

**Share-Net**  
Jordan

The Knowledge Platform on  
Sexual and Reproductive Health  
and Reproductive Rights



# NEWSLETTER

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## Preamble:

Share-Net Jordan (Knowledge Platform on Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights), hosted at the Higher Population Council, has prepared its annual plan for the year 2019. The plan aimed at strengthening the links between research, policies and practices through joint knowledge generation, translation and promotion. It also aims to involve all key actors in the field of sexual and reproductive health in Jordan in order to develop better sexual and reproductive health policies and practices.

This publication highlights the most notable achievements of the Platform in terms of studies, policies, activities and capacity building in the field of sexual and reproductive health. It also highlights the main activities on the Share-Net Jordan website in order to keep researchers, decision-makers, policy-makers, program creators, service-providers and research institutions informed of all local and international updates in the sexual and reproductive health field. As such, we are pleased to release issue No. 11 of Share-Net's (Knowledge Platform on Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights) quarterly publication for the first quarter of 2019.

## First: Studies and Research

- **Preparation of ToRs to update the national Strategy on sexual and reproductive health for the next five years (2019-2023)**

Share-Net Jordan/ Higher Population Council has participated in the development of the terms of reference to update the national strategy on sexual and reproductive health for the next five years (2019-2023), in preparation to contract with an expert or a specialized advisory body in the field of health and strategic development planning to update the strategy with funding from UNFPA. The strategy aims to provide a suitable environment that supports reproductive health issues, achieves the demographic opportunity and contributes to the well-being of citizens. The strategy is considered a key reference document that encompasses the results, outcomes, interventions, indicators, monitoring framework and time frame that the partners seek to achieve on the national level. This is done for the purposes of complementing the efforts made during the third phase of the national plan for reproductive health/ family planning for the years 2013-2018, building on the learned lessons and maintaining the previous gains and achievements. The most important activities included in the update of the strategy are:

- Review of the national strategy for reproductive health/ family planning and the annual follow-up reports thereof.
- Review of the relevant national strategies, plans, reports and documents; review of similar strategies in other countries in order to draw from their experiences and implementation impediments and how

such impediments were overcome and application of the participatory approach in the strategy development process.

- Identification of the reproductive health components that will be included in the strategy with the participation of the prospective partners, taking into consideration the sensitive criteria for gender and different age groups.
- Diagnosis of the current situation and analysis of the internal and external environment elements using SWOT analysis.
- Drafting the strategy and its results, outcomes and interventions in collaboration with the prospective partners within the scope of contributing to the achievement of the vision and the consistency of the partners' functions. Moreover, identifying the temporal phases of implementation according to the years covered by the strategy and the implementation partner.
- Development of a monitoring and evaluation approach for the strategy. The approach shall include cards, measurement of performance indicators and the monitoring and evaluation mechanism.
- **The study and policy briefs of the declined fertility rates factors in Jordan and determinants of variation between the Kingdom's governorates.**

The Higher Population Council and Share-Net Jordan proceeded with the development

of the study's technical requirements. The study aims to explain the variations in the fertility rates between Jordan's governorates and the governing factors thereof. It also aims to explain the decline in fertility rates at the national level. It is expected for this study to be carried out at the second quarter of this year after the data of the Population and Family Health survey is made available by the Department of Statistics for the researchers' use. This study will be funded by UNFPA.

- **A research project for the development of a national work plan to integrate the sexual and reproductive health concepts in school curricula in Jordan.**

The project was implemented by the School of Nursing at the University of Jordan in partnership with Share-Net Jordan/ Higher Population Council. The project aimed to open a dialogue with the national institutions and education experts in Jordan in order to establish a road map for a realistic work plan for the integration of sexual and reproductive health concepts that are culturally sensitive and based on the national priorities to be identified in the academic curricula. This project was funded by a grant from the Share-Net International project in Netherlands to support the update of the national strategy on the sexual and reproductive health.

Share-Net Jordan has, in collaboration with the School of Nursing at the University of Jordan, organized a round-table meeting

on February 19th , 2019 at the end of the project. 20 stakeholders' participants attended the meeting that was organized to present the results of the workshop on the implementation of the methodology that was developed in the previous workshops held



from 27-29 October 2018 and the roadmap for developing the national work plan. Dr. Areej Othman/ University of Jordan/ School of Nursing/ project manager presented the methodology and the roadmap matrix for the integration of sexual and reproductive health concepts in school curricula in Jordan. In addition to receiving the final feedback on the document from the attendees.

- Release of issue No. 10 of the Knowledge Platform on Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights (Share-Net). The issue includes the achievements of Share-Net Jordan in the fourth quarter of 2018. The issue was uploaded on the Share-Net Jordan website.

<https://share-net-jordan.org.jo/>

## Second: Hold or participate in local and international meetings, seminars and workshops

- Hold the fourth collaborative approach international workshop.

Share-Net International organized, in collaboration with Share-Net Jordan, the fourth collaborative approach international workshop between 14-16 January 2019. Share-Net International- Netherlands, Share-Net Bangladesh, Share-Net Burundi, Share-Net Indonesia Share-Net Jordan and Erasmus University Rotterdam have participated in the workshop. The workshop was held in a series of previous sessions aimed at exchanging knowledge and translating it effectively between partners to reach a consensus on policies and practices based on relevant evidence, in addition to advocacy and raising awareness of policies and practices and strengthening capacities for knowledge platforms (country hubs) in this area in coordination with partners and stakeholders to achieve sustainable development, equity and equal opportunities.

The fourth workshop focused on sharing expertise, challenges and opportunities after the third collaborative approach workshop. It also focused on sharing experiences between knowledge platforms (country hubs) on the application of the third learning session that was held in Bangladesh, building the capacities of knowledge platforms in sharing, using and

transferring knowledge and presenting and discussing the best practices for reducing child marriages and teenage pregnancies from the experience of country hubs, as well as developing a sustainability package on the translation and use of knowledge.



- **A meeting with Netherlands embassy in Amman**

A meeting was held between the acting Head of Mission, Ms. Renate Pors and Ms. Rawan Da'as of Netherlands embassy in Amman and Share-Net Jordan and Share-Net International in January 17th, 2019. The meeting was attended by the secretary of the Higher Population Council, the international Share-Net International coordinator, Ms. Françoise Jenniskens and the country coordinator for Share-Net International projects, Ms. Kimberley Meijers.

The collaboration between Share-Net Jordan and Netherlands embassy was explored during the meeting. Moreover, Share-Net Jordan has commended the great support it has received from Share-Net International and the impact such support had on generating knowledge on sexual and reproductive health, as well as creating networks for knowledge-sharing

between researchers and national institutions. The idea that Share-Net's work could be expanded to the regional level through the Regional Higher Population Council that will be established under the auspices of the League of Arab States was also reflected on during the meeting.

- **A mid-term evaluation workshop for the studies projects regarding the “in progress” studies projects relating to reproductive health that were funded for Jordan by the Dutch organization.**

The Higher Population Council held the workshop during (25-26/2/2019) through the Share-Net Jordan “Knowledge Platform on Reproductive Health” Project and in collaboration with the Dutch Organization for Scientific Research (NWO-WOTRO) and the participation of the studies' project teams. The workshop was aimed at expanding the



use of the knowledge resulting from such projects by the national entities concerned with the development of policies and practices by presenting and proposing the challenges and lessons learned in order to develop improved policies and interventions

regarding reproductive health for women and youth in Jordan. The studies projects, which started in September 2017 and will continue for a period of two years, tackled the following topics: Reproductive health rights of youth and women in Jordan and the extent to which reproductive health services vary between the Kingdom's governorates (National Center For Culture & Arts, American University of Beirut). In addition to understanding the reproductive health needs of Jordanian and Syrian youth (a collaborative research between Harvard College/USA, the Jordanian Hashemite Fund for Human Development and the Dutch organization for scientific research "WOTRO"), family planning through behavioral economics / an analytical field study (Texas University, Jordan University of Science and Technology, the Jordanian Ministry of Health) and Syrian refugee youth in Jordan: early marriage in perspective / a qualitative study (Yarmouk University, Ahel Aljabal Association for Human Development, the Graduate Institute of International and Development Studies "Geneva").

On the sidelines, a panel discussion attended by forty-nine members of Share-Net Jordan and local experts concerned with the development of reproductive health policies and practices was held to brief them on the projects' progress and to provide recommendations for the results' dissemination in Jordan to facilitate knowledge-sharing with the relevant actors,

whether practitioners or policymakers, on how to use research results in policies and practices. Furthermore, a special-focused session was held for national experts in reproductive health, during which they shared their experience and knowledge on transferring research results into policies that are enforceable on the ground. The discussion focused on how to link the research results with policy-making, what are the challenges, what are the factors that lead to successful linking and what are the obstacles standing in the way of the transition from researching to policy-making in cases where linking fails.



- **The consultative meeting on health, livelihoods and well-being in the context of conflicts and fragile settings.**

The Higher Population Council participated in the consultative meeting on health, livelihoods and well-being in the context of conflicts and fragile settings, which was organized by the Arab Council for the Social Sciences in Beirut-Lebanon during the period between 7-8/2/2019. The meeting was aimed at discussing and framing the Research Grants

Program's vision with a number of specialized researchers from multiple Arab countries as well as the most prominent research topics on emerging social sciences relating to health and society in Arab-majority states and identifying the advisory group role's in the program.

It is worth noting that the Arab Council for the Social Sciences is considered an independent regional institution dedicated to strengthening social science research and knowledge production in the Arab world by supporting researchers and academic/research institutions. The ACSS also aims to contribute to the creation and dissemination of social science research and to enhance the role of social science in Arab public life and inform public policy in the region.

- **Participation in the Third Brussels Conference on “Supporting the Future of Syria and the Region”.**

The Higher Population Council, as part of an Official Delegation that includes the Minister of Foreign Affairs and Expatriates Affairs and the Minister of Planning and International Cooperation, participated in the Third Brussels Conference, organized by the European Union, on “Supporting the Future of Syria and the Region”, held in Brussels-Belgium, during 12-14 / 3/2019.

The conference includes two sections, the first is two days of dialogue to discuss issues related to the Syrian crisis in terms of

refugees and the possibility of them returning to their country, women's issues as one of the most affected groups by this crisis and other issues and their impact on the surrounding countries that are hosting refugees. In addition to the education and health issues, with the participation of civil society organizations, non-profit organizations and representatives of host countries and donors. On the third day, a ministerial summit will be held in the presence of the foreign ministers of the participating countries, during which the financial pledges will be announced.

The Secretary of the Higher Population Council made a presentation on “Economic and Social Empowerment of Youth” and addressed the issue of early marriage among Syrians, noting that 43% of Syrian girls got married under the age of 18 in 2015, of which 95% were at the primary level of education or below. She stressed the necessity of exerting unified efforts to address this issue and to reach a unified approach in this area. Furthermore, she highlighted the importance of providing a set of basic provisions for the empowerment



of youth in society, especially the development of education and knowledge economies, improving public health and living conditions, empowering women in various fields, encouraging investment and strengthening public-private partnership in this field.

- **Presenting a lecture to the undergraduate students in the Geography Department at Al-Hussein Bin Talal University on the demographic opportunity in Jordan and its realization policies.**

The lecture was presented by the Director of Share-Net Jordan/ Higher Population Council, as part of the first symposium on Geography organized by the University.

The concept of demographic opportunity and the policies related to its realization and investment, Jordan demography, demographic and socio-economic indicators at the national level, population issues with priority to the community as well as information on refugee and migration in Jordan and the influence thereof on realizing the opportunity were among the things that were addressed at the lecture. Moreover, the population issues in Jordan, represented in the high rates of population in the youth age groups at rates exceeding economic growth rates, which lead to a decline in the chances for obtaining future employment opportunities, were also addressed. In addition to the low economic participation of women despite their high level of education, the weak environment of

services for sexual and reproductive health for youth and persons with disabilities and the increase in the females marriage under the age of 18 years. In order to address these challenges, the demographic dimension must be taken into consideration in the plans of all institutions and the support of policy makers, decision-makers and national and local leaders must be won for the policies of the demographic opportunity in line with the target groups and policy objectives. Furthermore, the private sector's participation in this area must be promoted.



- **Implementation of a training program on the integration of the demographic dimension in the local plans of the North Region's governorates. 28-31 January 2019**

The Council implemented the program, funded by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), in collaboration with Tawasol Project for Family Happiness in the during (28-31/1/2019). The program was implemented within the criticality framework of the demographic indicators and dynamics integration in the development plans at the national and local level. Such integration



helps expand the choices of projects that the governorate councils could include in the governorates' implementation plans (2019-2022) based on the demographic indicators of each governorate. Moreover, the program was implemented to complement the project implementation after it had previously targeted nine governorates (Ajloun, Madaba, Tafila, Amman, Zarqa, Balqa, Ma'an, Karak and Aqaba). Among the program's activities was the review of demographic, social and economic indicators of the North governorates, in promotion of the integration of demographic indicators, in general, and the sexual and reproductive indicators in the development plans and programs.



### **Third: Sustainability of the Online Knowledge Platform**

The research database on the Platform's website was sustained through four researches on sexual and reproductive health.

### **Fourth: Formation of the national executive preparatory committees (Community of Practice) for the themes of infertility and**

### **reproductive and sexual rights in fragile/emergency/conflict settings.**

In extension to Share-Net International's efforts in holding a conference entitled "Engaging in Knowledge Translation Together" during the first quarter of 2019 in Amsterdam-Netherlands. The conference aims to translate knowledge to a group of methods, tools and means to help (SNI) members and participants to use the evidence in improving policies and practices; identify the fields in which change is required and the required type of methods and process to achieve policies and/or programs improvement and develop work plans to implement the advanced knowledge methods, tools and means. Moreover, two topics were chosen to be placed at the center of the conference. These topics are: Infertility and Sexual and Reproductive Health Rights (SRHR) in fragile/ emergency/ conflict settings. Share-Net International, along with regional platforms, seeks to form executive preparatory committees (Community of Practice) for each field from members of partner countries and relevant persons in order to participate in the preparatory stage for the conference, prepare the conference's agenda and propose speakers for the conference for each field. As such, Share-Net Jordan has worked to form the national executive preparatory committees (Community of Practice) for the above-mentioned topics.

## Fifth: The most recent reports and publications on demographic issues

- **Jordan: Gender Justice & the Law: An assessment of laws affecting gender equality and protection against gender-based violence.**

This study was developed by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) in 2018 in collaboration with the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN Women), the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) and the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for West Asia (ESCWA) on gender justice and the law. The study can be found in English at the following link:

<https://jordan.unfpa.org/en/publications>

The study aims to provide a comprehensive assessment of laws and policies affecting gender equality and protection against gender-based violence in the Arab states region.

The study is composed of an introductory piece that describes the background, rationale, analytical framework and methodology, and a total of 18 country profiles. Each country profile maps the country's key legislative and policy developments regarding gender justice. This country profile presents the findings of the study relating to Jordan. It provides an analysis of whether the country's laws and policies promote or impede equality

between women and men before the law, and whether they provide protection against gender-based violence.

This country profile includes analysis of the following areas of the law:

- Constitutional guarantees of gender equality and constitutional protections against gender-based violence
- Status of penal codes and whether the country has domestic violence laws that address gender-based violence
- Status of personal status codes and how they impact gender equality
- Status of nationality laws and whether they ensure that women and men enjoy equal rights in relation to citizenship
- Status of labor laws and whether they provide protection from discrimination and gender-based violence in the workplace



- **Estimating costs of marital violence in the Arab region: Operational model**

This study was developed by the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA) in 2017. The study is part of a regional project on estimating the cost of violence against women in the Arab region. The study can be found in English at the following link:

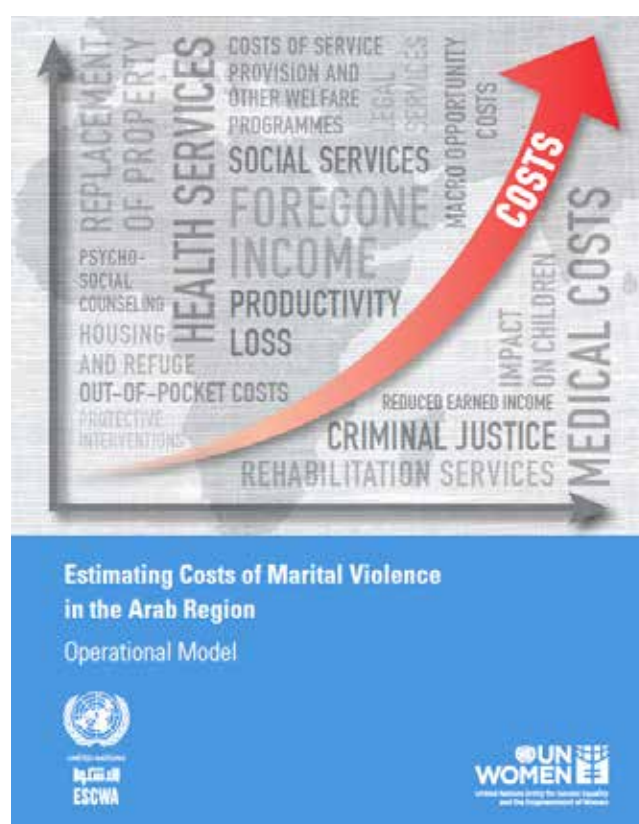
<https://www.unescwa.org/publications/estimating-costs-marital-violence-operational-model>

This report elaborates the basic economic model and options to estimate the costs of intimate partner violence (IPV). It comprises five sections. Section one presents an overview of the type of costs that constitute the total economic cost of violence. Section two elaborates approaches to costing, distinguishing between the cost of action and inaction as two distinct approaches, and discusses the factors that need to be considered when deciding the best economic costing model. Section three outlines the costing model for the region and section four discusses putting the model into operation, with specific options for estimating individual and household costs, the annual cost of service provision, business costs and national macro costs. Conclusions and key recommendations are included in section five.

The report focuses on three different entry points for the cost of marital violence in the region, by establishing the costs for individual

women and their households, businesses, and government and other civil society actors in providing services. Any entry point will produce only a partial estimate, but over time, and as information systems become more robust, comprehensive estimates can be produced.

The report concludes, however, that a useful first approximation is the monetary costs incurred by women, such as out-of-pocket expenditure to mitigate the consequences of violence, as well as missed opportunities for paid and unpaid work, productivity loss measured through presenteeism (turning up for work when unwell) and missed education for women and children. This partial estimate can lead to an estimate of the monetary cost for women and their families, and the cost of inaction at the national level.



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