

Child Marriage Study MENA – Jordan

Understanding child marriage amongst Syrian Refugee Communities in Jordan



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KEY OUTCOMES OF THE RESEARCH (JORDAN & LEBANON)



Outcome 1: Understanding of the social processes underpinning the increase in child marriage and impact of displacement.



Outcome 2: Current policy and practice responses to child marriage across Jordan and Lebanon mapped to provide greater understanding for partnership working and coordinated responses across sectors and multiple levels.



Outcome 3: Evidenced-based practice tools developed based on the research findings including: ToC + Assessment-Evaluation-Training Tools.



- ✓ *Tdh MENA Child Marriage Model of Action*
- ✓ *RAF – MENA Research Group Child Marriage. Co-chair with UNICEF/UNFPA*
- ✓ *JHU – Child Marriage Research Toolkit MENA*

CHILD MARRIAGE IN JORDAN (I)- Research



Understanding the social processes underpinning child marriage:
Impact of protracted displacement in Jordan

- ✓ The research was carried out in three locations across Jordan: **EJC**, **Irbid** and **Mafraq**.
- ✓ Research process Jan 2017 – October 2019.
- ✓ Partnership Tdh & University of Bedfordshire UK.

CHILD MARRIAGE IN JORDAN (II)- Research

Target Groups Researched

- ✓ Married Syrian refugee girls and their families.
- ✓ Unmarried Syrian refugee girls and their families.
- ✓ Syrian refugees (adolescent girls, adolescent boys and caregivers of adolescent girls and boys).
- ✓ Religious justice leaders (Personal Status Law) and faith based actors in Jordan and Lebanon.
- ✓ Policy makers and practitioners responding to child marriage across a range of organizations and sectors.

*The resulting data is, however, **not nationally representative nor generalizable, nor does it give an indication of prevalence of child marriage**. However, the lived experiences and attitudes described give depth to the current quantitative data available and help us **hear the voice of the Syrian refugee community** more than 8 years following displacement. The research seeks to **examine complicated and unstandardized social processes which are difficult to capture using quantitative techniques to inform programming***

CHILD MARRIAGE IN JORDAN (III)- Research

Mixed Method Research

- ✓ Systematic mapping of child marriage literature in Jordan (9 key questions CM). 76 items from 1970–2017.
- ✓ Mapping of policy and practice response to child marriage in Jordan. 17 policymakers and practitioners were interviewed
- ✓ Qualitative interviews (8 interviews – Sunni)
- ✓ Semi-structured narrative interviews with married/engaged/unmarried Syrian refugee adolescent girls and their families. 9 girls who were married under 18 years of age and their families were interviewed, along with 2 girls engaged under 18 years and 2 unmarried girls under 18 years of age, and their families.
- ✓ Focus groups with young Syrian refugees aged 13-21. 2 focus groups were held with girls (in EJC and Mafraq) and 2 groups were held with boys (1 in EJC and 1 in Irbid).
- ✓ Focus groups with parents of teenage children (separate groups for males and females). 2 focus groups were held with mothers (in EJC and Mafraq) and 2 groups were held with fathers (1 in EJC and 1 in Irbid).
- ✓ Additional assessment data from Tdh case files in Jordan was collected on age of marriage, desirability of child marriage and reason for marriage. 360 cases.

CHILD MARRIAGE IN JORDAN (IV)- Research

SYSTEMATIC MAPPING LITERATURE

1. What are the rates of child marriage in different communities in Jordan?
2. What is it like to be married under 18 in different communities in Jordan?
3. What is the **process of marriage (legal and social)** for different communities in Jordan?
4. How is child marriage understood and conceptualised in different communities in Jordan?
5. What are the **drivers** of child marriage in different communities in Jordan?
6. What are the consequences of child marriage in different communities in Jordan?
7. What do we know about the relationship between child marriage and education in different communities in Jordan?
8. **What are the recommendations for preventing child marriage and caring for those affected by child marriage in different communities in Jordan?**
9. What are the **current interventions** in response to child marriage in different communities in Jordan?

RECOMMENDATIONS *(clustered here, fully broken down and detail in the research)*

- ✓ Expansion of support to prevent Sexual Gender-Based Violence (SGBV).
- ✓ Strengthening laws which prohibit child marriage.
- ✓ Strengthen the education system to reduce child marriage through a gender-sensitive approach to education that underpins inclusive policies.
- ✓ Strengthen community-based engagement and activities.
- ✓ Developing and extending direct services to young women impacted by child marriage.
- ✓ Specific programs for adolescent young women.

13 BIG GAPS

CHILD MARRIAGE IN JORDAN (V)- Research

Figure 1: Drivers of child marriage mapped onto an ecological framework

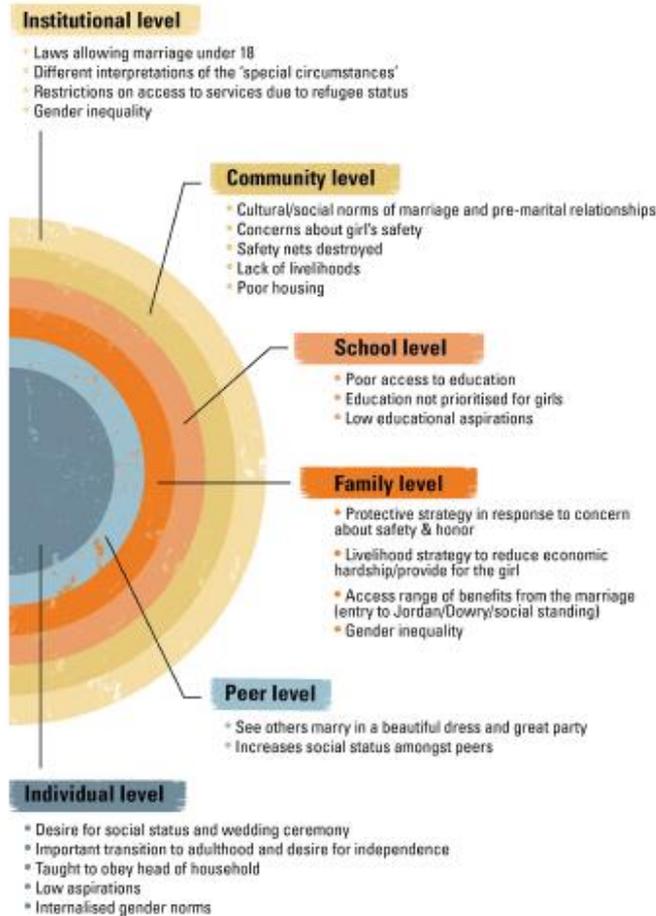


Figure 2: Problem tree developed based on the drivers and outcomes of child marriage



CHILD MARRIAGE IN JORDAN (VI)- Research

POLICY AND PRACTICE RESPONSE TO CHILD MARRIAGE

SOME RECOMMENDATIONS AS ANALYZED

- ✓ **Advocacy:** clearer communication on **why child marriage remains a priority** despite there being many other child protection or SGBV issues.
- ✓ **Policy:** child marriage is often included within wider protection policies – **specific national policy:** indicators, boundaries of the intervention, measurement of impacts, contextualization, contribute to join efforts.
- ✓ **Programmes:** formally develop the **preventative potential** of PSS activities, life skills training, empowerment programmes, safe spaces, case management and SRH education in relation to child marriage, with clarification of their role in prevention, a tailored theory of change and linked indicators.

Tdh Jordan Delegation: (1) Case Management Child Marriage Cases Guidelines, (2) Support Group Sessions for girls at EJC, (3) child-led initiatives with community and peer awareness approach and (4) child protection integrated services.

- ✓ **Monitoring and evaluation:** which approaches are most **effective**, whether special or targeted programmes on child marriage are needed to complement and support more general programs, specific evidence on if awareness-raising is effective, in what forms, how often and when.
- ✓ **Further action-research ----> BUT practice based knowledge:** notion of '**consent**' and how to open up conversations about the nature of a girl's consent to marry with all the stakeholders involved, the impact of the '**layers**' of drivers / intersectionality.

CHILD MARRIAGE IN JORDAN (VII)- Research

INTERVIEWS AND FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSIONS

INTERVIEWS

- Expectations of marriage
- Legal and **Social process of child marriage**
- Factors influencing the decision-making processes underpinning child marriage
- Marriage preparation
- 'Informed' consent
- **Impact of the displacement on child marriage (stages)**
- Consequences of child marriage

FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSIONS

- ❑ How are concepts of 'risk', 'vulnerability', 'protective factors' and 'successful outcomes' understood in Syrian refugees communities in relation to child marriage?
- ❑ What 'protective' actions do family and community members take in response to the challenges associated with child marriage?
- ❑ How does the refugee context change the process and experience and risks associated with child marriage?
- ❑ What do young men and women know and expect of marriage, SRH and childbearing? And how are these expectations changed by the refugee context?

CHILD MARRIAGE IN JORDAN (VIII)- Research

Figure 2: Factors impacting decision-making process as identified through qualitative interviews

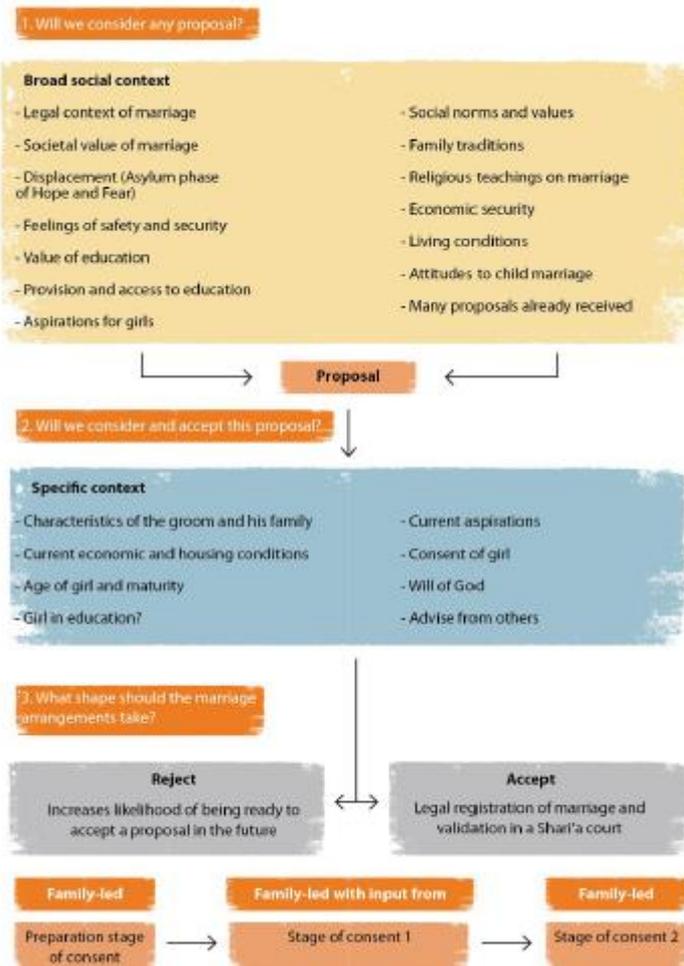
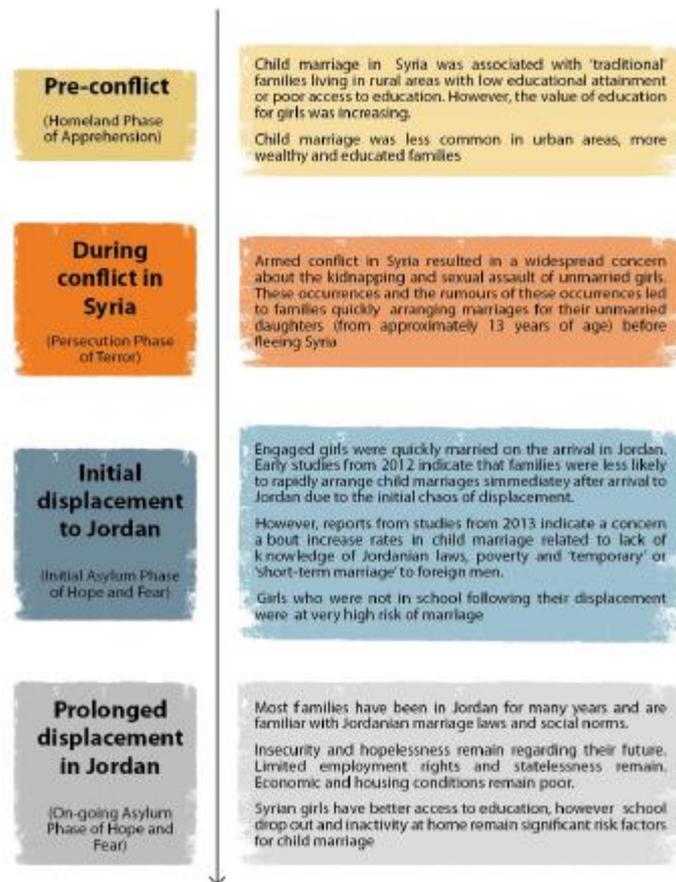


Figure 3: Summary of changes in social conditions for child marriage amongst Syrian communities from pre-conflict to prolonged displacement in Jordan



CHILD MARRIAGE IN JORDAN (IX)- Research

INTERVIEWS AND FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSIONS

SOME OF THE MOST HIGHLIGHTED ISSUES - RECOMMENDATIONS

- ✓ “*Why wait?*” national campaign: a set of positive messages on marriage after 18 years of age, BUT *focused on nature of marriage (religious teachings, social norms, human right, gender discourses)*.
- ✓ Development of specific **assessment tool for child marriage for interdisciplinary professionals** – (*specificities and complex and mixed factors*).
- ✓ Investment in **married girls and religious justice/faith-based actors**.
- ✓ Advocacy and awareness-raising message that take into account **community perceptions of child marriage and ambivalent attitudes**
- ✓ Peer to peer work with **male refugees on child marriage** that takes into account changes in traditional masculine identifies
- ✓ Peer to peer work with **mothers**, recognising their role in facilitating/allowing child marriage
- ✓ The lens of **gender inequality and sexuality** must remain at the heart of prevention activities.

THANK YOU and happy reading!



Q&A