

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

INTERIM NARRATIVE REPORT COVER PAGE

<p>Participating UN Organization(s):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) ● United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) ● United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF) 	<p>Project Title:</p> <p>“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”</p>
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UN Action pillar of activity: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Advocacy <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Knowledge building <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Support to UN system at country level	Reporting Period: January – December 2018
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Project Budget: Total Project Budget: USD 872,619 (USD 508,369 for UNHCR, USD 201,750 for UNICEF, and USD 162,500 for UNFPA) Amount of MPTF funds requested: USD 500,000 (USD 178,733 for UNHCR, USD 163,442 for UNICEF, and USD 157,825 for UNFPA)
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List Implementing Partners: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Participating UN Organization(s): United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF) · Other International Organizations: N/A · National (government, private, NGOs & others): Government of Jordan (Sharia Court), High Population Council, ARDD (local NGO providing legal aid), CARE (international NGO implementing COMBI strategy). 	Project Coverage/Scope: Jordan, Northern and Central Governorates: Amman, Karak, Balqa, Jerash, Ajloun, Irbid, Mafraq and Zarqa (including Za’atari and Azraq refugee camps)
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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

INTERIM NARRATIVE REPORT FORMAT

I. Purpose

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

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

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.

IV. Results

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.

Draft guidelines were finalized in October 2018 by ARDD (UNHCR legal partner) and UNHCR protection team initiate revision. Launch with legal service providers and SGBV safe referral training will take place during first quarter of 2019.

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

Output 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.

Output 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.

A high-level meeting conducted with the participation of all partners to discuss the national framework and update it based on the 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.

During 2018, UNFPA commenced the implementation of the Communication for Behavioral Impact (COMBI) strategy in Ain Al-Basha area in XX 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.



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

In January 2019, and as part of the implementation of the COMBI Strategy, UNFPA will be conducting a High level advocacy event on Ending Child Marriage through Community Engagement. The roundtable will involve many stakeholders including government agencies, members of parliament, civil society organizations, international and local NGOs, and community leaders, activists and influencers.

UNFPA is planning to mobilize funds to scale up the implementation of the COMBI Strategy in 2019. 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.

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.