furthermore, the NCHR endeavors to facilitate the Kingdom's accession to Arab and international agreements pertaining to human rights.¹¹⁶

For the NCHR to effectively pursue its objectives, the law provides various means at its disposal. These include:¹¹⁷

1. Monitoring human rights situations in the Kingdom, addressing violations, and taking necessary actions, such as settling or referring cases to the executive, legislative, or judicial authorities to halt and remedy their effects.
2. Promoting human rights principles in education at various levels, particularly in accordance with Islamic teachings.
3. Issuing statements and declarations related to human rights issues in the Kingdom.
4. Conducting legal, political, social, educational, and intellectual studies and research related to the center's objectives.
5. Conducting training courses, workshops, and awareness sessions.
6. Publishing periodic and non-periodic statements, newsletters, and publications related to human rights.
7. Exchanging information and experiences with national, Arab, Islamic, regional, and international associations and organizations with similar objectives.
8. Formulating recommendations and offering necessary suggestions to safeguard human rights in the Kingdom.
9. Establishing a database related to human rights.
10. Proposing legislation relevant to the center's objectives.
11. Visiting rehabilitation centers, care facilities, and events, as well as having the right to access relevant information.

The NCHR annually produces a report on the state of human rights and public freedoms in the Kingdom, submitting it to the Senate, the House of Representatives, and the Cabinet.¹¹⁸ Generally, these annual reports detail the national achievements in the field of human rights, document identified violations and complaints, and outline the approaches taken to address them. The reports also include policy recommendations, proposed policy and legislative amendments, in alignment with international standards. Typically, the annual reports are divided into four sections. The first section monitors the state of civil and political

114. See section 2-1-d

115. See section 2-1-a

116. Article 4, Law no.2006/51.

117. Article 10, Law no.2006/51.

118. Article 12, Law no.2006/51.

rights in Jordan, while the second section covers economic, social, and cultural rights. The third section focuses on the rights of the most vulnerable groups, including women, children, persons with disabilities, and the elderly. The fourth section provides a summary of the complaints received by the center in the past year and highlights the NCHR's significant achievements. The NCHR advocates for an enhanced role of the annual report in fortifying Parliament's oversight function. This can be accomplished by leveraging the report's content to ensure governmental accountability for observed infractions. Concurrently, the NCHR actively engages in the legislative deliberation process concerning human rights legislation, providing legal analysis. This involvement is exemplified by its contribution to discussions on amended laws regarding the right to access information, anti-trafficking, and legislation concerning cybercrimes.

According to the 2022 annual report, the NCHR received 620 complaints compared to 548 in 2021. Of these, 417 complaints were related to civil and political rights, 172 were related to economic, social, and cultural rights, and 31 were related to the most vulnerable groups in need of protection.

The following tables explain NCHR Complaint Resolution Statistics for 2022

Complaint Status	Number of Complaints	Percentage of Total Complaints
Satisfactory Resolution	148	24.00%
Closed without Resolution	65	10.50%
Lack of Jurisdiction	34	5.25%
No Human Rights Violation	122	19.70%
Non-cooperation	15	2.50%
Archived	3	0.05%
Under Review	232	38.00%

The high number of complaints still under review at the center can be attributed to various factors. These include delayed or absent responses from concerned parties, the complainants' reluctance to pursue their cases, and the pressing need for qualified officers in ministries and official institutions who possess legal knowledge and technical skills to effectively address complaints. Additionally, the NCHR encounters challenges related to the timely provision of necessary documents for the verification process in certain cases.¹¹⁹ According to the NCHR, the increase in complaints is attributed to heightened awareness of its role, as well as the emergence of novel categories of complaints that were previously unfamiliar to the NCHR, such as environmental complaints.

The NCHR explained that it has a comprehensive system for handling complaints, encompassing the entire process from submission to resolution within designated timeframes for each stage, while also considering the input provided by the complainant. Furthermore, the center possesses a group of liaison officers stationed within public institutions who are responsible for addressing complaints that are relevant to the specific public institution in which they are employed. In cases where the complainant lacks the capacity to secure legal representation, the center will refer the matter to the Bar Association for the purpose of appointing a lawyer. This referral is made in accordance with a memorandum of understanding established between the NCHR and the Bar Association.

119. The Nineteenth Annual Report on the Human Rights Situation in the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, the National Center for Human Rights, Amman, 2022, pp 144-137.

The NCHR is actively engaged in preparing shadow and alternative reports for treaty bodies and the national report for the Universal Periodic Review (UPR). It also issues reports that meticulously monitor elections, capturing any violations that may occur during the electoral processes. The NCHR also monitors and produces reports on demonstrations and public gatherings, offering insights into the prevailing human rights conditions. Furthermore, it regularly publishes reports on the status of rehabilitation and detention centers.¹²⁰ Additionally, the NCHR conducts specialized studies on various human rights topics, such as the Crimes Prevention Law, the rights of inmates, and the rights of rural women.¹²¹

b) Independent Election Commission

According to the constitutional amendments made in 2011, the constitution mandated the establishment of an independent body to oversee and manage the parliamentary electoral process at all its stages. It also oversees any other elections determined by the Council of Ministers¹²². With the constitutional amendments of 2014, the powers of the Independent Elections Commission (IEC) were expanded to include the management of municipal elections, as well as any other general elections according to the provisions of the law. The Council of Ministers may assign the Independent Elections Commission to manage or supervise any other elections upon the request of the legally authorized entity to conduct those elections.¹²³ It is worth noting that before the establishment of the Independent Elections Commission, the Ministry of Interior was responsible for overseeing and managing the electoral process.

In accordance with the constitutional amendment in 2011, the Independent Elections Commission Law No. 11/2012 was issued, and this law has been amended in the years 2015, 2016, and 2022 to expand IEC's scope, incorporating constitutional amendments and the issuance of the Parties Law No. 7/2022.

IEC has legal personality and financial and administrative autonomy.¹²⁴ It is governed by a Board of Commissioners consisting of a president and four members appointed by royal decree for a non-renewable term of six years. A list of proposed names for appointment to the board is submitted to the king, prepared by a committee chaired by the prime minister, and including the presidents of the Senate and the House of Representatives, as well as the head of the Judicial Council.¹²⁵

It is noteworthy that the involvement of the heads of the three authorities in selecting the board of commissioners of the authority contrasts with the process of selecting the board of trustees of the National Center for Human Rights, which relies solely on the recommendation by the prime minister. Furthermore, their membership is limited to a single term and cannot be extended. To uphold the autonomy and impartiality of the commission and mitigate the possibility of members developing excessive alignment with political or other interests.

120. The center conducts regular visits to correctional and rehabilitation centers, preparing specialized reports, and issuing periodic reports, with the most notable ones being the third periodic report on the conditions of correctional and rehabilitation centers (2020-2019), and a report on places of temporary detention in the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan for the year 2016.

121. All publications are available on the Center's website [<https://www.nchr.org.jo/ar/>].

122. Article 2/67 of the constitution as amended in 2011.

123. Article 2/67 of the constitution as amended in 2014.

124. Article 3, Law No. 2012/11.

125. Article 6, Law No. 2012/11.

In accordance with the provisions of Law No. 11/2012, the Commission is responsible for the following:¹²⁶

- Managing parliamentary and municipal elections, as well as any general elections, in accordance with the provisions of the law.
- Managing or supervising any other elections as assigned by the Council of Ministers, based on a request from the authorized entity according to the law.
- Reviewing applications for the establishment of political parties, monitoring their affairs in accordance with the provisions of this law and the Political Parties Law.

The third responsibility, which involves reviewing applications for the establishment of political parties, has been added based on Political Parties Law No. 7/2022. This law has transferred the authority over such applications from the Ministry of Political and Parliamentary Affairs to the Independent Elections Commission. This change indicates a shift in responsibilities and underscores the commission's role in overseeing the establishment and affairs of political parties in accordance with the new legal framework.

In 2024, the IEC launched the “Women’s Empowerment Strategy 2024-2026 - framework to empower women in elections and political parties”. This strategy prioritized issues related to women’s empowerment in elections and political parties, based on an analysis of the current situation and addressing challenges related to women’s participation in political work. This framework aligns with the IEC’s strategic plan 2023-2024, which emphasized in its fifth objective the need to empower women, youth, and persons with disabilities and to guarantee their constitutional right to political participation.¹²⁷

The board of commissioners is vested with significant responsibilities and powers, including formulating the general policy for the IEC, determining election dates, overseeing voter and candidate registration, publishing electoral information, establishing rules for campaign activities, promoting voter awareness, issuing instructions for publishing election results, and approving the formation of political parties.¹²⁸

The Commission issues a detailed final report for each electoral process at all its stages, which is then submitted to the King and published in the official gazette. Additionally, the IEC provides an annual report on its activities and operations, sending a copy to both the Cabinet and the Parliament.¹²⁹ This reporting mechanism ensures transparency and accountability in all procedures undertaken by the commission.

d) The Higher Council for Persons with Disabilities

The Higher Council for Persons with Disabilities (HCPD) was established by Law No. 31/2007. However, this law was repealed by Law No. 20/2017, which is considered an improvement over the previous law due to its greater alignment with the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

The HCPD enjoys independent legal and administrative personality.¹³⁰ It undertakes crucial responsibilities, including proposing public policies and legislation related to the rights of persons with disabilities. Moreover, the HCPD provides technical support and facilitates coordination among various entities to clearly define their roles, responsibilities, and to ensure the implementation of their duties as outlined in the law No. 20/2017. It also monitors and evaluates how well these entities adhere to the existing legislation. Additionally, the HCPD oversees the human rights situation of persons with disabilities, investigates individual and institutional complaints, and publishes an annual report on these matters. Furthermore, the

126. Article 4, Law No. 2012/11.

127. Primary Information Providers, Independent Election Commission, Written information shared in July 2024.

128. Article 12, Law No. 2012/11.

129. Article 12, Law No. 2012/11.

130. Article 7, Law No. 2017/20.

HCPD is responsible for developing standards related to the rights of persons with disabilities, conducting comprehensive and specialized studies, negotiating and signing agreements and memoranda of understanding, and forming both standing and ad-hoc committees.¹³¹

The President of the HCPD is appointed by royal decree based on the Prime Minister's nomination. The President is entrusted with several responsibilities, including overseeing the implementation of the HCPD's public policy, representing the HCPD before various entities, signing agreements and memoranda in which the HCPD is a party, and executing the powers granted to them by prevailing laws and regulations.¹³²

The Board of Trustees oversees the work of the HCPD. The Board is composed of the President and a maximum of 25 members, appointed by a Cabinet decision upon the President's nomination. The appointment conditions involve ensuring representation from at least nine members with disabilities, three members representing families of persons with disabilities, and eight members with expertise. The expertise criteria include being Jordanian citizens, at least 18 years old, and having relevant experience, ranging from law and human rights to planning, management, and social work. The Board strives for diversity, considering different types of disabilities and representation from organizations, organizations of Persons with Disabilities, employees, workers, women, and students.¹³³

The Secretary-General is appointed by a decision of the Council of Ministers based on the President's recommendation, with his financial rights specified in the appointment decision. The Secretary-General assumes responsibilities such as executing decisions from the Board of Trustees and the President, managing the HCPD's executive apparatus, overseeing its staff, and preparing the internal organizational structure for approval by the Board of Trustees.¹³⁴

The Board of Trustees is responsible for approving and overseeing the implementation of the HCPD's general policy, reviewing, and approving the annual work plan and report, deliberating matters referred by the President and Secretary-General, engaging with relevant organizations, providing technical support in developing strategies and plans, and studying and approving instructions for HCPD operations.¹³⁵

A committee called the "Equal Opportunities Committee", chaired by the Secretary-General of the HCPD and composed of representatives from various entities, including the MoL, the Civil Service Bureau, the Jordan Chamber of Commerce, the Jordan Chamber of Industry, the Jordanian Federation of Labor Unions, NCHR private sector representatives, and individuals with relevant expertise and experience in disability issues. The committee is tasked with addressing complaints related to discrimination based on disability in the workplace, issuing technical reports on facilitating arrangements in the work environment, exchanging information with relevant entities to promote the inclusion of people with disabilities in the labor market, cooperating in the issuance of guidance materials and awareness publications, and other tasks assigned by the President. The committee meets regularly, and its decisions are made by a majority vote of attending members.¹³⁶

The procedures for filing complaints, documentation, notification of decisions, and meeting locations are determined by the committee, following instructions issued by the President for this purpose.¹³⁷ The HCPD's annual report for 2022 states that the committee of Equal Opportunities received 33 complaints, all of which were successfully resolved with the appropriate authorities.¹³⁸ According to the information provided by the HCPD, the committee

131. Article 8, Law No. 2017/20.

132. Article 10, Law No. 2017/20.

133. Membership terms are stipulated at Article 11, Law No. 2017/20.

134. See for other duties of the SG: Article 13, Law No. 2017/20.

135. For more details, see Article 12, Law No. 2017/20.

136. Established under Article 14 of Law No. 2017/20.

137. Article 14, Law No. 2017/20.

138. The Higher Council of People with Disabilities, Annual Report of 2022, p 6

deliberated on 109 complaints spanning the period from 2019 to 2021. Moreover, the committee has circulated a directive to all ministries and government agencies, requiring them to refer candidates with disabilities who are being considered for appointment to the Equal Opportunities Committee within the council for the determination of specific appointment requirements. Notably, seventeen candidates, comprising seven males and ten females, underwent interviews, following which requisite reports were generated to delineate the prerequisites that employers must fulfill to enable the execution of job responsibilities in the year 2022. Additionally, a cadre of liaison officers was assembled, drawn from both governmental and non-governmental spheres, with the aim of following up grievances pertaining to the employment of individuals with disabilities. This team consisted of twenty-three officers from governmental entities and eleven officers from non-governmental entities.

In addition to the complaints received by the Equal Opportunities Committee, HCPD receives all forms of complaints. According to the HCPD's 2022 annual report, a total of 1373 complaints/requests were received and addressed by the HCPD.¹³⁹ As per the information disclosed by the HCPD, the process of receiving complaints encompasses a diverse array of channels, inclusive of direct submissions to the council, electronic means, and engagement via social media platforms like Facebook or Instagram. Subsequent to reception, complaints undergo classification based on distinct criteria, including their nature, thematic focus, and perceived significance. These complaints are subsequently subjected to procedural handling, entailing collaboration with pertinent stakeholders. Upon formulation of an agreed response, it is duly communicated to the complainant. Finally, the efficacy of the rendered response is gauged through an evaluation conducted by the complainant, thereby ascertaining their level of satisfaction with the provided resolution or response.

In accordance with Law No. 20/2017, the HCPD issues an annual report on the status of persons with disabilities in the Kingdom.¹⁴⁰ The report includes information about achievements and challenges in the field of the rights of persons with disabilities, issues of compliance, data on complaints and recommendations at the policy, legislative, and practice levels to improve performance and enhance the quality of services provided to persons with disabilities. The HCPD president is committed to submitting the annual report to the Prime Minister, the President of the Senate, the Speaker of the House of Representatives, and making it publicly available.

According to key informants from HCDP, there is a notable lack of engagement from the legislative branch with the annual report. The House of Representatives neither deliberates on the annual report nor initiates actions based on its recommendations. Furthermore, inquiries directed to the HCPD or the government regarding the report are absent. While inquiries may be directed to the HCPD, these inquiries focus on broader disability issues rather than the specific content of the report. This pattern is mirrored in the Senate. Notably, no dedicated committees exist within either legislative body to oversee the implementation of the report's recommendations. In contrast, the government issues a circular to relevant departments, urging them to consider the report's recommendations.¹⁴¹

Furthermore, a specialized team has been formed by the HCPD to issue monitoring reports since 2018. This team engages in the evaluation of legislation, facilitates discussions with pertinent government entities, and collects data pertaining to ten specific areas: education, social welfare, employment, self-sufficiency, healthcare, political engagement, access to emergency services, tourism and cultural activities, religious observance, and mobility.¹⁴²

139. The Higher Council of People with Disabilities, Annual Report of 2022, p 37.

140. Article 9, Law No. 2017/20.

141. Kils, HCPD, interview conducted in March 2024

142. See for example The 2nd Annual Report on Monitoring the Situations of Persons with Disabilities and Their Rights in the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan for the Year 2020-2019, April 2021.

In addition to the above mentioned, the HCPD has issued several important guiding documents, including the Media Guide on Addressing Disability Issues, the Forty Questions and Answers Guide to Achieve Equal Opportunities in the Workplace for People with Disabilities, as well as guides on accessing various facilities. Moreover, a range of studies has been launched, such as the study titled “Persons with Disabilities between the Hammer of Peace and the Anvil of Misfortune,” addressing various aspects including reproductive and sexual health programs, the reality of early intervention services, and the status of inclusive education programs in preschools. Furthermore, HCPD coordinates with Ministry of Education, Ministry of Social Development and Ministry of Public Works and Construction to create an enabling environment for persons with disabilities.

Furthermore, the HCPD has introduced several strategic plans, including the Ten-Year Strategy for Inclusive Education, the National Strategy for Alternatives to Shelter Roles, and the National Plan for Rectifying the Status of Existing Buildings and Public Facilities.¹⁴³

The HCPD has identified several challenges hindering the advancement of the rights of persons with disabilities and their empowerment within society. These challenges include:¹⁴⁴

- Slow progress in prioritizing the implementation of Law No. 20/2017 on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities among partner entities, as well as the allocation of necessary financial resources.
- Limited job opportunities for persons with disabilities and a preference for non-disabled individuals in hiring.
- Failure to prioritize disability issues by some entities responsible for implementing the provisions of Law No. 20 of 2017, as well as a lack of inclusion of disability rights in their projects and programs and the allocation of necessary financial resources.
- Inconsistencies between some legislations governing partner entities and the provisions of Law No. 20 of 2017.
- Lack of accurate data and statistics related to disability across various entities.

e) Integrity and Anti-Corruption Commission

The Integrity and Anti-Corruption Commission (IACC) was formed through the merger of the Ombudsman Bureau, established by Law No. 11/2008, and the Anti-Corruption Commission, established by Law No. 62/2006, as per the provisions of Law No. 13/2016.¹⁴⁵

The IACC enjoys financial and administrative autonomy,¹⁴⁶ and it seeks to establish a national integrity system, enforce the law, prevent corruption, and mitigate its effects at the national level, in accordance with international best practices, to establish a national environment that opposes corruption.¹⁴⁷ It carries out its tasks and functions freely and independently without any influence or interference from any party. The headquarters of the IACC may not be searched except by a judicial order and in the presence of the competent public prosecutor.¹⁴⁸ Cases of suspected corruption will be referred to the Investigation Directorate, while those involving violations of national integrity standards will be sent to the Integrity and Prevention Directorate.

143. For more information see the Higher Council for Persons with Disability Website.

144. Written information provided by HCPD, June 2024.

145. The government's justification for this merger, as stated in the reasons for introducing Law 2016/13, is to strengthen principles of fairness, responsibility, and effective administration for the benefit of the public, guarantee compliance with national integrity principles and combat corruption in all its manifestations. This is the reason why the IACC takes on the roles and responsibilities of an Ombudsman and Anti-corruption institutions

146. Article 3, Law No. 2016/13.

147. IACC website, Vision, Mission, and Objectives, last visited 15 June 2024.

148. Article 5, Law No. 2016/13.

IACC aims to combat corruption and uphold national integrity through various measures. These include activating ethical rules in public administration, ensuring high-quality and transparent services to citizens, promoting good governance principles, and guaranteeing transparency in policy formulation and decision-making by the executive authority. Additionally, IACC is tasked with investigating and addressing financial and administrative corruption, receiving, and addressing complaints, cooperating internationally in anti-corruption efforts, and prosecuting individuals involved in corrupt practices. The legal framework includes provisions for accountability of officials, and efforts are made to prevent character assassination. The involvement of private sector oversight institutions and civil society in establishing and enforcing good governance standards is also emphasized.¹⁴⁹

The management and oversight of IACC are entrusted to a council consisting of a president and four members known for their justice, integrity, competence, and experience, and none of them holds any other nationality. They are appointed by royal decree based on the Prime Minister's recommendation. The term of membership in the council is four years, renewable once for the president or any council member.¹⁵⁰

The council, has several tasks and powers,¹⁵¹ but this mapping with focus on its complaint handling mandate. Individuals adversely affected by decisions, actions, or practices of the general administration have the right to submit grievances to IACC in a specified form. Grievances must include a concise summary of facts, reasons, and the relevant entity's details, supported by necessary documents. The IACC undertakes an investigation, and the council issues a decision to accept or reject the grievance within fifteen days of its receipt. If the complaint is accepted, the council authorizes its president or a member of the council to take prompt and appropriate measures for resolution.¹⁵² If it is revealed that the complaint submitted involves a criminal offense, the council is obligated to refer the case to the relevant public prosecutor or the appropriate court.¹⁵³

If, following its procedures, the council finds that the decisions, actions, or abstentions of the general administration violate legislations, lack fairness, involve arbitrariness, fail to achieve equality, or discriminate, rely on illegal instructions or unfair procedures, or exhibit negligence, dereliction of duty, or error, the president is obligated to submit a detailed report to the concerned public entity along with appropriate recommendations. The public entity must respond within fifteen days of receiving the report, with the option for the president to grant an extension. If the concerned public entity fails to respond, rejects necessary actions, or a dispute arises, the president refers the matter to the Cabinet for an appropriate decision.¹⁵⁴

The president is authorized to appoint one or more liaison officers within the general administration to ensure adherence to national integrity standards and legislation, as well as to oversee complaints against its decisions.¹⁵⁵

The law mandates the establishment of a specialized prosecution office for corruption cases, staffed annually by appointed public prosecutors and tasked with handling various corruption-related offenses referred by the IACC. The IACC focuses on investigating money laundering from these offenses but lacks jurisdiction over individual disputes and cases already under other regulatory or judicial entities.¹⁵⁶ The IACC also provides protection to whistleblowers, witnesses, and others involved in corruption cases, ensuring their safety and preventing discrimination.¹⁵⁷ The IACC's annual report, detailing its anti-corruption efforts

149. Article 4, Law No. 2016/13.

150. Article 6, Law No. 2016/13.

151. Article 8, Law No. 2016/13.

152. Article 11, Law No. 2016/13.

153. Article 12, Law No. 2016/13.

154. Article 13, Law No. 2016/13.

155. Article 14, Law No. 2016/13.

156. Articles 16, 14 and 17, Law No. 2016/13.

157. Article 24, Law No. 2016/13.

and achievements, is submitted to the King, Cabinet, and Parliament.¹⁵⁸ Despite positive engagement from the House of Deputies and Senate, the parliament has yet to take significant action based on the report's findings.

In the annual report for the year 2022, the Integrity and Anti-Corruption Commission presented comprehensive statistics on its activities. The following table gives a summary of IACC activities in 2022.

The Referred Directorate/ Unit/ Department	Number of Complaints
Investigation Directorate	683
Information Directorate	282
Legal Affairs Directorate	15
Integrity and Prevention Directorate	33
Operations Unit	206
Financial Investigation and Anti-Money Laundering Unit	43
Compliance Officers Unit	63
Investment Unit	38
Technical Unit	29
Witness Protection Unit	1
Complaints Department	139
Joint Committee with the Civil Service Bureau	25
Joint Committee with the Income Tax Department	1
Committee Formed for Medical Report Cases	1
Joint Committee for Audit Bureau Cases	1
Joint Committee for Land Cases from Investigation Directorate and Operations Unit	1
Committee Formed for Royal Jordanian Cases	3
Consultants	7
Complaints with Decisions from IACC to address the Prime Minister	6
Total	1583

The IACC has addressed cases, complaints, and grievances, such as rectifying the situation for two qualified individuals who were unjustly denied government positions. The scope of the IACC's efforts includes the investigation and exposure of financial irregularities. Their inquiry revealed a shocking amount of 1,472,436 dinars being mishandled in a government infrastructure contract, resulting in legal proceedings against the accountable personnel. In addition, they addressed fraudulent activities in employee benefit programs, revealing manipulation in both a company health insurance fund and a private hospital's savings fund. They are extremely diligent in monitoring labor practices and promptly report any instances of trafficking in work permits for migrant workers to the public prosecutor for investigation. The Authority also advocates for transparency in public services, as demonstrated by their intervention in a case where a municipality's dubious decision to ignore billboard licensing could have led to the misappropriation of public funds.¹⁵⁹

158. Article 8, Law No. 2016/13.

159. Complaints and information pertaining to suspected crimes falling within the purview of the IACC are received through multiple channels, encompassing the IACC application, website, social media platforms, email, and physical correspondence, as stated by the IACC. Nevertheless, it is imperative that grievances against public entities are exclusively lodged via the designated form available on the IACC website, necessitating the applicant to provide a live signature.

In 2022, the IACC launched the National Integrity Indicator and Standards, a first in Jordan and the Arab region, in collaboration with RASED and supported by the EU and the Spanish Agency for Cooperation. This initiative assesses public administration's adherence to integrity standards. The IACC also published studies on integrity and issued codes of conduct to promote ethical behavior in public and private sectors.¹⁶⁰

The IACC's role in receiving complaints, reports, and grievances, conducting investigations, rectifying the situations of complainants, and providing physical and legal protection to whistleblowers, witnesses, informants, and their families in corruption cases, as well as its contribution to formulating the comprehensive national human rights plan through its liaison officer at the National Human Rights Center, is instrumental in promoting and safeguarding human rights.

3.2 Non-Parliamentary Reporting Institutions

In Jordan, a range of entities are mandated to play a role in upholding human rights, each with a distinct focus on particular rights or demographic groups. Significantly, these entities function autonomously from the parliament, setting them apart from traditional monitoring bodies. Although they do not directly report to the parliament, certain entities undertake monitoring functions as part of their mandates, while others primarily act as advisory bodies to the government or engage in human rights protection through their regulatory functions. This section presents a succinct overview of these entities, detailing their specific mandates and underscoring their contributions to the advancement of human rights protection.

a) National Council for Family Affairs

The National Council for Family Affairs (NCAA), established by Law No. 27/2001, operates with legal, financial, and administrative autonomy. Its mission is to enhance the status of Jordanian families and preserve the nation's cultural and ethical heritage amidst changing social and economic landscapes.¹⁶¹ The NCAA formulates and monitors family-related policies, supports family stability, and collaborates with public and private institutions to address family issues and promote integration in Jordan. Key tasks include recommending national priorities for family affairs, encouraging family participation in public life, providing technical support to relevant entities, and ensuring compliance with international family-related treaties. The NCAA also contributes to legislative development, monitors and evaluates programs, conducts research, and prepares annual reports and budgets. Specialized teams or committees can be formed to address specific responsibilities.¹⁶²

Notable accomplishments of the NCAA include the establishment of the National Committee for Monitoring the Implementation of the Elderly Strategy,¹⁶³ the National Team for Early Childhood Development,¹⁶⁴ the National Team for Family Protection from Violence,¹⁶⁵ the steering committee for juvenile justice and the child rights law enforcement committee.

These teams oversee the execution of national strategies, update plans, and monitor compliance with guidelines and policies. Additionally, the NCAA launched the Analytical Report for the Evaluation of the Jordanian National Strategy for the Elderly¹⁶⁶ and developed the National Strategy for Juvenile Justice (2024-2028).¹⁶⁷ The council has also prepared a procedural guide on non-custodial measures for juveniles, and the child's best interest guide for both the Sharia and civil judiciary and implemented CCTV technology to enhance the juvenile justice system.

160. IACC Website: IACC 2022 Annual Report, last visited 15 June 2024.

161. Articles 3 and 4, Law No.2001 /27

162. Article 6, Law No.200 /27 and article 30, Law No. 2022/17 (Rights of the Child Law)

163. The Committee was formed by Prime Ministerial Decision No. 28364/1/12/21 in 2012

164. In 2018, the council signed a cooperation agreement with Plan International, resulting in the formation of the National Team for Early Childhood Development

165. The team was established under Bylaw No. 2016/33

166. NCFCA Website: Reports, last visited 15 June 2024.

167. UNICEF Jordan Website: Launch of the National Juvenile Justice Strategy 2028-2024, last visited 15 June 2024.

The NCFA actively participates in legislative processes, including the preparation and proposal of laws related to the family and its affairs, as well as their amendment. The council continuously works to enhance the capacities of those working on these legislations through specialized training programs, most notably those designed for juvenile court personnel. The council has also undertaken the task of drafting and preparing a bill on the rights of the child and following up on its approval with the relevant authorities until it is passed by Parliament. NCFA also led national efforts to amend Article 62 of the Penal Law to grant equal surgical consent rights to both parents. The NCAA also prepares periodic reports on the Convention on the Rights of the Child, and drafted the national executive plan for the national priorities matrix to enhance the protection system against gender-based violence, domestic violence, and child protection (2021-2023) in partnership with relevant partners, and followed up on its approval by the Council of Ministers. In addition, the council contributed to the preparation of numerous national plans and mechanisms in compliance with international human rights standards and to preserve the growth and cohesion of the Jordanian family.¹⁶⁸

b) Jordanian National Commission for Women

The Jordanian National Commission for Women (JNCW) serves as the national mechanism for advancing women's status in Jordan and enhancing their participation in sustainable development. Established in 1992 by a Council of Ministers decision, the JNCW acts as the primary reference point for all government entities on women's issues and represents Jordan in international forums related to women. The JNCW's key responsibilities include integrating women's concerns into national strategies, policies, and legislation; monitoring gender-based discrimination; assessing women's status; and advocating for gender equality and equal opportunities. The JNCW's vision is to achieve equal and active citizenship in a just and equitable society that fosters sustainable national development.¹⁶⁹

The JNCW is leading the process of preparing the National Women's Strategy in Jordan, and is working on updating it under the direction of the Prime Ministry and under the supervision of the Ministerial Committee for Women's Empowerment, which represents the national framework for following up on efforts to develop programs and policies to enhance women's rights and empower them to participate effectively in public life. The current strategy was approved by the Council of Ministers in 2020; the framework of the strategy was linked to national plans and strategies related to women, including the Economic Modernization Vision, the Women's Empowerment Strategy, the outputs of the Royal Commission to Modernize the Political System, the Comprehensive National Human Rights Plan 2016-2025, and sectoral strategies, as well as international commitments and pledges, including the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security, the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development Goals, and in particular Goal 5 on gender equality.¹⁷⁰ This strategy has renewed its vision to be: "A society free from discrimination and gender-based violence; in which women and girls enjoy full human rights and equal opportunities to achieve comprehensive and sustainable development," within the framework of national participatory efforts from various government and civil institutions, the military and security sectors, and civil society organizations, in addition to members of both Houses of Parliament, trade unions and political parties, and based on broad national consultations at the level of all governorates.

The JNCW is actively working to establish a Women's Observatory in Jordan, which will focus on collecting data and indicators related to women's empowerment, discrimination, and the gendergap.¹⁷¹

168. Information Provided NCFA, July 2024.

169. JNCW Website: About JNCW, last visited 15 June 2024.

170. JNCW Website: The National Strategy of Women in Jordan 2025-2020, last visited 15 July 2024.

171. Information provided by JNCW, April 2024.

The JNCW is a member of the Ministerial Committee for Women’s Empowerment and chairs a legal team tasked with reviewing legislation to ensure it promotes gender equality and non-discrimination. Additionally, the commission is supported by legal, economic, and media advisory teams.

The JNCW strives to create a supportive environment for women’s empowerment and to combat gender-based discrimination and violence. Moreover, it focuses on ensuring sustainability and strengthening its institutional and administrative capacities.¹⁷²

JNCW has achieved several milestones. Firstly, in 2019, the committee conducted a comprehensive review of progress towards implementing the Beijing Declaration after 25 years. This involved a national consultation, providing an opportunity to discuss gender equality, women’s empowerment, challenges, and priorities, aligning with sustainable development goals. Additionally, the committee collaborated with various institutions, government sectors, civil society organizations, and experts.¹⁷³ Secondly, in 2023, the committee issued a position paper on the presence of women in decision-making positions in companies and boardrooms in Jordan, emphasizing the need for women’s representation and recommending specific measures, including amendments to company laws.¹⁷⁴ Thirdly, a study titled “Women’s Rights in Jordan’s Labor Law” was launched in 2023, examining the definition of labor law, employment contracts, termination procedures, annual and sick leave, maternity rights, overtime hours, and wages.¹⁷⁵ Lastly, the committee has conducted several impactful national campaigns focusing on human rights, especially women’s rights, such as the 2022 international campaign against gender-based violence and campaigns addressing teacher empowerment, safe school returns, and promoting women’s participation in the 2020 parliamentary elections.¹⁷⁶ These initiatives reflect the committee’s commitment to protecting and enhancing human rights, with a specific emphasis on the rights of women.

As per the JNCW, the organization receives grievances from women pertaining to GBV via a network of non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and activists known as “Shama’a,” derived from the Arabic term “candle.” The provision of legal advice or referral to a non-governmental organization (NGO) that offers legal assistance is contingent upon the specific nature of the complaint.

In the past, the JNCW held the responsibility of compiling the national report for the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW). Commencing in 2021, it was determined that the responsibility of this task would be assumed by the Human Rights Committee at the MOFAE. It is worth mentioning that the JNCW is not included in this committee, as it solely comprises representatives from concerned ministries. However, it is consulted during the process of preparing the national report. Furthermore, the JNCW plays a crucial role in furnishing the requisite information to other national reports that are submitted to United Nations entities or treaty bodies, with a specific focus on sections pertaining to women’s rights.

Furthermore, the JNCW has liaison officers stationed in all public entities who collect gender-related data and ensure the effective execution of gender strategies. The selection of these liaison officers is carried out by the corresponding public entity. Nevertheless, it is worth noting that certain officers may possess insufficient knowledge or experience pertaining to gender issues, thereby presenting a significant obstacle in effectively tackling matters related to gender.¹⁷⁷

172. Information provided by JNCW, April 2024.

173. The Comprehensive Review of Progress towards Implementing the Beijing Declaration after 25 Years, JNCW, Amman-Jordan, 2019, p. 2.

174. Position Paper on the Presence of Women in Decision-Making Positions in Companies and Boardrooms in the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, JNCW, Amman-Jordan, 2023, p. 2.

175. Women’s Rights in the Jordanian Labor Law, JNCW, Amman-Jordan, 2023.

176. JNCW Website: Campaigns, last visited 15 June 2024.

177. Information provided by JNCW, April 2024.

c) The Higher Population Council

The Higher Population Council (HPC) was established in 2002¹⁷⁸ and has evolved through restructuring in 2008 and 2012. The Council is currently chaired by the Minister of Planning and International Cooperation¹⁷⁹ and serves as a reference point for demographic issues related to development. The HPC is considered the national reference for demographic information related to population and development. It contributes to the development of policies, strategies, and action plans aimed at changing the trajectory of demographic trends to enhance development efforts in accordance with best practices, and monitors and evaluates their implementation. Additionally, it advocates for and raises awareness about these policies. The Council also supports the integration of population dynamics, issues, challenges, and opportunities into social, economic, and political planning frameworks at both the national and local levels. It raises awareness about these issues and builds national capacities in coordination with partners to achieve sustainable development, equity, and equal opportunities for all.¹⁸⁰

The HPC bases its work on a human rights-based approach to development, information, marriage, family formation, the desired number of children with appropriate spacing, youth empowerment, gender equality, and the rights of refugees/migrants. This is achieved by developing strategies, conducting specialized studies, and proposing policies related to population issues, sexual and reproductive health, based on the analysis of national data to provide evidence for decision-makers. The Council partners and coordinates with national, regional, and international institutions and organizations. The General Secretariat of the Higher Population Council studies all aspects of the demographic situation in the country using data, updating, analyzing it, and conducting studies to produce fact sheets and policy briefs based on digital evidence. These inform the process of developing social and economic policies, serve decision-making, and gain national support for alternatives and options that serve national interests.¹⁸¹

The Board of Trustees of the HPC includes ministers from various sectors, leaders from educational and media institutions, civil society organizations, and representatives of the private sector. The HPC coordinates with government, non-governmental, and volunteer organizations to address population challenges and raise awareness through media and communication programs. It also strengthens cooperation with regional and international bodies. Furthermore, the Council proposes training programs, participates in conferences, and produces policy briefs, fact sheets, and studies in the field of population and sexual and reproductive health issues.¹⁸²

The HPC has launched numerous policy briefs aimed at enhancing and protecting human rights in Jordan. Examples include a policy brief to reduce early marriage (later defined as marriage before the age of 18), which sought to protect girls during childhood from violence and affirm their right to health, education, and work. It also prepared a policy brief to enhance women's economic participation in the labor market, affirming their right to work, empowerment, and protection. Furthermore, a policy brief titled "Youth-Friendly Sexual and Reproductive Health Services" was prepared to affirm the rights of youth and adolescents to access age-appropriate health information and services.¹⁸³

178. Initially, it began as the National Population Committee, which was established at the initiative of Her Royal Highness Princess Basma Bint Talal in 1973.

179. The HPC was restructured in 2008 under the chairmanship of the Prime Minister and was restructured again in 2012 under the chairmanship of the Minister of Planning and International Cooperation.

180. Higher Population Council website: Establishment, last visited June 2024, 15.

181. Key Informants, Higher Population Council, Interview conducted in March 2024.

182. Ibid. As well as key informants, Higher Population Council, interview conducted in March 2024.

183. HPC website: Council Duties, last visited June 2024, 15.

The HPC has also launched several strategic plans in the areas of population and development, such as the National Population Strategy (2021-2030), the Sexual and Reproductive Health Communication Strategy (2022-2024), the Jordanian National Strategy for Sexual and Reproductive Health (2020-2030), the National Action Plan to Reduce Marriage of Those Under the Age of 18 “Child Marriage” (2018-2022), and national standards for youth-friendly sexual and reproductive health services. The HPC also regularly publishes research on issues related to development, population, and sexual and reproductive health.¹⁸⁴

The HPC monitors the implementation of its strategies through annual reports that highlight challenges, achievements, and recommendations. Although it lacks executive authority, the HPC collaborates with all relevant ministries and institutions and holds membership in numerous national steering and technical committees. It also discusses issues requiring ministerial attention during meetings of the Board of Trustees.¹⁸⁵

The HPC engages with parliament through annual meetings with the House of Representatives and the Senate, presenting population-related issues to ensure they remain central to national agendas. Despite its limited authority to hold entities accountable, the HPC works to raise and address issues effectively in collaboration with concerned ministries.¹⁸⁶

d) Other Entities

Several committees and organizations in Jordan, while not directly focused on human rights, engage in activities that have significant relevance to the field through their contributions to social welfare, legal frameworks, public services, and international humanitarian law.

National Committee for International Humanitarian Law (NCIHL): Established by Law No. 5/2016, the NCIHL has financial and administrative autonomy. Its aim is to promote the principles of international humanitarian law at the national level.¹⁸⁷ The committee develops public policy, raises awareness, and collaborates with the International Committee of the Red Cross and other entities. It engages in information exchange, conducts research, issues publications, and contributes to legislation related to international humanitarian law. Noteworthy initiatives include specialized workshops for judges and administrative governors, lectures on humanitarian law, and a memorandum of understanding with the State of Palestine to enhance regional cooperation.¹⁸⁸

Housing & Urban Development Corporation (HUDC): Founded under Law No. 28/1992, the HUDC strives to provide suitable housing for citizens, particularly targeting low to moderate-income individuals. A significant initiative is the National Housing Program launched in 2019, which offers subsidized housing plots with favorable financial terms. The program aims to assist youth, families, and those planning to marry, providing residential plots across various provinces. Additionally, the HUDC launched the Employee Benefits Program for the Public Sector, offering residential plots with direct installment deductions from salaries, thus enhancing housing accessibility and quality.¹⁸⁹

Cities and Villages Development Bank (CVDB): Established by Law No. 1985/63, the CVDB provides long-term financing for service and production projects by local authorities. It supports infrastructure and income-generating projects, manages loans, and offers technical services and training to local authorities.¹⁹⁰ The bank expanded its financial support in 2010 to include investment projects, aiming to diversify income sources for municipalities. It also aids in enhancing municipal operations and controlling expenditure by providing facilities to cover financing needs.¹⁹¹

184. Ibid.

185. HPC, Key informants, Higher Population Council, interview conducted in March 2024.

186. Ibid.

187. Articles 3 and 6, Law No. 2016/33.

188. NCIHL website: Workshop for an elite group of civil and military judges and administrative rulers on international humanitarian law, last visited 15 June 2024.

189. HUDC website Accomplished Projects, 15 June 2024.

190. Article 5, Law No. 1985/63.

191. CVDB website: Introduction, last visited 15 June 2024.

Media Commission (MC): The Media Commission, with financial and administrative autonomy,¹⁹² aims to develop the media sector and create an investment-friendly environment. It plays a crucial role in protecting and promoting human rights by encouraging diversity, respecting opinions, and facilitating the expression of various perspectives.¹⁹³ The MC ensures representation of all societal segments and guarantees the independence of media institutions. It regulates the visual and audio media sector, reviews licensing requests, monitors licensed entities, and coordinates with the Telecommunications Regulatory Commission. The MC also elevates journalism standards through training and research, addresses public complaints, and promotes self-regulation based on freedom and national responsibility.¹⁹⁴ All MC's decisions can be appealed before administrative courts.

192. Article 3, Audiovisual Media Law No. 2015/26.

193. The Strategic Plan of the Media Commission (2024-2021), Media Commission, Amman, p. 5.

194. Article (6) of the Instructions of the Visual and Audio Media Complaints Committee, issued in accordance with Article 4/b of Law No. 2015/26

4. The Constitutional Court



4. The Constitutional Court

The establishment of the Constitutional Court in Jordan is considered one of the prominent achievements in response to calls for reform. It was created based on the constitutional amendments made in 2011, granting the court authority to oversee the constitutionality of laws and bylaws, as well as to interpret constitutional texts upon request by the Cabinet or the Parliament. Although its jurisdiction does not extend to international conventions, the court has issued some important decisions related to such conventions, defining their meanings, and indicating their legal value. Additionally, the court issued rulings based on provisions in international human rights conventions, despite the absence of national legal provisions mandating such.

The Court's significance in relation to human rights stems from its exclusive authority to interpret chapter two of the constitution, which encompasses the rights and responsibilities of Jordanians.

4.1 Formation of the Court:

According to Law No. 15/2012, the Constitutional Court is considered an independent body based in Amman, endowed with financial and administrative independence.¹⁹⁵ It consists of at least nine members, including the president, who are appointed by the King. Membership in the Constitutional Court requires the individual to be Jordanian, at least fifty years old, and to have served as judges in the Court of Cassation or the Administrative High Court, or as law professors in universities holding the rank of professorship. Alternatively, they can be lawyers with at least twenty years of experience or specialists who meet the membership criteria¹⁹⁶ of the Senate.¹⁹⁷

4.2 Jurisdiction of the Court

The Constitutional Court has jurisdiction over the constitutionality of laws and bylaws. Its judgments are final and binding on all authorities. The Court has the right to interpret constitutional provisions if requested to do so by a decision from the Council of Ministers or a decision passed by a majority in either the Senate or the House of Representatives.¹⁹⁸

Direct appeals contesting the constitutionality of laws and bylaws must be made exclusively to the Constitutional Court and can only be initiated by the two chambers of the parliament: the House of Representatives or the Senate. A decision on the matter must be supported by at least 25% of the members of the respective chamber and the Council of Ministers.¹⁹⁹

As for individuals and other entities, they have the right to challenge the constitutionality of laws and bylaws, but this requires a pending lawsuit before any court in Jordan. One of the parties involved in the lawsuit must submit a memorandum to the court claiming the unconstitutionality of the law or bylaw related to the pending case, along with stating the reasons for its non-compliance with the constitution. If the court hearing the case finds that the law or bylaw in question is applicable to the subject of the lawsuit, and the challenge

195. Article, Law No. 2012/15.

196. The criteria for the appointment of Senators in Jordan, as stipulated in Article 64 of the constitution, extend beyond the conditions outlined in Article 75. To qualify for membership in the Senate, an individual must have reached the age of forty solar years and fall into one of the specified categories. These categories include former and current Prime Ministers, individuals who have held leadership positions, Speakers of the House of Representatives, Presidents and judges of the Court of Cassation, the Administrative Supreme Court, and the Supreme Sharia Court. Additionally, the President and members of the Constitutional Court, retired officers with the rank of Brigadier General or higher, and former deputies who have been elected to the parliament at least twice are eligible. Furthermore, individuals from these categories must have earned the confidence and approval of the people for their dedicated service and contributions to the nation and homeland.

197. Article 61, Jordanian Constitution, and article 6, Law No. 2012/15.

198. Article 60, Jordanian Constitution, and article 9, Law No. 2012/15.

199. Article 60, Jordanian Constitution.

is substantial, the court will suspend the case and refer the constitutional challenge to the Constitutional Court. The decision not to refer the challenge to the constitutional court is subject to appeal along with the subject of the lawsuit.²⁰⁰

Based on the aforementioned, individuals can challenge laws and bylaws that violate the provisions of the constitution, especially those related to the rights stipulated in the constitution. An example of this is a civil society organization, Tamkeen for Legal Aid and Human Rights, challenging the constitutionality of Crimes Prevention Law in a case defending an Indonesian worker who faced various forms of exploitation and violations. However, the Constitutional Court dismissed the challenge, determining that the Crimes Prevention Law does not infringe upon the constitution. Furthermore, the misinterpretation of this law by relevant authorities does not imply a violation of the constitution.²⁰¹

In July 2024, the Constitutional Court issued a landmark ruling declaring Article 40 of the Agriculture Law No. 13/2015 unconstitutional. The court found that this article had granted judicial powers to the administrative governor, thus creating a parallel judiciary system to the original one. The court argued that this gave the administrative governor the authority to adjudicate forestry and grazing disputes on an equal footing with the judiciary, which constituted a violation of the principle of separation of powers and a direct contravention of the Constitution.²⁰²

Before the establishment of the Constitutional Court, Jordanian courts refrained from applying provisions believed to be unconstitutional without nullifying them. These judgments applied only to the adversaries in the lawsuit, and there was no legal provision granting courts this authority. Courts assumed this right based on the belief that the legislative and executive branches cannot enact legislation contrary to the constitution and force the judiciary to apply them. Applying such legislation was considered the court's participation in assaulting the constitution and obstructing its provisions.²⁰³

The Supreme Court of Justice²⁰⁴ also had the authority to suspend the implementation of any temporary law²⁰⁵ or bylaw if found to be unconstitutional. The Supreme Court had previously suspended the implementation of the Press and Publications Temporary Law No. 27/1997 for its unconstitutionality.²⁰⁶ At present, the challenge of the constitutionality of laws can only be made through the Constitutional Court.

4.3 Constitutional Court and Human Rights Treaties

The Jordanian Constitution does not make any mention of human rights convention, in contrast to the majority of constitutions.²⁰⁷ The jurisdiction of the Constitutional Court is restricted to the examination of the conformity of laws and bylaws with the constitution, as well as the interpretation of constitutional provisions.²⁰⁸

200. Article 11, Law No. 2012/15.

201. Constitutional Court: Judgment Number (1) of the year 2023, Official Gazette Number: 5838, Published on 2017-01-26.

202. Constitutional Court: Judgment No. (6) of 2024, Constitutional Court website, last visited July 2024, 17

203. See for example Supreme Court Decision No. 1967/44.

204. The Supreme Court of Justice served as the sole administrative court in Jordan until 2014, at which point it underwent restructuring and was subsequently replaced by the Administrative Court and the Higher Administrative Court.

205. Temporary laws are those issued by the executive authority in the absence of the legislative authority to take swift measures in situations that cannot tolerate delay, provided that they are presented to the parliament in its first session for review.

206. Supreme Court Decision No. 1997/226

207. Some countries explicitly stipulate in their constitutions that the jurisdiction of the constitutional court encompasses the oversight of national legislation's adherence to internationally ratified agreements. In these countries, the constitutional court serves as a powerful mechanism to guarantee that the state upholds its international obligations and that its national laws do not contradict the commitments established in international law. Additionally, certain constitutional courts accord special importance to international human rights conventions, considering these conventions as integral parts of the constitution.

208. This contrasts with certain Arab countries where the Constitutional Court is empowered to review the constitutionality of treaties. Notably, examples include Article 151 of the Egyptian Constitution, the preamble of the Moroccan constitution, and Articles 111 and 186 of the Algerian Constitution.

Nevertheless, if the constitutional text being examined is linked to international conventions or international law, the court may possess certain authorities to act in accordance with these conventions. Only few constitutional provisions make reference to international conventions and international law, specifically those pertaining to the extradition of regular criminals, personal status issues of foreigners and commerce, and the determination of applicable laws.²⁰⁹

In addition, the Constitutional Court does not possess the authority to directly assess the constitutionality of international agreements. However, if an international convention in question is ratified by a law, the Constitutional Court has the authority to examine the constitutionality of the law approving the convention if there is a constitutional doubt. Nevertheless, no such case has been presented to the Constitutional Court up until the time of preparing this study.

The interpretative decision No.2/2019, issued by the Constitutional Court of Jordan, holds significant implications for the presentation of agreements between the government and private entities to Parliament.²¹⁰

In essence, the decision clarifies the legal definition of international agreements within the framework of Jordanian law. It asserts that agreements entered into by the government with natural or legal persons are not considered international agreements under public international law. This means that such agreements do not fall within the jurisdiction of public international law, which typically governs relations between states.

Instead, the decision emphasizes that international agreements, in the legal sense, should involve governments as legal entities recognized under public international law. Therefore, agreements between the government and private entities do not meet this criterion and are deemed outside the scope of public international law.

The practical implication of this decision is that agreements between the government and private entities do not require parliamentary approval. Previously, there might have been ambiguity regarding whether such agreements constituted international agreements necessitating parliamentary oversight. However, the decision provides clarity on this matter, establishing a clear distinction between agreements involving sovereign entities and those involving private entities.

Despite what has been mentioned earlier, it is noteworthy that in some decisions of the Jordanian Constitutional Court, reference has been made to human rights conventions to interpret the provisions concerning rights and freedoms in the constitution.

The Interpretative Decision No. 6/2013 pertains to the interpretation of Articles 23 (2), 16, and 120 of the constitution, aiming to clarify the public employee's right to form and join labor unions. The court emphasized its reliance on human rights conventions to interpret constitutional provisions regarding the freedom to form unions. Specifically, it referred to Article 23 (4) of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, Article 22 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, and Article 8 (b) of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights. The court highlighted the consistency of these international conventions with the constitutional principles supporting the freedom of association and the right to form and join labor unions.²¹¹

In Court Judgment No. 2 of 2017, the court responded to a challenge against the constitutionality of certain provisions in the Jordanian Bar Association Law. The court affirmed the compatibility of the law with the constitution and international conventions. The court dismissed the challenge, and notably, it independently raised the issue of alignment with international conventions, not brought up by the parties to the lawsuit.²¹²

209. Articles 1/21 and 103, Jordanian Constitution.

210. Constitutional Court: Interpretative Decision No. (2) of the year (2019) Official Gazette Number: 5595, published on -9-16 2019.

211. Constitutional Court: Interpretative Decision No. (6) of the year (2013), Official Gazette Number: 5238, published on -09-01 2013.

212. Constitutional Court: Judgment Number (2) of the year 2017, Official Gazette Number: 5474, Published on 2017-08-01.

Finally, it is worth noting a significant interpretative decision issued by the Constitutional Court in 2020, in response to a request from the Cabinet seeking clarification on whether it is permissible to enact a law that contradicts commitments established by treaties ratified by the Kingdom under law or includes amendments or cancellations of provisions of such treaties. The Court, in its Interpretative Decision No. 1/2020, provided the following outcomes:

- It is not permissible to issue a law that entirely contradicts the commitments established by parties to a treaty on which the Kingdom had previously agreed under law.
- It is not permissible to enact a law that includes amendments or cancellations of provisions of such a treaty.
- International treaties hold binding force for their parties, and states are obligated to respect them as long as these treaties remain valid and effective, provided they were duly ratified and fulfilled the prescribed procedures for their enforcement.²¹³

This decision carries special significance as it presented an invaluable opportunity for a comprehensive review of all legislations to ensure their alignment with international agreements adopted by Jordan, especially human rights conventions ratified by law, such as the Convention on the Rights of the Child and the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

It is important to emphasize that this decision applies exclusively to treaties ratified by law and does not encompass treaties adopted by the government without being presented to the Parliament. The reason for this limitation is that the government's request for interpretation was specifically focused on treaties ratified by law.

213. Constitutional Court: Interpretative Decision No. (1) of the year (2020), Official Gazette Number: 5640, published on -05-11 2020.



5. Conclusions



5. Conclusions

This research has presented a mapping of Jordanian state actors mandated to protect and promote human rights. This section sums-up the main elements of this mapping.

5.1 Ministries:

While Jordan lacks a dedicated Ministry of Human Rights, various ministries share the responsibility to carry out the human rights action of the state. The Prime Ministry's Human Rights Unit serves as a coordinating body for these efforts.

Some ministries are entrusted with implementing laws that guarantee the enjoyment of specific fundamental rights. For instance, the Ministry of Culture oversees access to information, the MoSD supports the right to association, and the MoI supervises the right to hold public meetings.

Additionally, the MoFA has a crucial role in promoting human rights on a global scale. It ensures that periodic reports on human rights progress in Jordan are submitted to UN treaty bodies and other international and regional organizations. On the other hand, the MoJ concentrates on legal reforms, providing legal aid, developing strategies to combat human trafficking, and raising awareness about human rights. The primary mandate of the MoI is to safeguard human rights within detention facilities, uphold public order, and advance equitable law enforcement procedures. The MoL ensures the protection of worker rights, including those of women and migrant workers, through the implementation of regulations and inspections. Additionally, the MoPPA advocates for civil and political rights, specifically focusing on promoting youth and women's political participation.

The Youth Ministry empowers adolescents and champions for the protection of fundamental freedoms through a range of initiatives. In addition, the MoH guarantees the equity and accessibility of the healthcare system, while the MoSD offers extensive support to individuals in need.

5.2 Ministerial Committees:

Jordan has set up an administrative structure to ensure coordinated efforts in upholding human rights. This system leverages two distinct types of Ministerial Committees: Legislative and Administrative.

- Legislative Committees play a long-term and comprehensive role. Established by law, they address specific human rights duties with a focus on enduring issues. These committees are designed to be inclusive, incorporating representatives from various stakeholders. This often includes civil society organizations, independent institutions like the NCHR and the National Council for Family Affairs, and relevant public entities whose expertise aligns with the committee's mandate. A prime example is the National Committee for the Prevention of Human Trafficking, where a broad membership ensures a comprehensive approach to tackling this specific human rights challenge.
- Administrative Committees, on the other hand, offer greater flexibility in addressing emerging human rights concerns. Formed through administrative decisions, their membership is typically streamlined to representatives from various ministries whose functions intersect with the committee's mandate. This focused structure allows for swift communication and coordinates action between ministries on pressing human rights issues.

These committees aim at guaranteeing a thorough and flexible response to the changing circumstances of human rights issues in the nation.

5.3 Independent Institutions:

A network of independent institutions has also been established. These institutions fall into two categories: reporting to Parliament and non-parliamentary reporting.

- Reporting institutions, like the National Center for Human Rights, provide annual reports to Parliament, fostering transparency and accountability.
- Non-parliamentary reporting institutions, such as the Jordanian National Committee for Women and the Higher Population Council, operate independently but collaborate with the government, offering specialized expertise.

Beyond simply existing, these independent institutions have demonstrably improved human rights in Jordan, particularly for vulnerable groups like women, children, and persons with disabilities. They function as crucial access points for individuals adhering to these approaches:

- **Complaint handling:** Individuals can file grievances directly with these institutions, ensuring their concerns are heard.
- **Engagement platforms:** They facilitate dialogue between citizens, relevant ministries, and Parliament, fostering collaborative solutions.
- **Legislative feedback:** These institutions provide expert analysis and feedback on proposed legislation, helping to ensure it aligns with human rights principles.
- **Advocacy for reform:** They actively advocate for legal reforms that strengthen human rights protections in Jordan.

These approaches guarantee both legislative supervision and specialized attention to different facets of human rights. This demonstrates Jordan's comprehensive approach to human rights strategy.

5.4 The Constitutional Court:

The Constitutional Court, which was founded in 2011, has a crucial function in protecting and upholding human rights in Jordan. Although the Court does not directly rely on human rights treaties to determine the legality of legislation, it takes them into account when interpreting constitutional provisions related to rights and freedoms. This approach has led to significant rulings that have provided clear interpretations of the legal definition of international treaties and conventions and the rights of employees to establish unions. Significantly, a ruling in 2020 highlights the requirement for laws to adhere to ratified international treaties, specifically including conventions on human rights. This decision reinforces Jordan's dedication to safeguarding human rights by ensuring that its laws are in accordance with international norms. The Constitutional Court enhances Jordan's human rights framework by ensuring that legislation adheres to the constitution, thereby aligning with certain interpretations of international conventions. The Court's examination of human rights conventions, even in an indirect manner, enhances Jordan's dedication to maintaining these rights within its jurisdiction.

In conclusion, the human rights framework put in place in Jordan is all-encompassing, as it incorporates various components such as government ministries, committees, independent institutions, and the Constitutional Court. This comprehensive approach has been designed to guarantee, as well as possible, synchronized endeavors, focused consideration on different rights, and compliance with international standards.

