



IN BRIEF



ADVANCING GENDER EQUALITY WITHIN PEACE AND SECURITY IN JORDAN

PHOTO UN WOMEN

Background

The Jordanian National Commission for Women (JNCW) has drafted a National Action Plan (NAP) on United Nations Security Council resolution (UN SCr) 1325 (2000) to advance women, peace and security. The NAP is currently under discussion within the Government of Jordan. This note serves as a summary of recent discussions hosted by the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN Women) and the JNCW on issues of women, peace and security. Two consultations were held under the framework of the Beijing plus 20 review and appraisal process and the current high level review of the implementation of UN SCr 1325. The consultations targeted national actors and decision makers on issues of women, peace and security, as well as Syrian refugees living in Za'atari refugee camp in Al Mafraq governorate.

Dialogue with national actors brought together representatives from the Government of Jordan through the Armed Forces, the Public Security Forces and several Ministries such as the Ministry of Interior and the Ministry for Social Development; representatives from civil society and educational institutions. The consultation with Syrian refugees brought together women serving Za'atari camp based women's committees, hosted and supported by UN Women.

The findings of the consultations highlight the need for a nuanced approach to the integration of gender equality and women's rights principles into peace and security responses. Participants emphasized the need for greater support to women's civil society groups, the importance of women's engagement in conflict resolution in the Middle East and the need to ensure that humanitarian aid understands and addresses the priorities of both women and men.

Consultation 1

National stakeholders with a focus on representatives from the Government of Jordan and civil society organisations.

As part of the Beijing plus 20 review and appraisal process, the UN System, under the leadership of UN Women and in collaboration with JNCW undertook a series of 24 consultation events across the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, with the aim of examining Jordan's progress in implementing the Beijing Platform for Action's 12 Critical Areas of Concern. In contribution to this, UN Women organized an ad hoc consultation event on the Area of Concern, 'Women and Armed Conflict' with national stakeholders. The following serves as a summary of these consultation events.

Women in international peacekeeping missions and conflict resolution

Achievements, Challenges and Recommendations

Jordan's key achievement is the increased participation of Jordanian women in international peacekeeping missions, including medical services, family protection, traffic control, and humanitarian assistance.

The following were discussed as challenges:

- Negative social and cultural ideas regarding the deployment of female officers due to safety concerns, family obligations and discrimination.
- Lack of social support and lack of specific financial incentives helping deployed female officers meet childcare and other domestic duties.



- The required examinations to enter peacekeeping missions needs review; many female officers have difficulties passing the driving and other related tests.

The following was recommended to overcome these challenges:

- Develop and implement advocacy campaigns to overcome stigmas related to women's engagement in peacekeeping missions.
- Run capacity building programmes within peacekeeping missions to increase awareness of gender issues and target skills building for female officers. For example, the Public Security Forces announced that 2014 and 2015 are "training years" dedicated to training female officers in language and computer skills. The Forces are collaborating with the Talal Abu Ghazaleh Organisation in this regard – more initiatives such as these are needed.
- Collect feedback from returning female officers and use this as the basis for tailoring policies to attract larger numbers of female recruits.
- Establish services within Jordan for the families of women deployed, and for women who return from deployments.
- The United Nations should continue to increase its support for women's engagement in peacekeeping missions including ensuring a safe environment while providing special incentives and services for women officers.

The Protection of Refugee Women and other Displaced Women

Achievements, Challenges and Recommendations

The following was outlined as the main achievements in Jordan with regard to the protection of refugee women, girls and other displaced women:

- The role and services provided by Government and non-governmental organisations and their effectiveness in spreading awareness on the rights of survivors of violence under law. Two examples were given: a) the provision of centers for the protection of women and children from gender based violence, b) the provision of psychological support and safety to women through trained and skilled staff in camp and non-camp contexts.
- A strong legal framework which works to protect all people in Jordan on issues related to forced marriage and violence against women.

The following challenges were identified:

- The social customs within Jordan makes it difficult for women to effectively contribute to daily life.
- Shortage of resources and capabilities within national structures and civil society.

Accordingly, the following recommendations were presented:

- Increase financial support to the response to the Syria crisis, with a focus on better support and training to staff at the front line of this response.
- Better coordination between official agencies and civil society organisations; the lack of coordination between organisations in Jordan has led to a certain level of negligence in the provision of services.

Women's Participation in Peace Negotiations and Peace treaties, especially in the Syrian and Palestinian-Israeli Conflicts

Achievements, Challenges and Recommendations

The following was presented as achievements:

- Active and increasing roles for women in decision making high-level positions in Jordan, particularly within the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

- Jordan's active and important role in issues around the Middle East in the United Nations Security Council; e.g. Jordan's Permanent Representative to the United Nations is currently a woman.
- The presence of Jordanian women in the peacekeeping review under the Secretary General of the United Nations

Certain challenges still persist to women's engagement in conflict resolution:

- The current political stalemate in negotiations in the region.
- The lack of political will to integrate women in decision-making positions.

The following recommendations were presented:

- Harmonize local laws and legislations with UN SCr 1325 and its subsequent resolutions.
- Increase decision-making roles for women; empower and train women to take part in negotiations and partake in peacekeeping in coordination with local and international organisations.

As a general recommendation, the facilitator stressed the importance of finding platforms for communication and the need for increased openness on issues related to UN SCr 1325, suggesting dialogues could be supported between Palestinian and Jordanian women.

CONSULTATION 2

Syrian refugee women living in Za'atari refugee camp

A dialogue with female refugees was undertaken in the Za'atari refugee camp as a contribution to the national and global discussions on women, peace and security. Given the context of Jordan, the discussion focused on the need to provide protection, assistance and training to refugee women, while also touching upon issues related to women's engagement in conflict resolution, the promotion of non-violent forms of conflict resolution and how the international community can better support women's contribution to fostering a culture of peace within their communities.

Needs, challenges and recommendations for meeting the needs of refugee women living in Za'atari refugee camp

ECONOMIC SUPPORT: The group expressed need for greater economic support for male and female Syrian refugees. The absence of adequate opportunities results in insecurity, depression and the increased reliance on

negative coping mechanisms such as the early marriage of girls. The spillover effect has been increased household tensions, which can result in increased act of domestic violence. It was noted that the credentials and past work experience of refugees are often not valued or leveraged by authorities and camp staff, resulting in skills not being adequately matched with cash-for-work opportunities, specifically for women.

As a response, the following recommendations were made:

- The provision of more cash-for-work opportunities for refugee men and women in the camp, and the more equitable distribution of these opportunities.
- Ensure cash-for-work opportunities fit the credentials and experience of the camp residents.

ACCESS TO EDUCATION: The group noted that the lack of opportunities for girls and boys to engage in tertiary education leaves many without hope for the future. Moreover, the lack of nearby schools in some districts within the camp results in children not continuing their education as parents don't feel comfortable sending their children unaccompanied, particularly girls. This is compounded by violence in schools, crowded conditions and the lack of heating/cooling systems. The group also noted that general emphasis on services for the youth, (e.g. restricting participation by setting age limits at 32) means that many older women and men are unable to access educational opportunities.

As a response, the following recommendations were made:

- Provide opportunities and support programmes to enable post-primary education.
- Provide more schools with good geographical distribution to increase girls and boys access to education and decrease the school dropout rate.



PHOTO UN WOMEN

PROTECTION: The group commented on the growing levels of verbal, emotional and sometimes physical abuse against adolescent girls and women by family members. This was credited to social pressures, inherited social and cultural norms, restricted mobility and the lack of space/privacy. Privacy issues lead to children witnessing intimate moments between adults and this has generated copying, mimicking behavior and protection concerns between family members. Verbal and physical harassment by men in the streets is common place. Women have said that they face verbal and physical abuse when attending clinics for maternal services.

As a response the following recommendations were made:

- Increase the distribution of caravans among families, enabling separate spaces for adults and children.
- Create a package of support services for single women in the camp and enable better access to existing services.
- Support large numbers of women committees in the camp to link women's voices, needs and priorities to camp decision making structures.
- Improve monitoring of reproductive health services, as well as special support for women who suffer reproductive health problems related to war traumas.

PSYCHOLOGICAL SUPPORT: The group reported that there is insufficient availability and access to psychological support in the camp, especially for young girls and men. Witnessing war in Syria has had both psychological and physical consequences on men and women. Some women are experiencing a prolonged break in their menstrual cycle, making them both 'unmarriageable' and causing breaks in relationships due to their inability to bear children. Men suffer both from the psychological impact of war and the shift from being breadwinners to being mostly unemployed, and in some cases seeing a shift in household power when women become the breadwinners.

The following recommendation was made in response:

- Provide more targeted psychological support to men and boys, and increase the quality of the opportunities available to women.

TRANSPORTATION: The group commented on the lack of transportation within the camp, stating they often walk long distances with heavy loads. They called for camp authorities to build a transportation network in the camp, ensuring women's safe mobility.

Recommendations on women's role in conflict resolution and peacemaking.

It was agreed that while peace networks existed within their communities, they hadn't seen any international support for these and were not aware of women participating in conflict resolution mechanisms.

The following recommendations were made:

- Broker access to ensure humanitarian aid reaches women, children and families in Syria.
- Provide safe roads for civilian's movements in Syria and at border crossings.
- Secure buffer zones to protect families and women and children traveling alone.
- Ensure open international borders to receive women and children from Syria.
- Stop human rights abuses of women activists in Syria.
- Train and support Syrian women (inside and outside Syria) to participate in different peace dialogues – at the international, regional, national and community levels.
- Support women's participation in spreading the culture of peace, through formal and informal education channels. Beginning by engaging children on non-violent methods for resolving disputes – at the family and community level.
- Apply strict international sanctions on all entities violating international laws that expose women and girls to physical violence during war.
- Call for all parties to the conflict to find means to end the Syrian crisis immediately.

UN WOMEN- JORDAN COUNTRY OFFICE

Established in December 2012, the UN Women Country Office for Jordan works in close collaboration with the Government of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan and the UN Country Team to advance the women's national agenda, promote women's empowerment and gender equality.

Um Uthaina, Jeddah street no. 6
P.O. Box 830896, Tel.+962 6 5200060
www.jordan.unwomen.org
fb.me/unwomenjordan



1 <http://www.unwomen.org/en/csw/csw59-2015>
2 <http://www.unwomen.org/en/news/in-focus/women-peace-security/1325-review-and-global-study>
3 These 12 areas are: Women and Armed Conflict, Women and Poverty, Education and Training of Women, Women and Health, Violence against Women, Women and the Economy, Women in Power and Decision Making, Institutional Mechanisms for the Advancement of Women, Human Rights of Women, Women and the Media, Women and Environment and The Girl Child.