

The Role of Civil Society Organisations as Sites for Knowledge Production in Jordan



This policy paper is part of the project entitled “Addressing Socio-Economic Challenges in Jordan: Reflections on the Economic Modernisation Vision 2033” implemented jointly by the West Asia-North Africa Institute and the Konrad Adenauer Stiftung (KAS) Jordan Office. The aim of the project is to examine Jordan’s Economic Modernisation Vision (EMV) implementation from fresh angles, highlighting the opportunities and necessary reforms to ensure the vision delivers on its promise for Jordan’s future.

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Published in 2026 by the WANA Institute and KAS Jordan

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Abstract

Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) in Jordan play a crucial role in development, driving social change, and enhancing the welfare of the country's citizens. They advocate social protection and human rights, contributing to lifelong learning by providing training and educational services to local communities. However, their role as knowledge producers is often understated in official narratives and invisible to the public. This paper explores the role of civil society organisations as knowledge producers, specifically looking at national Think Tanks. The paper argues for an expansive view of CSOs' role in shaping national strategies and policies as partners with the government. The paper highlights the critical role of CSOs in advancing the Economic Modernisation Vision goals through creating a supportive and participatory policy environment. The paper offers recommendations to strengthen the role and coordination of CSOs as knowledge producers and partners with the government in setting national priorities and agendas.

الملخص

تلعب منظمات المجتمع المدني في الأردن دوراً محورياً في دفع عجلة التغيير الاجتماعي نحو مستقبل أكثر عدالة، وتعزيز رفاه المواطنين عبر خدمات وبرامج متنوعة تشمل خدمات التدريب والتعليم وانذكاء الوعي في المواضيع التي تمس حياة المواطنين والمجتمعات المحلية. وبالرغم من هذه الجهود، يظل دور منظمات المجتمع المدني كمراكز لانتاج المعرفة في السردية الرسمية، غير مرئي إلى حد كبير.

تستعرض هذه الورقة دور منظمات المجتمع المدني، وبالاخص مراكز الفكر الوطنية، كموقع لانتاج المعرفة، وتتادي بتبني منظور أوسع لدور منظمات المجتمع المدني بوصفها شركاء للحكومة في صياغة الاستراتيجيات والسياسات الوطنية. كما تُبرز الورقة الدور الحاسم لمنظمات المجتمع المدني في دعم تحقيق أهداف رؤية التحديث الاقتصادي عبر الإسهام في خلق بيئة سياساتية داعمة وتشاركية. وتقدم الورقة توصيات لتعزيز دور منظمات المجتمع المدني وتنسق جهودها بوصفها منتجين للمعرفة وشركاء للحكومة في تحديد الأولويات الوطنية وصياغة الأجندة التنموية.

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1 Introduction

Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) in Jordan play a crucial role in reform and development, driving social change and enhancing the welfare of the country's citizens.^{1 2} Historically, CSOs, particularly Community-Based Organisations (CBOs), have a long-standing record and reputation for providing charity and humanitarian aid to vulnerable groups, and more recently for generating context-specific knowledge on social and economic reforms.³ Beyond service provision, CSOs advocate for social protection and the rights of marginalised groups, while raising awareness on issues ranging from gender-based violence and disability rights to refugees' inclusion into the formal labour market.^{4 5 6}

CSOs also contribute to lifelong learning, providing capacity-building, training, and educational services to local communities. However, their role as knowledge producers is often understated in official narratives and invisible to the public. In this paper, knowledge production is understood and operationalised as the interactive, dynamic, problem-driven processes of generating data, evidence, and insights, as well as knowledge dissemination and public engagement in various forms. Drawing on Gibbons et al.'s understanding of knowledge production as socially distributed and context-driven, CSOs in Jordan contribute to knowledge production not only through research but also through needs assessments, community consultations, and advocacy networks.⁷

The paper examines the role of CSOs, specifically local think tanks, as sites of knowledge production within the CSO landscape in Jordan. The following question drives the research:

- What is the role of CSOs as knowledge producers in public policy-making in Jordan, and how do they shape national priorities and agendas?

This research is especially relevant to current discussions on reforms in Jordan, particularly in the context of implementing Jordan's Economic Modernisation Vision (EMV), where the role of CSOs in knowledge production and shaping evidence-based policies is often overlooked in implementation plans.⁸

¹ Ministry of Planning and International Cooperation. The Fifth National Action Plan 2021-2025 Under the Open Government. The Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, December 2021.

² OECD (2024), OECD Public Governance Reviews: Jordan: Together for an Accountable and Transparent Public Administration, OECD Public Governance Reviews, OECD Publishing, Paris, <https://doi.org/10.1787/be41202d-en>.

³ USAID/Jordan Monitoring & Evaluation Support Project (MESP). Civil Society Assessment Report. Contracted Under AID-278-C-13-00009. May 2016. <https://www.msiworldwide.com/wp-content/uploads/2023/10/Civil-Society-Assessment-Report-Jordan.pdf>

⁴ Arab Renaissance for Democracy and Development (ARDD). Walking on Eggshells: Pathways to Equality in Jordan. Amman, Jordan: ARDD, 2022. <https://arrrd-jo.org/publication/walking-on-eggshells-pathways-to-equality-in-jordan/>.

⁵ Phenix Center for Economic and Informatics Studies. National and Local Debate Sessions on the Role of CSOs in Enhancing Social Protection, 2021. Amman, Jordan: Phenix Center, 2021. <https://en.phenixcenter.net/wp-content/uploads/2022/05/Report-national-and-local-debates-sessions-on-the-role-of-CSOs-in-Enhancing-social-protection-2021.pdf>

⁶ Yara Shaban and Marah Jamous, Towards Dignified Inclusive Opportunities: Enhancing Self-Reliance and Access to the Formal Labour Market for Refugees and Host Communities (Amman, Jordan: West Asia-North Africa Institute, 2023). <https://wana institute.org/en/publication/towards-dignified-inclusive-opportunities-enhancing-self-reliance-and-access-formal>.

⁷ Michael Gibbons, Camille Limoges, Helga Nowotny, Simon Schwartzman, Peter Scott, and Martin Trow. The New Production of Knowledge: The Dynamics of Science and Research in Contemporary Societies. London: SAGE Publications Ltd, 2010. <https://doi.org/10.4135/9781446221853>.

⁸ Civil Society Organisations were mentioned in one initiative of the Economic Modernisation Vision implementation plan, focusing on their role in enhancing financial support with the private sector for developing the current Student Support Fund system. For an overview of the Economic Modernisation Implementation Plan visit: <https://jordanvision.jo/-/files/%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%A8%D8%B1%D9%86%D8%A7%D9%85%D8%AC%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%A1%D9%86%D9%81%D9%81%D8%B0%D9%8A%D9%84%D8%B1%D9%88%D9%94%D9%8A%D8%A9%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%AA%D8%AD%D8%AF%D9%8A%D8%AB%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%A7%D9%82%D8%AA%D8%B5%D8%A7%D8%AF%D9%8A.pdf>

The paper argues for an expansive view of the role of CSOs in shaping national priorities and strategies as partners with the government.⁹

In the context of the EMV, the paper highlights the contributions of CSOs to support the “Smart Jordan” and “Vibrant Jordan” drivers. The Smart Jordan driver prioritises innovation and a knowledge economy, and CSOs can contribute by promoting lifelong education, participatory research, and citizen-driven research to drive innovation and shape innovation policies. The EMV’s “Vibrant Jordan” driver focuses on communities and quality of life. CSOs can serve as mediators between citizens and the government, promoting the public interest.¹⁰ They also build citizens’ capacities through non-formal education and partner with the government to shape public policies and national agendas. In doing so, they help ensure that national development efforts are effectively translated across communities and governorates.

The paper offers policy recommendations to strengthen the role and coordination of CSOs as knowledge producers and government partners in setting national priorities and agendas, thereby aligning with EMV priorities, including fostering critical thinking, inclusive, evidence-based policymaking, and human development.

1.1 Knowledge Production Landscape in Jordan

The knowledge production landscape within the development sector in Jordan is complex, and CSOs often play a constrained role in research, as dictated by their relationship with international non-governmental organisations (INGOs), international development agencies, and foreign donors. There is a clear asymmetry in power dynamics in which donors determine research priorities, and local organisations are expected to adhere to Request for Proposals (RFPs), which limits the development of and advocacy for their independent research agendas.¹¹ There is also widespread research fatigue among researchers and respondents, resulting from the repeated studies commissioned by different INGOs and donors.^{12 13} This has far-reaching and observable consequences, including diminishing people’s trust in research, persistent distrust in many government circles of CSOs “promoting foreign agendas”, and participants’ viewing research participation through “the lens of incoming aid,” which affects research quality and impact.^{14 15 16}

CSOs in Jordan also face regulatory and funding challenges. These include lengthy processes to obtain foreign funding approval from the Cabinet prior to the commencement of their work, and weak alternatives to foreign funding, which has been exacerbated in recent years by the decline in foreign funding opportunities.¹⁷

⁹ Phenix Center for Economic and Informatics Studies. Jordan's Civil Society in 2024: A Future Outlook. Policy paper. Amman, Jordan: Phenix Center for Economic and Informatics Studies, 2025.

¹⁰ OECD, OECD Public Governance Reviews: Jordan, 2024.

¹¹ Toukan, "Ethical Dimensions of Nonacademic Research," 229.

¹² Ibid.

¹³ Maysa Baroud, Haya Al-Dajani, and Persephone de Magdalene. "Conducting research with Syrian refugees: Reflections and experiences of researchers and practitioners in Lebanon and Jordan." In Refugee Resilience and Adaptation in the Middle East, pp. 155-177. Routledge, 2023.

¹⁴ Toukan, "Ethical Dimensions of Nonacademic Research," 229.

¹⁵ OECD, OECD Public Governance Reviews: Jordan, 2024.

¹⁶ Phenix Center for Economic and Informatics Studies. Jordan's Civil Society in 2024: A Future Outlook. Policy paper. Amman, Jordan: Phenix Center for Economic and Informatics Studies, 2025

¹⁷ Ibid.

Despite these challenges, CSOs, particularly local think tanks, continue to conduct research and provide evidence-based policy recommendations by forming various partnerships and seeking new funding mechanisms. This includes the formation of coalitions, consortia, and communities of practice, as well as exploring alternative modes of funding.

The following section outlines the theoretical framework and methodology, followed by a discussion of the main findings and their implication for CSOs' role in knowledge production in Jordan.

2 Theoretical Framework

To analyse the role of CSOs in Jordan as sites of knowledge production within the context of ongoing reform and the Economic Modernisation Vision, this study is guided by Martha Nussbaum's "Capabilities Approach" or the "Human Development" approach. Instead of measuring progress solely by Gross Domestic Product, the human-centric framework emphasises human dignity and what individuals are able to do and are enabled to achieve. The purpose of development is to "create an enabling environment for people to enjoy long, healthy, and creative lives."¹⁸ This is pursued by supporting the internal capabilities of each individual through various streams, including health and education, whether formal, informal, or lifelong learning, as well as support for family care and love, among others. It also requires an enabling environment that allows people to exercise and utilise these capabilities. Such an environment encompasses social, political, and economic conditions that allow citizens to choose whether and how to exercise their internal capabilities.¹⁹

The Capabilities Approach is particularly relevant to policymakers to design meaningful interventions that improve the well-being and quality of life of their citizens. Interventions that focus solely on economic growth often do not translate into improvements in the living standards for the most vulnerable people. CSOs, in their various roles, are essential for translating the Capabilities Approach into practice. This is achieved through service provision, advocacy for human rights, raising awareness, capacity building, and shaping national policies that promote the well-being and flourishing of all citizens, especially marginalised groups. As Nussbaum notes, "the road to human advancement will not be through economic progress but through human development and empowerment."²⁰ In this study, CSO's role as knowledge producers is understood as a central mechanism for advancing these capabilities in the Jordanian context.

3 Methodology

The study employed a purposive sampling approach to select seven local think tanks for in-depth interviews, aiming to gather rich insights into their roles as knowledge producers. The selection was based on three main criteria: 1) their history and institutional presence, with the

¹⁸ The late Mahbub ul Haq wrote this sentence. This Pakistani economist inaugurated the Human Development Reports of the United Nations Development Programme, as cited in Nussbaum, Martha C. *Creating Capabilities: The Human Development Approach*. Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2011

¹⁹ Nussbaum, Martha C. *Creating Capabilities: The Human Development Approach*. Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2011

²⁰ David A. Clark, *The Capability Approach: Its Development, Critiques and Recent Advances*, GPRG-WPS-032 (Global Poverty Research Group, Economic and Social Research Council, 2005). https://base.socioeco.org/docs/developments_critiques_advances.pdf#:~:text=As%20we%20have%20seen%20the,While%20growth%20may%20be

newest organisation operating in Jordan for a little more than five years and the oldest for close to thirty years; 2) their status as independent, non-governmental, not-for-profit organisation whose core work centers on research and advocacy; 3) and thematic areas they cover, including economy and legislative environment, national security, sustainable economic strategies and economic growth, democracy, governance, and human rights, the promotion of women's rights, legal assistance and support for marginalised communities, and the participation of women and youth in political life.

The author conducted semi-structured interviews with each organisation's director or head of programmes. The interview guide was structured around three main clusters of questions: 1) the organisation's work as a research institution, with particular attention to its role as a knowledge producer; 2) its participation in setting national agendas and its forms of collaboration with government actors; and 3) the extent to which their work aligns with, and responds to the Economic Modernisation Vision.

With participants' informed consent, the interviews were audio-recorded and transcribed for subsequent content and thematic analysis. The analysis sought to identify recurring patterns and differences, and to examine how local think tanks understand and enact their roles as sites of knowledge production in Jordan.

4 Findings and Discussion

This section summarises how Jordanian CSOs generate and use knowledge, the constraints they face, and their roles in governance and development. It first examines their work as knowledge producers, then the structural challenges shaping this role. It concludes by analysing their engagement with state institutions and the Economic Modernisation Vision (EMV).

4.1 Civil Society Organisations as Knowledge Producers

All organisations interviewed described systematic research practices, including designing questionnaires, conducting mixed-methods field work, translating empirical findings into infographics, policy briefs, fact sheets, articles, and position papers. They also engage in knowledge dissemination and capacity building through various formats, often in collaboration with national, regional, and international partners, including partnerships with academic institutions and research centres. In addition, two organisations described specific roles that extend beyond knowledge production, such as undertaking monitoring and evaluation functions related to government performance or EMV implementation, and providing legal assistance to vulnerable individuals and communities.

At the same time, one interviewee noted persistent confusion among the public between charitable associations and CSOs registered as not-for-profit companies whose work focuses on empowerment, capacity building, and civic engagement.²¹ A similar concern was raised by another interviewee, who described the CSO landscape as fragmented and differentiated, with some entities that might not be regarded as civil society. In his assessment, certain organisations operate as semi-governmental or solely represent the private sector's interests.²²

²¹ Interview by the author, Amman, August 29, 2025.

²² Interview by the author, Amman, August 22, 2025.

The interviews thus revealed not only the complexity of CSOs' registration, governance, financial structures, and networks of internal and external collaborators, but also highlight an important part of Jordan's civil society field that remains under-recognised as a knowledge producer. This complexity around who is considered a member of civil society invites a shift away from definitions based solely on voluntary work not associated with the private sector or the government.²³ Instead, it points towards a more productive focus on the capacity of institutions and organisations to contribute to the common good and engages citizens with public issues.²⁴ The concept of civicness is particularly useful in directing attention to how diverse institutions cultivate collective responsibility in the public sphere through knowledge production, advocacy and monitoring, rather than relying on blanket categorisations that fail to capture the variety of actors working for the public interest.

4.2 Knowledge Production Challenges and Constraints

Several interviewees articulated significant structural constraints facing their work as knowledge producers. One key challenge is the regulatory and bureaucratic complexity, including registration, licensing, and approval processes, especially for foreign funding and activities outside of Amman. These constraints can often delay projects and limit long-term planning. Another challenge is limited or unavailable access to detailed, timely data, and the absence of aggregated datasets or outputs from other knowledge production entities on development topics. Short project cycles and donor dependency, particularly for institutions without independent funding streams, further constrain their work. One interviewee noted, for instance, that legal representation and social change processes often outlast project cycles, making it challenging to follow cases through their conclusion.²⁵ Finally, several interviewees reflected on the tendency of CSOs to compete for funding and visibility rather than coordinate research agendas. This fragmentation weakens the impact of civil society on public policy and knowledge production.

4.3 Civil Society Organisations as Partners in Governance and Development

The interviews revealed an uneven ecosystem of state-CSO relations, in which organisations participate in governance through multiple overlapping channels and decision-making arenas. One organisation works closely with multiple ministries and the Royal Court on macroeconomic analysis, indicators and implementation plans, including those related to the EMV. Others engage critically with the ministries and agencies on specific issues, including elections, labour, social protection, and tax policies. A third group collaborates extensively with state institutions providing legal aid, training judicial and security actors and co-implementing programmes.

However, these modes of participation are often fragmented, ad hoc, and dependent on government leadership. One interviewee described a fluctuating relationship with successive governments, which directly affected the level of engagement in formal consultations.²⁶ Another interviewee noted that foreign donors working with official entities and ministries frequently request the participation of national CSOs in strategic programming.

²³ Phenix Center, National and Local Debate Sessions, 2021.

²⁴ Paul Dekker and Adalbert Evers, "Civicness and the Third Sector: Introduction," *Voluntas: International Journal of Voluntary and Nonprofit Organizations* 20, no. 3 (2009): 217–219, <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11266-009-9086-z>.

²⁵ Interview conducted by the author, October 5, 2025.

²⁶ Interview by the author, Amman, August 22, 2025.

Yet, in her view, governmental institutions themselves rarely invite a broad and diverse range of CSOs to engage in a collaborative and inclusive manner when assessing the effectiveness and impact of national programmes and strategies.²⁷

All organisations employ networks of formal and informal connections to decision-making cycles and engage with media, social media, and public events to translate technical research into accessible messages. One organisation emphasised its history of advocacy to mobilise the public and advance policy change.²⁸ Another interviewee acknowledged that the intelligence services are informed of their research outputs on citizens' perception of critical issues affecting the Jordanian public.²⁹

CSO's knowledge is thus already embedded in governance, but often in fragmented and informal ways. Access to decision-making spaces is selected and often mediated through personal connections, donor-funded projects, or specific thematic areas rather than through formalised mechanisms for CSO participation. This presents a missed opportunity to incorporate the knowledge generated by CSOs working on the ground with citizens and local communities.

4.4 Civil Society Organisations' Engagement with the Economic Modernisation Vision

All interviewed organisations relate their work to themes central to the EMV, whether in economic growth and investment, social protection and inclusion, governance and accountability, or the economic empowerment of women and youth. Nevertheless, their direct engagement with the EMV during the consultation and goal-setting stages has been uneven. Several interviewees noted that no formal invitations were extended to their institutions, and that they were not centrally positioned in the EMV's initial design. One interviewee reported that his organisation did not participate in drafting the EMV, which he perceived as being heavily influenced by private-sector perspectives, despite his institution's long-standing work on economic development grounded in a human rights-based approach.³⁰ Other interviewees situated their involvement predominantly at the post hoc monitoring stage to determine whether employment targets and economic growth were met.

By contrast, one organisation has been directly engaged in EMV technical work, including developing the roadmap, indicators, and sectoral strategies, and continues to monitor and evaluate the EMV. According to the interviewee, this exception is due to the organisation's central role in advancing EMV proposals to the Royal Court and articulating the private sector's contributions to economic activity and growth.

CSOs can nonetheless play a pivotal role in advancing several EMV drivers if more structured and inclusive channels for participation are established. For example, CSOs can contribute to the "Smart Jordan" driver through their knowledge-production role by prioritising innovation and the knowledge economy, fostering lifelong learning, supporting participatory and citizen-driven research, and generating evidence that shapes innovation and innovation policies

²⁷ Interview by the author, Amman, August 16, 2025

²⁸ Interview by the author, Amman, October 5, 2025.

²⁹ Interview by the author, Amman, August 15, 2025.

³⁰ Interview by the author, Amman, August 22, 2025.

in ways that reflect citizens' needs. Under the “Vibrant Jordan” driver, CSOs as intermediaries between citizens and the state can articulate public interests and concerns and raise awareness of Jordan's priorities and national strategies. CSOs can help ensure that national development priorities are effectively translated into practice across different communities and governorates. As one interviewee observed, human development in one way or another always advances economic modernisation and economic growth.³¹

5 Recommendations

Based on the findings, literature, and interviewees' recommendations, the paper proposes policy recommendations for government actors, civil society organisations, and international partners.

For the government of Jordan

- **Support CSOs as knowledge producers**

The government can establish frameworks and dedicated bodies for commissioning independent research from local think tanks on key policy questions, with clear criteria and safeguards for independence, transparency, and ethical standards. The Ministry of Digital Economy and Entrepreneurship and the Department of Statistics can also develop data-sharing protocols that allow accredited CSOs and think tanks to work with official statistics and administrative datasets in greater detail, under well-defined safeguards.

To ensure research quality, a national repository could be created to house all development-sector studies, alongside scholarly publications. Such a repository would help track, coordinate, and align research with national research priorities and development needs.³² Together, these measures would enable local think tanks and international partners to address societal needs effectively, improving the efficiency and impact of their work.

- **Institutionalise and mainstream CSOs' participation in policy-making**

This could be achieved by establishing formal mechanisms and cross-cutting permanent bodies, such as advisory councils, regular consultation forums, and working groups that invite a wide range of CSOs and think tanks to engage in policy and decision-making.³³ These mechanisms should facilitate continuous, meaningful engagement by research-based CSOs in the design, drafting, implementation, review and monitoring of major national strategies, visions, and policies such as the EMV. They can also serve as spaces to jointly define national priorities and needs based on shared assessment and knowledge of local realities.³⁴

- **Reform regulatory and funding approval processes**

Simplify and streamline processes for CSO registration, activity approvals and foreign funding approvals.³⁵ A 2025 policy paper published by the Phenix Centre for Economic and Information Studies proposed several legislative and organisational reforms to

³¹ Interview by the author, Amman, August 16, 2025.

³² Toukan, "Ethical Dimensions of Nonacademic Research," 229

³³ OECD, OECD Public Governance Reviews: Jordan, 2024.

³⁴ Phenix Center, Jordan's Civil Society in 2024, 2025.

³⁵ OECD, OECD Public Governance Reviews: Jordan, 2024.

enhance the operating environment for civil society, including establishing a unified supervisory authority and adopting a notification-based registration system.³⁶ These proposals could provide a useful starting point for reform efforts.

For Civil Society Organisations

- **Strengthen methodological standards and peer learning**

Civil Society coalitions and networks can collaborate on shared training programmes for researchers on mixed-methods, policy paper writing, and ethical research practices. Moreover, local think tanks can establish informal peer review processes among themselves for major reports and policy briefs to enhance quality and credibility.

- **Consolidate and coordinate research agendas**

Local think tanks and research-based CSOs can develop issue-based coalitions in partnership with academic institutions or research networks in Jordan and across the WANA region, similar to the Jordan Whole of Society Network for Displacement and the Euro-Mediterranean Research, Dialogue, Advocacy (EuroMeSCo). These coalitions can coordinate research priorities, share data and tools, and present joint papers or reports. This would create stronger evidence-based policies, and amplify civil society voices in policy-making.

- **Prioritise the production and dissemination of Arabic-language knowledge**

CSOs should encourage participatory research and citizen surveys to deepen public ownership and legitimacy of research outputs, and increase and prioritise the production of Arabic outputs, including policy briefs, videos, infographics, and media interventions to inform domestic public debate, not only donor reports.

For international donors and partners

- **Design funding schemes that support core research functions**

International donors and partners can design funding schemes that support research, data systems, and research staff development, and allow for flexible, multi-year funding based on local priorities in consultation with government and local think tanks.

- **Promote open access to outputs and data**

Donors and partners can make research outputs available in accessible formats and in Arabic. Where appropriate, anonymised datasets can be shared to strengthen broader knowledge ecosystems and enable secondary analysis by local researchers and institutions.

³⁶ Phenix Center, Jordan's Civil Society in 2024, 2025.

6 Conclusion

Civil society organisations in Jordan play an essential role as sites of knowledge production that shape public policies, encourage debate, raise awareness of social issues, and provide capacity-building. In line with the targets of the Economic Modernisation Vision, CSOs can contribute to human development and improve the quality of life by generating context-specific evidence, amplifying the voices of marginalised communities, and mediating between citizens and the state on issues ranging from social protection to economic reform. The paper calls for strengthening the role of CSOs and coordination mechanisms that enable them to act as partners with the government in setting national strategies and shaping public policies, evaluating and monitoring their implementation, and raising awareness on issues that protect the dignity and human security of citizens.



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From Classroom to Community: Leveraging Social Studies Education for Long-Term and Inclusive Economic Growth



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Published in 2026 by the WANA Institute and KAS Jordan
Author: Salma Nasser
Edited by: Dr Yara Shaban
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Abstract

Jordan ranks in the bottom 20th percentile of countries globally on social capital indices, indicating low levels of interpersonal trust, civic engagement, and tolerance, which undermine Jordan's Economic Modernisation Vision's goal of inclusive economic growth and improved quality of life. Civic and social studies education plays an instrumental role in strengthening social capital by cultivating shared values of social tolerance and civic and social engagement (CSE) among young people. This paper examines the extent to which social tolerance and CSE are promoted in Jordan's education ecosystem at the policy, institutional and interpersonal levels by analysing the General and Specific Framework for Social Studies, the national social studies curriculum, and data from focus group discussions conducted with social studies teachers across the Kingdom. The paper finds that although the new national social studies curriculum incorporates concepts of tolerance and CSE, insufficient teacher training, limited learning tools, and weak school infrastructure constrain its effective implementation. Addressing these gaps will strengthen Jordan's social capital and help realise the broader ambitions of the EMV. Recommendations call for addressing gaps in the curriculum, establishing partnerships among stakeholders to promote tolerance and CSE among adolescents, and investing in teacher training and school infrastructure.

الملخص

يقع الأردن في شريحة أدنى ٢٠٪ من دول العالم في مؤشرات رأس المال الاجتماعي، مما يشير إلى تدنياً في مستويات الثقة بين الأشخاص والمشاركة المدنية والتسامح، مما يُؤوض أهداف رؤية التحديث الاقتصادي المتعلقة بتحقيق نمو اقتصادي شامل وتحسين نوعية الحياة للمواطنين. وفي هذا السياق، تلعب التربية المدنية والدراسات الاجتماعية دوراً محورياً في تعزيز رأس المال الاجتماعي من خلال غرس القيم المشتركة للتسامح الاجتماعي والمشاركة المدنية والاجتماعية بين اليافعين والشباب. تبحث هذه الورقة المدى الذي يتم فيه تعزيز التسامح الاجتماعي والمشاركة المدنية والاجتماعية في النظام التعليمي الأردني على المستويات السياسية والمؤسسية والشخصية، وذلك من خلال تحليل الإطار العام للدراسات الاجتماعية، والمنهاج الوطني للدراسات الاجتماعية، والبيانات المستمدة من مجموعات النقاش المركزية التي أجريت مع معلمي الدراسات الاجتماعية في مختلف أنحاء المملكة. تُظهر الورقة أنه على الرغم من تضمين مفاهيم التسامح والمشاركة المدنية والاجتماعية في منهاج الوطني الجديد للدراسات الاجتماعية، إلا أن نقص تدريب المعلمين، وضالة الأدوات التعليمية، وضعف البنية التحتية المدرسية تُقيد التنفيذ الفعال له. وستساهم معالجة هذه الفجوات في تعزيز رأس المال الاجتماعي في الأردن وتحقيق الطموحات الأوسع لرؤية التحديث الاقتصادي. تدعو الورقة لمعالجة التغارات في منهاج، وإقامة شراكات بين أصحاب المصلحة لتعزيز التسامح والمشاركة المدنية والاجتماعية بين اليافعين، والاستثمار في تدريب المعلمين والبنية التحتية المدرسية.

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1 Introduction

His Royal Highness King Abdullah II emphasises the importance of education in shaping Jordan's future and its capacity to spread tolerance, mutual understanding, and raise global citizens rooted in their heritage.¹ Similar values are emphasised in Jordan's Economic Modernisation Vision (EMV), which seeks to maintain Jordan as a “symbol of tolerance and altruism”,² celebrate diversity, and promote sustainable, inclusive growth through its pillars of economic growth and quality of life.

Despite these ambitions, Jordan ranks low on global social capital indicators, which measure perceived tolerance towards minorities and immigrants, donations made to charity, voter turnout, volunteering, and the extent of voicing opinions to public officials.^{3,4} Jordan's ranking on these indicators suggests that social capital, central to the EMV's goals, requires greater attention, especially given its significance for building strong societies and economies.⁵ Social capital refers to the resources available to individuals, including social networks, affiliations, and community organisations, that bridge between individuals and foster a sense of belonging.^{6,7}

Strengthening Jordan's social capital is therefore crucial for promoting inclusive and sustainable economic development and enhancing the quality of life. Economic, social, and environmental dimensions of development are interdependent: people and societies shape the economies that sustain their livelihoods, and economic conditions, in turn, influence wellbeing. Strong social capital is associated with higher economic growth rates and improved health outcomes,⁸ and socially cohesive societies are better positioned to ensure equitable labour market participation and facilitate an attractive environment for investment and job creation.⁹ Jordan's efforts to improve its investment climate¹⁰ and to address the low female economic participation of 14.5

¹ Abdullah II Ibn Al Hussein, “Seventh Discussion Paper: Developing Human Resources and Education Imperative for Jordan's Progress”, April 15, 2017, <https://kingabdullah.jo/en/discussion-papers/developing-human-resources-and-education-imperative-for-jordans-progress>.

² Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, Economic Modernisation Vision: Unleashing Potential to Build the Future, <https://www.jordanvision.jo/img/vision-en.pdf>.

³ Legatum Institute, Jordan (Ranked 86th): Legatum Prosperity Index 2023, accessed July 23, 2025, <https://index.prosperity.com/globe/jordan>.

⁴ Social Progress Imperative, Jordan Social Progress Index, accessed July 23, 2025, <https://www.social-progress.org/social-progress-index>.

⁵ Asep Suryahadi et al., “Social Capital and Economic Development in a Large and Multi-Ethnic Developing Country: Evidence from Indonesia”, Asian Development Review, 41, no. 2 (2024).

⁶ Robert Putnam, *Making Democracy Work: Civic Traditions in Modern Italy*, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1993).

⁷ Isabel V. Sawhill, *Social Capital: Why We Need It and How We Can Create More of It*, (Brookings Institution, 2020).

⁸ *Ibid.*

⁹ German Development Institute, *Social Cohesion and Economic Development: Unpacking the Relationship*, (2019).

¹⁰ United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific, *Integrating the Three Dimensions of Sustainable Development: A Framework and Tools*, Greening of Economic Growth Series (Bangkok: UN ESCAP, 2016), <https://www.unescap.org/sites/default/files/Integrating%20the%20three%20dimensions%20of%20sustainable%20development%20A%20framework.pdf>.

percent,¹¹ and the high unemployment rate of 21.3 percent¹² require concerted effort to strengthen Jordan's social capital to address these structural challenges.

Civic and social studies education plays a central role in cultivating social capital. It shapes shared values, nurtures social identity, and can bridge socioeconomic divides among children,¹³ which influences the ideological, cultural, and intellectual development of young citizens.¹⁴ Schools serve as primary agents of socialisation, often stepping in to fill the gaps left by families, religious institutions, and traditional media.¹⁵ The EMV prioritises improving education through the "Smart Jordan" growth driver, which seeks to raise a generation of capable citizens equipped with the required future skills to accelerate economic growth and enhance quality of life.¹⁶

This study examines Jordan's social studies education ecosystem as a pathway for strengthening social capital among young citizens, thereby contributing to long-term economic growth and enhancing quality of life. This focus is timely as the new national social studies curriculum will complete its first full cycle at the end of the 2025/2026 academic year.¹⁷

The paper seeks to answer the following question:

- To what extent does Jordan's social studies education ecosystem nurture tolerance and civic and social engagement?

In this study, social capital is examined through two dimensions: social tolerance and civic and social engagement (CSE). Social tolerance refers to an individual's ability and willingness to coexist and establish relationships with individuals from different cultural and social backgrounds.¹⁸ CSE "refers to citizens' participation in community life to improve conditions or shape the future."¹⁹

The paper begins by outlining the methodology, followed by an exploration of Jordan's social studies educational ecosystem at the policy, institutional and interpersonal levels. It then offers policy recommendations for stakeholders working to cultivate a generation that embodies social tolerance and CSE to support inclusive, sustainable growth, and concludes with a summary of the findings.

¹¹ Department of Statistics, Unemployment Rate Reached 21,3% in Q1 2025, https://dosweb.dos.gov.jo/DataBank/News/Unemployment/2025/unemp_Q1_en_2025.pdf.

¹² Department of Statistics, Unemployment Rate Reached 21,3% in Q1 2025, https://dosweb.dos.gov.jo/DataBank/News/Unemployment/2025/unemp_Q1_en_2025.pdf.

¹³ German Development Institute, Social Cohesion and Economic Development: Unpacking the Relationship, (2019).

¹⁴ Qaisar Saleh Al-Ghraibeh, [الواقع وتحديات مادة التربية الاجتماعية (الاجتماعيات) في الأردن] The Reality and Challenges of Social Studies Subject in Jordan, Nissan, April 18, 2020.

¹⁵ Michael McDevitt, "Political Socialization and Child Development", in The Sage Handbook of Political Sociology: Two Volume Set, ed. William Outhwaite and Stephen Turner (Sage Publications, 2018).

¹⁶ Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, Economic Modernisation Vision: Unleashing Potential to Build the Future, <https://www.jordanvision.jo/img/vision-en.pdf>.

¹⁷ Interview with an expert in the social studies curricula at the Ministry of Education, and a coordinator for the National Center for Curriculum Development.

¹⁸ Mohammad Alzyoud et al., "The Impact of Teaching Tolerance on Students in Jordanian Schools", British Journal of Humanities and Social Sciences 15, no. 1 (2016).

¹⁹ Hannah Borhan, Civic education as a pathway to inclusive societies: Exploring the role of education in fostering civic and social engagement, (Paris: OECD, 2025), https://www.oecd.org/en/publications/civic-education-as-a-pathway-to-inclusive-societies_3f128be8-en.html.

2 Methodology

This study adopts a qualitative, social ecological approach to examine the social and structural factors shaping Jordan's social studies education ecosystem. This approach guides the analysis across three interconnected levels: policy, institutional, and interpersonal (Figure 1), and informs the selection and interpretation of both primary and secondary data.²⁰

At the policy level, the study investigates how national frameworks seek to promote social capital through the education ecosystem. At the institutional level, it explores how schools and curricula are implemented within different education settings. At the interpersonal level, it examines classroom dynamics and teachers' perceptions of students' attitudes and behaviours.

To operationalise this approach, the study combines both primary and secondary data. Primary data were collected through three online focus group discussions (FGDs) conducted with social studies teachers from both boys' and girls' schools, working in the North, Centre, and South of the Kingdom, yielding a total of 16 participants from 11 governorates. The FGDs provided insights into institutional practices and interpersonal interactions within the classroom. An interview was also conducted with the social studies curriculum coordinator at the Ministry of Education (MoE) to understand the philosophy behind the newly developed social studies curriculum and its policy framework. To gain a deeper understanding, consultations were conducted with an education expert and the head of the social studies department at a private school in Amman, as well as a field visit. The study also relied on secondary data from the national social studies books from first to eighth grade, and the civic education book of the ninth grade and relevant MoE and National Center for Curriculum Development (NCCD) policy documents, including the General and Specific Framework for Social Studies, its standards, learning outcomes, and performance indicators.²¹

A thematic content analysis was applied to the data to identify emerging and recurring themes to systematically uncover key patterns and generate deeper insights into Jordan's social studies education ecosystem at the policy, institutional, and interpersonal levels.

As for the study's limitations, it relied on teachers' observations of students' interests and behaviour, rather than direct data from students, which limited the individual-level analysis. Secondly, schools are one of several influential sites of value formation and socialisation, and rapid digitalisation makes schools' role in this regard more challenging.²²

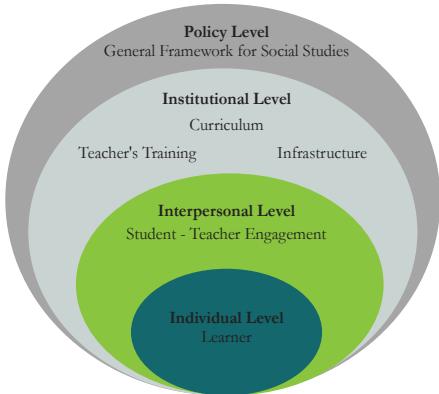


Figure 1. Social ecological model

²⁰ Josephine Campbell, Social ecological model, (EBSCO), <https://www.ebsco.com/research-starters/environmental-sciences/social-ecological-model>.

²¹ National Center for Curriculum Development, الإطار العام والخاص لمبحث الدراسات الاجتماعية ومعاييرها ومتطلبات تعليمها ومؤشرات أدائها [The General and Specific Framework for Social Studies: Standards, Learning Outcomes, and Performance Indicators], (Amman: July 5, 2022).

²² Chehrazed Ben Hamida, "Civic Education and Religion: Building a Culture of Citizenship and Social Peace". Intercontinental, Amman, Jordan. September 22, 2025.

3 Findings and Discussion

The findings identify the extent to which tolerance and CSE are nurtured through Jordan's social studies education ecosystem at the policy, institutional, and interpersonal levels. The section begins with the policy level focusing on the General and Specific Framework for Social Studies, followed by the institutional level delving into the social studies curriculum, school infrastructure and teachers' training. Lastly, it explores the interpersonal level through teachers' perceptions of students' engagement.

3.1 Policy level: The General & Specific Framework for Social Studies

At the policy level, the General and Specific Framework for Social Studies, developed by the NCCD, sets out the vision, defines the necessary learning environment for social studies education, and outlines the requirements for effective implementation. For grades one through eight, the curriculum combines three subjects – history, civic education, and geography – into a single subject, in line with international practices in teaching social studies.²³ From grades nine to twelve, these three subjects are taught separately.

The NCCD's framework and associated curriculum aim to cultivate students' awareness of national, regional, and global issues, thereby developing and enhancing their critical thinking skills. To achieve these aims, the framework identifies five components required to deliver the subject's outcomes: a coherent social studies curriculum, a qualified social studies teacher, effective social studies teaching strategies, a supportive learning environment, and the use and development of authentic assessment strategies.

The values underpinning the framework are closely aligned with the social capital dimensions highlighted in this study. They include social cohesion, respect for diversity in its various shapes and forms, distancing from all forms of extremism and prejudice, enhancing critical thinking skills, and emphasising values of justice and equality.²⁴ These values position social studies education as a key policy lever for fostering social tolerance and CSE and thus contribute to the broader EMV goals of improving quality of life and advancing Jordan's rankings in global indices measuring social capital.

3.2 Institutional Level: Curriculum, Infrastructure, and Training

3.2.1 National Social Studies Curriculum

At the institutional level, the national social studies curriculum operationalises the policy commitments outlined in the NCCD's Framework and translates them into classroom content.

²³ Online focus group discussions with teachers from the north of Jordan, Centre and South of Jordan conducted by Salma Nasser, October 13-15, 2025.

²⁴ National Center for Curriculum Development, طيّب الدّراسات الاجتماعيّة ومعاييرها ونّتاجات تعلّمها [The General and Specific Framework for Social Studies: Standards, Learning Outcomes, and Performance Indicators], (Amman: July 5, 2022).

The social studies curriculum promotes values of social tolerance and CSE across multiple units and lessons, adapting explanations and exercises to the developmental needs of each academic stage. During the primary years, these values are introduced mainly through visuals and simple narratives,²⁵ becoming more complex over the academic years.

Social tolerance and CSE are taught through applied learning exercises, including research-based tasks, critical thinking activities, group work, and exercises that draw on everyday scenarios and life skills to bring the concepts closer to students' lived realities. The curriculum also incorporates digital tools in its exercises, namely through QR codes embedded in textbooks to access additional learning materials and activities.

This focus on active engagement of the learner is further reinforced by the curriculum's use of inclusive language, evident in how questions are framed, giving agency to the learner, such as "I will demonstrate" rather than using the feminine or masculine forms of "demonstrate" in Arabic.

One drawback is that some visuals used in the curriculum do not show Jordanian children. This lack of immediate self-identification may reduce students' ownership of these values, undermining the curriculum as a site for building lasting tolerance and CSE in students. For students to internalise these values, they must first see themselves as legitimate participants through the curriculum.

The subsequent sections illustrate how tolerance and CSE are promoted through the social studies curriculum and particularly in the seventh and eighth-grade books. These pivotal school years are especially important as adolescents begin forming their worldview and social identities, making the curriculum's discussion of tolerance and CSE consequential for the development of social capital.²⁶

3.2.1.1 Promoting social tolerance

In the social studies curriculum, social tolerance is positioned as a fundamental characteristic of Jordanians, alongside mutual support and respect.²⁷ Tolerance is introduced early on through family and religious values. This approach is grounded in Article 6 (4) of the Jordanian constitution, stipulating that "The family is the basis of society, the core of which shall be religion, morals and patriotism."²⁸

Building on this foundation, students in the seventh and eighth grades develop a more in-depth understanding of tolerance beyond the family unit, weaving it throughout units on human rights, ethics, freedom of speech, and culture, which encourage collaboration, critical thinking, and mutual respect.

In human rights units, tolerance is grounded in international human rights conventions, the Sustainable Development Goals, and the Amman Message of 2004, which draws upon Islamic values to promote tolerance and respect between faiths and cultures.²⁹

²⁵ Interview with an expert in the social studies curricula at the Ministry of Education, and a coordinator for the National Center for Curriculum Development.

²⁶ Michael McDevitt, "Political Socialization and Child Development", in *The Sage Handbook of Political Sociology: Two Volume Set*, ed. William Outhwaite and Stephen Turner (Sage Publications, 2018), 800.

²⁷ Ali Mahafzah et al. [الدراسات الاجتماعية الصف الثاني الفصل الدراسي الأول] [Social Studies Second Grade First Semester], National Center for Curriculum Development, p. 82.

²⁸ The Jordanian Constitution, Article 6 / paragraph 4.

²⁹ Ali Mahafzah et al. [الدراسات الاجتماعية الصف السادس الفصل الدراسي الأول] [Social Studies Seventh Grade First Semester], National Center for Curriculum Development, p. 16.

Through such frameworks, Jordanians are simultaneously taught to be global citizens, Arab citizens, and proud patriots.

The curriculum also teaches tolerance through cultural diversity, which is described as a tool for achieving peace, development and stability.³⁰ The curriculum introduces students to ancient civilisations and to global cultural practices through traditional clothing, sports, cuisines, and dances. By mandating lessons focused on diversity, the curriculum nurtures students' knowledge and tolerance of different cultures.

As for diversity within the Jordanian context, students learn about cultural, historical and natural sites in different governorates in Jordan from a geographical perspective.³¹ Units on Jordanian cultural practices take a homogeneous approach, evident in the limited references to ethnic and religious diversity in Jordan.³² Cultural practices discussed are limited to marriage practices and national dishes, without providing historical or geographical context.³³ Homogenising Jordanian identity in national education narrows students' understanding of 'Jordanian-ness' to their own lived reality, which undermines social tolerance and therefore inclusive social capital.

The curriculum also emphasises students' responsibility in fostering social cohesion and tolerance to combat extremism and hate speech. It also outlines the stakeholders involved in this effort and the various manifestations and drivers of extremism to help students better comprehend the issue.³⁴ This fosters more resilient and tolerant young Jordanians, strengthening societal bonds and thus contributing towards a stronger social capital and an enhanced quality of life.

Therefore, social tolerance is discussed within different dimensions, including human rights, cultural diversity, and combating extremism. While tolerance is promoted in the curriculum, the main limitation is the topical depth of units and the framing of Jordanian identity, both of which require development to nurture tolerant young citizens actively engaged with society.

3.2.1.2 Promoting civic and social engagement (CSE)

The social studies curriculum also promotes CSE in its chapters and units, in line with the NCCD's Framework. CSE is introduced from the premise that all Jordanian citizens hold rights and responsibilities as stipulated in the constitution. Over the years, students learn about social engagement through spreading awareness, social responsibility, community service and solidarity,³⁵ but civic engagement is not given the same attention in the curriculum.

In seventh and eighth-grade books, CSE is demonstrated on the family, school and national levels.³⁶ This multi-level approach encourages students' active participation within their immediate and wider social environments. The family level focuses on democratic principles within the household, while the school level brings democratic principles closer to students' reality by explaining and encouraging participation in student elections. On the national level, students learn about the various political institutions in Jordan, including the Parliament and the Independent

³⁰ Ibid, p. 113.

³¹ Ali Mahafzah et al. [الدراسات الاجتماعية الصف السابع الفصل الدراسي الثاني] [Social Studies Seventh Grade Second Semester], National Center for Curriculum Development.

³² Ali Mahafzah et al. [الدراسات الاجتماعية الصف السابع الفصل الدراسي الأول] [Social Studies Seventh Grade First Semester], National Center for Curriculum Development, p. 115.

³³ Ibid, p. 115.

³⁴ Ali Mahafzah et al. [الدراسات الاجتماعية الصف السابع الفصل الدراسي الثاني] [Social Studies Seventh Grade Second Semester], National Center for Curriculum Development, pp. 48-58.

³⁵ Ali Mahafzah et al. [الدراسات الاجتماعية الصف الخامس الفصل الدراسي الأول] [Social Studies Fifth Grade First Semester], National Center for Curriculum Development, p. 23.

³⁶ Ali Mahafzah et al. [الدراسات الاجتماعية الصف السابع الفصل الدراسي الأول] [Social Studies Seventh Grade First Semester], National Center for Curriculum Development, p. 10.

Election Commission. However, the voting process in national elections is not covered in detail until the ninth grade, and local elections are not discussed. Additionally, the curriculum does not explicitly mention voting as a characteristic of an active citizen and only refers to it briefly through an exercise.

The curriculum also focuses on youth engagement in public life through volunteer work, entrepreneurship, and political parties.³⁷ Students are also familiarised with key social challenges in Jordanian society to direct them towards the issues that require their engagement, including poverty, unemployment, and cyberbullying.³⁸ While students are introduced to youth-focused civil society organisations, including the Crown Prince Foundation and All Jordan Youth, as possible avenues for engagement,³⁹ it does not equip students with the know-how to engage with grassroots, local civil society.

Aligning with digital transformations, the curriculum introduces students to digital citizenship, explaining how to utilise the government's e-services platform, Sanad. However, students are not introduced to digital participation tools, such as Bekhedmetkom or the Legislation and Opinion Bureau's online participation platform, which would position students as active participants rather than service recipients.

Overall, CSE in the social studies curriculum, and particularly in the seventh and eighth grades, places greater emphasis on social engagement than on civic engagement, keeping young citizens unaware of the available pathways for civic and political participation. This risks perpetuating weak social capital, as a service-oriented perception of government, coupled with limited political participation, undermines citizens' sense of responsibility and ownership towards their country.

3.2.2 Physical and Digital Infrastructure in Schools

At the institutional level, teachers in focus group discussions (FGDs) identify weak school infrastructure as the greatest challenge undermining the public education system. For one, teachers point to the large class size, often ranging from 40 to 50 students. This poses a challenge in classroom management, consuming a significant portion of the class's time, and hindering the learning process with limited ability to utilise modern teaching strategies, such as group exercises.⁴⁰

Most of the teachers participating in the FGDs expressed frustration with the lack of digital tools and subject-specific resources in their schools. They emphasised that digital tools could meaningfully enhance learning by helping students visualise the complex social concepts discussed. Even in schools that have a computer lab, there is a high demand from teachers across different subjects to use it, as expressed by one teacher:

We often have to book in advance just to give a lesson using the smart board, and each teacher might get only one session per week. Imagine if you have three or four classes, who gets priority? Who do you manage to accommodate?
You feel that some students may get the chance, while others won't, so it's difficult to ensure digital teaching and interaction.⁴¹

³⁷ Ali Mahafzah et al. [الدراسات الاجتماعية الصف الثامن الفصل الدراسي الثاني] [Social Studies Eighth Grade Second Semester], National Center for Curriculum Development, pp. 86-88.

³⁸ Ibid, pp. 90-95.

³⁹ Ibid, p. 83.

⁴⁰ Online focus group discussions with teachers from the north of Jordan, Centre and South of Jordan conducted by Salma Nasser, October 13-15, 2025.

⁴¹ Online focus group discussion with teachers from the centre of Jordan, conducted by Salma Nasser, October 14, 2025, translated by the author.

In the absence of adequate digital infrastructure, many teachers rely on their own or students' smartphones to integrate digital tools in their lessons, but a recent general directive by the MoE has requested schools to regulate mobile phone usage.⁴² While this provides a safer environment for students, teachers can no longer implement interactive learning activities previously used, such as Kahoot, or conduct examinations via Google Forms.⁴³

These findings reveal a noticeable gap between the curriculum and public-school infrastructure. While the curriculum incorporates technology through its exercises, most public schools are not equipped to leverage digital tools in the classroom. This reaffirms the need to focus on the "Smart Jordan" driver in the EMV to rapidly scale plans of improving school infrastructure. This would enable more participatory approaches in the classroom that would improve social capital dimensions.

3.2.3 Teacher Training

Teacher training is also a barrier to implementing the new social studies curriculum at the institutional level. With a new curriculum in place, teachers expressed a sense of urgency to receive additional training to deliver the new curriculum to the best of their abilities. Most teachers hold expertise in only one of the three disciplines - history, geography, and civic education - that have been merged into a single integrated curriculum. While teachers recognise the paradigm shift of the curriculum and acknowledge that this development has saved time for lesson and examination preparation and grading, some feel that the new curriculum puts an extra strain on them, needing to convey concepts from the geographical, historical, anthropological, national, political, philosophical, and economic angles.

Across the FGDs, social studies teachers expressed feeling that they are sidelined and not given the same attention as teachers of other subjects in terms of training, as conveyed by one teacher:

The social studies teacher is one of the most neglected by the Ministry. When we look at our colleagues in Arabic, Science, Mathematics, or English, they have training courses—intensive courses, and so on. But for social studies teachers, from what I see in the field, there is no attention or recognition of any kind.

Teachers also pointed to the lack of systemic training structures to advance their skills. While a mandatory 155-hour program has been implemented for new teachers hired by the MoE since 2023, it does not extend the same resources to those already in service. Although the Queen Rania Teacher Academy has a designated network for social studies teachers, teachers reported that it is inactive. Several teachers also mentioned a training course taken in 2022, designed for a new democracy curriculum, which was not implemented. Despite this, it equipped teachers with new teaching strategies that they applied in social studies classes, suggesting that targeted training can have a tangible positive spillover effect.

The lack of training limits the opportunities for promotion, as completing training courses provides potential pathways for advancement. Teachers noted that a teacher's guide for the subject would be beneficial for teaching the new curriculum. This would help teachers in choosing suitable teaching strategies for each unit and provide further information on how to unpack complex concepts.

⁴² Ibid.

⁴³ Ibid.

Overall, the lack of training for social studies teachers leads to inconsistency among teachers' capabilities, as the delivery of classes becomes heavily dependent on personal effort. It also exacerbates inequalities between teachers in public and private schools, with the latter receiving separate training programs tailored to their schools. Limited training also hinders the learning process and, hence, the ability to meet the NCCD's Framework's outcomes, including the promotion of tolerance and CSE among students.

3.3 Interpersonal Level: Teachers' Perceptions Of Students' Engagement

At the interpersonal level, teachers observe that students are highly engaged with specific topics discussed in the curriculum -including human rights, culture and climate change- despite constraints on infrastructure and teachers' training.

Multiple teachers highlighted students' engagement with the newly incorporated human rights units. One teacher attributed this interest to students' awareness of current political issues, referring to the dire humanitarian situation in Gaza.⁴⁴ Through these units, students learn about global human rights principles and how they are reflected in the Jordanian context for the first time. Teachers convey complex human rights concepts by relating them to students' lived realities, making them easier for the students to grasp.⁴⁵

Within the curriculum, there is a focus on the right to education and the right to work, specifically for women. One teacher noted that "students often express surprise upon learning such facts",⁴⁶ as was the case with one female student regarding the right to work, while in other cases, girls in class express their dream jobs without constraints that were previously only deemed suitable for men.⁴⁷ This particular example demonstrates the ramifications of social studies education for encouraging female participation in the workforce by ensuring that young girls are aware of their rights and potential, and it highlights the knowledge gap often filled by schools. Learning about rights can also ignite critical thinking among students. According to a teacher at a boys' school in Jerash, upon learning about the right to work, a student expressed frustration that his brother, a university graduate, is unemployed.⁴⁸

Climate change is another unit that many teachers note high student engagement "because they feel that the topic affects them and they are living it."⁴⁹ By learning about climate change, students are empowered with the knowledge and tools to combat it, which can nurture more aware and engaged citizens with buy-in to build a green economy, in line with the EMV's focus on sustainable green growth.

Units on culture were likewise seen as engaging for students. Teachers often utilise interactive activities in these units, in which students may learn how to pour traditional coffee, wear traditional dress, and organise cultural bazaars with local community participation. According to a girls' schoolteacher, "by the end of the year, the school turned into a cultural exhibit."⁵⁰

⁴⁴ Online focus group discussion with teachers from the north of Jordan, conducted by Salma Nasser, October 13, 2025.

⁴⁵ Online focus group discussion with teachers from the south of Jordan, conducted by Salma Nasser, October 15, 2025.

⁴⁶ Online focus group discussion with teachers from the north of Jordan, conducted by Salma Nasser, October 13, 2025.

⁴⁷ Online focus group discussion with teachers from the centre of Jordan, conducted by Salma Nasser, October 14, 2025.

⁴⁸ Ibid.

⁴⁹ Ibid, translated by the author.

⁵⁰ Online focus group discussion with teachers from the north of Jordan, conducted by Salma Nasser, October 13, 2025, translated by the author.

CSE is also promoted through student council elections, utilised as a practical learning tool for social studies units, and helps students comprehend elections, political campaigns and civic participation in practice.⁵¹ Also, one teacher noted efforts to organise a school-wide debate, tied to the lesson taken on democracy and freedom of expression. Through this activity, students learn to express their opinions and defend their ideas.⁵²

However, teachers' experiences also underscore the challenges of dealing with sensitive topics that arise in social studies education, as demonstrated by one teacher in a boys' school in Amman:

I experienced an embarrassing situation. A student said, 'I don't like dark-skinned people,' and there was a dark-skinned student in the class. I immediately tried to defend him in any way I could and make the student apologise. I felt the situation was a bit sensitive. The student openly said, 'I'm racist, I don't like dealing with these people,' and this happened in front of his classmate. These are the kinds of things we try to correct and change in students' values [...]. This came up when discussing the Jordanian constitution article stipulating that all Jordanians are equal in front of the law.⁵³

Another teacher expressed frustration with communicating difficult topics: "It is very difficult for teachers to know what strategy to utilise to communicate the information easily without getting into too many other topics."⁵⁴

These cases indicate a need to equip teachers with strategies to address sensitive subjects and to facilitate a safe space for dialogue, rather than shy away from them, thereby promoting greater social cohesion.

Many teachers from both boys' and girls' schools also mentioned that tensions and mistreatment between students are often linked to external problems such as family disputes or tribal tensions. At the same time, many students also possess a strong sense of community engagement, helping others by working together to collect the price for a sandwich at lunchtime or donating through clothing initiatives.⁵⁵

Therefore, the FGDs highlighted that students are engaged with the curriculum's topics that are tied to their lived experiences, but reported incidents and challenges highlight teachers' struggles with implementing strategies that address and thoroughly unpack complex concepts. This reflects the need to focus on social studies in schools to promote social well-being and to strengthen teachers' skills to meet the NCCD's Framework's aims and nurture students' social capital.

⁵¹ Online focus group discussion with teachers from the south of Jordan, conducted by Salma Nasser, October 15, 2025.

⁵² Ibid.

⁵³ Ibid, translated by the author.

⁵⁴ Online focus group discussion with teachers from the north of Jordan, conducted by Salma Nasser, October 13, 2025, translated by the author.

⁵⁵ Online focus group discussion with teachers from the centre of Jordan, conducted by Salma Nasser, October 14, 2025.

4 Recommendations

Enhancing the role of social studies in promoting tolerance and civic and social engagement requires coordinated action across all stakeholders within Jordan's education ecosystem. The following recommendations are tailored to key stakeholders and aim to strengthen the ability of Jordan's education system to nurture informed, tolerant, and engaged citizens.

For the National Center for Curriculum Development

- Further develop the social studies curriculum to include in-depth explanations on voting know-how and political participation in Jordan in the seventh and eighth grades. Include sections in the curriculum explaining civic technologies for participation, such as the Bekhedmetkom and Tawasal platforms, to inform young citizens of potential avenues for engagement.
- Adopt an institutional policy for all visuals added to Jordanian national curriculum books to be reflective of the faces of Jordanian children, adolescents, and families, reinforcing inclusion and representation in the curriculum and giving ownership of the values promoted in the curriculum.

For the Ministry of Education

- Design and implement a policy that mandates the organisation of yearly debates and student council elections in all public schools in Jordan, with a monitoring and evaluation framework. This should be a cross-disciplinary collaboration among teachers to ensure civic values are reinforced across all subjects, not only within social studies.
- Facilitate partnerships between public schools and municipalities to organise dialogues and politics labs in public spaces such as parks for school students. Municipalities can utilise the Greater Amman Municipality's model of youth dialogues and politics labs organised in public parks.
- Design and provide a specialised mandatory training that equips teachers to lead difficult conversations on sensitive topics such as racism, tolerance, diversity, and human rights.

For Queen Rania Teacher's Academy

- Activate the Academy's network for social studies teachers by establishing online channels and activating the standardised training track for social studies teachers, recognising the interdisciplinary nature of the subject, to ensure that the curriculum is executed meticulously.

For Civil Society Organisations

- Actively include school students in youth-focused programming and activities to enable early participation in community engagement initiatives. This will give school students more avenues for engagement while strengthening advocacy for civic and social studies education and practical activities in schools.

5 Conclusion

Nurturing tolerant and active citizens is essential to ensure that young citizens are invested in taking ownership in the process of building a stronger Jordanian economy and enhancing quality of life over the long run.

Civic and social studies education is a primary avenue for nurturing the values of tolerance, diversity, and civic and social participation, thereby fostering a stronger society and economy. The National Center for Curriculum Development and the Ministry of Education have sought to innovate through the curriculum to cultivate more tolerant and engaged citizens. However, weak school infrastructure, limited availability of digital tools, and limited opportunities for teacher training hinder the curriculum from unlocking its full potential. Social studies teachers in particular receive fewer training opportunities compared to teachers of other subjects and have fewer opportunities to use digital tools in schools. As a result, the curriculum is not aligned with the reality of most public schools, exacerbating educational inequalities in Jordan.

The EMV has prioritised the development of Jordan's education sector through the "Smart Jordan" growth driver, both in terms of skills and infrastructure. Rigorous improvements are required in this regard, in addition to sustained investment in teachers' professional development to meet educational needs and the EMV's goals. Additionally, the curriculum must engage students more deeply in tolerance and CSE concepts to build greater resilience and social capital, and to meet the General and Specific Framework for Social Studies' ambitious aims.



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Men's Participation in Jordan's Early Childhood Education and Care Sector: Barriers, Opportunities, and Policy Directions



This policy paper is part of the project entitled “Addressing Socio-Economic Challenges in Jordan: Reflections on the Economic Modernisation Vision 2033” implemented jointly by the West Asia-North Africa Institute and the Konrad Adenauer Stiftung (KAS) Jordan Office. The aim of the project is to examine Jordan’s Economic Modernisation Vision (EMV) implementation from fresh angles, highlighting the opportunities and necessary reforms to ensure the vision delivers on its promise for Jordan’s future.

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Abstract

This paper examines men's participation in Jordan's paid care economy, focusing on early childhood education and care (ECEC), a sector historically dominated by women. It investigates the social, cultural, and structural barriers limiting male involvement, including gender norms, parental expectations, limited career pathways, and professionalisation gaps. Using a mixed-methods approach, the research combines literature review, key informant interviews with policymakers and educators, and a survey of public attitudes to provide a comprehensive understanding of factors shaping male engagement. Findings reveal that societal perceptions are the primary obstacle, while professionalisation, improved working conditions, and targeted policies could attract more men to the sector. The paper underscores the potential benefits of increased male participation, including workforce diversification, enhanced service quality, and more equitable distribution of care work. Policy recommendations emphasise training, certification, awareness campaigns, and incentives aligned with Jordan's Economic Modernisation Vision to promote gender-inclusive workforce development.

الملخص

تتناول هذه الورقة البحثية واقع مشاركة الرجال في قطاع الرعاية المدفوعة الأجر في الأردن، مع التركيز خاص على قطاع التعليم والرعاية في مرحلة الطفولة المبكرة، وهو قطاع يهيمن عليه النساء تارخياً. وتسعى الورقة إلى تحليل المعوقات الاجتماعية والثقافية والمهنية التي تحد من انخراط الرجال في هذا المجال، بما في ذلك الأعراف الجندرية السائدة، وتوقعات أولياء الأمور، وحدودية المسارات المهنية، وفجوات التدريب والتطوير المهني.

وتعتمد الدراسة منهجية بحثية مختلطة الأساليب، تجمع بين مراجعة الأدبيات ذات الصلة، وإجراء مقابلات مع خبراء في مجال السياسات العامة والتربية، إلى جانب استطلاع آراء المواطنين، بما يتيح فهماً معمقاً وشاملاً للعوامل المؤثرة في مشاركة الرجال في هذا القطاع. وتشير النتائج إلى أن التصورات المجتمعية السائدة تمثل العائق الأبرز أمام مشاركة الرجال، في حين يُظهر البحث أن تعزيز فرص التطوير المهني، وتحسين ظروف العمل، وتبني سياسات موجهة يمكن أن يسهم في استقطاب عدد أكبر من الرجال.

وتبرز الورقة الفوائد المحتملة لزيادة مشاركة الرجال في قطاع التعليم والرعاية في مرحلة الطفولة المبكرة، بما في ذلك تنويع القوى العاملة، وتحسين جودة الخدمات المقدمة، والمساهمة في توزيع أكثر عدالة لأعمال الرعاية. وتخلص الورقة إلى مجموعة من التوصيات السياساتية التي تركز على التدريب المهني، ونظم الشهادات، وحملات التوعية، وتوفير الحوافز، بما يتماشى مع رؤية التحديث الاقتصادي في الأردن، وبهدف دعم تنمية قوى عاملة شمولية ومراعية لاحتياجات الجنسين.

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1 Introduction

Early Childhood Education and Care (ECEC) refer to the provision of education and care for children prior to entering primary school. It encompasses formal regulated settings (e.g. kindergarten, nursery or preschool, and regulated home-based care), formal unregulated settings (e.g., nannies) and informal care (e.g., by a relative).¹ In Jordan, the early childhood stage includes services provided to children from birth to nine years of age and is divided into three main stages: first, nursery for children from day one to the age of four years; second, the first stage of kindergarten from the age of four to five; and third, the second stage of kindergarten from the age of five until the age of six. Primary education then covers the first three grades.²

Jordan's ECEC sector remains markedly feminised,³ with women occupying nearly all direct care and teaching roles in kindergartens and nurseries, many of whom hold university or community college degrees.⁴ Their concentration in the sector is rooted in longstanding social expectations that caregiving, particularly for young children, is inherently women's work.⁵ Despite this, professional pathways remain uneven, with inconsistent pre-service preparation and limited opportunities for structured career progression.⁶ Moreover, the sector is characterised as undervalued and under-rewarded, reflecting the typical conditions of gender-segregated occupations dominated by women.⁷ Men are largely absent from the sector, and their limited participation is shaped by both cultural perceptions of early childhood spaces as unsuitable for men and concerns around children's safety,⁸ which continue to reinforce the sector's feminised identity.

International frameworks such as the Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989) and the Beijing Platform for Action (1995) promote equitable recognition of care work and shared responsibility between women and men. However, this agenda has gained limited momentum in Jordan's labour market and policy environment.

The underrepresentation of men in ECEC is not only a reflection of traditional gender norms but also a missed opportunity to strengthen professional standards, diversify the workforce, and

¹ OECD. 2025. "Reducing Inequalities by Investing in Early Childhood Education and Care: Starting Strong." Paris: OECD Publishing. <https://doi.org/10.1787/b78f8b25-en>.

² National Team for Early Childhood Development. 2000. "Early Childhood Development Strategy in Jordan." (Amman: NCFA) https://ncfa.org.jo/ebv4.0/root_storage/en/eb_list_page/early_childhood_development_strategy_in_jordan.pdf.

³ Arab Network for Early Childhood (ANECD). No date. "The Second Strategic Research Model on Working Conditions of Early Childhood Educators in Nurseries and Kindergartens." <https://www.anecd.net/article/the-second-strategic-research-model-on-working-conditions-of-early-childhood-educators-in-nurseries-and-kindergartens/>.

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ Ibid.

⁷ Eliana Carranza, Smita Das, and Aphichoke Kotikula. 2018. "Gender-Based Employment Segregation: Understanding Causes and Policy Interventions." World Bank, Washington, DC. <https://documents1.worldbank.org/curated/en/483621554129720460/pdf/Gender-Based-Employment-Segregation-Understanding-Causes-and-Policy-Interventions.pdf>.

⁸ Jamal Ahmad, Eman Al-Zboon, Mustafa Alkhawaldeh, and Amal Khatib. 2017. "Jordanian Mothers' and Female Preschool Teachers' Perceptions of Men Working in Preschools." *The Journal of Men's Studies*, 26(1), 77-91. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1060826517729507>

reshape societal expectations surrounding caregiving. Encouraging greater male participation could contribute to a more gender-balanced sector⁹, challenge stereotypes about men in care roles,¹⁰ and raise the overall status of ECEC occupations.¹¹ Improved gender balance in ECEC would also be beneficial for children, offering them an environment that is more representative of society in general and facilitating exposure to role models for positive forms of masculinity.¹²

The paper seeks to answer the following research questions:

- What are the key societal, cultural, and structural barriers to men's participation in the ECEC sector in Jordan?
- How do stakeholders – including policymakers, regulators, and the public – perceive male involvement in the ECEC sector?
- What strategies and policies could support increased male engagement in the sector in line with Jordan's Economic Modernisation Vision?

This paper thus explores the interplay of structural, regulatory, and cultural factors that maintain gendered labour patterns in the ECEC sector in Jordan. It applies a mixed-methods approach that includes a review of national policies and literature, key informant interviews with policymakers and regulators, and a survey of public attitudes toward men working in early childhood settings. Together, these methods provide a multidimensional understanding of how institutional conditions, workforce pathways, and societal perceptions interact to shape access to the profession and reinforce its feminised character.

The study aligns closely with the objectives and strategic goals of Jordan's Economic Modernisation Vision (EMV), which seeks to expand labour force participation and reduce barriers to women's and men's employment while strengthening human capital.¹³ The EMV recognises the ECEC as a priority sector that is essential for supporting children's development. However, it also notes that the current system remains limited in reach, uneven in quality, and fragmented.¹⁴ The EMV emphasises the need for coordinated improvements, including better data and evidence, strengthened workforce recruitment and training, more robust governance and licensing arrangements, and increased public awareness of the sector's importance.¹⁵

From this perspective, transforming the care economy is both a social and economic priority. A more professionalised ECEC sector, supported by clearer qualification standards, improved working conditions, and greater public recognition, can enhance service quality and create more secure and attractive employment opportunities.¹⁶

⁹ Barnardos. 2023. "ChildLinks Issue 2: Men in Early Childhood Education and Care." <https://knowledge.barnardos.ie/handle/20.500.13085/1244>.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*

¹¹ Margarita Torre. 2018. "Men's Entry and Exit from Female-Dominated Occupations." <http://www.wipsociology.org/2018/10/22/mens-entry-and-exit-from-female-dominated-occupations/>.

¹² Barnardos. 2023. "ChildLinks Issue 2: Men in Early Childhood Education and Care." <https://knowledge.barnardos.ie/handle/20.500.13085/1244>.

¹³ EMV's one of two main pillars "Economic growth – new economic opportunities for all, unleashing our full economic potential", <https://www.jordanvision.jo/img/vision-en.pdf>.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*

¹⁵ *Ibid.*

¹⁶ European Commission. 2020. "Early Childhood Education and Care: How to Recruit, Train, and Motivate Well-Qualified Staff."

At the same time, increasing men's engagement in ECEC may contribute to a more equitable distribution of unpaid domestic work, reduce occupational segregation, and help shift public attitudes about caregiving roles.

Expanding and professionalising ECEC services also has significant implications for job creation in a labour market characterised by high unemployment, particularly among youth. Addressing obstacles to male entry can inform wider discussions on labour regulation and human capital development. Overall, the paper positions greater male participation in ECEC as a potential pathway for advancing gender equality, improving workforce sustainability, and supporting a more inclusive and resilient economic model in Jordan.

Unless otherwise specified, this paper uses “ECEC” to refer exclusively to formal and regulated settings serving children from birth to the age of six years (nursery and preschool education stage), as recognised under the current Jordanian regulatory framework.^{18 17} These settings represent the entry point to the education system and play a critical role in shaping developmental outcomes and future educational trajectories.

2 Jordan's ECEC: Overview of Governance and Organisation

Jordan's ECEC landscape is shaped by a dual regulatory system in which the Ministry of Social Development (MoSD) licenses nurseries for children under four, while the Ministry of Education (MoE) oversees kindergartens in the year preceding primary school.¹⁹ Licensing requirements – for nurseries and kindergartens – define standards for staffing, infrastructure, and child safety, and recent regulations for home-based nurseries seek to expand coverage and bring small-scale provision into the formal system. ECEC services are delivered through a mix of public, private, and civil society providers, though access remains uneven.²⁰ Pre-primary education is not mandated, although the MoE offers KG2 classes for five-year-olds; but they are not sufficient to serve all children.²¹ Public kindergartens and workplace-based nurseries are concentrated in urban centres and government institutions, while the private sector operates the majority of licensed facilities. However, a substantial portion of pre-primary provision remains outside of MoE oversight via unlicensed providers, meaning that official enrolment figures underestimate the extent of service provision.²²

https://www.dge.mec.pt/sites/default/files/EInfancia/documentos/early_childhood_and_care_-_how_to_recruit_train_and_motivate_well-qualified_staff.pdf.

¹⁷ Ministry of Education. “Kindergarten Regulations No. 2 of 1980.” Ministry of Education. Jordan. Translated by Oraib Abu-Raideh. <https://moe.gov.jo/ar/node/15774>.

¹⁸ Ministry of Social Development. No date. “Nursery Bylaw No. 6 of 2024.” Ministry of Social Development. Jordan. <https://tinyurl.com/5cu7r3w6>.

¹⁹ World Bank. 2024. “Formal Childcare in Jordan: Limited Services and Unmet Demand.” Washington, DC: World Bank Group.

<https://documents.worldbank.org/en/publication/documents-reports/documentdetail/099062524142022514>.

²⁰ Ibid.

²¹ Ibid.

²² Ibid.

International partners also contribute to system development, providing technical and financial support for policy, workforce strengthening, and service expansion.

These institutional arrangements are critical to understanding how labour structures and workforce norms have developed. Despite the sector's central importance for children's development and school readiness, working conditions for ECEC staff remain weak. Most educators are young women, many without specialised early childhood training,²³ and the predominance of privately run centres, with limited strategic regulation or investment, results in low wages, limited career progression, and inadequate professional support.²⁴ ²⁵ Public concerns about service quality and professional standards further shape workforce morale and retention.²⁶

Cultural expectations continue to frame caregiving as a feminine domain, discouraging men from entering or remaining in the profession. Barriers include social stigma and limited training pathways.²⁷

In rural areas, gaps in service availability and workforce development opportunities further compound these challenges. Yet scaling up and professionalising ECEC holds significant potential for job creation and for diversifying employment opportunities,²⁸ aligning with national development strategies that seek to enhance labour market participation and reduce gendered occupational segregation.

Understanding how regulatory frameworks, workforce conditions, and social perceptions intersect is therefore essential to assessing both the challenges and the opportunities for expanding male engagement in Jordan's ECEC sector.

²³ Arab Network for Early Childhood (ANECD). No date. "The Second Strategic Research Model on Working Conditions of Early Childhood Educators in Nurseries and Kindergartens." <https://www.anecd.net/article/the-second-strategic-research-model-on-working-conditions-of-early-childhood-educators-in-nurseries-and-kindergartens/>.

²⁴ Ibid.

²⁵ İpek İlkkaracan, Ayşe Aylin Bayar, Luiza Nassif Pires, Tom Masterson, and Ajit Zacharias. 2022. "Investing in Early Childhood Education and Care Services in Jordan: An Assessment of Costs and Returns." https://levyinstitute.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/05/jordan_rpr_5_25.pdf.

²⁶ Sama Consulting. 2024. Early Childhood Care in Jordan: Community Perceptions and Practices. https://samaconsulting.com/wp-content/uploads/2024/10/Sama_Early-Childhood-Care-in-Jordan-Community-Perceptions-Practices_EN-2.pdf.

²⁷ Jamal Ahmad, Eman Al-Zboon, Mustafa Alkhawaldeh, and Amal Khatib. 2017. "Jordanian Mothers' and Female Preschool Teachers' Perceptions of Men Working in Preschools." *The Journal of Men's Studies* 26 (2017): article 106082651772950, https://www.researchgate.net/publication/319630761_Jordanian_Mothers'_and_Female_Preschool_Teachers'_Perceptions_of_Men_Working_in_Preschools.

²⁸ İpek İlkkaracan, Ayşe Aylin Bayar, Luiza Nassif Pires, Tom Masterson, and Ajit Zacharias. 2022. "Investing in Early Childhood Education and Care Services in Jordan: An Assessment of Costs and Returns." https://levyinstitute.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/05/jordan_rpr_5_25.pdf.

3 Professionalising the ECEC Sector

Professionalisation of the ECEC workforce has emerged internationally as a key strategy for improving service quality, elevating workforce status, and generating social and economic benefits.²⁹ Across multiple contexts, the focus has been on formalising qualifications, establishing clear training pathways, creating career progression opportunities, improving working conditions, and providing professional recognition.^{30 31 32} In highly feminised sectors, professionalisation not only strengthens competence and retention but also helps reposition ECEC as a respected occupation rather than an extension of unpaid domestic work.

International evidence highlights several core elements of professionalisation. Standardised pre-service and in-service training, competency frameworks, and certification systems provide clear benchmarks for knowledge and skills while motivating staff through structured career pathways.³³ Improved wages, leadership roles, reasonable child-to-staff ratios, and supportive working conditions enhance job satisfaction and retention.³⁴

Public recognition and professional associations contribute to the social legitimacy of the occupation, fostering broader societal respect for early childhood educators.³⁵ Targeted strategies to recruit underrepresented groups, including men, have been successfully implemented in countries such as Germany, Denmark, and the United Kingdom,³⁶ demonstrating that professionalisation can also be a lever to address gender imbalances.

In Jordan, the professionalisation of ECEC is increasingly recognised as essential to improving quality, attracting and retaining qualified staff, and creating sustainable workforce development.^{37 38} By establishing formal training and certification, defining career pathways, improving working conditions, and enhancing societal recognition, professionalisation can elevate the status of ECEC, diversify the workforce, and contribute to inclusive economic growth. Aligning these efforts with national strategies, such as Jordan's Economic Modernisation Vision, positions professionalisation as both a social and economic priority, ensuring that the sector delivers high-quality education and care while providing meaningful and respected careers for educators.

²⁹ European Commission. 2020. "Early Childhood Education and Care: How to Recruit, Train, and Motivate Well-Qualified Staff." https://www.dge.mec.pt/sites/default/files/EInfancia/documentos/early_childhood_and_care_-_how_to_recruit_train_and_motivate_well-qualified_staff.pdf.

³⁰ Ibid.

³¹ Peter Moss. 2006. "Structures, Understandings and Discourses: Possibilities for Re-Envisioning the Early Childhood Worker." *Contemporary Issues in Early Childhood* 7, no. 1 (2006): 30–45. <https://doi.org/10.2304/ciec.2006.7.1.30>.

³² Susan Irvine, Jo Lunn, Jennifer Sumsion, Elena Jansen, Victoria Sullivan, and Karen Thorpe. 2023. "Professionalization and Professionalism: Quality Improvement in Early Childhood Education and Care (ECEC)." *Early Childhood Education Journal* 52 (2024): 1911–1922, <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10643-023-01531-6>.

³³ European Commission. 2020. "Early Childhood Education and Care: How to Recruit, Train, and Motivate Well-Qualified Staff." https://www.dge.mec.pt/sites/default/files/EInfancia/documentos/early_childhood_and_care_-_how_to_recruit_train_and_motivate_well-qualified_staff.pdf.

³⁴ Ibid.

³⁵ Ibid.

³⁶ Ibid.

³⁷ Queen Rania Teacher Academy (QRTA). No date. "QRTA launches the first phase of the 'Professional Development Program for Kindergarten Teachers.'" Accessed November 26, 2025, <https://qrtta.edu.jo/en/news/820>.

³⁸ International Rescue Committee. 2024. "Jordan Introduces Landmark National Childcare Policy to Empower Families and Boost Economy." Accessed November 26, 2025, <https://www.rescue.org/press-release/jordan-introduces-landmark-national-childcare-policy-empower-families-and-boost>.

4 Methodology

The paper adopted a mixed-methods approach to explore institutional barriers and public attitudes towards male participation in Jordan's ECEC sector. The secondary data included academic studies, national policy frameworks such as the EMV, and international references, including the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD).³⁹ Analysis of secondary data established the contextual foundation of the research, identified existing knowledge gaps, and informed the design of the primary data collection tools.

Primary data included five semi-structured Key Informant Interviews. Participants included ECEC educators and training providers from the University of Jordan (UoJ) and the Vocational Training Corporation (VTC), as well as policy-makers and regulators from the MoE and the MoSD.

These interviews explored institutional and policy environments, cultural expectations, and enabling factors that might support greater male involvement in ECEC. The data were examined through thematic content analysis, which allowed recurring perceptions, patterns, and dynamics to emerge, helping to build a grounded understanding of the systemic realities influencing the workforce.

To complement these insights, a quantitative standardised online survey was conducted to gauge public attitudes toward men working in early childhood settings. The survey reached 158 Jordanian adults –50 men and 107 women– from diverse socioeconomic backgrounds and locations, representing both rural and urban regions across the twelve governorates, with the highest representation of respondents from Amman. It relied on a structured questionnaire designed to assess attitudes toward male caregivers, openness to their involvement in early childhood environments, and the public's awareness of policies and initiatives that support gender inclusion in the sector. The survey results were then considered alongside the qualitative data to identify opportunities and barriers within the policy, institutional, and social environment.

5 Findings: Gendered Norms and Attitudes and the Limited Participation of Men in Jordan's ECEC Sector

Interviews with participants reveal a consistent pattern of very limited male participation in Jordan's ECEC workforce. Participants consistently described a situation in which legal frameworks do not formally prevent men from working in leadership or ownership roles within childcare institutions. However, social and cultural expectations strongly constrain their involvement in direct caregiving. This was attributed to a long-standing association between nurturing and femininity, sensitivities around men working closely with young children, and the perception that nurseries and kindergartens are female-dominated spaces where male presence may be seen as socially inappropriate and “inconvenient”.

³⁹ See Appendix (1) to view national and international legal frameworks on ECEC.

A vocational expert, however, referenced SOS Children's Villages and orphan homes where men are directly engaged in caregiving to children at kindergarten age, citing larger facilities as a factor in recruiting and retaining male caregivers and educators.

The presence of a male manager in the nursery hinders the freedom of movement, and since he spends long hours in the nursery, the [female] caregivers will not have their freedom in moving around or interacting with the children – except in larger nurseries where the administration office is located far away, separate from the nursery.⁴⁰

Interviewees noted that recent regulatory developments, including the 2024 Nursery Bylaw,⁴¹ technically allows men to establish and own childcare facilities. Nevertheless, institutional practice continues to limit their presence in direct caregiving roles. Interviewees described this as an entrenched convention rather than a strictly legal restriction, but one that has practical implications for career pathways and reinforces the sector's gender imbalance.

Across interviews, social attitudes emerged as the most influential barrier. Participants highlighted that parental preferences, community expectations, and persistent gender stereotypes discourage men from studying or working in early childhood education. Higher education institutions were reported to have very low male enrolment in early childhood or primary education tracks, reflecting a wider belief that such roles lack professional status and are more suitable for women.

For men, early childhood is considered something specifically for women, so they do not pursue it. Although there is certainly a group in every society that has the ability to do this work, what prevents them is the culture of the society. Even if a man studies it, he does not work in childcare or in kindergartens; instead, he pursues postgraduate studies to become a university professor, because he considers that path more prestigious and financially beneficial than working in a kindergarten.⁴²

Several interviewees linked this feminisation of the sector to broader challenges, including low pay and weak professional recognition, which together reduce the attractiveness of ECEC careers for both men and women while further reinforcing gender segregation.

It is the parents who steer them in this direction, wanting their daughters to become teachers, as they consider the teaching profession better for a girl than any other job, such as working in a bank or in an organisation. This is because most, or even all, of this sector is female, so she only interacts with women like her within the school or within the kindergarten and nursery.

This is a significant factor.⁴³

⁴⁰ Key Informant (1). Translated by Oraib Abu-Raideh from the original Arabic.

⁴¹ Ministry of Social Development. No date. Nursery Bylaw No. 6 of 2024. <https://tinyurl.com/5cu7r3w6> (English translation unavailable).

⁴² Key Informant (2). Translated by Oraib Abu-Raideh from the original Arabic.

⁴³ Key Informant (2). Translated by Oraib Abu-Raideh from the original Arabic.

Despite these challenges, the interviewees also pointed to areas of opportunity. Several believed that increasing male participation could enrich children's learning experiences by offering diverse social and emotional role models and fostering more inclusive educational environments. Interviewees also referenced international examples, such as Germany, the United States, and Australia, where male educators have been successfully integrated into early childhood settings when supported by clear professional guidelines and strong communication with families. These examples were seen as evidence that male engagement can be normalised without compromising safety or educational quality.

There are no restrictions – neither social, nor religious, nor economic, nor anything. There is absolutely nothing. I'm sure there are many men who love teaching children. They definitely enjoy working with children, and I'm one of them.⁴⁴

Interviewees identified practical steps that could support positive change. Suggestions included professional certification requirements, targeted training and outreach for young men, communication campaigns to address parental concerns, and improving salaries and working conditions to make the profession more appealing overall. Several interviewees felt that increasing the sector's professional status would help shift cultural perceptions and position ECEC as a legitimate and valuable career path for both women and men.

The survey findings indicate that male participation in ECEC in Jordan remains limited, largely due to societal attitudes that frame caregiving as a female-dominated profession. Many respondents expressed a preference for women to work with young children and reported discomfort with male caregivers or teachers, as shown in Figures 1 and 2 below, reflecting the persistent social norm that early childhood care is women's work.

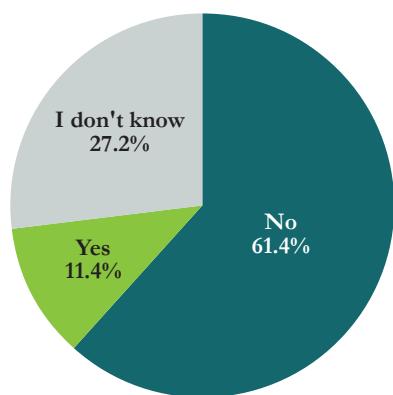


Figure 1. Would you feel comfortable if the caregiver for your child in the nursery were a man?

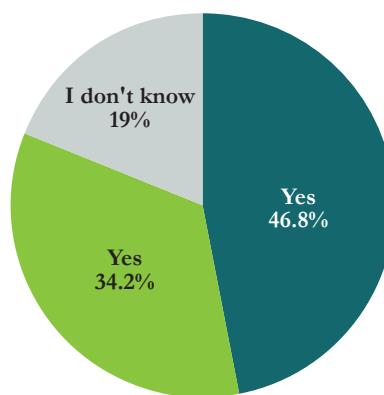
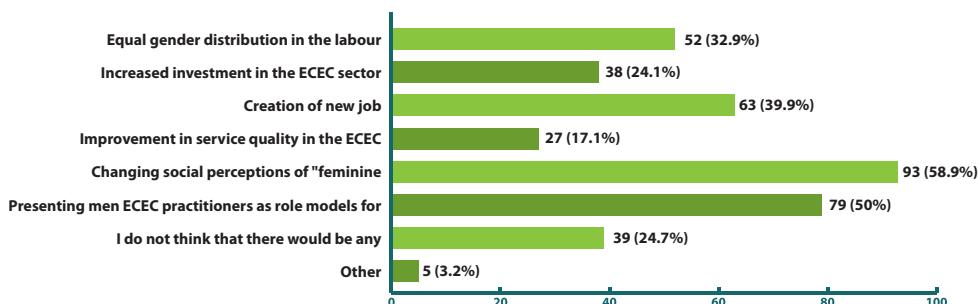


Figure 2. Would you feel comfortable if the caregiver for your child in kindergarten were a man?

⁴⁴ Key Informant (3). Translated by Oraib Abu-Raideh from the original Arabic.

Several barriers were identified as discouraging men from entering the sector. Child safety concerns, traditional social norms, and conventional gender expectations were cited as major obstacles. The lack of clear training pathways for men was also seen to influence career choices. Families' reluctance to accept male educators, particularly in nurseries serving very young children, reinforces these patterns.

Despite these challenges, respondents acknowledged potential benefits of increasing male participation, including exposure to diverse teaching styles and role models, and promoting a more balanced view of caregiving in society. There was notable support for policy interventions, such as targeted training programs, scholarships, and government-backed awareness campaigns designed to normalise male participation in ECEC (Figure 3).



Figures (3). Survey question: "Do you think that increasing the number of men working in early childhood education and care would contribute to: Please select all that apply."

Overall, the findings suggest that societal perceptions are the primary factor limiting male engagement in early childhood care. While structural conditions in the sector play a role, public attitudes strongly shape decisions made by families and potential entrants. The respondents expressed support for policy measures indicates that attitudes may be responsive to well-designed interventions that encourage men's participation.

6 Discussion

The findings highlight that male participation in Jordan's ECEC sector remains minimal, primarily due to societal perceptions that caregiving is a female responsibility. Families' discomfort with male caregivers and teachers underscores the persistence of these norms, particularly in nurseries serving very young children. These societal barriers interact with structural challenges, including a poor reward system and insufficient professional development opportunities for men, reinforcing low male engagement. Such constraints directly undermine the EMV's emphasis on aligning labour supply with market demand and strengthening high-potential sectors such as ECEC under the Smart Jordan priority areas.

Investment and professionalisation emerge as key policy levers to address these challenges. Enhancing wages, improving working conditions, establishing clear career trajectories, and providing targeted training can elevate the status of the ECEC workforce, making it a more attractive and viable career choice for men.

These measures are closely linked to the EMV's strategic goals of accommodating an additional one million men and women in the labour market, increasing income per capita by an average of 3% annually, and improving Jordan's ranking on the Global Competitiveness Index. Respondents also recognised potential benefits of increased male participation, such as diversifying teaching approaches, providing positive role models, and fostering a more balanced societal understanding of caregiving. These findings indicate that well-designed government interventions can shift both perceptions and career choices, aligning with EMV's foundational component of human capital development.

Policy-focused strategies that integrate awareness campaigns, scholarships, and professional development pathways offer the dual advantage of addressing societal norms while strengthening the quality and professionalism of the ECEC workforce. By linking male engagement to professionalisation, Jordan can strengthen a priority Smart Jordan sector, expand its skilled labour force, and advance the EMV's guiding principles of investment, competitiveness, and responsive labour market supply. Such interventions contribute not only to improved outcomes for children and educators, but also to sustained economic resilience and growth aligned with national development ambitions.

7 Policy Recommendations

The study proposes the following policy recommendations to strengthen the professionalisation of the ECEC sector in Jordan.

1) Invest in the professionalisation of the ECEC workforce.

Introduce structured pay scales, career progression criteria, and improved working conditions for all ECEC educators, with incentives to attract male candidates. This elevates the non-prestigious status of ECEC, strengthens the quality of care, and aligns with EMV objectives for human capital investment.

2) Establish professional development and certification programs.

MoSD and MoE, in collaboration with universities and vocational institutes, can develop specialised training tracks and certification programs for men and women entering ECEC. This promotes professionalisation, enhances career pathways, and elevates the status of the ECEC workforce, supporting EMV goals of workforce development and gender inclusion.

3) Implement a national awareness campaign to promote male participation in ECEC.

MoSD and MoE, in partnership with civil society organisations, can design and launch a campaign highlighting professional opportunities, male role models, and career pathways in ECEC. The campaign will address societal perceptions as a barrier to male engagement and positions ECEC as a professional and economically valuable career.

4) Provide scholarships and financial incentives for male candidates entering ECEC.

MoSD and MoE, in partnership with universities and private sector actors, can award scholarships to male students pursuing professional qualifications in ECEC. This reduces financial barriers, signals government investment in professionalising the sector, and encourages men to consider ECEC careers.

5) Develop a monitoring and evaluation system for effective participation and workforce professionalisation.

MoSD and MoE can establish a dedicated task force to collect and analyse data on male and female participation, professional development outcomes, career progression, and public acceptance. This supports evidence-based policymaking, ensuring that investments in professionalisation and male engagement yield measurable outcomes aligned with EMV objectives.

8 Conclusion

Male underrepresentation in Jordan's ECEC sector is largely driven by societal perceptions that frame early childhood care as women's work, reinforced by structural barriers such as limited career pathways and insufficient professional development opportunities. These factors collectively shape the decisions of families, current workers, and potential entrants, perpetuating low male participation.

However, the findings demonstrate that change is feasible through strategic government interventions. By investing in professionalisation (i.e. improving wages, working conditions, prospects for career progression and training) while promoting awareness and offering financial incentives, policymakers can attract more men to the sector. Such measures not only address gender imbalances but also elevate the status of ECEC, improve workforce quality, and align with the EMV's goals of workforce development, social inclusion, and economic modernisation.

Appendix:

National and International Frameworks

Level	Policy / Framework	Key Focus	Relevance to Topic
International	International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD) 1994	Redefine traditional gender roles; involving men in caregiving for gender equality and family wellbeing.	Highlights men's role in caregiving, foundational for shifting norms about men in paid care work.
	Beijing Declaration Platform for Action 1995	Eliminate gender stereotypes; promote men's participation in caregiving and early childhood education (ECEC).	Calls for gender-transformative policies that encourage men's inclusion in care professions
	Dakar Framework for Action: Education for All (2000)	Expand and improve early childhood care and education (ECCE), especially for disadvantaged children. Includes six regional frameworks for action, including for the Arab States.	Emphasises on expanding quality ECCE, highlights the need for a well-trained and diverse ECCE workforce, providing a policy basis for examining and promoting male engagement in the sector.
	Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) – Goal 5 & 8	Promote gender equality (Goal 5) and decent work/economic growth (Goal 8). Includes six regional frameworks for action, including for the Arab States.	Encourages dismantling occupational segregation and improving care work conditions, including men's engagement.
	International Labour Organization (ILO), UN Women Reports	Recognition of care economy as key to economic diversification and social protection; policy guidance.	Advocates for male inclusion in care roles and improvements in labor protections for all care workers.
National	Jordan Economic Modernisation Vision (EMV)	Increase labour market participation; expand and professionalise care economy; promote gender equality.	Identifies care economy as priority sector; supports reducing occupational segregation and boosting male participation in ECCE and care roles.
	Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW)	Eliminate employment discrimination; promote gender equality in all sectors.	Provides legal framework mandating equal access to employment opportunities, including non-traditional roles for men in care.
	National Strategy for Women's Empowerment 2020 – 2025	Challenge gender stereotypes.	Supports policies that indirectly promote women's greater participation in the labour force.
	Jordanian National Strategy for Early Childhood Development (2009)	Create a coordinated system that supports children's holistic development from birth to early school age.	Emphasises professionalising the ECCE, opening the door to a more gender-balanced workforce.

Appendix:

National and International Frameworks

Level	Policy / Framework	Key Focus	Relevance to Topic
National	Jordan Early Childhood Education Executive Plan, 2016-2025	Aims to expand access to quality pre-primary education and strengthen the systems needed to ensure children enter school ready to learn.	Expanding and professionalising pre-primary education creates opportunities to diversify the workforce and encourage greater male participation in ECEC roles.
	Education Strategic Plan 2018 – 2022	Improves access, equity, and quality across all education levels, strengthen the education system, and develop a skilled and professional workforce.	Prioritises early childhood education and workforce development, providing a framework to promote gender diversity and support male participation in the ECEC sector.
	National Strategy for Human Resource Development	Aligning education and training with labour market needs to build a skilled and competitive workforce.	Provides a framework to professionalise ECEC and create opportunities for greater male participation in the sector.



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Embedding Social Justice in Jordan's Economic Modernisation Vision – A Rights-Based Analysis



This policy paper is part of the project entitled “Addressing Socio-Economic Challenges in Jordan: Reflections on the Economic Modernisation Vision 2033” implemented jointly by the West Asia-North Africa Institute and the Konrad Adenauer Stiftung (KAS) Jordan Office. The aim of the project is to examine Jordan’s Economic Modernisation Vision (EMV) implementation from fresh angles, highlighting the opportunities and necessary reforms to ensure the vision delivers on its promise for Jordan’s future.

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Published in 2026 by the WANA Institute and KAS Jordan

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Special thanks to the peers who reviewed this work, particularly Salma Nasser, for their thoughtful feedback and valuable insights.

Abstract

Social justice principles are commonly adopted in the design and implementation of strategies and projects undertaken by humanitarian actors, including NGOs, civil society, and advocacy groups. However, they are rarely incorporated as a primary lens into economic and governmental reform strategies. This paper looks at the Economic Modernisation Vision's implementation plan and argues that incorporating social justice principles as an additional driver would accelerate the achievement of its objectives of economic growth and a better quality of life, while ensuring that Jordan has more inclusive economic growth and participation within its implementation plan. The paper offers a rights-based analysis focusing on three groups, namely women, PWDs, and refugees, to examine their rights and freedoms as protected under human rights instruments.

الملخص

تعتمد مبادئ العدالة الاجتماعية على نطاق واسع في تصميم وتنفيذ الاستراتيجيات والمشاريع التي تضطلع بها الجهات الفاعلة في العمل الإنساني، بما في ذلك المنظمات غير الحكومية، ومنظمات المجتمع المدني، وجماعات المناصرة. غير أنَّ هذه المبادئ نادراً ما تُوظَّف باعتبارها إطاراً تحليلياً ومنهجياً رئيسياً في صياغة وتنفيذ استراتيجيات الإصلاح الاقتصادي والحكومي.

تبحث هذه الورقة في خطة تنفيذ رؤية التحديث الاقتصادي، وتجاذل بأنَّ إدماج مبادئ العدالة الاجتماعية بوصفها محركاً إضافياً من شأنه أن يُسهم في تسريع تحقيق أهداف الرؤية المتعلقة بتعزيز النمو الاقتصادي وتحسين جودة الحياة، مع ضمان نمو أكثر شمولاً وعدالة، وأن تتعزز فرص المشاركة الاقتصادية ضمن إطار تنفيذ الخطة في الأردن. تقدم الورقة تحليلًا قائماً على النهج الحقوقي، يركِّز على ثلاثة فئات محددة، هي النساء، والأشخاص ذوي الإعاقة، واللاجئون، من خلال تقييم مدى تعميم حقوقهم وحرياتهم الأساسية كما تكفلها الاتفاقيات والمعاهدات الدولية لحقوق الإنسان.

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1 Introduction

Jordan has embarked on a long-term national strategy to unleash accelerated economic growth and an improved quality of life for its citizens through the Economic Modernisation Vision (EMV).¹ To achieve this vision, executive programs have been set for implementation over ten years, from 2022 to 2033, where the first implementation phase contained 183 initiatives out of a total of 380 to be implemented by 2033.²

The EMV is built around eight drivers: Invest Jordan, Smart Jordan, Future Services, Destination Jordan, High Value Industries, Sustainable Resources, Vibrant and Green Jordan, all designated to support its two main pillars of economic growth and improved quality of life. This paper argues for the adoption of social justice as an additional driver in the EMV. The paper demonstrates that incorporating social justice principles can reinforce existing drivers for achieving the EMV's goals and ensure inclusive economic growth, thereby enabling meaningful participation by all segments of society while safeguarding their rights and freedoms as protected by IHR instruments. The paper analyses the implementation of the EMV through a social justice lens by examining its 2025–2023 executive program and assessing whether it is inclusive of social justice principles.

Therefore, the central question of this paper is:

- To what extent does Jordan's Economic Modernisation Vision embed social justice principles in its 2025–2022 implementation plan, and how might adopting these principles affect its ability to safeguard the rights and freedoms of its recipients?

Although there is no agreed-upon definition of social justice, theorists broadly agree on core concepts to establish a just society, including fairness, equality of opportunity and access to resources, and the recognition of differences.³ Drawing on John Rawls's and broader social justice scholarship, four main principles to be adopted in this paper are equality, equity, rights, and participation.⁴

Equity entails fair access to goods and services for all, regardless of one's own gender, race, class, or religion.⁵ Equality demands that society recognise injustices that can form barriers for certain groups and deprive them of their ability to reach their full potential.⁶ As for rights, it covers the legally protected rights provided by one's own state, and the moral rights guaranteed by adequate procedure and norms, some of which are universally accepted, like the Universal

¹ Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, Economic Modernisation Vision: Unleashing Potential to Build the Future (Amman: Royal Hashemite Court, January 30, 2022), <https://jordanvision.jo/img/vision-en.pdf>

² Government of Jordan. 2022. Executive Program for the Economic Modernisation Vision. Amman: Government of Jordan. https://www.jordanvision.jo/img/Executive_Program_for_the_Economic_Modernisation_Vision_-_ENGLISH.pdf

³ Mona Khechen, Social Justice: Concepts, Principles, Tools and Challenges, E/ESCWA/SDD/2013/Technical Paper 9 (Beirut: United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia, 2013), <https://www.unescwa.org/sites/default/files/pubs/pdf/social-justice-concepts-principles-tools-challenges-english.pdf>

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ Mona Khechen, Social Justice: Concepts, Principles, Tools and Challenges, E/ESCWA/SDD/2013/Technical Paper 9 (Beirut: United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia, 2013), <https://www.unescwa.org/sites/default/files/pubs/pdf/social-justice-concepts-principles-tools-challenges-english.pdf>

⁶ Mona Khechen, Social Justice: Concepts, Principles, Tools and Challenges, E/ESCWA/SDD/2013/Technical Paper 9 (Beirut: United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia, 2013), <https://www.unescwa.org/sites/default/files/pubs/pdf/social-justice-concepts-principles-tools-challenges-english.pdf>

Declaration of Human Rights.⁷ Finally, participation entails the involvement of people in the decision-making process across the political and social spheres.⁸

A rights-based approach will be adopted to address the main question by examining the established rights arising from IHR instruments with respect to three vulnerable groups: women, people with disabilities, and refugees. The premise of this approach is to demonstrate how the ratification, domestication, and enforcement of IHR instruments into national legislation can lead to an implementation of the EMV that is more inclusive of social justice, which in turn significantly influences stronger economic growth and a better quality of life.⁹

The paper is divided into five sections, including the introduction. The following section outlines the methodology used to analyse the IHR instruments and discusses key limitations. This is followed by the findings, organised into three subsections on women, PWDs, and refugees. The fourth section sets out recommendations for relevant stakeholders, and the final section presents the conclusion.

2 Methodology

The analysis will examine the rights and freedoms of three vulnerable groups: women, PWDs, and refugees based on their relevance to the EMV implementation plans. The EMV places significant emphasis on women as both participants and beneficiaries and outlines several initiatives targeting the needs of PWDs. However, refugees are only mentioned in terms of the pressure the refugee crisis places on Jordan's resources and the need to account for this as a long-term phenomenon during EMV's implementation.

The analysis adopts a rights-based approach, which entails using human rights, as provided and protected by the state, as a benchmark for assessing the inclusion of social justice principles in the EMV's implementation. When referring to human rights, we mean the rights derived from the IHR treaties and conventions.

Consequently, the paper will examine IHR instruments which directly serve the selected vulnerable groups, which are the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), the 1951 Refugee Convention and its 1967 Protocol, and the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) and its optional Protocol.

The paper will explore each instrument by identifying Jordan's status, whether it's a signatory, made any reservations, domesticated IHR instruments into national legislation in legal texts, as well as the enforcement and implementation in practice, which can be deduced through implementation measures, outcomes, and statistics.

⁷ Mona Khechen, Social Justice: Concepts, Principles, Tools and Challenges, E/ESCWA/SDD/2013/Technical Paper.9 (Beirut: United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia, 2013), <https://www.un-escwa.org/sites/default/files/pubs/pdf/social-justice-concepts-principles-tools-challenges-english.pdf>

⁸ Mona Khechen, Social Justice: Concepts, Principles, Tools and Challenges, E/ESCWA/SDD/2013/Technical Paper.9 (Beirut: United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia, 2013), <https://www.un-escwa.org/sites/default/files/pubs/pdf/social-justice-concepts-principles-tools-challenges-english.pdf>

⁹ Mehmet Şahin and Elif Kaya, "Does Human Rights Enhance Economic Growth? Panel Evidence from Developing Countries" Journal of Economic Studies 12, no. 4 (2023): 77–95 https://www.researchgate.net/publication/376871219_Does_Human_Rights_Enhance_Economic_Growth_Panel_Evidence_from_Developing_Countries *Insan_Hakları_Ekonominik_Buyumeyi_Artırır_mi_Gelismekte_Olan_Ulkelerden_Panel_Kanıt*

The paper's scope will be narrowed to three cross-cutting rights that contribute to the EMV pillars of economic growth and quality of life; accessibility to the goods and services as beneficiaries of the EMV, economic participation as participants within the EMV's initiatives, and political participation as part of the inclusion in the decision-making process for current and future executive programs of the EMV.

3 Analysis

Jordan is a signatory to multiple IHR treaties and conventions and has made considerable efforts to ratify and domesticate them in its national legislation. The mechanism of integrating IHR instruments in domestic law is not explicitly stated in the Jordanian constitution; it only showcases that if international treaties affect the rights of the Jordanians, it needs the parliament's approval.¹⁰ Yet the Jordanian court of cassation has established a legal precedence regarding the hierarchy of international treaties in relation to national legislation.¹¹ Accordingly, based on the identified IHR instruments that ensure the social justice principles, each subsection analyses how each group is included in the EMV, presents Jordan's status with respect to the relevant instrument for each group, and highlights the progress and gaps that hinder the EMV's implementation of social justice and its overall effectiveness.

3.1 Women within the EMV: Equality, Accessibility, and Representation

The Jordanian government is working toward the advancement of women's roles in society by placing special emphasis on initiatives that promote women's empowerment and economic participation.¹² Additionally, two key women-related indices have been targeted for improvement within the EMV to enhance Jordan's international standing, which are: the Global Gender Gap Index and the Women, Business and the Law Report.¹³

Jordan signed CEDAW in 1992 and demonstrated its commitment to safeguarding women's rights and freedoms by incorporating it into its national legislation in 2007.¹⁴ This process led to significant progress in reflecting the rights mentioned in CEDAW, from amendments to the penal code and labour law, to the adoption of national strategies and gender mainstreaming policies. However, this progress is not without its shortcomings in the ratification, domestication, and implementation of the convention; these processes still lag behind advances in legislative and policy adoption.

The EMV aligns with CEDAW's trajectory and demonstrates a stated commitment to women's rights and inclusion. However, Jordan's reservations to CEDAW, particularly the reservation on

¹⁰ Mahasen Mohammad Aljaghoub, "The Implementation of Human Rights Treaties by Jordanian National Courts: Practice and Prospects," in *Basic Concepts of Public International Law: Monism and Dualism* (University of Belgrade, Serbia, 2013).

¹¹ Yasar Alhunieti, Dema Matrouk Aloun, and Muhammed Abdulkarim Sharif, "The Enforcement International Treaties of Human Rights in the Jordanian Law," in *Intelligence-Driven Circular Economy: Regeneration Towards Sustainability and Social Responsibility—Volume 2* (Cham: Springer Nature Switzerland, 2025), 601–613.

¹² Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan. Executive Program for the Economic Modernisation Vision. Amman: Government of Jordan, 2023. https://jordanvision.jo/img/Executive_Program_for_the_Economic_Modernisation_Vision_-_ENGLISH.pdf.

¹³ Ibid.

¹⁴ Arab Women Organization. Shadow Report 2021. Amman: Arab Women Organization, 2021. https://awo.org.jo/wp-content/uploads/2022/12/Shadow-Report_2021.pdf.

article (9/2) on nationality rights, coupled with persistent weaknesses in women's economic and political participation, undermine accomplished efforts and limit the extent to which social justice principles are integrated into the EMV's Implementation plan.

Jordan, for example, did not extend nationality for children of Jordanian Women Married to Non-nationals (JWMN), as stipulated in Article (19/2) of CEDAW, which states "States shall grant women equal rights with men with respect to the nationality of their children".¹⁵ The number of children of JWMN is unknown precisely, as there are no recent figures reported by the Jordanian government. Yet the latest number reported by the Ministry of the Interior in 2014 was more than 355,000 non-Jordanian nationals born to JWMN who live in Jordan.^{16 17} This number constitutes three percent of the Jordanian population, a group that is deprived of any national financial aid provided by the Ministry of Social Welfare, and such restrictions compound over time, creating further limitations on access to public healthcare services and enrolment in higher education.¹⁸

In 2014, the Jordanian government sought to address this issue by establishing a specialised privileges program, Mazaya, intended to compensate for rights denied. However, the program has not been fully implemented and, in any case, still restricts children of JWMN from accessing the rights and freedoms available to citizens.¹⁹

Regarding women's economic participation, Jordan has made strides in domesticating CEDAW into the labour law, including provisions for flexible hours, maternity leave, protection against workplace harassment, and the removal of gender-based job restrictions.²⁰ Significant efforts have also been made, according to the annual reports of the EMV's executive summary 2022 -2025, showing initiatives to establish e-stores for women, improve transportation, open daycares, provide soft loans, regulate women's work in the informal sector, and establish an Equity Seal for organisations that adhere to gender equality standards.^{21 22 23}

However, women's economic participation remains significantly lower than men's. The labour force participation rate among women in 2024 was 14 percent compared to 61.2 percent among males, and adult literacy rates among women remain lower than that of men.²⁴

¹⁵ United Nations, Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, adopted December 18, 1979, entered into force September 3, 1981, <https://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/cedaw/text/econvention.htm>.

¹⁶ Lina Ahmad, "Non-Jordanian Children of Jordanian Mothers," WANA Institute Blog, July 2021, <https://wana-institute.org/ar/blog/non-jordanian-children-jordanian-mothers>.

¹⁷ Faten Tawfiq Al-Hashash, The Children of Jordanian Women: Citizens without Real Citizenship, trans. Nathaniel Moses, March 30, 2023, Amman Net, <https://ammannet.net/english/children-jordanian-women-citizens-without-real-citizenship>

¹⁸ Arab Women Organization. Shadow Report 2021. Amman: Arab Women Organization, 2021. https://awo.org.jo/wp-content/uploads/2022/12/Shadow-Report_2021.pdf.

¹⁹ Ibid.

²⁰ Arab Women Organization. Shadow Report 2021. Amman: Arab Women Organization, 2021. https://awo.org.jo/wp-content/uploads/2022/12/Shadow-Report_2021.pdf.

²¹ Prime Ministry Delivery Unit (Jordan). General Performance Report, Q4 2023. Amman: Government of Jordan, 2023. https://pmdu.gov.jo/general_performance_reports/Q4_2023.pdf.

²² Prime Ministry Delivery Unit (Jordan). General Performance Report, Q4 2024. Amman: Government of Jordan, 2024. https://pmdu.gov.jo/general_performance_reports/Q4_2024.pdf.

²³ Prime Ministry Delivery Unit (Jordan), General Performance Report, H1 2025 Amman: Government of Jordan, 2025, https://pmdu.gov.jo/general_performance_reports/H1_2025.pdf.

²⁴ World Bank. Gender Data Portal: Jordan. Washington, DC: World Bank, 2025. Accessed November 16, 2025. <https://genderdata.worldbank.org/en/economies/jordan>.

What is notable about this percentage is that in 1990 the economic participation rate among women was 11.1 percent,²⁵ meaning that in nearly 35 years, it has increased by only 2.9 percent. This gap, according to the global gender gap report, is due not to the lack of legal foundation, but rather the absence of supportive frameworks to implement the legislation.²⁶

A supportive framework would entail the establishment of a safe public transport system and infrastructure, women's representation in decision-making processes through the enhancement of women's political participation, and stricter penalties for violators of existing laws and regulations meant to support women's economic participation. Within this broader framework, public transportation and infrastructure in Jordan constitute one of the main impediments to women's right to work, restricting them to close-by opportunities instead of allowing access to decent jobs further away and thereby reinforcing low-income and informal work.²⁷ Part of the EMV's initiatives is developing a Transport Sector Strategic Plan, which aims to increase access across urban and rural areas while enhancing safety; although it is still early to assess, a notion of scepticism cannot be ignored, since the problem has never been the absence of laws but rather their implementation.

Regarding women's representation in decision-making processes, political participation is vital to accelerating the implementation of CEDAW. While Jordan has made strides through reforms like the Election Law (2022) and Political Parties Law (2022), women remain underrepresented, holding only 19.5% of elected positions in the 2024 parliamentary elections.²⁸ Local councils also show a significant gender gap of 43% from the 2022 elections.²⁹ Furthermore, women encounter psychological violence, misogynistic remarks, and intimidation when engaging in political activities, particularly as candidates or elected representatives.³⁰

Limited women's economic and political participation thus undermines the ability of the EMV to embody social justice principles, since most of its initiatives targeting women will face enforcement limitations and constraints, making slow progress at best.

3.2 PWDs within the EMV: Accessibility, Participation and Representation

Jordan signed and ratified the International Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) in 2007, established the Right of Persons with Disability Law No. 20 of 2017, and made amendments to the constitution in 2022, leading to the establishment of multiple national

²⁵ World Bank. Gender Data Portal: Jordan. Washington, DC: World Bank, 2025. Accessed November 16, 2025. <https://genderdata.worldbank.org/en/economies/jordan>.

²⁶ World Economic Forum. Global Gender Gap Report 2025. Geneva: World Economic Forum, 2025. Accessed November 16, 2025. https://reports.weforum.org/docs/WEF_GGGR_2025.pdf

²⁷ WANA Institute. Public Transport in Jerash. Amman: WANA Institute, 2018. Accessed November 16, 2025. <https://wanainstitute.org/sites/default/files/publications/Public%20Transport%20in%20Jerash.pdf>.

²⁸ UN Women Jordan. Jordan Sets Historic Record for Women in Politics: Legal Reforms and Leadership Training Drive Change. Amman: UN Women, August 2025. <https://jordan.unwomen.org/en/stories/feature-story/2025/08/jordan-sets-historic-record-for-women-in-politics-legal-reforms-and-leadership-training-drive-changsafeguardinge>.

²⁹ Solidarity Is Global Institute – Jordan (SIGI–Jordan). TD MN MS-21. Amman: SIGI–Jordan, 2021. <https://www.sig-jordan.org/en/article/td-mn-ms-21>.

³⁰ Arab Women Organization. Shadow Report 2021. Amman: Arab Women Organization, 2021. https://awo.org.jo/wp-content/uploads/2022/12/Shadow-Report_2021.pdf.

strategies, including the National Policy to Guarantee the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (2030-2020).³¹

At the level of legal and policy frameworks, Jordan has made notable efforts regarding economic participation by establishing a quota for hiring PWDs in both government and non-government sectors.³² The Jordanian Right of Persons with Disability Law requires organisations with more than 25 but less than fifty workers to hire at least one person with disability, and organisations with more than 50 workers to assign four percent of their vacancies for PWDs.³³

However, this quota is not reflected in practice. A shadow report on the implementation of CRPD reported that the employment rate for PWDs within the public sector does not exceed 1 percent and 0.5 percent within the private sector. It further explained how the misuse of “conditional on the nature of the employer’s work” provision is one of the main reasons behind limited economic participation, since it is used as a loophole not to hire PWDs, encouraged by lack of deterrent financial penalties.³⁴

This is often derived from the belief that disability equals incapacity, failing to recognise the working capabilities of many PWDs as long as the environment is inclusive and accessible.³⁵ This raises another concern related to the domestication of CRPD in regard to the enforcement of accessibility measures, which hinders PWDs’ economic participation, access to goods and services, and enjoyment of their rights.

The Jordanian National Building Law of 1993 together with the Building Requirements Code for Persons with Disabilities and the Rights of Persons with Disabilities Law No. 20 of 2017 establishes special provisions for public structures and facilities for both public and private sectors to meet the needs of PWDs and imposes a “fine of no less than one hundred Jordanian dinars and not exceeding three thousand Jordanian dinars” for violations of any approved building code, including the disability-related code.³⁶

However, such measures are yet to be enforced on a wide scale. According to the Greater Amman Municipality, a maximum of six percent of the facilities and structures within hotels, streets, parks and other locations have been modified to fit the needs of PWDs, with only 29 accessible streets in Amman.³⁷ And within workplaces, only a small proportion is barrier free, making the limited labour market even more competitive for PWDs.³⁸

³¹ WANA Institute, Advancing Social Justice through Constitutional Reforms: Fact Sheet (Amman: WANA Institute, 2022) https://wanainstitute.org/sites/default/files/fact_sheets/Advancing%20Social%20Justice%20through%20Constitutional%20Reforms-WANA.pdf.

³² Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung, Country Reports with a Difference: International Comparison of Accessibility. Berlin: Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung, 2025. Accessed November 16, 2025. <https://www.kas.de/documents/d/guest/country-reports-with-a-difference>.

³³ The Jordanian Right of Persons with Disability Law No. 20 of 2017, Article 25/e.

³⁴ Arab Organization of Persons with Disabilities and Partners, Jordan Shadow Report for the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) (Amman, 2017), https://haqqi.s3.eu-north-1.amazonaws.com/2017-04/JordanShadowReportforCRPD_En_2017.pdf.

³⁵ Higher Council for the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, Good Practice in Disability-Inclusive Social Security (Amman: HCD, 2023), https://www.hcd.gov.jo/EBV4.0/Root_Storage/EN/Good_Practice_in_Disability-Inclusive_Social_Security.docx.

³⁶ Arab Organization of Persons with Disabilities and Partners, Jordan Shadow Report for the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) (Amman, 2017), https://haqqi.s3.eu-north-1.amazonaws.com/2017-04/JordanShadowReportforCRPD_En_2017.pdf.

³⁷ Alkhatib, Enas. Overview of the Challenges Facing the Realisation of Accessibility for Persons with Disabilities in Jordan. Amman: WANA Institute, 2022. https://wanainstitute.org/sites/default/files/publications/Overview%20of%20the%20Challenges%20Facing%20the%20Realisation%20of%20Accessibility%20for%20Persons%20with%20Disabilities%20in%20Jordan%20Enas%20Alkhatib_0.pdf.

³⁸ Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung, Country Reports with a Difference. Berlin: Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung, 2025. <https://www.kas.de/documents/d/guest/country-reports-with-a-difference>.

Jordan's commitment to implement the CRDP is reflected in the inclusion of PWDs through EMV initiatives centred on early intervention, childhood, and education, yet with limited efforts directed to PWDs in adulthood and their productive years.³⁹ This can also be attributed to their limited political representation and participation. For instance, within the last election cycle, less than a third of the parties addressed PWDs issues in their platforms, only six candidates out of 1,634 were PWDs during the 2024 parliamentary elections, and none won a seat in the House of Representatives, despite incentives granting parties additional state funding if a PWD candidate from their list wins.⁴⁰

Jordan's efforts are commendable, but given the weak economic participation and political representation of PWDs, Jordan's domestication of CRPD must reflect a long-term plan that could unlock their potential beyond childhood and early intervention and ensure stronger enforcement of existing legislation for the genuine domestication of the CRPD, particularly in the areas of economic and political participation, accessibility, and inclusive mobility. These measures would make the implementation of the EMV more reflective of social justice principles, by providing PWDs with the mechanism required to be part of the EMV initiatives as participants, beneficiaries on a bigger scale, and representatives for future executive programs.

3.3 Refugees within the EMV: Participation and Representation

Jordan is the second largest refugee-hosting country per capita, primarily hosting Syrians and Palestinians, but also Iraqis, Yemini, Sudanese, Libyans and Somalis.⁴¹ As such, refugees are only highlighted for their impact on Jordan despite not being direct EMV beneficiaries. The EMV's macroeconomic framework (2025–2023) notes the financial strain refugees place on Jordan's resources and recognises their presence as a long-term phenomenon in national strategy implementation⁴². This underscores the need for a strong legal foundation for refugees to support effective EMV implementation with fewer economic constraints and greater inclusion of social justice principles.

Jordan is not a signatory to the 1951 Refugee Convention or its Optional Protocol and has no domestic law regulating refugee rights. Instead, refugee protection is addressed through ad-hoc policies and international agreements including the Jordan Response Plan (JRP), with responsibilities delegated to international organisations, mainly UNHCR, under a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU), and UNRWA.⁴³

Yet the lack of accession to the convention creates challenges not addressed by existing frameworks. In relation to the EMV in specific, economic participation of refugees is the most important to tackle as a means of reducing the economic constraints by promoting self-reliance, reducing informal labour, and increasing refugees' contribution to the Jordanian economy.

³⁹ Prime Ministry Delivery Unit (Jordan), General Performance Report, H1 2025 Amman: Government of Jordan, 2025, https://pmdu.gov.jo/general_performance_reports/H1_2025.pdf.

⁴⁰ Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung, Country Reports with a Difference. Berlin: Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung, 2025. <https://www.kas.de/documents/d/guest/country-reports-with-a-difference>.

⁴¹ United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), Jordan Country Portal, accessed December 8, 2025, <https://data.unhcr.org/en/country/jor>.

⁴² Government of Jordan. Executive Program for the Economic Modernisation Vision. Amman: Government of Jordan, 2022. https://jordanvision.jo/img/Executive_Program_for_the_Economic_Modernisation_Vision_-_ENGLISH.pdf.

⁴³ cite

While Jordan has been committed to its refugee-hosting role and hospitality towards refugees, the status quo on refugees' right to work is resembled in a complex, often lengthy process, involving sectoral restrictions, multiple approvals from different entities, costly permits and documentation that refugees may not readily have upon their settlement in a host country.

The absence of an overarching legal foundation has created different frameworks to manage Syrian and non-Syrian refugees regarding the right to work. This is due to the recency and scale of their presence, as %91.9 of Jordan's 474,807 registered refugees are Syrian.⁴⁴

For instance, non-Syrian refugees are treated as foreigners under the Residency and Foreigners Affairs Law, requiring a residence permit, and under the Labour Law must obtain a work permit approved by the Ministry of Labour, they are excluded from closed sectors reserved for Jordanians subject to whether a Jordanian worker could fill the position.⁴⁵ Such a status constrains them to fall under the same sector-based quota system set by the government allowing a pre-set number of foreign workers to be employed.⁴⁶

For Syrian refugees, the Jordan Compact 2016 and the MOU signed with UNHCR provided greater access to the labour market. They are not required to have a residence permit if they hold an MOI card, only to attain a work permit, and Jordan introduced flexible work permits, not tying them to one sponsor, and made social security a condition to attain those permits to better protect them.⁴⁷

However, Syrian refugees are still tied to the restricted list of professions, the flexible permits are highly costly with a permit fee of 425 JOD and a two-month social security subscription (113 JOD) and it's valid for one year.⁴⁸ This has led to the exclusion of refugees from highly skilled and semi-skilled employment, which leads them to informal work or unemployment.⁴⁹ A recent press release by NRC reports that 93 percent of working refugees do not have work permits.⁵⁰

A Working Group on the latest Universal Periodic Review report describes the situation of refugees and migrants in Jordan, stating that migrant workers face significant barriers to employment and legal protection. Workers endure poor conditions, long hours, low wages, exploitation, discrimination, and exclusion from social services.⁵¹

⁴⁴ United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR). Jordan Country Portal. Geneva: UNHCR, 2025. <https://data.unhcr.org/en/country/jor>.

⁴⁵ Tamkeen for Legal Aid and Human Rights. The Right to Work for Non-Syrian Refugees in Jordan. Amman: Tamkeen, December 2024. <https://tamkeen-jo.org/sites/default/files/2024-12/The-right-to-work-for-non-Syrian-refugees-in-Jordan.pdf>.

⁴⁶ Tamkeen for Legal Aid and Human Rights. The Right to Work for Non-Syrian Refugees in Jordan. Amman: Tamkeen, December 2024. <https://tamkeen-jo.org/sites/default/files/2024-12/The-right-to-work-for-non-Syrian-refugees-in-Jordan.pdf>.

⁴⁷ Tamkeen for Legal Aid and Human Rights. Syrian Refugees and Social Security in Jordan. Amman: Tamkeen, December 2024. <https://tamkeen-jo.org/sites/default/files/2024-12/Syrian-refugees-and-Social-Security-in-Jordan.pdf>.

⁴⁸ UNHCR Jordan, "Work Permit FAQs for Syrian Refugees in Jordan," UNHCR Jordan Help. <https://help.unhcr.org/jordan/en/frequently-asked-questions-unhcr/work-permit-syrian-faqs/>.

⁴⁹ Arab Women Organization of Jordan. Shadow Report on the Status of Jordanian Women 2021. Amman: AWO, 2022. https://awo.org.jo/wp-content/uploads/2022/12/Shadow-Report_2021.pdf

⁵⁰ Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC). "Jordan: Syrian Refugees Face Mounting Obstacles to Return Home." Norwegian Refugee Council, September 2025. <https://www.nrc.no/news/2025/september/jordan-syrian-refugees-face-mounting-obstacles-to-return-home>.

⁵¹ United Nations Human Rights Council. National Report: Jordan, Working Group on the Universal Periodic Review, Forty-Fifth Session. Geneva: United Nations, 2025. <https://undocs.org/en/A/HRC/WG.6/45/JOR/2>.

The Refugee Convention is considered a rights-based instrument which holds fundamental principles built on the concepts of non-discrimination, non-penalisation and non-refoulement, its provisions for economic participation and the right to work are highlighted under articles 19-17, governing the wage-earning employment, self-employment, and liberal professions.⁵²

Accessing to the Convention would establish a robust legal framework that safeguards the rights and freedoms of refugees in Jordan and applies equally to all groups. It would lessen the burden of economic strain by regulating their economic participation and turning the principle of shared responsibility into a legal obligation on the international community rather than mere cooperation. It would also improve Jordan's stance internationally as a signatory party and provide more credibility for the assistance of donor countries and the international community in general, all of which would support better, more inclusive implementation of the EMV, making refugees participants and beneficiaries rather than an impediment to its implementation.

4 Recommendations

Through the rights-based approach, the paper established that safeguarding the rights and freedoms enshrined in IHR instruments is a clear pathway to embedding social justice principles in the EMV and its implementation plan. The paper recommends the following policy recommendations for each IHR instrument.

For CEDAW:

- Withdraw Jordan's reservation on Article (2/19) of CEDAW on nationality rights, and, accordingly, amend Article (3/3) of the Jordanian nationality law to grant children of JWMN the same nationality rights as those with Jordanian fathers.
- Ensure that the children of JWMN are included as direct beneficiaries and participants in the EMV initiatives.
- Enhance women's economic and political participation by introducing a supportive framework for their inclusion, including safe and affordable public transportation, strict measures to deal with misogynistic speech and intimidation against women in politics, and introduce labour inspection units with a gender mandate to monitor compliance with women-related provisions in the Labour Law and CEDAW compliance.

For the CRPD:

- Ratify the CRPD's Optional Protocol to ensure that individuals can bring complaints of rights violations or lack of CRPD's enforcement directly to the United Nations Committee.
- Strengthen the enforcement of PWD quotas for political and economic participation by imposing stricter penalties on violators of accessibility measures for buildings.
- Include initiatives within the EMV that direct the international donor community's attention to PWD's rights and needs to accelerate progress regarding accessibility measures.
- Revise the phrase "conditional on the nature of the employer's work" from Article 25 of Law on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities No. 20 of 2017, to make it more precise so that it is not used as a loophole not to hire PWDs. Effective assessment of incapacity should be included within the article to consider the broader environment of the workplace.

⁵² The 1951 Refugee convention and its protocol, articles 17,18,19.

For the 1951 Refugee Convention and its Protocol:

- Accede to the 1951 Refugee Convention and its Protocol and domesticate it into an overarching national legislation which applies to all refugees and safeguards their rights and freedoms equally.
- Reassess the list of professions reserved for Jordanians and identify areas where the inclusion of refugee employment could support EMV's objectives to reduce economic strain.

5 Conclusion

In the implementation of reform strategies, social justice can be seen as a guiding framework that ensures the success of each phase by providing a holistic approach grounded in four main principles: equality, equity, participation, and human rights. These four pillars function as a magnifying lens through which any reform strategy is examined, revealing the issues that must be addressed for each phase to succeed and to realise its full potential.

Analysing the EMV through these principles showed that the social justice lens has been neglected in the implementation of the EMV, showcasing how some groups are directly affected and thus excluded, both as participants in its initiatives or as beneficiaries, particularly children of JWMN. Other Groups are constrained by accessibility barriers and a lack of representation affecting their economic participation, namely, PWDs and women. As well as groups who are strictly seen as no more than an economic constraint to the implementation of the EMV, namely, refugees.

In Conclusion, while the EMV holds great potential in achieving economic growth and a better quality of life for its citizens, conformity with IHR is essential to embed social justice principles within its implementation and safeguard the rights and freedoms of the aforementioned vulnerable groups. It will provide a higher satisfaction with quality of life, global recognition by improving Jordan's rank on many international indices, and improved prosperity by increasing economic and political participation, all of which will ensure achieving the desired objectives of EMV more effectively with a dimension of social justice implied.



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Capacity for Change: Strategic Pathways to Scale Climate-Smart Agriculture in Jordan



This policy paper is part of the project entitled “Addressing Socio-Economic Challenges in Jordan: Reflections on the Economic Modernisation Vision 2033” implemented jointly by the West Asia-North Africa Institute and the Konrad Adenauer Stiftung (KAS) Jordan Office. The aim of the project is to examine Jordan’s Economic Modernisation Vision (EMV) implementation from fresh angles, highlighting the opportunities and necessary reforms to ensure the vision delivers on its promise for Jordan’s future.

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Published in 2026 by the WANA Institute and KAS Jordan
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Photo Credit: Fahroni Photography/ Shutterstock

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Abstract

Climate-Smart Agriculture (CSA) is an integrated framework for building resilience in agricultural system, promoting environmental sustainability, and addressing pressing challenges of food security and water scarcity. The widespread adoption of CSA in Jordan faces significant barriers, including financial constraints and inadequate capacity development.

The paper investigates capacity development needs to effectively promote and scale CSA, supporting Jordan's Economic Modernisation Vision objectives. The paper identifies key capacity gaps and outlines strategic pathways for advancing CSA. It argues that a successful national transition depends on targeted strategies across three interrelated levels: Policy, Finance, and Knowledge and Capacity Building. Key findings indicate that effective CSA implementation requires creating coherent policy incentives, strengthening knowledge-sharing systems - including establishment of actionable climate information services - and developing tailored financial instruments. The paper concludes with recommendations designed to strengthen the enabling environment and accelerate the transition toward a more productive, resilient, and climate-smart agricultural sector.

الملخص

الزراعة الذكية مناخياً هي إطار عمل متكامل لبناء المرونة في النظم الزراعية، وتعزيز الاستدامة البيئية، ومعالجة التحديات الملحة للأمن الغذائي وندرة المياه. يواجه التبني الواسع للزراعة الذكية مناخياً في الأردن عوائق كبيرة، أبرزها العوائق المالية وتنمية القدرات.

تبحث هذه الورقة في احتياجات تنمية القدرات الالزامية للتوسيع في نطاق الزراعة الذكية مناخياً، ودعم أهداف رؤية التحديث الاقتصادي في الأردن. كما تستعرض هذه الورقة الفجوات الرئيسية في القدرات الحالية، وتقترح مسارات استراتيجية للنهوض بالزراعة الذكية مناخياً. مُبرزةً أن النجاح في الانتقال الوطني نحو الزراعة الذكية مناخياً رهينٌ بتكميل السياسات والتمويل وبناء المعرفة والقدرات. وتنظر النتائج أن التنفيذ الفعال للزراعة الذكية مناخياً يتطلب وضع سياسات داعمة وحوافز محفزة، وتعزيز أنظمة تبادل المعرفة - بما في ذلك تطوير خدمات معلومات مناخية قابلة للتطبيق - وإتاحة برامج مالية مصممة خصيصاً لهذا الغرض. وفي ضوء ذلك، تقدم الورقة جملةً من التوصيات الهادفة إلى تعزيز البيئة التمكينية وتسريع الانتقال نحو قطاع زراعي أكثر إنتاجية ومرنة وذكي مناخياً.

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1 Introduction

Jordan's agricultural sector faces profound and interconnected challenges that are critical to the nation's food security and economic stability. As a resource-poor, food-deficit country with extreme water scarcity, Jordan's agricultural challenges are significantly exacerbated by climate change. The sector, which contributes 4.9 percent to the country's Gross Domestic Product (GDP)¹ and employs around 5.5 percent of its workforce,² is increasingly threatened by rising temperatures, erratic rainfall, and a higher incidence of droughts and heatwaves. These environmental pressures intensify long-standing structural constraints, such as limited arable land, and reinforce a stark import dependency, with nearly 98 percent of Jordan's consumable food items being imported³ at an annual cost of approximately 3 billion USD.⁴ Despite growth in high-value exports like fruits and vegetables, the country's grain self-sufficiency remains critically low, with wheat and barley reserves covering less than a year of domestic consumption.⁵

The Jordan Economic Modernisation Vision (EMV) 2023-2033 prioritises a transition toward a more resilient and efficient agricultural sector, emphasising sustainable resource management and climate-smart innovation. Achieving this transformation necessitates a paradigm shift toward Climate-Smart Agriculture (CSA), an integrated approach designed to enhance climate resilience, food security, and environmental sustainability concurrently. However, the effective scaling of CSA is constrained by significant capacity gaps, including limited financial resources, insufficient technical support, inadequate knowledge dissemination, and institutional coordination weaknesses. This paper, therefore, identifies and analyses the specific capacity development prerequisites and strategic action points required to catalyse this shift, structured across three levels: 1) Policy Level, encompassing cross-ministerial coordination, regulatory frameworks, and the creation of an enabling environment; 2) Finance Level, examining mechanisms, incentives, and instruments to de-risk and fund CSA transitions; and 3) Knowledge and Capacity Building, focusing on strengthening extension services, climate information systems, and the skills of all actors. The paper is guided by the following research question:

- What are the critical capacity development needs for scaling Climate-Smart Agriculture in ways to enhance Jordan's food security and significantly reduce its agricultural water footprint?

1.1 Climate-Smart Agriculture Framework

CSA is a conceptual framework for transforming and supporting existing agricultural systems under climatic stress. First conceptualised by the Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) in 2010, it was developed with a strong focus on ensuring food security under current and future climatic conditions.⁶

¹ Jordan's Economic Modernisation Vision 2023-2025, <https://www.jordanvision.jo/>, page 37.

² Jordan's Economic Modernisation Vision 2023-2025, <https://www.jordanvision.jo/>, page 37.

³ International Trade Administration, "Jordan - Agricultural Sectors," Country Commercial Guides, last modified January 17, 2024, <https://www.trade.gov/country-commercial-guides/jordan-agricultural-sectors>.

⁴ A January 2024 report indicated that Jordan imported \$2.8 billion in consumer-oriented products in 2021. While a final figure for the full 2024 calendar year has not yet been published, the \$2.8 billion figure remains the most commonly cited benchmark for the annual cost of food imports.

⁵ Jordan's Economic Modernisation Vision, first quarter of 2025 performance report.

⁶ Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, 2010. "Climate-Smart" Agriculture: Policies, Practices and Financing for Food Security, Adaptation and Mitigation.

CSA explicitly aims for three core, synergistic objectives, which distinguish it from singularly focused agricultural interventions:⁷

1. **Productivity and food security:** sustainably increasing yields and improving farmers' incomes, food security, and overall development, while ensuring natural resource conservation.
2. **Adaptation and resilience:** building and enhancing the resilience of agricultural systems to withstand climate-related shocks and stresses.
3. **Mitigation:** reducing greenhouse gases (GHGs) emissions from the agriculture sector to minimise its environmental footprint.

A core tenet of CSA is its explicit consideration of climatic risks that are occurring with greater intensity and frequency. This necessitates proactive transitions in agricultural technologies and approaches to improve the livelihoods and to prevent the loss of hard-won developmental gains. The framework advocates for the concurrent consideration of its three objectives across spatial scales—from farm to landscape—and across governance levels, from local to global, with implementation pathways tailored to specific national and local contexts and priorities.⁸

This holistic approach is particularly pertinent to Jordan's condition, where the severe constraints of water scarcity, high import dependency, and extreme vulnerability to climate change require solutions that simultaneously address productivity, adaptation, and resource efficiency. Consequently, CSA is not a standardised package of technologies but an integrated on-farm management with off-farm interventions, supported by aligned policies, institutional arrangements, and strategic investments.⁹

1.2 CSA Adoption Landscape in Jordan

The current status of CSA in Jordan is characterised by a clear strategic recognition but coupled with fragmented implementation and significant on-the-ground barriers. The Jordanian government has integrated CSA as a priority within key policy frameworks, including the dedicated Jordan Climate-Smart Agriculture Action Plan (2021),¹⁰ the National Food Security Strategy (2021-2030),¹¹ and the Green Growth National Action Plan (2021-2025).¹² This reflects a crucial political consensus that CSA is a core component to the country's climate adaptation and economic resilience agenda, particularly given that the agricultural sector is the most climate-vulnerable of all sectors in the country.¹³

⁷ Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, 2013. Climate-Smart Agriculture Sourcebook.

⁸ FAO, 2021. Synergies and trade-offs in climate-smart agriculture – An approach to systematic assessment. Rome. <https://doi.org/10.4060/cb5243en>.

⁹ FAO, 2013. Climate-Smart Agriculture Sourcebook.

¹⁰ World Bank. Jordan - Climate-Smart Agriculture Action Plan: Investment Opportunities in the Agriculture Sector's Transition to a Climate Resilient Growth Path (English). Washington, D.C.: World Bank Group. <http://documents.worldbank.org/curated/en/099105005092240188>.

¹¹ United Nations in Jordan, 2022. The National Food Security Strategy 2021 - 2030. <https://jordan.un.org/en/201684-national-food-security-strategy-2021-2030>.

¹² Ministry of Environment, "Agriculture Sector Green Growth National Action Plan 2021-2025," 2020. Amman, The Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan.

¹³ Ahmad Abdel-Fattah and Masnat Al Hiary, 2023. "A Participatory Multicriteria Decision Analysis of the Adaptive Capacity-Building Needs of Jordan's Agribusiness Actors Discloses the Indirect Needs Downstream the Value Chain as 'Post-Requisites' to the Direct Upstream Needs." *Frontiers in Sustainable Food Systems*, Vol. 6. <https://doi.org/10.3389/fsufs.2022.1026432>.

However, this recognition has not yet translated into a coherent, cross-sectoral operational framework. The existence of a standalone CSA action plan, without an overarching strategy to harmonize actions across the water, agriculture, energy, environment, and finance ministries, exemplifies a critical gap between policy endorsement and integrated execution.

At the farm level, the adoption of integrated CSA practices remains limited and inconsistent. Farmers, particularly smallholders who are the backbone of Jordan's agricultural sector, face significant barriers including the high initial cost of technology, insufficient technical support, lack of localised knowledge transfer, and insufficient access to modern technologies. These constraints, combined with limited stakeholder coordination, inhibit the transition from traditional practices to climate-resilient farming methods,¹⁴ and have hindered the widespread adoption of CSA practices. Furthermore, the implementation has been heavily reliant on international project funding, creating a dependency that challenges long-term sustainability and nationally-driven progress.

The result is a dual reality: while a strong strategic vision for CSA exists at the national level, its translation into effective, widespread field-level implementation remains limited.¹⁵ To bridge this gap, this paper provides an analysis of the specific capacity development needs required to translate policy into practice, examining the critical constraints and opportunities across the enabling policy environment, organisational and institutional, and individual dimensions.

2 Methodology

The research employed a qualitative methodology to investigate the capacity development prerequisites for promoting and scaling CSA in Jordan. The study was grounded in a two-stage data collection process: a comprehensive desk review of secondary data followed by the collection of primary data through Key Informant Interviews (KIIIs).

The desk review involved a systematic examination of national policy and strategies documents, including the Jordan Climate-Smart Agriculture Action Plan (2021), the National Food Security Strategy, and the Economic Modernisation Vision (2023-2033), alongside academic literature, and project reports from key national and international organisations. This initial analysis mapped the existing CSA policy and institutional landscape, identified proven and suitable technologies for Jordan's agro-ecological zones, and analysed systemic barriers to adoption, thereby providing the critical baseline for informing the subsequent primary data collection.

Primary data was collected through eight semi-structured KIIIs with representative from a diverse range of stakeholders, including government entities, farmers, Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs), research institutions, and the private sector.¹⁶

¹⁴ Anber Abraheem Shlash Mohammad, Suleiman Mohammad, Khaleel Ibrahim Al- Daoud, Badrea Al Oraini, Asokan Vasudevan, and Zhidong Feng, 2025. Building Resilience in Jordan's Agriculture: Harnessing Climate Smart Practices and Predictive Models to Combat Climatic Variability. *Research on World Agricultural Economy*. 6(2): 171–191. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.36956/rwae.v6i2.1628>.

¹⁵ Frank Van Weert, Marijn Gulpén, and Gert-Jan Wilbers, 2022. Climate-Smart Agriculture in Egypt and Jordan; Building blocks for a vision to create a climate-resilient agricultural sector. *Wageningen, Wageningen Environmental Research, Report 3218*.

¹⁶ The majority of KIIIs were conducted in-person. In circumstances where face-to-face interviews were not possible, the author conducted online and phone call interview. Before each interview started, informed consent was obtained from all participants using an approved consent form.

The stakeholder selection was based on three main criteria: 1) their institutional authority and mandate; 2) their direct, practical experience and technical knowledge in implementing CSA technologies; and 3) their demonstrated influence on adoption and scaling through funding, technical assistance, or market access.

The data analysis integrated findings from both data streams. The secondary data synthesis provided the contextual framework, while the qualitative data from the KIIs was subjected to thematic analysis to identify points of consensus and divergence regarding effective interventions, implementation barriers, and strategic pathways across the three interdependent levels critical for CSA scaling in Jordan: Policy; Finance; and Knowledge and Capacity Building. This triangulation of secondary and primary evidence enabled the identification of specific constraints within each strategic level and the formulation of evidence-based, context-specific policy recommendations. The following sections of this paper details these findings and the resulting recommendations.

3 Analysis and Findings: Challenges and Gaps in CSA Implementation

Jordan has made commendable strides in recognising the importance of sustainable agricultural practices, with several initiatives already laying the groundwork for a more resilient sector. However, the analysis-informed by secondary data, KIIs, and field visits-reveals that significant gaps remain, particularly in the widespread adoption of CSA. The potential transformation is currently hindered by a deficit in capacity development across three levels: policy, finance, and knowledge and capacity building. This section examines these areas to strengthen existing frameworks and achieve the scale necessary to effectively counter water scarcity and climate-driven pressures.

3.1 At the Policy Level

Jordan's policy landscape provides a robust and strategic foundation for sustainable agricultural development. To further catalyse the widespread adoption and scaling of CSA, the paper identified critical policy areas that require further enhancement to bridge the gap between strategic planning and on-the-ground implementation:

- Technical and Operational Scope of the CSA Action Plan

The existing World Bank-supported CSA action plan provides a foundational framework for integrating climate resilience into the agricultural sector. It prioritises six specific CSA investment packages, two for each of Jordan's primary agro-ecological zones: irrigated, rainfed, and agropastoral areas. This zonal prioritisation is a significant step toward targeted intervention. To build on this, the next step involves enriching these broad packages with more technical depth and operational guidance. For example, the plan identifies "Expanding and upgrading protected vegetable production in the Jordan Valley" as a priority, it does not yet offer the detailed, localised implementation roadmaps required to address the different water requirements and soil conditions found between the Northern and Southern Jordan Valley. This approach within the zones risks overlooking the unique vulnerabilities of smallholder farmers who may lack the capital to adopt the high-tech components of these prioritised packages. Furthermore, augmenting the plan with a robust, data-driven monitoring framework to track real-time adaptation outcomes at the farm level, enabling continuous learning and adaptive management.

Without refining these broad packages into context-specific toolkits that account for localised micro-climates and socio-economic constraints, the transition from strategic prioritisation to widespread on-the-ground adoption remains a significant challenge for the Ministry of Agriculture and its partners.

- Investment Incentives and Regulatory Frameworks

The Economic Modernisation Vision, through both its Phase I and Phase II executive programs, places a strong emphasis on fostering smart-innovation and creating a fertile environment for private sector involvement in national agricultural development. This strategic orientation is designed to establish an "attractive" and competitive investment landscape within Jordan, signalling a clear high-level commitment to sector-wide transformation. To fully realise this vision, there is an opportunity to develop more specific de-risking mechanisms and Public-Private Partnership (PPP) models necessary for empowering private sector investors and attracting large-scale capital to CSA. Currently, the absence of standard operating procedures for investing in smart technologies, resulting difficult administrative processes.¹⁷ Clarifying and simplifying regulations for emerging agri-tech and climate-resilient infrastructure would reduce perceived risks and bolster the continuity of the investment process. As well as developing a targeted financial incentive, such as targeted tax breaks or green subsidies, would further enhance the attractiveness of CSA investments.

3.2 At the Finance Level

The Ministry of Agriculture, primarily through the Agricultural Credit Corporation, provides farmers with loans and funds. Currently, farmers use this capital to finance expansions or improvements within conventional, resource-intensive farming systems-practices they know and trust for immediate returns.^{18 19}

The challenge, therefore, is the misalignment between how existing capital is currently used and the national priority of climate resilience shift to CSA. This presents a clear opportunity: to evolve the current financial ecosystem by introducing purpose-built instruments that make CSA investments more viable for farmers. Building directly on the existing loan infrastructure, for example, could involve creating targeted "green loans" with favorable terms for verified CSA practices. Integrating new tools like index-based climate insurance would protect investments against droughts or extreme heat.²⁰ Additionally, strategically conditioning a portion of existing subsidies to reward proven gains in water or energy efficiency could steer financial flows toward resilience.²¹ Layering these tailored instruments onto the existing financial foundation would help bridge the gap between current usage and the strategic need to fund a sector-wide transition.

¹⁷ Interview with a private sector representative in the climate-smart agricultural technologies, interview by the author, via online video meeting, November 6, 2025.

¹⁸ Interview with an agricultural expert, interview by the author, via online video meeting, November 6, 2025.

¹⁹ Interview with local farmers, Mafraq Governorate, interview by the author, Mafraq, Jordan, November 3, 2025.

²⁰ Interview with an agricultural expert, interview by the author, via online video meeting, November 6, 2025.

²¹ Interview with a senior researcher, National Agricultural Research Centre (Al-Khalidiyah station), interview by the author, Mafraq Governorate, Jordan, November 3, 2025.

3.3 At the Knowledge and Capacity Building Level

- Agricultural extension services to drive CSA

Agricultural extension services are widely recognized as a cornerstone for driving on-farm innovation and are essential for translating CSA into practice. The current extension framework provides a necessary foundation for outreach. To amplify its impact in facilitating a sector-wide shift toward CSA, there is an opportunity to deepen its approach. Moving beyond general advisories, the service's effectiveness could be enhanced by more structured, long-term engagement models, such as Farmer Field Schools (FFS) and targeted training programs. These tools are particularly valuable for generating practical, locally validated evidence of CSA benefits tailored to different scales and agro-ecological zones. A significant strength of this approach lies in its potential to formally integrate valuable traditional knowledge-practices farming communities have refined over generations-with scientific innovation. Blending these knowledge systems fosters co-created solutions that are contextually relevant and build greater trust and ownership among farmers. Additionally, peer-to-peer learning and experience sharing among farmers, they can help build informal networks that accelerate the adoption and adaptation of successful practices.

A broader consideration for strengthening the knowledge ecosystem is the relationship between research, academia, and extension. Valuable insights from on-farm trials or successful FFS pilots are often not systematically compiled or scaled into widely accessible knowledge resources.²² Strengthening this linkage would help ensure that local evidence and innovations inform both broader farmer support and future policy, creating a more resilient and self-sustaining knowledge base for CSA transformation.

- Climate Information and Early Warning Systems

The effectiveness of agricultural decision-making is increasingly linked to access to reliable climate information. In Jordan, initial groundwork has been laid through various projects that have installed agro-meteorological stations, signaling a recognition of this need. The current opportunity lies in transforming these discrete infrastructure investments into a cohesive, operational service for farmers.^{23 24}

For CSA adoption to be effective, farmers require actionable, localised data-such as precise short-term forecasts for irrigation timing or early warnings for extreme events like frosts or flash floods-to optimise their investments in resilient practices. At present, however, the available climate information services are not yet widely accessible or tailored to specific agricultural decision-making.²⁵ This gap means farmers often must rely on traditional knowledge and general forecasts, which can be insufficient for managing the specific risks and precision required by many CSA technologies.²⁶ Consequently, the full potential of investments in water-saving technologies or adapted crop varieties may not be realised.

²² Interview with a senior researcher, National Agricultural Research Centre (Al-Khalidiyah station), interview by the author, Mafraq Governorate, Jordan, November 3, 2025.

²³ Interview with a senior researcher, National Agricultural Research Centre (Al-Khalidiyah station), interview by the author, Mafraq Governorate, Jordan, November 3, 2025.

²⁴ Interview with the manager of the Food Security and Biodiversity Studies Division, Royal Scientific Society, interview by the author, Amman, Jordan, November 4, 2025.

²⁵ Interview with local farmers, Mafraq Governorate, interview by the author, Mafraq, Jordan, November 3, 2025.

²⁶ Ibid.

Building on the existing infrastructure, a clear pathway forward involves integrating these stations into a dedicated agricultural climate service. The focus would be on processing raw data into user-friendly advisories and timely alerts delivered through accessible channels, such as mobile technology. Developing this integrated system, which combines meteorological data, remote sensing, and agronomic insights, would provide a foundational tool for proactive farm management. It represents a critical step in enabling data-driven decisions that enhance both productivity and resilience.

4 Recommendations: Strategic Pathways for CSA Implementation

Based on the constructive analysis of existing frameworks, the following strategic considerations are proposed to enhance Jordan's climate resilience efforts. These suggestions aim to build upon current systems, offering a pathway to greater alignment, accessibility, and impact.

At the policy level:

1. **Deepen the technical and operational scope of the CSA Action Plan** by developing localised implementation roadmaps and context-specific toolkits for the interventions. This would ensure that national strategies account for distinct local conditions; such as micro-climates, soil variations, and socio-economic constraints; and include data-driven monitoring to track farm-level adaptation outcomes.
2. **Translate high-level investment incentives into actionable frameworks** by establishing clear Public-Private Partnership models, streamlined administrative procedures for smart agriculture investments, and targeted financial instruments to attract private capital and reduce perceived risks for CSA adopters.

At the Finance Level:

3. **Evolve existing financial mechanisms** by tasking the Agricultural Credit Corporation, in partnership with commercial and microfinance institutions, to design and promote accessible, concessional loans or funds explicitly linked to verified CSA investments.
4. **Introduce complementary risk-mitigation tools**, beginning with the piloting and scaling of climate index-based insurance schemes that provide automatic payouts for predefined shocks, thereby de-risking farmer investment and enhancing lender confidence.

At the Knowledge and Capacity Level:

5. **Strengthen the national extension service** by establishing a network of long-term Farmer Field Schools as community-based learning hubs, blending indigenous knowledge with validated CSA practices, and equipping agents with participatory and digital tools to foster peer learning.
6. **Develop a unified agricultural climate service** by creating a user-friendly digital platform that delivers localised agro-meteorological data, CSA advisories, and early warnings directly to farmers, supported by enhanced collaboration between meteorological, agricultural, and research institutions.

5 Conclusion

The escalating pressures of climate change and water scarcity present a critical imperative for Jordan to fundamentally transform its agricultural sector. Climate-Smart Agriculture provides the necessary, integrated framework to achieve this, aligning national objectives for food security, resource conservation, and economic resilience. This analysis confirms that a successful transition depends not on technological availability alone, but on a systemic paradigm shift to address interconnected capacity deficits.

The findings demonstrate that the widespread adoption of CSA is constrained by gaps across three strategic levels: Policy, Finance, and Knowledge and capacity building. Promising practices will remain underutilised without remedying the foundational challenges. This requires moving beyond isolated projects to create a coherent national strategy that incentivises sustainable practices, unlocks tailored investment, and ensures cross-ministerial coordination. Specifically, transforming extension services into active hubs for knowledge co-creation and establishing a robust climate information system are essential to bridge the gap between innovation and on-farm application. Concurrently, developing a dedicated financial ecosystem-with de-risking instruments and reformed incentives-is crucial to making the economic case for CSA viable for all farmers.

Supporting this integrated, multi-level capacity development represents the most strategic investment for securing Jordan's agricultural future and directly advancing the goals of the Economic Modernisation Vision 2033. By implementing the evidence-based recommendations outlined in this paper; focusing on institutional coherence, financial innovation, and revitalised knowledge systems; Jordan can systematically build a more productive, resilient, and sustainable agricultural sector. This proactive pathway is essential to safeguarding the nation's food and water security for generations to come.



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Unlocking Green Finance Instruments for Jordan's Energy Transition



This policy paper is part of the project entitled “Addressing Socio-Economic Challenges in Jordan: Reflections on the Economic Modernisation Vision 2033” implemented jointly by the West Asia-North Africa Institute and the Konrad Adenauer Stiftung (KAS) Jordan Office. The aim of the project is to examine Jordan’s Economic Modernisation Vision (EMV) implementation from fresh angles, highlighting the opportunities and necessary reforms to ensure the vision delivers on its promise for Jordan’s future.

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Published in 2026 by the WANA Institute and KAS Jordan
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Photo Credit: Summit Art Creation/ Shutterstock

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Abstract

Jordan's energy transition, driven by high reliance on energy imports and the imperative to reduce emissions, requires substantial financial capital. Green finance is a key enabler, yet its progress is shaped by Jordan's early-stage landscape, where several tools remain underexplored and clear standards for defining green activities are still emerging. This paper seeks to identify the financial instruments best suited to support this transition. Drawing on desk research and key informant interviews, it examines a range of debt- and equity-based tools. The findings show that because energy-transition projects are both capital-intensive and high-risk, blended finance emerges as the most suitable pathway as it de-risks projects and mobilises private capital. Therefore, the paper recommends the use of blended finance in Jordan as an effective model to accelerate Jordan's energy transition.

الملخص

يتطلب التحول الطاقي في الأردن على توفير رأس المال في ظل الاعتماد المرتفع على استيراد الطاقة وال الحاجة لخفض الانبعاثات. ولهذا، يُعد التمويل الأخضر أحد المُمكّنات الرئيسية لهذا التحول إلا أنه لا يزال في مراحله الأولى، حيث إن عدداً من الأدوات المالية الخضراء ما زال محدود الاستخدام، إلى جانب غياب معايير واضحة لتعريف الأنشطة الخضراء التي لا تزال قيد التطوير. تهدف هذه الورقة إلى تحديد الأدوات المالية الخضراء المناسبة لدعم التحول الطاقي في الأردن، وذلك من خلال الاعتماد على البحث المكتبي وإجراء مقابلات مع خبراء ومتخصصين. وتركز الورقة على تحليل كل من أدوات الدين وأدوات حقوق الملكية الخضراء. وتنظر نتائج البحث أن مشاريع التحول الطاقي تتسم بكونها مرتقبة المخاطر وبحاجة إلى رأس المال كبير، مما يجعل التمويل المدمج الخيار المناسب لدعمنها نظراً لدوره في تحفيظ المخاطر وتحفيز مشاركة القطاع الخاص. وبناءً عليه، توصي الورقة استخدام التمويل المدمج كنموذج فعال لتسريع وتيرة التحول الطاقي في الأردن.

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1 Introduction

Green Finance (GF) emerged as a critical component of the global climate change response. GF is generally described as environment-oriented financial products or services, such as debt, equity, or blended instruments, that are mobilised by both the public and private sectors.^{1,2} The Paris Agreement has not only set the goal of limiting global warming to 1.5°C by 2050, but also underscored the massive investment needed to achieve this, with an estimated USD 5.7 trillion annually in clean energy investment by 2030.³ However, progress remains limited, with only 37% of this investment currently globally mobilised.⁴

The core obstacle preventing global progress in the energy transition is a significant imbalance in finance between advanced economies and the Global South. The obstacle is two-fold: First, over 90% of current energy transition investment flows to advanced economies and China, despite the Global South accounting for 80% of future energy demand.^{5,6} Second, the financing costs, including interest rates and fees, are significantly higher in those same emerging economies by seven times compared to advanced markets.⁷ This additional expense acts as a major financial barrier, making it extremely difficult to bridge the massive USD 2.2 trillion annual investment gap required to successfully scale renewable energy deployment worldwide.⁸

Jordan is not an exception to the global financial challenges for energy transition, with the required cost for energy transition estimated at USD 2.4 billion, as outlined in the most recent Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC).⁹ This cost aims to achieve 35% contribution of renewable energy for electricity generation by 2035, with a predicted increase of the target to 50% after the issuance of the next NDC. Energy transition serves as an imperative to Jordan's self-sufficiency by supporting its energy security, as well as the decarbonisation of major sectors to reduce Greenhouse Gases (GHG) emissions. This is driven by two major challenges Jordan's energy sector is facing: the country's heavy reliance on energy imports, which account for 74% of its energy supply, posing serious energy security risks, and the energy sector's dominant contribution to national GHG.^{10,11}

¹ United Nations Environment Programme, “Green Financing,” UNEP Asia and the Pacific Regional Initiatives on Supporting Resource Efficiency, 2018, <https://www.unep.org/regions/asia-and-pacific/regional-initiatives/supporting-resource-efficiency/green-financing>

² Giampiero Bambagioni, “Green Financing for Sustainable Real Estate, Infrastructure and Urban Development” (UNECE Discussion Paper, Geneva: UNECE, March 19, 2024), accessed November 20, 2025, https://unece.org/sites/default/files/2024-04/01GBambagioni_Green-Financing_20240319.pdf

³ World Economic Forum, Fostering Effective Energy Transition 2025 (Geneva: World Economic Forum, 2025)

⁴ International Renewable Energy Agency, World Energy Transitions Outlook 2024: 1.5 °C Pathway (Abu Dhabi: IRENA, Nov 2024), <https://www.irena.org/publications/2024/Nov/World-Energy-Transitions-Outlook-2024>

⁵ International Energy Agency, World Energy Investment 2023 (Paris: International Energy Agency, 2023), <https://iea.blob.core.windows.net/assets/8834d3af-af60-4df0-9643-72e2684f7221/WorldEnergyInvestment2023.pdf>

⁶ Milan Babic, “Green Finance in the Global Energy Transition: Actors, Instruments, and Politics,” Energy Research & Social Science 111 (May 2024): Article 103482, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.erss.2024.103482>

⁷ World Economic Forum, Fostering Effective Energy Transition 2025 (Geneva: World Economic Forum, 2025)

⁸ Ibid

⁹ Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, Updated Submission of Jordan's 1st Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC) (Amman: Ministry of Environment, October 2021), <https://unfccc.int/sites/default/files/NDC/2022-06/UPDATED%20SUBMISSION%20OF%20JORDANS.pdf>

¹⁰ Ministry of Energy and Mineral Resources, Energy Balance 2024 (Amman: Ministry of Energy and Mineral Resources, 2025) https://www.memr.gov.jo/ebv4.0/root_storage/en/eb_list_page/energy_balance_2023.pdf.

¹¹ Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, Updated Submission of Jordan's 1st Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC) (Amman: Ministry of Environment, October 2021), <https://unfccc.int/sites/default/files/ND-C/2022-06/UPDATED%20SUBMISSION%20OF%20JORDANS.pdf>

The GF landscape has evolved to include a variety of instruments designed to mobilise capital for environmental projects. Green Financial Instruments (GFIs) are the different financial tools that can be used within the GF landscape. They are similar in structure to traditional financial tools but are specifically used for green projects. In Jordan's case, the aforementioned challenges of dual dependency make mobilisation of capital through GFIs not only an environmental necessity but also an economic necessity to reduce vulnerability to external shocks, attract investments and drive economic growth.

This narrative is emphasised within Jordan's Economic Modernisation Vision (EMV) 2033, the overarching national economic development plan. The EMV, through its sustainable resource implementation driver, highlights the strategic direction towards a more efficient and greener energy sector through the renewable energy and energy efficiency initiatives. This strategic direction has evolved over the course of the implementation cycles. Specifically, the 2022-2025 EMV executive programme focused on establishing the core energy goals, while the upcoming 2026-2029 EMV executive programme is set to explicitly include GF, reflecting a deepening commitment to the financial mechanisms required for implementation.

Given this strategic evolution and clear financial needs, this paper argues that the different GFIs can be leveraged to mobilise the funding required to enable Jordan's energy transition.

Therefore, the paper seeks to identify the GFIs best suited to continue the support of the energy transition. Moreover, Jordan can advance the goals of the EMV, enhance its position in global sustainability indices, and, in parallel, contribute to economic growth by creating opportunities and boosting competitiveness.

The following section will provide a brief overview of the different GFIs used in the Jordanian GF landscape.

1.1 Green Financial Instruments Taxonomy

GFIs are typically divided into two broad categories: debt and equity. Debt finance refers to the instruments that are utilised to raise capital through issuing an instrument, "the issuer" whereas "the investor" would provide the capital, with the stipulation that capital is paid back with interest over a period of time.¹² Equity, on the other hand, refers to instruments that offer a permanent share in ownership of a project or company.¹³ Understanding the structural distinction between debt- and equity-based instruments is critical, as each carries different implications for risk-sharing, investor appetite, and suitability to emerging markets like Jordan. Blended finance is a common mechanism that combines public and private capital, which includes both debt and equity instruments to finance green projects.¹⁴ Its primary objective is to attract private capital by strategically using concessional funds, whether public or philanthropic, to improve the risk-return profile of investments. This is achieved through the use of risk-mitigation tools, including guarantees, which make complex, capital-intensive projects, which are required for energy transition, more financially feasible for private investors.

¹² Barahona, Sarah. "Sustainable Finance Definitions in the 2025 SNA and BPM." Presentation to the 25th Meeting of the Advisory Expert Group on National Accounts, United Nations Statistical Division, 2024. https://unstats.un.org/unsd/nationalaccount/aeg/2024/M25/M25_2_Sustainable_Finance_Definitions_Pres.pdf.

¹³ Ibid

¹⁴ Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, *Making Blended Finance Work for the Sustainable Development Goals* (Paris: OECD Publishing, 2018) <https://doi.org/10.1787/9789264288768-en>.

This flexibility and adaptability across multiple actors and different scales is particularly important for complex goals like the energy transition, enabling both stand-alone instruments and combination structures like blended finance to drive investment.

Debt instruments encompass green bonds, green sukuk, green loans, sustainability-linked bonds and loans, whereas green equity refers to private equity investing that includes angel capital, venture capital and private equity and public investing, including Initial Public Offerings (IPOs). Table 1 below presents a definition of each instrument.

Table 1: Taxonomy of selected Green Financial Instruments

Green Financial Instruments		
Type	Instrument	Definition
Debt-Based Instruments	Green Bonds	A bond where the proceeds are exclusively earmarked to finance or refinance specific and eligible green projects that have clear environmental benefits and can be traded publicly. ¹⁵
	Green Sukuk	A Sharia-compliant financial certificate (similar to a bond in function) where proceeds are exclusively allocated to environmental and sustainable projects, with the financial structure adhering to Islamic principles. ¹⁶
	Sustainability-Linked Finance	Debt instruments (bonds or loans) dedicated for raising capital and providing financial incentives based on achieving sustainability performance targets. ¹⁷
	Green Loans	A loan where the proceeds are exclusively allocated to finance or refinance specific, eligible green projects, structured as a private bank loan rather than a publicly traded bond. ¹⁸
Equity-Based Instruments	Green Venture Capital	Equity financing provided by multiple investors for early-stage investment developing innovative green technologies. ¹⁹
	Green Private Equity Funds	Pooled investment funds that acquire equity stakes in mature private companies or projects focused on sustainable growth or environmental impact. ²⁰
	Green IPOs	Equity instrument that raises capital earmarked for environmental projects through purchasing shares that are listed on a stock market. ²¹

¹⁵ International Capital Market Association (ICMA), Guidance Handbook (March 2020), <https://www.icmagroup.org/assets/documents/Regulatory/Green-Bonds/Guidance-Handbook-March-2020-120320.pdf>

¹⁶ International Capital Market Association (ICMA), Islamic Development Bank (IsDB) & London Stock Exchange Group (LSEG), Guidance on Green, Social and Sustainability Sukuk (Zurich: ICMA, April 2024), <https://www.icmagroup.org/assets/documents/Sustainable-finance/ICMA-IsDB-LSEG-Guidance-on-Green-Social-and-Sustainability-Sukuk-April-2024.pdf>.

¹⁷ International Finance Corporation (IFC), Sustainability-Linked Finance — Mobilizing Capital for Sustainability in Emerging Markets, (Note 110, January 2022), <https://www.ifc.org/content/dam/ifc/doc/mgrt/emcompass-note-110-sustainability-linked-finance-web.pdf>.

¹⁸ Loan Market Association, Green Loan Principles (Booklet 21 March 2018) https://www.icmagroup.org/assets/documents/Regulatory/Green-Bonds/LMA_Green_Loan_Principles_Booklet-220318.pdf

¹⁹ Elena Randjelovic, Anastasia R. O'Rourke, and Renato J. Orsato, "The Emergence of Green Venture Capital," Business Strategy and the Environment 12 (2003) [https://pesquisa-eaesp.fgv.br/-files/arquivos/orsato_-_the_emergence_of_greenventure_capital.pdf](https://pesquisa-eaesp.fgv.br/sites/gypesquisa.fgv.br/-files/arquivos/orsato_-_the_emergence_of_greenventure_capital.pdf)

²⁰ United Nations Environment Programme, Demystifying Private Climate Finance (Nairobi: UNEP, 2015), <https://www.uncclean.org/wp-content/uploads/library/unep20022015.pdf>.

²¹ Abdul Wahid, Oskar Kowalewski, and Muhammad Zubair Mumtaz, "Green IPOs: A New Paradox in Environment or Economic Sustainability," International Journal of Managerial Finance 21, no. 4 (2025): 1272-1297, <https://doi.org/10.1108/IJMF-04-2023-0212>.

1.2 Jordan's National Context for Green Finance

Jordan's regulatory environment provides several foundational frameworks that currently shape the GF landscape. Jordan's Climate Change Bylaw (2019) identifies climate finance as a central pillar,²² while the Instructions for Climate-Responsive Public and Private Capital Spending and Financing (2021) define eligibility criteria for climate-related projects and outline viable funding sources.²³ These regulatory frameworks operationalise GF within Jordan's policy landscape, creating structured, suitable conditions and regulatory clarity that promote the issuance of different GFIs and strengthen the investors' confidence in green investments.

Within the financial sector, the Green Finance Strategy (GFS), issued by the Central Bank of Jordan (CBJ), marks a crucial milestone, outlining a roadmap through strengthening governance, building capacity, implementing supporting policies, enhancing resilience and increasing the mobilisation of GF.²⁴ Complementing this, Amman Stock Exchange (ASE) also developed a climate-related disclosure regulatory framework, guidance and policy aligning reporting practices with international requirements and improving the availability of climate-related information within the local market.^{25 26 27} These strategies support GF in encouraging financial institutions to diversify beyond traditional instruments and expand their portfolios to include green products.

The second phase of the EMV (2026–2029) emphasises the role of GF and confirms its inclusion in the upcoming executive programme. This reflects the growing integration of GF within long-term economic and development planning in Jordan. Anchoring GF within national economic planning also provides long-term policy stability, which is crucial for attracting long-term investment in energy-transition projects, signalling a gradual shift from policy commitment to actual regulated action. Jordan's existing Monitoring, Reporting, and Verification (MRV) systems, which are primarily designed for tracking climate actions and NDC progress, can also provide a foundation that could be adapted to support GF once aligned with taxonomy and GFI-specific disclosure requirements.

Although the policy and regulatory environment has become stronger, the 2023 CBJ self-assessment reflected the early stage of GF adoption at that time, with GF accounting for only three percent of the total banking sector.²⁸ This low baseline was linked to the absence of a national green taxonomy and limited institutional capacity for designing or managing GF products. However, the landscape has evolved significantly since then, with several banks developing

²² Ministry of Environment, Climate Change Regulation No. 79 of 2019 (Ministry of Environment – Jordan, 2019), https://www.moenv.gov.jo/ebv4.0/root_storage/en/eb_list_page/-climate_change_regression_no._79_of_%282019%29_.pdf.

²³ Government of Jordan, Prime Ministry, Instructions for Climate-Responsive Public and Private Expenditure and Financing for 2022 (Official Gazette, 2022)

²⁴ Central Bank of Jordan, Green Finance Strategy (Central Bank of Jordan, 10 November 2023), https://www.cbj.gov.jo/EBV4.0/Root_Storage/EN/FINAL_-_Green_Finance_Strategy_-_English_Version_-_10_Nov_2023.pdf

²⁵ Amman Stock Exchange, Disclosure Guidance (February 2025) <https://www.ase.com.jo/sites/default/files/2025-02/Disclosure%20Guidance.pdf>

²⁶ Amman Stock Exchange, Regulatory Framework (V6) (December 2024) <https://www.ase.com.jo/sites/default/files/2024-12/Regulatory%20Framework%20-%20V6%20%282002%29.pdf>

²⁷ Amman Stock Exchange, Disclosure Policy (February 2025) <https://www.ase.com.jo/sites/default/files/2025-02/Disclosure%20Policy.pdf>

²⁸ https://www.cbj.gov.jo/EBV4.0/Root_Storage/EN/FINAL_-_Green_Finance_Strategy_-_English_Version_-_10_Nov_2023.pdf

sustainable finance frameworks and issuing green and sustainable bonds, which indicates a growing level of maturity and readiness within the sector, in parallel with the design and upcoming implementation of the green taxonomy. The first green bond in Jordan was issued in 2023, followed by several banks issuing similar green bonds. These issuances provided inputs for developing Jordan's first Sovereign Green Bond Framework in 2024. However, loans remain the most widely used instrument in Jordan's GF market. The CBJ has identified green loans as the most prevalent form of GF, reflected in the growing number of national banks offering green loan products and mechanisms, particularly for renewable energy and energy-efficiency projects.

Specific debt-facilitation mechanisms drove early public-sector engagement in financing the energy transition. The CBJ's 'Medium Term Advances to Licensed Banks' programme was one of the earliest established, offering low-cost financing for high-added-value sectors, including renewable energy. Similarly, the Jordan Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency Fund (JREEEF) supports access to finance for both renewable energy and energy-efficiency projects by partnering with banks, offering interest-rate support, providing credit guarantees, and conducting feasibility studies and energy audits.²⁹ Current support is concentrated in the industrial sector, where JREEEF facilitates the preparation of financially viable projects and facilitates access to green financing.

1.3 Challenges in Jordan's Green Finance Landscape

As the GF landscape evolves, several bottlenecks have emerged that are hindering its progress. Crucially, one missing piece of the equation is the absence of clear and consistent definitions and terminologies that clearly showcase what is considered green, in terms of projects, activities or finance. This translates to uncertainty in identifying "green" activities and poses difficulties in reporting and monitoring the activities, particularly within the GF landscape.^{30 31 32} This ambiguity not only undermines the confidence of stakeholders in green investment but also increases the risk of greenwashing*. This challenge is currently being addressed through the ongoing development of the National Green Taxonomy, which will provide much-needed clarity and standardisation within the GF ecosystem, indicating clearly what is and what is not considered green. The taxonomy presents a pivotal juncture, as its successful implementation could provide an overarching guideline and clear standardisation of GF, propelling the landscape forward.

²⁹ Jordan Renewable Energy & Energy Efficiency Fund (JREEEF), "About JREEEF," https://jreef.memr.gov.jo/En/Pages/About_JREEEF

³⁰ KI-1 (Interview with key expert from national financial institution), Virtual interview, October 2025

³¹ KI-3 (Interview with key expert from International Intergovernmental Organisation), Virtual interview, October 2025

³² KI-4 (Interview with key expert from national financial institution), Virtual interview, October 2025

* Greenwashing, according to the UN definition, is misleading the public to believe that an entity is doing to protect the environment that it really is, promoting false solutions that distract from and delay concrete and credible action.

* United Nations, "Greenwashing – the deceptive tactics behind climate action." (United Nations Climate Change), Accessed 16 October 2025, <https://www.un.org/en/climatechange/science/climate-issues/greenwashing>

** "A project is bankable, whether from public or private sources, when its risk-return profile meets investors' criteria and can secure financing to implement the project" Cities Climate Finance Leadership Alliance, "What is Bankability?" (Cities Climate Finance Leadership Alliance), accessed 17 October 2025, <https://citiesclimatefinance.org/publications/what-is-bankability>

Another bottleneck that hinders unlocking GF for the energy transition is the market capacity to absorb the available GFIs. While financial institutions have developed GFIs, one issue that remains is the lack of widely available bankable projects** that are both feasible and able to effectively utilise these instruments.^{33 34} This shortage has created a mismatch between financial supply and demand: GFIs offered by various institutions are available but are not being sufficiently utilised by projects. Furthermore, projects that are being developed mainly relate to renewable energy, which showcases an overreliance on renewable energy projects, with limited attention given to crucial energy efficiency measures.^{35 36} This imbalance is often driven by the easier monitoring and shorter payback periods associated with RE projects, making them more attractive to investors. However, energy efficiency measures are equally crucial, as optimising consumption reduces overall energy demand and alleviates pressure on the national grid. Without greater emphasis on efficiency, expanding renewable capacity risks exceeding the grid's technical limits. Addressing this imbalance is therefore essential to ensure that Jordan's energy transition remains both sustainable and technically feasible.

2 Methodology

The policy paper adopts a qualitative approach that primarily uses secondary data to identify the GFIs present in Jordan's financial landscape and assess their relevance to the energy transition. Instruments were evaluated using three criteria drawn from the literature and Jordan's transition context: attractiveness, reflecting each instrument's credibility under global standards and its appeal for supporting the transition; regulatory readiness, assessing the extent to which national frameworks enable implementation; and risk, examining structural and market challenges associated with each instrument. Applying these criteria allowed the analysis to highlight the strengths, limitations, and overall suitability of each instrument for the transition. This assessment was supported by conducting six Key Informant Interviews (KII)s and expert consultations, which helped triangulate insights and refine the analysis. The findings reflect both the assessment of the instruments and the perspectives of key experts working in green finance and the energy sector.

3 Analysis of Green Financial Instruments in the Jordanian Context

Jordan's GF landscape is diverse, with current and potential instruments playing a crucial role in the energy transition, with certain instruments currently showing differences in attractiveness, regulatory readiness and risks.

3.1 Green Debt Instruments

3.1.1 Green Bonds

Green bonds are particularly suitable for the energy transition as they raise long-term and earmarked capital for green projects. They offer a new diversified funding base through attracting sustainability-oriented investors in addition to enhancing debt resilience against market

³³ KI-3 (Interview with key expert from International Intergovernmental Organisation), Virtual interview, October 2025

³⁴ KI-5 (Interview with key expert from Governmental Entity), Virtual interview, October 2025

³⁵ KI-1 (Interview with key expert from national financial institution), Virtual interview, October 2025

³⁶ KI-5 (Interview with key expert from Governmental Entity), Virtual interview, October 2025

volatility by maintaining longer-term commitments.³⁷ These positions green bonds as an appropriate tool to support Jordan's long-term energy goals in increasing the share of renewable energy in parallel to reducing GHG emissions by 2050. Moreover, global guidelines such as the ICMA increase attractiveness by standardising disclosures and reducing investor uncertainty, making them more appealing to both domestic and international investors. In terms of regulatory readiness, Jordan's continuously evolving regulatory frameworks indicate the dedicated steps it is taking to support green bonds. The national green bonds guidelines, in addition to the upcoming sovereign green bond framework, green taxonomy and inclusion in the upcoming EMV programme, demonstrate a collective direction to increase the confidence of investors and support long-term implementation of green bonds. Additionally, the successful examples of green bond issuances by national banks also indicate that institutions are becoming more familiar with the requirements and reporting structures associated with these instruments. This can incentivise other national banks to issue green bonds of their own and strengthen Jordan's green bond market.

However, green bonds guidelines emphasise a robust monitoring and evaluation system to validate proceeds allocation and greenwashing risks. This requires clear standards for defining green activities, for which Jordan is still developing its green taxonomy. This gap implies that the allocation of green bonds proceeds at the moment is not reported according to international or national standards, reducing international investors' confidence in Jordanian green bonds. This positions standardisation as a crucial bottleneck that must be addressed, undermining both the attractiveness and the regulatory readiness outlined above and limiting Jordan's ability to attract multilateral and private investment and advance its energy-transition goals.

3.1.2 Green Sukuk

Green Sukuk structure aligns well with the long-term nature of energy-transition projects through the Ijarah (leasing) mechanism. This approach keeps asset-ownership risk with the issuer while providing investors with predictable, lease-based cashflow, making green sukuk suitable for financing large-scale, capital-intensive infrastructure in the energy transition. Additionally, green sukuk incorporates a dual layer of Islamic and green verification, enhancing credibility and signalling higher investor confidence. Coupled with established global sukuk principles, this increases attractiveness for Sharia-compliant investors and broadens the investor base by appealing to regional markets. On the regulatory side, Jordan's Islamic Finance Sukuk Law and the Central Sharia Supervisory Commission provide the formal infrastructure needed to ensure compliance, offering a strong foundation to support future green Sukuk issuance. Jordan, therefore, demonstrates a high level of regulatory readiness for green sukuk through familiarity among issuers and investors, which translates to lower transaction costs and strengthens confidence in green sukuk issuance. These elements showcase Jordan's capacity in regulatory infrastructure and market appetite to support the green sukuk market.

However, one bottleneck in issuing green Sukuk is the dual requirement, which complicates the issuance process by necessitating strict adherence to both Sharia law and recognised green Sukuk principles. This risk can drive issuers away from green sukuk, especially with the higher structuring and verification costs, making them less accessible to smaller borrowers. As a result, even with strong regulatory readiness, actual issuance volumes may remain low unless structuring costs decrease or blended mechanisms reduce the burden on the issuer.

³⁷ KI-3 (Interview with key expert from International Intergovernmental Organisation), Virtual interview, October 2025

3.1.3 Green Loans

Green loans are usually easier to issue with a lower lending threshold, which makes them suitable for small borrowers and works well for renewable energy projects on a small scale.^{38 39} Their attractiveness stems from the predictability and alignment with traditional lending mechanisms, making green loans more accessible and familiar for both banks and investors.⁴⁰ This positions them as a useful tool to support smaller energy projects which green bonds or sukuk cannot fulfil, covering a wider range of practices. Moreover, green loans are backed up by global standards, which promote transparency and consistency, making them a reliable tool with clear indicators for allocating proceeds. As for regulatory readiness, green loans in Jordan benefit from established screening processes within banks, reflecting institutional readiness to assess borrower profiles and potential risks. This gives banks stronger oversight over who to finance and ensures that their funds will be paid back, as emphasised by an expert from a national financial institution. Additionally, CBJ is developing a national Green Loan Framework that will provide clearer guidelines for identifying and reporting green loans, resulting in reduced greenwashing and greater market consistency. In addition, given the strong presence of green loans supporting energy transition, a natural ecosystem has developed. Energy certifications, third-party inspections and best practices were established, strengthening their credibility and validity.^{41 42}

From a risk perspective, green loans are generally suitable for projects with shorter payback periods and limited capital requirements, as pointed out by an expert in a national financial institution. Their shorter periods can create a risk of mismatch when financing projects that require long-term capital commitments. As a result, relying too heavily on green loans could hinder the overall pace of renewable energy capacity, which would delay progress towards Jordan's energy targets. As a result, the use of other instruments such as green bonds and sukuk will be required to complement. This limits the extent to which the strengths identified under attractiveness and readiness can translate into large-scale impact.

3.1.4 Sustainability Linked Finance

Sustainability-linked finance, both bonds and loans, offers an attractive instrument for private and corporate firms as it allows them to access financing based on achieving sustainability performance targets rather than financing specific green projects. This structure provides companies with greater flexibility to determine how best to meet their targets, enabling them to align sustainability measures across their portfolios while still being monitored against clear, pre-set indicators. This flexibility is particularly appealing for firms that do not have capital-intensive green projects but still aim to contribute to national sustainability and energy-transition goals, positioning SLF as a useful tool to mobilise private-sector participation in climate action.

Globally, SLF has established guidelines that emphasise transparent disclosure and clear issuance procedures, strengthening the credibility of the instrument. Nationally, Jordan's evolving regulatory environment, particularly the ASE disclosure requirements and the Central Bank's

³⁸ KI-4 (Interview with key expert from national financial institution), Virtual interview, October 2025

³⁹ KI-5 (Interview with key expert from Governmental Entity), Virtual interview, October 2025

⁴⁰ KI-1 (Interview with key expert from national financial institution), Virtual interview, October 2025

⁴¹ KI-1 (Interview with key expert from national financial institution), Virtual interview, October 2025

⁴² KI-6 (Interview with key expert in the energy and renewable energy sector), Virtual interview, October 2025

Globally, SLF has established guidelines that emphasise transparent disclosure and clear issuance procedures, strengthening the credibility of the instrument. Nationally, Jordan's evolving regulatory environment, particularly the ASE disclosure requirements and the Central Bank's Green Finance Strategy, provides a growing foundation for the integration of SLF into national financial practices.^{43 44} These frameworks support the development of clear, measurable sustainability indicators, which are essential for setting and verifying performance targets. In addition, the Ministry of Environment's voluntary MRV reporting guideline offers an emerging platform that can, over time, reinforce transparency by enabling companies to track and disclose their emissions more systematically. These strong regulatory elements suggest that Jordan is gradually building the regulatory and institutional capacity needed to support SLF uptake, positioning the instrument as a viable complement to existing green finance mechanisms.

However, a key bottleneck for SLF is the requirement to demonstrate "additionality," meaning that sustainability performance targets must reflect improvements that would not occur without the financing. When KPIs are weak or insufficiently ambitious, investors cannot be confident that their capital is generating new impact, which undermines the credibility of the instrument. This creates a risk that SLFs can easily create greenwashing. As a result, even with growing regulatory support, uptake may remain limited unless KPI frameworks are strengthened and monitoring practices ensure that targets meaningfully contribute to Jordan's wider transition goals.

3.2 Green Equity Instruments

Equity instruments offer an important avenue for financing energy transition projects that carry higher levels of risk than traditional financial institutions are often unwilling to undertake. Their attractiveness lies in the potential for higher returns, which appeals to investors with the capacity and appetite to take on long-term investments in emerging sectors. Equity also enables risk-sharing among multiple investors, making it suitable for capital-intensive or early-stage innovative projects where debt may be insufficient or unavailable. In this way, equity provides Jordan with an alternative financing channel for early-stage or large-scale transition projects that require significant.

Jordan's investment ecosystem for equity financing has been developing, supported by institutional and legal frameworks that enable private equity and venture capital activity. The EMV further reinforces this direction by positioning investment as a core driver of long-term economic development, signalling policy commitment that can strengthen investor confidence. A key indication of market readiness is the establishment of the Jordan Capital and Investment Fund, which is owned by 16 Jordanian commercial and Islamic banks and demonstrates both appetite and structural capacity for equity-based financing. These elements highlight that Jordan possesses the foundational regulatory environment and growing institutional capacity needed to support equity participation in energy-transition projects.

However, green equity funding faces several risks that may limit its contribution to Jordan's energy-transition financing landscape. Early-stage capital venture for energy projects carries

⁴³ Amman Stock Exchange, Disclosure Guidance (February 2025) <https://www.ase.com.jo/sites/default/files/2025-02/Disclosure%20Guidance.pdf>

⁴⁴ Central Bank of Jordan, Green Finance Strategy (Central Bank of Jordan, 10 November 2023), https://www.cbj.gov.jo/EBV4.0/Root_Storage/EN/FINAL_-_Green_Finance_Strategy_-_English_Version_-_10_Nov_2023.pdf

high failure risks, particularly in emerging technologies where revenue models are uncertain. In addition, private equity and venture capital investors in Jordan face limited exit options due to a small IPO market and a constrained secondary market, which reduces liquidity and increases required returns. These constraints make equity suitable only for a narrow segment of projects and limit its scalability, despite its attractiveness for high-risk, high-return opportunities.

4 Findings

The combined assessment of Jordan's current and emerging GFIs across attractiveness, regulatory readiness and risk shows that no single tool can independently meet the long-term and capital-intensive requirements of the energy transition. Each instrument responds to different needs depending on project scale, sector, and investor appetite, indicating that Jordan's financing requirements demand a systematic approach to portfolio diversification. In this context, drawing on secondary data and key expert insights, blended finance rises as the most viable strategy for long-term capital mobilisation, as it brings together different financing sources to de-risk large projects and crowd in private investment.^{45 46 47 48}

Blended finance is also well-positioned to address the bottlenecks identified earlier in the analysis. The shortage of bankable projects, the mismatch between GFI supply and demand, and the overreliance on small-scale renewable projects all point to the need for mechanisms that can improve project preparation, reduce risk, and attract a broader pool of investors. Blended finance can help lower perceived risks for local banks and private investors, making larger and more innovative projects financially feasible. As the enabling environment continues to mature, with clearer regulations, improved disclosure standards, and stronger institutional capacity, the market is gradually becoming more open to a wider mix of blended structures capable of supporting long-term, capital-intensive projects.

This approach aligns closely with the direction of the EMV, which emphasises mobilising investments from both the public and private sectors. Under the EMV, this creates space for Public–Private Partnerships (PPPs) within the energy transition. PPPs typically combine public equity, private capital, and risk-sharing arrangements, making them a natural form of blended finance. By leveraging private investment while distributing project risks more effectively, PPP-based models can support large energy-transition projects and open the door for greater foreign investment into Jordan's green programmes, advancing both environmental and economic development goals.

However, blended finance does come with challenges. It requires strong coordination between ministries, financial institutions, and development partners, and its structures can be administratively complex, necessitating clear governance, transparent monitoring, and harmonised reporting systems. Addressing these challenges will be essential to ensure that blended finance can operate effectively and become a core driver of Jordan's energy transition.

⁴⁵ KI-1 (Interview with key expert from national financial institution), Virtual interview, October 2025

⁴⁶ KI-2 (Interview with key expert in national green economy), consultation meeting, September 2025

⁴⁷ KI-3 (Interview with key expert from International Intergovernmental Organisation), Virtual interview, October 2025

⁴⁸ KI-4 (Interview with key expert from national financial institution), Virtual interview, October 2025

5 Recommendations

The findings demonstrate that while each green financial instrument has a specific role and benefit, each has a limitation affecting its implementation. Therefore, blended finance is highlighted as an effective mechanism for mobilising long-term capital and aligning financial flows with the scale of Jordan’s energy transition. Building on this synthesis, the following recommendations address the key gaps identified in the analysis and reflect insights from the six key informant interviews.

- 1) Finalise and operationalise the National Green Taxonomy through a phased adoption approach. After endorsement, a pilot phase in one or two priority sectors should be used to test the taxonomy’s criteria, identify challenges, and refine procedures before wider national dissemination. To support consistent application, sector-specific guidance notes and standardised templates should translate taxonomy criteria into practical steps for project developers and financial institutions. A coordination mechanism between the CBJ and relevant ministries should facilitate alignment, interpretation, and periodic updates. An operational taxonomy will clarify what is considered “green,” improve project preparation, and create the transparency needed to support blended finance and attract long-term investment.
- 2) Conduct a detailed assessment of the energy sector to map project types against the most suitable GFIs. Developing a simple matrix that links project characteristics to appropriate GFIs will reduce mismatches between financing tools and project needs and ensure that energy-efficiency projects receive equal priority to prevent grid challenges. The matrix can also identify where blended finance is required to de-risk priority projects and mobilise additional capital. Integrating this tool into the national energy strategy and upcoming NDCs would help guide policymakers and investors in directing capital more effectively and improve accountability in implementation.
- 3) Develop coordinated and standardised capacity-building programmes across financial institutions, ministries, and national organisations to strengthen the technical skills required for developing and managing green GFIs. The CBJ can lead the design of a national training framework covering risk assessment, reporting, taxonomy alignment and GFI structuring, while line ministries deliver sector-specific sessions to ensure alignment with national priorities. National institutions should also receive training to prepare feasible, taxonomy-aligned project proposals that can attract finance. All training should rely on standardised toolkits and approved materials to ensure consistency and support the long-term integration of blended finance approaches.
- 4) Develop a dedicated Green Sukuk Framework to guide Islamic financial institutions in structuring and issuing green sukuk in Jordan. While a regulatory foundation for sukuk already exists, a specific green sukuk framework would clarify eligible activities, reporting requirements, and verification processes, enabling issuers to enter the market more easily. This would expand Jordan’s mix of green financial instruments, attract regional Sharia-compliant investors, and support long-term energy-transition projects that align naturally with sukuk structures. A clear framework would also enhance the potential for blended finance models that incorporate Sharia-compliant capital.

6 Conclusion

Jordan's green finance landscape is gradually moving toward a more structured and enabling environment, supported by strengthened national frameworks and rising institutional engagement. The expansion of disclosure requirements, introduction of green bond guidelines, and integration of green finance within long-term economic planning have increased confidence across the financial sector, reflected in banks' adoption of sustainable finance frameworks and early issuances of green and sustainable bonds. These developments indicate growing readiness for a wider mix of green financial instruments to support the energy transition.

Yet, the analysis shows that each instrument carries specific limitations and risks that constrain its scalability or suitability for energy transition. No single tool can independently meet the long-term, capital-intensive requirements of Jordan's transition. As a result, blended finance gains relevance, as it combines instruments with different risk profiles, reduces barriers for issuers, attracts a broader pool of investors, and supports larger projects. As Jordan's regulatory and market ecosystem continues to mature, blended finance is positioned to play a central role in mobilising the scale of investment needed for the energy transition.



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The Energy Transition in Jordan: Policy Lessons from Germany and the EU



This policy paper is part of the project entitled “Addressing Socio-Economic Challenges in Jordan: Reflections on the Economic Modernisation Vision 2033” implemented jointly by the West Asia-North Africa Institute and the Konrad Adenauer Stiftung (KAS) Jordan Office. The aim of the project is to examine Jordan’s Economic Modernisation Vision (EMV) implementation from fresh angles, highlighting the opportunities and necessary reforms to ensure the vision delivers on its promise for Jordan’s future.

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Published in 2026 by the WANA Institute and KAS Jordan

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I thank the KAS and WANA teams for their assistance and insights during the development of this paper. I am grateful to Dr. Yara Shaban, Dr. Majd Al Naber, Veronika Ertl, Dima Al-Zubi, and Layan Ounis for thoughtful discussions. I also extend my sincere gratitude to Prof. Dr. Miranda Schreurs, Dr. Florentine Koppenborg, and Dr. Edmund Ratka for their sustained support and encouragement.

Abstract

This paper addresses Jordan's Economic Modernisation Vision (EMV) target of a reliable, sustainable, and interconnected energy sector. To do so, the paper identifies the constraints that limit Jordan's energy transition and translates them into a reform package. Drawing on Jordanian legal documents, the paper classifies current regulations according to their impact on the energy transition as binding, partially binding, or enabling. Two constraints emerge as binding: connection regulations, which prevent viable solar projects from proceeding at scale, and the network services fee, which adds an additional monthly cost for renewables. Partially binding constraints include the electricity single-buyer model, absence of a renewable projects auction schedule, weak enforcement of energy efficiency obligations, and underdeveloped low-cost heat options. The paper applies a policy transfer approach, matching each constraint to specific instruments from Germany and the European Union (EU), assessing their design fit, and sequencing the recommendations into a three-phase roadmap. It complements this roadmap with a Key Performance Indicator (KPI) framework and cross-cutting risk mitigation and enabling measures. The paper's main contribution is to provide a concrete and time-bound policy package that advances the energy transition. Adopting these measures will help achieve three key objectives of the EMV, namely, Sustainable Resources, Invest Jordan, and Green Jordan.

الملخص

تناول هذه الورقة هدف رؤية التحديث الاقتصادي المتمثل في إرساء قطاع طاقة موثوق ومستدام ومتراoط. وتحقيقاً لذلك، ترصد الورقة القيود التي تكبل مسار انتقال الأردن الطاقي، وتترجمها إلى حزمة إصلاحية محددة المعالم. استناداً إلى الوثائق القانونية الأردنية، تصنف الورقة التدابير السارية بحسب أثرها في الانتقال الطاقي إلى ثلاثة فئات: تدابير مُقيدة، وأخرى مُقيدة جزئياً، وثالثة مُمكنة.

تُظهر النتائج بروز عقبتين مُقيدين: أولاً، تنظيم ربط منشآت مصادر الطاقة المتتجدة على النظام الكهربائي الذي يحول دون انفاذ مشاريع طاقة متتجدة مجدهa اقتصادياً على نطاق واسع، وثانياً، رسوم خدمات الشبكة الذي يضيف على مشاريع الطاقة المتتجدة كلفة شهرية إضافية. أما العقبات المُقيدة جزئياً فتشمل: نموذج المشتري الوحيد للكهرباء، وغياب جدول زمني واضح لمشاريع الطاقة المتتجدة، وضعف إنفاذ كفاءة الطاقة، وقصور تطوير بدائل التدفئة منخفضة الكلفة.

تعتمد الورقة مقاربة نقل السياسات، إذ تُقابل كل قيد بآدوات تنظيمية محددة مستقاة من ألمانيا والاتحاد الأوروبي، وتُخضعها لاختبار الملاءمة التصميمية مع السياق الأردني، ثم تُرتب توصياتها وتُسلّلها ضمن خارطة طريق ثلاثة المراحل. وتكمّل هذه الخارطة باطار مؤشرات أداء رئيسية، وبحزمة تدابير تكمينية وإجراءات لتخفيض المخاطر عبرة للقطاعات.

تتمثل الإضافة الرئيسية للورقة في تقديم حزمة سياسات عملية ومؤطرة زمنياً تدفع الانتقال الطاقي إلى الأمام، إذ إن اعتماد هذه التدابير من شأنه أن يُسهم في تحقيق ثلاثة مقاصد محورية من محركات النمو ضمن رؤية التحديث الاقتصادي، ألا وهي: الموارد المستدامة، والاستثمار، وبيئة مستدامة.

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1 Introduction

Jordan's energy transition has advanced rapidly over the past decade, with renewables now accounting for %26.9 of the country's electricity,¹ placing it among regional leaders.² For the next phase, the EMV aims to achieve a reliable, sustainable, and interconnected energy sector that supports economic growth and job creation.³ Jordan has advanced two major enabling pillars for this next phase. First, the General Electricity Law No. 10 of 2025, which expands the Energy and Minerals Regulatory Commission's (EMRC) powers and introduces an enabling framework for storage and gradual market opening.⁴ Second, the Third National Energy Efficiency Action Plan (NEEAP) targets a %4.33 reduction in final energy use by 2026 (%5.44 for electricity) and outlines sectoral measures.⁵ Moreover, some of the building blocks for this next phase are already in place. Smart meters are being rolled out, with completion targeted by the end of 2025.⁶ Time-of-use (ToU)⁷ tariffs are scheduled for full rollout by September 2026,⁸ enabling the efficient operation of the energy sector and allowing prices to better reflect system costs. In parallel, the National Electric Power Company (NEPCO) has a generation and transmission master plan that identifies where new capacity and grid reinforcements are needed.⁹

Despite this progress, some obstacles must be addressed to ensure the Jordanian energy transition remains credible and just. The next phase of Jordan's energy transition is no longer primarily a technical challenge; the electrical grid can host more renewables, and key technologies are available. The main constraints are now institutional, as specific regulations and procedures shape investment incentives and risks for the private sector and end-users. Primarily, Connection Regulation No. 58 of 2024¹⁰ (amended in Regulation No. 110 of 2024)¹¹ and the network services fee¹² directly limit the size and economics of rooftop and commercial and industrial (C&I) solar installations, even where the electrical grid could technically accommodate more renewable energy sources. The EMV Second Implementation Phase Plan points to this, highlighting limited electricity and gas network absorptive capacity, especially because storage solutions are missing, financial constraints from debt accumulation at NEPCO and weak sector financing, a need to study tariff and support structure design to better incentivise economic sectors, and the absence of clear studies for transitioning from the single-buyer model toward a more liberalised market. It also flags changing demand patterns from new loads such as electric vehicles, data centres, and hydrogen, which strengthens the case for flexibility, storage, and transparent planning as immediate priorities.

¹ Ministry of Energy and Mineral Resources, Annual Report 2024.

² UNDP, Arab Future Energy Index, 2023.

³ Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, Economic Modernisation Vision, 2022.

⁴ Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, General Electricity Law No. 10 of 2025.

⁵ Ministry of Energy and Mineral Resources, Third National Energy Efficiency Action Plan, 2024.

⁶ The Jordan Times, EMRC to Replace All Electric Meters with Smart Ones by 2025, 2024.

⁷ ToU means electricity costs more at busy peak times and less at quieter times, so users and businesses have a clear incentive to shift flexible uses into cheaper, often cleaner hours, which eases pressure on the grid and helps lower overall system costs.

⁸ IMF, Country Report No. 25/155, 2025, p. 11.

⁹ NEPCO, Annual Report 2024.

¹⁰ Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, Regulation No. 58 of 2024.

¹¹ Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, Regulation No. 110 of 2024.

¹² Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, Regulation No. 58 of 2024.

These obstacles matter for three reasons. First, they slow private investment exactly when Jordan needs more clean energy capacity to meet demand and reduce its dependence on imported energy, as 74% of Jordan's total energy is imported.¹³ Second, they risk keeping electricity costs high for households, firms, and the public budget, especially given NEPCO's accumulated losses.¹⁴ Third, they limit the competitiveness of the water, industry, and services sectors by raising production costs.

With these developments in mind, the paper asks,

- "Which constraints bind Jordan's energy transition, and what policy package would solve them while protecting affordability and system adequacy?"

To answer this question, the paper uses the official Jordanian legal and regulatory documents as its main evidence base, classifying provisions according to whether they are binding, partially binding, or enabling for the energy transition. It then adopts a policy transfer approach, building on Germany's experiences as one of the most advanced countries when it comes to energy transitions,¹⁵ and, where relevant, draws on EU-level directives that inform German practice. This approach examines how instruments from Germany fit Jordan's context and what adaptations and sequencing of solutions would be effective in Jordan. In doing so, this paper translates the EMV priorities into a sequenced, evidence-based policy package tailored to Jordan's institutions and political economy that would advance the energy transition.

The paper proceeds as follows: Section 2 presents the Methodology, Section 3 reports the Findings, Section 4 sets out the Recommendations, and Section 5 concludes.

2 Methodology

The study diagnoses the Jordanian energy sector and then employs a policy transfer approach from Germany to Jordan. First, it classifies each Jordanian rule according to its degree of constraint on the energy transition. The core evidence base is the official Jordanian set of laws and regulatory documents in force (laws, regulations, tariff booklets, interconnection guidelines, and NEPCO plans). Using a classification scheme that combines the strength of the evidence and its impact on the energy transition, the paper distinguishes three levels of rules:

- A **binding** rule is in force today and clearly limits the size, timing, or economics of the energy transition.
- A **partially binding** rule only applies in certain places, time periods, or under specific conditions, but does not directly block the energy transition.
- A **non-binding (enabling)** rule is either enabling or neutral for the energy transition.

Second, to move from diagnosis to solutions, the paper then matches each Jordanian constraint with a German instrument that serves a similar function. For every match, the research records: (i) what the instrument does in Germany, (ii) the specific Jordanian constraint it can solve, (iii)

¹³ Ministry of Energy and Mineral Resources, Energy Balance Data 2024.

¹⁴ NEPCO, Financial Statements, 2025.

¹⁵ World Economic Forum, Fostering Effective Energy Transition, 2024.

a design-fit judgement (High/Medium/Low) based on institutional fit, incentive alignment, administrative capacity, legal feasibility, and political-economy viability, and (iv) pre-requisites, risks, and Jordanian implementing actor(s). The result is a set of concrete reforms sequenced into a three-phase roadmap (36-18 ,18-6 ,6-0 months) that removes the constraints on the Jordanian energy transition. To track progress, the paper proposes a KPI framework.

All constraint classifications are derived from operative legal and technical clauses, not from secondary commentary, and each binding constraint is tied to a specific, measurable rule or cost that affects the Jordanian energy transition. Limitations remain, as some operational data may be incomplete, institutional capacity and political priorities can shift over the reform horizon, and some instruments depend on robust IT and data systems. These risks are addressed through the recommendations and KPI design.

3 Findings

This section presents the results across the diagnosis. It identifies the main constraints, explains how they affect the energy transition, and flags the direction of fit with proven instruments from Germany and the EU adapted to Jordan's context. Binding constraints that directly affect the energy transition include: (i) the Connection Regulation No. 58 of 2024 (amended in Regulation No. 110 of 2024), which limits the size and economics of rooftop and C&I solar systems, and (ii) the network services fee, which adds a recurring cost that weakens project economics. A second group of partially binding constraints comprises: (i) the financial and structural limits of the single-buyer model that concentrates offtake risk in NEPCO, because almost all projects sell their power to a single, financially stressed utility, which makes investors cautious about new projects without governmental guarantees, as seen in 2014 when Jordan cancelled the third round of the renewables programme. At that time, the Ministry of Energy and Mineral Resources opened a third Direct Proposal round for utility-scale renewables (100 MW class PV projects, with roughly 400 MW expected), extended the submission deadline, and then cancelled the round,¹⁶ (ii) the absence of a multi-year, calendarised auction schedule, which keeps the project pipeline uncertain, (iii) weak enforcement of energy efficiency obligations, and (iv) the underdevelopment of low-cost heat options such as clean process heat. By contrast, enabling measures include ToU, a legal framework that supports Independent Power Producers (IPPs), wheeling, storage, tax exemptions, and funds for renewables and efficiency. The following subsections unpack each constraint, trace its effects on the energy transition, and indicate the solutions.

3.1 Grid Access and Connection: Static Caps and Upgrade Rules

This section directly responds to the EMV Second Implementation Phase Plan diagnosis that Jordan's grid faces limited absorptive capacity for additional renewables, largely because storage solutions are absent. These challenges strengthen the case for moving from static caps to dynamic hosting capacity as a system reliability tool. Under the current framework, the binding constraint is Regulation No. 58 of 2024, which governs the four approved connection mechanisms: Wheeling (off-site solar PV systems), Net Billing (on-site), Zero-to-Grid,

¹⁶ Addustour Newspaper, Cancellation of the “third round” of direct bids for renewable energy projects, 2014.

and Buy-all/Sell-all. It links system size to past consumption, caps small low-voltage (LV) systems at 16 A per phase with a %15 substation ceiling, and requires projects to use only one mechanism. For net billing, exports are netted within fixed time bands, and any monthly credit is zeroed at the end of each calendar year, with no cash-out of surplus value. Applicants must also pay for connection and any needed LV distribution upgrades, which increases upfront cost uncertainty and can block otherwise viable projects. While the guide introduces clearer procedures, service-level agreements (SLAs), and a useful zero-export option for constrained feeders, the combination of static caps, consumption-linked sizing, and annual credit reset limits the economic and technical scalability of rooftop and C&I solar systems, even where the grid could accommodate more. Overall, this regulation increases initial investment costs and lengthens payback periods for solar energy projects. Ultimately, this leads to slower adoption of renewable energy.

There is high potential in moving from static ceilings to managed and dynamic hosting. Drawing on Germany's approach¹⁷ to power plants in LV networks that require smart inverter functions and remote feed-in management.¹⁸ This enables higher PV densities with occasional controlled curtailment (curtailment means plants are asked to reduce output even when they could generate more, resulting in lost potential renewable generation). Recent European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD) transmission upgrades in Jordan complement this approach. The Northern Green Substation is expected to eliminate approximately 300 GWh/year of curtailment by 2028, easing locational limits while distribution flexibility scales.¹⁹

3.2 Tariffs, Prosumers, and Incentives: Network Services Fee and ToU Signals

The network services fee is a binding constraint because it directly weakens project economics. It is charged monthly per kilowatt (kW) and differentiated by sector up to JOD 14 per kW per month (e.g., ports 14, commercial 13, telecom 12, private hospitals 12, large industrial 8, EV charging 8, residential 1) with specific exemptions (small and medium industrial and agriculture).²⁰ This fee acts as a recurring operating cost that lengthens payback periods and discourages new projects. By contrast, the rollout of ToU tariffs is supportive. By making electricity cheaper in off-peak periods and more expensive at peak, ToU gives users a clear incentive to shift flexible demand into lower-cost, often more solar-rich hours, improving the use of existing capacity and easing peaks without raising tariffs. The second phase in Jordan extended ToU to banking, private hospitals, water pumping, and hotels, with three daily periods.²¹ Putting it together, the reforms should now emphasise targeted subsidies, grid efficiency, and ToU activation over broad price rises.

Moreover, the EMV Second Implementation Phase Plan explicitly calls for studying the electricity tariff and support structure to better incentivise economic sectors and revisit support policies. This strengthens the rationale for reforming the network services fee as a targeted, cost-reflective instrument linked to cost-of-service studies, rather than a blunt charge that lengthens payback periods and undermines competitiveness.

¹⁷ VDE Association, Power Generating Plants in the Low Voltage Network (VDE-AR-N 4105), 2019.

¹⁸ Federal Republic of Germany, Renewable Energy Sources Act (EEG 2023), Section 9.

¹⁹ EBRD, NEPCO Northern Green Substation, 2024.

²⁰ Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, Regulation No. 58 of 2024.

²¹ Ministry of Energy and Mineral Resources, MEMR and EMRC Grant an Incentivizing Off-Peak Electricity Tariff to Several Vital Productive Sectors, 2025.

3.3 Market Design and Offtaker Viability: Single-Buyer Path Dependence

General Electricity Law No. 10 of 2025 is an enabling measure that lays the groundwork for gradual competition, empowers EMRC on tariffs and wheeling, and provides a framework for energy storage.²² However, the current reality is still dominated by NEPCO as the single-buyer. With accumulated losses of JOD 6.2 billion²³ (%14 of gross public debt; %16.4 of nominal GDP) and significant legacy contracts, NEPCO's financial position creates structural offtaker risk, meaning that the main buyer may not always be able to pay on time or sign new long-term Power Purchase Agreements (PPAs). This weighs on new utility-scale projects and is a partially binding constraint.

German balancing group accounting (MaBiS),²⁴ the rulebook for how balancing groups settle their energy positions, and standard balancing responsible party (BRP) contracts,²⁵ for entities that keep their customers' supply and demand in balance, provide a reference for piloting a simplified, corridor-based approach in Jordan, while maintaining NEPCO as the buyer of last resort. Over the longer term, the German Energy Industry Act (EnWG)²⁶ provides the trajectory towards non-discriminatory network access and third-party supply once institutions and data systems mature. These tools help Jordan move from a system in which one company carries all the risk to one in which that risk is shared more fairly. They also create clear rules so that more players can safely buy and sell electricity without destabilising the grid. Over time, this makes the energy sector more attractive to investors and less dependent on NEPCO alone. Critically, the EMV Second Implementation Phase Plan flags that no clear technical and financial studies currently evaluate the pathway from the single-buyer model to a more liberalised market, so controlled BRP and wheeling pilots are not ideological market opening; they are the most practical way to generate the evidence base for future reform decisions without destabilising the system.

3.4 Procurement and Pipeline: From Stop-Go to Rules-Based Auctions

Following the 2017 suspension on projects exceeding 1 megawatt (MW), the suspension has been lifted under updated mechanisms.²⁷ Procurement has restarted with an Expression of Interest for a 200 MW solar PV project.²⁸ However, the absence of a multi-year, calendarised auction schedule means the energy transition pathway remains unpredictable, rather than vision-driven, which constitutes a partially binding constraint on the scale of the renewables project pipeline.

Germany's Renewable Energy Act (EEG) auction model,²⁹ with clear volumes, standard documents, and a multi-year timetable, offers a ready template for Jordan to institutionalise

²² Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, General Electricity Law No. 10 of 2025.

²³ NEPCO, Financial Statements, 2025.

²⁴ Federal Republic of Germany, Market Rules for Electricity Balancing-Group Accounting, 2025.

²⁵ Federal Republic of Germany, Standard Balancing Responsible Party Contracts, 2023.

²⁶ Federal Republic of Germany, German Energy Industry Act, 2025.

²⁷ Ministry of Energy and Mineral Resources, Kharabsheh: Re-granting approvals for the installation of renewable energy systems equal to 1 MW or more, 2024.

²⁸ Ministry of Energy and Mineral Resources, Request for Submission of Expression of Interest under the Direct Proposal Submission Process, 2025.

²⁹ Federal Republic of Germany, EEG Auction Model, 2025.

regular, competitive auctions adapted to a single-buyer context and supported, where needed, by credit enhancements. Jordan can benefit from these templates by moving from episodic rounds to a published 5-3 year auction calendar with pre-announced annual volumes and technology-specific parameters, alongside transparent ceiling prices that create a reliable framework and keep support costs competitive.

3.5 Energy Efficiency: Enforcement, Data Gaps, and Investability

NEEAP 2026-2024 targets final energy savings of %4.33 by 2026 and %5.44 for electricity. It highlights the need for stronger audits and management systems for large energy users,³⁰ which are essential for enabling the energy transition. However, enforcement of audits, building codes, and data reporting is inconsistent.³¹ The absence of mandatory energy audits for at least large users produces a partially binding constraint. Furthermore, low-cost heat options such as solar water heating (SWH) and clean process heat are also underdeveloped due to weak enforcement of existing mandates, uneven quality infrastructure, and limited finance, creating a partially binding constraint on the uptake of these least-cost efficiency options.

The German energy efficiency obligations,³² enterprise audit or ISO 50001³³ requirements, and building energy codes³⁴ offer a ready template to generate actionable data and credible demand for financeable retrofits. Jordan's fit is high, provided mandates are phased and paired with audit subsidies and a green finance facility to absorb the initial compliance cost. Jordan can localise the German approach by turning energy efficiency from an encouraged activity into a mandatory, standardised process. This can be done by requiring large users to comply in phases (starting with the biggest consumers), measuring through standard energy audits or ISO 50001-style management systems, and submitting a short implementation plan that lists priority measures with costs and expected savings. The government can then make compliance affordable by co-funding early audits and establishing an accredited auditor system, while a dedicated green retrofit finance facility (with simple credit support where needed) converts verified plans into loans that companies and building owners can utilise. Finally, consistent inspections and basic penalties for non-compliance, especially in building codes and solar water heating, would improve data quality, strengthen investor confidence, and accelerate least-cost efficiency investments.

3.6 Delivery and Investment Readiness: Making EMV Phase II Implementable and Financeable

EMV Phase II is being run as an execution programme, tracked through defined priorities, liaison officers, and project reporting cards supported by routine monitoring and progress review. The implications of the constraints identified above are straightforward: Jordan's bottlenecks are now delivery ones, reforms succeed only if they become repeatable administrative routines with standard procedures, timelines, transparent outputs that reduce discretion and survive institutional turnover.

³⁰ Ministry of Energy and Mineral Resources, Third National Energy Efficiency Action Plan, 2024.

³¹ Guidehouse, Regulatory Analysis Jordan, 2022.

³² Federal Republic of Germany, Energy Services Act and Energy Efficiency Measures, 2025.

³³ International Organization for Standardization, ISO 50001 - Energy Management, 2023.

³⁴ Federal Republic of Germany, Building Energy Act, 2023.

Investment readiness in Jordan is inseparable from EMV's financing logic. The Vision anticipates roughly JD 41 billion in investment, with the majority driven by private investment and Public Private Partnerships (PPPs). In practice, this means the fastest way to unlock capital is to make the biggest investor unknowns priceable: (i) predictable grid, (ii) standardised exposure to upgrade costs, and (iii) rule-based operational risk treatment so investors can model cashflows.

Under a policy transfer lens, the lesson from Germany and the EU is not institutional imitation but functional equivalence. Standardise rules, publish system information, and treat system management actions as governed instruments rather than ad hoc discretion. Germany's regulatory practice makes this concrete. For example, when renewables are curtailed via feed-in management, the plant operator has a claim to compensation, which turns curtailment from political risk into a governed system tool. At the EU level, the same investability logic appears in rules that require prosumer charges to be non-discriminatory and proportionate, and that enable customers with smart meters to request dynamic price contracts, principles that reinforce the move toward cost-reflective charging, ToU, and dynamic pricing as system tools.

Finally, to match EMV Phase II's governance, the Recommendations in Section 4 should be managed as a small delivery portfolio. Accountable owners per reform, quarterly milestones, and a minimal public dashboard focused on what the market needs to trust implementation. Where the EMV Phase II highlights evidence gaps for future market decisions, Jordan should rely on controlled pilots to generate evidence and validate technical and financial pathways before scaling.

4 Recommendations

To enable Jordan's energy transition, the following recommendations address identified regulatory, institutional, and operational gaps that currently limit the development of renewables and energy efficiency. They are organised into three complementary parts. The first section outlines the steps to take first, next, and later. Phase 1 delivers rules and technology flips that unlock growth. Phase 2 stabilises grid operations and energy efficiency. Phase 3 pilots market enablers. The second section introduces KPIs that make delivery measurable and auditable with defined owners and formulas. The final section outlines risk mitigation and enabling measures to implement these recommendations.

4.1 Sequencing Roadmap: What to do First, Next, and Later

Phase 1 (0-6 months): Rules and Technology Changes that Unlock Capacity

1. Resolve Connection Regulation No. 58 of 2024

Amend this regulation to size connections based on published hosting capacity (i.e., the amount of extra generation each feeder can safely accept) on each feeder, rather than relying on past bills, and use inverters to cap exports where necessary. Authorise dynamic export limits where distribution system operators (DSOs) can support them. Create an optional PV-with-storage fast track that allows projects with certified batteries and export limits to exceed the 16 A per phase cap or historical consumption, while still protecting local network reliability.

2. Refine the Network Services Fee to Balance Cost Recovery and Investment Signals

Redesign the network services fee to be cost-reflective and size-sensitive, exempting small prosumers (customers who both consume and produce electricity) and preserving uptake. A temporary neutrality fund can backfill DSO and NEPCO revenue gaps. Transparent cost-of-service studies and stakeholder consultation should back the new fee model. This maintains revenue adequacy while removing a key investment hurdle.

3. Activate ToU Tariffs Across Jordan's Existing Smart Meter Base

Expand the activation of ToU tariffs and scale to other segments over time. ToU will incentivise solar-aligned usage, reduce curtailment, and improve system efficiency without raising tariffs. EMRC and DSOs should configure meters, publish ToU schedules, and monitor activation.

4. Publish a Transparent Auction Calendar and Standardise Procurement

Publish a rolling 3-2 year auction calendar with specific volumes tied to grid capacity, release standard documents, and maintain consistent timelines. Auctions should be backed by PPAs with financeable terms, including curtailment clauses, and credit enhancements where needed. This will help long-term planning and visionary actions.

5. Mandate Transparency Through Public Dashboards and SLAs

Maintain public dashboards that report connection SLAs, hosting capacity maps, curtailment statistics, and auction outcomes. All updates should be standardised and machine-readable.

Phase 2 (6-18 months): Lock in Operations, Auctions, Flexibility, and Efficiency

6. Institutionalise Redispatch with Compensation

Set out in the grid code how and when the system operator can turn plants down or up (redispatch), in what order, and how affected projects will be measured and compensated. Standardise these rules in PPAs. Publish statistics on curtailment and compensation (for example, MWh curtailed and JOD/MWh paid). This keeps the system flexible while making curtailment risk transparent and manageable.

7. Use Controllable Loads to Ease Grid Stress

Launch pilots with large flexible loads, such as water pumps and major cooling loads, on the most stressed feeders. DSOs should be able to briefly reduce demand under predefined conditions, with participating customers compensated, for example, through contractual payments. This is a cost-effective way to address grid bottlenecks and integrate more renewable energy sources, especially in areas where grid reinforcement is still underway.

8. Enforce Energy Efficiency Obligations for Buildings and Large Energy Users

Strengthen inspections of energy efficiency code compliance at occupancy, introduce audit mandates for industrial users, and encourage the adoption of ISO 50001. Enforcement teams must be adequately funded and their activities closely tracked. Energy efficiency audit data should feed into policy and finance design. This turns paper obligations into real and verifiable savings.

9. Expand Finance for Energy Efficiency, Low-cost Heat, and Rooftop Solutions.

Allocate further funds to the Jordan Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency Fund (JREEEF) and link it with commercial banks' credit lines, supported by partial guarantees or blended finance. Offer simple co-financing programmes (for example, a grant plus a bank loan) for rooftop PV, storage, and efficiency retrofits in homes, businesses, and public buildings. Within these programmes, explicitly prioritise low-cost heat options such as SWH and clean process heat, supported by quality assurance schemes and clear rules for combined heat-and-power (CHP) connections and heat sales. This transforms audits and identified opportunities into financeable projects at scale, including the cheapest forms of heat decarbonisation.

Phase 3 (18-36 months): Market Opening Pilots and Broader ToU Expansion

10. Enable Structured Third-Party Supply Through BRP Pilots and Wheeling Templates

EMRC and NEPCO should issue a standard BRP contract and simplified settlement protocols for pilots. Initial projects may be limited to corridors with available capacity, with NEPCO serving as the buyer of last resort during the transition. This builds the basic conditions needed for gradual competition without destabilising the system or overloading institutions.

11. Deepen Dynamic Control and ToU-based Flexibility

Building on Phases 1 and 2, extend remote feed-in management, dynamic export limits, and ToU eligibility to more customer groups as smart meters and IT systems mature. This allows the system operator and DSOs to manage higher shares of renewables through a mix of price signals and technical control, rather than rigid caps.

4.2 KPIs Framework

To align delivery with EMV and make it measurable, the paper proposes a two-tier KPI framework with clear ownership. Tier A tracks delivery KPIs that operationalise the reforms, while Tier B tracks EMV Phase II energy impact indicators (system outcomes). Also, the KPIs track whether today's constraints are being turned into managed, rules-based parameters while investment in renewables and efficiency scales up. Headline indicators cover system and curtailment rates, hosting capacity coverage, ToU activation, the prosumer-fee impact on defined residential and C&I reference cases, PPA financeability share, BRP pilot load, energy efficiency, and finance mobilised, each with clear definitions, formulas, and owners to ensure transparency and accountability. The detailed KPIs table is provided in Appendix 1.

4.3 Risk Mitigation and Enabling Measures

Where Section 4.1 outlined the recommendations roadmap, this subsection highlights cross-cutting design and implementation measures that should accompany those reforms across all three phases, so that they are financially neutral and socially acceptable.

- Keeping NEPCO financially stable: When changing network fees or easing grid caps, build in a mechanism that protects NEPCO from sudden revenue losses.
- Projects Development: Build a calendarised auction programme and ensure standard PPAs include curtailment and settlement clauses. This will lower risk premia and attract a larger pool of bidders.
- ToU activation assurance: Implement a one-cycle shadow billing process before cut-over, publish simple bill examples, and protect vulnerable users.
- Energy efficiency and low-cost heat enablers: Subsidise audits, capitalise a green finance facility with partner banks, train auditors and inspectors, and tie building-code compliance to occupancy permits. Within this, emphasise low-cost heat options to realise them at scale.

5 Conclusion

This paper argues that Jordan's energy transition challenge is now institutional more than technical. Two constraints are clearly binding: the Connection Regulation No. 58 of 2024, which limits the adoption of rooftop and C&I solar, and the network services fee, which adds a recurring cost that lengthens payback periods and discourages new projects. A second group of partially binding constraints shapes the pace and risk profile of the transition, including the single-buyer model, the absence of a calendarised auction schedule, weak enforcement of energy efficiency, and the underdevelopment of low-cost heat solutions.

The evidence shows these frictions can be converted into managed, rules-based parameters. The paper recommends shifting from static caps and consumption ceilings towards rules that actively manage hosting capacity, price signals, curtailment, and offtaker risk. Transparency is important through dashboards covering curtailment, connections, auctions, transmission milestones, ToU, BRP pilots, and energy efficiency delivery. It is supported by a KPI framework that makes delivery measurable and auditable, as well as by cross-cutting measures to ensure the financial stability of NEPCO and DSOs during the implementation of reforms.

Sequenced over three phases, this package first removes the binding constraints, locks in predictable operations and scales investment next, then pilots gradual market opening. Together, these steps convert today's frictions into clear, predictable, and rules-based parameters for investors and consumers. In doing so, the paper advances EMV objectives by delivering more clean electricity, stronger system adequacy, and lower risk premia, while positioning Jordan as a regional benchmark for the rules-based integration of distributed and utility-scale renewables. This approach captures economic value and advances industry competitiveness through lower energy costs for citizens and the C&I sector, as well as from regional power exports. Ultimately, strengthening energy security through greater resilience to geopolitical shocks.

Appendix 1: Detailed KPIs Table

Tier A tracks delivery KPIs that operationalise the reforms in this paper. Tier B aligns with EMV Phase II energy impact indicators.

KPI	What it Verifies	Measurement	Owner(s)
A. Reform Delivery KPIs			
Curtailment rate - system	Effectiveness of redispatch and congestion management (system-level)	Curtailed MWh ÷ (curtailed MWh + delivered MWh) per month/quarter (system)	NEPCO
Curtailment rate - node and feeder	Local congestion management performance and visibility of bottlenecks	Curtailed MWh ÷ (curtailed MWh + delivered MWh) per node/feeder, publish top constrained locations	NEPCO, DSOs
Compensated - curtailment share	Whether curtailment is codified and compensated (bankability)	% of curtailed MWh compensated under published rules (by technology and size segment)	EMRC, NEPCO
Redispatch/curtailment compensation exposure	Transparency of system-management cost and incentives for least-cost dispatch	JOD paid for redispatch and curtailment per month, also JOD/MWh curtailed (system)	NEPCO, EMRC
Hosting-capacity coverage (LV/MV)	Shift from static caps to physics-based access, transparency for investors	% of LV/MV feeders with published hosting capacity maps and standard connection offers (by DSO)	DSOs, NEPCO, EMRC
Cap-substitution share	Replacement of consumption ceilings/16A and % caps by export-limited/dynamic connections	% of new LV/MV renewable energy connections approved via export-limited or dynamic export arrangements	EMRC, DSOs
Feeder export-limit control coverage	DSO capability to operate dynamic export limits and smart-inverter telemetry	% of constrained feeders with remote export-limit control plus verified telemetry and communications	DSOs
Connection lead time (LV/MV)	Process efficiency and predictability for rooftop and C&I projects	Median days from complete application to energisation, publish distribution by step	DSOs
Connection SLA adherence	Delivery against published service-level timelines (administrative discipline)	% of connections meeting each SLA milestone on time (application review, site visit, offer, energisation)	DSOs, EMRC
ToU and dynamic pricing activation (on AMI base)	Price-signal deployment (not just meters installed)	Eligible AMI accounts billed on ToU/dynamic tariff ÷ total eligible AMI accounts (by segment and feeder stress)	DSOs, EMRC

AMI functional readiness (constrained feeders)	Readiness for ToU and controllable-load pilots (data and remote configuration)	% AMI on priority feeders passing interval-data quality, remote-config, and settlement tests	DSOs
Prosumer fee impact (reference cases)	Effect of network services fee redesign on uptake and bankability (cost-reflective, non-discriminatory)	% change in simple payback for defined residential and C&I reference cases vs current fee schedule	EMRC
Auction calendar adherence	Predictable, rules-based procurement (pipeline credibility)	MW scheduled in published calendar that are tendered and awarded on time (% and dates)	MEMR, EMRC
Project delivery (auctioned PPAs)	Execution and on-time COD, investor confidence in delivery chain	% of awarded MW achieving COD within contractual schedule, report slippage reasons	MEMR, NEPCO
PPA bankability share	Contract standardisation (curtailment, settlement, change-in-law, step-in rights as relevant)	% of new PPAs using the published standard and including codified curtailment and settlement clauses	EMRC, MEMR
Transmission Milestone Index	On-time delivery of grid reinforcements that unlock hosting capacity	MW weighted % of planned 400 kV and 132/33 kV works delivered on schedule (quarterly)	NEPCO
BRP and MaBiS-lite pilot load	Market plumbing progress for wheeling corridors and third-party supply pilots	MWh served under BRP and MaBiS-lite pilots on ring-fenced corridors, number of participants	EMRC, NEPCO
Controllable load participation	Flexibility available to DSOs (demand response) to ease feeder stress	Enrolled flexible load (MW) and number of verified control events on priority feeders; MWh shifted	DSOs, EMRC
Energy efficiency audit compliance (large users)	Enforcement of energy efficiency obligations and data generation	% of obliged sites completing audits or ISO 50001-style systems (by threshold) and submitting action plans	MEMR, EMRC
Energy efficiency and rooftop and storage finance mobilised	Conversion of audits and demand into funded projects (crowding-in capital)	JOD committed and JOD disbursed via JREEEF-linked and partner-bank lines, number of projects financed	JREEEF, CBJ
Dashboard publication lag	Transparency and delivery discipline (public trust)	Median days from month-end to dashboard update (per KPI category)	EMRC
Dashboard completeness and data quality	Transparency and reliability of reporting	% of KPI fields populated and % passing basic validation rules; flag missing series	EMRC, MEMR

B. EMV Phase II Energy Impact Indicators (Outcome KPIs)			
Total exports from the energy sector (JOD)	Contribution of energy sector to the economy and value creation	Annual value of energy sector exports (e.g., electricity exports and other energy products) per official trade statistics	DOS, MEMR
Value reduction in electricity sector losses (JOD)	Whether reforms reduce system waste and cost	(Losses MWh baseline – Losses MWh current) × bulk supply cost (JOD/MWh), report alongside losses %	EMRC, NEPCO, DSOs
Electricity losses rate (technical and non-technical) (%)	Operational efficiency and theft and collection impact (companion indicator)	(Energy purchased by DSOs – energy billed) ÷ energy purchased (annual)	DSOs, EMRC
Absorptive capacity for electricity generation - conventional (MW)	System ability to integrate additional conventional generation within network and security constraints	MW of additional conventional generation connectable and dispatchable under published NEPCO grid studies and plans (annual)	NEPCO, MEMR
Absorptive capacity for electricity generation - renewables (MW)	System ability to integrate additional renewables (hosting capacity at transmission level)	MW of additional renewable generation connectable and dispatchable under published NEPCO grid studies and plans (annual)	NEPCO, MEMR
Average outage duration	Reliability improvement (service quality)	Total customer interruption minutes ÷ total customers (annual)	DSOs, EMRC; NEPCO (system)
Average cost of electricity generation and bulk supply cost	Cost competitiveness and dispatch efficiency	Total generation or bulk supply cost ÷ total supplied MWh (define series and publish)	NEPCO, MEMR
Energy self-sufficiency (%)	Energy security outcome	Domestic primary energy supply ÷ total primary energy supply (annual)	MEMR, DOS
Local sources share in electricity generation (%)	Shift toward local sources (renewables + domestic gas)	(Renewables + domestic-gas generation) ÷ total generation (annual)	NEPCO, MEMR
Energy intensity	Economy wide efficiency outcome	kg oil equivalent per 1,000 JOD (constant prices) (annual)	DOS, MEMR
CO2 emissions from energy sector	Decarbonisation outcome	tCO2e (energy sector) per year, optional intensity metric (tCO2e/GDP)	MoEnv, MEMR
Industrial clusters covered by gas network	Competitiveness and fuel switching enabler	Number of industrial clusters connected, optional throughput and new connections per year	MEMR, gas operator

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Jordan rank in Energy Transition Index (ETI)	International benchmarking of transition performance and readiness	WEF ETI rank (annual) and score where available	MEMR, PMO
Jordan score in Regulatory Indicators for Sustainable Energy (RISE)	Regulatory readiness benchmark (renewables and energy efficiency pillars)	World Bank and ESMAP RISE score (latest) and pillar breakdown	EMRC, MEMR
Energy sector investment mobilised (domestic and foreign) (JOD)	Investment climate and pipeline conversion	JOD committed and JOD reaching financial close, split domestic, FDI, PPP (annual)	MOPIC, MEMR



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