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## Working Women in Sectors of Secretary, Beauty Salons, and Supportive Health Services

" Ill-treatment and Lack of Protection "

Tamkeen Fields For Aid



## **Futures Thumbnail study**

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##### **Executive Summary:**

Tamkeen Fields for Aid conducted a futures thumbnail study about the reality of working women in Jordan in three sectors, namely; "secretarial, beauty salons, and supportive health services", in order to identify the Jordanian and International legal framework that addresses forced labour, and to identify the social and economic framework for the work of women in Jordan, in addition to highlight the working condition of working women in the sectors which have been selected and link them to indicators of forced labour.

The study will review the background of the rights of women working theoretically, legislative developments, the position of national legislation and international treaties and conventions of this matter. A section will be allocated to describe the work environment and reality of working women, and the study will present as well the substance of rights of working women and degree of assimilation of these rights, the degree of practice on the ground, according to the indicators of forced labour, and provide a definition of the forced labour concept, and present its global reality.

The study indicates that the rate of women's participation in the Jordanian labour market still one of the lowest in the world (14% of women versus 66% of men), where Jordan's global order indicates the low women's economic participation , and even the participation rate is among the lowest in the world. Where the Global Gender Gap Report of 2014 ranked Jordan No. 140 out of 142countries.

The study confirms the exposure of working women in the sectors of secretary, beauty salon, and supportive health services to series of violations which fall under forced labour.

With regard to the workers in the secretarial sector, the statistics indicates that the number of workers in the secretarial profession in small and medium- sized private enterprises is estimated at 11-13 thousand workers. Jordanian women constitutes nearly 90% of them, and a large portion of workers in this field earn salaries below the minimum wage of 190 JDs, also they suffer from working conditions which are not fully consistent with the legislations in force, whether in terms of the different kinds of vacations or health insurance, and lack of inclusion to social security, as well as in the case secretaries

asked for their rights, they are forced to resign or being placed in unsuitable circumstances in order to take the decision of resignation on their own, without receiving their labour rights. In addition, many secretaries along with their administrative work, do perform other tasks, such as: "cleaning the office, and preparing beverages". It is noteworthy here that secretaries do not get the majority of the labour rights stipulated by legislations.

The workers were interviewed stressed that they worked for long hours (12-15) hours a day, which means that they are entitled for double of their wages, but that never happens, and they don't get public holidays, national events, and sometimes religious holidays. As well as the vacations they get are unpaid, and there is no article regarding overtime to their work hours that have been specified in 8 daily working hours.

In regard to salaries, many of them earn less than the minimum wage, and salaries granted to them ranged between only 100 and 150 JDs, violating in this the Ministry of Labour decision, specifically the one identified the minimum wage rate to 190 JDs per month.

As for the end of service rights, or when being laid off from work, these rights are not raise and being ignored by employers, and are not used in the secretarial sector. With regard to health insurance, workers confirmed the lack of health insurance despite the long working hours on typing machines and computers might subject them to occupational disease, and some secretaries work in buffet and maintenance which may expose them also to risk. As well as the lack of awareness of unions among workers in the secretarial profession, as they are unaware of their minimum requirements and knowledge of any union they belong to.

According to the study, the number of workers employed in the supportive health services are between 11-14 thousand male and female workers, where the majority of them are exposed to considerable labour violations which some might amount to the suspicion of forced labour. The study confirms that the majority of workers receive wages less than the minimum wage, and are forced to work for long hours up to 16 hours a day. In addition, the majority of the workers are not registered in the social security, does not enjoy any form of health insurance, and deprived of their vacations represented in the annual vacation, sick leave, official and national holidays, and maternity leave. Among the violations the workers in this sector are exposed to, are: the lack of occupational health and safety conditions, despite their dealings with patients, substances, medical waste, medical analysis laboratories, tissues, and collecting all forms of waste. Some workers are subject to being dismissed from work in the event of claiming for their labour rights, or could be subject to threatening. While some workers confirmed that the company deducted from their salaries when they demand for their rights.

The study presents the work conditions of women working in beauty salons, which it indicates that the number of female and male working in women beauty salons in the Kingdom of 24 thousand workers, most of them women, spread over 6000 women beauty salons in the various governorates of the Kingdom, which most of them are located in the capital, Amman. The majority of the workers in this sector earn wages less than the minimum determined in Jordan of 190 JDs, in addition to working for long hours exceeding the 8 hours per day, even some of the workers are working 15 hours a day without

earning overtime according to the Provisions of Labour Law. Workers also suffer from being deprived from official holidays, annual vacation, sick leaves, and some of them are even deprived from the weekly day off scheduled on Sunday to women beauty salons. Workers are exposed to many work-related injuries due to the absence of the occupational health and safety tools, as well as being infected by respiratory diseases due to their dealings with certain harmful chemicals.

The majority of the workers in this sector are also not covered under the social security, and they are not entitled to any form of health insurance, in addition to not being provided with health and safety tools by many saloons.

As well as not being provided with activities and training sessions to raise the efficiency of workers, also there is no employment contracts signed between the owner of the salon and the workers to protect them, as well as there is a huge portion of workers working in women beauty salons in West Amman earn wages based on their work revenues percentage system, which could raise their wages in seasons to 400 JDs and perhaps even more than this. This salary is relatively high compared with the salaries of workers in this profession, but in the less privileged areas whether within the capital Amman or in the provinces, the majority of them are employed with a monthly salary, ranging from 50 to 150 JDs.

The study recommends to work on activating the role of trade unions to act on improving the work conditions, and to raise awareness and train workers, the expansion of social security umbrella contained in the Social Security Act, to include health insurance for all participants in social security, increase the number of labour inspectors and enhance their effectiveness in following the working conditions of workers in these sectors.

In addition to explicitly stipulate the criminalizing of forced labour in the Jordanian Penal Code and other criminal laws, revise legislations related to social protection in Jordan, ratify the International Conventions related to social protection in Jordan, and to develop a comprehensive concept of social protection and road map for economic and social empowerment of Jordanian women.

**Background:**

Although decades have passed since the declaration of Labour legislations and bills and what it contains from provisions dedicated the rights of working women which takes into account their situations and conditions, and also despite the reform movements and sequential amendments to these laws in order to be in line with the global trends of giving women more rights, and remove all distinctions between the working males and females, however the reality still confirms the exposure of women at the workplace to many labour, psychological and physical abuses, and forced labour is considered as the most prominent violation faced by a working woman, on all the international and national levels, and Jordan cannot be of any exception from the existence of this phenomenon, in light of the great flaw originally the labour market suffers from, in addition to the society's perception of women.

Therefore, this future's thumbnail study will assess the reality of the rights of women working in the following business sectors: "secretarial, beauty salons, and supportive health services", to measure the presence of forced labour phenomenon in the three working environments, through a realistic study which adopts the language of numbers and statistics in a scientific way.

The study will review the background of the rights of working women in theory, legislative development, and the position of national legislation and international treaties and conventions on this matter. Furthermore, a section will be assigned to describe the women's work environments and reality, and display the content of working women rights and the extent of absorbing these rights, and the degree of these rights are being practiced on the ground, according to the forced labour indicators.

**Importance:**

This study gains its significance due to the nature of the subject in matter and the approach taken, the study is of importance as it sheds lights on the causes of forced labour in the following sectors: "Secretary jobs, beauty salons, and supportive health services" and the legal and economic status of a wide segment of workers in these sections, and the study gains its practical importance by analyzing the working environments, the workers' rights, and its effectiveness on the ground, in light of the scarcity of studies in this regard.

**Objectives:**

The study aims to identify the international and local legal framework which deals with forced labor, identify the social and economic framework for the work of women in Jordan, shed the light on the work conditions of workers in the following sectors: supportive health services, beauty salons, and secretarial, and link the findings to indicators of forced labor.

## **Methodology:**

In order to achieve the objectives of the futures thumbnail study, a descriptive analytical method will be used through the application of a range of research tools, both quantitative and qualitative types as follows :

1. A review of all the studies, reports, international conventions and national legislation that are relevant to forced labor.
2. Conducting a series of interviews with a number of specialists, workers in the sectors that have been selected, the Ministry of Labour, heads of trade unions, and employers .
3. Analysis of all interviews and identify their characteristics, and developing a thorough understanding of working conditions and details in the selected sectors.

## **Forced Labour**

The criminalization of forced labour goes back to the beginning of the past century, through the International Labour Organization efforts, which has embarked since its establishment to care for labour rights and lift the injustice endured on workers at the international level. Therefore, one of the results of their efforts was to adopt the Convention concerning Forced or Compulsory Labour, No. 29 of 1930.

Which defines Forced Labour as: "All work or service which is exacted from any person under the menace of any penalty and for which the said person has not offered himself voluntarily"<sup>1</sup>.

Indicators which considered as strong forced labour indicators is deception about the nature of work, and forced recruiting, such as: kidnapping, detention during the process of recruitment, recruitment linked to debt bondage. As for the recruitment based on deception about the work conditions, content of the employment contract and its legality, accommodation and living conditions, legal status, place of work, wages, and recruitment based on deception about promise to marry, are all considered as medium-indicators.

With regard to strong indicators on the working and living under duress, are being forced to work for long hours, restriction freedom of movement and restrict communication with others, degrading working and living conditions. As for forcing workers to conduct employers personal tasks or for the whole family members are considered as medium-indicators.

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<sup>1</sup> ILO Convention concerning Forced or Compulsory Labour, (No.29)

It is also considered as a strong indicator that it is impossible to leave the employer, to restrict the liberty of terminating the employment contract, forced to stay for longer period waiting for outstanding salaries, or even work for an indefinite period until the outstanding debt is repayment.

A study conducted by the International Labour Organization confirmed that low-skilled migrant workers are "the most vulnerable to forced labour in the Middle East", indicating that victims of human trafficking usually suffer from financial distress, "they are weighed down by debt and did not obtain adequate education."

According to statistics by the International Labour Organization in 2014, there are more than 21 million people who are victims of forced labour in the world, including 11 million women and girls, and 10 million men and child, though most cases of forced labour found in private companies and domestic work, and it is spread between agriculture, construction, industrial workers, and others.<sup>2</sup> And the total profit of forced labour according to the "Profits and Poverty: The Economics of Forced Labour" report issued by the International Labour Organization is estimated of 150 billion dollars, which \$99 billion came from sexual exploitation for commercial purposes, while the other one-third, \$ 51 billion resulted from forced economic exploitation, including domestic work, agricultural, and other economic activities.<sup>3</sup>

The ILO estimated the presence of (600) thousand victims of forced labour in the Middle East, and (3.4) per thousand of the region population work against their will.<sup>4</sup>

In Jordan, hundreds of workers both Jordanian and migrants are exposed to forced labour, where many of them are exposed to deprivation of liberty, confiscation of passport, non-payment of wages, deprivation of food, prevention from calling their families, subjected to beating and verbal abuse, denial of health care, in addition to non-allocation of place to sleep, long working hours, denial of vacations, and demanding them to work in more than one place, as well as sexual harassment.

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<sup>2</sup> International Labour Organization

<sup>3</sup> "Profits and Poverty: The Economics of Forced Labour" report issued by the International Labour Organization

<sup>4</sup> Tricked and Trapped: "Human Trafficking in the Middle East"

### **Forced Labour Patterns:**

Forced labour is distributed on three main patterns, namely:

First: *forced labour imposed by the state*: it includes three main categories mentioned in the first global report on the subject in 2001, which are; forced labour imposed forcibly by the army, work compulsory in public works, and forced labour in prisons.

Second: *forced labour imposed by agents for commercial sexual exploitation*: this type includes women and men who have involuntarily engage in prostitution or any other forms of activities, and who engage in prostitution voluntarily but they cannot leave it.

Third: *forced labour imposed by the agents for economical exploitation*: this type includes all forms of forced labour imposed by the agents for the exploitation of others beyond the sexual exploitation, such as debt, domestic work, or other commercial compulsory work.

### **Legislative and legal framework of women work in Jordan:**

Jordan signed on 24 International Convention out of 188 convention and 198 recommendations related to work and both male and female workers, and ratified on the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against women of 2000. Also, the Jordanian Constitution equaled between women and men in terms of rights and duties, where Paragraph 1 of Article 6 of the Jordanian Constitution stipulated that Jordanians are equal before the law, without distinction as to their rights and duties on grounds of race, language, or religion, and also the Paragraph 2 of the same Article stipulates that the State shall guarantee providing work and education within the limits of its capabilities, and ensure tranquility and equal opportunities to all Jordanians.

Article 13 of the Constitution stipulates that compulsory work is not imposed on anyone, however it is permissible under the law to impose work or service on any person in compelling cases, such as war, or upon the occurrence of general endangerment, fire, flood, starvation, earthquake, severe epidemic disease to human or animals, animal or insects or botanical pests, or any other similar lesion, or any other circumstances might endanger the safety of all or some of the population.

Article 23 of the Constitution also stipulates that work is a right for all citizens, and the State shall provide opportunities to Jordanians through directing the national economy and raising its standards, and therefore the provisions of the Constitution did not distinguish between women and men in terms of rights and duties, especially the right to work.

However, there are many labour legislations related to working that carry discrimination against women, as the Labour Law of 2010 does not include explicit provisions prohibiting discrimination in employment and occupation and incumbent equal wages between men and women for work of equal value. The law also lacks clear provisions which protects women from all forms of harassment and molestation in the workplace.

The vast majority of working women in Jordan (95%) are centered in three economic sectors out of (13), and these three sectors are represented in public administration, education and health, and social work.

### **The reality of women in the Jordanian labour market:**

Jordanian labour market is described as unfriendly-women environment, where the rate of women participation in the Jordanian labour market is still one of the lowest international rates by (14% women versus 66% of men), and the Global Gender Gap Report of 2014 ranked Jordan No. 140 out of 142 countries<sup>5</sup>. The rates of unemployment among women in Jordan dramatically amounts to 22%, while they amount to 40% at poor areas.

On the other hand, the latest figures from the Social Security Corporation during the year 2015, indicate that the percentage of women participating in the Corporation is nearly 26.0% of the total subscribers.<sup>6</sup>

The women working in Jordan suffer from wage discrimination in favor to male, according to indicators issued by the Department of Statistics, the average monthly wages of workers in the public sector is (412 JDs), and (338 JDs) in private sector, forming a gap of (63 JDs) in favor of male and (69 JDs) per month respectively.<sup>7</sup>

Many labour and human rights reports shows that working women in the private sector are subjected to many violations and abuses breaching the provisions of the Jordanian labour law. As large numbers of them work for more than 8 hours a day, and deprived from any form of social protection and social security, as well as is a significant number of them receive wages far below the minimum wage, and does not enjoy job security and other decent work conditions.

Many workers are exposed to several forms of forced labour, especially in the private and informal sectors, according to the internationally recognized concept: "All work or service which is exacted from any person under the menace of any penalty and for which the said person has not offered himself voluntarily".

Some of the forms of Forced labour practiced on some of the workers in several economic sectors are, forcing the worker to perform work where she is obliged not to choose or against her will or by force in executing her job, or the use of physical violence against the worker, confiscation or delaying deliberately the payment of her wage by the employer, or changing the nature of the work agreed upon, and so on.

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<sup>5</sup> The Global Gender Gap Report 2014

<sup>6</sup> Social Security Corporation

<sup>7</sup> Department of Statistics

## **Social Protection in Jordan**

Social protection is considered an essential component of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights; where Article 22 stipulated that "Everyone, as a member of society, has the right to social security and is entitled to realization, through national effort and international co-operation and in accordance with the organization and resources of each State, of the economic, social and cultural rights indispensable for his dignity and the free development of his personality", and one of the Paragraphs of Article 23 explicitly indicated that "Everyone who works has the right to just and favourable remuneration ensuring for himself and his family an existence worthy of human dignity, and supplemented, if necessary, by other means of social protection".

The International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights issued in 1966 confirmed in Article 9 on the right of everyone to social security, including social insurance, in addition to the right to decent work and health care for adults and children (Articles 10,11,12).

The social protection falls under a series of international conventions that guarantee a set of social services related to women's empowerment and the elimination of all forms of discrimination towards them, the Convention on the Rights of Children, International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families, and the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

The social guarantees developed in the Forties and Sixties of the last century, towards securing the minimum which ensure life for everyone, and included coverage of hospitalization and health care, in addition to various social services. In the second phase (1965 - 1988) the level of provided services was raised and expanded coverage of other categories not previously covered, in specific categories which are economically inactive. And the legal provisions related to social protection in the past two decades witnessed a trend towards more flexibility in ensuring the social protection of individuals and groups, but in 2001 a provision has been issued entitled "Social Security: a new consensus" which ensured explicitly that social security is a fundamental right of human rights.

Convention 102 which determine the minimum standards of social security, is considered as a reference provision for the rights and duties associated with the nine areas of social protection, namely;

Medical care, unemployment benefit, survivors' benefit, invalidity benefit, maternity benefit, family benefit, employment injury benefit, old-age benefit, and sickness benefit.

Recommendation 202 of the International Labour Organization has stated that the social protection floor includes a range of interrelated and integrated policies, which ensures comprehensive protection of individuals and groups from economic and social risks that could threaten their right to live in dignity, by ensuring a minimum income and services to enable them to secure their food and other basic needs.

According to the Social Protection Committee report of the UN, about 5.1 billion people lack adequate social security or social protection worldwide<sup>8</sup>, this means that out of every seven people in the world, there are more than five who lack adequate social security, which prompted a UN high-level team to advocate for income security, and basic services for all, not only as a mean to ensure peace and stability but also to promote the growth of economy.<sup>9</sup>

Jordanian legislations addressed the elements of social protection legal framework which included a wide range of laws, regulations and instructions, however most of the national legislations still suffer from deficiencies and incompatibility with the relevant international standards.

Jordan, in the area of legislations on social insurance has not yet ratified the four international conventions dealing with various social insurance issues, namely; Convention No. 121 of 1964 concerning employment injury benefits, Convention No. 128 of 1967 concerning invalidity, old-age and survivor's benefits, Convention No. 130 of 1969 concerning medical care and sickness benefits, and Convention No. 183 of 2000 concerning maternity protection.

And also has not ratified the ILO Convention No. 87 concerning freedom of association and protection of the right to organize, which guarantee the workers' right to defend their interests, protect and improve them, which is considered as one of the social protection floor standards.

With regard to the extent of the alignment of social protection systems in Jordan, in light of the social protection standards set forth in the ILO Recommendation No. 202 concerning social protection floors, we find that the social protection systems do not include all the citizens and do not provide all of the coverage.

In this sense, we find that social protection is absent from the majority of workers in the "secretarial, beauty salons, and supportive health services" sectors, where that 80% of them does not enjoy social protection coverage, and 100% of them does not have medical insurance in all its forms, which negatively affect the workers in these sectors in all their lives aspects now and in the future. Despite their working for many years but they will finish their work without guaranteeing a pension, or aging, or even any insurance for work-related injuries that they may experience, which contributes directly to increased poverty rates in light of the rising of the standards of living, leading to insecure future to them.

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<sup>8</sup> UN: Social Protection Committee report, 2011

<sup>9</sup> UN: The United Nations Commission on Sustainable Development, 2010

## **Forced Labour in Jordan**

In this section of futures thumbnail study we will present the indicators of forced labour in three sectors that women work in and they are subjected to many violations which fall under forced labour<sup>10</sup>, where the study team conducted interviews with 50 female worker in these sectors in three governorates of Amman, Irbid and Ma'an.

### **The Study Sample Details**

Tamkeen Fields for Aid team met 50 female worker in three sectors, are: "Secretarial, beauty saloons, and supportive health services", 80% of them are Jordanians, and 20% of them are migrant workers. Age groups between 20 and 40 years old, who are sole providers for their families. 60% of them are educated and holds various certificates ranging from Diploma to Bachelor degree, 40% of them are uneducated and only studied the first classes, and some of them did not enroll in any education stage.

The sample was asked in the three sectors about their working conditions and wages they receive, in addition to the work environment and to what extent they enjoy their labour and administrative rights. Regarding their wages, 76% of the sample indicated that their wages are less than the minimum wage, ranging from 50 to 180 JDs, while 24% of them receive wages ranging from the minimum wage of 190 JDs to 350 JDs.

In regard to the overtime, 100% of the workers confirmed that they are not being compensated for it, but even having imposed additional work on them, and threatened with dismissal or deduction from their salaries if they refused to comply.

In addition, workers are deprived from obtaining annual vacation and sick leaves, and even from public holidays. Where 90% of them stated that they do not get any kind of vacation types, and in case they have to take one, it is on their own expense. While 10% of workers said that they get their vacations in all its various types.

16% of the sample participants stated that they were threatened with being dismissed from work or deducted from their salaries in case they claimed for their labour rights, or refused to comply to a decision considered as an abuse their rights. While 84% of them stated that they had not been subjected to any kind of direct threatening, but they might be subjected to indirect threatening.

In regard to social protection of workers, 80% of them do not enjoy being covered by the social security, and 100% of them asserted that they do not have health insurance in all its forms.

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<sup>10</sup> All the violations presented in the working sectors, based on series of interviews conducted with women working in secretary, beauty salons, and supportive health services sectors

The implementation of the occupational health and safety conditions and standards are absent in the mentioned sectors, despite the seriousness and sensitivity of the tasks that the workers perform. Where 100% of the workers confirmed the lack of occupational health and safety standards in the their workplace.



Following are the details of the violations in the employment sectors that have been selected in the futures thumbnail study.

## 1. Secretarial Sector

Statistics indicates that the number of workers in the secretarial profession in small and medium- sized private enterprises is estimated at 11-13 thousand workers<sup>11</sup>. Jordanian women constitutes nearly 90% of them, and a large portion of workers in this field earn salaries below the minimum wage of 190 JDs, also they suffer from working conditions which are not fully consistent with the legislations in force, whether in terms of the different kinds of vacations or health insurance, and lack of inclusion to social security, as well as in the case secretaries asked for their rights, they are forced to resign or being placed in unsuitable circumstances in order to take the decision of resignation on their own, without receiving their labour rights. In addition, many secretaries along with their administrative work, do perform other tasks, such as: "cleaning the office, and preparing beverages". It is noteworthy here that secretaries do not get the majority of the labour rights stipulated by legislations.

In detail, the majority of secretaries in offices and companies do not have employment contracts that reserve their rights and protect them from arbitrary dismissal, and in the case of obtaining an employment contract between secretaries and office owners, it is verbal, that is why dismissal occur without the recognized reporting lines of warnings, notice letters, and other clear penalties in the Labour Law and internal regulations, if any.

Do'aa is a 20 years old young lady, she worked as a secretary for one of the organizations, for a salary of 150 JDs per month. She works 10 hours a day without having a break, and she was even not allowed to eat under the pretext of that the office is for working and not eating.

Workers in this sector suffer from difficult working conditions represented in the long working hours without getting paid for the overtime, where some secretaries work for hours estimated at about 12 - 15 hours a day, which is contrary to the provisions of Article 56 of the Labour Law that determine the working hours by 8 hours a day or 48 working hours per week. The majority of the workers are also deprived from the annual vacations and public holidays, which is contrary to the provisions of Article 61 of the Labour Law, that give workers 14 days of annual vacation per year if the duration of his/her work in the same workplace is less than five years, and 21 days per year if the duration of his/her work in the same place is of five years or more.

The tasks performed by secretaries are numerous, as many of them perform along with their secretarial work, the tasks of cleaning office, preparing tea and coffee to the employer and his guests, in addition to any other tasks requested by the employer, and in case she refused to comply to them, she might be subjected to the termination of her services without any warning.

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<sup>11</sup> Social Security Corporation

Wafa is a 40 years old lady. She worked as a secretary for a doctor, for a salary of 180 JDs per month and was raised to 190 JDs after 4 years. She says that she works for 13 hours a day with half an hour rest, and she indicates that although she had worked in the same workplace for 10 years but her employer did not register her in the social security. And in case she got sick, her sick leave is on her own expense, and she even pays for her own treatment due to the lack of health insurance.

She added that through the 10 working years, she used to clean the office in the morning, and prepare the beverages to the guests, and other non-administrative tasks.

As for the end of service rights, or when being laid off from work, these rights are not raise and being ignored by employers, and are not used in the secretarial profession.

With regard to health insurance, workers confirmed the lack of health insurance despite the long working hours on typing machines and computers might subject them to occupational disease, and some secretaries work in buffet and maintenance which may expose them also to risk.

As well as the lack of awareness of unions among workers in the secretarial profession, as they are unaware of their minimum requirements and knowledge of any union they belong to.

## **2. Supportive Health Services**

The number of workers employed in the supportive health services are between 11-14 thousand male and female workers<sup>12</sup>, 30% of them are Jordanian, and 70% are migrant workers. The supportive health services sector include cleaners, nutritionist, office boys, and other sub-contracted workers who work for private companies in public and private hospitals and clinics, health centers, pharmacies, laboratories, radiology clinics, and other health institutions.

The percentage of male workers employed in this sector is high, due to the nature of work in hospitals which oblige workers whether male or female to work late hours of the night, something that does not suit the vast majority of women, making this sector a repulsive environment for working women.

The majority of them despite their relatively small number are exposed to considerable labour violations which some might amount to the suspicion of forced labour. We note here that the majority of workers receive wages less than the minimum wage, and are forced to work for long hours up to 16 hours a day. In addition, the majority of the workers are not registered in the social security, does not enjoy any form

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<sup>12</sup> General Trade Union of Supportive Health Services Employees

of health insurance, and deprived of their vacations represented in the annual vacation, sick leave, official and national holidays, and maternity leave.

Um Mohammed who works as a cleaner in a hospital, says that she suffered from asthma due to the nature of her work which deals with chemical material special for cleaning, and that the doctor prevented her from working, but her need pushed her to keep on working, and she confirmed that she asked from her supervisor to provide public safety materials but he refused and punished her by deducting from her salary.

She added the her salary is 150 JDs and sometimes the price of the cleaning materials are deducted from it. And although she works for long hours amounting to 12 hours a day but she is not compensated for the overtime.

Among the violations the workers in this sector are exposed to, are: the lack of occupational health and safety conditions, despite their dealings with patients, substances, medical waste, medical analysis laboratories, tissues, and collecting all forms of waste, which is contrary to the provisions of Article 78 of the Jordanian Labour Law that demand the employer to provide the necessary precautions and measures to protect workers from hazards and diseases that may result from the work and the machines used. There are many cases where workers were forced to pay for their treatment of injuries suffered while performing their work, and we note here that number of women workers who have been interviewed suffered from skin allergy or respiratory allergy.

A number of workers in supportive health services companies did not receive paid leave, and if they had to be absent from work, their companies oblige them to bring an alternative worker or pay the alternative's wage.

Some workers are subject to being dismissed from work in the event of claiming for their labour rights, or could be subject to threatening. While some workers confirmed that the company deducted from their salaries when they demand for their rights.

Khaleda was dismissed from her job because she claimed for her labour rights and asked to be covered by the social security. She said that she worked in a tough working environment where her wage did not exceed 120 JDs for 10 daily working hours, and without any annual or official vacation.

She added that many of her colleagues in the service sector do not have the minimum of their labour rights, in addition to their lack of knowledge of these rights.

Also the workers' wages are being deducted for the price of the cleaning material, and they are not entitled to claim for financial compensation in return to the deduction, and even their salaries are being deducted for expired cleaning materials.

Many supportive health services companies work in poor conditions as they describe them, especially that the majority of cleaners working in supportive health services companies are of low-education, and some of them do not read and write, which prevent them from enjoying the necessary legal knowledge to protect their rights.

### **3. Beauty Saloons Sector**

The number of female and male working in women beauty salons in the Kingdom of 24 thousand workers, most of them women, spread over 6000 women beauty salons in the various governorates of the Kingdom, which most of them are located in the capital, Amman.

Workers in the beauty salons sector suffer from tough working conditions, in addition to working for long hours exceeding the legal limit which in some cases reaches up to 16 daily working hours. Workers also suffer from being deprived from official holidays, annual vacation, sick leaves, and some of them are even deprived from the weekly day off scheduled on Sunday, which is a clear violation to the provisions of Article (57) of the Jordanian Labour Law which refers to the inadmissibility of making workers work for more than 8 hours a day, except in special cases and for a period not exceeding 30 days per year and a minimum of two hours a day to be counted as overtime for a minimum wage of one hour and twenty five minutes of the usual wage for every hour, according to the provision of Article (59) of the Law. This is in addition to that forcing the worker to work for very long hours considered as part of the "suspicion of forced labour", which is considered as a crime according to the Jordanian laws and International Labour Standards.

Workers in this sector also suffers from the law wages they receive for their work, which is reflected negatively on their living status, while the government set the minimum wage for 190 JDs, there are large numbers of workers earn wages less than the minimum wage, and this low wage do not meet their basic needs. We point out here that huge portion of workers working in women beauty salons in West Amman earn wages based on their work revenues percentage system, which could raise their wages in seasons to 400 JDs and perhaps even more than this. This salary is relatively high compared with the salaries of workers in this profession, but in the less privileged areas whether within the capital Amman or in the provinces, the majority of them are employed with a monthly salary, ranging from 50 to 150 JDs.

Nisreen, who worked for a beauty salon 5 years ago, during which she was deprived from participating in the social security, and worked for hours exceeded 14 hours a day without being compensated for the overtime. She was dismissed from work due to her pregnancy.
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In another violation of the labour law, the majority of the workers do not have health insurance or social security, where workers who were interviewed indicated that in case they got sick, they are obliged to pay for their treatment on their own expense. With regard to the social security, the majority of the workers are not covered by the social security, where the number of workers covered in this sector is 1800 participant, which indicates that the evasion rate for the inclusion of workers in this sector reach to 95%.

The workers in this sector have no access to any form of health insurance, in addition to a number of salons that do not provide workers public health and safety tools.

The absence of public health and safety tools is an indicator of forced labour

Many of the workers are exposed to many work-related injuries due to the lack of occupational health and safety tools, in addition to being affected with respiratory diseases as a result of dealing with some harmful chemicals.

The majority of the beauty salons lack the public health and safety tools and protective equipment in the workplace where workers deal with many chemicals without any protection from them. A number of workers confirmed suffering from respiratory problems and asthma due to the "Keratin" substance, which is a "material containing formaldehyde carcinogens which is a colorless, flammable, and this material is characterized by pungent odor and being produced in small quantities naturally from plants, animals and humans. And being exposed to small amount of this substance in the air, and some foods and products including composite wooden products, may cause skin, eyes, nose and throat irritation. And the high level exposure may cause some types of cancer and sever chest problems "severe asthma" which with time may cause lung cancer.

In addition, to not being provided with activities and training sessions to raise the efficiency of workers, also there is no employment contracts signed between the owner of the salon and the workers to protect them.

A Filipina worker, who works in a beauty salon in Abdoun says that her employer makes her work at the salon in "pedicure and manicure", and she works in his house as well for the same salary of 200 JDs. But she accepts that due to the "tips" she gets from some customers which may reach monthly to 75 or 100 JDs.

Along to the Jordanian labour, women migrant workers prevailed in the beauty salon sector, and similar to Jordanian labour, women working in this sector suffer from low wages, being subjected such as other working colleagues to exploitation actions related to the non-availability of occupational health and

safety conditions, the absence of any form of health insurance, as well as not having social insurance provided by subscribing to the social security.

Respiratory diseases and skin diseases are spread widely among workers in nail care salons, that is in addition to increase the possibility of their exposure to other diseases such as cancer, and the risk of their reproductive health and cause abnormal growth of the fetus or being subjected to abortion.

Philippine nationality workers usually works in "pedicure and manicure", and are subjected to direct contact with chemicals without using any public safety tools. And some of the workers who work in the house of the salon owner along with working in the salon, but these often work willingly because they take extra money for their work.

There are Philippine workers who are forced to work in the salon without getting overtime, and the salon owner merely give them 200 JDs for both cleaning the house and the "pedicure and manicure" tasks in the salon. And there are some Filipino workers who works through a daily-paid system and work for more than one salon.

#### **Conclusions and Recommendations:**

Workers in the mentioned sectors, suffer in many of the practices in various aspects of their work, and to limit such practices, we recommend the following:

1. Activate the role of trade unions to work on improving the working conditions, and to educate and train workers.
2. The expansion of social security umbrella contained in the Social Security Act, to include health insurance for all participants in social security.
3. Increase the number of labour inspectors and enhance their effectiveness in following the working conditions of workers in these sectors.
4. To explicitly stipulate the criminalizing of forced labour in the Jordanian Penal Code and other criminal laws.
5. Revise legislations related to social protection in Jordan.
6. Ratify the International Conventions related to social protection in Jordan.
7. Develop a comprehensive concept of social protection and road map for economic and social empowerment of Jordanian women.



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