

Share-Net
Jordan

The Knowledge Platform on
Sexual and Reproductive Health
and Reproductive Rights



NEWSLETTER

Share-Net Jordan Quarterly Newsletter – 2nd Quarter, 2020



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Foreword

Share-Net Jordan(SNJ) is pleased to present its 16th quarterly newsletter, which covers key activities and events accomplished in the 2nd quarter of 2020.

The newsletter aims to apprise researchers, decision-makers, policymakers, program developers and research organizations of the latest updates locally and internationally in the field of Sexual and Reproductive Health(SRH) within the context of SNJ activities.

In light of the COVID-19 outbreak, the Share-Net Jordan team carried out work remotely during the second quarter in compliance with government directives to limit the spread of infection. The Higher Population Council (HPC) played a vital role during the pandemic by shedding light on the characteristics of different population groups to help identify gaps and priorities that need to be taken into consideration when formulating policies and plans to support different population groups in society, especially vulnerable groups.

This newsletter presents the key activities and events which HPC and SNJ participated in during the second quarter of 2020 with regard to the consequences of the COVID-19 pandemic. HPC and SNJ took part in several local and regional conferences that discussed the impact of the pandemic. Moreover, HPC Secretary General and chairperson of the SNJ steering committee, Dr. Abla Amawi, led a meeting of the

Arab Council for Population and Development (ACPD) to discuss the impact of COVID-19 on different population and development sectors. Dr. Amawi also appeared as guest on various TV interviews to talk about the COVID-19 impact.

This newsletter also covers project proposals and grants which SNJ collaborated with relevant national agencies to participate in, as well as latest international reports and publications related to population and development issue.

Newsletter Topics

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COVID-19 Response in Jordan

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latest reports and publication :
Publication : Related to population issues

One: COVID-19 Response in Jordan:

HPC and SNJ complemented government efforts towards enhancing response to the consequences of the COVID-19 pandemic in Jordan by taking part in several local and regional events through virtual communication tools to discuss the repercussions of the pandemic, offer recommendations and give online presentations on how COVID-19 impacts different segments, particularly the vulnerable groups of the population.

Through her participation in these local and regional events, HPC secretary general and chairperson of SNJ steering committee, Dr. Abla Amawi, helped to shed light on the characteristics of different population groups to enable the identification of gaps and priorities that need to be taken into consideration while

formulating policies and plans to support the different groups of society.

It was also indicated that persons suffering from chronic illnesses are not more likely to be infected, but that their illnesses would expose them to higher risks if they contract COVID-19. The need to focus on refugees and ensure that readiness and response strategies are gender-sensitive have also been stressed as necessary to overcome the impact of this crisis.

In addition, Dr. Amawi explained that social protection consists of sound income and access to comprehensive healthcare and that income generation programs should aim to mitigate and prevent poverty through ensuring access to a reasonable level of income to compensate for lost income resulting from the inability to work (due to old age and disability) and access to paid work. There is also a need to review the criteria for eligibility or age-based targeting, health, participation in the labor market and revenues, social or economic status limitations, or even alignment with certain behavioral patterns. It is also necessary to support economically vulnerable groups in the Jordanian society, especially during the preventative measures taken by the government, which have caused the informal workforce to remain at home, stop working and lose their income.

Key events included:

•HPC and SNJ participate in regional dialogues on social protection policies in the Arab region



HPC Secretary General and chairperson of the SNJ steering committee, Dr. Abila Amawi, participated on May 5, 2020 in the regional dialogue series on “Social Protection Policies in the Arab World- The impact of the current crisis on social protection policies and their ability to address the consequences of the COVID-19 pandemic on different population groups in the Arab states”. The session was organized by the Arab Renaissance for Democracy and Development (ARDD) and livestreamed on Zoom.

During the session, Amawi talked about the targeted groups within the national framework for supporting economically vulnerable communities during COVID-19.

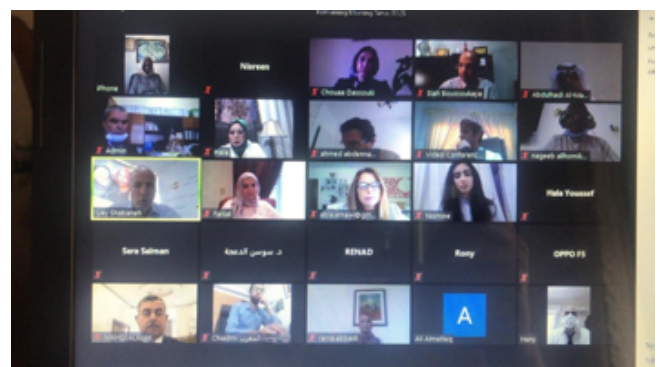
•HPC and SNJ participate in a semi-regional meeting entitled “Impact of COVID-19 on Women, particularly in terms of Domestic Violence”



HPC Secretary General and Chairperson of the SNJ Steering Committee, Dr. Abila Amawi, participated on May 6, 2020, in a semi-regional meeting on Zoom about gender and COVID-19 entitled “The Impact of COVID-19 on Women, particularly in terms of Domestic Violence,” as part of the Gender Dynamics during COVID-19 conference organized by Womenomics”.

At the session, Amawi highlighted the impact of COVID-19 on gender equality and the weaknesses exposed by the pandemic including the weak integration of women’s needs in response plans. Amawi also discussed the key components of gender-sensitive crisis-readiness and response strategies to help overcome the consequences of this crisis.

•Jordan Chairs the ACPD meeting on the impact of COVID-19 on populations in Arab States:



HPC Secretary General, Dr. Abla Amawi, who is also the Chairperson of the Arab Council for Population and Development/ Arab League and the Chairperson of SNJ Steering Committee, represented Jordan in chairing an ACPD video conference on May 20, 2020, organized by the Arab League/ Social Affairs Sector, Population Policies Department and the ACPD technical secretariat. Participants in the conference included members and heads of national population councils and committees in Arab countries, as well as population and development experts.

Attended by the Assistant Secretary General and head of the social affairs sector, Ambassador Dr. Haifa Abughazaleh, and UNFPA regional Director for the Arab States Dr. Luay Shabaheh, the conference aimed to discuss the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on populations in the Arab states and infection outbreak scenarios, and the role population councils play in response plans. The meeting focused on discussing the possible repercussions of COVID-19 on the future of the population in the Arab world, and the challenges Arab states face in containing the economic, social, health and political impact of the pandemic. The meeting also discussed population-related measures and policies that Arab states can adopt to address the consequences of this pandemic, especially on affected and the most vulnerable groups.

The meeting also discussed hypothetical projections and scenarios related to potential

injuries and deaths, to give an idea of what could happen in the future if the COVID-19 infection spreads. The scenarios and projections also serve as a planning tool for future policies and strategies to help mitigate the potential impact of the pandemic and examine long-term effects on the ability of Arab states to benefit from the demographic dividend and achieve the sustainable development goals.

In addition, the meeting discussed the role of population councils and committees in enhancing national response efforts to address COVID-19 and its impact on the population, assessing precautionary measures and their impact on achieving sustainable development and population policies. Participants also looked into possible ways to benefit from Arab states' experiences and best practices in combatting the spread of the pandemic.

•HPC and SNJ participate in a workshop entitled “Did COVID-19 Impact Violence and Discrimination Against Women in Jordan?”



HPC Secretary General and Chairperson of the SNJ Steering Committee, Dr. Abla Amawi, participated on May 30, 2020, through Zoom in a workshop organized by Al Quds Center

for Political Studies, entitled “Did COVID-19 Impact Violence and Discrimination against Women in Jordan?”

During the workshop Amawi talked about violence and discrimination against women during the COVID-19 pandemic and overviewed the main issues and challenges faced by women during the pandemic and the best ways to provide a safe and secure environment for women in these extraordinary times that Jordan is experiencing.

•HPC and SNJ participate in the 12th meeting for the Jordan Response Support Framework



HPC Secretary General and Chairperson of the SNJ steering committee, Dr. Abla Amawi, participated in the 12th meeting for the supporting framework of the Jordan response to the Syrian Refugee crisis, which was held on June 22, 2020 under the auspices of the Prime Minister, Dr. Omar Al-Razzaz via video conferencing technology.

The meeting aimed to launch the Jordan response plan to the Syrian crisis 2020-2022, in cooperation with the United Nations and donor countries.

The plan is the only reference for identifying what is needed to reduce the impact of hosting Syrian refugees, support host communities and support the treasury. The plan has been restructured to ensure alignment and integration with national plans, the Sustainable Development Goals and the Global Refugee Compact, while continuing to enhance resilience in dealing with humanitarian and development aspects of each sector. The plan also designates a separate chapter for the needs of the treasury, and adopts a multi-year approach extending to three years.

The plan consists of three key components; Host Community Needs, Infrastructure and Institutional Capacity Development Needs, and Refugee Needs. It also covers seven sectors; education, health, water, sanitation, social protection, justice, shelter and public services, which entails local governance, municipal services, energy, transport and environment, in addition to the economic empowerment sector which encompasses interventions in food security and livelihoods.



The President of Yarmouk University, Dr. Zaidan Kafafi, decided to form the board of the Princess Basma Center for Jordanian Women's Studies, chaired by Dr. Kafafi and comprising the following members:

- Dr. Abla Amawi, Secretary General of the Higher population Council, Chairperson of the Arab Council for Population and Development and Chairperson of SNJ Steering Committee.
- Dr. Anis Khasawneh, Vice President of the University for Administrative Affairs.
- H.E Dr. Ruwaida Al Ma'aitah/ Jordan University of Science and Technology.
- Dr. Sawsan Al Majali/ member of the Senate
- Dr. Salma Al Nems/ Secretary General of the Jordanian National Commission for Women.
- Dr. Ruba Bataineh/ Curricula and Teaching Methodologies/ College of Education.
- Dean of the College of Literature
- Dean of Scientific Research and Higher Studies
- Dr. Hanan Malkawi/ College of Science

- Dr. Batool Muhaisen/ College of Literature
- Dr. Nadia Hiasat / College of Literature
- Dr. Amenah Al Khasawneh/ Director of the Princess Basma Center for Jordanian Women's Studies (member and secretary).

•JTV's "60 Minutes" program interviews HPC Secretary General and Chairperson of the SNJ Steering Committee, Dr. Abla Amawi, on April 10, 2020, to discuss HPC-developed scenarios on the spread of COVID-19 in Jordan.



• Al Mamlakah TV's "@jo" program interviews HPC Secretary General and Chairperson of the SNJ Steering Committee, Dr. Abla Amawi, to talk about reactions and tweets on social media about crimes of honor in Jordan.



•Online presentations on COVID-19 impact on different groups of society finalized. The presentations mainly included:

- Analysis of press releases and articles published in the media on the impact of COVID-19 on different groups and sectors:



The presentation addressed key information and indicators contained in the press reports and analytical reports on the Google Alerts of the HPC. The presentation analyzed the main impact and consequences on various areas pertaining to population and development.

Moreover, the presentation focused on the most impacted groups by COVID-19, including women, youth, children and older persons as well as the most impacted sectors, including health, social protection and the economy (labor and unemployment).

<http://www.hpc.org.jo/sites/default/files/%28%29%281%29~1.pdf>

- COVID-19 Impact on SRH information and services and consequently on investing in the Demographic dividend :



The presentation focused on the concept and policies of the demographic dividend, the projected population pyramid of the residents of Jordan, and the consequences of COVID-19 on the sexual and reproductive health rights in Jordan.

The presentation also overviewed the findings of local studies on SRH during the COVID-19 pandemic and addressed proposed solutions for these exceptional circumstances.

http://www.hpc.org.jo/sites/default/files/2-0_كورونا-الصحة%20الانجابية-الفرصة%20السكانية.pdf

Two: Preparations by HPC and SNJ, with support from UNFPA, to mark World Population Day:

HPC and SNJ, with support from UNFPA, kicked off preparations for the celebration of World Population Day, which falls on July 11. To commemorate the occasion, HPC will conduct activities and events including:

- Video competition targeting youth in governorates about the economic impact of COVID-19 on youth (young men and women) and their role in responding to the crisis". The competition aims to shed light through media in an easy and simple way on the economic and social impact of COVID-19 on young men and women and the role of institutions and the private sector in supporting and empowering youth, ensuring equal opportunity, raise public awareness and contribute to enhancing the role of youth (males and females) in society.
- Short story writing competition for youth on the impact of COVID-19 on young men and women during the lockdown. The competition aims to identify, through story-writing, the social, economic and health impact of the pandemic on youth, their personal experiences, and the entrepreneurial ideas implemented by youth during the lockdown.
- Wall mural activity to translate into art messages that express youth issues during the pandemic.
- National virtual meeting to celebrate World Population Day under the theme "Safeguarding the health and rights of women and girls even during COVID-19". On the sidelines of the meeting, Share-Net Jordan released an Assessment of the Current Status of SRH & RR Awareness Programs for Youth and Adolescents in Jordan. At the meeting, the Secretary General of the National Council for Family Affairs talked about social protection during the COVID-19 pandemic and beyond, while the Director of

Maternal and Child Health at the Ministry of Health talked about SRH services during the COVID-19 pandemic.

- Participation in a meeting of experts on the occasion of World Population Day, organized by the General Secretariat of the Arab League – Social Affairs Sector – Population Policies Department/ Technical Secretariats of the Arab Council for Population and Development. The meeting was attended by ACPD members, who are also heads national population committees and councils, as well as social and economic experts, and aimed to review the direct impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic from a global perspective while taking into account different population groups.
- On the occasion of World Population Day and to cover related activities carried out by HPC marking the occasion, HPC Published press releases on different media outlets, as well as posts and tweets on HPC's social media accounts and coordinated TV and radio interviews.

Three: Grants and Project Proposals

Grants

•Share-Net Jordan announces to its members the 2020 small grants awarded by Share-Net International(SNI):

SNJ announced to its members the 2020 small grants awarded by Share-Net International and took part in the evaluation of proposals submitted from Jordan as per specific criteria.

Eight project proposals had been submitted from Jordan, two of which were awarded grants. The first grant was awarded to the Health Care Accreditation Council (HCAC) and Unicef amounting to 10,000 euros for a project proposal entitled “Promote Breastfeeding Initiation and Support”. The second grant amounted to 15,000 euros and was awarded to the Jordan University of Science and Technology, the Ministry of Health, the e-health Development Association, the University of Jordan and the Health Care Accreditation Council for a project proposal entitled “Easy and Safe Access to SRH Services in Jordan for Women during Lockdowns (like COVID-19).

•Share-Net Jordan receives a small grant from Share-Net International to develop a policy brief:

SNJ received a small grant from SNI to develop a policy brief on “The Role of Localization and Multi-Sectoral Approaches in Sustaining SRH Programs and Accountability in Crisis and Fragility Situation” which aims to achieve access to good SRH for persons affected by crisis and fragile situations, review the outcomes of the Share-Net International Co-Creation Conference, engage in translating knowledge so as to institutionalize multi-sectoral accountability in the field of SRH while enhancing coordination among stakeholders to improve access to high quality SRH for persons affected by crisis and fragile situations in Jordan.

The Policy brief is aimed at donors, national and

international NGOs, policymakers, governmental agencies, stakeholders and the concerned sector.

The policy brief will include a framework for highlighting and enhancing the role of localization and multi-sectoral approaches in sustaining SRH programs and accountability for affected persons during crisis and fragile situations in Jordan.

• Partnership with the Institute for Family Health- Noor Al Hussein Foundation to apply for a small grant to produce a video on Child Marriage:

SNJ, in partnership with the Institute for Family Health- Noor Al Hussein Foundation, received a small grant from SNI to produce a video on “How to End Child Marriage (knowledge and Practice)”, which aims to increase knowledge about child marriage prevention to influence policymakers and practitioners in national and international non-governmental agencies.

The video targets national and international non-governmental agencies working in the field of combatting child marriage, as well as policymakers, government agencies and non-government organizations.

The video will essentially offer to the target audience a new approach for preventing child marriage and will help to explain and disseminate and successes and best practices of the Institute for Family Health to shift from using a one dimension approach towards a multi-dimensional that leads to preventing child marriage and achieve the desired impact.

•HPC conducts a project on Decentralized Governments, Gender Mainstreaming and Population Dynamics at selected Jordanian Municipalities with support from HIVOS.

Believing in the importance of linking population issues with economic and social development and gender issues at the local and national levels in the context of decentralization and local governance, HPC, with the support of HIVOS organization, conducted a project on decentralization, gender and population dynamics at three municipalities in Jordan (Mahis, Greater Ajloun and Greater Madaba Municipalities).

The project aims to empower female members of the selected municipal councils to assume an effective role in integrating the population component, sustainable development goals, women and gender equality issues in local social and economic plans of municipalities. The project also aims to empower female members of municipal council to effectively engage in the decision-making process at the local level.

In light of the COVID-19 outbreak and its impact on various sectors across in all countries, including Jordan, HPC conducted a survey of municipal council members at the three selected municipalities (Mahis, Greater Ajloun, and Greater Madaba Municipalities), to identify the consequences of the COVID-19 Pandemic on the economic and social conditions at the municipal level, determine the impact of the

pandemic and identify priorities and future procedures to minimize the impact at the municipal level, and above all identify the role that municipal councils have played or should play to combat the crisis, with a special focus on the role of female members of the councils.

• HPC and SNJ partner with JHAS to apply for a small grant from SNI

HPC and SNJ partnered with the Jordanian Health Aid Society (JHAS) to apply for a small grant announced by SNI for a project proposal entitled “Sexual and Reproductive Health for Youth and Reproductive Rights through a Reliable Site” which aims to:

- Localize and harvest the needed knowledge for Jordanian committees
- Ensure that youth receive the information they seek from reliable sources
- Exchange knowledge among youth using the e-knowledge methodology for SRH to build a reliable repository of SRH information.
- Increase society's acceptance of the need for youth to obtain SRH services and increase knowledge and acceptance among youth as well.
- Disseminate knowledge among youth in schools.
- Answer questions and inquiries of youth confidentially and allow enough time for discussion.
- Ensure that youth feel more comfortable and confident about seeking the services.

- Engage different national experts and key players in SRH information.

•SNJ participates in the first and second M&E sessions of SNI:

SNJ participated in the first and second monitoring and evaluation sessions organized by SNI on April 2 and May 12, 2020 as part of the online M&E sessions.

The sessions aimed to conduct a collaborative review of the M&E system in order to update it. The countries that joined Share-Net International in conducting the review were Jordan, Brundi, Bangladesh and the Netherlands.

Project Proposals:

•Grant received from the University of Edinburgh– Scotland to conduct a qualitative field assessment of the SRH needs of adolescent refugees - in the context of forced migration:

HPC and SNJ received a grant from the University of Edinburgh- Scotland to conduct an analytical, qualitative field study entitled “an Assessment of the Sexual and Reproductive Health Needs of Adolescent Refugees- in the context of forced migration”.

The study aims to develop an understanding of the sexual and reproductive health needs of adolescent refugees in the context of forced migration, and understand the risks and challenges of providing efficient access to SRH. The findings of the study will open up horizons for policy-makers and humanitarian practitioners to reflect on current practices and potential new

trends, propose policies and initiatives to improve SRH for adolescent refugees and transform policies and knowledge to applicable practice.

•Grant received from the University of the West of Scotland to conduct a study on “Understanding and Mitigating the Severe Impact of Gender Based Violence during the COVID-19 Pandemic- A Qualitative Study of Women and Syrian Female Refugees in Jordan”

HPC and SNJ received a grant from the University of the West of Scotland to conduct a study on “understanding and mitigating the severe impact of gender-based violence during the COVID-19 pandemic- a qualitative study of Women and Syrian Female Refugees in Jordan”. The study aims to develop an empirical understanding of the growing impact of sexual violence on Syrian refugee women and girls in Jordan to present policy recommendations to reduce the impact.

In addition, the study aims to shed light on the following:

- 1) Gender—based violence in the context of the Syrian humanitarian crisis
- 2) Experiences of Syrian refugee women and girls with respect to GBV since arriving in Jordan.
- 3) What has been the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic and the resulting effect on this critical and personal aspect of their lives?
- 4) Has their situation become more difficult and unbearable due to the global pandemic? If so, in what way?

5) What reasons did they give for the increasing violence?

6) What could be helpful to them in their opinion?

7) What type of services and support do they want to improve their daily lives?

8) What are the policies, practices and changes that can be put in place so that SDGs 3, 5 and 10 are reinforced and made an integral part of the lives of these women?

The study will enhance the generation and dissemination of knowledge and lessons learned to transform policies, practices and service delivery, and enhance knowledge to make a difference in the lives of vulnerable persons and achieve the sustainable development goals, particularly SDGs 3, 5 and 10.

•Grant received from the Arab Council for Social Sciences to conduct a study on the “Impact of Child Marriage and Adolescent Pregnancy on the Sexual and Reproductive Health and Mental Health of Syrian Refugees in Jordan”

and practical understanding of the interlinks, health consequences and impact of child marriage and adolescent pregnancy on the reproductive and mental health of Syrian refugees in Jordan in light of the existing conflicts and displacement which increase their vulnerability and fragility. The purpose of the study is to propose policies, practices and interventions to achieve social justice and cause a social transition through enhanced equality and equity and ensuring universal access to SRH services.

The findings of the study are intended to develop specific, implementable and translatable recommendations at the policy and practice levels to improve service delivery locally and across the region to achieve social justice by applying the knowledge gained from research to achieve a social transition towards justice and equality. In addition, the study will produce a report (in Arabic and English) that documents the methodology and findings and at least one article in an influential periodical.

During its meeting with concerned officials from the Arab Council for Social Sciences, HPC gave a presentation on the key principles and ethics of the scientific research, including translating the outcomes and knowledge gained from the study into implementable policies, practices and interventions to achieve a social transition towards justice and equality by improving service delivery and practice at the local level; avoiding causing harm to anyone; increasing the potential benefits to the maximum; keeping potential harm to a minimum irrespective of gender, social class, political affiliation or legal status; working positively by having rules and regulations to protect data and information security and confidentiality, credibility, expertise, safety and trust; avoiding using information for purposes other than those for which they were created; ensuring the confidentiality of information and protecting the environment; and respecting the rights, opinions and dignity of other researchers, participants or targeted groups by the study;

respecting the independence and freedom to participate voluntarily without social pressure or coercion; informing participants about the nature of the research; protecting the privacy of participants in the study during the study and when drafting its findings.

HPC considers child marriage a violation of the legitimate human rights of girls, including the right to education, the right to develop capacities, the right to make an informed decision without coercion in choosing a partner, the right to ensure equality in marriage and build sound family relations. The violation of these rights negatively impacts the quality of life, reproductive health of girls, let alone the economic impact and the ability of families to carry out their duties of raising children, especially that building new generations is dependent on the characteristics of girls.

Four: Latest reports and publications related to population issues:

•State of the World Population 2020



UNFPA has released the State of the World Population Report of 2020 under the theme “Against My Will...Defying the practices that harm women and girls and undermine equality”. According to demographic indicators in the report, the world’s population stands at 7.795 billion, while the total fertility rate of women stands at 1.068 percent. In the Arab states, the population equals 377 million, while the total fertility rate is 3.3 percent.

The report reviews the most common harmful practices against women and girls in the Arab region and reveals that countries that have ratified international treaties such as the Convention on the Rights of the Child should end harmful practices committed against girls.

The report indicates that progress has been made towards ending harmful practices around the world, but the COVID-19 pandemic threatens to wipe out the achieved gains as it has made work more challenging and urgent with many girls becoming vulnerable.

The report also explains that some of the harmful practices that have received systematic attention in recent years, such as child marriage and female genital mutilation, are waning in countries where they have been most prevalent. Insufficient rates of change and demographic pressures combine with a mixed picture of progress on gender equality globally. Despite strong advances towards gender parity in access to health care and education, acute discrimination and marginalization are still

evident around the world. In 57 countries, only 55 per cent of women aged 15 to 49 years who are married or in a union make their own decisions about sexual relations and the use of contraceptives and reproductive health services.

https://arabstates.unfpa.org/sites/default/files/pub-pdf/arabic-v6.29-web_1.pdf