



**Child Protection**  
Sub-Working Group

**Joint CP and GBV SWG Meeting in partnership with NCFA**

**Meeting Minutes 26<sup>th</sup> of January 2021**



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**Co-chairs: UNHCR, UNFPA and UNICEF**

**Agencies present: NCFA, Supreme Judge Department, Ministry of Social Development, Higher Population Council-Jordan, Ministry of Education, Ministry of Health (Maternal & Child Health Dir), JNCW/RDPP, IFH/NHF, JWU, AIDOS, APS, ARCS, ARDD, AVSI, AWO, Care, CRS, CRP, DRC, HelpAge International, ICMC, IMC, INTERSOS, IOCC, IOM, IRAP, IRC, JRF, MECI, Mercy Corps, NRC, ONG Rescate Internacional, Oxfam, Plan International, Reclaim Childhood, Save the Children, TDHL, TDH-Italy, Tearfund Germany, UNFPA, UNHCR, UNICEF, UMR, UNRWA, UPP, Vento di Terra, War Child Holland, WFP, World Vision**

**Agenda**

- Welcome and Introduction.
- Updates on the national plan to combat child marriage and recommendations. (Presenter-NCFA)
- IBV policy to prevent child marriage – best practice from the camp. (Presenter-UNHCR Azraq/Zatari).
- Underlying causes of child marriage In Zaatari & Azraq Refugee Camp. (Presenter-UNICEF survey)
- Transformative programs to prevent child marriage: COMBI (Presenter-UNFPA)
- General Q&A session.
- AOB & Closure

Agenda items	Discussion	Action points
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<p><b>Welcome and introduction</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Welcoming participants and discussing the agenda.</li> <li>- Presenting objective and preparation of Joint meeting between CP SWG, GBV SWG and National Task force against child marriage.</li> <li>- Housekeeping rules and Available interpretation for Arabic/English translation.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <b>MoM will be uploaded on UNHCR's data portal:</b> <a href="http://data2.unhcr.org/en/situations/syria/location/36">http://data2.unhcr.org/en/situations/syria/location/36</a></li> <li>- <b>All presentations will be shared.</b></li> </ul>
<p><b>Updates on the national plan to combat child marriage and recommendations</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- NCFA presented the national action plan to implement the recommendations of the study of "underage marriage" in Jordan to limit marriage for those under the age of 18 for years (NAP 2020-2024).</li> <li>- On May 29, 2019, the Jordanian Council of Ministers decided to assign the task of following up the implementation of the national plan for early marriages to those under 18 years to the National Council for Family Affairs. Later, the time for implementing the plan has been modified to (2020-2024).</li> <li>- Work methodology: NCFA funded by UNFPA built a plan for a follow-up process on the implementation of the national action plan to limit marriages for those under 18 years through the following:             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Forming a group of liaison officers from the implementation authorities/line ministries.</li> <li>• Building a logical framework for the process of following up on the implementation of the plan so that it is systematic and directed to serve that process.</li> <li>• Raising the efficiency of the liaison officers on monitoring and evaluation mechanisms.</li> <li>• Rescheduling the time for the implementation plan based on the amendment of the Cabinet Resolution, as the time for implementation has been amended to (2020-2024) instead of (2018-2022) through the implementation work team.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	



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- Authorities and partners concerned with implementing NAP against child marriage are: MoE, MoSD, MoH, Ministry of Ministry of Awkaf and Islamic Affairs, Ministry of Justice, Ministry of Youth, MoPIC, Supreme Judge Department, Directorate of general security (NCFA, Juvenile Police), JNCW, NCWH, JOHUD, AJYC, JRF, JNFW, Higher Population Council, National Centre for Human Rights, IFH/NHF, UNICEF, UNFPA, UNRWA, Families Development Charity Association, Royal Medical Services, Save the Children.
- The national plan to limit marriage for those under 18 years old: a general framework for a program to limit the marriage of those under the age of 18 years and a guide for interventions for the next five years, which includes the proposed initiatives that will be implemented by the concerned authorities in the short and medium term for the years 2020-2024. The plan set a general framework that focuses on a supportive environment (policies / services / data) to limit early marriage and directs the processes of attracting international and local funding to implement the activities and programs emanating from it.
- Medium-term outcome (1): Supportive legislation to limit marriage to those under the age of 18 years.
  1. Amended and applied legislations and laws Jordan.
  2. Specific and comprehensive data on the number of underage marriages (under 18) to support decision makers and legislations.
- Medium-term outcome (2): Health and psychological services are available to support survivors of CM.
  1. Create a supportive healthy and societal environment to reduce the percentage and repercussions of marriage for those under the age of 18, raise the institutional and human capacities, and provide sources of financing.
  2. A case management program for those who are intending to get married or married under the age of 18 years.
- Medium-term outcome (3): A positive change in the beliefs and behaviours of community members towards early marriages under 18.
  1. Enhancing the culture of protection and knowledge of the concept of early marriages for those under 18.



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	<p>2. Concepts, values, and methods of protection to limit marriage to those under 18 years, integrated in educational programs and curricula for all school levels.</p> <p>- Recommendations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Provide funding to continue achieving medium-term results for the next three years (2021-2024).</li><li>• The necessity of unifying efforts aimed at achieving the concept of awareness, prevention, and treatment, based on a unified methodology of work among the executive bodies, which aims to prevent the implementation of those activities that lack coordination.</li><li>• Work on preparing unified training manuals for each target group through a scientific and applied methodology.</li><li>• Working to coordinate between the relevant authorities to unify efforts and not repeat their implementation. Contributes to investing financial allocations in achieving the three medium-term results.</li><li>• Following up with relevant parties.</li><li>• Work on building the main activities mentioned in the plan after completing the amendments.</li><li>• Work on making some modifications to the institution's individual achievement card form.</li><li>• Conduct regular meetings for members of the National Committee.</li><li>• Get the support and approvals from the decision makers regarding the importance of eliminating early marriages under 18.</li><li>• Work on preparing an annual plan that includes the targeted activities for the year 2021.</li><li>• Set activities with priorities for 2021 according to the available budget.</li><li>• Computerize the achievements report by using Google forms to facilitate the delivery of reports.</li></ul> <p>- Q from the higher population council: what about activities that need funding and do not have funds? there should be a list of activities that don't have fund to discuss them with donors for example some activities related to leaving schools and others related to justice.</p>	
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- A: Within the recommendations, some activities will be prioritized according to budgets and urgency. The list was modified and NCFA worked with UNFPA on these activities.</li> </ul>	
<p><b>IBV policy to prevent child marriage – best practice from the camp</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Azraq Incentive-Based Volunteering Tackling Early Marriage: discussing a document that is related to early marriage for IBVs in camps with the case management, it is still a draft document and will be shared for feedback. Towards mid last year, there was a realization of protection concerns for IBVs in both camps Azraq and Zaatari that are engaged in early marriages.</li> <li>- IBV is a key aspect of refugee participation in the delivery of humanitarian assistance and other services in the camp.</li> <li>- Incentive-Based Volunteering is one of the four possible forms of income generating opportunities for refugees in Azraq Refugee Camp including: Incentive-based Volunteering Scheme (IBVs); Private business on the local market (Souq) ;Work Permits; Home Based Business (HBB)</li> <li>- The incentive-based volunteering scheme aims at providing refugees living in Azraq refugee camp with basic means to enhance refugee’s resilience and self-reliance.</li> <li>- The incentive-based work is centered on a volunteering scheme which was introduced in 2014 following the agreement of the Government of Jordan through the Syrian Refugees Affairs Directorate (SRAD) and in coordination with UNHCR.</li> <li>- Compliance with the present IBVS SOPs is mandatory for all agencies administering IBVS programs in Azraq Camp.</li> <li>- IBV Eligibility:             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The incentive-based volunteering scheme is open to all refugees living in Azraq refugee camp wishing to work irrespective of their age, gender, ability, level of competencies etc.</li> <li>- To be registered in Azraq Camp</li> <li>- 18 years old and above.</li> </ul> </li> <li>- IBV Selection Process: All the recruitment process is facilitated directly by the agencies with UNHCR assistance on the eligibility and profiling.</li> </ul>	



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- Agencies must advertise their IBVs opportunities directly in the different locations in the camp and shortlist the candidates based on the list of the applicants.
- UNHCR cross check on the profiling of the shortlisted candidates and share the feedback with the agencies to initiate the recruitment process.
- Agencies share the outcome of the recruitment process with UNHCR to update RAIS accordingly.
- Code of conduct (CoC): All IBVs must sign the Code of Conduct of their recruiting agencies upon their recruitment. All agencies are responsible for encouraging, advocating, and promoting the dissemination and respect of their own code of conduct by their IBVs. All organizations also have a duty to prevent, oppose and combat all types of exploitation.
- As volunteers of UN agencies or INGOs, the mandate and commitment of prevention of sexual exploitation and abuse is extended to the IBVs. Early marriage is a form of SGBV and as a volunteer for humanitarian organization, the position of power shifts resulting in SEA. As such, all organizations have the duty to prevent, oppose and combat all forms of exploitation.
- The Action Plan document was drafted by UNHCR to address Incentive Based Volunteers (IBV) involvement in early marriage in the refugee camps in Jordan. The conversation started within CP and GBV WGs in the camp to see what the solutions are. IBVs have responsibilities and they sign the CoC that is unified for all organizations to make sure that all have the same understanding in all camps and for all IBVs. The process is similar in all camps, making sure that every volunteer understands the CoC. Zaatari developed a commitment form as well and shared there CoC.
- There is an IBV panel and there is a committee to discuss any reported incidents to see what the solutions are.
- The purpose of the Action Plan is to tackle issues of early marriage in the camp and reduce the occurrence of IBV related early marriage.
- To effectively address the concern that has a long tradition in the Syrian community.
- Training package on SGBV & SEA- developed by UNHCR country office and other organizations.



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- Commitments of organizations in the due courses of actions are undertaken when an IBV CoC violation/s are reported.
- Actions to be taken:
- Adopt a unified code of conduct for all IBVs that focus on preventing and response of child marriage and all SGBV types.
- Providing CP/SGBV training to all IBVs, focusing on child marriage.
- Requiring all IBVs to sign the code of conduct, before starting their work.
- Synchronized Code of Conduct:
- To enhance the existing established procedures on CoC.
- Create a unified document for all organizations contracting IBVs.
- Allows for equal expectations, interpretations, and obligation from both parties.
- Does not supersede internal organizational rules & regulations and the CoC but serves as the basis for contracting IBVs.
- The unified CoC draws from the Inter-Agency Standing Committee standards, that humanitarians – UN and INGOs alike are held to.
- Documents: IBV CoC Violation Incident Report Template. Interagency Code of Conduct guidelines for incentive-based volunteers. Interagency COC Commitment for Azraq IBVs. Incentive Based Volunteers Standard Operating Procedure: Measures for alleged Code of Conduct violations by volunteers contracted through IBV scheme. Annex 6 to the Azraq IBV SOPs.
- Jordanian law: the legal age of marriage in Jordan is set at 18 years, according to Article 10 of the Personal Status Law, 2019. Marriage of children who have completed 15 years of age, but not 18 years is allowed under special circumstances and with the approval of Chief of the Shariah judges.
- In Zaatari same issues were discussed, there is a need to have an information campaign that CoC includes child marriage cases. The other issue is the need to strengthen the knowledge of having IBVs.
- The draft will be shared with the WG.



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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Q from UNICEF: are IBVs obligated to report on child marriage cases?</li> <li>- A: haven't discussed this point but it could be part of their position depending on their duties.</li> </ul>	
<p><b>Underlying causes of child marriage In Zaatari &amp; Azraq Refugee Camp</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- A brief study of the key drivers leading to child marriage in the camps using a qualitative approach of one-on-one interviews with child spouses.</li> <li>- % of Child marriages documented by Shariah Court in Zaatari Refugee Camp June 2019-July 2020:</li> <li>- In June 2019, 30 out of 60 marriages were CM (50%), while in June 2020 the rate increases, 13 out of 16 we CM (81%).</li> <li>- July 2020, the rate is relatively high at 57% (37 out of 65 marriages were under 18).</li> <li>- Overall, in 2019, 58% CM while in 2020 so far, the rate is at 60%.</li> <li>- Between June 2019 to July 2020 (one-year lapse), a total of 586 marriages were registered in Shariah Court, 332 (57%) of these marriages are regarded as child marriage.</li> <li>- % of Child marriages documented by shariah court in Azraq Refugee Camp June 2019-July 2020:</li> <li>- In June 2019, 2 out of 13 CM (15%).</li> <li>- In June 2020, 8 out 14 marriages are deemed as CM (57%).</li> <li>- In July 2020, a 19-point increase is observed from the previous month of June 2020. A total of 17 marriages registered in Shariah Court, 13 of them are CM (76%).</li> <li>- From June 2019 until July 2020, a total of 212 marriages were registered in Shariah Court, 109 of these marriages (51%) are early marriage.</li> <li>- Azraq Camp 2019 vs. 2020 CM Data (January-July):</li> <li>- A total of 114 registered marriages between the months of January to July 2019, of which 46/114 were child marriage (40%).</li> <li>- A total of 100 marriages were registered in January to July 2020, 60 of them are regarded as child marriage (60%).</li> <li>- An increase in child marriage is observed in Azraq Refugee camp from the previous year (January to July).</li> <li>- 18% of married girls have reached grade 6 only.</li> </ul>	





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- In both Zaatari and Azraq camp, the education level varies, a lot of married children are dropouts while others have completed their high school (Tawjeehi).
- Average age of most child spouses is 16 years old.
- Social norms leading to child marriage:
- All girls interviewed believe that they should get married before the age of 18. "If the girl reaches 18 and still isn't married, she's considered to have lost her chance."
- Traditions and culture are the lead causes for early marriage. During the interviews the parents and child spouses highlighted it is part of their culture to marry the girls young.
- Lack of employment and poverty is the 2nd key driver for child marriage as observed.
- After the lockdown, child marriage cases have raised in both camps.
- UNICEF developed an action plan Slide and looked into different aspects and outcomes, politics, legislation, health and counselling.
- Cross-cutting interventions to implement M&E system encompassing all levels and sectors / capacity building in policy analysis, service delivery and communication to change behaviours/ adoption of policies/ leadership and decision-makers support.
- Comments:
- NRC: If not clearly stated in the action plan; please communicate the crucial matters of lost interest in education to the ESWG co-chairs (NRC, UNICEF and WVI) for advocacy and action planning.
- A: Education is one of the main areas we are advocating for, new SoPs will be shared with schools and will have a tracking system for girls above 14 years in schools and case management will take part in this. It will be implemented this year.
- TDHL: were parents and caregivers' part of the interviews? Did they have direct inputs or had questions specifically tailored to them?
- A: Yes, we had parents and caregivers and had a better understanding from them regarding the main for child marriage that is financial difficulties.



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<p><b>Transformative programs to prevent child marriage: COMBI</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- UNFPA is working on child marriage and mainly on strengthening national capacities.</li> <li>- Communication for Behavioural Impact (COMBI) on harmful practices of early marriage.</li> <li>- COMBI strategy is to involve, advocate and support different stakeholders, donors, and national stakeholders to strengthen monitoring on child marriage.</li> <li>- COMBI's planning methodology focuses on achieving behavioural results in health and social development. It works on family level and the head of household.</li> <li>- COMBI's approach stresses on doing the aspect more than knowing it.</li> <li>- Combination of using multiple communication teams to achieve the desired behavioural results.</li> <li>- A global program to end child marriage is supporting to see the implication of COVID-19 in increasing child marriage. A regional study will be done in 6 countries one of them is Jordan.</li> <li>- Worked on multiple advocacy reports on national level in Zadari and came up with multiple recommendations. Will work on national advocacy as well</li> <li>- Q/IMC: as child marriage is a cross cutting element between CP and GBV, we may need to review numbers of child marriage cases as received from Sharia court in compare to numbers of cases registered in CPIMS and GBVIMS, maybe to have a separate meeting to discuss this?</li> <li>- A: we are in process to review data for CPIMS and GBVIMS and produce reports after discussions.</li> <li>- Q/UNHCR: Did the studies include early marriage among PwDs (boys and girls)?</li> <li>- A: The scope is still being defined but this is a good point as UNFPA is also focusing on PwD.</li> </ul>	
<p><b>General Q&amp;A session</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Q: For child marriage cases, did the study also include early marriages among boys and their interest in continuing their education both formal and informal?</li> <li>- A: when UNICEF asked Sharia court for numbers, they only came across one male case. It is more known and common that girls under 18 are getting married. However, both genders are included in the studies.</li> <li>- Q: could the higher population council be part of the regional study regarding child marriage?</li> <li>- A: UNFPA will contact the higher population council.</li> <li>- Comment: Supreme Judge Department did not finish with releasing all statistics. There should be awareness regarding financial causes of child marriage. Education and having strict procedures to monitor boys and girls who are escaping and opting out from schools should be applied. The court tries to protect children to avoid early</li> </ul>	



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	<p>marriages by checking that both sides agree on the marriage. There are long procedures to approve early marriages. Also, there are trainings and awareness for early marriages.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Comment/ MoSD: unifying terminologies related to child marriage. Regarding the statistics, there should be a reference from religious courts.</li> <li>- The statistic department will check with Supreme Judge Department and the Church Court for numbers. However, biggest numbers are from the Supreme Judge Department.</li> <li>- Comment/IRC: importance of awareness sessions and we should include girls who are already married under the legal age.</li> <li>- Q: what are the reasons that makes the Sharia court approve child marriage?</li> <li>- A: the court takes into consideration different aspects and the caregivers are presented when conducting the marriage.</li> <li>- Q/ rising awareness is very essential, how is it possible to change cultural norms and aspects to avoid child marriage?</li> <li>- A: there is a need to acknowledge root causes. The 2019 interagency child marriage assessment in Zaatari revealed the following main causes: tradition, protection (to prevent girls being sexually harassed), poverty (marrying off a child means one less family member to support). Even if we can influence tradition and protection through behavioural change, poverty remains. Stronger linkages with the livelihoods sector are needed, as well as with the education sector.</li> <li>- Q: are child marriage cases exceptions in the camps more than host communities?</li> <li>- A: Final statistics were not shared yet by the Supreme Judge Department, and there are no studies that proves that. There is a discussion to have an electronic platform to calculate cases.</li> <li>- There was a proposal to have this joint meeting twice a year</li> </ul>	
<p><b>AOB</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- In February regular GBV will be on the 16<sup>th</sup> of February. From March on will be on last Tuesday of the month</li> <li>- CP SWG will be held in Feb and will focus on the review of the workplan.</li> </ul>	