(Translated from Arabic)

**Responses to the questionnaire to assess the human rights implications of the implementation of the Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing**

**Question 1**

The Ministry of Social Development cares for older persons in accordance with the law under which it was established, the Ministry of Social Development Act No. 14 of 1956. It is assisted in its task by other ministries and organizations.

Directives concerning authorization for old people’s homes were issued in 2001 and directives concerning authorization for day centres in 1999. They have since been updated with the issue of Regulation No. 81 of 2012, concerning care homes and centres for older persons. Pursuant to that Regulation, directives regarding authorization for day centres for older persons and directives regarding authorization for shelter homes were issued in 2013.

There are 10 authorized care homes, 3 of which are privately run and 7 of which are part of the voluntary sector. There are no State-run institutions. The number of day centres is four.

The Government defrays the residency costs for poor older persons in homes for the elderly, the sick or those unable to look after themselves.

Jordan recently introduced an important constitutional provision concerning older persons in article 6 (5) of the Jordanian Constitution as amended in 2011. The article states that the law shall protect “older persons, including those with disabilities, and guard them against ill-treatment”. The aim of this provision is to shield older persons from violence.

State institutions, private entities and the voluntary sector collaborated in the National Strategy for Older Persons 2008-2012. Its implementation was overseen by the National Council for Family Affairs and the Strategy is currently being updated by a committee formed with the approval of the Office of the Prime Minister.

Table showing issues and objectives related to different aspects of the Jordanian National Strategy for Older Persons (reference document)

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| Aspect 1: Older persons and development | Issue 1: Participation of older persons in developing programmes and drafting national plans | Objective 1: Increasing the participation of older persons in decision-making processes at all levels |
| Issue 2: Work, income and poverty | Objective 1: Improving living conditions, especially for poor older persons |
| Issue 3: Older persons in rural areas and nomadic communities | Objective 1: Improving living conditions for older persons in rural areas and nomadic communities |
| Issue 4: Older persons and emigration | Objective 1: Reintegrating older persons who have emigrated into the community |
| Objective 2: Ensuring a dignified life for older persons whose children have emigrated abroad |
| Issue 5: Continuing education and training | Objective 1: Eradicating illiteracy among older persons especially women |
| Objective 2: Capacity-building among older persons who wish to work, and retraining them for the labour market |
| Objective 3: Using the experience and know-how of older persons as workers or volunteers |
| Aspect 2: Health care for older persons | Issue 1: Preventive health care for older persons | Objective 1: Encouraging healthy lifestyles in the community in order to improve the health of older persons |
| Objective 2: Developing comprehensive preventive health-care services in the fields of bodily, mental and social health |
| Objective 3: Building capacity among health-care personnel vis-à-vis preventive care and the needs of older persons |
| Issue 2: Curative health care for older persons | Objective 1: Developing comprehensive curative health care services in the fields of bodily, mental and social health |
| Objective 2: Building capacity among health care personnel vis-à-vis curative care and the needs of older persons |
| Issue 3: Rehabilitative health care for older persons | Objective 1: Developing comprehensive rehabilitative health-care services in the fields of bodily, mental and social health |
| Objective 2: Building capacity among health-care personnel vis-à-vis rehabilitative care and the needs of older persons |
| Aspect 3: A supportive environment for older persons | Issue 1: Special housing and care homes | Objective 1: Creating special housing commensurate with the needs of older persons |
| Objective 2: Creating care homes commensurate with the needs of older persons |
| Issue 2: Public buildings and public facilities | Objective 1: Adapting public buildings and public facilities for older persons |
| Objective 2: Creating a friendly traffic environment for older persons |
| Objective 3: Providing vehicles adapted for older persons |
| Aspect 4: Social care for older persons | Issue 1: Social services for older persons and support for caregivers | Objective 1: Providing older persons with social services |
| Objective 2: Providing support to those caring for older persons |
| Issue 2: Community participation of older persons | Objective 1: Promoting the participation of older persons in the community |
| Objective 2: Putting in place programmes for older women in order to ensure they can enjoy a dignified life |
| Issue 3: Violence against older persons | Objective 1: Protecting older persons against violence |
| Objective 2: Developing human resources in order to improve the institutional capabilities of bodies which work to protect older persons from violence |
| Issue 4: How older persons are viewed in the community | Objective 1: Promoting a positive view of older persons in the community |
| Objective 2: Promoting intergenerational solidarity |
| Issue 5: Partnership and coordination among institutions working with older persons | Objective 1: Promoting partnership and coordination among institutions of the State, the private sector and civil society which work with older persons |
| Objective 2: Promoting a sense of social responsibility in the private sector |
| Aspect 5: Academic research and databases | Issue 1: Study and research concerning older persons | Objective 1: Establishing a national centre for study and research into ageing |
| Objective 2: Networking and partnerships with national, regional and international centres which conduct research into ageing |
| Aspect 6: Legislation | Issue 1: Legislation and laws concerning older persons and development | Objective 1: Promoting legislation and laws which help older persons participate in development |
|  | Issue 2: Legislation and laws concerning the provision of preventive, curative and rehabilitative health care | Objective 1: Promoting legislation and laws concerning the provision of preventive, curative and rehabilitative health care |
|  | Issue 3: Legislation and laws to create a supportive environment for older persons | Objective 1: Promoting legislation and laws to create a supportive environment for older persons |
|  | Issue 4: Legislation and laws concerning social care for older persons | Objective 1: Promoting legislation and laws to protect older persons from violence |
|  |  | Objective 2: Promoting legislation and laws to ensure that older persons can be cared for in their own families |

Jordan has 47 centres offering home nursing care and 85 health centres offering round-the-clock services. All these belong to the private sector and are licensed by the Ministry of Health. Moreover, humanitarian care associations offer free home palliative care for cancer sufferers, including older persons.

One law affecting health care for older persons is the High Health Council Act No. 9 of 1999 which sets forth the principal health-care policies and the strategy for their implementation. The Act regulates activities and develops all sectors in the area of health care in order to improve services for all citizens using the most up-to-date practices and advanced scientific techniques.

Article 4 (g) of the Public Health Act No. 47 of 2008 includes specific provision relating to the health of older persons and for monitoring the institutions which provide them with care.

At the end of 2013, there were nine State-run centres providing care for older persons. Of these, two were in rural areas: Sakhra and Rageb.

Over recent years Jordan has seen a significant increase in rates of life expectancy at birth. They have gone up from 71.6 years for men and 74.4 years for women in 2009 to 72.7 years for men and 76.7 years for women in 2013. This represents an increase of 1.1 years for men and 2.3 years for women.

In the year 2010, 76.3 per cent of elderly Jordanian citizens of all categories had health insurance coverage, according to estimates of the Ministry of Health, and that figure currently stands at 85 per cent. The proportion of older persons benefiting from civil health insurance (Ministry of Health) stood at around 6.3 per cent in 2013.

**Question 2**

The State-run National Assistance Fund provides older persons with aid in three forms: regular monthly assistance amounting to 45 Jordanian dinars (JD) per person, occasional emergency assistance and physical rehabilitation assistance in the form of medical devices for needy older persons. The latter is distributed pursuant to Directive No. 2 of 2012, concerning financial assistance for the protection of needy families. Under article 20 (a) of the Directive, physical rehabilitation assistance is to be provided by defraying the costs of purchasing assistive devices for persons in need, including older persons.

Thanks to the National Assistance Fund, in 2013, 25.4 per cent of the beneficiaries who received assistive devices through State-run physical rehabilitation programmes were older persons.

A total of 26,937 families received assistance for older members in the period between 2015 and the present, and the total amount disbursed stands at JD 11,251,878. According to article 11 (c) of Directive No. 2 of 2012, concerning financial assistance for the protection of needy families, regular monthly assistance is to be paid to older persons and their families who are living below the poverty line.

Article 12 (a) (viii) contains provision for the payment of temporary monthly assistance to families in need who are living below the poverty line. Such cases are considered as humanitarian cases and they usually involve older persons.

The National Assistance Fund has created a new directorate to train children of families who receive payments from the Fund in order to help them acquire qualifications, find appropriate work and so improve the family’s income. Many families of older persons have benefited from this initiative.

Older persons with disabilities are provided with assistive devices by the Higher Council for People with Disabilities. As of 2013, 2,428 older persons of both sexes had benefited from that service.

Financial assistance is also available through the Zakat Fund. Under article 8 (a) (3) of Act No. 8 of 1988, a part of the Fund’s revenues shall be distributed by Zakat committees throughout the country for the benefit of the physically infirm; i.e., older persons.

According to article 3 (1) and (2) of Directive No. 1 of 2002, concerning the principles regulating the payment of the Zakat, as amended, indigent or widowed older persons who do not have a fixed source of income shall benefit from Zakat payments which are distributed by Zakat committees throughout the country.

Older beneficiaries of aid from the Zakat Fund account for around 1.6 per cent of all the Fund’s beneficiaries while the sums payed out to them amount to around 1.1 per cent of the Fund’s total aid payments. It should be pointed out that the Zakat Fund is principally intended for poor children, especially orphans.

The Disabled Persons Act No. 31 of 2007 also caters for older persons with disabilities. They are able to access the services they require, on an equal footing with other age groups, depending upon their disability and without discrimination.

Under Regulation No. 14 of 2013, which governs exemptions for persons with disabilities and was issued as part of the Disabled Persons Act No. 31 of 2007, the Ministry of Social Development admits exemptions for the employment of domestic workers. According to article 10 of the Regulation, “persons with a disability or their guardians, if they fulfil the required conditions, are exempted from the payment of taxes on work permits for non-Jordanian nationals employed for domestic service and from payment of any additional sum”. Directives regarding those exemptions were issued as part of the Regulations.

Directives governing exemptions for special vehicles for the use of persons with disabilities set forth the conditions whereby such vehicles may be obtained duty free. The directives also accommodate older persons, without discrimination.

The initiative “Amman, age-friendly city” was launched in 2007. Since then no other city has been named as an age-friendly city.

The Guide to Building for Persons with Special Needs is an important reference document which will help to create a supportive environment that will also benefit to persons. The Guide was prepared by the special needs unit of the Greater Amman Municipality which, drawing from the American Act for Persons with Disabilities, worked in cooperation with the Royal Scientific Society, the Ministry of Public Works and Housing, the National Building Council, the Jordanian Engineers’ Association and the Higher Council for People with Disabilities. The Guide details the needs and specifications for disability-friendly building regulations, which will also benefit older persons. It covers private homes as well as public facilities, streets, pavements, etc.

The building permit booklet issued by the Greater Amman Municipality includes a section on building requirements for disabled persons and, when issuing a building permit or a licence to carry out works, the Municipality stresses that all those requirements must be fulfilled. This per se also meets the needs of older persons. The Municipality has also affixed notices stating that elderly persons must be given priority in their dealings with the Municipality and on public seating in parks and squares.

Most government offices are fitted with ramps to facilitate the access and movement of older persons and persons with special needs.

The updated Regulation No. 81 of 2012, concerning care homes and centres for older persons and the associated directives issued by the Ministry of Social Development set forth the general conditions for licensing such institutions. The most important of these is that they fulfil the specifications contained in the building code.

According to the records of the Ministry of Labour, each year around 2,500 migrant workers provide home care for older persons. However, it is not possible to determine the total number of such persons who are currently involved in that activity.

**Question 4**

As of the end of 2013, 2.4 per cent of the workforce was made up of older persons. About 0.4 per cent of them continue to work in teaching and academic positions in State and private universities where current staff regulations allow them to remain in service after having reached the age of 60. The same applies to the judiciary where judges can remain in service until reaching the age of 70. Most working older persons are employed as financial or legal advisers, business leaders in the public and private sectors and in family-run firms.

The proportion of older academics with respect to the total teaching staff went up from 10.9 per cent in 2012 to 13.6 per cent in 2013, with their numbers reaching 1,338. That proportion is expected to rise conspicuously in the light of Decree No. 295 issued by the Higher Education Council on 12 August 2014 which allows persons over the age of 70 who hold the rank of professor to remain in their posts as full-time lecturers on an annual contract without administrative duties.

Directives concerning authorization to practise professional activities from the home, issued in 2011, allow older women to practise certain professions legally from inside their own homes.

Jordan has 47 centres offering home nursing care and 85 health centres offering round-the-clock services. All these belong to the private sector and are licensed by the Ministry of Health. Moreover, humanitarian care associations offer free home palliative care for cancer sufferers, including older persons.

Meeting on 23 May 2006 the Council of Ministers agreed — in accordance with the provisions of article 29 of Regulation No. 83 of 2004, governing civil health insurance — that all uninsured persons over the age of 60 should be brought under the health insurance coverage of hospitals and centres run by the Ministry of Health. The Council of Ministers also decided that such persons should be brought under the health insurance coverage of the Royal Medical Services if there was no possibility of them receiving treatment in hospitals and centres run by the Ministry of Health, in accordance with article 33 of the aforementioned Regulation. To receive this service, persons in that category would pay a monthly sum of JD 6.

In the year 2010, 76.3 per cent of elderly Jordanian citizens of all categories had health insurance coverage. The proportion of older persons benefiting from civil health insurance (older persons covered by the Ministry of Health) stood at around 6.3 per cent in 2013. Furthermore, 16.2 per cent of elderly non-Jordanians in the country also have health insurance coverage.

Meeting on 23 May 2006 the Council of Ministers agreed — in accordance with the provisions of article 29 of Regulation No. 83 of 2004, governing civil health insurance — that persons over the age of 60 who were without health insurance should be brought under the health insurance umbrella.

**Question 5**

In 2008, as a way to protect older persons from violence, the Jordanian National Commission for Women launched a network, known as the Candle Network, to combat violence against women. The network remains active, one of its chief activities being media campaigns on violence against women. In 2009 it also opened an office to receive complaints from women of all categories — married, working, elderly — relating to violence and discrimination in the family, in the workplace or in everyday life.

Act No. 51 of 2006, establishing the National Centre for Human Rights, also contains provisions to protect the rights of older persons:

(a) Article 4 (a) promotes human rights principles, drawing its inspiration from the peaceful message of Islam, the values of the Arabic-Islamic tradition, the human rights provisions of the Constitution and principles enshrined in international treaties;

(b) Article 7 states that the Centre shall monitor violations of human rights and public freedoms in Jordan and strive to prevent them.

Article 3 (c) of the Domestic Violence Act No. 6 of 2008 states that, for the purposes of the Act, “the father or the mother of either or the spouses” shall be considered as members of the family. In most cases, the father or the mother of the spouses are older persons. One of the conditions of the law is that they should all be living in the same family home.

Under article 54 of the Criminal Code (Act No. 16 of 1960), as amended, account may be taken of the age of anyone convicted for major or serious offences, and the court may suspend the sentence if the offender is an older person.

Article 418 of the Code sets forth penalties for anyone who seeks to take advantage of persons with psychological or mental disabilities and to exploit their weaknesses in order to appropriate monies, promissory notes or commercial documents, contrary to the interests of that person. This provision implicitly covers older persons who may be fragile or affected with mental difficulties.

The promotion of a positive view of older persons in the community and intergenerational solidarity rests on the principles of the Islamic sharia according to which sons have to provide support for their fathers and mothers. During the period 2009-2013, the Jordanian sharia courts ruled on 3,190 support cases. The total value involved was JD 141,742, meaning that the average payment ordered by the courts was JD 44 per month.

Article 6 (i) of the Education Act No. 3 of 1994 includes provision for the establishment of continuous learning centres for older persons.

Regulation No. 81 of 2005, concerning adult education and the eradication of illiteracy sets forth general policy guidelines for adult education and illiteracy eradication centres. It also covers planning, programming and curriculum development. This includes programmes to raise awareness about the importance of adult education and the eradication of illiteracy.

Directive No. 2 of 2006, concerning adult education and literacy promotion centres lays down the conditions for education in those centres and the subjects to be covered.

According to data collected by the Ministry of Education, in 2013 there were 922 older persons enrolled at literacy promotion centres, as compared to 1,049 in 2009. As a proportion of the total number of persons enrolled they represented 17.5 per cent in 2013 and 17.1 per cent in 2009. At the end of 2013, there were 497 literacy promotion centres throughout the country. As regards the enrolment of older women, there were 867 in 2013 and 975 in 2009.

Older persons from rural areas and nomadic communities enrolled in literacy promotion programmes numbered 609 in 2013 and 657 in 2009.

**Question 6**

The Office of the Chief Justice has established the Family Reconciliation and Mediation Directorate. The Directorate oversees the family reconciliation and mediation offices established under Regulation No. 17 of 2003, concerning family reconciliation and mediation. The aim is to realize a national vision of domestic harmony wherein families are protected, their stability guaranteed, relations between members optimized and disputes resolved in a friendly fashion. This is made possible via awareness-raising, education and guidance to prevent families breaking apart and to relieve the material and mental anguish their members may face.

The years between 2009 and 2013 saw a noticeable drop in the number of cases examined by the sharia courts involving support for older persons by their children. In fact, the number of such cases fell from 746 in 2009 to 530 in 2013, a drop of 29 per cent. This is a testament to the success of the Personal Status Act and of efforts made to promote social solidarity between the generations.

The law also contains provision to protect older persons who are unable to manage their own assets. The sharia courts appoint someone to manage their monies for them, under court supervision.

Under article 7 of Regulation No. 83 of 2005, concerning Waqf charitable programmes, assistive medical devices shall be provided for poor and needy persons who are frail or sick. Moreover, under article 9, while taking account of the conditions imposed by the Waqf donors, the proceeds of the Waqf charitable programme are to be disbursed to help poor older persons.

Three pension systems are currently operating in the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan: the civil retirement system, the military retirement system and the social security system. Beginning in 2003, everyone employed in the civil or military sectors was brought under the provisions of the Social Security Act and the civil and military retirement systems are expected to stop functioning by 2045 whereafter the social security system will become the main overarching pension umbrella for all retirees. At the end of 2013, the pension umbrella — the social security system, and the civil and military systems — was delivering pension payments to 74.7 per cent of older persons.

Section 7 of Social Security Act No. 1 of 2014 covers insurance for old age, incapacity and death.

(a) Under article 63, men who have reached the age of 60 or women who have reached the age of 55 have the possibility of remaining within the provisions of the Social Security Act;

(b) Under article 64 (a) (1) the age of early retirement was raised from 45 to 50.

The “Social Security Ambassador” initiative has been launched to reach out to Jordanians working abroad. Visits have been organized to countries where there are large numbers of Jordanian workers in order to draw their attention to the importance of social security and to open the way for them to opt into the system via Jordanian embassies and consulates in those States. A number of agreements have been concluded with banks which operate abroad in order to enable Jordanian migrant workers to apply for optional membership and for those banks to channel their contributions to the Social Security Association. By the end of 2013, around 4,657 Jordanians working abroad had chosen to join the social security system.

Steps have been taken to enable older persons to obtain loans to launch their own business projects. Most banks offering loans stipulate that the borrower must be no more than 65 when the last repayment is made, and this represents a considerable obstacle preventing older persons from establishing businesses. On 14 September 2009, the Social Security Association launched a funding programme for social security pensioners designed to improve their standard of living through financing for business initiatives. The programme is run in coordination with the Development and Employment Fund and an agreement has been signed whereby the sum of JD 5 million has been allocated to be administered by the Fund in accordance with its own mechanisms. The Islamic principle of *murabaha* is applied at a rate of 5 per cent annually over a period of 6 years with repayments every 6 months.

**Question 7**

(a) Limited allocation of financial resources to the budgets of agencies dealing with older persons;

(b) A lack of doctors and nurses adequately trained in the field of geriatrics;

(c) The fact that not all older persons are covered by health insurance and pension systems;

(d) A lack of doctors and nurses working in the field of geriatrics;

(e) Limited private sector participation in supporting old people’s homes;

(f) A lack of specialized home-care services within the State system and the increased cost of such services in private sector institutions;

(g) Low levels of community involvement of older persons;

(h) Incomplete databases on older persons coupled with the fact that many organizations do not classify information by age;

(i) A lack of studies and research into geriatrics;

(j) The fact that few organizations accommodate issues relating to older persons into their strategies or set performance indicators in line with the Jordanian National Strategy for Older Persons.

Annexes

National strategies, plans and programmes which address issues affecting older persons

| *Document* | *Areas covered* |
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| * The Jordanian National Strategy for Older Persons — reference document of 2008 * Plan for the implementation of the Strategy | * Participation of older persons in developing programmes and drafting national plans: * Work, income and poverty; * Older persons in rural areas and nomadic communities; * Older persons and emigration; * Continuing education and training. |
| * The Strategic plan of the National Centre for Human Rights | * Promotion of the civil and political rights of groups most at risk of violation, including older persons. |
| * The National Strategy for Women | * Improvement of the quality of life of older women by empowering them to live with dignity within their communities. However the strategy has no indicators specifically relating to older women. |
| * Policy document on demographic opportunities in Jordan and the national plan to monitor and follow up on the implementation and funding of policies relating to demographic opportunities | * Population forecasts in Jordan embrace three scenarios which also take account of older persons. They include the provision of specialized staff to deal with older persons, training in health and social care, appropriate infrastructure, health and psychological care services for older persons and measures to ensure that the workforce has insurance against old age. The High-Level Council on Population is responsible for monitoring and following up on the implementation and funding of those policies via performance indicators within the national plan for demographic opportunities. The policy document intersects with the four main themes of the National Strategy for Older Persons. |
| * The strategic plan of the Social Security Association | * This is an integrated plan the ultimate beneficiaries of which are older persons; specifically, it enables them to obtain retirement payments when they reach the legal retirement age. The plan includes a number of important indicators: * The number of insured persons; * Insured persons as a proportion of the workforce; * Insured persons as a proportion of employed persons; * The number of persons outside Jordan who have taken out optional insurance; * Levels of awareness about insurance. |
| * The strategic plan of the National Assistance Fund | * Older persons who are beneficiaries of the Fund. |
| * The national strategy against poverty | * The provision of basic health services and facilitating access to health centres for both men and women from poor families or families at risk of poverty, as well as for older persons and persons with disabilities. * The provision of basic education and professional training and facilitating access to training centres for both men and women from poor families or families at risk of poverty, as well as for older persons and persons with disabilities. |
| * The strategic plan of the Ministry of Education | * Adult education and the eradication of illiteracy is one of the main thrusts of the Ministry’s strategic plan; indicators of this include the number of adult education and literacy promotion centres that have been opened throughout Jordan and the illiteracy rates themselves. |
| * Health care programme for older persons | * This is a special programme for older persons within the Ministry of Health’s health awareness and media directorate. Its activities are financed by the World Health Organization. |
| * The strategy of the Ministry of Social Development | * The Ministry’s strategic goal is to provide improved social services for individuals with special needs and older persons; * The strategy includes the following indicator: numbers of older persons who use the services of care and shelter homes at the expense of the Ministry of Social Development. |
| * The strategic plan of the Greater Amman Municipality | * The third pillar of the strategy — “the community” — has a number of goals and initiatives designed to serve older persons, they include: * Launching programmes for older persons by opening day centres and encouraging activities (such as recreational camps and trips, educational programmes and training courses) to make them active members of the community, refurbishing the music hall of the House of Pioneers and holding weekly concerts throughout the year. |
| * The strategy of the Ministry of Waqf and Islamic Affairs | * The strategy has no specific indicators for older persons but it does include a number of programmes which serve their interests such as the Waqf financial development programme; the preaching, guidance and religious scholars programme and the Zakat Fund programme. |
| * The national strategy and action plan for persons with disabilities | * The strategy focuses on the right of persons with disabilities — of whatever age or gender and wherever they may reside in the country — to obtain equal access to the services they may require, including health care, education and job opportunities as well as habilitation and rehabilitation and a supportive environment through appropriately equipped public transport and facilities; * The strategy has no indicators specifically relating to older persons, but they are automatically covered by the provisions of the Disabled Persons Act. |
| * The national strategy for the health sector in Jordan issued by the High Health Council | * Part of this plan is dedicated to the health of older persons and it includes an analysis of the challenges facing them such as limited economic resources, inability to meet the costs of treatment, a lack of specialized home care services and a lack of medical specialization in geriatrics and illnesses which affect older persons. * Two programmes for older persons have been incorporated into the strategy:   1. A programme to promote the health of older persons;  2. A programme to raise awareness among citizens about health-care issues, most importantly as regards the health of older persons.   * One of the principal performance indicators in the national strategy for the health sector is: “the number of doctors specialized in geriatrics”. |
| * The strategic plan of the Ministry of Health | * This strategy incorporates a number of indicators relating to older persons: * The number of health centres providing care for older persons; * The number of medical personnel trained to provide health care for older persons; * The amount of educational material for older persons. |