



**Human Rights Watch Submission  
to the United Nations Committee on the Rights of the Child  
Review of Jordan  
93rd Session  
April 2023**

We write in advance of the 93rd session of the Committee on the Rights of the Child (“the Committee”) and its review of Jordan. This submission includes information on discrimination against children of Jordanian women, corporal punishment, barriers to education particularly for refugee children and children with disabilities, and the protection of education from attack.

**Discrimination Against Children of Jordanian Women (articles 2, 7, 8, 10, 24, 27, and 28)**

Children born to Jordanian mothers and non-Jordanian fathers struggle to access basic rights and services in Jordan.<sup>1</sup> Due to a law that denies Jordanian women the right to pass citizenship to their children on an equal basis with men, these children are treated as foreign nationals their whole lives, with no permanent right to live or work in the country, and with significant barriers to accessing their rights to education and healthcare, to name a few. This Committee, along with the United Nations Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women and the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, have all found Jordan’s nationality law to be discriminatory in nature.

In a 2018 report, Human Rights Watch examined 34 cases of non-citizen children of Jordanian women denied fundamental rights, and interviewed more than 50 Jordanian women, non-citizen children, government officials, and activists.<sup>2</sup> We found that Jordanian authorities restricted the rights of non-citizen children of Jordanian women to work, own property, travel from and return to Jordan, enroll in higher education, and access government health care and other services.

In 2014, Jordanian authorities appeared ready to recognize non-citizen children of Jordanian women as a specific class of individuals entitled to benefits that they otherwise would not have been entitled to as non-Jordanians. The cabinet issued a decision purporting to ease restrictions on their access to employment opportunities, public education, government health care, property ownership, investment, and acquisition of a driver’s license.<sup>3</sup> The cabinet decision also established a special identification card which would be required to access these six areas.

---

<sup>1</sup> “Jordan: Biased Law Leaves Non-Citizen Children Adrift,” Human Rights Watch news release, April 24, 2018, <https://www.hrw.org/news/2018/04/24/jordan-biased-law-leaves-non-citizen-children-adrift>.

<sup>2</sup> Human Rights Watch, “*I Just Want Him to Live Like Other Jordanians*”: *Treatment of Non-Citizen Children of Jordanian Mothers* (New York: Human Rights Watch, 2018), <https://www.hrw.org/report/2018/04/24/i-just-want-him-live-other-jordanians/treatment-non-citizen-children-jordanian#6075>.

<sup>3</sup> Jordan: Cabinet decision no. 6415 issued on November 9, 2014 concerning the easing of restrictions on children of Jordanian mothers married to non-Jordanians, on file with Human Rights Watch.

At the time, authorities said that all 355,923 children of Jordanian mothers and foreign fathers registered with the Civil Status and Passports Department would benefit from the decision.<sup>4</sup> But by February 2018, authorities had issued just over 72,000 special ID cards, fewer than 20 per cent of those allegedly eligible, and many were not able to access the “privileges” that authorities had supposedly granted them.<sup>5</sup> Human Rights Watch found that some people were not able to get some of the long list of documents required to apply for the ID cards or could not afford the cost of obtaining them. Others were refused ID cards because of a requirement at the time that their mothers must have legally resided in Jordan for at least five years before they could apply.

Even for those who did obtain ID cards, many reported no discernible improvement in their circumstances. Jordanian government agencies continued to subject non-citizen children of Jordanian women to the same laws and regulations that govern provision of services for foreign nationals, with the exception of public hospitals and public schools. Soon after authorities issued the cabinet decision, the Ministry of Health circulated its own regulations calling on public hospitals to treat uninsured non-citizen children of Jordanian mothers as they would uninsured Jordanians. Regarding education, the cabinet decision stated that schools must treat non-citizen children of Jordanian mothers on par with Jordanian children.

In both cases however, those who could not procure identification cards or meet the mother’s five-year residency requirement were not eligible to benefit from these provisions, and some non-citizen children reported paying higher fees at public hospitals despite presenting identification cards proving their status.

In a positive move, Jordan’s cabinet issued a decision on September 10, 2018, to not only eliminate the five-year continuous residency requirement for the mothers, but also made clear that the identification card would be considered a valid ID by government agencies, thereby removing a significant barrier to services for non-citizen children of Jordanian women.<sup>6</sup>

However, the move is not enough to ensure full equality and access to fundamental rights, and the cabinet decision remains an inadequate substitute for full citizenship rights.

*Human Rights Watch recommends that the Committee ask the government of Jordan:*

- Have there been any reforms or updates regarding identification card requirements for non-citizen children of Jordanian women since September 2018?
- How many special identification cards have been issued to non-citizen children of Jordanian women as of March 2023?
- Has the September 10, 2018 cabinet decision been fully implemented across all government agencies?

---

<sup>4</sup> Mohammad Al-Fadilat, “Civil rights granted to children of Jordanians and foreigners,” *Alaraby*, November 9, 2014, <https://www.alaraby.co.uk/english/news/6619a5f2-5e21-49d4-8052-e3580c8bb15c> (accessed February 28, 2018).

<sup>5</sup> Human Rights Watch, “I Just Want Him to Live Like Other Jordanians.” See also “الإقامة” لأبناء الأردنيين شرط “ترحيب بإلغاء شرط” 2018, *Alghad*, <https://alghad.com/%D8%AA%D8%B1%D8%AD%D9%8A%D8%A8-%D8%A8%D8%A5%D9%84%D8%BA%D8%A7%D8%A1-%D8%B4%D8%B1%D8%B7-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%A5%D9%82%D8%A7%D9%85%D8%A9-%D9%84%D8%A3%D8%A8%D9%86%D8%A7%D8%A1-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%A7%D8%B1%D8%AF/> (accessed April 6, 2023).

<sup>6</sup> “Jordan: Small Step for Non-Citizen Children,” Human Rights Watch news release, October 7, 2018, <https://www.hrw.org/news/2018/10/07/jordan-small-step-non-citizen-children>.

*Human Rights Watch encourages the Committee to call on the government of Jordan to:*

- Remove all barriers to services and ensure non-citizen children of Jordanian mothers have full access to fundamental rights by amending the nationality law to allow Jordanian women to pass on citizenship to their spouses and children on par with Jordanian men, and in accordance with children's right to be treated without discrimination.
- In the meantime, provide all non-citizen children of Jordanian mothers without exception a government-issued identification card that identifies them as such and allows them to access basic services such as healthcare and education in line with children of Jordanian fathers, and across all relevant government agencies.

### **Barriers to Education for Refugee Children and Children with Disabilities (articles 2, 22, 23 and 28)**

Since the armed conflict in Syria began in 2011, Jordan has provided education to hundreds of thousands of Syrian children residing as refugees. However, many refugee children in Jordan have faced obstacles to accessing formal education.<sup>7</sup> In 2020, Human Rights Watch found that these obstacles were most acute for children ages 12 and older and included poverty-driven child labor and child marriage, lack of affordable school transportation, government policies that limited access to education, and the lack of inclusive education that kept children with disabilities out of school.<sup>8</sup>

Our 2020 reporting was based on interviews with Syrian refugee families and children (about 45 secondary-school age children, ages 12 to 17), staff at humanitarian agencies and nongovernmental organizations, and officials of the Jordanian government and donor governments. Human Rights Watch also interviewed four teachers at schools in refugee camps and in host communities who taught secondary school classes or secondary-school-age refugee children.

Jordan has taken significant steps, with support from foreign donors and humanitarian organizations, to fulfill its pledge to ensure all Syrian refugee children can go to school, including allowing free public-school enrollment for Syrian children, opening second shifts<sup>9</sup> to create more classroom spaces at existing schools, hiring new teachers, and opening new schools in refugee camps.<sup>10</sup> But the majority of Syrian refugee children in Jordan face increasingly difficult obstacles to education the further they progress in school, and as of 2020 education planning had overlooked the needs of this vulnerable age-group.<sup>11</sup> A 2017-2018 survey of 18,000 Syrian children living inside and outside the refugee camps in Jordan found that 99 percent of children between the ages of 6 and 11 were enrolled, while UN figures noted a gross enrollment rate of around 25 percent for upper-secondary school, including Syrian youth

---

<sup>7</sup> As of February 2023, there were 342,935 registered Syrian refugee children in Jordan. The UN Refugee Agency (UNHCR) Operational Data Portal, "Jordan Situation Gender & Age Map- 28 February 2023," March 2, 2023, <https://data.unhcr.org/en/documents/details/99267> (accessed March 16, 2023).

<sup>8</sup> Human Rights Watch, *"I Want to Continue to Study": Barriers to Secondary Education for Syrian Refugee Children in Jordan* (New York: Human Rights Watch, 2020), [https://www.hrw.org/sites/default/files/media\\_2020/06/jordan0620\\_web.pdf](https://www.hrw.org/sites/default/files/media_2020/06/jordan0620_web.pdf).

<sup>9</sup> The two-shift system had existed in some schools in Jordan as a solution to overcrowded classes for many years and was being phased out before the Syria conflict, but expanded following the outbreak of the conflict. Amelia Barry, "How Jordan is educating their new Syrian population without building new schools," *SBS*, January 26, 2018, <https://www.sbs.com.au/topics/voices/culture/article/2017/12/21/how-jordan-educating-their-new-syrian-population-without-building-new-schools> (accessed March 15, 2020).

<sup>10</sup> Delprato, M. Morrice, L. and Al-Nahi, S., *A Summary of Key Patterns in the Jordanian Education System by School Type, Gender and Region*, *Centre for International Education and Development*, University of Sussex, 2019.

<sup>11</sup> While foreign donors had given millions to education in Jordan under UN-coordinated humanitarian response plans for the Syria crisis, by 2020 the plans did not set enrollment targets or other goals for refugee children's secondary education.

who were older than the regular secondary-school-age range.<sup>12</sup> The net secondary-school enrollment rate was lower: just 15 percent of Syrian 16-year-olds and 21 percent of Syrian 17-year-olds were in Jordanian secondary school, according to the survey.<sup>13</sup>

Even before the Covid-19 pandemic, nearly 80 percent of Syrian refugees lived in poverty.<sup>14</sup> The most common coping mechanisms were child labor to provide additional income and child marriage to decrease the number of dependents needing support.<sup>15</sup> These practices had negative ramifications for education and primarily affected children beginning from around class 7.

For most children forced to drop out, there was often no way back to formal education; non-formal and informal education programs were reaching only a small fraction of secondary-school-age Syrian children. For children who were out of school, a certified program offered a pathway back to formal education for children ages 13 and older and allowed them to study toward a class 10 certificate. But in 2019, only 3,200 Syrian children had enrolled in this program,<sup>16</sup> while more than 20,000 Syrian refugee children ages 16-18 in Jordan were out of school.<sup>17</sup>

The prohibitive cost of transportation was a significant factor for dropping out of school across all age groups of Syrian children in Jordan,<sup>18</sup> but especially for older children. Because there are fewer secondary than primary schools, children are less likely to be able to walk to their secondary school as compared to their primary school.

Several Jordanian administrative restrictions have prevented Syrian and other refugee children from enrolling in school. Since 2016, education authorities have periodically waived the requirement that Syrian children must present a “service card” issued by the Interior Ministry in order to enroll in school but then re-imposed this requirement. Some Syrian refugees face significant barriers accessing this card unless they leave their communities to return to closed camps. Many Syrian families move in search of work, but the cards are valid only in the district where they were issued. Separately, the education

---

<sup>12</sup> Åge A. Tiltnes, Huafeng Zhang, and Jon Pedersen, *The Living conditions of Syrian refugees in Jordan: Results from the 2017-2018 survey of Syrian refugees inside and outside camps*, Fafo and Jordanian Ministry of Planning and International Cooperation, p. 80, <https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/67914.pdf> (accessed April 28, 2020). In the last quarter of 2019, the Gross Enrollment Rate was about 25 percent; the net enrollment rate is not specified. “Education Quarterly Dashboard, Q4 2019 (Oct - Dec 2019),” Inter-Sector Working Group Jordan, p. 2, <https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/73977.pdf> (accessed April 28, 2020). In 2017-2018, education ministry data showed 24 percent of Syrian refugee students were enrolled in classes 11-12. *We Made A Promise: Ensuring Learning Pathways and Protection for Children and Youth*, No Lost Generation, April 2018, p. 29, <https://reliefweb.int/report/syrian-arab-republic/we-made-promise-ensuring-learning-pathways-and-protection-syrian> (accessed March 27, 2023). The Ministry of Education’s Open EMIS data portal reports that 20.36 percent of Syrian children were enrolled in secondary school, apparently in 2016-2017, <https://jo-moe.openemis.org/data/emergencyedu/index.html> (accessed April 28, 2020).

<sup>13</sup> Åge A. Tiltnes, Huafeng Zhang, and Jon Pedersen, *The Living conditions of Syrian refugees in Jordan*, Fafo and Jordanian Ministry of Planning and International Cooperation, p. 80.

<sup>14</sup> Reva Dhingra, “Refugees at Risk in Jordan’s Response to COVID-19,” *MERIP*, April 8, 2020, <https://reliefweb.int/report/jordan/refugees-risk-jordan-s-response-covid-19> (accessed March 16, 2023).

<sup>15</sup> Human Rights Watch, “*I Want to Continue to Study.*”

<sup>16</sup> See Human Rights Watch, “*I Want to Continue to Study.*”; and Ministry of Planning and International Cooperation, *Jordan Response Plan for the Syria Crisis, 2020-2022*, p. 39, <https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/77262.pdf> (accessed March 27, 2023).

<sup>17</sup> “Education Quarterly Dashboard, Q4 2019 (Oct - Dec 2019),” Inter-Sector Working Group Jordan, p. 2, <https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/73977.pdf> (accessed April 28, 2020).

<sup>18</sup> In a 2016 report, long distances to school was also a main reason children gave for dropping out of formal education. See Human Rights Watch, “*We’re Afraid for Their Future.*”

*Barriers to Education for Syrian Refugee Children in Jordan* (New York: Human Rights Watch, 2016), [https://www.hrw.org/report/2016/08/16/were-afraid-their-future/barriers-education-syrian-refugee-children-jordan#\\_ftn146](https://www.hrw.org/report/2016/08/16/were-afraid-their-future/barriers-education-syrian-refugee-children-jordan#_ftn146); and Wannas Carlier, *The Widening Educational Gap for Syrian Refugee Children*, KidsRights Report 2018, p. 14.

ministry has created some workarounds to another rule that prohibits children from enrolling in education if they have been out of school for three or more years, but the “three-year rule” remains a barrier to education and should be abrogated. Non-Syrian refugees do not have access to the education infrastructure set up for Syrians and face significant challenges obtaining legal documentation in the country and accessing formal education.<sup>19</sup>

Human Rights Watch also found that children attending second shift schools in host communities often received poor-quality education. Nearly 70 percent of Syrian children attended double shift schools in 2016/2017, and they usually attended the second (afternoon) shift of these schools. Second shift schools offered fewer hours of instruction than regular public schools, often cut classes like physical education and art, and according to Jordanian teachers in double shift schools, sometimes closed resources that were available during first shift classes, including libraries, laboratories for science class, and resource rooms.<sup>20</sup> Some Jordanian teachers working in afternoon shifts said that inadequate resources led to a lower quality of education as crucial support services like school counselors were often not made available for the afternoon shift despite working the morning shift in the same school.<sup>21</sup>

### *Children with Disabilities*

Data on children with disabilities in Jordan is limited, but as of 2020 only a small percentage of the total population of children with disabilities was enrolled in school.<sup>22</sup> Both Syrian and Jordanian children with disabilities have faced obstacles in accessing formal education due to the lack of an inclusive approach and of reasonable accommodations in schools.<sup>23</sup> A lack of inclusive basic infrastructure in Jordan has created widespread issues of accessibility for children with disabilities according to United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF).<sup>24</sup>

Lack of access to affordable and accessible school transportation is especially problematic for children with disabilities. Caregivers of Syrian refugee children with disabilities in Jordan cited the distance from school as one of their top concerns, according to a 2018 survey asking about barriers that could prevent children from continuing to go to school.<sup>25</sup>

Jordan was the first Arab country to ratify the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and has passed a disability rights law that is broadly protective on paper,<sup>26</sup> but its 10-year strategy to make education more inclusive seeks to enroll only 10 percent of the total number of school-age

---

<sup>19</sup> See Walk the Talk Policy Paper, Jordan INGO Forum (JIF) Publication, January 10, 2023, <http://jordaningoforum.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/01/Walk-the-Talk-beyond-the-compact-May-2022.pdf> (accessed April 11, 2023).

<sup>20</sup> Human Rights Watch, “*I Want to Continue to Study*,” p. 38.

<sup>21</sup> Hamad, Jones, Samuels, et al., “A promise of tomorrow: The effects of UNHCR and UNICEF cash assistance on Syrian refugees in Jordan,” *Overseas Development Institute*, November 2017, <https://cdn.odi.org/media/documents/11877.pdf> (accessed March 27, 2023), p. 81.

<sup>22</sup> The Education of Syrian Refugees in Jordan: Issues of Access & Quality – A Review of Policies and Initiatives (2012-2018), Feb. 2019, on file with Human Rights Watch, p. 55.

<sup>23</sup> Accommodations can include basic physical accessibility in buildings; adequately trained teachers; and individualized approaches to children’s education, including modifications and adjustments as necessary. Inclusive education focuses on removing the barriers within the education system that exclude children and cause them to have negative experiences within school, and requires teachers and classrooms to adapt rather than for the child to change.

<sup>24</sup> Agulhas Applied Knowledge, *Independent Monitor’s Assessment Report: Jordan Compact and Brussels Meetings*, September 2019, <https://agulhas.co.uk/our-work/monitoring-and-assessment-framework-for-the-jordan-compact-second-report/>, p. 18.

<sup>25</sup> Humanity & Inclusion and iMMAP, *Removing Barriers – The Path Toward Inclusive Access: Disability Assessment among Syrian Refugees in Jordan and Lebanon*, *Jordan Report*, July 2018, <https://data2.unhcr.org/en/documents/download/67818>, p. 63.

<sup>26</sup> Law No. 20 for the Year 2017: Law on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act, <https://data2.unhcr.org/en/documents/download/66679> (accessed March 27, 2023).

children with disabilities by 2031. A December 2022 report by the UN special rapporteur on the rights of persons with disabilities following a country visit to Jordan expressed “concerns with the speed at which progress is being made” on the 10-year strategy and called on the education ministry to provide necessary financial resources to advance the strategy.<sup>27</sup>

Syrian children with disabilities are at severe risk of being excluded from secondary education, but insufficient data has been collected about this at-risk group.

#### *Access to education during the Covid-19 pandemic*

In 2020, Jordan responded to the Covid-19 pandemic by closing schools on March 15, and provided students with distance learning for classes 1 to 12 online and on two television stations.<sup>28</sup> Jordanian schools were fully closed for 44 weeks.<sup>29</sup> The transition to distance learning put children from lower-income families at risk of being deprived of education: 16 percent of Jordan’s students could not afford home internet; among low-income households, fewer than 30 percent of students had a computer for schoolwork, and only 50 percent had internet access. Some 43 percent of 15-year-old students’ schools had no online learning platforms, principals said.<sup>30</sup>

In a 2021 report, we found that refugee children faced several obstacles to accessing online education in Jordan.<sup>31</sup> One example of a bureaucratic barrier is that the website used for distance learning lessons and exams required a national identity number for citizens or a “personal identity number” for foreigners provided by Jordanian authorities to register, which some refugee children we interviewed said they did not have.<sup>32</sup> Some refugee children also could not afford internet access or had to share devices with family members, thereby constraining the amount of time that a child could spend with the device for learning.

#### *Human Rights Watch recommends that the Committee ask the government of Jordan:*

- How have primary- and secondary-level enrollment and retention rates, including for Syrian refugee children and children with disabilities (both Jordanian and non-Jordanian) progressed since 2018?
- How does the government plan to mitigate the learning inequities that resulted from disparate access to devices and the internet between children from refugee, low-income, and higher-income households during the Covid-19 pandemic?

#### *Human Rights Watch encourages the Committee to call on the government of Jordan to:*

---

<sup>27</sup> Special rapporteur on the rights of persons with disabilities, A/HRC/52/32/Add.2: Visit to Jordan - Report of the Special Rapporteur on the rights of persons with disabilities, December 28, 2022, <https://www.ohchr.org/en/documents/country-reports/ahrc5232add2-visit-jordan-report-special-rapporteur-rights-persons> (accessed April 11, 2023).

<sup>28</sup> Victoria Silva, “Learning under lockdown: How Jordan’s students are adopting to the coronavirus pandemic,” New Arab, April 16, 2020, <https://english.alaraby.co.uk/english/indepth/2020/4/16/learning-under-lockdown-jordans-students-adapt-to-coronavirus-pandemic>.

<sup>29</sup> UNESCO, Covid-19 Education Response, “Country Dashboard: Jordan,” March 2022, <https://covid19.uis.unesco.org/global-monitoring-school-closures-covid19/country-dashboard/> (accessed March 27, 2023)

<sup>30</sup> “Covid-19 and digital learning preparedness in Jordan,” World Bank blog post, May 21, 2020, <https://blogs.worldbank.org/arabvoices/covid-19-and-digital-learning-preparedness-jordan> (accessed June 8, 2020).

<sup>31</sup> Human Rights Watch, “Years Don’t Wait for Them”: *Increased Inequalities in Children’s Right to Education Due to the Covid-19 Pandemic* (New York: Human Rights Watch, May 2021), [https://www.hrw.org/report/2021/05/17/years-dont-wait-them/increased-inequalities-childrens-right-education-due-covid#\\_ftn90](https://www.hrw.org/report/2021/05/17/years-dont-wait-them/increased-inequalities-childrens-right-education-due-covid#_ftn90).

<sup>32</sup> Human Rights Watch interview with Aya M., 16, and Hamada M., 15, Amman, Jordan, June 10, 2020.

- Cancel the requirement that Syrian refugee children must present an interior-ministry-issued “service card” for school enrollment. Facilitate access to education for all non-Syrian refugee children regardless of legal residency status.
- Cancel the rule that bans children who have been out of compulsory education for three or more years from re-enrolling as an unjustified barrier to education.
- Provide all school teachers, including in second-shift schools, with quality, in-service training, including on inclusive education.
- Ensure that upper-secondary education is available and accessible to all free of charge, and that children remain in and complete lower-secondary education (classes 7 to 10) which is compulsory in Jordan.
- Regularly publish disaggregated data on secondary-school enrollment and attendance by refugee students, including data on students with disabilities.
- Seek to increase the number and reach of humanitarian education projects that target secondary-age children who are out-of-school or at risk of dropping out; and ensure that the needs of this at-risk demographic are weighted appropriately in project approvals.
- Accelerate and expand efforts to enroll more Jordanian and refugee children with disabilities, and set specific goals and benchmarks for inclusive education at the secondary level.
- Adequately fund and support the Ten-year Strategy for Inclusive Education
- Ensure reasonable accommodations for children with disabilities, and that schools are physically accessible including at building entrances, classrooms, and toilets.
- Continue to expand certified non-formal education programs to ensure that children have access to remedial education programs and continue to secondary education.
- Develop or expand device affordability and availability initiatives for schools and families, with support targeted at the most vulnerable children, and develop and expand initiatives to secure and equitably distribute devices for learning to schools.

### **Corporal Punishment (articles 6, 19, 24, 28, and 37)**

The Jordanian Education Ministry has banned violent discipline at school and conducted outreach campaigns on positive discipline.<sup>33</sup> The government launched a three-year national plan of action to further reduce violence against children in March 2018.<sup>34</sup> In 2020, the government endorsed the global “Safe to Learn” framework to end violence in and around schools, which includes goals of outlawing and enforcing the prohibition of corporal punishment in schools, while educating schools and communities about positive discipline.<sup>35</sup> However, corporal punishment is still not fully prohibited in all settings.

The Jordanian Civil Service Law prohibits “any form of corporal punishment against any children,” including in schools, and provides for warnings, the deduction of a weeks’ worth of pay from the monthly salary, denial of pay rises for up to three years, and termination.<sup>36</sup> However, other laws are inconsistent on the issue.

---

<sup>33</sup> In 2016, a survey found 18 percent of students reported verbal violence in schools, while 11 percent reported corporal punishment. Ana V. Ibáñez Prieto, “Teachers’ verbal, physical violence still prevalent in schools — SIGI,” *Jordan Times*, January 6, 2018, <http://www.jordantimes.com/news/local/teachers%E2%80%99-verbal-physical-violence-still-prevalent-schools-%E2%80%94-sigi>.

<sup>34</sup> Al Bawaba, “Jordan Implements 3-Year Plan to Reduce Violence Against Children,” March 30, 2018, <https://www.albawaba.com/editorchoice/jordan-implements-3-year-plan-reduce-violence-against-children-1110240>.

<sup>35</sup> UNICEF, “UNICEF welcomes Jordan’s endorsement of Safe To Learn Call to Action,” July 19, 2020, <https://reliefweb.int/report/jordan/unicef-welcomes-jordan-s-endorsement-safe-learn-call-action>.

<sup>36</sup> Civil Service Law, Art. 68(f), Art. 142(b).

The Education Law of 1994 does not address violent discipline at schools.<sup>37</sup> In the home, Article 62 of the Penal Code stipulates that parents can punish their children for disciplinary purposes in accordance with “general norms”; the same language is included in the Juveniles Act of 2014.<sup>38</sup> In September 2022, the Jordanian parliament passed the Child Rights Act, which prohibits “all forms of violence at school, including physical or disrespectful punishment and all forms of bullying.”<sup>39</sup> But it does not prohibit corporal punishment in all settings, including in the home.<sup>40</sup>

*We encourage the Committee to:*

- Ask the government of Jordan how recent cases of corporal punishment have been monitored and reported, and to provide recent data on the prevalence of violent discipline in schools.
- Call on the government of Jordan to explicitly prohibit all forms of violent discipline in all settings, including in the home.

### **Protection of Education from Attack (article 28)**

As of December 2022, Jordan was contributing 308 troops to the UN Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali.<sup>41</sup> These troops are required to comply with the UN Department of Peacekeeping Operations’ UN Infantry Battalion Manual (2012), which includes the provision that “schools shall not be used by the military in their operations.”<sup>42</sup> In May 2015, Jordan endorsed the Safe Schools Declaration,<sup>43</sup> an inter-governmental political commitment that provides countries the opportunity to express political support for the protection of students, teachers, and schools during times of armed conflict; the importance of the continuation of education during armed conflict; and the implementation of the *Guidelines for Protecting Schools and Universities from Military Use during Armed Conflict*.<sup>44</sup>

*Human Rights Watch recommends that the Committee ask the government of Jordan:*

- Are protections for schools from military use included in any policies, rules, or trainings for Jordan’s armed forces?

---

<sup>37</sup> Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, Education Law No. 3 1994.

<sup>38</sup> Article 62 of the Criminal Code 1960 originally permitted “disciplinary beating of children by their parents in a manner allowed by public customs.” The law, as amended, states, “types of discipline inflicted by parents on their children in a way that does not cause harm or damage to children within what is permitted by general custom.” United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF), *Changing Norms and Behaviors to End Physical Violence Against Children in Jordan, 2019-2021*, March 2018, p. 24, <http://ccp-pakistan.org.pk/wp-content/uploads/2018/08/UNICEF-Jordan-Changing-Norms-and-Behaviours-Strategy.pdf>. See also Juveniles Act of 2014, art. 33(h).

<sup>39</sup> Act No. (17) of (2022), Child Rights Act, art. 17.

<sup>40</sup> Article 20 of the Child Rights Act states: “Subject to the parents’ or trustees’ rights and in accordance with the legislation in force, every child is entitled to be protected from all forms of violence, abuse, neglect, exploitation, physical, psychological or sexual abuse, or detention.” The draft law originally did not include the phrase “subject to the parents’ or trustees’ rights and in accordance with the legislation in force.” See Annex No. 2 to the agenda of the fifth meeting, Special session of the first regular session of the Nineteenth House of Representatives, [https://representatives.jo/EBV4.0/Root\\_Storage/AR/EB\\_Agenda/%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%AC%D9%84%D8%B3%D8%A9\\_%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%AE%D8%A7%D9%85%D8%B3%D8%A9\\_-\\_D9%85%D9%84%D8%AD%D9%82\\_%D8%B1%D9%82%D9%85\\_2.pdf](https://representatives.jo/EBV4.0/Root_Storage/AR/EB_Agenda/%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%AC%D9%84%D8%B3%D8%A9_%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%AE%D8%A7%D9%85%D8%B3%D8%A9_-_D9%85%D9%84%D8%AD%D9%82_%D8%B1%D9%82%D9%85_2.pdf) (accessed March 16, 2023).

<sup>41</sup> United Nations Peacekeeping, “Troop and Police Contributors,” <https://peacekeeping.un.org/en/troop-and-police-contributors> (accessed March 28, 2023).

<sup>42</sup> United Nations Infantry Battalion Manual, 2012, section 2.13.

<sup>43</sup> Safe Schools Declaration, May 28, 2015, [https://www.regjeringen.no/globalassets/departementene/ud/vedlegg/utvikling/safe\\_schools\\_declaration.pdf](https://www.regjeringen.no/globalassets/departementene/ud/vedlegg/utvikling/safe_schools_declaration.pdf) (accessed January 18, 2023).

<sup>44</sup> Guidelines for Protecting Schools and Universities from Military Use during Armed Conflict, March 18, 2014, [http://protectingeducation.org/sites/default/files/documents/guidelines\\_en.pdf](http://protectingeducation.org/sites/default/files/documents/guidelines_en.pdf) (accessed January 18, 2023).



*Human Rights Watch encourages the Committee to:*

- Congratulate Jordan for endorsing the Safe Schools Declaration.
- Recommend that the government incorporate the declaration's commitments in domestic policy, military operational frameworks, legislation, and pre-deployment trainings, and encourage other regional states to endorse the declaration.