



Save the Children

WORKING TOGETHER TO END CHILD MARRIAGE

**How governments can end child marriage
by accelerating coordinated action across
education, health, protection and other sectors**

ENDING CHILD MARRIAGE BY 2030: 5 KEY MESSAGES TO TAKE AWAY

1

Ending child marriage is a cross-cutting challenge: gender discrimination combined with exposure to violence and unequal access to healthcare, nutrition and education reinforces – and is reinforced by – the risk girls face of being married too young.

2

But across the world, too many governments are failing to put child marriage high on the political agenda and failing to coordinate effective responses across the education, health, nutrition, protection, economic and justice sectors.

3

If we don't act urgently, 134 million girls will be married between 2018 and 2030, and almost 10 million will marry in 2030 alone, as the world falls badly short of the Sustainable Development Goal target to end child marriage.

4

Change is possible. New analysis by Save the Children suggests that achieving universal secondary education for girls could avert 51 million child marriages by 2030.

5

Governments have the opportunity to transform the future for millions of girls – and for their societies. To achieve this, governments must do more to develop and implement multisectoral, holistic national action plans to end child marriage, coordinating across ministries and stakeholders to deliver effective, joined-up approaches that tackle the root causes of gender inequality.

WHY WE MUST ACT NOW

Child marriage is an extreme violation of children's rights and a serious form of child abuse.¹ It robs girls of their agency, their childhood, their wellbeing and their potential. Being married too young forces girls into physical and emotional relationships they are not ready for, that they have not chosen, and that they have little control over.² It is an act of gender-based violence that isolates girls and exposes them to physical, sexual and emotional abuse and the risks associated with early pregnancy and childbirth.

650 million women and girls in the world today – around one in five – were married as children.³

This proportion is higher in some places than others. In South Asia, 44% of women and girls were married before turning 18, and in some sub-Saharan Africa countries national averages are over 65%.⁴ The figures are even higher in certain regions within countries and among particular ethnic groups. Recent analysis by Save the Children shows that more than one-third (35%) of child marriages involve girls from the world's poorest 20% of households.⁵

In 2015, the global community committed to end child marriage by 2030.

Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 5 on gender equality requires the elimination of all harmful practices, including child, early and forced marriage.⁶ While an estimated 25 million child marriages have been prevented through accelerated progress over the past ten years,⁷ no country is currently on track to meet the SDG target to end child marriage among all segments of society by 2030.⁸

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOAL 5

Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls



Target 5.3

Eliminate all harmful practices, such as child, early and forced marriage and female genital mutilation

Indicator 5.3.1

Proportion of women aged 20–24 years who were married or in a union before age 15 and before age 18

On current trends, 134 million more girls will marry between 2018 and 2030 – and almost 10 million will marry in 2030 alone, 2 million of them under 15 years of age.

These girls are more likely to come from poor homes. In order to reach the SDG target, progress for girls growing up in the poorest 20% of households needs to accelerate by a factor of 13.⁹

Too many girls still face grave risks of early pregnancy, physical and psychological abuse.

Their rights, to education, to be protected and to be empowered to influence decisions that affect their lives are denied. Child brides are often married into a relationship with an older man, where they lack the status and knowledge to negotiate safe sex and contraceptive practices. Child marriage places girls at risk of violence from in-laws, of HIV and other sexually transmitted infections, as well as early pregnancy. Complications from pregnancy and childbearing are the leading causes of death among girls 15–19 years.¹⁰ Babies born to women and girls married as children are more likely to suffer from malnutrition and underdevelopment, often perpetuating the cycle of poverty for another generation.¹¹

Gender inequality is a root cause of child marriage.

Without addressing the inequalities that drive risk of child marriage we will not succeed in eliminating the practice or effectively supporting married girls to realise their potential. Gender roles that restrict girls' abilities to generate income, along with traditions like bride price and dowry payments, lead to marriage being closely linked to financial security for girls and their families. Barriers to accessing essential health, economic livelihoods, nutrition and education services must be addressed; social norms that limit girls' opportunities and expose them to violence must change; and girls themselves must be empowered to shape the decisions that affect their lives.

Ending child marriage could save the worst-affected countries billions of dollars.

Modelling suggests that failing to end child marriage by 2030 will cost the world economy trillions of dollars.¹² By contrast, ending the practice will have a multiplier effect:¹³ for countries with the highest rates of child marriage it could result in billions of dollars in savings from welfare and education budgets through increased earnings, along with the human and economic benefits of reductions in child mortality, stunting and early child birth.¹⁴

Ending child marriage requires different sectors to work together for the benefit of all.

As child marriage rates decline, government savings and growth will increase national resources for human and economic development and bring countries closer to achieving a range of national, regional and global development goals. Multisectoral collaboration is urgently needed, to end child marriage and set married girls on a safe pathway to fulfilling their potential.



**A primary school
in Maiduguri,
north-east Nigeria**

A MULTISECTORAL APPROACH: WHAT? WHY? HOW?

To date, work to end child marriage has been siloed and relegated to low-profile, under-resourced ministries. The need to bring different sectors together to develop interventions that address the different drivers and effects of child marriage is increasingly being recognised. However, these interventions are not being implemented on the scale that is needed. Delivering multisectoral responses requires governments to demonstrate leadership, to coordinate the work of different departments and agencies, and to act faster to meet national, regional and global deadlines for ending child marriage.

WHAT DOES A MULTISECTORAL APPROACH TO CHILD MARRIAGE LOOK LIKE?

A multisectoral approach to ending child marriage brings together government ministries, service providers and community groups that work on and make decisions about how to address the different causes and consequences of child marriage. Developing a national action plan is a critical first step for governments to coordinate work led by different sectors and to make sure each sector has the funding it needs to respond effectively.

A multisectoral responses to child marriage should be tailored to national and community-level contexts. It must engage actors in the following sectors:

- health
- justice
- education
- child protection
- democracy, rights and governance
- economic growth, livelihoods and workforce development
- crisis and humanitarian conflict
- food security and nutrition
- agriculture and the environment
- gender-based violence
- youth participation and girls' empowerment.

WHY AND HOW SHOULD DIFFERENT SECTORS WORK TOGETHER?

Interventions to end child marriage have too often been developed without coordination between different government ministries and sectors. The intersecting causes and consequences of child marriage require sectors to work together. Community engagement, social norm change and protection (including social protection), for example, are essential to support legal reform, education and health interventions. Two-thirds of child marriages – about 7.5 million each year or 20,000 children every day – take place below the minimum age permitted by law.¹⁵ Weak enforcement, a disconnect from traditions and beliefs, and the perceived financial protection and protection from stranger violence associated with child marriage undermine national laws against the practice.

Strong, centralised leadership is essential to bringing diverse sectors together. Responsibility for child marriage interventions has typically fallen to low-profile line ministries, like departments of women and children. These ministries tend to lack the convening power, budget and mandate to coordinate cross-government responses. Managing multisectoral responses requires engagement by more powerful ministries, particularly ministries of finance, to ensure all relevant sectors are fairly and adequately funded to design, influence and deliver their responses as part of a coordinated response.

Child marriage should be at the centre of national development plans and policies.

National action plans to end child marriage and respond to the needs of married girls are critical to enabling different interventions led by different sectors to support one another. Through overseeing funding distribution and human resources, and through providing forums for information sharing, national action plans help interventions to be delivered effectively. Interventions are also made more accountable, with clear lines of responsibility, indicators, and monitoring and reporting processes.

The African Union (AU) Campaign to End Child Marriage has driven significant progress but more must be done, including in other regions.¹⁶

Under the campaign and 2015 Common Position, AU Members have committed to implement national action plans to coordinate multisectoral responses to child marriage.¹⁷ It is critical that those countries that have drawn up action plans accelerate implementation and that other countries act now to catch up, by developing and funding their own action plans. This AU campaign has generated new momentum and provided clear direction for African countries (see Box 1). The multisectoral, coordinated approach it promotes, including strong central leadership through national action plans, should be adapted by other regions and countries.

Box 1: A continental model

The AU Campaign to End Child marriage in Africa calls for multisectoral coordination through:

- national action plans
- legislative reform to enshrine human rights against child marriage in national law and policy
- programmes
- investment to support access to essential services, including sexual and reproductive health and education.¹⁸

In 2017, the AU's Specialised Technical Committee on Social Development, Labor and Employment called on members to accelerate efforts to operationalise an AU high-level Monitoring and Follow-up Mechanism in order to assess progress.¹⁹ In 2018, the Peace and Security Council of the AU held an open session on ending child marriage in Africa and underlined the need for Member States to develop 'comprehensive, multi-stakeholder, coordinated approaches' and engage community and traditional leaders, government, law enforcement agencies, teachers, social workers, civil society, the media and private sector.²⁰

EDUCATION AND CHILD MARRIAGE: WHAT ARE THE LINKS?

We carried out new analysis on the links between child marriage and education. Our results suggest that supporting girls to access a good-quality education and stay in school is critical: 51 million child marriages could be averted between now and 2030 through universal secondary education for girls.

OUR RESEARCH FINDINGS

Without accelerated action to achieve universal education and end child marriage:

- **6.7 million girls** will not complete primary school in 2030, let alone secondary education.
- **134 million girls** will marry between 2018 and the SDG end date.
- **10 million girls** will marry in 2030 alone, and 2 million of them will marry before reaching 15 years of age.
- **Just 4%** of married girls aged 15–18 are in school. And 87% of *all* married girls in this age group are out of school. These two figures suggest that education is a critical entry point for interventions to end child marriage and address the impact on girls who are already married.
- **51 million** child marriages could be averted by achieving universal secondary education for girls by 2030.
- **Education and empowerment** interventions are among the most effective ways of reducing child marriage (see page 8).

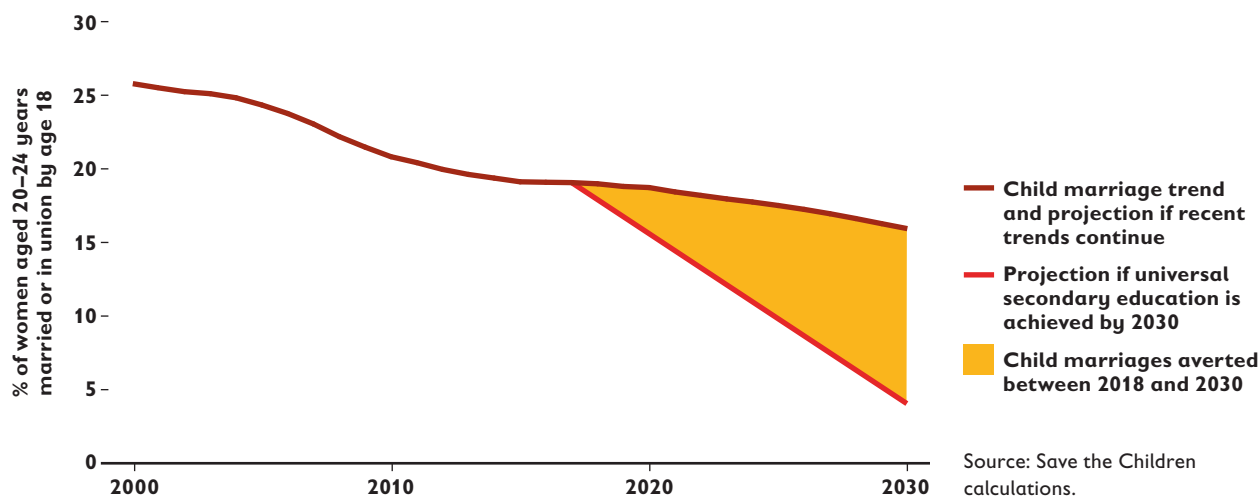
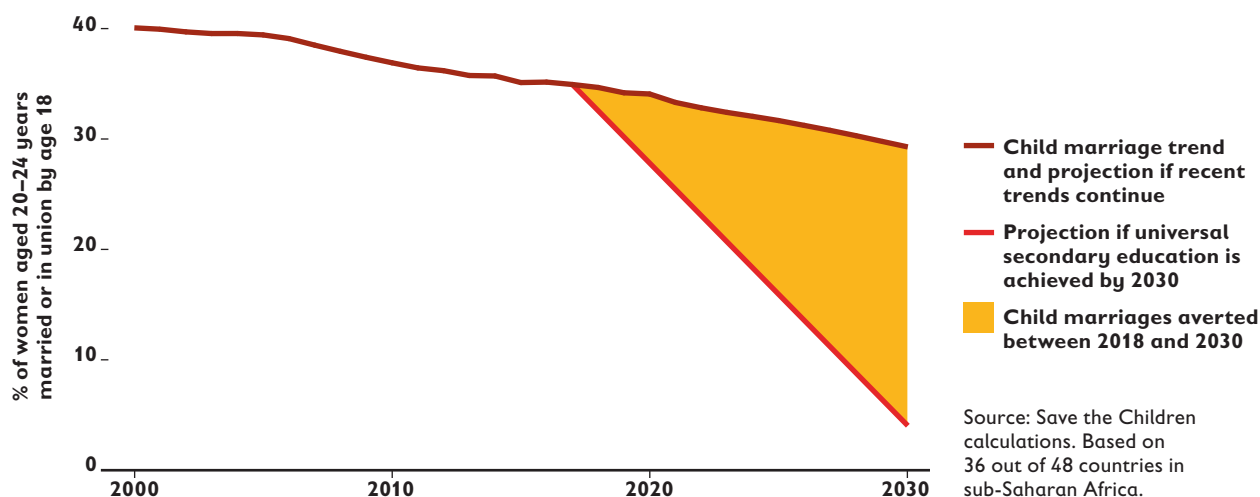
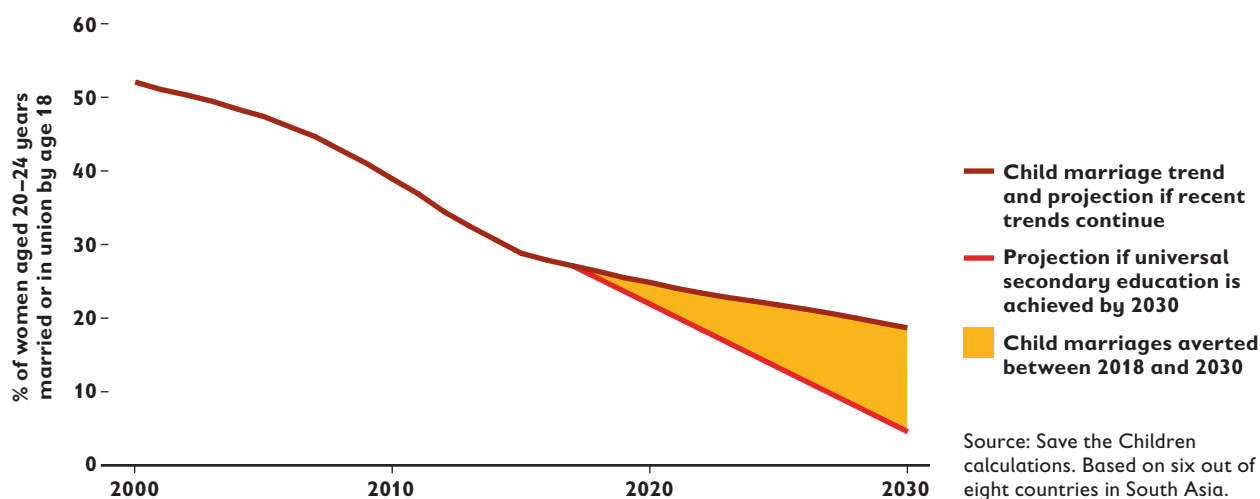
RESEARCH METHOD

We analysed data from Demographic Health Surveys (DHS) and Multiple Indicator Cluster Surveys (MICS) for 67 countries to determine the likelihood of a girl being married and in school at the same time.²¹

Our findings show a strong correlation between being out of school and being married, and between being in school and not being married (see above). It does not show causation, but identifies education as an essential entry point for interventions.

Using projected progress toward the child marriage target under SDG 5 drawn from our Group-based Inequality Database (GRID),²² we were able to project the reduction in child marriage made possible by achieving universal secondary education, assuming that the likelihood of being married and remaining in school remains constant at 4%.²³ Figure 1 is based on global data; figures 2 and 3 present averages for the two regions most affected by child marriage, sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia.

EDUCATION AND CHILD MARRIAGE: GETTING TO 2030

FIGURE 1 FEMALE UNIVERSAL SECONDARY EDUCATION COULD AVERT 51 MILLION CHILD MARRIAGES BY 2030**FIGURE 2** UNIVERSAL SECONDARY EDUCATION FOR GIRLS COULD AVERT 21.9 MILLION CHILD MARRIAGES BY 2030 IN SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA**FIGURE 3** UNIVERSAL SECONDARY EDUCATION FOR GIRLS COULD AVERT 15.4 MILLION CHILD MARRIAGES BY 2030 IN SOUTH ASIA

The relationship between child marriage and girls' education is two-way.

Being out of school increases risk of marriage for girls, and pressures to marry for cultural and economic reasons also increases rates of school dropout.²⁴ Girls who are out of school may be more likely to marry. Time spent outside of school can be linked to increased exposure to violence and higher rates of early pregnancy.²⁵ Parents of out-of-school girls may see marriage as a way to keep their daughter safe from stranger violence, to improve her financial security, or to reduce the risk of her becoming pregnant outside of marriage and associated stigma.²⁶

Girls drop out of secondary school for a range of reasons.

These include child marriage; early pregnancy (often resulting in expulsion); the cost of education, books and uniforms; the risk of violence on the way to and when in school; poor quality teaching; lack of access to appropriate sanitation facilities; poor academic performance; the limited relevance of education to the available livelihood opportunities; lack of interest in school; and interest in marrying.²⁷ These factors may intersect (see Box 2) and some will be more persuasive than others, depending on the context. Girls displaced by or living in humanitarian contexts face additional risk factors for child marriage, including reduced access to safe schooling (see Box 3).

Many of the reasons girls leave school early are linked to gender inequality.

Social norms and restrictive gender roles that limit girls' access to services and opportunities feed into thinking about the value of girls, their education and delaying marriage. Too often, the education system reinforces these norms rather than teaching gender equality and empowering girls. Subsequent early school dropout contributes to a cycle of lifelong economic dependence that further undermines the value of educating girls and reinforces the benefits of early marriage.

EDUCATING GIRLS AND ENDING CHILD MARRIAGE: WHAT WE KNOW WORKS

Education and empowerment interventions have been evaluated as the most effective ways of reducing child marriage.²⁸

Empowerment interventions include programmes to help change social norms. For example, Save the Children's Choices, Voices, and Promises programme works with very young adolescent boys and girls to:

- help them unpack discriminatory social norms that lie at the root of harmful practices like child marriage
- build alliances for girls' education
- delay child marriage through child advocacy to parents and sharing of chores (which reduce girls' time to study and can result in removal from school).²⁹

Incentive and asset transfer interventions to enable or encourage families to allow their daughters to complete secondary school have also been effective in reducing child marriage. Research suggests conditional transfers to incentivise school enrolment are more effective among younger adolescents, while incentives to delay marriage (such as gifts of cooking oil for every year a girl is not married) work better with older adolescent girls.³⁰

Research by Save the Children recommends that humanitarian responses enable girls to return to school as quickly as possible following acute crisis.³¹ To do this programmes should incentivise schooling and reduce barriers such as language, transport, and safety concerns – particularly in displacement settings – in order to increase girls' access to education.³²

Further research and improved data collection and sharing is needed to improve our understanding of child marriage in humanitarian contexts. Research to-date recommends that early assessments of acute crises identify pre-existing drivers of child marriage, as well as new risk factors and mainstream interventions to tackle child marriage, into humanitarian responses.

Box 2: Maria's Story: intersecting factors lead to exclusion and child marriage

The following account is drawn from an interview for a forthcoming report on an exclusion-mapping project conducted by Save the Children in Tanzania. Maria's experiences illustrate the impacts of intersecting deprivations on risks to and consequences of child marriage. These include the imperfect impacts of laws and shifting social norms around marriage in the context of gender inequality and limited life options.

Maria dropped out of primary school because she had problems with her vision and her parents, who suffer from alcoholism, couldn't afford to buy glasses for her. When she was 15, with consent from her parents, she married a 45-year-old man with the expectation that he would provide for her.

Soon after moving into her husband's house, Maria became pregnant, and her husband began mistreating her, including beating her. Later, he threw her out of the house. Initially he denied responsibility for the pregnancy but after Maria's parents threatened they would report him to the police he accepted his responsibility. However, he continued to mistreat Maria whenever she asked for his support.

Maria gave birth to a baby girl. Maria, now 17, and her daughter, who has health problems, are living with her parents.

Maria does not know how to read or write and is stigmatised by the wider community due to her albinism and because she married early.

"I'd like to go back to school if I get that opportunity," she says. "I feel bad that I don't know how to read and write. I want to support my child to have a better life, but my situation means I can't get a job."

Box 3: Changing social norms for children escaping conflict: Sarah's experience

Our programming for families seeking asylum in Jordan provides psychosocial support for children who have been through traumatic experiences. We also deliver activities to empower girls and mothers and help them challenge certain social norms, in order to encourage and enable girls to return to school and delay marriage.

After fleeing the war in Syria with her family, Sarah, age 17 spent two years out of school, following traumatic experiences she had been through. She became engaged to be married and hoped that marriage would help reduce both her psychological distress and her family's financial difficulties.

Sarah's mother took her to Save the Children's programme. Here, Sarah was given psychosocial care and offered financial support to return to school. She and her mother also attended awareness-raising sessions on child rights and gender equality. Sarah decided to end her engagement. She also chose to return to education in order to ensure her own financial future.

A MULTISECTORAL APPROACH TO GIRLS' EDUCATION AND ENDING CHILD MARRIAGE: WHAT'S NEEDED AND WHY

Addressing barriers to education and causes of school dropout requires interventions that respond to many of the same inequalities that incentivise child marriage.

These inequalities include social norms that reinforce – and are reinforced by – gender inequality, poverty, the risk of violence, and inadequate healthcare, nutrition, water and sanitation. Reducing child marriage will also bring countries closer to achieving universal secondary education.

To attend and complete their schooling, girls need the right foundations for learning.

Girls must be safe, well-nourished and in good health in order to learn. Education interventions should work in cooperation with health and nutrition services that keep girls well enough to attend school and participate effectively in class. Structural barriers such as poverty, as well as laws, social norms and risks that limit girls' freedom of movement must also be addressed – public safety programming and justice sector engagement are essential to ensure that girls are safe on the way to and in school.

All girls must have access to quality primary and secondary education.

This requires an end to the suspension and expulsion of girls who become pregnant and options to support ongoing education, catch-up and return to school by girls who have had babies. Education interventions should promote targets for adolescent girls under SDG 4 including the delivery of lessons covering comprehensive sexuality education, gender equality and human rights.

Schools should be an empowering space for girls.

Schools must offer better long- and short-term opportunities for girls than early dropout. Schools must be supported to deliver good-quality education that improves girls' economic independence by feeding into relevant livelihood opportunities and empowering them to participate in their communities. This must be supported by social norm change. Gender norms need to shift, to value girls and their education, and to prevent early removal from school for child marriage or to take on carer responsibilities that often fall to daughters due to lack of social protection and support services.

Success in all of these areas requires a multisectoral response.

The justice, education, health, finance and welfare sectors, along with community, religious and political leaders, civil society, international actors and child advocates, must all be engaged. Coordinating effective delivery by this range of actors calls for strong leadership, backed by adequate financing; ministries of finance and strong national action plans are critical.

MANAGING MULTISECTORAL RESPONSES: WHAT WORKS?

Managing multisectoral responses presents new challenges for coordination, resourcing, monitoring and reporting, as well as ensuring that necessary expertise is engaged. Strong, political leadership is essential for bringing diverse sectors together.

Multisectoral responses to child marriage can be facilitated and supported by **national action plans** to enable effective coordination and implementation. These plans must be supported by:

- **Diverse partnerships** to engage key actors across sectors including community and religious and customary leaders, and well-established women's rights organisations.³³
- **Fair and adequate financing** to achieve the ambitious progress demanded by the SDGs and the AU Commitment to End Child Marriage.³⁴ Girls' issues and child marriage are too often under-funded, too short to demonstrate impact and relegated to low-priority ministries. Research shows that women and girls are

disproportionately impacted by decreases in government revenue and public investment.³⁵ Ministers of finance must become champions for girls and ending child marriage. ODA and loan arrangements must allow funding and reporting that enable delivery of long term programmes with multiple components led by partners across different sectors.

- **Accountability** to ensure quality program delivery, and that strengthened legal and policy environments translate into improved outcomes for women and girls. Holding leaders, donors and institutions to account requires inclusive and participatory accountability mechanisms, and effective and transparent monitoring

Box 4: Engaging a range of partners to develop context-specific solutions to child marriage

In Latin American countries child marriage is often a response to early pregnancy and where gender norms value motherhood and marriage over education, child marriage can be a quicker way for girls to feel a sense of achievement as young women than completing their schooling. This makes empowerment through improved access to sexual and reproductive health services and comprehensive sexuality education an important intervention for reducing child marriage and de-facto unions that expose girls to similar risks, including intimate partner violence. Responding to this violence has led Save the Children and other advocates for girls to engage the justice sector and women's rights organisations with experience in advocacy to end sexual and gender-based violence.

The strength of laws against child marriage under the Convention on the Rights of the Child and Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women allows threats to these protections to be fought through litigation. Save the Children Mexico challenged exceptions to child marriage laws through an Amicus Curiae (friends of the court) brief to the Supreme Court of Justice (<https://www.savethechildren.mx/sci-mx/media/documentos/AMICUS-CURIAE-ENGLISH-VERSION.pdf>). The war-like generalised gang violence that fuels violence against girls in some Latin American countries has also led to responses that draw on lessons from girls' rights advocates working in humanitarian contexts, including through engagement with the Malala Foundation.

Box 5: Laws are not enough – the benefits of engaging communities

Child marriage has been illegal in Nepal since 1963 but the practice has continued, particularly among poor and rural communities. In 2015, Save the Children Nepal developed a response combining policy, advocacy and multi-component program interventions, working in close partnership with local government structures across the justice, education and child protection sectors.

Evaluation of the programme in nine districts found that child marriage declined by 11 percentage points – from 37% to 26% – between 2015 to 2017. The project mobilised service providers, police, religious leaders, girls, the media and communities. Community sensitisation efforts included street drama written and performed by children and public hearings led by a community-based team of independent journalists, a network of child clubs and village child protection committees. A helpline and Facebook page for lodging complaints with police and the District Child Welfare Board had stopped 115 marriages at the time of evaluation. Priests have been mobilised to identify and refuse proposed child marriages.

and reporting of progress. Education and empowerment programmes are critical to ensure women and girls know their rights and are able to effectively access accountability mechanisms.

- **Enabling legal and policy environments and multi-stakeholder engagement.** Efforts should harmonise national and subnational laws, setting the minimum legal age for marriage at

18 years. They should also engage communities, religious and customary leaders to promote the social and behavioural changes required for the successful implementation of these laws. Regulatory changes like requiring birth registration and removing barriers to registration can aid the detection and prevention of proposed child marriages.



Alyne at a makeshift school in the Democratic Republic of Congo's conflict-affected Kasai region

- **Humanitarian responses that address child marriage.** Child marriage prevention and response should be a part of all humanitarian responses to ensure early assessments identify drivers of risk and appropriate interventions for different phases of recovery. Responding to girls' needs in humanitarian contexts requires strong partnerships to reinstate essential justice, education, health and child protection services, including psychosocial support. In humanitarian

settings, parents may marry their daughters in order to protect them from stranger violence, so ensuring girls are safe from gender-based violence outside the home is a key step toward ending child marriage. Economic support should be provided to reduce barriers to uptake of services and communities should be mobilised against child marriage, including through empowerment programming for children.³⁶

Spotlight: Preventing and responding to child marriage in humanitarian contexts

Girls in humanitarian and fragile contexts face increased risk factors for child marriage. Humanitarian contexts are among the only areas where rates of child marriage are increasing rather than decreasing. A growing body of evidence shows that rates of child marriage increase during humanitarian crises and in conflict-affected areas but data to support this assertion is limited.³⁷ Data collection in humanitarian contexts is challenging and data on child marriage currently represents an important data gap.

Risk factors associated with higher rates of child marriage exist and are often heightened in humanitarian contexts: poverty, insecurity and a lack of good-quality essential services are all drivers of child marriage.³⁸ Resource scarcity, limited employment opportunities for parents, caregivers and working-age young people, and a lack of protection mechanisms often push families into arranging for their daughters to marry in order to ease the household burden and secure dowry payments.³⁹ Girls in humanitarian crises are also highly susceptible to violence including sexual assault and rape.⁴⁰ This heightened vulnerability can lead families to view marriage as a way to protect their daughter, including from the stigma sometimes associated with experiencing sexual violence and sex outside of marriage.⁴¹ Where systems of law and order are inadequate, have broken down or are overwhelmed, families see marriage as the best way to protect girls, creating a false choice between violence by strangers or through marriage.⁴²

In 2017, the Human Rights Council adopted a resolution on Child, Early and Forced Marriage in Humanitarian Settings including a call for the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights to create a 'web portal to bring together and collate information relating to child, early and forced marriage, including in humanitarian settings'.⁴³ The portal is now live (<https://www.ohchr.org/en/issues/women/wrgs/pages/childmarriage.aspx>) but further research in humanitarian settings is required to build the evidence base, together with more systematic collection and publication of data on child marriage rates. Government, donor and institutional support and investment is critical.

KEY RECOMMENDATIONS

Institutionalising leadership and coordination at the highest level is essential to delivering multisectoral responses to end child marriage and to respond to the needs of married girls.

States must intensify efforts to develop and implement multisectoral national action plans to end child marriage, as soon as possible.

These plans must:

- **Be fully and fairly financed.**
- **Be supported by accountability mechanisms**, including monitoring and reporting processes and enabling legal and policy environments.
- **Incorporate a strong focus on education**, alongside critical nutrition, health and protection interventions. Education interventions should:
 - **promote educational targets for adolescent girls** in line with SDG4, including universal access to free secondary education, and the delivery of comprehensive sexuality education, and curricular that cover gender equality and human rights.
 - **drive change in social norms** to increase the value given to girls and their education.
 - **work in cooperation with health and nutrition interventions** that keep girls well enough to attend school and learn, as well as public safety interventions to enable girls to travel to and attend school safely.
 - ensure that schools provide girls with a better alternative to marriage by **empowering girls to hold leaders to account**, and to **access livelihood opportunities** that improve their economic independence and their ability to influence decisions that affect them.
 - **work actively in communities**, involving women and girls, but also including men and boys to address child marriage and its consequences.

Sali's brother, aunt and two cousins were killed when their home was destroyed by a bomb. Devastated by what had happened, Sali dropped out of school. After getting psychosocial support, she's been able to return to education.



ENDNOTES

- ¹ Child and forced marriage violate Art 24(3) the Convention on the Rights of the Child 1989, Article 16(2) of the Convention for the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination against Women, Article 16(2) of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, Art 23(3) of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and Article 10(1) of the International Convention for Economic, Social and Cultural Rights.
- ² Save the Children (2018) *Still Left Behind: Tracking children's progress against the pledge to Leave No One Behind*, https://resourcecentre.savethechildren.net/node/13589/pdf/still_left_behind_low_res.pdf
- ³ UNICEF (2018) *Child Marriage: Latest trends and future prospects*, <https://data.unicef.org/resources/child-marriage-latest-trends-and-future-prospects/>
- ⁴ UNICEF (2018).
- ⁵ Save the Children (2018).
- ⁶ Sustainable Development Goal target 5.3: UN (2018) "Sustainable Development Goal 5", *Sustainable Development Knowledge Platform*, <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/sdg5>; The African Union has also committed to end child marriage, see: African Union (2014) *Campaign to end child marriage in Africa: Call to Action*, https://au.int/sites/default/files/pages/32905-file-campaign_to_end_child_marriage_in_africa_call_for_action_-_english.pdf
- ⁷ UNICEF (2018).
- ⁸ Save the Children (2018).
- ⁹ Save the Children (2018).
- ¹⁰ WHO (2016) "Causes of death among adolescents", *Maternal, newborn, child and adolescent health*. Available at: http://www.who.int/maternal_child_adolescent/data/causes-death-adolescents/en/. Accessed 26 September 2018.
- ¹¹ Save the Children and Human Rights Centre UC Berkeley School of Law (2018) *Toward an End to Child Marriage – Lessons from Research and Practice in Development and Humanitarian Sectors*, https://resourcecentre.savethechildren.net/node/13485/pdf/child_marriage_report_june2018.pdf
- ¹² World Bank and International Centre for Research on Women (2017) *Economic Impacts of Child Marriage: Global Synthesis Report*, <https://www.icrw.org/publications/economic-impacts-child-marriage/>
- ¹³ Save the Children (2016) *Every Last Girl: Free to live, free to learn, free from harm*, <https://www.savethechildren.org.uk/content/dam/global/reports/advocacy/every-last-girl.pdf>
- ¹⁴ World Bank and International Centre for Research on Women (2017).
- ¹⁵ Save the Children and World Bank (2017) *Spotlight series: Strengthening the harmonisation of laws*.
- ¹⁶ African Union (2014).
- ¹⁷ African Union (2015) *African Common Position on the AU Campaign to end Child Marriage in Africa*, https://au.int/sites/default/files/documents/31010-doc-cap_on_ending_child_marriage_-_english_0.pdf
- ¹⁸ African Union (2014).
- ¹⁹ Decision of African Union Specialised Technical Committee on Social Development, Labour and Employment (STC-SDLE-2).
- ²⁰ African Union Peace and Security (2018) *Communique of the 789th PSC Meeting on the theme: Ending Child Marriage in Africa*, <http://www.peaceau.org/en/article/communique-of-the-789th-psc-meeting-on-the-theme-ending-child-marriage-in-africa>
- ²¹ This approach builds on World Bank research on the relationship between education and child marriage: World Bank and International Centre for Research on Women (2017). See technical note for further detail.
- ²² Save the Children's Group-based Inequality Database (GRID) projects current trends in child development indicators into the future, estimating what improvements are needed to meet SDG targets by 2030. <https://campaigns.savethechildren.net/grid>
- ²³ This analysis is illustrative and embodies a number of assumptions and limitations. For example, the calculation is based on the impact of education on child marriage, and does not the impact of child marriage on education. For further discussion, see accompanying technical note.
- ²⁴ World Bank and International Centre for Research on Women (2017).
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Some names have been changed to protect identities.

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