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Child Marriage Amongst Syrian Refugees: A Rational Response?

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Abstract

This paper provides a comparative analysis of regional and country level Refugee Response Plans for Syrian refugees in Lebanon, Jordan and Turkey between 2015-2018 to analyse the extent to which they address the key drivers of the increase in child marriage amongst refugee girls.

Recent studies have challenged the dominant policy discourse on preventing child marriage in humanitarian and displacement settings by encouraging a shift away from norms-based approaches and advocating instead for a needs-driven approach that addresses the structural drivers of child marriage in emergency settings (Mourtada, Schlecht, and Dejong 2017). By applying a behavioural perspective to existing literature on child marriage amongst Syrian refugees, this dissertation highlights that, whilst customs and social norms do influence decisions regarding child marriage, the increase in child marriage rates can also be understood as a type of rational response or coping mechanism against the economic, safety and educational challenges faced by displaced families.

Through analysis of how regional and country Refugee Response Plans have addressed the main displacement-related drivers of child marriage, this dissertation shows that a shift in understanding and framings of child marriage from a “harmful traditional practice” to a “negative coping mechanism” has been concomitant with a strengthening of the extent to which policies address the structural drivers. Nonetheless, due to the persistence of implementation barriers at the national level and the relative absence of normative approaches, this dissertation suggests that strategies may fall short of inciting behavioural changes amongst refugees and advocates for a greater focus on creating and raising awareness of accessible alternative economic, protection and educational options to reduce reliance on child marriage.

Key Words: Refugee, Child Marriage, Syrian, Lebanon, Jordan, Turkey, Refugee Response Plan.

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List of Abbreviations

3RP	Regional Response and Resilience Plans (Regional Strategic Overview)
AFAD	The Turkish Disaster and Emergency Management Authority
GOL	Government of Lebanon
ILO	International Labour Organisation
IRC	International Rescue Committee
JRP	Jordan Response Plan
LCRP	Lebanon Crisis Response Plan
NGO	Nongovernmental Organisation
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
SGBV	Sexual and Gender Based Violence
UN	United Nations
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UNHCR	United Nations High Commission for Refugees

1. INTRODUCTION

Despite existing evidence that child marriage increases in a variety of humanitarian and conflict settings and greater awareness of the drivers of this increase, the response to the Syrian refugee crisis has failed to prevent an alarming rise in child marriage amongst refugees displaced in Lebanon, Jordan and Turkey. Dominant policy thinking on child marriage prevention is driven by the belief that “preventing child marriage requires a rights-based approach to changing social and cultural norms, empowering women and girls...raising awareness of the causes and consequences of child marriage” (United Nations 2017). However, within the context of displacement, evidence demonstrates that child marriage is often used as a negative coping mechanism. Existing evaluations of child marriage intervention programmes for Syrian refugees have focussed on NGO programmes and concluded that the majority “appear to focus on raising awareness and trying to address traditions as the main driver of child marriage, without taking into account other drivers of child marriage, or its negative consequences, particularly in the context of conflict and displacement” (Mourtada, Schlecht, and Dejong 2017). In light of an increasing focus on child marriage in regional and country response plans, this dissertation analyses and compares regional and country response plans from Lebanon, Jordan and Turkey between 2015-2018 to understand the extent to which they address the displacement-related drivers of child marriage.

1.1 The increase in child marriage amongst Syrian refugees

Whilst child marriage¹ was fairly prevalent in Syrian society before the conflict that began in 2011, there has been a substantive increase in child marriage, particularly amongst Syrian refugee girls displaced by the crisis.² Before the conflict, 13% of Syrian women aged 20 to 25 were married before 18 (Spencer 2015). This percentage had halved since 1990 (Spencer 2015). However, since the beginning of the war, figures have spiked significantly, particularly amongst those externally displaced.

In Lebanon, the percentage of displaced Syrian women married before the age of 18 now stands at 41% (Girls Not Brides 2017). In Jordan, the rates of registered child marriages involving Syrians rose from 12% in 2011 to 36% in 2018 (Girls Not Brides 2017). Data on the percentage of child marriages amongst Syrian refugees in Turkey is limited due to difficulties regarding registration of marriages and the fact that many are carried out in clandestine religious ceremonies (Weiner 2017). According to government figures, nearly 15% of refugee girls between 15 and 17 are married (Spencer 2015). A study carried out

¹ “Formal marriage or informal union before the age of 18”, United Nations Children's Fund (2015). *Child Protection from Violence, Exploitation and Abuse*.

² Whilst boys are also effected by child marriage, this dissertation chooses to focus on girls given the much higher number of cases and the differences in the drivers across genders.

by CARE International also found that the average age of marriage for Syrian refugee girls in Turkey is between 13 and 20 years (Spencer 2015).

1.2 Consequences of Child Marriage

Child marriage is considered a human rights violation and a form of gender-based violence.³ A legal obligation to prevent forced and child marriage is placed on states in the 1956 Supplementary Convention on the Abolition of Slavery, The Slave Trade and Institutions and Practices Similar to Slavery and 1979 Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women. Child marriage also undermines many rights outlined in the convention of the Rights of the Child (United Nations 1989). “Child marriage thus serves to perpetuate and reinforce gender inequality across a broad spectrum of a girl’s rights” (The Save the Children Fund 2014).

The consequences of child marriage can be hugely detrimental to both those married young and to the achievement of many development objectives (Greene 2014). Studies have highlighted that early marriage limits girls’ educational and economic opportunities, and in countries where the practice is prevalent, has consequent impacts on human capital and (Greene 2014). A 2017 World Bank study predicted that child marriage could cost the world trillions of dollars by 2030 (World Bank 2017). Child marriage also exposes girls to an increased risk of domestic violence and maternal health complications (Bartels and Hamill 2014). The biggest cause of death for girls aged 15 to 19 are pregnancy and childbirth related (World Health Organisation 2016). The importance of tackling this issue has been underlined by target 5.3 of the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda, to “eliminate all harmful practices, such as child, early and forced marriage and female genital mutilation” (United Nations 2015).

Within emergency settings, The International Federation of the Red Cross and The Red Crescent lists early and forced marriage as one of the greatest risks faced by children (Societies 2016). Evidence that child marriage increases significantly in humanitarian and conflict situations, as well as amongst displaced populations, has been widely documented (Girls Not Brides 2011; Save the Children Fund 2014; CARE International 2015). Such an increase within humanitarian and conflict settings thus severely threatens adherence to the aforementioned frameworks, the successful realisation of target 5.3 of the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda and of many other developmental goals, including reducing maternal mortality, achieving universal education and increasing women’s access to labour markets (United Nations 2015).

1.3 Research Question and Goals

³ The rights of individuals not be subjected to forced and child marriage are inscribed in the 1948 Declaration of Human Rights. <https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/Changing-Norms-of-Child-Marriage-in-Conflict.pdf>

The majority of literature addressing child marriage amongst Syrian refugees focuses on explaining the drivers or NGO-led responses, with a surprising lack of analysis of regional and country responses to the drivers. As the refugee crisis becomes increasingly protracted, it is vital that strategies concentrate on tackling the root causes of child marriage in order to protect the rights of vulnerable young girls and prevent a generation from missing out on educational and economic opportunities. Alongside the aforementioned consequences, in Lebanon, Jordan and Turkey, Syrian girl brides face greater vulnerabilities due to the often temporary, polygamous and/or unregistered nature of these marriages (AFAD 2014; UNHCR 2016). This also increases the risk that offspring of such marriages will be stateless, consequently passing vulnerabilities down the generation (AFAD 2014; UNHCR 2016). Reports show that child marriage is a major barrier to education for Syrian refugee girls, thus compromising their potential to participate in economic and social life (The Save the Children Fund 2014). Across all three countries, hospitals and health clinics have reported alarming increases in pregnancies amongst Syrian girls below the age of 18 (The Save the Children Fund 2014).

Girls Not Brides argue that, despite awareness that child marriage increases in humanitarian crises, “programmes that provide social protection, alternative opportunities, and services for girls at risk of child marriage ... are often absent” (Girls Not Brides 2013). Mourtada et. al advocate for a shift from norms-based approaches to needs-based approaches to tackling child marriage in emergency settings whilst CARE International highlight that the complex factors that contribute to increases in child marriage in emergencies must be addressed as part of the whole refugee responses, and not only in SGBV and child protection strategies (Spencer 2015; Mourtada, Schlecht, and Dejong 2017). The aim of this dissertation is therefore to assess the extent to which regional and country response plans have addressed the specific displacement-related drivers of child marriage among Syrian refugees between 2015-2018.

The dissertation proceeds in three main parts. In Section 2, I review existing literature to identify the main factors driving increases in the rate of child marriage among Syrian refugees in Lebanon, Jordan and Turkey. This provides a set of criteria against which to assess regional and country response plans. In Section 3, I set out my methodology, explaining which policies I will analyse, and how I will assess the extent to which those policies meet the criteria derived from the literature review, specifying a set of indicators for “good” policy. In Section 4, I analyse regional and country response plans against these indicators to provide an evaluation of the extent to which they have addressed the drivers of child marriage, before closing with some concluding remarks.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

To provide a framework for the subsequent analysis and assessment of existing policies, this section draws on existing literature, including studies based on rapid-review assessments, interviews and focus groups with Syrian refugees, to identify the main drivers of child marriage in Lebanon, Jordan and Turkey.

2.1 Explaining Child Marriage: A Theoretical Framework

Bicchieri and Lindemans provide a theoretical framework through which to understand the causal factors of child marriage and to evaluate measures to prevent it (Bicchieri and Lindemans 2014). By applying a behavioural economics approach, they challenge conventional policy approaches which conceptualise child marriage as a custom or social norm by arguing that it is crucial to understand what drives families to take this decision in specific contexts (Bicchieri and Lindemans 2014). The authors follow behavioural economic models which explain individuals' behaviour as determined by a combination of families' *preferences*, available *options* and the *perceptions* they have about these options (Bicchieri and Lindemans 2014). For example, even though families are aware of the harms caused by child marriage, since they *perceive* alternative protection *options* as limited, they adopt a *preference* for child marriage (Bicchieri and Lindemans 2014). The authors differentiate between different conceptualisations of child marriage, in particular, between customary practices (families marry their daughters young because it's a tradition which no one questions); a rational response (families marry their daughters young because girls are a financial burden); and moral and social normative beliefs (families believe girls should marry young because girls should be chaste and because others in their community also believe so (Bicchieri and Lindemans 2014).

2.2 Understanding Child Marriage amongst Syrian refugees in Lebanon, Jordan and Turkey

The drivers of child marriage vary greatly across different conflict and displacement contexts and thus, "it is critical to understand a particular crisis context and tailor solutions accordingly" (Girls Not Brides 2017). Using the conceptual framework outlined above, the following section will analyse the key drivers of child marriage amongst Syrian refugees identified in existing studies carried out in Lebanon, Jordan and Turkey in order to understand how policies can most effectively address them.

a) *Customary Practice*

In analysing child marriage amongst Syrian refugees, some literature and policy documents have framed the practice as a custom of Syrian society (GOL 2015; UNICEF 2017). Whilst it is important to recognise that child marriage took place amongst Syrians before the conflict and consequent refugee crisis, the dramatic increase amongst those displaced in Lebanon, Jordan and Turkey suggests the presence of additional drivers within the context of displacement. Several humanitarian agencies and NGOs have carried out studies to explore the causes of this increase, the majority of which are consistent

with the recognition that, whilst the practice is not unique to displacement, “what is new are the conflict related drivers contributing to girls marrying at an increasingly younger age” (Schlecht 2016).

Further evidence that child marriage has transcended from an unquestioned customary practice is that many studies found that families demonstrated a strong preference against child marriage, given the choice, and a high level of awareness of the harms it can cause, including the health risks associated with early pregnancy, psychological impacts on young brides and disruption of education (Mourtada, Schlecht, and DeJong 2017). In Jordan, “women who had, themselves, been married before the age of 18 overwhelmingly saw the practice as having had a negative impact on their lives ... [and] stated that they did not want their own daughters to have the same experience” (UNICEF 2014). In a UN study in Jordan, only 20.1% of male respondents and 26.8% of female respondents agreed with the statement “Marriage of children is preferable in any circumstances, regardless of displacement” (UN Women 2013). In Lebanon, focus groups, showed that parents viewed early marriage as undesirable and that the traditions associated with marriage had changed from representing hope and a home in Syria to signifying a means of protection in Lebanon (DeJong et al. 2017). In a study by the IRC, families expressed that if other options were available, early or forced marriage may not take place as early or at all indicating that, in the context of displacement, child marriage has transformed from a customary practice as families’ decisions are driven by additional displacement-related drivers which override awareness of the negative impacts (International Rescue Committee 2014). The implication for policy is that programmes which frame child marriage as a custom and focus solely on raising awareness of the dangers may be limited in effect unless accompanied by additional action to address displacement-related drivers. This is the first criterion against which policies will be assessed.

b) *Moral and Social Normative Beliefs*

Moral and social normative beliefs surrounding the protection of girls’ reputation and honour, or *al sutra*⁴, and by extension that of her family, are frequently cited as one of the reasons driving families’ to marry their daughters earlier (Save The Children Fund 2014; DeJong et al. 2017; Mourtada, Schlecht, and DeJong 2017). Whilst the concept of *al sutra* has traditionally been an important element of Syrian social norms, research in Lebanon, Jordan and Turkey concluded that the need to protect young women’s reputation and honour had increased significantly since displacement (Women’s Refugee Commission, 2016; DeJong et al. 2017; Mourtada, Schlecht, and DeJong 2017; Yildiz 2017). Save The Children highlight that this is intrinsically linked to normative beliefs regarding gender roles in which a girl’s value is largely determined by preservation of her virginity and upholding family honour (The Save the Children Fund 2014). Many reported fears of social stigmas, including attitudes to women

⁴ The concept of *Al Sutra* is complex but is widely understood to mean the maintenance of a girl’s virginity until marriage. – citation!

who have experienced rape and pregnancy outside of marriage as factors in decision making (Mourtada, Schlecht, and Dejong 2017).

CARE International thus argues that there is a fundamental confusion that marriage represents the most effective option for protecting girls' honour (The Save the Children Fund 2014). The implications are that policies focussing on changing normative beliefs relating to gender roles and girls' value and reducing stigma surrounding sexual violence would have an impact on reducing child marriage rates. This is the second criterion against which policies will be assessed.

c) *Rational Responses to a Lack of Alternative Options*

i. *Protection Options*

Whilst it is evident that social and moral normative beliefs are a key factor, it is also important to understand what is exacerbating these beliefs and why child marriage is perceived as the most effective protection option. A number of interviews and surveys revealed that Syrian refugees' views on early marriage as a form of protection to girls' honour were dependent upon their feelings of safety (Fowler 2014; Zaatari 2014). Refugees in all countries demonstrated a heightened sense of insecurity and vulnerability and perceived risk of sexual harassment and violence within the context of displacement (Zaatari 2014; Mourtada, Schlecht, and Dejong 2017; Yildiz 2017). Evidence across all case study countries confirms that perceived risks are not unfounded, identifying insecurity, sexual harassment and gender-based violence as the greatest risks faced by adolescent Syrian refugee girls, both within camps and within host communities (Girls Not Brides 2011; Save The Children Fund 2014; Rohwerder 2018).

UNICEF country reviews highlight "accountability and follow-up in referral pathways for child protection and gender-based violence" as major challenges (UNICEF 2017). Families demonstrated a lack of awareness and trust around existing child protection options, especially towards government and service providers (The Save the Children Fund 2014). This is exacerbated by the fact that most refugees reside in host communities, problematising the ability of service providers to provide and raise awareness of child protection amongst the most vulnerable. Additionally, a number of reports highlighted that there is a lack of legal protection to both protect girls from child marriage, through enforcement of a legal minimum marriage age (International Rescue Council 2015; Jones 2017). In Jordan, many child marriages are taking place without the required scrutiny of Shari'a court judges, leaving girls open to potential exploitation and abuse (The Save the Children Fund 2014).

This suggests that, alongside normative beliefs about girls' honour, child marriage guided by rational responses to provide protection amongst limited alternative options. To challenge perceptions that

marriage is the most effective form of protection, evidence suggests policies should tackle SGBV, strengthen child protection services, increase legislative protection and enforcement and raise awareness of these alternative protection options. This is the third set of criteria against which policies will be assessed.

ii. Economic Options

In Jordan, parents' preferences towards child marriage were also dependent on their ability to provide for their families (Fowler 2014). In all of the countries under study, the unstable economic situation of Syrian refugee families is frequently stated as one of the principal drivers of the increase in child marriage (Centre For Transnational Development and Collaboration 2015; Save The Children Fund 2014; Mourtada, Schlecht, and Dejong 2017). In studies in Jordan and Turkey, families reported marrying their daughters to relieve the economic burden on their family, caused by a lack of employment and livelihood opportunities (AFAD 2014; UNICEF 2014; Centre For Transitional Development and Collaboration 2015; International Rescue Council 2015). Similarly, Syrian refugee families in Lebanon reported that marrying their children reduced the number of mouths to feed and bodies to clothe (Bartels and Hamill 2014; Cherri et al. 2017). FXB Centre's study also found anecdotal reports that Jordanian or other non-Syrian men were paying between \$150–\$200 USD to purchase Syrian brides, including concerns that these marriages might be a guise for human trafficking (Bartels and Hamill 2014). In addition, because of economic pressures on conflict-affected Syrian families, these marriages are often conducted in haste, without formal registration or other traditional mechanisms that would provide some protection to a girl in the event of a divorce (International Rescue Council 2015).

In Jordan, 80% of refugees living outside of camps live below the poverty line, compared to 64% of refugee households outside of Turkish camps and 76% of all refugees in Lebanon (UNHCR 2017). Given the importance of economic factors in driving child marriage among Syrian refugees, and the high levels of poverty they experience in the case study countries, we would expect effective policies on child marriage to address economic hardship, which include a loss of financial resources, lack of stable or consistent work opportunities, low wages, and high rental rates (The Save the Children Fund 2014). This is the fourth criterion against which policies will be assessed.

iii. Educational Options

UNICEF and Girls Not Brides argue that the increase in child marriage is intrinsically linked to the alarming decrease in the number of refugee children, especially girls, attending education (Spencer 2015; Girls Not Brides 2017). In 2015, 65%, 53% and 17% of registered school age Syrian refugees in Turkey, Lebanon and Jordan respectively were out of education with 53% (UNHCR 2015). This is a stark contrast to pre-conflict rates, with 97% of primary-age children attending school, suggesting that

this is not driven by social norms regarding the importance of education (Culbertson and Constant 2015). Interviews with refugee mothers in Lebanon reveal that, despite families' wishes for their girls to continue education, the lack of accessibility to educational opportunities, and lack of employment options following education, has encouraged them to seek marriage as an alternative future for their female children (Mourtada, Schlecht, and Dejong 2017).

According to The Women's Refugee Committee "child marriage is both exacerbated by barriers to education and an impediment to school for the girls" (Schlecht 2016). A study by AFAD, The Turkish Disaster and Emergency Management Authority, into Syrian refugee girls below the age of 18 found that the percentage of those who were married decreased as their level of education increased (AFAD 2014). Thus, in addition to improving the economic and protection options outlined above, removing other barriers to education, which include registration fees, lack of available places, language barriers, difficulty of access and bullying and harassment faced at school, can also decrease reliance on child marriage as a negative coping mechanism (Culbertson and Constant 2015). This is the fifth criterion against which policies will be addressed.

3. METHODOLOGY

3.1 Analytical Framework: Tackling Child Marriage in Emergency Settings

In light of the drivers outlined above, this dissertation seeks to assess the extent to which regional and national refugee response plans address the different factors driving child marriage in Lebanon, Jordan and Turkey. Lebanon, Jordan and Turkey were selected as the case study countries firstly, because they have the highest number of registered Syrian refugees - 222,412, 670,429 and 3,552,303 respectively – and, secondly, because they have experienced the highest rates of child marriage, as outlined in the introduction.⁵

This dissertation will analyse the four 2015-16, 2016-17, 2017-18 and 2018-19 Regional Response and Resilience Plan: Regional Strategic Overviews (3RPs), with supplementary analysis from Lebanon Crisis Response Plan (LCRPs), Jordan Response Plans (JRP) and Turkey Regional Response and Resilience Plans (Turkey 3RPs) from the same period (Appendix 1). These documents were chosen as they encompass the activities of host governments, UN agencies and over 30 humanitarian actors, whose joint child protection initiative, No Lost Generation, is also incorporated into the plans. The plans budgets range from 4.32-4.63 billion USD, which is significantly higher than plans by other actors (UNHCR 2017). The dates were chosen as they coincide with increasing awareness regarding the increase in child marriage amongst Syrian refugees, as indicated by the number of reports published from 2014 onwards, and thus allow for a comparison of the reflection of this awareness over time. Supplementary data will also be collected from secondary sources, where missing from the plans. The plans will be analysed against the indicators detailed below. Using data from the plans under study as well as supplementary sources, I will also provide an initial assessment on the effectiveness of implementation to date, including, any barriers to implementation, thus allowing for a deeper understanding of the extent to which responses are addressing the key drivers.

This dissertation will assess the policies against a series of indicators which will facilitate determination of the extent to which policies are effectively addressing the key drivers of child marriage. In what follows, I specify the indicators for each of the conceptualisations and drivers outlined in the literature review.

a) Customs

The way in which policies frame child marriage will be crucial to understanding whether they recognise that the nature of child marriage has changed in the context of displacement. Rather than framing child marriage as a custom or harmful traditional practice, we would expect policies to reflect the evidence outlined in the literature review and recognise that child marriage is also driven by moral and social

⁵ <https://data2.unhcr.org/en/situations/syria>

normative beliefs, which have been exacerbated by displacement, and used as a coping mechanism or rational response to the economic, protection and educational hardships of displacement.

b) Moral and Social Normative Beliefs

Changing moral and social normative beliefs poses a difficult challenge to policymakers, particularly in refugee contexts where the preservation of social norms often takes on greater importance (Schlecht 2016). Doughty evaluates the challenges of balancing a norms-based approach to child protection in emergencies with the rights of families and communities to decide on the best protection strategies, and of balancing the need for cultural sensitivity with the need to challenge the norms within cultures which harm children (Doughty 2013). Given that studies suggest that families are aware of the harms of child marriage, we would expect that policies addressing moral and social normative beliefs, would focus not on demonising child marriage as a harmful practice, but rather empowering families to make informed decisions by increasing the options available to them and increasing their awareness of available options. Participatory programmes aimed at decision makers, such as families and religious leaders, have also proven effective at influencing moral and social normative beliefs around marriage (UNICEF 2017). Given the correlation identified between beliefs surrounding the need to protect girls' honour and feelings of safety, policies should aim to increase security as well as families' awareness of alternative protection options.

c) Protection Options

Challenging perceptions that child marriage represents the most effective means of protection requires a twofold approach – strengthening current systems to tackle the specific vulnerabilities of Syrian girls and increasing awareness and trust of available services. The United Nations Human Rights Council Resolution urges states to embed measures to target the specific protection needs of refugee children, including child marriage, into humanitarian child protection strategies from the onset of a crisis (Human Rights Council 2017). Protective strategies which include cross-sector coordination, strong referral and follow up mechanisms, community engagement and awareness raising have proven effective at reducing child marriage rates (Girls Not Brides 2011). We would expect strategies on SGBV to focus both on prevention, in particularly increasing security, and on providing support to those affected, as well as on increasing families' awareness of services. According to Girls Not Brides, the most effective mechanism for protection from child marriage is a national legal minimum age of marriage that reflects international legal and human rights frameworks and is effectively implemented and enforced (Girls Not Brides 2011). Save the Children argue that “advocating for the implementation of these laws and raising awareness among community leaders helps strengthen and better enforce existing initiatives around girls' rights” (The Save the Children Fund 2014).

d) Economic Options

“As refugee families deplete savings and increasingly incur debt, the scale-up of cash grants for the most vulnerable families is crucial to build capacity and reduce dependence on negative coping mechanisms” (MOPIC 2017). To relieve extreme financial hardship, we would expect policies to provide wide-reaching and sufficient cash transfers and non-cash items targeted at the most vulnerable. CARE International argues that it is important to ensure that “vulnerability to child marriage (as an individual or as a family) is made an explicit part of the criteria determining food vouchers and other social protection assistance” (Spencer 2015). Enhancing long term economic security by improving the livelihood opportunities available to refugees has also proven effective in emergency contexts (The Save the Children Fund 2014). Policies aimed at removing barriers to work by granting residency and work permits with minimal costs and bureaucracy, providing vocational skills training appropriate to the job market in the host country and on increasing livelihood generating opportunities reflective of Syrian’s existing skills with decent conditions and wages would provide also relieve reliance on child marriage as a negative coping mechanism. Indicators of effective policies to improve the human capital of girls include incentivising educational attendance, providing greater support to and regulation of self-employment and informal livelihood opportunities in the camps as well as increasing security to encourage female participation in the formal workforce outside the home (Barbelet, Hagen-zanker, and Mansour-ille 2018).

e) Educational Options

Possession of secondary or higher education reduces the likelihood that girls will marry before the age of 18 (The Save the Children Fund 2014). To increase school attendance, alongside ensuring sufficient formal and non-formal education settings exist, it is crucial that policy tackles the barriers preventing girls attending education. Research demonstrates that, unlike in other contexts where social norms and customs inhibit girls’ school attendance, the main barriers for Syrian refugee girls include fees, distance of schools from their homes (creating security concerns), language and curriculum differences and bullying and harassment (Culbertson and Constant 2015). Thus, we would expect effective refugee education policies to include free admissions and transport, Arabic curriculum and support to language learning and strategies to prevent bullying and harassment. Evidence also suggests that policies focussed on sustaining school attendance by providing financial incentives dependent on attendance and completion are effective at preventing child marriage in humanitarian settings (Schlecht 2016). Education policies aimed at providing vocational skills and preparing girls for the job market are likely to increase families’ perceptions regarding the value of educating girls (The Save the Children Fund 2014).

The following table summarises these indicators.

3.2 Indicators

Colour code: Indicators of effective policies addressing structural drivers

Indicators of effective policies which will also address normative drivers

Driver	Policy Objectives	Indicator
Customs	Incite behavioural change	Extent to which framing of child marriage recognises that drivers are no longer customary but driven by displacement-related factors.
Social and Moral Normative Beliefs	Increase awareness of the harms of child marriage	Extent to which, in raising awareness of harms, policies also raise awareness of benefits of alternative viable alternative options
	Change social and normative beliefs surrounding child marriage	Extent to which policies address social normative drivers of child marriage including: * gender normative values * values surrounding girls' honour and value * perceptions of safety.
	Engage influential community members as agents of change	Extent to which policies engage communities and decision makers, including families, males and religious leaders.
Protection Options	Strengthen child protection strategies	Prioritisation of child marriage within protection policies Extent to which protection strategies target specific vulnerabilities of girls Cross-sector coordination within strategies Strong referral and follow-up mechanisms
	Increase awareness of and trust of alternative protection options	Community awareness and engagement activities.
	Increase real and perceived safety within camps and host communities	Policies designed to improve security
	Reduce incidences of SGBV	Extent to which SGBV policies focus on preventing SGBV.

	Increase in legal protection against child marriage	Extent to which policies strengthen legislation around the legal age of child marriage. Extent to which policies advocate for law enforcement amongst communities.
Economic Options	Improve immediate financial conditions of families	Extent to which policies provide cash-based or non-cash-based immediate assistance. Extent to which assistance is targeted at most vulnerable. Extent to which marriage is referenced as criteria for needs provision.
	Improve families' access to decent livelihood opportunities	Extent to which policies provide work permits with limited costs and bureaucracy
		% of work age refugees with work permits
		Creation of suitable and decently paid livelihood opportunities, aligned with refugees' existing skills
		Policies designed to increase awareness of opportunities
	Improve human capital of women and girls	Support to informal and self-employment sector
		Increase in safety outside camps
Educational options	Improve school place availability	Extent to which policies increase formal and nonformal educational provision
	Increase educational attendance	Extent to which policies address barriers including distance, language, bullying and harassment, and providing financial incentives
		Policies increasing the quality and benefits of education
		Provision of vocational education aligned with the job market, particularly for girls

4. EMPIRICAL DISCUSSIONS

4.1 Customary Practices

Analysis of the framing of child marriage across the 3RPs demonstrates a transition in the conceptualisation of child marriage. The 2015-16 3RP frames child marriage purely as a form of SGBV whereas the subsequent 3RPs frame it as a negative coping mechanism, indicating an increasing awareness of the displacement-related drivers (UNHCR 2014a; 2015a; 2016a; 2017a). At the national level, the JRPs and LCRPs frame child marriage as a negative coping mechanism as early as 2015, whereas the 2018-19 Turkey 3RP still contains references to “harmful traditional practices”, suggesting a variation in understandings of the issue (GOL 2015; UNHCR 2017b).

4.2 Moral and Social Normative Beliefs

The varying conceptualisations of child marriage across countries appear to be also reflected in the way in which plans address the normative drivers. There is limited evidence across the 3RPs of measures to address normative beliefs relating directly to child marriage or girls’ value other than a commitment in the 2015-16 3RP that, “where possible, programmes and projects under the 3RP will seek to advance gender equality” (UNHCR 2014a). At the national level, the Turkey 3RPs do outline plans to raise awareness of “harmful practices”, such as child marriage amongst families, yet do not link these to awareness raising of alternative options (UNHCR 2014b; 2015b; 2016b; 2017b). The LCRP 17-20 commits to “enhanced engagement of men and male youth on gender issues”, to “capitalize on community allies to promote gender equality and women’s empowerment” and to engage “key community actors – including municipalities, religious leaders, employers, and community leaders to challenge and eradicate harmful practices and social norms that lead to the exploitation and abuse of children,” demonstrating a greater commitment to tackling normative drivers and particularly the way in which they are socially constructed (GOL 2016). According to the theoretical framework, which emphasises the need to empower families to make informed decisions by changing their perceptions of alternative options, JRPs reflect the most comprehensive approach to tackling normative drivers including engaging and empowering families to contribute to their own protection solutions by promoting positive coping mechanisms (MIPAD 2014; 2015; 2016; 2017). A deeper understanding of the extent to which policies address social and normative beliefs will also be gained through analysis of the links between policies aimed at increasing the alternative options outlined below to social and normative perceptions.

4.3 Rational Responses to a Lack of Alternative Options

a) Protection Options

In terms of providing alternative protection options, the priority dedicated to child marriage within protection strategies has increased significantly over the course of the 3RPs. The initial three plans

reference child marriage as one of many child protection concerns, whereas the 2017-18 3RP labels it a ‘priority’ and announces the development of an evidence-based toolkit on addressing child marriage in humanitarian emergencies by 3RP partners (UNHCR 2016a). In terms of country comparison, Jordan demonstrates the most comprehensive and earliest prioritisation of child marriage protection strategies. Jordan established a Forced and Early Marriage Taskforce in 2014, which functions as a platform to coordinate joint action and expertise sharing to reduce the risk and mitigate the consequences of child marriage amongst both refugees and Jordanians and included campaigns to address child marriage in their 2013 Strategy for the Prevention of and Response to Gender-based Violence (MIPAD 2014). The 2017-19 JRP highlights a cross-sectoral approach, combining medical/health care, psychosocial support, protection services and legal assistance, with multiple agencies including child marriage in their vulnerability criteria for access to services (MIPAD 2016). This lends the strategy strength by ensuring effective referral pathways and targeting of the most vulnerable. The 2017-19 JRP also includes strategies to increase refugees’ trust of authorities and service providers, further suggesting a greater likelihood of changing families’ preferences regarding protection options (MIPAD 2016).

Lebanon and Turkey’s protection responses have been slower to prioritise child marriage. In May 2016, The Lebanese Higher Council for Childhood committed to developing a national strategy on ending child marriage, which will incorporate measures specifically targeted at refugees (UNICEF Lebanon, 2018). However, the absence of this from LCRPs and the publication of a UNICEF job advertisement for a consultant to support the strategies’ development in early 2018 indicates that the strategy has yet to be developed (UNICEF Lebanon, 2018). A 2015 UNHCR evaluation of Turkey’s response to the Syrian refugee crisis highlighted the insufficient focus on child marriage “as a major gap in the United Nation’s protection response” (Girls Not Brides 2015). Whilst the 2018 Turkey 3RP has notably few references to child marriage prevention measures, a Joint UN Programme on Child Marriage was launched in 2018 to address child marriage in specific regions of Turkey, particularly those with high refugee populations (UNICEF 2017). The Programme aims to “address the negative social norms which help to sustain and perpetuate the practice” again indicating Turkey’s greater focus on normative drivers and lesser engagement with structural drivers (UNICEF 2017).

In terms of addressing SGBV, one of the structural drivers identified in the literature review, there has been a notable improvement in the extent to which plans address the specific vulnerabilities of refugee children across the progression of the 3RPs. Whilst the 2015-16 plan includes strategies to strengthen multi-sector approaches, SGBV strategies are skewed towards providing support to survivors rather than towards preventative measures (UNHCR 2014a). From 2016-17 onwards, 3RPs include a greater emphasis on prevention, including recognition of the need for humanitarian actors to identify and mitigate SGBV risks throughout the programme cycle, encouraging them to follow the Inter-Agency Standing Committee Gender Based Violence Guidelines (UNHCR 2015a). Analysis of protection

targets reflect how SGBV has been embedded across a variety of sectors, with the number of service providers targeted with child protection and SGBV training increasing from 18,000 in 2015-16 to 64,010. In comparison to previous years, the 2018-19 targets also show a shift towards addressing attitudes, social norms and increasing awareness amongst refugee communities, including targets for empowerment, raising awareness of services, and community-based initiatives and engagement of men and boys as agents of change, suggesting greater potential for addressing normative drivers of SGBV and awareness of alternative protection options to child marriage (UNHCR 2017a). Whilst it is essential to tackle the normative drivers of SGBV, the notable lack of measures to increase security in camps and host communities and across the 3RPs, together with Turkey and Lebanon's failure to address families' lack of trust of service providers, suggest a risk that strategies may fall short of changing families' perceptions of safety and their preference towards child marriage as the most effective protection option against SGBV.

Efforts to strengthen legal protection against child marriage are also absent from strategies. Lebanon currently has no legal minimum age for marriage with some Personal Laws permitting girls to marry as young as 12.5 years with permission from religious leaders (Human Rights Watch 2017). Despite human-rights based campaigns from international and local NGOs including, Human Rights Watch, The Lebanese Democratic Women's Gathering and KAFA, and the tabling of a law on the protection of children from early marriage by a speaker of the Lebanese parliament, Nabih Berri, the current political climate, alongside the opposition of powerful religious leaders in Lebanon, are barriers to law establishment and enforcement (Human Rights Watch 2017). Turkish and Jordanian laws set the legal age at 17 and 18 respectively but allow for marriage at the age of 16 under "exceptional circumstances" with court approval (Girls Not Brides 2015). The 2017-19 JRP echoes recommendations from a 2014 roundtable on child marriage that "ways of strengthening the best interests' determination evaluation for early marriage applications, as contained in the special instructions issued by the Supreme Judge Department should be examined", yet the 2018-20 JRP makes no reference to measures to rectify this (MIPAD 2016; 2017). In Turkey, in 2018, The Constitutional Court struck down elements of the Turkish Criminal Code that prohibit arranging or conducting religious marriage ceremonies without simultaneous ceremonies. Campaigners have argued that this grants authority to religious leaders to permit child marriage, suggesting that legal protection against child marriage has actually weakened in Turkey (Butcher, 2018).

Thus, whilst analysis indicates an increasing prioritisation of child marriage within protection strategies over time, and increasingly comprehensive SGBV strategies, the failure of plans to address legislation on the legal age of marriage leaves a gap in legislative protection.

b) Economic Options

Whilst all 3RPs recognise the link between economic factors and child marriage when analysing needs, it is only from 2016-17 that response strategies respond to the need to provide alternative economic options to reduce child marriage rates, most noticeably with regards to conditional cash transfers (UNHCR 2015a; 2016a; 2017a). The 2016-17 3RP explicitly highlights how conditional cash for rent for vulnerable refugees will reduce negative coping mechanisms, such as SGBV, and the 2018-19 3RP outlines the first pilot projects “to examine the use of cash-based interventions to mitigate SGBV, child labour and child marriage” (UNHCR 2017a). Whilst the scale of these is small and may be difficult to evaluate, they represent the first explicit measures to alter behaviour surrounding child marriage by providing alternative economic options.

In terms of nonconditional assistance, there is a notable transition across the 3RPs towards a greater emphasis on cash-based assistance, rather than in-kind. Targeted number of people receiving cash transfers increases from 284,000 in 2015-16 to 799,190 in 2017-18 (UNHCR 2014 a; 2015a; 2016a; 2017a). At the Country level, in Turkey “The Emergency Social Safety Net (ESSN) was launched nationwide at the end of 2016 and is a multi-purpose cash assistance scheme for over one million of the most vulnerable refugees to cover essential needs like food, rent and utilities.” The 2018-20 JRP and 2017-20 LCRP also include plans to increase cash-based assistance to target those most vulnerable (MIPAD 2017; GOL 2016). Despite slightly lower targets in 2018-19, the 3RP highlights that “cash assistance provides greater dignity and choice for refugees, while providing benefits to the local economies where refugees are spending the cash they receive under these programmes” (UNHCR 2017a). This suggests that cash-based incentives may have a greater impact on reducing child marriage since they empower refugees by providing increased economic options, possibly reducing the reliance on dowries for immediate cash and also facilitating socio-economic integration.

Surprisingly, within the livelihood strategies, the target number for those in paid employment significantly decreased from 272,000 in 2015-16 to 65,700 in 2017-18 (UNHCR 2014 a; 2015a; 2016a; 2017a). This appears to correlate with a growing recognition from the 2016-17 3RP onwards of the barriers to formal employment posed by national refugee policies. In Lebanon in 2017, due to national policies restricting access to residency, 74% of work-age Syrians were unable to access formal employment (Human Rights Watch 2016). Whilst Turkey introduced the Regulation on Work Permit of Refugees under temporary protection in 2016, bureaucratic barriers, such as the requirement for company sponsorship, and a lack of understanding of the process, meant that the number of work permits issued in 2017 accommodated fewer than 1% of Syrian refugees in the country (Human Rights Watch 2016). In Jordan, until 2016, Syrian refugees were unable to legally access work and reports also highlight that the government adopted an aggressive approach to illegal employment, including forced relocation and deportation (Human Rights Watch 2016).

Despite national barriers, the range of initiatives aimed at expanding livelihood and income generating opportunities in the initial 3RPs reflected sustainable and well-targeted approaches to increase the economic options of families, including creating the necessary conditions and environment for job creation, supporting MSMEs and vocational training linking demand and supply through partnership with the private sector (UNHCR 2014a; 2015a). However, many initiatives were small-scale and likely to yield results on a more long-term scale, problematising the likelihood of relieving economic pressure and reliance on child marriage in the immediate future.

2018-19 3RPs and country level plans reflect renewed efforts to remove barriers to formal employment, create short term livelihood opportunities and reduce dependency on negative coping mechanisms (UNHCR 2017a). Lebanon waived the fee for residency permits in 2017, therefore facilitating access to work permits for refugees. Turkey's 2018 3RP specifically targets previously identified barriers, with a proposal to strengthen the capacity of local partners to support refugees to access employment and vocational skills, alongside a communications strategy to disseminate knowledge to encourage refugees to access to formal labour markets (UNHCR 2017b). Though the 2016 Jordan Compact, the government has committed to granting 200,000 work permits for Syrian refugees in certain industries and to formalise many Syrian businesses in exchange for grants, loans and favourable trade agreements with the EU (MIPAD 2016). However, whilst the number of work permits issued in Jordan increased from around 3,000 a year at the beginning of 2016 to around 50,000 in July 2017, an International Labour Organisation (ILO) study suggested that this figure only represents 13% of the Syrian-work age population (Barbelet, Hagen-zanker, and Mansour-ille 2018). Overseas Development Institute (ODI) research suggests that refugees have been deterred from applying for permits by bureaucratic obstacles, high costs, limited understanding of the process and mistrust of official institutions (Barbelet, Hagen-zanker, and Mansour-ille 2018). Additionally, evidence suggests that the specific sectors to which permits apply do not align with the skills profile of the majority of Syrian refugees, especially those tertiary-educated, wages are typically low and working conditions poor (Barbelet, Hagen-zanker, and Mansour-ille 2018).

With regards to increasing work opportunities for women and girls, work permits issued for female Syrian refugees represents 4% of work permits issued across Jordan⁶ and less than 8% of those issued to Syrian refugees in Turkey (Barbelet, Hagen-zanker, and Mansour-ille 2018). The lack of policies relating to the regulation or support of self-employment, and at addressing attitudes to female employment, indicates a lack of tailoring towards refugees' social norms and the preferences of women, who primarily prefer to work in or close to their homes. This suggests that, in line with the theoretical framework, whilst refugee livelihood strategies have certainly removed barriers to economic opportunities, due to a failure to promote understanding of and ease of access to these options, as well

⁶ <https://www.asylumineurope.org/reports/country/turkey/access-labour-market-0> (last accessed 16/09/2018).

as to tailor the options to the needs, preferences and norms of refugees, strategies may not be sufficient to relieve the economic hardship which is driving child marriage. This is reflected in the 2018-19 3RP which highlights that, despite aforementioned strategies, living conditions of Syrian refugees have not improved and unemployment rates remain high, particularly for youth.

c) Educational Options

Analysis of education strategies within the regional and country response plans reflects the progression of an increasingly comprehensive and needs-driven approach to increase the educational options available to Syrian refugee girls, remove the barriers to access and to increase families' awareness of available options, most notably through the No Lost Generation Initiative, whose strategies are including in the 3RPs.⁷ The 2015-16 3RP primarily focusses on increasing access through safe transportation but lacks measures to remove additional or gender-specific barriers identified in the literature review (UNHCR 2014a). From 2016-17 onwards, 3RPs include more comprehensive and targeted strategies to remove the structural barriers to education (UNHCR 2015a; 2016a; 2017a). To increase the number of school places, plans include the introduction of double-shifts in schools, the training of additional teachers and the rehabilitation of existing unused schools (UNHCR 2015a; 2016a; 2017a). Economic barriers are addressed through the provisions of school feeding, school grants and scholarships, and assistance to families for school costs and language barriers are addressed through curriculum adaptation and additional language classes (UNHCR 2015a; 2016a; 2017a). Whilst from 2016-17 onwards there is a greater focus on removing gender-specific barriers to education, including introducing gender-specific WASH facilities and increasing safety on transportation routes, there is a noticeable lack of strategies to address normative barriers, including families' perceptions of the benefits of education as an alternative to child marriage (UNHCR 2015a; 2016a; 2017a).

At the country level, Turkey's response plans highlight national legislation supporting refugees' rights to free, non-residency dependent education (UNHCR 2015b; 2016b; 2017b). However, in 2016, a Human Rights Watch report highlighted that this is not always implemented at the local level, with many school children turned away due to lack of residency documentation. (Human Rights Watch 2016). However, the 2018 Turkey 3RP introduces Conditional Cash Transfer for Education (CCTE) which provide conditional assistance to support the most vulnerable children, particularly girls, to attend and remain in education. The programme reached more than 167,000 children by November 2017 and will be expanded to reach 325,000 in 2018 (UNHCR 2017b). However, whilst policies specify a greater focus on girls, the beneficiary figures from 2017 do not show a great gender variation, with 84,867 girls

⁷ No Lost Generation is an initiative bringing together key humanitarian actors to achieve agreed outcomes essential for the education, protection, wellbeing and future of children and young people affected by the Syrian Crisis - <https://nolostgeneration.org/page/who-we-are>

and 82,575 boys having received vouchers, suggesting that a greater targeting towards girls would help to further encourage families to choose education options over child marriage (UNHCR 2017b).

“The Jordan Compact pledged that every Syrian refugee child would be in school by 2016– 17, alongside a promised investment of \$97.6 million to open and run an additional 102 double shift schools” (Barbelet, Hagen-zanker, and Mansour-ille 2018). However, the 2018-20 plan highlights that 40% of school age children remain out of school and suggests that the double school system has decreased the quality of education and increased social divides since Jordanians and Syrians are educated in separate shifts (MIPAD 2017). Amongst the strengths of the JRPs are the inclusion of awareness raising campaigns “among vulnerable populations on educational opportunities to help refer children to formal or other alternative certified education programs” (MIPAD 2017). Whilst this indicates that strategies are addressing knowledge barriers to education, there is no reference to addressing normative beliefs regarding the value of education as an alternative to child marriage.

Lebanon’s education strategy, RACE, fulfils several of the identified indicators as early as 2015 by including key targets for increasing school spaces, ensuring equitable access, providing language support, specific programmes to prevent drop-outs and providing psychosocial support (GOL 2014). Importantly, in contrast with Turkish and Jordanian plans, there is a clear focus on addressing normative barriers, including measures “to support a sustainable behaviour change towards education” through community-based peer support mechanisms and to “foster a culture of dialogue between the school authorities, teachers and directors, and parents” as early as 2015 (GOL 2014). The 2015 LCRP also specifically identifies the link between education and child marriage, highlighting how strategies will be targeted to tackle gender-specific risks, such as child marriage (GOL 2014). These indicators suggest that Lebanon’s education plans represent the most comprehensive approach to addressing both the structural and normative factors which encourage families to choose child marriage as an alternative to education.

Nonetheless, despite strategies to increase provision and accessibility of education, the percentage of Syrian refugee children out of school has demonstrated little improvement. The total percentage of out-of-school Syrian refugee children increased from 34 per cent in December 2016 to 43 per cent in June 2017 (UNHCR 2017a). Whilst the number of school age refugee children still outstrips the number of available places, the low attendance rates suggest that structural and normative barriers to education still remain. Given the economic and protection concerns outlined in the literature review, educational policies do not demonstrate sufficient attention to addressing safety and economic barriers to education. Whilst, from 2016-17 all plans include a greater focus on increasing enrolment in vocational educational training, there is an absence of additional gender-focussed and normative strategies to increase families’ perceptions of education as a viable alternative future for Syrian refugee girls.

5. CONCLUSIONS

Analysis of existing literature on the drivers of child marriage amongst Syrian refugees in Lebanon, Jordan and Turkey through a theoretical framework which facilitates an understanding of the factors driving decision-making regarding child marriage, has problematised traditional conceptualisations of child marriage as a customary practice and has instead reflected recent arguments of humanitarian actors who highlight the importance of displacement-specific normative and structural drivers. Evidence suggests that Syrian refugee families are driven to child marriage by heightened social and normative beliefs regarding the need to protect girls' honour from SGBV and by a lack of protection, economic and educational alternative coping mechanisms.

Contrary to reports and evaluations of NGO-led initiatives to prevent child marriages in emergencies, which have identified a neglect of structural drivers in favour of a normative approach, this dissertation has illustrated that, across the progression of the regional and country refugee response plans between 2015-2018, there is an overall increased understanding of and response to the identified structural drivers of child marriage amongst Syrian refugees (Schlecht 2016). Analysis of plans from 2017 onwards highlights an increasing prioritisation of child marriage as a protection issue, with amplified efforts to expand and strengthen alternative protection provision and address the normative drivers of SGBV, strengthened strategies to increase sustainable livelihood opportunities and relieve immediate financial strain, and coordinated approaches to expand educational provision whilst removing structural barriers to continued attendance.

At the country level, analysis according to the identified indicators of "good" policy shows that Jordan has demonstrated the strongest commitment to tackling child marriage through the establishment of its dedicated taskforce and strength of its child protection systems. Lebanon's education strategy represents the most comprehensive approach to addressing the variety of structural and normative barriers to education and, by linking financial support to the most vulnerable, Turkey's Emergency Social Safety Net represents an effective strategy for increasing alternative economic coping mechanisms.

However, country level analysis has also highlighted that a failure to sufficiently address legislative, bureaucratic, economic and social barriers problematises the implementation of these strategies, and initial analysis of their policy implementation suggests that a further prioritisation of the specific needs of refugees is required to ensure that viable and sustainable protection, economic and educational alternatives to child marriage are provided. Across all countries, key limitations include an absence of legal protection against child marriage, a greater need to remove barriers to work permits and increase economic opportunities for women and a failure to increase school attendance by removing structural barriers. It must, however, be recognised that plans have been inhibited by a consistent shortfall in

funding requirements, with the 2017-18 regional plan receiving just 53% of required funding by December 2017 (UNHCR 2017a).

Additionally, whilst the most recent plans, particularly those of Lebanon, have begun to incorporate normative approaches to increase families' awareness and understanding of the benefits of alternative options, particularly around protection and education, the relatively low focus on increasing refugees' trust towards service providers and the failure to tailor measures to the specific needs of refugee girls, suggests that policies may fall short of reducing families' perceptions of child marriage as the most effective coping mechanism. The introduction of conditional cash-based incentives against child marriage indicates the first step in linking refugee assistance and protection policies directly to strategies to reduce reliance on child marriage and suggests potential for the linking of additional measures, such as educational incentives.

Analysis of future regional and country level plans would further illuminate understanding of the extent to which policies are addressing the drivers of child marriage as it is hoped that they will incorporate measures from the recently announced dedicated child marriage strategies in Lebanon and Turkey. In addition, UNICEF is currently finalising a Regional Accountability Framework of Action to End Child Marriage in the MENA Region, which it is hoped will incorporate increased regional and cross-sectoral coordination on reducing child marriage across the region (UNICEF 2018).

As outlined in the theoretical framework, it is crucial that policy makers understand the specific drivers of child marriage within individual emergency and displacement settings (Bicchieri and Lindemans 2014). This dissertation does not propose to provide a replicable model for effective child marriage prevention strategies within displacement settings, but rather, to illustrate the importance of understanding the drivers of behaviours around child marriage and of incorporating them into response plans. Whilst this dissertation concurs with dominant humanitarian actors' arguments that refugee response plans must address the structural drivers of child marriage, it also cautions against a complete neglect of normative approaches, by suggesting strategies addressing structural drivers should also incorporate measures to influence families' perceptions of the benefits of alternative coping mechanisms and reduce reliance on child marriage.

6. APPENDIX

Appendix 1: Regional and Country Response Plans Analysed

Appendix 1.1 3RP Regional Refugee and Resilience Plans in Response to the Syria Crisis – Regional Strategic Overview

Source: <http://www.3rpsyriacrisis.org/key-publications/>

Publication Year	Document	Abbreviation
2015	3RP Regional Refugee and Resilience Plan 2015-16 in Response to the Syria Crisis	2015-16 3RP
2016	3RP Regional Refugee and Resilience Plan 2016-17 in Response to the Syria Crisis	2016-17 3RP
2017	3RP Regional Refugee and Resilience Plan 2017-18 in Response to the Syria Crisis	2017-18 3RP
2018	3RP Regional Refugee and Resilience Plan 2018-19 in Response to the Syria Crisis	2018-19 3RP

Appendix 1.2 Country Level Plans

Lebanon

Source: <http://www.3rpsyriacrisis.org/key-publications/>

Publication Year	Document	Abbreviation
2014	Lebanon Crisis Response Plan 2015-2016	2015-16 LCRP
2015	Lebanon Crisis Response Plan 2016-2017	2016-17 LCRP
2016	Lebanon Crisis Response Plan 2017-2020	2017-20 LCRP

Jordan

Source: <http://www.jrpsc.org/jrp-publications/>

Publication Year	Document	Abbreviation
2014	Jordan Response Plan 2015	2015 JRP

2015	Jordan Response Plan 2016-2018	2016-17 JRP
2016	Jordan Response Plan 2017-2019	2017-19 JRP
2017	Jordan Response Plan 2018-2020	2018-20 JRP

Turkey

Source: <http://www.jrpsc.org/jrp-publications/>

Publication Year	Document	Abbreviation
2014	Turkey – Regional Refugee & Resilience Plan 2015-2016	2015-16 Turkey 3RP
2015	Turkey – Regional Refugee & Resilience Plan 2016-2017	2016-17 Turkey 3RP
2016	Turkey – Regional Refugee & Resilience Plan 2017-18	2017-18 Turkey 3RP
2017	Turkey – Regional Refugee & Resilience Plan 2018-19	2018-19 Turkey 3RP

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