COMMON COUNTRY ASSESSMENT

JORDAN

2006

UNITED NATIONS
“I am honoured to report that Jordan is on track to achieve the majority of its (MDG) targets. The challenges are real and there is much to be done. But gains are being made in poverty reduction, health, education, gender equality, the environment, and more... Our (middle-income) countries have a major role in regional and global stability. Many of us have been forging ahead full steam with reforms, and are on the verge of reaching higher income levels. That success can translate into real development gains, only if it is nourished and sustained.”
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### BASIC FACTS: JORDAN

- **Total Population**: 5,350,047 (2005)
- **Population Growth Rate**: 2.3% (2004)
- **Population Distribution**: 82.3% Urban population (2005)
- **Adult Literacy**: 91.1% (2005)
- **Life Expectancy**: 71.5 (2005)
- **Head of State**: H.M. King Abdullah II bin Al Hussein
- **GDP at Market Prices**: 9.0 (JD bn, 2005)
- **GDP**: 12.7 (US$ bn, 2005)
- **Major Industries**: Petroleum products, Cement, Pharmaceutical, Clinker,
- **Major Resources**: Agriculture, mining
- **GDP per Capita**: 2,345 (2005) (ppp US$)
- **Consumer Price Inflation**: 3.4 (2005)
- **Major Agricultural Imports**: Wheat
- **Major Agricultural Exports**: Fruit and Vegetables
- **Main Trading Partners**: US, Iraq, India, Saudi Arabia, Germany, China

Source:
- UNDP Human Development Report 2004
- Department of Statistics, Jordan in figures 2005
- Economist Intelligence Unit

### INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT RANKINGS FOR JORDAN

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indicator</th>
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<td>Human Development Index Rank, UNDP, 2006</td>
<td>86 (out of 177 countries)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Freedom of the Press Rank, Freedom House, 2005</td>
<td>128 (out of 194 countries)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Corruption Index Rank, Transparency International, 2005 (one being least corrupt)</td>
<td>37 (out of 158 countries)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Human Poverty Index, UNDP, 2006</td>
<td>11 (out of 102 countries)</td>
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<td>Global Competitiveness Index, 2005</td>
<td>54 (out of 102 countries)</td>
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<td>World Competitiveness Yearbook, 2005</td>
<td>44 (out of 60 countries)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Business Competitive Index</td>
<td>41 (out of 102 countries)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Overall of Health System Performance</td>
<td>(100/191)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Quality of the Educational System</td>
<td>(27/102)</td>
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<td>The Availability of Scientists and Engineers</td>
<td>(12/102)</td>
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<td>Infrastructure Quality</td>
<td>(23/102)</td>
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<td>Judicial Independence</td>
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<td>Protection of Minority Shareholder Interests</td>
<td>(19/102)</td>
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<td>Intellectual Property Protection</td>
<td>(22/102)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Gender-Related Development Index for 2006</td>
<td>(69/136) with value of 0.747</td>
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Sources:
- Human Development Index, UNDP, 2005
A small, resource-starved, middle-income country in the midst of a volatile region, Jordan has made enormous strides in recent years in achieving basic human-development standards for its people.

Under the steady guidance of a wise leadership and with the benefit of enormous human resources – a highly-literate, well-educated population with innate entrepreneurial skills and innovative capacities – Jordan has managed to become something of a model of stability, moderation, and rational human development in the region.

These gains, however, risk being overtaken by inexorable demographic, economic and environmental pressures: a high population growth rate (despite declining fertility rates); a widening poverty gap, particularly between urban and rural areas; the inability of the economy to generate quality productive jobs, and, above all, scarcity of quality water.

This Assessment, undertaken in close cooperation with the Government of Jordan and other key development partners, seeks to lay out the social, economic and institutional settings in which Jordan will continue to pursue its development aims in the coming period.

Economic reforms undertaken in the last 20 years have produced remarkable growth rates (7% in GDP in 2005), but the economy still relies heavily on migrant labour (and, contrariwise, on the repatriated earnings of equal numbers of nationals working abroad). Unemployment is high, wages are low and reduced subsidies, increasing trade liberalization and rising energy costs have created inflationary pressures, so that economic advances have left behind pockets of rural and urban poverty, and even many employed Jordanians find themselves among the poor.

Jordan's leadership has recognized the need to come to terms with, and address, these pressures – particularly in the areas of poverty-alleviation, population growth, job creation and capacity building. King Abdullah and his team have laid out an ambitious (albeit vague) plan for the next 10 years, known as the National Agenda, which embraces many of the targets set out in the Millennium Development Goals (and going beyond them into areas of political and administrative reform). Since sectoral action plans for implementing the National Agenda will effectively mainstream MDG targets into Government action, the Agenda offers an opportunity for Jordan's development partners, including the UN agencies represented in the country, to play a contributory role-particularly in building capacities and maintaining a strong focus on the aims of the Millennium Declaration in areas such as gender equality and human rights. Partnerships can also help in implementing both MDGs and National Agenda goals at regional and local, as well as national level.

**Some of the main findings of this Assessment:**

Jordan is on track to meet most of the MDG targets by 2015. Its current achievements in education (97% enrolment rates in the basic education cycle, virtual gender parity, high transition and low drop-out rates, thriving public and private universities, literacy rates of over 90%) have proven almost too much of a good thing, as there are increasingly too few jobs available for growing numbers of school leavers and university graduates, and a neglected vocational-education sector has failed to address market demands.
In health care, Jordan also appears on track to meet MDG targets, although rates for some chronic diseases are increasing, quality of care and neonatal and maternal mortality rates need watching, and there are troublesome service-delivery gaps – particularly in providing for the health needs of the rural poor.

It is in the area of poverty-alleviation – foremost among the MDGs – that Jordan faces potentially critical challenges. While absolute rates of poverty reduction have been creditable by most indicator standards, there remains a need to address high population growth rate and fine-tune poverty-alleviation efforts to reach the most vulnerable and address discrepancies, particularly geographical and gender gaps. While hunger is not a problem, Jordan must still import food to keep up with high population growth, and the country’s agricultural potential has not been fully realized due to poor planning and land use, thus raising rural poverty levels. The growing pace of desertification, water-resource depletion and other environmental pressures, are putting added strains on food security.

In a country of 5.5 million people, of whom almost 60% are under 25 and 38% under the age of 15, creating sustainable employment opportunities is obviously a high priority – and the National Agenda makes it one. Too few productive jobs are available – at least in appropriate skills sectors at attractive pay levels – to entice young graduates to the marketplace. The results are high, and growing, rates of unemployment – and underemployment. The potential impact of that is worrying for a small, tightly-knit country with a fragile natural resource base and vulnerable geopolitical location.

While women nominally enjoy full rights in Jordan, gender disparities exist, particularly in the workforce and in political and administrative life, where rates of female participation are low. Female-headed households feel the brunt of the impact of unemployment and poverty, and women's rights are still not fully realized – and, in some extreme cases, their violation is legally protected.

Despite its generally liberal social environment and overall commitment to international conventions, Jordan has expressed reservations towards some global women's rights and human-rights instruments. There are recognized shortfalls in the administration of justice and civic rights (such as the freedoms of association and of the press) and some migrant groups and minority communities are marginalized with little access to recourse procedures.

This Assessment, like the National Agenda, undertakes to identify areas where institutional capacities to address these most critical issues and to deliver services to those in most need can be strengthened, and where Jordan’s development partners could play a part. In keeping with the key functions of a CCA, it aims to support and enhance the national planning process, identify the root causes of development challenges, and above all provide a basis for the next UN Development Assistance Framework for Jordan-including an integrated approach to the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals and the principles of the Millennium Declaration, which Jordan has embraced.

This CCA has been prepared by the UN Country Team in Jordan, with the regular and active participation of its partners in Government (at Ministry secretary-general level) and of reference groups from civil society, the donor/lender community and the private sector. The final document seeks to respond to national priorities and commitments and to focus on the needs of the most vulnerable. Gender equality and human-rights principles have been “mainstreamed” into the assessment at every stage. Progress in achieving MDG targets, and the impact of real and potential challenges on further progress, have been identified in each section. National capacities,
and the potential for enhancing them, are also assessed. In the deliberative process, working and advisory groups clustered around MDG sectors analyzed and formulated recommendations for future action.

The National Agenda, launched at the end of 2005 and covering the coming 10-year period, has served as a reference point throughout. A framework of indicators has been developed to facilitate the monitoring of progress on meeting key agreed objectives over the life cycle of the UNDAF that will be built on the basis of this CCA. The overriding aim of this process, and underlying purpose of this document, is to facilitate the harmonization and integration of the UN programme in Jordan (where a dozen agencies are represented at various levels) into the national action plans for sustainable human, economic and social development. Therefore, the third section of the document concludes with a set of areas for consideration for inclusion in the future programme of development cooperation between the Government of Jordan and the United Nations. These areas are: poverty reduction; sustainable environment; education, training and youth employment; population and health; public and private sector development; and equity and equality issues including gender issues.
A. The CCA/UNDAF process

The Common Country Assessment (CCA) and the UN Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) are the principal mechanisms at country level for the operationalisation of the United Nations reform process launched by Secretary General Kofi Annan in 1997.

The CCA is the common instrument of the UN agencies prepared in collaboration with the national government for the analysis of the national development situation. Key development issues and challenges are identified with a focus on the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and the other commitments, goals and targets of the Millennium Declaration, international conferences, summits, conventions and human rights instruments. Equally important are the key development documents of the government. In Jordan, the National Agenda is the unifying document for the Government's strategies and action plans for national development and is therefore central to the analysis. Other government documents such as sector strategies are also referred to, as are well-documented papers by researchers and civil society organisations. The main reference point for statistical information is the Government's Department of Statistics.

The CCA provides the basis for the UN Development Assistance Framework. The UNDAF is the common strategic framework for the operational activities of the UN system at the country level. It provides a collective, coherent, and integrated response to national priorities and needs within the framework of the MDGs and other global commitments and a special emphasis on the harmonisation and alignment of programmes in Jordan.

Guiding principles

An important part of the UN reform process is the adoption at country level of a unified programme approach. The Millennium Summit of 2000 and its resulting Millennium Declaration forged a new framework in the form of Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) for multilateral cooperation. These are concrete, time-bound goals and targets which provide a unifying development agenda world-wide. The MDGs focus on eight major development results to be achieved by 2015:

- Goal One: Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger.
- Goal Two: Achieve universal primary education.
- Goal Three: Promote gender equality and empower women.
- Goal Four: Reduce child mortality.
- Goal Five: Improve maternal health.
- Goal Six: Combat HIV/AIDS, malaria, and other diseases.
- Goal Seven: Ensure environmental sustainability.
- Goal Eight: Develop a global partnership for development.

This document is organised around the main thematic areas of the Millennium Development Goals, and each sectoral analysis is informed by the guiding principles of the Millennium Declaration, in particular the importance to development of respect for human rights. In Annex One, the linkages between the MDGs and Human Rights instruments are presented.
Harmonisation and alignment aim at optimising the impact of UN inter-agency cooperation. They entail:

- A joint programming process for the UN Country Team (UNCT) in each country based on national development priorities;
- financing mechanisms, including the options to channel or pool funds, and common procedures for cash transfer to national counterparts;
- one CCA providing the basis for a common, results-based UNDAF;
- a results-based management approach, with a “results matrix” at the core;
- a transparent, participatory and inclusive methodology;
- leadership of the UNCTs by the Resident Coordinators (RCs), and
- support to develop relevant capacities of implementing national counterparts.

B. National ownership and partnership

The process of preparing the CCA and UNDAF documents has been carried out in close collaboration with the Government of Jordan. The Ministry of Planning and International Cooperation is the main Government partner for the UN Country Team and has been represented on the CCA Steering Committee by the Secretary General. Inputs to the CCA have been prepared by working groups and advisory groups, and in each case there has been Government representation at technical level.

In order to widen the ownership of the report, and thereby lay a solid ground for future partnerships for development in Jordan, the preliminary findings of the report were discussed with reference groups drawn from government ministries, civil society organisations, the donor/lender community in Jordan, and the private sector.

C. Methodology and scope

Following a three-day initial joint workshop in March 2006, the CCA Steering Committee decided to prepare an analysis based on official sources, publications and reports (rather than new research), and to focus on the main thematic areas of the MDGs under the following groupings: Poverty Reduction and Food Security; Education; Health; Environmental Sustainability and Global Partnerships for Development. The last goal includes a range of targets, including the improvement of trade and financial systems, dealing with debt problems, creating decent and productive work for youth, cooperation with the private sector and civil society (particularly with regard to affordable essential drugs, adopting new technologies and deploying ICT for development).

It was further decided that two other areas should be addressed in depth: Economic development in Jordan, and the Institutional framework for development. The final decision taken was that the analyses of the thematic sections of the report should be approached from the perspectives of gender and human rights as well as from the point of view of key challenges in each sector, rather than analyzing gender and human rights separately. However, basic facts on gender disparities are set out in Chapter 2, C. on the social and cultural background.

The process of writing the report has been highly participatory and consultative, with membership of the working groups and three advisory groups (Gender, Human Rights and the Indicator Framework) being drawn from all UN agencies in Jordan and from Government ministries and institutions. Quality assurance has been provided by senior staff of UN Development Group Agencies represented at regional level.
The time frame for preparing the report has been very short, from March to July 2006. However, due to the overwhelming support of UN staff and the Government of Jordan to the process, many hundreds of hours of staff time have been dedicated to preparing the report. To bring the many contributions of text and analysis together, a consultant was entrusted with the main task of welding the group inputs into a unified and coherent text.

D. The indicator framework

To ensure that the most updated indicators are used to monitor progress made since the preparation of the CCA, the UNCT and the Jordanian Government agreed to adopt a list of key indicators to be used for monitoring progress throughout the life cycle of the UNDAF which will be developed based on this CCA.

Using the latest CCA/UNDAF Guidelines from July 2004 as a basis, the different working groups preparing the CCA modified and added indicators to reflect the specificities in Jordan. Although extra attention was given to disaggregating data at the sub-national level, there was a clear shortage of data with this level of disaggregation. This lack of sub-national data is an area that requires collective UN and Government of Jordan attention in the coming UNDAF cycle.

The final list of indicators will be established on DevInfo which is already housed in the Department of Statistics as a common Government/UN database. Since the majority of the indicators in the CCA are MDGs indicators or National Agenda Indicators, the same database can be used for the future monitoring of global and national progress in meeting the agreed objectives.

The list of indicators (see Annex 3) is available on an electronic excel sheet, the following list of indicators is considered an initial compilation of the most important indicators in the CCA. This list will be revisited upon the finalization of the UNDAF results matrix and the UNDAF monitoring and evaluation framework, and additional indicators should be added to be used in monitoring the UNDAF.
A. The physical setting

The Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan is a small country (89,342 sq. km) with limited natural resources, a semi-arid climate and a strategic geopolitical setting in the midst of a conflict-ridden region, the Middle East. Jordan's population is approximately 5.5 million.

Although the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan was created out of the Emirate of trans-Jordan at the end of the British Mandate period after World War II, the country is founded in an area with a rich culture and heritage going back thousands of years.

A rich culture and proud heritage

Despite its small size, Jordan abounds with historical, archaeological, natural and scenic sites that are a source of national pride and which attract visitors and tourists from all over the world. Jordan was among the first signatory countries (in 1975) to the 1972 World Heritage Convention, and the Kingdom boasts three historical sites inscribed on the World Heritage List: the mysterious rock-hewn Nabataean city of Petra (added to the list in 1985), the Umayyad retreat of Quseir Amra in the eastern desert (also 1985) and the Roman/Byzantine/Islamic complex at Umm er-Rasas in the south (2004). Other noteworthy sites include the Graeco-Roman cities of Jerash (Gerasa) and Umm Qais (Gadara), the Citadel and Roman theatre of Amman (ancient Philadelphia), and the castles of Karak and Shobak and the Muslim fortress of Qasr ar-Rabadh (Ajloun), all dating from the time of the Crusades.

For a relatively small country (a little larger than Austria), Jordan is also blessed with a remarkable variety of landscapes and geological regions, from the vast rocky tracts of the north-eastern desert, to the sandy expanses of Wadi Rum in the southeast; from the cool, pine-clad central uplands, to the Jordan River running through its fertile rift valley from Tiberius Lake to the Dead Sea, the lowest point on earth. The rift valley continues south to the narrow Red Sea coastline and the resort of Aqaba. There are no Jordanian natural heritage sites on the World Heritage List, but high profile local groups such as the Royal Society for the Conservation of Nature and the Petra National Trust have been rallying to raise funds to protect the flora and fauna of these sites from degradation and even destruction in the face of environmental depredations and the pressures of growing local and international tourism.

Heritage preservation in Jordan goes hand-in-hand with poverty alleviation and economic development in many of the rural or remote areas in which these historical sites are situated. At a number of sites – including Petra, the Wadi Dana nature reserve, Iraq al-Amir, Madaba and many others – local communities are actively involved in spin-off activities such as income-generating projects that are tied into the use and preservation of local natural or historical assets and treasures. For example, since the declaration of Wadi Dana (a wooded preserve teeming with rare flora and fauna and dramatically set on a mountainside overlooking the Wadi Araba desert rift) as a UNESCO Biosphere Reserve, the local community has been directly involved in the management of the protected area and in the production of handicrafts, food products and other marketable items, thus linking the environment, the ecosystem and the empowerment of local communities in a single development enterprise. The balance between protecting the environment, preserving the cultural heritage and meeting the demands of the tourist industry will need to be kept in focus.

Since it was established, the Kingdom has experienced a succession of in-migrations, augmenting its indigenous population with waves of Palestinian refugees displaced by conflict in 1948 and 1967; hundreds of thousands of expatriate Palestinians expelled from the Arab Gulf states during the Gulf crisis of 1990 – 1991, and more recently large numbers of Iraqis. Most of Jordan's people are Arabs descended from major tribal clans – both nomadic and traditionally
town-dwelling – that have migrated to the area over the centuries. In addition, there are small communities of Circassians, Chechens, Armenians and Druze. The population is overwhelmingly Sunni Muslim; an estimated 3-4% is Christians, mostly Greek Orthodox and Greek Catholic.\(^1\)

Most of the population is urbanized (82%), with more than half living in the central Amman and Zarqa governorates and a further 18% living in the northern Irbid governorate. Thus, around 72% of the population is concentrated in the country’s three largest urban areas. The population is youthful: 59% of Jordanians are under the age of 25, and 38% are not yet 15.\(^2\)

The population has more than doubled since 1980, and currently grows at a rate of 2.3% a year.\(^3\) Despite declining fertility rates, the population is expected to double again, reaching 11 million, within 30 years. The total fertility rate has been steadily declining, but is still high, at 3.7% with variations according to geographic location (4.2% in rural areas and 4% in the South). The average household size is 5.4 and the median age is 19.3 years.

International migration plays an important role in the population profile of Jordan, since, due to its relatively open migration policies, the country receives labour from nations in the region (notably Egypt and Syria) and from other regions, chiefly in Asia (Sri Lanka, the Philippines and Indonesia). At the same time, large numbers of Jordanians go abroad in search of work, chiefly to the Arab Gulf states.

Jordan's population includes 1.8 million UNRWA-registered Palestine refugees from the 1948 Arab-Israeli conflict and their descendants, plus another one million or so Palestinians whose families already had Jordanian nationality when they arrived from the West Bank after the Israeli occupation of 1967. Almost all Palestinians and Palestine refugees living in Jordan have Jordanian nationality and can travel, work, serve in the military and participate in national life. Only 16% of the registered refugees served by UNRWA live in the 10 recognized camps and three other “unofficial” refugee gatherings; the rest are mostly clustered around the major cities and in the Jordan Valley.\(^4\) There is a smaller group of perhaps 100,000 Palestine refugees who were displaced from the Gaza Strip in 1967 – most of them now living in two camps near Jerash, north of Amman – who do not have citizenship or full access to jobs and social services and who depend entirely on UNRWA.

Jordan's only real natural resources are potash, phosphate and some reserves of shale oil, and 75% of the Kingdom's area is sparsely populated desert or semi-desert; only 7.8% of the total area is arable land. With annual rainfall ranging from 200 to 600mm in the highlands and 20 to 70mm in the desert, Jordan ranks as one of the world's five poorest countries in terms of water resources; the scarcity of water, combined with high rates of population growth, rapid and poorly planned urbanization and heavy investment in industry, is likely to create social, economic and environmental pressures that will overshadow Jordan's development process for years to come.

**B. The political setting**

Jordan is a constitutional monarchy with a parliamentary system consisting of an elected lower house and an upper house of notables appointed by the King. The monarch appoints and dismisses the prime minister, who appoints a cabinet that currently (2006) consists of 23 ministers.

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\(^2\) Government of Jordan, Department of Statistics (DOS), *Statistical Yearbook 2004*.

\(^3\) GoJ DOS, *Statistical Yearbook 2005*.

The prime minister and cabinet are nominally answerable to Parliament, which was formed most recently by elections in 2003 that were seen as freer, fairer, and more representative than those of previous years. While political power still derives to a great extent from traditional tribal or family connections, there is a wide diversity of legal political parties and, in the current parliamentary set-up, an Islamist bloc constituting an unofficial opposition that is at odds with many of the foreign and domestic policies pursued by the Government.

King Abdullah II, constitutionally the Head of the Three Authorities; Judicial, Legislative, and Executive of Jordan, provides guidance to the Kingdom's economic development and strategic direction. The stability of Jordan is supported by a well-trained army and a famously efficient security and intelligence network. Jordan has made national security its highest priority, particularly as tensions with its neighbours have fluctuated in recent years, and the Government and security services have at times acted forcefully to deal with dissent and neutralize threats to public order.

As a moderate Arab country with special political, economic and military ties with the West, a relatively liberal social climate and a vulnerable geographical setting, Jordan has in recent years fallen victim to acts of terrorism clearly aimed at destabilizing the Government. The deadliest and most shocking of these were the simultaneous bomb attacks on three leading Amman hotels in November 2005, which killed 60 people – almost all of them Jordanian civilians. While unleashing a wave of patriotic popular indignation, these attacks also exposed the vulnerability of the Kingdom to external pressures and to home-grown Islamist tendencies alike.

Since succeeding to the throne on the death of his father King Hussein in 1999, King Abdullah has pursued and vigorously promoted a programme of political, economic and social reforms. The culmination of this process was the publication at the end of 2005 of the “National Agenda”, a framework designed to guide the Kingdom's development process over the coming 10 years. A successor effort to 15 years of Government-sponsored plans for economic restructuring, sustainable development and social and economic liberalization, the National Agenda seeks to introduce a holistic approach to overcoming challenges – particularly to tackling rising rates of poverty, population growth, unemployment and underemployment (see Chapter 3).

On 26 July 2006, His Majesty King Abdullah II brought together over 700 delegates including members of parliament, senators, unions, political parties and civil society in a forum to launch the Kulluna Al-Urdun (“We are all Jordan”) initiative, a new move to help Jordan meet the domestic, regional and global challenges of being a moderate, middle income country in a region which experiences fast moving political and economic challenges. While the Forum looked at the long term situation, the Kulluna Al-Urdun action plan is very focused on what can realistically be done in the next one to two year period: a major constraint is parliamentary time for passing the enabling legislation such as a political parties act and the ombudsman law, women's law, children's law, a review of capital punishment, and an act which would define terrorism. The National Agenda remains valid with its eight areas for action: the Government has been working on an executive programme for its implementation and for the necessary finance to be included in the regular budget proposal for discussion by Parliament in late 20065.

C. The social and cultural background

Even by regional standards, the youthfulness prevailing in Jordan’s demographic profile is remarkable. The population age structure is witnessing noticeable change, the ratio of young

5 Presentation by HE Dr. Bassem Awadallah, Director of the Office of His Majesty the King, to the Donor Lender Consultation Group on 6 August, 2006
population (less than 15) decreased significantly between 1979 and 2005 and resulted in a lower dependency ratio. Still more than 31% of the population is between the ages of 15 and 29, and a further 38% is below the age of 15. The country's high fertility rate threatens to outstrip Jordan's economic and natural resource bases and serves to deprive vulnerable groups of the benefits of continued economic growth. Recognizing the importance of reducing fertility rates, the National Agenda has set as a goal the reduction of the Total Fertility Rate (TFR) to 2.5% by 2017, while the National Population Strategy sets the goal of reaching TFR of 2.1% by the year 2020.

Gender differences: Jordan has signed and ratified all major human rights instruments designed to ensure legal equality between men and women, principally the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), which it ratified in 1992. Although the Jordanian constitution does not discriminate between men and women, traditions and social practices still limit women's progress and full participation in society – an issue that was highlighted by the UN Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women when it discussed Jordan's second periodic CEDAW report in 1999.7

UN reports agree that Jordanian women have made considerable achievements in improving their status and role in society. In terms of educational attainment, for example, women's illiteracy has decreased from 15.2% in 2002 to 13% in 2005. Women constitute 49% of those enrolled in basic and secondary education. However, this progress is not reflected in female work-force or political participation. Only 9% of women over 15 years of age participate in the labour force, compared to 56% of men, and women who work sometimes earn less than their male counterparts. Exclusion of women from the labour force, voluntary or forced, can lead to greater poverty for their families and can become critical if women are divorced or widowed. Males of the households (husbands, fathers, brothers) usually play a very important role in deciding on women's work outside their homes especially in light of the lack of means of transportation and work opportunities in the proximity for the women's residence.

Along with wage disparity, women face the problem of unequal or lack of control of financial resources and/or land. The largely patriarchal structure of the Jordanian society plays a large role in preventing women's control and access to economic resources; for example, as of 1997, women constituted only 2.7% of owners of plots of agricultural land. Only 21% of women heads of household receive loans for agricultural development and only 9% for income-generating activities, compared with 43% and 14% respectively of male household heads.11

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7 UN document CEDAW/C/JOR/2, 26 October 1999. (The third and fourth periodic reports submitted by Jordan jointly at the end of 2005 [Jordan 3rd and 4th CEDAW reports], have not yet been discussed by the committee.)
Families headed by women tend to be among the poorest of the poor. Comparative data from the 1994 census and a 2002 employment and unemployment survey indicate that the proportion of female-headed households in Jordan rose from 9.6% of total households in 1994, to 12.6% in 2002. With regard to marital status, the proportion of widowed female heads of household increased by 23.2% during the same period. In terms of economic activity, the vast majority (88%) of female heads of households are classified as “homemakers”.

As for women’s political participation, in 2003 six seats in Parliament were reserved for women under a quota system adopted by the Government of Jordan the same year. The quota system is considered as an interim measure that aims at introducing women to the Parliament, and it still faces a number of challenges that are being dealt with through the Political Development Strategy of the government. In the 2003 elections, 54 women ran for elections and 52% of all the voters were women. Also in 2003, and for the first time in Jordan, three women were appointed to the cabinet of ministers. After several reshuffles, by 2005 this number had fallen to just one, the Minister of Planning and International Cooperation. In addition, seven women where appointed as senators or ambassadors. In the judiciary sector, only 2.8% of Jordan's 608 judges, and 3% of employees in the judiciary sector were women.

‘Honour’ killings: The most extreme form of discrimination against women in Jordan is the officially deplored practice of “honour” killings – the murders of women (usually from within the family or clan) over accusations (often false) of “immoral” behaviour. While these crimes (also carried out in other cultures in the region) have been criticized by human rights groups, official figures from Jordan indicate a decrease in the numbers of cases – from 21 reported in 2002, to 13 in 2003, 19 in 2004 and 5 cases up until May 2005. In 2000 and 2003, Parliament rejected efforts to repeal Article 340 of the criminal code, which provides legal protection for perpetrators of “honour” killings under certain circumstances. The treaty body, the international CEDAW committee, requested that the Convention be endorsed by Parliament and published in the Official Gazette to give it a legally binding status, and to modify the nationality law which discriminates against the children of Jordanian women married to non-Jordanians, and eliminate violence against women – especially “honour” killings.

In 1999, a Family Protection Unit was established as part of the Public Security Directorate (police department), to deal with cases of domestic sexual and physical abuse. The Unit and a number of Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) have undertaken activities aimed at raising public awareness on issues of domestic violence – especially violence against women and children. As a result of such activities, and based on data from 2001 – 2004, there has been an increase in the numbers of (reported) cases of domestic violence.

In sum, the status of women in Jordan has improved in recent years, but the participation of Jordanian women in public life is still limited. There are many reasons for their generally low participation in the economic and political spheres, varying from the socio-cultural barriers to skills and capacities. The National Agenda expresses a strong commitment to women's empowerment, calling for equity, equality and removal of all forms of discrimination against women, elimination of adverse social practices, and increasing women's participation in economy and politics.

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13 Jordan Beijing +10 report, 2005
14 Ibid.
15 Ibid.
16 Jordan 3rd and 4th CEDAW report, 2005 (not yet taken up by the CEDAW committee).
**Deprived groups:** Even in Jordan’s largely homogeneous society, it is still possible to identify a number of social divisions indicating that not all citizens have benefited equally from Jordan’s economic development. The 2004 Jordan Human Development Report pointed to regional and local differences in social and economic development. This is not simply a matter of urban/rural differences, but also differences within and between urban areas. Zarqa, a highly-urbanized governorate hosting 15.7% of the country’s population, demonstrated the lowest increase in Human Development Index (HDI) value in the country, with average per capita incomes actually falling somewhat between 1997 and 2004. It was the only governorate to go backwards in terms of the MDG indicators. A new local MDG report for Aqaba shows that even in a governorate that has been highly successful in attracting investment, there are still pockets of severe poverty. Thus, there are areas of relative deprivation in Jordan which do not offer equal life chances to all people, and special attention will need to be paid to these. Marginalized groups needing attention include:

**Mentally and physically challenged:** The mentally and physically challenged still suffer from stigmatization in Jordan, and, particularly as children, still may be shielded by their families and not allowed to exercise their rights, for example, to education.

Some civil society organisations are working to include them in education and social programmes, as is the Ministry of Education, in keeping with a 1993 law on “the welfare of disabled persons” and the 1994 Education Law reaffirming compulsory education for all for the first 10 years of schooling. Mental illness is also stigmatized, and rehabilitation centres have low uptake of places due to people’s reluctance to be labelled – and also due to the reputation (deserved or not) of such centres being used to rehabilitate drug users/abusers.

**Drug abusers:** The number of registered drug abusers in Jordan was just over 4,000 persons in 2005 – very low in comparison with most Western countries. However, the number of trafficking cases, of persons involved and of drug abusers in Jordan, has been steadily increasing since 2001.

**Children in conflict with the law:** There are different estimates regarding the number of children who come into contact with the law. The Ministry of Social Development has recorded around 4,500 each year, while a study carried out for UNICEF indicated a figure of around 11,000 of whom 52% are detained, 34% are arrested and released and another 4% are children in need of protection and not juveniles.

### Institutions caring for Children in conflict with the Law

The Juvenile Law Number 24 of 1968, and amendments thereof up to 2002, distinguishes between juveniles convicted, detained, or in need of special care and protection. There are nine institutions for juvenile care, rehabilitation and protection, including eight reporting to the Ministry of Social Development and one to the Jordan River Foundation. In addition, there are four institutions for convicted juveniles and detainees, and four more for protection and care. These institutions are being developed by the Ministry in cooperation with its partners, mainly non-governmental organisations. They are also targeted by institutional capacity building projects such as the Juvenile Criminal Justice Project.

Source: Ministry of Social Development, written communication of the 27th June, 2006

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The UNICEF study reports that 60% of all arrested juveniles are students; consequent prolonged contact with the juvenile justice system would imply discontinuing school and could eventually result in their dropping out. The geographical distribution shows 55.5% of all arrests coming from the three biggest cities (Amman, Irbid and Zarqa). Only 15 – 20% of all juvenile arrests are of repeat offenders, indicating that 80 – 85% of all arrests are of new offenders. This requires giving special attention to new offenders by directing them away from the formal juvenile justice system into a more community-based solution in order to reduce recidivism.

Child labourers: Another vulnerable group (as in many countries in the region) is children who work, often at menial jobs without protection or adequate training or supervision. A 2002 ILO report estimated that the number of working children in Jordan was 40,000 in 1991, dropping to 39,000 in 2001 and predicted to have risen again to 42,000 in 2005. There are, however uncertainties about the figures as a study carried out in 2002 by the Ministry of Labour gave a figure of 32,000 child labourers nation-wide. According to the 2001 ILO report, most of these children are 16 years or older; only about 4,000 child labourers, or 9.5%, were under 14. The estimates indicate that 23,000 of the working children are among school drop-outs who have passed their basic education (through the 6th grade) and dropped out of school during the preparatory grades for secondary education. Fewer than 5% completed the 9th grade and dropped out during secondary education, while 1% had not completed basic education.

Migrant workers: Perhaps the single largest group that must contend with the difficult social and economic situation in Jordan are the unskilled migrant workers, whose numbers were estimated at 190,000 in the 2004 census (see Chapter 5,E,3, Employment and labour). Migrant workers often live in substandard living conditions and generally are not well paid – 97% of them were earning less than JD100 (US$140) a month in 2004, around the level of the minimum wage at that time. In the first half of 2006, 500 migrant workers, most of them domestic helpers from Asia, were deported from Jordan after testing positive for hepatitis B, according to the Ministry of Health.

Refugees from the Iraq war: Since 2003, as a result of the conflict in Iraq, small groups of refugees – Iraqis, Palestinians and other nationalities – have arrived on Jordan’s northeastern border with Iraq, where they were hosted in a camp near Ruwaished. UNHCR, UNICEF and local NGOs have provided essential services to these groups. It was expected that these refugees would be accepted as refugees by other host countries. In addition, some 200 Iranian Kurds were stranded in the No-Man’s Land between the Jordanian and Iraqi borders. Lack of accessibility has hindered relief efforts of the various agencies. However, the majority of Iraqis entering Jordan since the start of the conflict are voluntary migrants, not refugees. They are a large number and although there are no official figures on their numbers or their status, estimates are in the hundreds of thousands. Although many are not economically vulnerable, there are significant social and cultural implications when a large migrant population settles in a short period of time.

The most marginalized. It could be contended that the most marginalized group in Jordan are the itinerant Roma and Gypsies, forming two distinct groups. (In Arabic, a distinction is made between “ghajar”, or Gypsies from Eastern Europe, and “nawar”, those of Arab origin.) According to one expert on nomadic peoples, there are between several thousand and twenty thousand Roma and/or Gypsies in Jordan. They are found in areas of Amman, living in roadside

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encampments and selling trinkets or begging at major road junctions. They converge on places like Irbid during the harvest season and tend to gather in southern Jordan during the winter. Little is known about their uptake of social services such as health and education. Another less visible but potentially vulnerable group whose status in Jordan is ambiguous are gays, lesbians, bisexuals and transgender persons. Jordan’s criminal code is one of the few in the Middle East that makes no explicit distinction between heterosexuals and homosexuals when it comes to private, adult, consensual relationships. Jordan has no sodomy law, and the age of consent is 16 for all.

D. The economic background

In spite of the volatile regional political environment, lack of natural resources, a large burden of external debt, huge budget deficits, a growing population and other constraints, Jordan has shown a remarkable ability to achieve economic growth rates that have made it the envy of the Near East region. To a great extent, this can be attributed to the market-oriented, export-driven approach that the King and his economic planners have adopted.

Since the late 1980s, with the firm encouragement of the International Monetary Fund and World Bank, Jordan has made sustained efforts to reform its economy. Structural reforms have been especially focused on liberalizing private investment policies, opening up international trade, developing the private sector through modern regulation, and privatizing state-owned enterprises. Current policy aims at moving the economy “towards a public-private partnership that will involve joint policy-making, but will shift responsibility for most investments to the private sector.”

Prescribed reform measures were not without pain, involving removing public subsidies (including those on fuel), controlling public-sector payrolls, reforming the state pension system, and introducing a general sales tax (in 2004). To counterbalance the impact of structural reform on the most vulnerable, Jordan spends more than 25% of GDP on social programmes related to human development (education, health care, pensions and other social safety nets). Overall, the outcomes of these investments are better than those achieved by other countries with similar GDPs.

By 2000 the economy was growing at an average annual growth rate of 5% (compared with less than 3.5% on average from 1996 – 2000); real GDP growth reached 7.7% in 2004 and 8.4% in 2005. Remarkably, this growth occurred despite a recession in 2003 caused by the Iraq war, which led to the “disappearance” of one of Jordan’s most important trading partners and caused the loss of heavily-subsidized oil supplies from Iraq. This forced Jordan to purchase crude oil at global market prices, which in turn led to sharp rises in fuel prices—carrying over into 2005.

While inflation has been largely kept under control through the pegging of the Jordanian dinar to the U.S. dollar and maintaining high interest rates (the official inflation rate was 3.5% in 2005, but rose to 5.4% in the first five months of 2006), the budget deficit has remained high and the country has continued to rely on large donor contributions to cover the deficit. Direct foreign assistance to Jordan (loans and grants) amounted to $704 million in 2005, more than 80% of which came from bilateral donors. The biggest donors were the United States (54.2% of the total), the European Union (11.8%) and Germany (11.2%). Together, these loans and grants covered more than half of the 2005 budget deficit of $1.25 billion. (The deficit,

27 Ministry of Finance figures, 10 July 2006.
after grants, was $651.1 million at the end of 2005.\(^{28}\) Japan is also an important development cooperation partner, with a mixture of loans and grants.

In 1989, Jordan's external public debt was equivalent to 190% of GDP; by 2004 this had fallen to 68.9% and at the end of 2005 it was 55.5%.\(^{29}\) Jordan also maintains a relatively high rate of Government expenditure – about 40% of GDP, of which about one-fifth goes to maintaining a large military establishment, while 7% and 5% respectively go towards salaries and pensions for state employees.

The transport sector is of crucial importance to Jordan's further economic development. Jordan has a single seaport, at Aqaba in the far south. The port serves as the main conduit for foreign trade and also for transit traffic to neighbouring countries, in particular Iraq. In 2005, the volume of cargo handled by the Port of Aqaba reached 20.4 million tonnes.\(^{30}\) In spite of its strategic importance, the port, in particular its container terminal, has suffered from a lack of investment in infrastructure and equipment.\(^{31}\) The result was severe congestion, which in 2003 prompted international shipping lines to impose congestion surcharges of up to $950 for 40-foot containers from Asia.\(^{32}\)

In response to this situation, the Aqaba Development Corporation (ADC), which is responsible for developing Aqaba's strategic facilities, signed a management contract with an international terminal operator to operate and develop the port's container terminal. Investment in new handling equipment, a sophisticated information system, and personnel training helped to clear up the congestion and make it possible to eliminate the port congestion charges in 2005.\(^{33}\)

The National Agenda strategy calls for deregulating the air-transport sector, improving airport infrastructure, restructuring the civil aviation authority, and privatizing Royal Jordanian airline. As early as 1996 Jordan signed an open skies agreement with the US, and by 2010 Jordan will be fully open to domestic competition.\(^{34}\)

The National Agenda also calls for improving the efficiency of road transport services, and for encouraging investors to invest in the sector. It proposes the establishment of a body to organize the freight sector and deregulate freight costs, and an improvement of the road network by centralizing planning, control and maintenance. Jordan is a contracting party to the ESCWA Agreement on International Roads in the Arab Mashreq which defines an international network of roads in the West Asia region. A recent World Bank study noted that Jordan's trucking fleet suffers from market oversupply and stagnant demand, and is in need of deregulation and restructuring in order to create a modern industry.\(^{35}\)

Rail transport in Jordan includes the Hijaz railway, which was built in 1901 to connect Damascus with Medina in Saudi Arabia. The Amman-Damascus route was reactivated in 2001 but as travel time between the two capitals is six hours it has not attracted passenger traffic. However, in 2004, the railway announced a 600% increase in goods traffic over the preceding two years. In the south, the Aqaba railway serves the export of phosphate and the Transport Ministry has announced that plans to privatize the Aqaba Railway Corporation are on schedule.\(^{36}\)

\(^{28}\) Ministry of Planning and International Cooperation (MoPIC), *Foreign Assistance to Jordan, and Main Economic Indicators*, 2005.

\(^{29}\) Ibid.

\(^{30}\) *The Jordan Times* 7 February 2006.


\(^{32}\) *The Jordan Times*, 5 March 2004.


\(^{35}\) *Improving trade logistics in the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan*, draft note prepared by Julia Devlin – World Bank.

\(^{36}\) *The Jordan Times*, 5 June 2005.
In order to improve public transport in the Amman metropolitan area, Jordan has invited proposals to build and operate a 25-km light rail system between Amman and Zarqa, which should be completed by 2007 and which is expected to carry some 50,000 passengers each way daily by 2010.\textsuperscript{37}

**Services Sector:** The economy continues to be dominated by the services sector, which accounted for more than 71\% of GDP in 2004. Government services alone (e.g. utilities, transport) made up more than 18\% of GDP in 2004, and the state services sector found itself a prime target of privatization efforts. Of the non-services economy, industry claimed only a 26\% share of GDP. Jordan’s industrial sector consists mainly of mining and quarrying, manufacturing and electricity generation. Some 74 enterprises are categorized as large industrial enterprises (those with more than 250 workers), and together they employ about 30\% of the workforce.\textsuperscript{38} The construction booms in the early 1990s and again since 2003 have boosted industry, particularly the manufacturing of construction materials; the construction sector alone has accounted for more than 5\% of GDP since 2004.\textsuperscript{39}

**Agriculture** accounted for a minuscule 2.3\% of GDP in 2004 (down from 8.5\% in 1994).\textsuperscript{40} But it was said to contribute 27\% of GDP through associated downstream activities which added some JD323 million to the economy.\textsuperscript{41} The agriculture sector was the source of income for 15\% of the population and provided jobs for 73,000 workers, or about 6\% of the total workforce.\textsuperscript{42} (It should be noted, however, that there are many foreign workers in the agriculture sector.)

**Free trade:** In April 2000, Jordan joined the World Trade Organization and in the same year it signed a Free Trade Agreement with the United States, which entered into force in 2001. These agreements boosted the growth of free-trade areas, from a network of Qualified Industrial Zones (QIZs) scattered around the country to the giant Aqaba Special Economic Zone (ASEZ), a semi-autonomous area set up around the southern port city with a regime of low taxes and liberal investment regulations. (There are four public free zones and 17 private free zones spread around the kingdom.) The first QIZ, the El Hassan Industrial Estate near Irbid, had been established in 1998 as an outgrowth of the 1994 peace treaty with Israel. Under a bilateral Jordanian-Israeli agreement and with joint-venture funding from the two countries, factories in the zone manufacture mostly clothing goods for export to the United States.

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**Services Sector:** The economy continues to be dominated by the services sector, which accounted for more than 71\% of GDP in 2004. Government services alone (e.g. utilities, transport) made up more than 18\% of GDP in 2004, and the state services sector found itself a prime target of privatization efforts. Of the non-services economy, industry claimed only a 26\% share of GDP. Jordan’s industrial sector consists mainly of mining and quarrying, manufacturing and electricity generation. Some 74 enterprises are categorized as large industrial enterprises (those with more than 250 workers), and together they employ about 30\% of the workforce.\textsuperscript{38} The construction booms in the early 1990s and again since 2003 have boosted industry, particularly the manufacture of construction materials; the construction sector alone has accounted for more than 5\% of GDP since 2004.\textsuperscript{39}

**Agriculture** accounted for a minuscule 2.3\% of GDP in 2004 (down from 8.5\% in 1994).\textsuperscript{40} But it was said to contribute 27\% of GDP through associated downstream activities which added some JD323 million to the economy.\textsuperscript{41} The agriculture sector was the source of income for 15\% of the population and provided jobs for 73,000 workers, or about 6\% of the total workforce.\textsuperscript{42} (It should be noted, however, that there are many foreign workers in the agriculture sector.)

**Free trade:** In April 2000, Jordan joined the World Trade Organization and in the same year it signed a Free Trade Agreement with the United States, which entered into force in 2001. These agreements boosted the growth of free-trade areas, from a network of Qualified Industrial Zones (QIZs) scattered around the country to the giant Aqaba Special Economic Zone (ASEZ), a semi-autonomous area set up around the southern port city with a regime of low taxes and liberal investment regulations. (There are four public free zones and 17 private free zones spread around the kingdom.) The first QIZ, the El Hassan Industrial Estate near Irbid, had been established in 1998 as an outgrowth of the 1994 peace treaty with Israel. Under a bilateral Jordanian-Israeli agreement and with joint-venture funding from the two countries, factories in the zone manufacture mostly clothing goods for export to the United States.
Despite their positive effect on Jordan’s trade balance, the QIZs have been the subject of criticism because of their limited impact on Jordanians’ standard of living and of the working conditions faced by their estimated 44,000 employees – mostly contract labourers from south and east Asia. The zones employ relatively few Jordanians, even those with the same skills as the contracted workers, and even though the zones are mostly based in remote areas where they could have a positive effect on the local economies. Critics also say that very few of the entrepreneurs who are partners in the ownership of the zones have reinvested the revenues of their textile businesses in the underdeveloped areas surrounding the zones.43

In May 2006, a U.S. workers’ rights group issued a damning report on labour conditions at the QIZs. It alleged that workers in clothing factories in the zones were underpaid, overworked and sometimes abused. The Ministry of Labour investigated and found that “violations do exist in some factories in terms of overtime hours” and some did not comply with other social-security and labour laws.44 Action is being taken by the Government of Jordan.

Economic vulnerability: Jordan’s economy remains vulnerable to external shocks, as was seen in various ways during the 1990s, particularly in terms of trade with Iraq and the Gulf states. As an ironic by-product of Jordan’s geographical location and historic openness, these external shocks have as often as not produced boom conditions in certain economic sectors in Jordan – including construction, real-estate and the service industries – often making use of the influxes of skilled labour that various crises have brought into the Kingdom.

The upheaval caused by the U.S.-led invasion and occupation of Iraq in 2003 has had twin effects on the Jordanian economy similar to the earlier Iraq-Kuwait crisis of 1990 – 1991. As if to compensate for the loss of trade with Iraq and the loss of the free oil supplies Jordan had received from Iraq, Jordan quickly positioned itself as a commercial “gateway” to Iraq. In steadily growing waves, middle-class Iraqis fleeing the chaos of the war invested in real estate and other businesses in Jordan. Added to this, as oil prices went up, Gulf oil revenues rose and the benefits to Jordan of increased remittances and investments from its nationals and expatriates in the Gulf served somewhat to offset the increased burden that the oil-price rises imposed upon Jordanians. By mid-2006, economists were predicting that Jordan’s positive growth would continue throughout that year, but perhaps at a lower rate, possibly around 5%, than in the previous two years.

The rising cost of imported oil and declining foreign grants were seen as factors (together with continuing regional instability) in this slight levelling off of the growth rate. On the other hand, the real estate and construction booms, the continuing influx of foreign investment (particularly from the Gulf states) and increasing tourist arrivals (again, particularly from the Gulf) were seen as factors in keeping the growth rate high.45

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In June 2006, the World Bank launched a new “Country Assistance Strategy” (CAS) for Jordan, placing the reduction of poverty and the creation of jobs at the heart of its relationship with the Kingdom. Covering the period 2006-2010, the strategy envisaged a flexible soft-lending programme providing from $175 million-$540 million over the four years, together with a programme of stepped-up advisory services and private-sector investment. “For the Jordanian economy, the challenges in the coming years will be to sustain the economic gains, advance the reform agenda and cushion hardships for the vulnerable while effectively managing external shocks, such as oil price

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Despite the large number of public investment development entities that have contributed to shaping the investment environment, the Government has been unable to formulate clear, long-term economic policies to attract investments. Public spending to stimulate the economy is often decided in an ad-hoc manner without a clear strategy. High infrastructure costs, delays in transport and logistics, inflexible labour laws and a complex tax and incentive structure have created an unattractive investment climate. Private sector development programmes for domestic enterprises are also limited in scope, lacking coordination with other national policies and are not deemed sustainable. There is also an absence of an adequate institutional framework for investments to coordinate and unify investment policies.

Internal Shocks: Jordan is also vulnerable to internal shocks, ranging from the consequences of possible earthquakes (there have been two in the past three years) and the impact of water shortages and insufficient seasonal rainfall, to local manifestations of cross-border problems such as terrorism or the potential outbreak of avian influenza or other diseases. (Emergency preparedness and disaster management is dealt with in Chapter 6, G).

The Government and the development community in Jordan must also be prepared for internal shocks resulting from economic liberalization policies and a service-led pattern of economic growth. For example, privatization can at a stroke eliminate patronage jobs in previously state-run businesses and industries, putting thousands of persons out of work with few alternatives to turn to. The services sector can create thousands of new jobs, but within a relatively narrow skills set – and jobs for which Jordanians may have to compete with imported or migrant labour. These internal pressures may raise the cost of poverty-reduction strategies.

E. The socio-economic challenges

- **Alleviate poverty:** Improve productivity, lower population growth rate, reduce unemployment, and expand the reach and benefits of human development and eliminate poverty pockets, improve generation and use of data for planning and monitoring;
- **Stimulate economic growth:** Achieve annual growth rates of 9 – 10% over next decade;
- **Focus on job creation:** Even at present rate of growth, unemployment will grow by nearly 50% over the next 10 years;
- **Tackle underemployment:** Create opportunities and incentives to keep people in the job market;
- **Correct gender imbalances:** Greatly expand role of women in the economy, particularly in the labour force, public service, and in political life;
- **Achieve equality in public services:** Correct wide gender, regional and other disparities and imbalances in provision of services Kingdom-wide;
- **Strengthen the resilience of the economy against external shocks:** Establish partnerships for self-reliance;
- **Boost exports:** Continue to reduce the ratio of debt to GDP.

 increases,” a World Bank statement said. The strategy is based on four main pillars: strengthening the investment environment for a skill-intensive and knowledge-based economy; supporting local development through increased access to services and economic opportunities; reforming social protection and expanding inclusion, and restructuring public expenditures and supporting public sector reform.

Source:
A. Key development challenges

Jordan has made human development a high priority and has seen slow but steady growth, according to most indicators. Between 1997 and 2002, its Human Development Index (HDI) score rose from 0.715 to 0.747 (on a scale from 0 – 1). The fact that Jordan’s HDI values ranked it ninth out of 19 countries in the Arab region, and that of the eight higher-ranking countries seven were the beneficiaries of huge revenues from oil and gas exports, shows the relatively high standard of human development that resource-starved Jordan has been able to attain and sustain.

The sustainability of such gains, and the strides made by Jordan in educating its young population and providing basic social services for all and social security for the most vulnerable, is threatened by several factors: the continuing high fertility rate and the looming bulge in the number of people of reproductive age; the decline in both the quantity and quality of water resources; worsening degradation in the quality and availability of arable land due to urbanization and poor land-use policies; the pressures on income levels (particularly for women) generated by population growth and migration; the need for structural changes to ensure economic productivity; and the ever-present threat of the spill-over effects on Jordan from chronic regional conflicts, particularly those on the Kingdom’s eastern (Iraq) and western (Palestine) flanks.

B. The Government response: A National Agenda

To confront and address these challenges, the Government of Jordan, under the direction and guidance of His Majesty King Abdullah II, in 2005 produced the “National Agenda”, an action plan for achieving sustainable development through a programme of reforms in prevailing policies and practices. The result of nine months of effort overseen by a Steering Committee comprising leaders from all walks of national life, representing all of Jordan’s main constituencies, the National Agenda is intended to serve as a blueprint for dealing with development and reform priorities.

While much of its focus, and many of its recommended reforms, will be in the area of public administration – including legislative, legal and social initiatives – the National Agenda also has as a key aim to “develop human and economic resources, upgrade the production base and expand development benefits”.

The National Agenda is organized around eight “themes”, upon which it proposes to structure the development of specific initiatives to achieve identified goals and targets. These themes are:

- Political development and inclusion;
- justice and legislation;
- investment development;
- financial services and fiscal reform;

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46 Jordan Human Development Report 2004
• employment support and vocational training;
• social welfare;
• education, higher education, scientific research and innovation, and
• infrastructure upgrade (water, energy, transport, ICT and postal services, environmental
  protection and sustainability).\footnote{\textit{The National Agenda 2006-2015: The Jordan we strive for} (English summary), published in December 2005., p. 9.}

Of these, four—employment support and vocational training, social welfare (which embraces
public health care, poverty alleviation, and “social security”), the education and “innovation”
sector, and the upgrading of infrastructure—reside in areas where Jordan's partners in the
development process, including United Nations, could potentially assist the Kingdom in realizing
the plan's objectives. Additionally, the Agenda identifies areas in all sectors where the cross-
cutting themes of women's empowerment, administrative accountability, and civil rights are seen
as important elements in the push for reform; Jordan's partners in the development process may
take advantage of this to offer assistance that may help the Government to make a difference in
these areas.

\textbf{Relationship of the National Agenda to the MDGs}

Although the National Agenda does not directly address the UN Millennium Development Goals,
several of the cross-cutting themes of the Agenda feed into more than one specific development
goal. These include Justice and legislation, Investment development and Infrastructure upgrade.
These can be denoted as the baseline for addressing MDG achievement through ensuring the
sustainability of a comparative competitive development, and providing an enabling environment.
By the same token, other themes could be directly linked to certain of the MDGs, as follows:

• \textit{Political development and inclusion}, which is in line with Goal Three (Promote gender equality
  and empowerment of women).
• \textit{Financial services and fiscal reform}, which would feed into Goal Eight (Developing a global
  partnership for development).
• \textit{Employment support and vocational training}, which is in line with Goal One (Eradicate extreme
  poverty and hunger).
• \textit{Social welfare}, which is in line with Goals One, Four, Five and Six (Eradicate extreme poverty
  and hunger, reduce child mortality, improve maternal health and combat HIV/AIDS, malaria
  and other diseases).
• \textit{Education}, higher education, scientific research and innovation, which feeds into Goals Two,
  Seven and Eight (Achieve universal primary education, ensure environmental sustainability
  and develop a global partnership for development).

While actual implementation of the National Agenda's prescribed programme will unfold over
time, with working groups starting to review and establish priorities among the themes and
sectors (and coming up with estimated costs for funding the initiatives) only during the period
2007 – 2009, the Government has identified key socio-economic targets to be achieved under the
plan (see Annex 2).
A. The Millennium Declaration and the MDGs

As articulated in the Millennium Declaration, the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) are “benchmarks for progress towards a vision of development, peace and human rights, guided by certain fundamental values essential to international relations in the twenty-first century.” The Declaration recognizes that these targets are not just aspirations but are claimable rights. Taking action to achieve them is an obligation, not an act of charity.

The commitment of Jordan to implementing the obligations of the Millennium Declaration and the MDGs was clearly expressed in His Majesty King Abdullah II’s speech at the World Summit of the UN General Assembly in New York, on 16 September 2005, in which he reported that Jordan was “on track to achieve the majority of its (MDG) targets”. The King said the work of Jordan and other middle-income countries to achieve higher living standards for their people could “translate into real development gains, only if it is nourished and sustained.”

In 2004, the Government and the UN Country Team produced the first national MDG report for Jordan. The report showed that Jordan was on track for the achievement of Goal One (poverty and hunger) and Goal Two (universal primary education), and there was a strong possibility that Goal Six (HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases) would be met. Goal Four (child mortality), was also on track, with the exception of a key indicator -- the reduction of tuberculosis, to which more attention needs to be paid in the context of the policy environment. Also, any further reductions in the infant and child mortality will depend on reducing neo-natal mortality, the area of most infant deaths. Regarding Goal 5 (Improve maternal health), concerns were expressed about reaching the goal of reducing maternal mortality from 48 to 12 per 100,000 live births. More complete and accurate maternal mortality and morbidity figures are needed in order to address this issue.

The two MDGs that will be more difficult for Jordan to attain are Goal Three (Promote gender equality and empowerment of women), and Goal Seven (Ensure environmental sustainability). Regarding the gender goal, the indicators related to education are on track. However, there are serious concerns about the share of women in wage employment in the non-agricultural sector, and with the proportion of seats held by women in the national parliament. In general, as noted in the comments of the CEDAW committee on Jordan’s second report, the barrier to women’s full participation in development is a cultural barrier rather than an access barrier.

Regarding environmental sustainability, Jordan has the potential to achieve standard global goals, and has already achieved the indicator regarding the proportion of population with sustainable access to an improved water source. However, the sustainability of water supplies is, in the long run, a serious problem for Jordan.

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54 UN document CEDAW/C/JOR/2, 26 October 1999.
Regarding Goal Eight (Developing a global partnership for development), Jordan was shown in the MDG report to have made substantial progress in the area of opening the economy to regional and global trade. However, there are still challenges with the management of internal and external public debt, and Jordan continues to rely considerably on Official Development Assistance – although the importance of this has been reduced from 16% of GDP in 1994 to 10% in 2002. Goal 8 also covers the use of new technologies, which with the King’s strong personal backing is a priority area for the Government of Jordan.

B. International Conventions

1. Human rights conventions
Among countries of the Middle East, Jordan has ratified the highest number of international treaties relating to human rights. These include:

- the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948);
- the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (1966);
- International Convention Against Apartheid (1973);
- CEDAW (1979);
- the Convention Against Torture (1984), and

Jordan has also signed the two CRC Optional Protocols on Child Soldiers and Trafficking of Children (2000), and the ILO Convention on Child Labour (1999). In addition, Jordan participated in the International Conference on Population and Development (1994) and adopted the Programme of Action for the 20 years following the conference. (See Annex 5 for a list of international conventions, Human Rights Conventions ratified by Jordan).

Throughout the years, Jordan has fulfilled its reporting requirements to the various treaty bodies committees. Jordan submitted its Third Report to the CRC Committee in August 2005 and was among the few in the region to do so. The preparatory process for the Committee was a participatory one, bringing governmental and non-governmental partners around the table. As for CEDAW, Jordan's ratification was with reservations on several sections, Jordan submitted a first and second combined report to the CEDAW committee, and the third and forth combined report was also submitted in 2005. These conventions have not been ratified by the Jordanian parliament or published in the Official Gazette, and thus cannot be invoked in a court of law.

2. Environment conventions
Another key area in which Jordan has ratified conventions and made progress in their implementation is the environment (see Annex 6). The main challenge that faces Jordan in relation to those conventions is the integration of the strategies and plans that result from Jordan's signature and ratification of global environmental conventions into national developmental plans, as well as integrating the objectives of these conventions into the various sectoral plans and strategies.

C. Trade agreements

Jordan became a member of the World Trade Organization in April 2000 and has concluded an Association Agreement with the European Union (signed in 1997 and entered into force in 2002) and a Free Trade Agreement with the United States (signed in 2000 and entered into force
In 2004, Jordan also entered into FTAs with Singapore and several Arab countries (Egypt, Morocco and Tunisia) in the context of the Agadir initiative. A similar agreement with Turkey is under negotiation. Jordan is member of the Greater Arab Free Trade Area (GAFTA) established in 1981 by the Arab Economic and Social Council of the League of Arab States with the aim of facilitating and promoting trade among Arab countries.

The implementation of commitments undertaken as part of accession to the WTO has posed specific challenges to Jordan, namely limited institutional capacities and coordination mechanisms—particularly between the public and private sectors and between policy-making and executing institutions. Some critics have argued that Jordan's trade and investment policies have so far been "compliance-oriented", lacking a clear development dimension and creating a bias in favour of foreign investors; they argue that this risks locking Jordan into investment patterns playing on its static comparative advantages rather than helping it to develop new comparative advantages in dynamic sectors.

In the context of the Middle East peace process, Jordan established trade relations with Israel through a 1995 trade and economic co-operation agreement, which has recently been upgraded. Trade relations with both the U.S. and Israel have been also promoted through the creation of Qualified Industrial Zones operating since 1998 (see Chapter 2, D). The QIZs allow manufacturers duty-free and quota-free access to the U.S. market for their goods – provided that these have at least 35% local input, including 8% of Israeli origin.56

55 Information from a draft mission report by Dr. Walid Mehalaine, trade policy advisor, UNDP, Sub-Regional Resource Facility-Arab States (SURF-AS), Beirut, May 2006.

56 "QIZs open door to the United States", from a special survey on Jordan in the International Herald Tribune, 19 May 2005.
CHAPTER FIVE: KEY NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT ISSUES

A. Poverty and food security

1. The policy framework

The National Human Development Report (NHDR) of 2004 showed that poverty in Jordan is characterized by financial destitution and not by human poverty (the latter being broadly defined by longevity, health and education levels and attainment of a “decent standard of living”). Jordan has a relatively low Human Poverty Index (HPI) value of 8.1% and ranks 11th among 156 developing countries, according to 2005 figures. Jordan scored 0.75 on the Human Development Index (HDI) which ranked it 90th among 177 countries.

Poverty Eradication is a key objective of the National Agenda, dealt with under the sections on education, employment and health. According to the National Agenda, despite a reduction in poverty rates, poverty alleviation efforts still suffer from many deficiencies, including: uncoordinated programmes that are unevenly distributed geographically; lack of a clear social policy; highly burdensome direct assistance through the National Aid Fund (NAF) on public finances, which is not adequately targeted, and a lack of linkages between direct financial assistance provided and the ability for the poor to attain self-sustainability. Under the social welfare theme, the Agenda proposes several initiatives to address these issues – including the coordination of programmes and organisations fighting poverty, improving monitoring and evaluation, and increasing the effectiveness of programmes. Additional initiatives include restructuring the NAF to reduce system abuse and improved targeting of the poor population and gradually conditioning financial assistance to the poor on improving education, health, and employability skills and practices.

In May 2006, the Government launched a two-year Employment and Anti-Poverty Programme directly targeting the poorest communities. It included a plan for restructuring the NAF, through which the Government provides direct assistance to the neediest Jordanians.

Poverty and human rights: Jordan has ratified a number of human rights instruments related to poverty alleviation, including the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (adopted by consensus; Articles 22, 23, 25 and 26 relate); the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (Articles 6, 7, 9, 11, 12 and 13), ratified by Jordan on 28 May 1975; CEDAW (Articles 10, 11, 12, 13 and14), ratified on 1 July 1992, with reservations, and the CRC (Article 27), ratified on 23 June 1991, with reservations. Jordan also participated in the United Nations Conference on Human Settlements, (Habitat II), held in 1996 in Istanbul, at which the assembled leaders agreed that shelter is a fundamental right for the well-being of all people.

Although such instruments provide a support and a framework for tackling poverty, in Jordan as elsewhere, the poor may not be sufficiently empowered, or possess the confidence, knowledge and necessary skills, to claim their rights. A key finding of the 2004 NHDR was that, whereas

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57 Jordan Human Development Report 2004
58 UNDP, Human Development Report 2005
59 The Jordan Times, 1 June 2006.
adequate support systems are needed to facilitate poor people's access to their rights, the institutions and processes through which people access their rights are seen as obstacles to the full enjoyment of entitlements in practice. Barriers to accessing rights in Jordan include the inappropriate use of power, difficulty in reaching those responsible for services, the use of influence through political and tribal affiliations, lack of knowledge about agency mandates, lack of necessary documentation, lack of social skills, and lack of transport and mobility, especially for women.\(^{60}\)

### 2. Poverty trends

A poverty line of JD392 (approximately $553) per capita per year was established based on the Household Expenditures and Income Survey conducted by the Department of Statistics, covering the period 2002-2003. Using this benchmark, poverty in Jordan had declined by one-third between 1997 and 2002, from 21.3% to 14.2%\(^{61}\). By another token, using a benchmark of $2 a day as proposed by the UN Capital Development Fund as a more reasonable criterion for a middle-income country like Jordan, an estimated 29.9% of the population, or some 1.65 million persons, could be said to be living below the poverty line.\(^{62}\)

**Income poverty:** Jordan still suffers from persistent income inequalities, as the income share of the poorest quintile increased only marginally from 6.5%-6.9\(^{63}\), and is still very low. Another issue is the unequal distribution of resources. Between 1997 and 2002, growth in Jordan was slightly biased against the poor.\(^{64}\) The mean growth rate in this period was 3.1% a year; however the mean growth rates for the poor (up to the 47th percentile) were less than for the whole population.

There is a correlation here with Jordan's high fertility rates: the poor generally have higher rates of fertility – available data indicate that poor households are, on average, some 40% larger than non-poor households. Income-poverty incidence is 22% when a family consists of 3-4 persons, and 65% when there are eight or more persons in a family. Moreover, poor households tend to have higher dependency ratios, meaning that there are proportionally more family members in the years of early childhood (0-8), middle childhood (9-12) and adolescence (13-18): dependants in these age groups make up 60% of poor households, compared with 48% of non-poor ones.

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**Gender:** According to national studies, there is, generally speaking, no feminization of poverty in Jordan at the household level. According to the 2004 Jordan Poverty Assessment, the headcount ratio of poverty among female-headed households was 15.35% against 14.07% among male-headed households, which statistically does not represent a significant difference between male and female poverty. However, there is a wide difference among female-headed households when related to marital status: about three-quarters of the female heads of household are widows, and poverty among them is relatively low (20%). The incidence of income poverty is even lower (17%) among households with a married female head. These make up 23% of female-headed households, and they are typically those whose previous male head is now absent, working in the Gulf or elsewhere, for example. The poorest female-headed households are those whose heads are separated from their husbands; almost half of such households are poor. About 60% of such households have seven or more members and often require special attention due to their poverty and frequent social ostracism of separated women heading households.

It should be noted that the national definition of poverty, which is reflected in calculations of the poverty line, is based on household consumption. This means that intra-household inequalities and gender relations are not reflected in the poverty definition. Additionally, available data compares the poor with the non-poor but there are no indicators to show differences within different levels of poverty. (“The poor are not a homogeneous group and different segments have different needs”, noted the 2004 NHDR.65)

**Urban/rural poverty:** Poverty in Jordan is characterized by distinct rural/urban differences, as well as by discrepancies within urban areas. The incidence of income poverty is significantly higher in rural areas, where 37% are poor, compared with 29% in urban areas. (According to one IFAD study, “rural people make up about 45% of the people in the country who live in extreme poverty, surviving on less than $1 a day.”66) However, since more than 80% of the total population lives in urban areas, the number of urban poor is three times that of the rural poor.67 Proportionally, however, rural areas have 50% more poverty than urban areas, and the rate of decline in poverty is slower in rural areas than in urban centres.68 The Government’s Agricultural Credit Corporation (ACC) has undertaken an integrated programme for poverty and unemployment reduction in rural areas, and allocated JD15 million in loans for a three-year period beginning in 2005; 57% of the loan recipients are housewives and the remaining 43% are unemployed.69

**Poverty in the governorates:** Progress in poverty reduction is also geographically uneven. In Balqa, Karak and Aqaba governorates, there was no strong evidence of any change between 1997 and 2002; in Zarqa, poverty significantly increased, from 16% to 22%, while in all other governorates it declined significantly.70 Four governorates showed reductions in poverty ratios of well over 10%: Irbid (12%) and Madaba, Tafileh and Ma’an (around 13% each).71 In six of the twelve governorates, growth has not been pro-poor; these are Mafraq, Ajloun, Balqa, Aqaba, Karak, Jerash and worst of all in Zarqa.72 The analysis shows that in governorates where growth has been pro-poor, both growth and income redistribution effects have worked in the same

67 Data developed for the 2002 CCA based on unpublished data provided by the Department of Statistics.
69 Information from Ministry of Agriculture, July 2006.
direction. Densely-populated, heavily-industrialized Zarqa governorate trended in the opposite direction, and was an extreme case, with poverty actually increasing and the redistribution effect overwhelming the growth effect.

**Poverty pockets:** Out of the total of 73 sub-districts in the country, 20 had poverty levels of over 25%. Altogether, these areas have a total population of 403,000 living in 254 settlements with an average of fewer than 200 households per settlement—pointing to the existence of significant pockets of isolated, remote and resource-deprived communities in rural Jordan.

3. Food security and nutrition

Jordan has improved its food security position in the last two decades. During the period from 1980 to 1996, per capita food production increased by 13%, and the proportion of food imports decreased from 26% (in 1974-1976) to 20% (in 1996-1998). However, food imports are still needed, to keep up with population growth.

Major risks to food security in Jordan include: lack of job opportunities and low income in the food-producing sector; declines in economic indicators; agricultural land degradation; insufficiency of food production, especially of cereals, and water scarcity, with Jordan ranking globally among the ten most water-deficit countries.

Among the contributing factors to chronic under-nutrition and food insecurity are: poverty, low agricultural productivity, and high seasonal and year-to-year variability in food supplies due to unreliable rainfall; insufficient water for crop and livestock production, and a lack of off-farm employment opportunities, which contribute to low and uncertain incomes in urban and rural areas.

Low-income households have greater food supply insecurity. Households with an annual income below JD1,200 pay a larger share of their income per calorie when compared to households with an annual income of JD6,000 or more. Furthermore, the poor households have lower quantity and quality of food, calorie and nutrient intake. Cereals are the main and cheapest source of energy for households with an annual household income of less than JD1,200 contributing to about 70% of total calorie intake.

Under the combined pressure of macroeconomic, social and political factors, the food sector in Jordan moved from a food subsidy, price and import control policy during the 1970s and 1980s to a gradual but progressive liberalization and removal of food subsidies in the early 1990s. Despite some improvements in food production, imports of essential food commodities such as cereals, animal foods and dairy products remain critical and affect the process of socio-economic development. Therefore, a sustainable food security strategy is important to ensuring adequate food of good quality while helping to stimulate rural economies and to promote the social and environmental aspects of sustainable agricultural development.

Water security: Another key challenge to the welfare of Jordanian families is that the demand for water nationally will increase from about 1,525 million cubic metres (mcm) in 2005 to about

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Given possible available national water resources, and considering the estimated safe yield of ground water, surface water and treated wastewater effluent, tremendous efforts will have to be undertaken to secure the vital water needs of Jordanians. Possible increased costs for household water will impact disproportionately on the poor.

4. Shelter, land tenure and basic services

According to studies carried out by the Housing and Urban Development Corporation (HUDC) in 2004, 58% of Jordanian families could not afford to buy a housing unit of 70 square metres (a minimum standard adopted for a family house) according to the market prices prevailing at the time. Considering that average family size in Jordan is 5.4 persons and average monthly household income is JD361, this meant that a majority of Jordanian families were living in substandard and overcrowded housing. The median "area per person" in a unit was 18.6 square metres, with an average 1.67 persons per room in a unit.78

Established in 1966, the HUDC has since the 1980s been working to upgrade housing conditions in low-income, poorly-serviced areas; so far – and in direct pursuit of the housing-improvement targets of MDG 7 – it has improved the living conditions of around 500,000 persons in low-income areas. The corporation has identified all remaining squatter or ill-serviced sites in the country, and selected 22 for improvement at a cost of JD20 million over the next 10 years, if funding is available. HUDC also provides small loans (maximum value: JD1,000) for those in poor housing to improve their living environment on a self-help basis.79

National indicators reveal that most Jordanians have access to utility service networks, including electricity (99.7%) and water (97.2%), with slight variations among governorates.80 However, access to the public sanitation network is an issue, and 42.4% of the population relies on cesspits for solid waste disposal. Use of the latter means extra disposal costs and contributes to pollution of ground water sources, thus impacting on community level poverty. The main source of heating in Jordan is kerosene, with 57.8% of the population relying on this source; only 7.9% have central heating. Fully 68.2% of Jordanians own their own homes, while the rest rent, share or squat illegally.

5. MDG progress

The MDG Report for Jordan shows an encouraging picture regarding poverty and hunger eradication, with trends indicating that the goals could be met by 2015. The proportion of families living on less than a dollar a day was reduced from 6.6% in 1992 to 4.0% in 2002. The poverty gap ratio fell by 2% during the same period (from 5.3% to 3.3%). The prevalence of underweight children (below five years of age) fell from 6.4% in 1992 to 4.4% in 2002; and the proportion of people below the minimum level of dietary consumption fell from 6.6% to 4.0%. However, the indicator on “stunting” (low height for weight in children) remained critical, and the trend actually showed an increase between 1990 and 2002.81

Despite the above trends and based on the levels of economic growth, it can be said that poverty rates were not reduced to expected levels, due partly to the negative impact of structural-adjustment programmes and macro-economic policies on the poor – especially privatization and

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78 Data from the Housing and Urban Development Corporation, July 2006.
79 Data from the Housing and Urban Development Corporation, July 2006.
the persistence of jobless growth. Additionally, safety net institutions have not been as effective as expected, with studies showing that the chronically poor and other highly vulnerable groups receive only 16% of National Aid Fund (NAF) assistance. Therefore, targeting can be improved in terms of outreach to these groups and among regions and provinces.

Jordan has done very well in terms of ensuring access to safe drinking water and the related MDG target has already been achieved, with a 97% rate of access – although issues of water quality, networks and sustainability remain, and long-term sustainability is critical. On the other hand, when it comes to sanitation the situation is bleaker, as the proportion of households with access to public networks was 57.3% in 2002/3, with huge disparities between governorates – ranging from 76.9% in Amman to 13.1% in Karak.

Jordan’s chief development challenge is to address the poverty that has grown in the past decade. A combination of factors contributed to this sharp increase: the return of approximately 300,000 Jordanians from the Gulf countries, the subsequent drop in worker remittances from neighbouring oil-producing countries, the high natural population growth rate, and the significant increase in oil prices.

The poor in Jordan rely on the Government to provide essential services such as health, education, social welfare and cash assistance, which constitute the foundation for well-being. In spite of significant investment by the Government in these services, the poor themselves, when consulted, are critical of service provision – noting obstacles to access, uneven quality of service delivery, and disappointing outcomes. They recommended that services be designed to meet their needs efficiently, effectively and in a way that respects their dignity. This requires targeted investments in the capacity building of specific line ministries that deliver services to the poor.

Challenges identified in a World Bank (WB) report in 2001 are still valid and should be addressed, namely: Sustainable reduction of poverty requires resumption and sustainability of growth; there is a need for a policy response to the vulnerability of the poor and near-poor to economic shocks; the capacity of the NAF needs to be significantly enhanced, and continued priority needs to be placed on human-development policies – particularly those affecting the poor.

The Government considers poverty alleviation as a main priority. In addition to ongoing poverty-alleviation programmes, it has adopted the following interventions: expanding housing for the poor; allocating arable land to poor families; restructuring and reviving the National Vocational Training project; creating a reliable and accurate national database on the poor; establishing new productive and income-generating projects in some poverty areas, and increasing minimum wages. The strategy of the Government aims at converting the poor from financial-aid recipients to productive members.

In sum, Jordan is on track to meet the MDG 1 challenges of poverty eradication and food security at the aggregate level, but there are problems with tackling poverty. Economic advances have left behind many pockets of rural and urban poverty. Deprived areas need better quality services and work opportunities. Attitudes to women’s paid employment limit economic opportunities for

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87 *Al-Ghad* newspaper, Amman, 20 January 2006.
families. The poorest segments of the population included migrant workers who have few rights, and minority communities who live on the margins of society. They need support, as do families of children with special needs. Finally, there is the special challenge of demining, in order to bring land back into productive use.

6. The poverty and food security challenges

- **Tackle extreme poverty:** Eliminate hunger and extreme poverty especially in rural areas.
- **Develop rural areas:** Foster rural and agricultural development and reverse rural-urban migration; accelerate demining to free up more land.
- **Educate the poor:** Increase the level of educational attainment of poor boys and girls in the school system and increase the proportion of young men and women in the higher education system (vocational and academic).
- **Improve the quality of public health and education:** Increase the efficiency of public spending on health and education services so that the poor may derive maximum benefit from insurance schemes and free basic education services.
- **Improve access of poor households to safe sanitation:** Capital expenditure to be directed outside the capital to reduce inter-governorate disparities in access to sanitation.
- **Improve access of poor households to safe drinking water:** This must be approached within the context of the severe water shortage and water pollution problems in Jordan.
- **Give shelter:** Provide adequate, hygienic shelter for poor families by establishing proper mechanisms of housing finance and access to credit.
- **Strengthen regional capacities:** Bolster the closest administrative units to the populace and those most likely to represent the needs of the people, ensure transparency and act in close cooperation with local communities and representatives of civil society.
- **Tackle socio-cultural factors which contribute to poverty:** These include gender-stereotyped roles and the patriarchal society, resistance to family planning and the social stigma associated with disability.
- **Ensure efficient and streamlined social schemes:** These include subsidies, health insurance, unemployment benefits, social security, pension, and National Aid Fund transfers. Develop and implement a clear, workable social policy.
- **Ensure pro-poor growth and equal redistribution of resources:** See to it that the benefits of investment trickle down to the poor; focus investment in productive economic sectors. Reform fiscal policy to become pro-poor, with public budgeting and taxation policies and greater transparency.
- **Zoom in Zarqa:** Reverse the increasing poverty trend in Zarqa governorate while maintaining the positive trend towards poverty reduction in other governorates.

B. Education and training

1. The policy framework

In 1976, Jordan ratified the 1960 UNESCO Convention against Discrimination in Education. The country's 1994 Education Law mandated compulsory education for the first ten years, through age 15, and provided for two free years of optional secondary education. According to UNESCO, 97% of enrolled pupils make the transition from primary to secondary education – in equal numbers of girls and boys.\(^{88}\) This is a very high transition rate, not only among other countries in the region, but also as compared with many middle-income countries worldwide.

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In July 2003, within the context of an Educational Reform Programme aimed at raising the quality of basic and secondary education, the Government of Jordan launched the Education Reform for the Knowledge Economy (ERfKE) initiative. This five-year, $380 million programme is one of the most ambitious education reform initiatives to be undertaken in the region.

The ERfKE project, supported by external donors, aims to foster significant changes in the governance, administration and quality of education, to restructure education programmes and practices, improve physical learning environments and promote “learning readiness” through improved and more accessible early-childhood education. On the more immediate level, ERfKE seeks to boost science and math scores obtained by Jordanian students in comprehensive exams, to alleviate unsafe and overcrowded conditions in schools, and to provide computerized on-line “learning portals” for elementary and secondary students.

According to the 2004 UN Human Development Report, Jordan spent 20.6% of its budget on education in 2001 – nearly double the 11.1% expenditure rates recorded by both Lebanon and Syria in the same period. Government investment in education amounted to 6% of GDP; additionally, direct spending on education by UNRWA and the private sector brought the total amount spent on education to some 8% of GDP.

2. Early childhood education

The proportion of children aged 4-6 years who were enrolled in kindergartens (KGs) rose from 23% in 1990 to 33% in 2004. Of these, only 5% were enrolled in public kindergartens, while 77% were in private KGs and 18% in KGs run by NGOs. Nurseries providing temporary care and play activities for a few hours daily to the youngest and most crucial age group (children below four years of age), are extremely limited, covering only 1% of the relevant age children, who constitute 12.9% of the total population. By end 2002, the number of registered nurseries had reached 730; by 2005 it was 796 – 52.5% of them public and 47.5% private or NGO-run.

The Ministry of Education has embarked on developing national standards for children’s learning for four age groups; 0-18 months, 19 months – 3 years; 4 – 6 years, and 7 – 8 years. These standards will represent the benchmarks upon which Jordan will measure the progress of its children. The lack of Early Childhood Education programmes for the very young is coupled with knowledge gaps in effective child rearing among parents.

Alongside the institutional approach to ECD, Jordan is strengthening the support system for community and family based early child care. Since 1996, a Better Parenting partnership was initiated between the Government of Jordan and UNICEF to address this aspect through community based approaches. The Programme particularly targets urban and rural families.

91 Quoted in EIU country profile, p. 17.
92 GOJ, Jordan, Third report to the CRC Committee, 2005.
disadvantaged by poverty, unemployment and low educational levels. It has also provided a model for extending holistic and stimulating early developmental options to children in their natural environment.

3. Basic education

In Jordan, there is universal access to basic education and almost all children are in school.

### Schools in Jordan

School enrolment rates in the basic education cycle (grades 1-10) were 97.3% for boys and 97% for girls in 2003, according to UNICEF. Of the total number of students enrolled from kindergarten to secondary level, 70% are in Government schools, 20% in private schools, 9% in UNRWA schools and 1% in military-run schools.

### UNRWA schools in Jordan

About 8.5% of pupils in the primary and preparatory levels (through 10th grade) attend schools operated by UNRWA for Palestine refugees. UNRWA employs some 4,500 school teachers and spends more than $70 million a year on education in Jordan (including technical and vocational education and teacher training). The 177 UNRWA schools, located mostly in or near large refugee concentrations in Amman, Zarqa, Irbid and in some rural areas, are typically run-down (many of them date from the 1970s), overcrowded and under-equipped; more than a quarter of them are situated in unsatisfactory rented buildings not designed as schools, and double-shifting prevails in fully 92% of UNRWA’s schools. Classrooms with 40 or more pupils are not untypical, and UNRWA depends on dedicated donor funding to add classrooms or build new schools. The Agency has as a goal to reduce average student/teacher ratios from the present 1:30 to 1:21 by 2010. UNRWA has prided itself on maintaining perfect parity between boys and girls in its schools ever since it began educating refugee children in the early 1950s.

However, drop-out rates at all levels of the education cycle increased from an average of 0.69% in 1998 to 1.2% in 2001, according to the National Centre for Human Resources Development, and showed a systematic increase from the lower to the higher grades, reaching a rate of 2.5% for the 10th grade. The targets contained in the National Agenda aim to reduce dropout rates to 0.15% by 2017.

### 4. Secondary education

At the secondary level (grades 11 and 12), enrolment rates in Jordan drop sharply, to some 76% overall. According to UNESCO, the net enrolment ratio of students enrolled in the secondary level in 2004 was 83% of females and 81% of males. By the time they reach the age of 20, however, the majority of young Jordanians, both men and women, are already outside the education system. Still, according to the trend reported in a recent UNICEF survey, some 65.8%

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93 Jordan MDG Report 2004, p. 15
94 Jordan National Agenda for the Education Sector, Ministry of Education presentation to the Donor/Lender Consultative Group, p. 68.
of Jordanians between the ages of 10 and 24 were enrolled in some sort of education, and 20.5% of females and nearly 22% of males were continuing with their education, pursuing higher degrees at university level.\textsuperscript{95}

In the National Agenda, expanding secondary education is a top priority of the Government. While the gross enrolment ratio in secondary education is currently 86%, it is projected to be 90% by 2012 and 95% by 2017.\textsuperscript{96} However, the drop-out rate at the upper Secondary level is 66.2% for males and 43.5% for females.\textsuperscript{97} Secondary education is gradually being reformed under the ERfKE project to face challenges from a quantitative standpoint as well as to improve qualitative aspects – with a primary objective of educating adolescents from many different social backgrounds and with different interests.

Using the measure of gross entry ratios, 45% of Jordan's secondary school graduates – 46% of female and 44% of male graduates – make the transition to the tertiary level of education.\textsuperscript{98} Problems of transition, repetition and dropout during secondary schooling are not so serious in Jordan, but deserve to be given attention in rural areas.

\textbf{5. Technical and vocational education}

In Jordan, vocational education starts at the secondary-school level (11th and 12th grades), in Government-run schools and specialized training centres (state, private and UNRWA-run).

\begin{table}[h]
\centering
\begin{tabular}{|l|}
\hline
\textbf{Gender differences in enrolment in Vocational streams at Secondary level} \\
\hline
According to a 2005 survey by UNESCO and the Ministry of Education, the vocational stream in Government schools (providing industrial, agricultural, commercial, hotel-management and other courses) accounts for 36% of all secondary-school students - of whom one-third are females. After the Education Development Plan was launched in 1998, the proportion of students enrolled in the vocational stream of secondary education increased from 17% to 43% for males and 12% to 25% for females. These increases were a consequence of better job and pay prospects for vocational graduates and new regulations allowing vocational graduates to continue on to higher education. \\
Source:  
- UNESCO/MoE Survey 2006, p.18 
- UNDP: Human Development Report 2000, p.52  
\hline
\end{tabular}
\end{table}

However, 80% of females tended to pursue just two vocations: textile and leather working and hairdressing/cosmetology. More recently, it is reported that women are moving into other fields of vocational training, such as electronics and hotel/restaurant courses.\textsuperscript{99}

The National Agenda asserts that Jordan's Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) system “has been yielding poorly trained and uncommitted workers”; at the same time, it says, there has been a lack of collaboration between vocational training centres and the private sector, thus “widening the gap between private-sector expectations and the skill-set taught to vocational trainees”.\textsuperscript{100}

\textsuperscript{96} National Agenda (English summary), p.32.  
\textsuperscript{97} MOE/UNESCO Survey Report, 2005, pg 75-76. \textsuperscript{100} National Agenda (English summary), p.25.  
\textsuperscript{98} UNESCOUIS Global Education Digest 2006, p.117.  
\textsuperscript{100} National Agenda (English summary), p.25.
It has been recognized since the early 1990s that TVET in Jordan was not responding to the needs of industry and the demands of an open and competitive market economy. TVET was largely “supply-driven”, with a low level of coordination among institutions and inadequate linkages to the labourer market. Despite ambitious reform efforts, there remains little or no correlation between the qualifications needed in the Jordanian economy and the training in the different streams of vocational training.101

6. Higher education

Jordan has 10 state and 15 private universities with an enrolment of more than 150,000 students.102 There are also some 41 technical and community colleges, some private and two operated by UNRWA, but all using common certification criteria and curricula supervised by the Government-run Community College system. A total of 24,790 students were enrolled in community colleges, which offer teacher-training and a variety of trade and semi-professional courses.103

According to the National Agenda, the current gross enrolment ratio in higher education is 35%. The Agenda aims to increase it to 44% by 2012 and 50% by 2017. The proportion of students at higher-education level who are enrolled in community colleges stands at 12%; the National Agenda targets aim to increase the rate to 25% by 2012 and 40% by 2017.104 Through its student support fund, the Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research provides grants and loans to support almost 10% of students attending Government universities.105

Altogether, the Government allocates 14% of its education budget to higher education annually. While education expenditure as a percentage of GDP is now 5%, for higher education it is 1.1% of GDP, clearly demonstrating the Government’s effort to shift responsibility for higher learning to private institutions. The main issue of concern to the Government is the quality of higher-education graduates and ensuring that they have the skills required by the labourer market.

The cost per student in higher education is roughly JD1,828 a year (approximately $2,582). Yet despite this high rate of investment, some 22.3% of those holding B.A. or higher degrees are currently unemployed.106 A recent study found that a majority of employed females hold higher-education degrees, while 50% of employed males hold less than secondary-level certificates – clearly confirming gaps in skills of the public and private sector employees.107 The National Agenda stresses the need to diversify the financing of higher education, increasing demands for enrolment, the need to build links with the private and other sectors, and the need to ensure quality and relevance.

7. Literacy and adult education

Literacy is a universal human right. In 1970, Jordan’s adult illiteracy rate was 45%, and this has been reduced dramatically – to 9% in 2002108. The National Agenda confirms the commitment of the Government to eradicate adult illiteracy by 2015 or further reduce it by half, to 5%.

101 Donor/Lender Consultative Group: Draft position paper on Technical and Vocational Education, 2005
102 Ministry of Higher Education Statistical Unit, 2006
108 National Agenda Education Sector, Presentation, 2006
The proportion of illiterate Jordanians in the population aged 15 years and above is estimated at 4.8% for males and 13% for females, with the highest rates among women concentrated in the 55-64 and 65+ age groups, where they reach 48.5% and 79.1% respectively.\textsuperscript{109} The Ministry of Education has established 324 literacy centres, of which 269 are for females and 33 for males. Enrolment in the literacy centres is 3,415 adults in the 12 governorates.\textsuperscript{110} Several NGOs also offer literacy and non-formal education programmes as well. A major challenge is the fragmentation of non-formal education programmes, with too many providers and partner ministries (including the Ministry of Social Development) delivering this service.

The National Agenda puts an emphasis on “life-long learning” opportunities for all Jordanians to enable them to keep up with rapid socio-economic changes. It foresees a new form of dialogue between governmental and non-governmental players in linking adult education with sustainable development and equitable human development, job creation, income generation and the overall goals of social development.

\textbf{8. MDG progress}

Jordan is well on track to have achieved the MDG Two and Three targets of universal primary education and gender parity before the target date of 2015. In its Key Performance Indicators for Public Education, the National Agenda sets targets of 100% gross enrolment in primary education and 90% in secondary education by 2012.\textsuperscript{111} Gender parity has been achieved across the education system, with slightly more girls enrolled than boys. The gender parity index (GPI) (the ratio of female to male in a given indicator, with a GPI of 1 indicating parity between sexes) is 0.96 in education.

In 2003-2004, a net 98% of female students made the transition from primary education to the secondary level, with a net enrolment rate of 83% at secondary level.\textsuperscript{112} The transition rate from primary to secondary school for Jordanian pupils is 97%, and transition rates for girls are equal to those for boys.\textsuperscript{113}

Despite universal access and attendance statistics of 94% of enrolled male/female students in primary education, access for the poor and children with disabilities is still limited and this is especially so at progressively higher levels of education. The Ministry of Education provides services to about 4,000 disabled children and children with learning difficulties in schools across Jordan. However the full application of the inclusive education approach still faces considerable challenges.

It is, indeed, in the area of access to and equal participation in the basic education system that Jordan’s strategies need to be focused. The National Agenda notes these weaknesses almost en passant, in the context of overall education reform, but does not prescribe specific approaches for addressing them. Generally speaking, it has been observed that Jordan’s public expenditure on education is “pro-poor at the basic education level, is equally distributed at the secondary level, and is pro-rich at the tertiary level”.\textsuperscript{114}

Jordan has always shown a strong commitment to universal education and prides itself in having some of the highest school enrolment and literacy rates in the Arab region. However, there

\textsuperscript{109} Department of Statistics, Employment and Unemployment survey, 2005.
\textsuperscript{111} National Agenda (English summary), table, p. 52.
\textsuperscript{112} UNESCO: Education for All Global Monitoring Report 2006, p. 419.
\textsuperscript{113} UNESCO Institute for Statistics (UIS), Global Education Digest 2006, p. 87.
\textsuperscript{114} World Bank report quoted in DCLG education subgroup technical committee report, February 2006.
are inconsistencies – even inequalities – in education indicators among regions and between males and females, and in some areas declines in state-school enrolment are becoming evident. Sustained population growth rates, immigration, and particularly the steady increase in the proportion of Jordanians aged 15 and younger, are placing strains on public expenditure in education.

At the same time, there is a recognized need for a reform of teaching practices and of the learning culture generally. The Government has embarked on an ambitious plan to computerize classrooms and expand Internet connectivity to all schools in the Kingdom; however, it has acknowledged a pressing need to broaden access to pre-school education and to transform the vocational training system to match labour-market needs. As the National Agenda puts it:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Programme</th>
<th>Number of Institutions</th>
<th>Target Students Group</th>
<th>Number of Students</th>
<th>Number of Staff</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Resource rooms for learning disabilities</td>
<td>463 rooms</td>
<td>From 2nd Grade to 6th Grade</td>
<td>7739</td>
<td>463</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Schools for deaf students</td>
<td>9 schools</td>
<td>From kindergarten to 6th Grade</td>
<td>755</td>
<td>170</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Schools for blind students</td>
<td>2 schools</td>
<td>From 1st Grade to 6th Grade</td>
<td>255</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Special classes for mentally handicapped students</td>
<td>4 schools</td>
<td>From 4 – 14 years</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Special classes for the deaf</td>
<td>5 classes</td>
<td>Normal classes joined in normal schools</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physically handicapped</td>
<td>Joined in normal schools</td>
<td>567</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cerebral palsy school</td>
<td>1 school</td>
<td>From 1st Grade to 9th Grade</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Ministry of Education

Despite recent improvements, low enrolment in pre-school education remains an issue, while curricula and teaching quality across all levels of public education still offer room for improvement. Furthermore, vocational education suffers from decreasing enrolment, lack of funding and several narrow occupations specializations that do not match (labour) market requirements.115

Despite all the successes achieved by the educational system, there still remain challenges related to the quality of education. Introduction of new technologies and availability of teaching equipment such as computers and labs, science labs, and vocational education demonstration material is yet to be ensured in all schools. An emphasis on life skills education is needed to ensure the integrated development of students as well as their increased participation in broader activities like student councils.

9. The education and training challenges

Although Jordan is well on track to meet the MDG education goal and the Education for All targets, there are still challenges facing the education sector:

• **Improve access to early childhood development programmes:** access needs expanding and standards set for child development and learning.

• **Increase quality of primary and preparatory education:** Quality is an issue in some schools and school infrastructure needs to be improved, to reduce rented premises and double-shift schools.

• **Expand access to quality secondary education:** Achieve same participation rates as for elementary and preparatory levels.

• **Ensure improved access to schooling for poor children and those with disabilities.**

• **Expand access to quality higher education.**

• **Integrate quality assurance across all sectors of education:** including teacher training.

• **Achieve full computer literacy among school age young people:** Extend and ensure access to computer facilities and internet connections to all schools.

• **Strengthen students’ participation in school life** promoting their access to life-skills based education.

• **Boost and reshape skills development:** Reform vocational and skills training to match the needs of the job market.

• **Strengthen links between secondary and higher education.** Update curricula, improve capacity of teachers, expand access in rural areas.

• **Strengthen links between TVE, higher education, and the job market.** Shape curricula to market needs, build capacity of teachers, and increase female participation.

C. Health and health care in Jordan

1. **The policy framework**

“Health for All” is a vision which has been shared by UN member states since the 1940s and which was defined in 1977 in World Health Assembly resolution 30.43: that the main social target of governments and WHO in the coming decades should be “the attainment by all citizens of the world of a level of health that would permit them to lead socially and economically productive lives”. The Convention on the Rights of the Child reaffirms children’s right to the highest attainable standard of health care.

By regional standards, Jordan has a well-developed health-care system, and has made great strides in health services over the past few decades. Still, Government spending on health amounted to only 2.9% of GDP in 2004 and accounts for only 8.5% of the national budget. The National Agenda includes a set of health-sector priorities and strategic directions for greater social and political inclusion. Health is one of the eight “themes” and the plan includes three indicators: to reach 100% medical insurance coverage by 2012, increase total health expenditures per capita and to increase life expectancy to 74.0 by 2012.

2. **The health care system**

Jordan is justifiably proud of the access to health care in the country with nation wide coverage, a mixture of public and private facilities as well as some facilities run by NGOs and charities as well as health centres run by UNRWA.

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Public and private health care facilities

The Ministry of Health (MoH) provides primary, secondary and tertiary health-care services. Primary services are mainly delivered through a network of 57 comprehensive health-care centres, 368 primary health-care centres, 238 village clinics and 385 MCH centres Kingdom-wide. The MoH also operates 29 hospitals with 3,600 beds; however, these represented only 36.1% of the hospital beds in the country as of the end of 2005. The private sector runs 56 hospitals representing fully 35.7% of total beds in the Kingdom, as well as about 2,600 private clinics of general practice and specialties. The Royal Medical Services (RMS) operates 11 hospitals (19% of the total), serving active and retired military and security personnel and their families as well as employees and families of some national enterprises such as Royal Jordanian Airlines. The Jordan University Hospital (JUH) in Amman and the King Abdullah I Hospital in Irbid also provide high-quality secondary and tertiary care. The four types of hospitals in Jordan (MoH, RMS, JUH and private) have a median occupancy rate of about 64.1%. There are also some primary health-care facilities operated by NGOs and charities, and UNRWA operates 23 health centres providing primary and some preventive health care, which see more than 2 million patients a year. UNRWA also assists refugee patients with special health-care needs, subsidizes hospitalization for the poorest refugees, and takes care of sanitation and environmental health services in refugee concentrations in Jordan.

According to a joint WHO/MoH report, Jordan’s primary health-care coverage is 2.4 centres per 10,000 populations, with an average patient travel time of 30 minutes to the nearest centre – representing a high-density system by international standards. The USAID-funded Primary Health Care Initiative (PHCI) carried out a household survey in 2001 which showed that Jordanians make 3.55 outpatient visits a year on a per capita basis, about half of them at MoH facilities, 40% at private facilities and 11% divided among RMS, JUH, UNRWA and NGO facilities. Outpatient visits by the illiterate, the poor, and those living in rural areas were much more likely to occur at MoH centres than at other facilities, the survey found.

Source:
- UNRWA PIO, UNRWA in figures, March 2006.
- USAID, PHCI Utilization of Health Services, Delivery and Health Status Study (pre-test phase), Jordan, January 2001.
- WHO/MoH, Health in Jordan, p. 46.

3. Child health

Jordan's achievements in reducing infant deaths have been phenomenal. The rate of 135 infant deaths per 1,000 live births in the 1960s fell to 40 per 1,000 by 1990 and was reported to be 27 per 1,000 in 2002 and 22 per 1,000 in 2004.117

There are still considerable variations among income groups, however, and also geographically. The infant mortality rate is higher in rural areas (27 per 1,000) and among mothers with elementary or no education (35 and 36 per 1,000 respectively).118 Most of these deaths (an average of 17 per 1,000) occur in the neonatal stage (first month), indicating the need for intensifying maternal and child health (MCH) care programmes for the period close to birth.

There are no exact figures on the number of disabled children in Jordan, and the National Council for the Care of the Disabled established a Committee for a National Register in 1996 to address this. Preliminary findings of a recent survey conducted in 7 governorates indicated varying rates by governorate ranging between 0.36% and 1.9%, with the overall rate not exceeding 1% of the total population.

A 2001 study commissioned by UNICEF showed that 105 of the 131 centres serving the disabled were for children. Some 4,000 boys and 3,000 girls benefited from these centres – the lower number of girls indicating either more disability among boys or a social bias against sending boys for specialized care, or not wanting to send girls to boarding schools.

Infectious diseases remain a major cause of child morbidity. According to reports of the Disease Control Directorate in the Ministry of Health, diarrhoeal diseases, acute respiratory infections and hepatitis are still leading conditions reported from health facilities in Jordan. Thus, it is crucial to improve the capacity of the health system to provide quality services through an integrated approach to child illnesses. Road accidents rates are increasing and are a major cause of injury and death among children: more than 20% of deaths related to traffic accidents in 2003 were of children.\textsuperscript{119}

4. Adolescent health

Nearly a quarter of Jordanians (1.4 million) are aged 9-18 years. There has traditionally been little data on the health status of adolescents, but some recent studies have looked into young people's own perceptions of their health and ways of preserving it.

School health services are geared more towards the general needs of the primary age group, though they are limited in scope even in that context.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Concerns about health among young people</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A 2000 Jordanian Youth Survey provided insights into what 15-24 year-olds did to remain healthy. Females tended to associate health with diet and eating habits, while boys were more likely to relate good health to avoidance of health-risk behaviour such as smoking, drinking and drug use. Young people in Jordan also show low levels of awareness about reproductive health. One survey found 42% of those aged 15-19 (48% boys, 35% girls) unable to explain the meaning of reproductive health. A 2005 survey showed that only 3.7% of young males and 1.3% of young females mentioned the use of condoms as a method of HIV/AIDS prevention.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source:

Currently, there are no clear-cut age-specific policies addressing reproductive health services for the youth that include means or access for youth to obtain reproductive health information and services, and they thus have little information to protect their reproductive and sexual health. Public sector services are targeted to married females. Therefore “micro-targeting” of programmes must be taken into consideration to provide age-specific services that are culturally sensitive. Although teenage marriage and fertility rates remain low, those who have begun child bearing have the highest unmet needs in family planning, mainly due to provider biases and cultural pressures to prove fertility. These unmet needs may not be addressed adequately due to mass targeting strategies of family planning programmes that eventually do not address the needs of all age groups.

5. Health at reproductive age

Antenatal care is offered at all primary health care centres, and most of the safe-motherhood services are provided by those facilities. It is estimated that 95% of pregnant women had received at least one antenatal check-up during pregnancy, and that 86.2% had received four check-ups or more. Over 90% of deliveries occur at health facilities, out of which 65% are assisted by a physician and 32% by a nurse or trained midwife.\textsuperscript{120}

\textsuperscript{119} Report of the Jordanian Traffic Institute, 2003
The use of modern family planning (FP) contraceptives appears to have leveled off at less than 42%; women living in rural areas and in the southern region have lower utilization rates. Empowerment of women and attitudes towards mass targeting of programmes and services, lack of proper counselling from health providers fuelled by provider biases and traditional beliefs, and access to information on human rights are key components leading to these figures. Other factors include limited involvement of husbands in supporting wives in family planning and improved reproductive health as well as limited open dialogue and education programme for assisting current and future couples to make informed choices. Effective programme outreach is hindered by the unavailability of disaggregated data at sub regional level.

Although knowledge of family planning is high among ever-married women, there is a gap in applying knowledge into action. Some 14% of all married women's needs for contraceptives are unmet. The level of FP knowledge among young women is lower than the overall – low knowledge mirrored by the fact that unmet FP needs are highest in the age group of 15-19 years, currently at 18.5%.

A contraceptive security and sustainability plan has been developed to address donor phase out in this area which will be in 2009.

The government has instated mandatory premarital Thalsemia testing for couples prior to marriage, but aside from this premarital test/contact with health providers, other areas of premarital testing and counseling, remain limited and underline the lack of preparedness of couples for reproductive health issues prior to marriage.

Maternal mortality levels are currently estimated at 40/100,000 live births. The MoH lists maternal morbidity as the second leading cause of female hospital admissions. In this context as well, postnatal care utilization is low, with around 35% of women delivering a healthcare facility return for further postnatal care. Key challenges in this area include underutilization of postnatal-care services and limited use of standards and protocols by providers – especially those covering high risk pregnancies, referral and reproductive health concerns. There is also insufficient data on reproductive and maternal morbidity levels. Currently, there are no specific policies or programmes targeting women of menopausal age. There is also no qualitative or quantitative data on specific RH issues for men and women of this age group.

6. Chronic and non-communicable diseases

Jordan is witnessing an increase in the number and severity of non-communicable diseases, particularly cardiovascular diseases, cancer, and diabetes. Although the recording of deaths and causes of death is not consistent Kingdom-wide, mortality trend analyses indicate that
cardiovascular diseases are the main cause of death, accounting for 38% of all deaths in the most recent study.\textsuperscript{124} Cancer ranked second (accounting for 14% of all deaths) and accidents, responsible for 11% of all deaths, ranked third.

The major cardiovascular diseases prevalent in Jordan are hypertension, coronary heart disease and stroke. According to the most recent national morbidity study, 32% of those aged 25 years and above suffered from hypertension, of whom 89% had uncontrolled hypertension. The prevalence of diabetes mellitus was 14%,\textsuperscript{125}

### Chronic diseases survey results

According to a Government survey carried out in 2004-2005, the risk factors of chronic diseases were high among adults 25 years of age or older. Among the findings of the survey were prevalence rates of 29% for hypertension, 28% for borderline hypercholesterolemia, and 13.2% for diabetes as measured by fasting levels. Overweight obesity was still a major problem, with a prevalence of overweight of 36.9% of the population, and a prevalence of obesity of 35.1%. The overall obesity rate was 76.5% (65.0% males and 76.9 % females).

Source:
- National survey on non-communicable disease risk factors, unpublished MoH report submitted to WHO, 2005

In 2002, the Jordan Cancer Registry registered 4,187 cancer cases, of which 82% were among Jordanians and 18% among non-Jordanians. The crude incidence rate of all cancers among Jordanians in 2002 was 64.4 per 100,000 (63.1 for males and 65.7 for females). Breast cancer was the most frequent cancer among females, (30.1% of all cases), while lung cancer was the leading type of cancer in males (9.5%).\textsuperscript{126}

Smoking is a major problem in Jordan, with 40-50% of adult men and 5-10% of women smoking regularly.\textsuperscript{127}

### Smoking habits of young people

A 2003 survey showed that 33% of children in the age group 13-15 smoke cigarettes and/or water-pipes (nargheeleh) that are popular in Jordanian cafes. The smoking rate in the age group was 57% among boys and 28% among girls. Although the health risks are quite high, nargheeleh use is seen as a socially acceptable activity among adolescents in Jordan (males and females alike), as in much of the Arab world. According to the 2004 MoH behavioural risks survey, about 60% of smokers started to smoke before the age of 18.

Source:

### Communicable diseases

Communicable diseases have largely been controlled in Jordan. However, diarrhoeal diseases, acute respiratory infections and hepatitis are still leading conditions reported from health facilities. There is a lack of information on the prevalence of hepatitis B and C virus infections. Vaccine-preventable diseases (VPDs) have shown a remarkable decline in the last 20 years. No cases of polio or diphtheria have been reported in the last 10 years, while a very small number of pertussis and tetanus cases were detected during the same period. Reasons for the remarkable decline in the number of VPDs include high immunization rates among children (97% for polio and DPT), as well as improved surveillance.

\textsuperscript{124}Ministry of Health, Health Information Directorate, 2005.
\textsuperscript{125}Ministry of Health, Health Information Directorate, 2005.
**HIV/AIDS:** Jordan is considered to be a low-prevalence country for HIV/AIDS. The cumulative number of cases since 1986 rose to 422 reported cases as of December 2005. Sexual contact remains the main mode of transmission, accounting for 57.3% of infections, followed by blood and blood products, at 19%; the mode of transmission is unknown in 12% of cases. In 72% of cases reported by the end of 2001, the infection was acquired outside of Jordan. Females constitute 30% of all cases. The role of civil society and NGOs needs strengthening in this regard. Major actors so far are the Jordan Association for Family Planning and Protection and the Jordanian Red crescent Society. However, new players are emerging and the most at-risk population is being more directly targeted.

Knowledge about HIV/AIDS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Knowledge about HIV is still superficial in Jordan, with surveys among youth indicating that, while more than 97% had heard about AIDS, only 10% could name two symptoms of a sexually-transmitted infection. Stigma and discrimination prevail at all levels, with 29% of ever-married women saying that they are not willing to care for a relative with AIDS at home and 64% of young people participating in one survey saying they believed that AIDS patients should be isolated.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Source:</strong></td>
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</table>

The UN theme group on HIV/AIDS has proved to be a successful mechanism for ensuring coordination and mobilizing resources. A national HIV/AIDS strategy (2005-2009) is currently being developed, outlining the main goals, objectives and strategies for a multi-sector response. The Ministry of Education has integrated HIV/AIDS awareness into school curricula.

**Health human resources:** Despite good overall supply of health services and being on track to meet most of the MDG health targets, there are still challenges facing Jordan including the retention of staff in government health services.

General Practitioners and Specialists in Public Health Care

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>According to a recent study, 1,066 general practitioners were working in MoH institutions in 2004. The number of specialists was 1,189 and the number of residents in various specialties was 957. The same study revealed that the salaries of MoH physicians were considerably less than their colleagues in the private sector and other health-provider agencies, although the MoH was shown to be competitive in providing other benefits such as leaves and educational scholarships. When physicians were asked about reasons for leaving the MoH, more than half indicated poor salaries and a lack of promotion and incentives. Projections for 2014, made taking into consideration attrition rates, current intake of medical schools, graduates in or outflow and recruitment numbers in 10 years, forecast shortages in the number of general practitioners and specialists. Unless current recruitment trends change, there will be a deficit of about 5,000 specialists and more than 2,000 general practitioners by 2014.</th>
</tr>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Source:</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>- Samawi, O, USAID/PHCI, presentation to the MoH/WHO meeting of national experts in medical education and health services, 24 August 2005</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Another important challenge, with population growth and a high fertility rate, is the high unmet demand for family planning services, including modern contraceptives, needs to be addressed. Infectious diseases remain as major causes of child morbidity. It is crucial to improve the capacity

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of the health system to provide quality services through an integrated approach to child illness. Young people have limited knowledge of reproductive health and healthy life styles. Postnatal care is weaker than prenatal, and the MDG for maternal mortality needs attention. There is a growing burden of non-communicable diseases. HIV/AIDS is not yet a major problem but it is crucial that there be more public education. Quality of health care could be negatively impacted by low public sector salaries and the shortage of nurses.

**Health and human rights issues:** In Jordan, inequalities exist in the health indicators of the poorest quintile of the population, which include higher infant and child mortality rates, greater child malnutrition, greater disability prevalence (nearly twice as high among the poor than among the richest quintile) and higher total fertility rates. Factors contributing to these inequalities need further analysis, but they could be attributed to poorer access to effective health care services, marriage among relatives, household health and environmental practices -- including water, sanitation, garbage disposal methods and housing conditions. Gender has an impact on health outcomes of the poor, as women are generally the caretakers in the family and lower female educational attainment influences the health outcomes of the poor.

7. **MDG progress**

Jordan is on track to achieve most health-related targets of the MDGs. Goal Four (to reduce child mortality by two thirds between 1990 and 2015; under-five mortality rates to 13 per 1,000 and infant mortality rates to 11.3 per 1,000) is considered on track. Jordan's infant mortality rate is currently estimated at 22.1 per 1000 live births. More than 94% of Jordan's children are fully immunized and 97% of Jordanians have access to health services. However, it will be a challenge to meet the targets for Goal Five (reduce maternal mortality by three-quarters), which would mean reducing it from the current 40 per 100,000 to 12 per 100,000 by 2015, despite the fact that almost all births (99.5%) are attended by a health professional and 96.9% of deliveries are in a health facility. Antenatal care is almost universal, with 98.6% of women receiving antenatal care from a healthcare professional. However, postnatal care is low, with only 27% of women giving birth returning for postnatal care within the first 42 days after delivery; here, emphasis on quality of care and on hard-to-reach groups in rural and poor areas is needed. The other health-related MDG is Goal Six (reduce AIDS, malaria and other diseases) where Jordan is expected to be on track.

8. **The Health and Health Care Challenges**

- **Strengthen population planning strategies and their monitoring:** Jordan's high population growth rate strains natural resources (water), outpaces employment opportunities, poses inherent health issues and threatens the Kingdom's delicate environmental balance, data at the sub-national level and disaggregated by sex needed for informed decision making.
- **Work to continue trend toward declining fertility rates:** The high birth rate poses serious challenges to economic growth, focus on the unmet needs of young women, environmental sustainability and overall stability of the kingdom.
- **Broaden reproductive health policies and services.** Improve outreach and performance of public healthcare system, including integrated reproductive health for all.
- **Promote healthy life styles:** healthy life styles for young people.

130 Ibid.
133 Ibid.
• **Achieve equality and equity in health care:** Improve access of the poor, gender parity and the right of the disabled and vulnerable groups to fulfill health services, medications and health insurance.

• **Tackle non-communicable diseases:** Narrow the gap in information and education about healthy life styles; improve and expand chronic-disease care.

• **Build capacities of health workers:** Institute continuous medical training, performance appraisal and improved incentives and motivation.

• **Reconsider priorities for the health sector:** Spend more on human resources than on health infrastructure; build only where most people can be served.

• **Boost health-spending share of GDP:** Present level (c. 2.9% of GDP) is below par.

• **Pay more attention to HIV/AIDS and STDs:** The problem is real but largely unacknowledged; treatment practices are inconsistent and public knowledge levels remain low, need to address within a comprehensive human rights approach.

• **Improve coordination among health players:** A mechanism is needed for communication and coordination among partners: Government sectors, donors, civil society.

• **Bolster emergency preparedness:** A national strategy is needed to cope with natural and other disasters; special measures needed for immigrants.

D. The Environment and Natural Resources

1. The overall situation

Jordan's climate varies from dry sub-humid Mediterranean in the northwest of the country to desert in the southeast. The varied climatic conditions give rise to a number of distinct ecosystems, but these are fragile and need protecting. The vulnerability of these ecosystems and of environmental resources in general is compounded by human-caused pressures, including the fierce competition for the scarce water resources due to population growth and economic development. In addition to scarce water resources, most of Jordan's economic activities take place on only 10% of its land, leading in many areas to land degradation that has direct consequences for the livelihoods of the population.

Acute water scarcity compounded by high population growth is seen as an important constraint to sustainable development in Jordan. Although public piped water supplies are available to 95% of the population, the quality of supplies suffers from interruptions and poor-quality distribution networks. While 50% of the population (60% in urban areas) has access to wastewater collection and treatment systems, wastewater treatment plants are often overloaded, and effluent from them does not meet national standards.134 Somewhat higher figures are recorded by the Government Performance Directorate for 2006, 97% for water and 58% wastewater treatment.

134 This section is adapted from WHO/MoH, *Health in Jordan*, ed. A. Alwan, 2005.
The increased use of chemicals such as fertilizers and pesticides has brought with it serious environmental and health problems; there are about 500 chemical poisoning cases reported each year. Efforts are being made by the Government to put a hazardous waste-disposal site into use. The disposal and management of medical waste is also being addressed.

Emissions of five principal air pollutants (SO2, NO2, CO, TSP and lead) have all increased significantly in Jordan in the last two decades, the main sources being thermal power plants, oil refineries, a wastewater treatment plant, automobiles, phosphate mining and cement factories. Specific measures for regulating polluting industries and controlling automobile emissions (lead-free petrol, better public transport, car-pooling) are often called for.

Jordan is signatory to many environment conventions and these are summarized in Annex 6.

2. Energy resources

Jordan depends almost entirely on imported oil to meet its energy needs. In 2005, the bill for imported energy (oil products, gas and imported electricity) reached about $2.5 billion, forming about 19% of GDP. Demand for primary energy in 2005 was 7 million tons of oil equivalent, an increase of 10% over the previous year. This increase was mainly due to the economic growth witnessed in the kingdom. Average energy consumption per capita in 2005 was 1,281 kilogrammes of oil equivalent (kgOE), compared with 1,213 kgOE in 2004. Due to economic growth and increasing population, energy demand is expected to rise by at least 50% over the next 20 years. The provision of reliable energy supply at reasonable cost is thus a crucial element of economic reform and sustainable development.

In order to enhance the security of supply and ensure that Jordan's energy needs are met in an economically and environmentally sustainable way, an energy master plan was developed and approved by the Cabinet in December 2004. It calls for the investment of over $3 billion in the energy sector. Implementation of the plan should yield a net increase in GDP of $250 million a year and create a number of investment opportunities, which will be structured to encourage and promote private-sector participation.

According to the National Agenda, the energy sector faces essential challenges including reliance on international energy markets for direct imports; rising costs of crude oil and oil derivatives imports; growing demand for oil derivatives expected to exceed 3% a year and electricity consumption maintaining an upward trend and expected to exceed 4% a year; provision of necessary funding for investment in the development of the energy industry and its installations, and promoting the efficient use of energy in all sectors and upgrading oil derivative specifications in line with international standards in order to ensure safety and environmental protection.

3. Water resources management

Jordan is considered one of the most water-scarce countries in the world in terms of availability of water resources per capita. These were estimated at 150m3 per capita per year in 2005; however, due to expected population growth, availability is expected to fall to about 95m3/cap/year by 2025, potentially putting Jordan in the category of absolute water shortage countries.

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136 Information provided by the Ministry of Energy and Natural Resources, July 2006.
Demand and Availability of Water

According to a master plan prepared by the Ministry of Water and Irrigation with assistance from Germany’s GTZ, Jordan’s renewable natural water resources are estimated to be in the range of 800-850 million cubic metres (mcm) a year, of which 275mcm is considered “safe yield” (sustainable groundwater abstractions from wells and springs). However, the actual groundwater abstraction by far exceeds the estimated sustainable yield of aquifers, and reaches 150% (from non-renewable groundwater resources) to bridge the gap between supply and demand. Total demand is now estimated at 1,525mcm/year (2005), compared to an actual supply of 941mcm/year – for an annual water deficit of some 584mcm/year.

Source:  
- Ministry of Water and Irrigation, National Water Master Plan 2002  
- Ministry of Water and Irrigation, National Water Master Plan 2004 and Water Planning and Resource Directorates, July 2006

It is expected that there will be increased demand from agriculture, industry and private consumers. In order to bridge the current and prospective gap between the demand and available resources, the Government of Jordan envisages to develop some of the few remaining non-renewable groundwater resources such as the Disi aquifer in the south, in addition to increasing reliance on desalination schemes of brackish and seawater, as well as increasing use of reclaimed water for irrigation.

The National Agenda covers the water sector as part of the Infrastructure Upgrade theme, and considers the issue of water of strategic importance with ramifications on Jordan’s socio-economic growth. The Agenda identifies several issues of relevance to the water resources management, which include: scarcity of renewable water resources; depletion of underground water; distribution inefficiencies, inadequate tariffs, limited wastewater treatment capabilities, and restricted private sector involvement.

Overpumped aquifers: Most of Jordan’s industrial and municipal water supply systems depend on groundwater and springs. Several aquifers are being over-pumped to cover growing demand, and water resources are being depleted. The natural distribution of water resources does not correspond to the areas of highest demand, particularly the densely populated urban areas. Under pressure to meet increasing municipal and industrial water requirements, the authorities have constructed a complex conveyance system.

Taking a Comprehensive Approach to Water supply

The feasibility of constructing a pipeline network linking the entire water system in northern and southern Jordan to permit integrated resource management is under consideration. Pressure to develop new sources has sometimes led to the selection of costly solutions. One example is the Deir ‘Alla pumping station, completed in 1985 and designed to pump, treat and convey about 45 mcm a year to the Greater Amman area (from 220 metres below sea level to about 880 metres above sea level over a distance of about 65km). Plans to modify this system so as to convey about 90 mcm annually to the Greater Amman area are ongoing.

Progress has been achieved in many parts of the country in modernizing irrigation techniques designed to conserve the country’s available water resources. In general, non-conventional and limited conventional irrigation methods are applied in Jordan. A great deal of agricultural activity occurs in the lowland areas, particularly in the Jordan Valley and northern Wadi ‘Araba (south of the Dead Sea). Groundwater, surface water, treated wastewater effluent, and recently desalinated brackish groundwater resources are furnishing the main water supply components for the existing and future agriculture and other water uses in these areas.
**Water pollution:** Groundwater quality deterioration within the lowlands (Jordan Valley) is primarily attributed to: the prevailing overdraft conditions, applications of fertilizers resulting in localized water quality deterioration and the reuse of treated wastewater effluent in irrigation in some localities in the Valley. Pollution of Jordan's major water resources is due to salt water intrusion into the aquifers in the Amman-Zarqa, Mujib, Azraq and Yarmouk basins; contamination of groundwater caused by accelerated seepage from Al-Samra wastewater treatment plant; contamination of springs by wastewater from involuntary immigrants and contamination of groundwater from Gulf Crisis refugee camps, and damage to water supply networks caused by water quality degradation. The 1990 Gulf crisis, which saw nearly 1.9 million refugees flooding into Jordan from Kuwait and other Gulf countries, had a devastating effect on groundwater resources. Since that crisis, contamination of groundwater and depletion of resources has recognizably increased.

The Amman-Zarqa basin has the most serious problem with groundwater quality deterioration. The salinity of many wells and springs is substantially increased to a level far above the standard value for domestic or agricultural use. Present groundwater salinity levels do not meet Jordanian standards of potability. This means that the present groundwater abstraction rates (18mcm a year) for irrigation purposes would have to be reduced in order to improve groundwater quality.

Drinking water in Jordan's four major spring areas – Salt, Russeifeh, Jerash, and Wadi El-Sir – have been contaminated by wastewater discharges. Some groundwater wells in the Azraq, Dead Sea and Mujib basins show more or less tendency towards salinization. Some wells in other areas have a similar problem. Very small increases in salinity have been detected in the Yarmouk basin.

Water quality degradation in Jordan is associated with pollution of water resources due to economic activities (industrial, agricultural, and pollution with wastewater), as is the case with groundwater and surface water quality in the Amman-Zarqa basin, and the Jordan Valley, as well as salinization associated with abstraction of groundwater resources beyond the sustainable yield of the aquifers, such as in Azraq, Mujib, and Yarmouk basins.

### 3. Sustainable land management

Jordan's land area is divided into five zones – semi-desert, arid, semi-arid, and semi-humid and the Jordan Valley – which have widely differing agricultural potential. Arable land, amounting to 410,000 hectares, is concentrated in the north west-central areas, which get more than 200mm of rainfall annually. Of this land, 56,300 hectares located in the Jordan Valley and the upland areas are irrigated. In the Jordan Valley, water from the Yarmouk and Zarqa rivers and smaller wadis is distributed to farm tanks. After being used for irrigation, water is drained into the Jordan River. Upland irrigation is provided from pump boreholes and springs. These water sources are used for full-time and supplementary irrigation of vegetables and fruit trees and account for 60% of national production.

### The Agriculture Sector

The agriculture sector comprises three sub-sectors: cereal production, fruit and vegetable production and livestock production. Cereals are produced under rain fed conditions during winter (October to April). Production of the main cereal crops, wheat and barley, varies considerably from year to year, depending on rainfall amounts and distribution. Even in the best production years, the national cereal harvest covers only about 10% of domestic requirements.

Jordan is self-sufficient in vegetables and fruit and produces a surplus for export, mainly to the Gulf states. Intensive vegetable production comes from the irrigated areas, while supplementary irrigation is important
In 2003, the Government launched the National Agriculture Sector Strategy (2002 – 2010), which included economic, social and environmental objectives alike. In addition to increasing investment (particularly private investment), productivity and competitiveness in agriculture, boosting self-sufficiency in food and enhancing the incomes and opportunities of farmers and agricultural workers, the strategy also had the following social and environmental objectives: limiting rural-urban migration; increasing the participation of women in agricultural development; building capacities and knowledge bases; improving living standards, and conserving land, water and biodiversity resources. The strategy also aimed to boost agribusiness integration between Jordan and neighbouring Arab countries.138

A factor limiting the amount of arable land for cultivation has been the presence on Jordanian territory of some 305,000 landmines. After 1970, landmines remained strewn in 497 identified minefields spread over a “suspected hazardous area” of 60 million square metres. Most of the mines were to be found near the northern border with Syria and in the Jordan Valley and Wadi ‘Araba, along the borders with Israel and the West Bank. Serious clearance of mines began in 1993, and by 2005, more than 101,000 mines were removed and 25,000 square km of land was cleared.139

**Desertification:** Most of Jordan's arid and semi-arid areas have suffered from desertification, and irrigated regions of the highlands and the Jordan Valley have also been affected by salinization and alkalinization of the soil. Among the identified causes of desertification are a lack of proper and sustainable land-use planning and soil erosion which results from several practices such as irrational ploughing, cultivation of land for barley, the mismanagement of plant residues and overgrazing of natural vegetation, forest cutting, land fragmentation, and over-pumping of groundwater. In addition to human-induced factors, climatic factors such as irrational rainfall patterns and periodic droughts also contribute to the problem. High population growth also puts pressure on land resources.

**Climate change:** The effects of climate change on Jordan's environment are also getting attention. With funding from the Global Environmental Facility, UNDP is initiating work on updating Jordan's greenhouse gases inventory, to identify the main sectors contributing to GHG emissions as well as strategic responses to reduce them.

5. **Biodiversity**

The National Agenda considers Jordan's Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan (2002) as a major contribution to the country's development plan, since land, water, pasture, terrestrial and marine ecosystems as well as wildlife and aquatic resources in particular are central to agriculture, fisheries and tourism development.

Habitat protection, natural resource conservation and sustainable use options offer significant opportunities for demonstrating that conservation of biodiversity represents a vital investment in future sustainability of Jordan's economic and social development.

Within the Environmental sustainability section of its Infrastructure Upgrade theme, the National Agenda calls for improving management of natural reserves and developing a master plan for land use and ensuring its implementation; enforcing sound management policies relating to the uses of water in the Dead Sea and surrounding areas, and integrating policies relating to the protection of the Red Sea and its environment in relevant development policies, including the implementation of monitoring of water and coral reefs.

Forestry laws have been in place since 1923 and were amended as recently as 2002. The forest cover is affected mainly by fires, grazing, logging, farming and construction. The Department of Forestry is in full control of the forests owned by the state, and strictly implements regulations on individual-owned forestlands. The department forbids any logging in forestlands – both private and Government-owned.

6. Waste management

There are currently 21 landfills in Jordan, the newest of which is the Ghabawi landfill, which receives approximately 60% of Jordan's solid waste. Many landfills are not lined (except for Ghabawi and Russeifeh) leading to leachate reaching groundwater resources. The hazardous waste is currently being stored at the Swaqa hazardous waste disposal site; however, this site still has not started functioning properly. Jordan's MDG report and the National Agenda identified waste management as a major issue. The MDG report identified the lack of a comprehensive system for integrated solid waste-management and called for the need to develop such plans and policies. The National Agenda addresses the issue of solid and hazardous waste management under the environment sector, within the Infrastructure Upgrade theme, and proposes the following measures:

- Develop solid waste management policies, promote environmentally sound disposal sites, encourage recycling and minimize solid waste generation;
- develop a hazardous and chemical waste institutional framework which includes knowledge dissemination mechanisms and information tracking, along with an enforcement regime, in order to ensure that hazardous and chemical waste is properly collected, transported, stored and disposed of;
- improve medical waste segregation, transportation, storage and treatment. In order to support the implementation of effective management, the legislative framework should be updated and enforced, and
• reduce wastewater discharge outside the sewage system and increase wastewater treatment capacity.

7. MDG Progress

Jordan's 2004 MDG Report identifies water management in terms of maintaining both quality and quantity of water, as one of the main challenges facing Jordan, in addition to the need for a comprehensive management of water, agricultural, and natural resources. Despite Jordan's being on track for the globally agreed MDG indicators, long term water supply and quality are serious concerns to the Government. The Zarqa and Jordan rivers are both heavily polluted, by industry and agriculture, and are already causing environmental health problems and need attention. Fragile ecosystems need protection, both flora and fauna, and land management is essential, including urban planning which is currently a serious weakness in Jordan's development. Part of the problem is unsustainable transport systems which negatively impact on urban environments in particular.

Jordan is party to a number of environmental conventions, such as Ramsar Conventions on Wetlands of International Importance, the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora, and to the three Rio Conventions: UN Framework Convention on Climate Change and Kyoto Protocol, Convention to Combat Desertification, and Convention for Biological Diversity.

In keeping with its ratification of these agreements, Jordan has developed a number of strategies and action plans, including the National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan (2003); the National Implementation Plan for Persistent Organic Pollutants Management (2005), and the National Strategy and Action Plan to Combat Desertification (2006). The main challenge that faces Jordan in relation to these conventions is the integration of their strategies and plans into its national developmental plans, as well as integrating the objectives of these conventions into the various sectoral plans and strategies. The Ministries of Environment and Agriculture are also working with IFAD to develop a national strategy for mainstreaming sustainable land management practices, with a particular focus on mitigating the effects of desertification.\(^{140}\)

A key finding of the 2004 NHDR was that insecure land tenure and inequitable access to land and water resources by the poor were major limiting factors to sustainable land-resource management. Jordan's limited energy sources are also straining the economy, and for these reasons, it is essential that environmental issues are taken into consideration in Jordan's developmental plans, since the scarce water resources, combined with high rates of population growth, rapid and poorly planned urbanization and heavy investment in industry, are likely to create social, economic and environmental pressures that, if not properly managed, would overshadow Jordan's development process for years to come.

8. The Environment and Natural Resources Challenges

• **Rehabilitate hot spots:** Support national efforts aimed at rehabilitating environmental priority areas and “hot spots”, such as the Zarqa river basin, phosphate mining sites and landfill areas.

• **Capacity development:** Support institutional capacity building efforts at the Ministry of Environment, and help strengthen the enforcement of environmental legislation and the role of the new Environmental Police.

\(^{140}\) Information from the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), July 2006.
- **Protect flora and fauna**: Prevent loss of species, including marine species, through hunting activities and loss of habitat, and increase the coverage of protected areas/nature reserves.
- **Sustainable transport**: Move to a concept of sustainable transport and management of demand for vehicles and decrease the numbers of one-person vehicles on the roads.

**Land management**
- **Sustainable agriculture**: Enhance agriculture and grazing practices in terms of cropping patterns, water use efficiency, and use of pesticides.
- **Sustainable land use**: Develop and enforce a sustainable land-use plan in order to use in a sustainable manner the available land resources and prevent desertification.

**Waste management**
- **Improve waste management practices**: Decrease pollution associated with waste management practices by implementing sustainable management of household, toxic and medical waste.
- **Industrial waste**: Develop and implement action plans for dealing with industrial waste, including medical waste, and wastewater generated by industrial zones (including QIZs) and involve the private sector in waste management strategies.

**Water resources management**
- **Integrated water resources management**: Develop an integrated approach to water resource management.
- **Water supply**: Enhance adoption of supply measures for surface water, such as surface and sub-surface storage, evaporation reduction, eliminating and controlling seepage losses, and protection of water quality, and develop and expand the use of new non-conventional water resources.
- **Water resources quality**: Properly control groundwater abstractions and reduce abstraction to within a safe yield of the aquifers, and protect the quality of surface and groundwater resources from degradation associated with pollution and over-abstraction.

**Energy management**
- **Boost domestic energy sources**: These are inadequate for present needs, never mind future ones; promote use of renewable energy sources (e.g. solar and wind) through a national strategy and action plan.
- **Capacity building**: Build national capacity for increasing energy efficiency in all sectors.
- **Decrease reliance on conventional fuels**: Improve energy efficiency at industry and household levels by implementing demand management measures, and invest in development of renewable energy resources.
- **Get the lead out of petrol**: Encourage the use of alternative energy sources (e.g. natural gas) in vehicles and support the Government's decision to phase out leaded fuel by 2008.

**E. Employment, Labour and Enterprise**

1. **The policy framework**

A number of conventions ratified by Jordan are of relevance to the key issues of employment and labour. They include:

- The Abolition of Forced Labour Convention, ratified on 31 March 1958;
- the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ratified by Jordan on 28 May, 1975);
- the Discrimination (Employment and Occupation) Convention (ratified on 4 July 1963);
• the Equal Remuneration Convention (ratified on 22 September 1966);
• the Employment Policy Convention (ratified on 10 March 1966);
• the Convention concerning Forced or Compulsory Labor (ratified on 6 June 1966), and
• CEDAW (ratified by Jordan on 1 July 1992, with reservations on articles 9, 15 and 16).

Government action in employment and labourer is one of the areas of MDG Eight, the
development of a global partnership for development. MDG 8 pays particular attention to the
employment situation of youth. The National Agenda can well provide the context for enforcing
compliance with the conventions.

2. The Jordanian Labour Force

The Jordanian labour force (employed and unemployed adults) increased at an annual rate of
5.9% in the period 1980-1997. This growth was due to three factors: population growth, an
increase in the relative size of the working-age population (ages 15-59) from 45% in 1980 to 54%
in 1995, and the return of thousands of workers from the Gulf states following the 1990 – 1991
Gulf crisis. According to a 2005 study, the Jordanian labour force is growing at a rate of 4% a
year.\textsuperscript{141} It is now estimated at 1.3 million, with some 300,000 Jordanians currently believed to be
working abroad.

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<tr>
<th>Employment in Jordan by sector (%)</th>
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<tr>
<td>Agriculture</td>
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<td>Fishing</td>
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<td>Mining &amp; quarrying</td>
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<td>Manufacturing</td>
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<td>Electricity, gas &amp; water supply</td>
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<td>Construction</td>
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<tr>
<td>Wholesale &amp; retail</td>
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<tr>
<td>Hotels &amp; restaurants</td>
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<tr>
<td>Transport, storage &amp; communications</td>
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<td>Financial intermediation</td>
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<tr>
<td>Real Estate, renting, &amp; business activities</td>
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<tr>
<td>Public administration</td>
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<tr>
<td>Education</td>
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<tr>
<td>Health &amp; social work</td>
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<tr>
<td>Others</td>
</tr>
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Source: Jordan Investment Board website: http://www.jordaninvestment.com/pages.php?menu_id=175&local_type=0&local_id=&local_details=&local_details1=&localsite_branchname=JIB

Unemployment reduction initiatives in the National Agenda include monetary support to the
unemployed and those incapable of work among the poor; support to micro-enterprises targeting
the poor; expanding the coverage of pension and social security and ensuring that financing
is available for the required coverage. Currently, social protection and health insurance do not
cover the informal sector and the social security law excludes irregular work and workers in
agriculture, grazing, fisheries, sailors, domestic helpers and in organisations hiring fewer than
5 people. The proportion of the unemployed who have no pension scheme is 47%, and the
National Agenda's target for 2012 is to reduce this to 25% and to 10% in 2017.

\textsuperscript{141} Information from the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), July 2006.
The Agenda additionally recommends initiatives focused on raising employability in the workforce and providing training based on market needs; increasing flexibility in the labour market and productivity through flexibility in labourer laws and establishing safety nets; expanding the labourer force and the\textsuperscript{142} size of the economically active population by replacing foreign labourer with local labourer, increasing employment of the disabled, women and formalizing the informal sector for the sake of social integration. Among the factors identified in Jordan as contributors to poverty and unemployment is the mismatch between the outputs of higher education and vocational training and the needs of the labourer market.

The National Agenda recommends targeted vocational training programmes for women, income generation (with a focus on home-based activities), raising awareness on the positive aspects of female work as well as increasing female participation in the workforce (timed with the growth in the job market). Additionally, the National Strategy for women has elaborated a full section toward female economic empowerment, with focus on improvement of vocational education and employment opportunities and economic projects in rural and Badia areas. Other national strategies address this need such as the socio-economic plan (2004 – 2006) and the poverty alleviation strategy of 2002.\textsuperscript{143}

3. Employment and labour issues

Unemployment in Jordan is estimated around 14.8%, 25.9% for females and 12.8% for men. A report issued by the Ministry of Labourer in May 2006 said that some 200,000 Jordanians – 144,000 males and 55,000 females, were unemployed.\textsuperscript{144} The National Agenda pays serious attention to unemployment because the rapid growth rate of the Jordanian economy in recent years has not been accompanied by the creation of anything approaching the number of jobs needed to attract and absorb new job seekers. The result, as the National Agenda concedes, is that “many unemployed, discouraged by months of searching, quit the workforce altogether”.\textsuperscript{145}

Jordan has a minimum wage legislation, and on 1 May 2006 the Ministry of Labour increased the minimum wage by JD15 (about $21), bringing it to JD110 ($133) a month. The reason given was to help workers to cope with recent hikes in fuel prices, which had also driven up the cost of other goods and services.

Government and trade-union officials also clearly hoped, however, that the wage rise would encourage Jordanians to replace the hundreds of thousands of foreign labourers working legally and illegally in the Kingdom. While welcoming the minimum-wage hike, trade-union leaders

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**Employment, qualifications and gender**

According to one study, among Jordanians with less than a secondary-level education the unemployment rate is 15.3%. Some 15.2% of unemployed males, and nearly 18.2% of unemployed females, have less than a secondary education. By contrast, the unemployment rate for those with a secondary-level education is about 12.1% – 11.4% for males and 16.8% for females.

Source:
National Centre for Human Resources Development (NCHRD) and European Training Foundation (ETF): Unemployment in Jordan Study, 2005, p.10

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\textsuperscript{142} Jordan in figures, 2005

\textsuperscript{143} Jordan’s 3rd and 4th reports to CEDAW (not yet taken up by the CEDAW Committee), 2005.


\textsuperscript{145} National Agenda (English summary), p.25.
maintained that the floor wage rate should be no less than JD300 ($420) and insisted that only about 10-12% of workers actually received the minimum wage.¹⁴⁶

**Unemployment rates:** Today, some 61% of Jordanians are of working age, and of those only 39% are economically active, while the rest are housewives, students and the unemployed.¹⁴⁷ The unemployment rate for women is nearly twice that for men. The gap between male and female unemployment declined from 29% to 21% during 1995-2000, while the rate for males stayed more or less the same. Unemployment is highest among those from 15-24 years of age, regardless of gender – about 50% of unemployed females and 55% of unemployed males fall into this age group.

### Access to the Labour Market

In the age group between 20 and 24 years – a very large proportion of whom will have successfully completed some higher education – only 11% of females and 54% of males were working for pay, according to a survey conducted by UNICEF and the Jordanian Department of Statistics in late 2001. According to the Ministry of Labour's annual report for 2004, some 12,520 Jordanians were registered as seeking work in 2004, of whom just over 8,000 found jobs, mostly in the “unskilled and production” sector. The majority of the job-seekers (9,610 or 77%) were men, two-thirds of whom (just over 6,000) found employment.

**Source:**
- Ministry of Labour, Department of Statistics, Annual Report, 2004

The Ministry is developing a “training and employment fund”, financed through a 1% levy on the profits of private enterprises, through which the Ministry secures jobs for workers and pays their wages for a 3-6 month period, on the condition that employers train them during that period and hire them for at least one year afterwards. The aim of this programme is to hire Jordanians and gradually decrease dependence on foreign workers.¹⁴⁸

**Unemployment and poverty:** Analysis of poverty trends in Jordan belies the common assumption that income poverty is directly due to unemployment. Rather, the available data indicate that low labourer-force participation and low wages are the main causes of income poverty. As many as 73% of the poor are working, and most of those (70%) are in the urban areas of Amman, Irbid and Zarqa while 23.4% are in rural areas. Labour generates 64.6% of the total current income for the poor (2002 estimates), compared with 58.9% for the non-poor. Labour force participation among the poor was 36.7%, slightly lower than the non-poor (40%), while poor women’s participation was 6.7% compared with 13.5% among the non-poor. The governorates of Ajloun and Ma’an were the lowest in general, while Zarqa and Jerash had the lowest rates of female participation.¹⁴⁹

**Economic sectors and the poor:** The sectors that employed a higher proportion of the poor than non-poor were land transport, agriculture, market gardening and horticulture, construction, manufacture and repair of motor vehicles, manufacture of wearing apparel and retail sale of food, beverages and tobacco.¹⁵⁰

¹⁴⁸ Memo on support to youth employment in Jordan, Ministry of Labour, February 2006.
¹⁵⁰ Ibid.
The informal sector, in which many of the poor tend to find work, employs around 250,000 workers, 60% of which are in the commercial and repair sectors, 19% in manufacturing, 7% in personal services, 6% in hotels and restaurants, 5% in business services, 3% in social services and 1% in transport. Estimates indicate that 55% of working women are in the informal sector, which includes agricultural work and work with no contract or social security. Problems with data are related to the difficulty in surveying the informal sector as people generally do not declare it. The National Agenda notes that an unemployment benefit, based on a minimum number of years of work and associated training, would encourage people to register their informal work.

In 2001, around 217,000 micro-enterprises operated in Jordan (see section 5, c, below), mostly organized informally and operating in retail and general service sectors. Typical enterprises operated by the poor were in “easy entry/easy exit” sectors, and few of them produced enough revenue to lift people out of poverty. All were vulnerable to the external environment – especially negative economic trends, which quickly impact at the local level. Micro-enterprises, especially those run by the poor, are also constrained by a range of factors such as lack of resources; limited and inappropriate skills, knowledge and experience in running a viable business; lack of mobility which limits access to markets, and limited exposure to business models.

**Gender differences:** Unemployment among women is about twice that among males in Jordan, and the percentage of “discouraged” female workers is more than four times that for males. Moreover, the fact that the underemployment rate for males is more than twice that for females means that a higher percentage of working males are looking for other or additional jobs, thus also reducing work opportunities that might be available for women.

Female participation in the labourer force accounted for 27.8% of the total in 2000. This represented an increase from a rate of 18% in 1990, although that trend reflected mainly an increased demand for female labourer created as a result of the migration of Jordanian men to the Gulf states and the consequent shortage of skilled workers in the labourer market. Even with this increase in female participation, Jordan’s level is still low when compared to the 32% rate prevailing in the World Bank’s Middle East/North Africa (MENA) region, which is in turn the lowest in the world. Of the 120,000 women employed in the work force in Jordan, nearly 54,000, or 45%, of the female total work in the public sector, including those employed as teachers and medical staff.

It is notable that in Jordan women tend to have higher levels of academic achievement than men in high school and college, but they contribute less to the economy. According to one study on unemployment in Jordan, women constitute 48% of the Jordanian population, but their economic participation rate is less than 12%. This would give Jordan one of the lowest female economic participation rates of all Arab countries.

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151 National Agenda 2005 (based on year 2000 data).
152 Jordan CEDAW Report, 2005
153 Jordan Human Development Report, 2004
155 Ibid.
156 Ibid.
**Foreign workers:** The number of foreign workers in Jordan – attracted by two economic and building booms after 1981 and after 1991 – increased by more than threefold in the 1980s and 1990s, from 80,000 in 1980 to 258,000 in 1995. In May 2006, the Ministry of Labour disclosed that there were 500,000 expatriates of working age living in Jordan legally, representing about one-quarter of the workforce.

In addition, there are an estimated 500,000 illegal labourers working in the Kingdom without official permission; most of the latter were Iraqis, fleeing the chaos in their country, followed by Egyptians and Syrians. Migrants from Egypt and Syria have traditionally been able to enter Jordan freely without visas and to blend into Jordanian society and find low-paid jobs.

Reflecting the growing concern in official circles at high levels of unemployment among Jordanians, the Government announced in May 2006 that it would significantly increase fees levied on foreign workers applying for annual work permits.

**Labour Migrants in Jordan**

According to the Ministry of Labour, some 218,756 labourer migrants held work permits as of 2004. Of the total, 33,760 (15%) were women. Out of the same total, 44,627 were classified as ‘service workers’, of whom 20,997 (40%) were women.

Of the total of 184,988 male migrants, fully 78% (144,323) are classified as ‘illiterate’. Nearly 70% (122,758) of the male migrants come from Egypt and are employed predominantly in what are classified as “unskilled and production” jobs and in the agriculture sector. The service sector is dominated by labourer migrants from Asia, although a substantial number of the Asian labourer migrants also work in the “unskilled and production” category.

In 2003, the Government standardized a work contract for foreign domestic workers, stipulating a salary scale and the right to medical services; new legislation was then adopted regulating and licensing recruiting agencies. A Department for Migrant Domestic Workers was established in the Labourer Ministry to work with employers, agencies and embassies, and NGOs were given a role in providing legal and social services and training to migrant women workers.

**Women migrant workers**

According to a 2000 UNIFEM report, more than 98% of female migrant workers in Jordan were domestic workers, mainly from Sri Lanka and the Philippines. After finding that many migrant women workers in Jordan were excluded from the application of Labourer Law codes governing contract terms and working conditions, UNIFEM launched a Women Migrant Workers’ project and undertook an awareness campaign targeting employers and recruitment agencies.

In 2001, the Ministry of Labour signed a Memorandum of Understanding with UNIFEM and with the Governments of India, Indonesia, Nepal, Sri Lanka and the Philippines, to address the issue of domestic workers’ labour rights – thus becoming the first country in the Middle East to do so.

**Expatriate remittances:** The number of foreign “guest-workers” in Jordan is “balanced” by the number of Jordanian nationals working outside the Kingdom. While it is not known exactly how

159 IRIN News, UN OCHA, 22 May 2006.
many Jordanians are working overseas (the number is estimated at 300,000), or where they all are, it is known that remittances from expatriate Jordanian nationals contribute as much as 18% of GDP and more than offset Jordan's trade deficit. According to preliminary data from the Central Bank of Jordan, workers' remittances flowing back to Jordan reached JD1.459 billion ($2.06 billion) in 2004.162 This inflow has increased steadily in recent years, from JD1.177 billion ($1.66 billion) in 2000. Compared with this inflow of capital, the outflow of remittances sent by foreign workers in Jordan back to their countries is minuscule: JD123.6 million ($174.5 million) in 2000 and JD170.1 million ($240.2 million) in 2004.163

Underemployment: Jordan's underemployment rate is some 6%. About two-thirds of those who seek another job or an additional job do so because their present one provides insufficient pay or meagre incentives; underemployment is thus associated mainly with economic returns, and thus with income poverty, rather than with other reasons such as working conditions or a lack of job satisfaction.

4. Trade and enterprise development

Trade policy reforms in Jordan were initiated in the late 1980s, as part of the macroeconomic stabilization and structural adjustment programmes launched with the assistance of the IMF and World Bank in response to the 1988-1989 economic crisis. Trade liberalization undertaken as part of the economic reform process and trade agreements has resulted in tariff reductions or streamlining and the gradual elimination of non-tariff barriers to trade and foreign trade monopolies. As of mid-2006, Jordan had met most WTO commitments that were to have been achieved by 2010, and almost half of all tariff lines were duty free.

Accession to the WTO and GATS

As part of its protocol of accession to the WTO, Jordan was compelled to eliminate by 31 December 2002 two forms of export subsidies: partial or total exemptions from income tax for profits on certain exports (all exports, except phosphate and potash, to non-protocol countries and territories); and discounted commercial documents from the Central Bank of Jordan to finance exports at below-market interest rate. Jordan has also made significant commitments under the 1995 General Agreement on Trade in Services (GATS) by binding 11 sectors: business, communications, construction, distribution, education, environment, financial, health/social, recreational, tourism, and transport.

WTO accession has so far not involved further trade liberalization. However, the implementation of some WTO accession commitments, particularly changes required in legal and regulatory frameworks, has proved challenging, partly due to institutional capacity issues. In the context of the ongoing multilateral trade negotiations (Doha round) there are increasing pressures from developed countries on developing countries to reduce tariffs on industrial goods and liberalize their services sectors in exchange for improved market access for their agricultural exports. Given the relatively low level of Jordan's bound tariffs, any new significant cuts could have an adverse impact on the manufacturing sector and affect industrial development and diversification prospects.

In the area of services, Jordan may benefit from trade liberalization in certain sub-sectors such as insurance, travel, transportation, education and health services. However since it joined the WTO, Jordan's trade services balance with the world has been constantly negative and the deficit has

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increased sharply in recent years (see table in Annex 4). This means that before improving both the quality and number of its offers, Jordan should conduct a comprehensive assessment of its needs, and ensure that any new commitment is consistent with its sustainable development goals.

**Large-scale enterprises:** Phosphate and potash mining are Jordan's most important industries, followed by pharmaceuticals, cement, and light manufacturing. The mining industry is one of the main contributors to economic growth and a principal generator of national income, accounting for over 5% of GDP and 25% of export earnings. In order to maximize the contribution of mining sector to GDP, the Government has adopted policies that boost local value-adding capacity and improve efficiency by privatizing the major players in the sector.

### The Phosphates Industry

Jordan has enormous phosphate reserves which cover about 60% of its land area, and the country is the world's fourth largest exporter of phosphate fertilizer. By the end of 2005, total sales of rock phosphate were 6.3 million tons; about two-thirds of the production is exported to 20 countries worldwide, while the rest is used for manufacturing phosphoric acid at a complex and joint ventures in Aqaba. Phosphates exports in 2004 increased significantly by 29.6% to reach JD 117.7 million after a slowdown witnessed the previous year. Despite this increase, their contribution to total domestic exports declined from 5.4% in 2003 to 5.1% in 2004. India is considered the major market for phosphates, consuming 56.4% of total Jordanian phosphate exports.

Source:

Potash exports increased by 12.9% to reach JD163.5 million and accounted for 7% of domestic exports. This increase was mainly attributed to a rise in exports to the Indian market in 2004 by JD12 million compared to their levels in 2003.\(^\text{164}\)

The pharmaceutical sector in Jordan comprises 18 registered companies that produce branded generic pharmaceuticals. The combined working capital of these companies stands at around $400 million and accounts for 3.4% of manufacturing employment in Jordan. The pharmaceutical manufacturers posted a turnover of $285 million in 2003. Total production has increased more than five-fold since 1991, to reach around $270 million in 2004.\(^\text{165}\)

**Small and medium enterprises:** Like many small, middle-income countries, Jordan has made concerted efforts to boost investment in the economy and promote the expansion of a middle-class by encouraging the development of small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs). The common definition of an SME is a formally registered business which employs between 10 and 250 workers and can generate up to $1 million in annual turnover. (By this definition, micro-enterprises employ fewer than 10 and large enterprises more than 250 workers). SMEs in fact account for the vast majority of industrial enterprises in Jordan, but the SME sector has traditionally been hampered by poor business-development opportunities, an inadequate entrepreneurial skills base, and a lack of partnership initiatives.

The Jordan Investment Board (JIB), working with the Ministry of Trade and Industry with assistance from UNIDO and the Italian government, was set up to promote the SME sector. The JIB provides facilitation services for interested investors and has the authority to offer exemptions to encourage investment. It is essentially the Government's arm for promoting investment opportunities in Jordan.\(^\text{166}\)

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\(^{164}\) Central Bank of Jordan, Annual Report, 2004
\(^{165}\) Jordan Investment Board: [http://www.jordaninvestment.com](http://www.jordaninvestment.com)
Other organisations working to promote SME development include “Tatweer”, a successor to the Jordan-U.S. Business Partnership, which has supported some 500 SMEs with a $7.3 million grant from USAID. Managed by the non-profit Business Development Centre (BDC), Tatweer and other organisations provide a combination of financial aid and consulting services to help potential investors to find their way into the Jordanian market. They also sponsor recruitment and training programmes to link recent university graduates with private-sector firms. The BDC acts to encourage trade associations and business clusters to pool their resources, and to link small local businesses in sub-contracting roles with international corporations. A legal framework for the development of SMEs is lacking, however. At the same time, there would seem to be no mechanism for coordinating investment promotion with Jordan’s sustainable development goals.

5. Microfinance and micro-enterprise

The lack of formal recognition of MFIs in Jordan creates policy constraints within which local MFIs must operate, including the inability to collect savings, an ambiguous sales-tax regime and the lack of a credit bureau. MFIs have to pay 13% sales tax on their interest income, which affects sustainability and pricing. Two of the MFIs succeeded in getting a document from the tax authorities exempting them from the sales tax temporarily; two others did not succeed in obtaining this exemption, illustrating the lack of standardization and transparency in the industry’s governing systems and procedures.

Jordan has a very shallow depth of microfinance outreach: the average loan balance of the clients of the Jordanian MFIs in 2004 was $728, which is 54% of GDP per capita. However that depth among the four MFIs varies widely, with MFW targeting the poorest and Al-Ahli targeting the not-so-poor. In effect the four MFIs target the whole range of clients from poor to low-income to perhaps even middle-income clients. In terms of active clients, MFW is the market leader, having a market share of over 40%.

Despite the presence of four best-practice MFIs, the microfinance industry in Jordan remains vulnerable to competition from large subsidized credit programmes including the Government-initiated Development Employment Fund (DEF) and programmes including the Industrial Development Bank (IDB) and the National Assistance Fund (NAF), which provide very soft loans to poor households which in effect are grants. The four best-practice MFIs note the vast supply of

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**Four Best Practice Micro-Finance Institutions**

Jordan holds a unique position in the region with all four best practice microfinance institutions (MFIs) established as companies – one as a for-profit company and three as non-profit companies. The four – Jordan Micro Credit Company (JMCC), the Microfund for Women (MFW), Middle East Micro-credit Company (MEMCO) and Al-Ahli Micro-financing Company (owned by the Jordan National Bank) – are funded by the USAID-financed ‘AMIR’ programme, and began operations in the mid-to-late 1990s. As of March 2005, these four providers were serving 24,668 clients for an outstanding portfolio of JD11 million ($15.5 million). In 2001, UNRWA also entered the microfinance market in Jordan, offering micro loans to (mainly women) entrepreneurs in the Palestinian refugee districts of eastern Amman. The private banking sector has also been making increasingly accessible consumer loans to those with a salary, and a National Microfinance Bank has recently been set up.

Source:
- Information from UNRWA Microfinance & Microenterprise Department.

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subsidized credit as a major obstacle constraining their growth. Decreasing demand is also seen as an obstacle, with more and more Jordanians preferring to work for somebody else rather than engaging in their own business activity.

The Saudi-based Arab Gulf Programme for United Nations Development Organisations (Agfund) has assisted the Government in preparing a draft law that would create a National Bank for Financing Small Projects, known in its conception as a “Bank for the Poor”. Although the microfinance industry does not oppose the establishment of this bank in itself, the existing lenders are concerned about the potential impact of such an institution on the supply of microcredit, if it provides subsidized credit. The AMIR programme lobbied the Government for equal treatment of all microfinance organisations operating in the country. Specifically, the government was requested to extend the tax and fee exemptions as well as other special permissions granted to the envisaged National Bank for Financing Small Projects to all MFIs in the country. The Council of Ministers approved the request in April 2004.

6. MDG Progress

The key issue is youth employment. Access to jobs by young people and especially women will depend on the whole nexus of economic development being approached from the point of view of job creation. There is investment in Jordan, but it is not creating sufficient jobs, and many of the jobs that are created are being taken up by migrant workers. At the same time there is a significant outward flow of highly skilled Jordanians who seek work in the Gulf and further afield. Small and medium and micro enterprises can create jobs, but entrepreneurs are finding it difficult to set up their business and attract financing. Institutional issues will need to be resolved so that the Government can more effectively attract investment in job-creating enterprises.

7. The SME/Labour Productivity and Water Challenges

- **Support and expand micro, small and medium enterprises in Jordan:** Make sure SMEs have access to markets and to research and development.
- **Decrease reliance on foreign labour:** Address gaps in the labour law to embrace all sectors and enforce the laws on minimum wage, working hours, social security.
- **Job opportunities for the young:** Improve the connection between education and the world of work, provide skills of relevance to the labour market.
- **Encourage women to enter the labour market:** discrimination against women job seekers needs to be tackled and women and their families encouraged to support their entry into the labourmarket.
- **Reduce government role in economy:** Expand private sector, focusing on small and medium-sized enterprises.
- **Improve and expand access to credit:** Create a private credit registry and undertake special efforts to make credit available to women entrepreneurs.
- **Encourage direct foreign investment:** Enact incentives such as profit transfers and tax exemptions.
- **Overcome chronic water shortages:** All development efforts hinge on finding a solution to this most severe problem – not only to match ever-dwindling quantities of water with sharply increasing demand, but also to ensure water quality.
Jordan has demonstrated a commitment to building institutions and partnerships in pursuit of development and poverty eradication. As the National Agenda states, Jordan is working towards enhancing public participation, guaranteeing the rule of law and independence of the judiciary, adopting principles of transparency, good governance and accountability and strengthening principles of social justice and equal opportunity.

A. The Legal and Human Rights Framework

The Millennium Declaration, which underpins the global Millennium Development Goals, explicitly lists freedom, equality, solidarity and tolerance as among the fundamental values to be considered essential to international relations in the twenty-first century. Good governance is seen as essential to achieving the development goals.

While Jordan has ratified a number of human rights treaties (see Chapter 2, and Annex 5), it has expressed some reservations. Many of these treaties still need to be formally endorsed by Parliament. Compared to other countries in the region, Jordan has a relatively small number of recorded infractions of human rights principles or treaties. However, a number of allegations of abuses, particularly in imprisonment and interrogation, have emerged in the aftermath of the November 2005 hotel bombings.

The Constitution: The Constitution of Jordan provides the primary framework for safeguarding basic freedoms. It is based on the principles of separation of powers, independence of the judiciary, accountability of the Executive Branch and rotation of authority. It provides for equality among citizens in rights and responsibilities and the protection of personal freedoms. The Constitution safeguards the freedom of expression through peaceful means, and the rights of assembly, establishing NGOs and political parties and addressing public authorities. It stipulates that no person shall be detained or imprisoned except in accordance with the provisions of the law. While securing these freedoms, the Constitution stipulates that they be regulated through laws drafted by the Executive Authority to ensure such freedoms do not infringe on the basic rights of others, or violate people's dignity, security and freedom.

The National Centre for Human Rights: A National Centre for Human Rights (NCHR) was established in 2002. It was the de facto successor to the Royal Commission for Human Rights, which ended its mission that year and recommended the establishment by law of a national human-rights body. According to the provisions of the NCHR law, the Centre aims to enhance human rights in Jordan; establish a human-rights culture both at the intellectual level and in practice; promote non-discrimination among citizens on grounds of race, language, religion or gender, and enhance the democratic approach in the Kingdom with a view to fashioning an integrative, balanced model based on spreading freedoms, ensuring political pluralism, respecting the sovereignty of the law and guaranteeing the right to economic, social and cultural development.

A well-functioning and respected National Centre for Human Rights will be an indispensable part of Jordan's apparatus for achieving the MDG goals, especially those related to women's empowerment that are directly relevant, among others, to the CEDAW and CRC conventions.
The most relevant at this stage is the ratification of the different human rights agreements by the Parliament so that they become legally binding and judiciary can play a role in enforcing human rights instruments and violations become punishable by law.

Parliament: Jordan's parliamentary system has undergone important changes that have contributed significantly to the improvement of basic legislative functions of representation, effective lawmaking, and oversight – all integral elements of good governance. The relationship between the legislative and the executive branches may be characterized as one of “flexible moderate separation of powers.” The King partakes of legislative functions through several methods, including appointing members of the Upper House (senators) and dissolving both houses of parliament as required.

Parliament meets for four months a year, with both houses meeting simultaneously. The King may prolong the ordinary session for a further period not exceeding three months to allow for the dispatch of pending matters. He may also summon the parliament for extraordinary sessions. Both houses of the Jordanian parliament may initiate debates, submit legislation to the Government in the form of a draft law, and vote on legislation. The new Elections Law, issued by Royal Decree on 22 July 2001, raised the number of Lower House seats from 80 to 104, increased the number of constituencies from 21 to 44, redistributed parliamentary seats, and lowered the voting age from 19 to 18. Some seats are reserved for religious and ethnic minorities: Christians, Circassians, Bedouins, and Chechens. Six seats are set aside specifically for women.

The judicial system: Fifteen out of the 131 articles of the Kingdom's Constitution tackle judicial power, its role and duties. Courts are divided into three categories: civil, religious and special. Civil (regular) courts adjudicate all civil and criminal cases. Religious courts – divided into Sharia’ courts for Muslims and tribunals for other religious communities (including ecclesiastical courts for the Christian communities) – have jurisdiction in respect of matters of personal status (marriage, divorce, child custody, and inheritance) and Islamic (waqf) and communal endowments among their respective communities. Special courts exercise their jurisdiction in accordance with the provisions of the laws constituting them. Among the various categories of these courts are the military courts and the state security court.

The criminal code adopted in 1960 is based on Islamic principles and customs. These provisions, however, were largely modified and extended along European lines as it stands for the whole judicial system. Jordan was one of the first Arab countries to recognize the theory of rehabilitation, rather than retribution, as the basis for sentencing offenders. With the exception of cases involving juveniles, court trials are open. Defendants are entitled to legal counsel, and have the right to appeal. Defendants facing the death penalty or life imprisonment must be represented by legal counsel.

Jordan does have a Judiciary Development Strategy which seeks to improve judiciary performance, enhance its role in supporting civil society and economic competitiveness while ensuring the independence and integrity of the system.

Juvenile justice: There are five juvenile rehabilitation centres, four for males and one for females. Juveniles in conflict with the law, often young women taken into preventive custody, have a difficult situation to cope with in the detention centres, and there is concern in Jordan about the general state of the prisons and lack of rehabilitation programmes for offenders. From 1971 to 2005, the average number of cases of juveniles in conflict with the criminal justice system was just over 4,500 a year. Most of the cases concerned juveniles held in pre-trial detention and the
general causes of juvenile delinquency were poverty, family socio-economic conditions and low levels of education. The highest percentage of cases was recorded in Amman and Zarqa.\footnote{68}

To consolidate issues related to family safety, a protection centre was set up in Amman by the Family Protection Department of the Public Security Directorate. The Department and its facilities provide medical care and psychological support for children victims of abuse. The Department works with the children victims and perpetrators of domestic and sexual violence. In 2005, two pilot projects were started in Amman to promote the concept of juvenile police and a restorative justice approach by providing counselling to juveniles through intervention of social workers based at the police stations.\footnote{69}

The Jordanian law has adopted special measures for juvenile offenders including much lower penalties than those for adults. Since the first priority is the re-integration of the child into the community, for minor offenses the reconciliation court directed to hand over juveniles (7-18 years) to the parents or place them under the supervision of the behaviour inspector. While the death sentence is permissible under the country’s judicial system, it is not applicable to those under 18 years of age. The law also prohibits detention of minors with adult prisoners and in reform and rehabilitation centres. Instead they are kept in special juvenile care centres, which provide for their basic needs including education. Specialised reconciliation courts for children in conflict with the law exist in Amman, Irbid and Zarqa.

The legal framework for community-based organisations: In Jordan, NGOs and other civil society organisations are regulated by the Government according to their mission, based on the following division of responsibility: the Ministry of Interior regulates political parties, unions, and professional associations; the Ministry of Culture regulates all cultural organisations, and the Ministry of Social Development regulates all charitable organisations. Each of the ministries controls all activities within their respective areas of responsibility, and organisations are not permitted to engage in activities which cross into the purview of multiple ministries. “Civil society is thus partitioned and segmented into administrative units based upon the logic of bureaucratic control.”\footnote{70}

Another important aspect of the institutional framework for civil society is that the normally quite clear division between Government and NGOs is rather blurred. One group of NGOs can be considered as not quite independent because they are so closely monitored and regulated by Governmental institutions, while another group is comprised of NGOs that are quite closely linked to the Government. The majority of NGOs belong to the first group. They are governed by the Law for Associations and Social Organisations (Law 33 of 1966), which limits their scope of action and excludes them from exercising any kind of political activity.

In accordance with Law 33 of 1966 and amendments thereof up to 1971, the Ministry of Social Development’s authority over NGOs is paramount, giving the Minister the right to accept or reject even an NGO registration application. In addition, following consultations with the administrative governor, the Ministry’s staff is entitled to visit NGOs’ headquarters and review their records, both administrative and financial, attend the elections of their administrative committees, and even to dismiss their elected bodies. Furthermore, the Minister has the right to dissolve any NGO altogether and not only does the foundation of a new organization require permission by the Ministry, but also every activity has to be approved.

Foreign NGOs may be authorized under the same licensing procedures, but they face the added imposition of any “conditions and restrictions which [the Minister of Social Development] imposes.” Again, the Minister’s decisions in this realm are unrestrained; he or she can “refuse to allow any foreign body or society to work in the Kingdom [or] impose on it any conditions which he sees proper.” This 1966 law forbids the formation of any federation or union of societies except for the General Federation of Voluntary Societies (GUVS, established in 1959) which enjoys wide powers, including the right to dissolve any NGO. GUVS perform as the umbrella organization for most of the social welfare NGOs in Jordan. As of 1996, it had 721 members, 189 charitable societies registered with MoSD and 25 Islamic and foreign societies under the auspices of MoSD. It coordinates the activities of small grass-roots NGOs and represents their interests with the government. However, cooperation between the members of GUVS remains limited.

The second group of NGOs comprises those that are close to Government and which are exempted from the rules and regulations of Law No. 33. There are several distinct groups and include the following:

- NGOs sponsored by members of the royal family, such as the Noor Al-Hussein Foundation, JOHUD, which is the former Queen Alia Fund for Social Development, and the Jordan River Foundation. Their special status gives them the freedom to mobilize international funds and sponsor political programmes. They also have direct access to foreign donors, which the other NGOs officially are not allowed to establish. Therefore compared to the smaller NGOs they have greater flexibility and can accumulate funds;
- Charitable organisations, a large number of which are religiously or ethnically based and are mainly involved in relief work;
- Women’s NGOs, such as the Jordanian Women’s Union and the General Federation of Jordanian Women, which have attempted to focus on addressing the main issues affecting women’s status and participation in the political realm;
- Specialized NGOs, such as those dealing with environmental issues, national heritage, the disabled, etc., and
- International NGOs working in both urban and rural settings, usually through Jordanian NGOs, which sponsor a variety of economic and political empowerment projects.

There is an alternative route for the founders of civil society organisations which have an NGO profile: they can register as non-profit-making companies with the Ministry of Trade and Industry or as cultural associations within the Ministry of Culture. Yet, even if they register as companies they do not escape government regulation: In June 2000, the Office of the Controller of Companies at the Ministry of Trade and Industry requested these NGOs to comply with new financial and administrative regulations, to submit them to the office, and to disclose all their income, activities, and expenditures.
Despite the strict regulatory framework, the wider democratization of Jordan has had a positive impact on the ability of NGOs to participate in development. Their numbers mushroomed in the 1990s, rising from 112 in 1980 to some 750 by 1998. Such has been the extent of this growth that it is difficult to know exactly how many NGOs or other civil-society organisations exist in Jordan today. According to source there are 836 charitable and social societies; 110 women's organisations; 16 environmental and sustainable development societies and 27 foreign NGOs registered at the Ministry of Social Development. Other CSOs include 262 sport and youth clubs, 7 human-rights organisations, 33 political parties, 14 professional societies, 18 labourer unions, 96 employers' organisations and 242 intellectual societies.\textsuperscript{171} The Ministry of Social Development alone has registered 1020 societies with 100,000 members, 20\% of them female, but it is not certain how many of these societies are active.

There has in recent years been much greater emphasis on the significant role played by NGOs and the importance of their participation in development. NGOs have been allowed greater flexibility in funding, either directly or through international agencies, and there has been greater inclusion of NGOs within Governmental committees charged with the formulation of policies, especially those relating to women's issues, and also more recently in the committees of the National Agenda process. It is the intention of the current government to amend the Law, for example to lower the age of membership to 18 years, to broaden female participation, and encourage the merger of similar organisations (Information from Ministry of Social Development, 31/07/06).

B. Public Sector Reform

The National Agenda recognizes the importance of reforming the public administrative sector and improving the quality of services it delivers. Recognizing the vital link between good governance and Jordan's socio-economic goals, King Abdullah has emphasized the importance of a “customer orientation” as a key strategy in reorienting public service delivery.

Although Jordan's public sector institutions have made significant progress in improving services, past efforts did not go far enough and were not institutionalized to ensure sustainability. Furthermore, the concepts of “customer satisfaction” and delivery of services based on client needs are not yet the main drivers of public administration in Jordan. A focus on procedures rather than on results continues to be the modus operandi and there is a lingering lack of accountability for inadequate or poor performance.

In October 2004, the Government adopted a Public Sector Reform Programme for the years 2004-2009. This programme aims at improving the performance of ministries and Government institutions by helping them to achieve their mid-term and long-term strategic objectives. The Ministry of Public Sector Development (MoPSD) has assumed responsibility for implementing five main components of the Statement of the Government Policy related to public sector reform in coordination and cooperation with the concerned ministries and government institutions. The five components are as follows: Enhancement of policy-making and decision-making capacities at the ministerial level; Government performance management; service delivery improvement; institutional streamlining, and human resources management and development.

\textbf{Public financial management:} Many in Jordan believe that corruption constitutes one of the biggest challenges facing the Kingdom and complain that high-profile corruption cases are handled discreetly. One of the major issues is “wasta” (the use of family, tribal or other

\textsuperscript{171} Al Urdun Al Jadid Research Centre, Civil Society and Democratic Development Studies Programme, Amman, 2004.
“connections” to secure favours, contracts, etc.), due to the partisan nature of Jordanian society and lack of enforcement of laws. Specific areas identified as needing attention include the lack of transparency in the procurement of large acquisitions (an “e-procurement” project to computerize the procurement procedures of the Public Administration is ongoing at the Ministry of Finance’s General Supplies Department in collaboration with UNDP Jordan); the absence of a legal framework for access to information from the public on corruption issues; inadequate media coverage of corruption cases due to the severe laws that limit the media’s freedom of action, and the lack of active watchdog organisations to advocate an anti-corruption culture in Jordan. One such organization does exist – the Amman-based Good Governance Studies Centre.

An amended draft law requiring financial disclosures by public officials has been approved by the Senate and returned to the Lower House, where the Government has asked that it be treated with urgency. “Corruption in Jordan is institutionalized,” charged one MP during the deliberations. “It's practiced at the highest levels, and anyone who dares expose corrupt officials faces legal and illegal attempts to stop him.”

<table>
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<th>Jordan’s Rank in the Transparency International Index</th>
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<td>In a 2005 report by the international corruption watchdog Transparency International (TI), Jordan ranked 37th out of 158 countries in terms of official corruption levels. The TI report ranked Jordan fifth best in the Arab region. According to World Bank Governance Indicators, Jordan has a “control of corruption” percentile ranking of 69% only. The National Agenda states as one of its targets to raise this figure to 80% by 2012 and to 90% by 2017 through a fiscal reform programme.</td>
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An Audit Bureau was established already under the Constitution and Audit Bureau Law No. 28 of 1952. The Audit Bureau analyzes Government departments’ spending and posts audits of their accounts. It reports on these accounts to Parliament annually. (In addition to its legislative role, Jordan's Parliament is mandated to provide oversight over Government, although it has seldom exercised this oversight role. Indeed, Parliament has delayed the passage of laws on asset declaration and the establishment of an independent anti-corruption commission. It did, however, ratify the UN Convention Against Corruption in early 2005.) The Audit Bureau is still traditional in its approach and Parliament does not follow up with the Government on sighted mismanagement, and there is no public access to the Audit Bureau's annual report.

Institutional reform in this area has focused on finding mechanisms to combat and prevent official corruption. An Anti-Corruption Department was established in 1996 within the General Intelligence Directorate. The Department receives reports, some anonymous, and these are considered by investigators who are members of the GID staff. The Department is accountable to the prime minister and through him to the King.

The Anti-Corruption Department also monitors practices in the private sector to which other Government departments have no formal access. When sufficient evidence is found, the department refers cases to the courts through a prosecutor attached to the Department from the Ministry of Justice. The Department co-operates with the departments concerned for administrative follow-up if the evidence is not sufficient for prosecution. The Anti-Corruption Department co-operates more generally with other security agencies; the Department’s Director is a member of the Higher Governmental Committee formed to combat corruption. The Department has made efforts to encourage more cooperation by the public in fighting corruption. A hotline telephone number is also available for “whistle-blowers”.

C. Private Sector Development

The National Agenda re-emphasizes the importance of trade and investment promotion in pursuing Jordan’s sustainable development goals. Jordan has been working to liberalize the economy and increase the flow of capital. The country adopted an ambitious privatization programme in the second half of 1996 aimed at activating the role of the market economy and enhancing competitiveness. In 1999, parliament ratified the National Privatization Strategy to raise the efficiency, productivity and competitiveness of economic enterprises and to attract local, Arab and international investment. Regulatory commissions were formed to monitor sectors in the post-privatization stage and to safeguard the rights of both consumers and investors.

Parallel to the economic stabilization and liberalization efforts introduced by the structural adjustment programmes under way since the 1980s, a set of legal measures has been implemented to modernize and amend existing laws and to introduce new laws that would allow the Government to restructure and privatize state-owned enterprises, sell its shares in public shareholding companies and establish regulatory bodies.

Among the legal measures introduced to create a more favourable investment environment were the provisions of those laws and regulations that allowed foreign parties to participate in the privatization process – where foreign and local investors are equally treated according to the prevailing legislation in the country. Foreign investors can in most sectors acquire up to 100% of a company’s shares. The Government has prioritized key economic sectors to enhance their competitiveness in order to attract investors.

Despite the many economic reforms introduced since the 1990s, Jordan still faces immense pressure to ensure pro-poor annual growth over the next decade as well as increase foreign direct investment. A more coherent PSD strategy with a clear development dimension is essential, to coordinate better trade and other policies, as well as to enhance the capacities of key institutions in charge of PSD policy formulation and implementation.

Two Examples of Privatisation in Jordan

One area which has attracted the attention of local and foreign investors is Jordan’s telecommunications sector, which, together with transport, accounts for 16% of GDP. In 2000, the former state monopoly telecommunications company became a 60-40 mixed state-private enterprise, Jordan Telecom, with 88% of the private shares purchased by France Telecom. In addition to being the only operator of fixed telephone lines, JT also owns one of the country’s profitable Internet service providers. Another noteworthy privatization was that of the Jordan Phosphate Mining Company, which had a significant effect on boosting Government reserves at the Central Bank of Jordan, to $4.9 million in the first quarter of 2006.

Source:

D. Regional Development

Traditionally, Jordan's governance structure has always been centralized in term of administrative and financial matters. Decentralization – interpreted as implying that the governorates and regions would gain more influence and budget share – has traditionally been resisted. Although there are 272 laws concerning local administration and decentralization, some of them are ambiguous and inconsistent with national legislation.\(^{173}\)

\(^{173}\) Legal status of centralization and decentralization of Jordan, report of Mr. Ibrahim Amosh, Annex 5.
Unbalanced regional development among the governorates is one of the Government's principal challenges in implementing reforms aimed at reducing poverty and unemployment. The major obstacles restricting action by local Government are the lack of significant autonomous resources and a scarcity of qualified personnel.

Decentralization of decision-making authority in terms of resource allocations to the governorate and municipal level requires building skills and structures that guarantee accountability. The ability of the authorities to allocate funds equitably and be accountable by local tax payers would lead to greater demands and voice of the local communities including the poor.

In Jordan, the municipal system had been fragmented and inefficient. It underwent a process of restructuring which reorganized the 328 municipalities into 99 entities. The main responsibility of service delivery at the local level lies within central-government line ministries and Jordanian municipalities perform few duties, despite enabling laws, and have little control over their resources. They have the authority to raise part of their own revenues (50% on average), but they have little influence over the rates that are set or the allocations they receive from the central government. Currently, municipal council members in Jordan are half appointed, half elected, a change which occurred after the reorganization. Full election of the municipal council had in some instances led to election of mayors and representatives who lacked appropriate knowledge, skills and attitudes to implement sound development projects benefiting the entire community.

**Human rights dimensions:** A major hindrance is that centralized government institutions are located far away from the people and tend to respond to more powerful and influential communities and fail to meet the diverse needs of the poor. Jordan has embarked upon a process of decentralization of authority and responsibility for the implementation of poverty alleviation initiatives at the governorate and municipal levels. The assumption is that decentralization is required to remove some of the blockages that prevent macroeconomic policies from leading to progress at the micro-level, by opening up channels of communication between governments and the people. For this to happen, there is a need to build capacity of local staff at the governorate and municipal levels in order to be able to engage in a dialogue with partners at the local level and manage a pro-poor development process based on the needs of the communities.

In January 2005, King Abdullah made a televised nationwide address announcing a sweeping plan to reform the role of the regions and governorates in national life. “As political development is the gateway to the full participation of all segments of grassroots and civil society institutions in the various aspects of the development process, I assert here that political development should start at the grassroots level, and then move up to decision-making centres, and not vice versa,” the King said. He announced that the Kingdom's administrative structure would be “reconsidered”, and the existing 12 governorates would be combined into a smaller number (three or four) of “development areas or regions”. Each region would have a directly elected local assembly which, together with directly elected municipal councils would “set priorities and draw up plans and programmes related to their respective regions”. They would also control their own budgets. The idea was, the King asserted, that “the people of each region are more aware of their interests and needs”.

In November 2005, a new Jordanian Government was formed with Dr. Ma’rouf Al-Bakhit, a former general, academic, diplomat and royal national security adviser, as prime minister. In his letter of designation to the new prime minister, King Abdullah tied the newly launched National Agenda with his earlier decentralization plan. However, subsequent progress on implementing

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the latter appears to have stalled, and decentralization efforts to date have had little effect on reducing capacity gaps between the central authority and the regions.

E. Information and Communications Technology

MDG 8 aims to build partnerships in cooperation with the private sector to make available the benefits of information and communication technologies (ICT). Jordan is well aware of the important role ICT can play in achieving the social and economic development objectives set for the country. With the direct support of the tech-savvy King Abdullah, several initiatives were undertaken with ICT as their core and requiring major advancement in ICT infrastructure to achieve their goals.

The “e-initiatives” are programmes aimed at: empowering local communities to use ICT for their own development; assisting Jordanians in integrating ICT into their daily lives; increasing awareness of the benefits of using ICT; facilitating the participation of all Jordanians to the information society; bridging the “digital gap”; developing an entrepreneurial spirit, and increasing youth employment in the ICT sector. (The four major initiatives in this sector are described in Annex 7.)

F. The Media

Development of the Jordanian mass media is one of the prime goals of the National Agenda. As in the larger Arab region, the Jordanian media are still emerging from years of state control, and are generally not highly trusted or respected by the public that they are meant to serve. Like citizens of most Arab states, modern Jordanians rely heavily on international or satellite radio and television channels for information. Jordan made a somewhat half-hearted attempt in the late 1990s to become a media centre for the Arab region, but, as it was unable to make sufficient guarantees of press freedom or to offer sufficient financial inducements, the business went elsewhere, principally to Dubai and Doha.

Despite repeated Government pledges to turn all the news media over to private ownership and free them of Government control (goals that are given fresh priority in the National Agenda), the major media are still run by mixed public-private corporations; their chief editors are appointed with official approval and they exercise fairly rigorous “self-censorship”. The Government has also retained control of the Jordan Radio and Television Corporation (although there has been a proliferation of private radio stations, most of them playing Arabic and Western music and very popular with young Jordanians). The National Agenda stresses that press freedom is a main pillar for democracy and a road to reform. The Agenda emphasizes the need to revise media legislation, to give it a stronger role as the “fourth estate” in supporting and projecting development goals.

There are four major “quality” newspapers in Arabic and one in English published daily in Amman and serving the country as a whole. There are also a number of weekly newspapers and magazines which, even though they are not widely distributed, more closely reflect the “pulse of the street” (and their editors frequently come into conflict with the law as a result). In recent years, the publication of economic, business, fashion, “style”, celebrity, sport and religious
magazines has flourished in Jordan, although the number of titles is not matched by circulation figures. There are even four quality glossy magazines published monthly in English, one of which has won international awards for investigative reporting, including stories on women's and children's rights and developmental issues. Several magazines are published by NGOs or representing civil society on issues such as poverty, the environment, and women's rights, but they have small readerships and limited budgets.

The National Centre for Human Rights in its 2005 Human Rights Report showed some reservations about Jordan's provision of access to information and freedom of press, but reported that despite the setbacks in freedom of expression, there was positive development, citing the directives of the King to ban the arrest and detention of journalists and a government decision to lift the ban on certain publications. It also referred to the Press and Publications Draft Law and recommended that Parliament approve it.

In May 2006, two Jordanian journalists were sentenced to two months in prison each for publishing controversial cartoons vilifying the Prophet Muhammad. The two were released on bail pending an appeal. Publication of the cartoons in a Danish paper had stirred violent protests across the Muslim world earlier in the year. The two Jordanian editors said they had published them with the “good intention” of showing Jordanians the pressures on Islam in the world. Also in May 2006, the Centre for Defending the Freedom of Journalists reported that press freedom in Jordan had regressed over the previous year, with journalists being harassed and denied access to information. The director of the centre said that “press freedom and political reform remain at a standstill (and) are not on successive governments' lists of priorities, despite honey-coated promises to support media freedom.” The head of the Jordan Press Association said: “The Government isn't serious about allowing media freedom.”

Proposed media legislation as described in the National Agenda is aimed at ensuring that laws are in line with international human rights principles, and guaranteeing freedoms of speech and media, through drafting a law which regulates the industry, based on the following principles:

- Jordanians have the right to media ownership;
- limiting state ownership of media through the introduction of a by-law to separate ownership from editorial control;
- preventing state censorship;
- preventing the detention of journalists and referring all cases to courts, similarly preventing the closure or license withdrawal;
- encouraging media representatives to form their own council instead of the Higher Media Council;
- establishing a commission to regulate the media sector to serve as an umbrella organization for the Audiovisual Commission and the Press and Publications Department, and
- abolishing mandatory membership in the Jordan Press Association.

Other communications indicators: In Jordan, 53% of houses own a landline telephone, 43% of the population uses mobile phones, 16.4% of households possess a computer and 26% of the population uses the Internet.

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176 Mr. Nidal Mansour, director of the Centre for Defending the Freedom of Journalists, quoted in IRIN, UN OCHA, 18 May 2006.
177 Mr. Tareq Momani, also quoted in IRIN.
178 Ipsos poll, September 2005.
G. Emergency Preparedness and Disaster Management

The Government’s National Master Plan for Emergency and Disaster Management (2004) identifies the following main disasters as potential threats to Jordan: earthquakes, flash floods, drought, locusts, and weather emergencies (snowstorms, frost), as well as man-made disasters such as fires, chemical dangers (industrial releases, hazardous materials transportation accidents, etc.), chemical, biological, and radioactive contamination, armed conflict, and mass population migration.

Responsibilities for disaster management and mitigation in Jordan are widely dispersed among a large number of ministries and Government agencies, with the Civil Defence Directorate as the focal point. The Higher Council for Civil Defence (HCCD) is the highest body concerned with taking any procedures required to encounter and control emergencies. The annual national budget specified for HCCD for disaster-risk reduction is allocated through the Ministry of Finance to enhance, develop and establish projects designed to mitigate disaster risks. (The national institutions which are members of the HCCD are listed in Annex 8, as are the organisations that contribute to disaster risk reduction in Jordan.)

Disaster Preparedness: the example of Avian Influenza

A recent good example of the work of national committees and sub committees emerged in connection with the threat of an “avian flu” epidemic. Being located directly on major flight paths of migratory birds, Jordan has taken the threat of an avian influenza pandemic very seriously. The Ministry of Health and other stakeholders at national, regional and international levels, prepared a Jordan Influenza Preparedness Plan (JIPP), and parliament approved JD5 million in 2005 to procure and stockpile medications and protective equipment as indicated in WHO guidelines for contingency plan preparation. A communication strategy for avian influenza was developed and two workshops for media and spokespersons were conducted by the MoH and supported by UNICEF and WHO. The risk of avian flu remains a major challenge, and plans should be ready and tested frequently. An outbreak in poultry was experienced in 2005, and one imported human case was reported and managed quickly. However, as the threat still exists globally, there is a need for more involvement of international donors in supporting and funding the national plan.

In April 2004, WHO assisted the Government in assessing the level of national health preparedness for natural and man-made disasters. A strategy of emergency preparedness for the control of communicable diseases and epidemics already exists, and it identifies the Ministry of Health and health directorates’ responsibilities regarding epidemic surveillance, controlling the cause, and the treatment of infected persons.

There are also guidelines to be followed in cases of emergencies regarding the distribution of food, medications, vaccines and safe water. However, a multi-sectoral plan at the national level is needed to cover all aspects of safety, security and well-being.

The Jordan Government and local NGOs and UN agencies have also been working with the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies to provide needed humanitarian aid to the Ruwaished refugee camp set up on the Iraqi border in 2003.

H. The Coordination of Development Cooperation

The Ministry of Planning and International Cooperation (MoPIC) is the Government’s designated interlocutor with international agencies in Jordan. MOPIC both guides and coordinates Government socio-economic policies, programmes and priorities, and enhances international cooperation.
cooperation aimed at addressing the Kingdom’s developmental priorities. To do this, the Ministry maintains regular open channels of coordination with UN programmes and agencies to bring greater coherence to development assistance operations and to enhance their impact and effectiveness. (MoPIC has been an active partner in the preparation of this CCA.) MoPIC also coordinates with line ministries to prioritize Government needs and actions to meet these needs, and to present its position in negotiations with the donor/lender community.180

I. The Challenges facing the Institutional Framework for Development

This chapter has covered a wide range of topics and it can be seen that there are unmet challenges in each part of the institutional framework. Among the many challenges facing the government in improving the institutional framework for development are the following:

- **Tackle inconsistencies in the institutional framework for civil society organisations and in particular NGOs:** NGOs are severely hampered by laws and institutional arrangements. There have been attempts to redress this and it is urgent that the Government and CSOs agreed on a functioning enabling environment.
- **Improve governance to achieve National Agenda goals:** The King and cabinet have pointed the way to economic and social reforms; other institutions of Government and civil society – parliament, professional associations, NGOs, the media – need to be brought firmly on board.
- **Enact electoral reforms:** Amend the elections law to facilitate equitable representation in parliament.
- **Increase popular participation in national political life:** Democratization must truly take root at community level.
- **Realize more personal freedom:** Jordanians must be encouraged to feel they have a stake in where the country is going, and to get more involved, if the fruits of economic growth and improved education are to be realized.
- **Reinforce the commitment to freedom of expression:** End government monopoly on information and strive for truly free media.
- **Strengthen links between trade and development:** Coordinate trade liberalization and industrial development policies better to use trade policy as an effective tool for a coherent industrialization strategy.

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A. Meeting National Agenda goals, MDG targets and Millennium Declaration commitments

This CCA shows that the Government of Jordan is tackling a number of serious development challenges, taking into account Jordan's global commitment to help achieve the Millennium Development Goals by 2015, respecting human rights as a key factor in development as outlined in the Millennium Declaration, as well as working on the obligations of international conventions and trade agreements.

Jordan has for many years organised its development in a number of national development plans supported by sector strategies. In 2006, a longer term strategy, the National Agenda, was published, bringing together all government institutions in a concerted effort to meet both medium and longer term development challenges. Throughout 2006, the sector ministries have been working on developing their own strategic plans for achieving their parts of the National Agenda, this work being coordinated by the Ministry of Planning and International Cooperation. These plans will reflect coherence with the long term strategy and shorter term priorities established by the Kulluna Al-Urdun initiative launched by HM King Abdullah II in July 2006.

Jordan is on track for meeting most of the targets of the MDGs, but as has been shown in this report, there are serious issues that need to be tackled, for example regarding gender and some health issues, if the global goals are to be met by 2015. Wider gender challenges include:

- Implementing the key conventions that have been ratified;
- developing gender disaggregated databases at sub-national level;
- increasing female participation in the labourer force;
- increasing female participation in public life, especially the political sphere;
- addressing some serious violations of women's human rights, and
- reducing maternal mortality rates.

In addition, Jordan has the ambition to tackle quality issues, for example in education and health care, which are not specifically set out in the MDGs. There are also serious challenges for Jordan which are only touched upon in the MDGs, for example the question of how to link steady economic growth, as enjoyed by Jordan, with job creation and in particular the facilitation of employment-generating small and medium enterprises.

A promising example of local partnerships for MDG attainment is the National Alliance Against Hunger (NAAH), launched in 2003 under the patronage of HRH Princess Basma bin Talal. With the participation of local, regional and international bodies (from the farmers' union and women's groups to university and research institutes, and including Government and UN agency representatives) its aim is to institutionalize and coordinate food security and hunger-reduction strategies.

Concerning human rights, a major theme of the Millennium Declaration, many conventions have been ratified but with some exceptions. Some violations of women's human rights still need to be tackled by the legal system, notably violence against women within the family. Work needs to be done on meeting the rights of physically and mentally challenged persons, for example the rights
of children to education. There are shortfalls in juvenile justice, prisons and detention centres including those used for protective custody of women and children. And more could be done to ensure press freedom. Finally, there are some vulnerable groups in society whose human rights need further attention, in particular migrant workers, but also other minority groups such as Roma and Gypsies.

Other areas of concern are set out in the National Agenda, such as modernizing public services so that they become more demand driven and consumer friendly, and encompassing the whole population in the political process. These concerns are important parts of the National Agenda, and the need to include both civil society organisations and the private sector in national development are reflected in the MDGs and the Millennium Declaration as well as the National Agenda.

B. The role of the United Nations

The United Nations is represented at several levels in Jordan, from Headquarters organisations such as UNRWA and the UNU-International Leadership Institute, to regional offices (UNICEF, UNFPA-CST, UNIFEM and HABITAT) sub-regional offices (WHO-CEHA) and nine country offices. In addition, several agencies have field staff in Jordan, for example UNODC and UNIDO, but without established offices and a small number have no representation at all in Jordan but have regional programmes implemented in Jordan among other countries.

Apart from the UNRWA Jordan field office, which spends $100 million a year in Jordan on services to Palestine refugees, the UN agencies are not major financial contributors to either development or humanitarian programmes in Jordan. By far the largest external contributor to Jordan’s development is the USA, with a mixture of programmes and cash transfers to the Government of Jordan. Other significant donors include the European Union and the Government of Japan. Many of the development cooperation partner countries have programmes which are quite small financially because, as a middle-income country, Jordan is not a priority for major budget support: access to knowledge and to markets is considered more relevant to Jordan’s particular stage of economic development. The World Bank is another international agency of significance in the Jordan development cooperation landscape, as noted in the economic section of this report.

The strength of the United Nations lies in its capacity to provide technical assistance and policy advice, and to support Jordan to meet international obligations in fields such as human rights and environmental sustainability. The knowledge focus can be seen quite clearly in the current 2003 – 2007 UNDAF implementation. There are very close ties between some agencies and the corresponding sector ministries – for example between WHO and the Ministry of Health, or UNESCO and the Ministry of Education. UNICEF has close ties with several sector ministries. These ties resting on knowledge development rather than on cash transfers. Other agencies such as UNICEF have a number of government partners and also work with CSOs. These range from Parliament and the National Centre for Human Rights, through national NGOs right down to grass-roots, community-based environmental NGOs.

Increasingly, there are partnerships at local level, for example between UNDP and the Aqaba Special Economic Zone Authority and the Governorate of Zarqa on producing local MDG reports. Another example of UN and local authority partnership is the cooperation between Greater Amman Municipality and UNICEF to mainstream children’s rights at local authority level through the establishment of Child Municipal Council projects whose objective is to influence decision-making at the level to make it more in favour of the best interest of the children of Amman. Even more recently, avenues for cooperation with the private sector are being explored,
developing further the work of UNIDO on export promotion and support to small and medium enterprises. The value of the UN knowledge systems is shown in the financial contributions made by the Government of Jordan to the programmes that are managed by the appropriate UN agencies.

The future role of the United Nations in Jordan will be guided by the analysis of the current development challenges and the human rights situation in Jordan, but also by an understanding of the comparative advantages of the United Nations given its global knowledge base and specific mandates in pursuit of poverty eradication, the achievement of the MDGs, and the achievement of universal human rights. Special consideration is given to the situation of women and young people, as well as to minority and vulnerable groups such as people growing up with physical and mental challenges and communities that have so far not benefited from Jordan's economic development.

C. Main recommendations for the UNDAF 2008 – 2012

To better understand the potential priority areas for United Nations cooperation with the Government of Jordan, a series of consultative meetings was held in June 2006 to discuss the findings of the draft CCA and also to sound out various groups on the role they envisage for the future UN involvement in Jordan's development. Two consultations were held with Civil Society Organisations, one of these groups focusing on gender and human rights and the other on general issues. Other consultations were with the private sector, with the Donor/Lender Consultation Group, and with the Government, which was represented at secretary-general level in a meeting that brought together all the ministries under the chairmanship of the Secretary General of the Ministry of Planning and International Cooperation.

It was quite clear in these consultations that there are several areas of common concern: Education was perhaps the leading sector with specific concerns about quality and relevance to the labourer market. But of almost equal concern were the complex issues of employment and migration, touching also upon the wider challenge of balancing population growth and environmental sustainability. Those consulted were seriously concerned about the long-term impact of population growth, including the impact of migration on Jordan – in particular in relation to the available water resources. The role and social situation of women, and their position in the labourer market, were discussed by all the groups – although there were differences of opinion, particularly between the Government and the CSO groupings, regarding the human rights situation of women in Jordan.

In sum, the following areas emerge from the analysis and from the consultative group meetings as potential focus areas for the United Nations in Jordan in the next UNDAF period, 2008 – 2012. It should be noted that the over-arching goal of the UN development programme is to reduce poverty and in particular to help Jordan achieve the MDGs by 2015 as well as take measures to strengthen the human rights based approach to development, in line with the intent expressed in the Millennium Declaration. These areas of concern are not listed in order of importance but are put forward for consideration as key components in the UNDAF. The challenges identified in the earlier chapters of the CCA are presented as a consolidated list in Annex 9, and are the basis for the areas listed below.

**Poverty Reduction:** In many ways, poverty reduction is a cross cutting issue which will be addressed within the areas mentioned below. However, for the poorest of the poor, and those families and communities living on the poverty line, direct action is also needed. Fulfilling the Millennium Development Goal commitments will help lift people out of poverty. Attention will
need to be focused on Zarqa, on rural and urban pockets of poverty, and vulnerable groups: households headed by divorced women, families which include physically challenged persons, and marginalized groups such as the migrant workers. Continual monitoring of the situation, and high quality and timely statistics, socio-economic analysis and research will be key tools in the fight against poverty. There needs to be budget targeting of vulnerable groups. Identifying the rights of the poor, and empowering them to claim their rights, will be an important component of a poverty reduction programme. The UN is well-placed to support the government in poverty reduction.

Sustainable environment: Jordan's fragile natural environment faces many challenges: Water, waste-water management, energy, environmental pollution; transport systems, public health, and the impact of tourism (survival of the cultural and natural heritage). A key question is how much more environmental stress Jordan can tolerate and the answer will be in part dependent on the management of other issues such as migration, education, health, and population growth. Jordan is a signatory to many environmental conventions and actively pursues compliance, often with support of UN expert bodies. For the long term development of Jordan, sustainable management of the environment will be a key issue, and finding long-term solutions will be facilitated by a rights-based approach to local communities, for example concerning land rights. The UN and the Global Environment Facility can work together to support the Government's actions in the field of sustainable environment.

Education, training and youth employment: Jordan is currently working on strengthening the links between education, higher education and the world of work and the linkages need to be further developed. Within the education system there are a number of issues, mainly to do with quality and relevance, and access to upper secondary and higher education, which still need to be tackled. The education system could also be supported to deal more proactively with gender differences, inclusion issues, quality of education for Palestine refugees, as well as the promotion of concepts such as healthy life styles, social justice, human rights, individual responsibility, and gender equality. A rights-based approach to education would help the Government and donors identify under-served groups such as children with physical and mental challenges and the UN has expertise which can be drawn up in all these areas.

Population and Health: Jordan gives a high priority to providing health services and has done much to facilitate citizens' rights to health care. However there are a number of issues facing the health services which will need to be tackled in the near future, and healthy lifestyles need promoting. Integrated quality reproductive health services provided to all, taking into consideration the needs of different age groups. Within this sector, much work is on-going on emergency response and disaster preparedness and the UN will need to continue to work with the Government in such areas as HIV/AIDS prevention and preparedness for a possible global Avian Influenza pandemic as well as with health service provision in general.

Public and Private Sector Development: Without wealth creation and the generation of jobs (employment and self-employment), sustainable development will be elusive. For employment generation, greater access to financial services and credit is essential, from micro-credit and microfinance services, to accessible financial services for small, medium and large-scale enterprises. Entrepreneurship needs to be incubated, and private sector development will need export promotion and a stable, fair and non-corrupt economic environment in order to flourish. Empowering women to use their education to enter the labourer market is essential as single-income households are more vulnerable to poverty than those with dual-incomes. A well functioning, service oriented public service, free of corruption and with a stable regulatory framework, is needed to underpin private sector development. Weaknesses identified
include data collection and analysis (particularly sub-national); monitoring and evaluation; results-based management; emergency preparedness and response; capacity development of government institutions; weak linkages between public policy, planning and strategies and their implementation. For both public sector and private sector development there is a great deal of UN knowledge which can be utilized.

**Equity and equality issues, including gender issues:** Jordan has done much to encourage equitable development but despite this there are cultural and economic barriers to the full participation of all citizens in the country’s development. There are cultural barriers to participation, some negative traditional values, health and education concerns and discrimination in employment. The Government has introduced legislative changes addressing gender based violence; additional efforts are required to enforce the application of such measures and secure community support. More is still to be done on the ratification and official publication of UN instruments on human rights, women’s empowerment and other rights-based issues. These include: lack of knowledge of human rights; discrimination, human rights abuses, violence in society. These issues particularly impact on women, children, mentally and physically challenged, and minorities. It will be necessary to continue to work on the empowerment of individuals for their own development and the United Nations can lend support to this endeavour.
ANNEX ONE: SUMMARY OF MDG TARGETS AND INDICATORS

MILLENNIUM DEVELOPMENT GOALS AND HUMAN RIGHTS

The following chart provides a list of the Millennium Development Goals and examples highlighting some of the corresponding human rights standards that are recognized in the major international human rights treaties. There are additional human rights provisions that are also relevant to each of the goals.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Goal</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Human Rights Treaties and Provisions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger</td>
<td>Draft Guidelines on a human rights approach to poverty reduction strategies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>ICESCR (article 11), GC 12 of the ICESCR Com., CRC (articles 24 para. 2 and 27 para. 3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Achieve universal primary education</td>
<td>ICESCR (articles 13 and 14, and GC 11 of the ICESCR Com.), CRC (article 28 a and GC 1 of the CRC Com.), CERD (articles 5 and 7)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Promote gender equality and empower women</td>
<td>CEDAW; ICESCR (articles 3 and 7 para. (i)); ICCPR (articles 5, 6 para. 5 and 23 para. 2); CRC (article 2); CERD (GC 25)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Reduce child mortality</td>
<td>CRC (articles 6 and 24 para. 2.a); ICESCR (article 12 para. 2 a, GC 14 of the CRC Com.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Improve maternal health</td>
<td>CEDAW (articles 10 h, 11 f, 12 para. 1, 14 b, and GC 24; CERD (article 5 e iv); ICESCR: GC 14; CRC (article 24 d)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Combat HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases</td>
<td>International guidelines on HIV/AIDS and human rights, ICESCR: GC 14 of the CRC Com.; CRC(article24 e)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Ensure environmental sustainability</td>
<td>Safe drinking water: ICESCR: GC 14; Slum dwellers: ICESCR: GC 4 and GC 7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Develop a global partnership for development</td>
<td>Charter of the United Nations (article 1 para. 3), ICESCR (article 2), CRC (article 4)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights
CEDAW: Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women
CERD: Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination
CRC: Convention on the Rights of the Child
GC: General Comment
ICCPR: International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights
ICESCR: International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights
# ANNEX TWO: NATIONAL AGENDA TARGETS

Selected Social Development Targets from the National Agenda  
(Phases I and II: 2007-2017)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Poverty</th>
<th>Education, Higher Education, and R&amp;D</th>
<th>Inclusion</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Poverty</strong></td>
<td><strong>Current</strong></td>
<td><strong>2012</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poverty Rate</td>
<td>14.2%</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poverty Cap</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% of Poor People Attaining Secondary Education</td>
<td>11.4%</td>
<td>18%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Education, Higher Education, and R&amp;D</strong></td>
<td><strong>Current</strong></td>
<td><strong>2012</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gross Enrolment in Pre-School Education</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gross Enrolment in Tertiary Education</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td>44%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expenditure on R&amp;D as a % of GPD</td>
<td>0.4%</td>
<td>1.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Health Care</strong></td>
<td><strong>Current</strong></td>
<td><strong>2012</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% of Population Covered by any form of Medical Insurance</td>
<td>70%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Health Expenditure per Capita (USD)</td>
<td>187</td>
<td>350</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Life Expectancy</td>
<td>71.4</td>
<td>74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Inclusion</strong></td>
<td><strong>Current</strong></td>
<td><strong>2012</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% of Female Employed out of Total Employed</td>
<td>12.5%</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% of People Rating the Judicial System as Fair</td>
<td>67%</td>
<td>80%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% of Disabled Employed out of Total Employed</td>
<td>~0%</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
ANNEX THREE: INDICATORS FRAMEWORK

Selected indicators (by sex, age and geographic distribution where applicable):

- Number of human rights conventions ratified by the Parliament.
- Transparency international corruption perception index.
- Neo-natal, infant and child mortality rates.
- Maternal mortality rate.
- Percentage of the population with health insurance coverage.
- External Debt as percentage of GDP.
- Expenditures on health as a percentage of GDP.
- Debt service as a percentage of exports of goods and services.
- Unemployment rate.
- Economic activity rate.
- Personal computers per 1000 people.
- Internet users per 1000 population.
- The incidence of poverty measured according to the national poverty line, i.e. headcount ratio.
- Unemployment rate and economic activity rate.
- Percentage of population aged 15-24 with comprehensive correct knowledge of HIV/AIDS.
- Contraceptive Prevalence Rate by method.
- Number of General Physicians / 10,000 Population in MoH Institutions.
- Percentage of the population who are overweight.
- Percentage of the population who smoke.
- A comprehensive National Plan for emergency preparedness is in place and monitored.
- Drop out rate in technical and vocational institutions.
- Employment ratios of technical and vocational graduates.
- Percentage of employment rate of secondary vocational education graduates.
- Enrolment ratio of ECD.
- Enrolment Ratio of basic education (we have to include this since it is a MDG goal).
- Higher education enrolment and completion rate.
- Land area protected to maintain biological diversity.
- GDP per unit of energy use (as proxy for energy efficiency).
- Percentage of households with water connection.
- Percentage of households with sanitation connection.
ANNEX FOUR: SOURCES OF DATA


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Jordan Population and Family Health Survey 2002 and Department of Statistics (Jordan) and ORC Macro, Calverton, Maryland, Unpublished report (2003).


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Tarawneh, Dr. Radi. Secretary-General of the Ministry of Agriculture: Presentation to the Donor/Lender Consultation Group (20 April 2006).

*The Jordan Times.*


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JOR/1 (August 2002).


UNODC, Jordan Office. Internal paper on Juvenile justice system in Jordan (May 2006).

UNRWA Jordan Field Office Statistics, Education Department (May 2006).


USAID, PHCI. Utilization of Health Services, Delivery and Health Status Study (pre-test phase), Jordan (January 2001).


## Annex Five: Ratification of International Human Rights Treaties - Jordan

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Treaty Description</th>
<th>Signature Date</th>
<th>Ratification Date</th>
<th>Accession Date</th>
<th>Reservations</th>
<th>Entry into Force</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Second Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, aiming at the abolition of the death penalty</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prevention of Discrimination on the Basis of Race, Religion, or Belief, and Protection of Minorities</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>International Covenant on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>3 Jan 1976</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Women’s Human Rights</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Terrorism</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>


<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Slavery and Slavery-Like Practices</strong></td>
<td>Signature</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supplementary Convention on the Abolition of Slavery, the Slave Trade, and Institutions and Practices Similar to Slavery</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Slavery Convention</td>
<td>Not signed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Protocol amending the Slavery Convention</td>
<td>Not signed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Convention for the Suppression of the Traffic in Persons and of the Exploitation of the Prostitution of Others</td>
<td>Not signed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Protection from Torture, Ill-Treatment and Disappearance</strong></td>
<td>Signature</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>European Convention for the Prevention of Torture and Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment</td>
<td>Not signed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Protocol No. 1 to the European Convention for the Prevention of Torture and Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment</td>
<td>Not signed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Protocol No. 2 to the European Convention for the Prevention of Torture and inhuman or Degrading Treatment of Punishment</td>
<td>Not signed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Supplementary Convention on the Abolition of Slavery, the Slave Trade, and Institutions and Practices Similar to Slavery</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment</td>
<td>13 Nov 1991</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rights of the Child</td>
<td>Signature</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the involvement of children in armed conflicts</td>
<td>6 Sep 2000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Convention concerning the Prohibition and Immediate Action for the Elimination of the Worst Forms of Child Labour</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Freedom of Association</td>
<td>Signature</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Freedom of Association and Protection of the Right to Organise Convention</td>
<td>Not signed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Right to Organise and Collective Bargaining Convention</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employment and Forced Labour</td>
<td>Signature</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Convention concerning Forced or Compulsory Labour</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Equal Remuneration Convention</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Abolition of Forced Labour Convention</td>
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<tr>
<td>Discrimination (Employment and Occupation) Convention</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employment Policy Convention</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Convention concerning Occupational Safety and Health and the Working Environment</td>
<td>Not signed</td>
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<tr>
<td>Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Category</td>
<td>Treaty/M.C.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------------------------------------------</td>
<td>------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td><strong>Convention against Discrimination in Education</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Refugees and Asylum</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Convention relating to the Status of Refugees</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Protocol Relating to the Status of Refugees</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Nationality, Statelessness, and the Rights of Aliens</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Convention on the Reduction of Statelessness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Convention relating to the Status of Stateless Persons</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>War Crimes and Crimes Against Humanity, Genocide, and Terrorism</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Convention on the Non-Applicability of Statutory Limitations to War Crimes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>and Crimes Against Humanity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Law of Armed Conflict</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Geneva Convention for the Amelioration of the Condition of the Wounded and</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sick in Armed Forces in the Field</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Geneva Convention for the Amelioration of the Condition of Wounded, Sick</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>and Shipwrecked Members of Armed Forces at Sea</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Geneva Convention relative to the Treatment of Prisoners of War</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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*The table reflects the status of treaty ratifications as of the respective dates.*
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Treaty</th>
<th>Signature</th>
<th>Ratification</th>
<th>Accession</th>
<th>Reservations</th>
<th>Entry into Force</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Geneva Convention relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Protocol I Additional to the Geneva Conventions of 12 August 1949, and Relating to the Protection of Victims of International Armed Conflicts (Protocol I)</td>
<td>12 Dec 1977</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Protocol II Additional to the Geneva Conventions of 12 August 1949, and Relating to the Protection of Victims on Non-International Armed Conflicts (Protocol II)</td>
<td>12 Dec 1977</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Terrorism and Human Rights</td>
<td></td>
<td>Ratification</td>
<td></td>
<td>Accession</td>
<td>Reservations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>International Convention Against the Taking of Hostages</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>International Convention for the Suppression of Terrorist Bombing</td>
<td></td>
<td>Not signed</td>
<td></td>
<td>Entry into Force</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>International Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of Crimes Against International Protected Persons</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>U.N. Activities and Employees</td>
<td></td>
<td>Ratification</td>
<td>Accession</td>
<td>Reservations</td>
<td>Entry into Force</td>
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<tr>
<td>Convention on the Privileges and Immunities of the United Nations</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
ANNEX SIX: RATIFICATION OF ENVIRONMENTAL CONVENTIONS
AND AGREEMENTS

- Ramsar Conventions of Wetlands of International Importance – 1971. Azraq oasis is a Ramsar site in Jordan.
- Secretariat for both the Vienna Convention and the Montreal Protocol for the Protection of the Ozone Layer.
- UN Framework Convention on Climate Change.
- UN Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD) – 1996.
- Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety.
- Convention Concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage – 1975.
REACH: In response to a challenge from the King in July 1999 for the private sector to prioritize the development of Jordan’s IT sector, a core group from the IT industry devised a strategy and action plan identified as the REACH Initiative. [REACH is an acronym for the actions to be taken in the following areas: (R)egulatory framework strengthening, (E)nabling environment (infrastructure development), (A)dvancement programmes, (C)apital and finance and (H)uman Resources Development.] This is seen as a national strategy for developing a vibrant, export-oriented IT services sector and paving the way for Jordan to become a regional leader and internationally recognized exporter of IT products and services. The strategy was led by the private sector, in partnership with the Government, for the ultimate purpose of positioning Jordan favourably within the knowledge-based economy of the future. The REACH initiative ended in 2004.

E-Learning: The e-learning initiative was launched by the Ministry of Education in 2001 and aims at reforming the educational system. Its strategic objective is to adapt and enhance the education system through the use of ICT in: upgrading the Ministry of Education to become an e-learning organization; developing informatics and administrative systems to support the decision making process; developing learning content whereby the outcomes support student achievement and empower them to access information and acquire knowledge and skills required of knowledge workers; having the teacher become a facilitator of learning in an electronic classroom; developing e-Learning Resource Centres to support e-learning; developing a Jordanian learning network supportive of the national programme “Connecting Jordanians” in partnership with the Ministry of ICT, and providing technological support such as equipment, computer labs, and maintenance to all schools.

E-Government: The Government of Jordan has recognized that a major driving factor in the transformation of the economy is Government itself as the largest producer and consumer of goods and services in the country. What is needed is to organize internal operations, improve service delivery and enhance interaction with citizens, e.g. by providing them with easier access to Government services at the local level. Ownership and responsibility for e-Government has been assigned to the Ministry of Information and Communications Technology (MoICT). To assist the Ministry in the implementation of the plan, as well as supervise the drafting of an overall strategy for longer-range implementation, a National Task Force for e-Government has been formed. The MoICT chairs the task force and reports to the Prime Minister. A first draft of the e-Government strategy was finalized in 2003. Several services will be available electronically over the next couple of years, as envisaged under the e-Government initiative. Among these services, e-accounting has been identified as a priority. Through e-accounting the Government hopes to streamline the accounting processes, make them more transparent, and reduce transaction costs, thereby lowering the costs for services and raising the Government’s capacity to provide public services.

The development and implementation of a new comprehensive e-Government programme is one of the National Agenda objectives under the Financial Services and Fiscal Reform theme.
Knowledge stations: The Knowledge Station Initiative which is owned and funded by the King Abdullah II Fund for Development was launched in 1999. It aims at enabling all segments of Jordanian society, irrespective of their geographical location or economic status, to acquire the necessary new-age ICT skills that would allow them to enhance their socio-economic capabilities. To date, the initiative has successfully established a total of 100 knowledge stations throughout the 12 governorates, and aims at establishing several more so as to cover the Kingdom. Knowledge stations were primarily established in less developed, information-poor areas with the task of leveraging the power of ICT as a means for improving social and economic conditions.
The national institutions which are members of the Higher Council for Civil Defence are:

- The Minister of Interior.
- Director of Civil Defence.
- Secretary General of the Prime Ministry.
- Secretaries General of all ministries.
- Secretary General of the Higher Council for Youth.
- Jordanian Armed Forces deputy assigned by the chairman of Jordanian Armed Forces.
- Public Security deputy assigned by the Public Security general director.
- Amman Municipality Deputy.
- Chairman of the Jordanian Red Crescent Society.
- Chairman of the Chamber of Trade Unions.
- A Chairman for one of the industrial chambers assigned by the Ministry of Industry and Trade.

Private sector, societies, and NGOs and academic institutions that participate in disaster risk reduction include:

- Jordanian Red Crescent Society.
- Jordan Hashemite Charity Organization.
- Ministry of Environment.
- International Agency for Atomic Energy.
- The National Committee for Demining and Rehabilitation.
- All universities in Jordan.
- Most public and private hospitals and medical centres in Jordan.
- UN offices in Amman.
- International Red Cross Committee in Jordan.
The Socio-Economic Challenges

- **Alleviate poverty**: Improve productivity, reduce unemployment, and expand the reach and benefits of human development and eliminate poverty pockets.
- **Stimulate Economic growth**: Achieve annual growth rates of 9-10% over next decade;
- **Focus on job creation**: Even at present rate of growth, unemployment will grow by nearly 50% over the next 10 years.
- **Tackle underemployment**: Create opportunities and incentives to keep people in the job market.
- **Correct gender imbalances**: Greatly expand role of women in the economy, particularly in the labour force, public service, and in political life.
- **Achieve equality in public services**: Correct wide gender, regional and other disparities and imbalances in provision of services kingdom-wide.
- **Strengthen the resilience of the economy against external shocks**: Establish partnerships for self-reliance.
- **Boost exports**: Continue to reduce the ratio of debt to GDP.

The Poverty and food security challenges

- **Tackle extreme poverty**: Eliminate hunger and extreme poverty especially in rural areas;
- **Develop rural areas**: Foster rural and agricultural development and reverse rural-urban migration; accelerate demining to free up more land.
- **Educate the poor**: Increase the level of educational attainment of poor boys and girls in the school system and increase the proportion of young men and women in the higher education system (vocational and academic).
- **Improve the quality of public health and education**: Increase the efficiency of public spending on health and education services so that the poor may derive maximum benefit from insurance schemes and free basic education services.
- **Improve access of poor households to safe sanitation**: Capital expenditure to be directed outside the capital to reduce inter-governorate disparities in access to sanitation.
- **Improve access of poor households to safe drinking water**: This must be approached within the context of the severe water shortage and water pollution problems in Jordan.
- **Give shelter**: Provide adequate, hygienic shelter for poor families by establishing proper mechanisms of housing finance and access to credit.
- **Strengthen regional capacities**: Bolster the closest administrative units to the populace and those most likely to represent the needs of the people, apply transparency and act in close cooperation with local communities and representatives of civil society.
- **Tackle socio-cultural factors which contribute to poverty**: These include gender-stereotyped roles and the patriarchal society, resistance to family planning and the social stigma associated with disability.
- **Ensure efficient and streamlined social schemes**: These include subsidies, health insurance, unemployment benefits, social security, pension, and National Aid Fund transfers. Develop and implement a clear, workable social policy.
- **Ensure pro-poor growth and equal redistribution of resources**: See to it that the benefits of investment trickle down to the poor; focus investment in productive economic sectors. Reform fiscal policy to become pro-poor, with public budgeting and taxation policies and greater transparency.
The Education and Training Challenges

- **Zoom in Zarqa**: Reverse the increasing poverty trend in Zarqa governorate while maintaining the positive trend towards poverty reduction in other governorates.

**The Education and Training Challenges**

- **Improve access to early childhood development programmes**: Access needs expanding and standards set for child development and learning.
- **Increase quality of primary and preparatory education**: Quality is an issue in some schools and school infrastructure needs to be improved, to reduce rented premises and double-shift schools.
- **Expand access to quality secondary education**: Achieve same participation rates as for elementary and preparatory levels.
- **Ensure improved access to schooling for poor children and those with disabilities**.
- **Expand access to quality higher education**.
- **Integrate quality assurance across all sectors of education**: Including teacher training.
- **Achieve full computer literacy among school age young people**: Extend and ensure access to computer facilities and internet connections to all schools.
- **Strengthen students' participation in school life**: Promoting their access to life-skills based education.
- **Boost and reshape skills development**: Reform vocational and skills training to match the needs of the job market.
- **Strengthen links between secondary and higher education**: Update curricula, improve capacity of teachers, expand access in rural areas.
- **Strengthen links between TVE, higher education, and the job market**: Shape curricula to market needs, build capacity of teachers, and increase female participation.

The Health and Health Care Challenges

- **Strengthen population planning strategies**: Jordan's high population growth rate strains natural resources (water), outpaces employment opportunities, poses inherent health issues and threatens the Kingdom's delicate environmental balance.
- **Work to continue trend toward declining fertility rates**: The high birth rate poses serious challenges to economic growth, environmental sustainability and overall stability of the kingdom.
- **Broaden reproductive health policies and services**: Improve outreach and performance of public healthcare system, including family planning.
- **Achieve equality and equity in health care**: Improve access of the poor, gender parity and fulfil the right of the disabled and vulnerable groups to health services, medications and health insurance.
- **Tackle non-communicable diseases**: Narrow the gap in information and education about healthy life styles; improve and expand chronic-disease care.
- **Build capacities of health workers**: Institute continuous medical training, performance appraisal and improved incentives and motivation.
- **Reconsider priorities for the health sector**: Spend more on human resources than on health infrastructure; build only where most people can be served.
- **Boost health-spending share of GDP**: Present level (c. 9% of GDP) is below par.
- **Pay more attention to HIV/AIDS and STDs**: Problem is real but largely unacknowledged. Treatment practices are inconsistent and public knowledge levels remain low.
- **Improve coordination among health players**: Mechanism needed for communication and coordination among partners: Government sectors, donors, civil society.
- **Bolster emergency preparedness**: National strategy needed to cope with natural and other disasters; special measures needed for immigrants.
The Environment and Natural Resources Challenges

- **Rehabilitate hot spots**: Support national efforts aimed at rehabilitating environmental priority areas and “hot spots”, such as the Zarqa river basin, phosphate mining sites and landfill areas.

- **Capacity development**: Support institutional capacity building efforts at the Ministry of Environment, and help strengthen the enforcement of environmental legislation and the role of the new Environmental Police.

- **Protect flora and fauna**: Prevent loss of species, including marine species, through hunting activities and loss of habitat, and increase the coverage of protected areas/nature reserves.

- **Sustainable transport**: Move to a concept of sustainable transport and management of demand for vehicles and decrease the numbers of one-person vehicles on the roads.

### Land management

- **Sustainable agriculture**: Enhance agriculture and grazing practices in terms of cropping patterns, water use efficiency, and use of pesticides.

- **Sustainable land use**: Develop and enforce a sustainable land-use plan in order to use in a sustainable manner the available land resources and prevent desertification.

### Waste management

- **Improve waste management practices**: Decrease pollution associated with waste management practices by implementing sustainable management of household, toxic and medical waste.

- **Industrial waste**: Develop and implement action plans for dealing with industrial waste, including medical waste, and wastewater generated by industrial zones (including QIZs) and involve the private sector in waste management strategies.

### Water resources management

- **Integrated water resources management**: Develop an integrated approach to water resource management.

- **Water supply**: Enhance adoption of supply measures for surface water, such as surface and sub-surface storage, evaporation reduction, eliminating and controlling seepage losses, and protection of water quality, and develop and expand the use of new non-conventional water resources.

- **Water resources quality**: Properly control groundwater abstractions and reduce abstraction to within a safe yield of the aquifers, and protect the quality of surface and groundwater resources from degradation associated with pollution and over-abstraction.

- **Decrease reliance on conventional fuels**: Improve energy efficiency at industry and household levels by implementing demand management measures, and invest in development of renewable energy resources.

- **Get the lead out of petrol**: Encourage the use of alternative energy sources (e.g. natural gas) in vehicles and support the Government’s decision to phase out leaded fuel by 2008.

### Energy management

- **Boost domestic energy sources**: These are inadequate for present needs, never mind future ones; promote use of renewable energy sources (e.g. solar and wind) through a national strategy and action plan.

- **Capacity building**: Build national capacity for increasing energy efficiency in all sectors.

- **Decrease reliance on conventional fuels**: Improve energy efficiency at industry and household levels by implementing demand management measures, and invest in development of renewable energy resources.

- **Get the lead out of petrol**: Encourage the use of alternative energy sources (e.g. natural gas) in
vehicles and support the Government's decision to phase out leaded fuel by 2008.

The Employment, Labourer and Enterprise Challenges

- **Support and expand micro, small and medium enterprises in Jordan:** Make sure SMEs have access to markets and to research and development.
- **Decrease reliance on foreign labourer:** Address gaps in the labourer law to embrace all sectors and enforce the laws on minimum wage, working hours, social security.
- **Job opportunities for the young:** Improve the connection between education and the world of work, provide skills of relevance to the labourer market.
- **Encourage women to enter the labourer market:** Discrimination against women job seekers needs to be tackled and women and their families encouraged to support their entry into the labourer market.
- **Reduce government role in economy:** Expand private sector, focusing on small and medium-sized enterprises.
- **Improve and expand access to credit:** Create a private credit registry and undertake special efforts to make credit available to women entrepreneurs.
- **Encourage direct foreign investment:** Enact incentives such as profit transfers and tax exemptions.
- **Overcome chronic water shortages:** All development efforts hinge on finding a solution to this most severe problem – not only to match ever-dwindling quantities of water with sharply increasing demand, but also to ensure water quality.

The Institutional Framework Challenges

- **Tackle inconsistencies in the institutional framework for civil society organisations and in particular NGOs:** NGOs are severely hampered by laws and institutional arrangements. There have been attempts to redress this and it is urgent that the Government and CSOs agreed on a functioning enabling environment.
- **Improve governance to achieve National Agenda goals:** The King and cabinet have pointed the way to economic and social reforms; other institutions of Government and civil society -- parliament, professional associations, NGOs, the media -- need to be brought firmly on board.
- **Enact electoral reforms:** Amend the elections law to facilitate equitable representation in parliament.
- **Increase popular participation in national political life:** Democratization must truly take root at community level.
- **Realize more personal freedom:** Jordanians must be encouraged to feel they have a stake in where the country is going, and to get more involved, if the fruits of economic growth and improved education are to be realized.
- **Reinforce the commitment to freedom of expression:** End government monopoly on information and strive for truly free media.
- **Strengthen links between trade and development:** Coordinate trade liberalization and industrial development policies better to use trade policy as an effective tool for a coherent industrialization strategy.