

# JORDAN

## Socio-Economic Costs of Gender-Based Violence



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### Gender-based violence (GBV) is a global pandemic, with serious social and economic repercussions for survivors, their families, communities and nations.<sup>i</sup>

This project aimed to estimate the socio-economic costs of GBV (domestic violence, early and forced marriage, and public sexual harassment) in six USAID presence countries: Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon, Morocco, Tunisia, and West Bank and Gaza.

Across the globe, 1 in 3 women has experienced physical and/or sexual intimate partner violence (IPV).<sup>ii</sup> In Jordan 24% of ever-married women experienced physical, and/or sexual violence perpetrated by their husband.<sup>iii</sup> Relatives constitute 52% of perpetrators of sexual violence, 12% of whom are husbands.<sup>iv</sup>

Another serious form of GBV is child marriage- defined as any marriage before the age of 18. In Jordan, the prevalence of child marriage among 20-24 year old women is relatively low, at 8%.<sup>1</sup> This marks a decreasing trend, as 18% of women currently 45-49 years of age were married before age 18.<sup>v</sup>

**24%** of women have experienced IPV

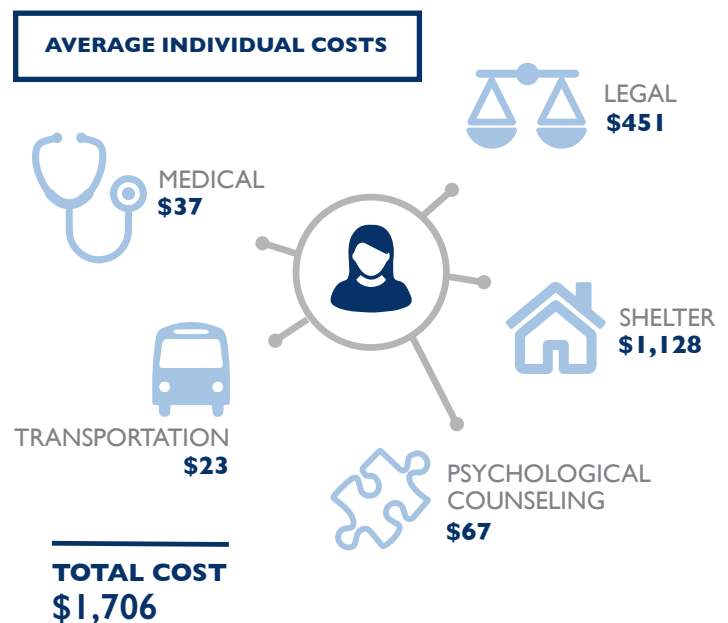
**8%** of women were married before 18

The legal and political environment for addressing GBV in Jordan is comparable to other countries in the region. The Jordanian Constitution provides explicit legal protections for basic human rights without distinction to gender.

It attempts to eliminate all forms of discrimination against women, and takes some measures to ensure equality. Article VIII explicitly outlaws threats, abuse, and torture, though in broad terms. Additionally, the National Charter of 1991 stipulates that all Jordanians – men and women – are equal before the law and prohibits gender-based discrimination in their rights and obligations.

This legal framing does not yet translate directly into equality in the social sphere, particularly with regard to male survivors of GBV, and the discrimination faced by the lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and intersex (LGBTI) population. However, there are growing support networks and awareness campaigns that focus on the rights of women, girls, and children.

Despite the supportive normative context, not every woman who has experienced GBV seeks help. Only 41% of women who have experienced any form of physical or sexual violence sought help; an additional 13% did not seek help but told someone about their experience. Among women who did seek help, 84% looked to their own family for support, 20% their husband's family, five percent from friends, and less than two percent from the police.<sup>vi</sup>



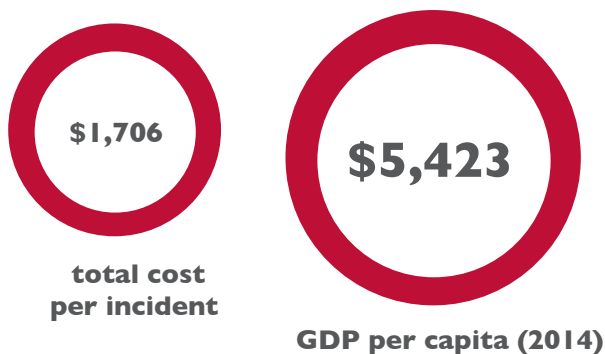
## INCIDENT LEVEL COSTS

The cost of providing and accessing these services adds up quickly. The model below assumes that IPV survivors who seek help through formal sources receive comprehensive treatment across four types of services, and require transport to access these. The average costs of each type of service per episode of IPV are summarized in the graphic below:

The average medical cost considers medical consultation and other potential medical procedures. The average cost of a consultation is \$21, whereas the average cost with additional procedures is \$53, for an average of \$37. The estimated cost of one month in an emergency shelter is \$1,128 per survivor.

The costs for psychological counseling and transportation are calculated to include the average number of follow up visits a survivor is required to make for full treatment, an average of \$67.

Thus, the total average cost incurred for this full complement of care is approximately \$1706 per episode of violence. It is important to note that not all these incident level costs are exclusively borne by the survivor. Therefore, the above comparison of these costs to the GDP per capita in Jordan only provides a loose comparison of the magnitude of the economic impact of GBV. As presented in the graphic above, this number is the sum of the average costs for medical services, legal services, psychological counseling, transportation and shelter.



## INCIDENT LEVEL COSTS

The average total cost, assuming all services are used, varies depending on whether a survivor requires post-rape care. These calculations can help us understand how much of Jordan's GDP is invested in services for GBV response. Taking into consideration the national IPV prevalence and help-seeking rates among IPV survivors, these expenditures can add up to \$8.07 million or 0.01% of total GDP for the most comprehensive package of services.

Even for a simpler package of services, including only counseling through a social service organization, this cost still equates to \$1.2 million. It is important to note that these national level figures do not take into account costs related to other forms of GBV.

As a comparison to these figures, national health expenditures were 5.2% of the 2014 GDP and 1.7% of GDP is spent on education. Across Jordan, there is an extensive range of support services for GBV survivors, such as hotlines and shelters that provide legal aid, psychosocial support interventions, health and medical forensic services, advocacy, and awareness campaigns. However, the spending of both the Jordanian government and civil society on GBV services represent significant lost opportunity cost. If violence were prevented, at least \$8.07 million currently lost to GBV response could instead be invested in services like education that promote the prevention of GBV, and preventive health measures that benefit the entire nation.



## METHODOLOGY

The data presented here were collected via 15 key informant interviews with service providers in Jordan. The cost estimates include only the direct costs of service access and provision for survivors of GBV and were calculated at the individual level using an accounting methodology.<sup>vii</sup> Due to limitations of the primary data collected, the national level cost estimates relied on extrapolation using secondary data/statistics.

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