POLICY REPORT - SSE IN JORDAN

2025-2026

SOCIAL AND SOLIDARITY ECONOMY IN JORDAN

منتدى الاستراتيجيات الأردني
JORDAN STRATEGY FORUM

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Social and Solidarity Economy in Jordan

2025-2026

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This research/project is supported/funded by the British Academy's ODA International Interdisciplinary Research Programme. Award Reference: OIIRP230329

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FOREWORD

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The Jordan Strategy Forum (JSF) has long viewed its role as extending beyond analyzing economic realities to actively contributing to their reassessment through strategic inquiry and forward-looking policy dialogue. Central to this work are enduring questions about how to achieve sustainable economic growth, expand participation in economic activity, and ensure that growth supports social stability and creates decent work opportunities across all regions of the Kingdom.

Economic discourse in Jordan, and across the region, has traditionally focused on the roles of the government and the private sector. This paper brings forward a third and equally significant actor and that is “social and solidarity economy”.

The paper demonstrates that Jordan has a dynamic ecosystem of social impact initiatives and institutions that operate within communities and responds to their priorities while offering sustainable economic and social solutions. The social and solidarity economy complements the public and private sectors and constitutes a vital component of a diversified and resilient national economy. It enables organizations at the local level, stimulates investments, creates employment opportunities, and offers practical models of shared values.

At the JSF, we firmly believe that policy clarity is essential for sustainable economic growth. Clear definitions, accurate classifications, and balanced recognition of institutional roles enable effective collaboration across sectors, attract impactful investment, and support integration within national modernization pathways. For this reason, we have consistently supported efforts to articulate a nationally grounded understanding of the social and solidarity economy, one that reflects Jordanian realities, draws on local capacities, and engages thoughtfully with relevant international experiences.

The recommendations outlined in this paper, particularly those related to classification frameworks and the strengthening of cross-sector partnerships, reflect an advanced and pragmatic approach to strategic thinking. They move beyond abstract policy discussion by offering actionable pathways for aligning institutional roles, improving coordination across sectors, and enhancing the effectiveness of existing initiatives.

Jordan’s greatest asset remains its people, their resilience, spirit of solidarity, and their capacity for innovation. Recognizing and strengthening the social and solidarity economy, and developing its institutional frameworks, represents a strategic economic choice that reinforces Jordan’s pathway toward sustainable development.

ABSTRACT

This policy report examines the role and current state of social impact in Jordan within the national development agenda. It assesses the relevance of the Social and Solidarity Economy (SSE) framework for Jordan and explores how it can be adapted to support the evolution of a transitional social-impact ecosystem. Drawing on mixed-methods evidence from the Doing Good, Growing Strong research project—including participatory workshops and a national survey of 313 entities—the report maps Jordan's social-impact ecosystem, highlighting key strengths, structural challenges, and emerging opportunities. Based on these findings, it proposes a locally grounded definition of SSE and presents strategic policy recommendations, with particular emphasis on the introduction of an accreditation and certification framework, strengthened cross-sectoral collaboration, and a set of short-, medium-, and long-term policy actions to support a coherent and sustainable social and solidarity economy in Jordan.

Social and Solidarity Economy in Jordan

1. BACKGROUND

The Arab region faces interconnected economic, social, environmental, and political challenges that constrain justice, sovereignty, and shared prosperity. Conventional economic models1 have proven insufficient to address these complexities, placing unsustainable pressure on governments alone. This context calls for innovative, inclusive, and locally grounded economic approaches that place communities at the center of development and support a just transition towards sustainability.

In response to these challenges, the United Nations[1] has promoted the Social and Solidarity Economy (SSE) as a development model that recentres economic activity around human and ecological well-being, particularly in the context of multiple global crises and the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

According to the United Nations and the World Economic Forum[2], SSE encompasses a diverse set of economic activities and private actors that prioritise social—and often environmental—objectives alongside economic sustainability, rather than profit maximisation. Grounded in collective action and solidarity, SSE seeks to strengthen social governance of the economy and foster inclusive, democratic, and sustainable economic systems. It includes a heterogeneous range of organisations, such as co-operatives, associations, foundations, not-for-profit organisations, voluntary groups, and social enterprises, which vary widely in legal form, ownership, scale, sector, and target communities.

While governments, corporations, civil society organisations, and academic institutions increasingly adopt SDG[3] and Environmental, Social, and Governance (ESG) frameworks in reporting and strategy, these approaches often fall short of enabling genuinely localised development. Evidence suggests that localisation is frequently symbolic rather than substantive, with limited community involvement in design and decision-making, and continued concentration of power and funding among international actors[4]. Moreover, such frameworks are often criticised for being rooted in Western epistemologies and bureaucratic models that risk perpetuating dependency rather than fostering autonomy and sovereignty[5,6,7].

Against this backdrop, SSE offers an alternative pathway beyond neoliberal and extractive paradigms, emphasising pluralism, community ownership, and culturally rooted economic practices. In the Jordanian context, this includes building on proven, locally embedded mechanisms—such as Shariah-compliant finance, Islamic social finance tools, and modest community-level investment. The prevalence of strong community ties and extended family networks further positions SSE as a viable framework for collective action and community-centred development.

[1] Krlev, G., Wruk, D., Pasi, G., & Bernhard, M. (Eds.). (2023). Social economy science: Transforming the economy and making society more resilient. Oxford University Press. https://doi.org/10.1093/oso/9780192868343.001.0001
[2] United Nations. (2023, March 29). Social and solidarity economy (PDF). United Nations. https://www.un.org/sites/un2.un.org/files/social_and_solidarity_economy_29_march_2023.pdf
[3] World Economic Forum. (2022). Unlocking the social economy: Towards an inclusive and resilient society (WEF Report). World Economic Forum. https://www3.weforum.org/docs/WEF_Unlocking_the_Social_Economy_2022.pdf
[4] Impact Jordan. (2024). Impact Jordan – Finance, ethics, and the return of meaning. Author. Funded by the International Development Research Centre (IDRC).
[5] Mihlar, F. (2023). Coloniality and the inadequacy of localisation. The Humanitarian Leader, 2023. https://doi.org/10.21153/thl2023art1971
[6] Shuayb, M., Parashar, S., & Schulz, M. (2024). Compliance and coloniality: Aid bureaucracy and the failures of "localisation" in Myanmar's complex emergency. Global Public Health. Advance online publication. https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/articles/PMC12306387/
[7] Sutherland, R. (2022). Unlearning the "master's tools": Can international development be decolonized? Yale Journal of International Affairs. https://yalejournal.org

The objectives of this report are twofold:

1. To examine why the SSE framework is relevant for Jordan.
2. To suggest how SSE can be adapted and evolved to support a transitional social-impact ecosystem.

The findings of this report are based on evidence generated through the Doing Good, Growing Strong: Catalysing Economic and Social Impact in Jordan through Sustainable Social Enterprises research project. The research project combines qualitative participatory methods—including ideation and co-creation workshops—with quantitative data from a national survey (sample of 313 entities). Together, these approaches provide a comprehensive mapping of Jordan's social-impact ecosystem, highlighting key strengths, structural challenges, and emerging opportunities, including but not limited to economic pressures, fragmentation across actors, and misalignment between donor-driven and community-driven models. Based on this evidence, the report proposes a locally grounded definition of SSE and offers strategic policy recommendations to guide the future development of a coherent and sustainable social and solidarity economy in Jordan.

2. SOCIAL IMPACT iN JORDAN: INTRODUCTION

Social impact practices in Jordan, which represents the practices that prioritize social values and community wellbeing over private values, are deeply rooted in everyday life, shaped by traditions of solidarity, faith, and mutual support that extend across family, tribal, and neighborhood networks. These indigenous forms of cooperation—grounded in religious and cultural values—have long provided mechanisms for social welfare, resilience, and collective responsibility. However, in recent decades, the global discourse of "development" has shifted significantly, transforming from a shared human pursuit into a hierarchical model of expertise. This paradigm has profoundly influenced international development policy, often overshadowing the local systems of care and cooperation that historically sustained Jordanian society.

Jordan's engagement with the global development landscape can be understood through two interrelated dynamics[8] . The first is a strong reliance on external funding, which has positioned international donors and multilateral agencies as influential actors in shaping development priorities. While donor support has played an important role in providing much-needed resources and technical expertise, it has also created structural challenges, including a tendency for priorities to align with externally defined agendas. Over time, this dynamic can limit the scope for locally led

[8] Rosli, A., & Al Taji, F. (2025, November 14). Reclaiming development: Lessons from Jordan and Malaysia. Impact Entrepreneur. https://impactentrepreneur.com/reclaiming-development-lessons-from-jordan-and-malaysia/

decision-making and reduce the ability of communities and national institutions to fully shape development pathways.

The second dynamic arises from the market-oriented logic embedded with much external assistance. Frameworks that prioritize efficiency, entrepreneurship, and measurable outcomes frequently neglect cultural and social contexts. Consequently, they tend to privilege start-ups and business models over the long-standing, community-rooted practices of solidarity and faith-based giving that continue to define social impact in Jordan. The globally popularized term "social entrepreneurship," often presented as a universal model for empowerment, can inadvertently act as an instrument of policy transfer, imposing external definitions of success and legitimacy. In doing so, it risks marginalizing locally grounded traditions of collective giving and responsibility that have long embodied social innovation without the need for imported frameworks.

This tension highlights a deeper challenge: development narratives not only determine funding flows but also shape the very imagination of progress. Addressing this requires recognizing and strengthening Jordan's indigenous traditions of social cooperation while integrating them within broader frameworks of innovation and sustainability.

In this context, the Social and Solidarity Economy (SSE) presents a viable and forward-looking pathway. Globally, SSE reflects a shift towards human- and nature-centered economic models that integrate social purpose with innovation, financial viability, and long-term sustainability. According to a United Nations report (2017), the social economy accounts for approximately 7 per cent of global GDP. As conventional fiscal and monetary tools increasingly prove insufficient to deliver inclusive growth and decent work, governments globally are turning to the social economy as a complementary development approach. This shift is reflected in the growing adoption of supportive legal and policy frameworks, including measures related to public procurement, licensing, and targeted tax incentives.[9]

Realising the potential of the Social and Solidarity Economy (SSE) in Jordan requires a deliberate effort to identify, map, and activate a locally rooted ecosystem of actors, knowledge, and institutions. Strengthening these linkages can support a community-led social economy that is grounded in local culture while aligned with global principles of inclusion, justice, and sustainability.

To support this objective, this report draws on evidence generated by the Doing Good, Growing Strong research project[10], which adopts a locally driven, participatory, and ecosystem-based approach. Using a mixed-methods design—combining qualitative co-creation workshops with quantitative national survey analysis—the project examines the structure and dynamics of Jordan's social-impact ecosystem, identifies key actors and enablers, and co-develops mechanisms to support sustained and scalable collective impact. Beyond analysis, the project seeks to activate the ecosystem by strengthening collaboration among grassroots initiatives, policymakers, support organisations, and other stakeholders to advance social and economic wellbeing in Jordan.

The research employs an action-research methodology to co-create a locally grounded social-impact ecosystem rooted in sovereignty, culture, and solidarity. This approach includes:

- Defining the scope of the ecosystem through community dialogue and quantitative analysis, with a focus on how social impact emerges from within communities;
- Mapping key ecosystem actors and engaging them in the co-development of an actionable ecosystem framework;
- Assessing the needs and constraints of practitioners through survey data and participatory research led by local experts; and
- Supporting the formation of a community of social-impact actors to sustain collaboration beyond the life of the project, through networking, peer learning, and tailored capacity-building tools.

Through cooperation among grassroots organisations, support institutions, funders and investors, businesses, and government stakeholders, this process aims to contribute to the development of a more coherent and resilient social and solidarity economy in Jordan.

The mission of this initiative is to localise social impact and community innovation across Jordan by:

- Strengthening and scaling existing community-led practices grounded in solidarity and innovation;
- Enabling supportive institutional and policy environments for grassroots initiatives;
- Deepening partnerships among communities, decision-makers, and ecosystem stakeholders;
- Supporting communities to identify challenges and co-develop practical, scalable solutions;
- Promoting inclusive and participatory dialogue across government, civil society, and communities;
- Advocating for policies and structures that enable community-based social entrepreneurship; and
- Encouraging regional collaboration and knowledge exchange to advance shared development goals across the Arab region.

[9] Krlev, G., Wruk, D., Pasi, G., & Bernhard, M. (Eds.). (2023). Social economy science: Transforming the economy and making society more resilient. Oxford University Press. https://doi.org/10.1093/oso/9780192868343.001.0001

[10] German Jordanian University. (n.d.). About Social Entrepreneurship Hub. German Jordanian University. Retrieved January 14, 2026, from https://gju.edu.jo/content/about-social-entrepreneurship-hub-19436

3. METHODOLOGY

The Doing Good, Growing Strong research project is funded by the British Academy and led by Brunel University of London (UK) in partnership with the German Jordanian University (Jordan) and Lund University (Sweden). It is further strengthened by the invaluable contributions of a range of strategic collaborators at national, regional, and governmental levels :

Nationally: IBTECAR consultancy, Jordan Strategy Forum, Impact Jordan, and Jordan Nature Academy.

Regionally: Coordinamento delle Organizzazioni per il Servizio Volontario (COSV group, Italy and Lebanon) and Arweqah Alreyadah (Saudi Arabia).

Governmental level: Jordan's ministry of Investment supported the project's launch, and the Ministry of Social Development maintains ongoing engagement.

The project general aim is to identify pathways for shifting the social impact ecosystem in Jordan from ownership to trusteeship, from neoliberal models to rooted cultural and indigenous practices, and from dependency to economic and social sovereignty.

The following sections outline the action research undertaken by the project, drawing on both qualitative and quantitative methodologies.

3.1. Qualitative Methodology: Ideation workshops

The research conducted by the Doing Good, Growing Strong project is committed in its methodology to co-build the ecosystem alongside practitioners. its approach involved embedding the researchers with the community to ensure every single step was real, relevant, and designed to generate tangible results. This approach, rooted in Action Research, ensured that every step was grounded in the realities of the region. Below are the phases used in the qualitative methodology:

Phase 1: Foundation and Stakeholder Alignment

The process began with Ideation Workshops, designed as focused dialogues with core stakeholders. These sessions functioned as a strategic compass, mapping entry points and identifying key actors to engage, ensuring that subsequent efforts addressed actual challenges rather than external assumptions.

Phase 2: Targeted Capacity Development

A cohort of 20–25 promising social impact creators was engaged, supported by a Diagnostic Needs Assessment to identify individualized gaps and requirements. Findings informed the design and implementation of a Capacity Development Program structured around three core skill pillars:

1. Impact Narrative – Strengthening the ability of entrepreneurs to articulate their social value and communicate their impact effectively.
2. Organizational Integration – Embedding an impact-focused mindset into the organizational culture and operational DNA.
3. Impact Reporting – Equipping participants with tools to measure, analyze, and communicate results persuasively to stakeholders and investors.

Phase 3: Cultivating the "Community of Practitioners"

Crucially, the needs assessment highlighted that the most critical unmet need was mutual support. In response, a Community of Practitioners was established to function as a vital safety net, focusing on three strategic outcomes:

- **Connecting the Dots:** Enabling members to network and build co-creation opportunities based on mutual reliance.

- **Learning from Peers:** Providing a safe space for the horizontal exchange of practical experiences and knowledge—sharing what truly works.

- **Fostering "Ezweh" (Deep Support):** Establishing strong social and professional support networks among members for shared resilience and collective action.

Ongoing check-ins and iterative feedback ensured that this community became a vital pillar for social impact creators, offering the guidance, support, and collaborative environment necessary to thrive in challenging operational contexts.

3.2. Quantitative Methodology: National Survey

1. Survey Design and Pilot Phase

Between December 2024 and January 2025, the research team in collaboration with our partner IBTECAR consultancy in Jordan conducted five pilot surveys to test and refine the questionnaire design, ensuring clarity, relevance, and validity of the questions before official distribution. Feedback from the pilot phase informed minor adjustments to improve the flow and accuracy of responses.

In parallel, the team engaged with several government entities to access data on target groups, including the Ministry of Youth, the Ministry of Social Development, the Ministry of Digital Economy and Entrepreneurship, and the Companies Control Department within the Ministry of Industry and Trade. This collaboration supported the identification of relevant respondents and enhanced the representativeness of the sample.

2. Sample and Response Overview

A total of 800 phone calls were made, resulting in 401 responses, of which 313 were fully completed surveys and 88 partially completed. The sample included representatives of non-profit and for-profit organisations, civil society organisations, and youth entrepreneurs leading initiatives and projects.

The survey design ensured broad geographic representation across Jordan's governorates, as shown below in table (3.1):

Table (3.1) Geographic distribution of survey respondents across Jordan

Governorate	Response Rate (%)	Governorate	Response Rate (%)
Irbid	21.62	Amman	24.86
Ajloun	9.19	Zarqa	10.27
Jerash	4.32	Balqa	4.32
Mafraq	7.84	Mada-	2.97
Karak	4.59	Tafila	4.59
Ma'an	5.95	Aqaba	2.70

Source: Authors' fieldwork, 2025

This distribution demonstrates a balanced representation of both northern and southern regions, reflecting diverse economic and social contexts across Jordan.

3. Data Analysis

The quantitative data collected through the national survey were analysed using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS). The analysis was structured around four main dimensions:

1. Demographic Profiling
The first stage of analysis examined the demographic and organisational characteristics of the surveyed entities, including age, size, location, and legal form. This profiling provided a foundational understanding of the distribution and diversity of organisations operating across different governorates and sectors.

2. Human Capital
The second stage focused on human capital attributes, analysing variables such as gender composition, experience levels, directors' exposure, and persistence within the organisations. These indicators helped assess workforce diversity, leadership capacity, and the sustainability of human resources in the social impact ecosystem.

3. Value Creation
The third analytical dimension explored the value creation mechanisms within the participating entities. It assessed factors such as sectoral focus, key actors, social performance, scale of social impact, annual income, sources of income, and overall economic performance. This analysis provided insights into how entities balance social and financial objectives, highlighting patterns of sustainability and growth.

4. Stakeholder and Government Relationships
The final stage investigated the external environment and institutional relationships that shape organisational behaviour. Variables included stakeholder engagement capability, government intervention, and social pressure. This analysis illuminated the extent of collaboration between social impact entities, public institutions, and community actors, as well as the influence of regulatory and societal expectations on organisational practices.

Together, these analytical dimensions allowed for a comprehensive understanding of the structural, human, and relational components that define Jordan's social and solidarity economy. The empirical findings serve as an empirical foundation for the policy insights and recommendations presented in the following sections.

4. RESULTS

4.1. Social impact in Jordan: Conceptual Frameworks

Developing a coherent conceptual framework for a social-impact ecosystem in Jordan has presented several challenges. Previous policy initiatives and ecosystem-building efforts have generated important learning, yet their outcomes have not always been sustained over time. This has been partly influenced by limitations in access to comprehensive empirical evidence, as much of the existing research has been produced and held by individual organizations and is not always publicly available. As a result, opportunities to build a shared, data-informed understanding of the sector at a systemic level have been constrained. At the same time, it is important to recognize the significant efforts undertaken by key actors despite these limitations. Notably, the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) and the Ministry of Digital Economy and Entrepreneurship (MoDEE) have, over several years, made attempts to establish a regulatory framework for social enterprises in Jordan. In parallel, organizations such as Alfanar[11] have demonstrated long-standing commitment to advancing the social economy, with increased levels of investment in recent years contributing to greater visibility, capacity-building, and institutional learning within the sector. Furthermore, platforms such as Impact Jordan[12] have evolved in their approach, moving from contextualization-based models towards more localized and community-anchored practices, reflecting a growing emphasis on locally led solutions.

To ensure the framework's foundation in culturally embedded practices, a series of three targeted ideation sessions were conducted, strategically engaging a multi-sectoral cohort committed to the principle of trusteeship (al-i'timan)—the ethical practice of leveraging acquired resources and knowledge for communal benefit. This cohort included social impact creators, community-based organizations, advocates for national economic self-reliance (private sector entities focused on sovereignty from foreign aid), and key actors from the entrepreneurship ecosystem (service providers and academics). While full engagement faced hurdles, notably stakeholder reluctance toward initiatives perceived as foreign-funded (e.g., Extended Families' Councils/Diwan) and consultation fatigue from non-actionable discussions, these sessions successfully aimed to achieve two core objectives: the identification and codification of practices rooted in social solidarity and trusteeship, and the determination of which globally recognized social impact models are most congruent with these identified local practices.

[11] Alfanar. (2025, January 7). Celebrating Jordan's growing impact ecosystem. Alfanar. https://www.alfanar.org/resources/celebrating-jordans-growing-impact-ecosystem

[12] Impact Jordan. (2024). Impact Jordan – Finance, ethics, and the return of meaning. Author. Funded by the International Development Research Centre (IDRC).

Key Findings from the Impact Ideation Sessions

1. Defining Social Impact Creation in Jordan (SSE Model)

Social impact creation in Jordan aligns primarily with two interdependent models, indicating that impact is a localized economy rather than a singular sector (table 4.1):

Table (4.1) Localised models of social impact creation in Jordan

Model	Core Characteristics	Focus
Community-Based Social Entrepreneurship	**Grassroots Focus:** Prioritises community empowerment and self-determination through locally rooted initiatives and collective action.	**Local Ownership:** Emphasizes solutions derived directly from community needs, avoiding reliance on externally imposed patterns of support.
Solidarity Economy Entrepreneurship	**Economic Democracy:** Promotes cooperative ownership, mutual aid, and solidarity, often operating outside conventional profit-driven market structures.	**Systemic Change:** Aiming for systemic transformation (e.g., transitioning beneficiaries from dependency to empowerment).

Source: Authors' fieldwork, 2025

2. Profile of High-Impact Practitioners

The sessions identified ten essential characteristics defining the most effective Impact Creators (Doers) in the Jordanian ecosystem:

1. **Problem-Solving Acuity:** Capacity to accurately identify complex community problems and generate viable solutions (Awareness).

2. **Public Trust and Relatability:** Alignment with the community ("People like us"), which fosters public trust and social acceptance.

3. **Persistence and Resilience:** Demonstrated willpower and resolve to sustain initiatives and work through significant operational and systemic challenges.

4. **Community-Driven Motivation:** Initiatives are founded on internal motivation and strong belief in the idea, ensuring relevance to the community's actual needs.

5. Tangible Output Creation: The capacity to deliver verifiable outputs, whether in the form of innovative products, direct social impact, or awareness campaigns.

6. Systemic Transformation: Focusing impact on changing the "rules of the game" (e.g., transforming refugees from hopeless individuals into productive actors; shifting awareness at national and economic levels).

7. Catalytic Ripple Effect: Generating an impact that extends beyond the core initiative (e.g., program beneficiaries becoming independent founders of their own projects).

8. Community as a Financial Asset: Successfully transforming the community into a reliable source of support and solidarity, often including local financial backing.

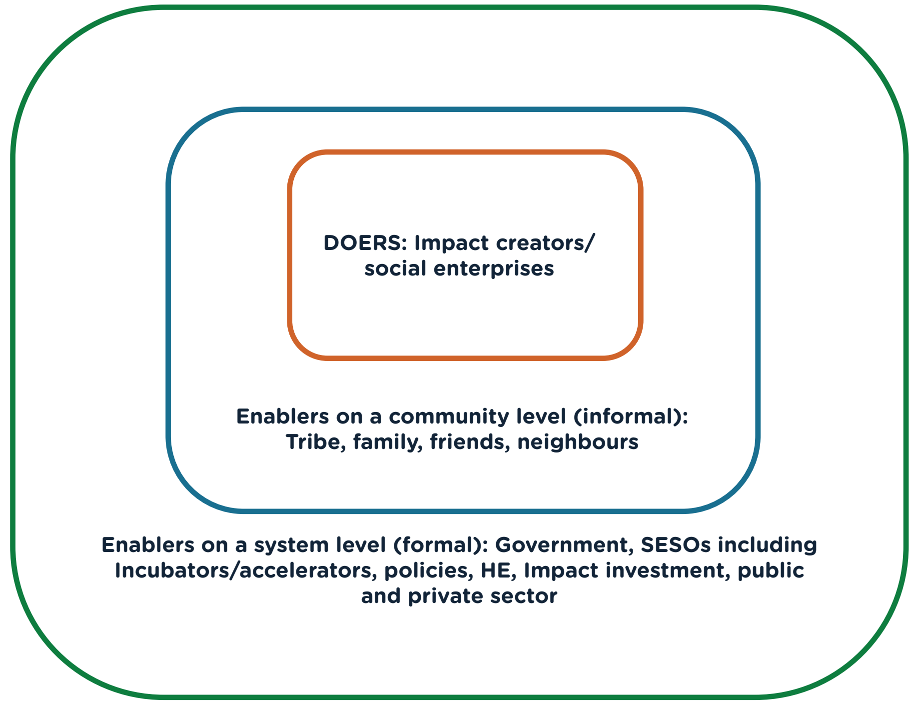
3. Essential Ecosystem Enablers

The following factors are critical for maximizing the effectiveness and scalability of social impact initiatives within Jordan (Table 4.2):

Table (4.2) Ecosystem enablers

Enabler Category	Key Elements
Foundational Support	**Local Community Endorsement:** Social backing, trust, and validation derived from family, tribe, and neighbours.
Human Capital & Practice	**Actors' Attributes:** Fostering continuous learning, passion, persistence, and resilience among practitioners to drive initiatives forward.
Capacity Building	**Incubators & Accelerators:** Ensuring access to opportunities for competence-building, networking, and structured growth methodologies.
Policy Support	**Supportive Regulations:** Advancing legal frameworks that recognize the SSE and provide the flexibility and support needed for social economy actors to operate, innovate, and grow.
Resource Mobilization	**Funders and Investors:** Securing committed and the right financial resources and impact investment capital necessary for scaling projects sustainably.
Knowledge Infrastructure	**Research and Education:** Establishing strong links with higher education institutions to access cutting-edge research, skills, and innovation pipelines.
Market and Sector Links	**Cross-Sector Partnerships:** Cultivating collaborations with the public and private sectors, aligning social models with market needs and sustainable revenue generation.
Empowerment	**Actors Agency:** Promoting active community engagement and participation, ensuring actors function as empowered and self-determined.

Source: Authors' fieldwork, 2025



4.2. Social impact in Jordan: Demographic Analysis

1. Age

The study sought to estimate how long these social impact entities have been in operation. As shown in Figure 4.1, the result reveals that while almost half of them (49.8%) have been in operation between 5-10 years, nearly one third of them (29.7%) are relatively new to operation. The remaining 20.4% indicate that they have been in operation for mor than 11 years, indicating they are well established.

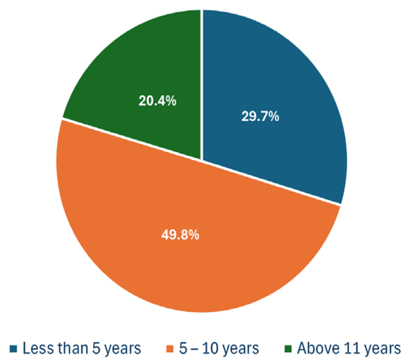


Figure (4.1) Social Impact Entity Age

2. Size

Figure 4.2 presents the results about the size of participating social enterprises in the study. The results show that 18.5 per cent have less than 5 employees, 58.5 per cent have between 5-19 employees, 18.2 per cent have 20-50 employees and 4.8 per cent have more than 51 employees respectively. The Jordan Enterprise Development Corporation defines enterprise in the service sector as follows: organizations that have less than 5 employees are regarded as micro, less than 25 employees are considered small, and less than 50 employees is considered medium[1]. Our results show highest among the participants are small, followed by micro and medium. A small percentage of 4.8 per cent with more than 50 employees maybe regarded as big. Social enterprise.

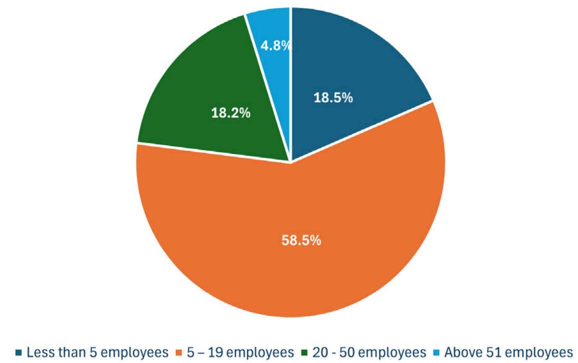


Figure (4.2) Social Impact Entity Size

For the cross-analysis of size and age, the table below presents the results, indicating that small entities with 5–19 employees are the most common across both newer and more established organizations (table 4.3).

Table (4.3) Cross-analysis of size and age

Social entity size	Social entity age			Total
	Less than 5 years	From 5 to 10 years	More than 11 years	
Less than 5 employees	34 (58.6%)	10 (17.2%)	14 (24.1%)	58
5 - 19 employees	52(28.4%)	98 (53.6%)	33 (18%)	183
20 - 50 employees	6 (10.5%)	39 (68.4)	12 (21.1%)	57
More than 51 employees	1 (6.7%)	9 (60%)	5 (33.3%)	15
Total	93 (29.7%)	156 (49.8%)	64 (20.5%)	313

Source: Authors' fieldwork, 2025

3. Location

Figure 4.3 presents the geographical location of participating social entities. About 34% of them are based on North Jordan, followed by 24% based on Middle of Jordan, 23% based on Amman and finally 19% based on South of Jordan. Nearly 1 in 4 social impact entities are based in Amman, the Capital City of Jordan. Showing that Amman and its ecosystem host social enterprises more than of that in other cities.

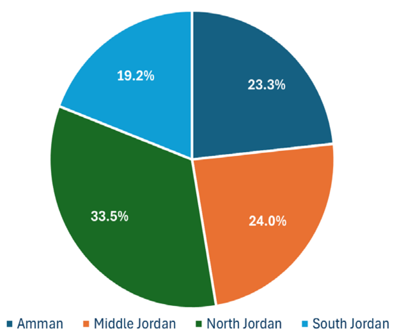


Figure (4.3) Social Impact Entity Location

4. Social Entity Legal Form

As shown in the table and figure, over half of the participating entities identify as not-for-profit organizations (53%), followed by associations (33.2%). The remaining entities are distributed across unregistered initiatives (10.2%), cooperatives (1.9%), and for-profit companies or individual enterprises (1.6%).

The relatively low representation of for-profit entities may suggest limited awareness or uptake of social business and hybrid models that integrate commercial activity with social objectives. It may also reflect regulatory, institutional, or cultural factors that shape how social impact is organized and formalized. These findings point to an opportunity for policy frameworks, awareness-raising initiatives, and capacity-building efforts to better enable and recognize socially oriented business models within the broader social and solidarity economy (Table 4.4).

Table (4.4) Social impact legal form

	Count	Percentage
For profit company/ individual employees	5	1.6%
Cooperative	6	1.9%
Not registered	32	10.2%
Association	104	33.2%
Not for profit company	166	53%

Source: Authors' fieldwork, 2025

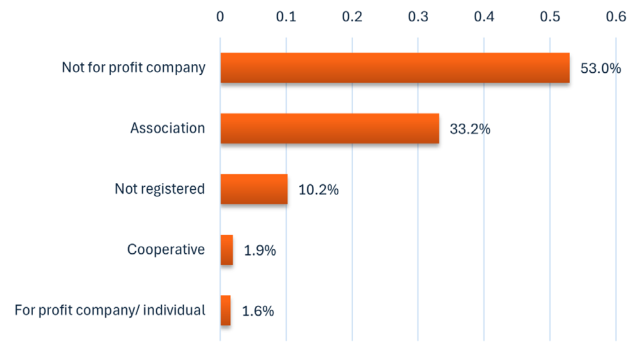


Figure (4.4) Social Impact Legal Form

4.3. Social impact in Jordan: Human Capital

1. Gender of Respondents

Based on the gathered data from the representatives of social Impact Entities (i.e., founders, owners and other representatives), 67.4% were men while women accounted for 32.6% of leaders from Jordanian social impact entities that responded to our survey (see Figure (4.5). This suggests that in comparison to women, men are more represented in leadership positions in Jordanian social impact. This is not uncommon in the Levant (Middle East) region due to the cultural considerations and low participation of women in country's the labour force[13]

[13] British Council. (2021). Social entrepreneurship mapping: Scoping for social enterprise programming in Iraq, Jordan, Palestine and Yemen. https://www.britishcouncil.org/sites/default/files/social_enterprise_scoping_report_in_jordan_yemen_iraq_and_palestine_final_0.pdf

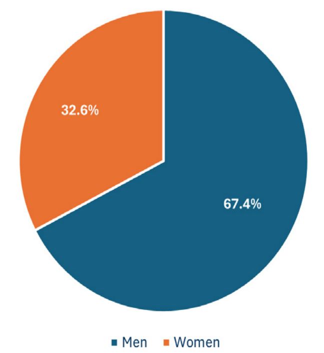


Figure (4.5) Social Impact Entity Location Gender distribution

2. Experience (Tenure) of Respondents

Based on the survey, the years of experience (tenure) among the respondents demonstrate that most social impact's leaders (i.e., 49.8 %) are within the category of '5 – 10 years'. Further, respondents with 'less than 5 years' of experience represent nearly one-third (i.e., 29.4 %) of our sample, while the remaining 20.8 % with a deep sector expertise falls under the 'more than 10 years' category (see Figure 4.6)

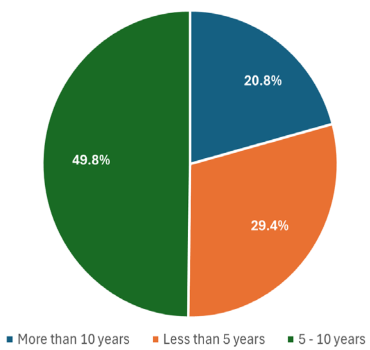


Figure (4.6) Years of experience (Tenure) distribution

In addition, a cross-tabulation analysis (see Table 4.5 below) indicates that men are the majority across the different categories under the years of experience. However, women representation rises from 29.5 % in the '5 – 10 years' category to 35.4 % in the 'more than 10 years' category. This suggests that gender gap starts to narrow as the tenure increases for women due to improved female representation.

Table (4.5) Percentage of gender by tenure

Years of experience	Female (%)	Male (%)	Total
Less than 5	33 (35.9%)	59 (64.1%)	92
5 – 10	46 (29.5%)	110 (70.5%)	156
More than 10	23 (35.4%)	42 (64.6%)	65
Total	102 (32.6%)	42 (64.6%)	65

Source: Authors' fieldwork, 2025

3. Directors' Exposure

Directors' exposure refers to the expertise and knowledge of leaders (managers) in connection with the tasks of their social impact entity[14] . As shown in Table (4.6), our survey respondents revealed that cumulatively 97.1 % were in agreement that they possess the necessary education and expertise for social impact activities. This suggests that leaders of Jordanian social impact entities have a sound knowledge relating to their social mission driven initiatives.

Relatedly, a high proportion of respondents (96.5%) agreed or strongly agreed that, as directors of social-impact entities, they have first-hand experience of the social problem or challenge their entity seeks to address and provide solutions for. With 2.2 % in disagreement, this demonstrates only a negligible proportion of Jordanian social impact entities have directors' without a direct personal experience of social challenges they address. Further, 97.1 % of the surveyed respondents were aware and connected to individuals or communities facing social challenges. Lastly, with 95.6 % agreement (versus 2.2 % neutral and 2.3 % disagreement) among the survey respondents that directors have work experience in social impact entities focused on societal issues, this suggest that leaders in Jordanian social impact possess the experience and solid know-how to drive social impact in the social and solidarity economy.

[14] Achi, A. (2024). Directors' exposure and social enterprise performance: Does entrepreneurial mindset and financial resource availability matter? International Journal of Entrepreneurial Behavior & Research, 30(10), 2386–2410.

Table (4.6) Directors' exposure

Directors' exposure	Strongly Disagree (%)	Disagree (%)	Neutral (%)	Agree (%)	Strongly Agree (%)
1. Our directors possess the necessary education and/or expertise relating to our social enterprise activities.	0.6%	1.6%	0.6%	39.3%	57.8%
2. Our directors have first-hand experience of a social problem.	0.6%	1.6%	1.3%	43.5%	53%
3. Our directors know individuals or communities that have experience of social challenges.	1%	1.3%	0.6%	46.3%	50.8%
4. Our directors have work experience from social enterprises focusing on societal issues.	1%	1.3%	2.2%	43.8%	51.8%

Source: Authors' fieldwork, 2025

4. Social Entrepreneurial Persistence

Social entrepreneurial persistence captures the continuous efforts of social impact entity to pursue their social mission even in the presence of difficulties[15] . In challenging economies like that of Jordan, social entrepreneurial persistence is an important element of social impact entities to ensure their survival and sustained operations. From the 313 social impact entities surveyed, the results (see Table (4.7) demonstrated that 92.4 % of the respondents were in agreement that their social impact entities have always remained persistent with work when others quit. Also, the respondents were asked to identify if their social entity continues to work hard on project even when others oppose it. 92.3 % were in conformity, followed by 5.5 % in disagreement and 2.2 % that were neutral with the statement.

Finally, a high concentration of the social entities (i.e., 96.5 %) generally agreed that they never give up despite the difficulties in executing projects while 3.2 % expressed disagreement and 0.3 % was ambivalent. This indicates that Jordanian social enterprises demonstrate a strong tenacity to uphold their social missions against the economic and social odds within their environment.

Table (4.7) Social entrepreneurial persistence

Social entrepreneurial persistence	Strongly Disagree (%)	Disagree (%)	Neutral (%)	Agree (%)	Strongly Agree (%)
1. Many times, our social enterprise persistswith work when others quit.	1.3%	4.5%	1.9%	44.7%	47.7%
2. Our social enterprise continues to work hard on projects even when others oppose them.	1.3%	4.2%	2.2%	46%	46.3%
3. No matter how challenging our project is, our social enterprise does not give up	1%	2.2%	0.3%	49.5%	47%

Source: Authors' fieldwork, 2025

[15] Cardon, M. S., & Kirk, C. P. (2015). Entrepreneurial passion as mediator of the self-efficacy to persistence relationship. Entrepreneurship Theory and Practice, 39(5), 1027–1050.

4.4. Social impact in Jordan: Value Creation

1. Sector

Participating social entities indicated that they function in multiple sectors. They had the option to choose more than one sector. The results show that the Art and culture was the highest sector followed by handicraft, health and social care, environment conservation, digital technologies and housing, in addition to other sectors (See |Figure (4.7). The focus on art, culture and handicraft of these entities reflect the commitment to preserving Jordan historically rooted tangible and intangible heritage and traditions and in turn empower communities economically.

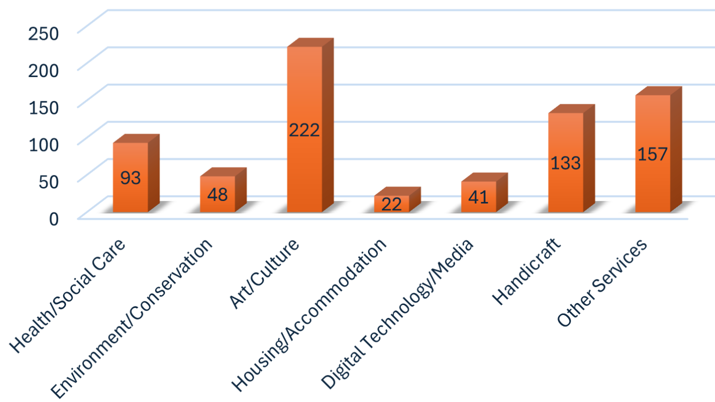


Figure (4.7) Sector

2. Actors

The social entities that took part in this study were asked to indicate who are their target actors they serve. They were allowed to choose more than one segment of the actors. They have reported they mainly serve children, women, refugees, deprived people, farmers, disabled among others, with main target actors the women and children. These groups would be usually marginalized and are affected more by political, economic and environmental shocks. See figure 4.8.

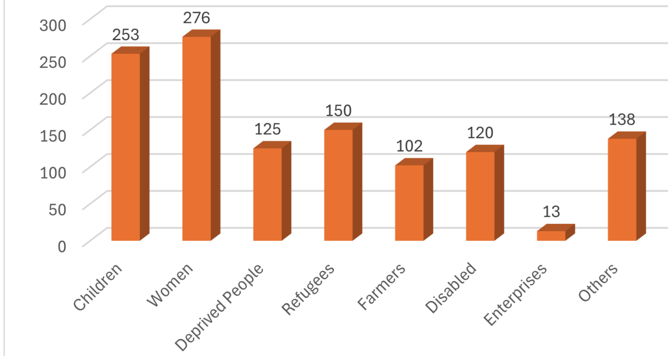


Figure (4.8) Actors

3. Social Performance

Social performance relates to social entities perceive themselves achieving their social mission and creating value for the communities they serve. The results reveal that most the respondents perceive have done well in terms of social performance. The average is 4.54 in a scale of 5, indicating they agree and strongly agree with survey statements. When asked about their social mission and objectives, over 97% of respondents agree/strongly agree they have fulfilled their social mission and met their social objectives. Similarly, they have strongly agreed they have expanded their social service to different locations with 90% agreement with this statement and 96.8% agreement they are serving more actors in their communities. This could imply the commitment of social entity to tackle and address societal issues facing Jordanian people. While social performance metrics remain limited and ambiguous[16], this perceptual and subjective understanding offers a strong indication of the social performance. Policies and supportive regulatory ecosystem that nurture similar initiatives are vital to their sustainability (figure 4.9).

[16] André, K., Cho, C. H., & Laine, M. (2018). Reference points for measuring social performance: Case study of a social business venture. Journal of Business Venturing, 33(5), 660–678. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jbusvent.2017.12.002

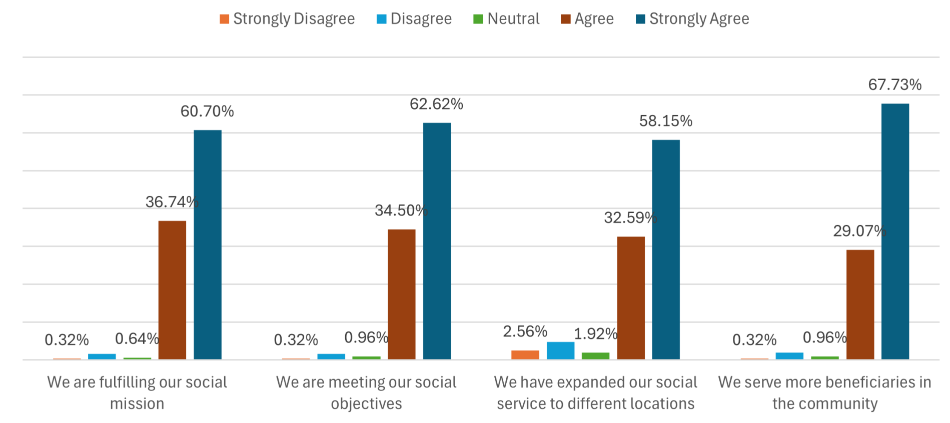


Figure (4.9)Social Performance

4. Scale of Social Impact

Social Impact is defined as the "beneficial outcomes resulting from prosocial behavior that are enjoyed by the intended targets of that behavior and/or by the broader community of individuals, organizations, and/or environments"[17]. In this report, it reflects the perceptions of the participants on how the believe they have scaled their social impact. The average point in a scale of 5 is 4.36, indicating agreement and strong agreement with the study scale. Over 94% and 91% agreed and strongly agreed they have expanded their reach to more individuals and substantially expanded the geographic areas they serve. Similarly, about 92.97% indicated agreement and strong agreement they have made a significant progress in alleviating social challenges and that have scaled up their capabilities to address those social challenges, (93.29% agreement and strong agreement). The ability that social impact creators shown in the identifying and addressing societal challenges, enhancing their capabilities and expanding their reach to wider geographical areas reflect the drive to create, deliver and capture value for their stakeholders. See figure (4.10).

[17] Rawhouser, H., Cummings, M., & Newbert, S. L. (2019). Social impact measurement: Current approaches and future directions for social entrepreneurship research. Entrepreneurship Theory and Practice, 43(1), 82–115. https://doi.org/10.1177/1042258717727718

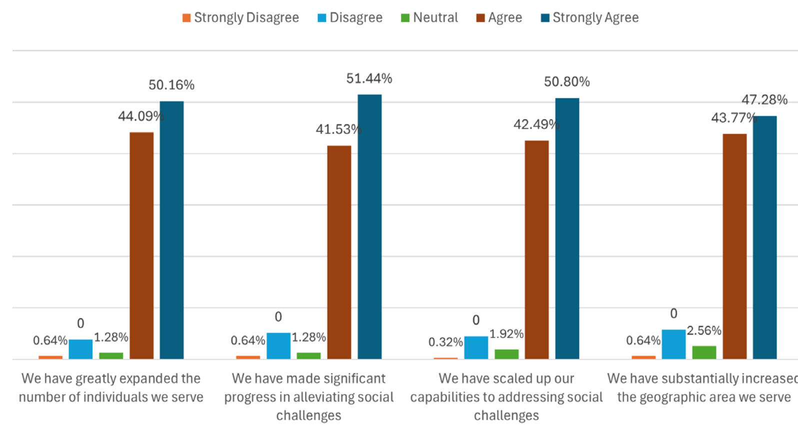


Figure (4.10) Scale of Social Impact

5. Annual Income

The study participants have been asked about their entities' annual income. As shown in Figure (), nearly 70 % reported their annual income is less than 5,000 JOD. This is probably due to them being micro in size and unregistered. Over 17 % reported their annual income is between 5,000 – 10,000 JOD while a small percentage (3.5%) indicated their annual income is 10,000-20,000 JOD. One in ten of participating entities indicated their annual income is above 20,000 JOD. See figure (4.11).

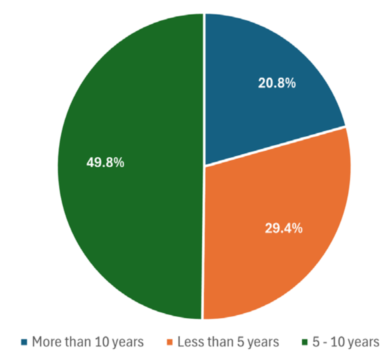


Figure (4.11)Annual Income

6. Source of Income

Participating entities were asked about the source of their income. They also had the option to choose more than one source if any. Most of them indicated the main source of income is local donations and self-fund. Another higher source of income come from local and CSR grants, followed by sales activities and international grants and other scattered sources. Surprisingly, international grants were the least among them all despite Jordan is one of the ODA countries that attract international funds to tackle national issues including economic, social, environmental and immigration. According to the July 2024 Foreign Assistance Report by the Jordanian Ministry of Planning and International Cooperation, grants of over two billion USD[5]. This can be explained by the high percentage of non-registered initiatives (53%) among respondents (as shown in the above) in this study, indicating that these entities are not eligible to receive external funding (Figure 4.12).

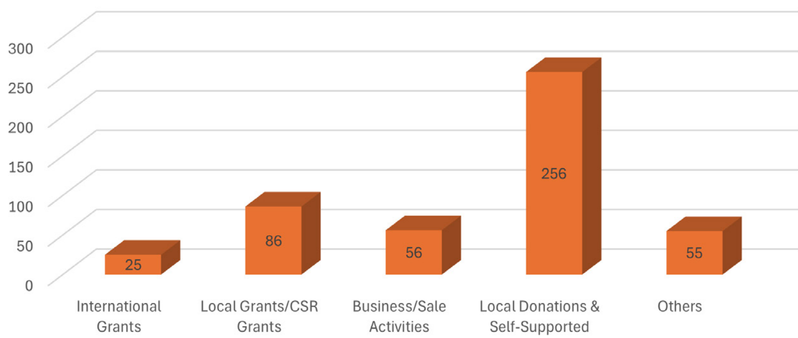


Figure (4.12) Source of Income

Cross-analysis of income sources by entities size and age indicates that more established entities (operating for over 11 years) and larger entities (with more than 51 employees) are more likely to mobilise financing from a diversified mix of funding sources. In contrast, younger and smaller entities tend to rely more heavily on local donations and self-generated income.

This pattern suggests that organisational maturity and scale are closely associated with greater access to, and capacity for, diversified financing. It also highlights potential structural barriers faced by early-stage and small social-impact entities, pointing to the need for targeted policy measures, capacity-building support, and tailored financial instruments to enable their growth, resilience, and long-term sustainability. See table (4.8).

Table (4.8) Cross-analysis of income sources by entities size and age

		Sources of Income				
		International Grants	**Local Grants/CSR grants**	**Business/ sale Activities**	**Local Donations/ Self-Supported**	**Others**
Age	**Less than 5 years**	4 (4.3%)	13 (14.0%)	15 (16.1%)	74 (79.6%)	21 (22.6%)
	5 - 10 years	8 (5.1%)	45 (28.8%)	29 (18.6%)	131 (84.0%)	28 (17.9%)
	Above 11 years	13 (20.3%)	28 (43.8%)	12 (18.8%)	51 (79.7%)	6 (9.4%)
Total	**Count**	25	86	56	256	55

		Sources of Income				
		International Grants	**Local Grants/CSR grants**	**Business/ sale Activities**	**Local Donations/ Self-Supported**	**Others**
Size	**Less than 5 employee**	5 (8.6%)	12 (20.7%)	9 (15.5%)	45 (77.6%)	7 (12.1%)
	5 - 19 employees	11 (6.0%)	50 (27.3%)	30 (16.4%)	155 (84.7%)	32 (17.5%)
	20 - 50 employees	5 (8.8%)	20 (35.1%)	14 (24.6%)	44 (77.2%)	12 (21.1%)
	Above 51 employees	4 (26.7%)	4 (26.7%)	3 (20.0%)	12 (80.0%)	4 (26.7%)
Total	**Count**	25	86	56	256	55

Source: Authors' fieldwork, 2025

7. Economic Performance

Social entities strive to balance economic and social performance. To achieve greater social performance, social entities could innovate economically viable solutions while addressing societal challenges[18].

As depicted in Figure (4.13), the results show that the participants report they have achieved their economic goals. The average point in a scale of 5 is 4.07, indicating agreement they have performed well. Regarding whether their financial performance has been satisfactory, 74.12% agree and strongly agree about it, while over 20% of them disagreed and strongly disagreed. In terms for growth, 88.49% reported they have achieved a rapid growth. Similarly, 78.6% and 80.51% have reported their enterprises have reached their financial goals and generated high volume of financial activities respectively. Considering they have reported they have multiple sources of income including self-support, local grants and donations as well as business and sales activities among others, this may indicate sustainability of their operations in the short run only, considering the results that indicating low annual income. To achieve long term financial sustainability of their operations and better figures in their annual incomes, alternative innovative financial mechanisms and tools should be explored to ensure they continue to address societal challenges facing the people of Jordan. When considered alongside data on organizational size, the financial performance results are particularly notable, suggesting that many social-impact entities are operating sustainably without requiring the level of financial returns typically assumed by conventional market models. This points to the potential value of supporting a larger number of smaller, impact-driven enterprises, rather than prioritizing scale alone, and underscores the importance of continued investment in self-reporting mechanisms to generate context-sensitive, grounded metrics that reflect on-the-ground realities.

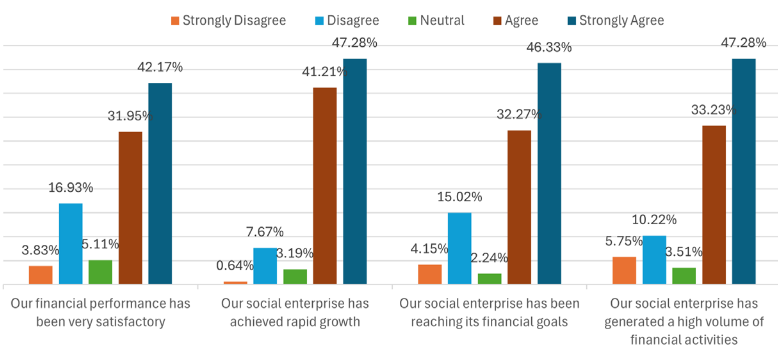


Figure (4.13) Economic Performance

[18] Kwong, C., Bhattarai, C. R., Bhandari, M. P., & Cheung, C. W. M. (2023). Does social performance contribute to economic performance of social enterprises? The role of social enterprise reputation building. International Journal of Entrepreneurial Behavior & Research, 29(8), 1906–1926. https://doi.org/10.1108/IJEBR-12-2022-1106

4.5. Social impact in Jordan: Stakeholder and Government Relationship

1. Stakeholder Engagement Capability

Stakeholders (i.e., people or groups that can influence or are influenced by social enterprises activities) perform a vital role in the Jordanian business environment. Stakeholder engagement capability captures the competence of social enterprises to relate, connect and co-create with diverse people and groups in a positive manner [19]. Stakeholder engagement capability can help strengthen the social learning and adaptability of Jordanian social enterprises to changing environmental conditions[20] . The survey findings relating to stakeholder engagement capability (see Table 4.9) revealed that a high proportion of the respondents (89.8 %) overly agreed that their social entity is effective at communicating with their key constituencies and stakeholders. Also, the survey results revealed that 94.8 % of the social entities accepted that they can successfully convey their program value to actors.

Lastly, in terms of engaging with donors and funders, 92 % of Jordanian social entities (compared to 5.4 % in opposition) identified being efficacious in highlighting the value of their activities to key donors and funders.

Table (4.9) Stakeholder engagement capability

Stakeholder engagement capability	Strongly Disagree (%)	Disagree (%)	Neutral (%)	Agree (%)	Strongly Agree (%)
1. We have been effective at communicating what we do to key constituencies and stakeholders.	2.6%	4.2%	3.5%	40.3%	49.5%
2. We have been successful at informing the individuals we seek to serve about the value of our program for them.	1.6%	1.9%	1.6%	45%	49.8%
3. We have been successful at informing donors and funders about the value of what we do.	1.6%	3.8%	2.6%	45.4%	46.6%

Source: Authors' fieldwork, 2025

[19] Jiang, W., Wang, A. X., Zhou, K. Z., & Zhang, C. (2020). Stakeholder relationship capability and firm innovation: A contingent analysis. Journal of Business Ethics, 167(1), 111–125.

[20] Weerakoon, C., & McMurray, A. J. (2024). Fostering social enterprise innovativeness: The interplay of learning, market orientation and stakeholder engagement within a capability framework. Social Enterprise Journal, 20(5), 888–920.

2. Government Intervention

In our report, government intervention refers to the degree to which government agencies change and implement regulatory policies that impacts the social impact and entrepreneurial practices in Jordan[21] . The survey results (see Table 4.10 below) relating to government intervention show that a similar significant proportion of the respondents were both in agreement (48.5 %) and disagreement (46.7 %) that government regulations usually change. This may point to the lack of a clear regulatory framework and communication on the social entity sector in Jordan[22].

Also, the survey revealed that 51.1 % of the social entities (i.e., about half) accepted that regulatory changes by the Jordanian government impacted their operations, although, 4.5 % was indifferent, and 44.4 % disagreed with the statement.

Similarly, 49.2 % of the respondents agreed that regulatory changes impact decision-making in their social entities. An almost equal proportion (47.3 %) disagreed, believing that their social entities' decisions are not entirely dependent on shifts in government regulations. This may be due to the different governance structures of Jordanian social entities and the limited regulatory support from the government.

Table (4.10) Government intervention

Government intervention	Strongly Disagree (%)	Disagree (%)	Neutral (%)	Agree (%)	Strongly Agree (%)
1. The government regulations change frequently	9.6%	37.1%	4.8%	33.5%	15%
2. The changes of government regulations greatly affect our business operation	7.3%	37.1%	4.5%	35.1%	16%
3. The changes of government regulations greatly affect our decision-making	7%	40.3%	3.5%	34.2%	15%

Source: Authors' fieldwork, 2025

To explore this further, cross-analyses were conducted examining government intervention in relation to organizational size and legal form.

The cross-tabulation by organizational size (see Tables 4.11, 4.12, 4.13) indicates that responses among small entities (fewer than 20 employees) are relatively balanced, with similar proportions agreeing and disagreeing about the frequency of regulatory change. In contrast, medium and larger entities (20 or more employees) are more likely to report being affected by changes in government regulations. This suggests that while perceptions of regulatory change are relatively consistent among smaller entities, regulatory shifts tend to have a more pronounced impact on organizations as they grow in scale and complexity.

[21] Wang, L., Jin, J. L., & Zhou, K. Z. (2023). Technological capability strength/asymmetry and supply chain process innovation: The contingent roles of institutional environments. Research Policy, 52(4), Article 104724. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.respol.2023.104724

[22] Ministry of Digital Economy and Entrepreneurship. (2025). Preparing a legislative framework for social entrepreneurial companies. https://www.modee.gov.jo/EN/Pages/Preparing_a_legislative_framework_for_social_entrepreneurial_companies

Table (4.11) Size and indicator 1 of government intervention

Social entity size	The government regulations change frequently					
	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree	Total
Less than 5 employees	4 (6.9%)	26 (44.8%)	8 (13.8%)	14 (24.1%)	6 (10.3%)	58
5 – 19 employees	17 (9.3%)	74 (40.4%)	4 (2.2%)	57 (31.1%)	31 (16.9%)	183
20 – 50 employees	9 (15.8%)	14 (24.6%)	1 (1.8%)	24 (42.1%)	9 (15.8%)	57
More than 51 employees	0 (0%)	2 (13.3%)	2 (13.3%)	10 (66.7%)	1 (6.7%)	15
Total	30 (9.6%)	116 (37.1%)	15 (4.8%)	105 (33.5%)	47 (15%)	313

Source: Authors' fieldwork, 2025

Table (4.12) Size and indicator 2 of government intervention

Social entity size	The changes of government regulations greatly affect our business operation					
	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree	Total
Less than 5 employees	6 (10.3%)	20 (34.5%)	9 (15.5%)	15 (25.9%)	8 (13.8%)	58
5 – 19 employees	12 (6.6%)	73 (39.9%)	3 (1.6%)	63 (34.4%)	32 (17.5%)	183
20 – 50 employees	4 (7%)	17 (29.8%)	1 (1.8%)	27 (47.4%)	8 (14%)	57
More than 51 employees	1 (6.7%)	6 (40%)	1 (6.7%)	5 (33.3%)	2 (13.3%)	15
Total	23 (7.3%)	116 (37.1%)	14 (4.5%)	110 (35.1%)	50 (16%)	313

Source: Authors' fieldwork, 2025

Table (4.13) Size and indicator 3 of government intervention

Social entity size	The changes of government regulations greatly affect our decision-making					
	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree	Total
Less than 5 employees	6 (10.3%)	23 (39.7%)	6 (10.3%)	15 (25.9%)	8 (13.8%)	58
5 – 19 employees	9 (4.9%)	78 (42.6%)	4 (2.2%)	61 (33.3%)	31 (16.9%)	183
20 – 50 employees	6 (10.5%)	20 (35.1%)	1 (1.8%)	24 (42.1%)	6 (10.5%)	57
More than 51 employees	1 (6.7%)	5 (33.3%)	0 (0%)	7 (46.7%)	2 (13.3%)	15
Total	22 (7%)	126 (40.3%)	11 (3.5%)	107 (34.2%)	47 (15%)	313

Source: Authors' fieldwork, 2025

By legal form, the cross-tabulation indicates that unregistered initiatives, associations, and for-profit entities are more affected by changes in government regulations. This finding may help explain the observed level of informality within the sector (10.2%) and suggests that regulatory complexity or uncertainty may pose particular challenges for these entities. It also points to constraints faced by associations and for profit entities in relation to business operations and decision-making, underscoring the need for clearer, more proportionate, and enabling regulatory frameworks that reflect the diversity of social-impact actors (tables 4.14, 4.15, 4.16).

Table (4.14) Legal form and indicator 1 of government intervention

Legal form	The government regulations change frequently					
	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree	Total
Not registered social initiative	10 (31.2%)	11 (34.4%)	1 (3.1%)	7 (21.9%)	3 (9.4%)	32
Not for profit company	11 (6.6%)	82 (49.4%)	3 (1.8%)	42 (25.3%)	28 (16.9%))	166
For profit company	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	3 (60%)	1 (20%)	1 (20%)	5
Association	8 (7.7%)	19 (18.2%)	8 (7.7%)	55 (52.9%)	14 (13.5%)	104
Cooperative	1 (16.7%)	4 (66.6%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%	1 (16.7%)	6
Total	30 (9.6%)	116 (37.1%)	15 (4.8%)	105 (33.5%)	47 (15%)	313

Source: Authors' fieldwork, 2025

Table (4.15) Legal form and indicator 2 of government intervention

Legal form	The changes of government regulations greatly affect our business operation					
	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree	Total
Not registered social initiative	4 (12.5%)	7 (21.9%)	1 (3.1%)	16 (50%)	4 (12.5%)	32
Not for profit company	9 (5.4%)	79 (47.6%)	3 (1.8%)	49 (29.5%)	26 (15.7%)	166
For profit company	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	3 (60%)	1 (20%)	1 (20%)	5
Association	9 (8.7%)	27 (26%)	7 (6.7%)	44 (42.3%)	17 (16.3%)	104
Cooperative	1 (16.7%)	3 (50%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	2 (33.3%)	6
Total	23 (7.3%)	116 (37.1%)	14 (4.5%)	110 (35.1%)	50 (16%)	313

Source: Authors' fieldwork, 2025

Table (4.16) Legal form and indicator 3 of government intervention

Legal form	The changes of government regulations greatly affect our decision-making					
	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree	Total
Not registered social initiative	4 (12.5%)	9 (28.1%)	1 (3.1%)	13 (40.6%)	5 (15.6%)	32
Not for profit company	8 (4.8%)	83 (50%)	1 (0.6%)	50 (30.1%)	24 (14.5%)	166
For profit company	1 (20%)	0 (0%)	1 (20%)	1 (20%)	2 (40%)	5
Association	8 (7.7%)	31 (29.8%)	8 (7.7%)	43 (41.3%)	14 (13.5%)	104
Cooperative	1 (16.7%)	3 (50%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	2 (33.3%)	6
Total	22 (7%)	126 (40.3%)	11 (3.5%)	107 (34.2%)	47 (15%)	313

Source: Authors' fieldwork, 2025

3. Social Pressure

Non-sectorial external stakeholders often exert influence on how social enterprises respond to social challenges in the community. In this report, social pressure represents the perceived extent of pressure from the media, public and governmental organizations that influences how Jordanian social entities address the social or environmental challenges in their community[23].

Findings from our survey (see Table 4.17) uncovers that while 39 % were in agreement, a significant 53.9 % of Jordanian social entities disagreed that non-governmental organizations influenced how they managed social issues.

However, in comparison to 38.4 % social entities that opined that pressure from media outlets does not shape their social issues management, 57.8 % of the responding social entities agreed that media narratives in Jordan affected how they managed social issues. This highlights the critical role of media on issues relating to social entities.

In addition,, approximately 54.7 % of the social entities acknowledged that the national/regional governments in Jordan shapes how they handle social issues. Similarly, 58.1 % of the social entities largely agreed that local public agencies within Jordan influence their approaches to social issues, while 37.4 % disagreed. Implicitly, the findings show that in comparison to national (regional) governments pressure, the respondents perceived that pressures from local public agencies were more influential on Jordanian social entities.

Table (4.17) Social pressure

Social pressure	Strongly Disagree (%)	Disagree (%)	Neutral (%)	Agree (%)	Strongly Agree (%)
1. Non-governmental organizations influence our social issues management	8.9%	45%	7%	28.1%	10.9%
2. Media influence our social issues management	6.1%	32.3%	3.8%	39.3%	18.5%
3. National (regional) governments influence our social issues management	8.3%	31.9%	5.1%	37.4%	17.3%
4. Local public agencies influence our social issues management	8.3%	29.1%	4.5%	43.1%	15%

Source: Authors' fieldwork, 2025

[23] Yang, D., Wang, A. X., Zhou, K. Z., & Jiang, W. (2019). Environmental strategy, institutional force, and innovation capability: A managerial cognition perspective. Journal of Business Ethics, 159(4), 1147–1161.

5. OUTCOMES

5.1. Definition: Social and Solidarity Economy in Jordan

Social impact practices in Jordan represents a social economy, not a single sector. Limiting it to one organisational form risks excluding the wide spectrum of actors—including non-profits, for-profits, associations, non-registered initiatives, cooperations, families (Diwan), tribes, and Waqf institutions—that contribute to social value creation.

The most influential global paradigm aligned with this vision is the Social and Solidarity Economy (SSE), which integrates charitable action with innovation, profitability, and sustainability. Jordan's ecosystem already demonstrates and possesses the potential for many features of the SSE: mission-driven entities embedded in local culture, guided by solidarity, justice, sovereignty, and trusteeship, and working toward financial sustainability through local investment and entrepreneurial activity. By demonstrating alternative approaches to economic activity through the social economy, these practices have the potential to inspire other economic actors to mainstream models that place social value and community wellbeing at the center of decision-making.

Proposed Definition of SSE in Jordan:

Forms of economic activity and relations led by mission-driven entities that create positive social or environmental change, evolving toward locally rooted and financially sustainable models.

• Mission-driven: Guided by the values of solidarity, justice, sovereignty, and trusteeship.

• Entity type: Includes associations, NGOs, unregistered initiatives, cooperatives, for-profit organisations, family associations, and Waqf endowments.

• Locally rooted: Embedded in culture and religion, originating from communities, families, and tribes.

• Financially sustainable: Transitioning from reliance on external funding toward local investment, economic solidarity, and/ or entrepreneurial self-sufficiency.

Globally, social economy commonly face challenges related to limited visibility, insufficiently enabling legal and regulatory frameworks, the absence of clear verification mechanisms and standards, and constrained access to finance and markets.[24] The findings of this study indicate that Jordan reflects many of these same structural challenges, underscoring the need for coordinated policy responses that enhance recognition, reduce regulatory barriers, strengthen accountability frameworks, and expand market and financing opportunities for social economy actors.

At the same time, several countries across the MENA region and globally have begun to introduce targeted and customized frameworks and mechanisms to support their social economies, offering valuable learning models for the Jordanian context. Drawing on these experiences, this report suggests pathways to support the healthy evolution of Jordan's social economy. In particular, it outlines two enabling mechanisms—an accreditation and certification framework and cross-sectoral collaboration—alongside a set of complementary policy recommendations.

5.2. Certificate of Accreditation

To effectively recognise, regulate, and support the growing Social and Solidarity Economy (SSE) in Jordan, this report suggests a structured accreditation and classification system. Such a system would formally identify and differentiate social impact entities according to their organisational models, purposes, and levels of social value creation.

The proposed Certificate of Accreditation would serve as a cornerstone for institutionalising the SSE sector, ensuring that social entities and hybrid models are recognised through clear, transparent, and measurable criteria. It would enable policymakers, funders, investors, and support organisations to better understand, engage with, and empower them, while also promoting accountability and good governance.

This vision builds upon global and regional best practices and particularly draws inspiration from the MENA region experience, where social impact accreditation frameworks have successfully enhanced legitimacy, credibility, and access to opportunities.

A key recommendation in developing the accreditation framework involves reviewing and comparing successful international and regional models in social impact ecosystems.

Benchmarking against these practices will allow the Jordanian system to integrate proven mechanisms that enhance transparency, accountability, and inclusivity.

[24] World Economic Forum. (2022). Unlocking the social economy: Towards an inclusive and resilient society (WEF Report). World Economic Forum. https://www3.weforum.org/docs/WEF_Unlocking_the_Social_Economy_2022.pdf

The development of the proposed accreditation system is suggested to adopt a participatory, co-creation approach to ensure the framework is locally grounded and to strengthen its legitimacy, inclusivity, and long-term sustainability.

This participatory process is suggested to:
- Define classification criteria and eligibility standards based on performance, purpose, and governance.
- Identify an appropriate authorising and regulatory body, ensuring independence and transparency.
- Establish incentives and renewal mechanisms to sustain compliance and continuous improvement.

Jordan's development journey highlights the importance of reclaiming local agency and moving beyond externally imposed development models. The accreditation framework presents an opportunity to build on indigenous values of solidarity, cooperation, and shared prosperity, transforming them into actionable standards for modern social impact governance. By localising and rooting the accreditation framework in local culture and participatory research, this initiative contributes to the co-creation of a sustainable Social and Solidarity Economy that reflects Jordan's unique identity while remaining regionally and globally connected.

5.3. Cross-Sectoral Collaboration

Several initiatives are working in building a sustainable, inclusive, and community-driven Social and Solidarity Economy (SSE) in Jordan. Rather than focusing on isolated interventions or individual enterprises, the report suggests a systemic lens inspired by emerging models of social entities and solidarity-driven development. Its overarching goal is to nurture an ecosystem in which social impact organizations, communities, public authorities, and private actors can collaboratively design and deliver solutions that strengthen social justice, economic resilience, and environmental sustainability.

Findings from the Doing Good, Growing Strong research project strongly echo lessons observed in regional SSE experiences, particularly those emerging from Lebanon's Social Justice Incubation Program (SJIP) led by COSV. One of the central insights is the transformative potential of collaboration over competition. Multi-stakeholder partnerships, spanning civil society, municipalities, vocational institutions, SMEs, and citizen groups, have proven to be critical for generating long-term, scalable impact. Those collaborations not only mobilize diverse resources but also ensure that solutions are rooted in local needs and community ownership. This shift reflects a broader trend toward what research calls a second welfare approach: community-centered, co-financed, and co-designed public–private mechanisms that compensate for gaps in traditional state-led service provision.

Social economy initiatives increasingly act as intermediaries within these value chains, linking producers, consumers, municipalities, and market actors, thereby enabling more equitable labor markets, inclusive job opportunities, and environmentally responsible production systems.

Building on these lessons, the policy report recommends that Jordan's policy frameworks should explicitly institutionalize cross-sector collaboration within the SSE. This includes enabling legal and financial mechanisms for co-management of community assets, supporting hybrid business models that blend grants, market revenue, and in-kind contributions, and integrating social entities into national strategies for employment, local development, and environmental management. Evidence from the region shows that ecosystems thrive when social impact entities are recognized not merely as service providers but as strategic partners in governance and economic transformation.

To translate these principles into practice, the report proposes a Collaborative Incubation Model tailored to Jordan's context. This model is grounded in co-creation, shared-value principles, and the hybrid resource strategies that have proven essential for the sustainability of social enterprises. Through participatory workshops with COSV and the project team, three high-potential sectors emerged as priority value chains for collaborative incubation: Agriculture and Agrifood, Waste Management, and Tourism. These sectors combine strong local economic relevance with opportunities for employment generation, community participation, and environmental stewardship.

The proposed model is adaptive and region sensitive. It focuses on identifying geographic areas where multi-actor coalitions can emerge, bringing together farmers, cooperatives, municipalities, youth groups, women-led initiatives, waste entrepreneurs, tourism actors, and educational institutions. It encourages experimentation with public–private partnerships, community enterprises, school-enterprise models, and entrepreneurial non-profits, mirroring the diverse typologies found effective in comparable contexts.

By linking community engagement, social innovation, and value-chain transformation into a coherent national strategy, Jordan has the potential to champion a new generation of inclusive and resilient SSE initiatives across the Arab region.

6. POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

To translate this vision into reality, a coordinated and time-bound action plan is required. The following policy recommendations are organized by timeframe – short, medium, and long term – and designate lead actors for each action. These recommendations are grounded in the report's findings, which emphasize local agency, the role of informal actors, cross-sector collaboration, accreditation systems, stakeholder engagement, and financial sustainability.

Each action is designed to be ambitious yet achievable, laying the foundation for an SSE in Jordan that is both resilient and scalable within the national context.

Short-Term (Next 1–2 Years)

1. Establish a National SSE Task Force – Form a high-level task force or steering committee to kick-start the SSE agenda. This body should coordinate SSE policy development and oversee initial implementation. Its first tasks would include setting a clear national definition of Social and Solidarity Economy, outlining strategic objectives, and championing SSE across government agencies.

2. Launch Pilot Collaborative Projects in Key Sectors – Kick off cross-sector "social impact incubator" pilots in high-potential sectors identified by Jordanian stakeholders – for example, sustainable agriculture, waste management, and community-based tourism. These pilots would bring together private companies, start-ups, cooperatives, and community organizations to co-create solutions. The government should facilitate these partnerships by providing seed funding, technical expertise, and policy support (e.g. streamlined licensing or use of public facilities). Early successes in these pilots will build confidence and demonstrate the power of cross-sector collaboration in the Jordanian context.

3. Implement an SSE Accreditation System – Co-Design and roll out a Certificate of Accreditation to formally recognize social and solidarity entities across Jordan. By the third year, a tiered accreditation framework should be operational, with clear criteria for what constitutes an SSE entity, based on social purpose, reinvestment of profits, inclusive governance, and community impact. Accredited organizations would gain legitimacy and access to incentives – for example, tax reductions, eligibility for public procurement set-asides, or priority in grant programs. The accreditation process must be transparent and participatory: developed in co-creation with SSE practitioners and experts to ensure it fits Jordan's context. Once in place, this system will professionalize the sector and encourage more informal initiatives to formalize to reap the benefits.

Medium-Term (Next 3–5 Years)

1. Institutionalize Cross-Sector Collaboration Mechanisms – Scale up the pilot cross-sector initiatives into a national program for collaborative social innovation. Based on lessons from the short-term pilots, the government should establish permanent multi-stakeholder platforms in the key sectors (and potentially new ones) that bring together ministries, businesses, municipalities, universities, and community organizations. For instance, a Public-Private-Civic Partnership Council for each sector can coordinate projects that enhance value chains while creating jobs and social value.

2. Strengthen Local Support Infrastructure – Develop regional SSE support hubs to serve as one-stop resources for social impact creators and community enterprises. Lead actors: Local municipalities (major cities and governorates) with guidance from the Ministry of Local Administration and support from donors. By year 5, each region should have access to an incubator or resource center providing mentorship, business development services, legal advice, and networking specifically tailored for SSE entities. Municipal governments can allocate space (e.g. in community centers or innovation parks) and small grants for local SSE projects, integrating SSE promotion into local development plans. In parallel, build capacity among municipal officials and community leaders to champion SSE projects – for example, training on participatory project design, cooperative management, and blended finance. Empowering local authorities to take ownership of SSE growth ensures that the movement is rooted in local needs and agency, not just driven from Amman.

3. Mobilize Sustainable Financing – Shift from ad-hoc funding to sustainable financial instruments for the SSE. The government, in partnership with central bank and financial sector regulators, should by this stage establish a Social Finance Facility or Fund that pools public, private, and philanthropic capital to invest in SSE ventures. This could include a dedicated fund within the Jordan Loan Guarantee Corporation or a new vehicle offering soft loans, impact investment matching, and credit guarantees to social impact entities and cooperatives. Lead actors: Ministry of Finance and Central Bank (for regulatory support), with donor agencies contributing initial capital. Additionally, introduce financial incentives such as: tax credits for banks that lend to SSE projects; impact investment guidelines encouraging venture funds to include social businesses; and "social sukuk" or bonds to attract Islamic finance aligned with social objectives. Exploring innovative tools – from crowdfunding platforms to community-development funds – will ensure that SSE entities have access to capital for growth, moving them toward long-term financial sustainability. By year 5, the aim is to significantly broaden funding sources beyond grants, anchoring SSE financing in domestic markets.

4. Deepen Stakeholder Engagement and Awareness – Make stakeholder participation a hallmark of Jordan's SSE expansion. By the medium term, create formal channels for continuous dialogue: for example, an Annual Social Economy Forum under the patronage of the government, where practitioners, beneficiaries, investors, and policymakers share progress and co-create solutions. Moreover, integrate SSE principles into public education and professional training – business schools, public administration institutes, and vocational centers should incorporate modules on social economy, cooperative business models, and community finance. This will cultivate a new generation of leaders and skilled workforce for the SSE. Broad public awareness campaigns (through media and national conferences) should highlight success stories of home-grown social innovators, solidifying public support and engagement. In essence, the medium-term goal is to normalize the SSE as a valued and mainstream part of Jordan's socioeconomic landscape, backed by an engaged coalition of stakeholders.

Long-Term (Beyond 5 Years)

1. Mainstream SSE in National Development – By the end of the decade, Jordan should fully integrate the Social and Solidarity Economy into its national development strategy and vision. This means institutionalizing SSE governance at the highest levels: for example, establishing a permanent SSE Unit or Directorate within a key ministry (or as an independent commission) to coordinate cross-ministerial efforts beyond the project phase. This body would oversee policy coherence, monitor SSE's contribution to development goals, and continually update strategies.

2. Ensure Longevity of Support Structures – The pilot programs, accreditation systems, and financial instruments developed in earlier phases must evolve into permanent support structures. Long-term, the Certificate of Accreditation should be managed by a self-sustaining institution (potentially a public-private agency) that continues to refine standards and provide services (such as capacity-building tied to accreditation). The regional SSE hubs and incubators should be networked and possibly consolidated into a National Social Innovation Network that continues to offer mentorship, research, and market linkages for SSE entities countrywide. Donor projects should gradually hand over roles to local institutions, ensuring that knowledge and networks built remain in Jordan. By institutionalizing these supports, Jordan guarantees that the SSE ecosystem will not dissipate with changing donor priorities or political terms.

3. Policy Refinement and Responsive Regulation – As the SSE grows and evolves, Jordan's regulatory environment should remain adaptive and supportive. In the long term, the government (with input from SSE stakeholders) must periodically review and refine laws and policies governing the sector. This could involve updating the SSE law to cover new forms of social innovation, refining tax incentive schemes based on impact data, and strengthening oversight to ensure accountability without imposing undue burden. Data collection and impact measurement should be built into the system: national statistics agencies can begin capturing SSE contributions to GDP, employment, and social indicators, providing evidence for policy adjustments. The goal is a learning government that responds to the needs of SSE actors, ensuring regulation remains an enabler of innovation and cooperation, not a hindrance.

4. Cultivate a Culture of Social Innovation and Solidarity – Finally, the long-term success of SSE in Jordan hinges on cultural and mindset shifts. By weaving SSE principles into the fabric of society, Jordan can solidify a culture of social innovation. This includes continuing to celebrate and elevate stories of social impact creators and community leaders who solve local problems through enterprise. It also means leveraging Jordan's tradition of philanthropy and social cohesion – for instance, encouraging waqf (endowments) and zakat funds to invest in community enterprises, thus marrying traditional solidarity with modern innovation. Lead actors: Civil society and educational institutions, supported by media and religious/community leaders. In the long run, the measure of success will be when collaboration, solidarity, and local initiative become default approaches to development challenges. Jordan will then stand as a regional pioneer in demonstrating that economic growth can go hand in hand with social equity and that doing good is integral to growing strong.

In conclusion, these recommendations chart a feasible yet visionary roadmap for Jordan. Implementing them will require steadfast commitment from all stakeholders – government agencies providing an enabling environment, municipalities and communities driving local action, the private sector investing in shared value, and donors aligning their support with national priorities. The journey to a thriving Social and Solidarity Economy will be incremental, but each step will build a more resilient, inclusive Jordan. By acting on these recommendations, Jordan's leaders can unlock the tremendous potential of its people's solidarity and entrepreneurship, setting the nation on a course of sustainable development that is uniquely its own. see figuer 6.1.

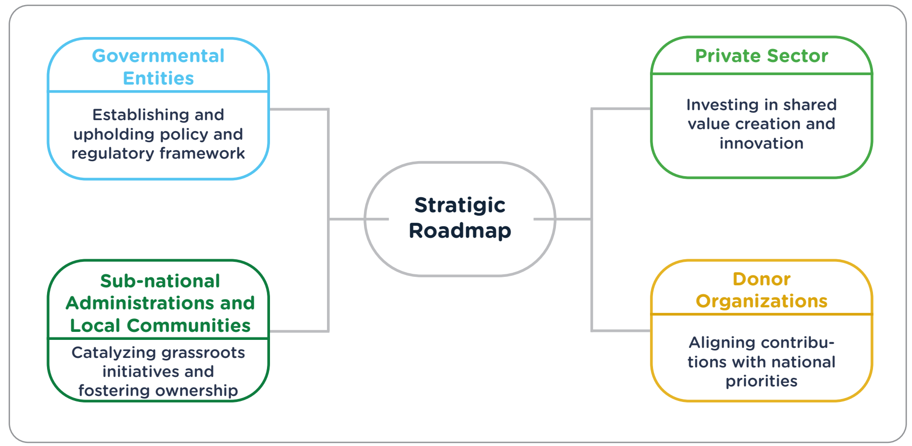


Figure 6.1: Collaborative Effort for Strategic Success

To evaluate the study

Published in 2026 by:
German Jordanian University
Brunel University of London
Jordan Strategy Forum

This publication was supported/funded by the British Academy's ODA International Interdisciplinary Research Programme. Award Reference:

Design by Arch. Dana Al-Lafi