



المجلس الوطني لشؤون الأسرة
NATIONAL COUNCIL FOR FAMILY AFFAIRS

National Strategy for Senior Citizens

2018-2022

"Towards a society for all ages"

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2018-2022
"Towards a society for all ages"**

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In the Name of God the Most Gracious the Most Merciful

Foreword

"He it is Who created you from dust, then from a drop (of seed) then from a clot, then bringeth you forth as a child, then (ordaineth) that ye attain full strength and afterward that ye become old men - though some among you die before - and that ye reach an appointed term, that haply ye may understand." (Ghafir:67)

The issue of the elderly has taken center stage in all societies, and all divine religions have stressed the need to look after them and to respect them as they are an integral part of society and have the right to live in a safe environment that enhances their capacities and enables them to contribute to the sustainable development of their societies.

Human dignity is the most precious asset in life; and to safeguard it, mutual respect has to exist among all society members whereby the old show kindness to the young and, in exchange, the young show respect to the old. It is a moral equation inherent in human nature whereby intergenerational solidarity is fundamental in the attainment of a secure and safe society for all its segments.

Guided by the directives of HM King Abdallah II Bin Al-Hussein and HM Queen Rania Al-Abdullah, Jordan has paid utmost concern to the elderly and the advancement of their wellbeing and the level of services presented to them. The National Council for Family Affairs (NCFA) has worked diligently to put these directives into action through the formulation of national policies that aim to improve the lives of all members of the Jordanian family, following a participatory approach that encompasses all national and international governmental and nongovernmental stakeholders, including the elderly themselves. The first fruit of this work was the preparation of the **"National Strategy for Senior Citizens"** in 2008, followed by an **"Analytical Evaluation Report of the National Strategy for Senior Citizens"** launched in 2015 under the patronage of HM Queen Rania (**Chair of NCFA Board of Trustees**). The report sought to evaluate and analyze what has been achieved on the ground and to identify gaps and loopholes that impeded the progress of the strategy. It has concluded with a range of findings and recommendations which have guided the update of the strategy and its executive plan for the years 2018-2022. Furthermore, a set of applicable actions has been incorporated within to help achieve the strategy's envisaged goal in "the realization of a positive ageing that ensures senior citizens a life of dignity and active participation in building the society".

In conclusion, taking pride in this national achievement, NCFA would like to extend its gratitude to all members of the National Follow-up Committee on the Implementation of the National Strategy for Senior Citizens and to Mrs. Arwa Al-Najdawi, our strategy consultant, for their dedicated work, not just in the finalization of the strategy but also for their unfailing cooperation in the implementation of all activities pertaining to senior citizens. We also like to thank everyone who contributed to this work at all scales and international organizations for their support, and we would like to take this opportunity to emphasize the need for

continued participatory action among all stakeholders in the creation of enabling conditions that preserve the structure and stability of the family under the leadership of HM King Abdullah II so as to set Jordan on the road to excellence.

NCFAs Secretary General

Fadel Mohammad Al-Hmoud

Introduction

According to the United Nations and World Health Organization's guidelines, older persons are considered those who are 60 years and above, while in some developed countries old age is set at 65 years. Jordan, however, considers the United Nation's definition appropriate and in harmony with its own legislation, national strategies and executive plans of action.

Based on UN reports, information indicate that more than 700 million people are over the age of 60, and by the year 2050 the number is projected to reach 2 billion people, comprising more than 20% of world population. The highest and most rapid growth is expected to take place in the developing countries; therefore, more attention should be placed on the particular requirements and challenges confronting older persons at these times and in future.

Over the last few decades, the composition of the world population has changed drastically. Between 1950 and 2010, life expectancy around the world rose from 46 years to 68 and is projected to increase to 81 by the end of this century. It should be noted that at present women outnumber men by an estimated 66 million within the age group of 60 years or above. Among those aged 80 years or above, women are nearly double the number of men, and among centenarians the number of women is around four and five times as that of men. For the first time in human history, by the year 2050, there will be more persons over 60 than children in the world¹.

The elderly population in Jordan (60+ years) in the year 2015 reached 518757 persons², including 49.1% females and 50.9% males; noting that life expectancy at birth for women is greater than that for males by one and a half years. While the rate stands at 74 years for females, it reaches 72.5 for males. The proportion of older persons in Jordan reaches around 5.4% according to 2015's censuses. However, the elderly population (65+ years) reached around 3.7% against 5.2% and 3.2% for both age groups respectively in accordance to a census conducted in 2004. According to recent estimates issued by Help Age International, the percentage of older persons in Jordan (60+) will be increasing over the coming years to a projected rate of 8.6% by the end of 2030 and to 15.8% by the end of 2050.³

The Jordanian National Strategy for Senior Citizens has been prepared and formulated following a participatory approach with the participation of all governmental and non-governmental institutions concerned with elderly issues along with social and health care service providers who work with this age group. Panel discussions were conducted with focus groups in all Jordanian governorates to identify the needs of senior citizens in the Jordanian community and the challenges that confront them. It is to be noted that the formulation of the strategy was preceded by a preparatory stage which involved the development of an analytical study for evaluating the situation of senior citizens in Jordan up to the end of 2015.

The strategy was inspired by its strategic objective to provide security, dignity and welfare for senior citizens in Jordan. Its logical framework was devised based on the guiding principles of

¹ <http://www.un.org/ar/events/olderpersonsday/background.shtml>

² According to the latest Censuses conducted by the Department of Statistics

³ <http://www.helpage.org/global-agewatch/population-ageing-data/country-ageing-data/?country=Jordan>

the Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing and relevant international standards, and in harmony with the norms and culture of the Jordanian community and the needs of the elderly in Jordan as drawn from the community focus group discussions.

The strategy included priority areas and actions that need to be undertaken within the period of its implementation which were structured along the following three overarching pillars:

Pillar One: Contribution of senior citizens to the development process

Pillar Two: Advancement of health care for senior citizens

Pillar Three: Provision of a supportive physical environment and social care to senior citizens

It is important to note that the strategy was developed in response to the requirements of **the Jordanian constitution** with regard to the protection of old age, and to be in conformity with the "Jordan 2050" document which focused on senior citizen issues and the Comprehensive National Human Rights Plan (2016-2025) the third pillar of which dealt with the rights of the elderly being the most vulnerable group.

In conclusion, it is imperative to emphasize that the implementation of the strategy's requirements to achieve positive ageing standards demands the pooling of national, institutional, and societal efforts including all government institutions and private and voluntary sectors concerned with the issue of senior citizens in Jordan.

1. The Concept of Positive Ageing

Senior citizens are valued members of any community and have the right to live with dignity in their old age. They have the skills, the know-how and the experience that allow them to continue contributing to their society effectively. Moreover, the expected increase in the percentage of the elderly over the next decades is regarded as a valuable asset to all societies.

Positive ageing is a description of the process of maintaining positive attitudes and behaviors into old age that involves psychological and health-related aspects, continued involvement in society and the availability of a secure income⁴. The principles of positive ageing are summarized in the following:

- To enable old people to live in dignity enjoying a secure income and a healthy lifestyle;
- To provide opportunities for community engagement;
- To promote positive attitudes towards senior citizens;
- To enhance and upskill senior citizens' capacities;
- To eliminate gender-based discrimination;
- To provide an enabling environment and services for senior citizens in rural and Badia areas; and
- To raise awareness on the circumstances and factors impacting ageing which demands the provision of health care and appropriate sport activities.

There are numerous ways to prevent and/or delay the onset of ageing symptoms to enable older persons to enjoy positive ageing. These include:

- Maintaining positive attitudes and sentiments and enjoying recreational activities;
- Maintaining social engagement by enhancing family relations, joining clubs and social centers, volunteering and avoiding isolation;
- Maintaining mental health through continued practice of mental activities such as reading books and newspapers and solving intellectual puzzles or crosswords;
- Managing stress through positive problem solving, getting enough sleep and nourishment, playing sports to let go of stress and obtain positive energy instead, and asking the assistance of friends in problem solving;
- Engaging in voluntary activities or part-time jobs or joining social networks to preserve mental state;
- Engaging in continued elderly-appropriate physical activities and walking for half an hour daily to enjoy good health, positive thinking and a state of happiness;
- Conducting periodic medical check-ups to avoid possible illnesses and/or treat any ageing-associated diseases;
- Maintaining proper nourishment to avoid obesity, chronic diseases such as hypertension and diabetes.

⁴ Australian Psychological Society, https://www.psychology.org.au/publications/tip_sheets/ageing/

2. Positive Determinants for the Life of Senior Citizens

A secure and stable income at the retirement age is a key component in a positive and comfortable life for the elderly; insufficient income would have negative impacts on health and older persons' ability to carry out their activities as effective community members. Moreover, good health and affirmative relationships during childhood along with healthy life styles and the availability of proper health and social services through the course of life are all positive determinants that will definitely lead to better chances of good health into old age.

The concept of positive ageing is closely related to the ability of elderly to stay at their homes and to receive support for that, a concept that is currently termed as "Age in Place". In order to reinforce positive ageing and enable senior citizens to enjoy their independence at their own homes, it is imperative to provide them with adequate services at their homes based on their needs. While most senior citizens do not need in-house services and support to be able to live in their homes, the majority of those over 80 years will most probably need some kind of in-house assistance. Therefore, it is of great importance to ensure that the elements of security and safety settings at their homes are taken into consideration, particularly with this vulnerable group which may suffer neurological diseases such as Alzheimer's or osteoporosis, lack of resources or loneliness.

Members of all communities agree that senior citizens have the right to receive support and encouragement to rely on themselves and to enjoy a standard of living enough for them and their families to live in dignity. The factors that impact senior citizens' ability to attain services and to engage in society are not limited to the health conditions and the availability of income but also include the availability of transportation and accessibility to services.

Leaving the work force after retirement does not necessarily mean withdrawal from community engagement; it rather provides alternative options for involvement in various shapes and forms such as through the establishment of small enterprises, working outside the formal labor market, volunteering, engagement in family gatherings, engagement with neighbors, membership in associations, consultation ...etc.

The option of work after retirement is a challenge for positive ageing; practical experience has shown that people who work longer enjoy better health at old age. With this in mind, particular attention should be paid to the continued developing of a wide range of employment options for all ages which requires older persons to develop their skills, knowledge and capacities as they age in order to help them attain good employment opportunities in later stages.

Positive ageing presents itself through several elements including: good health, secure income, independence, intellectual motivation, self-fulfillment and building friendships. Owing to that, the entire community will enjoy positive outcomes. In other words, when we have a society with the elderly community enjoying good health, wellbeing, experience and skills, there will definitely be less demand on social services (aid, residential care (nursery homes) or in-house care services). Moreover, this would set a good example for the younger generation.

Herein lies the significance of positive ageing initiatives in supporting senior citizens and their enjoyment of productive lifestyles in economy and community. More importantly, it shows the importance of formulating and implementing holistic government policies that give attention to all aspects of elderly issues including employment, community engagement, health, availability of secure home and income, and provision of elderly-friendly supportive environment. Only by doing so will we ensure that senior citizens and the next generations will experience ageing as a positive and productive phenomenon.

3. Methodology of Preparation and Design of the Jordanian National Strategy for Senior Citizens (2018-2022)

The strategy's key strategic objective is to ensure security, dignity and wellbeing for senior citizens. The importance of this strategy rests on the method of its preparation. The process of developing and updating the strategy is grounded in two interlocking participatory approaches:

- A Top-Down national strategic participatory approach whereby several panel discussions were held with members of the National Follow-up Committee on the Implementation of the National Strategy for Senior Citizens which comprised representatives from all relevant government institutions and service providers from the voluntary sector. The sessions aimed at developing and formulating a national strategy to coordinate all government policies that are concerned with the advancement of the wellbeing and decent living of senior citizens in Jordan.
- A Bottom-Up participatory approach through which 14 panel discussions (community focus groups) were held across the Kingdom for representing all age groups to better understand the situation and needs of senior citizens in Jordanian communities.

The following points demonstrate the procedural steps that were adopted in the development and updating of this strategy:

- A desk review was conducted for national and international documents, reports and databases of relevance to elderly issues.

In this stage, an in-depth desk analysis was carried out for local legislation, national and international documents and reports and national strategies and plans of action, taking into account the principles of Islamic sharia pertinent to the protection of the rights of older persons. Following are the main reviewed documents:

- The Constitution of Jordan and "Jordan 2025" document to identify the rights of senior citizens in Jordan.
- Local legislation to identify legal provisions on senior citizens.
- International agreements and conventions on human rights.
- The Jordanian National Strategy for Senior Citizens "The Reference Document" 2008.
- The Analytical Evaluation Report of the National Strategy for Senior Citizens (2009-2013).
- Elderly-responsive international and regional reports and strategies including: the Vienna International Plan of Action on Ageing 1982; the Regional Plan of Action on Senior Citizens 1993; Proclamation on Ageing 1993; the General Comment No 6: "The economic, social and cultural rights of older persons" 1995; Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing 2002 and its guiding principles and evaluation 2007; UN reports on the protection of elderly rights and dignity; Arab Plan of Action on Ageing (2002-2012); Active Ageing: A Policy Framework 2002; and the Arab Family Strategy 2004.

- National strategies and plans of action vis-à-vis senior citizens including: the Comprehensive National Plan for Human Right (2016-2025); the Demographic Opportunity Policy Document; the national plan for follow-up and monitoring on the achievement and investment of the demographic opportunity; the National Health Strategy; the National Strategy for Health Communication and Media; the Ministry of Health Strategy; National Strategy for People with Disabilities; and the National Strategy for Jordanian Women.
 - Human rights status reports in Jordan (senior citizens sector) and the periodic reports on the status of the elderly published by the National Center on Human Rights in Jordan.
 - All data, indicators and statistics on senior citizens available at the Department of Statistics and other government bodies.
 - Published reports by the Help Age International for the years 2013, 2014, and 2015 with regard to indicators for Jordan's ranking and evaluation in the area of elderly care as compared to other countries.
- "Community focus groups" were conducted covering several age groups with the purpose of identifying senior citizens' needs within the Jordanian communities.
 - "Stakeholder consultations" were held with members of National Follow-up Committee on the Implementation of the National Strategy for Senior Citizens and representatives from governmental and nongovernmental partner institutions concerned with elderly issues. The meetings discussed the findings of the "community focus groups" in addition to the data and statistics relevant to the elderly so as to identify the high profile priority areas of relevance to the realization of elderly rights in the Jordanian community.
 - As a result of the aforementioned steps, an analytical study was conducted for the status quo of senior citizens up to 2015; this study set the groundwork for the formulation of this strategy.
 - A (SWOT) Analysis was conducted to identify points of strengths and weaknesses and to determine the opportunities and challenges associated with the issue of senior citizens in Jordan.

As such, based on the desk reviews, community focus groups, stakeholder consultations and the available data collected on senior citizens, the (SWOT) analysis for the strategy's pillars revealed several points of strengths and opportunities against points of weaknesses and concerns. The findings of the analysis were reviewed and discussed with members of the national committee and were agreed as follows:

Pillar One: Senior Citizens and Development

Pillar One: Senior Citizens and Development	
Strengths and Opportunities	Weaknesses and Concerns
<p>Points of Strength</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Existence of a national strategy "Jordan 2015" document that deals with the elderly retirement system. • The existence of the "Comprehensive National Plan for Human Rights (2016-2025)" which aims to further and protect the rights of the elderly and guarantee their enjoyment thereof, in a manner that leads <u>to enhancing their capacities to continue and maximize their contribution and participation in public life.</u> • The update of the "National Strategy for Senior Citizens" a pillar of which is "Senior Citizens and Development". • The creation of a national committee to follow-up on the update and implementation of the strategy. • The development of special legislation on retirement systems and the reduction of the incidences of early retirement. • The existence of instructions that allow elderly academics to continue teaching in universities up to the age of 75. • The existence of a national strategy to combat poverty. • The existence of bodies responsible for social solidarity (Takaful) that offer aid and combat elderly poverty. 	<p>Points of Weakness</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Poor inclusion of the elderly under the retirement umbrella. • Poor institutional procedures for raising awareness on matters pertaining to insurance issues to encourage optional subscription in social security. • Poor elderly community engagement. • Poor financial allocations within government bodies' budgets for elderly issues and development. • Lack of specialized departments that deal with elderly issues within relevant ministries.
<p>Opportunities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Government interest in enhancing the capacities of senior citizens to continue giving and to increase their contribution and participation in public life. • The creation and design of retirement systems that ensure a secure income for senior citizens. • The mobilization of the support of community-based organizations to further senior citizens issues and increase their community engagement. 	<p>Concerns</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dearth of research, studies, surveys and data on elderly-related issues such as secure income, poverty, employment and education, which undermines the abilities of policy and decision makers to set future policies that meet the medium and long term needs of the elderly. • Inability to meet the goals of the National Strategy for Senior Citizens owing to the fact that some

Pillar One: Senior Citizens and Development

Strengths and Opportunities	Weaknesses and Concerns
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encouragement of philanthropy initiatives to direct Zakat or Waqf money towards the elderly. • A government initiative to establish a senior citizens' fund. 	<p>relevant institutions failed to include the proper performance indicators vis-à-vis the "Senior Citizen's and Development Pillar" included in the Strategy into their own strategies and plans of action. Furthermore, the lack of specific allocated budget assigned to implementing the strategy's activities.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase in the rate of senior citizens who receive pensions lower than the poverty line. • Increase in the rate of senior citizens with no retirement pensions. • Poor coordination among governmental and nongovernmental entities involved with elderly issues.

Pillar Two: Health Care for Senior Citizens

Pillar Two: Health Care for Senior Citizens	
Strengths and Opportunities	Weaknesses and Concerns
<p>Points of Strength</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The existence of the national strategy "Jordan 2025" in place which is concerned with the provision of basic services for senior citizens such as medicine delivery services. • The existence of the "Comprehensive National Plan for Human Right (2016-2025)" which aims to further and protect the rights of the elderly and guarantee their enjoyment thereof, in a manner that leads to expanding the <u>health insurance umbrella for the elderly</u>. • Supplementing the Public Health Law No. (47) for the year 2008 with an explicit provision on elderly health-related activities and supervision on health centers and their 	<p>Points of Weakness</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Poor inclusion of all senior citizens under the health insurance umbrella. • Shortage of qualified medical cadre in the area of Geriatric medicine and Gerontological nursing. • Exclusion of the specialized in-house services from the public and private health insurance coverage. • Poor financial allocations for institutions concerned with elderly health care within the government budgets. • Lack of a special department within the Ministry of Health for following

Pillar Two: Health Care for Senior Citizens

Strengths and Opportunities	Weaknesses and Concerns
<p>affiliated entities.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The issuance of an in-house health care accreditation system for institutions No. (84) for the year 2016 which covers senior citizens implicitly. • The updating of the National Strategy for Senior Citizens a pillar of which is elderly health care. • The existence of a national committee to follow up on the strategy's update and to supervise the implementation of its activities. • The existence of national health strategies that handle elderly issues. • Establishment of clinics by the Ministry of Health to provide direct medical supervision and care to senior citizens inside elderly nursing homes. • The Prime Ministry's decision to include all the age category (60-69) who do not enjoy health insurance (those who could and could not afford it) under the umbrella of the Ministry's health insurance in all its hospitals and medical centers. • The Prime Ministry's decision to exempt all senior citizens (70 years and more) from the annual health insurance fees. • The availability of health manuals and booklets on how to deal with senior citizens in terms of healthy lifestyles and Alzheimer's. • Refurbish and adapt health centers in several governorates to become age-friendly. 	<p>up on the issues pertaining to senior citizens.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of a medical information system for senior citizens which documents their medical prescriptions, particularly with respect to chronic disease medications, and tracks patient cases and deaths.
<p>Opportunities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Government interest in elderly health care issues. • Sending a group of doctors and nurses to specialize in Geriatric medicine and Gerontological nursing. • Utilization of donor support in the advancement of elderly health requirements. • Teaching courses on Gerontological nursing in some Jordanian universities. • Conducting specialized Gerontological nursing courses in some private hospitals. 	<p>Concerns</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dearth of research, studies, surveys and data on elderly-related issues such as health, chronic diseases and health insurance which undermines the abilities of policy and decision makers to set future policies that meet the medium and long term needs of the elderly. • Inability to meet the goals of the national strategy for senior citizens owing to the fact that some relevant institutions failed to include the proper performance indicators related to the "Health Care Pillar" included in the Strategy into their

Pillar Two: Health Care for Senior Citizens

Strengths and Opportunities	Weaknesses and Concerns
	<p>own strategies and plans of action. Furthermore, the absence of a dedicated budget assigned to implementing the strategy's activities.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Poor coordination among governmental and nongovernmental entities concerned with the elderly health issues.

Pillar Three: Supportive Environment (Financial & Societal) for Senior Citizens

Pillar Three: Supportive Environment (Financial & Societal) for Senior Citizens

Strengths and Opportunities	Weaknesses and Concerns
<p>Points of Strength</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Jordanian Constitution's inclusion of an explicit provision on the protection of senior citizens and those with disabilities against abuse and exploitation. • The existence of the National "Jordan 2025" document which is concerned with strengthening the capacities of the existing elderly nursing homes in conformity with international best practices. • The existence of the "Comprehensive National Plan for Human Right (2016-2025)" which aims to enhance and protect the rights of the elderly and guarantee their enjoyment thereof, in a manner that leads to the enhancement of the level of services offered to them whereby they are provided with a dignified life in the community, in addition to the strengthening of oversight on elderly nursing homes and shelters. • The predominance of religious and moral attitudes in dealing with the elderly. 	<p>Points of Weakness</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The inability of the Protection against Family Violence Law to provide full legal coverage of senior citizens. • The lack of a law that criminalizes assault, violence or disobedience towards parents, or the possibility of imposing alternative penalties. • Poor incentives provided to registered nurses (with university degree) for working in elderly nursing homes. • Shortage of staff that care for social and psychological aspects in elderly nursing homes. • Poor private sector contribution to the support of elderly nursing homes. • Absence of free specialized in-house care services and the high cost of the private sector services.

Pillar Three: Supportive Environment (Financial & Societal) for Senior Citizens

Strengths and Opportunities	Weaknesses and Concerns
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Updating the National Strategy for Senior Citizens a pillar of which is the supportive environment for senior citizens. • The existence of a national committee to follow up on and monitor the update and implementation of the strategy. • The availability of (7) voluntary elderly nursing homes and (3) private ones. • The existence of regulations governing the licensing of and supervision on elderly nursing homes and daytime elderly clubs. • The existence of a flexible working system to provide favorable working conditions for employees who provide care for senior citizens at their houses. • The establishment of clinics by the Ministry of Health to provide direct medical supervision and health care to senior citizens inside elderly nursing homes. • Conducting awareness raising campaigns and specialized workshops on the protection of senior citizens against violence and exploitation. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Limited availability of applied studies on the elderly which are concerned with senior citizens who reside at their houses or at nursing homes and which reflect their actual issues and problems. • Poor enforcement of the special building codes and the shortcomings in the creation of an age-friendly environment within public spaces such as roads, sidewalks and public facilities. • Failure to provide means of transportation appropriate and adapted to the use of senior citizens in general and those with disabilities in particular. • Lack of sufficient allocations within government budgets for entities responsible for issue related to elderly friendly environment. • Lack of daytime elderly clubs and their unavailability in all governorates.
<p>Opportunities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Government interest in providing protection and dignified life for the elderly. • Building the capacities of public employees working in the area of elderly social care such as social specialists and psychologist. • Qualification of the youth to do voluntary social work for the benefit of the elderly. • Advocacy for the support of community-based organizations to further senior citizens issues in the Jordanian community and provide social care to them. • Promotion of positive images of ageing and older persons through media outlets, school curricula and preaching and guidance campaigns. • Fostering age-friendly cities initiatives and rolling them out across all Jordanian governorates. • Strengthening the role of municipalities in the establishment of age-friendly public parks and the creation of social clubs within. 	<p>Concerns</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Elderly nursing homes' inability to meet their operational expenses in light of the increased occupancy in these homes in parallel with increased inflation rates. • Dearth of research, studies, surveys and data specialized on elderly social care and violence cases against them which undermines the abilities of policy and decision makers to set future policies that meet elderly needs and provide them with proper protection in light of the projected economic and social changes in the medium and long terms. • Reluctance by some young people to engage in elderly-oriented voluntary social work. • The influx of elderly refugees to the kingdom and the accompanying

Pillar Three: Supportive Environment (Financial & Societal) for Senior Citizens

Strengths and Opportunities	Weaknesses and Concerns
	<p>social and economic burdens.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inability to meet the goals of the national strategy for senior citizens owing to the fact that some relevant institutions failed to include the proper performance indicators related to the "Supportive Environment Pillar" included in the Strategy into their own strategies and plans of action. Furthermore, the lack of a budget appropriated to implementing the strategy's activities. • Poor coordination among governmental and nongovernmental entities concerned with the social aspects and supportive environments of the elderly.

- The Strategy's logical framework was designed in harmony with the principles of positive ageing and in line with best practices in this regard and the prevalent legislative, cultural and religious environment in the Jordanian community.
- Priority initiatives and actions relevant to the pillars of the strategy were developed informed by the stakeholder consultations and focus community groups.
- The executive plan of action was elaborated, incorporating within it priority initiatives (priority areas) and the set of actions necessary for the achievement of goals.
- Monitoring and evaluation key indicators were defined, which should be assessed periodically to take stock of the progress /underperformance of the strategy.

4. Towards a National Jordanian Strategy for Senior Citizens

Vision

"A society in which senior citizens enjoy positive ageing that ensures them dignified life and active participation".

Mission

"To provide safeguards that enable senior citizens to enjoy their full rights without discrimination and work to ensure a life of dignity where human rights are guaranteed for all in conformity with our religious and societal culture and best practices in this area".

Strategic Goal

"To ensure security, dignity and welfare to senior citizens in Jordan"

The vision, mission and goal of the strategy can be realized through the following:

- Promoting the Arab and Islamic values and the teachings of the divine religions which calls attention to respect and provision of decent living for the elderly;
- Valuing the wisdom, expertise and skills of senior citizens , and recognizing their active participation at the level of the family and society alike;
- Creating a society where all ages enjoy decent lives;
- Acknowledging that ageing is a positive experience irrespective of sex, age, religion or capacities;
- Enabling senior citizens to participate in society as they see fit, and appreciating and respecting their participation by others;
- Cooperating and coordinating among stakeholders to provide an affirmative environment for the elderly;
- Welcoming senior citizens as mentors and advisers to the young generation and sharing their expertise and know-how with the young;
- Monitoring the projected growth rate in the number of senior citizens with a view to plan in response to the increased demand on required services;
- Creating a life-long learning environment for senior citizens and developing their skills;
- Creating flexible employment practices that support senior citizens in the labor market;
- Raising awareness on the importance of healthy lifestyles and recreational activities during the course of life which support the health and well-being of people in their old age;
- Providing secure and stable life for the elderly and affording them required support when they lack the ability to rely on themselves;
- Attainability and accessibility of the elderly to required medical services;
- Providing secure and stable income at the retirement age to enable them to live in dignity;
- Facilitating access to transportation to promote community engagement;

- Providing adequate and dignified housing;
- Providing in-house care services for the elderly to support the "Age at Place" approach;
- Ensuring adequate services for older persons in rural, Badia and remote areas.
- Promoting positive images of older persons and ageing ;
- Raising public awareness on the concept and significance of positive ageing across governorates and local communities.

5. Pillars of the Strategy, Priority Initiatives and Actions

The Strategy has included a range of government policies and strategies, interventions and services required to be undertaken during the implementation of the Strategy to realize senior citizens' rights in the Jordanian society. These were incorporated under the following three key pillars (findings):

- **Pillar One: Contribution of senior citizens in the development process**
- **Pillar Two: Advancement of health care for senior citizens**
- **Pillar Three: Provision of a supportive physical environment and social care to senior citizens**

To create a favorable environment that can realize these findings, it must be underpinned by the pillars' crosscutting instruments which should achieve the goals of each pillar. These instruments are:

- Facilitation of a legislative and regulatory environment supportive of elderly issues in terms of the enhancement of their contribution to development, provision of health and social care and a supportive physical environment.
- Provision of elderly-responsive scientific research and studies in all fields, and the building of databases for the benefit of policy and decision makers.

The formulation of the Strategy was based on a results-oriented strategy to be in line with international best practices in this area and the guidelines of the Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing and to be in conformity with the prevailing social and religious culture in the Jordanian society.

Pillar One: Senior Citizens and Development

Senior citizens play crucial roles in the Jordanian society ranging from decision makers in the public and private sectors, academics in universities and small and big family business owners to professional workers and artisans, in addition to contributing to voluntary work in society. Moreover, some elderly women work in craftwork and domestic professions, sewing businesses and watching over their grandchildren, and in doing so, they meet part of the needs of their households which makes them valuable assets to their families and country.

Priority Area 1: Elderly engagement in all levels of decision making processes

Actions:

- To establish an advisory board comprised of senior citizens.

- To increase the rate of senior citizen participation in decision-making bodies.
- To encourage investment in the expertise of senior citizens in all aspect.

Priority Area 2: Improvement of living conditions and reduction of poverty ratio among senior citizens.

Actions:

- To introduce any necessary modifications to the retirement systems to guarantee senior citizens a secure income in their old age.
- To create a social safety net.
- To operationalize the Islamic social solidarity instruments (Takaful) such as Zakat and Waqf to support senior citizens.
- To track changes that take place in the living standards of citizens and take adequate measures to combat poverty.
- To conduct periodic review of the amount of national aid presented to senior citizens by the National Aid Fund by tying it to inflation rates (indexation).
- To adopt appropriate measures to facilitate the attainment of loans and credit facilities by the elderly.
- To support and market elderly income-generating and crafts projects.

Priority Area 3: Enhancement of living conditions of senior citizens in rural and Badia areas.

Actions:

- To set developmental government policies supportive of senior citizens in rural and Badia areas.
- To scale up the level of health services presented to senior citizens in rural and Badia areas.
- To fulfil the needs of senior citizens in rural and Badia areas with regard to transportation to facilitate access to service centers in the cities.
- To take adequate measures to combat poverty in rural and Badia areas.
- To strengthen literacy programs for senior citizens in rural and Badia areas.

Priority Area 4: Integration of expatriate senior citizens into society

Actions:

- To formulate appropriate and meaningful government policies to integrate expatriate senior citizens into the Jordanian Society.
- To encourage the subscription of Jordanian expatriates under the umbrella of social security.

Priority Area 5: Life-long Education and Training of Senior Citizens

Actions:

- To foster initiatives that support the teaching and training of senior citizens.
- To conduct specialized training courses on the use of the Internet and computer software.

Pillar Two: Health Care for Senior Citizens

Good health in childhood, healthy lifestyles and the availability of adequate health services through the course of life are some of the positive determinants that inevitably lead to the enjoyment of good health at old age and contribute to the increase in life expectancy at birth. Furthermore, the availability of in-house health care services and proper healthy diets and sports at the elderly's place of residence is a key contributing factor to preventing chronic diseases such as hypertension, high cholesterol rates, and diabetes. In the same context, the advancement of preventive, curative and rehabilitative health programs for the elderly, particularly for those with disabilities, and the availability of medical staff specialized in Geriatric medicine and Gerontological nursing are of paramount importance in the fulfilment of elderly needs with respect to high quality health services.

Priority Area 1: Provision of preventive health care for senior citizens

Actions:

- To raise awareness of senior citizens and their families on healthy diets for the prevention of chronic diseases and their complications.
- To increase awareness of senior citizens and their families on the importance of taking up age-appropriate sports and exercise.
- To organize free "medical days" in all governorates whereby the elderly undergo periodic medical tests.

Priority Area 2: Provision of curative health care for senior citizens

Actions:

- To provide free health insurance for senior citizens.
- To provide in-house health care services for senior citizens.
- To ensure the availability of medical staff specialized in Geriatrics.
- To ensure the availability of a nursing staff specialized in Gerontological nursing.
- To ensure the availability of academic courses in all universities covering elderly health aspects.
- To ensure the availability of on-going training for medical and nursing staff to provide curative services for senior citizens.
- To ensure the availability of proper medical services for senior citizens with disabilities of all types.
- To re-design health centers to be age-friendly.

Pillar Three: Supportive Physical Environment and Social Care for Senior Citizens

An enabling physical environment is a key component that provides the elderly with means of comfort while exercising their everyday activities. This includes the provision of proper housing and shelter homes for the elderly; public buildings and facilities that are compliant

with special building codes; recreational clubs; and means of transport that are tailored to meet the needs and uses of the elderly which facilitate their transport and easy access to health services.

The enhancement of gender-sensitive elderly participation in society; the protection against violence and abuse of senior citizens; the promotion of a positive image of ageing; the reinforcing of intergenerational solidarity; the strengthening of the role of the private sector towards the elderly through their social corporate responsibility; and finally the support provided for caregivers are all pivotal factors in the provision of adequate social care for senior citizens allowing them to live comfortably and peacefully.

Priority Area 1: Adjusting houses and elderly nursery homes to the needs of senior citizens

Actions:

- To stimulate the public and private sectors to establish age-friendly residential compounds.
- To provide housing loans at preferential interest rates to build and purchase age-friendly houses.
- To design age-friendly elderly shelter homes.
- To design age-friendly daytime clubs.

Priority Area 2: Adjusting buildings, public facilities and means of transport to the needs of senior citizens

Actions:

- To adjust public facilities, places of worship and recreational areas to be suitable for elderly use.
- To design road intersections, crossings, footbridges to be senior-friendly.
- To provide age-friendly means of transport to ensure easy access to public services in general and health services in particular.
- To conduct periodic reviews of the terms of granting driving licenses to senior citizens to ensure their fitness to drive, and not to link age with granting the license.

Priority Area 3: Provision of social services for senior citizens and provision of support for caregivers

Actions:

- To upskill social specialists, psychologists and workers in the area of elderly care.
- To introduce an academic course in all universities concerned with social and psychological care for the elderly.
- To organize educational workshops on elderly care and how to deal with them.
- To provide in-house social services for senior citizens "Ageing in Place".

- To adopt flexible workplace practices by institutions to facilitate the working conditions for employees who take care of an elderly at their homes.
- To apply accreditation and quality control standards for shelter homes.

Priority Area 4: Enhancement of senior citizen community engagement

Actions:

- To support the participation of senior citizens –particularly females seniors- to civil society organizations (CSOs) involved in the voluntary work in all governorates of Jordan.
- To further social and economic activities which senior citizens participate in (particularly females).
- To establish social and cultural clubs that are tailored to the needs and hobbies of senior citizens (males and females) in all governorates.

Priority Area 5: Prevention and protection of senior citizens against violence

Actions:

- To raise public awareness to protect senior citizens against violence using different venues such as schools, universities, media outlets, mosques and seminars.
- To raise the awareness of senior citizens on their rights and the mechanism of reporting of any violence inflicted on them –if it occurs.
- To qualify staff working with senior citizens to be able to handle violence against the elderly and their rights.
- To provide databases on violence cases against the elderly.

Priority Area 6: Promotion of a positive community perception of senior citizens and enhancement of intergenerational solidarity

Actions:

- To organize awareness campaigns and preaching and guidance activities to promote positive image of older persons.
- To enhance intergenerational solidarity programs in schools and local communities.

Priority Area 7: Strengthening the role of the private sector towards senior citizens

Actions:

- To encourage private sector investors to establish elderly nursing homes and daytime clubs.
- To encourage social responsibility initiatives targeting senior citizens to launch a "Sponsoring a Senior Citizen" initiative.

- To encourage the private sector and philanthropists to provide in-house care services for the elderly.

First Crosscutting Pillar: Local legislation, and National Strategies and Plans of Action

The provision of a legislative and regulatory environment supportive of senior citizen issues boosts their participation in the development process. It also leads to the provision of health and social care services and the facilitation of a supportive physical environment for the elderly.

Actions:

- To review the Social Security Law periodically to ensure a secure income that guarantees senior citizens a life of dignity in their old age.
- To review the Civil Retirement Law and propose relevant amendments.
- To review the Military Retirement Law and propose relevant amendments.
- To review the Labor Law and propose relevant amendments.
- To review the Civil Service By-law and propose relevant amendments.
- To review the Public Health Law and its regulating by-laws and propose relevant amendments.
- To review the Social Affairs and Labor Law and its regulating by-laws and propose relevant amendments.
- To review the Law on the Rights for Persons with Disabilities and propose relevant amendments.
- To review the Accreditation and Quality Control Standards for Elderly Home Shelters.
- To draft a legislation to establish a fund for supporting senior citizens in all areas.
- To review the flexible working system in correspondence with the demands of senior citizens who are capable and willing to work.
- To draft a law to criminalize parental disobedience and violence, proceeding from the magnanimous principles of Islam.
- To develop necessary legislation to regulate work related to in-house care services (health and social).
- To activate the implementation of the special building codes for persons with disabilities.
- To draw policies and strategies that enable the elderly economically and socially.
- To introduce amended instructions to include all senior citizens under the umbrella of free health insurance.
- To revisit the licensing system for elderly nursing homes and daytime clubs.
- To revisit the Code of Criminal Procedure with respect to the detention of those over 70 years.
- To revisit the Notary Public Law with respect to the older persons' right of disposition of immovable property in their place of residence.
- Jordan's participation in the formulation of an agreement on the rights of senior citizens.

Second Crosscutting Pillar: Scientific Research and Studies and Databases:

The availability of scientific research and studies that are responsive to senior citizens' issues in all areas and the creation of databases on senior citizens are assistive tools to government decision and policy makers in the establishment, formulation and implementation of elderly-responsive strategies.

Actions:

- To build integrated databases on the elderly for all stakeholders.
- To conduct field surveys on the elderly by the Department of Statistics.
- To promote synergies with academia and research centers with regard to the conducting of research and studies which deal with elderly issues in all its aspects.
- To strengthen partnerships and create new ones with international research centers concerned with the elderly.

Appendix 1: Members of the National Follow-up Committee on the Implementation of the National Strategy for Senior Citizens at the time of its preparation

Mr. Fadel Al-Hmoud/ Secretary General of National Council for Family Affairs- Committee Chairman

Ms. Haifa Zalloum/ Ministry of Social Development representative- Committee Rapporteur

Dr. Hasan Krairah/ Ministry of Awqaf and Islamic Affairs representative

Dr. Hamda Abu Saleh/ Ministry of Health representative

Dr. Mohammad Al-Zboun Ministry of Higher Education representative

Mr. Mahmoud Mashal/ Ministry of Education representative

Eng. Rasha Qadourah/ Ministry of Transport representative

Mrs. Suhad Al-Qutob/ Ministry of Municipal Affairs

Mrs. Anoud Abu Wandil/ Ministry of Interior

Brigadier General Dr. Adeel Al-Sharman/ Public Security Directorate (PSD) representative/
Director of Public Relations and Media Department

Captain Kifaya Al-Bdour/ Family Protection Department (PSD) representative

Dr. Salah Shwayat/Chief Justice Department representative

Mrs. Kholoud Bilal/ National Aid Fund representative

Dr. Zuhair Shawaqfah/ Royal Medial Services representative

Mrs. Fidda Ananbeh/ Department of Statistics representative

Mr. Qais Al-Btoush/ Social Security Corporation representative

Eng. Nancy Abu Hayyaneh/ Greater Amman Municipality representative

Miss. Samar Abu Durrah/ Greater Amman Municipality representative

Miss Itaf Al-Hadid/ Higher Population Council representative

Miss Hala Hamad/ The Higher Council for the Affairs of Persons with Disabilities
representative

Dr. Raghad Al-Hadidi/ High Health Council representative

Mrs. Aisha Damra/ Jordanian Nursing Council representative

Dr. Raja Al-Bawabji/ The National Centre for Human Rights representative

Miss Arwa Al-Zo'bi/ Jordan Radio and Television Corporation representative

Miss Dima Arabiyat/ Jordanian National Commission for Women representative

Miss Haifa Al-Bashir/ White Beds representative

Dr. Hmoud Al-Lasasmah/ Darat Samir Shamma for the Elderly representative

