



Child Early Marriage Pilot Project

Real-Time Evaluation Summary



Save the Children

Acknowledgement

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All drawings published in this resource are from adolescent girls participating in Her Voice activities.

Project background

What

The Child Early Marriage Pilot (CEMPP) is a pilot of Save the Children's global Child Early Forced Marriage and Union Theory of Change.

Why

The aim is to protect girls from child early marriage, and support girls experiencing child early marriage.

Where

Irbid, Jordan hosts the third largest population of Syrian refugees, where challenges such as poverty and deeply ingrained social and gender norms have exacerbated the issue of child marriage.

When

The CEMPP was launched in the fall of 2023, and was implemented throughout 2024.

How

A dynamic Real-Time Evaluation was used to continuously assess and enhance the CEMPP's effectiveness, relevance and adaptability.

Who

Partners: Supreme Judge Department, Ministry of Education, Community Based Organisations (CBOs)

Targeted groups: adolescent girls and boys, teachers, counselors, parents.



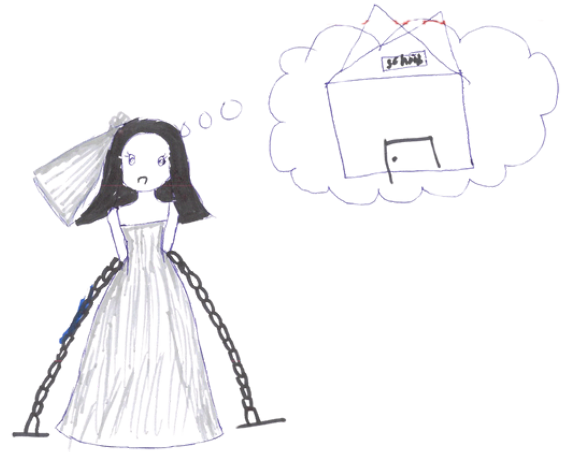
Global facts

- 12 million girls marry before the age of 18
- 19% of women between ages of 20-24 around the world were child brides
- Pregnancy and childbirth complications are a leading cause of death for girls aged 15-19
- 23 girls under 18 are married every minute

Jordan facts

- in the last 10 years, marriages below 18 years reached an average of 13% of total registered marriages
- In 2024, 8% of marriages in Jordan were below 18 years and above 16 years.
- 5033 girls married in 2024 in Jordan 16 to 18 years old.

The CEMPP Roadmap



Journey 1

Girls aged 14-17 at risk of child marriage are retained in school

Journey 2

Targeted families have improved knowledge, attitude, and practice towards supporting ever-married girls aged 14-20 to continue their education

Journey 3

Enhanced institutional coordination between key stakeholders, including the Ministry of Education and the Supreme Judge Department

CEMPP TOTAL DIRECT REACH

Girls	656
Boys	321
Men	113
Women	389
TOTAL	1,479

Journey 1

School activities

Students

Students in schools (591 females, 321 male) expressed that participated in the interactive awareness sessions on child marriage have:

- enhanced their self-awareness and interpersonal skills
- increased awareness of their ambitions and aspirations
- positively influenced their relationships with their parents
- deeper understanding of their strengths and weaknesses, relationships in their lives and whom to trust
- heightened their awareness of risks and consequences of child marriage

Baseline and endline surveys were conducted with 10th and 11th grade students from five female schools. **Three girls were considered at risk of child marriage at baseline; at endline, all of them were retained at school.**

"Education will open many doors for me in the future. It will allow me to influence those around me and leave a lasting impact — whether through my work or in raising my children, I will make a difference."

16 year old girl, Ramtha

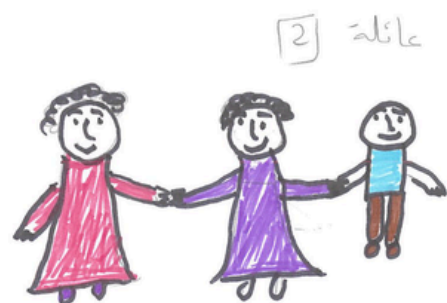
"If a girl's family wants her to get married but she wants to continue her education, I would encourage her to tell them: 'I'm still young — I want to focus on my studies first, and I can get married later.'"

10 year old girl, Ramtha

Parents

316 Parents (229 Female, 87 Male) participated in interactive awareness sessions on child marriage and the importance of education.

Counselors reported that the sessions were effective, but recommended increasing parental engagement and increasing number of sessions.



توفير بيئة داعمة وحسنة
للمفهوم وتطوره التذمير والنفس

Journey 1

School activities

School staff

"While the program's topic is undoubtedly important, but what stood out was the emphasis on the value of education rather than solely on preventing early marriage. Even in situations where marriage occurs, the central focus was on how to support continued education for those getting married and that was the heart of the conversation." Counselor

80% of participating staff (counselors and management staff) reported improved knowledge in responding to girls at risk of child marriage.

76 school counselors and teachers were trained on the indicators, enhancing their ability to detect at-risk girls early on and intervene appropriately.

Schools were linked to the newly established Family Reform Offices, improving coordination between the education and legal systems in addressing child marriage cases.

Journey 2

Adolescent girls at the CBO

Over **70%** of participating girls reported feeling **more resilient, confident, and equipped** to promote gender equality



Mentor girls (18–20) trained younger girls (TOT), gaining public speaking and leadership skills.



Mentors and core team at the CBO (girls aged 14–20) participated in capacity-building and advocacy trainings



Supported by mentors, the core team implemented four girl-led initiatives designed to raise awareness and support girls. These initiatives were shaped through focused discussions with the girls themselves, ensuring that the activities directly reflected their needs and concerns.

Journey 2

Adolescent girls at the CBO

Girl-led initiatives



“Tree of Messages of Hope” mural

Raised awareness on early marriage while sharing real messages of change from girls, to girls



Theatrical performance by 20 girls

Addressed early marriage risks while reaching families directly through creative storytelling



Self-Care awareness through art

engaged girls 14-20 in visual activities promoting emotional wellbeing while highlighting self-care as a tool for empowerment



Digital safety campaign

Awareness messages on **online violence** shared via Instagram and Whatsapp reached wide youth audiences using platforms they truly trust



“I want to be a voice for girls who are subjected to early marriage, and I call for a condition that ensures the continuation of education until high school before marriage.” Girl from Ramtha, 18 years old

Parents at the CBO

Mothers who attended the awareness sessions and reported having daughters married between the ages of 15.3 and 20 demonstrated the following improvements:

1. A better understanding of their daughters' educational needs
2. More supportive attitudes towards girls' educational goals
3. Initiation of conversations about future learning opportunities with other married girls in their families

Parents and caregivers reported that the activities were effective in **increasing awareness about the risks of early marriage** and empowering both mothers and daughters to **advocate for girls' education and rights**.

81% of baseline-endline survey with parents and caregivers demonstrated **enhanced knowledge related to the continued education of ever-married girls** (14-20), having 19% level of change in their knowledge.

Journey 3

Enhanced institutional coordination

The project worked to develop the internal Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) for the Ministry of Education (MoE), including:

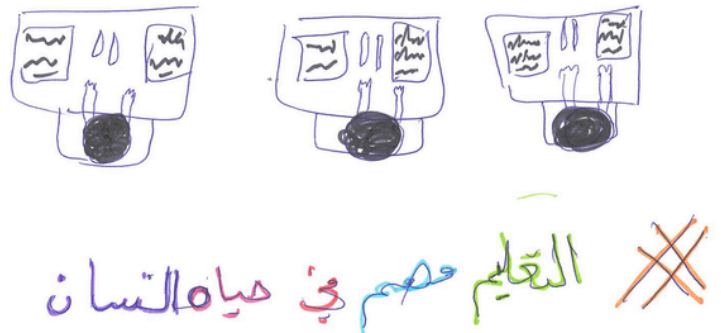
- ✦ incorporating an early detection indicator
- ✦ creating a clear path of cooperation between MoE and the Supreme Judge Department to exchange available data on hotspots and married cases to follow up on the educational opportunities

Several meetings and workshops engaged counsellors and teachers from Irbid and Ramtha schools, the directorate in the two locations as well as the counselling directorate in the Ministry, which worked to strengthen the coordination pathways, referrals and synergy between all parties.

“The cooperation with the Supreme Judge Department and Save the Children in developing the Standard Operating Procedures was a strategic step that will facilitate data sharing and follow-up on sensitive cases, with a focus on sustaining education and expanding the practical application of guidance counselors in schools.” Mr. Bassam Habahbeh, Counselling Department, Ministry of Education



“The institutionalization of procedures provides a clear mechanism for monitoring cases, and links with the Ministry of Education to ensure the continuation of girls’ education. It also highlights the role of family reconciliation offices and the National Committee on Early Marriage in following up on cases and enforcing legal regulations.” Dr. Tareq Abu Tayeh and Mr. Mohammad Abu Samra, Supreme Judge Department



Key findings

- 1. Coordination between sectors is essential**

A close partnership between the Ministry of Education and the Supreme Judge Department allowed for collaboration on identifying a list of early detection indicators for child early marriage, and a dialogue sessions for girls and community organizations.
- 2. School-based interventions to identify Girls-at-Risk were effective**

The project aimed to keep girls at risk of child marriage in school by training counsellors and staff to identify and support them. School feedback confirmed its impact but called for more sessions and greater parental involvement.
- 3. Community engagement and awareness raising**

Engaging families and community leaders increased awareness about the negative consequences of child marriage.
- 4. Flexibility and adaptability were key**

The Real-Time Evaluation approach enabled the project to provide ongoing insights by closely monitoring progress against objectives, identifying gaps in implementation and course correcting where necessary.
- 5. Economic barriers are a major challenge**

The project addressed the issue through awareness campaigns and targeted financial support, however more economic empowerment programs are needed.
- 6. Stengthening multi-sectoral collaboration**

Sustained engagement between government agencies, schools, community leaders, and civil society ensures long-term impact. A formal national task force on child marriage prevention, involving key ministries and stakeholders, enhances coordination and scalability.
- 7. Economic support is fundamental**

Given the strong link between poverty and child marriage, future programs should integrate financial support mechanisms, vocational training, and income-generating activities for girls and families.
- 8. Engaging fathers and male community members is essential**

While mothers and girls actively participated, fathers and male community leaders were less involved. Future programs should develop male-targeted awareness campaigns to address patriarchal attitudes and foster more supportive environments for girls.
- 9. Digital solutions can expand reach**

Innovative digital strategies, such as e-learning modules, mobile apps, and SMS-based awareness campaigns, can help reach remote communities and married girls who may not be able to attend in-person sessions.
- 10. Adaptive learning is crucial**

A flexible, learning-driven approach enhances project effectiveness. Future initiatives should incorporate continuous feedback mechanisms, such as regular evaluations and stakeholder workshops, to improve interventions in real time



Project management reflections on success factors for the pilot project



Collaboration at the core

At the heart of the project was the formation of an **Advisory Committee**— a first-of-its-kind collaboration with the Supreme Judge Department, the Ministry of Education, and other key national stakeholders. Underscoring the importance of respectful, inclusive communication, framing the initiative around shared goals such as safeguarding girls' right to education. This approach fostered trust, mutual understanding, and a strong sense of ownership among all involved.



Alignment with national strategies and innovative collaboration

This project is aligned with the National Action Plan to Combat Marriage of Persons Under the Age of 18 in Jordan (2020–2024) and with national priorities. The coordination with the Supreme Judge Department and the Ministry of Education was unique, and for the first time formally documented and approved by both parties.



Empowering girls to lead

Central to the project was the empowerment of girls through a structured mentorship model and dialogue groups. Older girls were trained as mentors and led peer-to-peer sessions on topics such as digital safety, mental health, and gender-based violence. These safe, supportive spaces encouraged open discussion, self-expression, and leadership development. By entrusting the girls with responsibility and voice, the project enabled them to become active advocates for change in their communities.



Her Voice Advocacy Paper

The “HER Voice” initiative empowered adolescent girls to lead change. They developed an advocacy paper highlighting the risks of child marriage and the importance of education, offering recommendations to decision-makers to support informed choices and awareness campaigns. Through workshops, advocacy sessions, and social media, girls amplified their voices, becoming active advocates and influencing policies while raising societal understanding of the challenges they face.



Strong engagement and participation of counsellors

School counsellors took a leading role in the school-level work as they contributed to needs assessments, tool development, and feedback collection from children and parents. When we conducted the pilot sessions in the schools, counselors highlighted the relevance of the content, the interactive facilitation, and the use of participatory learning principles. The counselors then implemented the sessions with students and parents who actively engaged with the sessions, participated in activities, expressed themselves, and shared experiences in a positive and collaborative atmosphere.



Real Time Learning in action

A major innovation was the integration of Real Time Evaluation (RTE) – a continuous feedback mechanism that enabled the team to reflect, adapt, and improve as the project unfolded. Having an RTE throughout the intervention, strengthened both responsiveness and accountability.



A model for the future

Looking ahead, there is significant potential for national replication and scale-up. From establishing protocols and referral systems to influencing national education databases, the pilot has already contributed to broader system strengthening. Collaboration with women-led organizations and the integration of real-time evaluation further reinforced its impact.

The project is not starting from scratch. We have solid, evidence-based outcomes