

Micro-Enterprises Run by Women in the Kufranja District: Reality and Challenges



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1 Executive Summary

Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) make up more than 95% of enterprises in the world, and their importance lies in providing job opportunities and driving economic growth and income¹ as they absorb more than 75% of the jobs in the world.²

In Jordan, MSMEs play a significant role in the Jordanian economy. These companies represent 50% of the private sector's contribution to the GDP, and constitute 98% of the corporate sector in Jordan³ and employ 60-70% of the employees working in the private sector.⁴

By 2030, six hundred million new jobs will need to be created to accommodate the growing number of the world's growing workforce. Here, the significant role of MSMEs in achieving economic growth appears evident as such enterprises provide decent work and help in developing infrastructure.⁵

Despite the significant role of MSMEs, a report by the International Finance Corporation (IFC) showed that nearly 65 million firms or 40% of formal MSMEs in developing countries have unmet financing needs of \$5.2 trillion. In terms of the “financing gap” ratio,⁶ it reached 87% in Latin America and the Caribbean and 88% in the Middle East and North Africa, which represents the highest ratio in the financing gap compared to demand. The financing gap increases when informal enterprises are taken into account, and this is reflected in the economic conditions of the owners of micro enterprises,⁷ of which women constitute a large proportion.

This brief aimed to study the reality of women who manage micro-enterprises in the Kufranja District in Ajloun Governorate, and to identify the most important challenges that hinder the process of their economic empowerment through micro-enterprises. The policy brief concludes with a number of suggested recommendations to decision-makers, policy-makers and relevant authorities. Such recommendations aim to advance the legislative, financing and knowledge reality of micro-enterprises, in a way that reflects positively on the economic and social life of women.

¹ Micro and Small Enterprises, United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees.

<https://www.unhcr.org/ar/5a5360344.html>

² Abbas, Jehan. 2020, The Role of Small Enterprises in Achieving Economic Development in Egypt, a published research paper, Cairo University, Egypt.

https://caf.journals.ekb.eg/article_154776_ef6575854fbbae601466ea9540db6c5b.pdf

³ Small and micro companies in Jordan are “most affected” by the repercussions of Corona, Kingdom, June 27, 2021.

⁴ A brief about the Local Business Support Project, Centre for International Private Enterprise.

<https://cipe-arabia.org/لمحة-عن-مشروع-مساندة-الأعمال-المحلية-ب/>

⁵ Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises Day, Qatar National Library, June 26, 2022.

<https://www.qnl.qa/ar/blogs/12707>

⁶ For more information about the funding gap, visit the following link:

<https://www.findevgateway.org/ar/البيانات/fjw-tmwyl-almnshat-alsghry-walsghyrt-walmtwstt>

⁷ Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) Finance, the world bank. <https://www.worldbank.org/en/topic/sme/finance>

The policy brief concluded that micro-enterprises are extremely important for women in the Kufranja District in Ajloun Governorate, as they constitute a source of basic income and a work outlet for them in light of the high rates of poverty and unemployment. The results also showed the type of the enterprises they work on or manage, which were craft or productive micro-enterprises. On the other hand, the results showed a number of challenges faced by women, these were: 1) the cultural stereotype of their roles limiting them to care and domestic work, 2) working without licenses and government procedures, 3) most women lack the necessary knowledge in the registration and licensing procedures for their enterprises, 4) their weak skills and ability in managing their enterprises, financial literacy and marketing skills.

In conclusion, the policy brief put forth a number of recommendations, as follows:

- **First:** Developing awareness and educational programmes about micro-enterprises and their role in improving women's economic situation, in cooperation between the Jordan Enterprise Development Corporation (JEDCO), the Development and Employment Fund, the Ministry of Social Development (MoSD) and the Municipality of Kufranja.
- **Second:** Networking and connecting the lending and financing institutions for micro-enterprises in cooperation and coordination with the Central Bank of Jordan, JEDCO and MoSD.
- **Third:** Employing technology and various means of communication in the production and marketing of micro-enterprises in cooperation and coordination between the Development and Employment Fund, the Ministry of Industry and Trade (MoIT), JEDCO, Municipalities, and the Ministry of Digital Economy and Entrepreneurship (MoDEE).

2 Paper Methodology

The policy brief followed the following methodology: **First:** reviewing previous studies, articles, international agreements, legislation and regulations related to the subject of the study. **Second:** Conducting in-depth, semi-structured interviews with experts in micro and small enterprises, and here are their names with due respect to their titles:

Salem Bani Salameh Director of the Labour Directorate, Ministry of Labour, Ajloun

Fawzat Freihat Mayor of Kufranja District, Ajloun.

Issa Al-Awawdeh Director of the Development and Employment Fund, Ajloun

Third: Holding two focus group discussions with 8 women who run micro-enterprises in the Kufranja district.

3 Introduction

Ajloun governorate is located in the north-western corner of the Jordanian capital, Amman. The governorate includes two districts (Qasabat Ajloun District, Kufranja District), and includes two sub-districts (Sakhra and Arjan), and includes five municipalities (Greater Ajloun, New Kufranja, Junaid, Al-Oyoon, and Al-Shifa). The population of the governorate is 194,700, (males 100,200 and females 94,500). Ajloun is one of the poorest governorates in Jordan due to the high poverty rate among the population, which amounted to 25.6%, and the high unemployment rate, which amounted to 11.4%, and its significant increase among females, which amounted to 25.8%, compared to males, which amounted to 7.8%. There are also 3 poverty pockets in the Ajloun governorate: Arjan district, Qasabat Ajloun, and Al-Sakhra sub-district.⁸



Figure No. 1 - District map according to the Ministry of Interior website

The level of "demographic dependency"⁹ is also high in Ajloun governorate, which is equivalent to approximately 88%, which is much higher than the dependency rate in all of Jordan, around 68%. This means that there's a high burden on the economically active class, of which every 100 people must support 88 people to provide them with a decent life.¹⁰

And based on the difficult economic conditions that Ajloun governorate suffers, the consequences are more evident on women in light of the high unemployment rates and low economic activity among them compared to men, it became evident the importance of shedding light on micro-enterprises run by women and their role in providing sources of income for themselves and for their families.

Owing to the variety of roles women are expected to play in the Jordanian society, as homemakers, caregivers, and perennial jugglers of the material and psychological needs of their families, micro-enterprises contribute to providing an environment that is commensurate and appropriate to the conditions and privacy of women, which enables them to participate economically and become active in their society without affecting their traditional family roles. In addition, any woman can

⁸ Ajloun Governorate Development Program 2017-2019, 2017
https://www.mop.gov.jo/ebv4.0/root_storage/ar/eb_list_page

⁹ Demographic dependency: it is the number of people that a person who is able to work can support, for more information via the following link:

<https://e3arabi.com/sociology/نسبة-الإعالة-الديموغرافية/>

¹⁰Al-Sirani, Muhammad, Demographics in Ajloun Governorate, Ministry of Culture. <https://ich.gov.jo/node/50755>

establish an enterprise from her home, without the need for a high financial budget to establish it or to provide a site for its operation. Hence, the role of micro-enterprises in integrating women into the economic life proved to be of great value.

Jordan realised at an early stage the importance of micro and small enterprises, and the year 1959 is considered the start of financing micro and small enterprises in Jordan, through the Agricultural Credit Corporation which provided loans to farmers, and in 1965 this sector was supported through the establishment of the Industrial Development Bank. Jordan began encouraging small enterprises in the early seventies through the five-year economic development plan 1976-1980, which encouraged social and economic development and the tendency towards small enterprises that produce an alternative to imported goods and products.¹¹ Many governmental and non-governmental institutions have begun to increase the economic participation of women through loan programmes for micro and small enterprises, in addition to strategies, policies and programmes that encourage Jordanian women to establish micro and small enterprises.¹²

According to the Central Bank of Jordan, the number of "microfinance¹³ enterprises" operating in Jordan is 9 companies.¹⁴ This significantly contributed to the increase in the percentage of rural women who manage and work in productive enterprises in Jordan from 27.1% in 2012 to 34.1% in 2014.¹⁵ Also, the percentage of women who head their families and run micro-enterprises reached 35.6% in 2015.¹⁶

4 The conceptual framework for microenterprises

After an in-depth research process on the concept of micro-enterprises, it became clear that there is no single comprehensive definition agreed upon by specialists. The reasons are due to the multiplicity of concepts presented by the relevant authorities, whether the funding agencies or the entities responsible for licensing and registering this type of enterprise, in addition to the multiplicity of criteria in defining micro-enterprises, such as: number of employees, capital, ownership, project management, and product type.

¹¹ Qaddumi, Tha'er. IBID.

¹² Al-Walidat, Oraib and Al-Kharouf, Amal. 2019, IBID.

¹³ Microfinance activity is defined according to Microfinance Regulation No. (5) of 2015 as: "Granting loans and financing to low-income individuals, or individuals who cannot obtain financial services from the banking sector, in whole or in part, whether they are individuals or micro or small companies according to Standards set by the bank", you can view the microfinance system via the following link:

<https://www.cbj.gov.jo/EchoBusV3.0/SystemAssets/35322181-eff9-411f-bcf2-a29aac8fe177.pdf>

¹⁴ Directory of microfinance companies operating in Jordan, Central Bank of Jordan. For more information, visit the following link:

<https://www.cbj.gov.jo/Pages/viewpage.aspx?pageID=372>

¹⁵ IBID

¹⁶ Abdou, Hani Khamis Ahmed (2008), The Feminization of Poverty between Determinants and Ways of Confrontation, published scientific research, p. 2, Arab Journal of Sociology - Centre for Research and Social Studies, Cairo.

According to the Central Bank of Jordan,¹⁷ specifically in the light of the Small and Medium Enterprises Guide, there is no specific definition of micro-enterprises, but based on the definition of small enterprises according to the criterion of the number of employees, they are: “the enterprises that employ between 5-20 employees”.¹⁸ Accordingly, it is concluded that a micro-enterprise employs less than 5 employees.

As indicated by the Jordanian Women’s Solidarity Is Global Institute – SIGI, based on the amount of money borrowed, women borrowers from microfinance companies are defined as: “Women who borrow from small private financing companies, financial amounts ranging between five hundred and four thousand dollars, with the aim of covering their economic or living needs or financing a small project that improves the family's income, or is motivated by the husband or the family.”¹⁹

Accordingly, we can define micro-enterprises as follows: **"Every enterprise that has fewer than 5 employees, and a capital that does not exceed \$4,000."**

5 The Legal Framework

Women’s economic and social rights have become fully recognised and has been receiving increasing interest by the international community. Article No. (14) of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) emphasised that it is the state’s role to overcome the economic challenges facing women, especially rural women, as it needs to provide ways to support them economically by supporting economic enterprises.²⁰ On the other hand, the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development considered the empowerment of women to be a focus and a prerequisite for breaking the cycle of poverty, as its Goal No. (8) stipulated the need for decent work and economic growth by promoting inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment, and decent work for all.²¹

According to Article No. (6) of the International Covenant on Economic and Social Rights, the right to work must be recognised, as the States Parties to this covenant have recognised the right of every person to have the opportunity to earn his/her living through work that he/she freely chooses or accepts. These states shall take all necessary measures to safeguard that right, provided that the measures taken include the provision of technical and vocational guidance and training programmes, and the adoption of policies and techniques that guarantee the achievement of

¹⁷ An official governmental body working to monitor, supervise and regulate the activities of financial companies that practice microfinance activities licensed in Jordan.

¹⁸ Directory of Small and Medium Productive Enterprises, Central Bank and Sanad, 2017.

https://www.cbj.gov.jo/EchoBusv3.0/SystemAssets/PDFs/AR/SME_Guide_Arabic_Final_27_4_2017.pdf

¹⁹ Indebted women in Jordan, a fact sheet, the Jordanian Women's Solidarity Institute.

<https://www.sigi-jordan.org/?p=3761>

²⁰ United Nations General Assembly, Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, adopted December 18, 1979.

²¹ United Nations General Assembly, United Nations Summit on Sustainable Development, 25 September 2015.

economic, social and cultural development, in addition to full and productive employment under conditions that guarantee the individual's basic political and economic freedoms.²²

At the local level, the Jordanian constitution guarantees, according to Article No. (23), the right to work for all citizens of the state. The constitution also established a set of legislations regulating work and workers and mentioned several principles for regulating work.²³

The Jordanian government became aware of the need for improving the national economy through optimal utilisation of human resources, including women, therefore it has striven to improve the economic conditions of Jordanian women, enhance their participation in the labour market, and empower them through micro and small enterprises, which is one of the steps implemented by the government.

In 1972, the Jordan Enterprise Development Corporation (JEDCO) was established as a government arm to support the private sector. The Corporation also offers a number of development programmes in the fields of manufacturing, services, and the agricultural industry, and provides technical and financial support to start-up MSMEs.²⁴

Microfinance companies appeared for the first time in Jordan in 1998 following the cooperation of the Jordanian Ministry of Planning and International Cooperation with "USAID" in launching the "Support and Development of the Business Environment in Jordan" programme with the aim of empowering individuals economically and removing them from poverty, and financing women with sums of money that would enable them to establish small income-generating enterprises.²⁵

In 2005, the Central Bank of Jordan issued the "Microfinance Companies Regulation No. (5) for the year 2015" in order to regulate and control the work of financing companies.²⁶

With the multiplicity of financing companies, the increase in the number of borrowers, and the emergence of the phenomenon of indebted women in Jordan, the Central Bank introduced the "Microfinance Companies Regulation No. (107) for the year 2021" to subject these²⁷ companies to the control and supervision of the Central Bank.²⁸ In the light of this regulation, the "Microfinance Companies Regulation No. (5) for the year 2015" is considered null when "Microfinance Companies Regulation No. (107) of 2021" entered into force on May 30, 2022.

²² Human Rights Library, University of Minnesota, International Covenant on Economic and Social Rights, 1966

²³ The Jordanian Constitution, Chapter Two, The Rights and Freedoms of Jordanians, Article 23.

²⁴ The official website of the Jordan Corporation for the Development of Economic Enterprises.

https://www.jedco.gov.jo/Ar/Pages/عن_المؤسسة

²⁵ Saqfalhait, Nahil. 2011, "Microfinance Regulation in Jordan: A Comparative Perspective with MENA Countries and Other Areas, Applied Econometrics and International Development, "Applied Econometrics and International Development", P.132–50.

²⁶ " Microfinance Companies Regulation No. 5 of 2015, IBID.

²⁷ You can view the "Microfinance Companies Regulation No. 107 of 2021", via the following link:

<https://www.cbj.gov.jo/EchoBusV3.0/SystemAssets/12a9b545-c36c-4d7f-b4fe-1c1e28719339.pdf>

²⁸ "The Central Bank subjects financing companies to its control and supervision," Jordan News Agency, May 31, 2021.

In view of the role of micro and small enterprises in integrating women, and taking into account the multiple roles that women play inside and outside the home, Jordanian law provided clear facilities for obtaining licenses for domestic professions within the “professional licenses” law, which is considered one of the laws within the boundaries of the Greater Amman Municipality (GAM) No. (11) for the year 2022, whereby the law provides for “allowing the practice of professions in domestic residences, while exempting them from half of the fees specified for licensing, and from the fees for the first three years from the date of obtaining the license... .²⁹” A guide to start working from home was also issued by GAM and a number of the partners as a guiding tool for citizens to benefit from the new legislative framework related to licensing home businesses³⁰, and as part of the “Supporting Local Businesses” enterprise.³¹

6 The reality of micro-enterprises in Ajloun governorate

In Ajloun, in light of the high rates of poverty and unemployment among women, many women have tried to find alternative ways that would generate steady financial income for them, so they started micro-enterprises as an outlet and as one of the solutions to improve their economic and social conditions. As one of the participants pointed out, saying: *"Of course, we know that in Ajloun, employment opportunities for young people or women in particular are very minimal, and there are no job opportunities, and small enterprises for women are very important because they help her to develop her life socially and economically."*

According to Issa Al-Awawdeh (Director of the Office of Development and Employment, Ajloun Governorate Branch), since 2019 until the period of preparation of the paper, 111 small and micro enterprises for women were funded, with a financing value estimated at 776,000 dinars. He also added that the percentage of enterprise defaults in Ajloun is low, and Ajloun has the highest loan repayment rate in all governorates.

Micro-enterprises in the Kufranja district clearly contribute to the possibility of providing an additional or basic source of income, and new job opportunities for women, especially those who head their families, as one of the women said: *"Women now spend on their families and produce, and their economic level as families improved."* Another woman indicated: *"I have two daughters, and I pay for their tuition expenses,"* while another woman said: *"I am a mother of orphans and I started my micro-enterprise which brought me income and contributed to my children's education as well"*.

In addition to the above, micro-enterprises contributed to the knowledge growth of women, through courses and trainings offered by women who have experience, knowledge and skills in

²⁹ The official website of the Jordanian Prime Ministry, the Official Gazette, <https://pm.gov.jo/Ar/Pages/NewsPaperDetails/5797>

³⁰ To view "Your Guide to Starting Your Home Business", via the following link: https://www.ammancity.gov.jo/site_doc/HBBSBook.pdf

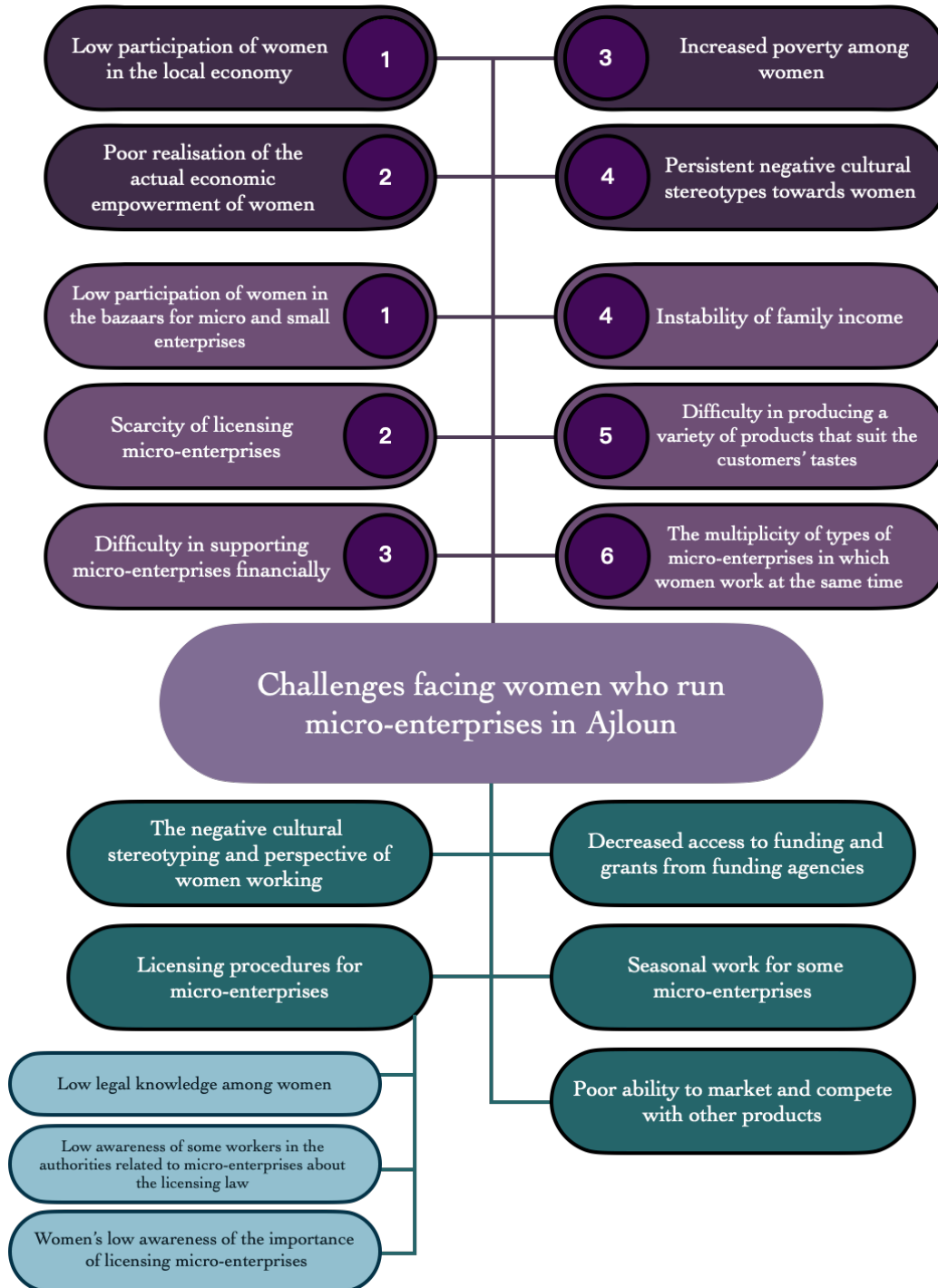
³¹ To view the "Supporting Local Business" project, visit the following link: <https://cipe-arabia.org/لمحة-عن-مشروع-مساندة-الأعمال-المحلية-ب/>

their enterprises and work to transfer them to other women from the local community. One woman spoke about that, saying: *"I gave a course on agriculture methods and I was a trainer. I trained 20 girls to manufacture food, pickles and jams, and I was previously trained to give courses."* This culminated in the multiplicity of success stories among women and the positive impact among them, as one of the participants added in the same context: *"women began to follow the example of other successful women, and the culture of society began to change, and it became necessary women to start her own enterprise"*.

This shows the positive role of micro-enterprises in improving and supporting women economically by providing steady sources of income that enable them to meet the requirements of daily life. Women are doing work they want to do, which makes their professions no less important than the formal jobs in which women work. This was confirmed by one of the participants, who said: *"I believed in the idea, I mean, I left my job to start my project/enterprise even though I was an employee, but I left my job in order to start my enterprise."* Another participant added: *"For me, these enterprises have become more important than jobs, as they support the economy and support the family."* In conclusion, another participant said: *"I left my job and started my enterprise. For me, my enterprise is better than 100 jobs."*

7 Discussing Challenges

7.1 Problem Tree³²



³² A methodology to identify the problem and its causes and effects. The trunk represents the main problem, the roots represent the causes of the basic problem, and the branches represent the effects resulting from the problem.

7.2 Challenges facing women working in micro-enterprises in Kufranja District

Among the most prominent challenges that women face in the Kufranja district, which constitute an obstacle to establishing, managing or continuing micro and small enterprises, are the following:

7.2.1 The negative cultural perspective of women's work

Despite the importance of micro-enterprises at the individual, family and community levels, and women's proof of their ability to produce and contribute to the family's income, the negative stereotype towards women in some areas is still entrenched, which limits their participation to work alongside men. One of the women referred to this, saying: *"still, there are women who cannot be reached because they live in closed environments and they are bidden. There are supportive bodies and there is support for women, but not for everyone. I mean, it is possible that we find ourselves supported here and there, but there are women who are not able to take the first step to work"*.

7.3 Licensing procedures for micro-enterprises

The licensing and registration of enterprises is tantamount to legal protection for the enterprises themselves and their owners. For example, during the Corona pandemic, licensed enterprises affected by the effects of the Corona pandemic received governmental support and facilities to correct their situation and mitigate the severity of the effects of the pandemic, in addition to increasing the opportunity for these enterprises to obtain financial support from international organisations.³³

Often, for various reasons, women avoid licensing their enterprises. The reality of the experiences of the participating women who were involved in the micro-enterprise business showed that the licensing procedures for the previous enterprises did not always fall into their interests. Enterprise licensing requires a long period of time, and it also entails several obligations such as providing a work site, and it also affects a number of other aspects in a negative way, as one participant indicated: *"I tried it, and when I saw that licensing requires many procedures, I said no, running my enterprise from my home is better."* Despite the legislative framework regulating economic work from home, the results showed a low awareness of women participating in the "professional licenses" law, with the exception of one woman who mentioned that when she went to the municipality for a license, the municipality employees had no knowledge of this law, which is an indication of the need to empower and raise awareness for workers in this sector.

One of the women stated that when she tried to license her enterprise, it became clear that her daughter was unable to obtain a scholarship based on the conditions for obtaining the scholarship, which stipulated that one of the parents should not have a commercial record as a condition for obtaining the scholarships, according to what she indicated, saying: *"Our enterprise must be licensed,*

<https://sswm.info/ar/taxonomy/term/2647/problem-tree-analysis>

³³ For more information about supporting projects during the Corona crisis, visit the following link:

https://jedco.gov.jo/AR/List_دعم_المشاريع_خلال_أزمة_كورونا

but there is a problem with our laws, for example, my daughter is studying engineering in Al-Hosn, and as soon as my enterprise is registered and I have commercial record, she will not be entitled to any scholarship from the university. I do not want to register my enterprise, even though it is two years old. This is a very important point, because once my enterprise is registered, the scholarship is dropped."

7.3.1 Opportunities for being financed by financing agencies

Participants mentioned challenges in terms of opportunities to obtain grants, represented by the unfair distribution of these opportunities to micro and small enterprises, according to what one of the participants indicated, saying: *"When external parties come, the grants go to certain people only"*. Participants also stressed the difficulty of obtaining grants for unlicensed enterprises, as one of the participants indicated: *"Even when applying for grants and loans, they ask you if you have a licensed enterprise."* This constitutes an obstacle for women to obtain grants for their enterprises, as another woman added, *"There are women who receive support from organisations, but they tell them that they have to obtain a license, then they cancel it... this happens a lot"*. These statements reveal that not licensing micro-enterprises classifies them under the informal or unorganised enterprises, and thus they face difficulty in obtaining support or grants for micro-enterprises.

7.3.2 Seasonal work of some small enterprises

The small and household enterprises that the majority of women in the Kufranja district tend to adopt are: cooking, sewing, embroidery, handicrafts and tourism, preparing jams and pickles. This type of work, in their nature or the nature of their production, depends on certain seasons, for example, one of the participants said: *"when I started my enterprise, I received a grant of 1,800 dinars. To be honest, my profits covered this amount within two months only. Later on, it became necessary to expand but the winter season is weaker than the summer."* Another participant added: *"Tourism takes place in the summer, so what can I do during the rest of the year? Therefore, I decided that I would have a year-round job, which means that during winter I teach students, and summer is dedicated to tourism. I also make many educational things for children; I try to work all year long so that I would have a financial return throughout the year"*.

7.3.3 The ability to market and compete with other products

The ability of micro and small enterprises products to compete in the market is not an easy issue, as this requires high skills in design, ability to innovate, and work to improve coming up with products of high value and quality at a reasonable cost, which would ensure that these products are able to compete with other enterprises. Currently, the idea of bazaars has become well-known as a marketing method for simple products that are mostly prepared by women. This requires taking into account all the details that attract the consumer, the most important of which is the consumer's confidence in the product. In this context, one of the participants stressed the importance of licensing to ensure getting the consumer's confidence and trust, saying: *"If you want to export or prepare for a bazaar, people usually buy from the licensed products because they are stronger and well controlled."*

8 Options and Alternatives

Based on the foregoing, the policy brief reached a number of recommendations to advance the legislative, financing and knowledge realities of micro-enterprises, and to mitigate the challenges faced by women in a manner designed to ensure the achievement of the development and empowerment goals and objectives of women's micro-enterprises.

First: Developing awareness and educational programmes about micro-enterprises and their role in improving the economic status of women, in cooperation between the JEDCO, the Development and Employment Fund, MoSD and local municipalities.

The goal: economic empowerment of women

Programmes:

- Develop a national programme to enhance marketing operations for micro-enterprises and effective competition methods at the local and foreign levels.
- An informational programme that sheds light on micro-enterprises and their importance, as well as highlighting the success stories of micro-enterprises.
- Develop a guide for women about the entities responsible for registering, starting, managing micro-enterprises.

Advantages and opportunities of the proposed recommendation:

- Improving the economic conditions of women and their families.
- Increasing the reach to a larger number of women and men in society and raising their awareness about micro-enterprises and their importance to women and the economy as a whole.
- These activities do not need large funds.

Challenges facing the implementation of the proposed recommendation:

- The implementation of the proposed recommendation depends on the extent/ possibility of coordination and cooperation between the relevant authorities.
- Implementation of these activities require long-term plans.

Second: Coordination among the lending and financing institutions for micro-enterprises and the Central Bank of Jordan, the JEDCO and MoSD.

Objective: Regulating approaches to MSMEs financing.

Programmes:

- Establishing a system to follow-up on the implementation of micro-enterprises at all stages of work, in order to ensure that women do not reach the stage of default.

- Determining the guarantees required from micro-enterprises, unifying the mechanism of follow-up and financial control of these enterprises before and after obtaining financing, loans or grants.

Advantages and opportunities of the proposed recommendation:

- Clarity of mechanisms for obtaining loans and grants.
- A database of institutions with the names of women who own micro-enterprises and are able to manage and support their enterprises.
- Clarity of the principles of lending and financing helps reduce the problem of default.
- Participation and cooperation between lending institutions contributes to uniting efforts towards continuously developing the lending basis in a manner that commensurate with the conditions of women.

Challenges facing the implementation of the proposed recommendation:

- The necessity of preparing a periodic follow-up and control system.
- Implementation needs human cadres and large funds.
- Difficulty in unifying the work approach of lending and financing entities.
- Preparing the database requires working on developing it periodically.
- Defining cooperation and coordination frameworks between all relevant authorities.

Third: Employing technology and various means of communication in the production and marketing of micro-enterprises in cooperation and coordination between the Development and Employment Fund, the Ministry of Trade and Industry, JEDCO and Municipalities, and the Ministry of Digital Economy and Entrepreneurship.

Objective: To produce high quality and competitive products.

Programmes:

- Conduct training courses for women aimed at introducing and training them in the use of relevant technological methods and tools in small and domestic enterprises.
- Conduct training courses for women aimed at empowering and training them in the use of social media to promote their products.
- Conduct training courses for women on how to prepare products on aesthetic basis while maintaining the quality of the product.
- Prepare a comprehensive platform for displaying all women's products in micro-enterprises, in a way that guarantees the preservation of property rights and patents.

Advantages and opportunities of the proposed recommendation:

- Building women's capabilities in modern technological methods.
- Expanding the promotional scope of displaying small enterprises' products.
- Producing high quality products with highly competitive specifications that suit different consumer tastes.
- The comprehensive platform increases the competitive strength among local products.

Challenges facing the implementation of the proposed recommendation:

- The large financial cost and the long period of time needed for implementation.
- The success of the recommendation depends on the extent to which women accept the idea of using modern technological methods in addition to using traditional methods.

Based on the above, more national, institutional and policy efforts must be made to raise women's awareness regarding the importance of licensing micro-enterprises. This effort will aim to overcome the negative aspects of licensing from the point of view of the participating women, as the license provides the following: 1) legal and social protection for the owner of the enterprise itself in terms of preserving ownership, 2) marketing the product, as the license enables women to create a trademark for their products, 3) benefiting from governmental and non-governmental support provided to small enterprises, 4) expanding the scope of marketing the product outside the governorate. This, in turn, will contribute to alleviating the challenges faced by women micro-entrepreneurs, and will help moving forward in improving their social and economic conditions.



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