



Public Perception Survey of Community Safety

Amman, Jordan
2020

PUBLIC
PERCEPTION
SURVEY

SIREN
■ ASSOCIATES

Background

This survey was conducted in April 2020 to provide empirical data on the public's perception of community safety and social cohesion in Amman, Jordan. The study is a part of the project 'Shoulder to Shoulder' implemented by Siren Associates in partnership with the Community Police Team of the Public Security Directorate (PSD) and with funding from the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs. 'Shoulder to Shoulder' involves the implementation of community-level quick impact projects, the rehabilitation of community safety spaces at PSD headquarters and locally, and training and mentoring for community police trainers, local police women and men, and community pioneers. The objective of the project is that – through expanded and improved engagement between the community and Community Police – refugees and vulnerable host communities will be better protected against violence and abuse.

Project Team

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1.0 Summary of Main Findings

This study provides an overview of perceptions of community safety among Amman residents. Respondents believe that the level of security remains stable or has improved at the national, governorate and neighbourhood levels. They also believe that safety levels will either remain the same or improve over the next five years. However, they perceive the level of safety in Jordan's neighbouring countries to be worse compared to five years ago.

The vast majority of respondents say that they would go to the police if they were harmed physically, were victims of theft or were victims of blackmail for monetary benefit. The majority of those who indicate that they would not go to the police in response to these crimes state they could either solve the issue themselves, or that they would not want to escalate the situation.

Respondents in all areas are very likely to approach the police as a first port of call if someone in their immediate family is assaulted

physically (91.9 percent) or to report a theft (97.3 percent) or blackmail (95 percent).

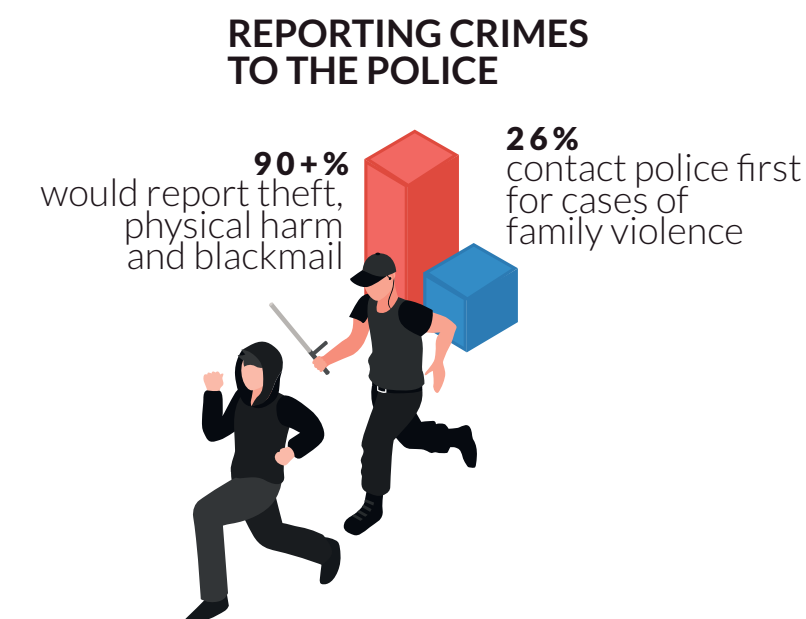
However, only a quarter of respondents would advise a woman relative – subjected to physical violence at home – to go to the police. A senior family or tribal member is the preferred source of help (37.6 percent). A third (33.5 percent) say that they would not do anything. The distribution of these answers is similar across different ages and locations, but they differ significantly by gender. Women are more likely to go to a senior family or tribal member (42.1 percent) than men (33.7 percent). On the other hand, men (40 percent) are more likely to advise not doing anything. This number increases to 49.2 percent for Syrian men.

A quarter of Syrians surveyed report being very concerned about family violence, compared to 17 percent of Jordanians. 45.2 percent of women report at least some concern about domestic violence.

Over a half of respondents are concerned with cybercrime. 22.6 percent reported being “very concerned” with little difference between gender and age, except in the age group 50+ where respondents report lower levels of concern.

Bullying is also a concern for a third of respondents. Indeed, 25.7 percent of Syrians and 18.4 percent of Jordanians are “very concerned”.

The majority of respondents (64.9 percent) feel that community safety remains the same as ten years ago, and that it has not changed with the arrival of large numbers of refugees. A quarter (24.5 percent) feel that the community has become less safe, while others say that it has become safer (9.7 percent). Limited employment opportunities, criminality or street



violence are most frequently cited by those who report feeling less safe.

Exactly 77.9 percent of Syrians stated they felt they and their families were accepted by most of the Jordanian community. Nine percent of respondents say that they do not feel welcomed at all.

A third of Syrians and a quarter of Jordanians do not agree or strongly do not agree with the statement “people from similar backgrounds to me can access services (such as healthcare and education) in the same way as other people in the neighbourhood”. There is no significant difference in terms of gender or age.

A third of Jordanians believe that local authorities do not treat people equally from all backgrounds in their neighbourhood (33.8 percent), compared to 9.2 percent of Syrians who believe the same. Jordanian youth (18-24 years old) are slightly more inclined to feel this way than other age groups (41.5 percent, compared to an average of 33 percent for other age groups).

Syrians have more friends and acquaintances from other nationalities than Jordanians (77.6 percent compared to 50.1 percent). There is little difference in terms of gender, although youth are slightly more likely to have friends and acquaintances from other nationalities.

Almost double the number of Jordanians to Syrians want a higher uniformed police

presence in their neighbourhood (38.6 percent to 19.9 percent).

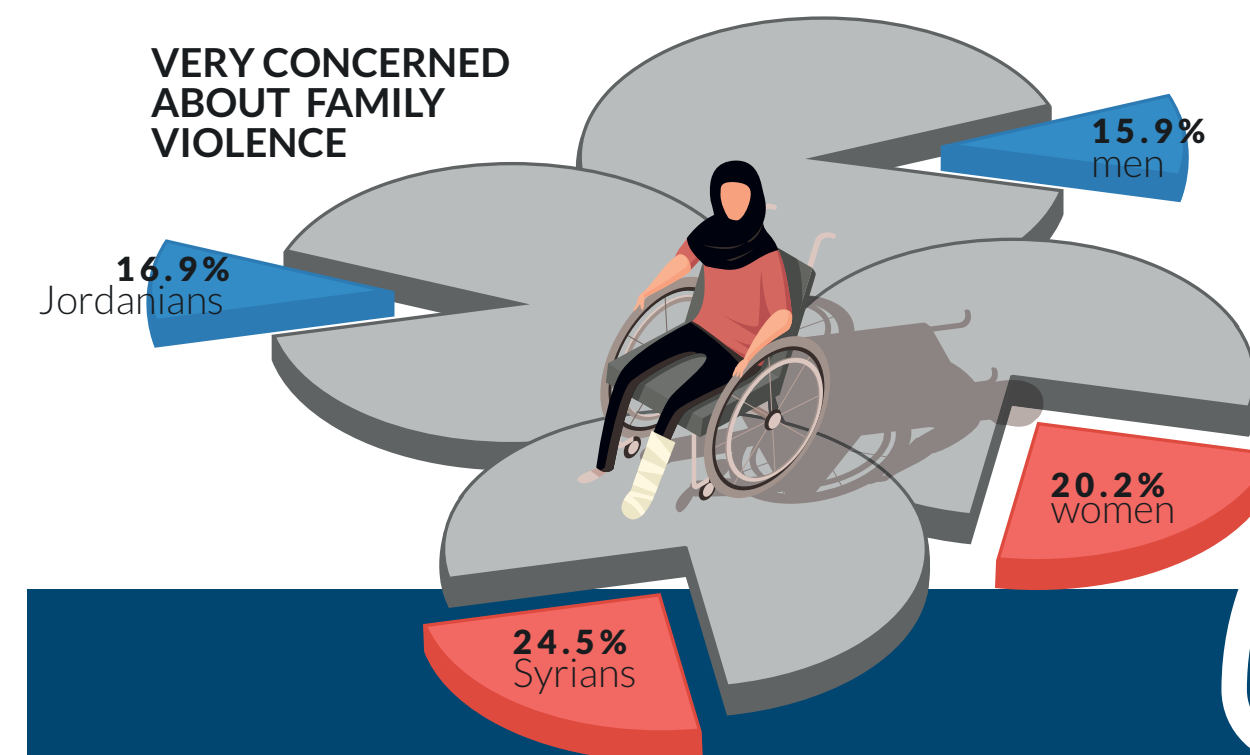
The vast majority of respondents indicate that they know where the nearest police station is (91.4 percent), but that they do not know the names of any police officers in the station or any other stations (84.2 percent).

Significantly more men than women have visited a police station before (77.4 percent to 40.2 percent). The majority of women say they would be more likely to consider going to the police if there was easier access to a police woman.

Over half of the respondents indicate that they would contact the police by phoning 911. Around a quarter say they would physically go to the police station if they had a problem.

The majority of the respondents have never heard of Local Security Councils (79.5 percent). Half of those who do know about them indicate the Councils make them feel safer, make their community safer, represent their concerns/issues and that they are an efficient mechanism of cooperation between the police and the community.

Over half of the respondents are aware that there is a website for the Public Security Department (PSD), and a third are aware that there is a PSD smartphone application that helps them report crimes.



The majority of women say they would be more likely to consider going to the police if there was easier access to a police woman.

2.0 Introduction

Siren Associates is a non-profit organisation working in Jordan with national authorities, civil society and international organisations on programmes that contribute to developing safe and secure societies where there is equal access to justice and freedom from fear. Siren has a proven track record in Jordan, specialising since 2013 in community policing and increasing access of marginalised communities to protection and safety services, both in refugee camps and host communities.

This study was conducted in order to create a baseline to understand community perceptions of safety and well-being in north Amman, where the project 'Shoulder to Shoulder' is being implemented.

Due to the Covid-19 pandemic and the difficulty of collecting data through face-to-face interviews, this study was conducted through phone interviews covering all of Amman. Conducting the interviews over the phone did

not affect the results, but the survey had to be shortened to match the style of data collection, which lasted approximately ten to 15 minutes. While the Covid-19 pandemic has had a negative impact on a variety of aspects of daily life, the survey found that it has not significantly impacted perceptions of safety.¹

The sample was based on 1,683 respondents, of which 1,430 were Jordanian, 241 were Syrian refugees, and 12 were of other nationalities. The margin of error is +/- 2.5 percent and the confidence level is 95 percent.

¹To verify whether the Covid-19 pandemic and subsequent lockdown had had an impact on survey results, responses were compared with field research – also conducted by NAMA – for the World Values Survey in 2018. In the World Values Survey, Jordanians living in Amman reported a 93.8 percent confidence and trust level (a great deal and quite a lot) in the Jordanian Armed Forces, 91.7 percent trust in the General Intelligence Directorate (GID), 93.5 percent trust in the Gendarmerie, and 92.3 percent trust in the Public Security Directorate (PSD). When asked how secure they felt currently, 94.2 percent of Jordanians in Amman indicated that they felt very secure or quite secure, compared to only 5.8 percent who stated that they did not feel very secure or did not feel secure at all. Finally, 23.5 percent of Jordanians in Amman indicated that they preferred to not go out at night because of reasons of security. The results of this survey (conducted April 2020) do not present a decreased sense of security despite the global COVID-19 pandemic. For example 95 percent of respondents reported their perception of security today compared to 5 years ago being either the same or much better than it was.



3.0 Results

Perceptions of safety and security

Perceptions of safety are high across all areas in Amman, among all age groups and genders. The majority (over 90 percent) of those surveyed believed that the level of security had remained stable or improved at the national, Amman and neighbourhood levels compared to five years ago.

Respondents also had a positive outlook for the future: the majority (77.8 percent) felt that their perceptions of their personal security in five years' time will either be the same, will get better or much better. This was broadly the same when it came to their family's security, security in Amman, and security nationally.

However, 56.5 percent of respondents reported that their perception of safety in Jordan's neighbouring countries was either worse or much worse.

Respondents were then asked whether they would go the police if they were physically

harmed, were victims of theft, or were victims of blackmail for monetary benefit. In all instances, more than 90 percent of respondents answered that they would go to the police to report such crimes, regardless of nationality, gender, age or area.

People in south Amman were slightly less likely to turn to the police if they were physically harmed (6.5 percent would not go to the police in south Amman, compared to 9.3 percent in east Amman). The majority of those across Amman who indicated that they would not go to the police for the above-mentioned reasons, reasoned that they could resolve the issue themselves (over a third).

The respondents were also asked about who they would first turn to if someone in their immediate family had their wallet stolen on the street. The results show that 89.5 percent would go to the police first. The second choice was to turn to a senior family or tribal member. This figure stood at 6.8 percent among those residing in south and east Amman, 5.7 percent in north Amman and 5.1 percent in central Amman.

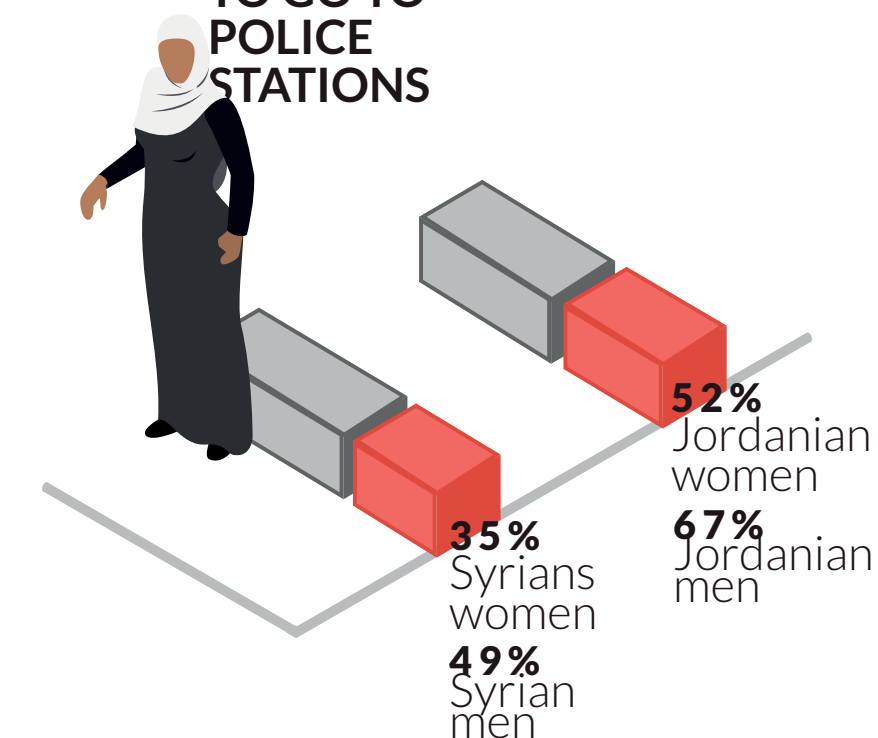
This number was slightly higher when it came to physical assault. 13.3 percent of respondents in south Amman would turn to a

senior family or tribal member, compared to 11.4 percent in north Amman, 15.1 percent in east Amman, 11.8 percent in central Amman.

When the respondents were asked about the person or entity they would advise a woman relative to turn to if she were subjected to physical violence at home, 37.6 percent of respondents said they would recommend speaking to a senior family or tribal member, 33.5 percent stated that they would not do anything, and 26.1 percent stated that they would suggest going to the police.

The distribution of these answers was fairly similar when disaggregated by age and area, but they differ significantly with gender. Women (42.1 percent) were found to be more likely to go to a senior family or tribal member than men (33.7 percent). Men (40 percent) were more likely to not do anything than women (25.8 percent). This number increased to 49.2 percent for Syrian men.

BELIEF THAT LOCAL FAMILIES PREFER WOMEN NOT TO GO TO POLICE STATIONS



The respondents were then asked to express their level of concern with safety under each of the following instances: on the road as drivers, family violence, online/cybercrimes, and bullying.

Cybercrime ranked highest with 39.7 percent of respondents reporting being very concerned or somewhat concerned with cybercrimes, followed by 36.2 percent who reported being concerned about bullying.

Women seemed to be more concerned with bullying at school than men. Precisely 53.8 percent of men were not concerned at all by bullying compared to 41.6 percent of women. There were fewer discrepancies when it came to cybercrime, whether according to nationality, gender, age or area.

Amman residents were asked whether they felt their community safety had changed in the last ten years with the arrival of large numbers of refugees. The study found that 64.9 percent felt that there had not been any change, while 24.5 percent stated that it had become less safe, and 9.7 percent said that it had become safer. In north Amman, 26 percent of respondents felt that it had become less safe. That figure stood at 30 percent in North Amman, 24.9 percent in east Amman, 21.3 percent in south Amman and 20.4 percent in central Amman.

Respondents were then asked about their perceptions of their own safety in their

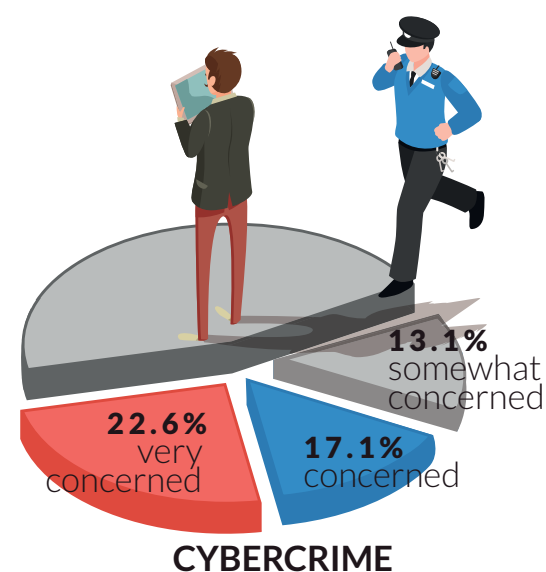
neighbourhoods over the past five years under a number of circumstances. Limited employment opportunities made 37.8 percent feel less safe in their neighbourhoods. Criminality made 13.7 percent feel less safe, with street violence negatively affecting safety perceptions for 10.4 percent of respondents.

Social cohesion

The study looked to measure the level of social cohesion and first inquired about the extent to which respondents agreed with a number of specified statements.

Most respondents indicated that they strongly agree or agree with these multiple statements:

- People from similar backgrounds to me can access services, such as healthcare and education, in



the same way as other people in the neighbourhood (67.2 percent)

- In my neighbourhood, I have friends and acquaintances from other nationalities (54.2 percent)
- I think that local authorities treat people from all backgrounds in my neighbourhood equally (63.8 percent)
- People in my area are willing to help their neighbours (84.9 percent)

66

Respondents had a positive outlook for the future: over three quarters felt that their perceptions of their personal security in five years' time will either be the same, will get better or much better.

70%
of women
more likely to go to
the police station
if they could speak
to a policewoman

2:1
ratio of men
to women visiting
police stations



Experience with the police

The respondents were then asked how often they have had interactions with the general public in their neighbourhood over the past three months in specific social settings. The different social settings listed included school/at their child's school, work, weddings, someone's house when having coffee or tea, in the street, shops, at prayers or other religious gatherings, and during activities organised by local groups.

Respondents most often interacted with members of the general public in their area at the shops, in the street, at prayers or other religious gatherings.

Non-Jordanians were asked if they felt that the Jordanian community had accepted them and their families into their communities. The study found that 77.9 percent of Syrians felt that Jordanians did accept them and their families in their local communities, and 100 percent of the other non-Jordanian respondents agreed. The lowest acceptance rate was in central Amman, where 71.9 percent indicated that they felt welcomed by most of the local community. The highest rate was observed in north Amman where 85.7 percent of respondents felt that they had been accepted by most of the community.

This final section of the study addressed respondents' experiences with police. The study first inquired whether or not respondents believed there should be a greater police presence in their neighbourhoods. The greatest discrepancy in responses was between nationalities: 38.6 percent of Jordanians believed there should be greater presence of uniformed police in their neighbourhoods, compared to 19.9 percent of Syrians. There were also some minor differences between different areas of

Amman: 31.8 percent of respondents in north Amman wished to see greater uniformed police presence compared to 33.3 percent in south Amman, 39.3 percent in east Amman and 43 percent in central Amman.

The vast majority of respondents indicated that they knew where the nearest police station was (91.4 percent). A slightly larger percentage in north Amman (12.6 percent) compared to other areas did not know the location of the nearest police station. The vast majority of respondents (84.2 percent) did not know the names of any police officers stationed at any police station, including the one nearest to them.

Furthermore, 77.4 percent of men and 40.2 percent of women indicated that they had visited a police station before. There were no clear differences in the number of respondents that visited police stations in different areas in Amman. Women were asked to indicate whether they would be more likely to consider going to the police if there was easier access to a policewoman; 70 percent of women said they would.

Exactly 57.2 percent of respondents agreed or agreed strongly with the following statement: "In my neighbourhood, most families prefer women not to go to the police". This was highest for Jordanians (59.8 percent), and in particular

Jordanian men (66.5 percent), and lowest for Syrians (42.4 percent), in particular Syrian women (34.5 percent).

All respondents were asked how they would contact the police if they were victims of a crime. More than half of the respondents (54.2 percent) indicated that they would phone 911, with 51.4 percent residing in East Amman, 51.6 percent in south Amman, 55.9 percent in central Amman and 56.8 percent in north Amman. The remainder of the answers were spread between going directly to the station themselves (33.1 percent), asking someone to go on their behalf (14.9 percent of women), using the PSD smartphone app (0.4percent), or reporting the issue through social media (0.5percent).

Finally, the study examined respondents' perceptions towards Local Security Councils. Most people (79.5 percent) indicated that they had never heard of these councils, while 19.6 percent had. Those who did know of these councils were asked about their perceptions of them. The study found that a little over 50

percent of the respondents believe that the Local Security Councils made them feel safer, made their community safer, represented their concerns/issues, and that they were an efficient mechanism of cooperation between the police and the community.

A slim majority of respondents (57.5 percent) indicated that they are aware that there was a website for the PSD. 47.2 percent of respondents in central Amman, 39.7 percent in east Amman, 35.1 percent in south Amman, 36.3 percent in north Amman say that they did not know the PSD had a website.

Regarding the level of awareness about the PSD's smartphone application, 35 percent of respondents were aware that there was a smartphone application for the PSD in which they could report crimes. At the area level, the degree of awareness ranged from 31.2 percent in central Amman, 34.6 percent in north Amman, 36 percent in south Amman and 36.8 percent in east Amman.

