

The Political
Economy of Reform:
A Comparative Study
Between Jordan and
Tunisia

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Introduction

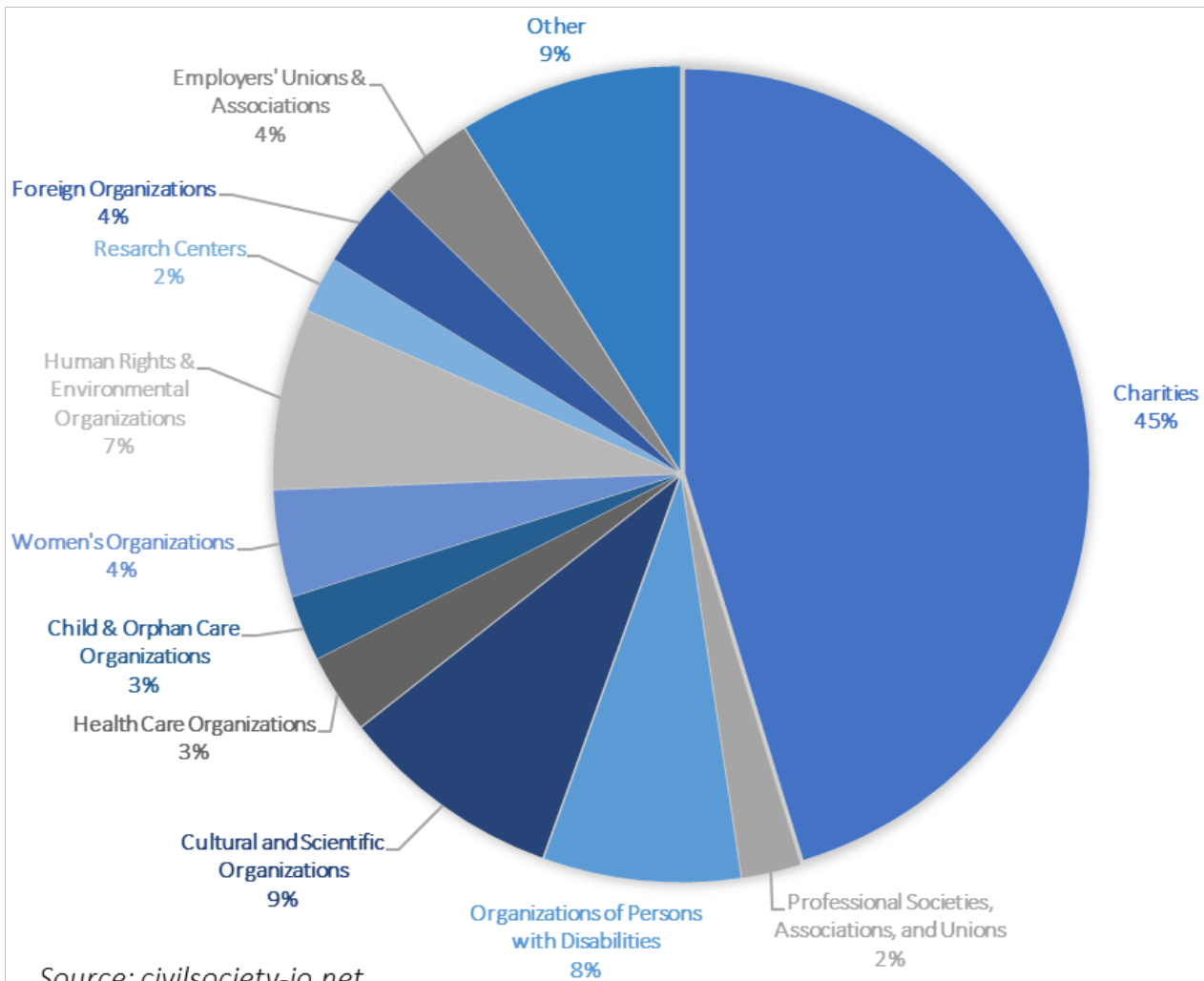
- In order for social protection policies to be most effective, the consultative process is essential.
- However, historically, Civil Society organizations across the region have faced significant limitations on their ability to engage in the social dialogue.
- This study utilized a qualitative interview-based approach to examining the current political economy of the social dialogue in both Jordan and Tunisia, with particular focus on the role that Civil Society has played in the development and implementation of social protection.

Background



01

JORDAN



Source: civilsocietv-io.net

Civil Society and Its Role In Social Protection

- Historically, restrictions placed on CSOs have **limited consultative capacity** in generation of social protection policy.
- Jordan does host mechanisms for civil society input into social protection such as
 - Institutions which **facilitate dialogue** about social protection (e.g. ESC)
 - Process of **posting draft laws & feedback** on PMs website
 - *However* feedback may be disregarded and mechanisms are reactive
- CSOs face many challenges involving their relationship with government and authority including **restrictions on mobilising administrative and lobbying** barriers, and **weak consultation procedures**.
- In Jordan, CSOs fill many of the gaps caused by the downscaling of the welfare state and the legal barriers to accessing social protection for **non-Jordanians**

Table 2: Sources of Aid for Households with an Annual Income Less than 2500 JD in Jordan

Aid Source	% of Households Receiving Aid
Individuals	11.9
Religious Associations	2.6
UNHCR	9.8
World Food Programme	1.3
UNRWA	1.8
Zakat Fund	1.0
Royal Court	2.2
Ministry of Health	1.7
National Aid Fund	4.9
Ministry of Social Development	10.6
Other sources	21.0
None	50.4

Source: Department of Statistics, Household Expenditures and Income Survey (2017)



02

Tunisia



Findings



03

**Comparative
Analysis**

CONTEXT: Social Protection Rates of Coverage

Table 1: Rates of Coverage

<i>Rates of Coverage</i>	Jordan	Tunisia
<i>Population Covered by at least one social protection benefit</i>	35%	50%
<i>Persons of Retirement Age receiving pensions</i>	57%	85%
<i>Persons with severe disabilities collecting benefits</i>	14%	5%
<i>Employed Covered in the event of work injury</i>	58%	29%
<i>Children/households receiving cash benefits</i>	9%	29%
<i>Poor persons covered by some form of social protection</i>	N/A	66%
<i>Vulnerable persons covered by social assistance</i>	17%	21%

Source: ILO, Social Protection Data Dashboards

Table 3: Enabling Environment Comparative Analysis

	Jordan	Tunisia
<i>Formation of CSOs and Regulation of Activities</i>	2008 Societies Law, MOSD MOL (Labor Unions)	Decree-Law on Associations (No. 2011-88)
<i>Ability to form CSOs</i>	Somewhat limited	Yes
<i>Access to foreign funding for CSOs</i>	Very limited	Yes (due diligence is required)
<i>Freedom of assembly</i>	Somewhat Limited	Yes
<i>Ability to host board meetings without supervision / interference</i>	No	Yes
<i>Ability to host and organize activities without permission</i>	No	Yes
<i>Freedom of protest</i>	Very limited	Yes
<i>Formalized Mechanism for Social Dialogue</i>	The Economic and Social Council; The Tripartite Committee	National Council for Social Dialogue
<i>Regular meetings</i>	Somewhat	Somewhat
<i>Independent</i>	Somewhat	Yes
<i>Obligatory consultation</i>	No	Yes
<i>Diverse representation of CSOs</i>	Somewhat	No

Source: Author's Compilation

Key actors comparative analysis

Organizations	Jordan	Tunisia
International Organisations	UN organizations and other large international organizations play a significant role in the <u>technical guidance of policy development</u> . For example, UNICEF has been an active partner in expanding the National Aid Fund's services. <u>UN Organizations were also consulted during the development of the National Social Protection Strategy.</u>	UN organizations (ILO, UNPD, UNICEF, OIM..)are important development partners in several sectors including social protection and inclusion. Provide policy support and institutional capacity development, Strong engagement with civil society organizations. ILO (social contract) Advocacy efforts (Oxfam.)
Communitybased Organizations (CBOs)	<u>Community organizations, RNGOs, and charities</u> offer cash assistance, food parcel distribution, legal assistance and psychosocial support. <u>Their ability to contribute to social dialogue varies considerably.</u>	<u>Community organizations, youth associations,</u> diversified and big outreach play a role in provision of services to vulnerable people (food distribution, facilitate access to health, psychological support,
Advocacy and human rights	The advocacy abilities of these organizations largely depends on their own internal capacities and proactiveness. Have had significant successes in the past, but also significant challenges.	Multiple organizations advocating for HR and social and economic rights especially after the revolution. Strong capacity to implement initiatives and advocacy LTDH, IADH, FTDES, AFDT...
Trade Unions	Very weak bargaining position. Officially recognized trade unions are incorporated into Ministry of Labor and are not independent. Independent trade unions regarded as illegal by gov.	Monopolize the social dialogue, strong role in negotiating social reforms, don't recognize small trade unions, don't cover informal workers in their negotiation with the gov.

Challenges comparative analysis

= ǫ ǁ αǔ	Jordan	Tunisia
Limited Capacity of CSOs	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Financial and administrative spheres 2. Funding challenges worsened during pandemic as private sector also affected 3. CSOs require higher level of technical ability, MEAL services and improved targeting of population 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Main weaknesses were sustainability and technical capacity 2. Funding challenges, unavailability of funds 3. CSOs unable to adapt to beneficiaries 4. CSOs insufficient and inconsistent to meet needs of informal workers
Relationship with Governmental Bodies	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Permission required for mobilisation/events 2. Restrictions tightened during pandemic 3. Worse for those relying on MOSD for funding 4. Poor coordination/communication 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Unclear communication between government and civil society, highlighted by the pandemic <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Government ignored information shared with them during Pandemic
Wasta, Nepotism and Corruption	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Preferential treatment of certain CSOs by state, which would then have more freedom 2. Eased approval for those with connection 3. Preferential treatment in policy arena 4. Nepotism within own CSOs bodies 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Beneficiaries of CSOs routinely noted that wasta was a factor in determining service provision. 2. Those with good connections and favouritism could access health services more quickly

Policy recommendations

JORDAN

- Institution of formalized and independent mechanisms for social dialogue, with obligatory consultation
- Amendment of the 2008 Societies Law and improved freedom of association

TUNISIA

- More diverse representation of CSOs within social dialogue

JORDAN AND TUNISIA

- Improved support for CSOs
- Improved communication with governmental bodies

Discussion