



## EXPLORING THE IMPACT OF CHILD MARRIAGE ON CHILDREN LIVING WITH DISABILITIES IN THE MENA REGION

### NEW DESK REVIEW

In April 2024 RAF completed a desk review on the impact of child marriage on children living with disabilities in the MENA region. [Read it here.](#)

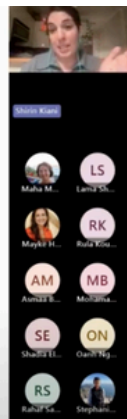
The desk review study demonstrates that marriage among children with disabilities is present in contexts where child marriage is practiced in MENA. This must be acknowledged and brought into RAF members' current work on policy, advocacy and programming work. The impact of child marriage on children with disabilities shows that it seriously affects their overall well-being and dignity. Child marriage leads to a cycle of violence, particularly for girls living with disabilities.

There is a need for an in-depth understanding of the root causes that promote different types of discrimination and exclusion of children with disabilities from child marriage programming. [Phase III of UNFPA-UNICEF's Global Programme to end child marriage](#) has put more focus on disability inclusion, but more needs to be done to mainstream disability throughout child marriage prevention programs. It is also important to ensure that youth with disabilities – and girls in particular – can participate in programme design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation.

### 1. **There is** an association between child marriage and disability and it is under-reported

\*Lack of disaggregated data in ECM work and myth around disability and marriage

Country where MICS data came from	# of women aged 15-19 years who are married		% of women aged 15-19 years who are married	
	With Functional difficulty (i.e. disability)	With no functional difficulty	With functional difficulty (i.e. disability)	With no functional difficulty
Algeria (MICS 6)	55	1,857	4.7%	7.3%
Iraq (MICS 6)	46	2,521	12.1%	29.1%
State of Palestine (MICS 6)	11	932	* (less than 25 cases)	15.8%
Tunisia (MICS 6)	39	598	3.9%	1.2%
Yemen (MICS 6)	166	2,682	30.6%	30%



### WEBINAR

The desk review was presented by Shirin Kiani, Disability and Inclusion Specialist and author of the desk review, during a RAF webinar on April 29 that was attended by more than 40 RAF members.

[Watch the webinar here](#) to learn more about the desk review findings.

# CHILD MARRIAGE SOLUTIONS WORKSHOP CASABLANCA, MOROCCO

On May 22-24, 14 RAF INGO, NGO, UN, and academic members took part in the Child Marriage Solutions Workshop (CMSW) in Casablanca, Morocco, where more than 45 UNICEF and UNFPA child protection and gender experts, as well as NGO partners, gathered to discuss the preliminary findings from UNICEF Innocenti's most recent study on child marriage in the Middle East.

UNICEF MENARO, UNFPA ASRO, and UNICEF Innocenti are currently finalizing the multi-country analysis that aims to examine the design, delivery, and impact of child marriage interventions in humanitarian settings in the MENA region.

The purpose of the CMSW, which was co-organized by RAF, was to:

- (1) Discuss, validate and contextualise research findings;
- (2) Exchange lessons from programmatic experiences across countries and stakeholders on the prevention of and response to child marriage in humanitarian settings; and
- (3) Enhance capacity and demand for the strategic use of evidence to guide action to address child marriage in humanitarian settings.



During the CMSW gathering, RAF members also participated in panel discussions to share key findings on:

- (1) Innovative approaches: cash assistance for child marriage prevention in MENA/Arab States;
- (2) Preventing child marriage in times of conflict, crisis, and displacement; and
- (3) The impact of climate change on child marriage in MENA/Arab States.



## RAF KEY MEMBERS' MEETING

RAF members also organized a key RAF members' meeting in Casablanca on May 24 and discussed ways to improve RAF Coordination and Engagement, they included:

- (1) Investing further in research collaborations to address lasting data and information gaps related to child marriage understanding and prevention in MENA;
- (2) Furthering joint advocacy initiatives particularly ahead of key events such as the International Day of the Girl Child; and
- (3) Strengthening the presence and role of NGOs and INGOs within the RAF framework.



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