

Gaps and Opportunities

A Critical Evaluation of the Juvenile Protection
Regulation No.36 of 2024



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Introduction

Regulation No. 36 of 2024 on the protection of juveniles represents an advanced step in strengthening Jordan's legislative framework for child protection—especially against the backdrop of rising social and economic challenges that exacerbate phenomena like child labor, begging, and various forms of exploitation. This regulation emerged as a national response to the urgent need to organize and activate comprehensive protection mechanisms for children, particularly vulnerable groups, following years of advocacy demanding clear enforcement tools for the Juveniles Law of 2014.

This regulation aims to build an integrated protection system grounded in social justice. It comprehensively targets working and begging juveniles who require care, applying a case-management approach that considers the psychological, social, and economic circumstances surrounding the child, along with strategies for reintegration into school. It defines roles and responsibilities between the Ministry of Social Development and other relevant stakeholders, and includes the development of plans and strategies to ensure a safe environment for children in need of care, along with strengthened monitoring and follow-up mechanisms. It also seeks to combat exploitation of children in illegal or inhumane work by implementing strict controls and enforcing penalties against violators.

The importance of this regulation stems from its alignment with Jordan's international commitments, notably the Convention on the Rights of the Child and its Optional Protocols on trafficking and economic and sexual exploitation, as well as recommendations from relevant UN committees. In this context, the regulation is more than a regulatory document—it reflects legislative intent to implement a rights-based protection system that considers the best interests of the child and provides protection from all forms of violence and exploitation.

Drawing on the oversight and legislative role of civil society organizations, Tamkeen for Legal Aid & Human Rights provides an in-depth analysis of the regulation's content from both legal and practical perspectives. It highlights strengths and gaps and offers recommendations to improve implementation, ensuring effective and comprehensive protection for all at-risk children, especially working juveniles.

This research paper thus gains its significance from its aim to assess the effectiveness of Juvenile Protection Regulation No. 36 of 2024 by analyzing its provisions and comparing them with international standards and best practices. It also explores legal

and implementation challenges, examines potential impacts on targeted groups, and offers recommendations to enhance Jordan's legislative and institutional framework for protecting working juveniles, ensuring their right to a safe environment that fosters dignified lives and healthy development.

Objectives and Methodology

The present paper aims to provide an objective, comprehensive analysis of Regulation No. 36 of 2024 by deconstructing its legal and procedural content and assessing its suitability for the realities of working and exploited children in Jordan. The paper seeks to identify the system's strengths and shortcomings, and evaluate its consistency with other relevant national laws and international child rights standards, particularly those ratified by Jordan.

This analysis is based on a descriptive analytical methodology, supported by a critical reading of the regulation's articles, compared with related legal texts such as the Juveniles Law of 2014 and the Labour Law. It also incorporates a review of national policies like the 2024–2028 National Juvenile Justice Strategy, along with related literature, practitioner reports, and observations from concerned authorities.

This paper serves as an informational tool designed to support efforts for legislative amendment and improvement, and to promote effective field implementation by official institutions and civil society, thereby achieving integrated and effective protection for the most at-risk children.

Introduction to the Legal Context of the Regulation

To accurately understand Regulation No. 36 of 2024 on the protection of juveniles, it is essential to place it within both its national legal context and its international framework. The regulation does not operate in isolation; rather, it fills an existing implementation gap in protecting working and exploited children, translating Jordan's international commitments on child rights into practical measures.

The regulation was issued seven years after prolonged discussions, indicating significant legal and institutional complexities that necessitated careful drafting. Therefore, the analysis begins by reviewing the relationship between this regulation and the 2014 Juveniles Law, before evaluating its core provisions, comparing them with international standards, and assessing their actual impact on child protection in Jordan.

First: The Regulation in Legal Context

Issued in the Official Gazette on 16 July 2024, Regulation No. 36 of 2024¹ is part of Jordan's efforts to complete its legal schema for childhood protection, specifically focusing on working juveniles. It is based on Articles (33) and (47) of the Juveniles Law of 2014, which authorize issuing executive regulations to organize preventive and protective measures concerning juveniles.²

The regulation serves as an executive tool operationalizing general legal provisions, focusing on a specific group—working, begging, and exploited juveniles—who typically fall outside formal protective frameworks. It reflects efforts to fill legislative gaps, especially regarding concrete casemanagement procedures, role distribution among responsible agencies, and clear intervention standards.

At the institutional level, the regulation aligns with the 2024–2028 National Juvenile Justice Strategy, which aims to improve judicial procedures and expand preventive and rehabilitative services. The inclusion of “case management” marks a significant shift in the national protection approach, moving from generalized interventions to individualized plans based on a comprehensive assessment of each child's circumstances.

Despite this progress, questions remain regarding the scope: the regulation targets the “working juvenile” without explicitly covering other atrisk categories, and general terms like “abuse” or “danger” may lead to broad or inconsistent interpretations. Therefore, the regulation must be reviewed in light of associated policies and laws, ensuring defined terminology and legal coherence to enhance protection effectiveness.

1 [Juvenile Protection Regulation No. \(36\) of 2024.](#)

2 Tamkeen for Legal Aid & Human Rights, Study on Legislation Related to Child Labour: Protection but... 2025.

Second: Definitions and Scope of Application

Clarifying definitions and scope is essential for legislative clarity and precise targeting. Although titled “Juvenile Protection,” the regulation applies only to working juveniles, a mismatch that necessitates revising its title and content for accuracy and transparency.

Article 2 provides essential definitions—such as “working juvenile,” “coordinator,” and “service provider”³—which set the conceptual framework. These definitions directly influence application scope, role allocation, and intervention responsibilities. While consistent with Jordan’s Labour Law concerning age, the definition of working juvenile remains limited, as it excludes forbidden work types or related forms of exploitation. Clearer definitions are needed in implementing regulations to unify understanding and application.

Article 3 defines the cases covered—working juveniles, beggars, those exploited in slavery, forced labor, sexual exploitation, organized begging, street vendors, and waste scavengers.⁴ Although reflective of real-world social needs, the scope still misses children suffering neglect, domestic violence, or school drop-out—also vulnerable groups.

Key terms such as “danger,” “exploitation,” and “abuse” remain undefined, potentially causing legal interpretive variation. The absence of clear criteria for determining “danger” or “intervention eligibility” undermines equitable response. Thus, detailed implementing regulations should define these terms and unify understanding, while reviewing terminology to enhance clarity and coverage.

3 Article (2)(A): The following words and expressions, wherever they appear in this Regulation, shall have the meanings assigned to them below unless the context indicates otherwise: Law: The Juvenile Law. Ministry: Ministry of Social Development. Minister: Minister of Social Development. Directorate: The organizational unit within the Ministry responsible for juvenile affairs under the provisions of the Law. Committee: The coordinating committee established under the provisions of this Regulation. Case: A juvenile in need of protection and care in accordance with this Regulation. Working Juvenile: A juvenile under the age of sixteen or between sixteen and eighteen working in violation of applicable laws. Supervisor: A Ministry employee or any person appointed by the Ministry who assigns cases to the coordinator. Coordinator: A Ministry employee or any person appointed by the Ministry to manage the case. Service Provider: A Ministry employee or any person appointed by the Ministry responsible for directly engaging with the juvenile and their family and delivering specialized services.

4 Article (3): The provisions of this Regulation apply to the following cases: A. A juvenile working in violation of applicable legislation. B. A beggar. C. A person soliciting under false pretenses. D. A street vendor or waste scavenger. E. A juvenile subjected to exploitation through forced labor, slavery, servitude, organized begging, prostitution, any form of sexual exploitation, or the worst forms of child labor as defined by the Human Trafficking Prevention Law in force.

Third: Case Management Procedures and Implementation Challenges

Article 4 marks a pivotal shift by adopting “case management” as the central tool for coordinated, integrated interventions tailored to a child’s individual needs. The coordinator must follow protocols involving risk assessment, child and family involvement, stakeholder engagement, and psychological and social considerations.⁵

Globally, this approach is a best practice for vulnerable groups due to its emphasis on participation, transparency, and reduced generic interventions. Yet, challenges persist: absence of detailed implementing guidelines on how to conduct assessments, criteria for coordinator selection and training, and coordination mechanisms across institutions. Family involvement, though emphasized, lacks prominence in decisionmaking, despite its vital role in sustainable outcomes.

The regulation also highlights interagency information sharing with confidentiality safeguards. Nonetheless, unified, secure databases and digital infrastructure are currently insufficient, slowing response and weakening integration. The lack of oversight mechanisms for service providers’ compliance with intervention plans reduces accountability.

Thus, effective case management depends not just on legal text, but on clear implementation tools, trained staff, supportive digital infrastructure, and active participation from families and local communities.

⁵ Article (4)(A): The coordinator must observe the following in case management: 1. Invite relevant stakeholders to attend case management meetings involving the juvenile and their family. 2. Ensure the reporting party responsible for child protection joins the case management team and case conference decisions. 3. Assess the risk factors to the juvenile and family by evaluating personal safety and convene a rapid response meeting with all relevant partners. 4. Inform the case management team of updates, relevant information, and developments concerning the juvenile and their family. 5. Involve the juvenile or their representative and family at all stages, explain options and implications, and seek their opinion regarding the proposed intervention plan.

Fourth: Reporting and Referral Mechanism

Articles 5 through 9 detail mechanisms for reporting at-risk juveniles, referral, and follow-up. The regulation assigns primary responsibility for receiving reports to juvenile police, which then formally refers cases to the Ministry of Social Development for appropriate action.⁶

While this provides a structured institutional pathway and links law enforcement with social services, restricting reporting to official channels may limit early detection. Service providers, schools, and health institutions lack direct reporting powers, potentially delaying response in low-trust or fearful communities.

Notably, the regulation does not articulate protections for reporters or confidentiality protocols—critical gaps given the sensitivity of such cases. Article 8⁷ allows closing a case file by a Juvenile Court judge based on a case-management report and behavioral monitor’s recommendation—but omits clear criteria to ensure closures are appropriate and timely. Article 9⁸ mandates follow-up for children placed in care, yet fails to specify duration or oversight procedures, risking post-placement protection gaps.

Therefore, there is a need to develop multi-channel, secure, confidential reporting tools (including electronic reporting), train relevant professionals, run public awareness campaigns, include protections for whistleblowers, and establish periodic follow-up after case closure.

6 Article (5): Relevant authorities handling juvenile cases must adopt internal procedures for their staff to report identified cases under Article (3) of this Regulation to the Juvenile Police or the nearest police station, using the Ministry’s approved reporting form. Identification of cases may occur by any means. Article (6)(A): After receiving the report per Article (5), the Juvenile Police or nearest police station must fill in the necessary forms and refer the case to the Ministry to proceed under Article (4)(B) of this Regulation. (B): If the juvenile requires immediate protective measures, the behavioral monitor shall refer the case to the court for necessary action.

7 Article (8)(A): Subject to Article (4)(D), a case file may be closed by decision of the Juvenile Court judge, who shall consider the coordinator’s case report and the behavioral monitor’s recommendation, along with any other relevant evidence. (B): The coordinator shall be informed of the closure decision by the behavioral monitor.

8 Article (9): If a juvenile requiring protection and care is placed in a juvenile care facility under this Regulation, the case file shall be referred to the Ministry’s aftercare unit for follow-up actions.

Fifth: The Coordinating Committee and Institutional Role Integration

Article 10⁹ mandates forming a coordinating committee within the Ministry comprising various government entities to coordinate efforts and develop a national database of juvenile labor cases.

Although important for institutional integration, overlapping mandates with the parallel “National Committee to Reduce Child Labor” (headed by the National Council for Family Affairs) may generate duplication or conflict. Clear linkage and role delineation between both committees are needed to avoid overlap and ensure policy coherence.

Moreover, limited civil society representation (only two seats) constrains community-based protection. The committee’s composition needs broader, more diverse civil society involvement to embody partnership rather than centralization.

Sixth: Implementing Instructions and Impact of Their Delay

Article 13 requires issuing three sets of detailed instructions for defining case-management entities, service providers, and programs akin to juvenile care homes.¹⁰ However, the delay in issuing these instructions poses a major obstacle to implementation. Without them, many general provisions remain non-operational and protection tools inactive. This delay generates ambiguity among practitioners about roles and procedures, undermining system credibility, early intervention, and prompt response. Urgent issuance of instructions—developed with broad community participation—is essential to activate the regulation and achieve desired juvenile protection.

⁹ Article (10): A. A committee shall be formed within the Ministry under the name “Coordinating Committee,” chaired by the Director of the Directorate, and composed of the following members: 1. A representative of the Judicial Council, nominated by its President. 2. A representative of the Ministry of Labour, nominated by the Minister. 3. A representative of the Ministry of Health, nominated by the Minister. 4. A representative of the Ministry of Education, nominated by the Minister. 5. A representative of the Ministry of Justice, nominated by the Minister. 6. A representative of the Ministry of Planning and International Cooperation, nominated by the Minister. 7. A representative of the Juvenile Police, nominated by the Director of Public Security. 8. A representative of the National Council for Family Affairs, nominated by the Council’s Secretary-General. 9. A representative of the Anti-Human Trafficking Unit / Criminal Investigation Department, nominated by the Director of Public Security. 10. Two representatives from civil society organizations concerned with child protection, appointed by the Minister, who may replace them at any time. 11. The Head of the Child Labour Combat Section at the Ministry shall serve as the Committee’s rapporteur. B. The Minister shall appoint one of the committee members as Deputy Chair. C. The Committee shall meet upon invitation by its Chair or Deputy at least once every three months. A quorum shall be deemed valid with a majority of members present, provided that the Chair or Deputy is among them. Decisions and recommendations shall be made by a majority vote of attending members.

¹⁰ Article (13): The Minister shall issue the necessary instructions for the implementation of the provisions of this Regulation, including the following: A. Instructions on the mechanisms and procedures for accrediting case management implementing entities. B. Instructions for accrediting the service provider, supervisor, and coordinator. C. Instructions for rehabilitation programs, services, and institutions similar to juvenile care facilities.

In summary, regulation No. 36 of 2024 is limited in scope to protecting working juveniles—a sign that more precision is needed in drafting legislation to ensure it includes intended subjects without excess. It is advised to review the regulation promptly, adjusting its title and content to reflect the exact protection scope, thus enhancing clarity and effectiveness.¹¹

Furthermore, the regulation lacks clear provisions for how working juveniles can claim violated rights and does not explicitly address legal aid, highlighting a legislative gap. Enhancing the law to guarantee full protection—including legal support—will strengthen social justice and protect the most vulnerable. This requires allocating resources and developing implementation mechanisms for effective legal aid.

Seventh: Implementation and Structural Challenges¹²

The practical application of the juvenile protection system faces multiple challenges that must be addressed to achieve its goals, including:

- Lack of reliable methods to determine a juvenile’s age when documents are absent—opening space for errors or injustice in access to protection.¹³
- Weak institutional coordination due to multiple agencies and unclear decision processes, causing delays and implementation gaps. The coordinating committee includes ten bodies, potentially slowing decisions through bureaucracy. Effective cooperation among Social Development, Labour, Health, Education, and Juvenile Police is vital for prompt response to working juvenile cases.¹⁴
- Insufficient human and financial resources, especially in peripheral and remote areas, hindering access to the most vulnerable children—coupled with expected government challenges in funding and specialized staff training.
- Inadequate provision of psychological services, although exploited children often suffer trauma requiring expert intervention; the regulation lacks any mandate for intensive psychological support.

11 Analytical Study of Legislation Related to Child Labour: Protection, But... Tamkeen for Legal Aid and Human Rights, 2025.

12 See the National Juvenile Justice Strategy for the Years 2024–2028.

13 From the discussions of the Coordinating Committee for the Reduction of Child Labour during the 2024–2025 meetings.

14 From the discussions of the Coordinating Committee for the Reduction of Child Labour during the 2024–2025 meetings.

- Limited empowerment of civil society in oversight and intervention—its role is mainly reporting or symbolic, weakening a key social protection arm.
- Public awareness of child rights and protection from exploitation requires coordinated multi-stakeholder action. Under Article 11(h), the committee must launch awareness campaigns targeting all community segments and monitor outputs from relevant conferences and projects.
- There is a pressing need to establish reporting mechanisms for exploitation cases and enforce strict laws to protect child rights and punish violators—necessitating sufficient staffing and finances.¹⁵
- Fear of consequences and distrust hinder reporting, even though reporting is mandatory. The lack of knowledge about proper reporting channels and protections is a major obstacle.¹⁶
- Effective case management per the regulation requires involving the juvenile and their family, but societal norms sometimes exclude the child from consultation, while some families resist state intervention due to mistrust or fear.¹⁷

Eighth: Digital Dimension & Emerging Risks

With increasing child use of digital platforms, new exploitation forms have emerged—illegal digital labor, online sexual exploitation, and e-begging. The regulation does not explicitly address these growing risks, representing a gap needing adaptable legislative responses and regular updates.

Protecting children online also requires electronic monitoring tools, cooperation with tech companies, and legal adjustments to keep pace with technological developments.

¹⁵ See the National Strategy for Juvenile Justice for the Years 2024–2028.

¹⁶ From the discussions of the members of the Coordinating Committee for the Reduction of Child Labour during the 2024–2025 meetings.

¹⁷ From the discussions of the members of the Coordinating Committee for the Reduction of Child Labour during the 2024–2025 meetings.

Conclusion

Regulation No. 36 of 2024 is a noteworthy legislative advance in Jordan, serving as a critical step toward enhanced child rights and protection—particularly for working juveniles amid social and economic pressures. However, its practical impact relies on overcoming administrative, bureaucratic, and social barriers. Key prerequisites include finalizing detailed instructions, clarifying legal terms, and activating coordination mechanisms. It also demands sufficient human and financial resources and close cooperation among institutions, civil society, and families.

To transform this regulation into an actual protective tool, integrating rights-based principles is essential alongside expanding target groups and adopting a comprehensive approach that addresses root causes—poverty, school dropout, and domestic violence—through integrated social protection policies. Effective implementation further requires robust oversight mechanisms, and training and awareness programs for all stakeholders. Long-term resource allocation and integrated social services are also imperative.

Recommendations

1. Rename the regulation to “Regulation on Protection of the Working Juvenile” to ensure the title aligns with its content and accurately reflects its objectives.
2. Include explicit provisions outlining the rights of working juveniles and mechanisms for asserting them, with clear reference to legal aid to ensure protection and support against challenges.
3. Expedite issuance of comprehensive implementing instructions for the regulation.
4. Broaden the target categories to include children facing neglect, violence, or school dropout.
5. Define legal terms precisely—such as “danger,” “abuse,” and “exploitation.”
6. Enhance civil society representation in the coordinating committee and expand its oversight and evaluation role.
7. Develop a multi-channel, secure, and confidential reporting system, including electronic modalities.
8. Establish a unified, secure national database to track cases and monitor interventions.
9. Train field staff in Social Development, Labour, and Education ministries on case management procedures.
10. Integrate digital protection components, and update the regulation to address contemporary risks.
11. Strengthen family engagement in protection and rehabilitation plans, involving them in decision-making.
12. Launch public awareness campaigns on children’s rights and exploitation risks via schools, media, and community networks.

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