

Understanding girl-child marriage amongst Syrian refugee communities in Jordan and Lebanon

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Research partnership between Dr Aisha Hutchinson (then University of Bedfordshire; now King's College London) and Terre des hommes Jordan and Lebanon

Focus is on **girl-child** marriage

Focus on Syrian refugees

Data collection occurred from January 2017 until October 2018

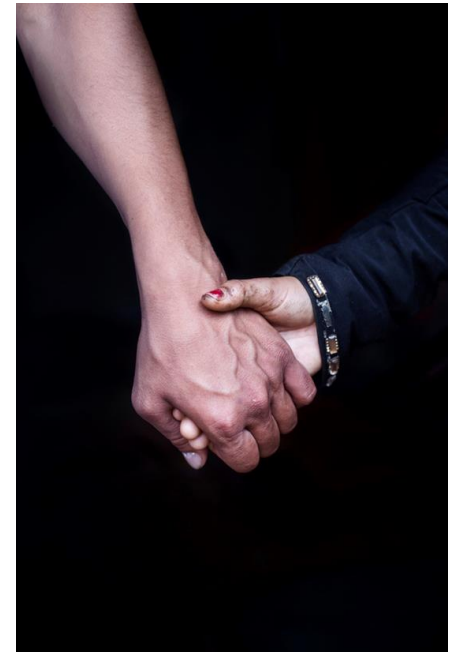


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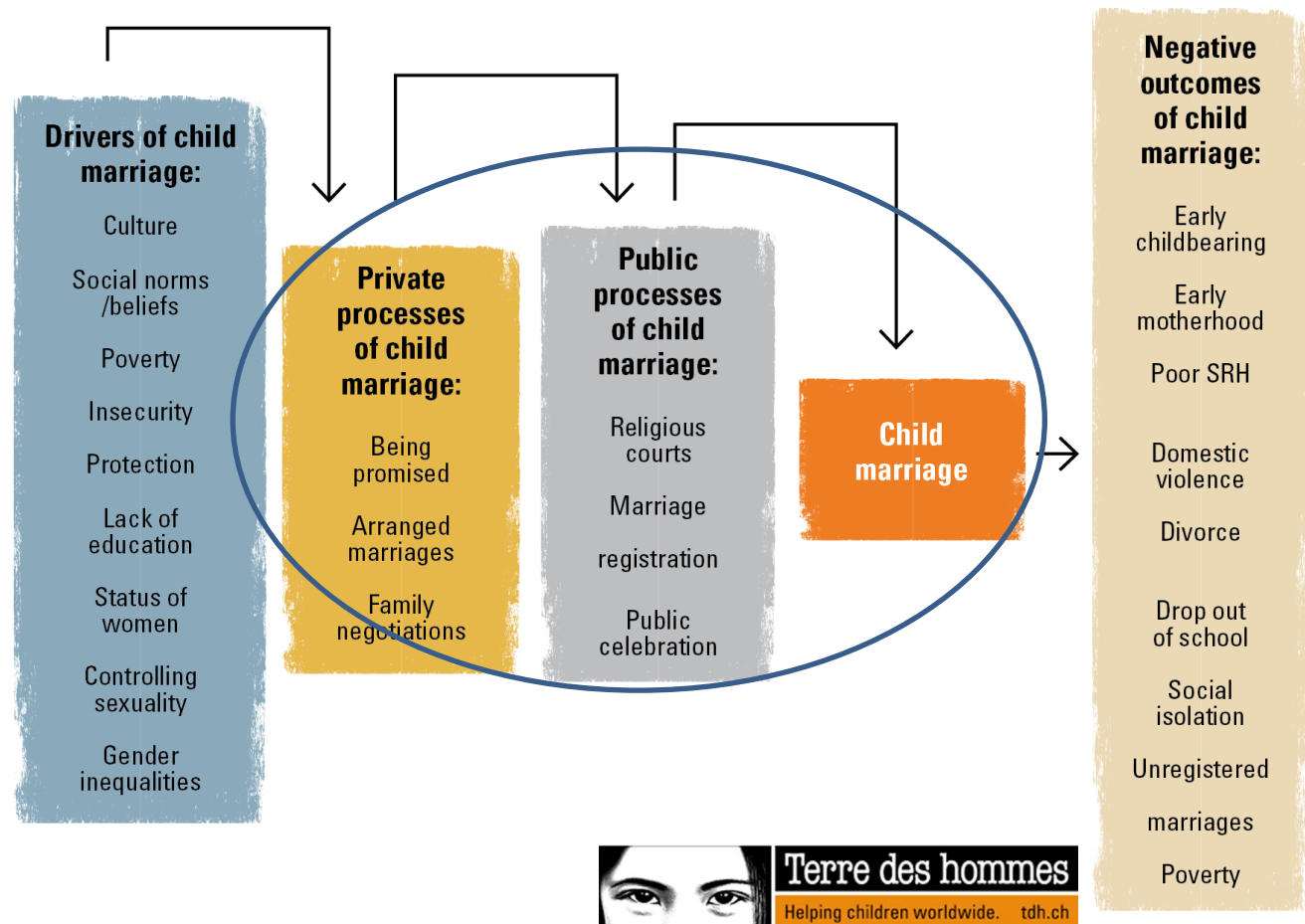


Aims and objectives of the study

To improve knowledge, and develop a culturally relevant framework of risk and protective factors associated with child marriage in the Syrian refugee communities in Jordan and Lebanon; using an ecological framework which is cognisant of and informed by religious, cultural and social processes



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Overarching research questions

- 1) How does the refugee context change the process and experience of child marriage and the associated risks?
- 2) How are concepts of 'risk', 'vulnerability', 'protective factors' and 'successful outcomes' understood in relation to child marriage, and what 'protective' actions can this lead to?
- 3) How do various professionals respond to child marriage, and what support services are available?
- 4) How do cultural-religious and legal processes impact the practice of child marriage?

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Systematic mapping

76 items from 1970-2017
(Jordan only)



Assessment tool

144 households
202 girls
(Jordan only)



Qualitative interviews with married/engaged girls

11 girls (Jordan)
10 girls (Lebanon)



Qualitative interviews with families of married/engaged girls

10 families (Jordan)
7 families (Lebanon)



Focus groups with young people

20 boys & 18 girls (Jordan)
12 boys & 27 girls (Lebanon)
8 groups



Focus groups with caregivers

20 men & 19 women (Jordan)
6 men & 16 women (Lebanon)
8 groups



Qualitative interviews with practitioners

17 (Jordan)
25 (Lebanon)



Qualitative interviews with faith-based actors

8 (Jordan)
12 (Lebanon)



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Qualitative interviews and focus groups

- Social process of marriage
- Factors influencing the decision-making processes underpinning child marriage
- High levels of ambivalence about child marriage across Syrian refugee communities
- Impact of the displacement on child marriage
- Preparation for marriage and consent to marriage
- Consequences of child marriage
- Help seeking behaviours usually draw on informal rather than formal resources



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Policy mapping

- Rise in recognition of child marriage as a protection concern
- Very few child marriage specific policies
- Child marriage interventions
- Multi-sectorial engagement
- Strengths and weaknesses of integrated responses
- Limitations of awareness raising
- Challenges and gaps



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Interviews with faith-based actors

- Wide range of faith-based actors involved in marriages
- Heterogeneity of faith-based actors with different roles and responsibilities related to marriage
- Importance of morality in marriage
- Different red lines in relation to child marriage
- Decisions related to child marriage often on a case by case basis
- Concepts of maturity and consent more important
- Limits of their role and influence



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Full research reports available at

<https://www.tdh.ch/en/media-library/documents/research-child-marriage>

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