

The Right to Employment for People with Disabilities

A Study on Jordan

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*For you Narmin,
for every day that you have been,
and for every day that you forever will be.*

Thank you

Mom and Dad, for your endless support, faith in me, and your genuine care. For making the pursuit of my dreams an incredible journey and for being the best parents one could have.

Sisters, for your jokes, stories, and easiness that always got me back on track. Without you none of this would have been possible. Shukran.

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List of Abbreviations

CRPD	International Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities
ICCPR	International Convention on the Civil and Political Rights
ICESCR	International Convention on the Economic, Social and Cultural Rights
UN	The United Nations
2007 Law	Law on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities/2007- Jordan
HCD	The Higher Council for the Affairs of Persons with Disabilities
VTC	Vocational Training Corporation
JEA	Jordanian Engineer Association
DoS	Department of Statistics
LTRC	Land Transport Regulatory Commission
JICA	Japan International Cooperation Agency – Amman Office
MoL	Ministry of Labor
MoSD	Ministry of Social Development
MDGs	Millennium Development Goals
NCHR	National Center for Human Rights – Amman, Jordan
MGA	Municipality of Greater Amman
NEC	National Employment Center
NEES	National Electronic Employment System

1 Introduction

1.1 Motive of study

All human rights are universal, indivisible, interdependent and interrelated¹. Until the development of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) in 2006, little legal specificity was reserved for people with disabilities. Disability only recently found itself on the list of grounds which discriminating against is penalized. Reasons for such neglect can be traced in concepts as that of social contract. It was initially formed with the belief that social cooperation is based on mutual economic advantage; which people with disabilities were not part of. Only recently people with disabilities were granted official rights; that is after the society's basic institutions have already been established. People with disabilities however have the same rights as everyone else in a society, thus they have the right to be taken into account from the early beginnings of any social cooperation². The light at the end of the tunnel has been detected, and as developments across the globe take place, the spotlight in this study is on Jordan.

Jordan is a strategically situated country within the Middle East. Throughout history it maintained positive relations with neighboring countries as well the West. It has always strived to be part of international developments and welcomed them eagerly. Since King Abdullah II ascended the throne in 1999, Jordan's economy advanced, whether by becoming a state of interest for foreign investments, or through the improved partnerships between private and public sectors. This newly introduced image has been desperately protected. However, with the recent events of revolting citizens and toppled regimes in the Arab region, Jordanians have also started demanding various changes and more human rights, such as; freedom of expression, the right to privacy (from secret services intervention), ending unlawful detentions, putting an end to corruption and equality in employment. Employment however for people with disabilities was never part of the demands, and very

¹ Vienna Declaration, 1993, Para. 5, A/CONF.157/23

² Nussbaum, 2011, p. 150

rarely do people with disabilities in Jordan have a chance to be part of any change, since laws protecting them are not implemented, and official entities developed to assist them, lack the experience, and/or the will to do so.

I have chosen to focus this study on the right to employment as a specific feature of economic empowerment for people with physical disabilities in Jordan. Mainly because of my inspirational sister (23) who has Cerebral Palsy and to whom I owe all my success to. Having spent all my life with my family fighting small-scale battles, this study is an opportunity to ‘take the bull by the horns’. Being surrounded by young adults with disabilities, and living their experiences vicariously, has been the motivational push I never had to search hard for. The reasons for choosing this topic to research could be compressed in two; people with disabilities need more advocates to promote their rights, ones that have a full insight on international human rights law. Secondly, the scarcity of research on this specific issue which has been leading, so far, to legislation and activities that have shown to be of very little success.

In compliance with the CRPD, as mentioned in the Preamble and numerous articles, Jordan has a general obligation to ensure and promote the full realization of all human rights and fundamental freedoms for all people with disabilities without any kind of discrimination based on their disability³. Internationally, Jordan has accepted the terms and conditions of ratifying the convention, while nationally it has developed laws which should allow people with disabilities to have easy access to employment. However, the reflection of this in practice is quite different, for it lacks logic and a coherent pattern. Thus my belief of the importance of this study, functioning as a valid and relevant contribution to the governmental initiatives developed to enhance fulfilling the rights of people with disabilities. As well as a bridge on which the dialogue could find means to move forward in achieving the rights to equal treatment and participation.

³ CRPD, Art. 4(1)

1.2 Research Question

The research question below that has driven me to choose this topic aims at describing the current phenomenon of the disability and employment relationship in Jordan, and the extent to which disability rights are respected and protected⁴.

- Why do people with disabilities in Jordan find it difficult to obtain employment?

The initial hypothesis I began the research under was that *people with disabilities in Jordan find it hard to search for jobs and get employed due to lack of knowledge about rights, in addition to a weakly implemented legal system*. Emphasis is however focused on the latter assumption.

1.3 Methodology

The methodology is made up of two parts. The first being a *theoretical approach* in which a presentation is offered of international and national laws and regulations that depict the rights of people with disabilities to employment. On the international sphere, the Convention on the Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), and the Convention on the Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights (ICESCR) and their general comments are analyzed. The CRPD and the relevant State Report which Jordan submitted in 2012 are also discussed. Moreover, to have a more comprehensive take on the matter, the United Nations (UN) General Assembly Resolutions have also been examined when relevant. Regarding the national field, the Constitution of Jordan, the Labor Law, the Law on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (2007 Law) and the National Strategy (2010-2015) have been analyzed. The purpose being to highlight the compatibility of the international and national areas regarding Jordan's positioning on fulfilling the right to employment for people with disabilities.

⁴ Nygaard, 2009, p.82

Secondly, the *qualitative approach*, which is based on empirical findings that were collected during a three week research in Amman, Jordan in February 2012. The information was collected by conducting 15 interviews. I tried to cover a spectrum of representatives from numerous fields. Such as governmental entities: the Higher Council for the Affairs of Persons with Disabilities (HCD), Vocational Training Corporation (VTC), Jordanian Engineer Association (JEA), Department of Statistics (DoS), and Land Transport Regulatory Commission (LTRC); four young ladies with physical disabilities; a lawyer from Amman who specializes in the rights of people with disabilities; Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA); and two leading women of private initiatives, Sana Group and Al Masar. I have also attended meetings at the Ministry of Public Works and Housing, JICA office and the Royal Culture Centre which hosted a job fair. After the first interview, the set of prepared questions was altered to become more open-ended, which allowed access to more information. Having explained the reason for the interview and the topic of this dissertation, interviewees were keen on answering most questions. However, some seemed hesitant, and thus asked to remain anonymous, fearing that their current positions might be threatened after revealing critical details.

In terms of the available literature I faced difficulties finding scholarly work in the field of the right to employment for people with physical disabilities in Jordan. There is a clear scarcity in the academic field regarding this topic. After visiting the Jordanian University Library, some unpublished material with a slight reference to the topic of this thesis was found, however, only parts were allowed to be used, and the lack of a holistic view made the material barren. Some sources used were in Arabic, and for this thesis, I have translated them into English.

1.4 Terminology: People with Disabilities

Disability is an evolving concept, and although the CRPD does not provide a definition for neither disability nor for people with disabilities⁵, Art.1 of the Convention proclaims that people with disabilities include “...those who have long-term physical, mental, intellectual or sensory impairments which in interaction with various barriers may hinder their full and effective participation in society on an equal basis with others”⁶. For the purpose of this thesis, and due to limited research time and word limitations, the focus in this study is mainly on physical disabilities.

1.5 Thesis Outlook

This thesis focuses on describing the present state of people with disabilities in Jordan and the obstacles that need to be removed in order for them to practice their right to employment; a right which the state has an obligation to fulfill.

It is divided into three main parts; the first is a study of available relevant laws and regulations in international human rights law, specifically the UN. The second presents briefly pertinent domestic laws, regulations and strategies found and developed in Jordan, which aim at protecting the right to employment for people with disabilities. The third part, is the main analysis of the interviews intertwined with factors, which after the intensive research, have been identified as being the reasons for the present hindering of the rights of people with disabilities in Jordan. The final part of the thesis is a conclusive summary, followed by an annex detailing information about the interviewed individuals who have given consent to be mentioned.

⁵ Rehman,2010,p.611

⁶ CRPD,Art.1

2 Guiding Concepts on Right to Employment for People with Disabilities

2.1 Capabilities Approach

Nussbaum's Capabilities Approach will be assumed as a framework for this thesis. The mutual aspect of this approach and the human rights based approach is that both share the belief that all people, by virtue of their humanity, have a few core entitlements which society has a duty to respect and protect. What the approach does is assess whether society is 'decent and with a political order', by how effective it is in providing every person with basic justice. Focusing on the opportunities- which in their nature are based on substantial freedoms and choice- provided for every person separately, and not those provided for the society as a whole. It answers *what is each person able to do and to be*. Nussbaum connects the approach with the government. She argues that it is the minimum job of the government to provide everyone with a life of dignity, and that for not doing so it should be held accountable. It assigns tasks to the government and public policy to create a better quality of life for all defined by their capabilities⁷.

The Capabilities Approach distinguishes between the internal capabilities, and the combined capabilities in which the social, economical, and political conditions play a huge role. The thesis will show to what extent Jordan has succeeded in acknowledging both. This approach will be discussed further in the Vocational Training section and Conclusion.

2.2 Inclusion Theory

Throughout the thesis, the concept of inclusion is studied and portrayed according to Jones' three dimensions, which if met, inclusion of people with disabilities in a society would be guaranteed. Firstly, a non-discriminatory attitude towards people with disabilities, which

⁷ Nussbaum, 2011, ps. 62, 18, 64

could be assessed through the media's portrayal of people with disabilities as equal members of any given society. Secondly, the access of participation in every aspect of life; which requires a social reconstruction and reorganization, by which limitations would be easier to identify and thus eliminated. Jones also makes an important note stating that such a responsibility falls on the entire society and requires initiating active steps, since the status quo is designed in favor of the dominant majorities. Thirdly, the facilitation of people with disabilities in order to limit the impacts of their disabilities. This can be achieved by providing suitable equipment, creating accessible environments, keeping in mind that the costs of such organization are low and the gains to the individuals in return are immense. The author concludes with saying that while the practicality and implementation of human rights law always remains debatable, the existence of such law provides a legal basis for the claims of people with disabilities in their entitlements to equality, and dignified and respectful treatment. Yet it is inclusion specifically that provides the true meaning of a person with disability being an equal member of society⁸.

2.3 Dignity & Equality

In the basic foundation for human rights, and as early as 1948 through the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR), the origins were established for what today is still not necessarily guaranteed. *Dignity* was recognized and named inherent, and *equality* was emphasized regarding the joint terms; everyone and without distinction, which indirectly meant *inclusion*, though the word itself and ultimately as a right was used for the first time in the 1993 General Assembly's Standard Rules on the Equalization of Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities. The recognition of human dignity and its essentiality can be traced in various legislative instruments, international and domestic. These instruments apply to people with disabilities whether disability is referred to directly or not. Bearing in mind that the term 'disability', until the adoption of the CRPD was only mentioned in the

⁸ Jones,2011, ps.57-61,81

Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC); and by then Bassier states that disability had already become an issue on the public agenda, and thus the need for a comprehensive disability-specific convention was apparent.

Whereas dignity is a vital pillar for human rights emphasized in the Charter of the UN and in Preambles of conventions and their articles, the CRPD refers to the respect for dignity as a ‘foundational principle’⁹. As for the notion of equality, it “has been used as an organizing framework to recognize that, groups are disproportionately impacted by the nature of social structures and that it is the state’s responsibility to address such issues”¹⁰. Rioux and Riddle however emphasize the fact that while the CRPD mentions the ‘equality of opportunity as well as practices of non-discrimination’ and as equality requires ‘distributive justice’, it fails to explicitly highlight and determine the conceptualization and application of equality in practice. For example, as will be shown in the Research Analysis, “while the courts have used equality of opportunity in cases of race or gender, they are still reluctant to use it as a basis for decision-making in cases related to disability”¹¹. As with many concepts within the international laws and legislation, ideas such as equality or disability, seem to exist perfectly as a general conception of what they stand for. However, there is a lack in clarifying the practical usage of the terms before and under the law in a more expansive interpretation. The importance of this is evident since in Jordan too “an abundance of important and precedent-setting legal cases in the field of disability are nowhere to be found”¹². This empowers a social definition of what equality is and what establishes justice; taking away the authority of the legal system and its potential in guaranteeing the dignified equality of opportunity as mentioned in international human rights law. Seeing that the basic claims of people with disabilities are already included in the general perception of human rights law, next is a detailed study on the right to employment of people with disabilities and how is it mentioned directly in the international arena.

⁹ Bassier,2011, ps.17,30

¹⁰ Rioux& Riddle,2011, p.53

¹¹ Rioux& Riddle,2011, p.54

¹² Rioux&Riddle,2011, p.55

3 International Human Rights Law

The right to work in an employment of one's choice without any discrimination was first mentioned as one of the 30 rights guaranteed by the UDHR. Even though there was no specific and direct acknowledgment of people with disabilities, Articles 1 and 2 included 'all human beings' and 'everyone'¹³. Ten years afterwards, in 1958, the Discrimination (Employment and Occupation) Convention was adopted. Jordan ratified this Convention in 1963. Under the direction of the International Labor Office¹⁴, the aforementioned Convention mentions disablement as one of the reasons to which special protection or assistance might be required and would not be deemed as discrimination¹⁵. It also calls on member states to promote through national practice the equality of opportunity. Moreover, in Article 3 (c) and (e) the state is required to revoke statutory provisions that are inconsistent with the Convention's policy, and additionally ensure observance of the policy in vocational guidance, training, and placement services under the direction of the national authority. This Convention was the building block of provisions created years afterwards.

3.1 ICCPR & ICESCR

Even though both 1966 Conventions were signed and ratified by Jordan; the ICCPR and the ICESCR, did not mention specifically people with disabilities nor disability, discrimination against them regarding employment or training would fall under 'distinction based on other status'. Furthermore, in Article 1 both state the 'right to self-determination'; among other meanings, it refers to the right to freely pursue the desired economic development of every individual¹⁶. In Article 2 of the ICCPR, there is a clear indication of Jor-

¹³ UDHR 1,2,23

¹⁴ The constitutionally mandated international organization and the competent body to set and deal with international labor standards, and enjoys universal support and acknowledgment in promoting fundamental rights at work. The IL Conference, Geneva, 1998

¹⁵ Discrimination Convention, Art.5

¹⁶ ICCPR, Art.1, ICESCR, Art.1

dan's (as a member state) obligation to internalize provisions by adopting them as internal legislation in order for the rights the Convention protects to be effective. Furthermore, it specifies the necessity of competent authorities to ensure the enforcement of granted remedies if rights of individuals are violated, especially emphasizing the power granted to the legal system of Jordan in providing legal protection and thus judicial remedy¹⁷. This research however shows negative results for any case law available in Jordan, in which people with disabilities alerted severe discrimination targeted at them based on their disabilities regarding employment; one might doubt the functionality of the legal system that the state was obliged to empower and develop upon ratifying the Convention. In addition, the competent authority the Article refers to may very well be the HCD, or any of the relevant Ministries; of Labor (MoL), or of Social Development (MoSD). This thesis aims at showing that Jordan has in fact set up institutions with authoritative powers; however these institutions do not function, and are incompetent in enforcing laws. As for the ICESCR, articles are more employment oriented due to the nature of the Convention. Article 6 directly recognizes everyone's right to work; including the guaranteeing of the freedom of choice of every person in for example choosing vocational guidance and training programs, which the state is recommended to take active steps towards providing. All are aimed at ensuring economic development and productive employment of all individuals. Jordan has undertaken various steps towards meeting international standards, and as will be shown it has incorporated international laws and internalized some provisions into domestic legislation. However, the 'free choice' of people with disabilities will be looked into furthermore; the notion of fitting people with disabilities into trainings and jobs that suit their disability according to employers or trainers, is merely any illustration of free choice.

As for the 'equal opportunity for everyone to be promoted and the fair and equal remuneration for work without distinction of any kind', the Research Analysis will show it to be failing in the Jordanian system. Both scholars and interviewed parents of working people with disabilities, provide evidence that Jordan as the state, and the authoritative entities it

¹⁷ ICCPR, Art. 2

has given power to, not only discriminate, but also neglect basic provisions and do not offer remedies and compensations. This contradicts the states duty mentioned in Article 10, stating that “the widest possible protection and assistance should be accorded to the family”¹⁸. The Article mentions dependent children, which is understood, however, more assistance as well should be offered to families with dependent persons with disabilities, to help them develop an economically empowered lifestyle, and gain independence. As a recent example, a change in the HCD’s role was noted a few weeks ago by parents and teachers of a certain special school for people with disabilities. The administration had to increase the fees at the school due to the sudden cut of financial support the HCD used to offer. When parents asked why, the HCD’s response was ambiguously clear; ‘lack of resources due to the cut in the governmental budget’. The school depended on such assistance, so they did the licensing the HCD assured would give them back the right to receive support. Yet even by doing so, the school received another reply: ‘financial support will be offered for students under the age of 18 when the money is available. Students over the age of 18 will receive no such support’¹⁹. For confirmation I contacted the HCD representative whom I interviewed regarding such vague behavior. However, no response was provided. The current conduct contradicts the HCD’s mission, vision, and information provided by their representatives when interviewed. Which also takes quite an opposite direction from “...the state’s obligation to take positive action to reduce structural disadvantages and give appropriate preferential treatment to people with disabilities to achieve full participation and equality within society. This almost invariably means that additional resources will need to be made available for this purpose and that a wide range of specially tailored measures will be required”²⁰. Although the government’s duty in the implementation of equality and rights are clearly delineated in international conventions, it has not been sufficient to ensure implementation²¹.

¹⁸ ICESCR,Arts.6,7,10(1)

¹⁹ Information received via email from parents (anonymous) interviewed while doing research in Amman.

²⁰ ICESCR,General Comments No.5,Para.9

²¹ Heymann&Cassola,2012,p.6

3.2 ICCPR & ICESCR – General Comments

In the general comments of the Human Rights Committee which oversees the work of the ICCPR, no specific mention is made of disability, but as Jones stated, it is well understood that disability is amongst the listed grounds that should not be discriminated against²². In its General Comments No. 18, the Committee stated that “the principal of equality sometimes requires States to take affirmative action in order to diminish or eliminate conditions which cause or help to perpetuate discrimination prohibited by the Convention”²³. Thus the responsibility of the removal of all obstacles that people with disabilities face in Jordan is held by the government. While the government takes its time in addressing the factors to be shown in the research analysis, various violations are occurring; not only towards the people with disabilities themselves, but also towards the Committee and the international community in failing to uphold the required policies set in the Convention and its General Comments. Moreover, in the Constitution of Jordan, grounds of discrimination are quite limited; there is no mention of disability²⁴. Although the Committee has inquired reasons for such omissions, none were mentioned during the conducted interviews²⁵. The General Comment No.5 of the Committee on Economic, Cultural and Social Rights is more thorough on the rights of people with disabilities and employment. The role of the government is emphasized as; regulating the public and private spheres equally in empowering integration and the right to choice, raising awareness about the rights, needs and potentials of people with disabilities, providing compensation for the results produced by market forces²⁶, and ensuring Jordan’s general compliance with the provisions of the Convention. The Committee through such comments makes it feasible for the Jordanian government to structure laws that would not only be non-discriminatory, but would also present positive

²² Jones,2011,p. 80

²³ ICCPR,General Comment 18,Para.10

²⁴ The constitution only lists race, language and religion. Recently actions to include gender have been raised, but the authorities seem unwilling and reluctant to make any changes.

²⁵ ICCPR,General Comments 18,Para.11

²⁶ ICESCR,General Comments No.5

and affirmative actions towards eliminating obstacles, fulfilling rights, and ultimately respecting the Convention and its requirements.

However, ethical predicaments are evident even in international documents. Paragraph 17 of the General Comment, which states that “Anti-discrimination measures should be based on the principal of equal rights for persons with disabilities and the non-disabled...”²⁷ collides with the General Assembly’s Standard Rules resolution stating that the support of people with disabilities into integrated open employment should be encouraged by states in forms such as: incentive-oriented quota schemes or even reserved or designated employment²⁸. Does the principal of equal rights go hand-in-hand with the quota system? The 2007 Law obligates institutions of private and public nature who employ 25-50 employees, to hire at least one person with disabilities, and if the total number of workers exceeds 50 then people with disabilities should account for not less than 4% of the work force²⁹. On one hand this is one way to guarantee people with disabilities being employed. However, on the other hand, any individual with a disability would get labeled as part of the quota system during the entire employment process. It implies that, qualifications, achievements, or education mean little in the system that provides employment -assuming that the law is implemented and monitored- but takes away the competitiveness and equality from the job application. Instead of being integrated in the process of hiring, people with disabilities are treated separately and remain excluded from all other potential-employees. When Norway introduced the quota system in workplaces to guarantee gender equality, much criticism followed. Sweigart said that it may lead to a perception of tokenism which would be difficult to eradicate later on³⁰. The quota system encourages hiring on a basis of preferential and special treatment. However, since people with disabilities find the law as means of a

²⁷ ICESCR, General Comments No.5, Para.17

²⁸ Standard Rules, 2003, Rule 7(2), A/RES/48/96

²⁹ HCD Law, 2007, Art.4

³⁰ Sweigart, 2012, p.94A

guarantee for their right to work, on a short-term span, it is the lesser of two evils; being hired through the quota system is better than not being hired at all.

3.3 The UN General Assembly Resolutions

The UN General Assembly proclaimed 1981 as the International Year of the Disabled Persons. In a resolution a year later, it introduced the World Program for Action concerning Disabled Persons. In the aforementioned proclamation, the Assembly pinpointed that the equalization of opportunities for people with disabilities has moved forward, and with a genuine momentum. Noting that, the emergence of various organizations, national and international, concerned with people with disabilities and their rights has had a powerful influence on *their image* and conditions. These efforts encourage the international community and the member states of the UN to continue undertaken activities and create new initiatives. The main aim of both resolutions; announcing the importance of the year 1981, and the World Program, was and still is the promotion of the full and equal participation of people with disabilities in the social life and development of their societies³¹. There are two points that should be stressed on; the first being the usage of the UN of controversial wordings such as ‘the image of people with disabilities’. By doing so, the stereotyping that people with disabilities are different, is highlighted instead of eliminated, contrary to the desired effect and to the intentions of the international system in eradicating discrimination. Moreover, whilst pointing out the importance of the inclusive participation of people with disabilities in societal development, little emphasis is put on their right to development. Whether through economic empowerment or through other activities, without self-development of their capabilities, people with disabilities have little opportunity to contribute in the general development of any society. In the General Assembly’s resolution on the right for development³², no mention was made of people with disabilities nor was special attention paid to those with special needs for development. Nonetheless, in the 2013 Spe-

³¹ World Program of Action concerning Disabled Persons, A/RES/37/52

³² Declaration on the Right to Development, A/RES/41/128

cial Rapporteur on Disability report, reference to development was very frequent and put emphasis on the need to incorporate the right to development into the rights of people with disabilities; "...the urgency and importance of including disability in national and international development policies and practices"³³. The report also made a very important reference to the need of incorporating disability into the targets and indicators of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). Unfortunately so far, it has been invisible in the Goals' implementation, and rarely included in national policies, monitoring and evaluation efforts related to the MDGs³⁴.

The Standard Rules resolution and the Vienna Declaration were also meant to be means to pressure state governments to take action promptly. "The place of the disabled persons is everywhere"³⁵ was straight to the point and said it all. The government of Jordan, as will be shown in the analysis, has taken various steps as the Standard Rules recommended. It has developed laws guaranteeing opportunities, created awareness campaigns and encouraged employers to establish accessible environments. Both the public and private sector have also been legally bound to respect and protect the rights of people with disabilities. Even though all the General Assembly's resolutions are non-binding in nature, governments and the entire international society took seriously the need to equalize societal aspects for people with disabilities to be free and able to use their rights and enjoy them. However, as in the case of Jordan, while agreements, declarations and conventions have been signed, reality remains grim for the majority of people with disabilities. The reasons: lack of monitoring, lack of law implementation, corruption and negative attitudes.

3.4 CRPD

Regardless of all the previous UNs' ways of promoting the rights of people with disabilities; the development of the CRPD in 2006 and its Optional Protocol was the real safety net for all the rights of people with disabilities worldwide. "The General Assembly mandate,

³³ ECOSOC, Commission for Social Development, E/CN.5/2013/10, Para. 19

³⁴ ECOSOC, Commission for Social Development, E/CN.5/2013/10, Para. 26

³⁵ Vienna Declaration, 1993, A/CONF.157/23, B-6-64

under which the Convention was developed, used the word ‘integral’, signifying a shift in the right of the disabled to being a core constituent of international human rights law, rather than existing as complementary to other core instruments”³⁶. Focus will only be made on a few articles of the Convention. It is worth stating the obvious; as Jordan has signed and ratified the Convention, and has signed the Optional Protocol, it is legally bound to the provisions directed mainly at the duties member states have. State parties have both positive and negative duties towards people with disabilities. Thus, it is Jordan’s official duty to for example, ensure the ability of people with disabilities to attain the highest possibilities in living an independent life, be included and integrated in all aspects of social participation, as well as receive comprehensive rehabilitation and facilitation programs to fit all their needs and desires in all life aspects³⁷. Moreover, it is the state’s contractual obligation to recognize the right to work for people with disabilities on equal basis in both private and public sectors, by mainly, prohibiting discrimination. Disability is not mentioned on the list of what should not be discriminated against as part of all citizens being equal. The aforementioned right should be based on the freedom of choice of each individual, and in environments that are inclusive, accessible and equipped with reasonable accommodation.

As for the statistics and data that every state party has the duty to collect and maintain³⁸, Jordan has been taking steps to professionalize questionnaires and census questions. DoS and the HCD have launched a report based on a survey entitled “Disability Reality in Jordan 2010: Labor and Unemployment”. Additionally, the HCD has developed new forms based on the Washington Group on Disability Statistics recommendations, aimed to be implemented in 2012³⁹. Yet as will be shown in the analysis, the data available to the public is inconsistent, incomplete, and at times contradictory. Article 32, which emphasizes the importance of international cooperation, and the duty of each state in ensuring and promoting

³⁶ Rehman,2010,p.605

³⁷ CRPD,Art.26

³⁸ CRPD,Arts.27,31

³⁹ HCD, annual report,2011

such collaboration, has “raged controversy throughout negotiations”⁴⁰. Jordan has implemented this provision by collaborating for example with JICA. The mutual work and the extended experience Japan has in tackling issues related to people with disabilities, have been very fruitful for the Jordanian disability society. However, the controversy lies in the fact that developing countries may depend more, according to such collaborations, on increased international aid. Otherwise, there is always a high risk of such countries, still developing and with limited resources, to repudiate implementing articles in the Convention due to lack of financial, technical or other resources. When it comes to national implementation and monitoring, states are required to designate focal points within governments to create a mechanism to facilitate actions undertaken by all sectors, in the form of independent frameworks⁴¹. As the HCD exists, and its core duty is promoting the rights of people with disabilities and improving their states of being, analysis will show that the work actually done is insufficient, and often quite unsuccessful. Furthermore, the lack of coordination and monitoring mechanisms is one of the main reasons, as will be demonstrated, why people with disabilities in Jordan have little access to their internationally guaranteed rights.

3.5 CRPD – State Report, Jordan 2012

The state report which Jordan submitted in 2012⁴² (Arabic version only published) to the Committee for the Persons with Disabilities Rights, is still scheduled for review and the concluding remarks are thus unpublished. The report which covers the issues related to the Convention and to the state of people with disabilities in Jordan from 2007 until 2011 is overly general and lacks specificity. Its referral to the National Center for Human Rights (NCHR) as part of the states independent monitoring and implementing entity is somewhat

⁴⁰ Rehman,2010,p.613

⁴¹ CRPD,Art.33

⁴² CRPD, Jordan,2012

misleading⁴³. Since Jordan received the Franklin Roosevelt International Disability Rights Award in 2005, the report states that a reason Jordan, out of only a few Arab countries that have ratified the Convention, did so from a belief that states which provide ‘this category’ of people attention and rights, are developed societies marked with prosperous social bonds and present the state as a role model. The analysis will show that what the report says about the rights of people with disabilities having full political support, in practice is not entirely correct. While Ministries have responsibilities, the means to fulfill them, often create more obstacles. An example of lack of monitoring as the report states, is the lack of monitoring of the 4% employment quota for people with disabilities. The report includes high quality programs for rehabilitation and vocational training, as well as many assistive tools. During research however, and in material analyzed in further sections, evidence shows that quality is not a priority on the list of what the state offers people with disabilities. The report is transparent regarding the need to work harder on awareness, especially among employers, as it states that equal chances are not given to applicants as a result of stereotyping, leading to discrimination and thus it decreases the possibilities of people with disabilities being employed. There was no description available on how the government plans to implement the provisions of the Convention. Agreements, legislation and laws have been passed and published in the official newspapers, but there was no mention of physical implementation, success stories or results. If monitoring is claimed as conducted, and research shows that it is not, the Committee will be unable to address the actual setbacks and ways to handle them in the concluding remarks or comments. Such reporting should also be monitored.

International human rights law extends and develops; improving provisions, guaranteeing better lifestyles and more rights to humanity. As important as it is for state parties to sign and ratify conventions, and to have an active engagement in sessions, agreements and discussions, such efforts will be in vain if nationally these laws are not adopted. It is important

⁴³ Having had an internship at the NCHR for three months, I have mentioned in the submitted report that the Center, even though it claims is an independent unit, actually receives administrative finances from the government, and the Center’s General Commissioner is elected out of a few candidates by the government. Moreover, there were indicators of lack of transparency and corrupt employments; for example family connections or personal networks.

that human rights are incorporated into domestic law. The following section offers a clearer picture on how Jordan goes about the right to employment for people with disabilities domestically.

4 National Law

Simmons has extensively written about international human rights law and its influence on politics. She states that such law has had positive contributions in a way that has altered domestic political scenes and created improvements in the human rights arena. The reasons behind that vary, however most importantly because such provisions hold governments legally accountable for human rights violations⁴⁴. Simmons' theory is important, yet it is idealistic in that it assumes that states actually act and implement internalized legislation. Influencing domestic politics goes beyond internalizing international law, it also entails enforcement. On the other hand, a thousand mile journey begins with one step. Below will be a presentation of the domestic laws within Jordan, to study whether international law has influenced Jordan's politics and laws regarding the right to employment for people with disabilities.

4.1 The Constitution of Jordan of 1952

Under the chapter entitled 'Rights and Duties of Jordanians', Article 6 of the Constitution declares the equality of all Jordanians, without any distinction among them on grounds that unfortunately do not entail disability; race, language and religion. While the article also affirms the equality of opportunity for all, it states alongside "within the limits of its possibilities"⁴⁵. Such terms mean both positive duties in which the state shall ensure equality, and also negative duties in which the state shall refrain from discrimination. Yet such additions, allow the state to justify violations by 'having limited possibilities'; for example providing funding for reconstructing the infrastructure to make it accessible for people with disabilities. However, while the constitution protects general equality, it does not guarantee any aspect of equal treatment to persons with disabilities. On the other hand, neither do the constitutions of Norway or the USA⁴⁶.

⁴⁴ Simmons,2009,ch.1

⁴⁵ Jordan Constitution,Art.6

⁴⁶Children's Chances, Equality in Constitutions (see ref.)

The 23rd article of the Constitution states that work is the right of every citizen, thus the state takes on its duty to provide opportunities and enact legislation⁴⁷. Nevertheless, it does not explicitly protect this right for people with disabilities, nor has it introduced provisions for potentially positive actions in the future. Conversely, the right to employment's explicit protection for people with disabilities is protected in only a few Constitutions, such as the UK, Spain or Brazil⁴⁸.

4.2 Law on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities of 2007 (2007 Law)

Article 4(c) states that all citizens with disabilities should be provided with services such as appropriate vocational training to develop their capabilities enabling them to meet the requirements of the labor market. It also states the equal opportunities regarding employment that people with disabilities are entitled to, are usually based on educational qualifications. However, as will be shown in the analysis, there are violations in the implementation of this specific requirement. Educational qualifications are often disregarded while emphasis is put on the physical limitations of potential employees. Yet while the 2007 law obligates public and private sectors employing 25-50 workers, to employ at least one person with disabilities, and not less than 4% when over 50 workers, it adds “*if the nature of the work allows this provision*”⁴⁹. Article 12 declares that only private institutions that fail to comply with the aforementioned provision shall be fined, and if the violation repeated, the fine shall be doubled. These fines, for which there were no records while conducting the research, shall be deposited to the HCD's account. While such an approach is beneficial for the rights of people with disabilities, again, just as in the Constitution, justification for not implementing it could be easily found by simply blaming the nature of the work.

⁴⁷ Jordan Constitution, Art. 23

⁴⁸ Children's Chances, Right to Work (see ref.)

⁴⁹ HCD Law, 2007, Art. 4

The HCD, the official governmental entity responsible for laying down policies regarding people with disabilities, revising them and following up on their implementation, is the entity that developed these provisions. The Prime Minister and Ministers are entrusted with the provisions' execution⁵⁰. It should be mentioned that the Monarchy of Jordan has played a significant role in supporting the disability policies and legislation⁵¹. The HCD's President is HRH Prince Raad Bin Zeid, while his son HRH Prince Mired is the vice-President. Backing this specific law with such powerful authorities is necessary for the cause, but not necessarily influential. In various other fields such as economy, investment or education, where the Monarchy is involved⁵², achievements occur in high speed and with perfect accuracy. The implementation, monitoring and enforcement of the 2007 Law seems not to be a priority. Since as shown in the wording of some articles, it is quite easy to go around their implementation. The HCD is currently working on modifying the 2007 Law to make it more compatible with the CRPD. Moreover, some amendments will apply to Article 12⁵³ regarding the penalty for violators in the private sector institutions. The law exists, and means to advance it and fill the gaps are underway, however factors analyzed in the research analysis also need to be addressed to create the desired progress. The 2007 Law is necessary, but it should be fully inclusive, and very detailed to avoid justified violations.

4.3 Labor Law of 1996

The only mention of people with disabilities' right to employment is Art.13 within the Labor Law, which states that employers who employ 50 workers or more, and whose nature of work allows it, *shall* employ *disabled* workers that have been trained vocationally through programs in institutions approved by the MoL and shall make up as much as 2% of

⁵⁰ HCD Law 2007,Arts.12 a+b,21

⁵¹ Turmusani,1999,p.11

⁵² Ex.: Queen Rania's 'Madrasaty' educational initiatives which have been very successful in promoting education and improving the infrastructure for many public schools.

⁵³ HCD Law,2007,Art.12, which entails a fine to private sector institutions that do not apply Article 4-c-3 of employing people with disabilities and the 4% quota.

the total workers. In addition to that, a statement describing the position of the employed *disabled* workers and their wages should be sent to the MoL⁵⁴. Other provisions discuss the rights of workers who have acquired disability due to injuries while working, or regarding non-Jordanian home-workers, to assist people with disabilities. The Labor Law first of all uses terminology such as ‘disabled’ which as will be shown in the Awareness section in the Research Analysis, is outdated. Secondly, it is discriminatory; only those who have had recognized training can be employed, and only in institutions that have 50 workers or more. Furthermore, while the 2007 Law states the 4% quota, the Labor Law demands only 2%. Leaving employers with space not only to avoid employing people with disabilities by using the excuse that the ‘nature of work does not allow it’, but also with the choice regarding how many workers it is they choose to employ. Such inefficiencies should be corrected so people with disabilities’ right to employment is safeguarded and implemented. If governmental institutions, the duty-holders, seem not to agree on one set of unified legislation, less should be expected from employers to follow and implement the law.

4.4 The National Strategy for Persons with Disabilities – Action Plans: Phase II (2010-2015)

The strategy is an initiative called on by HM King Abdulla II, in which the HCD and key actors from civil society, including people with disabilities representatives, aim to ensure the principles of equality, non-discrimination and empowerment as stated in the CRPD. While the strategy covers a wide range of fields, for the purpose of this thesis, focus will be only on two; Legislation and Economic Empowerment.

Legislation⁵⁵: The HCD partnering with various Ministries, NGOs, civil society, the NCHR, the Municipality of Greater Amman (MGA), the Lawyers Association and a few

⁵⁴ Labor Law, 1996, Art. 13

⁵⁵ National Strategy, HCD, p. 41-44

other entities, have four main goals to be achieved by 2015. The estimated cost of this portion of the Strategy is around 300,000 JD (estimated 2,400,000 NOK). These goals are:

1. Increase awareness of the 2007 Law and the CRPD.
2. Revision of national legislation to develop compatibility with international standards.
3. Develop and complete systems to activate and enforce the 2007 Law.
4. Promote and enhance the right of people with disabilities to judicial and legal claims and recourse.

Economic Empowerment⁵⁶: partnering with MoL, the VTC, the private sector and other entities, the HCD with around 1,165,000 JD (estimated 9,400,000 NOK) is set to achieve the following goals:

1. Work on creating unified provisions of all laws that are in accord with each other and with international standards.
2. Create a database for all people with disabilities seeking employment.
3. Enhance and modernize vocational training in order to match the market demands.
4. Increase the chances of people with disabilities applying for and receiving 'productivity loans' to help establish new small projects.

As seen, the national legislation in Jordan has incorporated the right to employment for people with disabilities, but has surrounded this right with too many limitations and conditions. Thus it secures more benefit to the employer, than to the person with disability seeking employment.

⁵⁶ National Strategy, HCD, p.65-67

5 Research Analysis

“The rights of every man are diminished when the rights of one man are threatened”⁵⁷. Since 1948, and all over the world, people have been fighting for their rights; with liberty, freedom and equality heading slogans and successfully leading their right-holders to a life of dignity. As far as we have reached, and we have reached quite a distance, many remain left behind the scenes of such historical changes. People with disabilities are the ‘threatened men and women’, still fighting battles of equality and non-discrimination; yet their battles are always doubled; one to accept and learn to live with one’s disability, and the other to be equally treated as other citizens. In Jordan, people with disabilities remain in the shadows of change, as the country like many neighboring countries, witnesses the Arab Spring, with all its political, economic and social transformations. These transformations have at no point been directed at people with disabilities, yet significant achievements have been made in the general human rights arena. For example regarding the wider range of liberty in expressing one’s opinion; it has only been recently that publically criticizing the government became usual. Despise being penalized and restricted, people have regained general faith in the role of the duty-holders towards them, which created a foundation for people with disabilities to use as a tool to manifest their universally guaranteed rights. As the analysis in this section shows, pressure groups have not yet been formed, but are necessary for people with disabilities to be acknowledged and have their rights granted. As has been established in the previous sections, the focus on their right to employment derives from the belief of every person’s right to participation, development and independency.

The three weeks of research in Amman were very insightful; the reality of how things actually are would sadden any human rights practitioner, however, I have come across multiple initiatives and projects both public and private in nature, that, if implemented, would offer potential for people with disabilities and most importantly – choice. The biggest challenge I perceived was that only a minority of those in authoritative positions consider people with

⁵⁷ John F. Kennedy

disabilities as individuals with rights. Instead, assumptions are made on their behalf, with certain plans materializing that are ineffective and useless. For example, if the state was thoughtful enough to build a ramp for individuals with physical disabilities at a frequently used building, and the ramp is built too steep, this creates rather than resolves problems. The ramp is one thing less on the to-do-list, but no measurements were taken into account. This is just one example mentioned by interviewed people with disabilities. Yet it is enough to get an image of the situation in Jordan. The following part will be divided in two; an outlook on some factors that need to be addressed to understand the reason behind the problem people with disabilities face in employment, followed by a few steps that the state has taken to combat this phenomenon and whether in practice these steps function effectively or hinder equality for people with disabilities further.

5.1 The General Picture

It should be remembered that disability or handicap is a ‘functional limitation’; it is the inability to perform a specific function due to lack of necessary ability, thus disability is the inability to be fully independent⁵⁸; by understanding this, overcoming the obstacles that are usually within the social construct boundaries and compensating such natural inabilities becomes easier. This section focuses on why there is a problem in the first place. A few factors which if eliminated or adapted, would resolve and remove all obstacles without which people with disabilities in Jordan would have equal opportunities in being employed as all who are able. However it is first necessary to establish a very important point; these factors are very much intertwined and convoluted. The fact that they are hard to separate is rather advantageous to the cause. Nevertheless, it also means that it is quite impossible to breakdown each factor without reference to a few others.

Below is a presentation of six factors which cause unemployment among people with disabilities. These factors are; awareness, accessibility, transportation, cooperation and networking, lack of monitoring and supervision, and vocational training discrimination.

⁵⁸ Khatib,2010,p.32

5.1.1 Awareness

Rehman stated that historically, people with disabilities have suffered from the ‘invisibility’ syndrome which basically refers to their exclusion from society in all forms and at all levels due to negative attitudes rooted in notions such as shame, ignorance, disgrace, superstition and fear. He continues with what is still very relevant in societies like Jordan; people with disabilities are most often seen as objects of treatment and charity rather than holders of rights⁵⁹. This predicament however extends from the person with disability as the main right-holder to his/her family and continues all the way upwards to the main duty-bearer; the state.

As an example on negative attitudes, Turmusani in an earlier study stated that religion for example plays a major role in shaping attitudes towards people with disabilities in Jordan. Since everything is attributed to the will of God (Allah), disability is perceived as a test of faith⁶⁰. Once that is instilled in the mentality, human rights become accessories instead of necessities. Furthermore, school curricula have very little reference to human rights or international conventions, whether in general or to those Jordan has signed and ratified.

To change such negative attitudes, the media can have a pivotal role, especially nowadays when technology has reached every household. Yet it too has rarely dedicated enough attention to set forth the importance of equality in treatment and employment for people with disabilities. Turmusani said that “until recently, the media in Jordan has portrayed disabled people as passive and dependant, thereby perpetuating a negative image”⁶¹. Khatib on reflection stated “that in a society like Jordan, part of the Arab region, the gap between theory and practice remains eminently big, to start closing the gap targeting the general perception and changing it from charity into full understanding of human and civil rights is the first step”⁶². The HCD initiated this issue; it focused on the roles of radio and televisions in

⁵⁹ Rehman,2010,ps.600-601

⁶⁰ Turmusani,1999,p.4

⁶¹ Turmusani,1999,p.4

⁶² Khatib,2010,ps.17,53

mainstreaming training and employment issues for people with disabilities under the broad term ‘economic empowerment’. Yet apparently such initiatives reach only a few and are not well marketed to have the desired outcome. It is common to come across articles in newspapers and online pages about what the HCD is currently doing, or criticism regarding what it is not doing, yet such articles are only read by those involved. As involved and political as Jordanians are, the problems of their fellow citizens with disabilities are rarely on discussion lists, when they actually should be. According to a 2010 study, at least one person with a disability lives in about 8% of households in Jordan⁶³. According to the last Population and Housing Census of 2004⁶⁴, there are almost 63,000 people with disabilities in Jordan, over 21,000 of them living in the capital Amman⁶⁵. The economic activity statistics show that of the people with disabilities who are 15 years old and above, 5291 are employed; of which only 1962 reside in Amman⁶⁶.

As Turmusani stated, statistics of this kind are never accurate and are open to question⁶⁷, even internationally it has been difficult to define what disability is and who is disabled. As Zureikat, a young woman with Cerebral Palsy who uses an electric wheelchair said: “disability is a concept in process”⁶⁸ claiming that what was not a disability years ago is one now, and terms used before are seen as unacceptable nowadays. Moreover, Jordan’s ‘culture of shame’ still unfortunately plays a huge role in maintaining a family’s image, and thus their lack openness to disability matters reflects lower statistics portraying only a portion of reality.

⁶³ DoS+HCD report,2010,p.25

⁶⁴ The census is conducted every 10 years. The statistics offered are the most accurate, since the Department of Statistics (DoS) in Amman is the only official source providing such data. The next census will take place in 2014 with results to be published early 2015.

⁶⁵ DoS,2004(see ref.)

⁶⁶ Of the people with disabilities residing in Amman who are employed the ratio of women to men is only 1:8.

⁶⁷ Turmusani,1999

⁶⁸ Zureikat, Feb 10

Inaccurate definitions however are just one problem in a society dictated by pride. Halawa, a mother of a young man with physical disability and a founder of Sana Group⁶⁹ said “there is very evident resistance by parents caused by the culture of shame resulting in refusing jobs for their children”⁷⁰. This creates a double problem, since not only is it hard to find employment, but if any is found, parents are reluctant to accept the minor jobs offered; such as unpacking groceries or labeling products in supermarkets. Sarayji referred to this issue when he said that “education and awareness are lacked and vital to be invoked; to society as a whole, and to people with disabilities themselves and their parents and families”⁷¹. Zureikat argues that “there is no social responsibility in our (Jordanian) community”⁷², a form of awareness that would instill acceptance as well as promote and protect the differences that are only natural to occur and be evident.

A lot is to be done to create a serious shift in mentalities of Jordanians when it comes to the rights of people with disabilities. It will take a long time to develop a functioning system that will allow them to receive an education, be enrolled in vocational trainings of their own choice, and be employed accordingly based on qualifications and skills instead of finding job placements as community service and charity work. If everyone reoriented their perception towards a human rights based approach instead of one focused on charity and good will then all the following obstacles would become easier to overcome. The desired outcome is for society to position itself towards employment based on what one *can* do instead of focusing on what it is they are not able to. Such positioning would be a victory for every Jordanian with whatever disability they have.

⁶⁹ Sana Group is a group of parents of children and young adults with disabilities that have joined together to tackle the obstacles their children face. They work on four levels; support other parents of children with disabilities, work on awareness campaigns and emphasize on educating people with disabilities and their surrounding about their rights, education and scholarships, and finally work on the employment of people with disabilities. More focus is put on first three missions, due to various reasons of which the bigger part takes the lack of cooperation with all entities in Jordan responsible for the rights of people with disabilities.

⁷⁰ Halawa, Feb9

⁷¹ Sarayji, Feb11

⁷² Zureikat, Feb10

The general focus in this thesis is people with physical disabilities⁷³, who are easier to integrate into the labor market as opposed to people with for example mental or intellectual disabilities. Akrouk stated that “people with physical disabilities are the most employable in any society; it is saddening to see how even they are discriminated against in Jordan regarding employment. I believe they could be the ones who break the *stigma* in our country, making it easier for people with all types of disabilities to be economically empowered and employed”⁷⁴.

Furthermore, awareness in Jordan regarding terminology used to address disability matters, ones that have been discussed thoroughly in disability theories, is also essential. Albeit the fact that it was 20 years ago that the General Assembly, through the Standard Rules focused on the fundamental concepts and terminology that should be used instead of ones like ‘disabled people’⁷⁵. After which the CECSR Committee in its General Comments stated that “the Committee will use the term ‘persons with disabilities’ instead of the previously used ‘disabled persons’, since it has been suggested that the latter term might be misinterpreted to imply that the ability of the individual to function as a person has been disabled”⁷⁶. As Oliver stated “it is not individual limitations that are the cause of the problem, it is society’s failure to provide appropriate services, and adequately ensure needs of people with disabilities be considered part of the social organization”⁷⁷. In Jordan, and even though there has been a significant shift from the individual model towards the social model, mainly more social change and less individual adaptation, it is yet to be fully instilled in scholarly writing and academic works of professors who teach at universities where they instill such knowledge into future generations. Khatib for example stated that “there are terms that should be avoided and a sense of neutrality should be kept when referring to

⁷³ DoS+HCD,2010,p.49, the most common disability that people in Jordan have is physical disability with the percentage of 17.3%.

⁷⁴ Akrouk, Feb13.

⁷⁵ Standard Rules,1993,A/RES/48/96

⁷⁶ ICESCR,General Comments No.5,Para.4

⁷⁷ Oliver,2009,p.21,22

people with disabilities. Words such as: patient, victim or disabled should be avoided”⁷⁸. Yet throughout his book he uses ‘disabled’ and even “people who were normal but acquired disability”⁷⁹. The HCD uses “and person suffering from...”⁸⁰ a term Khatib also claims should be negated. Moreover there always seems to be a chapter justifying the training and employment of people with disabilities that focuses on the fact that they are human beings entitled to a life of dignity. The works also portray their need for vocational training as a requirement for them to acquire skills and become eligible for employment. It is hard to change the mentality of a whole society and end the stereotyping, when individuals are taught to instill in their knowledge, the natural differentiation between people with disabilities and the rest of society. It seems at times that by providing such justifications these authors are primarily convincing themselves of the right to employment for people with disabilities. Specifically when wordings such as “...in contrast to what is said about them, they do show more willingness to work than other employees”⁸¹ are used. It is academically unprofessional, and unjust to the main targets of their work. The process however does not stop at raising awareness, and thus accessibility will be addressed next.

5.1.2 Accessibility

Accessibility overlaps with awareness among other factors. In this section the importance of having accessible environments is shown, as well as the steps Jordan has been and still is planning to achieve, and whether these steps have been implemented and are successful.

“Every single time I wanted to go to the bank and get my finances sorted out I would have to ask random people in the street to help me up the stairs which was inconvenient for everyone. After a while I asked to see the manager and told him I have a problem with finding a suitable parking place and asking for help carrying me on my wheelchair up the stairs; I

⁷⁸ Khatib,2010,p.19

⁷⁹ Khatib,2010,p.15

⁸⁰ HCD Law,2007,Art.2

⁸¹ Yousef&Ghareer,2010,p.56

said without a ramp I will need to close my account and look for a more accessible bank. He found a solution which has worked for me; now I stay in my car, and an employee would come out and provide the bank's services while I am in my car"⁸²- Khitam. This example epitomizes the problems people with physical limitations face in Jordan. One might at first conclude that the offered solution is reasonable. However it will be when it will cease to be an act of 'good will', or when the importance of keeping a client is more valuable than purely economic loss related to them choosing the services of another bank.

Creating a disability friendly environment in Jordan is a very recent concept. A concept which entails financial costs, thus it is always pushed behind as far from execution as possible. The 2007 Law states that the national buildings accessibility code (the Code) for persons with disabilities should be implemented in the public and private sectors and if possible, on already existing buildings. Moreover it encourages the withholding of the building licenses to any party which does not follow the Code⁸³. The positive side to it is that laws to guarantee some rights of people with disabilities do exist, however there is also a negative side. A specified entity responsible for monitoring of whether such laws are implemented does not exist. In addition to that, governmental departments set to legislate, operate and embark upon such laws have duplicated duties; not overlapping, but rather duties that create gaps in accountability, an image that could be compared to fighting windmills. For further information I turned to the JEA; the legal entity that approves of all architectural plans, they offered the following statement: "the association follows the law; we go through the given plan and check if it abides the law, we make changes until the final plan offers accessibility in accordance with the Code and that is when we approve of it. However, it is the MGA that gives the final approval and it should hold the monitoring and supervision squad that checks if the process of building abides by the Code. However there are no restrictions for private plans"⁸⁴. In theory the 2007 Law states that buildings of private and public sectors should be accessible; yet clearly in practice the private sector is over-

⁸² Khitam, Feb.18

⁸³ HCD Law, 2007, Art.4E1+2

⁸⁴ Saleh, Feb.12

looked. Once the plan is approved, the only responsibility of its actualization falls on the private engineering offices; which are never monitored, thus the various new buildings that arise, unfortunately fool the law and are therefore inaccessible.

I was invited to one of the meetings held once a week at the Ministry of Public Works and Housing which aimed at modernize the Code. The attendees were from governmental institutions involved in the accessibility of buildings for people with disabilities. As important as it is to try and improve existing laws and mainstream accessibility, the meeting itself resulted in questions such as ‘is it really necessary to have an accessible toilet on every floor?’ rather than a general consent on the importance of accessibility itself. An engineer at the meeting referred to people with disabilities as ‘abnormal’ or ‘people of that kind’ showing that it is only the law that is aimed at being altered without respect to persons with disabilities for whom this law is supposed to provide equal opportunities. Engineer Rana Haddadin from MGA stated that “We are annually working on raising public awareness hoping it will change mentalities of engineers and decision makers regarding the importance of accessibility”⁸⁵. She also added that so far 33 street intersections in Amman have been made accessible to wheelchair users and to seven, sound systems for the visually impaired were introduced. Such details are of course included in the Code that is being renewed, however, the number is far too low and the results are often misleading. Khitam said the special ramps created on the sidewalks for wheelchair users are useless, for the measurements of the ramp and its steepness make it impossible to access, moreover, on many of these sidewalks, there are ramps to go up but find no way to go back down⁸⁶. It is understood that the government makes plans according to its financial resources, but if such resources are found to actually accomplish an achievement, specialists should monitor whether what is being implemented practically functions. Maysoon and Zureikat, two individuals with physical disabilities who work at HCD, agree that to tackle the need to convince employers to make adjustments to their workplaces, a strong instilling of a culture of

⁸⁵ Haddadin, JICA meeting, Feb.19

⁸⁶ Khitam, Feb18

conviction in society allowing policies to be implemented is required⁸⁷. To legitimize these claims, the ICESCR Committee mentioned "...For example, as long as workplaces are designed and built in ways that make them inaccessible to wheelchairs, employers will be able to 'justify' their failure to employ wheelchair users"⁸⁸.

The weekly meetings targeted at renewing the talks are the initial step, since there are several highly situated stakeholders that would have to go through the new Code for it to be passed as law. While the 2007 Law states that the Council of Ministers shall issue necessary regulations for the implementation of the stated provisions, and that the Prime Minister and the Ministers are entrusted with the execution of these provisions⁸⁹, it is the Ministry of Antiquities, the Ministry of Public Works and Housing, the MGA, the JEA and the Civil Defense that revise the renewed articles and requirements of the Code before passing it to the Prime Minister. Many claim that employers or engineering offices choose to ignore and neglect the Code because it necessitates extra costs. To which Maysoon stated that "we have worked on raising awareness not only about the Code, but also about the fact that it is more cost effective to include the Code requirements at the building process initially and not after it is established. We try to be more convincing using daily sentimental illustrations, for example old age; we will all get old one day and might end up as wheelchair users or individuals with crutches for whom ramps would be necessary. It is a process, and we are working on it"⁹⁰. Jones refers to this saying the right to be facilitated is not only means to support people with disabilities, it is more importantly a matter of self-interest, stating that, "statistically there is a very high chance that any given person or one of their close relatives will become disabled at some point of their lives"⁹¹. While all this was being explained during a video conference at JICA office with the headquarters in Japan, it left many confused on why should there be so much stress on awareness if there is a law that in itself proclaims all as equal. Just as Khawaja said "we are a nation that fears the law

⁸⁷ Maysoon & Zureikat, JICA meeting, Feb 19

⁸⁸ ICESCR, General Comments No.5, Para. 22

⁸⁹ HCD Law, 2007, Art. 19'21

⁹⁰ Maysoon, Feb 10.

⁹¹ Jones, 2011, p.61

rather than respects it, we do not internalize it as being our ethical code ⁹². Nevertheless at the VTC in which he manages the people's with disabilities training opportunities and their acceptance into such programs, out of 42 training institutions covering almost the entire regions of Jordan, only 9 were over time made accessible. This common attitude of demanding from the surrounding more than from oneself seems to work for these governmental entities in avoiding responsibility, and creating grounds for justifying their lack of seriousness in tackling the problems of people with disabilities in achieving their ultimate capabilities, and having their rights guaranteed.

There was no mention at any of the meetings or interviews of accessibility in the forms of Assistive Technology Aid in the form of ergonomic tools such as Electric wheelchairs, Braille displays, screen readers, screen magnifiers (for all kinds of disabilities). Such services to be provided and maintained require financial and technical funding, as well as special training to acquire knowledge on how to use these tools and teach individuals new to such tools. Jordan's resources allocated to the HCD yearly are not easy to find. While researching, I was informed that in 2012 the budget received from the government and international funding exceeded 6 million JD (approximately 50 million NOK), detailed projects budgets were restricted information, the only number shared was the administrative costs; less than 20%⁹³. Due to lack of information it is difficult to estimate how much technology and assistive aid the government could afford and fund, yet if transparency was respected, both the private and the public sectors could invest more in disability projects with a security of government backing.

5.1.3 Transportation

Accessibility and transportation are very closely linked. However, while more emphasis is being targeted at regulating the Code and modernizing it, transportation although also men-

⁹² Khawaja, Feb.12

⁹³ Hussein, Feb 10.

tioned, is not given that much priority. Yaghi said that “our transportation system is very inaccessible. Wealthier people with disabilities can have access to modified cars but they are the exception, generally, people with disabilities can’t even have access to a driving license because of lack of such accommodated cars for driving classes let alone drive an owned car. The taxis won’t stop for a person on a wheelchair because it is too much trouble for the driver, and the public buses are simply unsuitable for wheelchair users”⁹⁴. The 2007 Law states that “all public transportation companies, tourism agencies and car rental companies are obliged to make available at least one vehicle accessible for persons with disabilities”⁹⁵. To verify this, I interviewed Mujahed, the General Director of the Land Transport Regulatory Commission⁹⁶. The official documents show that in total, there are 24 public buses and 25 taxis accessible for people with disabilities; however no one has ever witnessed any of them on the streets. Mujahed said that very few efforts are being made because of two main reasons; the high costs of importing such buses and maintaining them⁹⁷, and the very bad infrastructure. He said that even if we have buses, the bus stops, terminals and pavements are not disability friendly environments, which if adapted could mean higher tariffs and that could be a main obstacle⁹⁸. Moreover, there was a lack of clarity on which entity the responsibility of pushing this forward rests with; the Commission, the MGA or regional counties offices.

As shown, there is an evident gap in accessible public transportation; however, even those with personal transportation face other kinds of problems. Khitam drives her own customized car. However she faces another kind of a problem that is very much related not only to weakly implemented sanctions, but also to bad individual judgments caused by lack of awareness. She finds it hard to find parking spots specified for people with disabilities and if she does they are usually occupied by individuals without a right to park there. “In a

⁹⁴ Yaghi, JICA meeting, Feb 19

⁹⁵ HCD Law, 2007, Art.4E

⁹⁶ Mujahed, Feb. 21

⁹⁷ There is only one Jordanian company ‘Alba House’ that manufactures bus bodies and has capacities to produce accessible buses. Though the buses claimed to exist that are meant to make it easier for people with disabilities to travel are imported.

⁹⁸ Mujahed, Feb 21

Safeway market parking I drove straight to the sign that showed a spot reserved for wheelchair users, a spot for me. Only to find it occupied by the store manager. I called one of the employees for assistance but he showed absolutely no interest in resolving the situation repeating that he can't do anything since the car belongs to the manager"⁹⁹. The Code includes special parking lots for people with disabilities, yet there is no monitoring as to whether it is respected. This makes it very difficult if not impossible, for rights to be enjoyed by those who are entitled to them.

The best case scenario would be if the entire society became aware of the needs and rights of people with disabilities and the Code became enforced law so no entity; public or private could legitimately ignore it. However developing accessible transportation to go with this is vital. Thus it is the society that is being more disabling to individuals than any disability in itself. "The failure of governments to ensure that modes of transportation are accessible to persons with disabilities greatly reduces the chances of them finding suitable, integrated jobs, taking advantage of educational and vocational training, or commuting to facilities of all types...special tailored forms of transportation is crucial"¹⁰⁰. Suggested solutions that would involve equality and implementation of human rights are discussed in the conclusion.

The analysis thus far reveals an evident top-bottom approach. Almost all pressure by individuals is targeted towards the state and its governmental institutions which were created to assist people with disabilities and their rights. In theory it could be very effective. Akrouk said that "I believe to achieve anything, people with disabilities and their families should find lawyers who will be willing to advocate for their rights. What we need is pressure groups, and that way we could take our demands as high as necessary to those in authoritative positions"¹⁰¹. Turmusani as confirmation said that "there has been a negative impact on the suitability of services provided due to the lack of mobilized voices of disabled peo-

⁹⁹ Khitam, Feb18

¹⁰⁰ ICESCR, General Comments No.5, Para.23

¹⁰¹ Akrouk, Feb 13.

ple”¹⁰². Leading to the conclusion that a balance needs to be created by activating a bottom-top approach, in which people with disabilities are key players. One lawyer from Amman said that “Our society needs an awakening, and for change to see daylight we need the implementation of law”¹⁰³. However, he was not aware of any case brought on behalf of a person with disability-namely for discrimination or unlawful actions based on disability. To be certain I visited the Lawyers Union and at the University of Jordan’s law library, no cases were found. In Jordan, laws in favor of disability rights do exist but are not implemented, and furthermore not one person with disabilities has filed a legal complaint regarding discriminatory actions. Whether it is the lack of their awareness of rights and duties of states towards them, fear of ‘making a bigger deal’ out of their disabilities or simply hopelessness, the exclusive fact that lawyers themselves do not take action to mainstream such rights and advocate for them, puts more pressure on people with disabilities in fighting for their rights through organized pressure groups.

5.1.4 Cooperation and Networking Failure

It is a unique situation in Jordan; there are several governmental institutions such as Ministries, the VTC, HCD, NGOs, and private initiatives that aim at advancing disability rights in Jordan. Perhaps because there are so many entities, loops and gaps leave anybody looking for assistance in more confusion. “The system is impotent in doing what it is set up to do; they care about their individual images and have little faith and passion in the cause, thus the striking failure. What we need is collaboration and joint efforts especially financially between the MoL, MoSD the HCD as well as between them and the NGOs and the private sector”¹⁰⁴ said Halawa when asked about several governmental entities in regards to their effectiveness towards establishing good grounds for disability rights and pushing them forward. The lack of networking was a common setback mentioned by everyone who

¹⁰² Turmusani,1999,p.8

¹⁰³ A lawyer who chose anonymity. Information provided was delicate and could lead to losing job or other consequences. Has been a lawyer for over 40 years of which most were dedicated for people with disabilities rights.

¹⁰⁴ Halawa, Feb9

gave in their input for the research. It is said that admitting the problem and being aware of it is the first step to success, unfortunately it seems that on admission, the line is drawn and any further action finds no initiation.

Nevertheless, there has been collaboration between a few entities. Both the HCD, which has recently become an independent entity, and the MoSD, at times follow up on each other's programs, and also do joint projects with the MoL. The first example is a job fair organized by the MoL which I attended while conducting research. The job fair itself was not aimed at people with disabilities but had an 'on the side' table in collaboration with JICA that did job matching and assisted people with disabilities in applying for jobs. The initiative was a great chance for all individuals to have easier access to job openings. However, the attitude of a certain representative from the MoL did not make the process for people with disabilities any easier. Asking directly 'what is your disability and how severe is it' or placing people with visual impairments under *mentally disabled* based on nothing else but physical appearance goes against any principles of equality. Moreover, there were no interviews conducted. That same representative decided who goes where trusting only on his intuition. He said 'he knows which employer could tolerate people with disabilities and since they want work they should be happy for any opportunity'. What Turmusani said 14 years ago can still unfortunately be applied today "disabled people were not consulted as to the type of employment they wanted"¹⁰⁵. JICA representatives were unsatisfied with such a process, since their efforts in sending officials to Japan for training and introducing high quality solutions based on Japanese expertise in creating better employment opportunities for people with disabilities, seemed to have made little if any impact on Jordanian entities and their representatives. Even the ladies assisting people with hearing impairments with sign language, shared that they came looking for a chance to apply for a job or accompanying their family members who had hearing impairments, and only after seeing how others are finding it very difficult to communicate decided to volunteer as interpreters during the days of the job fair. A job fair held in part to assist people with all sorts of disabilities, in

¹⁰⁵ Turmusani,1999,p.9

which so many governmental players are taking part – players whose job is to create a better life of dignity for those with special needs- lacked the capacity to ensure the basic requirements of a majority of the individuals concerned.

As for established networks, the HCD has been partnered (and in some cases still is) with:

- the MoL; providing the Ministry’s inspectors with the adequate training on the 2007 Law when it comes to the implementation of the 4% employment quota in the private sector.
- the VTC; commencing in 2007, engage in grouping people with disabilities who first look for assistance at the HCD and redirecting them to the vocational and training programs that the VTC offers. However, Khawaja, stated that “the flow of information and data between both parties and all other sectors involved in the process is very poor; there is no unity”¹⁰⁶.
- UNESCO who funded a project for sign language for 89 supervisors of which currently 25 work at various universities in Jordan assisting with interpretation.
- Young Adult Institute of New York on a group-home project in which they created two homes for 12 young men¹⁰⁷ with disabilities who were previously institutionalized which aimed at capacity building by teaching them various skills to live independently. Eight of them found employment opportunities and were integrated into society.
- The Public Security Directorate/ Civil Defense and Traffic Administration to raise awareness about parking spaces reserved for people with disabilities and fining those who abuse the spaces and unlawfully park in them.

¹⁰⁶ Khawaja, Feb12

¹⁰⁷ The program focused entirely on men due to cultural restrictions of having both sexes live in the same ‘group-home’, moreover creating a group-home for young women would also require parental approval which is difficult to achieve regarding housing.

As Akrouk said “The HCD and the related governmental bodies do work, but they work on macro levels”¹⁰⁸. There are many projects and various plans, however, most of them aim at general and very wide-spread results. What is needed the most is an initial meeting in which all these entities meet, put forward all their plans, establish duties and responsibilities and act jointly to achieve the targets. Otherwise, the reality in Jordan will be that while everyone is doing something, the individuals with disabilities are being neglected and their rights are not being neither promoted nor fulfilled. “This lack of coordination results in unnecessary duplication of services and inefficient use of limited resources”¹⁰⁹. Jordan requires a micro-scheme that will help avoid duplication and focus on what could be achieved with the resources available. Projects should be feasible and should involve all, as well as be very well marketed to the society through campaigns that would involve media coverage by television, radio, newspaper, publications and viral coverage.

A second example is JICA, an international organization cooperating with Jordanian governmental institutions. It aims at “creating a single unit that would be the core of the web of entities in Jordan, to organize, distribute and monitor all the projects being conducted at present and for the future. “The Jordanian community is active in terms of involvement in the rights of people with disabilities and the problems they face, however they lack the drive of networking oriented around one entity that would lead the process in one direction”¹¹⁰. Looking at the Japanese structure of employing people with disabilities and all the vocational training and seriousness it includes, is an opportunity for their partners in Jordan to learn a lot from. During a video-conference that I attended while researching, the Japanese team said “please use us as a tool of experience, we do not intend to force on Jordan what we have done and are still doing in Japan. However, we would like to influence what you are already on the path of achieving, and mobilize you for better and more positive

¹⁰⁸ Akrouk, Feb13

¹⁰⁹ Turmusani, 1999, p.9

¹¹⁰ Sarayji, Feb11

outcomes”¹¹¹. More on JICA’s role in mainstreaming disability rights is covered in the Employment in Depth section.

Jordan is considered a developing country. Whether it is measured by the GDP or by the freedoms and rights granted to its citizens¹¹²; it is clear it has a long way to go to fully have fulfilled its duties towards socialization¹¹³ and internalizing the international human rights into its domestic and national law. Nonetheless, according to official statistics in 2004 Jordan’s population was 5,350,000¹¹⁴, of which 63,000 were individuals with disabilities; that is more than 1% of the population. According to a research study conducted by the DoS in cooperation with the HCD, the number is 2% of the total¹¹⁵. Jordan depends on assistance in forms of financial aid and expertise from countries such as Japan, the USA or The UK¹¹⁶, alongside nationally initiated programs. In terms of what is best for the people with disabilities themselves, one would wonder if the pressure should come from inside or outside of Jordan. Akrouk said “it is part of our heritage and culture that we look after each other, which is why in comparison with the Western states, very few families use the services of homes for the elderly or institutions for their children with special needs in which they are left overnight. We are able to absorb each other’s needs on personal and family levels”¹¹⁷. This shows that Jordanians have the will, they simply lack the drive and the means of finding easy access to governmental entities which could offer legally backed solutions. The setback from unsuccessful cooperation results as a gap in shared experiences and knowledge as well as collected data, and most importantly in a temporary development linked to ‘working at macro-level’. More importantly, Jordan was (and still is) part of the Arab Spring; demonstrations and rallies gather for the fight for basic rights and freedoms

¹¹¹ JICA video-conference, Feb19

¹¹² Freedom House,2012, Jordan is a ‘Not Free’ with only partly free internet and not free press.

¹¹³ Risse&Sikkink,1999,Ch.1

¹¹⁴ DoS,2004. Since 2004 the population data has increased, the population in 2011 was 6,249,000 http://www.dos.gov.jo/dos_home_a/main/index.htm . Which means that the number of people with disabilities has risen as well. For coherence, 2004 data is used.

¹¹⁵ DoS +HCD report,2010

¹¹⁶ Ex. USAID, or USA and UK models for accessibility codes

¹¹⁷ Akrouk, Feb 13.

every day. Due to that the government has changed six times since early 2011, such rapid changes and visible instability influences the work of state departments to a large extent; with every new government being formulated, new officials and Ministers are appointed and each with a different background, strategies and plans. There is no continuity in the already established programs and with every new team a ‘reset’ button is pushed and the work begins from scratch. Thus the political changes in Jordan, as minor in comparison to its neighboring states, still play an enormous role not only on the political arena, but also on the sub-agendas that are being founded and worked on for a few months, but halted without any results or achievements due to a new government formation. Which ironically indicates that with every governmental *change*, the *change* that people are demonstrating and fighting for since early 2011, is being pushed backwards.

Khatib stated that “the government and its departments should have a leading role in implementing legislation aimed at the integration of people with disabilities in the work force in public and official institutions to begin with. In addition they should firmly create awareness amongst the employers and all employees at all Ministries regarding the importance of such integration”¹¹⁸. The required criteria at the moment is restore the faith of people with disabilities, their families and all who work with dedication to disability rights, in a government that is transparent, accountable and able to sustain the acceleration of any progress that is to take place. However, the leading goal of any project or change should firstly represent and reflect the views and needs of people with disabilities themselves. Just as Turmusani said “in order to make these rights a reality there is a strong need for all relevant parties to cooperate and coordinate their efforts”¹¹⁹.

¹¹⁸ Khatib,2010,p.53

¹¹⁹ Turmusani,1999,p.12

5.1.5 Lack of Monitoring and Supervision

Lack of cooperation and networking is one problem. The unavailability of a specified unit that has the full authority of a monitoring body is another. It makes the shift from charity to human rights attitude too slow for people with disabilities to enjoy their rights as guaranteed in international human rights law, which Jordan signed, ratified and institutionalized to a certain degree. Presently there are four main state departments with ‘monitoring duties’ split between them; the HCD; for all issues regarding people with disabilities, the MoSD; with its Supervision and Rehabilitation Unit targeted at training and vocational matters, the MoL; for all employment and economic empowerment tasks as well as the role of quota inspectors, and the MGA; regarding the Code. When no actual monitoring is taking place, and all the aforementioned entities pass the blame onto each other, the outcome is that the law exists on paper and on paper only. This distribution of duties, instead of making organization more effective, has resulted in governmental indolence and stagnation in its general capacity to create a supervisory mandate which would apply to all and be spearheaded by one responsible party.

The HCD as stated in Article 7(A) lays down policies then revises them and follows up on their implementation in coordination with all concerned parties; as a way of consolidating efforts for the people with disabilities final advantage¹²⁰. As shown, such ‘coordination’ exists on very small scales, while following up on the implementation means directing criticism to a body that has breached accessibility and employment quota laws. There is no specific mention to any authority given to the HCD to actually monitor the implementation of the 2007 Law. According to the CRPD Jordan shall establish and strengthen a framework for independent mechanisms to -amongst other duties- monitor the implementation of the Convention, which also guarantees the full participation of civil society- mainly people with disabilities themselves in the monitoring process¹²¹. Based on the National Strategy,

¹²⁰ HCD Law, 2007, Art. 7

¹²¹ CRPD, Art. 33 (2)(3)

not less than a 100,000 JD (approximately 825, 000 NOK)¹²² were allocated for the creation of a more societally oriented (NGOs, INGOs and the private sector) intervention in the monitoring process. However, interview results revealed no such collaboration. A Lawyer said “there is no implementation, monitoring or execution of any sort. There is just written law, and even that law due to academic and legal incompetence is creating more obstacles for people with disabilities than solving their problems. The HCD comes up with definitions and plans, it publishes studies and prints brochures but practically it is futile”¹²³. Halawa said “The HCD as a facilitator has introduced the legislation, but has not defined a monitoring responsibility in a pure sense of monitoring to neither itself nor any other entity, and while the law is breached, the HCD is in no position to hold anyone accountable”¹²⁴.

Private sector institutions are fined by the 2007 Law¹²⁵ in case of breaching the employment quota¹²⁶. The inspection is carried out by the Inspection Unit of the MoL. However, failing to deliver accessible environments is not mentioned and thus it is not punishable. The HCD’s Eng. Maysoon eagerly stated that “we are currently working on amending the 2007 Law to make it more compatible with the CRPD. Part of what we are pushing for is penalizing private sector institutions for breaches of the buildings code. However, we have to be very careful that the penalty these private institutions will pay will not be their gateway out of creating an accessible environment but an additional financial punishment”¹²⁷. According to JICA representatives, institutions that do not implement the accessibility laws in Japan are strictly fined due to constant monitoring, the money is then carried forward as incentives for institutions that do. Such a strategy would be very applicable in Jordan; however the 2007 Law would have to state the exact destination of the fines collected to avoid corruption; and in a country like Jordan, where it has received the 58th rank of corrupt

¹²² National Strategy, p.91-93

¹²³ Ibid footnote 103

¹²⁴ Halawa, Feb9

¹²⁵ HCD Law, 2007, Art.12

¹²⁶ Unclear whether they should abide to the Labor Law (2% when employees exceed 50) or the 2007 Law (4% when employees exceed 50).

¹²⁷ Maysoon, Feb 10.

states with a scores of 48/100 in the Transparency International 2012 Index¹²⁸, such measures are crucial.

The monitoring role of the MGA as stated by Eng. Haddadin regarding the accessibility code is focused mainly on denying approvals of potential building plans. However, after approval is granted, the projects are not monitored. At the JEA, engineers stated that the system is looped. Upon receiving approval project leaders easily maneuver around to avoid the accessibility measures. The 2007 Law does not punish such actions; “it is the MGA that is at fault for not doing its part in field monitoring or continuously following up”¹²⁹.

While the Ministries role is strictly connected to Article 21 of the 2007 Law stating that “the Prime Minister and the Ministers shall be entrusted with the execution of the provisions”¹³⁰, monitoring units for the implementation of the employment quota exists at the MoL, and a monitoring and supervision unit has been established at the MoSD. However, as shown in previous factors analyses, monitoring does not exist, thus these set up institutions and departments have failed in the roles entrusted to them.

5.1.6 Vocational Training Discrimination

The purpose of this research in general is to pinpoint the discrimination people with disabilities suffer from regarding their right to employment and to an independent dignified life of economic empowerment opportunities. However, young men and women at the age of work (15+)¹³¹ who were born with physical disabilities or have acquired them as a result of accidents or disease are discriminated against on various steps towards finding a job.

To begin with, the educational system in Jordan, as early as primary or secondary education is not available to everyone due to accessibility restrictions. For those lucky enough to

¹²⁸ Transparency International,2012

¹²⁹ Saleh, Feb 12

¹³⁰ HCD Law,2007Art.21

¹³¹ 15+ is used here given the complexity of Jordanian labor law. This choice is based on DoS documents regarding employment statistics.

receive such an education the barrier to find accessible higher education institutions follows. However, many remain educated in special care centers and institutions where they later require vocational training to attain a skill they could master to make the labor market accessible for them. The VTC operates 42 training facilities all over Jordan¹³², of which eight are located in Amman, and only nine in total are accessible. Nevertheless, even though for people with disabilities the trainings are for free, the admission to any course is a long and unjust process. Firstly even though VTC representatives claim that they offer courses to empower people with disabilities with skills that demanded in the market, these skills are aimed at “low-level jobs”¹³³, such as: product distribution at supermarkets, receptionists, cashiers or tailors¹³⁴. Khatib says that “the expectations from employing people with disabilities are very low, let alone the percentage itself, but also the jobs offered (after the adequate training) are traditional and in many cases outdated”¹³⁵. What is also worrying, is the fact that scholars seem to have succumbed to such discrimination by pointing out what jobs *fit* people with disabilities without further questioning the concept; “jobs such as carpentry, flower arranging, and hairdressing are jobs that are suitable for ‘the disabled’”¹³⁶. Moreover, they are contradictive. Merely a few pages apart, they state that “an important aspect for the vocational training is its democratic connotation; it allows the person to actively choose and decide for him/herself”¹³⁷. Choosing training from a list that includes outdated forms of labor hardly falls under the right to one’s democratic choice. Especially when they reference to John Holland’s career choice theory, in which he explains that people choose environments to work in that are similar to their personalities and in such environments only are they able to express their values and attitudes to be successful and satisfied¹³⁸. Holland describes that the choice of a career is an expression and an extension of the person’s lifestyle. By having only a list of training opportunities for specific skills peo-

¹³² These facilities are for everyone looking for training, they are not specifically created for people with disabilities.

¹³³ Turmusani,1999,p.13

¹³⁴ Yousef &Ghareer, 2010,p.62

¹³⁵ Khatib,2010,p.54

¹³⁶ Yousef &Ghareer,2010,p.15

¹³⁷ Yousef &Ghareer,2010,p.18

¹³⁸ Holland’s Theory (see Ref.)

ple with disabilities are fitted into jobs based on their disabilities, when it should be the other way around. People with disabilities should have the choice to obtain any skill they wish and acquire a job based on their abilities and character. Their disabilities should cease being an obstacle. By ‘giving a helping hand’, the governmental institutions are causing more psychological deterioration than previously existed for any individual, and instead of focusing on *abilities* they choose to remain loyal to viewing the *disability* only. This was clear when at the job fair Rou’a who has a visual impairment was begging for ‘any’ job¹³⁹. Interviewing her showed that she is quite passionate and skilled in various fields such as knitting, sewing, or baking pastries, skills that could guarantee her a desired job if the working environment was made accessible. Yet such negative attitudes from these institutions have taught her that because of her disability, any job should and would be enough for her to be grateful for. Referring to the Capabilities approach mentioned in the Introduction, it shows how individuals have acquired internal capabilities which have not been developed fully. Such attitudes portray the lack of the central capability allowing individuals to control their own environment. While they acquire knowledge of their choice, pursuit of employment depends on governmental decisions rather than on the capabilities and abilities these individuals enjoy.

Moreover, a ‘health certificate’ from any official governmental health institution saying ‘in an appropriate health condition to work’ is required. The report has to state that he/she are ‘disabled’ and have no contagious or psychological illnesses along with other specifications that are reviewed by a specific committee. Able individuals are not required to have such an official document, and instead of helping people to overcome their disabilities, such a document emphasizes their differences even more. Disabilities are not illnesses that should be diagnosed, especially not physical disabilities. A simple conversation with such an individual should be enough to answer a question of any employer of “how could I make your work here comfortable for your mobility?”

¹³⁹ Rou’a, Feb11

Secondly, the duration of the vocational trainings last only four months; that is less than half the period of the trainings able individuals obtain. People with disabilities are the ones with severe complications finding employment, that their courses last shorter defies rationale. Ghareer and Yousef state that when unemployment rates are already high, employers are reluctant to employ people with disabilities as they believe employing able individuals works best for productivity. They continue to say that fellow employees assume the productivity of people with disabilities does not match theirs which could influence their image as a whole; assuming that disability decreases productivity or makes it of a lesser value¹⁴⁰. Such fears do exist in society; researchers and activists are trying to cope by awareness campaigns and positively shifting such negative thoughts. Vocational and training centers, which are governmental institutions, should assist by eliminating such differentiation regarding the training duration.

Thirdly, there is a lack of integration at the training and vocational level, not allowing social skills' development which would enable people with disabilities to feel comfort when employed after finishing the course. Such segregation they claim allows more focus to be put on allowing them to learn skills while accepting their disabilities. While all international legislation and approaches focus on integration in order to fulfill the rights of people with disabilities, it is a matter of concern when Khatib¹⁴¹ is first capable of stating that "people with disabilities should be trained separately from other trainees"¹⁴² and then say "especially with the universal enforcement of integrated training"¹⁴³, showing little dedication to the detail of the scholarly work. While the ICESCR Committee stated that "The technical and vocational guidance and training programs should reflect the needs of all per-

¹⁴⁰ Yousef & Ghareer, Ch.5,7,p.79,222

¹⁴¹ Khatib is an author of various academic writings related to people with disabilities. He also is a professor at the University of Jordan, and sits on the Counseling Committee of the HCD.

¹⁴² Khatib,2010,p213

¹⁴³ Khatib,2010,p213

sons with disabilities, take place in integrated settings, and be planned and implemented with the full involvement of representatives of persons with disabilities”¹⁴⁴.

Fourthly, it is essential to note the cultural pressure of the ‘head of the family’ that plays a huge role on men with disabilities. They are burdened by the need for independence for themselves, and for their societal acceptance especially as the ‘source of income’. This leads to psychological stress for the person with disability as well as his entire family¹⁴⁵. “Disabled women are often viewed as endless burden on their families- both morally and financially... she becomes the focus of the family’s concern, less out of concern for her well-being, more as a protection of the family honor”¹⁴⁶. Nevertheless, during the past decade women in general have had an increased participation in ‘decision making positions’¹⁴⁷ in the Arab region. According to Khatib, their contributions are estimated to be still less than 20% of the entire work force¹⁴⁸, and the situation is much worse for women with disabilities. The pressure in Jordan is generally higher on male individuals to find employment to support their families, yet nowadays, women are eager and sometimes forced to join the financial responsibilities due to harsh economic conditions and poverty. Turmusani studied the link between poverty and disability stating that “disability leads to poverty in the sense that those with impairments will engender extra costs of living related to their specific needs”¹⁴⁹. Further discrimination is rendered inevitable, if as Khatib states that “if employed, salaries, promotional opportunities as well as health insurances and social security benefits are much lower than their ‘able’ colleagues”¹⁵⁰. This shows that people with disabilities have endless problems starting with the basic one of coping and accepting their disability and throughout every step they take afterwards to find employment and enjoy their basic human right of participation.

¹⁴⁴ ICESCR, General Comments No.5, Para.24

¹⁴⁵ Khatib, 2010, p.128

¹⁴⁶ Turmusani, 1999, p.5

¹⁴⁷ By decision making positions I mean more the freedom of choice and right to decide for themselves.

¹⁴⁸ Khatib, 2010, p.347

¹⁴⁹ Turmusani, 2003, p.1

¹⁵⁰ Khatib, 2010, p.222

Agreeing with Turmusani it must be said that the “absence of a welfare system and of positive policies that would promote integration and employment of people with disabilities cause the existing inequalities to multiply”¹⁵¹, and where no such system exists, “economic participation via employment”¹⁵² is particularly important.

5.2 Employment in Depth

As shown, people with disabilities in Jordan struggle continuously to find employment. Reasons that obstruct such a natural right vary in size and form. However, there have been ways to combat the unemployment of people with disabilities through theory; such as through laws and legislation that have been set, and through practice; such as the job fairs or online programs for registration and job matching explained below. Such initiatives are seen as a practical gateway for people with disabilities to mark their presence and their will for employment. Technology today has made it easier for everyone, wherever they are, in being connected, searching and finding what it is they are seeking – employment in this case.

In 2004, the MoL with the support of the American Agency for International Development has established the ‘National Employment Center (NEC)’ aimed at providing both job-seekers and employers in the private sector with all the necessary employment services¹⁵³. This program’s mission is to “provide both parties with high quality solutions designed to meet their needs via an effective job matching system and specialized career consultations”¹⁵⁴. By 2006, they have provided the registered employers with 80% of their needs. Also as a form of more assistance, the Ministry offers a list of 36 employment agencies for Jordanian workers¹⁵⁵. For more efficiency the ‘National Electronic Employment System (NEES)’ was also founded for job-seekers. It is an online system, in which one

¹⁵¹ Turmusani,1999,p.3

¹⁵² Turmusani,2003,p.3

¹⁵³ MoL, NEC (see Ref.)

¹⁵⁴ Ibid

¹⁵⁵ MoL (see Ref)

creates an account with basic information; education, experience and preferences and then follows up on obtainable vacancies made available by employers from different fields. These programs are targeted at all Jordanian job-seekers; there is no specific mention or detailed information for job-seekers with disabilities. Nevertheless, while registering on NEES, one must answer ‘are you a person with disabilities?’ and if ‘yes’, choose from visual impairment, hearing impairment, physical, mental or other. Such a question is both; a highlight of the person’s special needs and also a misleading tool. The ‘choices’ of disabilities are too vague, for example, there is a difference between a person with a certain physical disability that could easily use a staircase and a wheelchair user who would require an elevator or a 1st floor office. Melting all functional limitations into one category may cause the person with disability searching for a job more obstacles than those which already exist. Unfortunately, there are no available results on how many job-seekers have found a job through NEES, and how many (if any) of them were people with disabilities. This example sums up most of such initiatives offered by governmental institutions. After weeks of meetings they act to involve people with disabilities in their programs, and they do so without necessarily contacting any person with disability for guidance as to whether there are special requirements that need to be taken into account. Of course all initiatives are a necessary start, yet if more stigmatizing will result from such projects, they should be researched more thoroughly before applied in practice. However, such opportunities are always better than the lack of them. From raising awareness to actual implementation and positive outcomes it is a long process, one in which every step and decision should be thought of and applied with precision. Regarding NEES, it is a start and a positive one indeed. With the cooperation of organizations that have a history of specialized experience tackling such programs, national and international, it looks promising, given that Jordan through its governmental institutions has the will and capacity to embrace such cooperation and learn from it.

JICA is an example of such an international organization. JICA’s idea of promoting employment for people with disabilities in collaboration with the MoL and other entities is organized in a very efficient structure. It involves all key players; MoL’s Employment Of-

face, the HCD, VTC, the MoSD, and NGOs. The main focus on duties is targeted at the MoL, although all other entities play a huge role in introducing and promoting NEES at individual, private and public levels, providing support and guidance for registration, offering counseling opportunities regarding training and vocational options and preferences, as well as organizing job fairs and interviews. JICA stresses on the importance of ‘career guidance’ that the MoL ought to establish and develop. Moreover, it is working hard to introduce in Jordan what they have been very successful with in Japan; the concept of Job Coaching. “The role of the job coach is not to be a trainer, but rather a bridge or intermediary to connect people with disabilities and companies, by providing support for both, throughout the process of employment”¹⁵⁶. This works very well with assisting the process of raising awareness about the right to employment for people with disabilities, by creating a smooth way of integration. The job coach offers support to individuals until they are familiar with their duties at work in accordance to their disabilities, whilst providing training for the employers as well on how to effectively support the person with disability throughout his/her job, after which contact is kept through calls or occasional visits as follow up. JICA has assisted Malaysia for example with introducing the Job Coach concept, “companies that have undertaken the initiative have seen positive outcomes in creating sustainable employment and in long term service among employees with disabilities in their company”¹⁵⁷. As Halawa said “there is a sincere need for some sort of manuals or job coaches to assist both sides at work, someone to bridge the gap between the employed people with disabilities and their employers”¹⁵⁸. Ultimately, JICA has been developing the skills of governmental institutions and other entities which could lead to better organization of the employment of people with disabilities. Currently, there are workshops taking place in Amman to stabilize more the interaction between JICA’s successful experience in Japan and Jordan’s need to have a model that has achieved very high standards to learn from and use as an example. However, so far and while the workshops and projects are still ongoing, there is no clear indication as to what extent have such concepts been internalized.

¹⁵⁶ Ogawa,2012,Ch1.p.11

¹⁵⁷ Ogawa,2012,Ch.3,p. 73

¹⁵⁸ Halawa, Feb 9

As mentioned, the existence of the 4% quota for employment of people with disabilities does not mean it is being implemented and respected. Individually people with disabilities seeking and willing employment are doing all they possibly can to be achieve their goals. Khitam, a 38 year old wheelchair user has obtained her degree in Special Education. Yet her struggle for a job never entailed her education or degree. “Before the establishment of the HCD I turned to what was then the Union of People with Disabilities to ask for work assistance. After which I was hired for data entry at the Civil Defense office. It was inaccessible, but with the collaboration of the HCD and MGA they created a disability friendly environment. After that I worked as a receptionist at a real-estate development company; apparently they only desired female wheelchair users to fill the receptionist position. It was only here, at the Friends and Families Society for People with Disabilities that my education was relevant, it was only here my degree was valuable”¹⁵⁹. Lack of research time did not allow an answer to whether the real-estate company hired female wheelchair users in respect to the 2007 Law in implementing the 4% quota, or out of an ethical obligation, yet whatever the cause, it was quite inspirational to become aware of such corporate responsibility. Regardless of the lack of interest in Khitam’s degree in her previous jobs, she is content with her career. As an employed individual it was easy for her to point out where the main problem is: “It is the accessibility and transportation that hinder our searches. Governmental departments are usually helpful in employing people with disabilities, yet many of them are inaccessible; we must either find our own ways, ask for help, or keep searching. We need to be able to access places; hospitals, banks, pharmacies”¹⁶⁰. Khitam made clear what herself and all other people with disabilities in Jordan face. Yet out of so many, she has the competitive advantage of being privileged enough to have been successful in finding employment every time she searched. Regarding the aforementioned willingness of employment within the public sector, a research study in 2010 showed that 54% of employed women with disabilities work in the public sector, while 79% of already employed

¹⁵⁹ Khitam, Feb 18

¹⁶⁰ Khitam, Feb 18

men with disabilities work in the private sector¹⁶¹. There was no indication to whether there is any form of gender preference related to positions at both sectors, yet from the study one could gather that women with disabilities find work in both sectors while men with disabilities are more often successful in finding placement in the private sector.

An encounter with the President of the “I am a Human” Society for Rights of People with Disabilities -Jordan, Yaghi, who is also a wheelchair user, was truly encouraging. She is self-employed, and more devoted to the rights of people with disabilities than any other interviewed person or governmental entity. She does field work mostly in 33 areas outside of Amman that are considered less-fortunate. Since Yaghi knows everything about the difficulties, the discrimination and the obstacles; being a person with disability gives her the advantage of knowing what and how to tackle. “When officials claim that there are not enough people with disabilities in Jordan to make the infrastructure adaptations and create disability friendly environments; we face a problem. That is why we aim firstly at changing the mindset of society in general, and of public officials specifically, that change and guaranteeing right of people with disabilities are important for every reason. For example when it comes to accessibility; we instill the idea that even if for the coming 10 years, not one person with disabilities would use a ramp that has been perfectly set according to international standards, it is vital that the ramp exists”¹⁶². It is worth reminding that both Khitam and Yaghi drive customized cars that fit their mobility limitations, accessible transport has made it easier for them to find employment possible and be productive. Regardless of these small scale individual initiatives; it is clear that possibilities do exist if help is provided. They did not find work based on any laws to back them up and are not currently employed because of a quota that guaranteed them a job. One could only imagine how much the market would open up if the quota criteria and the accessibility law were actually implemented. Hopefully, such individual examples of success could set a threshold, and motivate public

¹⁶¹ DoS+HCD report,2010,p.40

¹⁶² Yaghi,JICA meeting, Feb 19

officials to view the bigger picture of the prosperous market that would follow integrating people with disabilities, by making employment for them accessible and unhindered.

According to a study conducted in 2010 by the DoS in cooperation with the HCD entitled ‘The Disability Reality in Jordan: Labor and Unemployment’ there are 17.8% of people with disabilities (age 15 and above) that are economically active (both employed and currently unemployed), while 82.2% are not part of any form of economic empowerment, comparing to 41.6% and 58.4% respectively for ‘able’ persons¹⁶³. Employment of people with disabilities on a larger scale has -according to the annual reports of the HCD – been improving. In 2010 the HCD has secured jobs for 205 persons with disabilities in public and private sectors, while in 2011 the number grew to 391¹⁶⁴. Furthermore, a memorandum of understanding is currently being formulated between the HCD and the Development and Employment Fund¹⁶⁵, aimed at facilitating access of people with disabilities to loans from the Fund, with benefits such as reduced interest rates and extended periods of loan repayment; a step aimed at promoting self-employment and a very innovative way of pushing economic empowerment for people with disabilities forward¹⁶⁶.

As shown, possibilities for people with disabilities to search and find employment suitable for their skills and qualifications are visible. The amount of work being currently undertaken; all the strategies, plans, understandings, legislation, and projects, is paying off. If not on a wide national scale, the extent it is pushed towards is always a step towards better understanding of the needs and special requirements of people with disabilities as an essential segment of the state’s workforce. Nevertheless, obstacles discussed previously must be eliminated, and more emphasis should be directed towards actual implementation of laws and legislation, that if enforced and respected would create a healthy competitive field for

¹⁶³ DoS+HCD report, 2010,p.34

¹⁶⁴ HCD, Annual Reports,2010+2011

¹⁶⁵ The Development and Employment Fund is the official body providing financial loans aimed at self-employment projects.

¹⁶⁶ HCD webpage (see Ref)

everyone to strive towards. The legislation when violated by either public or private sectors should give rise to fines. The database that the HCD in collaboration with the Royal Scientific Society have created – as provided in the HCD 2011 Annual Report- in which a national electronic system keeps all data regarding people with disabilities and all services provided to them¹⁶⁷, is what is necessary to make available for all entities concerned; public, private, NGOs, and people with disabilities themselves along with their families¹⁶⁸. As with any other process, it is long and requires patience, but as long as everyone is included, and as long as people with disabilities are involved and not be spoken of on behalf of, such a process would be more successful, and by all means a development that would guarantee Jordan not only better economic results, less unemployment, and a more integrated society. Additionally at times of political instability as Jordan is presently experiencing, such faith restoration is highly needed and would motivate society to actually think productively of the future of Jordan, as a unity, as one.

¹⁶⁷ HCD, Annual Report 2011

¹⁶⁸ It is of course understood that a certain criteria of anonymity is required, however a database available for all would make all processes transparent and would build up faith in a system that so far has failed the majority of them.

6 Conclusion

I hope I have demonstrated the scale of necessary work that needs to be undertaken by researchers, analysts, decision makers, NGOs, and human rights practitioners in the field of disability rights. In the hypothesis, I posited that the fault for lack of employment opportunities was pointed towards lack of ‘rights’ knowledge, and a weak legal implementation. Yet as shown, entangled within them are many factors that also need to be addressed. However, there are success stories that Jordan could learn from. MacLennan studied the work of organizations that focus on increasing the disability rights realization in developed and developing countries to conclude that four focal points reappear in their methods of work. Rights education, political and social will, law enforcement, and cooperation between governmental and non-governmental organizations are aspects which if targeted in a contextual manner, would make it possible for rights to have a chance and be effectively realized in different settings¹⁶⁹. As most interviewees have shown, for people with disabilities in Jordan and their struggles to find employment, social perceptions should be targeted by awareness campaigns and politicians should focus on implementing existing laws before developing new legislation, while organizations and individuals ought to act as pressure groups that would keep the wheels turning. Turmusani suggested that for the Jordanian state to meet the present international demands it should first prioritize support to people with disabilities to promote their self-advocacy, and work on increasing access to various resources of which the most important is finance¹⁷⁰. Others have also suggested ways to end disability rights violations. The solutions to the discrimination against people with disabilities according to Nussbaum are somewhat too general. She states “that the public sphere has to be more engaged, and nation’s health plans need to be more reasonable, while

¹⁶⁹ MacLennan,2012,p.351

¹⁷⁰ Turmusani,1999,p.14

workplaces need to become more flexible with other forms of adjustments taken into account”¹⁷¹.

People with disabilities have been marginalized and their rights and demands have been kept under the surface for far too long. It is about time for Jordan to step up its dedication to the cause and shift it from words to action. Jordan receives huge amounts of financial aid annually from many countries; most importantly the USA. The USA aid to Jordan in 2012 amounted approximately \$13.1 billion, in 2013 and only as part of the Economic Support Funds, Jordan is expecting \$360 million¹⁷². While there is little transparency as to the aid amounts and what they are spent on, after eliminating corruption, and having official figures accountable for the expenditure, organizations handling issues of people with disabilities will have legitimate means to apply for financial support to develop for example ramps, or training schemes adequate to the abilities and choices of people with disabilities.

People with disabilities like everyone else in society, have also developed and acquired internal capabilities, such as intellectual and emotional capacities preparing them for adulthood, however the state has ‘cut off the avenues through which they actually have the opportunity to function in accordance with those capabilities’¹⁷³. As shown, Jordan has ratified the CRPD, or introduced the 4% employment for people with disabilities quota, proving that the central capability of controlling one’s environment¹⁷⁴ and having the right to seek employment on equal basis is valid. Yet, it has failed in creating means for this to materialize. Since the approach studies capability failures that result from discrimination and marginalization among other factors, it is unfortunately safe to say, that Jordan according to Nussbaum’s theory has imprisoned people with disabilities by preventing them from choosing to function in accordance to their developed internal capabilities, due to social, economic and political conditions¹⁷⁵.

¹⁷¹ Nussbaum,2011,p.152

¹⁷² Sharp,2013,p.12

¹⁷³ Nussbaum,2011,p.21

¹⁷⁴ Nussbaum,2011,p.34

¹⁷⁵ Nussbaum,2011,p.30

As the factors have been analyzed, evidently, no planned solution should neglect any of them. The success of any plan lies in the joint forces of all governmental and non-governmental institutions and organizations. It is clear as the thesis has shown that it is not in the numbers of laws and legislation developed but in the actual enforcement and implementation of them. The first however strike should aim at awareness, once the positive social mentality towards people with disabilities is established, an ethical obligation will precede the fear of being penalized. Accessibility and facilitated transport will materialize once public and private sectors acknowledge the seriousness of the situation when an efficient monitoring body is created. Nevertheless, internal pressure groups are as vital in this process as external 'international' pressure, which "can amplify the demands of domestic groups"¹⁷⁶. Once people with disabilities raise their voices in unity and demand their inherent right to a dignified and facilitated life in which they have the rights to equal participation and to employment, a developing country like Jordan, on its path to democracy and human rights fulfillment would have little room to silence a national and international community calling for nothing more than inclusion, participation and equality.

¹⁷⁶ Risse&Sikkink,1999,p.18

Annex: List of Interviewees¹⁷⁷

<u>Entity</u>	<u>Name/Position</u>	<u>Date</u>
Anonymous	Lawyer/Civil & Penal Court	Feb.7 th , 2013
Sana Group/Activist in Disability Affairs	Mona Halawa/Active Founder (also Adnan's mother, a young man with Cerebral Palsy)	Feb.9 th , 2013
Vocational and Train- ing Corporation	Salman Al Qaruty/Director of Public Relations(Spokesman) Majed Khawaja/Director of Train- ing Courses and its Partici- pants(incl.People with Disabilities)	Feb.10 th , 2013 Feb.12 th , 2013
Higher Council for the Affairs of Persons with Disabilities	Alia Zureikat/Director of Communica- tion & International Relations De- partment (also a wheelchair user) Eng. Maysoon / Coordinator of Acces- sibility Department (also a person with disabilities) Hussein Abu Farash/ Planning & Re- search Director	Feb.10 th , 2013 Feb.10 th , 2013 Feb.10 th , 2013
Japan International Cooperation Agency	Nizar Sarayji/ Project Coordinator	Feb.11 th , 2013

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- ¹⁷⁷ I have also contacted representatives of various organizations and ministries who have rejected my calls constantly, or rejected the chance to be interviewed. For compliance with anonymity measures, some names will not be published.

	Masato Takechi/Advisor of Disability Affairs	Feb.11 th , 2013
Individual/Applicant for employment at Job Fair	Rou'a/ Applicant at the visited Job Fair (person with disabilities)	Feb.11 th , 2013
Jordanian Engineer Association	Eng. Muneer Saleh/ Consultation & Plans Revision	Feb.12 th , 2013
Al Masar(Child Development Services)/Activist in Disability Affairs	Widad Akrouk/Managing Director	Feb.13 th , 2013
Friends and Families of People with Disabilities (FFSPD)	Khitam Abu Awad/A teacher (also a wheelchair user)	Feb.18 th , 2013
I am Human Society for Rights of People with Disabilities	Asia Yaghi/President (also a wheelchair user)	Feb.19 th , 2013
Land Transport Regulatory Commission	Jamil Mujahed/Director General	Feb.21 st , 2013

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Discrimination (Employment and Occupation) Convention, 1958 (No.111) (Entry into force:15 Jun 1960 – Adoption: Geneva, 42nd ILC session 25 Jun 1958)

ICCPR International Convention on Civil and Political Rights (adopted by the United Nations General Assembly on December 16, 1966, and in force from March 23, 1976)

ICESCR International Convention on the Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (adopted by the United Nations General Assembly on 16 December 1966, and in force from 3 January 1976)

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