



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

COUNTRY PORTFOLIO EVALUATION

UN WOMEN JORDAN

STRATEGIC NOTE 2018-2022

THIS REPORT PRESENTS THE MAIN FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE COUNTRY PORTFOLIO EVALUATION (CPE) OF THE UN WOMEN JORDAN COUNTRY OFFICE, CONDUCTED BETWEEN SEPTEMBER 2022 AND AUGUST 2023. A CPE IS A SYSTEMATIC ASSESSMENT OF THE NORMATIVE, COORDINATION AND OPERATIONAL ASPECTS OF UN WOMEN'S CONTRIBUTION TO DEVELOPMENT RESULTS RELATED TO GENDER EQUALITY AND WOMEN'S EMPOWERMENT AT THE COUNTRY LEVEL.

JORDAN COUNTRY CONTEXT

- ◆ Jordan is an upper-middle-income country, heavily dependent on fossil fuel imports and one of the most water-poor countries in the world.
- ◆ 2021 unemployment rate in Jordan was **24.1 per cent**, **22.4 per cent** among males and **30.7 per cent** among females.
- ◆ Since 2012, Jordan has received hundreds of thousands of refugees fleeing the conflict in Syria. As of 30 June 2022, **675,433** Syrian refugees were registered with UNHCR in Jordan, of which 542,614 live in host communities.
- ◆ Jordan ranked **131 of 156 countries** in the Global Gender Gap Index Ranking, up seven places compared to 2020.
- ◆ Only **15.6 per cent of women** are in the labour force despite high education attainment.
- ◆ Gender-based violence **remains a widespread issue**.
- ◆ Social attitudes towards gender-based violence: **68.7 per cent** of men and **42 per cent** of women believe it is justified for a man to beat his wife in some circumstances.

Background of UN Women in Jordan

The UN Women Jordan Country Office has been in existence since 2010. The Country Office supports the Government of Jordan to implement global norms and standards on gender equality and women's empowerment; promotes women's economic empowerment; implements a resilience and empowerment model for Syrian refugee women and vulnerable Jordanian women; and supports the government and other national stakeholders to meet Jordan's commitments to UN Security Council Resolution 1325 on women, peace and security. The Country Office's engagement is built on a partnership with the national women's machinery and the government, particularly the Jordanian National Commission for Women, the Inter-Ministerial Committee for Women's Empowerment, the Ministry of Social Development, the Ministry of Planning & International Cooperation and the Ministry of Labour. The Country Office also has a collaborative relationship with the wider public, including civil society organizations (CSOs), the women's movement, academia, private sector, the UN Country Team and international development players.

The Country Office's Strategic Note (2018–2022) addresses a number of priority areas for gender equality and women's empowerment in Jordan over five impact areas (Governance and leadership, Women's Economic Empowerment, Women's Peace and Security and Humanitarian Action, Frontier Issues and Normative Change) with Ending Violence Against Women as a cross-cutting impact area. As of October 2021, the Country Office had a

total of 64 personnel positions. The total budget for the 2018–2021 period was US\$ 44,354,135. The financial portfolio, specifically non-core resources, almost doubled between 2018 and 2021, with non-core funding amounting to 88.2 per cent of its total funding during 2018–2021, making the Jordan Country Office the office with the largest resources in the Arab States region.¹

Evaluation purpose, objectives and use

The CPE was conducted by the UN Women Independent Evaluation Service (IES) in close collaboration with the UN Women Jordan Country Office as a primarily formative (forward-looking) evaluation to support the Country Office and national stakeholders' strategic learning and decision-making for the next Strategic Note (2023–2027). The evaluation also had a secondary summative (retrospective) perspective, to support enhanced accountability for development effectiveness and learning from experience. The evaluation aimed to:

- ◇ Assess the **relevance** of UN Women's programmatic interventions at national levels and alignment with international agreements and conventions on gender equality and the empowerment of women.
- ◇ Assess the **effectiveness, organizational efficiency** and **coherence** of Country Office programming in progressing towards the achievement of gender equality and women's empowerment results as defined in the Strategic Note.

- ◇ Enable the Country Office to improve its strategic positioning to better support the achievement of **sustained** gender equality and the empowerment of women.
- ◇ Analyse how a **human rights approach** and **gender equality principles** are integrated in the design and implementation of the Strategic Note.
- ◇ Identify and validate **lessons learned**, good practices and examples of **innovation** that can be scaled up and replicated to support gender equality and human rights.
- ◇ Provide insights into the extent to which the UN Women has realized **synergies** from its integrated mandate (normative, UN system coordination and operational).

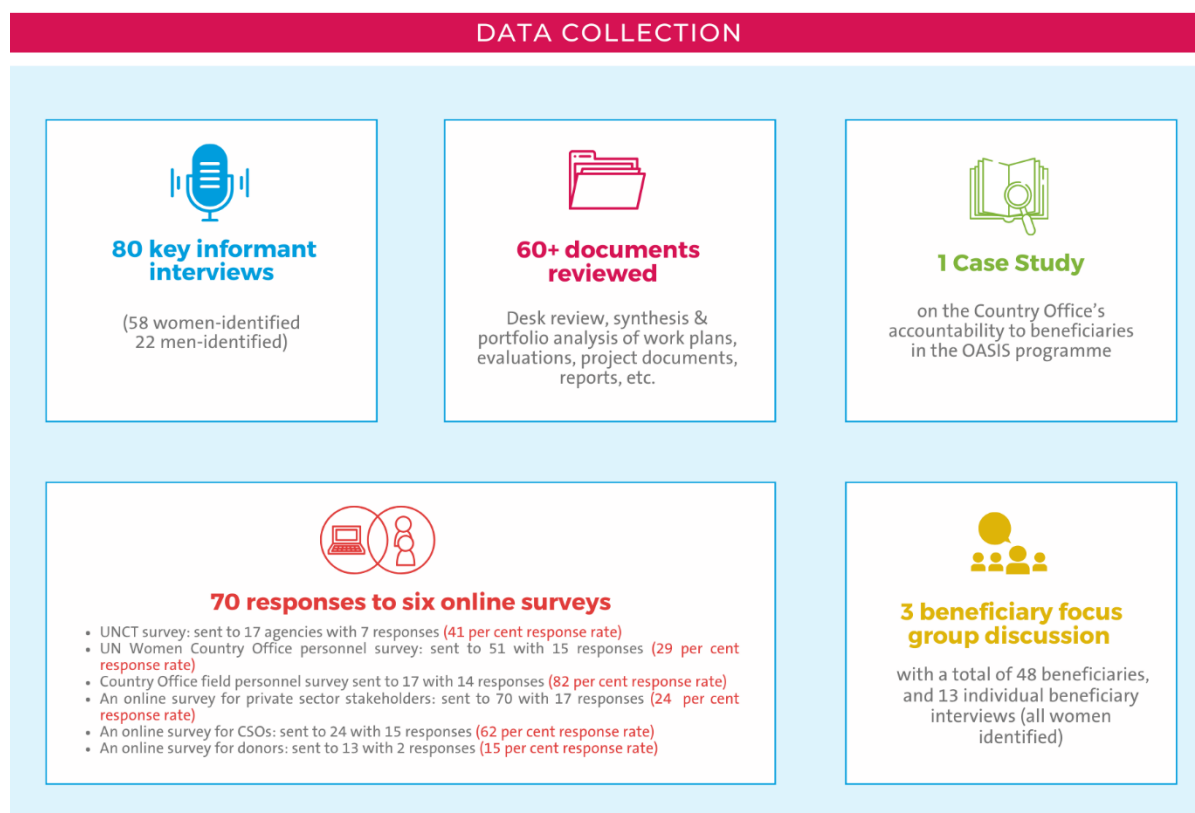


The primary intended users of this evaluation are UN Women management and Country Office personnel; the UN Women Executive Board, the UN Women Regional Office for the Arab States, UN Women headquarters and other Regional and Country Offices outside the Arab States region; target groups, their households and community members, programme and project partners; national and local governments in Jordan; civil society representatives; the donor community and other development partners; and the United Nations Country Team (UNCT).

Intended uses of the evaluation include learning and improved decision-making to support development of the next Strategic Note; accountability for the development effectiveness of UN Women’s contribution to gender equality and the empowerment of women; and capacity development and mobilization of national stakeholders to advance gender equality and the empowerment of women.

Evaluation methodology and data collection

The evaluation followed the principles of Gender-Responsive Evaluations and had ‘a utilization focused lens’. It used theory-based design to assess the performance of the Strategic Note based on its stated assumptions about how change happens. The evaluation used contribution analysis to assess the contribution made towards policy and legislative reforms, the OECD “Gender Equality across the Humanitarian-Development-Peace Nexus” framework for the analysis of the OASIS programme and JONAP interventions. It also used the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) Accountability to Affected People as a reference framework for the Case Study, Gender at Work analytical framework and the Gender Results Effectiveness Scale to assess the extent to which the Country Office had been gender transformative.



¹ This evaluation is taking place during the last year of Strategic Note implementation; hence the data for 2018-2021 is reflected. Full 2022 budget and delivery was not taken into consideration. Please note for 2018-2022 total budget was US\$ 58.95 million and expenditure US\$ 56.83 million.

Conclusion and recommendations

Conclusion 1: The Country Office's 2018–2022 Strategic Note was relevant and responsive to national, international and United Nations priorities for gender equality and the empowerment of women. Given the resource constraints, the Country Office managed to support the development pillars of its work by situating them within nexus programming. The Country Office achieved some tangible results through its existing programming. As the humanitarian financing envelope for Jordan shrinks, the Country Office needs to communicate more explicitly its vision, strategy and contribution towards the development pillars of work in its next Strategic Note.

Conclusion 2: The Country Office was recognized as an expert in gender equality in Jordan for its technical experience, contextual understanding, coordination work, strategic partnerships and ability to generate meaningful evidence and knowledge. There is opportunity for the Country Office to strengthen its partnership with donors, private sectors and CSOs to amplify a common and collective advocacy voice on women's rights and gender transformation in Jordan. Systems and processes to capture the impact of Country Office programming need strengthening.

Conclusion 3: The Country Office's staffing structure could be improved to ensure it is "fit for purpose", particularly for the direct implementation of the OASIS programme. At the time of the evaluation, the working environment was not conducive to the Country Office's optimal functioning. Regional management oversight needed to be more proactive and regular for countries such as Jordan with large programming and associated risks. UN Women's institutional approach to support leadership transition in such contexts needs to be tailor-made to minimize disruption.

Conclusion 4: The Country Office's work on leaving no one behind beyond its humanitarian programme to address the needs of the most vulnerable women (including those with intersectional vulnerabilities and disability) was limited and less systematic. Arrangements for accountability towards the affected population under its humanitarian portfolio were not fully effective and some of the Country Office's arrangements needed review and reconsideration. The Country Office had adopted some innovative and diverse approaches towards achieving gender transformation and social norms change and would benefit from a coherent strategy and systematic evidence gathering to confirm what is working and what is not to achieve gender social norms change.

Recommendation 1: The Country Office should ensure that the development pillars of its portfolio (Women's Economic Empowerment, Women's Political Participation and Ending Violence Against Women) have a clear strategy and receive dedicated focus and resources in the next Strategic Note.

Recommendation 2: The Country Office should revisit the underlying theory of change for its humanitarian development nexus programming. It should strengthen the programme's monitoring function and accountability mechanisms towards the target beneficiaries.

Recommendation 3: The Country Office should strengthen its coordination and convening role with respect to its relationships with the UNCT, donors, civil society and private sector. The Country Office's coordination work on gender and humanitarian action should be supported by a knowledge management strategy and plan.

Recommendation 4: The Country Office should re-invigorate its approach to evidence management, programme monitoring, data quality, analysis and sharing to ensure there is meaningful information about programme impact, evidence uptake and use.

Recommendation 5: The Country Office, with the support of the Regional Office, should undertake measures to enhance a positive workplace environment and adherence to the highest standards of the code of conduct. UN Women corporate management oversight and leadership transition arrangements should aim to proactively identify and manage risks and disruption and support better positioning of Country Offices to provide support to host countries and their partners.

Recommendation 6: The Country Office should embed targeted leave no one behind outcomes in the next Strategic Note paying specific attention to disability inclusion across its portfolio. It should develop a cross-cutting social norms change strategy to positively transform gender stereotypes across the portfolio and strengthen adherence to established best practices towards accountability to the affected population.
