

REACH Informing
more effective
humanitarian action

Jordan 'Rural Women in Agriculture' Assessment

- Key Findings Presentation, October 2018
- Livelihoods Working Group



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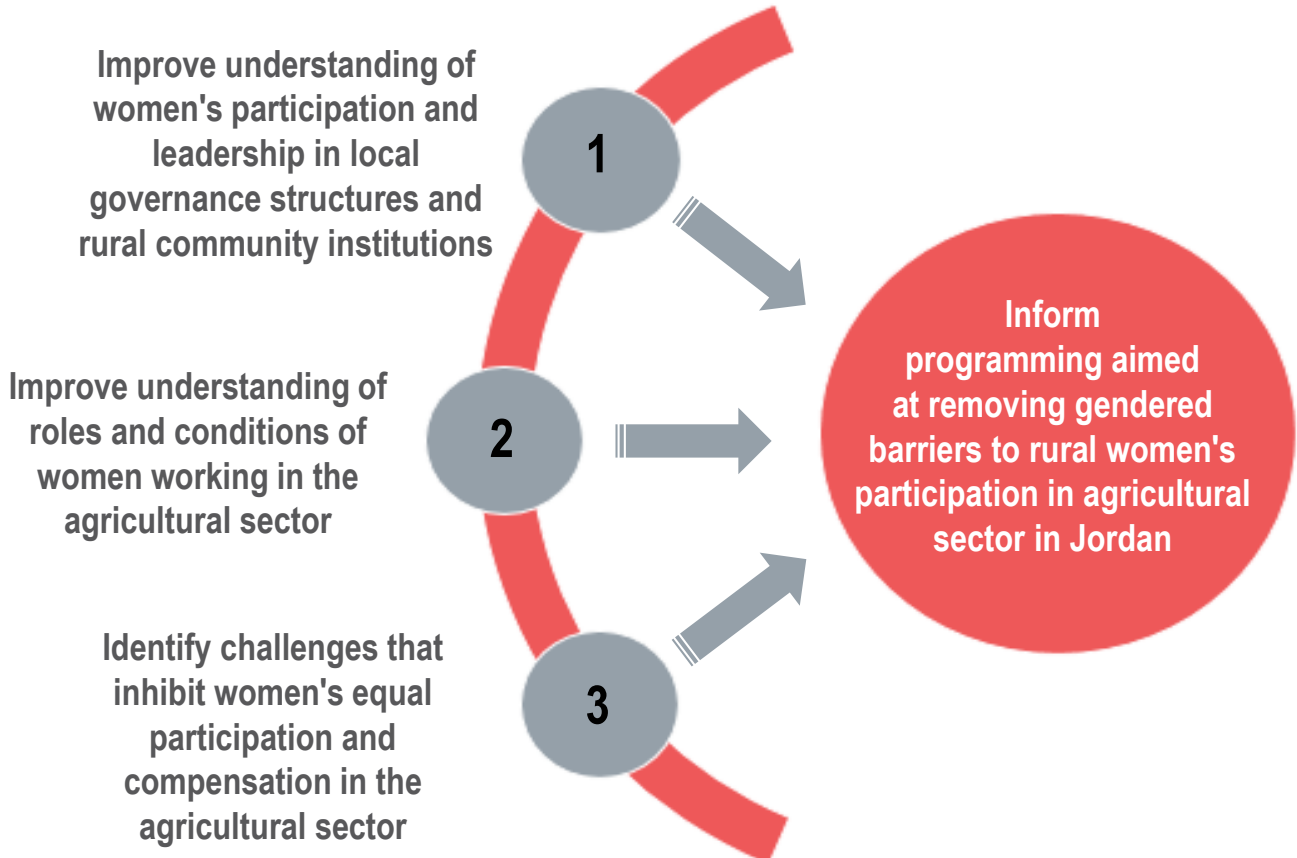
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Assessment Background

Between January and August 2017, REACH, in collaboration with UN Women, conducted an **assessment on rural women and their role in the agriculture sector in four governorates across Jordan: Irbid, Mafraq, Balqa, Karak**

OBJECTIVES  GOAL



Assessment Methodology

To meet research objectives, a **mixed-methods, multi-stage approach** was used for this assessment...



Overview of Women's Engagement in the Agriculture Sector

Demographic profile of women who engaged in agriculture in the past 12 months¹

Women who engaged in agricultural activities in the past 12 months were found to be...

1.2.3

From younger age groups (56% aged 18-40 years)



With relatively low levels of education (31% primary education, 30% illiterate)



Married (79%)



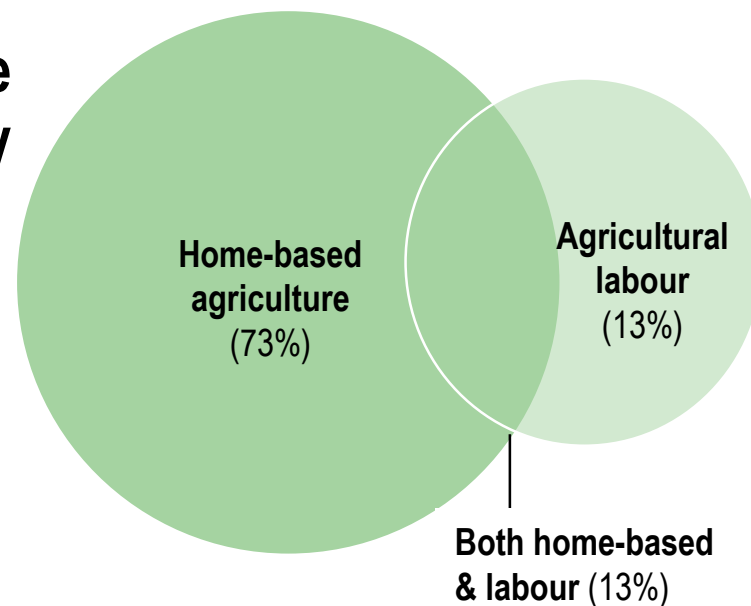
With children (73%)

¹ For all findings presented, past 12 months implies 12 months preceding the time the survey was conducted (May-June 2017)

Type of agricultural activity (1)

Home-based agriculture found to be the most common type of activity women undertook in the past 12 months

- **More common among Jordanian women (97% Jordanians, 3% Syrians)**



However, 68% of Syrian women also reported to have engaged in home-based agriculture in Syria i.e. prior to their displacement → **Syrian women have background knowledge and could benefit from opportunities to expand and sustain these activities**

Type of agricultural activity (2)

Defining characteristics of women’s engagement in home-based agriculture/ paid agricultural labour (as defined by KIs and FGD participants)

	Home-based Agriculture	Paid agricultural Labour
Nature and setting of work	Agricultural production activities undertaken from or near home , on family-owned or rented land	Usually women who are informally employed and working as labourers in commercial farms
Profile of women engaged in this type of work	More common among Jordanian women , due to their/ their family’s ability to own land	Common for women from poorer economic backgrounds , and also becoming increasingly common among Syrian refugee women
Socio-cultural factors	Common form of engagement among women because it enables women to work from home , while also focusing on domestic responsibilities	Due to cultural reasons, women’s engagement in agricultural labour is perceived negatively by people in the community

Factors motivating women to engage in agriculture

Factors motivating women's participation in the agriculture sector (1)

Most commonly reported **factors motivating women to engage in agricultural activities include:**



Economic factors (93%), such as income generation, need to produce food for household consumption



Personal/ familial circumstances (52%), such as lack of alternatives, whole family working on farms, as a hobby



Having **background knowledge and experience** in the sector (32%)¹

Reflective of the economic nature of motivating factors, **women perceived their involvement in agriculture to be 'essential' or 'important' for their household**

¹ Background knowledge and experience includes women who have the relevant knowledge and experience due to prior engagement in the sector as well as women who undertake agricultural activities because it is customary and a common way of life for the women of the area.

Factors motivating women's participation in the agriculture sector (2)

Motivating factors do **vary by type of agricultural activity** women are engaging in

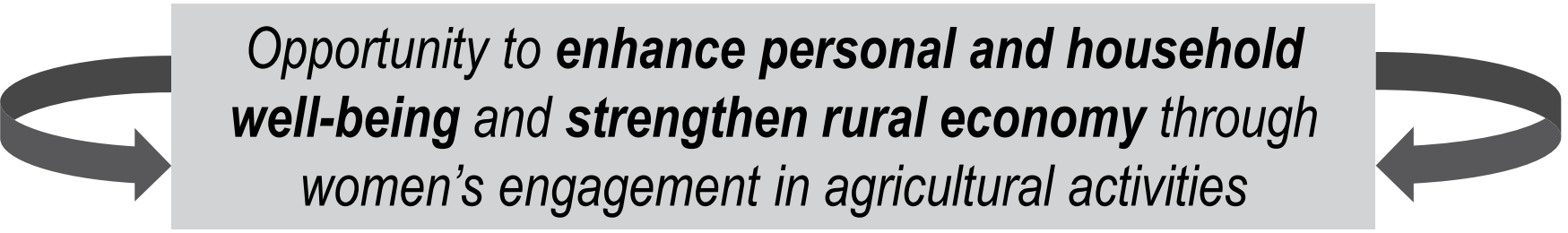
Home-based agriculture		
Engagement in home-based agriculture is driven more by personal preference		
1		Produce food for household consumption (90%)
2		As a hobby (44%)
3		To sell products/ generate income (36%)

Paid agricultural labour	
Engagement in paid agricultural labour is motivated largely by economic factors	
	Generate income and meet household expenses (93%)
	Lack of alternatives/ not trained for anything else (44%)
	Provide for household needs by taking crops home (23%)

Economic importance of women's engagement in agricultural activities

Large majority of women perceived their **engagement in agriculture to be 'essential' or 'important' for the household** (81% for labour, 79% for home-based)...

- Capacity to contribute to household income → **enhanced independence and decision-making role within the household**
- However, wages earned as agricultural labour relatively low → **reported average of 142 JOD per month across all seasons**



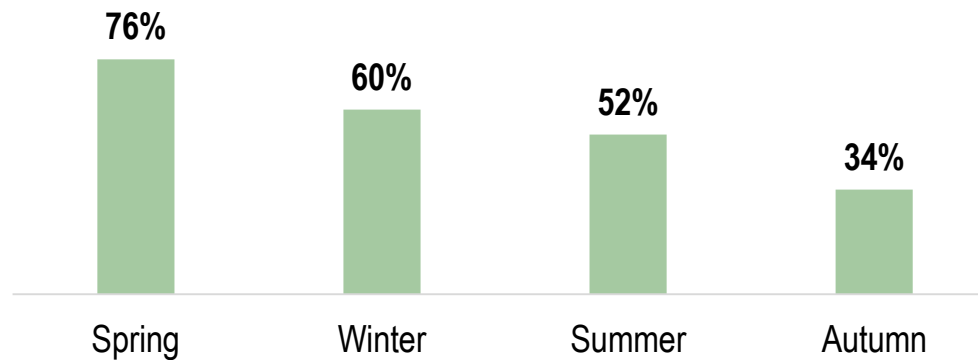
*Opportunity to **enhance personal and household well-being** and **strengthen rural economy** through women's engagement in agricultural activities*

Women's Engagement in Home-based Agriculture

Women's involvement in home-based agriculture during the last 12 months

Extent of women's involvement in home-based agriculture did vary between seasons and areas: spring and winter most active overall

- Home-based agriculture during winter more common in Jordan Valley
- Home-based agriculture during autumn more common in Rainfed Highlands¹






- **Significant time committed by women to this activity:** on average, 21 days per month and 4 hours per day
 - No major variations were found between seasons
 - Home-based agriculture an important source of livelihood for women

¹For the purpose of this assessment, rainfed highlands included Rahab district in Mafraq, and rural areas in Irbid, Karak, Balqa governorates. These highlands are characterised by high elevation (600 metres above sea level), mountainous terrain, rainfed agriculture, and fertile red soil




Women's role in home-based agriculture

- Women are involved **throughout the agricultural production process**, playing the fundamental role on a day-to-day basis
- **Men of the household have more supportive roles**, and more actively involved in commercial/ marketing aspects
- Women are **producing a range of products** through their engagement in home-based agriculture

Most commonly reported tasks undertaken by women across seasons

1		Livestock rearing (47% across all four seasons)
2		Harvesting (39% across all four seasons)
3		Planting/ sowing (31% across all four seasons)

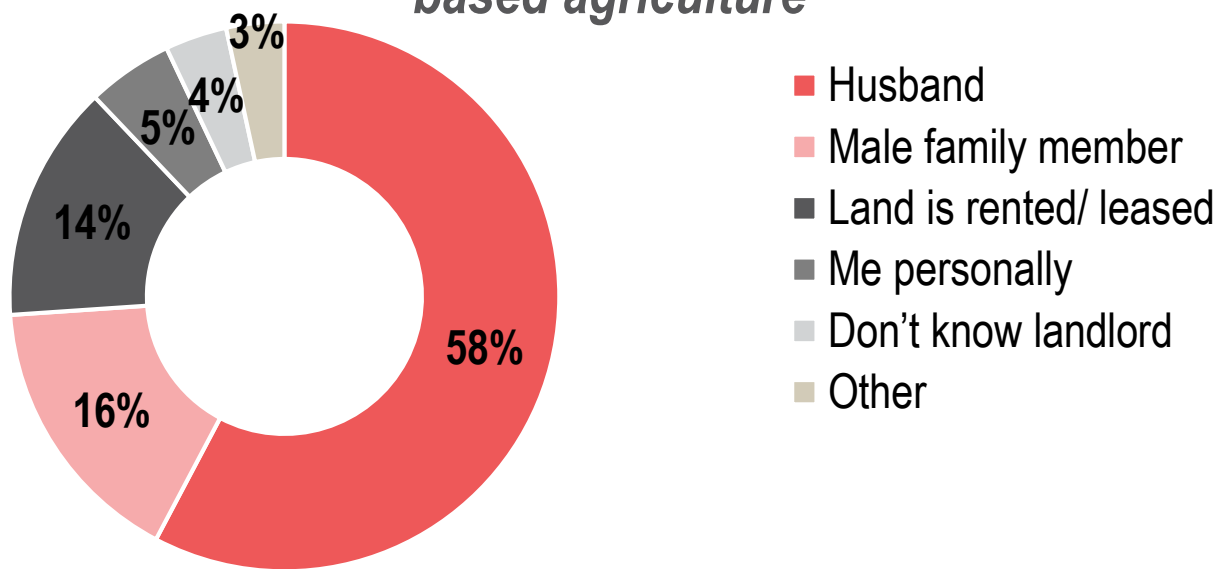
Most commonly produced agricultural products by women across seasons

	Vegetables (42% across all four seasons)
	Dairy products (31% across all four seasons)
	Eggs (24% across all four seasons)

Ownership of land used for agriculture

Despite women's active involvement in home-based agriculture, **it was found to be uncommon for women to own the land being used for agricultural production**

Ownership of land being used by women for home-based agriculture

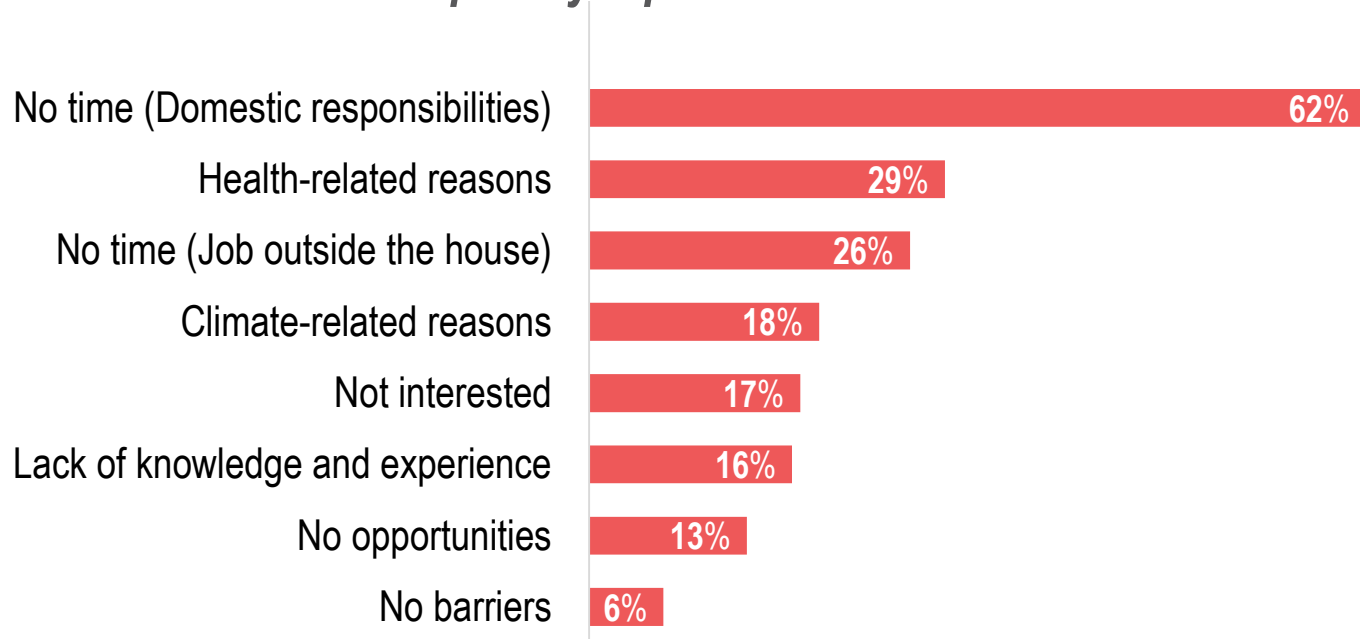


How does lack of land ownership affect women's engagement in agriculture?

- Limits scope of agricultural production
- Limits decision-making capacity vis-à-vis production and marketing/ ability to expand agricultural activities
- Limits women's access to loans to start small-scale agribusinesses

Barriers limiting women's more active participation in home-based agriculture

Most frequently reported barriers



Barriers reported were found to vary between:

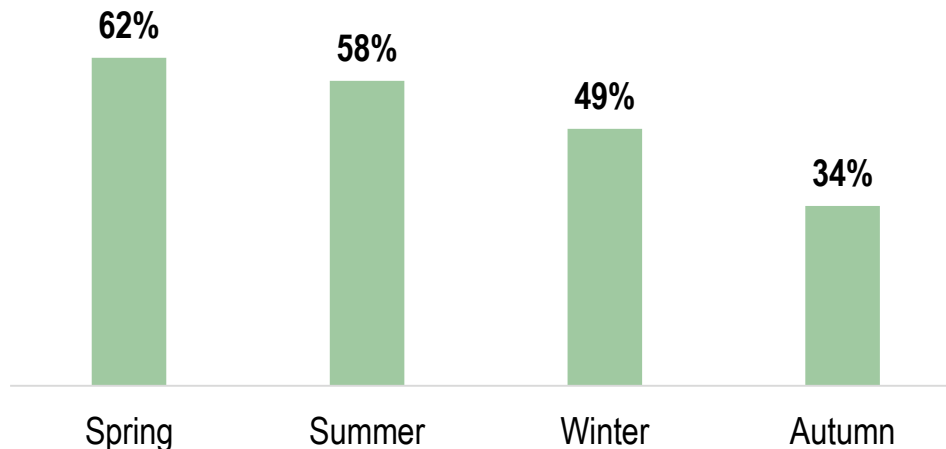
- 1. Age groups-** health-related barriers more common among women of older age groups
- 2. Nationality-** lack of interest and/ or time more common among Jordanians
- 3. Agricultural zones-** climatic barriers more common in the Northeast

Women's Engagement in Paid Agricultural Labour

Women's involvement in paid agricultural labour (1)

In the past 12 months, women engaged in agricultural labour mostly during spring and/ or summer seasons

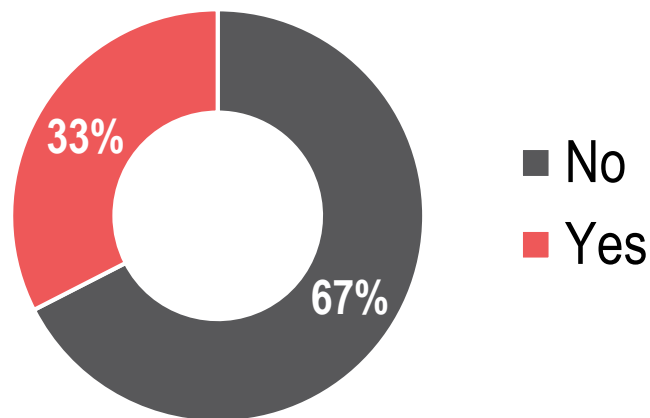
- Agricultural labour during winter most common in the Jordan Valley (57%)
- **Difference with home-based agriculture:** spring and winter most active seasons



- **Significant time committed by women to this activity:** on average, 22 days per month and 6 hours per day
 - Time commitment similar to home-based agriculture
 - No major variations were found between seasons

Women's involvement in paid agricultural labour (2)

% of women who moved around between seasons to engage in agricultural labour



Women were not very likely to move around across seasons for agricultural work but this tendency was found to vary by nationality:

58% Syrians reported having moved around across seasons

18% Jordanians reported having moved around across seasons

Working conditions

High prevalence of informal employment

- Very small minority reported to have been employed through a **contract** for their work as paid agricultural labour

Women exposed to bad working conditions

- **Arbitrary wage determination** (daily and hourly rates most reported)
- **Low wages** (average of 142 JOD per month)
- No access to **health insurance, social security**

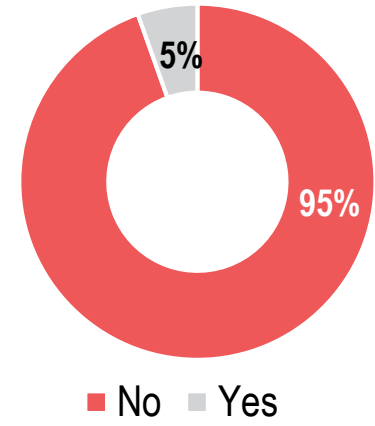
Need for programmatic interventions, higher level advocacy

- **Raise awareness** about formal employment benefits
- Support **women workers to organise formally**
- Advocacy for more **stringent application of labour laws**

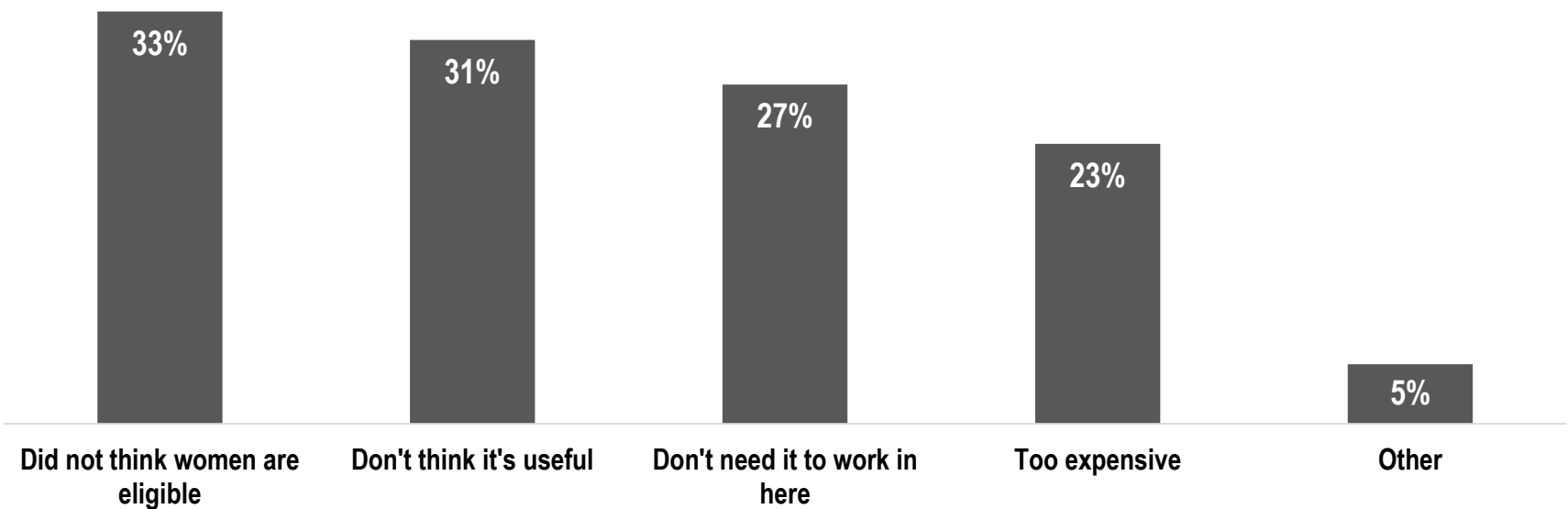
Work permits for Syrian women working as agricultural labour

Informal employment as agricultural labour also common among Syrian women: 5% of Syrian respondents reported to have a work permit

- Only 3% reportedly **tried to apply** for one
- Reasons reported for not applying highlights **the need to generate awareness about application processes, as well as about the benefits of having a work permit**







Reasons Syrian respondents did not try to apply for a work permit



Involvement of Women in Rural Community Life

Rural women's involvement in community-based activities

- Women's active involvement in agriculture **does not appear to translate to enhanced community organisation**: only 1% reportedly organised in any formal/ informal organisation, union or association
- Most commonly reported **reasons for limited participation** include:
 -  **Lack of awareness¹ (57%)**: more common among Syrian women, women of older age groups
 -  **Not perceived to be useful (35%)**: more common among women aged 41-50 years old
 -  **Lack of opportunities (34%)**
 -  **No time (16%)**: more common among Jordanian women, women aged 31-40 years

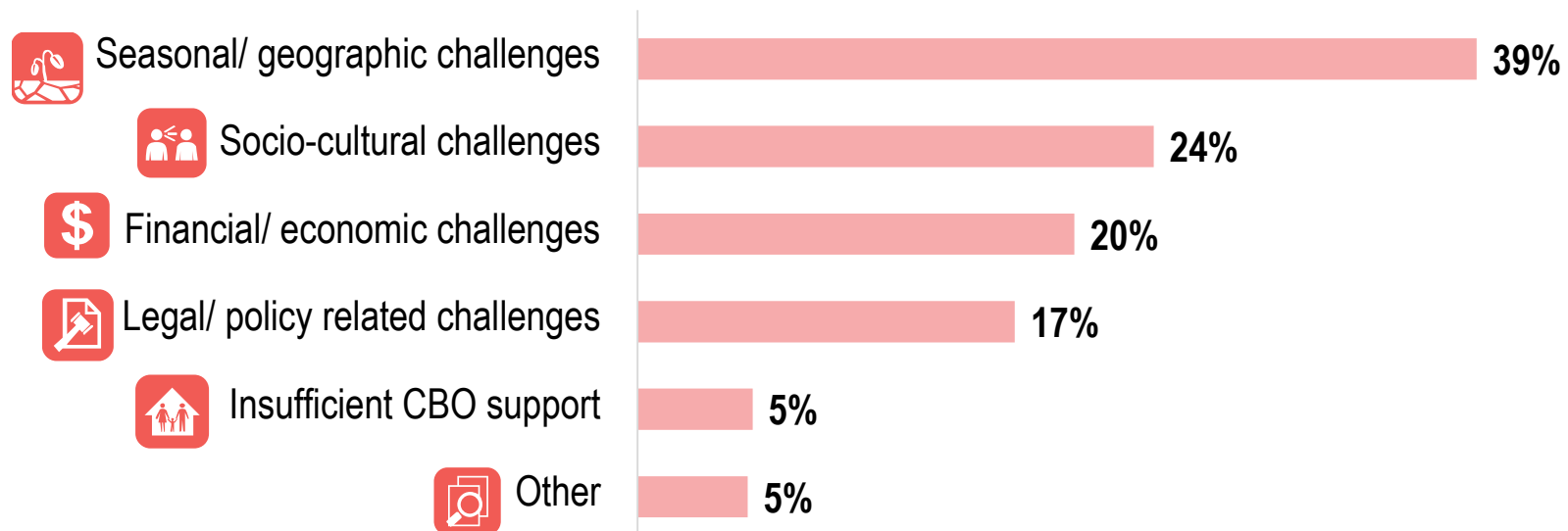
¹ 'Lack of awareness' includes both unawareness of how to organise or take up community-based roles, as well as lack of awareness of whether there are such associations in the area that women could participate in.

Challenges and Support

Challenges faced by women working in agriculture (1)

- Women engaging in agriculture are facing a range of challenges in their day-to-day activities







Most important challenge faced by women in agriculture



- Reported challenges did **vary by nationality and agricultural zone**:
 - **Legal/ policy related challenges** more important for (1) women in Jordan Valley (2) Syrian women engaging in agricultural activities
 - **Seasonal/ geographic challenges** more important in the Northeast
 - **Socio-cultural challenges** more important for Syrian women

Challenges faced by women working in agriculture (2)

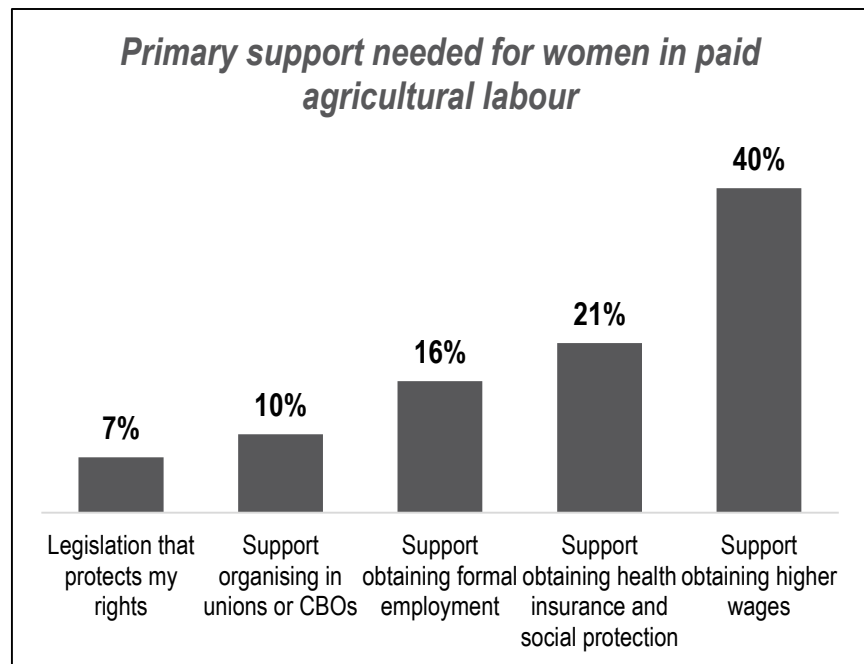
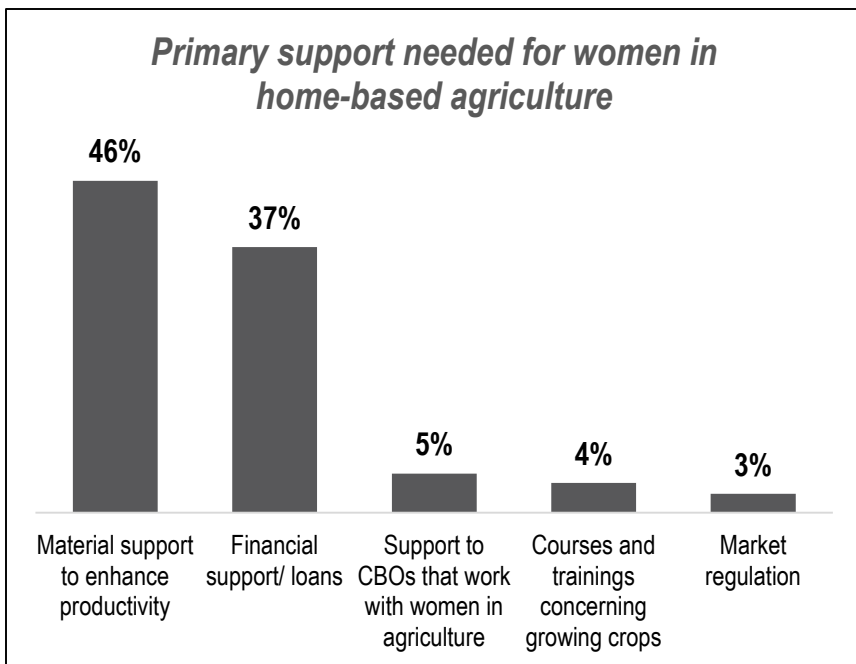
Challenges being faced also **vary by type of agricultural activity** women are engaging in..

Home-based agriculture			Paid agricultural labour		
Challenges related to production more pressing for home-based activities			Personal and legal/ policy issues more important for agricultural labour		
1		Seasonal/ geographic challenges (42%)		Domestic responsibilities on top of work (25%)	
2		Lack of financial opportunities (18%)		No access to health insurance and social security (17%)	
3		Lack of land ownership (18%)		Challenges related to working circumstances (14%)	

Most important type of support needed

Reflective of challenges reported:

- **Material and financial support** reported as primary type of support needed to enhance women's role in **home-based agriculture**
- Meanwhile, **legislative/ policy support** reported as primary type of support needed for **paid agricultural labour**



CONCLUSION

Conclusions and the Way Forward

Agriculture is an important means of livelihood for rural women in Jordan

→ need for **removing barriers to rural women’s participation** in the sector

→ contribute towards **overall economic empowerment of women** and inclusive socio-economic development in the country

Four potential entry points to enhance women’s role in agriculture and the rural economy can be identified based on findings from this assessment:

	How?	Why?
1	Provision of direct material and financial support and strengthen technical capacities of women engaging in agricultural activities	To enable women to enhance productivity, expand agricultural production, and accrue optimum benefits from agricultural activities
2	Awareness-raising campaigns targetting benefits of formal employment, usefulness of community organization, and sustainable water management and land use strategies	To enable women to empower themselves to deal with the most important challenges being faced/ barriers limiting their active participation in the sector
3	Higher-level legislative/ policy support and active advocacy efforts	To support women in overcoming challenges of legislative nature (informal employment, land ownership)
4	Proper targetting based on variations in experiences between different demographic groups, different types of activities across the country	To ensure interventions and advocacy efforts are tailored as much as possible to local contexts , and varying primary needs of different demographic groups in different parts of the country are equitably addressed

QUESTIONS?

Thank You!

For further information regarding the work of REACH and UN Women in Jordan,
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