

Her Voice:

Insights into the Thoughts and Trends
Among Adolescent Girls Towards Child Marriage
and Gender-Based Violence



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WHEN THE WHITE DRESS TURNED INTO A NIGHTMARE

Driven by the desire to escape the clutches of poverty, 16-year-old Mona agreed to marry after her fiancé showered her with promises and assurances that her education would continue uninterrupted. In her mind, a beautiful future unfolded; a life in a European country where her fiancé resided, the completion of her university studies abroad, and the ability to support her family, who had struggled financially since her father's death years ago. These dreams, however, were shattered mere hours after she donned the white dress. Her groom's demeanor shifted dramatically, and he reneged on his promise to complete her education. Instead, he confined her to a tin room on the roof of his family home, leaving her behind as he departed for Europe.

Mona soon discovered the harsh reality behind the facade. Her partner was already married, had children, and had deceived her into believing he was single. Her role was merely to serve as a helper to his elderly parents. The idealized image she had constructed of him crumbled, revealing a stark contrast to the man she had thought she knew.

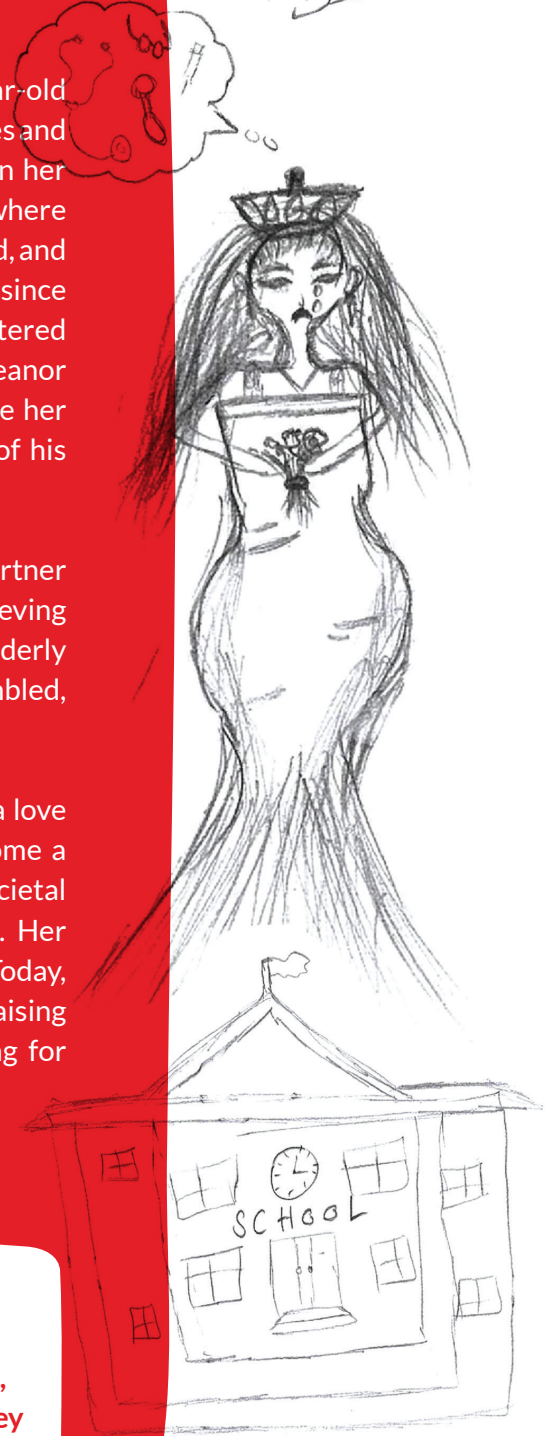
Despite this bitter ordeal, Mona, a spirited young woman with a love for life and knowledge, refused to succumb to despair or become a victim. With the unwavering support of her mother, she defied societal norms and obtained a divorce before reaching the age of 18. Her determination to pursue her education remained steadfast. Today, Mona is actively involved in community mobilization programs, raising awareness about the dangers of child marriage and advocating for girls' rights to education and protection from violence.

“

I want to be a voice for girls who get married at school age, Mona states, and I advocate for a condition that ensures they finish high school before marriage.

MUNA

“في احد الايام ستنازل
مجبوراً عن احلامي
حتى تعيش واقفك”



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This advocacy paper examines the issue of child marriage in Jordan. The paper is part of the Her Voice initiative, focusing on the perspectives and experiences of adolescent girls, offering and providing recommendations for decision-makers and policymakers. This paper adopts a participatory research methodology that ensures the participation of adolescent girls in all stages of research process, allowing their voices and experiences shape findings and recommendations. A total of 108 girls, aged 15 to 19, from five different regions in Jordan contributed to the development of this paper. The girls led the processes of data collection, analysis, and drafting recommendations, empowering them to influence issues that matter to them.

The paper aims to raise awareness of the risks associated with child marriage under 18 and its impact on education and girls' rights. It highlights the importance of empowering girls and strengthening their voices in society. The paper includes the personal experiences of girls like Mona. Married at the age of 16 with promises of continuing her education, Mona's dreams quickly faded after her wedding. Despite the challenges, Mona braved difficult circumstances, got a divorce and returned to her studies, and now works to educate the community and raise awareness about the dangers of child marriage.

The paper provides recommendations for decision-makers including:

1. Making education a top priority for girls.
2. Providing support programs that enhance girls' abilities to make informed decisions.
3. Launching awareness campaigns to raise awareness about the risks of child marriage, and its impact on society as a whole.

The advocacy paper seeks to create a positive impact on decision-makers by enhancing their understanding of the challenges facing girls in this context.



THE CONTEXT OF CHILD MARRIAGE AND DOMESTIC VIOLENCE IN JORDAN

The issue of marriage for those under the age of 18 is a fundamental one that requires special attention in Jordan, as these practices have a profound impact on the lives of girls. Many of them are deprived of their right to education, exposing them to long-term health and psychological risks. Marriage for those under 18, which is sometimes practiced as part of social traditions or due to economic pressures, is a global issue that affects various religions, countries, cultures, and ethnicities.

Although the legal age for marriage in Jordan is 18, the law allows several exceptions for individuals who are 16 but not yet 18, if the marriage is deemed to serve an interest and provide a benefit or prevent harm, with the assurance of obtaining consent and the freedom of choice. According to the Department of the Supreme Judge Department – the Sharia Court, the rate of marriage for those under the age of 18 was 13% of the total marriages in Jordan between 2010 and 2022 (Save the Children, 2022, UNICEF, 2021).

Early marriages significantly impede girls' opportunities to pursue education and attain economic self-sufficiency. Furthermore, those who enter into marriage at a young age are at an increased risk of facing complications during childbirth, resulting in elevated maternal mortality rates and adverse health outcomes for both mothers and their children. Additionally, these young brides are more vulnerable to experiencing domestic violence.

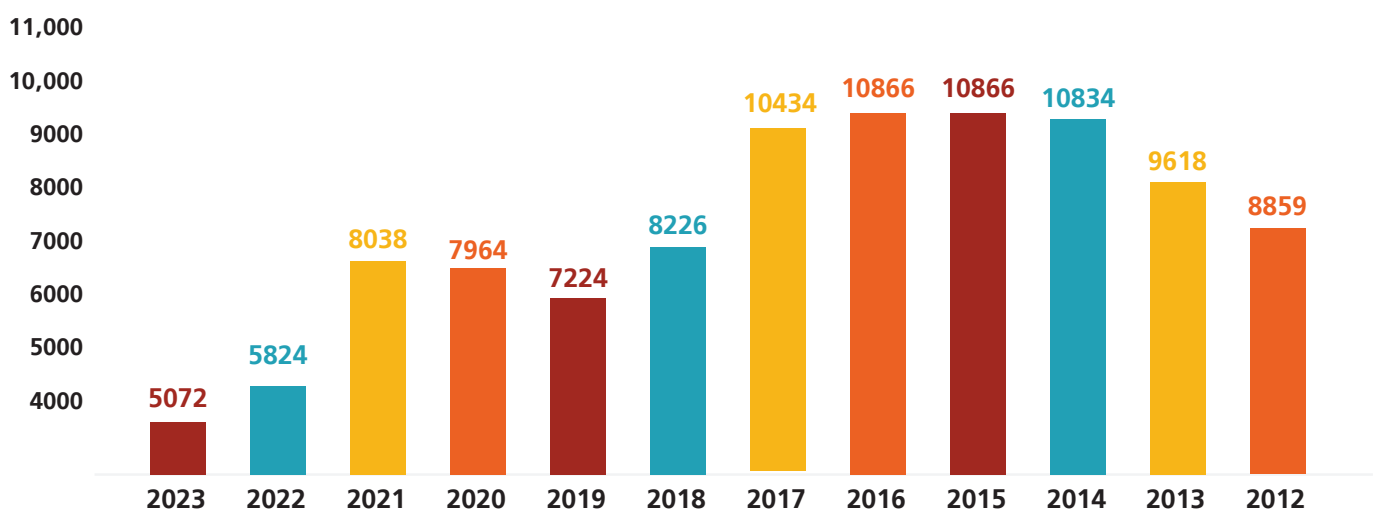
Domestic violence is a pervasive issue that disproportionately affects women and girls globally. In Jordan, a report by UN Women (2022) indicates that around 27% of Jordanian women

have encountered some form of domestic violence throughout their lives. Conversely, girls who marry at an early age confront unique challenges that can significantly affect their futures. They often need to enhance their decision-making skills and adjust to new responsibilities, while also requiring adequate support to access resources and information that can elevate their quality of life.

To effectively tackle the issue of marriage for individuals under 18 and child brides, a comprehensive strategy is necessary, encompassing advocacy, education, and legal reforms. The national initiative aimed at reducing child marriage in Jordan outlines essential objectives focused on raising awareness, addressing the cultural and economic factors that perpetuate this practice, and improving legal protections for girls. Education is recognized as one of the most powerful instruments for achieving these goals. Despite existing laws designed to safeguard girls, there is an urgent necessity to fortify these regulations and ensure their effective implementation, alongside intensifying community efforts to transform the customs that endorse such practices.

MARRIAGE STATISTICS FOR THOSE UNDER THE AGE OF 18 IN JORDAN

Number of marriages of girls under 18 years old between 2012 and 2023



Source: Statistics of the Supreme Judge Department - Sharia Court.

The average percentage of marriages for those under 18 over the past ten years has been around 13% of the total registered marriages, with fluctuations occurring irregularly on an annual basis. In recent years (2018-2023), there has been variation in both the percentages and the numbers, as shown in Table 1. The percentage was 11.6% in 2018, and then decreased by approximately 1% in 2019 to 10.7%. The percentage rose again in 2020, exceeding 1%,

reaching 11.8%. After that, the percentage began to decline once more, dropping by more than 1% each year, reaching 10.6% in 2021, 9.1% in 2022, and 8.5% in 2023. According to data from the Supreme Judge Department, the number of marriage contracts for individuals aged 16-18 decreased from 5,824 cases in 2022 to 5,072 cases in 2023, signifying an 8.5% reduction.

PAPER METHODOLOGY

This paper adopted a participatory research methodology, which promotes the participation of concerned individuals at all stages of research, to ensure that their voices and experiences directly reflect the findings and recommendations. This study is characterized by the leadership of the participating girls, who were not just respondents, but were active in gathering information, analyzing it, and writing recommendations, which enhances their impact on the issues that matter to them.

Stages of participatory research:

Initial planning (problem identification and prioritization):

A participatory activity was conducted with the girls to identify issues they would like to address, focusing on their personal experiences and advocacy through art (Artivism) to help girls express their problems, and the implications of the child marriage were prioritized based on their opinions.

Data and information collection (participation in research):

At this stage, the data was collected directly from the girls themselves, which enhances the accuracy of the information. Questions were asked about the issues identified in the first phase, and the girls used drawing and writing to express their opinions. This approach helped to gather rich information that comprehensively reflects the girls' perspectives and reflects the importance of their voices in directing the research.

Data analysis and identification of solutions (participation in analysis):

After collecting the information, the data extracted from the girls was analyzed, then a panel discussion with the girls was held to discuss the results and exchange ideas on possible solutions.

Writing the paper:

The girls led the process of drafting the final report, where the results were discussed together and formulated in a way that served predetermined advocacy goals. Participatory evaluation sessions were held with the girls to review the impact of the advocacy paper and make recommendations for improving efforts in future projects, reflecting the girls' commitment to actively participating in change.



108

Number of
participating girls



15-19 Years

Ages of participating girls



Amman, Karak,
Ramtha, Zaatari, and
the Northern Jordan
Valley

PARTICIPATING GIRLS:

This paper was developed with the participation of 108 girls, aged 15 to 19, from five diverse regions in Jordan: Amman, Karak, Ramtha, Zaatari, and the Northern Jordan Valley. These girls were selected through participatory activities conducted in Save the Children Jordan community centers and associations within the targeted areas. Participants were invited based on their expressed interest in issues related to child marriage.

The paper was co-authored by girls who have personal experiences with child marriage, as well as those who, while lacking direct experience, possess strong opinions and feelings on the subject. This diversity enriches the research by offering multiple perspectives on the complex issue of child marriage within Jordanian society.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY:

This paper aims to address the issue of child marriage by prioritizing the empowerment of girls and amplifying their voices. To achieve this objective, the paper focuses on three key areas:

Empowering girls and amplifying their voices:

This involves working to strengthen girls' ability to express their opinions and aspirations through leadership and advocacy training, which in turn will help them actively participate in decision-making processes related to their rights.

Raising awareness about the effects of child marriage:

This involves highlighting the effects of child marriages and violence against girls through advocacy papers and awareness campaigns to change societal attitudes and foster public understanding of these issues.

Providing practical recommendations to decision-makers:

This involves developing a comprehensive advocacy paper with well-considered recommendations aimed at developing effective policies and laws to limit child marriage and protect girls' rights, in addition to strengthening cooperation between government agencies and civil society to achieve this goal.

STUDY QUESTIONS

This study aims to answer the following questions:

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FIRST QUESTION:
How do perceptions of the community around you affect your ambitions?

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SECOND QUESTION:
What limits girls' participation in society?

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THIRD QUESTION:
How does child marriage impact girls' schooling?

An orange circle containing a white number 4.

FOURTH QUESTION:
What is the dream you aspire to achieve?

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FIFTH QUESTION:
What kind of support can help you achieve your dreams and ambitions?

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SIXTH QUESTION:
What obstacle do you face in achieving your dream or ambition?

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QUESTION SEVEN:
What ideas and solutions do you propose to improve educational opportunities for children?

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QUESTION EIGHT:
What do you think are the ideas and solutions to reduce the prevalence of child marriage?



1

FIRST QUESTION:

How do perceptions of the community around you affect your ambitions?

Girls see the societal perceptions imposed on them as having a significant impact on their life trajectory and perceptions of themselves. However, many girls noted that community awareness of these issues is gradually changing, as there is increasing support and recognition of the importance of girls' rights, opening up the way for improving their educational and professional opportunities.

The girls talked about the difficulties they face in making fateful decisions, such as completing their university education, or choosing a major, and pointed out that this goes beyond the limits of interaction with society to the extent of affecting girls' perception of themselves.



Although I missed out on some opportunities due to the challenges imposed upon me by my child marriage, I believe that every day is a new chance, and I'll keep going after my dreams, because I deserve to learn and grow, and I won't let anything get in my way.

Then, an 18-year-old girl from Ramtha maintains



Sometimes I feel like the world sees me only through my flaws, as if my appearance is all that matters to people; this actually undermines my self-confidence.

A 16-year-old girl from the northern Jordan Valley say

Regarding family interferences, girls pointed out that some families oblige their daughters to choose majors or life paths they do not want, which affects their enthusiasm to achieve their ambitions. However, they appreciated what they described as the gradual change in some families towards respecting their choices.

Although there are significant challenges such as the issue of child marriage, which deprives girls of their basic rights such as education, some girls have continued to pursue their dreams despite all circumstances.

A 19-year-old girl from Ramtha says:



Sometimes I feel like my marriage was a nightmare. I lost my right to be a child, but despite everything, I still try to complete my education and achieve my dream, because hope is the only thing I don't want to lose.

The girls also discussed economic challenges and child labour, noting that it limits their opportunities for education and negatively affects their futures.

The assignment of societal roles also plays a significant part, with girls often tasked with household chores and domestic duties, while boys are obliged to do other tasks, exposing both to different pressures and reducing their educational opportunities.

An 18-year-old girl from the northern Jordan Valley says:



I see many children in my village working instead of going to school, which exposes them to exploitation. It saddens me.

Despite these challenges, the girls expressed hope and desire to make a positive change.

An 18-year-old girl from Karak says:



I am determined to change my lifestyle; I will work hard to fulfill my dreams; no one can stop me.

The girls also pointed to the importance of adapting to modern social changes, as they recognize that some customs and traditions may not suit the current circumstances, and that they seek to promote community awareness about their rights and participate in community awareness activities to achieve this.

A 16-year-old girl from Amman states:



I feel that society is beginning to understand the importance of girls' education and their role, and this gives me hope to achieve my ambitions in the future.

Then, a 17-year-old girl from Zaatari says:



Despite all the difficulties, I find someone who supports and encourages me to move forward in education, and this pushes me to be stronger.

SECOND QUESTION:

What limits girls' participation in society?

2

While answering this question, the girls' discussions focused on many issues that hinder their full involvement in community activities and achieving an active role in their surroundings. Drawing on their personal and community experiences, the participating girls highlighted several factors limiting their participation.

Deprivation of education is one of the most prominent factors at all, as they pointed out that, it constitutes a basis that restricts their ability to integrate into society and develop their skills. Despite this deprivation, many girls express their passion for learning and their determination to improve their situation, reflecting their strong will.

“

I am determined to change my lifestyle, and I will work hard to achieve my dreams, no one can stop me.

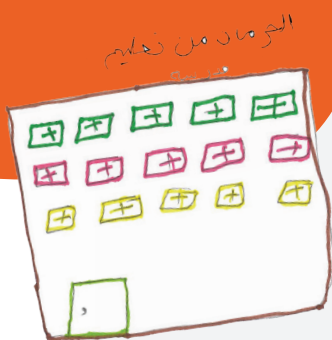
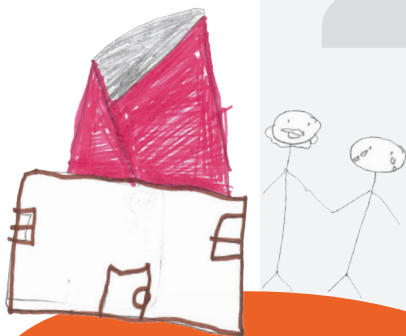
Girl from Zaatari, 17 years old.

“

I want to learn, because education is the only way for me to become an important person in my community.

says a 16-year-old girl from Karak.

Other girls also pointed to the importance of education to boost their self-confidence and develop their skills to interact with society.



Besides education, girls reported that preventing them from going to school or discriminating between them and boys directly hinders their participation in society. This discrimination often leads to male preference in community activities and educational opportunities, leaving girls in the background, unable to express themselves or participate effectively.

A 17-year-old girl from Amman expressed her dismay at this reality:

“

I have to choose a major that I don't want, just because my parents decided to do so. I feel like my dreams are no longer my own.

Domestic violence is an additional barrier for girls, affecting their psychological state and limiting their self-confidence, making them less able to interact with society. However, many girls show inner strength and a willingness to overcome this challenge by supporting each other and building support networks.



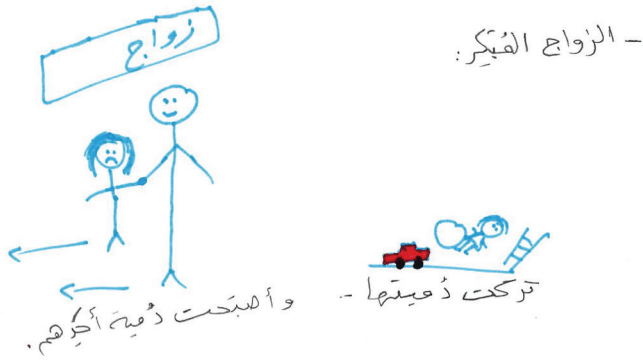
The girls also discussed the relationship between domestic violence and bullying in schools, noting that children who experience violence in their homes become more vulnerable to bullying and can become bullies.

“

When a girl experiences domestic violence, it can affect her self-confidence and make her more vulnerable to bullying at school. says a 16-year-old girl from Amman.



Child marriage is one of the biggest of the obstacles that girls agree is one of the main factors hindering their community participation, as this marriage puts them under pressure and responsibilities greater than their age. However, some girls seek to raise awareness of the dangers of child marriage, reflecting their desire to change their reality.



Poverty also affects the ability of some families to support their daughters' education or provide them with opportunities to engage in society, as girls in Zaatari and the northern Jordan Valley agreed upon.

An 18-year-old girl from the northern Jordan Valley spoke about this situation:

“

Our financial conditions are difficult, which is why I have not been able to continue my education.

Moreover, the lack of family support is an important factor in determining girls' opportunities, as the family's discouragement of them pursuing education or participating in community activities may limit their capabilities. Societal legacies also constrain their movement, forcing them into traditional roles that limit their ambitions.

An 18-year-old girl from the northern Jordan Valley talks about this challenge:

“

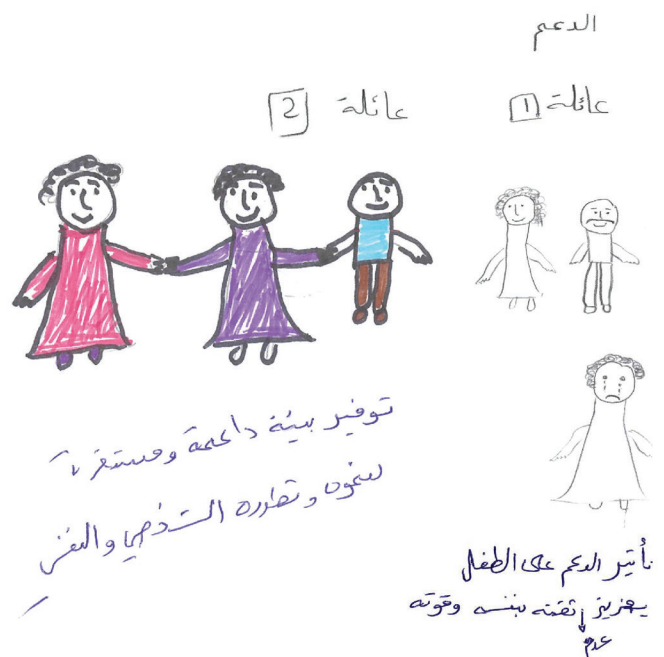
I want to be a teacher, but my family thinks this job is not the one for girls.

Finally, girls agreed on the lack of societal awareness of their rights as one of the main factors constraining their community participation, but they also expressed enthusiasm to participate in awareness campaigns aimed at promoting awareness of the role of women.

An 18-year-old girl from the northern Jordan Valley says:

“

I believe that learning and working hard will enable me to change my life and shape my future.





THIRD QUESTION:

How does child marriage impact girls' schooling?

When addressing the issue of child marriage and its impact on girls' educational opportunities, it becomes evident that there are significant negative effects that directly affect their educational path. Education often becomes the first victim of such phenomenon. The opinions expressed by the participating girls revealed the extent to which this phenomenon affects their educational future.

One prominent issue which girls from Karak and the northern Jordan Valley agreed on was the denial of education rights to girls, noting that marriage deprives them of the opportunity to pursue education and acquire the skills necessary for self-reliance. After marriage, girls have multiple domestic responsibilities that prevent them from continuing their studies.

An 18-year-old girl from Karak expresses this reality:



Child marriage has made many girls in my village drop out of school; there are always burdens that prevent us from continuing education.

“
 Although some opportunities are not available due to the circumstances that forced her to marry early, she believes that every new day has a new opportunity. I will continue to achieve my goals, Orange I deserve a chance to learn and grow, so I will not allow any obstacle to prevent me from doing so.
 Girl from Ramtha, 18 years old.



In the northern Jordan Valley, girls say that family responsibilities resulting from child marriage, as well as pregnancy, increase the educational challenges they face. Pregnancy imposes physical and emotional stress that hinders girls' ability to concentrate in school, leading to a decline in academic performance or even dropping out of school altogether.

One girl in the Northern Jordan Valley, despite the challenges, expresses her hope:

“

I believe that education can help me fulfill my dreams, and I will work hard to finish my studies.



8 للزواج المبكر

Girls also noted that child marriage often leads to feelings of isolation from their friends, thus negatively affecting their mental and emotional health. This feeling of isolation is another barrier to their personal and social development.

A 15-year-old girl from the Northern Jordan Valley says:

“

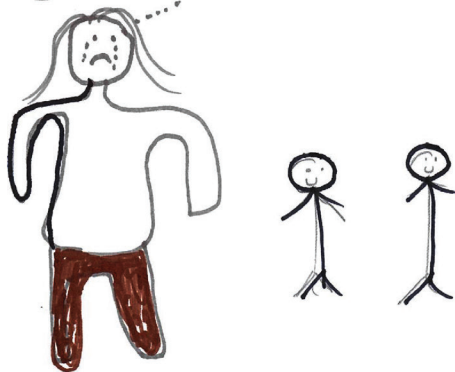
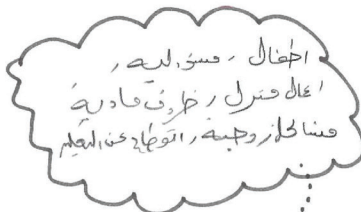
I can't see my friends anymore, and it hurts. Feeling isolated makes me miss school days.

She added:

“

I wish I could go back to school one day and meet my friends again.

Moreover, child marriage is closely linked to domestic violence, which negatively affects the mental and physical health of girls and makes it difficult for them to complete their education.



A 19-year-old girl from the Northern Jordan Valley says:

“

Domestic violence isn't just physical; it also affects our minds and ambitions. We have to talk about it.

She also expresses desire for change:

“

I want to be a voice for other girls who face the same challenges.

FOURTH QUESTION:

What is the dream you aspire to achieve?



4

The girls who participated in the training expressed their lofty aspirations and unwavering hope for the realization of their dreams.

Another dream expressed by a 16-year-old girl from Amman, is to memorize the Holy Quran, which she sees as an inspiration to herself and others.

A 19-year-old girl from Amman hopes to become a judge to advocate for children and girls:

“

I've been passionate about this field since I was a child, and I hope to improve healthcare in my community.

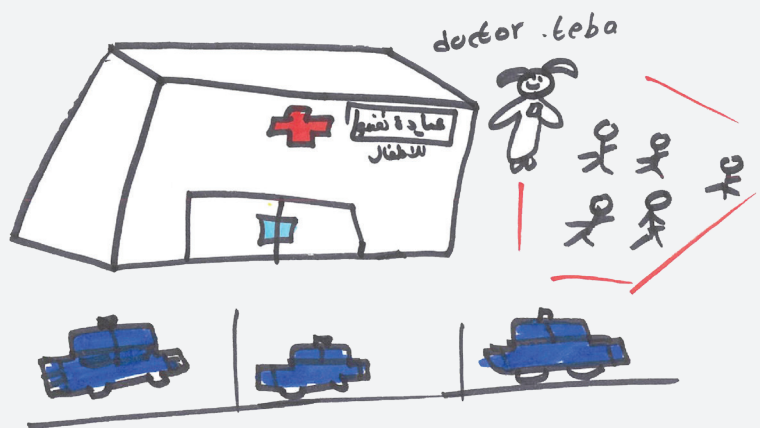
A 19-year-old girl from Ramtha

I want to contribute to creating job opportunities for other girls, as this will promote my economic empowerment and helps empower girls in my community.

18-year-old girl from Amman

“

I want to be a voice for the vulnerable and help bring justice to them, because I believe that every child and girl deserves to have their rights protected and their future secured.



When it comes to technology, A 17-year-old girl from Amman expressed interest in pursuing a career in artificial intelligence, saying:

“

I want to be part of keeping pace with technological developments, because it is a field that is developing rapidly and reflects the future.



An 18-year-old girl from Amman aspires to become a teacher:

“

I dream of contributing to the education of future generations, because education is the foundation that builds societies.



A 19-year-old girl from Amman, aspiring to study media, expressed her determination to prove girls can succeed and excel in this field.

“

I want to be a voice that reflects girls' experiences and helps change the perception towards them.

Then, A 19-year-old girl from Amman highlights her dream of becoming a policewoman, noting:

“

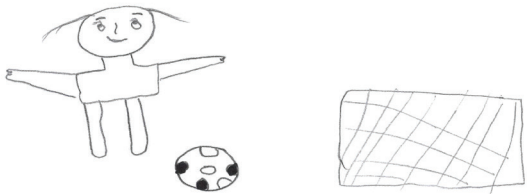
I want to contribute to protecting my country, and to prove to my family and myself that I can succeed in this field, which should not be limited to males.



On the other hand, a 17-year-old girl from Amman expresses her dream of being an outstanding footballer:

“

I aspire to succeed in this field and show that girls can excel in it.



An 18-year-old girl from Amman expresses her desire to become an architect, hoping to contribute to building a better future for her city:

“

I want to be part of the positive change that reflects the aspirations of my community.



An 18-year-old girl from Amman talks about her ambition to be a doctor:

“

I dream of helping patients in my community and making healthcare better.



A 17-year-old girl from Amman expresses her passion for the arts:

“

I want to be an artist or a graphic designer, where I use my skills to express issues that matter to me and my community.

An 18-year-old girl from Amman is also seeking to be an entrepreneur, saying:

“

I aspire to start a project that will help support women and girls in my community, because this will contribute to their empowerment.

As for protecting the environment, a 16-year-old girl from Zaatari expresses her dream of working in this field:

“

I want to contribute to preserving our planet for future generations, as this is our duty.

A 17-year-old girl from Amman wishes to become a programmer, noting:

“

I dream of developing innovative technological solutions that serve the community and help improve their quality of life.

Another big dream is expressed by a 16-year-old girl from the Northern Jordan Valley in the field of human rights:

“

I want to defend the rights of women and girls and make a positive change in my community.

An 18-year-old girl from Amman aspires to pursue her dream of becoming a pilot:

“

I dream of flying in the sky and seeing the world from above and proving that girls are capable of reaching new horizons in fields that I always thought were for men.

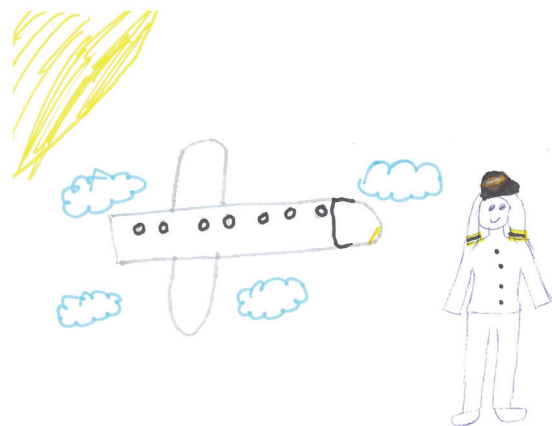


Finally, an 18-year-old girl from Zaatari aspires to be an aerospace scientist:

“

I want to explore stars and galaxies, because that represents the limits of human potential to me.

In conclusion, through these dreams, the girls show great ambitions and desire to make a positive change in their communities, emphasizing their effective and important role in building a bright future.



FIFTH QUESTION:

What is the dream you aspire to achieve?



“

I hope to be a role model for other girls in society.

A 16-year-old girl from Amman

The girls highlighted the need for community and youth centers as beacons for skill development and enhancement, in Karak. For example, girls talked about benefiting from community programs that provide the necessary support to develop their skills.

A 15-year-old girl from Karak recounts her experience:

“

If there were youth support centers that helped us develop our skills, we would be better prepared to face the challenges.

This reflects the urgent need to provide safe spaces and empowerment centers that help girls enhance their skills and prepare for the difficulties they face in life.



In the northern Jordan Valley, the dream goes beyond mere education to the need for tangible financial support. The poverty barrier is one of the biggest challenges facing girls and can hinder their continued education. To overcome this, girls believe that providing scholarships or financial support can ease the financial burden associated with education.

An 18-year-old girl from the northern Jordan Valley says:



A lot of girls can't afford to pay school fees. If we get financial support, we will be able to continue education.

A 19-year-old girl looks forward to government initiatives that offer scholarships for girls, stressing that such opportunities could be key to achieving their dreams. In this context, the importance of scholarships is highlighted as an invaluable opportunity for girls who face economic challenges that hinder the realization of their ambitions.

On the other hand, family support plays a pivotal role in determining how well girls are able to achieve their ambitions.

An 18-year-old girl from Amman sees family support as the basis on which she relies in pursuing her studies:



If my family supports my choices, I will be able to continue my studies and fulfill my dreams.

This quote highlights the importance of the family environment in motivating and supporting girls to overcome challenges and achieve success.

Besides education and family support, girls in Ramtha find practical training and job opportunities particularly important.

A 17-year-old girl expresses her interest in internship opportunities that help her earn money and gain professional experience, this reflects the impact of practical experience in empowering girls not only to achieve financial independence, but also to build a strong career.

SIXTH QUESTION:

6 What obstacle do you face in achieving your dream or ambition?

Girls face many obstacles in pursuing their ambitions and dreams, as the surrounding environment plays a big role in shaping such challenges. Many girls maintain that there is not enough support from family and community. This can lead them to make unwanted decisions.

For example, a 16-year-old girl from Ramtha points out that:

“

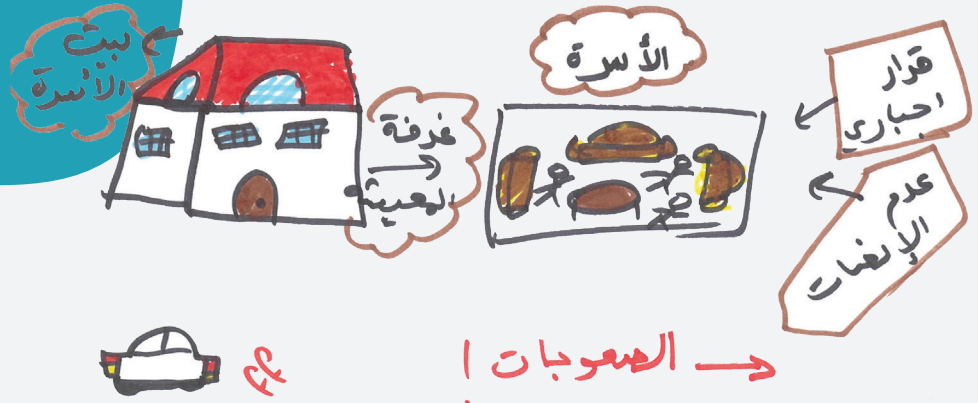
With every challenge I face, I see a new opportunity to achieve my goals.

A 17-year-old girl from Karak

“

I have a lot of responsibilities at home that prevent me from focusing on my education or self-development.

a quote that reflects how expected domestic roles can push girls to curtail their educational ambitions.



Moreover, some customs play a prominent role in restricting girls' choices; *a 17-year-old girl from Karak adds:*



The customs and traditions in my society limit my ability to make decisions about my future, as if the girl must commit to certain roles such as marriage and taking care of home duties.

These challenges are exacerbated by the financial situation of families.

A 19-year-old girl from the northern Jordan Valley points out.



My family's financial situation is the biggest obstacle for me, as I cannot complete my education due to the lack of financial support, even though I excel academically.

In addition, some girls are subjected to social pressure to get married before they turn 18.

A 16-year-old girl from Amman says:



There is a lot of pressure from my parents to marry at an early age, even though I aspire to study and succeed in my chosen field.

this quote shows how social expectations greatly influence girls' decisions and future directions, which can hinder their educational dreams and force them to abandon them.

QUESTION SEVEN:

7

What ideas and solutions do you propose to improve educational opportunities for children?

From a girls' point of view, the learning environment is key to enhancing girls' opportunities for education.

A 17-year-old girl from Ramtha says:

“

If schools in rural areas improve, we will be able to continue our education without hindrance.

Another girl adds,

“

Every opportunity to learn is a step towards achieving our dreams.

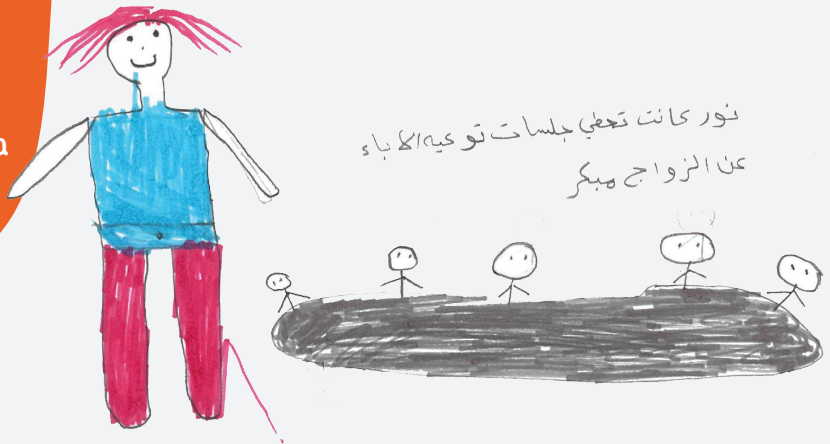
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I believe that education should be compulsory for up to 18 years, not only to finish school, but to be able to face life and find better opportunities.

18-year-old girl from Ramtha

Providing transportation to schools in remote areas will assist children who are unable to access education. Education is a fundamental right for every child, and distance should not be a barrier.

17-year-old girl from Zaatari



Increasing the number of schools in remote areas also makes it easier for children to access education nearby.

A 16-year-old girl from the northern Jordan Valley says:

“

If there were schools nearby, we would be able to go easily and learn, education is everyone’s right.

The girls also stress the importance of providing additional support to students who face academic difficulties.

“

If we get help with difficult subjects, we will be able to improve our academic achievement.

18-year-old girl from the northern Jordan Valley

Expanding the use of technology in education can enhance children's interaction with school subjects, making learning more engaging, and providing them with opportunities to access new learning resources.

Providing free transportation to students living away from school has also emerged as a priority that girls believe is necessary to motivate them to enroll in education.

“

The commute to school is long, and if there is safe transportation, I will go to school every day without hesitation.

says one girl,

“

If we had free and safe transportation, we would be able to go to school regularly without obstacles.

15-year-old girl from Karak



توفير نقل الطلاب لتسهيل الوصول
إلى المدارس

Supporting children with disabilities and providing them with appropriate education is one of the key aspects that girls emphasized.

A 17-year-old girl from Ramtha says:

“

Every child deserves an equal opportunity to learn.

As part of the proposals to raise awareness of the importance of education for girls, the girls highlighted the importance of organizing awareness sessions for parents, especially on the role of education in empowering girls.

A 16-year-old girl from the Northern Jordan Valley says:

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Awareness sessions should be organized for parents to understand that girls' education is more important than any work or responsibilities.

The girls also stressed the need to pass a law that forces education until the age of 18.

An 18-year-old girl from Ramtha explained:

“

Education must be compulsory until 18 years, not only to finish school, but to be able to face life.

In addition, the girls suggested placing flyers in public places to highlight the importance of education for children, saying that this step may be the beginning of change.



QUESTION EIGHT:

8

What do you think are the ideas and solutions to reduce the prevalence of child marriage?

When discussing solutions to reduce cases of child marriage, the girls suggested a variety of ideas that could effectively contribute to addressing the issue.

At the outset, it is important to understand the negative effects of this phenomenon, including its impact on girls' education and mental health. Thus, addressing this issue requires taking effective steps. The girls stressed that education is a strong empowerment tool that can allow them to achieve their dreams and change their reality.

As a 16-year-old girl participating in the advocacy sessions in Ramtha says:

“

آمل أن أكون مثلاً يحتذى به
للفتيات الأخريات في المجتمع.
فتاة من عمان، 16 عاماً.

«بكل تحدٍ أواجهه، أرى فرصة
جديدة لتحقيق أهدافي.
فتاة من الكرك، 17 عاماً.

“

Despite the difficulties I face, I hold on to my hope of returning to school and completing my education to regain my social life.



The girls concur that legislation mandating education until the age of 18 should be implemented, as education is fundamental to shaping a promising future.

A 16-year-old girl from Karak says,

“

If we get the opportunity to go to school until the age of 18, then we can build our lives ourselves instead of being forced to marry at a young age.

Among the proposed solutions, awareness campaigns for parents and children are essential, highlighting the negative effects of child marriage and the importance of education.

A 15-year-old girl from Ramtha states,

“

We must launch awareness campaigns targeting parents, highlighting the detrimental impact of such marriage on their daughters and promoting the value of education.

Organizing awareness sessions for decision-makers and parents is an important step to raise awareness of the risks associated with the child marriage. A girl from the Northern Jordan Valley puts it:

“

If we conduct awareness sessions for parents, we will make them understand the real dangers.

The girls agreed on the importance of using social media as a powerful platform to spread awareness, through messages targeting the community and decision-makers:

“

Social media can be a powerful way to deliver our messages about child marriage, and we can reach out to more people.

16-year-old girl from Amman confirms.

The girls proposed providing support programs for those whose education was interrupted by child marriage. These programs, they suggested, should offer both psychological and financial assistance to help these girls return to their studies.

A 17-year-old from Karak emphasized this point, stating,

“

There should be programs that support girls who left school because of marriage, so that they can return to complete their education.

The girls also agreed on the importance of societal mobilization to reduce child marriage. They believed that providing job opportunities for parents could significantly contribute to this goal, leading to greater family stability and meeting their needs.

An 18-year-old from the Northern Jordan Valley underscored this idea, stating,

“

Creating employment opportunities for parents can mitigate the incidents of child marriage.

The girls recognized the need for collective action involving the government, civil society organizations, and families to achieve positive results in addressing this issue.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings presented in this advocacy paper, the girls agreed on the following recommendations:

- Law enforcement to eliminate child marriage, and providing legal and societal mechanisms to protect girls and promote their rights, including education and participation.
- Enact a law mandating education until the age of 18 to ensure that girls complete their schooling, even if married. This includes implementing mechanisms to protect girls' right to education, such as providing legal support to facilitate their return to school.
- Adopting laws that prohibit all forms of gender-based violence, including domestic violence, ensuring effective implementation and providing gender sensitive reporting mechanisms.
- Provide inclusive and free educational programs that encourage girls to continue their studies and provide safe learning environments.
- Develop community awareness campaigns, including social media, workshops, and seminars to enhance understanding about girls' rights and the importance of education.
- Establish specialized psychosocial support centers that provide counseling services and practical support to girls to help them recover and build a better future.
- Build platforms that allow girls to participate in decision-making, giving them the opportunity to express their opinions and influence policies that matter to them.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- "Implement educational programs designed to promote gender equality, dispel negative cultural stereotypes, and provide teacher training on gender-related topics."
- Establish vocational training programs specifically designed for girls to equip them with the necessary skills to join the workforce and attain financial independence.
- Collaborate with civil society organizations to develop educational programs and workshops that address girls' issues, enhancing society's role in driving change.
- Support the development of clear legislation that safeguards girls' rights, shields them from harmful practices, and promotes awareness of these rights within local communities.
- Encourage the media to highlight the success stories of girls who have completed their education and overcome challenges.
- Develop mentorship programs connecting girls with role models from diverse fields to inspire them to achieve their goals.
- Enhance school environments to create safer and supportive spaces for girls, while providing training for teachers to address gender-related issues.

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