

**MULTI-DONOR TRUST FUND FOR**  
**UN ACTION AGAINST SEXUAL VIOLENCE IN CONFLICT**

**FINAL NARRATIVE REPORT COVER PAGE**

<p><b>Participating UN Organization(s):</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR)</li> <li>● United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA)</li> <li>● United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF)</li> </ul>	<p><b>Project Title:</b></p> <p><b>“Strengthen Prevention and Response to conflict–related sexual violence in the Syria conflict and other forms of SGBV in Jordan through improved access to justice and engagement with community leaders”</b></p>
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<b>UN Action pillar of activity:</b>  <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <b>Advocacy</b>  <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <b>Knowledge building</b>  <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <b>Support to UN system at country level</b>	<b>Reporting Period: September 2016- January 2019</b>
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<b>Project Budget:</b>  <b>Total Project Budget:</b>  <b>USD 872,619 (USD 508,369 for UNHCR, USD 201,750 for UNICEF, and USD 162,500 for UNFPA)</b>  <b>Amount of MPTF funds requested:</b>  <b>USD 500,000 (USD 178,733 for UNHCR, USD 163,442 for UNICEF, and USD 157,825 for UNFPA)</b>
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<b>List Implementing Partners:</b>  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· <b>Participating UN Organization(s): United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF)</b></li> <li>· <b>Other International Organizations: N/A</b></li> <li>· <b>National (government, private, NGOs &amp; others): Government of Jordan (Sharia Court), High Population Council, ARDD (local NGO providing legal aid), CARE (international NGO implementing COMBI strategy).</b></li> </ul>	<b>Project Coverage/Scope:</b>  <b>Jordan, Northern and Central Governorates: Amman, Karak, Balqa, Jerash, Ajloun, Irbid, Mafraq and Zarqa (including Za’atari and Azraq refugee camps)</b>
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**Project Duration/Closed Project:**

- **Provide the project duration.**
- **Report on budget revisions and extensions and provide the new dates.**
- **Indicate if the project has been operationally closed during the reporting period.**

**Date of Submission: 30 June 2015**

**Re-submission: 20 August 2015**

**Project duration: 12 months September 2016– August 2017**

**No-cost extension: August 2017 to 31st of January 2019**

**Project closure: 31st of January 2019**

## **FINAL NARRATIVE REPORT FORMAT**

### **I. Purpose**

- **Provide the main outcomes and outputs of the project**
- **Explain how the project relates to the Strategic Framework of UN Action Against Sexual Violence in Conflict and to its Terms of Reference**
- **Indicate the main implementing partners, their roles and responsibilities, and their interaction with the Participating UN Organizations**

The overall goal of the inter-agency project titled ‘Strengthen Prevention and Response to CRSV conflict-related in the Syria conflict and other forms of SGBV in Jordan through improved access to justice and engagement with community leaders’ is to strengthen the sexual and gender based violence (SGBV) prevention and response system in Jordan at both community and national levels. The project has the following two objectives:

- a) Improved availability, access to and quality of SGBV, including CRSV survivors’ legal assistance and legal remedies within the multi-sectoral survivor-centered response;
- b) Improved community and religious-based engagement to prevent the risks and mitigate the consequences of SGBV (in particular early and forced marriage);

Since the beginning of the Syrian Refugee Emergency, UNHCR, UNICEF and UNFPA have worked closely to maximize resources and expertise and enhance cooperation with other agencies. The three agencies are jointly executing this project within the coordination mechanism of the SGBV Sub-Working Group (SGBV SWG). The three agencies are ensuring that the project is based on best practices and that the resources are allocated in the most efficient manner without overlaps or duplication.

As the lead agency for refugee protection in Jordan, UNHCR is providing protection related services (including prevention and response to SGBV) to refugees in both camps and host communities. UNHCR also co-chairs the SGBV SWG. UNFPA being the co-chair for the SGBV SWG is providing multi-sectoral GBV services through the safe space approach in both camps and host communities in Jordan. Through this project, UNHCR has provided legal aid and assistance to survivors of SGBV. Moreover, early and forced marriage remains one of the most dominant form of SGBV among Syrian Refugees, as part of this project UNFPA and UNICEF are working closely to increase awareness and reduce the occurrence of early and forced marriage in Jordan. In order to achieve these ends: the three UN Agencies, under this project, are using the following technical approach:

i) Development and roll-out of the guidelines and training package for provision of legal services by lawyers, paralegals and related professionals providing legal services or involved in legal assistance to SGBV survivors; provision of legal aid and legal consultation for survivors in UNFPA and UNHCR supported safe spaces and strengthening of Sharia courts in camps.

ii) Development and implementation of Communication for Development (C4D) approach to address early/forced marriages. As part of this project, UNICEF and UNFPA are working towards developing a C4D strategy along with an implementation plan that includes a social mobilization component. Once developed and adopted, the strategy will be implemented. UNFPA will take a lead in the implementation of the social mobilization, awareness-raising and media engagement components while UNICEF will be responsible for the advocacy and mapping of results. UNICEF will carry out a drivers of early marriages in Jordan to provide evidence base for development of a sound strategy. UNICEF is specifically contributing to Output 2.1 Context-appropriate good practices on engaging religious leaders and communities to prevent SGBV-CRSV, in particular sexual violence and early marriage, are identified and applied for advocacy purposes and to community-level outreach programmes. UNICEF partnered with the Higher Population Council (HPC) to revise the National Framework to End Child Marriages. HPC is the lead government body that coordinates efforts to implement a multi-sectoral national plan of action to end child marriages in Jordan. The HPC is chairing a 'National Committee' consisting of all relevant government bodies, UN agencies, international and local NGOs that helps in the implementation and provision of oversight of the national plan of action.

**The main implementing partners are listed below:**

- **Government of Jordan (Sharia Court, funded by UNHCR), Higher Population Council (UNICEF)**
- **ARDD (local NGO providing legal aid, funded by UNHCR)**
- **CARE (international NGO implementing COMBI strategy, funded by UNFPA)**

## **II. Resources**

#### **Financial Resources:**

- **Provide information on other funding resources available to the project, if applicable.**
- **Provide details on any budget revisions approved by the appropriate decision-making body, if applicable.**

UNHCR contributed other funds for the project (329'636 USD).

UNICEF also used Dfid funds to implement the `Looney Balloony` community event to raise awareness on violence against children in Jordan that included a component on ending early marriages.

#### **III. Implementation and Monitoring Arrangements**

- **Summarize the implementation mechanisms primarily utilized and how they were adapted to achieve maximum impact given the operating context.**
- **Provide details on the monitoring system(s) used and how you identify and incorporate lessons learned into the project.**
- **Report on any assessments, evaluations or studies undertaken.**

UNHCR, UNFPA and UNICEF have closely coordinated the implementation of the project throughout. This included bilateral coordination meetings as well as briefings to the SGBV SWG.

UNICEF in partnership with UNFPA at the regional level conducted an assessment of the situation of child marriage in the Middle East and North Africa region, including Jordan. The data of the assessment was collected via key informant interviews with staff in three governmental institutions, four UN agencies, and eight non-governmental organizations. The assessment examined `Girls' Voice and Agency`; `Household and Community Attitudes and Behaviours`; `Service Delivery`; Legal Context and Evidence Generation`. The study also reviewed the status of current programming and proposed a list of recommendation to enhance the efforts to end of child marriage. In addition, UNICEF commissioned the study on drivers of early/ child marriage in Jordan.

UNHCR conducted regular monitoring visits to Sharia Courts in the camps and ARDD offices where legal assistance was provided. Technical guidance and coaching was provided to legal staff to ensure quality of service. Partner reports were also used to track progress on target. During the project, UNHCR identified shortcomings in referrals of survivors by legal actors to GBV case management organizations. Therefore, the content of the guidelines for legal service providers was adjusted and includes practical information on safe referrals. The focus of the training was also shifted towards building skills of legal service providers to safely refer survivors.

#### **IV. Results**

- **Describe the main activities undertaken and their achievements.**
- **Explain any implementation constraints, and the lessons learned from addressing these and knowledge gained in the course of the project.**
- **Discuss key partnerships and inter-agency collaboration and their impact on the results being reported on.**
- **Indicate other highlights and cross cutting issues pertinent to the results being reported on.**

**Output 1.1: Guidelines for quality legal assistance to SGBV-CRSV survivors are developed for use by local organizations providing legal services or involved in legal assistance.**

Over the course of the full project UNHCR worked closely with ARDD to produce a legal toolkit that would support legal practitioners and apply a survivor centred approach. The toolkit was aimed at providing an overview on the relevant Jordanian legal framework to SGBV in support of legal practitioners working with SGBV survivors. The tool kit was also designed to include a section on a ‘survivor centred approach’ in an effort to ensure that legal practitioners would be equipped with relevant skills when interacting with SGBV survivors. Throughout the course of the project the draft guidelines were reviewed to ensure that at all times they correctly represented current Jordanian law.

Draft guidelines were finalized in October 2018 by ARDD (UNHCR legal partner) and UNHCR protection team initiated revision. Guidelines were finalized in 2019 and include the following chapters (full guidelines are attached to the report):

- A. Applying a survivor centered approach within legal service provision
- B. Jurisprudence analysis
- C. Legal challenges
- D. Legal articles

A launch event was organized to disseminate the guidelines. 24 participants from local and international NGO’s attended. An introduction to the guidelines was provided by ARDD founder and UNHCR SGBV officer. An expert panel then answered questions from the audience. Experts provided insight on their daily work with survivors and challenges faced within provision of legal support.



A SGBV safe referral training was conducted for legal service providers. 24 legal staff were trained on survivor-centred approach, survivor centred communication skills and steps to safely refer survivors. 92.8%



of participants indicated that the training was useful for their daily work. Some of the feedback included: *“The trainers were well prepared and knowledgeable on SGBV, they used very unique training techniques which helped keep the participants alert”*, *“Open conversation with trainers helped the trainees participate and take a more active role in the discussion”*, *“Coherence of the topics, the information passed on was very clear and structured”*, *“Training was relevant to my job and useful for frontline staff”*.

**Output 1.2: Specialized quality legal services are available and accessible to SGBV-CRSV survivors for Sharia and criminal courts**

Over the course of the project legal aid services were provided to refugees through UNHCR partners in urban communities and through Sharia courts in Azraq and Zaatari refugee camps in Jordan.

Over the course of the project more than 36,000 refugees were able to benefit from legal consultations, including legal counselling and representation for SGBV survivors and well as over legal assistance for cases focused on divorce and legal custody.

It should be noted that in 2017, the initial target for 3,000 SGBV survivors to receive legal support was exceeded by 26% and the total number of beneficiaries receiving support overall in 2017 was increased by 18.75%.

Activities relating to legal assistance were completed in 2017.

**Output 1.3: The capacity of Sharia Courts and Family Reconciliation Offices in preventing and responding to SGBV-CRSV, including early marriage is increased.**

During the course of the project, and reflecting gaps in legal service provision for refugees, activities were focused on ensuring that Sharia court staff were trained on appropriate standards relating to SGBV.

Induction trainings were held for Sharia court staff and newly appointed Sharia judges were trained on international protection including SGBV prevention.

Sharia court staff in both Azraq and Zaatari camps received trainings focused on sensitization on SGBV issues in the camps and in particular early marriage.

Additionally legal roundtables were organized bringing together staff from the Government of Jordan alongside local and international NGO's to sensitive them on legal challenges when assisting refugees in the context of support for SGBV survivors as well as children lacking documentation.

Activities related to capacity building for the Sharia courts and Family reconciliation offices were completed in 2017.

**Output 2.1: Context-appropriate good practices on engaging religious leaders and communities to prevent SGBV-CRSV, in particular sexual violence and early marriage, are identified and applied for advocacy purposes and to community-level outreach programmes**

In order to compliment other outcomes of this project, UNICEF commissioned a national study to identify the social and economic drivers that influence early/child marriages in Jordan. Based on the findings of this study, UNICEF developed a workplan with special focus on religious leaders as main players in addressing the child marriage problem, and the national framework to end child marriages will be revised accordingly.

A systematic literature review of the existing evidence on risk and protective factors to analyse the situation and immediate and root causes contributing to child marriage in Jordan, as well as their causal relationship. This included a systematic literature review of academic and grey literature on the risk and protective factors leading to child marriage in Jordan.

A policy and legislation review. This desk review also identified policies and legislation that aim to address such causes as well as existing prevention and response interventions in Jordan in order to identify existing gaps and potential synergy through collaborative efforts without duplication.

Review of national and/or regional and/or global multi-sectoral child marriage prevention initiatives that have been successful identified from global literature and the policy and programmatic mechanisms, context and key underpinning impact factors identified. An 8-pager developed pulling out the key elements from these successful interventions to inform discussions and for advocacy purposes.

Secondary analysis of DHS and other national datasets conducted in order to triangulate findings with the findings from the systematic literature review on risk and protective factors contributing to child marriage.

Drivers of early marriages study. . This study was carried out as a qualitative participatory research with 471 young people, parents and other key stakeholders. It consisted of focus group discussions (FGDs) and in-depth interviews with married and unmarried adolescents between 12 to 17 years of age, parents, extended family members, professionals (teachers, police, etc.), sheikhs, religious/community leaders and policymakers in 6 governorates across Jordan covering North, Central and South regions (Irbid, Mafraq, Amman, Zarqa, Karak, Ma'an). These governorates have been chosen based on the following criteria: a) high prevalence of child marriage, b) selection of both urban and rural communities; c) inclusion of communities from poorer areas and from specific groups of interest such as the Dom communities (from the Bani Murra and/or Turkman groups), Syrian refugees and Palestinian refugees living in camps. The FGD included participatory qualitative activities to explore conceptualization of childhood, social norms and response, ensuring the *ethical standards* practiced nationally and adhering to the 2015 *UNICEF Procedure for Ethical Standards in Research, Evaluation, Data Collection and Analysis*.

A workplan developed based on the findings of the study. The national framework on child marriages developed by the HPC will be revised based on this workplan.

UNICEF has launched the findings of the the Drivers of Child Marriage Study on 25 April 2019 at a high-level event conducted with the participation of all relevant partners. As a follow up national framework will be discussed and updated based on the study and its workplan.

In 2018, messages around ending early/child marriage were included in the community based events that were held in four cities in Jordan. The events aimed to raise awareness of general public on violence against children. The events have been visited by 40,000 persons and gained 4.3 million impressions through social media (UNICEF platforms and media).

In 2017, child marriage was part of a social media campaign to raise the awareness of general public on violence against children. The campaign gained 30 million impressions and reached 10 million people.

UNICEF carried out bilateral meetings with nine religious leaders as part of the drivers of early/child marriages study to discuss the barriers they are facing in their communities to end child marriage. The deliberations also included the role religious leaders play in the communities.



An action plan was developed in partnership with the Ministry of Awqaf and Islamic Affairs to address child marriage in Jordan. Together with the Ministry of Awqaf and Islamic Affairs, UNICEF organized three meetings with imams and preachers who head different mosques and religious organizations to discuss possible interventions related to addressing social norms that might be introduced or reinforced to end early/child marriages in Jordan. However, due to shortage of funds the plan has not been implemented yet.

**Output 2.2 A group of religious and community leaders are advocates against SGBVCRSV and in support of attitude and behavior change.**

UNFPA commissioned a Communication for Behavioral Impact (COMBI) Plan for addressing child marriage in Jordan. The planning process began with a consultation with a large number of partners working on child marriage in Jordan. The consultation was attended by 27 participants representing the government, UNFPA, UNHCR, CARE International, and a number of other I/NGO partners. An introduction of the COMBI Methodology was provided by the consultant and participants were asked to undertake the task of developing a Specific Behavioral Objective (SBO) with regard to child marriage in Jordan, with special attention to the challenge within the Syrian refugee communities. The consultation was followed by field visits to two refugee camps (Zaa'tari and Azraq) and meetings with CARE, UNHCR, UNICEF, Institute of Family Health (IFH) Jordan River Foundation (JRF) among others.

Following various consultations, the strategy has been developed using a communication approach that goes beyond just increasing awareness and knowledge on problems related to child marriage and gets directly to behavioural results, at the family level, and particularly at the level of the decision-maker/decision taker, namely the Head of Household (HOH), with influences on this behaviour coming from the community at large and other sources. As part of this project, an implementation plan with a holistic component on social mobilization has been developed. UNFPA will take a lead in the implementation of the social mobilization, awareness raising and media engagement components.

COMBI strategy's Five-Point Star method for Improved community and religious-based engagement to prevent child marriage included the following five communication actions: 1. Administrative Mobilization / Public Relations / Advocacy; 2. Community Mobilization; 3. Advertising; 4. Personal selling / Interpersonal communication; and 5. Point-of-Service promotion. As a pilot phase for implementation, it was decided to implement the said strategy in Ain al-Basha County communities in Amman and Al Balqaa Governorates.

Following the commission of the Communication for Behavioral Impact (COMBI) Plan for addressing child marriage in Jordan. UNFPA has identified CARE Jordan to implement the COMBI strategy on child marriage. CARE Jordan has an extensive experience working on addressing the needs of both host and refugees population placing special emphasis to work with women to create permanent social change; this includes their work on addressing child marriage in Jordan. Child marriage Interventions by CARE Jordan are at two levels; prevention level including providing information, and ensuring that girls stay in schools. Response, which includes prioritizing services to girls including case management, providing psychosocial

support, and technical and vocational education. The approach was a multi-level holistic one which addressed the rights of young girls, and ensures that services are provided to them.

During 2018, UNFPA commenced the implementation of the Communication for Behavioral Impact (COMBI) strategy in Ain Al-Basha area towards enhanced awareness of the negative impacts of child marriage and having empowered adolescent girls, below 18 years of age, and their families to adopt positive coping mechanism, behaviors and alternatives to child marriage. As a result, 40 adolescent girls and their families had increased access to information about early/child marriage and increased positive coping mechanisms as alternatives to child marriage. Moreover; a network of 15 Child Protection Ambassadors (CPAs) was established with enhanced knowledge and communication / advocacy skills to advocate against early/child marriage helping to support adolescent girls at risk and their families to adopt positive attitudes. This has been achieved through the below described interventions, those are in line with the communication actions as recommended in the COMBI strategy.

### Community Mobilization

In line with the participatory nature of the programme, and in an effort to actively involve members of the target community who both perpetuate the behavior and are at risk of child marriage in affecting change; members of the community were identified to adopt the role of Child Protection Ambassadors (CPAs). The CPAs serve as integral link between youth and youth, and youth and adults in the communities, helping support adolescent girls and boys at risk and their families to adopt positive gender attitudes and develop their capacity to advocate for gender equality, with the specific aim in combating child marriage.

Fifteen child protection ambassadors were selected (out of 1700 applications) who have different educational backgrounds including medicine, social work and counseling students or community leaders and the right attitude about women's rights. The selected ambassadors acted as 'transitional characters' in their families and communities, or those who model changes or have modeled such changes before, in attitude and behavior with respect to early/child marriage.

During the reporting period, capacity of the 15 selected CPAs was built to equip them with necessary knowledge and advocacy and communication skills they need as actors of change in their community. As a result, 15 Child Protection Ambassadors (CPAs) had enhanced knowledge, communication and advocacy skills about GBV, child marriage and alternatives to said behaviors through participation in a set of trainings over the course of the project. The trainings intended to equip CPAs with the knowledge, communication and advocacy skills needed to become catalysts for behavioral change within these families, leading to the elimination of all forms of discrimination and violence against girls and women, and ensuring they are allowed to reach their full potential by having equal opportunities.



The CPAs were introduced to and trained in behavioral change communication campaigns and strategies and in combating gender-based violence and child marriage.

The trainings also equipped CPAs with the necessary communication and negotiations skills to facilitate home visits and discussions on child marriage, to overcome encountered challenges related to families' acceptance of the intervention (detailed below), and convey social messages to 40 adolescent girls, their families and the community.

Consequently, CPAs were able to conduct a total of eight community initiatives and awareness sessions on the risks of child marriage, targeting the local community of target area Ain Al Basha.



It is also worth mentioning that implementation was achieved in cooperation with three active CBOs in Ail Al-Basha building on their experience working in this area. The selection of these CBOs was done in cooperation with the ministry of social development.

CPAs conducted several activities with community members leading to the following results:

Awareness of 156 community members in Ain Al Basha was raised on the negative impacts of child marriage and highlighting the importance of education and the opportunities girls can access if they stay in school, gain skills, and marry when they are old enough.

Moreover, 234 community members were involved in four community initiatives. The first initiative, *Waethat* (Arabic for female preachers), targeted the 27 religious female preachers in Ain Al Basha in a two-hour session about the negative impacts of child marriage, to increase their knowledge and capacity to deliver similar sessions to members of the community. Out of the 27, 17 preachers delivered sessions, each targeting ten women. Recommendations put forward by the preachers included approaching *Emams* (religious male preachers) to target males in mosques.



The second initiative, “Wait, it’s still too early” (*Ajelha lessa bakeer*), targeted 54 adolescent girls and their mothers in Ain Al Basha, and was led by eight CPAs and three volunteers. The initiative employed group work, storytelling, painting, open discussion forums, and role playing to raise the awareness of the girls and mothers on the negative consequences of child marriage, and explored possible alternatives for a better, brighter future for those girls and their families. At the end of the event, the girls captured their thoughts and aspirations on a mural that was designed for the initiative.



The third initiative, the interactive theater, targeted 35 girls and their mothers and fathers (35 families; 105 individuals) at the Yarmouk Cultural Theater. Through the initiative, volunteered actors and two CPAs performed a play that shed light on the chain of negative consequences emerging from child marriage.



The fourth initiative, “Raise my awareness” (*Waeeni*), targeted 48 adolescent girls and aimed to raise their awareness on the importance of pursuing higher education opportunities as a positive behavior and an alternative to child marriage. The initiative entailed a visit to the University of Jordan where the girls were taken on an educational tour around the campus by volunteer female university students. The girls attended an awareness session by the Director of the Center for Development and Community Service, Dr. Rania Jaber, about self-realization and the risks of child marriage. The girls socialized with female university students and spoke about university life. The university students presented a good example of females pursuing their studies and achieving their dreams. This initiative was conducted in cooperation with the Center for Development and Community Service at the University of Jordan.

#### Personal selling / Interpersonal communication

In the effort to engage girls at risk of child marriage through innovative approaches; forty adolescent girls and their families were selected based on the following set of criteria: Age group is between 13 and 17 years old, the girl is at risk of early marriage including but not limited to girls dropped out from schools; the girl’s family members accept early marriage’s concepts; 90% of the participants are Syrians and 10% are Jordanian. The criteria was shared with different stakeholders in order to identify the right adolescent girls who are at risk of early marriage and live in Ain Albasha area. The forty selected adolescent girls and their families attended introduction sessions at Ain Albasha to let them have clear information about the aims, objectives and the activities of this initiative.

The Child Protection Ambassadors (CPAs) targeted the 40 selected families. As suggested by the COMBI Strategy; the CPA’s used the appropriate communication Keys (CKs) tailored in each encounter with a HOH depending on where they are with regard to a decision on CM. The CPAs adapted the keys to the particular family/individual context. As a result, 41 adolescent girls and their families had increased access to information about child marriage which was transferred to them through different interventions that were undertaken by the trained Child Protection Ambassadors in addition to professional experts, this included:

Home visits: The visits raised many arguments to enhance the families' knowledge of the negative impacts of child marriage and the potential positive alternatives. The notion that child marriage would deprive adolescent girls from many opportunities that would otherwise be available to them was emphasized throughout the visits, owing to the fact that adolescent girls are not mature enough to make informed decisions towards the betterment of their lives.

Pre and post-assessment showed that parents scored an average of 95% in the post-assessment test, compared to a score of 56.5% in the pre-assessment test (an improvement of +38.5%) on knowledge of negative impacts of early marriage. Girls scored an average of 90% on the same post-assessment test, indicating a good level of knowledge on the subject matter. The visits provided these families with a platform for accessing information, gaining knowledge, discussing controversial ideas, and sharing thoughts and experiences.

Father daughter sessions: Each session targeted three family members; the father, the mother and the daughter (in the case of female headed household, the mother and the daughter). The sessions focused on enhancing communication skills between the girls and their parents, giving them the opportunity to learn more about each other and empowering girls to express their thoughts. The sessions provided a platform to both parents and daughters to share their personal aspirations, concerns, fears, expectations and favorite memories. In addition to that, the sessions helped parents and daughters bridge interpersonal communication gaps and learn about their values and priorities. The sessions also discussed the ways of enhancing the dialogue between the girls and their parents more than the language of parenthood and the promotion of mutual trust through the opening of channels of mutual communication, Feelings, desires, ambitions and friendship, and thinking differently towards each other.

Psychosocial sessions: Each session targeted 4 families; the fathers, the mothers and the adolescent girls. The sessions aimed to strengthen the relationship between the families' members, providing them the opportunity to express their attitudes and thoughts, let the family members learn from each other's experience using group activities, open discussions, and role play activities. One of the girls indicated *"Usually my mother doesn't listen to me, she is always busy with cooking and doing house chores. Through this session, I felt that she paid attention and has understood my thoughts and opinions for the first time"*. One of the fathers mentioned that *"I always come back from my work tired, so I do not sit with my daughter and listen to her. During these sessions, I discovered new things about my daughters and I am so proud that she loves her school and wants to finish her studies. I will do my best to help her in achieving her dreams"*.





Four days of leisure/lifestyle and sporting activities were conducted for 186 members of 36 families in Ain Al-Basha district. Each day targeted the family members of eight to ten families (between 30 and 50 participants).

The activities focused on enhancing girls' role inside their families, strengthening dialogue and thoughts and aspiration sharing between the family members and encourage their sense of cooperation and team work inside the family. The activities also emphasized on the overall information about the negative consequences of child marriage through different interactive exercises. The consultant designed creative activities that exercised critical thinking and encouraged the participants to question their practices to become more motivated to create change within themselves including sport activities, interactive theatre and families' competitions.



#### Point-of-Service promotion

Leaflets and posters were distributed to the local community members of Ain Al-Bash on Fridays in the front of mosques, shops, markets and gathering places to increase community awareness about the negative impacts of child marriage in addition to the media campaign which was targeting the community of Ain Albasha. The media campaign included:

- Dissemination of publications and pictures through Facebook paid ads to ensure that the messages are reaching thousands within the social media targeted segment: Please review the [photo link](#) and [video link](#).
- Publishing the coverage of project activities through the media (Radio broadcasting, TV and Newspapers), Below are the coverage links:
  - Petra news <https://goo.gl/xUMKK4>

- Ain news <https://goo.gl/F4FzpL>
- Iraqi news <https://goo.gl/dmYiDG>
- Almadenah News <http://bit.do/Almadenah-News>
- Hala Jo <http://bit.do/Hala-Jo>
- Urdoni <http://bit.do/Urdoni>



- 20,000 members of the local community of Ain Al-Basha were reached through SMS Messages. The SMS text was “Marrying off your daughter under 18 deprives her of her rights and affects her health and education, don’t marry her before 18, #don’t\_ruin\_her\_dreams”
- A video was produced during the life of the project, the video focused in showcasing the bad impact of child marriage through showing two true stories of women who married in an early age and faced different challenges in addition to showing the side effects of child marriage and the percentages of marriage under 18 in Jordan for both Syrians and Jordanians and divorces resulted out of child marriage.





In 2019, A high-profile roundtable meeting was held in Amman on “Ending Child Marriage through Community Engagement”. The roundtable was attended by 140 representatives of government agencies, members of parliament, civil society organizations, international and local NGOs, donors, and community leaders, activists and influencers. The purpose of the roundtable was to obtain recommendations on effective strategies to end child marriage in Jordan, especially with the recent law passed by the Parliament of Jordan in December 2018, which allows exceptions for child marriage for specific cases aged 16 and above. CARE Jordan and UNFPA also showcased the joint work done in empowering girls and combating child marriage.

The Roundtable featured a panel discussion on the previous efforts of civil society organizations and decision makers in Jordan to combat child marriage during the past five years; the best practices needed to cause change; the role of each sector in influencing the change process; and strategic recommendations for ending child marriage in the coming years. The list of panelists included Mrs. Asma Khader, Expert at Sisterhood Is Global Institute; MP Khaled Ramadan; Dr. Ashraf Alomari, Chief Justice Department representative; and Dr. Amer Hafi, religious figure.

The recommendations from the roundtable were as follows:

- Support the implementation of the multi-sectorial national action plan on Child Marriage led by the Higher Population Council and support collective efforts to implement the strategy with relevant sectors in Jordan.
- Ensure that the plan of action is based on an inter-sector approach; creating incentives, information and evidence based and offering services to bridge the Gap.
- Lobby civil society, including local and international organizations, and reach out to political unions, coalitions and chambers, to adopt a political stance against exceptions for child marriage before the age of 18.
- Continue to pressure the parliamentary legal committee through women movements and CSOs to amend Article 6 to set the minimum age for marriage at 18 without exceptions.
- Foster political will to lobby the Chief of Justice Department, governmental agencies, ministries, municipalities, and the Parliament of Jordan, against child marriage.
- Amass facts, figures, credible statistics and stories to pressure for amendments on certain laws. Consider lessons learned from the abolishment of Article 308, brought about by lobbying and advocacy of women activists and movements, street protests, general meetings and other organized activities that presented credible information which convinced the Parliament of Jordan to abolish the controversial article.
- Support and strengthen stronger women movements in Jordan as women-supporting development agencies struggle with legislative hurdles and securing financial aid.

- Encourage government to support the sustainability of the work of the CSOs and facilitating their work. Delays in receiving approvals for funding caused by ministerial bureaucratic systems hampers the real implementation of projects that would otherwise benefit many women, youth and children.
- Set combating child marriage as a strategic priority and sustain funds for the multi-sectoral National Action Plan on Child marriage until the indicators of change are observed.
- Create national coalitions of youth that advocate for ending child marriage and act as drivers of change, supported by Child protection ambassadors to further allow youth to access and explore more opportunities.
- Support national campaigns in all Jordanian governorates, to be coordinated and implemented by CSOs according to mandates and areas of presence.
- Support the implementation of opinion polls and community-engaged research to further investigate the root causes of child marriage, and use these tools to raise the awareness and change the behaviors of the community.
- Strengthen the role of the media sector by producing credible awareness-raising programs that communicate effectively and openly with the community, ensuring that the information presented is well-researched and verified.
- Create educational community-based programs to reach out to girls, boys, women, men and youth to raise awareness about the detrimental effects of child marriage and rectify the religious misconceptions and misinterpretation of verses the regarding child marriage.



Media coverage for the roundtable: <https://royanews.tv/news/173068>

Success Story: “The journey to finding hope is a very long and scary one, with many difficulties and challenges on the personal and practical levels. The most important part is knowing how to stand up tall and fight society with all your power, until you come out with a success story,” said Khawla, a

33-year-old mother of four children, who has carried her pain and wounds since got married at the young age of 16 because of customs and traditions in her society.

In an attempt to counteract the sense of failure that lived with her, and to save the lives of other young girls who may find themselves in similar circumstances as she once was, Khawla applied for and was selected as one of the Child Protection Ambassadors by CARE International in Jordan. She received a 3 months training on topics such as gender based violence, early marriage and child protection. Khawla yearned to end this social phenomenon and make people aware of its endless disadvantages, such as the lack of mutual understanding due to the age gap between the husband and wife, culture differences, and the mental and physical immaturity of the girl at that age.

Khawla has transferred her early marriage experience from the training to other families to change the way they think. When we asked her about her motivation for participating in this program, she said, “After the Syrian war, early marriage became ordinary in society, and this frustrates me and pushes me to educate people about its devastating consequences.”

Khawla thought the training was of a high quality. In particular, the training improved her negotiation and persuasion skills, helped her develop more patience, and taught her how to better deal with her own daughter. She also learned how to build trust between her and the families she reached out to, because, in her own words, “trust is what lets people open up to you and accept what you say.”

One of the stories that affected Khawla the most was the story of a 14-year-old girl that was smart with a strong disposition. The girl wanted to get married just because her friends got married. After several meetings with the girl, and after a considerable amount of effort and time that went into articulating the best arguments to dissuade her, Khawla was able to change the girl’s resolution and instead, encouraged her to dream big and aim for success in her education and career. Khawla gave her real life examples about the challenges of motherhood, especially when motherhood comes too early on in girls’ life.

“This project has heightened my sense of responsibility towards the society I live in, and has provided me with a platform to actually make a difference,” says Khawla. Khalwa dreams of establishing a sustainable project aimed at raising the awareness of mother and adolescent girls in hopes of absolutely eliminating early marriage.



### Challenges Faced during 2018

- The limited funding for the implementation of the COMBI Strategy was a major challenge in 2018. The COMBI Plan envisages a large-scale national effort to deal with Child Marriage (CM). The strategy urges to not take this on as a small-scale pilot effort. CM is a national problem and requires dedicated, massive, focused attention. It should not be tackled in bits and pieces. The challenge should be pursued in M-RIP (Massive, Repetitive, Intense, Persistent) fashion in order to achieve a major behavioural difference.
- Delays have been encountered in the implementation of the COMBI Strategy due to challenges in identifying an implementing partner for this purpose. Moreover; lengthy processes in finalizing agreement with the selected IP being an International NGO has resulted in further delays.
- There was resistance from partners to be part of the programme to end early/ child marriages in Jordan mainly because child marriage is not considered as priority at the national level and decision makers do not see it is a problem. While there is a National framework for Ending Child Marriage in Jordan that was developed by the Higher Population Council that was endorsed by the Cabinet none of the ministries allocated funds for it.
- Before the national committee was established prior to 2017, many programmes were carried out without proper planning or a cohesive plan on an ad hoc basis. This made it challenging to design a unique

programme that compliments and builds on what was done already to address the issue of ending child marriages in Jordan.

- The commissioning and initiation of the study on drivers of child marriage took a long time. The delays were caused as a result of the ever changing realities and needs on the ground and the regional developments on the subject.. Likewise getting final endorsement from the national partners for the inception report was cumbersome, and required many deliberations to reach consensus which delayed the process.

- In the reporting period, UNICEF also made plans with the Ministry of AWQAF and Islamic Affairs to develop a reference book based on the verses of the Holy Quran and the Hadith that talk about protection of girls to support the 'Ending Child Marriage programme'. The aim of the reference book was to equip the religious leaders with better understanding and correct interpretation of the Holy Quran and the Hadith. However, due to lack of funding, this activity could not be materialized.

#### Lessons Learnt during 2018

- Although results from implementation of the COMBI Strategy indicated positive outcomes from the intervention; lasting impact and achievement of real behavioral change requires a longer-term interventions opposed to pilot smaller scale initiatives.

- Child marriage affects mostly refugee girls from Syria. The specific interventions need to build on the identified drivers of child marriages that affect different groups of the population to be more effective.

- While, this project was a good initiative to bring together different UN agencies, there is a need for further strengthening coordination among a wider range of different initiatives and partners including among UN agencies on the subject so that more results can be achieved.

- As part of the implementation of the COMBI Strategy, and as child marriage is a multi-faceted problem with no simple, short, easy arguments to be made; the Child Protection Ambassadors have used different tailored communication keys and arguments. While doing so, it became apparent that solid alternative solutions must be offered to families who are resorting to child marriage based on Income question or inability to continue schooling. Therefore, coordination with all sectors must be strengthened to ensure having alternatives to said practice.

## **V. Future Work Plan**

UNFPA is planning to mobilize funds to scale up the implementation of the COMBI Strategy for the following years. The COMBI Plan envisages a large-scale national effort to deal with Child Marriage (CM). The strategy urges to not take this on as a small-scale pilot effort. CM is a national problem and requires dedicated, massive, focused attention. It should not be tackled in bits and pieces.

UNHCR will launch the legal guidelines and conduct SGBV safe referral training in January 2019.

Following the launching of the Drivers of Child Marriage study, UNICEF will work with the HPC to integrate the workplan developed based on the findings of the drivers of child marriage study in the National Framework to End Child Marriage in Jordan.