معهد السياسة والمجتمع
Politics & Society Institute

مختبر الاستدامة الأردني

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Towards Inclusive Infrastructure: Overcoming Challenges for Persons with Disabilities in Ajloun Governorate

بالشراكة مع السفارة الأمريكية في عمّان

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Policy paper

Towards Inclusive Infrastructure: Overcoming Challenges for Persons with Disabilities in Ajloun Governorate

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ABSTRACT

The difficulties facing the disabled as far as infrastructure accessibility is concerned in Ajloun Governorate, Jordan are examined in this policy paper. Although there is legislation and international commitments, the paper reveals that there are significant gaps in the implementation of such standards, notably in transport systems, public buildings, sidewalks, residential areas and parks. PWDs suffer from social exclusion due to lack of accessible infrastructure leading to economic disadvantages and a lower quality of life.

SWOT and PESTEL analysis were used to determine strengths, weaknesses opportunities and threats relating to infrastructure development for people with disabilities. The paper expounds on how government policies, financial resources, public consciousness about disability issues alongside technological advancements and engagement of stakeholders can lead to substantial systemic changes.

The paper provides a wide range of recommendations for the short, medium and long terms that revolve around policy enforcement, boosting existing infrastructure, universal design principles promotion, capacity building, technology utilization and stakeholder engagement.

If these recommendations are adopted by Ajloun Governorate, a fully inclusive environment will be created where PWDs can enjoy equitable access to opportunities, services and an improved standard of living. This dedication to accessibility in keeping with Jordanian principles of human rights advances a fairer society.

Introduction

[1]Ajloun Governorate, nestled in the scenic north of Jordan, boasts a rich history, captivating landscapes, and a vibrant cultural heritage. However, its infrastructure development has not kept pace with the needs of all its citizens, particularly those with disabilities (PWDs)[2]. Inclusive infrastructure, encompassing public transportation, buildings, parks, and other public spaces, is essential for ensuring equitable access and participation for everyone, regardless of their physical abilities

Ajloun Governorate: Historical and Scenic Beauty

This policy paper delves into the challenges faced by PWDs in Ajloun Governorate regarding infrastructure accessibility. Despite existing legislation and international commitments, significant gaps remain in implementation, leading to social exclusion, economic disadvantages, and a diminished quality of life for PWDs.

1.0 Background

2.1 Geographic and Demographic Context

Ajloun Governorate, characterized by its undulating terrain, rich vegetation, and diverse biodiversity, is home to approximately 176,080 residents[1]. The moderate population density is driven by the topography, which limits urban expansion. The population is predominantly young, presenting both challenges and opportunities for local economic growth and infrastructure development. While the gender ratio is relatively balanced, socioeconomic disparities exist, with higher unemployment rates among youth and women. Access to services, particularly for PWDs, remains a significant challenge.

Map of Ajloun Governorate

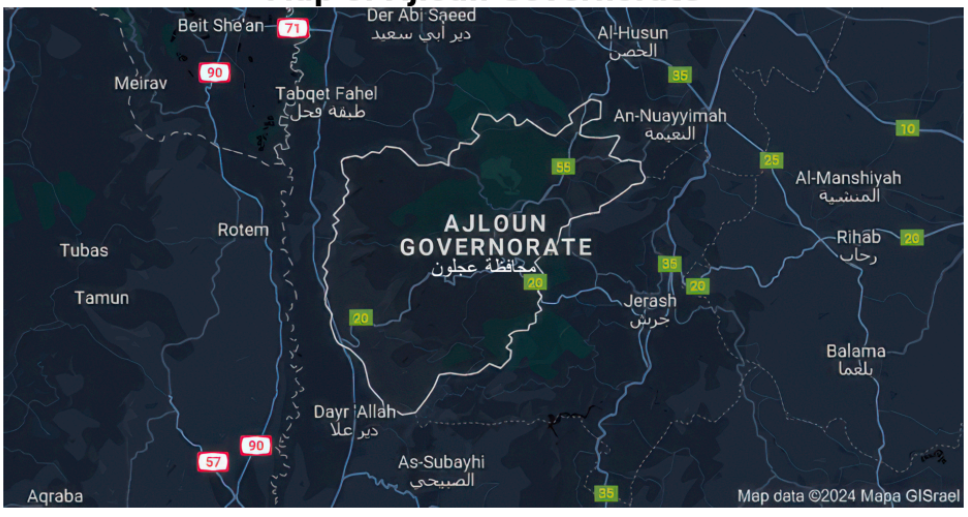


Figure.1 Map of Ajloun Governorate

2.1.1 Legislative and Policy Framework.

1.Jordan has established a legislative and policy framework aimed at promoting the inclusion and equality of PWDs. Key legislation includes:

- Law on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (No. 20 of 2017): This landmark law outlines the rights and entitlements of PWDs, including their right to accessibility in public and private spaces. It mandates accessibility standards for public buildings and facilities, inclusive education, equal employment opportunities, and healthcare access[1].
- Jordanian Constitution: While not specifically targeting PWDs, the Jordanian Constitution enshrines the principle of equality and non-discrimination, encompassing all citizens[2].

2.International Commitments:

- United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD): Jordan ratified the CRPD in 2008, committing to protecting the rights of PWDs and ensuring their integration into all spheres of national life. The CRPD emphasizes respect for dignity, an accessible environment, and non-discrimination[3].

Key Challenges:

Despite these legislative and policy frameworks, challenges persist in Ajloun[4]:

- Enforcement and Compliance: Weak enforcement mechanisms hinder the effective implementation of accessibility standards[5].
- Public Awareness: Limited public awareness about disability rights and the importance of accessible environments contributes to the perpetuation of barriers[6].
- Resource Allocation: Insufficient financial resources allocated to accessibility initiatives impede progress in improving infrastructure.

1.0 Background

3.1 Current State of Infrastructure in Ajloun.

Ajloun's infrastructure presents significant challenges for PWDs, despite the presence of relevant legislation and international obligations[1]. The implementation of accessibility requirements remains inadequate, impacting various aspects of life for PWDs.

Public Transportation:

[2]Public transportation in Ajloun is largely inaccessible to PWDs. Buses and mini-buses lack ramps, designated seating, and audio-visual aids for the visually and hearing impaired, restricting their mobility and independence[3].

Public Buildings:

Numerous public buildings, including government offices, schools, and hospitals, lack basic accessibility features such as ramps, lifts, and disabled-friendly toilets, hindering access to essential services.

Sidewalks and Pedestrian Paths:

Sidewalks and pedestrian paths in Ajloun are often irregular, narrow, or blocked, posing challenges for wheelchair users and individuals with mobility impairments. Tactile paving and audible signals for people with visual impairments are scarce[4].

Housing:

Housing infrastructure in Ajloun is generally inaccessible, with many residential houses lacking elevators or ramps, creating obstacles for PWDs within their homes and neighborhoods.

Public Spaces and Recreational Areas:

[5]Most parks, recreational areas, and public spaces in Ajloun lack accessible paths, seats, and services, limiting the social interaction and recreational opportunities for PWDs.

Employment and Educational Facilities:

[6]Limited accessibility in employment and educational facilities hinders access to education and employment for PWDs, leading to higher unemployment rates and lower levels of educational attainment[7].

3.2 Social and Economic Impact of Inaccessible Infrastructure.

[8]The lack of accessible infrastructure in Ajloun has profound social and economic consequences for PWDs:

- Social Exclusion: Inaccessibility limits PWDs' ability to participate in community activities, access services, and interact with others, leading to increased isolation and negative impacts on mental health.
- Economic Disadvantage: Barriers to employment and economic activities for PWDs result in higher unemployment rates and reduced economic contribution.
- Quality of Life: The lack of accessible infrastructure affects daily life and independence for PWDs, leading to a lower quality of life and reduced opportunities.

1.0 Data Sources and Methodology

The accessibility audit data collection in Ajloun Governorate employed a multi-method approach, combining field surveys, structured interviews, and direct observational studies. A standardized checklist was used to assess critical aspects of accessibility in various public infrastructures, including buildings, transport facilities, and open spaces.

4.1 Data Collection Methods.

The audit involved systematic visits to public infrastructures, using a standardized checklist to assess key accessibility features such as ramps, elevators, accessible toilets, designated seating on public transport, and the provision of visual and auditory aids in public spaces.

4.2 Accessibility Ratings.

Accessibility ratings were determined using a weighted scoring system, with each facility receiving a score from 1 (poor) to 5 (excellent) based on ease of use, safety, and other relevant factors[1]. This scoring system aligned with the principles outlined in the Building Construction - Accessibility and Usability of the Built Environment standard, ensuring compliance with global best practices.

4.3 Case Studies: Real-Life Experiences Highlighting the Challenges.

Two case studies were presented to illustrate the challenges faced by PWDs in Ajloun:

- Ahmed's Experience Battling Mobility: Ahmed, a 28-year-old PWD, faces significant limitations in accessing key services due to the lack of ramps and lifts in public buildings, highlighting the need for all-inclusive improvements in infrastructure.
- Fatima & Her Advocacy toward Accessible Public Transport: Fatima, a mother of two children with disabilities, advocates for accessible public transport, emphasizing the urgent need for appropriate transportation options for PWDs.

To give a better idea about the current status, table 3 below highlights the main aspects of infrastructure accessibility across different domains:

Table 3: Accessibility of Public Spaces in Ajloun

Infrastructure Area	Accessible (%)	Inaccessible (%)
Public Transportation	10%	90%
Government Offices	25%	75%
Healthcare Facilities	30%	70%
Educational Institutions	20%	80%
Parks and Recreational Areas	15%	85%
Private Businesses	10%	90%
Public Buildings	15%	85%
Sidewalks and Pedestrian Paths	20%	80%
Housing	25%	75%
Public Spaces and Recreation	30%	70%
Employment and Education	35%	65%

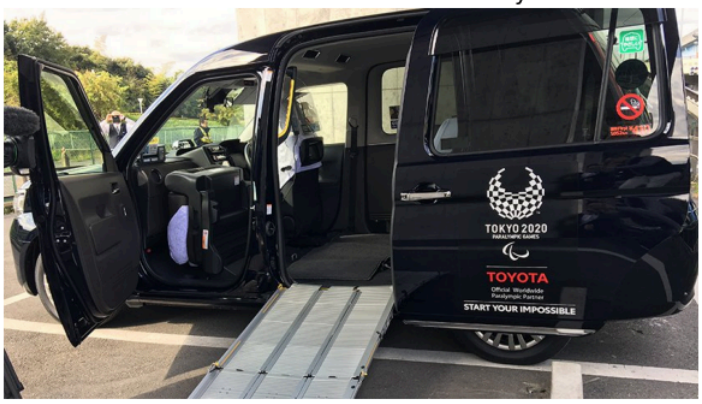
4.4 International Best Practices: Learning from Global Success Stories.

International best practices in accessibility were showcased, demonstrating how other countries have successfully addressed similar challenges:

Public Transportation in Japan and Universal Design: Japan's world-renowned public transportation system embodies universal design principles, incorporating tactile paving, audio-visual announcements, and barrier-free train stations to enhance accessibility for PWDs[1].

Accessible Train Boarding Assistance in Tokyo

Accessible Taxi Services in Tokyo



- Canadian Building Regulations on Accessibility: Canada's stringent regulations on creating accessible built environments ensure that all new publicly owned buildings meet disability-related criteria from the planning stage, demonstrating a commitment to inclusion[1].

4.5 Sustainability and Long-Term Impact: Ensuring Lasting Change.

[1]To ensure the sustainability of accessibility initiatives, long-term funding strategies and a strong dedication to inclusion are crucial. This includes:

- Creating special government funds: Allocating dedicated resources for accessibility projects.
- Encouraging public-private partnerships: Leveraging private sector investment in accessible infrastructure.
- Attracting foreign donors or NGOs with expertise in disability rights: Seeking external support and expertise.

4.6 Addressing Potential Barriers in Implementation: Proactive Solutions.

Potential barriers to implementation were identified and addressed:

- Overcoming Financial Constraints: Exploring diverse financial resources, including government budgets, international development funds, and private sector collaborations.
- Navigating Bureaucratic Challenges: Forming strong advocacy coalitions to lobby for inclusive policies and practices at all levels of governance.
- Enhancing Technical Capacity and Expertise: Creating training programs for architects, urban planners, and building professionals on accessibility standards and best practices.

1.0 SWOT Analysis.

A SWOT analysis was conducted to assess the internal and external factors influencing accessibility in Ajloun:

Strengths:

- Policy and Legislative Frameworks: Existing national policies and legislative frameworks provide a basis for advocating for better infrastructure and accessibility.
- Community Awareness and Advocacy: Active community organizations and advocacy groups raise awareness and fight for the rights of PWDs.
- Governmental and Non-Governmental Support: Support services for PWDs are offered by both governmental and non-governmental organizations.
- Technological Advancements: Current technologies and assistive equipment can enhance mobility and independence for PWDs.
- Cultural Heritage and Tourism Potential: Ajloun's rich cultural heritage and potential tourist attractions can encourage investment in accessible infrastructure.

Weaknesses:

- Inadequate Public Transportation: Public transportation in Ajloun is largely inaccessible, limiting the mobility and independence of PWDs.
- Limited Accessible Public Buildings: Many public buildings lack accessibility features, hindering access to essential services.

- Poorly Designed Sidewalks and Pedestrian Paths: Sidewalks and pedestrian paths are often irregular, narrow, or blocked, posing challenges for wheelchair users and individuals with mobility impairments.
- Inaccessible Housing: Most housing infrastructure is not designed with accessibility in mind, preventing PWDs from living independently.
- Lack of Accessible Public Spaces and Recreational Areas: Many parks and recreational areas are inaccessible, limiting social interaction and recreational opportunities for PWDs.
- Limited Accessibility in Employment and Educational Facilities: Limited accessibility in employment and educational facilities leads to higher unemployment rates and lower levels of educational attainment for PWDs.

Opportunities:

- Government Initiatives and Funding: Opportunities exist to secure government support and funding for the development of accessible infrastructure.
- International Aid and Grants: Non-governmental organizations (NGOs) offer grants and aids to projects that advance accessibility.
- Public-private Partnerships: Public-private collaborations can facilitate investments in accessible infrastructure.
- Community Engagement and Participatory Planning: Engaging the community and PWDs in planning processes can ensure that infrastructure improvements cater to their needs.
- Tourism Development: The attraction of more tourists to Ajloun can increase demand for better infrastructure, including accessible facilities.
- Technological Integration: The use of new technologies in infrastructure development can improve accessibility and create innovative solutions.

Threats:

- Economic Constraints: Limited financial resources and budget constraints can hinder the adoption of infrastructure improvements.
- Resistance to Change: Some stakeholders may resist change due to accessibility not being a top priority.
- Bureaucratic Hurdles: Complex bureaucratic processes and regulatory hurdles can slow down the implementation of infrastructure development policies.
- Sustainability Concerns: Ensuring the long-term sustainability of infrastructure projects requires a continuous flow of funds for maintenance and management.
- Technological Barriers: Insufficient technology expertise, high costs, and limited availability of assistive devices can pose challenges.

Environmental Challenges: Ajloun's geographical and environmental conditions, such as hilly terrain and harsh weather, can present additional challenges to infrastructure development.

Figure.8 SWOT Analysis: Disabled Access in Ajloun Governorate.

The strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats related to infrastructure challenges that people with disabilities in Ajloun Governorate have been highlighted in figure 8.

1.0 PESTEL Analysis.

A PESTEL analysis was conducted to examine the external factors impacting accessibility in Ajloun:

Political Factors:

- Government Policies: Government commitment to disability rights, implementation of national and local policies supporting accessibility, and adherence to international agreements like the CRPD are crucial.
- Legislation: Enforcement of disability laws and regulations is essential for ensuring compliance with accessibility standards.
- Political Stability: Regional political stability affects funding and policy implementation.
- Public Sector Initiatives: Government programs and initiatives aimed at improving accessibility and infrastructure are vital.

Economic Factors:

- Funding and Resources: Availability of government and non-government funding for infrastructure development, economic focuses, and budgeting are key considerations.
- Economic Growth: The economic situation impacts infrastructure projects, financing initiatives for PWDs, and overall progress in Ajloun.
- Work Opportunities: Economic potential for PWDs, workplace access, and economic integration are important factors.
- Cost of Implementation: Financial difficulties associated with accessible infrastructure development and the affordability of adaptive technologies can pose challenges.

Social Factors:

- Public Awareness and Attitudes: Disability awareness in society, societal attitudes towards PWDs, and advocacy strategies are crucial for promoting inclusion.
- Demographic Trends: Population increase, aging population, and prevalence of impairments among residents influence the demand for accessible infrastructure.
- Cultural Factors: Cultural influences on the inclusion and support of PWDs play a significant role.
- Education and Training: Accessibility of educational institutions, vocational training facilities, and public sensitization campaigns are essential for promoting awareness and understanding.

Technological Factors:

- Technological Advancements: Innovations in infrastructure accessibility, growth of assistive technology availability and usage, and integration of technology into public services can enhance accessibility for PWDs.
- Digital Inclusion: Digital platforms for PWDs to access online content and services, as well as the availability of internet connectivity, are crucial for promoting inclusion.
- Research and Development: Funding research into technologies that support accessibility and inclusion is essential for driving innovation.
- Infrastructure Development: Implementing smart city programs, upgrading technological infrastructure within public transportation, and incorporating technological improvements within public spaces can enhance accessibility.

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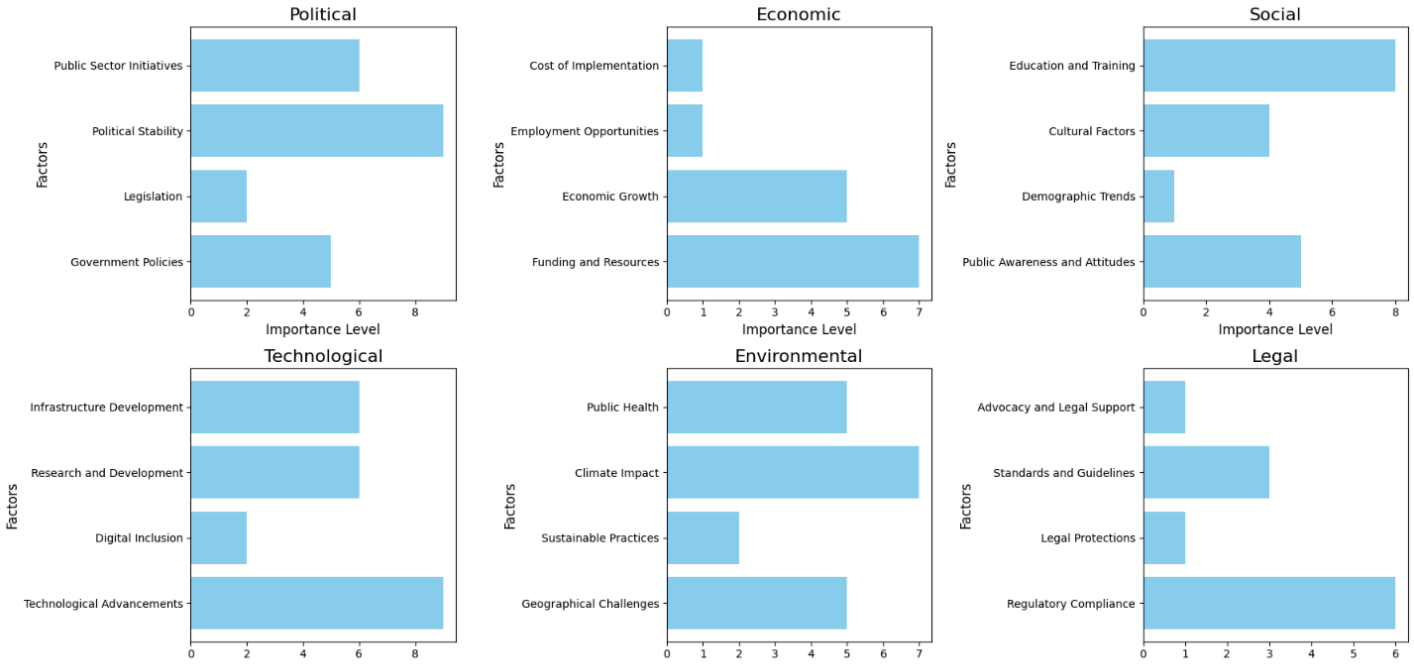
- Infrastructure Development: Implementing smart city programs, upgrading technological infrastructure within public transportation, and incorporating technological improvements within public spaces can enhance accessibility.

Environmental Factors:

- Geographical Challenges: Ajloun's topographical and ecological conditions, such as hilly terrain and harsh weather, can affect infrastructure development and accessibility.
- Sustainable Practices: Incorporating green building initiatives and environmental considerations into infrastructure projects is important for long-term sustainability.
- Climate Impact: The effects of climate change on infrastructure require resilient adaptive designs to meet the needs of PWDs.
- Public Health: Environmental factors influencing the health and well-being of PWDs, as well as access to healthcare facilities, are crucial considerations.

Legal Factors:

- Regulatory Compliance: National and international laws on accessibility, building codes, and disability rights must be complied with adequately.
- Legal Protections: Legal protections for PWDs, including anti-discrimination laws and enforcement mechanisms, are essential for ensuring their rights.
- Standards and Guidelines: Infrastructure projects should adopt and utilize accessibility standards and guidelines to ensure compliance.
- Advocacy and Legal Support: Disability rights organizations play a vital role in advocating for legal reforms and providing legal support services.



7. Stakeholder Analysis: Identifying Key Actors and Their Roles

The success of addressing infrastructure challenges for PWDs in Ajloun depends on the involvement and cooperation of various stakeholders. A stakeholder analysis was conducted to identify key actors and their roles:

1.0 Stakeholder Analysis

In Ajloun Governorate, the success of handling infrastructure challenges of disabled persons is determined by the involvement as well as cooperation of different actors. A complete stakeholder analysis will recognize who is involved and what their interests, power and role are in the process. This analysis will offer insights on how to properly engage each stakeholder for the desired outcomes.

Key Stakeholders:

- People Living with Disabilities (PLWDs): PWDs are the primary beneficiaries and advocates for change, seeking accessibility to universal infrastructures, increased freedom of mobility, and a better quality of life.
- Government Officials: Government officials play a crucial role in enforcing all-inclusive measures, ensuring social justice, and developing policies, directing financial appropriations, overseeing regulations, and implementing programs.
- Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs): NGOs advocate for PWDs' rights, facilitate inclusion measures, provide resource backup and expertise, conduct advocacy work, sensitization campaigns, technical backstopping, and infrastructure monitoring.
- Local Residents: Local residents benefit from increased public inclusivity, better amenities within the community, and social integration. They can support inclusive initiatives, participate in consultations, and nurture an enabling atmosphere.
- Private Sector: The private sector can contribute through corporate social responsibility initiatives, market expansion, financing infrastructure projects, creating available technologies, and adopting inclusive business practices.
- Educational Institutions: Educational institutions play a role in enhancing learning for all children, conducting research relevant to PWDs, grooming the next generation of advocates, and fostering an environment of inclusiveness.
- International Organizations: International organizations uphold human rights, promote global inclusivity standards, provide technical and financial support, offer funding, technical assistance, and monitor progress.

1.0 Recommendations.

Based on the analysis of the current situation, stakeholder engagement, and the need for sustainability, a comprehensive set of recommendations was developed to address the infrastructure challenges faced by PWDs in Ajloun:

1. Policy Development and Enforcement:

- Enhance Existing Policies: Review and upgrade existing infrastructure policies to ensure they meet the requirements of PWDs, harmonizing local codes with global standards like the CRPD.
- Introduce Strict Enforcement Measures: Establish clear guidelines for accessibility compliance by public and private sector infrastructure projects, with occasional checks and sanctions for non-compliance.
- Encourage Universal Design: Provide incentives, such as tax remissions or subsidies, to developers who incorporate accessible characteristics into their projects.

2. Infrastructure Development and Upgrades:

- Rehabilitation of the Current Infrastructure: Prioritize the rehabilitation of existing public buildings, roads, and transport systems to accommodate the needs of PWDs, installing ramps, tactile or raised pavements, lifts or elevators, and accessible signage.
- Designing Inclusive Public Transport Systems: Increase the range of accessible public transportation options, including low-floor buses, accessible bus stops, and other PWD-friendly features.
- Incorporating Universal Design Approaches: Ensure that all new infrastructure projects comply with universal design standards to be inclusive for all persons, regardless of disabilities.

3. Capacity Building and Training:

- Training for Government Officials and Planners: Conduct regular training sessions for government officials, urban planners, and engineers on inclusive design and accessibility standards.
- Community Awareness Campaigns: Organize community sensitization campaigns to raise awareness about accessibility issues and the rights of PWDs.
- Support for PWDs in Using Infrastructure: Develop programs to enable PWDs to fully utilize public infrastructure, including orientation and mobility training, as well as technological literacy education.

4. Stakeholder Engagement and Collaboration:

- Establish a Multi-Stakeholder Platform: Create a platform for regular discussions and collaboration between government departments, NGOs, private sector players, PWDs, and other stakeholders.
- Enhance NGO Involvement: Strengthen the role of NGOs in monitoring infrastructure projects and advocating for the rights of PWDs.
- Encourage Private Sector Participation: Encourage private sector involvement in financing and constructing accessible infrastructure through public-private partnerships and CSR initiatives.

5. Funding and Resource Allocation:

- Allocate Dedicated Funding: Allocate a specific percentage of the infrastructure budget to accessibility projects, with monitoring from authorities.
- Leverage International Funding: Seek funding from international donors and development organizations for large-scale accessibility projects.
- Promote Cost-Effective Solutions: Encourage the use of low-cost innovative solutions in infrastructure development, such as pre-cast ramps, accessibility mobile apps, and community-based monitoring systems.

6. Monitoring and Evaluation:

- Establish Clear Metrics and Indicators: Develop SMART (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, and Time-bound) indicators to track progress on accessibility initiatives.
- Regular Audits and Reporting: Conduct regular audits of public infrastructure to assess compliance with accessibility standards, making the results public and taking corrective action where necessary.
- Incorporate Feedback Mechanisms: Establish feedback channels to gather input from PWDs and other stakeholders on infrastructure projects, using this feedback to improve future schemes.

1.7. Technological Integration:

- Implement Assistive Technologies: Advocate for the use of assistive technologies in public spaces to increase access, such as screen readers at public terminals, audio guides, and mobile apps offering real-time information about accessible routes and services.
- Digital Inclusion: Ensure that digital infrastructure and services, including websites and mobile apps, are accessible to PWDs by complying with international standards like WCAG.
- Support Research and Innovation: Promote research on new technologies and solutions that enhance accessibility through grants, partnerships with universities, and innovation challenges.

2.8. Advocacy and Awareness:

- National Campaigns: Run national awareness campaigns to educate the public about accessible infrastructure, share success stories, and build a movement for inclusive design.
- Best Practices: Showcase successful accessible infrastructure projects locally and globally to inspire other communities.
- Engage Media: Work with media to feature stories about PWDs and infrastructure challenges to raise awareness and garner broader public support.

3.1.0 Implementation Plan: A Phased Approach to Achieving Accessibility.

- A phased implementation plan was developed to guide the implementation of the recommendations:

4.1) Short-Term Actions (0-6 months):

- Audit public infrastructure to ensure that it is accessible.
- Start awareness initiatives for decision-makers and the general public.

5.2) Medium-Term Actions (6-18 months):

- Equip 50% of public buses with wheelchair ramps and designated seating.
- Modify public buildings to comply with accessibility requirements.

6.3) Long-Term Actions (18-36 months):

- Overhaul all of the streets in the city.
- Develop a continued monitoring and evaluation framework.

1.0 Data Visualization and Analysis: Illustrating the Accessibility Gaps.

Data collected from an accessibility appraisal done in different parts of Ajloun Governorate are shown in Table 1. The various places were surveyed to establish how accessible they were for persons with disabilities (PWDs) and the ratings were made on a scale that ranged between 1 and 5 where 1 implied poor access while 5 meant excellent access. It also highlights the particular problems found in each place and suggests what changes should be made to promote their accessibility.

Table 5: Accessibility Audit Results.

Location	Type of Infrastructure	Accessibility Rating (1-5)	Issues Identified	Required Upgrades
Ajloun City Center	Public Buildings	2	No ramps, narrow doorways, lack of signage	Install ramps, widen doorways, add signage
Ajloun Bus Terminal	Public Transportation	1	No accessible buses, high platforms	Acquire accessible buses, lower platforms
Al Hashmi District	Residential Area	3	Uneven sidewalks, no tactile paving	Level sidewalks, add tactile paving
Ajloun National Park	Recreational Area	4	Limited accessible pathways, no accessible restrooms	Create accessible pathways, add restrooms
Local Government Office	Government Building	2	No elevator, high counters	Install elevator, lower counters

Furthermore, table 5 depicts the main suggestions for enhancing the infrastructure of persons with disabilities in Ajloun Governorate, as well as their predicted effects, implementation plan and those who will be accountable for undertaking these measures.

Table 6: Recommendations and Expected Impact.

Recommendation	Expected Impact	Implementation Timeline	Stakeholders Involved
Implement Strict Enforcement Mechanisms	Improved compliance with accessibility standards	6-12 months	Municipalities, Law Enforcement Agencies
Develop Inclusive Public Transportation	Increased mobility and independence for PWDs	12-18 months	Ministry of Transport, Public Transport Companies
Upgrade Existing Infrastructure	Enhanced access to public and private buildings	1-2 years	Ministry of Public Works, Local Governments
Launch Public Awareness Campaigns	Greater public support and understanding of PWD needs	12 months	Ministry of Social Development, NGOs, Media
Allocate Dedicated Funding	Secured financial resources for ongoing projects	Annual budget cycles	Ministry of Finance, Ajloun Governorate Office

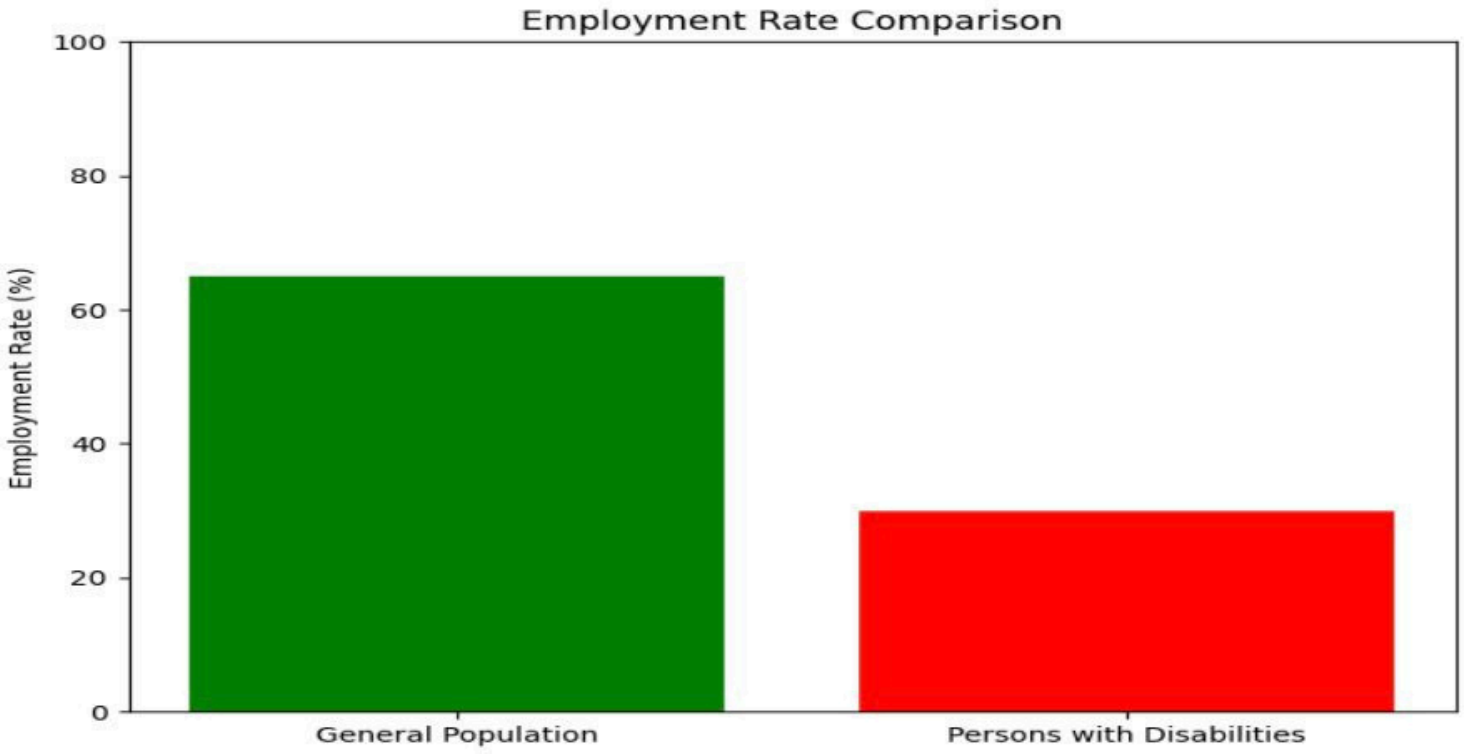


Figure.10 Employment Rate Comparison

Moreover, Figure. 10 shows a comparison between employment rates among the general population and PWDs in Ajloun Governorate. This bar chart illustrates a sharp contrast that underscores the problems PWDs experience when looking for employment compared to other members of society.

Overall, In Ajloun Governorate, infrastructural accessibility enhancement is essential for the betterment disabled persons' quality of life. By implementing recommended steps, Ajloun can become a demonstration area of inclusive development whereby all inhabitants can be full participants in society.

1.0 Appendix.

10.1 Appendix A: Audit Checklist for Accessibility.

This checklist was used to audit the accessibility of several public and private infrastructures in Ajloun Governorate. Each item was reviewed to determine the current accessibility status and find out areas which need enhancement.

1. **Ramps at Building Entrances:**

- Presence of ramps at entrances to public and private buildings.
- Evaluation of ramp steepness and materials used for safety and user friendliness.

2. **Multi-Storey Buildings - Elevators:**

- Existence of elevators in multi-storey buildings.
- Reviewing elevator sizes, placement of buttons, hearing/visual signals.

3. **Accessible Restrooms:**

- Availability of toilets that disabled people can access.
- Determining if the door width is okay or not as well as railings on walls among others like emergency telephone facilities are some examples.

4. **Designated Seating in Public Transportation:**

- Availability of seats set aside for PWDs on buses plus other public transportation means.
- Location evaluation, signage and ease of entering such seats are also included here.

5. **Auditory and Visual Aids in Public Spaces:**

- The existence auditory (such as beeps at crosswalks) and visual aids (for example Braille signs).
- Evaluating how effective these aids are within various parts of the Ajloun.

10.2 Appendix B: List of Stakeholders.

1. **Ministry of Public Works and Housing:**

- In charge with planning, construction and maintenance of public infrastructures.
- Major contributor in the creation of an accessible infrastructure in Ajloun.

2. **Ajloun Municipality:**

- This is a local government body which controls urban planning, public utilities and command compliance officers.
- It is central to any efforts at improving access to disabled persons on behalf of the state.

4. Local PWD Advocacy Groups:

- Such organizations advocate for rights and needs of such individuals as handicapped people.
- They give some ideas, supporting or criticizing the efficiency of different plans implying accessibility.

5. International Organizations (e.g., UNDP, WHO):

- Provide technical support, financing and knowledge about disability issues internationally or globally speaking.
- Global health agencies partner with local authorities and civic groups to ensure international standards are met.

12. Conclusion.

Ajloun Governorate has the potential to become a truly inclusive and accessible place for all its inhabitants. By leveraging its strengths, addressing its weaknesses, and capitalizing on the opportunities presented, Ajloun can create an environment where PWDs enjoy equal access to societal amenities, services, and opportunities.

The recommendations outlined in this policy paper provide a comprehensive roadmap for action. Through strict policy enforcement, incorporating universal design principles, fostering stakeholder collaboration, and embracing technology, the challenges faced by PWDs in accessing infrastructure can be overcome.

Investing in accessible infrastructure is not just a social responsibility; it is an investment in the future of Ajloun, ensuring that its society is inclusive and just for all people. Now is the time for action. By working together, government organizations, NGOs, the business community, and PWDs themselves can make Ajloun a model town where inclusive development thrives. Let us pledge to leave no one behind and work towards a better future for all residents of Ajloun.

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The Jordanian Sustainability Lab - Overview

The “Jordanian Sustainability Lab” project of young leaders was launched by the Policy and Society Institute in February 2024, in partnership with the US Embassy in Amman, which aims to empower Jordanian youth to participate effectively in decision-making processes regarding sustainable development to address sustainability challenges and promote a green future based on sustainable development (SDGs) perspective, create innovative solutions in the environmental, economic and social sectors as well.

The project targeted 24 young men and women from all Jordanian governorates, including disabled individuals, they work in a highly efficient national committee responsible for studying the challenges of their communities and developing sustainable solutions after they underwent intensive training with experts and specialists in environmental issues, the training sessions improved their leadership skills and understanding of sustainability-related concepts, goals, and mechanisms of writing a policy paper for their developmental ideas.

The participants were divided into teams from different regions, they conducted a systematic analysis of their regions' needs, in addition to awareness and needs specification sessions for the northern, central, and southern regions in several community institutions. They came up with innovative solutions and sustainable development opportunities available there.

The Institute adopts the mentioned programs to empower Jordanian youth to participate effectively, raise awareness about the Sustainable Development Goals and the importance of youth participation, promote cooperation and networking among stakeholders, and ensure the inclusion of disabled individuals in all activities.

مختبـر
الاستدامـة الأردني

About the Politics and Society Institute

The Politics and Society Institute is a non-profit organization and an independent research and studies center that aims to achieve stability and prosperity in Jordan and the region and to enhance the frameworks and tools of knowledge in the region and its societies.

The Institute analyzes and anticipates risks and changes and proposes creative ideas and practical solutions that contribute to addressing local and regional challenges in the political, security, economic, and social fields, particularly those related to demographic transformations and the role of youth in politics and society.

The Institute also contributes to clarifying public policies and complicated challenges and promotes the knowledge base of citizens and officials about local and global transformations that determine the features of the future.

In turn, The Institute amid the national values system promotes the culture of moderation, the rule of law, good governance, and the development of democratic life.

In addition to the studies and research the institute conducts, the Institute's work includes providing consultations and training in various fields, as it contributes to training young people on the values of citizenship, democracy, the rule of law, and comprehensive national principles, Through its research and training programs in the field of policy building, the Institute also improve the ability of the decision-maker to address the strict challenges and build the important strategies to confront risks.

The institute aims to concentrate the efforts of several researchers, experts, and specialists of different fields in an integrated manner to build practical ideas and solutions to current challenges and expected changes to support the work of institutions and improve the ability to achieve the national interest.

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