Displaced adolescent girls' protection
Could casuistry be a methodology for humanitarians?

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Abstract

This dissertation will analyse the practice of displaced adolescent girls' marriages and critically explore the application of casuistry to this protection issue. It illustrates how currently dominant conceptualization of early marriages has failed to embed ethical and livelihoods dimensions. This, as well as the lack of displaced adolescent girls' agency, has contributed to inefficient interventions. The dissertation then demonstrates how group casuistry may address these flaws by emphasizing the values of stakeholders as well as the circumstances in which early marriages occur. This methodology would also allow displaced adolescent girls to exert more influence in decision-making. The dissertation highlights the comprehensiveness, simplicity and naturalness of the proposed approach. Finally, it discusses how group casuistry could facilitate various linkages and contribute to, for instance, connecting universality and contextuality in interventions.

Contents

1   Introduction

'I understand morality to be contextually defined. I take it to be the ability to distinguish right and wrong, and to uphold principles of justice and duty in accordance with individual conscience as shaped by cultural and social codes and precepts' (Boyden 2003:345).

Armed conflict and consequent displacement continue to affect millions worldwide by jeopardizing their protection and destroying their livelihoods. Women and children constitute a majority of uprooted populations and according to some analysts are particularly at risk (Freedson 2002; Machel 2001). As a result, a variety of organizations have focused on addressing their specific concerns. Yet, despite some encouraging exceptions, it seems that displaced adolescent girls have 'fallen through the cracks' (Ward and Marsh 2006; WCRWC 2000). Rape, trafficking, sexual exploitation and abuse continue.

The practice of early marriage is a protection concern that affects displaced adolescent girls (Benson 1994; de Smedt 1998; Hoodfar 2008; Krulfeld 1994; Swaine and Feeney 2004). Empirical evidence indicates that the risk of early marriage often increases in displacement (de Smedt 1998; Swaine with Feeny 2004). Therefore, displaced female adolescents, their protection, and early marriages have emerged as significant research topics.

Although research on adolescence started at the beginning of the 20th century when Hall (1904) brought the term to developmental psychology, it was only in the 1970s that the subject started to be examined in the context of political violence and displacement (Hart 2008b). Recently, displaced adolescent girls' lived experiences and early marriage have become more prominent in the literature (de Smedt 1998; Hoodfar 2008; Swaine with Feeny 2004). Despite this, more attention could be given to intervention methods aimed at reducing displaced female adolescents' protection risks, including early marriages. Additionally, a growing number of scholars and practitioners are discussing how protection is linked to livelihoods and how this interrelationship is crucial (Jaspars et al. 2007; Slim and Bonwick 2005; Young 2006). However, the linkage has been under-researched in the case of adolescent girls' protection concerns, such as early marriages. Currently, this practice has been mainly conceptualized in narrow terms as a human rights issue (Bunting 2005). Yet without fully understanding the complexity of protection issues, it is rarely possible to elaborate effective programs aimed at assuring displaced adolescent girls' protection.

This thesis argues that a particular form of case-based reasoning – group casuistry – could be, in certain circumstances, an effective additional methodology for humanitarians. It could help to understand and address the protection concerns of displaced adolescent girls. Early marriages are chosen as an example of a protection issue to demonstrate the application of casuistry.

More precisely, this thesis illustrates an inept conceptualization of displaced female adolescents' protection by highlighting the multi-dimensionality of their early marriages

and how this complexity has been inadequately addressed. It argues that group casuistry could address this multidimensionality, first, by emphasizing the values of displaced girls and their families, in addition to their rights, needs and risks. The discussion will show that values of displaced girls and their families have received too little attention from humanitarians, although early marriages often constitute value conflicts due to the contextuality of morality. Second, group casuistry would ensure that circumstances are included in programming that in the case of female adolescents' protection often refers to the linkage to livelihoods. Third, it would also better realize female adolescents' agency that is currently underestimated, notwithstanding its importance for successful intervention. Finally, the dissertation illustrates the comprehensiveness, simplicity and naturalness of group casuistry and demonstrates how it facilitates linkages. It has potential, for instance, to enhance the links between protection, livelihoods and values, theory and practice as well as universality and contextuality in interventions.

By critically reviewing various bodies of literature, this paper will analyze group casuistry in the context of displaced adolescent girls' protection. It builds in particular upon the work of Jonsen (1995), who participated in the rehabilitation of casuistry, and Jaspars et al. (2007), who were among the first to examine in detail the linkage between protection and livelihoods. However, this analysis will not examine in-depth the history of casuistry or provide a thorough analysis of livelihoods and protection concepts. It also does not engage in moral debates or elaborate taxonomy for female adolescent protection concerns.

It should be noted that this analysis is both exploratory and hypothetical. It examines an under-researched field where casuistry has not yet been applied. This study aims to further discussion on this topic and suggests empirical testing.

The analysis proceeds in the following main steps. First, a conceptual framework is established, melding anthropological, ethical, and humanitarian policy and practice perspectives. The discussion starts with prevailing concepts related to displaced adolescent girls and then continues by exploring the complexity of early marriages. The paper then considers current humanitarian interventions aimed at addressing displaced girls' early marriages. Next, casuistry is introduced by briefly discussing its origin and current application. Group casuistry is suggested as a suitable methodology to be applied for displaced female adolescents' early marriages. Further, group casuistry is applied to the case of early marriages and the advantages and disadvantages are explored. More precisely, the discussion explores how casuistry could emphasize values and circumstances and how it assures contextuality. Subsequently, the analysis proceeds by examining how this methodology could increase female adolescents' agency. Finally, the paper outlines the comprehensiveness, simplicity and naturalness of group casuistry and discusses how it functions as a 'linkage facilitator'.

2   Displaced adolescent girls

Before delving into discussion of early marriages, this section introduces such notions as displaced adolescent girls, protection and female adolescents' protection issues that are predominantly used and the premise of current conceptualization.

Forcibly displaced female adolescents

For many years development psychology, medicine, demography and education generated major theoretical concepts regarding young people. Yet youth, including adolescents, remained rather under researched compared to early and middle childhood (Boyden 2001). However, the reproductive health of adolescents is gaining attention and adolescents' sexual behaviour is being examined through a medical approach (Harcourt 1997; Mensch, Bruce and Greene 1998; Tremayne 2001).

As to anthropological paradigms, Hart (2008b) recently carried out a comprehensive overview of various approaches to adolescence. For instance, he discusses Mead's (1943) viewpoint on adolescence, which states that it may not be a universal a period of 'storm and stress,' and explores Bame Nsamenang (2002) who points out that adolescence is not 'a Eurocentric enterprise.' Hart (2008b) concludes that conceptualization of adolescence should not focus solely on psychological development and that much depends on a particular context. Chatty and Hundt (2005), in turn, maintain that youth experience in forced displacement needs to be explored and understood within a family context. Bunting (2005) and Caldwell et al. (1998) examine the social construction of adolescence and the role of colonialism in it.

Research has also demonstrated that many other factors such as gender, social class, caste and ethnicity play important roles in shaping the experience of adolescents. In various cases gender has a considerable impact (Hart 2008b). The duration of adolescence for girls, for instance, can vary in comparison to young men (Shahar 1990). Girls can suffer from specific anxieties related to returning to their home country (Hoodfar 2008), or can become vulnerable due to their social context (de Berry 2004). Displaced adolescent girls may have particular protection issues (Hart 2008b).

Different views also exist on displaced adolescent girls. As Swaine with Feeny (2004) discuss, according to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC), adolescent girls together with other children under 18 are considered to have specific needs due to their immaturity. Controversially, it seems that in many cultures adolescent girls are viewed and treated as adults, and therefore do not benefit from special protection. The third viewpoint suggests that displaced female adolescents constitute a special social group with a particular lived experiences, susceptibilities and capabilities (Swaine with Feeny 2004).

Notwithstanding a variety of existing paradigms, the conventional trend appears to regard female adolescents as merely victims in need of legal protection (Bunting 2005; Burr 2002). Hence psychomedical and legal paradigms seem to dominate, despite the fact that adolescence is increasingly viewed as a social construct, with a multitude of local concepts about adolescence, girlhood, womanhood and the variety of issues they face.

In order to address this disaccord and to allow a comprehensive understanding of displaced girls' experiences, in this paper Schlegel's definition of adolescence is considered: 'a period between childhood and adulthood during which its participants behave and are treated differently than either their seniors or their juniors' (Schlegel 1995:16). Therefore, it is a liminal life stage that 'is malleable in its boundaries and content…' (Hart 2008b: 7). De Berry (2008) also mentions that it is linked more to a particular social status than to a certain age category. In short, it is a socially constructed stage of life that characterizes the transition to adulthood, which occurs in the second decade of life and varies from context to context. Anthropological conceptualization was also selected as it allows an understanding of the context and how it shapes morality. Both aspects have currently been ignored by dominant paradigms. Often when the term 'children' is used, it also refers to adolescents. In this analysis the terms 'female adolescents' or '(adolescent) girls' are preferred to 'children' to emphasize the distinctiveness of the category. Only girls displaced forcibly by persecution or armed conflict in the North or South are examined.

Prior to discussing the conventional trend that highlights protection issues of uprooted girls as human rights concerns, it is important to define what is meant by 'protection.'

Protection

Jaspars et al. (2007:43) note: 'put simply, protection is about seeking to assure the safety of civilians from acute harm.' In fact, protection represents a conceptual challenge since, first, many humanitarian actors use the tailored concept of protection, which results in a multitude of existing definitions. Second, different scholars and humanitarian organizations focus on varied aspects: while some use protection to concentrate on legal safety (Chimni 2000; Goodwin-Gill and MacAdam 2007; Hathaway 1991); others, mainly NGOs, refer to physical security (Hastie et al. 2007; WFP 2006; World Vision 2007). In addition to examining protection from duty bearers' and third parties' viewpoints, the emphasis can also be on self-protection (Bonwick 2006a and 2006b; Vincent and Sorensen 2001). Third, it is a notion that is still evolving an evolution and lacks rigid conceptual boundaries. As O'Callaghan and Pantuliano (2007) discuss, it has developed from legally-oriented diplomatic engagement with national authorities to advocacy at the global level and implementation of projects at the local community level.

Nevertheless, the majority of main actors have agreed upon a definition that is considered as an 'overarching normative framework' for their tailored concepts:

> [Protection is] all activities aimed at obtaining full respect for the rights of the individual in accordance with the letter and spirit of the relevant bodies of law (i.e. human rights law, international humanitarian law and refugee law). Human rights and humanitarian organizations must conduct these activities in an impartial manner (not on the basis of race, national or ethnic origin, language or gender) (ICRC 1999).

Protection hence aims at preventing and mitigating acute harm that can be interpreted as violations of the civil, political, social and economic rights which are codified in the above-mentioned instruments of law or as threats to people's life, dignity and integrity (Jaspars et al. 2007).

In the framework of the broad definition, this thesis will focus on self-protection strategies that displaced girls and their families use to face their protection concerns. Based on Vincent and Sorenson (2001), protection strategy could be defined as a strategy that people use to protect right to life, security and liberty. Such choice is due to the fact that physical self-protection highlights better the agency of people and ethical and pragmatic choices they need to make to prevent and mitigate harm. Legal protection that emphasizes rights and the role of duty bearers and third parties in protecting civilians, seems often to remain too abstract at micro-level. It also does not allow for a thorough exploration of the situational complexity. Moreover, these strategies have been inadequately examined (Vincent and Sorensen 2001; Bonwick 2006b) and are vital for understanding the linkage to livelihoods, as discussed further in this thesis. Although risks and threats have a slightly different meaning and UNICEF prefers to use the term 'protection issue' (Lewis 1999; UNICEF 2009), in this analysis, protection risks, problems, threats, concerns and issues are used interchangeably.

Protection Issues of Displaced Adolescent Girls

What are these commonly emphasized protection risks that girls and their families need to address by self-protection strategies? Female adolescents, like all other civilians, may suffer from a multitude of human rights, international humanitarian law and refugee law violations. However, being considered by the international community as children, they also have specific 'child protection issues'. UNICEF defines 'child protection' as: 'preventing and responding to violence, exploitation and abuse against children – including commercial sexual exploitation, trafficking, child labour and harmful traditional practices, such as female genital mutilation/cutting and child marriage' (UNICEF 2009). All the aforementioned risks are examples of the 'child protection issues.'

Various kinds of risks such as rape, sexual exploitation and abuse threaten girls and young women in armed conflict and in situation of displacement (Machel 2001). Moreover, adolescent girls can be victims of domestic violence (Machel 2001), psychological persecution (Swaine with Feeny 2004), become unaccompanied minors, be adolescent heads of households and, although less than adolescent boys, be recruited as child soldiers (WCRWC 2000). In order to protect girls, parents may also marry them earlier (Boyden et al. 2002; Hart 2008b). While perceived as a protection strategy by the parents, early marriages are generally viewed as a violation of children's rights, a child protection issue.

However, to understand the complexity of adolescent girls' protection in displacement, it is important to go beyond the labels and deconstruct these risks. Such disaggregation allows various components and linkages to be uncovered. In the current discussion the issue of early marriages has been chosen as the focus for in-depth analysis.

3   Early marriages

Bearing in mind the concepts defined above, this section explores the phenomenon of early marriage and illustrates how this protection concern could often be simultaneously a protection strategy, a value conflict as well as a livelihood strategy.

Overview of the Problem

Early marriages continue to affect a great number of girls. According to UNICEF (2009), over 60 million women aged 20-24 were married or were in union prior to age 18 in developing countries. Early marriage can be defined as 'any marriage carried out below the age of 18, before the girl is physically, physiologically and psychologically ready to shoulder the responsibilities of marriage and child bearing' (The Inter-African Committee on Traditional Practices Affecting the Health of Women and Children in Mikhail 2002:43). In this analysis it is used interchangeably with 'adolescent marriage.'

Many authors discuss how the practice of early marriages increases in the context of displacement and how this constitutes a continuous threat for displaced girls (Benson 1994; Hoodfar 2008; Krulfeld 1994; Swaine and Feeney 2004). Bunting (2005:26) mentions that 'historically early marriage has been statistically significant during wartime and when a cultural community views itself as under threat'. De Smedt (1998) explains how adolescent marriage is a good example to explore changes in gender roles, relationships and marriage, since this practice was the most remarkable example of changing rules and behaviour among Rwandan refugees.

The governing approach to adolescent marriages has been without doubt legal, and even shadows medical paradigms (Bunting 2005). In addition to the CRC, it is framed by such legal instruments as Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1984) Article 16, Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (1979) Article 16, Convention on Consent to Marriage, Minimum Age for Marriage and Registration of Marriages (1962) as well as two African instruments (UNICEF 2009).

Value conflict

However, for decades early marriages have given rise to discussions over the age of marriage and the morality of this practice. Child protection specialists disapprove of early marriage. Their concern focuses on the health risks associated with early childbearing, the lack of educational opportunities, the greater likelihood of abuse and higher risk of divorce (Singh and Samara 1996; Outtara et al. 1998; UNICEF 2009). This view is based on the international legal framework and seems, among others, to be supported by such principles as 'right to education', 'right to health' and 'right to childhood.'

Yet, the values of girls and their parents framing their reasoning vary from context to context. For instance, in the case of Afghans displaced in Iran, parents' main reasoning is the emphasis on the collective good of the family. The girls, in turn, although willing to marry, asked for a right to accept or to refuse (Hoodfar 2008). On the other hand, displaced Kosovar Albanian parents mainly tried to protect their daughters from sexual abuse and early marriage was considered a protection strategy, though the girls themselves did not believe that this was an effective way to protect them (Swaine with

Feeny 2004). Displaced Laotians are forced to marry early mainly for chastity. Similarly to Kosovar and Afghan adolescents, Laotian girls' opinions differ significantly from those of their parents, resulting in intergenerational conflict (Benson 1994). Uprooted Cambodians also faced the problem of early marriages, which increased after resettlement. The main reasoning behind it was to control the adolescents' sexuality (Kulig 1994). In brief, in many displacement contexts, parents' reasons for marrying their daughters early and forcibly are based on the idea of safeguarding the honour of the family and/or protecting their daughters (Hoodfar 2008; Krulfeld 1994; Zolfaqar 2000 and Swaine and Feeny 2004), but girls have different viewpoints and often emphasize the principle of 'full and free consent of both parties.'

The aforementioned cases demonstrate that early marriages can be viewed as a value conflict where often at least three different perspectives can be distinguished – the parents', the girls' and the child protection advocates' approach, each of these sides prioritizing different values. The broad term 'value conflict' is used in this paper to include all possible kind of moral problems, conflicts and dilemmas.

The ethical approaches, however, currently seem to remain scarce. Indeed, there are debates over instrumental and monistic humanitarianism (Weiner 1998) as well as neutrality and moral standing (Leader 2000; Slim 1997a and 1997b). Various authors (Anderson 1994; McClellan 1995; Minear 1995) have discussed humanitarian action in moral terms. Yet, the literature review indicates that contributions mainly focus on overall ethical framework of humanitarian policy and very few analysts (Slim 1997a; Weiner 1998) discuss applying ethics to concrete dilemmas. Highlighting the contextuality of morality remains rare and the conceptualizations of displaced adolescent marriages as a moral dilemma were not identified.

It should be noted that parents do not always initiate early marriages. In the case of Kosovar Albanians, girls sometimes initiated the marriage, in order to keep the emigrating boyfriend or, if girls were the heads of households, to guarantee a livelihood. For many girls marriage represented the only remaining hope for a better future (Swaine and Feeny 2004). Similarly, in the case of Rwandan girls, it was mostly their decision, based on economical, emotional as well as security reasons (de Smedt 1998).

Livelihood

The latter examples indicate a move from the moral to the livelihoods dimension. These examples suggest that while early marriages may often be protection strategies and value conflicts, they can also be a way to assure a livelihood. Indeed, girls may be married in order to finance the marriage of a son, to pay rent, return a loan in difficult times or to gain capital to start a small income-generating activity. In hardship, Afghan girls can be viewed as resources, for example, to get as high a bride price as possible or to obtain brides for their brothers in exchange (Hoodfar 2008). Bride price was sometimes among the reasons to marry early in the case of displaced Laotians as well (Benson 1994). UNICEF (2009) argues that another reason for parents to marry off their daughter early is that daughters may be viewed as an economic burden and marrying them off would be a survival strategy for the family. They could be considered as an extra mouth to feed (Farah 2000). Since girls may in some cultures be valued less than boys, they may be more

easily separated by marriage from their family. Early marriages are hence clearly related to livelihoods and viewed in some cases as livelihood strategies. Again, the current dominating legal paradigm masks the livelihood dimension.

Before looking at how protection issues are connected to livelihoods, it is important to clarify what exactly is meant in this paper by livelihood and a livelihood strategy. Chambers and Conway (1992:7-8), whose definition is most commonly accepted, state that: 'a livelihood comprises the capabilities, assets (stores, resources, claims, and access) and activities required for a means of living; a livelihood is sustainable when it can cope with, and recover from stress and shocks, maintain or enhance its capabilities and assets, and provide sustainable livelihood opportunities for the next generation'.

In fact, Chambers (1988:1) went further and contributed to developing a livelihood approach that looks at 'where people are, what they have, and what their needs and interests are'. Schafer (2002:14) describes it as 'one that takes as its starting point the actual livelihoods strategies of people.' The main elements of livelihood framework are: assets, strategies, outcomes and policies, institutions and processes (PIP). The latter refers to the governance environment, through which households negotiate the use of their assets and the configuration of their livelihood options (Lautze and Raven-Roberts 2006). Livelihood strategies can be defined a the range of activities and choices that people make and undertake by combining and using assets in order to achieve their livelihood goals (DFID 1999).

However, is the livelihoods approach a valid concept to be used in displacement? Indeed, it was initially used in natural disasters and in the development realm, but has been increasingly applied in complex emergencies (Buchanan-Smith and Jaspars 2006; Collinson 2003; Lautze and Raven Roberts 2006; Stites et al. 2006), the situations that often cause displacement. While adapted to conflicts, vulnerability may be emphasized further (Collinson 2003) and the analysis of power relations and of assets as liabilities could be introduced (Duffield 1994; Jaspars et al. 2007; Lautze and Raven Roberts 2006). Some add an additional asset – political status or proximity to power (Jaspars et al. 2007; Collinson 2003). Many authors have also focused on examining PIP in details in conflict settings (Buchanan-Smith and Jaspars 2006; Young et al. 2005; Jaspars and Shoham 2002; Lautze and Raven Roberts 2006).

The livelihood approach is useful for analyzing early marriages as it focuses on the various elements of livelihoods, the aspects that affect livelihoods and their vulnerability, and the interactions between these elements (Jaspars et al. 2007). It therefore contributes to deconstruction and an in-depth understanding of this complex phenomenon. In current analysis, the Lautze and Raven Roberts (2006) concept adaptable to complex emergencies is chosen as it accommodates a greater variety of displacement situations. Thanks to its embedded vulnerability, it also includes risks and resulting vulnerabilities generated by people. This is an important aspect as early marriages are endogenous to families. Moreover, this model considers the relationships among violence, assets and liabilities, seeming thus the most suitable to capture the complex inherent link to protection.

Linkage between protection and livelihoods

The question that arises is: how are these two notions related and how has this linkage been conceptualized?

Despite a scarcity of literature on this topic, the existing sources indicate that one of the connections is related to the notion 'coping or survival strategies.' The latter are often used to illustrate the activities that manage threats to livelihoods as well as to personal safety (Jaspars et al. 2007; Vincent and Sorenson 2001). Various analysts use different typologies of strategies (Bonwick 2006b; Vincent and Sorenson 2001; Le Billon 2000; Jaspars and Shoham 2002; Korf 2003) and some prefer to use subsistence or economic survival strategies instead of livelihood strategies (Davies 1993; Devereux 1999; Jaspars et al. 2007).

Despite the debates over definitions and categorizations, the research indicates that one linkage between the two concepts is related to the inextricability of the strategies that are undertaken to manage the risks to livelihoods and protection. Various factors refer to this linkage. First, the debate around the categorization and conceptual confusion indicates that boundaries between strategies may be blurred. Second and related to the first, certain activities, such as early marriages, can be simultaneously protection and livelihoods strategies. Some other such examples are: reducing investment into assets that may be looted, are immobile or could be stolen, or transition to short-season or low-risk crops (Jaspars et al. 2007). Third, often the strategies of one group may be harmful for others or they may conflict (Jaspars et al. 2007; Young et al. 2007). In Teso, for instance, some girls were exposed to sexual abuse by other community members. The latter protected their own daughters and secured their livelihoods by contributing to sexual abuse of others (de Berry 2004). Some strategies may not have such a visible interrelation. Hence, no clear-cut division between livelihood and protection strategies seems to exist in the everyday lives of a population. Rather, various livelihood and protection strategies may mutually influence each other and this can be neutral, positive or negative. For instance, livelihood situations can increase protection risks, as when firewood must be collected and farming done in insecure areas (Stites et al. 2006; Buchanan-Smith and Jaspars 2006; O'Callaghan and Pantuliano 2006). Similarly, an increase in violence affects the livelihoods of certain populations as movements and access may be restricted and markets destroyed (Jaspars et al. 2007).

In the case of adolescents, de Berry (2008:215) states: '…however much young people seek to protect themselves, it is often necessary for them to compromise their personal safety and protection in order to play a vital part in sustaining family life in times of great hardship.' She describes the rationale young people use in Afghanistan – they give priority to livelihood activities over protection since the first is the necessity, but protection risks are only a possibility.

Various organizations have started to link protection and assistance activities. The linkage can be explained by similarities the two approaches share. Both conduct macro and micro level analysis, emphasize contextual understanding and use participatory approaches (Jaspars et al. 2007; Narbeth and McLean 2003). Linking the two approaches also provides a safe way to explore sensitive issues since the focus is on peoples' daily life and not on

politics (Collinson 2003). Most often a 'do no harm' approach (Anderson 1999) seems to be applied that emphasizes minimizing negative consequences of assistance (Jaspars et al. 2007). Also 'protection mainstreaming' may be used, which goes further than 'do no harm' and purposefully aims to use assistance to provide protection.

Yet, except in a few encouraging examples, the linkage of protection and livelihoods has remained rather under researched and a dearth of understanding and of conceptualizations prevails (Jaspars et al. 2007).

Linkages between protection, livelihoods and values

Protection and livelihoods strategies do not occur separately from value conflicts, but are interlinked. How have current conceptualizations of protection and livelihoods succeeded in incorporating the values of different stakeholders?

It seems that both livelihoods and protection concepts do not emphasize culture and customary practices that embed values and morality. In the case of livelihoods, some mention that they are incorporated in PIP (Jaspars et al. 2007; Collinson 2003; Lautze and Raven-Roberts 2006); however, current research has focused more on policies and institutions than cultural processes and ethical issues (e.g. Buchanan-Smith and Jaspars 2006; Young et al. 2005). In the case of protection, culture and values appear to be even more dismissed from conceptualizations.

Given the focus of current analysis, this leads to the following questions. How is the issue of displaced girls' early marriage currently addressed in the field? Although dominant concepts have failed to take into consideration the multi-dimensionality of adolescent marriage, have the humanitarians been successful in capturing it? Have the agencies been able to address the inextricable linkages between livelihood, protection and values in the case of displaced girls' early marriages?

4 Current interventions

In this section I will first explore adolescent protection activities and then look at how value conflicts have been managed. Subsequently, I will examine livelihood-related activities and finally, I shall discuss the results of interventions.

Due to the large number of humanitarian actors, only the most pertinent current trends and contributions of main agencies are discussed. It should be noted that peer-reviewed data on interventions towards displaced female adolescent marriage is inadequate, both in terms of evaluations of concrete activities and the effects of these interventions. However, the analysis of main trends in the field allows certain conclusions to be drawn regarding displaced adolescent marriages and fill this lacuna. Yet further research is necessary to understand the specificity of interventions and their consequences in various displacement settings.

Adolescent protection

Since uprooted female adolescents are legally viewed as children, child protection activities in particular are aimed at addressing their protection concerns. However, activities emphasizing women's rights are also used. For instance, UNICEF states that early marriage needs to be addressed as a human rights violation and the treaty-monitoring committee for the Women's Convention (CEDAW) advocates for a uniform marriageable age (Bunting 2005). This indicates that early marriage has been considered one-dimensionally by agencies and that legal protection dominates. Save the Children's Alliance (SC), however, focused in particular on displaced girls. The agency conducted a survey in a Bhutanese refugee camp that outlined the need for awareness-raising through informal education, introducing sex education to school curriculum, changing school policies about married children's access and creating opportunities for informal and vocational training (Umesh Kumar Kattel 1997). Swaine with Feeny (2004:84) also mention that 'chances are that these girls would choose employment over marriage as a post-conflict survival strategy,' referring to the possibility that income generation may be an option to combat this phenomenon. Yet, these are just recommendations and research indicates that contemporary non-governmental and international approaches build on international human rights strategies to combat early marriages (Bunting 2005).

Value conflict management

Since early marriage can be regarded as a value conflict, ethical decision-making (EDM) involving various stakeholders may be required for efficient interventions. Indeed, humanitarian actors have increasingly recognized the importance of ethics, resulting in the development of principles and codes of conduct.[1] However, these tools remain very general in their scope (Slim 1997a) and going beyond the codes to micro-level cases is rare. Coady's (1996) critiques on insufficient use of codes in current EDM also support this claim. The success of reification of ethical constructs to humanitarian policy and programming is modest, as applying EDM tools – in particular in the case of displaced female adolescent protection – remains extremely rare.

Indeed, in this area of forced migration, like everywhere, people with a multitude of worldviews and moral appeals make decisions. Some may rely on consequentialism, arguing that the benefit of an action should outweigh the harm, while others depart from deontological ethics and emphasize the inherent good or evil of acts. Moreover, some other moral philosophies, such as ethical egoism or relativism may be applied (Carlson and Kacmar 1997). Yet lack of reference to EDM frameworks seems to indicate that the application of moral theories in cases of displaced female adolescents' protection mainly happens unconsciously and without any method. Miner and Petocz (2003) label such ethical judgements as not 'fully informed'.

Both the existence of conflict and EDM refer to the involvement of others. Conflict refers to at least two parties and an ethical decision ought to be based on something more than self-will, reflect social consensus and involve considerations regarding 'each stakeholder group' (Jones 1991; Miner and Petocz 2003). Translated into the early marriage context, it

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[1] Mainly Principles of Conduct for the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement and NGOs in Disaster Response Programmes, but also the Mohonk Criteria for Humanitarian Assistance in Complex Emergencies and Providence Principles.

means the involvement of girls and their parents. Indeed, adolescent participation is nowadays a widely used approach and efforts are being made to include it in various humanitarian interventions (Watters 2008). Conceptualization of early marriage as a human rights issue seems to refer to considering parents as the guardians of children's rights. This leads to the conclusion that parent involvement might pose a lesser hurdle since parents seem to be regarded as gatekeepers to adolescents.

Link to livelihoods activities
Given the linkage between protection and livelihoods, some may argue that livelihoods activities indirectly tackle the protection issues of adolescent girls. While a protection approach emphasizes rights, the livelihoods approach highlights needs as a central notion (Darcy 2005) and may thus highlight other aspects. However, despite the applicability of the concept of livelihood to complex emergencies, these activities remain rather rare in these settings (Jaspars et al. 2007). Yet many displacement situations are related to conflicts.

In order to, inter alia, better combine the particularities of protection and livelihoods, some have developed a risk-based approach (Darcy and Hofmann 2003; Darcy 2005). Although contributing to the diminishing dichotomy between needs and rights, the risk-based approach requires experienced staff and provides a discussion forum for management levels rather than a practical tool to be implemented (Darcy 2005).

Results
Information is scarce about the results of activities tackling adolescent girls' marriages in displacement. Yet the conceptualizations, the empirical evidence and the activities described above allow us to assume that the results for displaced girls are rather modest. For instance, humanitarians may intervene based on their own values and fail to understand the values and desires of adolescents and particularity of different cultures (Tefferi 2008; Liebel 2004). Heiberg (2001) also refers to a 'moralist approach' to children's sexual abuse and exploitation. Hence the plurality of values, and parents' and girls' beliefs, have not been fully incorporated into early-marriage programming. It is unlikely that displacement situations constitute an exception, as the time frame is often limited. Lack of ethical analysis in cases of displaced early marriages is most probably linked to the lack of perception of early marriages as value conflicts; however, further research is needed to confirm this assumption.

Additionally, Bunting (2005) criticizes early marriage-related human rights discourse as failing to include the socio-economic determinants and cultural contexts of 'child marriage'. Dolan and Hovil (2006) note that humanitarian actors sometimes use predetermined approaches to protection and do not engage in a thorough analysis of the context. Moreover, de Berry (2008) mentions extending existing programmes to adolescents, but notes that this is inadequate due to the complexity of the situation. She also points out that agencies tend to focus on an individual child protection issue instead of having a holistic approach. De Berry also outlines the lack of local understanding of risks. Therefore, the emphasis on context seems to be often limited.

Various authors (Lautze and Raven-Roberts 2006; Le Sage and Majid 2002) argue that livelihoods activities have not been successfully integrated into humanitarian interventions. The latter, however, often aim at addressing the concerns of the displaced. Moreover, despite growing knowledge that endangered populations do not recognize differences between protection and livelihoods (Jaspars et al. 2007), challenges of joint programming remain. Among the main hurdles are lack of holistic thinking and/or organization-wide analytical frameworks (Jaspars et al. 2007). De Berry (2004:9) adds that 'commonly, however, in designing and implementing projects for war-affected youth there is not enough attention given to the reality of the circumstances in which young people live and develop'. The circumstances in cases of displacement, as will be discussed later, are often interwoven with livelihoods issues.

As for current participatory approaches, they remain rather limited and do not lead to a shift of power in relationships between children and adults (Laws et al. 2003). As Liebel (2004) notes, participation is often restricted to rather marginal questions and does not result in real influence. The adolescents are heard, but do not take part of real decision-making. In some cases their views are not taken literally, but used to legitimize adults' fixed ideas (Liebel 2004). In conflict settings, it is discussed that 'groups with greater power are likely to dominate unless marginalized and exploited populations are actively sought' (Jaspars 2007:23). With that in mind, it is rather unlikely that displacement-affected girls experience much full participation.

Lack of agency

Although from the early 1990s the international community began to think of displaced persons as active participants in their own survival rather than passive aid receivers (Byrne and Baden 1995; Gibbs 1994; Honwana 1999; Malkki 1995), displaced female adolescents are often regarded as passive victims. This is particularly the case when adolescents' exploitation is considered, since they are so described, whether lured or forced into exploitive activities (Heiberg 2001), and extremely rare is the discussion that emphasizes their agency. In the case of early marriages, this is best seen by the widespread use of such labels as 'forced marriage' and 'arranged marriage'. Thus their agency remains insufficiently explored and considered. 'Agency' is defined in this dissertation as 'realized capacity of people to act upon their world and not only to know about or give personal or intersubjective significance to it' (Holland et al. 1998:42).

Indeed, adolescent girls often exercise less agency and have less power than adults. In the context of adolescents and displacement, several authors note that although adolescents carry out adults' responsibilities particularly in conflict-affected situations, they have less social power compared to adults (Hart 2008b; Swaine with Feeny 2004). It is also a widely known fact that many adolescent exploitation cases are a result of coercion, intimidation or indoctrination carried out by adults.

However, to assume that girls do not have any agency at all, or that it is unworthy of consideration, is both erroneous and dangerous. According to Hajdukowski-Ahmed (2008:30), 'any comprehensive understanding of refugee women and their identity must both recognize the agency of the subject and integrate culture and history into that understanding'. She adds that it is also relevant to humanitarian programmes for refugee

women. In many cultures female displaced adolescents are perceived as women, hence the aforementioned quote is pertinent for this discussion. Similarly, from children's perspective – they, including adolescents, are people of equal rights who have agency and should be viewed as social actors (James et al. 1998; Jans 2004; Liebel 2004). Displacement does not constitute an exception. As discussed before, in some instances, displaced adolescent girls exercise agency and choose to marry early (de Smedt 1998). De Smedt (1998:220) mentions that in a Rwandan refugee camp the female adolescents '…took advantage of the men, using them to achieve their own goals. Their life in the camps was very difficult; they were looking for ways to improve their life, looking for things they thought men or marriage could provide – a better life, protection, company, attention; in short, a (better) future.' Swaine with Feeny (2004) also note that displaced adolescent girls show agency and apply various protection strategies.

Finally, it is not merely erroneous, but even dangerous to consider that children and youth are without agency since sexual abuse often stems from the belief that children are the 'property' of their family, to be used as they see fit (Heiberg 2001). Kitzinger (1997), in turn, argues that focusing on the innocence of childhood, its asexuality and ignorance can be counterproductive in the fight against child sexual abuse. This ideology, as Kitzinger discusses, is: 'to deny children access to knowledge and power and hence actually to increase their vulnerability to abuse' (Kitzinger 1997:169). She describes how children are portrayed as passive, with innate vulnerability, rather than as agents of their own life. Their survival strategies are labelled 'post-traumatic stress syndrome' (Kitzinger 1997). According to the author, this paternalistic approach can lead to decreased protection of children. Although the two last-mentioned authors discussed child sexual abuse in general terms, no solid evidence was found to refute the validity of these claims in the context of displacement.

To sum up the current situation, the problem of early marriages lies in an overly simplistic dominant conceptualization. This protection issue has not been perceived as a value conflict or a livelihood strategy. It seems that such erroneous perception of the issue, a lack of consideration of girls' agency and of cross-cultural ethical sensitivity, have lead to inadequate interventions. The latter can be described by limited participatory approaches and a dearth of EDM tools. This leads to the question how these flaws could be tackled.

5   Casuistry

This section will suggest 'group casuistry' as a method to address some of the shortcomings of current interventions. It will provide the definition of casuistry, its brief history, nature, current application and procedures.

Definitions and history

Casuistry is a case-based reasoning that provides a practical approach for solving moral dilemmas. More precisely, Jonsen and Toulmin (1988:257) define it as follows:

> The analysis of moral issues, using procedures of reasoning based on paradigms and analogies, leading to the formulation of expert opinions about the existence and stringency of particular moral obligations, framed in terms of rules or maxims that are general but not universal or invariable, since they hold good with certainty only in the typical conditions of the agent and circumstances of action.

Simply, 'casuistry involves the use of settled cases to resolve present moral dilemmas' (Calkins 2001:238). Casuistry is a type of EDM that uses analogical reasoning (referring to previous cases) and is useful for managing value conflicts. It gives guidance how to weigh different and often conflicting values and come to a resolution about appropriate course of action in a concrete situation.

Casuistry has its roots in Aristotle's analysis of moral practice. Aristotle elaborated practical wisdom – pronesis – in order to deal with problems in law, politics, ethics and rhetoric. However, the Stoics are generally credited with the development of casuistry and Cicero is regarded as the first real casuist. He first discussed the conflict between duty and advantage and gathered moral dilemmas in a 'case book' for analyzing moral logic. Although casuistry was in particular largely applied in confessional and pastoral theology in 16th- and 17th-century Europe, a similar practice developed in parallel in Judaism and Islam (Jonsen and Toulmin 1988). However, Pascal attacked casuistry in his *Provincial Letters* in 1656 because of the abuse of its methods as it had developed into 'a sordid form of logic-chopping in the service of personal expediency' (Arras 1997:175).

The methodology was consequently regarded as disreputable for more than three centuries (Jonsen and Toulmin 1988). Although Kirk (1927:125) wrote that 'the abuse of casuistry is properly directed, not against all casuistry, but only against its abuse,' it was not until Jonsen and Toulmin (1988) published *The Abuse of Casuistry: A History of Moral Reasoning* that casuistry was rehabilitated. The latter revived the methodological debate between neo-casuists (e.g. Jonsen and Toulmin 1988; Miller 1996; Strong 2000) and those who are more sceptical (e.g. Beauchamp and Childress 1994; Emanuel 1991; Tomlinson 1994; Wildes 1993), particularly in bioethics and over such issues as the relationship between principles and moral judgement, and cases being the sources of judgement (Jonsen 1995).

Current application

The modern application of casuistry varies from casuist to casuist. Nordgren (2002) discusses some variations of contemporary casuistry in bioethics. For instance, Brody (1998) suggest a 'pluralistic casuistry' that accepts the legitimate plurality of moral appeals – be it utilitarian, deontological or from a third moral theory. Brody argues that all these views have failed since they have not focused on other legitimate appeals. Brody sees casuistry as a decision-making process and uses intuition instead of analogy for finding solutions. Jonsen and Toulmin (1988) propose a 'new casuistry' that uses analogical reasoning and they argue that three kinds of problematic cases exist: when a paradigm is not clearly applicable; when two or more paradigms are simultaneously applicable,

creating a contradiction; and when cases are novel, meaning that various kind of historical changes bring novel situations and require us to reconsider our moral positions.

Nordgren (2002) suggests using a decision-making method labelled 'imaginative casuistry'. Instead of intuition or analogy, he prefers moral imagination: 'the ability to envisage different perspectives, alternatives of action, and arguments, and to empathize with other people' (Nordgren 2002: 285). Finally, Kuczewsky (1994) states that casuistry is a 'sophisticated type of communitarianism' ,where the concrete issues of applied ethics can be solved rationally, without first resolving theoretical disagreements between different debating parties.

Hence a diversity of applications exists in bioethics, offering an alternative for deductivistic applied ethics (Arras 1991; Jonsen and Toulmin 1988). Casuistry is also used in religious ethics and philosophy (Miller 1996) and has been suggested as a methodology for the ethics of business, government, environment and journalism (Boeyink 1992; Calkins 2001; Jonsen 1995). In fact, its application is widespread since ordinary people unconsciously use casuistry in their daily life (Calkins 2001). Case-based reasoning in broader terms is applied, inter alia, in medicine and in common law (Jonsen and Toulmin 1988).

Regarding conflict and displacement, for instance, Walzer (1977) applies casuistry for analyzing the morality of wars. However, more relevant to the current discussion is the application of casuistry to displacement, carried out by Weiner (1998). He discusses how UNHCR and other humanitarian actors can proceed if they have to choose among competing international norms. Weiner explains, for instance, how (UNHCR) could decide if women's rights conflict with the humanitarian imperative.

Group casuistry

I propose 'group casuistry' as the EDM method to complement existing tools used in cases of female adolescent protection. Group casuistry primarily uses analogical reasoning, but could also additionally invoke moral imagination. It stresses that paradigm cases have a certain consensus in their community, which is achieved by making decisions jointly in a group setting, involving all main stakeholders – displaced girls, their parents and humanitarians. The method allows the inclusion of other players, such as extended family members, but in this essay the tripartite application is used as an example. Adapting Jonsen's (1995) intellectual steps of casuistry, I suggest three main steps of group casuistry: determining topics and maxims, describing and evaluating the circumstances and reviewing maxims, and comparing the new case to existing paradigm cases.

I will hereafter apply group casuistry to tackle the issue of early marriages. My aim is to demonstrate how this methodology includes the values of stakeholders and the circumstances. I will also discuss how it allows more the realization of girls' agency in humanitarian intervention.

6   Values

Definitions

One of the main strengths of casuistry is that it sheds light on values, beliefs and attitudes. These vary, already according to Montaigne, from context to context (Geertz 1984). Before discussing how casuistry highlights different stakeholders' values, it is important to note what is meant by 'value' in this analysis. I will also discuss some other designations.

A myriad of definitions for the term 'value' exist. Rokeach (1968:124) provides a social psychology perspective and states: 'I consider a value to be a type of belief, centrally located within one's total belief system, about how one ought or ought not to behave...' Wines and Napier (1992:832) furnish an ethicist perspective and state that 'a value is seen to be the disposition of a person just like an attitude, but more basic than an attitude, often underlying it.' Economists use it to designate monetary value or the utilities of various resources (Daly and Townsend 1993). Individuals in their daily lives, in turn, use 'value' to highlight dimensions of personal and social experiences that they consider particularly important or worthy (Lynn 1998).

In the current study 'value' is used as an umbrella term in a broad sense, with wide-ranging connotations. In brief, in this analysis value refers to what is important for various stakeholders. Under this designation, for instance, fall beliefs, attitudes, moral values and perceptions. Moral standards and ethical principles are likewise included in this concept, despite the fact that they differ from values in terms of ethics (Hosmer 1994). Although such conflating of value judgements and ethical norms is criticized by many ethicists (Lynn 1998), I believe these distinctions are rather trivial for addressing the issue of early marriages in a displacement situation. Yet, it does not mean that humanitarians ought not to aim for better ethical skills and distinguish between various ethical concepts, as proposed by Slim (1997a). It rather indicates that all beliefs, including values, as well as moral standards and ethical principles concerned, need to be regarded to fully comprehend the complexity of adolescent marriage. Moreover, such simplified popular conceptualization is more easily applicable in the field.

However, I separate legal norms from ethical norms and do not include the former in the concept of value. I believe that current excessive equalization of legal and ethical frameworks has led to disregard of the contextuality of morality.

The terms 'moral' and 'ethical' are used interchangeably to refer to what is right according to accepted standards of conduct. I respect the divergences of these terms in ethics, but do not think these distinctions are crucial in the context of forced migration. Regarding 'ethics', following Wines and Napier (1992), this designation refers to the application of moral precepts (maxims) to concrete problems. Boyden's (2003) definition of 'morality' is used, which is outlined in the introduction of this paper.

First step – topics and maxims

The first step in casuistic decision-making is to determine topics – main features of the value conflict. Jonsen (1995:242) explains them as 'the defining features of those enterprises: the activities and relationships that make them what they are'. Based on the

disaggregation of early marriages discussed earlier, I propose following four topics for female displaced adolescents' early marriages: protection (human rights) issues; consequences of early marriages; stakeholders' preferences; and contextual features. The latter would also include displacement and livelihoods related issues. In brief, all the maxims - the main arguments regarding the appropriate course of action - in case of early marriage stem from these four topics, which ought to cover the causes and consequences of this phenomenon. If the topics that were determined in a context were used in a new case, it is important to discuss these with all relevant stakeholders in the new context to ensure their appropriateness and legitimacy.

Group casuistry emphasizes values by asking participants to outline their preferences and views. It requires us to go beyond regarding early marriage as a mere human rights issue and opens the possibility that participants may have different, conflicting values. It therefore ensures that the belief systems of all stakeholders are jointly considered. In this respect it is similar to the peace education and conflict resolution approaches, which also regard each side of the narrative as well as deeply rooted beliefs (Salomon 2002). If values had not been emphasized, it would have easily been missed that Kosovar adolescent girls understood their own security as embedded in the stability of their families and communities, and that they often prioritize the survival of their male family members above their own (Swaine with Feeny 2004). Or that in Afghanistan 'adolescent boys and girls value in particular the economic contribution they can make to their families and their responsibility for bringing in income and running the household' (Berry 2008:213). These are just a few examples. They also illustrate that values are not merely personal, but strongly influenced by culture. Stakeholders' differing values will emerge while discussing the other three topics and set of circumstances. They can be revealed by asking stakeholders questions such as 'why do you think/do that,' or 'why is this important for you?'

Discussion of preferences and their underpinning values leads to an understanding of what is acceptable or ethical – 'good', 'right' and 'just' – behaviour for adolescent girls and their parents in a certain setting. It is best achieved by identifying maxims. This is a process that starts while discussing topics and continues in the evaluation of circumstances. It is concluded after circumstances have been discussed. During the third step the ruling maxim(s) ought to be determined.

Jonsen and Toulmin (1988) state that maxims function as inference principles of the moral argument and can be classified by topics. Maxims are moral precepts, abbreviated arguments that are commonly accepted, but sometimes apply only marginally or ambiguously. Various stakeholders may apply different maxims. The following examples clarify the difference between stakeholders' preferences, maxims and values. In the case of early marriages, girls may prefer to marry, but want to choose their husbands. This preference, in turn, may invoke maxims as 'informed consent is obligatory' or 'persons have the right to take their own risk', both referring to the underlying value of autonomy. The consequences of early marriage may call for such maxims as 'do no harm' and 'everyone has a right to education and health', the first based on the value of beneficence and second referring to quality of life and justice. In the discussion regarding contextual features and circumstances, the maxim 'common good should come first' may emerge.

Such disaggregation of stakeholders' preferences is necessary to understand the local morality and thus the moral landscape for EDM. This, in turn, is needed for successful interventions. Without knowledge of what different stakeholders consider to be ethically appropriate courses of action, the elaboration of an effective and sustainable intervention may easily fail. Regarding early marriages this could mean that while humanitarians consider individual protection as the framework of intervention, girls and their parents emphasize common good, meaning the well-being and protection of their family. If such divergence is not appropriately addressed, inefficient programmes result. Mostly projects fail that lack local moral legitimacy and do not incorporate what is important to the people. Second, this would help humanitarians to do the right thing in very complex situations and reduce their moral confusion. As Slim (1997a: 246) discusses: 'much poor morale in relief agencies is directly linked to a predominant sense of moral confusion…people only tend to feel good about what they do if they are confident that what they are doing is right.' Such deconstruction and emphasis on maxims and values allows establishing moral landmarks for orientation in the complex situation. Comparing these moral landmarks to the core values of the organization can help humanitarians to better navigate in a challenging moral landscape.

Values, law and ethics

It can be argued that there is a universal ethical principle that is accepted by all. Reference can be made to many legal instruments and the CRC in particular, which has been ratified by a majority of states, underpinning such universal values as respect, autonomy, and non-maleficence. Hence no need exists to regard early marriage as a valid moral conflict and it is sufficient to use a legal framework. However, first, legal positivists and followers of Bentham may argue towards the separateness of law and morality and disagree that morality is the foundation of law. They often refer to the 'doctrine of sources', Article 38 of the Statute of the International Court of Justice that enumerates treaties, custom and general principles of law as 'the exclusive means for generating legal obligations on states' (Steiner et al. 2008:61).

Second, humanitarians often 'inherit' a moral landscape where the application of human rights law fails locally and humanitarians 'find themselves making decisions in a legal vacuum' (Slim 1997a: 247). Slim continues by arguing that in a lawless environment there exist only a few mutually respected norms. This leads to morally tough choices, compared with contexts where the rule of law is commonly accepted as a basis for what is right and wrong. He concludes by stating that: 'any situation in which one party or more is actively failing to meet its obligations under law is bound to expose a third party to more extreme moral choices' (Slim 1997a: 247). Thus, to decide an appropriate course of action, ethical analysis and EDM are even more crucial in a volatile context than in a stable setting.

Third, assuming that there is a universal moral truth, the application of it – ethics – differs from context to context. Athenian philosophers were already aware that cultural differences create ambiguities in ethics (Jonsen and Toulmin 1988). Virtues may be interpreted as non-relative while at the same time they are culturally sensitive (Nussbaum 1988). Application of the same principle, for instance 'child's best interest', can vary considerably in the case of early marriages: those in favour may refer to this principle as well as those rejecting such practice. The former would argue that in a patriarchal society

an adolescent girl might be ostracized if she does not marry the man that has been chosen for her (Alston and Gilmour-Walsh 1996). This leads us to the second main strength of casuistry – its emphasis on circumstances.

7   Circumstances

Second step – circumstances and maxims
What are circumstances and how exactly does casuistry include them? Circumstances are facts (e.g. statistics and nouns) that can be uncovered by such questions as 'who, what, where, when, why, how, and by what means.' Like values, they differ from context to context. For instance, the question – 'what constitutes threats to you,' may reveal varying answers in different cases. While Kosovar Albanians view their male family members as protectors of girls and women (Swaine with Feeny 2004), Afghan girls perceive their brothers and fathers as threats to their happiness and safety (Hoodfar 2008).

This phase corresponds to the conventional assessment, where needs, rights violations and risks are determined. It is similar to thorough problem analysis, in which the core of the problem in a certain case is determined. This is also the stage that considers the livelihood dimension and the link to protection. In the case of displaced girls' early marriages, inter alia, questions such as the following may be asked: What are the schooling and work opportunities for adolescents? How old are the girls? How widespread is the problem? What are the reasons? If enrolled in school while marrying, could they continue education? Who is initiating the early marriages – girls or their parents? How is the girls' reproductive health affected by the marriages? Facts, like maxims, can be categorized by topics.

Casuists argue that circumstances MAKE the case (Jonsen and Toulmin 1988). In other words, when facts are determined, it is necessary to review the maxims. It is important to see if and how the additional information affects the appropriate solutions suggested by the stakeholders. Maybe some new maxims emerge, but most probably the second step helps to outline the main maxims for the case. In the first stage all suggested maxims were considered. In this step, however, the parties need to choose those they all agree upon based on circumstances. For instance, it may be that girls are married early because the livelihood situation of their family has deteriorated significantly and families do not have any livestock to sell if an emergency occurs in the family. Therefore marrying a daughter and receiving bride price to pay for the healthcare of another seriously ill child may be the only solution. With such circumstances, the stakeholders may all agree that one of the main maxims for the case would be 'saving a life outweighs liberty.' Alternatively, as in a Bhutanese refugee camp, one of the reasons why girls may be forced to marry is that grandparents want to see them settled before dying (Umesh Kumar Kattel 1997). Main maxims may therefore include 'wishes of an older person must be respected.'

At the end of the second stage, the focus group consisting at least of humanitarians, adolescent girls and their parents, ought to have jointly filled out a matrix, such as the one outlined below. The final row is filled in during the stage three. This matrix is entirely hypothetical, aimed at serving as an example.

Table 1: Matrix of Group Casuistry Case X

		Protection / Human Rights	Consequences of early marriages	Stakeholders Preferences	Contextual Features
C O N T E X T	**Values**	Justice, equality, respect of every human being, vulnerability	Justice, respect of every human being, beneficence	Family honour, common good, respect of older persons, prioritizing male members, autonomy, pregnancy outside marriage and inter-caste marriages are shameful	Social status in the camp and quality of life are important, girls are adults at 12 if they have started menstruation, girls need to obey parents
	Maxims	Informed consent is obligatory. Equality of men and women in all matters related to marriage	Everyone has a right to education and reproductive rights. Right to play and leisure time for everyone. Do no harm	Family honour and common good are more important than girls' liberty. Informed consent is obligatory. Wishes of older persons need to be filled.	Good girls obey and carry out a lot of domestic chores. It is appropriate to marry earlier due to displacement
	Circum-stances	Breach of Art.16 CEAFDW and Convention on Consent to Marriage	Less access to education Dropping out of school Early pregnancy Depression among girls No spare time for girls, too overloaded with work	Girls: To marry, but to choose the husband Parents: To decide when and to whom to marry girls Humanitarians: early marriage should be abolished	Community 3 years displaced, camp of 4000 persons, no access to formal employment, around 50 girls affected, 12-17 years old, no contraception, parents initiating marriages
	Final Maxims	Informed consent is important if it does not affect family honour	Reproductive right and right for education	Family honour and respect for older persons are important	
	Inter-ventions				

This matrix is schematic. More information will certainly emerge while applying group casuistry. Brainstorming or round table may be used, as well as checklists, to stimulate and guide the process. For instance, in order to determine the circumstances regarding protection and human right issues, tools of protection analysis may be applied. Similarly, the circumstances under contextual features may involve livelihoods analysis.

Context

As described previously, a lack of consideration of context and the linkage between livelihoods and protection are among the main reasons for inadequate interventions. As outlined in the Table 1, I argue that emphasizing values and considering circumstances allows this gap to be addressed, since both are integral parts of the context. Moreover, in the case of displacement, the daily context for the families can often be described by one word – survival. This, in turn, means assuring livelihoods and protection. Subsequently, context for displaced families often means livelihoods linked to protection. The majority of empirical evidence in this analysis supports this claim. Thus group casuistry addresses protection and livelihood dimensions in addition to the ethical perspective.

Yet some may ask why such value-fact dichotomy is used and why context is not regarded as a whole. This is based on the assumption that without deconstruction and a separate attention to values, the current trend indicates that assessments concentrate more on facts than on what is considered important and right in the community. In the case of displaced early marriages the focus is mainly on legal facts. I argue that using group casuistry that evaluates values and facts separately, ensures that values do not remain concealed and are indeed included. This would avoid interventions that merely focus on awareness raising of youth and/or grandparents, in a situation similar to the one in the Bhutanese camp. If only factual information is considered, it may be thought that the elderly need to be targeted to change their mind, as their wishes are the cause of early marriages. However, the assessment of values clarifies whether it is respect for the elderly or for any older person that is the maxim in this culture. If the latter were the case, targeting only the elderly would clearly not be adequate.

Simultaneously, values are via maxims strongly linked to circumstances, guaranteeing a holistic approach. This, in turn, leads to contextuality, meaning that 'the sense and the value of any action and any order is bound to a certain context and can be valued differently from different points of view' (Visscher and Rip 2003:123). In other words, livelihood and protection activities can only be fully understood in the context of the community that creates them.

Contextuality – main weakness of casuistry?

Nonetheless, following Pascal, it may be argued that moral judgements can only be related to universal laws. Focusing on contextuality would result in rootless relativism and lead to laxity. Indeed, both laxist and sound casuistry exist. In order to ensure balanced casuistry and avoid abuse, it is important not to generalize or exaggerate the resolutions – this will lead to laxist casuistry (Jonsen and Toulmin 1988). Hence resolutions that have been made regarding the early marriages of displaced Afghan girls cannot be generalized for other contexts. Resolutions always need to be discussed in relation to the circumstances. Hence misuse can be prevented.

Fear that casuistry and contextualized solutions might undermine the CRC and other legal instruments may also exist. Protection issues may therefore become commonplace and be perceived as a non-issue. This, in turn, may lead to erosion in child-protection. Pascal already declared that the morality of circumstances serves only as an invitation to excuse the inexcusable (Jonsen and Toulmin 1988). It has also been mentioned that

casuistry does not radically criticize existing social institutions nor lead to fundamental change (Arras 1991; Wildes 1993). However, first, casuistry is not meant to be a remedy for all ills, or to replace the current activities. Rather it is hoped to complement advocacy efforts and participatory approaches currently used. Second, casuistry can enhance the implementation of the CRC while being a possible starting point, a bridge and trust-building method upon which rising awareness and advocacy can lean. Third, it contributes to raising awareness since it requires all parties, including humanitarians, to express their viewpoints in an equal setting.

However, in cases where value conflicts have become zealous, it can result in a 'strong belief in one's position and rejection of information that threatens one group's beliefs' (Kupermintz and Salomon 2005:296). In this instance, casuistry is not an option. If no common ground is found, a strong possibility of relativistic claims exists (Keenan and Shannon 1995). It is important to know which methodology is appropriate to use in which situation, and how to benefit the most from the multitude of methods available.

It may be argued that emphasis on contexts would conceal personal values and differences between persons. There is no universal adolescent or parent – all weight and apply values differently. Thus analysis on the community or group level may be inefficient. Indeed, the balancing and application of values is individual; however, as discussed by Wines and Napier (1992:834) 'the functionalist model suggests that a core culture is generally shared by the members of a society'. Hofstede also (1980) talks about a consensus core culture that characterizes a certain country and empirical evidence demonstrated in this discussion supports this claim. Hence people from one context have similarities in the way they apply and balance values, and community can be taken as an optimal level of analysis. Yet, differences may exist between parents' and girls' viewpoints on early marriage, but group casuistry through its joint decision-making process could address this gap. Moreover, if it appears that an individual case-by-case approach is the best solution, group casuistry could be applied between three persons – an adolescent, a parent and service provider.

8 Agency of displaced female adolescents

In addition to the inclusion of context, casuistry may also increase the agency of female adolescents. This happens in particular in the final stage of group casuistry.

Third step – casuistic resolution and taxonomy
The question that remains is how to ensure a contextually sound solution that is also consistent with the principles and policy of the organization.

In casuistry the ethical decision regarding the appropriate action in a given context is called casuistic resolution, which is based on the case analogous relationship to other cases (Keenan and Shannon 1995). This occurs in the final phase of casuistry when the new case is compared to existing paradigm cases of the humanitarian organization. In Case X outlined in Table 1, the matrix and its last two filled-in rows particularly, need to

be compared to other matrices of paradigm cases, in order to confirm the ruling maxim(s) and possible interventions. For instance, the review may reveal that in other cases with similar circumstances and ruling maxims, the intervention consisted of awareness raising through informal educational activities for all community members, and allowing girls to access contraception and education. A focus group needs to see if these interventions, or some of these, may be appropriate interventions within their context. Moral imagination can be used as a complementary way of reasoning and stakeholders may elaborate a novel intervention. Then the organization needs to decide whether this proposition is in accordance with their core values and objectives.

Applying analogical reasoning requires taxonomy. In the case of adolescents' protection, an organization could create an internal taxonomy by organizing the cases by their resolutions. It needs to be accessible in the field in order to allow analogical reasoning to be conducted through group casuistry, with the involvement of stakeholders. This would allow a fuller participation and sharing of lessons learned in other contexts. Such taxonomy could also contribute to decentralization in the organization. Using other matrices with precise, but anonymous data to compare it with, would guarantee confidentiality and consistency in the policy of the organization. It would also avoid excessive relativism. It is important for consistency to confirm the resolutions by headquarters.

In addition to self-protection from abuse that comes with group involvement, an open taxonomy protects casuistry from such criticism as: 'Casuistry may serve both to justify questionable decisions to others and to rationalize such decisions to oneself, allowing one to maintain what Pyszczynski and Greenberg (1987) called a desired "illusion of objectivity"' (Norton et al. 2004:817).

Realizing agency
But how exactly does group casuistry contribute to the realization of displaced girls' agency? It makes adolescent girls more visible and empowers them, in particular due to joint casuistic resolution - the common process of EDM. As illustrated previously, although adolescents have been given the opportunity to articulate their perceptions, their agency has remained unrealized. This is partly due to current participatory approaches that remain limited. Casuistry, however, would ensure that adolescents are not merely consulted, but that they actively participate in decision-making. It would enable the participation to move forward on the Hart (1992) 'ladder of participation', to the level of 'adult initiated, shared decisions with children' and would contribute to decreasing the power imbalance in intergenerational relations. As Calkins (2001:241) argues about casuistry: 'it encourages those who actually can make ethical decisions to do so when they otherwise might not or when they might be inclined to defer decision making to so-called "moral experts"'. It allows female adolescents to gain a better negotiating position. Furthermore, casuistry provides a setting where the initiatives regarding protection could come from adolescents and the concepts they use to make sense of their lives could be explored.

There remains the question of whether it is possible to negotiate girls' participation in the process of casuistry with their parents. As Tolfree (1996) discusses, contexts exist where

adolescents' pro-active role is not favoured and their empowerment could thus lead to cultural dissonance or even alienate children from their community. There is also the danger that adults may become gatekeepers for children whose opinions might differ from those of adults (Carpenter 2007). However, Boyden et al. (1998:234) respond to such worries by stating that: 'this concern generally is less acute the more fully and transparently children are involved in decision-making processes'. Group casuistry, by empowering the full participation of girls, has therefore the internal prerequisite for facilitating social dialogue between the generations.

Nonetheless, it may be argued that a more realized agency might become a liability for girls. In some cases girls may prefer to stay silent due to existing stigma or in order to protect themselves (Baldi and MacKenzie 2007; Machel 2001). Indeed, it may not be appropriate in certain settings to involve girls overtly in the decision-making process and it can even be harmful. For instance, Swaine with Feeny (2004) discuss how in the case of Kosovar adolescent girls, they dressed like elderly women – a very clear sign that they preferred to stay invisible. Girls need to be consulted regarding participation before starting group casuistry, and possible threats and stigma have to be discussed. Group casuistry can only be successful when all parties freely agree and feel safe to participate in decision-making. As discussed earlier, casuistry may not be the answer in all situations and has its limitations.

Referring to Kohlberg's (1968; 1976; 1983) theory of moral development, some may state that despite adolescents' agency, they are not morally mature enough to participate as equals in moral reasoning. However, following Vygotsky (1978), many researchers indicate that specific competences develop through children's engagement with their surroundings (Lave 1990; Rogoff 1981; Cole 1996). Based on the latter, Boyden (2003) and Hart (2008a) argue that it is possible that a child who grows up in an environment requiring regular negotiation of threats and who bears major responsibilities, may acquire earlier moral competences than a child in a more stable setting. This is also likely to apply to displaced female adolescents who experience conflict and various risks, and who are in charge of taking care of their siblings. Moreover, Carlson and Kacmar's (1997) conceptualization of EDM also seems to support the moral maturity of adolescents. By combining Kohlberg's theory, moral philosophies and Rokeach's (1973) theory of values, they argue that Kohlberg's level of post-conventional reasoning is linked to consequentalist or deontological moral philosophy and other-centred values. As described above, girls often prioritize the value of the common good, a clearly other-focused value. Hence according to Carlson and Kacmar's (1997) theory, girls have a high level of moral reasoning.

Zealousness, ideals and the imaginary palace
The question remains whether the diversity of viewpoints is not leading to deadlock. I argue that if the divergences in values are remarkable and discussion seems to head towards a moral deadlock during group casuistry, the moderator can redirect the discussion to circumstances. This manoeuvre helps put the belief systems consciously aside and focus will be on what all parties can compromise about in the given case. For instance, if parents zealously believe in early marriages and humanitarians and girls are fervently opposed to them, casuistry through its practical focus on circumstances would

allow concentration on something all parties agree upon. As discussed in Case X, it may be focusing on enabling girls to continue education while married, or ensuring that marriages will not affect girls' reproductive health or result in exploitation. As the Rwandan case illustrates, many girls wanted to get married; however, their major concern was how to access contraception without their husband's consent (de Smedt 1998).

Is there any evidence that such a 'group casuistry' may work when values of different parties are involved and the decision-maker is not a person or an organization? As Jonsen and Toulmin (1988) found in their 1974 meeting with the National Commission for the Protection of Human Subjects of Biomedical and Behavioral Research, the focus on practical conclusions helped Commission members to come to the same views regarding practical recommendations even though they did not necessarily agree on the reasons or principles underlying the recommendations. Calkins (2001:240) argues that, 'by concentrating on practical conclusions, Commission members were able to get around the insurmountable problems associated with epistemological foundationalism.' This suggests that casuistry can be conducted jointly and does not merely need to be used for personal value judgements.

Nevertheless, focus on married adolescent girls' education may be considered as giving up the principle of abolition of early marriages, and is therefore not an equal compromise. Moreover, some may fear that it means contributing to something wrong. First, although it would be good to reach a satisfice, that according to Weiner (1998:448) means 'to pursue a course of action to achieve the minimum requirements of both norms,' this is not the main aim of casuistry. The focus, as discussed, is on a practical resolution of the particular case that all parties can agree upon. Second, humanitarians can regard the value conflicts intrinsic in displaced adolescent marriages as moral dilemmas. According to Slim (1997a: 247), this would allow them to view the situations as a challenge, in which the lesser of two evils needs to be identified. Both possible actions may be wrong and it would not be about taking the right action, but to take the best action possible in the specific circumstances. Slim argues that 'in the face of moral dilemmas therefore, it is usual to find oneself operating in the extremely uncomfortable moral zone between various wrongs in search of the least worst' (Slim1997a: 247). In the case of Rwandan girls, for instance, it could mean a choice between either giving contraception to adolescents to avoid early pregnancies or doing nothing. The latter option would be based on the argument that as adolescent marriages are considered wrong by the organization, giving contraception could be regarded as contributing to this practice. Such ethical choices are painful for humanitarians and casuistry could help in the decision-making process.

Some may go even further and state that casuistry has no morals or ideals (Johnston 1914; Keenan and Shannon 1995). Jonsen (1995), however, responds to these kinds of claims by arguing that casuistry was not meant to be a premise for reasoning nor a substitute for moral theory. Jonsen and Toulmin (1988:242) state that casuistry does not aim to design moral life and is 'not a doctrine about what is the best life for a man'. It is rather a practice that can be used to attain a satisfactory solution to a particular moral problem. They go on to state that already Aristotle did not deny the existence and necessity of general moral ideas such as kindness and cruelty or loyalty and betrayal, but rather focused on how these ideas match with a particular situation. They emphasize that moral idealism and

virtue ethics are important and warn against the excessive use of casuistry to excuse. Also Keenan and Shannon (1995) argue that virtue ethics and casuistry can be combined and complement each other and that it is important to avoid relativistic tendencies.

To illustrate the relationship between casuistry and moral theory, and to better demonstrate the proceedings of this methodology, I will use the metaphor: 'taxonomy of the cases of early marriages is like an imaginary palace.' This refers to adapting the simile that Jonsen (1995) uses in his explanation of casuistry. Ethical principles are labelled 'the foundation, roof and walls of the palace.' The cases of early marriages from various contexts are called 'rooms'. Similarly to Jonsen, topics are named 'the interior design of the palace' and circumstances, the 'furniture and decoration.' I also describe analogical reasoning between the cases in the taxonomy as 'walking back and forth between rooms.' Therefore, casuistry in the case of early marriages does not require participants to renounce their values, but rather hopes that they examine how these can best be applied in given circumstances. The focus is how to link a moral theory with the demands of real life. Jonsen (1995:248) highlights this link as 'the moral philosopher may be the architect of the moral "memory palace" but the casuist is its interior decorator.' In order to decorate, one needs to take into consideration the overall architecture of the building. I believe that the imaginary palace ought not exist merely in the memory of humanitarians, but girls and their parents ought to be able to walk in it and participate in its interior design.

9 Casuistic framework

But why introduce casuistry and not merely adapt current protection, livelihood and participatory approaches to tackle the complexity of early marriages? This question will be answered in this section by demonstrating the comprehensiveness and the simplicity of group casuistry and its conformity with the ordinary course of reasoning. It also outlines the ability of casuistry to function as 'linkage facilitator'.

Comprehensiveness
Casuistry can enable humanitarians to better address the issue of early marriages since it provides a holistic framework to deal with the complexity of the phenomenon. Group casuistry is simultaneously moral mapping and participatory EDM methods used in cross-cultural settings. It incorporates needs, rights and risk assessments and brings together livelihood and protection analysis. None of the existing approaches allows as holistic an understanding as casuistry. Yet the all-encompassing approach, as illustrated previously, is necessary in order to address the complexity of early marriages. Most importantly, the current approaches do not incorporate EDM methods and thus fail to fully address the moral issues involved. Having a method for EDM in the case of value conflicts is essential for appropriate moral reasoning and judgement (Patton 2008).

Simplicity and naturalness
Everyone, including adolescent girls, can participate in group casuistry. It has three stages. Participants must describe what is important to them; what is right and appropriate; and

what their everyday life is like. Indeed, the moderator needs to be briefed regarding the use of the methodology. However, the training is not more complicated than for any other approach. Group casuistry does not require thorough knowledge of ethics. Although Keenan and Shannon (1995) mention that a rightly ordered person is needed for casuistry, Acton (1936) already mentioned that unconsciously everyone uses a sort of casuistic thinking, so it is more about making explicit what is currently done implicitly. With this in mind, applying casuistic reasoning for the protection issues of displaced female adolescents means following the existing trend more consciously. For instance, empirical studies have shown that moral reasoning among people generally starts from paradigms and not from abstract theory. Deduction is not as natural a way of approaching problems as analogical reasoning is (Johnson 1993; Nordgren 2002). Second, since the late 1960s, moral problems in the field of war and social policy have been following taxonomic terms and have been solved by using methods of paradigms (Jonsen and Toulmin 1988). Finally, my observation in the field has shown that practitioners often implicitly use analogous diagnostic reasoning in their assessments. They refer to their decisions in other countries where they have worked in order to determine the appropriate action in the new situation. Thus, introducing casuistry would not mean substantial change in this regard; it is rather increasing consciousness and providing more choice of paradigms through taxonomy.

Some may wonder why EDM needs to be conscious and cannot stay implicit. First, implicit EDM would exclude the other stakeholders from the process. Second, as discussed, by setting a clear and acceptable framework for ethical decision-making, casuistry could contribute to better morale for humanitarians. More cognizances on the part of the practitioner could also strengthen ethical awareness and framework of the humanitarian agency. Humanitarians would reflect more on the core values and principles of their organization while making decisions in the field.

'Linkage facilitator'

As discussed above, group casuistry does not merely highlight the link between protection and livelihoods, but incorporates both dimensions in the moral reasoning process. It also links values with circumstances via maxims. Group casuistry could also facilitate relations between girls and their parents and between the local community and humanitarians. As mentioned, it may serve as a bridge-building activity. However, there are two more links that group casuistry can enhance – links between theory and practice and between contextuality and universality.

Humanitarians have mostly limited time for assessments and thus poor knowledge of the context. Fully involving stakeholders would increase the probability that the context is better understood. However, in order to benefit the most from group casuistry, it is highly recommended that humanitarians who participate have certain anthropological knowledge of the given context. This can be achieved in headquarters by including regularly updated anthropological findings, classified geographically, to the departure reading kit for humanitarians, in addition to the usual political background papers. I argue that using casuistry could enhance the link between theory and practice.

Casuistry could also help with another challenge – it could connect the concerns for contextuality and universality, the dilemma humanitarians often face. As Boeyink (1992:107) states:

> Beginning deductively with ethical theory requires an a priori choice of ethical principles which, when applied, may not take account of the complexity of real problems. But beginning with cases can result in a situationalism in which the normative role of ethical principles is slighted. Casuistry, a case-centred methodology, offers one way to bridge this gap. Casuistry's bottom-up strategy develops policy guidelines out of case analysis, building a middle ground between practice and principle.

In the case of adolescent protection, 'ethical principles' in the abovementioned quote could also be replaced by the 'legal instruments' and the citation would still be valid. Providing such holistic and natural structure for decision-making, casuistry can be considered more as an ethical framework than a mere method.

10 Conclusion

The dominant protection approach and the conceptualization of displaced adolescent girls' marriages fail to appropriately include the values of all stakeholders and the livelihoods perspective. Also the current interventions, which are mainly based on protection discourse, are not efficiently tackling this issue, leaving displaced adolescent girls without adequate protection.

Group casuistry has the potential to significantly contribute to addressing displaced adolescent girls' early marriages. It provides a holistic ethical framework that includes various dimensions and helps address the complexity of adolescent marriages. Since the latter often constitute value conflicts, casuistry can help by including the values of stakeholders. It also highlights the circumstances and, therefore, has the ability to emphasize that early marriages may constitute livelihood strategies. Moreover, this ancient methodology would also better realize the agency of displaced adolescent girls. Its comprehensiveness, simplicity and naturalness allow it to become prominent among current approaches. One of the advantages of group casuistry is its ability to enhance the linkages. It can facilitate the links between values, livelihoods and protection, or theory and practice and universality and contextuality.

Like all methodologies, group casuistry has its limitations. It could be abused by judging resolutions out of context or generalizing universally. Yet the involvement of the group and taxonomy protect it from abuse. In some contexts, singling out girls as participants may increase their protection risks and thus may not be an option. If the value conflict is too fervent or proposed interventions are ethically unacceptable for the organization, group casuistry may also not be applicable. It is not a remedy for all ills, but rather a methodology that complements participatory approaches, advocacy and other current interventions.

Group casuistry is based on the supposition that morality needs to be explored in context. Thanks to this philosophical assumption and its comprehensiveness and capacity to enhance linkages, group casuistry is not merely a method, but a methodology. It merits empirical testing and further scholarly study. This ethical framework has many advantages that can contribute to displaced adolescent girls' protection. For instance, its usefulness for adolescent domestic work and prostitution – other possible masked value conflicts – can be examined. Its applicability to novel situations may be explored due to the evolving nature of forced migration and resulting challenges. Thanks to its comprehensiveness and ability to link various perspectives, the casuistic framework might also strengthen conceptualization of displaced adolescent protection.

Group casuistry also has several indirect advantages. It strengthens the moral analysis of participants and avoids them falling into moral self-righteousness. This practice also reinforces the triangular relationship involving adolescents, parents and humanitarians. More importantly, it allows a more nuanced understanding and multifaceted approach to displaced adolescent girls. It could be useful for shedding light on adolescents' personal value commitments and other parts of identity, which often are not acknowledged by humanitarians. For instance, it helps to explore what it means for girls to be a daughter, a

Muslim or a student. It emphasizes possible overlapping between protection strategies and risks. Group casuistry also enables the exploration of other complexities, such as the extent of girls' involvement in confirming and reinforcing detrimental practices that may be obscured by a one-dimensional approach.

Lastly, Nordstrom (2004:ii) argues:

> Illuminating the truths concerning girls in war-zones is a substantial first step towards solving the harm they face.

I believe that casuistry has the requisites to courageously confront this challenge and bring real-life changes not merely to girls in war-zones, but to displaced adolescent girls worldwide.

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