

WOMEN, PEACE AND SECURITY IN JORDAN - HOW CAN SWEDEN MAKE A DIFFERENCE?

The following recommendations have been developed by Operation 1325 with support from the the Jordanian civil society organization Arab Women Organization of Jordan (AWO).

SITUATION ANALYSIS

- Jordan is host to nearly 750 000 refugees, including women refugees who are vulnerable to gender-based violence and lack access to income and sexual and reproductive healthcare.
- While Jordanian leaders have embraced the Women, Peace and Security Agenda, this has to some degree been pursued at the expense of civil liberties, including freedom of association which limits women's civil society organizations from organizing freely.
- In line with Jordan's National Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security, Jordan has pursued the objective of increasing women's participation in the security sector. However not enough is being done to increase women's participation in political decision-making and in the labor market.

RECOMMENDATIONS IN SHORT

- Ensure the protection of women refugees in Jordan.
- Support women's civil society organizations to act freely in the Jordanian society.
- Increase women's participation and representation in political decision-making and the labor market.

ENSURE THE PROTECTION OF WOMEN REFUGEES IN JORDAN

Jordan hosts nearly 750 000 refugees, of which the majority have fled Syria. Today Syrian refugees account for over 10 % of Jordanian population. Jordan has been unable to provide adequate health care for the refugees residing in the country and while the Jordanian Government has granted more than 100,000 work permits to Syrian refugees, women refugees are seldom able to access employment. According to Oxfam, 28 % of the Syrian women refugee community in Jordan, have reported that they left Syria fearing violence, including sexual and gender-based violence. Almost all of them reported increased violence from their partners on arrival in Jordan. The judicial system has been overloaded and cases of violence against refugee women are not brought to court and result in prosecution. Women also lack access to sexual and reproductive healthcare in addition to psycho-social services for survivors of gender-based violence.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- Sweden should support women activists and civil society organizations which provide sexual and reproductive healthcare to women refugees in Jordan, as well as psycho-social services for survivors of gender-based violence.
- Sweden should support Syrian women refugees in Jordan and provide platforms which these women can use to be part of the ongoing Syrian peace process.
- Sweden should ensure that EU development funding to Jordan is programmed to promote accountability regarding violence against women and support the judicial system to investigate and prosecute cases of violence against women within the refugee community.



Operation 1325 is a Swedish civil society organization working for the implementation of UN Resolution 1325. Founded by several Swedish women's and peace organizations in 2003, the organizations objective is to increase women's influence at all levels of peace processes and in conflict resolution.

The Arab Women Organization of Jordan (AWO) is a non-governmental and non-profit human rights' organization dedicated to women's rights as human rights. Since its foundation in 1970, AWO's vision is to support gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls.

SUPPORT WOMEN CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANIZATIONS TO ACT FREELY IN THE JORDANIAN SOCIETY

Jordan has been applauded for its commitment to the Women, Peace and Security Agenda through the adoption of a National Action Plan in 2017. However, efforts to increase women's rights and implement the Women, Peace and Security Agenda have to some degree been used to justify other autocratic tendencies, such as the repression of freedom of expression and association, which are essential for civil society, including women civil society organizations, to act freely. This has also barred civil society, including women's rights organizations, from public protests and online expression.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- Sweden should support local women's organizations by providing flexible funding and access to platforms to discuss and advocate for issues they identify as important.
- Sweden should highlight the importance of free civil society in diplomatic dialogue with Jordan.
- Sweden should, together with the EU and UN, insist that Jordan adheres to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights by ensuring a safe, respectful, and enabling environment for civil society and the removal of legal and policy measures that unwarrantedly limit the right to association.

INCREASE WOMEN'S PARTICIPATION AND REPRESENTATION IN POLITICAL DECISION-MAKING AND IN THE LABOR MARKET

While the Jordanian National Action Plan for Women, Peace and Security focuses on increasing women's participation in the security sector, considerable challenges remain for women's participation in the labor market and in politics. Currently there are only 15 % women in the Parliament and 13 % of women are part of the labor market. The male custodian system further hinders women from freely participating in the labor market, which both reduces women's ability to achieve economic independence and has implications on women's participation at other decision-making levels.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- Sweden should advocate that increasing women's participation in the labor market becomes a key priority in the EU's foreign relations with Jordan. Particularly regarding private sector development and trade agreements. In line with this, the current provision of 5 % of the EU-Jordan budget partnership being allocated for gender equality and women's rights, should be increased and special earmarking for women, peace and security initiatives should be encouraged in forthcoming budget partnerships.
- Sweden should support civil society initiatives which aim to provide platforms for women politicians, especially young women, in line with Resolution 2250 on Youth, Peace and Security.
- Sweden should, together with the EU and local civil society, advocate for the abolishment of the currently prevalent male custodian system in order to allow women to freely participate in political decision-making and in the labor market.



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