

*UNDP Global Programme on Strengthening the Rule of Law and Human Rights for Sustaining Peace and Fostering Development*

**Pipeline Funding Request Form**

Project title: **Strengthened and accountable institutions with human rights at the center & empowered people in Jordan (SDG 16)**

Project Number and Output Number in Atlas:

Dept ID in Atlas:

Requesting Country/Regional Office: **Jordan- RBAS**

Country/Regional Office focal point: Sally G. El Mahdy – Advisor/Team Leader -Governance and Peace Pillar- [sally.elmahdy@undp.org](mailto:sally.elmahdy@undp.org)

Country/Regional Office Finance focal point: Maen Oweis, Finance Senior Specialist, maen.oweis@undp.org

Country Office Resident Representative/Head of Office: Sara Ferrer Olivella, Resident Representative, [sara.ferrer.olivella@undp.org](mailto:sara.ferrer.olivella@undp.org)

Amount requested: USD$ 100,000

**1. Country context**

Please give a short overview of the political context, including present (or possible) instability, fragility, or opportunity to further prevention efforts.

Jordan is a middle-income country that has demonstrated remarkable resilience, despite the recent neighboring countries’ political instability, armed conflicts and civil wars, which forced the Kingdom to absorb a major influx of refugees. These strenuous factors were amplified by the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic and its consequential precautionary measures, including lockdowns and curfews, which had negative effects on the socio-economic landscapes and dynamics. To this effect, Jordan economy has retracted by 1.6 percent in 2020, according to The World Bank estimates. In addition, unemployment rates reached 24.7 percent in the fourth quarter of 2020 and youth unemployment rates reached an unprecedented 50 percent. The economic shock of COVID-19 has exacerbated both existing economic structural weaknesses and unresolved social challenges, putting pressure on the country’s fragile macroeconomic stance.

Jordan’s commitments towards fulfilling the SDGs are jeopardised by the challenging socio-political and economic landscapes as well as an increased citizens’ pressures to be actively engaged in the decision- making processes, especially the electoral and political ones. In February, the National Centre for Human Rights[[1]](#footnote-1) in its final monitoring report of the results of the 19th House of Representatives’ elections asserted that "violations and irregularities, which accompanied the electoral process, especially during the period of candidacy and voting, have reached such a serious extent that the entire electoral process is flawed."

Jordan has **ratified** seven out of the nine core international human rights treaties. Jordan has undergone three circles under the Universal Periodic Review (UPR), is **reporting** regularly to the independent expert committees (Treaty Bodies), which oversee implementation of the human rights treaties at the national level- with only one exception, namely under the Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights a report is overdue since 2003.

If Jordan submits a Voluntary National Review (VNR) report in 2022 on the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for sustainable development this could be a concrete entry point (between October-December 2021) to ensure a rights-based implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals including through a multi-stakeholder participation in developing such a report. And in this context reviewing implementation of the Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights and dialogue around these important rights could be an important contribution to building forward better.

Jordan does not have a Governmental inter-institutional mechanism for implementation and reporting on human rights (so-called National Mechanism for Reporting and Follow-up- NMRF).

And when it comes to independent institution building or access to remedies for individuals, Jordan has accepted the inquiry procedure under CAT (article 20), but has not ratified the Optional Protocol to that treaty which foresees the establishment of a National Mechanism for the Prevention of Torture (NPM) nor accepted any human rights treaty-based individual complaints procedure. Jordan has an independent National Human Rights Institution with A status, the National Center for Human Rights. Jordan adopted the Mérida Declaration, which outlines the various roles and functions that NHRIs[[2]](#footnote-2) undertake to mainstream human rights in the SDGs. Yet, it is noteworthy to highlight that the projects currently implemented in Jordan do not adequately address the interdependency and linkages between human rights mechanisms and related SDGs and targets.

Overall, since 2006, Jordan received more than 800 recommendations through the UPR and by Treaty Bodies and Special Procedures mandate holders, some of which confirm the need to strengthen national independent institutions and complaint mechanisms. The UPR, CERD, HR Committee and CAT recommended to expand the authority and available resources of the **National Centre for Human Rights**, the national human rights institution. A number of Treaty Bodies also issued concrete recommendations with a view to complaints mechanisms, such as CAT asking that the “Complaints and Human Rights Office of the Public Security Directorate and the National Centre for Human Rights work closely together to monitor the strict application of the rule of law for **detainees”;** CEDAW, which “notes the numerous complaint mechanisms accessible to **women who are victims of discrimination or violence**, including the Women’s Rights Unit of the National Centre for Human Rights, the Women’s Complaint Unit of the National Commission for Women and the Justice Centre for Legal Aid. As well, the CRPD suggested to “Launch investigations into reported cases of cruel and degrading treatment of **persons with disabilities in “shelters”**, with a view to provide PWDs exposed to ill-treatment with **access to independent complaint mechanisms.**

**2. Overview of project and the purpose of the funds**

Please give a brief overview of the project for which these funds are requested, including how this targeted action will address the elements of the political context outlined above.

This project seeks to strengthen the capacity of the NCHR to bring national legislations into conformity with international human rights standards and to strengthen the NCHR complaints mechanism.

**Outcome:** **Increased access by the people we serve and allow for their voices to being heard**

Output 1: Strengthen collective support to independent monitoring institutions, in particular the National Center for Human Rights (NCHR)

Output 2: Implement collectively the UN SG Guidance Note on Widening Civic Space to ensure that people have access to a NCHR complaints mechanism

**Establish a unit with in the NCHR to receive and process complaints of human rights violations and provide all support, digital solutions, and technologies as well as capacity building programmes to ensure full operationalisation of the unit.**

The implementation of the proposed initiative to **promote the Sustainable Development Goal 5 & 16 by optimizing and activating a Complaint Mechanism at the National Centre for Human Rights** would lead to document, process, and follow up on human rights violations. This mechanism and process is considered an actual translation of SDG 16 and SDG5 related human rights targets and indicators, with special focus on vulnerable groups, including women, youth, persons with disabilities and refugees.

**Activities:**

* **Complaints’ Reception**: Setting up and operationalizing an online platform for complaints.
* **Complaints’ Processing**: classification, categorization, investigation, analysis, and documentation.
* **Complaints’ Referral**: processing and follow-up.
* **Complaints’ Creditability**: Investigate and document complaints to ascertain their credibility.
* **Processing and follow-up**: establish direct channels of communication with the respective authorities to ensure effective referral and handling.
* Complaints’ documentation: E- data and digital archiving of complaints processed, including production of quarterly quantitative statistical reports about cases’ numbers, types and nature and ways of dealing with them.
* **Training and capacity-building**
  + Capacity-building programmes and training for all staff and lawyers in the CM on:
    - legal writing of notes, reports, communications, and complaints
    - sustainable development goals related to international and national human rights mechanisms
    - Documentation, classification, storage, archiving and complaints’ recovery.
  + Production of an annual report that can feed into the national and shadow reports and the Jordanian UPR, while strengthening SDGs 5&16.

**3. Integrated and multidimensional programming**

Please explain how these funds will contribute to advancing integrated programmatic engagement.

On June 10, 2021, H.M. King Abdullah established a high-level 92 members committee headed by former Prime Minister Samir Rifai. The Committee is entrusted with modernizing Jordan’s political system, focusing on elections and political parties. At the heart of the process are the anticipated political reforms and national dialogue that would expand public participation in the decision-making process.

Such a move is timely and highly welcome as Jordan is emerging from the pandemic that has hit the country hard. Yet, it also comes in the wake of a series of events that have drawn global and regional attention to the Kingdom, including rising public demands that culminated in demonstrations in the wake of the pandemic. It is not the first time that Jordan endeavors to modernize the political system with youth and women at the center of this approach. Yet, as the country is marking its centennial, this is an opportunity not to be missed.[[3]](#footnote-3) The process aims at enhancing political and electoral inclusiveness, especially amongst vulnerable groups, particularly women, youth, and persons with disabilities. It intends to alleviate the structural barriers hampering equal, fair, and inclusive participation. In addition, laws on digital transformation, transparency, integrity, and accountability, strengthening of the role of regulatory bodies, and several national strategies aim to combat corruption, promote equality in accessing information and technology and protect privacy and personal data.

Also, the UNCT in April 2021 adopted three Priorities Action Plans, one of which focuses joint UNCT action around “Strengthened accountable institutions with human rights at the center”. All UNCT members committed to support the implementation of UPR, Treaty Body and Special Procedures recommendations identified across all three Action Plans, with specific emphasis on those relating to independent monitoring institutions and to report upon progress in the context of the next UPR of Jordan in 2023.

The proposed initiative attends to diverse regulatory frameworks and addresses different layers of structural and contextual opportunities/challenges. On the ***regulatory frameworks***, this initiative addresses two main **Sustainable Development Goals**, SDG5 & SDG16, **through optimizing and activating a national mechanism for human rights complaints.** It alsoattends to the requirements and/or recommendations of the relevant International Standards and Frameworks Jordan ratified or is signatory to**.** On the ***contextual level***, the Kingdom's higher political will expressed determination to boost structural reform to ensure more inclusiveness in the public and political domains and provide citizens with more space to meaningfully practice their basic human rights and be part of the decision-making process. As well, the higher political will entrusts and cooperates with UN bodies and, especially UNDP, via its national human rights institutions, especially the National Centre for Human Rights, on different developmental fronts, with special emphasis on the human rights ones. On the ***structural level***, existing laws and legislations undermine fundamental human rights and freedom of expression and assembly. The Human Rights Watch pointed out in 2020 that Defence Orders No. (8)[[4]](#footnote-4) could potentially restrict online debates about Jordan's response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

**4. Partnerships**

Please explain the project’s strategy for joined up action and strengthening partnership – both within and external to the UN system.

Within the partnership framework and joint work between UNDP and OHCHR since 2018 in implementing joint initiatives, this initiative is properly positioned to establish monitoring human rights structures that fulfil the Sustainable Development Goals’ (SDGs 5&16) targets at the country level. The initiative intends to bring together the United Nations and national stakeholders (including the National Center for Human Rights)to create synergies between the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals and the recommendations of the Universal Periodic Review and other human rights Standards.

In this context, to activate and optimize an effective and efficient mechanism to receive complaints related to human rights signifies the essentiality of installing this mechanism; given the widespread violations associated with freedom of opinion, freedom of expression, and other human rights violations. This is further asserted by the Jordan’s higher political will’s towards public and political reforms, especially amendments of laws and legislations related to human rights and freedoms, supporting national human rights institutions, and allowing human rights organizations and civil society to play wider and diversified roles in this process.

**5. Innovation**

Please describe any innovations or new ways of working that these funds will contribute to.

This initiative will employ and capitalize on digital transformation and solutions to provide a safe, transparent and accountable platform for citizens, especially vulnerable groups (women, youth and persons with disabilities) to voice out their human rights complaints/violations to the responsible entity (The National Center for Human Rights-NCHR) for investigation. It will also enable the NCHR to digitally document, archive and cluster complaints in a manner that can inform national and international reporting on human rights status in the country.

**6. Catalytic impact and complementarity**

A. Briefly explain how the requested funds will either: a) help accelerate or amplify the project’s impact, or b) help attract additional resources to amplify impact.

Jordan is in a dire need integrate the Sustainable Development Goals’ related targets within the national mechanism for human rights. This initiative rests, across all stages of implementation, on:

1- The annual report of the Complaints Unit is the main pillar in national and shadow reports in the Jordanian UPR, while strengthening SDG 16, which emphasizes the strengthening of the effectiveness and transparency of national institutions and the strengthening of the rule of law, both at the national and international levels.

2- The Annual Report of the Complaints Authority is an important indicator of Jordan's commitment to the Sustainable Development Goals and their purposes.

3- The complaints mechanism promotes mutual support between the Sustainable Development Goals and national and international human rights mechanisms through the ability of Jordanian institutions to achieve significant progress in this field.

4- The initiative emphasizes the integrated approach between the Sustainable Development Goals and national and international human rights mechanisms and the empowerment of stakeholders, particularly UN agencies and national human rights institutions established under the Paris Declaration, as well as CBOs, women's organizations, CSOs and official state institutions, to implement this integrative approach in all practices and legislation.

B. Please describe the project sustainability plan, including how the funds will complement other funding streams such as the Funding Windows, RRF, etc.

This initiative emphasizes the interlinkages and interdependencies between human rights mechanisms recommendations and the Sustainable Development Goals and extends support to independent national human rights institutions and complaints mechanisms as per SDG 16 from the UN.

Sustainability is ensured as the project fits into agreed UNCT action points. The project leads will ensure regular progress reporting in the context of Implementation of the three UNCT 2021 Action Plans, which will in turn feed into the design of the next Common Country Cooperation Framework (starting 2023).

Diagram

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**7. Quality assurance**

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| Checking this box verifies that this project has been (or will be) developed according to the following principles:   * Demonstrates strong national ownership, and is in line with country priorities/CPD * Targets populations and communities that are most vulnerable * Adheres the [UNDP corporate Quality Standards and Assurance](https://popp.undp.org/SitePages/POPPChapter.aspx?TermID=53e99aef-9c22-4e8a-b3b1-493de3c02b16) * When appropriate, promotes use of South-South and triangular cooperation * Meets the minimum threshold of 15% of total resources dedicated to gender-related activities |

**8. Indicate which RoLSHR Global Programme outputs this project aligns to**

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| 1. A political environment that strengthens rule of law and human rights is further enabled. |  |
| 2. Capable justice and security institutions are stablished and strengthened to increase and improve service delivery in crisis-affected and transitional settings. |  |
| 3. Comprehensive community security approaches are developed, strengthened and/or applied. |  |
| 4. National human rights institutions are strengthened and made more effective in promoting and protecting human rights. |  |
| 5. Access to justice for all is increased – particularly for vulnerable and marginalized groups, including minorities – and discrimination, exclusion and other drivers of fragility are reduced. |  |
| 6. Transitional justice processes and/or mechanisms are promoted in conflict-affected contexts. |  |
| 7. Human rights, access to justice, and security for women and girls are increased. |  |

**9. Project budget (please attach as an annex)**

1. The Jordan National Centre for Human Rights was established by the Royal Decree/Provisional Law on December 19, 2002 under Article 94(1) of the Constitution and the decision of the Council of Ministers on December 3, 2002. It became operational on June 1, 2003. The Centre has a wide human rights mandate and deals with cases of human rights violations, complaints, education and promotion, monitoring and integrating human rights into legislations and practices. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. NHRIs are uniquely placed to contribute to, monitor and follow up on a human rights-based approach to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. Laws currently under reform are: the Decentralization Law, Political Parties Law and the Election Law, which were preceded by Constitutional amendments related to the structure of the political system, particularly the correlation between the legislative and executive branches. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. The Defence Order No. (8) provides that in case of breach of the provisions of the order, one could be subject to up to three years of imprisonment, or a fine of JOD3,000, or both, in case of disseminating alarming" news about the pandemic through social media or otherwise. [↑](#footnote-ref-4)