# A Human Security Approach for Successfully Preventing Extremism in a Patriarchal Society: The Case of Jordan

"Women are the boundary of the state, and what maintains or changes the status of women may alter the situation of the state." – Jan Jindy Pettman

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## Introduction

Research shows that less democratic regimes are more likely to be based on gender inequality because these regimes thrive "on gendered foundations, relying particularly on the construction of masculinity and femininity which assigns particular traditional' roles to women" (Caprioli, et al.). This is evident in Jordan, where a monarchial government led by an authoritarian king coexists with tribal rule based on gendered hierarchies. The system of norms and laws underpinning Jordanian politics and society, since gaining independence in 1947, fosters an environment in which patriarchy and patrilineality flourish. In fact, the Jordanian Constitution lacks an explicit prohibition of gender discrimination; consequently, the codification of gender inequality under Jordan's colonial-inspired institutions of law persists without a legal basis for opposition. Additionally, the Constitution gives male-dominated religious institutions authority under Shari'a law to dictate "matters of personal status," such as marriage and guardianship, which directly impact the day-to-day lives of Jordanian women. The institutionalization of patriarchy within Jordan creates a re-enforcing system of inequality, which permeates all aspects of Jordanian society and effectively renders Jordanian women second-class citizens. In addition to entrenched patriarchal norms, Jordan also suffers from rising extremism. Every interview participant for this project emphasized that the increasing adoption of extremist ideologies derived from inaccurate interpretations of Islam within Jordanian society fuels intolerance and hate speech and normalizes gender-based violence.

The consequences of gender inequality within a patriarchal system, combined with the norms and power dynamics resulting from rising extremism, negatively affect Jordanian women's quality of life, opportunities, and societal contributions. However, by relying on traditional military approaches to counterterrorism, the Jordanian government fails to adequately acknowledge the relationship between patriarchy and extremism and the gendered consequences. This paper will argue that shifting from a state-security to a human security approach, focusing on women's rights concerns in preventing and countering violent extremism (P/CVE) and all governmental policies, will sustainably reduce both rising extremism and gender inequality in Jordan while also advancing broad national objectives. The challenges to this are manifold: cultural, religious, and systemic. Additionally, many women themselves will resist changes they associate with western feminism and attacks on their tradition and culture. Moreover, the government itself upholds barriers to women's equitable inclusion and engagement in leadership levels. And yet, the sustainable prevention of extremism will require a significant shift away from the very patriarchal norms and institutions that bolster the Jordanian government's power.

## Methodology

This project incorporated two main forms of research: five interviews and a comprehensive literature review. The researcher conducted the interviews while she was studying abroad in Amman, Jordan during fall of 2021. Interview participants included the perspectives of both the Jordanian government, such as the Former Jordanian Minister of Culture & Youth, and civil society, such as the leader of a prominent Jordanian NGO. See the appendix for a complete list of the interview participants and questions.

This paper will begin with a literature review examining women's rights, extremism, and security policies, before moving into an in-depth analysis of patriarchy and extremism in Jordan. The second half of this paper will assess the Jordanian government's and civil society actor's approach to P/CVE from a gender-specific lens. Finally, this paper will make recommendations for successfully preventing extremism and reducing gender inequality within Jordan while also advancing national objectives and building state resiliency.

## Literature Review

This section will examine the connection between women's rights and extremism and set the foundation for the argument that focusing on human security, specifically that of women, leads to a sustainable reduction of extremism and the development of a resilient state.

### Low Levels of Women's Rights and High Levels of Extremism

The relationship between gender inequality and extremism is complex and symbiotic. A policy brief published in 2021 by the UN's Economic and Social Commission for Western Africa (UNESCWA) summarized this relationship as follows: "gender inequality and violence against women are warning signs of violent extremism, mobilizing factors for engagement in violent extremism, and also the outcomes of violent extremism" (UNESCWA, 11). Furthermore, research indicates that "misogyny is an integral part of the ideology, political identity, political economy, and recruitment strategies of violent extremist groups" (Ibid, 12).

In 2020, UN Women published a case study assessing "the impact of gender identities, norms, and relations on violent extremism" in Bangladesh, Indonesia, and the Philippines; the study found that "violence against women, hostile misogyny, and benevolent sexism are better indicators of violent extremism than" other "variables" including "age, religiosity," and education level (Johnston, Dr. Melissa, et al., 51). Specifically, the report found that "more than any factor, support for violence against women" was the most significant indicator of "support for violent extremism" (Ibid, 10). These results support the argument that low levels of women's rights coincide with increased levels of extremism. This is evident in Jordan as well; according to Al-Jaber, "violent radicalization impedes the process of improving and expanding women's freedoms and access to rights."

### Gender Equality as a Predictor of Peace

Contrastingly, research shows that societies with more inclusion of women and higher levels of gender equality are less likely to be extremist. For example, in the 2012 book, *Sex and World Peace*, the authors claim that "the best predictor of a nation's peacefulness is not its level of democracy or wealth, but rather the level of physical security enjoyed by its women" (Hudson). UNESCWA also contends that "societies with higher gender equality indicators were less vulnerable to violent extremism" (UNESCWA, 2).

The results of a "case study on the role of gender and identity in shaping positive alternatives to extremisms" in Indonesia exemplify these claims. Indonesia presents itself as a good case study because, like Jordan, the nature of violent extremism is based on "gendered narratives," often derived from "narrow interpretations of Islam and Qur'anic texts" and exacerbated by "social

media" (Holmes & Fransen, 1). For context, there are "hundreds of pesantren," "Islamic boarding schools," in Indonesia, run by "Muslim women clerics and educators," called "women ulama" (Ibid, 3). The case study found that by collaborating with local women's rights activists, the women ulama can utilize "Islamic tradition to improve the economic, social, and psychological condition" of Indonesian women (Ibid). Additionally, the study stated that women ulama's "trust-based relationships and gender-sensitive Islamic perspective" allow them to "deconstruct violent narratives" while pursuing "gender justice" (Ibid, 1). Furthermore, the women ulama participate in training programs focused on "counter[ing] extremist narratives" with "peaceful and just interpretation of Islam," "recogniz[ing] the signs of violent extremism," and "actively engag[ing] with the government in dialogue and advocacy" (Ibid, 5). The success of the women ulama program in Indonesia illustrates the importance of women in peacebuilding processes.

Human Security vs. Traditional (State) Security

Research indicates that investing in women is a prerequisite for successful investments into overall state stability and resiliency. The 2005 UN Arab Human Development Report noted that "the lack of full participation of women in every sphere of society" was "the most important barrier" to creating "a more prosperous and peaceful region" (Osborne, 8). Additionally, a Brookings policy brief on "democracy, gender equality, and security" found evidence supporting the argument that "the positive relationship between democracy and relative peacefulness only holds if democracy is accompanied by an increase in gender equality" (Brookings, 3). This finding suggests that any effort to democratize governments, like Jordan, with the hopes of increasing peace, must incorporate a women's rights perspective.

The West Asia-North Africa Institute's (WANA) "Theory of Change" project analyzed the "trilateral relationship between human security, state security policies, and efforts to counter violent extremism in the region" (Bondokji & Mhadeen, 2). The project inspected "radicalization hotbeds, refugee host communities, and marginalized areas" within the region, including several areas in Jordan, such as Ajloun, Mafraq, Russeifa, Karak, Tafileh, and East Amman (ibid, 5). The project defines human security (HS) as the following:

> "a state of individual and communal peace achieved through an environment that meets the basic needs of individuals and through legislations that guarantee the rights and duties of all citizens. A state that promotes confidence in state institutions and cements citizenship and belonging" (Bondokji & Mhadeen, 4).

WANA breaks down HS into two categories, "material" and "abstract;" material refers to "basic services that meet human needs," such as "safe transportation, decent healthcare, and quality education," while abstract refers to "rights, freedoms, and duties" (Ibid, 6). WANA's categorization of HS builds on the "seven main categories" of HS identified in the 1994 UN Human Development Report: "economic," "food," "health," "environmental," "personal," "community," and "political" (24-5). However, in practice, the project found that people often define human security "by its absence;" the tendency to defer to examples of insecurity when asked about security illustrates that "citizens are overwhelmed" by "various unmet human needs" (White

Paper, 7). A White Paper published in 2019 presents the key findings of the project. Overall, "state-centric security policies" (SSPs), functioning with the goal of "protecting the state and its borders in terms of the military and security aspects," were found to "reinforce drivers of violent extremism" (Ibid, 12). For example, "excessive use of force, selective application of security measures, and constraints on freedoms of expression" can cause citizens to direct their frustrations "towards the state" (Bondokji & Mhadeen, 2). SSPs also restrict the participation of individuals and civil society. On the other hand, the project found that "human security (HS) programming" can simultaneously "prevent violent extremism" and "address drivers of broader" regional instability, such as "drivers of social conflict, economic strife, challenges" to "representative and inclusive governance," and concerns regarding states' "social contract" (Ibid, 2). In essence, HS programming is a preventative approach in which the key is protecting vulnerable populations, such as women. Adopting this perspective is critical for addressing the issue of extremism within the context of a patriarchal society.

## Jordan as a Patriarchal Society

While western scholars view patriarchy "as the power of men over women," Suad Joseph, a Middle East gender and family studies scholar, argues that patriarchy within "the Arab context" is more nuanced than an asymmetric power balance between two genders. According to Joseph, "in the Arab world," patriarchy manifests as "the prioritizati[on] of rights of males and elders (including elder women) and the justification of those rights within kinship values which, are usually supported by religion" (Joseph, 14). Furthermore, Joseph proposes that the resilience and permeability of this form of patriarchy is due to the centrality of the family unit and "kinship values" in "Arab society" (Ibid). Considering Joseph's definition, there is no doubt that Jordan is a patriarchal society. The royal family itself exemplifies the central role the patrilineal family unit plays in Jordanian society. Additionally, while women account for approximately half of Jordan's population, many symbiotic factors continue to actively oppress Jordanian women in all facets of life. The World Economic Forum's 2020 Global Gender Gap Report ranked Jordan "among the countries with lowest scores on the gender disparity index, 138 out of 153 countries;" they cited "low economic participation, political empowerment, representation of women," and "discriminatory legislation and practices" as the main reasons (Institutional Capacity, 18). In her framework for "understanding the persistence of patriarchy in the Arab world," Joseph analyzes five forms of patriarchy: social, political, economic, religious, and patriarchy of the self. Examining the status of Jordanian women's rights and equality within this framework illustrates the pervasiveness of patriarchal norms in all aspects of Jordanian society.

### Social Patriarchy: Normalized Inequality

Like most countries in the region, "family is the basic unit" of Jordanian society (Joseph, 15). Colonial influence, tribal rule, and religious prominence all contribute to this norm. For example, the unofficial implementation of tribal rule within parts of Jordanian society feeds into women's disempowerment by promoting "traditional male and female roles" (Osborne, 10). More generally, Al-Banawi claims that gender stereotypes are taught to children both at home and at school from a young age. A report on "Gender Discrimination in Jordan" published by UN Women in 2019 found that textbooks used in "primary school curricula" "misrepresented and

limited" the role of women to "stereotypical professions," such as "housewives and mothers" in the private sphere and as "teachers and nurses" in the public sphere (5). The media also plays a significant role in "enforcing stereotypes, perceptions, and attitudes" of women in Jordan and the MENA region (Allen). All interview participants stressed this issue. While the emergence of social media has contributed to women's empowerment by providing women "access to the public sphere" and "a voice," a large-scale assessment of the presence of women in mass media shows that they remain invisible; "women's achievements, voices, and participation" are perceived as insignificant and not "newsworthy" (Ibid). For instance, "23 studies" conducted in the MENA region examining "the portrayal of women in Arab media" "found that 79% of images of women were negative" and depicted them mainly as "sexual commodities" as well as "materialistic, docile, and unintelligent" (Ibid). Furthermore, a case study published by Oxford University analyzing the portrayal of "Middle Eastern women in the media" found that Middle Eastern media outlets, like Aljazeera.net, repeatedly fail to report on critical women's issues, such as "sexual slavery, trafficking, child exploitation, prostitution, and rape in the Middle East" (Al-Ariqi, 37). This neglect harmfully contributes to the normalization of violence against women in the region. Furthermore, the perpetuation of dangerous stereotypes of women in primary school curricula and media illustrate the patriarchal perception of women within Jordanian society; Jordanian women's second-class citizenry is not only enabled by these patriarchal societal norms but codified through legislation unrestrained by the constitution.

Political Patriarchy: Institutionalized Inequality

Since the introduction of quotas "at the national level" in 2003 and the "municipal level" in 2007, women's representation in "the House of Representatives" increased from "6.4%" to "15.4%" and from "12.7%" to "15.4" in "the Senate" (OECD, 16). Still, there is a way to go until women are on par with their male counterparts or reach what is called "a critical mass (30% representation" (Ibid). Additionally, there are persisting social and structural barriers excluding women from political leadership positions; for example, "neither gender targets or quotas exist for leadership posts within" institutions including "parliaments, local councils," or "the political executive" (Ibid,17). Although the quota system has some benefits, like introducing the idea of women leaders to rural and tribal communities, most interview participants voiced concern over the quota system. According to Al-Jaber, the government needs "to view women as humans not just numbers to meet a goal," and it is "not only the number of participants" that is "important but also the quality and level of authority that is earned." By reducing women to numbers, quotas objectify women while limiting their participation to a set threshold. Furthermore, quotas may fuel arguments that women are undeservingly handed positions. Therefore, the system needs to be revised.

In addition to unequal political representation, it is evident that patriarchy and gender inequality are deeply engrained within the governing institutions of Jordan. In fact, the Constitution does not explicitly "prohibit gender discrimination;" consequently, discriminatory national laws cannot "be challenged as unconstitutional" (Gender Discrimination, 2). Furthermore, legislative change remains slow due to the persisting "male dominance" entrenched in the judiciary (Osborne, 10). Notably, various Jordanian laws are derived from British "colonial institutions of

law" rooted in "notions of paternity and patrilineality" (Gender Discrimination, 2). First, Jordan's Nationality Law strongly resembles British Nationality Laws, which are "based on the notion of paternity" (Ibid). Consequently, "Jordanian law allows only fathers to pass citizenship to their children;" therefore, "a child born to a Jordanian mother and a non-Jordanian father is considered a non-citizen" by the government (Zayadin). As of 2014, "the Jordanian Ministry of Interior" reported "that there were over 355,000 non-citizen children of Jordanian women;" these children's "access to basic rights and services, such as international travel, work permits, and "public education and health care," are restricted by Jordanian authorities (Ibid). Additionally, until 1987 Jordanian women married to non-Jordanians were "denationalized" (Gender Discrimination, 12). Jordan's Nationality Law, which codifies Jordanian women's inferior position to men, is "a violation of international human rights law" (Zayadin). Jordanian law also effectively legalizes violence against women and the objectification of women. For example, "Article 340 of Jordan's Penal Code reduces the penalty" for a man who "kills or attacks a female relative" accused of "adultery," while Article 98 "reduces the penalty for murder" if the perpetrator was "in a state of great fury" (Al-Wazir). Additionally, Jordan's Personal Status Law gives religious institutions, predominantly Islamic, "control over fundamental issues of daily life," including, "marriage, divorce, and inheritance" (Gender Discrimination, 10). These laws are implemented by "religious jurists" who base their interpretations on "sacred Shari'a principles" (Ibid). Shari'a is defined as "the sum total of religious values and principles as revealed to the Prophet Muhammad to direct human life;" because Shari'a principles are regarded as sacred, they hold the "patriarchal assumptions," which reflect "the social and political context as well as the normative values" from the time of the Prophet as permanent and unmalleable (Ibid). For example, articles in the Personal Status Law treat women as "dependents of men" and legally require women to obey their husbands (Ibid). The implications of codifying gender inequality extend beyond women themselves: "a quantitative analysis of 171 countries" published by *The Council of Foreign Relations* found that "inequality in family law," specifically laws that "disadvantage women regarding age and consent of marriage, the criminalization of marital rape, and inheritance law and practices," "is a significant predicator of state instabilities and fragility." These inequalities are found within Jordanian law.

Religious Patriarchy: Justified Inequality

Religion, specifically Islam, has always played a central role in Jordan; in fact, the monarchy established "its symbolic legitimate source to rule" on the premise that the ruling family is directly descended from the Prophet Muhammad (Shboul, 48). However, an increase in fundamentalist Islam in the mid-1900s, mainly attributed to regional political trends and the monarchy's increased emphasis on religious legitimacy, has caused the relationship between men and women to worsen within Jordan. As exemplified by the passing of Jordan's Personal Status Law in 1976, religious institutions are given immense authority within Jordan, consequently amplifying the consequences of what Joseph calls "religious patriarchy:" "the privileging of males and elders in religious institutions and practices" (Joseph, 17). According to UNWomen, "existing social norms" have kept women from occupying "decision-making positions" within Jordanian religious institutions, putting control over women's daily lives "exclusively in the hands of men" and "reinfuse[ing] patriarchy" into daily life (Ibid). Succinctly put, norms derived

from fundamentalism interpretations of Shari'a principles have led to a society in which women's "voice[s] are haram," according to E'leimat, they are "seen as wrong."

## Economic Patriarchy: Materialized Inequality

Jordan's "economic participation and opportunity for women" score on the "Global Gender Gap Index" decreased 28% from 2008 to 2015, indicating that the economic exclusion of women not only persists but is worsening in Jordan (Freedom House). Despite higher levels of education and "the highest rate of female literacy in the region (97%)," women make up only "15% of the labor force" in Jordan, making the female unemployment rate "nearly 10% higher than the male unemployment rate" and "four times" higher than the global "female unemployment rate" (Dan; Anderson). Furthermore, women's employment is concentrated in sectors that fit the expectations of their "traditional roles," such as "education and healthcare" (World Bank, 6). There is also an underrepresentation of women in "high-skill sectors" and "senior leadership roles;" for example, women led "only 2% of Jordanian firms" in 2020 and owned "less than 10% of Jordanian businesses" (Ibid).

In addition to societal expectations for women to occupy traditional roles within Jordanian society, other factors such as the inaccessibility of childcare, a "lack of safe transportation for women," and a gender pay gap exceeding "15% in the private sector" and "over 13%" in the public sector discourage women from economic engagement (Dan). Consequently, only "14.6% of women were economically active" in 2018 (Gender Discrimination, 8). According to Joseph, "economic patriarchy" is "the privileging of males and elders in ownership and control over wealth and resources, including human resources" (Joseph, 15). As of 2017, women owned only "16.7% of land" and "23.7% of apartments" (Gender Discrimination, 27). Perhaps the most significant demonstration of economic patriarchy in Jordan is the rate of economic abuse amongst Jordanian women. A study published in *Humanities and Social Sciences Communications* in 2021 found that "55.2% of urban women and 44.8% of rural women" in Jordan suffered from economic abuse, defined as "an intentional pattern of control in which individuals interfere with their partner's ability to acquire, use, and maintain economic resources" (Alsawalqa, 2 & 5). The study reported that economic abuse takes form in Jordan in two main ways: "controlling" and "exploiting" women's "economic resources" and "managing their financial decisions" (Ibid, 1). Significantly, the results illustrated that all women who reported economic abuse simultaneously suffered from "psychological, emotional, and physical abuse" (Ibid, 6).

## Patriarchy in the Self:

According to Joseph's framework, the presence of "heavily ingrained" social, political, religious, and economic patriarchies within a society causes patriarchy to become "part of the psyche," leading individuals to internalize "patriarchal principles" (Joseph, 18). Joseph argues that this concept is the key to understanding the persistence of patriarchy. Additionally, Joseph explains that in "Arab societies" like Jordan, patriarchy is "linked to a 'connective' (or relational) notion of self" in which individuals are "encouraged to see themselves in relationship to critical others, especially their families" (Ibid). Joseph calls this concept "patriarchal connectivity:" societies

revolving around patrilineal familial structures cause one's sense of self to become dependent on their relationship to their "male kin" (Ibid). The presence of patriarchy in the self explains patriarchy's self-sustaining ability within Jordanian society. Furthermore, the effect of patriarchal connectivity is exacerbated by the prevalent identity crisis in Jordan. Al-Jaber believes that many people struggle with what it means to be Jordanian. He said that "this is a sensitive topic in Jordan," partially because it is a "post-colonial issue." Although he believes a Jordanian national identity is slowly emerging, the government's neglect of intersectionality has led to a disconnect between the national identity and "sub-identities." This disharmony contributes to 'extra-marginalization,' in which many Jordanian women automatically feel excluded from the male-centric national identity.

Where Does This Leave Jordanian Women?

Traditional gender norms and expectations that are "ingrained in the fabric of" Jordanian society reinforce "deficiencies in legal protection," normalize "rights violations," and "restrict women's participation in the labor market" (Osborne, 9-10). Essentially, women occupy the position of second-class citizens in Jordanian society. Sociologist Charles Tilly defines citizenship as a "direct relationship between the individual and the state;" however, Jordanian women's relationships with the state are conducted through a "mediator – usually her father or her husband" (Gender Discrimination, 2). This status is the result of the persistent nature of Jordanian patriarchy. Notably, the Convention of the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) "concluding observations on the cultural stereotypes and gender roles have not changed since" 2000 (Ibid, 1). The Committee voiced "concern over the persistence of deep-rooted discriminatory stereotypes" which "overemphasize the traditional role of women" within the domestic sphere and "undermin[e] women's social status, autonomy, educational opportunities, and professional careers" (Ibid). Furthermore, CEDAW reported a rise of "patriarchal attitudes" in "state authorities and society" as well as an increase in "conservative groups" openly challenging gender equality (Ibid). The normalization of patriarchal practices within Jordanian society creates a dangerous environment for women. For example, The Sisterhood is Global Institute reported that "the total number" of "murders of women and girls" by family members increased 200% from 2018 to 2019 (Alsawalqa, 3). It is important to note that Jordan's male-dominant power dynamics have varying consequences for different demographics. One of the most popular comparisons amongst scholars is urban versus rural women. For example, while the results of Alsawalqa's study indicate higher levels of economic abuse amongst urban women, the study also found higher earning and education rates amongst urban women, "indicat[ing] that location affected women's" educational and employment opportunities (Ibid, 6). Notably, the same study found no "significant differences in" men's "employment status between urban and rural areas" (Ibid). According to Fityan, "most of the women in rural areas are pushed to stay home while boys are allowed to pursue education and to engage in their communities."

Obstacles to Overcoming Patriarchy in Jordanian Society

Amongst all interviewees, the most cited obstacle to overcoming patriarchy and gender inequality in Jordan is a lack of awareness of the issue and women themselves rejecting the idea

of women's rights and equality. According to Al-Banawi, "some people are not aware of gender issues and specifically women's rights." She also stated that some Jordanian women "view it as an elitist concept" and "think it does not relate to them" because "they see it as a concept used by foreign NGOs operating in Jordan." Overall, she believes there is an overarching "cultural issue with how people perceive issues relating to women's rights in Jordan." E'liemat, Fiyan, and Al-Jaber added that this issue is the result of international institutions and organizations imposing notions of women's rights rooted in western centrism, which they argue is not only counterproductive but dangerous. In her essay, "The Master's Tools Will Never Dismantle the Master's House," Audre Lorde argues from a postcolonial feminist perspective that "western feminism" will not be able to "make positive change for third world women by using the same tools" as "the patriarchal system to oppress women" (Daoud, 36). Programs run by International NGOs with the goal of empowering Middle Eastern women are often rooted in "Euro-centrism" and perpetuate orientalist stereotypes of Middle Eastern women that often conflate religious traditions with examples of oppression. The most notable example is the western perception of veiling. As pointed out in Imogen Parker's essay, "Western Ideals of Gender Equality: Contemporary Middle Eastern Women," attempting to enforce a "universal" standard of "equality" often "conflict[s] with cultural relativity" (Parker). Therefore, it is understandable that western-backed initiatives to promote gender equality are perceived "as a form of neo-colonialism" by women in the MENA region (Ibid). Because the negative consequences of patriarchy and gender inequality are not fully acknowledged or understood in Jordan, the role these issues play in radicalization and extremism are essentially unacknowledged.

## Part 4: Rising Extremism in Jordan

Brief History of Radicalization and Violent Extremism in Jordan

Radicalization is best understood as a process occurring on a spectrum ranging from embracing "radical political or religious" beliefs to "violent action" (Center on Global Counterterrorism Cooperation, 1). Radicalization resulting in violent action is referred to as violent extremism, which USAID defines as "advocating, engaging in, preparing, or otherwise supporting ideologically motivated or justified violence to further social, economic, and political objectives." It is important to note that radicalization and violent extremism are not exclusive to Islamic extremism; however, this paper focuses on extremist ideologies derived from "distorted interpretations of jihad and Islamic teachings" (Santos). Specifically, one school of thought within the Sunni Salafi movement known as Salafist Jihadism serves as the ideological foundation of violent extremist organizations (VEOs) such as al-Qaeda and the Islamic State (ISIS). Dr. Abu Rumman identifies the main principles of Salafi-Jihadism as "establishing an Islamic state, refusing to participate in the political process, not accepting democracy, and believing in armed action as the main strategy for change" (Abu Rumman, 1).

Jordan's proximity to multiple regional conflicts and the subsequent influx of refugees have contributed to a history of radicalization and support for violent extremism within the country. In fact, some of the most influential characters in the rise of Jihadism hail from Jordan, including Abdullah Azzam, credited as "the father of global jihad," and Abu Musab al-Zarqawi, the founder of al-Qaeda in Iraq (Speckhard). As of 2017, Jordan had "over 30,000 foreign fighters"

in "the Syrian and Iraq conflict," making it the country with the "highest number of foreign fighters, on a per capita basis" (Ibid). In addition to political and economic frustrations, other factors, including "sectarianism, oppression, corruption, and abuses of power," have historically pushed those in Jordan and the MENA region toward violent extremism (Ibid). As of 2015, "Reuters reported" that there were approximately "6,000-7,000 jihadi sympathizers" in Jordan, mainly concentrated in four areas designated as "hotbeds of radicalization:" Zarqa, Irbid, Ma'an, and A'Salt. (Ibid). The researcher was unable to find concrete figures or reports related to the current state of terrorism and violent extremism within Jordan. This challenge was validated during the interview process, with multiple respondents claiming that "the government does not publicize" information related to "the presence of current extremism or terrorism threats in Jordan because they don't want to say" those threats are present (Fityan).

However, all interview participants argue that the nature of the extremist threat in Jordan is evolving; the rise of social media has catalyzed a shift from the predominance of violent actions to violent ideologies, reflecting the effectiveness of VEO propaganda. This contributes to a "culture of extremism" characterized by "the adoption of ideologies, beliefs, and behavior beyond the norm and local and international standards" (Homran, et al., 456). Jordanian journalist, Ranya Kadri, described this phenomenon as "social ISIS" or "social Jihad" in which "young men and young women are embracing Takfir" ideology, the purification of Islam, resulting in a "state of mind" promoting hatred "in the name of Islam" (Speckhard). While the emergence of the social Jihad has caused a shift away from physically violent declarations of support for VEOs, media outlets and social media have become the new battleground for Salafist Jihadis. For example, a survey conducted amongst a random sample of 250 students at Yarmouk University in Jordan found that 82% of respondents identified "creating an enabling environment for violence and extremism" as one of the most prominent effects of increased levels of e-hate speech in Jordan (Tahat, et al., 1505). Furthermore, 85% of respondents in UN Women's report on "Women and Violent Radicalization in Jordan" reported that "if members of their community adopted radical views, it would affect their daily lives" (20).

The Gendered Dimensions of Radicalization in Jordan

With the rise of 'the Social Jihad,' "there is a greater reliance on using social media" to target women "because it is easier to infiltrate their homes when they are not as physically present in social communities" (Fityan). Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka, United Nations Under-Secretary-General and Executive Director of UN Women, stated that VEO's "propaganda and recruitment materials" demonstrate how sophisticated they "are in exploiting existing gender inequalities and ideas around traditional or 'ideal' roles for women in men." (Brown, 6). They use gendered terminology, "such as promises of 'sisterhood'," and promote images of women fulfilling nurturing roles, caring for soldiers and raising the children of the new caliphate" (Osborne, 5). One interviewee shared that they frequently get Facebook message requests from people in Syria wanting to "brainwash" and "recruit" her to join ISIS. In addition to the utilization of social media by VEOs, religious centers and some conservative communities weaponize Islam to push extremist ideologies onto women in hopes they will push the ideology onto their families.

The increase of Jordanians adopting radical ideologies has normalized intolerance, hate speech, and even gender-based violence. For instance, the perpetuation of these ideologies by non-regulated religious centers essentially, "legalize violence" (Fityan). In these situations, "women, specifically young women, are the first victims," according to Al-Jaber. E'leimat, echoed Al-Jaber's point by arguing that the "community suffers today in Jordan from intolerance and hate speech," this trend manifests by "limit[ing] spaces for women to express themselves" and restricting "opportunities to be exposed to other ways of life." As previously mentioned, Jordan suffers from an identity crisis, fueled in part by the government's neglect of intersectionality and "sub-identities;" therefore, women may identify "with VEOs more than a Jordanian national identity because they are looking for belonging" (Al-Jaber). The following section will analyze the gender-specific implications of rising extremism in Jordan.

## Part 5: Compounded Consequences of Rising Extremism in Jordan's Patriarchal Society

### Jordan's Cycle of Oppression

In 2016, UN Women and the Jordanian National Commission for Women published a Technical Report on Women and Violent Radicalization in Jordan. The report identified a critical connection between gender inequity and radicalization in Jordan; the "existing limitations on [Jordanian] women's freedom and access to their rights" put women at a "bigger risk than men" from the results of radicalization and, consequently, the norms resulting from "increased radicalization" within Jordanian communities exacerbate the pre-existing "limitations on women's freedom and access to their rights" (21). In fact, 71% of the study's thirty-nine interview respondents believe women are at a more significant risk to the effects of radicalization than men. Furthermore, women respondents reported that their "fears" regarding the "impact of radicalization" included a "decreased ability to work or study" and "community engagement and volunteerism," and "increased limitations on women's freedoms" and "domestic violence" (Ibid, 29). This cycle of radicalization and oppression is a direct consequence of neglecting the role gender inequity and patriarchal norms play in radicalization and cultures of extremism.

The report also highlighted that existing research generally disregards the active role women play in radicalization and extremism and P/CVE efforts. Most narratives addressing women's relationship to extremism portray women as either secondary actors within VEOs or victims of violent extremism; for example, common beliefs that "women only support violent extremism when they are coerced or because of connections to male violent extremists" and that "women do not commit violence in violent extremist groups" (Search for Common Ground). However, perpetuating this 'women as victims' narrative' neglects the influence women have within the radicalization and deradicalization processes and reinforces gender power dynamics.

### The Consequences of the Cycle: New Norms and Power Dynamics

The pre-existing patriarchal environment is detrimental for Jordanian women and is exacerbated by rising extremism. As previously stated, all interviewees agreed that currently, it is the widespread adoption of extremist ideologies and the resulting "cultures of extremism" that pose a critical threat to Jordan. According to Al-Jaber, "increased radicalization within a community, results in new power dynamics which normalize various aspects of radicalized ideologies,

specifically violence." He explained that by building on pre-existing gender inequities, these new norms reaffirm traditional gender expectations rooted in hyper-masculinity, leading to greater levels of "aggression, competition, and violence" that disproportionately harm women (Al-Jaber). Research published by the UN support these. Generally, "acts of sexual and gender-based violence" are instrumentalized by VEOs to "increase their power" (Brown, 7). More specifically, gender-based sexual violence is used by VEOs "to impose an ideology that permits the oppression of women and control over their lives, means, sexual and reproductive rights;" additionally, "sexual slavery, human trafficking, [and] forced prostitution" are all tactics to "generate income in the shadow economy" (UNESCWA, 14). The consequences of this are reflected in a "41% increase" in the "number of cases of violence against women reported to the police" in the first year of JONAP's implementation (JONAP Annual Review 2018-2019, 31). Furthermore, norms that restrict women to the traditional domestic sphere limit their ability to operate in the public sphere. According to UN Women, these limitations may pertain to "access[ing] education and employment," utilizing "health services" and other governmental resources, "exercise[ing] leadership roles in their communities," "engaging in voluntary and community work," and "express[ing] themselves without the fear of" retaliation (Ibid). Essentially further affirming women's status as second-class citizens in Jordan.

As previously mentioned, one of the biggest issues is that Jordanian women are unaware of their rights and therefore unable to identify when they are being impeded. ICAN argues that extremists contribute to this issue by "portraying women's rights" and feminism as "western invention[s] to spoil Muslim society" and "an extension of colonialist politics" (ICAN, 7). Furthermore, communities that uphold these narratives become extremely dangerous environments for women to partake in women's rights initiatives; therefore, limiting grassroots opposition efforts.

While women in Jordan are generally at higher risk than men in cultures of extremism, all interviewees also brought up the importance of intersectionality. The UN Women report on Women and Radicalization in Jordan summarizes this well: "women's identities are a complex amalgamation of many factors, of which gender is only a part… nationality, ethnicity, sexuality, political leanings and a host of other factors also influence women's experiences and the choices they make" (16). Therefore, it is critical to inquire how the compounded consequences of patriarchy and extremism vary amongst different groups of women in Jordan, such as, urban versus rural, Muslim versus Christian, citizen versus non-citizen, young versus old, and so on. For example, research has found that urban women receive higher levels of education than their rural counterparts, consequently providing urban women not only with better economic opportunities but higher levels of self-awareness "with respect to their rights," "how to defend them," and how "to better distinguish abuse" (Alsawalqa, 6). Furthermore, according to Fityan the rate of people adopting radical ideologies is higher in rural communities. These facts support the assertion that women who suffer the most from patriarchal norms overlap with those who live in the areas of Jordan known for elevated levels of extremism.

The combination of patriarchy and rising extremism yields negative implications not only for women but also for the country as a whole. Fityan stated that "Jordan's social component is

weak from the inside, making every aspect of Jordan easy to attack and manipulate." According to E'leimat, the mechanisms that "enable gender inequity" and women's "lack of social protection" have implications for the broader community. These assertions correlate with the body of research on the connection between gender equality, extremism, and peace introduced in the literature review. E'leimat pointed to the legislative implications resulting from "Members of Parliament" adopting "radical ideologies" as well as the social implications of the "growing intolerance" between religions that is "evident on social media," specifically "between Muslims and Christians." Furthermore, most research pertaining to "the impact of gender inequality on economic performance" has found a negative correlation between the two variables (Klasen, 282). For example, a working paper published by the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) found that "gender discrimination in social institutions, which were defined as "formal and informal laws, social norms, and practices," negatively impacted a country's "long-term growth" (Ferrant and Kolev, 5). Specifically, the report identified a link between "gender-based discrimination in social institutions" and "lower levels of national income;" this is because the marginalization of women from educational and employment opportunities negatively impacts a nation's GDP by reducing productivity (Ibid). For perspective, the OECD estimated that in 2016, "gender-based discrimination in social institutions" resulted in a "regional income loss" of 575 billion USD for the MENA region (Ibid).

The authoritarian nature of Jordan's government intensifies these consequences. Dr. Abu Rumman poignantly stated that "extremism is a legal son of an authoritarian regime;" according to him, "one of the biggest issues is the lack of democracy" in Jordan, coupled with "high levels of corruption," "he stated that when you put the idea of "women's rights in this context, then you see the connection" between extremism and the government. In support of this claim, research published by the Brookings Institute in 2017 identified a "strong correlation between lower levels of violence against women and higher levels of democratic quality," indicating that states with "higher quality of democracy have the lowest levels of violence against women" (Brookings, 2). The next part of this paper will examine how the Jordanian government's current approach to P/CVE, which predominantly utilizes SSPs, fails to address the root issues and human consequences of extremism, specifically those pertaining to women.

## Part 6: Reviewing Jordan's P/CVE and women's rights efforts

### The Jordanian Government's Approach

Jordan's approach to counterterrorism and P/CVE has historically been overly militaristic and reactionary. While the Jordanian government has yet to publish a national framework for P/CVE, "Jordan developed its counter-terrorism plan" in 2014, followed by "the King's 'Amman Message on Tolerance'" (UNESCWA, 5). These two documents essentially serve as the foundation of the country's P/CVE efforts and exhibit "a clear emphasis on the security approach" (Ibid). Specifically, the Jordanian government has predominately focused on utilizing military approaches to attack the "organizational infrastructure of terrorism" and "hardening homeland security through greater monitoring and intelligence" while ignoring the "the underlying social and political" problems pushing Jordanians toward violent extremism (Yom).

According to Fityan, SSPs, such as the regulation of Islamic religious centers or social media, have generally led to increased government surveillance and censorship. For example, the Jordanian government has imposed security crackdowns, including a year-long "state of emergency" in "the Ma'an governate," which resulted in "unjustified" arrests and investigations and consequently increased "tensions between locals and security forces," as well as "economic decline" (Sayegh and Bondokji, 5). The growing distrust between Jordanians and the state's security services is reflected in the fact that only 7% of parents said "they would report their child's suspicious behavior to state security as their first choice;" additionally 0% of parents said they would tell "security as the first choice" if their daughter "faced the risk of radicalization" (Technical Report, 26).

All interviewees voiced concern that the Jordanian government's focus on the militaristic and security aspects of P/CVE has resulted in detrimental and unintended consequences, reflecting the findings of WANA's White Paper introduced in the Literature Review section. First, although SSPs can be effective for "short-term conflict containment," predominant reliance on such programs actually "enhances the prospects of violent extremism" (Bondokji and Mhadeen, 2). This contributes to a phenomenon called co-radicalization, in which VEOs provoke the government through "violence and hate" to create a "culture of surveillance" within the country that exacerbates the population's frustrations with the government, consequently decreasing societal engagement and increasing incentives to join VEOs (Reicher and Haslam). Additionally, over-reliance on SSPs "hinder[s] successful HS programming" and increases "distrust in the government" as a "provider of HS" and "the security sector" (Bondokji and Mhadeen, 15; White Paper, 13). Perhaps most detrimental, framing P/CVE solely in a security context endangers human rights in Jordan and violates a UN resolution stating that a state's obligation to respect human rights should serve as "the fundamental basis" in all counterterrorism efforts (Brown). Individuals arrested as a result of P/CVE-related SSPs have reported "ill-treatment, including sexual humiliation" while detained by state security forces; both Amnesty International and Human Rights Watch have voiced concern over the use of torture in Jordan (Abi-Habib). Additionally, regulation programs and "surveillance policies" pose a threat to personal liberties, including freedom of expression and religion, while also producing "gendered impacts" (UNESCWA, 9). According to Fityan, increased government surveillance and censorship deters women from seeking opportunities to engage as leaders within their religious communities. Lastly, multiple respondents argued that the over militarization of P/CVE strategies prohibits the establishment of sustainable peace, referred to in academia as positive peace. As Al-Jaber poignantly declared, a "lack of war does not mean peace;" similarly, "security is not the same thing as peace." By overmilitarizing P/CVE, the Jordanian government fails to uphold most of the "pillars of peace" proposed by The Institute for Economics and Peace, including "equitable distribution of resources, acceptance of the rights of others," "low levels of corruption," and "free flow of information" (IDare).

According to Fityan, "the [Jordanian] government won't disclose information related to" P/CVE because they view the publication of such information as a public admittance to the presence of extremism in Jordan. Fityan claims this is the main reason for the lack of a public national P/CVE framework. According to an article published by The Washington Institute in 2018, the

Jordanian government formed "a counter-extremism committee and department to enact" the "2014 National Strategy for Preventing and Countering Violent Extremism;" however, the plan "is still classified as 'confidential' and only accessible by "the General Intelligence Directorate, the Public Security Directorate, and the Ministries of Interior, Social Development, and Awqaf" (Al-Sharafat). According to Al-Banawi, "some P/CVE activists and CSO's might think the government is trying to limit their access to the developmental process" of P/CVE related initiatives because "the government values the military's insight more than" the civilian perspective. She stated that she believes the government has the intention of bettering the "coordination of the national efforts." Additionally, all interviewees claimed that the Jordanian government's over-exercised censorship has created an environment where "P/CVE is a sensitive topic and not openly discussed," and when it is, "veiled terminology is used." For example, the government may title plans related to P/CVE as "plans for community peace" (Fityan). Someone with whom the researcher spoke stated that the government also indirectly forces CSOs and NGOs to employ veiled language to indirectly address issues related to P/CVE by using nonthreatening language like "tolerance" in order to receive governmental approval; however, this statement was later recanted. Additionally, the government "even prevents people from meeting with former foreign fighters by signing forms;" while Dr. Abu Rumman has been able to interview former male foreign fighters, the state refuses to let him work with former women Jihadists because it is "more complicated" to do so (Fityan; Abu Rumman). The classified nature of the Jordanian government's P/CVE strategies, such as the 2014 National Strategy, limits governmental accountability and prevents the input and participation of civil society. When the government works on these strategies in isolation, they are by default neglecting the opinion of the other stakeholders, such as CSOs and NGOs that have more experience and knowledge related to the root causes of extremism. Furthermore, it is impossible for policies drafted in isolation to be gender responsive.

Generally speaking, "the practice of looking at the gendered-dimensions" of extremism and P/CVE "is absent in Jordan" (Dr. Abu Rumman). Dr. Abu Rumman claimed that many Jordanians believe that on a governmental level, "no one cares" about the issue and that the "Jordanian government doesn't see women's rights as a necessity." Because the government does not view gender inequity as a critical issue, inclusion of women's rights initiatives in various government plans, proposals, or programs is superficial and done out of necessity to meet requirements for foreign funding by "maintain[ing] the appearance of a modern, democratic country" (Forester). Since Jordan does not currently have a national framework for P/CVE, this research paper will analyze the *Jordanian National Action Plan (JONAP) for the Implementation of UN Security Council Resolution 1325 (UNSCR 1325) on Women, Peace and Security 2018-2021* to assess the Jordanian government's approach to the gendered dimensions of extremism. It is important to note that the Jordanian government did not publish the JONAP; however, the JONAP is the primary Jordanian government-endorsed plan that incorporates a gender-specific perspective in P/CVE.

In the context of P/CVE, when gender is addressed, it is often done in harmful ways. Fityan argues that this is the result of governmental negligence; although "there are a lot of studies and research about these issues, "they're not really utilized by the Jordanian government." First,

references to women are done within the parameters of traditional gender roles, such as mothers, teachers, and trusted confidants. For example, Jordan's 2014 counter-terrorism plan only mentions "the role of women" once, "regarding enhancing the role of women preachers and making them more active in influencing society" (UNESCWA, 5). Most interviewees emphasized the importance of understanding how women may exercise their influence within traditional roles to spread extremist ideologies in order to identify strategies for productively channeling this influence within P/CVE initiatives. However, they also noted that it is important not to pigeonhole women in these traditional roles because "an excessive focus on these identities can reinforce" gender stereotypes (Ibid, 19). Additionally, Al-Jaber argues that the inclusion of phrases like "women should" in various policies perpetuates gender norms. Second, the government tends to victimize women. The JONAP exemplifies this issue by not once referring to women as voluntary participants in VEOs. Third, the government fails to include women's perspectives in the development of policies and programs. According to Fityan, prior to the JONAP, "women were not included at all, and their perspectives were not considered" because the government had "zero intention of including women;" additionally, she contends that the inclusion of women within the JONAP developmental process, via focus groups, should be attributed to the JNCW's modern approach emphasizing the equal representation of a variety of women. Despite the inclusion of women in the developmental process of the JONAP, women's involvement in governmental policies remains limited. Fourth, this paper has demonstrated how the government continuously excludes women from leadership and decision-making positions. Furthermore, efforts to increase the number of women in leadership positions could objectify women by utilizing a quota system that reduces women to "numbers to meet a goal" rather than "human" (Al-Jaber). Most significantly, "the majority of PVE actions involving or relating to women are only" present in the JONAP; this is extremely dangerous because only addressing women's role in P/CVE in relation to UNSCR 1325 while omitting the role of women in any "broader counter-terrorism" or P/CVE plan, "may lead to the instrumentalization and securitization of women's rights" (UNESCWA, 10).

The securitization and instrumentalization of women and women's rights agendas is dangerous because such practices frame women's empowerment initiatives as merely a "means to an end" rather than the end itself (Ibid, 9). Consequently, the political value of women's empowerment depends on its instrumentalization within a security context. The instrumentalization of women within P/CVE policies also objectifies women by using them as tools to build state security rather than empowering women as agents of peace and change. This is exemplified by the fact that the only publicly accessible Gender Mainstreaming Strategies published by entities of the Jordanian government are the ones for the Jordanian Armed Forces and the Public Security Directorate. Furthermore, "selectively empower[ing] women" through P/CVE or UNSCR 1325 educational programs "to speak out or act against certain extremist groups" while not empowering them "to address structural powers within society" is an example of the government instrumentalizing the women's empowerment agenda for their benefit (Ibid). Similarly, tying women's rights to P/CVE could negatively impact women's societal engagement by limiting participation opportunities to "activities that only target women or women's issues rather than the full scope of activities" (Search for Common Ground). Not only are these practices counterproductive to women's empowerment they also impose unnecessary, additional security

threats onto women; publicly tying women's rights with P/CVE efforts can provoke "violent backlash against women" from VEOs (UNESCWA, 9). The government's "security mentality" even extends to its approach to de-radicalized women, women returning from VEOs; multiple interviewees pointed out that anything related to the process of dealing with de-radicalized women is controlled by the government, specifically the Public Security Directorate, and heavily censored. Fityan stated that security officials will "periodically observe and question" these women not to help them reintegrate into society but to monitor them to ensure they do not pose a security threat and to gain insight into VEO operations. Analyzing the Jordanian government's securitization, instrumentalization, & weaponization of women within the P/CVE context underscores the overall nature of its approach to women's issues: highly "masculine and militarized" while emphasizing "the need for women's protection rather than the transformation of gender relations" (Forester).

Perhaps the most critical example of the securitization and instrumentalization of women's rights is the King's strategy of combining women's rights advancements with the further centralization of power and militarism to "downplay autocratic tendencies" and attract international partners in "the global war on terror" (Ibid). Research has found that the King has repeatedly advanced laws related to women's rights while simultaneously implementing laws restricting civil liberties such as "freedom of speech and assembly" (Ibid). For example, Jordan passed previously stalled women's rights initiatives, including the Family Protection Law of 2008, while concurrently "expand[ing] the powers of national intelligence and police" and restricting human rights under the 2006 anti-terrorism law (Ibid). With extremism on the rise, it can be assumed that the Jordanian government will continue to strategically instrumentalize women's rights while coincidently attacking fundamental human rights in the name of state security.

The Chameleon Approach: NGOs, CSOs, and International Organizations

As evidenced by the government's lack of substantial action regarding gender and P/CVE, there is a lack of political will within Jordan to advance the women's rights agenda; consequently, this burden falls onto civil society with little governmental help. One of the leading actors is the Jordanian National Commission for Women (JNCW), founded in 1992 as a "semi-governmental committee," which operates as the main "reference authority for all bodies in Jordan in relation to women's affairs." (OECD, 5). JNCW's website states that their "mission is to advance women's status and maintain their achievements in Jordan and promoting a positive and supportive attitude and environment that values women's role through a participatory approach that engages all stakeholders." (JNCW). Although various programs initiated by JNCW, such as education programs, have yielded some success, Al-Banawi, who serves as the Knowledge Management Specialist for JNCW's UNSCR 1325 committee, believes that maximum success requires more investment into the relationship between JNCW and the Jordanian government, specifically the Prime Ministry. She continued to state that currently, JNCW relies on the ministries to "increase the credibility of" JNCW's "1325 efforts and increase broader governmental support," either through declarations of support in the media or public appearances by government officials (Al-Banawi).

In addition to JNCW, NGOs play a significant role in the fight against rising extremism and gender inequality. However, COVID-19 has substantially reduced the number of NGOs in Jordan while severely hindering the operational capacities of the remaining ones. Because the Jordanian government cannot and does not fully support every NGO in Jordan, these organizations must turn to foreign funding. According to Al-Jaber, international organizations often impose barriers to funding, such as a language requirement, which "exclude approximately 80% of Jordanian NGOs." These factors have led to a critical issue referred to as "the chameleon approach" by Al-Jaber. Because funding is difficult to obtain, "many NGOs will apply for JONAP funding for self-sustainability;" consequently, NGOs "get involved without understanding the context or having the adequate knowledge or experience" (Al-Jaber). Additionally, the protectionist narrative of women's rights within the Jordanian government pressures civil society actors to frame their cause within this 'framework' in order to receive approval and funding; as a result, many women's rights efforts reflect the need to protect women rather than empowering women through giving them the tools and knowledge to exercise autonomy (Forester). This issue is exacerbated by the government's indirect requirement of veiled terminology for efforts related to extremism and P/CVE. Furthermore, NGOs and CSOs often fail to include the perspectives of those most affected by the issues they are attempting to rectify. For one, research has found that young women "are often denied leadership opportunities in the formal public sphere;" additionally, "civic initiatives" related to "peace and security" continuously "overlook their needs and contributions," even though young women are one of the most active demographics in "civil society" (Brown, 21).

As previously mentioned, international organizations also play a role in these issues by imposing western ideals related to gender equality and extremism that neglect local contexts. Because "the agendas of donor programs often don't match local agendas," E'liemat asserted that "people feel their priorities aren't reflected." Similarly, Fityan stated that "how the message of women's rights and equality is delivered is critical, because when introduced by outside parties," such as the government and international organizations, "it is viewed as a threat to cultural and religious traditions" as well as an "attempt to impose Western values on them." To demonstrate this point, E'liemat outlined a hypothetical scenario in which, by imposing a western standard of gender equality onto Jordanian society, an international NGO wrongfully perceived the needs of Jordanian women. In her example, volunteers visited a village to identify ways in which they could help women and saw that local mosques had gender-segregated seating. From a western perspective, gender segregation in public facilities is antithetical to equality; however, E'liemat explained that for the Jordanian women, a 'women only' section within Mosques provides them with a safe place to pray and freely practice their religion. The problem here is that religious centers have important issues pertaining to patriarchal norms and women's rights, such as the lack of women in leadership roles, that could have been identified by consulting women within the community. This example speaks to the big-picture issue. International organizations, either through direct involvement or funding, base their approach to problems on the assumption that, as a more developed society, they are better qualified to determine what constitutes equality and progress and fail to consult those that are actually impacted by the issues; consequently, their efforts not only fail to address the issues adequately but fuel resentment towards outside help and the women's rights agenda more generally.

<u>Evaluating Outcomes</u>

Despite the many shortcomings of the governmental and societal approaches to P/CVE and women's rights, there has been some progress in recent years. There was a consensus among interviewees that the biggest success of JONAP- and 1325-related programs was increased awareness which has manifested as people beginning to adopt some of the language used in 1325 and "starting conversations about women's empowerment," specifically in schools, workshops, and NGO/CSO programming, (Fityan). For example, while monitoring a JONAP program at a public school in A'salt, Al-Banawi recalled noticing a "paradigm shift," the kids "were integrating heavy terms regarding P/CVE into their daily lives," which she recognized as "a sign of change." Additionally, JNCW works with non-governmental donors to facilitate awareness sessions for women within various communities that aim to provide women with healthy terminology to discuss gender inequality and increase self-awareness and advocacy. Al-Jaber's organization, IDare, launched similar community programs following the official addition of 1325 elements to its programing in 2020; for instance, a program in Ma'an that uses theater to promote women's role in peacekeeping. IDare's focus is on "fostering positive youth development for sustainable change" while emphasizing the importance of equally respecting the "social, economic, and political dimensions;" by embracing the elements of HS, organizations like IDare are critical. Despite these encouraging signs, E'liemat argued that "on a cultural level… the prevalence of radical ideology is increasing." Fityan added that "while there are a substantial number of programs that aim to empower women, there are not enough, especially the further you get from Amman." Especially in areas "considered hotbeds for radicalization," such as "Ma'an, Zarqa, and Karak" (Fityan). Overall, most interviewees agreed that there has not been substantial progress. For example, in terms of government led initiatives, there were no tangible results in the education system. Although the JONAP resulted in the formation of "a task force on gender and curriculum" and "an action plan to develop concrete actions for gender mainstreaming of the curriculum," the JONAP Annual Report 2018-2019 found that "authors who apply to perform curricula development are usually not adequately competent in mainstreaming gender in curricula and/or often have views and beliefs unsupportive of gender equality" (24). Additionally, while the number of women in the security field, specifically the military, has increased since the adoption of the JONAP in 2018, very few women "have leadership positions," according to Fityan. Additionally, there is a gendered distribution "of women personnel across operation sections;" for instance, women make up "5.8% of medical services personnel but only 1.4% of field operations personnel" (Ibid, 15).

Several factors limit the success of women's rights and P/CVE programming. First, as mentioned above, the Jordanian government lacks both a genuine interest in and the political will to address issues related to gender equality. Although "right now women's empowerment is a trend" within the international donor community, "there is a rotation of what the priority is based on changes within the international arena" (Al-Banawi). Therefore, it is safe to assume that as long as Jordan is heavily reliant on foreign aid, the government's will to address women's rights issues will ebb and flow based on political relevancy. Consequently, governmental plans, such as the JONAP, are released to appease international pressures and secure funding without any sincere intentions for implementation. Furthermore, the time frames for plans like the JONAP are not realistic

because "real change requires more time" (Al-Banawi). This leads to the second factor, the lack of comprehensive implementation and monitoring mechanisms. Currently, the burden of implementation falls onto civil society; however, the government does not meaningfully involve NGOs and CSOs in the developmental process of policies and programs. The main dividing factor between the government and civil society actors is differing perspectives of P/CVE; for instance, the government fails to consider intersectionality when developing policies (Al-Jaber). For these reasons, relevant stakeholders cannot successfully coordinate and execute the implementation of policies or assess the outcomes of specific programs.

The next section of this paper will propose strategies to overcome these obstacles and the others introduced in the above sections, such as the securitization of women's rights and the government's over-militarized approach to P/CVE.

## Part 7: What Needs to be Done

According to WANA's White Paper, "structural drivers" of extremism can be understood as "manifestations of weak" HS programming (2). Examining the consequences of rising extremism within the context of Jordan's patriarchal society highlights the importance of adopting an HS approach, focusing on women's rights concerns, for preventing extremism; HS will solve both issues of rising extremism and gender inequity while also advancing broader national objectives and developing state resiliency. This begins by changing the narrative surrounding P/CVE.

For most of Jordan's history, the country has been surrounded by violent conflicts, notably the Iraq War, the Syrian Civil War, the Arab-Israeli conflict, and the ongoing Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Considering the compounded implications of border security concerns, the influx of refugees, navigating regional and international relationships, and maintaining Jordan's reputation of being a stable country in a region of conflict and violence, the Jordanian government tends to operate in crisis mode by responding to physical threats as they appear. Consequently, P/CVE efforts have been disproportionately focused on countering rather than preventing extremism. As explained by Al-Jaber, even using the terminology of "countering violent extremism" is harmful because "any counter narrative" is fundamentally "dependent" on the narrative it is intended to counter, therefore "legitimizing it." The government's reactionary nature has led to predominantly militaristic and securitized responses to violent extremism. In this environment, "the logics of war continue" to physically and ideologically permeate governmental responses (Qureshi). However, the shift in popularity from traditional 'military Jihad' to 'social Jihad' changed the nature of the threat from violent extremism to the extensive adoption of extreme ideologies promoting intolerance and hate. Now more than ever, it is imperative for the Jordanian government to address the structural and societal root causes of extremism and the role it plays in facilitating the spread. Therefore, the narrative surrounding extremism should prioritize preventing extremism (PE), not combating terrorism, the key difference being that one generates a war-like effort while the other would ignite a nationwide social and political metamorphosis.

As referenced earlier, successfully avoiding war or the outbreak of violent conflict is not the same as building peace; therefore, to sustainably prevent rising extremism and advance women's

rights, the Jordanian government should strive towards positive peace. Positive peace is defined as "the attitudes, institutions, and structures that create and sustain peaceful societies" (IDare). According to the 2022 Positive Peace Report, positive peace is a "holistic, systemic framework" which uses "system thinking" to understand "conceptualizing social change." From this perspective, overcoming societal challenges requires the recognition that "events and problems" are the result of "relationships and flows," not "linear causality" (Ibid). The positive peace framework includes eight interconnected and interactive pillars: "well-functioning government; equitable distribution of resources; free flow of information; good relations with neighbors; high levels of human capital; acceptance of the rights of others; low levels of corruption; and a sound business environment" (Ibid). This framework would enable the Jordanian government to develop a concrete strategy for addressing the social and political systems feeding rising extremism, specifically patriarchy. Al-Jaber called this approach "investing in resilience," in which the key is "building, supporting, and maintaining alternatives to extremism," in addition to "investing in women and youth." To do so, the Jordanian government should focus on developing a holistic HS programming that acknowledges "human needs" and "protects the human rights of everyone," especially women, while also working to strengthen the pillars of positive peace (Qureshi).

First Steps & Pre-Conditions

Before focusing on developing and implementing HS programming, the Jordanian government must create a receptive environment because programs are only successful to the extent the targeted individuals are willing to participate. Therefore, the government needs to actively build amongst the Jordanian population by promoting transparency, accountability, and engagement. Additionally, the government must foster social cohesion under a shared national identity that embraces intersectionality and condemns male-centrism. As long as there are still laws permitting gender discrimination and violence against women, any governmental plan addressing women's rights will not only be ineffective but hypocritical. Therefore, the government should work to explicitly codify gender discrimination in the Constitution, as well as amending or eliminating laws that infringe on human rights, such as Jordan's Nationality Law, the Penal Code, and the 2006 anti-terrorism law. To further limit the influence of patriarchal norms and practices, the Jordanian government needs to institutionalize women's rights by implementing a long-term national women's strategy and a national gender mainstreaming framework. UN Women developed a Jordan-specific "Institutional Capacity-Development on Gender Mainstreaming Implementation Framework" in September 2021 that comprehensively lays out a strategy emphasizing "partnership, ownership, and sustainability" that should be utilized by the Jordanian government to implement gender mainstreaming on a national level (7). Institutionalizing gender equality would also reduce the risk of the military and security sectors monopolizing women's rights initiatives. Although gender mainstreaming is critical in all governmental policies, this paper has demonstrated that it is especially critical in PE. The Jordanian government should consult the UN Women's Guidance Note on "Gender mainstreaming principles, dimensions, and priorities for PVE," which addresses "gender mainstreaming and human rights as mutually reinforcing" concepts in PE and thoroughly and concretely lays how programming can successfully incorporate both (Brown, 17).

<u>Women's Role</u>

Instead of objectifying and instrumentalizing women, the Jordanian government needs to include women as leaders and primary actors in PE programming and policies by working to include various types of women at every step from development to implementation. While initiatives to empower women within the security apparatus, emerging from UNSCR1325, are beneficial, efforts must expand to directly include cultural and religious perspectives, as well as intersectionality. However, considering the implications of quotas, goals for increasing women's engagement should prioritize quality over quantity and maximizing impact. One way to do this is by providing opportunities for qualified and educated women to earn positions of authority and then harnessing the power of social media to present them as role models of strong women genuinely devoted to bettering Jordanian society. Additionally, leadership and employment opportunities must increase across all fields, not just security. Government plans will never authentically and comprehensively address women's issues unless women bring them to the forefront; therefore, there needs to be a focus on putting women in leadership positions within civil society and the government. As Fityan stated if women are not at the table, "there is no one there to defend their rights."

<u>Recommendations: Holistic, Human Security Programming</u>

The paper has illustrated how rising extremism is not a standalone issue, rather, it is the product of a malfunctioning system. Furthermore, Jordan faces multiple crises such as water scarcity, identity crisis, economic development, and many more; while these issues are typically perceived as outside of extremism, the system's thinking element of the positive peace framework suggests that all of these factors interact to create an environment ripe for extremism. Most significantly, the breakdown of the five forms of patriarchy shows how the patriarchal nature of Jordan's government and society continues to marginalize and harm women while promoting dangerous masculinities and normalizing violence. That being said, it is clear that the Jordanian government falls short of meeting the "material" and "abstract" human needs of its population, especially women, such as decent infrastructure, "rights," or "freedoms" (Bondokji & Mhadeen, 6). Therefore, the Jordanian government must include women and their needs in the development and implementation of all governmental policies. This paper has provided a two-fold reason for this: first, the negative consequences of rising extremism within a patriarchal society disproportionately harm women; second, research proves that "the lack of full participation of women in every sphere of society" is "the most important barrier" to creating "a more prosperous and peaceful region" (Osborne, 8). Recall the definition of HS provided in the literature review section:

"a state of individual and communal peace achieved through an environment that meets the basic needs of individuals and through legislations that guarantee the rights and duties of all citizens. A state that promotes confidence in state institutions and cements citizenship and belonging" (Bondokji & Mhadeen, 4).

This is why a holistic HS approach is needed. With the definition of HS in mind, the specific programming recommendations outlined below were developed using the positive peace framework to analyze extremism and patriarchy in Jordan as a mutually reinforcing system.

UN Women's proposed gender mainstreaming implementation framework emphasizes the importance of adopting a "resilience and empowerment" approach in building an enabling environment that promotes sustainable development (6). Therefore, all plans and programs should adopt a long-term objective with short-term goals while embracing a participatory approach that includes and empowers all stakeholders and specifically engages women in leadership positions across all sectors. This element of HS programming is critical considering most experts seem to agree that the key to a successful national strategy is empowering civil society actors and localizing programs; As Al-Jaber pointed out, "you cannot call any plan a national plan unless it reflects the nation as a whole, otherwise it should be called a governmental plan." While it is important for the national government to engage in PE, research has shown that PE community programs utilizing a "top-down approach" fail to treat local partners and participants as "equals;" consequently, these programs "can face resistance at every level" and can make participants feel "targeted, spied upon, and patronized rather than supported" (Brown, 19). Therefore, as pointed out by all interviewees, the way to increase the success of implementation is for the national government to empower local actors by granting them the authority to lead grass-roots efforts while also providing them with monetary and logistical support. To better facilitate coordination amongst relevant stakeholders, the Jordanian government should also commit to sharing vital information related to rising extremism with civil society that was previously censored or enshrouded by veiled language. Additionally, local programs within specific fields, such as education reforms, should engage in sustained cooperation with the corresponding ministry, such as the Ministry of Education, to increase productivity and specialization. These programs should be concentrated in rural areas exhibiting a higher disparity in economic, political, and educational opportunities between men and women, as well as rising levels of extremism, relative to urban areas like Amman. The researcher also believes it is critical that the Jordanian government creates a third-party oversight committee to monitor and assess the implementation process, ensuring all programs and policies comply with international human rights laws, especially women's rights, while also determining what additional resources and tools actors may need to better integrate human right's objectives into programming. Another way to enable comprehensive implementation and monitoring is by placing the short-term goals at five-year increments, with the stakeholders and oversight committee conducting a review assessing what has been achieved and what the current and emerging challenges are. Stakeholders should utilize review findings to reprioritize their goals and reallocate resources accordingly. Furthermore, all HS programming should adopt standardized terminology reflecting the Jordanian context rather than western ideals. Within this task, it is critical that all stakeholders understand the concept of HS as well as the difference between P/CVE and PE.

The following specific program recommendations are based on the researcher's analysis of the interview responses and secondary research; however, the programs that should be prioritized are those that arise from collaborating with local communities to assess their specific needs. To this end, the Jordanian government should actively "ensure marginalized and less-heard groups have the opportunity to influence the objectives" of policies and programs which may affect them,

especially women (Brown, 20). Furthermore, programs serving rural communities within governorates considered "hotbeds" for extremism should be prioritized.

<u>Program Recommendations</u>

While there are many potential HS program opportunities, this section will outline one core recommendation for each critical area: infrastructure, education, economic, political, religious, and social.

- Infrastructure:
  - Water resource management
    - The 2011 Millennium Challenge Corporation (MCC) Compact aimed "to increase the [water] supply in Zarqa Governorate by improving water delivery, wastewater collection and wastewater treatment" (ReleifWeb). Additionally, the compact included initiatives to "include women in water programs," such as "provid[ing] certified plumbing training for women" (ibid). Similar endeavors should be introduced in other water-scarce Jordanian governorates.
    - Large scale desalination via the revival of the Red Sea-Dead Sea Project. Initially introduced in the early 2000s yet never brought to fruition, this project would theoretically "desalinate water from the Red Sea," "transport freshwater" to Amman, "and dispose of the leftover highly saline water in the rapidly shrinking Dead Sea" (Garthwaite). Similar to the MCC compact, this effort should include gender-specific considerations in hirings and training opportunities.
- Education
  - Multiple respondents cited one of the most significant barriers to women's empowerment in Jordan as the reluctance of Jordanian women, primarily in rural areas, to embrace the women's rights agenda; therefore, leadership and empowerment educational workshops should focus on building awareness around women's rights and self-advocacy.
    - E'liemat advised that the "message" of women's rights and equality "should come from women within these communities" utilizing "specialized methodologies." She laid out a three-step approach for local women's rights initiatives. First, utilize "local context terminologies." She argued that "when people don't understand a concept, they reject it;" therefore, education programs should break down foreign terms into words that make sense within the local context. For example, "gender" would become "men and women and youth." Second, programs need to empower "more local leaders" who have a "genuine interest in promoting women's rights," not just an interest in the social prestige of the position. She added that these leaders should be women who are trusted by their communities. And third, programs should marry the broad concept of women's rights to local case studies by highlighting specific issues faced by women in

these communities that could be alleviated by applying elements of women's rights practices.

- Economic
  - Eradicating factors prohibiting women from joining the labor force while also addressing the geographic economic disparities between urban and rural women.
    - Research indicates that the main factors keeping women from working in Jordan are a lack of affordable childcare and safe transportation; therefore, programs should focus on providing subsidized childcare and safe public transportation options. Additionally, microfinancing opportunities should be provided for women, specifically in rural areas, through funds to start small businesses within critical industries, such as natural resource management.
- Political
  - Political advocacy workshops for Jordanian youth, specifically young women.
    - Localized political advocacy programs should be developed within all governorates in which the youth population, especially young women, collaborate with their local political leaders to identify critical issues within their community. Once an issue is identified, the youth participants and local leaders should collaborate with national political leaders in a workshop to develop solutions and implementation strategies. These programs should also include periodical check-ins with all actors to prioritize long-term collaboration and relationship building.
- Religious
  - Capacity building programs for women in leadership positions within religious centers.
    - "Women in religious centers could promote a counter narrative to radical ideologies by promoting the modern and real elements of Islam" (Fityan). As introduced in the literature review, similar programs in Indonesia were successful in harnessing women ulama's "trust-based relationships and gender-sensitive Islamic perspective" to "deconstruct violent narratives" while pursuing "gender justice" (Holmes & Fransen, 1).
- Social
  - Instead of attempting to censor every post reflecting extremism or intolerance, efforts should focus on promoting positive female role models and alternative narratives to extremism in the news and on social media.
    - IDare's Shabab 2250 program, based on the UNSCR 2250 – "youth in building peace and security" – aims to "enable youth participation in building community resilience." One aspect of Shabab 2250, called "Adeem: Youth for Social Cohesion," focuses on "building the capacity" of youth, and specifically young women, "to promote social cohesion [and pluralism] through the creation of" youth-led "arts and cultural productions." Programming includes "residential training," "coaching on social cohesion concepts, artistic methodologies," and "the development of youth-led initiatives." Currently, the program includes youth living in Amman, Zarqa,

and Balqa but should be expanded to other Governates and incorporate specific sub-programs focused on promoting positive displays of women role models to counter patriarchal gender norms.

## **What This Achieves**

### Preventing Extremism & Gender Equality

As previously explained, systems thinking indicates that the only way to successfully address complex issues such as extremism and entrenched patriarchy is to disrupt the operational capacity of the systems reinforcing the problem, not just eliminating the individual factors; the holistic HS programming outlined above meets these requirements. First, institutionalizing women's rights and gender equality will help erode patriarchal practices and norms in multiple ways, criminalizing gender discrimination and gender-based violence, codifying women's position as equal citizens, and forcing actors to incorporate a gender-specific perspective across all industries and policies. Notably, the nature of HS programming, combined with these institutional changes, will minimize the risk of instrumentalizing and securitizing women and women's rights. Second, placing women at the center of programs across all fields will ensure that their needs and concerns are considered. Programs recommended under infrastructure and economic will help women develop the skills, knowledge, resources, and confidence to enter the labor force; additionally, these programs promote an equal distribution of resources by considering geographic disparities. The educational, political, and religious programs will help women, and specifically young women, become more engaged in their communities and practice self-advocacy by presenting women's rights and empowerment in a way that fits the local context. Similarly, the social programs will engage young women in eliminating harmful gender stereotypes and the normalization of violence by promoting social cohesion and gender equality. By focusing on developing leadership skills, these programs will also increase the number of women from both urban and rural communities in societal, political, and even religious leadership positions. Subsequently, providing women with the ability and authority to address gender-specific issues and rising extremism.

Programs focused on developing and disseminating alternative narratives emphasizing social cohesion and peace will successfully reduce the prevalence of the social Jihad and extremism ideologies by fostering a shared national identity and reducing sentiments of marginalization. Additionally, considering that youth make up Jordan's largest demographic, emphasizing the importance of youth engagement within programming centered on combating violent norms while promoting alternative opportunities will contribute to a sustainable reduction in rising extremism. Similarly, politically engaging youth, especially women and rural youth, will reduce feelings of frustration and fear towards the national government. Perhaps most significantly, abandoning SSPs will eliminate frustration towards the government and security sector more broadly, while increased community engagement within HS programming will help rebuild trust between the government and civil society. For instance, expanding and protecting human rights, such as those restricted under the 2006 anti-terrorism law, will further reduce civilian frustration with the government. Furthermore, changing Jordan's Nationality Law to allow mothers to pass

down Jordanian citizenship to their children would allow the more than 300,000 children denied citizenship under the current law access to previously restricted social services, including public education and healthcare, work permits, and international travel. Furthermore, the structure of HS programming promotes transparency and accountability among all stakeholders, therefore, leading to better cooperation and trust between governmental and civil society actors.

<u>Advancing National Objectives</u>

As outlined above, effectively incorporating a gender-specific perspective within HS programming not only achieves PE and women's rights objectives but advances Jordan's broader national objectives. First, empowering women economically, socially, and politically enables them to contribute more to their communities. For example, research predicts that removing the obstacles keeping women from joining the labor force would "increase Jordan's GDP by more than 20%" (Anderson). Additionally, research has found that "women's economic empowerment" increases "productivity," "economic diversification, and income equality" (UN Women). Programs aimed at promoting business development and investments within critical industries such as natural resource management will not only aid economic growth and diversification but also contribute to sustainability in the face of climate change. Additionally, the infrastructure programs will help Jordan's water scarcity issue by increasing access to fresh and clean water, help alleviate the unequal distribution of water across different governorates and socioeconomic groups, and provide more high-skill jobs in urban and rural areas. While the above examples illustrate just a few ways in which holistic HS programming benefits national objectives, the culmination of such programming will dramatically increase Jordan's overall positive peace and resiliency.

<u>Positive Peace & Resilience</u>

Traditionally, the Jordanian government has prioritized SSPs to treat the outcomes of extremism while neglecting the root causes and humanitarian consequences; this approach is not only consequential in the short-term but neglects the long-term importance of resilience. Research indicates that implementing the recommendations included in this paper will not only comprehensively address extremism and patriarchy but increase Jordan's overall positive peace and resiliency. Sociologist John Galtung explained positive peace as *"lasting peace that is built on sustainable investments in economic development and institutions as well as societal attitudes that foster peace;"* as related to PE, "positive peace opposes" the "structures and cultures" that enable people to "behave violently or impose violence on others" (The Institute for Economics and Peace). Combining this definition with the explanations provided above illustrates how holistic HS programming contributes to the further development of positive peace in Jordan. As stated previously, the positive peace framework includes eight pillars: "well-functioning government; equitable distribution of resources; free flow of information; good relations with neighbors; high levels of human capital; acceptance of the rights of others; low levels of corruption; and sounds business environment" (Ibid, 8). In addition to increasing peace, the Positive Peace Index states that improvements within the eight pillars "have a robust statistical relationship" with other advancements including, "economic progress, better ecological performance, happiness, stronger development," "social development," and "higher degrees of

resilience" (Ibid, 4). These improvements would make Jordan a more attractive location for foreign investment, which is an important step in diminishing Jordan's reliance on foreign aid. Additionally, resilience, which UN Women explains as "both resistance and adaption to threats or shocks," is a critical component of any well-functioning state (Brown, 51). High levels of resilience are linked to "more effective protection" of "citizens against adverse" "political, environmental, or economic" "shocks;" in fact, highly resilient social systems "evolve systemically to be stronger and more capable of recovering from future shocks" (Institute of Economics and Peace, 4). Therefore, it is clear that the Jordanian government should view the fight against rising extremism and gender inequality as an opportunity to fix the larger issue at hand: a malfunctioning national system.

## Conclusion

Using Jordan as a case study, this paper first examined how Islamic extremist ideologies and patriarchal societies interact to produce amplified consequences that not only harm women but pose a threat to countries more generally. Then, this paper analyzed how approaching these issues from a state security rather than a human security perspective may exacerbate the problem. Lastly, this paper argued that adopting a human security approach rooted in the notion of positive peace effectively addresses concerns related to PE from a gender-specific perspective while also advancing broader national objectives and promoting increased resiliency.

Jordan is not the only patriarchal country wrestling with rising extremism; these issues also pertain to other countries in the MENA region as well as others, such as Indonesia, Kenya, and Somalia, to name a few. While the recommendations made within this paper were developed specifically for the Jordanian context, they can serve as a template for the international community. Additionally, this project briefly addressed the role of intersectionality in the issues of patriarchy and extremism; however, more research should be done to examine how these issues disproportionately impact those with intersectional identities, such as women refugees. Further research could also investigate the reintegration process for de-radicalized women at the governmental and societal levels.

## Appendix

<u>Interview Participants</u>

- Muhamad Abu Rumman: Former Jordanian Minister of Culture & Youth; Expert at Politics and Society Institute
- Sana'a Al-Banawi: Knowledge Management Specialist – The Jordanian National Commission for Women (JNCW) on UN Security Council Resolution 1325 – Women, Peace, & Security in Jordan
- Iyad Al-Jaber: Founder & General Manager, IDare for Sustainable Development
- Mai E'leimat: Founder and CEO of Edmaaj for Social Responsibility and the Co-Founder and Senior Advisor for Strategy and Research at Al-Hayat – RASED
- Rasha Fityan: Director of Politics & Society Institute; member of the Youth Committee for the Department of Population and Immigration Policies of the League of Arab States 2007-2011

<u>Interview Questions</u>

Theme 1: Examining how the gender norms perpetuated by Jordan's patriarchal society influence women's role in the violent radicalization process.

- Question 1: In what ways do the existing gender inequalities within Jordanian society contribute to the radicalization of women?
- Question 2: In what ways do the expected gender roles within Jordanian society place women in a position to take-on active roles in both the radicalization and de-radicalization processes?

Theme 2: The effects of increased radicalization on women

- Question 1: What is the impact of increased radicalization on the already existing limitations on women's freedoms and access to rights?
- Question 2: What is the perception of radicalized women within Jordan on a national and local level? And specifically, what is the degree of acceptance of de-radicalized women back into their communities and are there programs in place to help re-integrate these women?
- Question 3: What are the most significant differences in the ways that the prevalence of radicalization and violent extremism in Jordan effects men versus women?

Theme 3: Examining the Jordanian government's current counterterrorism strategies

- Question 1: Do you think past government plans and strategies targeting radicalization successfully include women's perspectives? Specifically, to what extent were women consulted and included in the development process of government plans, such as the Jordanian National Plan for the Implementation of UNSCR 1325 of 2017?
- Question 2: Past research has indicated that there is an inherent risk in framing women's empowerment as a means to an end, in this context the end would be combating terrorism and achieving security, because it makes the political value of women's empowerment

dependent on its instrumentalization within a security context. In what ways do you see this issue manifesting within Jordan and what are some ways future de-radicalization and counterterrorism plans developed by the Jordanian government can avoid this issue?

Theme 4: Examining past/current efforts to address radicalization and violent extremism from a gender-specific perspective

- Question 1: To what extent do the Jordanian government's current counterterrorism strategies consider the role of gender in the radicalization and de-radicalization processes?
- Question 2: Do government policies/plans represent an accurate and authentic understanding of the challenges Jordanian women face? How could the government enrich their understanding of these issues?
- Question 3: Why do you think Jordanian women, primarily in rural areas, reject the concepts of gender equality and women's rights? And how do you think the government and NGOs could promote the acceptance of these concepts in a successful way?

Theme 5: Addressing shortcomings of current governmental efforts (specifically the JONAP) and positing solutions

- Question 1: From your perspective, has there been a noticeable change or advancement regarding the issues of radicalization and women's rights since the publication of the JONAP in 2017? What factors contribute to the government's ability/inability to successfully translate their plan into substantial results?
- Question 2: In what ways to the patriarchal norms present in Jordanian society influence the de-radicalization process. For example, how does a patriarchal mindset effect policy, programming, and narrative?
- Question 3: Currently, what do you consider to be the most pressing challenge faced by Jordanian women within the context of security and radicalization that is ignored by past government strategies?
- Question 4: What would be your advice for the Jordanian government for the development and implementation of a national strategy that aims to limit the radicalization of women and the negative effects of radicalization on women's rights?

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