Gendered-Approach Inputs to UNHCR for the Global Compact on Refugees (2018): Lessons from Abuses faced by Syrian Female Refuges in Lebanon, Turkey, and Jordan

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

In September 2016, the UN General Assembly adopted the New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants, expressing Member States’ commitments to protect refugees and migrants. The Declaration paves the way for Member States to adopt a Global Compact on Refugees in 2018. Consistent with the New York Declaration, the Compact will “mainstream a gender perspective, promote gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls and fully respect and protect the human rights of women and girls.”

This report was produced by the Walter Leitner International Human Rights Clinic in the Leitner Center for International Law and Justice at Fordham University School of Law in New York City. The Clinic provides education and practical human rights training to law students while furthering the Center’s core objectives of strengthening access to justice and promoting the rights of marginalized populations.

This report provides gendered recommendations to strengthen the upcoming Global Compact on Refugees. The recommendations are based on case-studies, which highlight and analyze the gendered issues faced by female Syrian refugees in Lebanon, Turkey, and Jordan. It is our hope that these recommendations will be incorporated into the Global Compact on Refugees in order to help strengthen the compact’s protection of women and girl refugees around the world. As these case-studies demonstrate, women and girls are disproportionately burdened by the consequences of displacement. These burdens should be considered when drafting each provision of the compact.

The Syrian refugee crisis is one of the largest refugee crises in the world. Since 2011, nearly 4.8 million Syrians have fled their homes in search of refuge abroad. Currently, Lebanon, 

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2 There is limited gender specific information available regarding the Syrian refugee population in Turkey. Due to this limitation, we have chosen not to include an analysis of Turkey in certain subsections.
Turkey, and Jordan host the largest populations of Syrian refugees, the majority of whom are women and girls. During times of conflict and forced displacement, women and girls are disproportionately exposed to human rights abuses and violations. In Lebanon, Turkey, and Jordan, female Syrian refugees face the threat of labor exploitation, discriminatory housing practices, lack of access to sexual and reproductive health services, sexual assault and harassment, child marriage, barriers to education, domestic violence, human trafficking, discrimination and violence based on their sexuality or gender identity, and lack of access to justice.

- **Employment:** Female Syrian refugees face a number of gendered barriers to employment, including discrimination, family responsibilities and lack of childcare, and the threat of sexual harassment and exploitation. Syrian refugee women who work are largely limited to the informal sector, especially domestic and agricultural labor, where they are subject to exploitative wages and working conditions, including sexual harassment and violence. Women in female-headed households are particularly at risk of extreme poverty.

- **Housing:** Female Syrian refugees are burdened by restricted access to affordable and adequate housing. Limited supply and high rent prices have led to overcrowding, poor sanitation, and little privacy. Female-headed households are especially affected by these conditions, and anecdotal evidence indicates that discriminatory housing practices often force women to live on the street or in makeshift shelters.

- **Sexual and Reproductive Health:** Female Syrian refugees face barriers in accessing sexual and reproductive healthcare, including limited resources, high costs, and lack of information regarding existing services. These barriers result in a number of adverse health outcomes, including complications during pregnancy.

- **Sexual Assault and Harassment:** Statistical data collected from a variety of surveys indicate that female Syrian refugees feel insecure within their communities and fear sexual harassment and assault on a daily basis. This forces many female Syrian refugees to remain in their homes, limiting their access to necessary goods and services. Currently, there are limited services for victims/survivors of sexual assault and harassment.

- **Child Marriage:** Rates of child marriage have risen among Syrian refugees, driven by factors including economic and physical insecurity. Child marriage exposes Syrian refugee girls to a wide range of harms, including an elevated risk of domestic violence and social isolation, interrupted education and loss of employment opportunities, and the health consequences associated with early pregnancy.

- **Domestic Violence:** Female Syrian refugees report that domestic violence incidents have increased within refugee populations since the start of the crisis due to the prolonged conflict, displacement, poor living conditions, and changing gender roles.

- **Education:** Many school-aged Syrian refugee girls are not enrolled in school. While there is not a significant disparity between the number of Syrian refugee boys and girls
enrolled in schools, girls face gendered barriers to education, including the rise in child marriage and fear of street-based sexual harassment going to and from school.

- **Human Trafficking:** Female Syrian refugees are vulnerable to international, intra-regional, and internal human trafficking. The most common forms of human trafficking in the region are forced prostitution, child marriage, and “temporary” marriage.

- **Queer Females:** Queer female Syrian refugees are subject to violence and harassment by members of their family, refugee communities, and host country communities. Transgender female refugees, face heightened forms of gender-based violence.

- **Access to Justice:** Lack of valid residency permits adds an additional barrier to female Syrian refugees when trying to report sexual and gender-based crimes. This barrier, combined with corrupt police systems and social stigma, hinder many female refugees from reporting gender-based violence.
RECOMMENDATIONS:

We urge all states to ratify the 1951 Refugee Convention and Protocol, which is a foundation to the success of the Global Compact on Refugees, and commit to protecting and promoting the fundamental rights of all refugees. Further, with respect to the rights of female refugees, the Global Compact on Refugees should include the following commitments:

I. EMPLOYMENT

1) Reaffirm states’ obligations to the human rights of female refugees with respect to work, including the obligation to eliminate all forms of discrimination against women in employment.
2) Remove barriers to refugee women’s employment, including onerous work permitting procedures, irregular residency status, and restrictions on or barriers to travel or changing employers, with particular attention paid to the needs of female-headed households, including opportunities for home-based labor and childcare support.
3) Ensure that national laws provide female refugees with the same rights and protections that are extended to all workers, including by creating avenues to protect women working in informal and seasonal sectors, such as domestic and agricultural labor.
4) Provide humanitarian assistance sufficient to meet the needs of refugee families, such that refugee women and girls are not forced to accept exploitative work conditions.
5) Expand employment opportunities available to refugee women, including by providing vocational training, with a focus on those entering the workforce for the first time as a result of their displacement.

II. HOUSING

1) Ensure that female refugees have equal access to affordable and adequate housing from the onset of any refugee crisis.
2) Work with UN concerned agencies, NGOs and civil society to create plans and procedures that would allow host countries to provide all refugees with regularized residency status at the moment they arrive into the country.
3) Establish an emergency plan for the rapid creation of adequate housing for refugees and provide UN concerned agencies, international organizations and NGOs with the necessary funds to implement these plans within the first 30 days of a refugee crisis.
4) Establish clear guidelines for host countries that will ensure that appropriate action is taken to provide housing for female refugees who are the heads of their households.

III. SEXUAL AND REPRODUCTIVE HEALTHCARE

1) Work with UN concerned agencies, NGOs and non-profit and grassroots organizations to increase humanitarian aid organization’s presence and funding in host countries to provide a wide variety of sexual and reproductive healthcare
services to all women and girl refugees, and ensure they are located in areas near refugee populations.

2) **Have humanitarian organizations increase awareness of services to female refugees** by actively reaching out to female refugees to provide and inform them of services offered, and how to access them when needed.

IV. **SEXUAL ASSAULT AND HARASSMENT**

1) **Work with civil society and NGOs to create comprehensive programs that seek to prevent sexual abuse.**

2) **Ensure that healthcare and related services are available to women and girls who are victims/survivors of sexual abuse from the onset of any refugee crisis.**

3) **Take action against police and local officials who fail to investigate allegations of sexual assault and harassment committed against female refugees.**

V. **CHILD MARRIAGE**

1) **Partner with relevant parts of the government and NGOs to create and implement programs designed to better understand the root causes of increased child marriage within refugee communities during humanitarian crises, create programs taking steps to end child marriage, and monitor its effectiveness to improve programming.**

2) **Consult relevant parts of the government, grassroots organizations, faith-based leaders, and members of the refugee community to develop and implement a national plan to end child marriage within refugee communities, which addresses the drivers of child marriage.**

VI. **DOMESTIC VIOLENCE**

1) **Partner with UN concerned agencies, NGOs and civil society to create places for female refugees to report abuse, receive legal counseling, support, and services.**

2) **Partner with UN concerned agencies, NGOs and civil society to establish safe places for female refugee victims of domestic violence.**

3) **Create plans for integrating refugees into the host country through employment and education opportunities, to avoid populations living in mass poverty, which has been a catalyst to the increase in domestic violence among refugee communities.**

4) **Consult humanitarian organizations to develop educational programs training both men and women about domestic violence and its consequences, and helping men to develop new coping mechanisms to deal with the stress of being refugees.**

VII. **EDUCATION**

1) **Develop emergency plans in consultation with relevant parts of the government, UN concerned agencies, NGOs, grassroots organizations and members of refugee communities for current and future refugee crises that involve ensuring that young refugees, especially girls, are afforded opportunities to continue their education.**
2) Partner with NGOs and humanitarian organizations to monitor and provide adequate educational services to refugee students and ensure that female students do not leave school early and complete their education.

VIII. HUMAN TRAFFICKING

1) Dedicate significant resources to combating the human trafficking of refugees and work collaboratively with regional governments to prevent transnational human trafficking.
2) In order to reduce instances of trafficking in persons among refugees, States should commit to providing safe and legal routes to migration.
3) States should commit to providing resources for survivors of trafficking.
4) Commit to enforcement of anti-trafficking policies in a manner consistent with the human rights of female refugees.

IX. QUEER FEMALES

1) Partner with NGOs and humanitarian organizations working on LGBT issues to execute programs that provide legal and healthcare services.
2) Take affirmative steps towards implementing comprehensive programs that seek to protect members of the LGBTI refugee community during times of humanitarian crisis.

X. ACCESS TO JUSTICE

1) Recognize that all refugees have a right to access justice services. This provision should clearly state that States have an affirmative obligation to ensure that refugees have access to these services, regardless of their legal status, gender identity, and sexual orientation.
2) Partner with NGOs and civil society to conduct public information campaigns to create awareness among refugee women and girls about their rights and the procedures for accessing justice in cases of gender-based violence.
3) Take affirmative steps towards implementing alternative programs, such as safe-houses, to allow female refugees to report abuses in a safe environment, regardless of their legal status, gender identity, and sexual orientation.
DISCUSSION:

I. EMPLOYMENT

The majority of Syrian refugees living in Lebanon, Turkey, or Jordan live in poverty. Throughout the region, Syrian refugee women’s access to employment is limited by gendered factors including discrimination, sexual harassment, lack of childcare, and family responsibilities. Restrictions on the right to work limit formal employment opportunities for all Syrian refugees, and the vast majority of Syrian refugee women who work do so in the informal sector. Syrian refugee women who work are typically paid considerably less than men, restricted to low-skilled sectors like agriculture and domestic work, and vulnerable to exploitative working conditions and sexual harassment. Lack of economic opportunity for Syrian refugee women also increases poverty and reliance on child labor in female-headed households.

A. Lebanon

In September 2015, UNHCR estimated that 70% of Syrian refugee families were living below the Lebanese poverty line. In addition to extreme poverty, residency enforcement efforts targeting Syrian refugee men have forced some women and children into abusive work conditions, as they are less likely to be arrested for lack of legal status than men.

Syrian refugees in Lebanon, especially women, have limited access to employment. Access to the formal labor market is particularly limited: in 2014, 1,814 Syrian refugees applied for work permits, and only 758 were granted. Overall, less than half of Syrian refugees were

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7 See, e.g. ILO, Assessment of the Impact of Syrian Refugees in Lebanon, at 25 (Lebanon).


9 See UNHCR, Woman Alone, at 39-40.


11 See Human Rights Watch, I Just Wanted to Be Treated Like a Real Person, at 25.

12 See id. at 23.
economically active, and almost a third of Syrian refugees in the labor market were unemployed.\textsuperscript{13} For Syrian refugee women, workforce participation rates were considerably lower: only one in five women participated in the economy, and two-thirds of women seeking work were unemployed.\textsuperscript{14} ILO and others have identified a number of gendered barriers to work in Lebanon, including limited opportunities, family and childcare responsibilities, and lack of skills.\textsuperscript{15} Syrian refugee women who work in Lebanon overwhelmingly work in either agriculture or as domestic workers; 71\% of Syrian women who work are in unskilled jobs.\textsuperscript{16} These positions are characterized by low pay and little job security.\textsuperscript{17}

Syrian refugee women in Lebanon report a range of exploitative work conditions. Employers take advantage of Syrian refugee women’s desperation by paying low wages, or offering housing in lieu of wages.\textsuperscript{18} In 2016, a Syrian refugee woman’s average monthly income was only $115 – a full $100 less than the average for Syrian refugee men.\textsuperscript{19} Syrian refugee women report instances of employers refusing to pay agreed wages or changing terms of work.\textsuperscript{20} Syrian refugee women are also more likely to accept certain unhealthy working conditions than men: 75\% of working Syrian refugee women suffer from back or joint pain, compared to 55\% of working men.\textsuperscript{21} Three quarters of employed Syrian refugee women feel they have been forced to accept unfair working conditions,\textsuperscript{22} and some refugees and aid workers report that employers prefer to hire female refugees specifically because they will accept lower wages and other exploitative work conditions.\textsuperscript{23}

Syrian refugee women are also vulnerable to sexual harassment and exploitation in the workplace.\textsuperscript{24} These abuses constitute a barrier to Syrian refugee women’s employment, as some women leave jobs following sexual harassment or assault, and others decline to seek employment out of fear of sexual harassment.\textsuperscript{25} One female refugee told Human Rights Watch that her boss had grabbed her at work: “If you don’t accept your boss’s advances you will get fired. For me, I prefer to stay at home to avoid sexual exploitation, even if my family barely has

\textsuperscript{13} See ILO, Assessment of the Impact of Syrian Refugees in Lebanon, at 23-24.
\textsuperscript{14} See id. at 22.
\textsuperscript{17} See id. at 9.
\textsuperscript{18} See Amnesty Int’l, I Want a Safe Place, at 34; Interview with Hiyam Al Fassam, Head of Education Unit, Layan Campaign in New York, N.Y. (Oct. 20, 2017) (reporting an instance of a woman accepting a job doing domestic work in exchange for shelter for herself and her five children in a horse stable).
\textsuperscript{19} See UNHCR et al., Vulnerability Assessment of Syrian Refugees in Lebanon, at 56 (2016), https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/VASyR2016.pdf [hereinafter UNHCR et al., Vulnerability Assessment]. In 2014, the ILO found similarly stark disparities between the wages paid to Syrian refugee men and women: working Syrian refugees had an average monthly income of LBP 418,000, well below both the minimum wage (LBP 675,000) and the 2007 poverty line (LBP 6,000 per person per day); for women, wages averaged only LBP 248,000, a rate 43\% lower than that paid to Syrian refugee men. See ILO, Assessment of the Impact of Syrian Refugees in Lebanon, at 27-28.
\textsuperscript{20} See Amnesty Int’l, I Want a Safe Place, at 34.
\textsuperscript{21} See ILO, Assessment of the Impact of Syrian Refugees in Lebanon, at 31.
\textsuperscript{22} See Amnesty Int’l, I Want a Safe Place, at 34.
\textsuperscript{23} See Human Rights Watch, I Just Wanted to Be Treated Like a Real Person, at 28.
\textsuperscript{24} See id.
\textsuperscript{25} See id.
enough food.”

Another Syrian refugee woman reported that she had been fired after refusing several of her boss’ advances. Syrian refugees typically lack recourse for workplace abuses because they commonly lack documentation and fear reporting to Lebanese authorities.

Child labor is also a significant issue among Syrian refugees. Nearly three quarters of street-based child laborers in Lebanon are Syrian; 27% of these Syrian child laborers are girls. Almost all female street-based child laborers in Lebanon are engaged in begging, street vending, car-windshield cleaning, or fortunetelling. Street-based child laborers are particularly vulnerable to abuse: 75% report verbal harassment and aggression by passers-by, 46% report physical harassment by passers-by, and 6% report sexual assault or rape while working.

B. Turkey

Female Syrian refugees in Turkey face barriers to labor market participation. Although Syrians with temporary protection status are formally permitted to apply for work permits in Turkey, a number of barriers exist to obtaining permits. The intersection of these factors leaves Syrian refugee women particularly vulnerable to exclusion from, and abuse within, the Turkish labor force. Faced with sexual, physical, and verbal harassment, lack of childcare, and discrimination, fewer than one in five female Syrian refugees were employed in Turkey in 2014. By contrast, more than 80% of male Syrian refugees reported some income from employment. The limited data available on Syrian refugee women’s employment in Turkey suggests that the majority of women who do find work are engaged in agricultural or domestic labor outside the formal labor market. Syrian refugee women have reported pay rates less than half that of Turkish coworkers. Disparities are particularly extreme in the case of domestic labor, for which Syrian refugee women are paid as

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26 See Id.
27 See id.
28 See id.
30 See id. at 36.
31 See id. at 49.
32 See Human Rights Watch, EU: Don’t Send Syrians Back to Turkey: Lack of Jobs, School, Health Care Spurs Poverty, Exploitation (June 20, 2016), https://www.hrw.org/news/2016/06/20/eu-dont-send-syrians-back-turkey [hereinafter Human Rights Watch, EU]. Barriers to obtaining permits include long delays in the registration process for temporary protection status, requirements for employer sponsorship and that Syrians compose no more than 10% of an employer’s workforce, and limits on permits to a province where the applicant has been registered for at least six months. See id.
34 See Disaster & Emergency Mgmt. Auth. (AFAD) at 28.
36 See Human Rights Watch, EU.
little as a tenth of a Turkish worker’s wages. Syr
ing women in Turkey also report instances of
physical abuse by managers. Others report expe
riencing wage theft, verbal harassment, and
discrimination in the workplace.

These abuses are particularly harmful in the case of the approximately one third of Syrian
refugee households in Turkey headed by women or children, which are reliant on women’s
income. In a 2014 study conducted by the Turkish Disaster and Emergency Management
Authority, 96.7% of female Syrian refugee heads of household reported having earned no
income at all in the previous month.

C. Jordan

More than 90% of Syrian refugees registered in Jordan live below the national poverty
line of $87 per month. Almost half of Syrian refugees in one survey reported cutting other
needs, such as education or healthcare, to pay for food. Poverty rates are even higher among
female-headed households, which have an average expenditure that is 1.6 times greater than their
income. Households headed by women have less access to income from employment than
households headed by men: a UNHCR survey in Jordan in 2013 found that 26% of Syrian
households in Jordan reported some income from work, but only 9% of female-headed
households had income from work. The number of these households has increased
significantly: 39% of Syrian refugee households in Jordan were female-headed in 2016,
compared to 25% only a few years earlier.

Enforcement efforts that target male refugees, as well as low wages for men and a high
cost of living, have pushed some women and girls into the workforce. Syrian refugee women

38 See Human Rights Watch, EU.
39 See id.
40 See Zeynep Kivilcim, Legal Violence Against Syrian Female Refugees in Turkey, 24 Feminist Legal Stud. 193,
41 See Disaster & Emergency Mgmt. Auth. (AFAD) at 30.
43 See CARE, Six Years into Exile: The Challenges and Coping Strategies of Non-Camp Syrian Refugees in Jordan
44 See UNFPA, More Than Numbers: Regional Overview: Responding to Gender-based Violence in the Syrian
Crisis, at 13 (2016), https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/SYRIA%20CRISIS%20%20MORE%20THAN%20NUMBE R%2C%20GBV%2C%20ENG%20%0.pdf [hereinafter UNFPA, More Than Numbers]; Sarah Aziza, Dignity in
Displacement: Syrian Widows in Jordan Take Charge of Their New Lives, Intercept, Sept. 24, 2017,
45 See UNHCR, Woman Alone at 30.
46 See CARE, On Her Own: Women Forced to Flee from Syria Are Shouldering Increased Responsibility as They
Struggle to Survive, at 5 (2016), https://www.care.org/sites/default/files/documents/care_on-her-own_refugee-
media-report_sept-2016.pdf [hereinafter CARE, On Her Own].
47 See CARE, Six Years into Exile, at 20, 67.
are increasingly the primary wage earners in their family: the number of households reporting a female primary wage-earner increased 10% between 2015 and 2016.\textsuperscript{48}

However, Syrian refugee women face substantial barriers to employment in Jordan. According to a UN Women assessment carried out in 2016, only 6% of Syrian refugee women in Jordan are employed.\textsuperscript{49} In the same assessment, 17% reported that they had worked in Syria prior to the conflict, a rate comparable to the 20% of Jordanian women who are employed.\textsuperscript{50} Accordingly, UN Women has concluded that Syrian women’s low employment rate is likely a consequence of displacement rather than attitudes toward work.\textsuperscript{51}

Nearly half of Syrian refugees employed in Jordan lack work permits.\textsuperscript{52} Even after the Jordanian government announced a fee waiver for Syrian applicants in April 2016, paperwork required from employers and landlords have made permits unobtainable for many Syrian refugees.\textsuperscript{53} Permits are tied to a single employer and valid for only one year.\textsuperscript{54} Women are much more likely than men to be working without a permit: the Jordanian Ministry of Labor issued 25,455 work permits to Syrians between January and mid-September 2016, but issued only 357 permits to women.\textsuperscript{55} Only 2% of Syrian refugee women hold work permits, and women hold about 5% of the total number of permits issued to Syrian refugees.\textsuperscript{56}

UN Women concluded that gender discrimination is a likely barrier to employment for Syrian refugee women.\textsuperscript{57} Additional gendered barriers to employment include lack of affordable childcare, fears of harassment while travelling, and workplace harassment, violence, and exploitation.\textsuperscript{58}

\begin{footnotesize}  
\textsuperscript{48} See id. at 76.  
\textsuperscript{49} See UN Women, Women Working at 6. UN Women notes it is likely that Syrian economic activity is underreported because it commonly infringes Jordanian labor law. See id. at 7. Rates of employment are likely considerably higher in outside refugee camps: the Secure Livelihoods Research Consortium estimates 20-30% of Syrian refugee women are engaged in some form of paid part-time work in the city of Irbid, and even more participate in annual olive harvests, but estimated women’s employment rate in the Za'atari refugee camp as less than 5-10%. See Secure Livelihoods Research Consortium, Uncertain Livelihoods in Refugee Environments, at 15-18 (2016), https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/5902069740f0b606c700024e/Uncertain_livelihoods_in_refugee_environments_-_Between_risk_and_tradition_for_Syrian_refugee_women_in_Jordan.pdf.  
\textsuperscript{50} See UN Women, Women Working, at 6, 10.  
\textsuperscript{51} See id. at 28.  
\textsuperscript{53} See Int’l Rescue Comm., In Search of Work, at 12.  
\textsuperscript{54} See id.  
\textsuperscript{57} See UN Women, Women Working, at 24.  
\textsuperscript{58} See id. at 21 (Syrian refugees are nearly twice as likely as Jordanian women to perceive childcare and household responsibilities as an obstacle to employment.); Simmons, Widowed, Divorced, Abandoned; Int’l Rescue Comm., In Search of Work, at 12, 16; UN Women, Women Working, at 24.  
\end{footnotesize}
Economic insecurity has led to a high rate of child labor among Syrian refugees in Jordan. In 47% of households where someone works, a child is contributing, and households headed by women are more likely to rely on child labor than households headed by men in Jordan.59 Eighty percent of employed girls work in domestic work or agriculture, both high-risk sectors for physical abuse and sexual exploitation.60

II. HOUSING

One of the principle concerns of female Syrian refugees in the region is access to adequate and affordable housing. 61 Due to limited supply and high rental prices, many female Syrian refugees live in overcrowded and substandard housing. 62 Women who are the head of their household are particularly effected and often face discrimination is accessing housing, difficulty in paying for housing and harassment by landlords. 63 Many female Syrian refugees also report being approached by landlords for sex in lieu of rent. 64

A. Lebanon

Housing is a major concern for the refugee community in Lebanon. 65 Due to high rent prices and limited income generating opportunities, 55% of Syrian refugees live in informal tented settlements or other substandard shelters. 66 Female Syrian refugees are disproportionately impacted by inadequate living conditions, which negatively impact their health, physical safety and emotional wellbeing. 67 Female-headed households are among the most vulnerable in terms of shelter. 68 Due to the precarious legal status of most female Syrian refugees in Lebanon, landlords have a considerable amount of power over their female tenants. 69 Amnesty International found that landlords often exploit their female tenants and routinely increase rent. 70 Women who are unable to pay high rental fees often face eviction or are propositioned for “survival sex” – an offer to reduce rent in exchange for sex. 71 Anecdotal evidence obtained by Amnesty International suggests that eviction is a major concern for female Syrian refugees. 72 One woman who was

60 See id. at 3.
61 See CARE, Six Years into Exile, at 11.
62 See, e.g. id.
63 See, e.g. id.
65 See UNHCR, Woman Alone, at 8.
67 See UNHCR, Woman Alone, at 17.
68 See id.
69 See id.
70 See Amnesty Int’l, I Want a Safe Place, at 41.
71 See id.
72 See id. at 34.
interviewed by the group stated that the longest period of time she had remained in a single place was six months due to evictions.\textsuperscript{73}

High rental fees for apartments and formal housing also force women to seek alternative forms of shelter for their families.\textsuperscript{74} Hiyam Alfassam, Head of Education Unit in Layan Campaign, noted that during a 2013 trip to Beqaa Valley, she encountered a woman who was living in a horse stable with her five children.\textsuperscript{75} The woman, who had previously been living on the streets, had agreed to work the lands of a local farm in exchange for the ability to live in the stable with her children.\textsuperscript{76}

\textbf{B. Jordan}

Syrian refugees in Jordan face prohibitively expensive rent prices and a limited supply of housing.\textsuperscript{77} A 2016 poll conducted by CARE International found that the primary concern of Syrian refugees in Jordan is paying rent.\textsuperscript{78} The majority of refugees who are able to secure housing live in cramped accommodations where they lack both privacy and security.\textsuperscript{79}

Women are particularly burdened by the limited supply of accommodations and high rent prices. Due to the limited economic opportunities available to working age women, female-headed households struggle to keep up with rising rent.\textsuperscript{80} In 2016, CARE reported that nearly 10\% of households headed by women refugees in Jordan faced the immediate threat of eviction, and a third were in debt with their landlords.\textsuperscript{81} Female-headed households also face barriers to finding adequate housing in the first place.\textsuperscript{82} According to several female refugees interviewed by CARE, landlords often refuse to rent to women-headed households because they are viewed as “socially problematic” and unlikely to keep up with rent.\textsuperscript{83} Additionally, some Syrian refugee women report sexual harassment by landlords, including offers of free accommodation or money in exchange for sex.\textsuperscript{84}

\textbf{III. SEXUAL AND REPRODUCTIVE HEALTHCARE}

Syrian refugee women throughout the region have had their sexual and reproductive health compromised by common factors, including gender-based violence (rape, assault, harassment, intimate partner violence, and child marriage), early pregnancy, frequent UTIs, and

\textsuperscript{73} See id.
\textsuperscript{74} Interview with Hiyam Alfassam, Head of Education Unit, Layan Campaign in New York, N.Y. (Oct. 20, 2017).
\textsuperscript{75} See id.
\textsuperscript{76} See id.
\textsuperscript{77} See CARE, On Her Own, at 11.
\textsuperscript{78} See CARE, Six Years into Exile, at 11.
\textsuperscript{79} See id.
\textsuperscript{80} See CARE, On Her Own, at 11.
\textsuperscript{81} See id.
\textsuperscript{83} See id.
\textsuperscript{84} See CARE, On Her Own, at 11.
complications during pregnancy.⁸⁵ Barriers to accessing healthcare include cost, distance, fear of mistreatment, unavailability of female doctors, insufficient services, and lack of awareness regarding those services that do exist.⁸⁶ Women’s health is further compromised by the prioritization of other family members and general fear of seeking services.⁸⁷ Regionally, UNFPA provided 23,949 reproductive health services in July 2017 to a population of more than 1,264,500 Syrian refugee women and girls of reproductive age, 110,000 of whom were pregnant.⁸⁸ In the same month, only 5,557 Syrian refugee women received family planning services or consultations.⁸⁹

A. Lebanon

Although data on Syrian refugee women’s health in Lebanon is limited, Syrian refugees report sexual and reproductive health problems, including menstrual irregularity, infections, and severe pelvic pain.⁹⁰ Access to contraception is also lacking in Lebanon with nearly 60% of Syrian women reporting using contraceptives prior to the conflict, but only 34.5% report using family planning in Lebanon.⁹¹ A study by BMC Women’s Health revealed that of the person’s surveyed, 65.5% of female Syrian refugees between the ages of 18 and 45 did not use any form of birth control.⁹² As a result, the average age for a Syrian woman to become pregnant was 19.⁹³ The study further noted that almost half (49.7%) of Syrian refugee women identified cost as a barrier to accessing reproductive health services, with the distance to travel to clinics (25.4%), fear of mistreatment (7.9%), security concerns (6.2%), shame or embarrassment (6.2%), and other unspecified reasons (4.5%) following in that order.⁹⁴ Furthermore, only 37.8% of the refugees surveyed were aware that reproductive health services were available, while 44.7% perceived services as unavailable and 16.8% were unsure on availability.⁹⁵ Based on its research, BMC found that female Syrian refugees in Lebanon have poor reproductive health, including “gynecologic conditions, pregnancy and delivery complication, and poor birth outcomes.”⁹⁶

Access to medical care in Lebanon is severely limited by high costs and other factors.⁹⁷ UNFPA delivered only 197 reproductive health services to female Syrian refugees in Lebanon in July 2017.⁹⁸ Limited information about those services that are available also poses a barrier to

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⁸⁶ See id.
⁸⁷ See id.
⁸⁸ See UNFPA, More Than Numbers, at 1, 3.
⁸⁹ See id. at 1.
⁹⁰ See Samarai.
⁹¹ See Samarai.
⁹³ See id.
⁹⁴ See id.
⁹⁵ See id.
⁹⁶ See id.
⁹⁷ See Amnesty Int’l, Agonizing Choices, at 23.
⁹⁸ See UNFPA, More Than Numbers, at 3.
healthcare as Syrian refugees report finding eligibility criteria for UNHCR healthcare subsidies extremely confusing.99

B. Turkey

Fewer NGOs are working to deliver refugee healthcare in Turkey than in Lebanon and Jordan, and authorities have restricted access to camps to evaluate existing services.100 However, female Syrian refugees’ sexual and reproductive health in Turkey’s refugee camps is known to be compromised by lack of access to basic hygiene.101 Syrian refugees in Turkey have reported a variety of sexual and reproductive health issues associated with the trauma and stress of the conflict and their displacement, ranging from menstrual irregularities to miscarriage.102

Despite extensive need, access to treatment is severely lacking. UNFPA delivered only 8,386 reproductive health services to female Syrian refugees in Turkey in July 2017.103 Long delays in the registration process for temporary protection status impose a barrier to accessing healthcare.104 For those who are not registered, access is limited to emergency and private healthcare; for those who are registered, primary care is in principle available.105 However, women have reported being turned away from hospitals. For example, one family lacking registration reported that a hospital refused to deliver a baby without payment.106 Curfews impose an additional barrier to accessing medical services, as healthcare is denied altogether during curfew periods.107

Syrian women attempting to enter Turkey are also at risk, and pregnant women in camps on the border between Syria and Turkey have been denied medical treatment.108

C. Jordan

Syrian refugee women and girls’ healthcare needs have escalated since arriving in Jordan. For example, women and girls are giving birth at earlier ages as child marriages become more common in Jordan.109 Despite this need, Syrian refugees in Jordan face increasing obstacles to accessing healthcare, including financial barriers, medical centers with limited resources, long wait times, rude staff, lack of information about where to access care, unavailability of female medical providers, and availability of family planning services limited to married female Syrian

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100 See Samarai.
101 See id.
103 See UNFPA, More Than Numbers, at 3.
104 See Human Rights Watch, EU.
105 See id.
106 See Global Fund for Women; see also Human Rights Watch, EU.
107 See Global Fund for Women.
refugees. An assessment of women in refugee camps found 17% lacked access to prenatal care during pregnancy, and half of Syrian refugee women living in urban areas are unable to afford the fees or transport costs associated with prenatal care. Overall, only 56.3% of Syrian refugee participants of a 2016 CARE survey who have pregnant women in their families reported access to prenatal care, and only 47.9% of participants with lactating women in their families reported access to postnatal care.

IV. SEXUAL ASSAULT AND HARASSMENT

Sexual assault and harassment is a part of everyday life for many female Syrian refugees in Lebanon, Turkey and Jordan. In 2014, UNHCR surveyed female Syrian refugees across the Middle East and found that 60% felt insecure and were afraid of both violence and harassment. According to those surveyed, sexual harassment and assault is perpetrated by a variety of actors, including cab drivers, landlords, service providers, and strangers in public spaces.

Harassment has psychological, physical, and economic consequences. These consequences may include shame, domestic violence, loss of employment and limited access to services due to self-imposed limitations on mobility. Nearly half of the Syrian refugee women interviewed by UNHCR indicated that they leave their homes less often than they did when they lived in Syria, and one in three women stated that they no longer leave their homes at all. The pervasiveness of sexual assault and harassment has also contributed to an increase in the rate of child marriage as families seek the protection of a male guardian for their daughters.

Regionally, services for victims/survivors of sexual assault and harassment are very limited. In July 2017, UNFPA reported that 17,870 Syrian women accessed women’s safe spaces, UNFPA facilities that provide a variety of services to women and girls, including women’s health and maternal health services, psychosocial support and legal counseling. The UNFPA also reported that only 3,189 Syrians in the region received gender-based violence services. The number of female Syrian refugees who have accessed these services is miniscule considering that there are an estimated 2.37 million female Syrian refugees in the region.

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111 See Samarai; Amnesty Int’l, Living on the Margins, at 18-19.
112 See CARE, Syrian Refugees in Urban Jordan, at 60.
113 See UNHCR, Woman Alone, at 46.
114 See id.
116 See id. at 7-8.
117 See id. at 7.
118 See Amnesty Int’l, I Want a Safe Place, at 50.
120 See id.
A. Lebanon

Female Syrian refugees in Lebanon are subjected to pervasive harassment in public spaces by a wide variety of state and non-state actors, including police officers, government employees reviewing residence permits, employers, neighbors, transportation providers, and strangers.\footnote{122}{See Amnesty Int’l, I Want a Safe Place, at 6; see also Human Rights Watch, I Just Wanted to Be Treated Like a Real Person, at 28 (noting that Syrian refugee women in Lebanon report sexual harassment and abuse by a variety of actors, including government officials, employers, and sponsors of residency documents).} Female heads of households are particularly vulnerable to abuse and harassment from landlords, employers and neighbors who are aware that there is no adult male in the household.\footnote{123}{See Amnesty Int’l, I Want a Safe Place, at 57.} One female Syrian refugee interviewed by Amnesty International reported that men in her neighborhood constantly offer to do favors for her in exchange for sex because they know her husband does not live with her.\footnote{124}{Id. at 6.}

The prevalence of this harassment traps many women and girls in their homes.\footnote{125}{Id. at 51.} Anecdotal evidence suggests that some female Syrian refugees in Lebanon choose to remain in their homes out of fear of public harassment, while others are forced to remain inside by family members who claim to be protecting them.\footnote{126}{See Int’l Rescue Comm., Syrian Women & Girls: Fleeing Death, Facing Ongoing Threats and Humiliation: A Gender-Based Violence Rapid Assessment, Syrian Refugee Populations, Lebanon, at 8 (2012) [hereinafter Int’l Rescue Comm., Syrian Women & Girls].} The International Rescue Committee noted that during interviews with focus groups of female Syrian refugees, many of the women reported that they were incapable of leaving their homes due to restrictions placed on them by family members.\footnote{127}{Id. at 8-9.}

Services for female victims/survivors of sexual harassment and abuse are extremely limited. UNFPA only operates 11 facilities that are designated as safe spaces for female Syrian refugees.\footnote{128}{See UNFPA, Regional Situation Report 59, at 3.} Further, sexual violence is rarely reported in Lebanon.\footnote{129}{See Human Rights Watch, “It’s Part of the Job”: Ill-Treatment and Torture of Vulnerable Groups in Lebanese Police Stations, at 33 (2013), https://www.hrw.org/sites/default/files/reports/lebanon0613_forUpload_1.pdf [hereinafter Human Rights Watch, It’s Part of the Job].} Women and girls who lack valid residency permits are reluctant to seek assistance from local officials who may detain them.\footnote{130}{See Amnesty Int’l, I Want a Safe Place, at 6.} Additionally, women and girls may refrain from reporting abuse due to the social stigma attached to sexual violence and the trauma associated with confiding in officials that lack appropriate training.\footnote{131}{Id. at 51.}

In 2013, Human Rights Watch reported that it had interviewed a dozen female Syrian refugees in Lebanon who had been sexually harassed by employers, landlords, and aid workers; the women reported being groped, harassed, and pressured to have sex.\footnote{132}{See Int’l Rescue Comm., Syrian Women & Girls: Fleeing Death, Facing Ongoing Threats and Humiliation: A Gender-Based Violence Rapid Assessment, Syrian Refugee Populations, Lebanon, at 8 (2012) [hereinafter Int’l Rescue Comm., Syrian Women & Girls].} None had reported the incidents to local authorities, citing fear the authorities would not take action, fear of reprisals by their abusers, and fear of arrest for lacking valid residency permits.\footnote{133}{Id.}
B. Turkey

Fear of sexual assault and sexual harassment is a part of the everyday lives of female Syrian refugees in Turkey. Since the beginning of the refugee crisis, incidents of sexual assault and harassment have increased as tensions have risen within Turkey.\(^{134}\) Syrian women reported escalating levels of rape and sexual harassment in Turkey to the Global Fund for Women in 2016.\(^{135}\)

Female Syrian refugees in Turkey also report being targeted by police for verbal abuse, threats, rape, and sexual abuse.\(^{136}\) Services and support for victims/survivors in Turkey is also limited.\(^{137}\) The UNFPA supports only 20 safe spaces for women and girls in Turkey.\(^{138}\)

C. Jordan

Syrian refugee women in Jordan report near-constant harassment, including offers of transactional sexual relations.\(^{139}\) Women heads of households are particularly vulnerable to this harassment.\(^{140}\)

Fear of harassment has severely limited the mobility of Syrian women and girls in Jordan. Adult women are only half as likely as boys to go outside their homes on a daily basis (26.9\% and 47.3\%, respectively) and 41.2\% of women and 34.1\% of girls rarely or never leave the house.\(^{141}\) According to UN Women, Syrian women in Jordan are 23\% less likely to go out alone than men.\(^{142}\) Additionally, UN Women found that fear of harassment has discouraged Syrian women from seeking employment.\(^{143}\) As in both Lebanon and Turkey, there are limited resources available for victims/survivors of sexual assault and harassment and the UNFPA only supports 14 facilities that are designated as safe spaces for women in Jordan.\(^{144}\)

V. CHILD MARRIAGE

Child marriage was practiced in some Syrian communities prior to the refugee crisis: in 2011, 13\% of girls under the age of 18 were married in Syria.\(^{145}\) However, throughout the region, the conditions of displacement have contributed to an increasing rate of child marriage among

\(^{134}\) See Spotlight on Turkey, Global Fund for Women (June 29, 2016), https://www.globalfundforwomen.org/women-discuss-crisis-in-turkey/#.WeZOgUzMygQ, [hereinafter Spotlight on Turkey].

\(^{135}\) See id.

\(^{136}\) See Spotlight on Turkey.

\(^{137}\) See UNFPA, Regional Situation Report 59.

\(^{138}\) See id.

\(^{139}\) See CARE, Syrian Refugees in Urban Jordan, at 5.

\(^{140}\) See id. at 37.

\(^{141}\) See UN Women, Gender-based Violence, at 3.

\(^{142}\) See id. at 23.

\(^{143}\) See UN Women, Women Working, at 24.

\(^{144}\) See UNFPA, Regional Situation Report 59.

\(^{145}\) See Save the Children, Too Young to Wed, at 1; see also UN Women, Gender-based Violence, at 29-30 (More than half of Syrian refugee women surveyed in Jordan indicated that they had themselves married before the age of 18, and many indicated that they considered marrying daughters at 17 to be an element of their culture rather than a result of the conflict or refugee status.).
Syrian refugees, particularly among girls. Some estimates place the rate of child marriage among Syrian refugees at four times the rate that had existed among Syrians before the crisis.\textsuperscript{146} Throughout the region, this escalation in child marriage is driven by refugees’ extreme poverty, physical insecurity, and vulnerability to sexual violence.\textsuperscript{147}

Child marriage exposes girls to a heightened risk of sexual and domestic violence, health risks associated with violence and early childbirth, disrupted education, limited economic opportunities, and social isolation, among other harms.\textsuperscript{148} A girl who marries before 18 is more likely to experience domestic violence than a peer who marries later.\textsuperscript{149} A girl under the age of 15 is five times more likely to die in childbirth than an adult woman.\textsuperscript{150}

In the context of conflict and humanitarian crises, child marriage is particularly dangerous, as social systems allowing families to vet husbands’ capacity to support their wives are disrupted, and marriages are likely to be conducted without formal registration or other mechanisms intended to protect the girl in the event of divorce.\textsuperscript{151} Greater age disparities between a child bride and her husband also increase the risk of violence, abuse, and exploitation.\textsuperscript{152} In 2012, 16.2\% of Syrian refugee girls in Jordan who married between the ages of 15 and 17 married a man who was fifteen years or more older than themselves.\textsuperscript{153}

\textbf{A. Lebanon}

A UNFPA survey of Syrian women and girls conducted in Western Bekaa in 2016 found an “alarming rise” in the rate of child marriage among Syrian refugees in Lebanon.\textsuperscript{154} That survey indicated that nearly 35\% of women ages 20-24 had married under the age of 18, and that 24\% of girls ages 15-17 were already married.\textsuperscript{155} There is no Lebanese law prohibiting child marriage, and religious courts are permitted to sanction marriages of girls as young as 15.\textsuperscript{156} Aid workers report that marriages sometimes occur involving girls as young as 12.\textsuperscript{157}

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{147} See Amnesty Int’l, I Want a Safe Place, at 50 (Lebanon); Girls Not Brides, Child Marriage Around the World: Turkey, https://www.girlsnobrides.org/child-marriage/turkey/ (last visited Oct. 15, 2017) [hereinafter Girls Not Brides, Turkey]; Save the Children, Too Young to Wed, at 1 (Jordan).
\item \textsuperscript{149} See Save the Children, Too Young to Wed, at 2.
\item \textsuperscript{150} See id.
\item \textsuperscript{151} See Int’l Rescue Comm., Are We Listening? at 8.
\item \textsuperscript{152} See Save the Children, Too Young to Wed, at 6.
\item \textsuperscript{153} See Int’l Rescue Comm., Are We Listening? at 10. Compare this number to the 7.0\% of Jordanian girls who married early who married a man fifteen years or older than herself. See id.
\item \textsuperscript{154} See UNFPA, New Study.
\item \textsuperscript{155} See id. Girls Not Brides estimates the rate of child marriage among Syrian refugees is even higher. See Girls Not Brides, Child Marriage and the Syrian Conflict (Reporting 41\% of Syrian girls in Lebanon are married before the age of 18 and noting that, because many marriages are not registered, actual rates of child marriage may be higher).
\item \textsuperscript{157} Interview with Hiyam Alfassam, Head of Education Unit, Layan Campaign in New York, N.Y. (Oct. 20, 2017).
\end{itemize}
In a 2012 focus group, Syrian refugee women in Lebanon attributed increased rates of child marriage to economic pressure and a need to “protect” girls from pervasive sexual harassment and violence.\(^{158}\) Amnesty International also reports that child marriage among Syrian refugees results from financial pressures and the risk of sexual harassment and violence.\(^{159}\) For female-headed households, which are among the most economically vulnerable, child marriage may be viewed as an opportunity to alleviate financial pressure.\(^{160}\)

Child marriage dramatically increases Syrian refugee girls’ risk of marital rape, domestic violence, economic exploitation, and health issues related to early childbirth.\(^{161}\) High rates of child marriage in Lebanon are linked to widespread disruptions in girls’ education: while more than 70% of Syrian refugee girls in Lebanon are in school at age 9, less than 17% are still enrolled at age 16.\(^{162}\) Child marriage is particularly dangerous in the context of displacement: in Lebanon, Syrian girls are likely to marry younger and to older men, and are more likely to marry outside their community, placing them at greater risk of isolation.\(^{163}\)

**B. Turkey**

Child marriage has reportedly become more common in Turkey since the beginning of the Syrian refugee crisis, alongside the development of a system of “fixers” or “matchmakers” accepting fees to arrange marriages with Syrian girls.\(^{164}\) In 2014, the average age of a female Syrian refugee who married was between 13 and 20, and 14% of Syrian refugee girls aged 15-18 in Turkey were already married.\(^{165}\) Many of these marriages are polygamous marriages between Syrian girls and older Turkish men driven by intense poverty in the refugee community.\(^{166}\) Refugee families report that financial insecurity is the primary driver of child marriage and that, absent this insecurity, they would not subject their daughters to child marriage.\(^{167}\) However, these marriages provide girls little stability or protection. Turkey does not register marriages involving Syrians lacking passports, girls under the age of 16, or polygamous relationships; absent registration, Syrian women or girls lack legal protections, including rights upon divorce and, for those married to Turkish men, Turkish citizenship for their children.\(^{168}\)

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\(^{159}\) See Amnesty Int’l, I Want a Safe Place, at 50.

\(^{160}\) See UNFPA, New Study.

\(^{161}\) See Human Rights Watch, Pass Bill.


\(^{165}\) See Disaster & Emergency Mgmt. Auth. (AFAD) at 27; Girls Not Brides, Turkey.


\(^{167}\) See Girls Not Brides, Turkey.

C. Jordan

UN Women has found that drivers of child marriage, such as economic and physical insecurity, have intensified for Syrians in Jordan.\(^{169}\) Consequently, child marriage has escalated dramatically among Syrian refugees in Jordan: in 2011, 12% of marriages involved girls under 18; in 2012, 18%; in 2013, 25%; and in the first quarter 2014, almost 32%.\(^{170}\) The number of child marriages recorded by CARE nearly quadrupled between 2015 and 2016.\(^{171}\) The practice of child marriage is particularly prevalent among girls, with 51.2% of female Syrian refugees in Jordan, and 13% of males, reporting having married before the age of 18.\(^{172}\)

According to Save the Children, the primary drivers of rising rates of child marriage among Syrian refugees in Jordan are financial insecurity and girls’ vulnerability to sexual violence.\(^{173}\) Girls are especially at risk because they are less likely to be working and helping to support their families.\(^{174}\) Women and girls may also be forced to marry if they are victims of sexual violence.\(^{175}\) However, girls who marry are at a heightened risk of domestic and sexual violence.\(^{176}\) Child marriage is also linked to high rates of early pregnancy among Syrian refugees in Jordan: 11% of the beneficiaries of UNFPA-supported antenatal services in April 2015 were girls under the age of 18.\(^{177}\) In one clinic in the Zaatari camp, 58 pregnant girls under the age of 18 were registered in one week in February 2013.\(^{178}\)

Girls in Jordan are also likely to be married to men who are much older than themselves. In 2012, 48% of Syrian child brides in Jordan married men who were ten or more years older than themselves.\(^{179}\) Syrian refugee women report receiving marriage proposals for girls as young as 12.\(^{180}\)

\(^{169}\) See UN Women, Gender-based Violence, at 3; see also Save the Children, Too Young to Wed, at 1 (identifying financial insecurity and girls’ vulnerability to sexual violence as the primary drivers of child marriage among Syrian refugees in Jordan).


\(^{171}\) See CARE, Six Years into Exile, at 76.

\(^{172}\) See UN Women, Gender-based Violence, at 30.

\(^{173}\) See Save the Children, Too Young to Wed, at 1.

\(^{174}\) See id. Approximately 85% of reported Syrian child laborers in Jordan are boys. See UN Women, Gender-based Violence, at 3.

\(^{175}\) See Save the Children, Too Young to Wed, at 5.


\(^{178}\) See Save the Children, Too Young to Wed, at 8.

\(^{179}\) See id. at 6.

\(^{180}\) See UNHCR, Woman Alone, at 42.
VI. DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

A 2011 study by UNFPA found that one in three women living in Syria prior to the conflict was a victim/survivor of domestic violence. However, throughout the region, refugees and aid organizations report an increase in domestic violence and attribute this rising violence to the conditions of displacement, including lack of employment, economic pressures, and lack of privacy in crowded housing. For example, in 2014, UNFPA reported that 70% of violent acts against female Syrian refugees in Lebanon and Jordan occurred in the home and 80% of those acts were perpetrated by an intimate partner or someone the victim knew. Honor killings and other violence inflicted by family members in response to women’s experiences with sexual assault and harassment are also a problem among refugees in the region.

A. Lebanon

Refugees and aid organizations report a sharp increase in domestic violence among Syrian refugees in Lebanon. This escalation of violence has been attributed to the pressures of refugee life, including economic stress and crowded housing. Similarly, participants in a 2012 focus group reported rising domestic violence linked to stress, anxiety, and feelings of powerlessness among men.

Hiyam Alfassam, Head of the Education Unit of the Layan Campaign, who has been on several research trips to Syrian refugee camps in Lebanon, further noted that the longer that families are displaced, living in poor conditions, and mishandling mental and physical sicknesses, the more frustrated families become, which can result in domestic violence. The level of violence is at times extreme: in June 2014, two Syrian teenage boys admitted to killing their sister in Lebanon after she left the house without telling anyone where she was going.

B. Jordan

Women report that domestic violence has increased in Syrian refugee households in Jordan. NGOs have pointed to men’s lack of economic opportunity and consequent shifts in gender roles, as a driver of frustration and domestic violence. Domestic violence has become a

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182 See id. at 8.
183 See UNFPA, More Than Numbers, at 22.
184 See MADRE et al., at 3.
186 Id.
189 See MADRE et al. at 3.
190 See CARE, Syrian Refugees in Urban Jordan, at 32.
“coping mechanism” of sorts for men. Due to economic insecurity there are high levels of emotional and physical violence. Other NGOs, such as CARE, attribute rising violence within Syrian refugee families in Jordan to poor living conditions, lack of activities and social interactions outside the household, and lack of food.

VII. EDUCATION

The majority of Syrian refugee children are not enrolled in school, including most school-aged girls. The most common barriers to education are economic, meaning children in female-headed households may be particularly vulnerable to loss of educational opportunities. Gendered barriers, including child marriage and fear of sexual harassment, further affect Syrian refugee girls’ access to education.

A. Lebanon

Many school-aged Syrian refugees in Lebanon are not enrolled in school. Commonly cited barriers to education include an inability to pay school fees (47%) and lack of nearby schools or open spots in nearby schools (27%). Because female Syrian refugee workers in Lebanon are paid significantly less than Syrian refugee men, children in female-headed households may have particularly limited access to education.

A 2014 ILO study found approximate parity between Syrian refugee boys and girls in enrollment for the 2012-13 school year, with 31% of boys and 30% of girls enrolled in school. While enrollment rates barely differ between girls and boys, girls face several gendered barriers to education that disproportionately affect their ability to attend school. Barriers include sexual harassment, insufficient access to private and clean sanitation facilities in schools, which results in a disruption in their education during menstruation, and child marriage. Furthermore, Human Rights Watch reported that girls, children, and children with disabilities face particularized barriers to enrolling in Lebanese schools. Female Syrian refugees are frequently

‘Domestic violence is very common among the Syrian refugees because of the level of frustration,’ said Layla Naffa Hamarneh, director of projects for the Arab Women Organization of Jordan.

193 Id.
194 See CARE, Syrian Refugees in Urban Jordan, at 32.
195 See UNHCR, UNHCR Reports Crisis in Refugee Education (Sept. 15, 2016), http://www.unhcr.org/afr/news/press/2016/9/57d7d6f34/unhcr-reports-crisis-refugee-education.html [hereinafter UNHCR, UNHCR Reports] (noting that in Turkey, only 39% of school-aged refugee children and adolescents were enrolled in primary and secondary education, 40% in Lebanon, and 70% in Jordan).
196 See, e.g. ILO, Assessment of the Impact of Syrian Refugees in Lebanon, at 21.
197 See, e.g. UN Women, Gender-based Violence, at 35.
198 See UNHCR, UNHCR Reports.
199 Id. at 21.
200 See Amnesty Int’l, Agonizing Choices, at 6.
201 See ILO, Assessment of the Impact of Syrian Refugees in Lebanon, at 21.
203 Id.
204 Id.
the targets of sexual harassment in Lebanon. The common propositioning of girls on the streets makes it difficult for girls to travel to and from school without being harassed. One Syrian refugee parent in Lebanon shared with Human Rights Watch that his daughters were being offered money for sex on their way to school, and as a result, he is afraid to allow them to go to school. Child marriage has become common for girls due to economic hardship on their families, and as a result of marrying before the age of 18, many girls are taken out of school to start bearing children.

B. Jordan

According to a CARE survey conducted in 2016, more than 30% of Syrian refugee boys and 28% of Syrian refugee girls aged 7-18 were not enrolled in school. Barriers to education for Syrian refugees in Jordan include auxiliary costs, travel distances, safety to and from school, bullying and discrimination in school, prior gaps in education, and children’s psychological issues. Although girls are marginally more likely to be enrolled in school, they face a number of gendered barriers to attendance, including child marriage and fear of sexual harassment. Save the Children U.K. shared testimony from a father of a young Syrian refugee girl in Jordan who said he married his daughter off at a young age to keep her safe from harassment from men in the streets and near the schools. Girls who marry before age 18 are expected to leave school to care for their husbands and start bearing children.

VIII. ACCESS TO JUSTICE

Throughout the region, women and girls face obstacles in reporting sexual and gender-based crimes. Female Syrian refugees, however, face additional barriers due to their precarious legal status. In all three countries, the vast majority of female Syrian refugees do not have valid residency permits and are limited to working in the informal labor market. Because of their irregular residency and employment status, some Syrian refugee women and girls fear deportation or arbitrary detention and often refrain from seeking justice when they are victims of

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205 Id.
206 Id.
207 Id.
208 See id; Interview with Hiyam Alfassam, Head of Education Unit, Layan Campaign in New York, N.Y. (Oct. 20, 2017).
209 See CARE, Six Years into Exile, at 61.
210 See CARE, Syrian Refugees in Urban Jordan, at 32.
211 See UN Women, Gender-based Violence, at 35.
212 Id.
Additionally, female Syrian refugees may not report crimes to local authorities because (1) they do not trust local authorities to fairly and adequately help them seek justice; 216 (2) they fear retaliation by abusers; 217 or (3) they feel stigmatized. 218 Alternatives for female Syrian victims are also often missing, as these refugees often lack access to quality and trusted services. 219

A. Lebanon

Women and girls in Lebanon face a number of obstacles in reporting sexual and gender-based crimes, including lack of legal assistance, and lack of knowledge and sensitivity to women’s rights among justice officials. 220 This lack of access to justice is exacerbated in the case of Syrian refugees, who are at risk of arrest on the basis of residency restrictions and consequently are afraid to report crimes to the Lebanese authorities. 221 Female Syrian refugees in Lebanon also reported an inability to report instances of harassment and gender-based violence to family members out of fear of a violent response. 222

In 2013, Human Rights Watch documented the sexual assault and harassment of 12 female Syrian refugees by employers and others in Lebanon. 223 None of the women reported these abuses to local authorities, citing a belief that the authorities would not act, fear of reprisal by their abusers, and fear of arrest for lacking valid residency permits. 224 An interview with the manager of Layan Campaign reported that the Lebanese police are “not dealing with [Syrian refugees] as humans.” 225

Amnesty International found that Syrian refugee women rarely report instances of sexual harassment or abuse to authorities, believing reporting would lead to them being questioned about their legal status with the possibility of being deported. 226 Of the women who attempted to report crimes committed against them, none had a positive experience. 227 A woman shared that she would not report any crimes committed against her because once authorities learn that she is Syrian, they say that she does not have any rights. 228 Several women interviewed by Amnesty International indicated that they were harassed by police officers after filing complaints about

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215 See, e.g. Amnesty Int’l, I Want a Safe Place, at 52-53 (Lebanon).
219 See Int’l Rescue Comm., Are We Listening?, at 8.
220 See Amnesty Int’l, I Want a Safe Place, at 52-53.
224 See id.
226 See Amnesty Int’l, I Want a Safe Place, at 52-53.
227 See id. at 52.
228 See id.
separate incidents.\textsuperscript{229} One woman stated that the police officers used the information included in her complaint to repeatedly harass her at her home and proposition her for sex.\textsuperscript{230}

**B. Jordan**

Female Syrian refugees report feeling vulnerable and at risk of exploitation or abuse, but are unlikely to report any crimes committed against them to Jordanian authorities.\textsuperscript{231} The majority of Syrian refugee women have stated they would not seek help from anyone, including family members or police officials, and that the best course of action is to “remain silent and pray to God for help.”\textsuperscript{232} In Jordan, only 22.8\% of Syrian refugee women and girls indicated that they would report instances of gender-based violence to police.\textsuperscript{233}

Syrian refugee women do not report abuses because they do not feel safe reaching out to authorities.\textsuperscript{234} UN Women has found that Syrian refugee women are unwilling to report out of fear of further abuse.\textsuperscript{235} One Syrian refugee woman, for example, engaged in domestic work was sexually harassed by her male employer, whose wife reported her to the police for allegedly attempting to seduce her husband; the refugee was forcibly relocated to a refugee camp.\textsuperscript{236}

Generally, women in Jordan do not report the abuses they face at home to the authorities because they feel stigma around the issue of intimate partner abuse.\textsuperscript{237} Because of this social stigma, many women do not seek out services for gender-based violence and thus, are not aware of available services. UN Women found in 2013 that women were not aware of the limited services that did exist for victims/survivors of gender-based violence.\textsuperscript{238} Moreover, the IRC found that reported cases of violence increased significantly as quality and trusted services became available to women and girls in Jordan; however, that rates of reporting are still considered low.\textsuperscript{239}

**IX. HUMAN TRAFFICKING**

Syrian refugees, including women and girls, are vulnerable to trafficking in all three host countries.\textsuperscript{240} Forced prostitution and child marriage are among the two most common forms of

\begin{footnotesize}
\begin{itemize}
\item[\textsuperscript{229}] See id. at 52-53.
\item[\textsuperscript{230}] See id. at 53.
\item[\textsuperscript{231}] See UN Women, Gender-based Violence, at 2-3.
\item[\textsuperscript{232}] See id. at 28.
\item[\textsuperscript{233}] See id.
\item[\textsuperscript{234}] See id.
\item[\textsuperscript{235}] See id.
\item[\textsuperscript{236}] See Int’l Rescue Comm., In Search of Work, at 16.
\item[\textsuperscript{237}] See FIDH, at 5.
\item[\textsuperscript{238}] See UN Women, Gender-based Violence, at 2.
\item[\textsuperscript{239}] See Int’l Rescue Comm., Are We Listening?, at 17 (reporting instances of violence to IRC increased as it increased its services and outreach to women and girls in Jordan, from 13 reports in January 2014 to 160 reports in June 2014).
\end{itemize}
\end{footnotesize}
trafficking in the region. \textsuperscript{241} Deep economic depression and limited income generating opportunities make women and girls particularly vulnerable to human trafficking. \textsuperscript{242}

A. Lebanon

Female Syrian refugees living in Lebanon are at risk of international, intra-regional and internal trafficking. \textsuperscript{243} Between 2015 and 2016, a series of raids conducted by Lebanese security personnel uncovered dozens of Syrian women being held against their will and resulted in the arrest of over a dozen individuals on charges of trafficking women into forced prostitution. \textsuperscript{244} During one raid in March 2016, as many as 75 Syrian women were rescued from two separate brothels. \textsuperscript{245} Human Rights Watch interviewed several of the women who were freed during the March raid and found that they were lured into Jordan from Syria by traffickers who promised them marriage and employment. \textsuperscript{246} These traffickers then forced the women into prostitution where they were never paid and routinely beaten. \textsuperscript{247}

Human Rights Watch has expressed concern that victims of human trafficking do not receive necessary services and support in Lebanon. \textsuperscript{248} Additionally, many individuals are reluctant to report trafficking crimes due to the criminalization of sex work and lack of legal residency status. \textsuperscript{249}

B. Turkey

Turkish activists report that human trafficking in the form of “temporary marriages” has been on the rise in Turkey since 2012. \textsuperscript{250} The system of temporary marriages involves the transportation and sale of Syrian women and girls to Turkish men as temporary brides. \textsuperscript{251} The Turkish men who engage in this practice typically use their Syrian brides for sex before divorcing them after a few months. \textsuperscript{252}

\textsuperscript{242} See Letsch, Syria’s Refugees.
\textsuperscript{244} See Human Rights Watch, Syrian Women.
\textsuperscript{245} See id.
\textsuperscript{246} See id.
\textsuperscript{247} See id.
\textsuperscript{248} See id.
\textsuperscript{249} See id.
\textsuperscript{250} See Letsch, Syria’s Refugees.
\textsuperscript{251} See id
\textsuperscript{252} See id.
C. Jordan

Syrian refugee women and girls in Jordan are vulnerable to trafficking for labor and marriage purposes. Because many Syrian refugees have limited access to the formal labor market, Syrian women and girls in Jordan are susceptible to being tricked into working without pay in Jordan. Additionally, Syrian refugee girls are particularly vulnerable to being trafficked for sexual exploitation through “temporary” or forced marriages to older men. Men from both Jordan and Gulf countries seek Syrian child brides in order to exploit them sexually before divorcing them. The Special Rapporteur on trafficking in persons, especially women and children, reported a case of a 17-year-old Syrian girl who was forced to marry 13 different men from both Jordan and Gulf countries over a period of two years. The marriages lasted between a day and a month.

X. QUEER FEMALES

UNHCR found that efforts to protect LGBTI refugees generally are a global concern. Of particular concern to LGBTI refugees are violence and harassment by members of their community, including family members, and by both state and non-state agents in host countries.

After conducting thorough research on Syrian LGBTI refugees in Lebanon, Turkey, and Jordan, it is clear there has been limited studies concerned with the security concern of LGBTI refugees. LGBTI refugees report they face gender-based violence. Because of fear of potential abuse, many LGBTI refugees are silent about their identity. One interviewee reported that members who identify with the Syrian refugee LGBTI community in Lebanon do not want to show their affiliation to a particular identity nor do they want to talk about their identity in fear that they would be killed.

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254 See id.
255 See Report of the Special Rapporteur at para. 18 (noting that “Syrian refugee women and girls are also trafficked for sexual exploitation through the practice of ‘temporary’ . . . marriages to Jordanians and older men from Gulf countries. . . . Once married, trafficked wives are likely to end up in a situation of sexual exploitation and domestic exploitation.”).
256 See id.
257 See id.
258 See id (the Special Rapporteur noted that “[f]or each ‘marriage’ . . . the victim was forced to undergo hymen reconstruction surgery at a private clinic in Aman . . .”).
A. Lebanon

Many LGBTI refugees in Beirut report that they engage in sex work as a form of employment and survival.262 Women’s Refugee Commission found that 95% of transwomen that they consulted with reported as current or former sex workers.263 Transwomen have reported physical violence as a regular incidence. Many transwomen have a consistent fear of being harmed not only by the Syrian community, but also police and sex work clients because they are in situations where they must exchange sex for food or shelter.264 One transwoman refugee in Beirut stated, “[a] lot of us are beaten up and robbed in the street or even raped just by random people and they destroy our life and move onto the next transperson.”265 This fear is shared amongst many LGBTI refugees.266

For example, lesbian Syrian refugees reported fear of being harmed by their families in practices such as “corrective” rape and forced marriage even before the crisis in Syria. However, this fear has been exacerbated because these incidents occur more often now in Beirut. This is due to women having restrictive movement in Lebanon; these women in Syria had more mobility and thus were able to create distance between themselves and their families.267

LGBTI refugees in Lebanon also face higher risks of gender-based violence than LGBTI non-refugees.268 Thus, many LGBTI refugees mitigate their risks of violence by isolating themselves from the public.269 One Syrian transwoman refugee reported “[w]e live in fear and anxiety and we don’t leave the house very much.”270 In addition, many LGBTI refugees are not aware of the many LGBTI organizations and thus are unable to utilize resources.271

B. Turkey

LGBTI Syrian refugees in Turkey face harassment, discrimination and violence from their families, neighbors, employees and members of the Turkish police.272 Although there is no Turkish law targeting LGBTI persons, broad criminal offenses such as “offenses against public morality” are used by Turkish authorities to harass homosexual and transgender people.273 Due to the threat of harassment or arrest, Syrian LGBTI refugees are less likely to pursue their legal rights under Turkish law than other Syrian refugees.274 Additionally, Turkish authorities have

263 See id. at 9.
264 Id.
265 Id.
266 Id.
267 See id. at 9.
268 See id. at 12.
269 See id. at 13.
270 See id.
271 See id.
273 See id.
274 See id.
refrained from punishing individuals who commit crimes against LGBTI people.\textsuperscript{275} A Syrian
refugee transwoman, for example, was stabbed to death in Istanbul in her home on December
2016 by a man posing as a customer.\textsuperscript{276} An activist with the Istanbul LGBTI Association
reported that transgender refugee women are subjected to more violence in Turkey than
transgender women of Turkish origin.\textsuperscript{277} The same activist reported that transgender Syrians are
exposed to police violence, and consequently lack access to justice.\textsuperscript{278}

C. Jordan

One Syrian transwoman refugee, since resettled in Canada, has told the press that she and
her friends in Jordan were picked up by the police, who cut their hair and then drove them across
the Syrian border.\textsuperscript{279} She was arrested herself with two transgender friends several weeks later,
taken to a government building by authorities where their jewelry and cellphones were
confiscated and they were subjected to torture.\textsuperscript{280} Police then demanded sex in exchange for
them not being taken back to Syria.\textsuperscript{281} Weeks later, she was assaulted again, this time by
members of the public who beat her and her transgender friends with wooden rods; one of the
friends was never seen again.\textsuperscript{282}

\textsuperscript{275} See id.
\textsuperscript{276} See Refugee Transgender Woman Was Killed in Istanbul, KaosGL, Dec. 22, 2016,
\textsuperscript{277} See id.
\textsuperscript{278} See id.
\textsuperscript{279} See Laura Fraser, Transgender Woman Survives Rape, Assault While Fleeing Syria, CBC News, Nov. 30, 2015,
\textsuperscript{280} See id.
\textsuperscript{281} See id.
\textsuperscript{282} See id.