UNFPA–UNICEF
**GLOBAL PROGRAMME
TO END CHILD MARRIAGE**

TAKING THE FIELD FORWARD:
INVESTING IN KNOWLEDGE TO END CHILD MARRIAGE

end
child
marriage
A voice. A chance. A future.

PUBLICATIONS CATALOGUE 2020–2021

Front cover: © UNICEF/UN0517420/Panjwani

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To learn more about the Global Programme, visit www.unicef.org/protection/UNFPA–UNICEF-global-programme-end-child-marriage, or contact GPChildMarriage@unicef.org.

May 2022

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INTRODUCTION

Investing in data and generating and disseminating evidence on what works to prevent child marriage is essential to developing smart, effective policies and programmes that lead to large-scale change. This publications catalogue compiles research and evidence pieces published in 2020 and 2021 by the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) and United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) headquarters and regional and country offices, as well as by our partners around the world. The catalogue serves as a global good for sharing knowledge, identifying gaps in research and helping to connect child marriage experts to each other.

The catalogue is also a part of the research strategy of the UNFPA–UNICEF Global Programme to End Child Marriage, which aims to improve, unify and amplify contributions to evidence on child marriage nationally and globally. The strategy aims to ensure that quality evidence can inform national and subnational policies and programmes and improve their effectiveness in preventing child marriage and supporting married girls in scalable, sustainable, rights-based and gender-transformative ways.

The UNFPA–UNICEF Global Programme to End Child Marriage is turning commitments into tangible action for girls and boys. It promotes the right of girls to delay marriage, addresses the conditions that keep the practice in place, and cares for girls already in union. The Global Programme is being implemented in 12 countries that have a high prevalence or high burden of child marriage. These are Bangladesh, Burkina Faso, Ethiopia, Ghana, India, Mozambique, Nepal, Niger, Sierra Leone, Uganda, Yemen and Zambia.

A total of 119 publications are presented in this catalogue, grouped within key themes:

• Prevalence, drivers and consequences
• Linked issues
• The impact of COVID-19
• Humanitarian settings
• Systems: education, child protection and gender-based violence, social protection and health
• Working with communities
• Programme reviews
• Laws, policy frameworks, budgets and costing
• Evidence reviews and use of knowledge

The publications showcased under each key theme are listed in order of publication (newest to oldest). Please see the annex for a list of publications by geographical region/country.

We are grateful to our partners who submitted research to be featured in this catalogue:

• AJWS
• Anandi
• Child Frontiers
• Girls Not Brides: The global partnership to end child marriage
• Partners for Law in Development
• Plan International
• Save the Children
• United Nations Girls' Education Initiative
• Aliadas Latin America and the Caribbean
• Young Lives

The findings, content and opinions expressed in the various publications represent the view of the authors and do not necessarily correspond to the views of UNFPA or UNICEF.

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The publications in this catalogue come from...

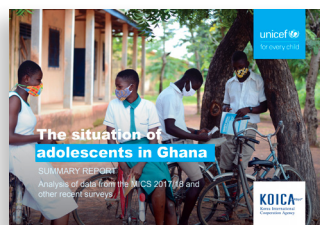**2** Kenya
5 Ethiopia
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Plus global and regional studies from...

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- **4** Middle East and North Africa
- **5** Latin America and the Caribbean
- **10** South Asia

Note: This map is stylized and not to scale. It does not reflect a position by UNFPA or UNICEF on the legal status of any country or area or the delimitation of any frontiers.

CHILD MARRIAGE PREVALENCE, DRIVERS AND CONSEQUENCES

The situation of adolescents in Ghana

This report looks at the situation of adolescents in Ghana, in terms of health, nutrition, education, experience of violence, sanitation and equality. Child marriage is common among girls in all regions except for the Greater Accra Region. The practice is twice as common in rural areas compared with urban areas, and girls in households of the lower wealth quintiles are more likely to be married by the age of 18 years.

Two out of three unmarried sexually active girls and more than half of married adolescents report that they want to stop or delay childbearing but are not using any method of contraception. Among adolescent girls aged 15 to 19 years, 14 per cent have had a live birth or are currently pregnant with their first child.

Research report: UNICEF Ghana
December 2021 | 69 pp. | English
Contact: Miho Yoshikawa (myoshikawa@unicef.org)

🌐 Ghana   ⤭ Prevalence   ⬇ Download

👪 Linked issues

Los matrimonios y uniones infantiles, tempranos y forzados: Prácticas nocivas profundizadoras de la desigualdad de género en América Latina y el Caribe
[Child, early and forced marriages and unions: Harmful practices deepening gender inequality in Latin America and the Caribbean]

Child, early and forced marriages and unions are a reality in Latin America and the Caribbean, despite their lack of visibility. They constitute a complex phenomenon related to gender inequalities, violence, poverty, school dropout, teenage pregnancy and inadequate or insufficient legislation and policies, which put girls and adolescents at risk. The objective of this report is to make visible those harmful practices that deepen gender inequalities. Through statistical and qualitative information, it seeks to make an innovative contribution by looking at different gendered dimensions related to child marriage and early unions, such as time spent on domestic chores and caretaking and makes recommendations on how to address the situation on a regional level.

Research report: United Nations Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean, UN Women, UNFPA, UNICEF
December 2021 | 38 pp. | Spanish
Contact: Alejandra Alzerreca (alzerreca@unfpa.org)

🌐 Latin America and the Caribbean   ⤭ Prevalence   ⬇ Download

🚚 Drivers

🚶 Consequences

👪 Linked issues

Protecting and empowering adolescent girls in Ghana

This new statistical report underscores the need for concerted and sustained investment in the rights and well-being of adolescent girls in Ghana as this would significantly contribute to the country's overall progress towards the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. The report outlines how early pregnancy, violence and excessive household chores thwart the opportunities of many girls aged between 10 and 19 years, particularly the most vulnerable and marginalized, and how this trend has worsened as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Data brochure: UNICEF Ghana
November 2021 | **44 pp.** | **English**
Contact: Miho Yoshikawa (myoshikawa@unicef.org)
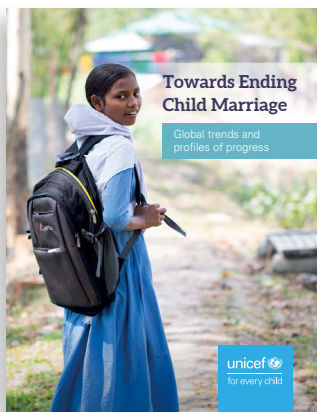
Ghana   Prevalence   Download

Linked issues

Towards ending child marriage

Child marriage is widely recognized as a violation of human rights and a hindrance to national development. Evidence suggests that the practice of child marriage is closely associated with lower educational attainment, early pregnancies, intimate partner violence, maternal and child mortality, increased rates of sexually transmitted infections, intergenerational poverty and the disempowerment of married girls.

This report looks at historical trends, with a focus on selected countries that have recorded significant declines in child marriage prevalence. It offers an overview of changes in the practice of child marriage and a review of other shifts that have occurred in these countries in terms of girls' access to education and employment opportunities, as well as economic development and poverty reduction.

Data brochure: UNICEF Data and Analytics
October 2021 | **76 pp.** | **English**
Contact: Claudia Cappa (ccappa@unicef.org)
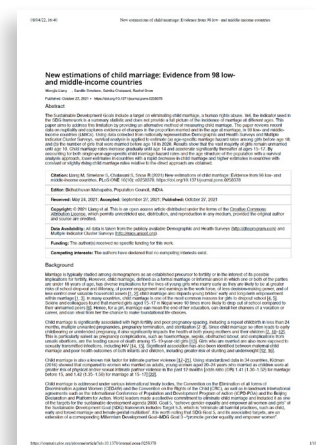
Global   Prevalence   Download

Drivers

New estimations of child marriage: Evidence from 98 low- and middle-income countries

The Sustainable Development Goals include a target on eliminating child marriage, measured by the indicator 5.3.1, *the percentage of women aged 20-24 married before age 18*, a summary statistic. This paper provides a fuller picture of the incidence of child marriage at different ages in childhood and adolescence. Using a survival analysis approach, the estimates account for both single-year-age-specific child marriage hazard rates as well as the age structure of the population. Results show that the vast majority of girls remain unmarried until age 10. Child marriage rates increase gradually until age 14 and accelerate significantly thereafter at ages 15–17. The majority of child marriage thus occurs in middle adolescence, pointing to the need for intervention in early adolescence. Regional variations indicate that the rate of child marriage starts to escalate only at age 16 and beyond in European countries, while in some sub-Saharan countries the rate accelerates as early as age 12.

Relative to the traditional estimation method, the survival method shows lower estimates in countries with a rapid decrease in child marriage (partially reflecting declines in child marriage in recent cohorts in these countries). In countries with constant or slightly rising child marriage rates, the survival approach shows higher estimates than the traditional estimation method (partially reflecting the increase in population size of recent cohorts in these countries).

Journal article: UNFPA
October 2021 | **17 pp.** | **English**
Contact: Mengjia Liang (liang@unfpa.org)

Global   Prevalence   Download

Methods

Supporting married girls, adolescent mothers and girls who are pregnant

This report explores the rights and complex needs of married girls, pregnant adolescents and adolescent mothers, sharing successful approaches and recommendations from around the world.

With the majority of adolescent births taking place within the context of marriage, adolescent pregnancy and child marriage are closely linked. Married adolescent girls and girls who are already mothers have unique needs, which health care, education and social services systems are often not well placed to meet. Responses to adolescent pregnancy to date have been heavily focused on prevention and maternal health, ignoring broader sexual and reproductive rights, the psychological and socioeconomic consequences of adolescent pregnancy, and the complex needs of married girls, pregnant adolescents and adolescent mothers.

Report: Girls Not Brides
October 2021 | **19 pp.** | **English and French**
Contact: Arwyn Finnie (Arwyn.finnie@girlsnotbrides.org)

Global   Consequences   Download

State of the Nigerian girl: An incisive diagnosis of child marriage in Nigeria

This report confirms that child marriage is both a cause and result of poor education for girls in Nigeria. There are over 10 million out-of-school children in the country, over 60 per cent of whom are girls. If a girl is out of school, her likelihood of getting married at an early age is very high. When a girl is married young, she is robbed of her childhood and opportunities to realize her full potential. She has an increased risk of poor health outcomes, having children at a younger age, dropping out of school, experiencing ongoing violence in the home, being restricted in her mobility, having limited decision-making ability, and earning less over her lifetime.

Research report: Save the Children
October 2021 | **78 pp.** | **English**
Contact: Amanuel Mamo (Amanuel.Mamo@savethechildren.org)

Nigeria   Drivers   Download

Consequences

Baseline study on social norms and behavioural drivers related to child marriage in Sierra Leone

Respondents are aware of the negative aspects of child marriage and report being personally committed to marrying children at a later age – even into their mid-20s. A majority of respondents said they would not budge on their preferred marriage ages, even if a good opportunity arose or if they were faced with social pressure. Perceptions and attitudes around parents making child marriage decisions appear to be shifting, but it seems children are still subject to expectations of early marriage and judgement for promiscuity if they are not married by a certain age.

The attitudinal shifts that are taking root may in part be attributable to campaigns and programming happening on the ground in Sierra Leone – more than three in four respondents had been exposed to sources promoting the elimination of child marriage in the last year. Based on the results of the advanced analysis, demographic factors and environmental factors bear most heavily on decision-making around child marriage in Sierra Leone. In particular, men, older people and those with higher income and education levels are more likely to desire an end to child marriage.

Research report (PowerPoint presentation): UNICEF Sierra Leone, IPSOS
September 2021 | **80 pp.** | **English**
Contact: Yuichiro Yamamoto (yyamamoto@unicef.org)
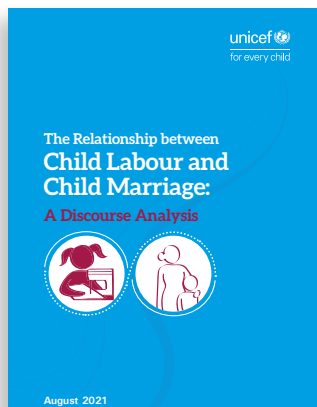
Sierra Leone   Drivers   Available upon request– global synthesis report of this project to come

The relationship between child labour and child marriage: A discourse analysis

This paper examines arguments around the relationship between child labour and child marriage. It reviews key concepts and frameworks relevant to child and forced labour, and child early and forced marriage and provides an overview of child labour and child marriage in South Asia. The report also reviews the role of children's agency in marital and work decisions and the evidence for other interactions between marriage and work in children's lives, particularly in South Asia.

Rather than offering answers or proposing a consensus argument about the nature of child marriage and child labour and how they overlap, or not, the paper suggests some conceptual and empirical questions on consent in marriage, labour in marriage, control within marriage, and abuse and labour migration, that could move the discourse on this topic forward.

Research report: UNICEF Regional Office for South Asia, Carol Boender, UNFPA, ILO
August 2021 | **59 pp.** | **English**
Contact: Amanda Bissex (abissex@unicef.org)

🌍 South Asia   👥 Linked issues   ⬇ Download

Child marriage and modern slavery

This position paper explores the connection between child marriage and modern slavery, outlines the key issues and offers recommendations for action. The exploitation and coercive control that are features of both child marriage and modern slavery cut across religions, cultures, regions and borders. Practices like these put girls around the world in situations of dependency, limiting their human rights, freedom and ability to act on their decisions (their agency).

Position paper: Girls Not Brides
August 2021 | **4 pp.** | **English**
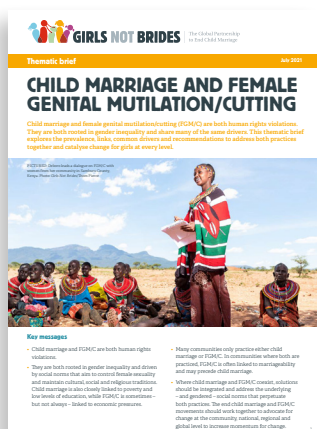**Contact**: Zoe Birchall (zoe.birchall@girlsnotbrides.org)

🌍 Global   👥 Linked issues   ⬇ Download

Child marriage and female genital mutilation/cutting

This brief explores the common drivers of child marriage and female genital mutilation (FGM) and includes recommendations for integrated policy and programming to catalyse change for girls. Child marriage and FGM are both violations of girls' rights. Both practices are rooted in gender inequality and driven by social norms that aim to control female sexuality and maintain cultural, social and religious traditions. Child marriage is also closely linked to poverty and low levels of education, while FGM is sometimes – but not always – linked to economic pressures.

Where child marriage and FGM coexist, solutions should be integrated and address the underlying – and gendered – social norms that perpetuate both practices. The movements to end child marriage and FGM should work together to advocate for change at the community, national, regional and global level to increase momentum for change.

Factsheet: Girls Not Brides
July 2021 | **7 pp.** | **English, French and Kiswahili**
Contact: Arwyn Finnie (Arwyn.finnie@girlsnotbrides.org)

Global   Drivers   Download

Linked issues

'The school was closed, so when they brought me a husband I couldn't say no': Exploring the gendered experiences of child marriage amongst adolescent girls and boys in Ethiopia

Addressing child marriage is increasingly recognized as a development priority, given the far-reaching life-course and intergenerational consequences of the practice. Despite rapid progress, Ethiopia remains in the top five countries globally in terms of absolute numbers of married girls, with significant sub-national variation in the drivers and patterning of child marriage. This article explores the gendered experiences of child marriage amongst girls and boys in the Amhara and Oromia regions of Ethiopia. It applies capabilities framing in a novel way to move debates beyond a sole focus on girls and a single modality of marriage. The findings highlight context-specific economic and gender norm drivers of adolescent-initiated and parent-arranged child marriages, and their differential effects on girls and boys.

Journal article: Emiria, G., Jones, N., Kebede, M., Addis Ababa University, ODI, GAGE
June 2021 | **22 pp.** | **English**
Contact: Nicola Jones (n.jones@odi.org.uk)

Ethiopia   Drivers   Download

Consequences

Trading daughters for livestock: An ethnographic study of facilitators of child marriage in Lira district, Northern Uganda

This study explores the underlying drivers of child marriage in Lira district in Northern Uganda. This publication is re-affirming that child marriage is deeply rooted in the intersections between poverty, inequitable gender norms, cultural perceptions and inadequate investments by parents in education for girls.

The study emphasizes that identifying the underlying drivers of child marriage are critical in order to address the persistent burden of child marriage. The trading of girls at markets was perceived as a response for some poor households to access livestock, household income and addressing poverty. Recommendations include to invest in critical initiatives to keep girls in school, address poverty through targeting the family and individual level with appropriate incentives to address the economic needs of girls and families to delay marriage and engage community leaders and key influencers such as religious and cultural leaders in supporting enforcement and implementation of bylaws and ordinances to change hostile environments that reinforce child marriages in the communities.

Journal article: Stella Neema, Christine Muhumuza, Rita Nakigudde, Cecilie S Uldbjerg, Florence M Tagoola, Edson Muhwezi
June 2021 | **22 pp.** | **English**
Contact: Harriet Ndagire (hndagire@unfpa.org), Edson Mulwezi (emuhwezi@unfpa.org) and Florence Tagoola (tagoola@unfpa.org)
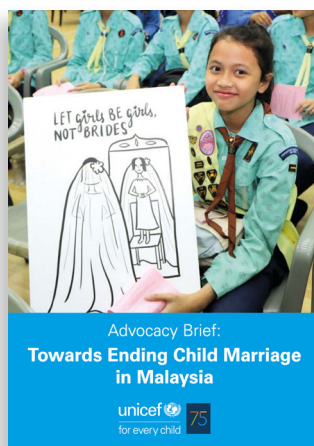
Uganda   Drivers   Download

Towards ending child marriage in Malaysia

Child marriage is a global phenomenon affecting the lives of millions of children each year. Malaysia is no exception. Between 2007 and 2017, approximately 15,000 cases of child marriage were recorded in Malaysia, occurring in all communities across the country. Ninety per cent of the children who were married in 2018 were girls.

Advocacy brief, infographic: UNICEF Malaysia
March 2021 | **76 pp.** | **English and Bahasa Malaysia**
Contact: Saskia Blume (sblume@unicef.org)

Malaysia   Prevalence   Download

Advocacy Brief:
Towards Ending Child Marriage in Malaysia

unicef for every child | 75
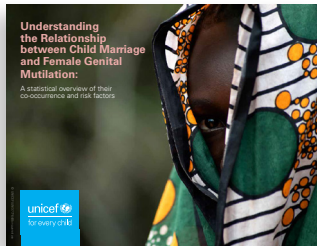
Understanding the relationship between child marriage and female genital mutilation

Child marriage and FGM threaten the well-being of millions of girls around the world. Both practices have existed for generations, as manifestations of gender inequality, and have been propagated by discriminatory norms that devalue girls. In many countries where both child marriage and FGM are common, girls most at risk for each practice tend to share certain characteristics, such as low levels of education, rural residence and living in poorer households. Yet, there are distinct differences in what drives each practice, and many communities in which one may be common, will not practice the other.

This report seeks to identify the extent to which child marriage and FGM co-exist. The intersection of these two practices – that is, the share of women who underwent FGM and were married in childhood – is reviewed over time, to determine whether girls' likelihood of experiencing both practices has changed across generations. Lastly, the analysis identifies the characteristics that most commonly distinguish the girls who experience one practice from those who experience both.

Data brochure: UNICEF Data and Analytics
February 2021 | **54 pp.** | **English**
Contact: Claudia Cappa (ccappa@unicef.org)
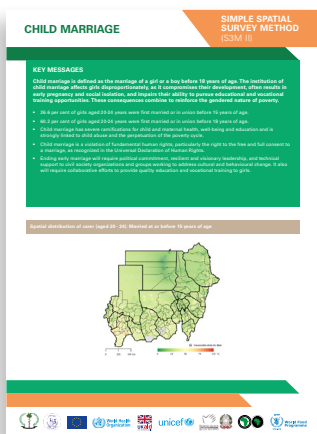
Global   Prevalence   Download

Drivers

Linked issues

Child marriage in Sudan

This snapshot shows the prevalence of child marriage in the different states of Sudan. Overall, 60 per cent of all young women in Sudan are married before the age of 18, and 27 per cent before age 15.

Data snapshot: UNICEF, World Health Organization, European Union, World Food Programme, African Development Bank
February 2021 | **2 pp.** | **English**
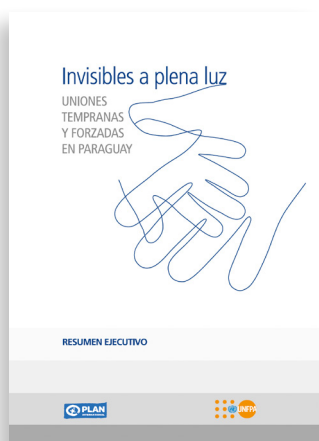**Contact**: Tamador Abdalla (taabdalla@unicef.org)

Sudan   Prevalence   Download

Invisibles a plena luz: Uniones tempranas y forzadas en Paraguay
[Invisible in plain sight: Early and forced unions in Paraguay]

This research report clearly demonstrates the close relationship between early unions, pregnancy, poverty and dropping out of school, factors that condition girls and adolescents to the loss of opportunities, the resignation of their life projects and the reproduction of these conditioning factors.

Likewise, the findings constitute a call for attention to the clear need for a multisectoral and coordinated approach to eradicate them, leaving no one behind. This is a call to promote a life free of violence, to place this issue on political and public agendas, to strengthen the child and adolescent protection system, and, above all, to move decisively towards the goal of eliminating, by 2030, this form of gender-based violence that affects girls and adolescents in unions or marriages, who are currently invisible in plain sight.

Executive summary: UNFPA and Plan International
2021 | **30 pp.** | **Spanish**
Contact: Mirtha Rivarola (rivarola@unfpa.org) and Patricia Aguilar (paguilar@unfpa.org)

Paraguay	Drivers	Download
	Consequences	
	Laws	
	Budgets	
	Linked issues	

Child marriage in the Sahel

The Sahel is home to over 20 million child brides, including currently married girls and women who were first married in childhood. Over half of young women in the Sahel marry in childhood; levels are highest in central Sahel, where 7 in 10 young women are child brides. Women living in states or provinces in the Sahel marry nearly two years earlier than those living outside the Sahel. Vast disparities exist across population groups: young women with no education are 10 times more likely to have married in childhood than their peers with more than a secondary education. Six in ten child brides in the Sahel gave birth before the age of 18 years, and nearly 9 in 10 gave birth before age 20. Ninety-five per cent of married adolescent girls in the Sahel are not attending school.

Child marriage remains just as common in the Sahel today as it was 25 years ago; without a change in course, the Sahel will fall further behind other regions of the world in the progress towards eliminating child marriage.

Data brochure: UNICEF Data and Analytics
December 2020 | **17 pp.** | **English**
Contact: Claudia Cappa (ccappa@unicef.org)

Global	Prevalence	Download
	Drivers	

Child, early and forced marriage in Turkey

In Turkey, the proportion of girls who married before the age of 18 declined between 1993 and 2008. However, this observed decline did not continue between 2008 and 2018. The study findings distinctly reveal a relationship between child, early and forced marriage (CEFM) and the duration and level of education. The educational levels of mothers and fathers among families who support CEFM are low.

Three out of four women aged 20–24 years who married before the age of 18 did not know about the fertile period, and three out of four women did not talk with anybody about family planning. The actions of half of the child brides are limited by their husbands. On the other hand, the proportion of child brides justifying any physical violence decreased over time, and the proportion of women stating that they can refuse sexual intercourse increased.

Data brochure: UNFPA Turkey
December 2020 | **78 pp.** | **English**
Contact: Basarankut, Zeynep (basarankut@unfpa.org)

Turkey   Prevalence   Download

                Drivers

                Consequences

A multi-sector approach to health risks and consequences of child, early, and forced marriage

This qualitative study focuses on the risks and consequences of child, early and forced marriage on health. The study reveals many health problems caused by child marriages and adolescent pregnancies, such as increased risk of maternal and newborn mortality, miscarriages, preterm births, difficult delivery, growth retardation during pregnancy, low birth weight, severe bleeding, fistula and tears, sexually transmitted infections and postnatal complications.

In addition to presenting the health-related burdens of child, early and forced marriages, the study discusses many suggestions and interventions to address, manage and prevent the issue of child marriages from a health-sector perspective with a multi-sectoral approach. The research also considers the reasons for child marriages and the domestic and international legislation on child marriage.

Research report: UNFPA Turkey
November 2020 | **152 pp.** | **English**
Contact: Basarankut, Zeynep (basarankut@unfpa.org)

Turkey   Consequences   Download

Child marriage and teenage pregnancy in Uganda

Although the legal age of consent to marriage in Uganda is set at 18, formal or informal marriage before this age is a common practice. Girls, who in most cases are married to older men, are disproportionately affected by this harmful practice. Progress has been made to end child marriage, but the practice still affects nearly half of all girls in Uganda.

In Uganda, a complex and interrelated set of drivers exposes girls to child marriage and teenage pregnancy. These drivers are crosscutting and deeply rooted in traditions, culture and poverty. Child marriage and teenage pregnancy are closely linked, and while child marriage is often a precursor of early childbearing, pre-marital pregnancy may also put girls at risk of being married off. Young girls may be forced to marry the father of their baby – even a rapist – to spare their families the stigma associated with an unmarried pregnancy.

Data snapshot: UNFPA Uganda
November 2020 | **4 pp.** | **English**
Contact: Harriet Ndagire (hndagire@unfpa.org) and Rachel Ogolla (rogolla@unfpa.org)

Uganda   Prevalence   Download

Drivers

Ending child marriage: A profile of progress in Bangladesh

Bangladesh is home to 38 million child brides, including currently married girls and women who were first married in childhood. Of these, 13 million married before the age of 15 years. Fifty-one per cent of young women in Bangladesh were married before their eighteenth birthday.

A girl's risk of child marriage is influenced by certain background characteristics. Child brides are somewhat more likely to reside in rural areas and to live in poorer households, and are less likely to have more than a secondary education. Married girls are over four times more likely to be out of school than unmarried girls. Nearly 5 in 10 child brides gave birth before age 18, and 8 in 10 gave birth before age 20.

Declines in the practice have been observed across wealth groups, with more progress seen among the richest. Meeting the Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) target to end child marriage by 2030, or the national target to end child marriage by 2041, will require a major push. Progress must be at least 8 times faster than the rate observed over the past decade to meet the national target, or 17 times faster to meet the SDG target.

Data brochure: UNICEF Data and Analytics, UNICEF Bangladesh
October 2020 | **17 pp.** | **English**
Contact: Claudia Cappa (ccappa@unicef.org) and Tahmina Huq (thuq@unicef.org)

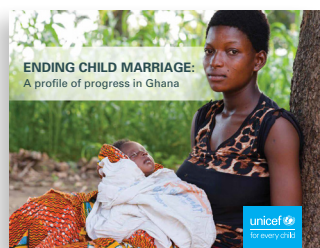Bangladesh   Prevalence   Download

Drivers

Consequences

🏠

Ending child marriage: A profile of progress in Ghana

Ghana is home to over 2 million child brides, including currently married girls and women who were first married in childhood. Child marriage often takes the form of an informal union, in which a girl lives with a partner as if married. One in five young women in Ghana are married or in an informal union before their eighteenth birthday.

A girl's risk of child marriage is influenced by certain background characteristics. Girls who live in rural areas or come from poorer households are at greater risk, and a higher proportion of child brides are found among those with little or no education. More than 9 in 10 married girls are not attending school. Most young women who married in childhood gave birth as adolescents.

Ghana has made strong progress compared with other countries in West and Central Africa. However, eliminating child marriage by 2030 will require additional efforts.

Data brochure: UNICEF Data and Analytics, UNICEF Ghana
October 2020 | **15 pp.** | **English**
Contact: Claudia Cappa (ccappa@unicef.org)

🗺 Ghana   ⤬ Prevalence   ⬇ Download

              🚚 Drivers

              👤 Consequences

Looking ahead towards 2030: Eliminating child marriage through a decade of action

The world is making inroads against child marriage, with an acceleration of progress in the past 10 years. By 2030, the SDG target is to eliminate the practice globally. Reaching this goal will require coordinated action and additional investment. To end child marriage by 2030, progress must be 17 times faster than the progress of the last decade, based on pre-COVID-19 projections.

Data snapshot: UNICEF Data and Analytics
September 2020 | **3 pp.** | **English**
Contact: Claudia Cappa (ccappa@unicef.org)

🗺 Global   ⤬ Prevalence   ⬇ Download

Violence against children in South Asia: A systematic review of evidence since 2015

This systematic review of the prevalence, drivers and consequences of violence against children, as well as the interventions that seek to prevent violence, serves as an evidence baseline of data produced since the adoption of the SDGs in 2015. Evidence from this review is unequivocal: violence in childhood is deeply damaging to children and disrupts sustainable development in South Asia.

Child marriage is a significant risk factor in all forms of violence against children. For the countries in South Asia where data was available, this review found that physical violence is the most common form of violence that married women within this age group face, except for the Maldives, where the prevalence of emotional violence is greater, and Pakistan, where the prevalence of physical and emotional violence is comparable. The study also looks at programming approaches that have had a positive impact in preventing violence and child marriage.

Research report, executive summary and synthesis of findings: UNICEF Regional Office for South Asia, University of Edinburgh
September 2020 | **148/32/8 pp.** | **English**
Contact: Amanda Bissex (abissex@unicef.org)

South Asia   Linked issues   Download

Early and child marriage in India: A framework to achieve SDGs

The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child defines any human being below the age of 18 years as a child. Therefore, child marriage is the marriage of a girl or boy where one or either of the parties is below the age of 18 years. In international human rights discourse, child marriage is interchangeably used with early marriage. Early marriage also implies the inability to offer considered consent, even after the individual has reached the age of 18.

Along with forced marriage, which is totally non-consensual, early and child marriage are viewed as harmful practices and a human rights violation. However, the lives of individuals are embedded in social relations, communities and cultures, and so the meaning of early and child marriage adopted in this report is more complex and reflects the structures and dynamics of social relations in India.

Research report: Meena Gopal, Advanced Centre for Women's Studies Tata Institute of Social Sciences Mumbai India
August 2020 | **9 pp.** | **English**
Contact: Meena Gopal (meena.gopal@tiss.edu)
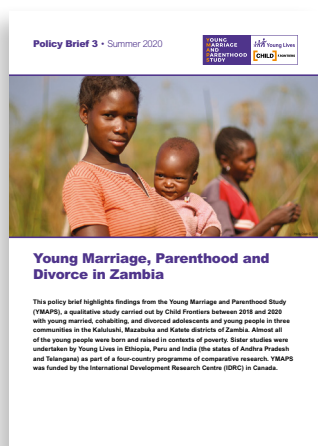
India   Prevalence   Download

Young marriage, parenthood and divorce in Zambia

In a country where statutory law prohibits marriage under the age of 21, nearly all the young people in the study live in informal, cohabiting relationships, though most consider themselves to be husbands and wives, as do their families. For both girls and boys, pregnancy is the primary driver of school dropout, but not all girls who had given birth were studying when they became pregnant. Nevertheless, young people in Zambia express a strong appreciation of the value of education.

Unintended pregnancy is the main reason why children and young people marry or start living together. Although for some, romantic love is a motivator for marriage and cohabitation, for many girls and young women relationships are established as a way to meet their basic needs and those of their children. Young men, however, are motivated in large part by sexual curiosity. The quality of young people's relationships with their families of origin appears to be an important predictor of both early marriage and individuals' capacity to manage marriage and parenthood, as well as separation and divorce.

Policy brief: Young Lives, Child Frontiers, Oliver Mweemba and Gillian Mann
July 2020 | 8 pp. | English
Contact: Gillian Mann (gmann@childfrontiers.com)
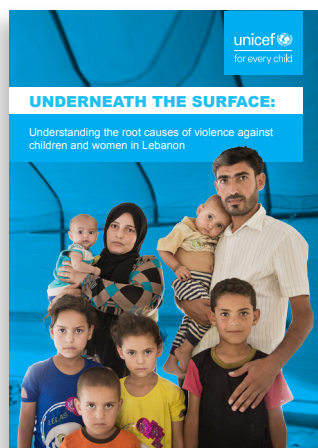
Zambia   Drivers   Download

Consequences

Underneath the surface: Understanding the root causes of violence against children and women in Lebanon

This research looks at the drivers and root causes of child labour, child marriage, violence against children, intimate partner violence and children engaged in armed violence in Lebanon. It uses the social behavioural change model to understand the drivers' dimensions, including social norms, and provides a wide view of the perception and attitudes of those who influence, decide and/or encourage violence on women and children.

The research found that, at times, boys consider child marriage to be a sign of maturity, a view that was sometimes shared by members of their community. If boys can start their own family, they are expected to do so. For girls, child marriage was often seen as a potential way out of their parents' homes.

Research report: UNICEF Lebanon
July 2020 | 221 pp. | English
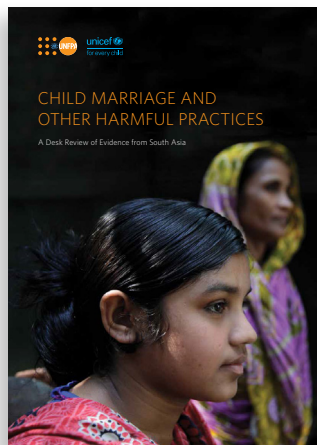**Contact**: Johanna Eriksson (jeriksson@unicef.org)

Lebanon   Drivers   Download

Linked issues

Policy Brief 3 • Summer 2020

Young Marriage, Parenthood and Divorce in Zambia

This policy brief highlights findings from the Young Marriage and Parenthood Study (YMAPS), a qualitative study carried out by Child Frontiers between 2018 and 2020 with young married, cohabiting, and divorced adolescents and young people in three communities in the Kalulushi, Mazabuka and Katete districts of Zambia. Almost all of the young people were born and raised in contexts of poverty. Sister studies were undertaken by Young Lives in Ethiopia, Peru and India (the states of Andhra Pradesh and Telangana) as part of a four-country programme of comparative research. YMAPS was funded by the International Development Research Centre (IDRC) in Canada.

UNDERNEATH THE SURFACE:

Understanding the root causes of violence against children and women in Lebanon

Child marriage and other harmful practices

This study looks at the different forms of child marriage in South Asia and how these variations in child marriage practices are linked to other harmful practices. The study describes the impact that programmes seeking to address child marriage may be having upon other harmful practices, such as polygamy, honour crimes and dowry-related violence, bride price and dowry, sex selection and female infanticide, menstruation practices, caste-based discrimination and child labour.

By identifying the links between child marriage and other harmful practices, programmes can be better informed about the potential impact of their interventions and can reflect on whether there are additional considerations that should be considered.

Research report: UNICEF Regional Office for South Asia, UNFPA Asia and the Pacific Regional Office
July 2020 | **52 pp.** | **English**
Contact: Amanda Bissex (abissex@unicef.org), Upala Devi (devi@unfpa.org)
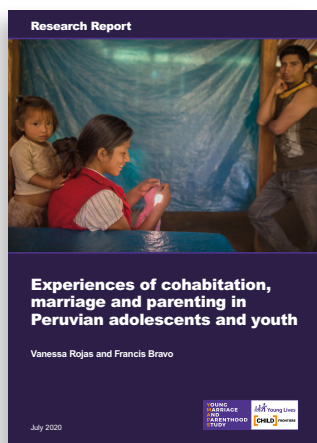
South Asia   Prevalence   Download

Linked issues

Experiences of cohabitation, marriage and parenting in Peruvian adolescents and youth

Early cohabitation patterns vary according to age and gender. For women in this study, cohabitation was related to the desire to escape oppressive or violent situations in their family environment, to improve their socioeconomic situation, or to seek protection. Men started cohabiting at a later age than women. Families play a decisive role in the establishment of cohabitation: at the community level, families encourage (and sometimes demand) cohabitation when it has been made public that the young couple has already begun an active sex life or it is known that the young woman is pregnant.

Living together at an early age limits girls' educational opportunities: some girls do not complete basic education and others do not continue with higher studies because they must conform to traditional gender roles associated with care of the household and children. Relationships between young people are marked by unequal power relations; expectations around gender roles in the home place women in a subordinate position to their partners. Young men and women feel that they were not prepared to start a life together and that it did not turn out as they expected.

Research report: Young Lives, Child Frontiers, Vanessa Rojas and Francis Bravo
July 2020 | **48 pp.** | **English**
Contact: Julia Tillford (julia.tilford@qeh.ox.ac.uk)

Peru   Prevalence   Download

Drivers

Child, early and forced marriage and unions in Latin America and the Caribbean

This brief analyses the key characteristics of child, early and forced marriages and unions in Latin America and the Caribbean and provides recommendations to strengthen the response of all sectors interested in guaranteeing girls' and adolescents' rights.

Fact sheet: Girls Not Brides
July 2020 | 12 pp. | English and Spanish
Contact: Gabriela Garcia (Gabriela.Garcia@girlsnotbrides.org)

⊘ Latin America and the Caribbean   ⊘ Prevalence   ⊘ Download

SDGs and child marriage

Ending child marriage is essential to reach 8 of the 17 SDGs. This advocacy brief explains why ending child marriage is necessary to achieving these 8 SDGs and outlines the actions needed to ensure that this happens.

Advocacy brief: Girls Not Brides
July 2020 | 4 pp. | English, French, Spanish and Arabic
Contact: Zoe Birchall (Zoe.Birchall@girlsnotbrides.org)

⊘ Global   ⊘ Linked issues   ⊘ Download

Ending child, early and forced marriage is crucial to gender equality

This advocacy brief explores and documents how each of the six issues identified as critical to achieving gender equality in the Beijing +25 process – gender-based violence, economic justice and rights, bodily autonomy and sexual and reproductive health and rights, feminist action on climate justice, technology and innovation, and feminist movements and leadership – link with child, early and forced marriage (CEFM). It also urges development actors to invest in comprehensive, multisectoral, rights-based approaches that address the structural drivers of CEFM and build positive norms to achieve gender equality.

Advocacy brief: Girls Not Brides
July 2020 | 5 pp. | English, French and Spanish
Contact: Jacky Repila (jacky.repila@girlsnotbrides.org)
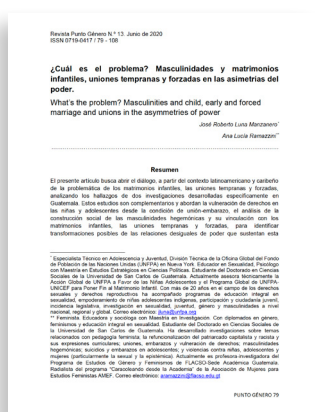
⊘ Global   ⊘ Linked issues   ⊘ Download

¿Cuál es el problema? Masculinidades y matrimonios infantiles, uniones tempranas y forzadas en las asimetrías del poder.

What's the problem? Masculinities and child, early and forced marriage and unions in the asymmetries of power

José Roberto Luna Manzanero[*]
Ana Lucía Ramazzini[**]

Resumen

El presente artículo busca abrir al diálogo, a partir del contexto latinoamericano y caribeño de la problemática de los matrimonios infantiles, las uniones tempranas y forzadas, analizando los hallazgos de dos investigaciones desarrolladas específicamente en Guatemala. Estos estudios son complementarios y abordan la vulneración de derechos en las niñas y adolescentes desde la condición de unión-embarazo, el análisis de la construcción social de las masculinidades hegemónicas y su vinculación con los matrimonios infantiles, las uniones tempranas y forzadas, para identificar transformaciones posibles de las relaciones desiguales de poder que sustentan esta

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[**] Feminista. Educadora y socióloga con Maestría en Investigación. Con diplomados en género, feminismos y educación integral en sexualidad. Estudiante del Doctorado en Ciencias Sociales de la Universidad de San Carlos de Guatemala. Ha desarrollado investigaciones sobre temas relacionados con pedagogía feminista, la refuncionalización del patriarcado capitalista y racista y sus expresiones curriculares; uniones, embarazos y vulneración de derechos; masculinidades hegemónicas; suicidios y embarazos en adolescentes; y violencias contra niñas, adolescentes y mujeres (particularmente la sexual y la epistémica). Actualmente es profesora-investigadora del Programa de Estudios de Género y Feminismos de FLACSO-Sede Académica Guatemala. Radialista del programa "Cacaoleando desde la Academia" de la Asociación de Mujeres para Estudios Feministas AMEF. Correo electrónico: aramazzini@flacso.edu.gt

¿Cuál e el problema? Masculinidades y matrimonios infantiles, uniones tempranas y forzadas en las asimetrías del poder

[What's the problem? Masculinities and child, early and forced marriage and unions in the asymmetries of power]

This article seeks to open a dialogue on the issue of child, early and forced marriage and unions in Latin America and the Caribbean by analysing the findings of two research studies undertaken specifically in Guatemala. These studies are complementary and address the violation of the rights of adolescent girls from the onset of an union/pregnancy vis-à-vis the analysis of the social construction of hegemonic masculinities and their linkages with child marriages and unions, aimed at identifying possible transformations of the unequal power relations that sustain this harmful practice, as well as providing potential strategies for the agenda on engaging men and boys in gender equality.

Research report: José Roberto Luna, Ana Lucía Ramazzini
June 2020 | **30 pp.** | **Spanish**
Contact: José Roberto Luna (jluna@unfpa.org) and Ana Lucía Ramazzini (aramazzini@flacso.edu.gt)

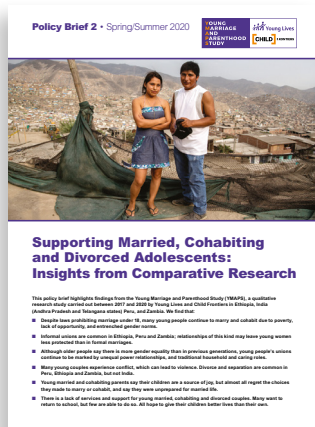Guatemala, Latin America and the Caribbean

Drivers

Download

Consequences

Linked issues

Supporting married, cohabiting and divorced adolescents: Insights from comparative research

This brief highlights findings and proposes policy recommendations related to how young people experience marriage, co-habitation and parenthood; live dignified lives despite poverty; are able to return to, or finish their education and access training; and most importantly, ensure that their own children go to school in order to give them a better future.

Understanding, supporting and listening to this generation of adolescents who have married or cohabited and become parents is a critical step in breaking the cycle of young marriage for the next generation and achieving the SDGs by 2030.

Policy brief: Young Lives, Nikki van der Gaag, et al.
May 2020 | **9 pp.** | **English**
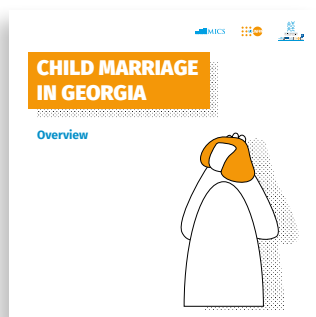**Contact**: Julia Tillford (julia.tilford@qeh.ox.ac.uk)

Global

Consequences

Download

Child marriage in Georgia

The prevalence of child marriage throughout Georgia has not changed since 2010; the percentage of women aged 20–24 years who were married before age 18 was 14 per cent in 2010 and 13.9 per cent in 2018. In comparison, 0.5 per cent of men aged 20-24 married before the age of 18.

The child marriage situation in Georgia is not homogenous: data indicate that child marriages occur more frequently in rural areas – where 25 per cent of women aged 20–24 had married before the age of 18 – than in urban areas (8 per cent). Girls belonging to the two lowest wealth quintiles are also most likely to be affected, indicating a link between child marriage and poverty. Child marriage is strongly linked to education level: 46.5 per cent of women aged 20–24 married by age 18 had only completed primary or lower secondary school, while just 3.1 per cent of this group were enrolled in or had graduated from higher education.

Research report: UNFPA Georgia, Joanna Pares Hoare
April 2020 | **39 pp.** | **English and Georgian**
Contact: Mariam Bandzeladze (bandzeladze@unfpa.org)

Georgia   Prevalence   Download

Drivers
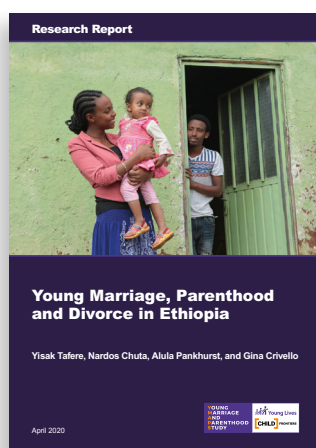
Young marriage, parenthood and divorce in Ethiopia

While there has been significant change in Ethiopia in young people's personal agency in deciding to form relationships, cohabit or establish marriages, customary norms are still pervasive in marriage processes, particularly in rural areas, and gender norms constrain young women's agency. Within marriage, domestic roles and the division of labour remain gendered, and power imbalances based on sex and age disempower young women in household decision-making, including in relation to family planning and parenting.

Single women, whether unmarried, separated or divorced, face particular vulnerabilities, social stigma and challenges in accessing mother and child services and support with childcare. While there are indications that women's rights to property and childcare upon divorce are improving in some contexts, customary norms often still constrain the implementation of these rights.

Research report: Young Lives, Child Frontiers, Tafere, Y., N. Chuta, A. Pankhurst, and G. Crivello
April 2020 | **45 pp.** | **English**
Contact: Julia Tillford (julia.tilford@qeh.ox.ac.uk)

Ethiopia   Consequences   Download

Las masculinidades y su impacto en el matrimonio infantil y las uniones tempranas

[Masculinities and their impact on child marriage and early unions]

This study examines how masculinity and gender norms affect the prevalence of child marriage in the Dominican Republic. The study looks at gender roles related to providing economically for one's family, and at sexuality and violence and how these impact the lives of boys and girls. The study shows that men who have received sexual education from a young age and who have certain religious affiliations are less likely to marry girls.

Research brief: Natanael Disla, UNFPA Dominican Republic, Plan International
March 2020 | **24 pp.** | **Spanish**
Contact: Jeannie Ferreras (ferrerasgomez@unfpa.org)

Latin America and the Caribbean   Drivers   Download
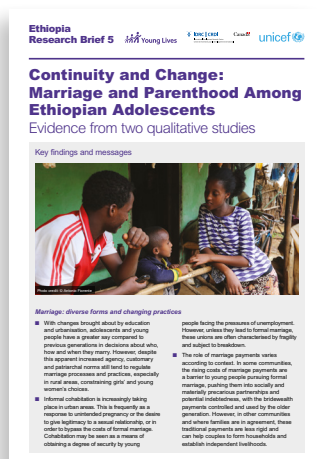
Continuity and change: Marriage and parenthood among Ethiopian adolescents

With changes brought about by education and urbanization, compared with previous generations adolescents and young people have a greater say in decisions about who, how and when they marry. However, despite this apparent increased agency, customary and patriarchal norms still tend to regulate marriage processes and practices, especially in rural areas, constraining girls' and young women's choices.

Despite widespread assumptions about greater gender equality among this generation of young people, patriarchal norms continue to bear heavily on household roles, in relations among young couples, and on decision-making within marriage. Single mothers are especially vulnerable and face challenges in terms of social attitudes and discrimination. Most of the adolescent girls and boys had already dropped out of school for a range of reasons before they got married. Many young women and young men regret the timing and circumstances in which they married and became first-time parents, and the consequent loss of the freedoms of childhood.

Research brief: UNICEF Ethiopia, Young Lives
March 2020 | **12 pp.** | **English**
Contact: Celine Herbiet (cherbiet@unicef.org) and Zemzem Shikur (zshikur@unicef.org)

Ethiopia   Consequences   Download
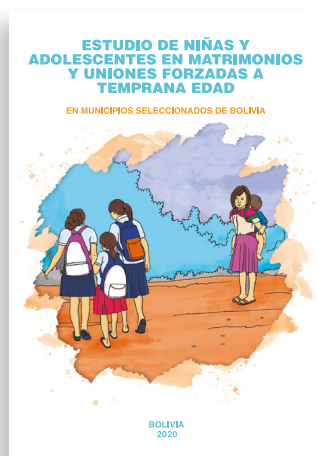
Estudio de niñas y adolescentes en matrimonios y uniones forzadas a temprana edad
[Study of girls and adolescents in early marriages and forced unions]

Child marriages and early unions are harmful practices that threaten the most basic rights of girls and adolescents. This study aims to help make these harmful practices visible and provide guidance to health, education and justice sectors so that they can better protect girls and adolescents.

Research report: UNFPA Bolivia, Plan International
March 2020 | **134 pp.** | **Spanish**
Contact: Freddy Huaraz (huaraz@unfpa.org)

🌎 Bolivia   ✕ Prevalence   ⬇ Download

👥 Linked issues
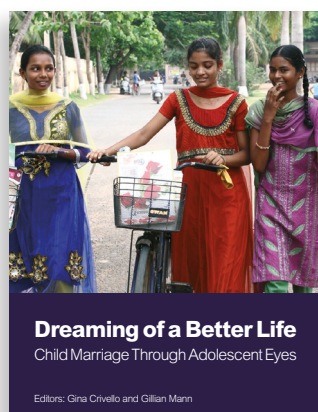
Dreaming of a better life: Child marriage through adolescent eyes

This book showcases evidence and new learnings from an international suite of research projects on 'Early, Child and Forced Marriage'. The book is divided into four themes: adolescent girls' agency and roles in marital decision-making, daily lives and experiences of married girls and boys and young people, child marriage on the continuum of sexual and gender-based violence, and policies and programmes to reduce child marriage in different settings.

Analogy: Young Lives, Gina Crivello and Gillian Mann
March 2020 | **168 pp.** | **English**
Contact: Julia Tillford (julia.tilford@qeh.ox.ac.uk)

🌎 Global   ←↑→ Consequences   ⬇ Download
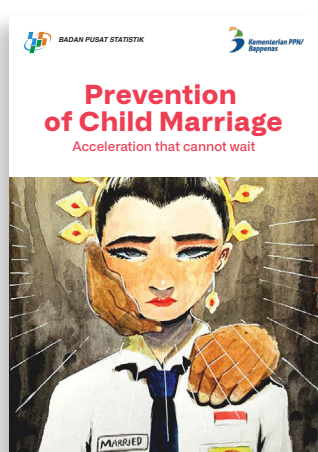
Prevention of child marriage: Acceleration that cannot wait

In the past 10 years, the practice of child marriage in Indonesia has decreased by 3.5 percentage points. However, this decline is relatively slow. A systemic and integrated effort is needed to achieve the target child marriage prevalence of 8.74 per cent by 2024 and 6.94 per cent by 2030. Child marriage is linked to various factors, both structural and those associated with community, family and individual capacity. Findings from the National Socioeconomic Survey and other relevant literature studies showed that girls and children who were from a poor family, lived in rural areas and had a low educational background were more vulnerable to child marriage.

Research report, fact sheet: UNICEF Indonesia, BPS, PUSKAPA UI,
Kementerian PPN/ Bappenas
February 2020 | **44/1 pp.** | **English**
Contact: Milen Kidane (mkidane@unicef.org)

🌎 Indonesia   ✕ Prevalence   ⬇ Download
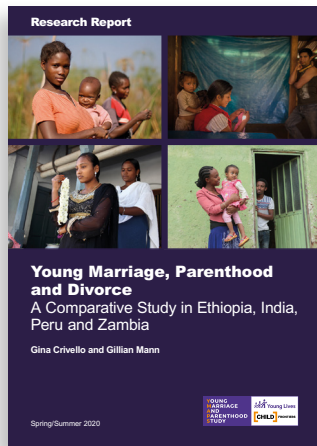
🚚 Drivers

Young marriage, parenthood and divorce: A comparative study in Ethiopia, India, Peru and Zambia

The findings of this study suggest that a commitment to the 'leave no one behind' agenda requires expanding the focus of efforts to address child marriage to more explicitly include the experiences of young people who are married or in informal unions, as well as those who are divorced and separated. A focus on adolescent sexuality, the experiences of boys and young men, and a more accurate understanding of girls' and boys' agency and decision-making in their marriage and reproductive pathways are also needed.

One of the characteristics that differentiates the experiences of younger and older couples, as demonstrated in this study, is that married girls and boys and young people occupy a liminal position that is unique to them, one that sits squarely between childhood and adulthood and affects all aspects of their roles in marriage and parenthood. This transitional position creates many contradictions and challenges affecting their access to the services and support appropriate to their specific needs and realities.

As social disapproval of child marriage grows, so too does the risk of stigmatizing the young people already in these relationships. Whether it was their choice or not to marry, it is important to respect their diverse experiences, motivations and aspirations so that they can live their lives with dignity and without shame.

Research report: Young Lives, Child Frontiers, Gina Crivello and Gillian Mann
February 2020 | **36 pp.** | **English**
Contact: Julia Tillford (julia.tilford@qeh.ox.ac.uk)

Ethiopia, India, Peru, Zambia   Consequences   Download
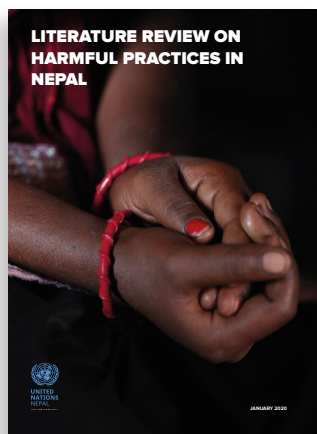
Literature review on harmful practices in Nepal

This literature review aims to better understand five harmful practices and their impact in Nepal, namely: caste-based discrimination; menstrual restrictions, including *chhaupadi*; child marriage; dowry and dowry-related violence; and witchcraft accusations and persecution. While these practices are distinct, placing particular excluded groups at risk, they are interconnected and can have compounded effects on individuals. They are also often perpetuated by one another. Thus, individuals, in particular women and excluded groups, may experience several harmful practices throughout their life.

Harmful practices are deeply embedded within social, cultural and religious norms and are often perceived as traditional in communities in which they are practiced. It is essential that research and strategies are informed and developed jointly with those who practice and experience these harmful customs in their day-to-day lives. The impact of harmful practices cuts across all development sectors, by, for example, limiting meaningful participation in decision-making (caste-based discrimination, menstrual restrictions, accusations of witchcraft) or restricting livelihoods and economic opportunities (dowry, caste-based discrimination, child marriage, menstrual restrictions, accusations of witchcraft).

Research report: United Nations Nepal
January 2020 | **64 pp.** | **English**
**Contact**: Apekchya Rana Khatri (khatri@unfpa.org) and Pragya Shah Karki (pkarki@unicef.org)

Nepal   Prevalence   Download

Drivers

Linked issues

Harmful practices in Nepal: Report on community perceptions

In this survey, 56 per cent of respondents reported that marriage between individuals under the age of 20 occurred in their communities. When asked why parents would marry their children young, the most common response (90 per cent of respondents) was fear of elopement. Sixty per cent of respondents believed that child marriage had a negative impact on the health of girls and women.

The responses indicated a link between dowry and early marriage, with 20 per cent of respondents identifying lower dowry payments as the motivation for marrying daughters early. In Province 2, 96 per cent of respondents said that dowry is common in their communities, compared with around 1 per cent in Karnali and Sudurpaschim Provinces. Dowry places a high economic burden on the families of the brides.

Research report: United Nations Nepal
January 2020 | **48 pp.** | **English and Nepali**
Contact: Apekchya Rana Khatri (khatri@unfpa.org) and Pragya Shah Karki (pkarki@unicef.org)

Nepal   Drivers   Download
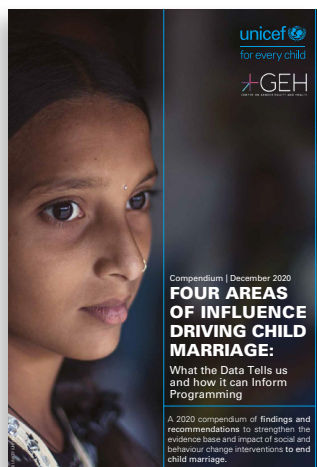
Linked issues

Four areas of influence driving child marriage: What the data tells us and how it can inform programming

This compendium contributes to the global evidence base on the root drivers of child marriage. It consists of findings and recommendations for social and behaviour change programming from four pieces of research, exploring the areas of decision-making, parent-child relationship, community-level social norms and geography. The compendium includes an executive summary providing an overview of the background, overall findings and recommendations from the four studies, including links to the published manuscripts and individual briefs on each of the four studies.

Compendium: UNICEF, UCSD
2020 | **29 pp.** | **English**
Contact: Charlotte Lapsansky (clapsansky@unicef.org)

Global   Drivers   Download

Matrimonio infantil hoja de datos
[Child marriage data sheet]

In 2011–2012, 26.1 per cent of all adolescents aged 15–19 years were married or in a union in Honduras. There is a difference of one and a half years between the median age at first union in urban areas (20.1 years) compared with rural areas (18.5 years). A difference is also observed when comparing median age at first marriage by educational level (17.5 years for women without any educational level, 21.7 years for women with higher education) and wealth quintile (18.2 years for women in the lowest quintile and 19.6 years for those in the top quintile).

Infographic: UNFPA Honduras
2020 | **4 pp.** | **Spanish**
Contact: Mildred Tejada (tejada@unfpa.org)

Honduras   Prevalence   Download

Estudio niñas adolescentes en matrimonios y uniones infantiles tempranas y forzadas en Honduras

[Study of adolescent girls in early and forced child marriages and unions in Honduras]

Norms, attitudes, behaviours and social relations impede the realization of the rights of children (particularly girls) to live free from child marriage and early unions. Reasons include the normalization of early and forced child marriage and unions, sustained by patriarchal and ancestral cultures. Further, legal frameworks are lacking, and institutions do not have the financial, methodological or operational resources to address the issue appropriately.

Executive summary: UNFPA Honduras
2020 | **18 pp.** | **Spanish**
Contact: Mildred Tejada (tejada@unfpa.org)

🌍 Honduras   ✕ Prevalence   ⬇ Download

🚚 Drivers

🚶 Consequences

THE IMPACT OF COVID-19 ON GIRLS, CHILD MARRIAGE AND PROGRAMMING
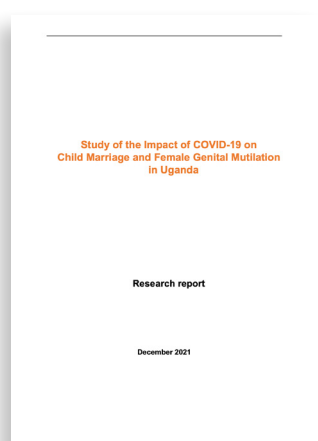
Study of the impact of COVID-19 on child marriage and female genital mutilation in Uganda

The COVID-19 pandemic has increased rates of child marriage by increasing the risk factors that drive the practice, particularly levels of poverty and access to education. Huge numbers of children are not engaged in formal education of any kind as a result of prolonged school closures and many feel that they have now been out of school for so long that a return to the classroom is an impossibility. Together, poverty and being out of school create additional sources of vulnerability that make children – both boys and girls – more likely to marry. Disruption of basic services, including access to health services and sexual and reproductive information and services, have also increased girls' vulnerability to pregnancy, which is known to drive marriage in many instances.

The study also shows that COVID-19 has accelerated already existing transformations in marriage practices, most notably the decision of many young people to marry without parental consent, and the reduction, negation, or postponement of bride wealth payments. Lastly, married adolescent girls and young women appear to be especially vulnerable to the negative impacts of COVID-19. The emotional load on married girls (and boys, and the couple as a whole) is significant at the best of times. During COVID-19, with all of its related challenges, these burdens have been exacerbated because girls have been isolated from friends and other sources of support and advice.

Research report and policy briefs: UNICEF Uganda, Child Frontiers
December 2021 | **50/9 pp.** | **English**
Contact: Maryam Enyiazu (menyiazu@unicef.org)

Uganda   Prevalence   Available upon request

Consequences
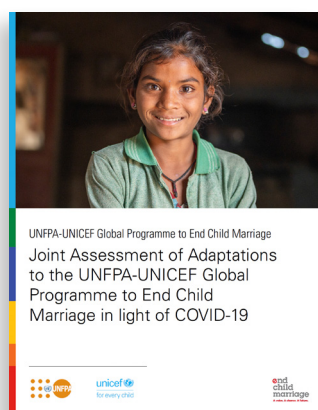
Joint assessment of adaptations to the UNFPA-UNICEF Global Programme to End Child Marriage in light of COVID-19

This assessment explores what the Global Programme has learned about preventing and responding to child marriage during COVID-19 as the pandemic hit at the very beginning of Phase II (2020-2023) of the Global Programme.

The results from this assessment informs further adjustments and refinements of the programme, to continue delivering in changing contexts and to accelerate the pace, during the Decade of Action, to eliminate the practice of child marriage to achieve the SDGs.

Assessment report, briefs: UNFPA, UNICEF
November 2021 | **88/2 pp.** | **English, French, Spanish and Arabic**
Contact: Eduard Bonet Porqueras (ebonet@unicef.org)

Global   Programme review   Download
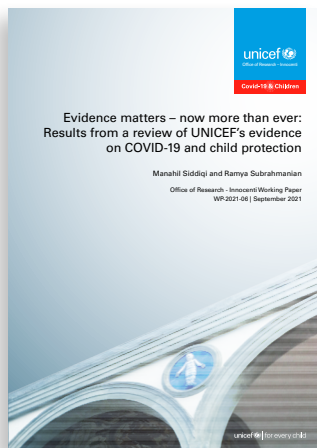
Evidence matters – now more than ever: Results from a review of UNICEF's evidence on COVID-19 and child protection

Early on, the pandemic rapidly sparked research on child protection across the globe. In the barrage of information on COVID-19, evidence is key to understand children's situations and to develop the best solutions. This review takes stock of UNICEF's rapidly evolving evidence base on COVID-19 and child protection, including child marriage, and describes what has been learned so far from this evidence base on the impacts of COVID-19 on child protection and the response measures put in place since the pandemic.

Research report: UNICEF Office of Research – Innocenti
July 2021 | **33** | **English**
Contact: Ramya Subrahmanian (rsubrahmanian@unicef.org) and Manahil Siddiqi (msiddiqi@unicef.org)

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📝 Programme review

⚙ Methods

COVID-19 and child marriage: A year on

This brief provides insights, recommendations and resources for civil society and governments to respond to the needs of adolescent girls during and after the COVID-19 pandemic, with a focus on child marriage, including those at risk of early marriage, married girls and those in informal unions.

Brief: Girls Not Brides
July 2021 | **6 pp.** | **English, French, Arabic, Spanish, Bangla and Portuguese**
Contact: Zoe Birchall (Zoe.Birchall@girlsnotbrides.org)

🌐 Global 　　　 🚚 Drivers 　　　 ⬇ Download

Child marriage in the context of COVID-19

This study documents good practices, programmatic interventions and alternative approaches being implemented to curb the impact of COVID-19 on child marriage in the Middle East and North Africa region.

The study documents programmatic examples from six countries: Djibouti, Egypt, Jordan, Morocco, Sudan and Yemen, and provides key recommendations for strengthening child marriage prevention programming during COVID-19 response and recovery phases.

Research report: UNFPA Arab States Regional Office and UNICEF Middle East and North Africa Regional Office
June 2021 | **33 pp.** | **English**
Contact: Indrani Sarkar (isarkar@unicef.org) and Shadia Elshiwy (elshiwy@unfpa.org)

🌐 Djibouti, Egypt, Jordan, Morocco, Sudan, Yemen 　　　 📝 Programme review 　　　 ⬇ Download

A gendered analysis of child protection systems responses in COVID-19 programming in South Asia

Across South Asia, child protection actors have been critical in responding to the COVID-19 pandemic by ensuring children have continued access to services, mitigating new and increased risks and promoting mental health and well-being. This study explores the changes that took place in child protection systems across South Asia in response to the COVID-19 pandemic and documents promising practices, programmatic innovations, challenges and lessons learnt from UNICEF's programming with partners.

The study found that key elements of complex adaptive systems are present within the child protection system responses to COVID-19 in the South Asia region. Importantly, there were three common factors that contributed to the success of the interventions: multi-level strategies, strong partnerships and building on existing initiatives and systems.

Research report, case studies: UNICEF Regional Office for South Asia, Dr. Deborah Fry, Karina Padilla, Lakshmi Neelakantan, Srividya Ivatury
May 2021 | **102/4/4 pp.** | **English**
Contact: Amanda Bissex (abissex@unicef.org)

🌍 South Asia   📝 Programme review   ⬇ Download

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COVID-19: A threat to progress against child marriage

The COVID-19 pandemic is profoundly affecting the everyday lives of girls: their physical and mental health, their education and the economic circumstances of their families and communities. Changes like these increase the likelihood of child marriage: over the next decade, up to 10 million more girls will be at risk of becoming child brides as a result of the pandemic.

The risk of child marriage is increased by economic shocks, school closures and interruptions in services. For example, economic insecurity can lead to child marriage as a way to relieve financial pressure on a family. The evidence is also clear that education is a protective factor against child marriage. Thus, school closures such as those triggered by COVID-19 may, in effect, push girls towards marriage because school is no longer an option. Additionally, the disruption of 'non-essential' services, including reproductive health services, has a direct impact on teenage pregnancy and subsequently on marriage.

Data brief: UNICEF Data and Analytics
March 2021 | **32 pp.** | **English**
Contact: Claudia Cappa (ccappa@unicef.org)

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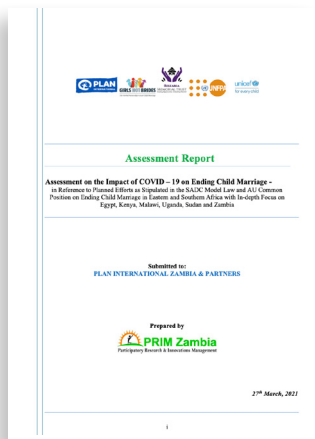
Regional assessment on the impact of COVID-19 on ending child marriage

This study aimed to establish the impact of COVID-19 on ending child marriage, in reference to planned efforts stipulated in the Southern African Development Community Model Law on Ending Child Marriage and protection of those already in marriage and the African Union Common Position on ending child marriage.

Based on participatory and integrated data collection and analysis, the study assesses the effect of COVID-19 on child marriage, measures taken to address the impact of the pandemic and the effectiveness of these measures.

Research report: PRIM Zambia, Participatory Research & Innovations Management
March 2021 | 61 pp. | English
Contact: Lynn Chinene (Lynn.Chinene@plan-international.org)

🌍 East and Southern Africa

✖ Prevalence

✉ Available upon request

✎ Programme review

Impact of COVID-19: Safeguarding women's health and entrepreneurship

The COVID-19 pandemic has exposed the depth and extent of gender inequalities that persist in many societies across the globe. The gendered impact of COVID-19 can be seen across every sphere affected by the pandemic. For example, while early evidence suggests that men are more at risk of dying from COVID-19 than women, the diversion of financial and human resources away from sexual and reproductive health services adversely affects women's and girls' well-being.

Unmarried adolescent girls and women typically experience challenges accessing reproductive and sexual health-care services. Although these services are currently operating at normal levels, Ministry of Health data show a decline in new contraception users (15 per cent) between January and April 2020, compared with 2018 and 2019.

Consultations with development partners working with adolescents reveal that gender and social norms put sexual and reproductive health services at high risk of being deprioritized, which could lead to an increase in unplanned pregnancies, child marriages and unsafe abortions. In Lao PDR, the traditional practices of child and forced marriages for labour or money further increases the risk of these practices being used to combat the economic distress resulting from COVID-19.

Brief: CDR-MPI Lao PDR, UNFPA Lao PDR, UNICEF Lao PDR
2021 | 8 pp. | English
Contact: Yali Zhang (yzhang@unicef.org)

🌍 Lao People's Democratic Republic (Lao PDR)

✖ Prevalence

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Child marriage in COVID-19 contexts: Disruptions, alternative approaches and building programme resilience

COVID-19 has upended the lives of children and families across the globe and adversely affected programmes to end child marriage. The pandemic is having a devastating effect on families, communities and economies. In the medium to long term, the threat of child marriage is far greater when communities are affected by economic shocks and have limited access to basic services such as health, education, child protection, and for gender-based violence (GBV), all of which are being negatively impacted by the pandemic.

This brief provides an overview of child marriage in the East and Southern Africa region, particularly in the context of COVID-19, as well as an analysis of disruptions to child marriage programmes in Ethiopia, Mozambique, Uganda and Zambia. It also describes alternatives to traditional programmatic work to overcome challenges presented by COVID-19.

The brief proposes a way forward for child marriage programming during the COVID-19 response and recovery phases, as well as outlining implications for future programming, including the need to strengthen programme resilience.

Research report: UNFPA East and Southern Africa Regional Office, UNICEF East and Southern Africa Regional Office
December 2020 | **12 pp.** | **English, French and Portuguese**
Contact: Mona Aika (maika@unicef.org) and Anandita Phillipose (phillipose@unfpa.org)

East and Southern Africa   Programme review   Download
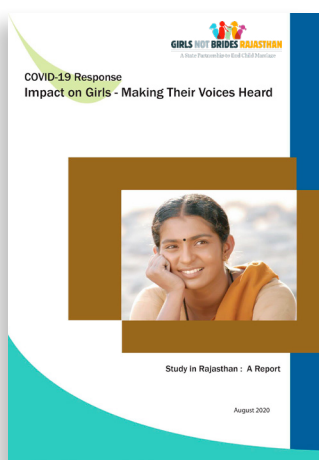
Girl-led research on the impact of COVID-19 in Rajasthan

This study aims to understand the impact of COVID-19 on the lives of young girls, predominantly in the age group of 15–19 years, in 13 districts of Rajasthan state in Northern India. This girl-led research explores how the pandemic and lockdown impacted the autonomy of girls and young women, girls' health and specifically the deterioration of their mental health, the role of girl-leaders during the pandemic and lockdown and the dangers and risks they faced, and the aspirations of adolescent girls and their expectations of the government and civil society organizations to address their needs and rights.

The study highlights recommendations from adolescent girls, such as advocating for strengthening legal-procedural mechanisms to prevent child marriage; prioritizing sexual and reproductive health and education; uniform distribution of menstruation kits; and an improved education curriculum.

Research report: Girls Not Brides
August 2020 | **91 pp.** | **English**
Contact: Divya Mukand (Divya.Mukand@GirlsNotBrides.org)

India   Linked issues   Download
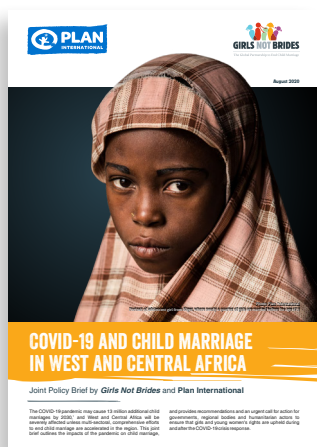
COVID-19 and child marriage in West and Central Africa

The COVID-19 pandemic may cause millions of additional child marriages by 2030. West and Central Africa will be severely affected unless multisectoral, comprehensive efforts to end child marriage are accelerated in the region.

This brief outlines the impacts of the pandemic on child marriage and provides recommendations and an urgent call for action for governments, regional bodies and humanitarian actors to ensure that girls' and young women's rights are upheld during and after the COVID-19 crisis response.

Brief: Girls Not Brides, Plan International
August 2020 | **10 pp.** | **English and French**
Contact: Mundia Situmbeko (Mundia.Situmbeko@girlsnotbrides.org)

West and Central Africa   Drivers   Download
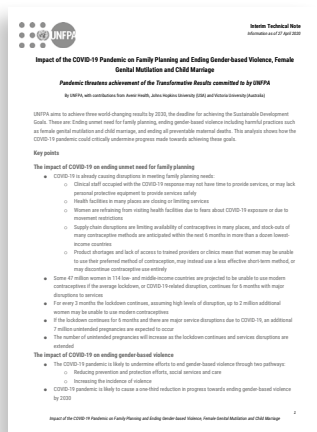
Impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on family planning and ending gender-based violence, female genital mutilation and child marriage

COVID-19 will disrupt planned efforts to end child marriage and lead to wide-reaching economic consequences. Together, these factors are expected to result in an additional 13 million child marriages that otherwise would not have occurred between 2020 and 2030 (based on early projections during the pandemic). This brief also considers the impact on female genital mutilation, on the unmet need for family planning and gender-based violence due to the pandemic.

Technical note: UNFPA, with contributions from Avenir Health, Johns Hopkins University and Victoria University
April 2020 | **7 pp.** | **English and Arabic**
Contact: Satvika Chalasani (chalasani@unfpa.org)

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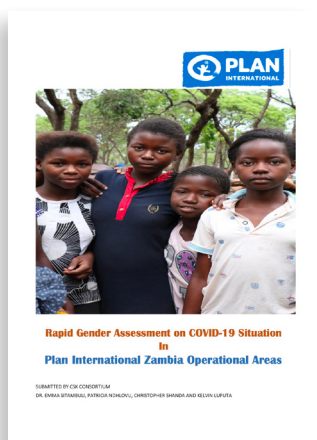
Rapid gender assessment on COVID-19 situation in Plan International Zambia operational areas

This assessment aims to understand and verify the extent of sexual gender-based violence among girls and young women as a result of COVID-19 lockdowns in Zambia. The respondents were primarily aged 10–24 years. Young women over the age of 25 were also included in the assessment as part of an intergenerational approach to enhance understanding of some of the deep-rooted gender issues.

Research report: Plan International Zambia
2020 | **44 pp.** | **English**
Contact: Lynn Chinene (Lynn.Chinene@plan-international.org)

Zambia   Linked issues   Available upon request
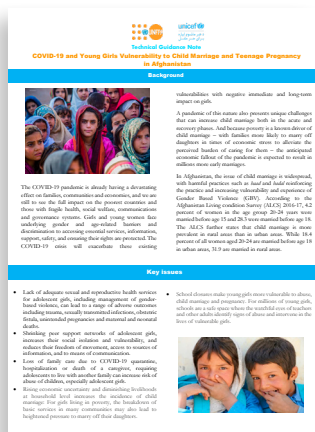
COVID-19 and young girls' vulnerability to child marriage and teenage pregnancy

The full impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the poorest countries and those with fragile health, social welfare, communications and governance systems is yet to be fully understood. Girls and young women face underlying gender and age-related barriers and discrimination in accessing essential services, information, support and safety, and in ensuring their rights are protected – especially during the pandemic.

Technical note: UNFPA Afghanistan, UNICEF
2020 | 3 pp. | English
Contact: Veronica Kamanga Njikho (vnjikho@unicef.org) and Sulaf Mustafa (smustafa@unfpa.org)

🌐 Afghanistan   🚚 Drivers   ⬇ Download

Matrimonio infantil y uniones tempranas en América Latina y el Caribe en contextos humanitarios y de crisis
[Child marriages and early unions in Latin America and the Caribbean in humanitarian contexts and crises]

The COVID-19 pandemic has strongly impacted the economy of families and has caused an increase in poverty. This can lead families to view their daughters' marriage as an economic relief.

Staying in school and completing high school are the best strategies for preventing child marriage and early unions. With schools closing during the COVID-19 pandemic, there is a risk that early unions will spike. When schools reopen, fewer girls and adolescents will return to school. During the pandemic, economic dependency, isolation from families and violence within the home make life more difficult for girls and adolescents who are married or in union, especially as access to health or protection services is limited.

Technical note: UNFPA Latin America and the Caribbean Regional Office, UNICEF, UN Women
2020 | 15 pp. | English and Spanish
Contact: Cintia Cruz (ccruz@unicef.org)

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CHILD MARRIAGE IN HUMANITARIAN SETTINGS
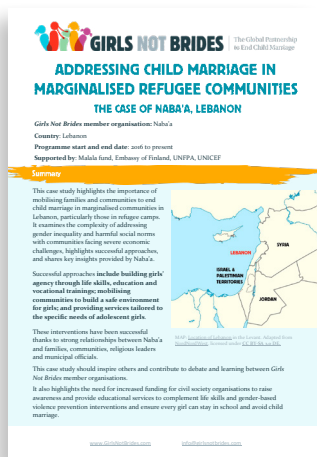
Addressing child marriage in marginalised refugee communities

This case study highlights the importance of mobilizing families and communities to end child marriage in marginalized communities in Lebanon, particularly those in refugee camps. The case study examines the complexity of addressing gender inequality and harmful social norms with communities facing severe economic challenges, highlights successful approaches, and shares key insights provided by *Girls Not Brides* member organization Naba'a.

Successful approaches include building girls' agency through life skills, education and vocational trainings; mobilizing communities to build a safe environment for girls; and providing services tailored to the specific needs of adolescent girls.

Case study: Girls Not Brides
August 2021 | **17 pp.** | **English**
Contact: Jean Casey (jean.casey@girlsnotbrides.org)

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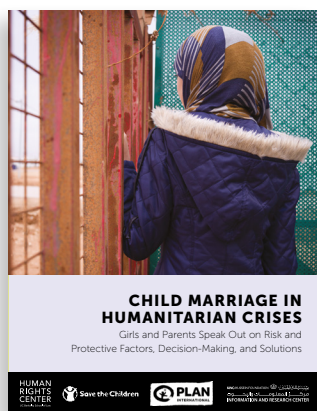
Child marriage in humanitarian crises: Girls and parents speak out on risk and protective factors, decision-making, and solutions

Research to better understand child marriage in crisis settings has only recently begun to gain traction. Yet, despite recent progress, there are still significant gaps in the existing literature for practitioners seeking to develop evidence-based programming.

This qualitative study seeks to better understand the risks and protective factors, decision-making processes, service and support needs of girls and their caregivers that contribute to vulnerability to child marriage, and community perspectives on solutions for addressing and responding to child marriage in humanitarian settings.

Research report: Human Rights Center at the University of California, Berkeley, Information and Research Center King Hussein Foundation, Plan International UK, Save the Children
March 2021 | **82 pp.** | **English**
Contact: Nina Gora (Nina.Gora@savethechildren.org)

⊕ Jordan, Uganda   🚚 Drivers   ↓ Download
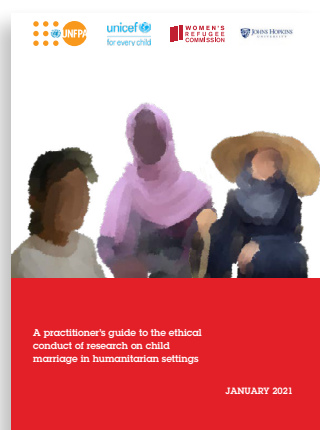
🚶 Consequences

A practitioner's guide to the ethical conduct of research on child marriage in humanitarian settings

This guide is intended to offer practitioners a framework for decision-making considering whether and how to conduct research on child marriage in humanitarian settings. The focus is on the ethical conduct of research among female and male adolescents and young people (aged 10–24) who are at risk of or have experienced child marriage and are living in challenging, low-resource, and often insecure environments. The guide is designed to help practitioners make decisions about whether or not human subject research on child marriage is needed in humanitarian settings, and, if it is needed, to help them examine the key concepts, elements, and options that should be considered in conducting ethical research.

Research report: UNFPA Arab States Regional Office, UNICEF Middle East and North Africa Regional Office, Women's Refugee Commission, Center for Humanitarian Health at the Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health
February 2021 | **74 pp.** | **English**
Contact: Shadia Elshiwy (elshiwy@unfpa.org) and Indrani Sarkar (isarkar@unicef.org)

Global   Methods   Download

Child marriage in humanitarian settings in the Arab States region: Study results from Djibouti, Egypt, Kurdistan region of Iraq and Yemen

The Arab States region has shown quickly declining rates of child marriage compared to other regions of the world. However, current regional rates show that about one in six girls are married before the age of 18. There is now increased concern that the fragility resulting from the multiple conflicts in the region may also significantly impact rates of child marriage. Four conflict affected contexts were selected that required a rigorous assessment of prevalence and drivers of child marriage to inform strategic priorities within country offices. Field studies were conducted amongst Somali and Yemeni refugees in Djibouti, Syrian refugees in Egypt, Syrian refugees and internally displaced persons in the Kurdistan Region of Iraq, and internally displaced persons in Yemen.

Research report: UNFPA Arab States Regional Office, UNICEF Middle East and North Africa Regional Office, Women's Refugee Commission and the Center for Humanitarian Health at the Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health
December 2020 | **22 pp.** | **English**
Contact: Shadia Elshiwy (elshiwy@unfpa.org) and Indrani Sarkar (isarkar@unicef.org)

Djibouti, Egypt, Iraq, Yemen   Prevalence   Download

Drivers

Child marriage in humanitarian settings in South Asia: Study results from Bangladesh and Nepal

In South Asia, a region prone to natural disasters and one that has urgent and protracted conflicts, families may resort to child marriage during crises, as it is perceived to be the best means to provide economic and physical security. It can also be perceived as a way to preserve family honour and duty during crises and disasters that threaten the identity and security of those affected.

While the drivers of child marriage may be similar, they are often heightened in emergency settings. Humanitarian crises can also change prevailing social and gender norms in ways that reduce – or reinforce – the persistent gender inequalities that underpin and perpetuate child marriage.

This study highlights the need to urgently bolster economic and social security in those communities that practice child marriage so that this harmful practice does not increase as a result of the stressors families experience in crisis situations. Programming must be more adaptive and responsive so that children and young people are empowered to shape their own futures and make their own choices, and parents and communities have the skills and empathy to support them. Boys, who are often excluded from programmes, also have the right to learn and grow up as responsible persons, able to make their own choices and empowered to have equal, respectful relationships.

Research report and policy briefs: UNFPA Asia and the Pacific Regional Office, UNICEF Regional Office for South Asia, Women's Refugee Commission and the Center for Humanitarian Health at the Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health
October 2020 | 208/4/4/4 pp. | English
Contact: Amanda Bissex (abissex@unicef.org) and Upala Devi (devi@unfpa.org)

Bangladesh, Nepal   Prevalence   Download

Drivers

Child marriage in humanitarian contexts

This brief summarizes knowledge about child marriage in humanitarian contexts and highlights where accelerated action is needed to meet global development targets by 2030. Conflicts, generalized violence and disasters resulting from natural hazards are devastating millions of lives and severely impacting communities. Girls may experience multiple adverse outcomes, including child marriage.

Brief: Girls Not Brides
August 2020 | 8 pp. | English, Arabic, French and Spanish
Contact: Jean Casey (jean.casey@girlsnotbrides.org)

Global   Prevalence   Download

Drivers

Global consultation on child marriage in humanitarian settings: Meeting report

Responding to the need for more learning, exchange and guidance on how to address child marriage across the humanitarian-development continuum, the UNFPA-UNICEF Global Programme to End Child Marriage convened 30 experts at a consultation on child marriage in humanitarian settings in Amman, Jordan on 4–5 February 2020. This report is a summary of the presentations, discussions and recommendations made by the participants.

Meeting report: UNFPA–UNICEF Global Programme to End Child Marriage
May 2020 | **29 pp.** | **English**
Contact: Nankali Maksud (nmaksud@unicef.org) and Satvika Chalasani (chalasani@unfpa.org)

Global   Programme review   Download

SYSTEMS: EDUCATION, CHILD PROTECTION AND GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE, HEALTH, AND SOCIAL PROTECTION

Social Protection & Gender Equality Outcomes Across the Life-Course
A Synthesis of Recent Findings

Social protection and gender equality outcomes across the lifecycle

This report (available as a full report or separate parts for each key pillar) summarizes the findings of a rapid evidence assessment, capturing the recent evidence on whether and how social protection programmes in low- and middle-income countries can contribute to gender equality. Critically, the paper considers evidence with a lifecycle perspective, from infancy through to adulthood.

Evidence shows that social protection can improve transitions to secondary school, reduce absenteeism, encourage parents to allow more time for homework, and improve grade completion, learning outcomes and graduation rates. Programming that supports adolescent girls' education not only reduces their risk of child marriage but can have cascading positive impacts on younger siblings' education.

Programmes can contribute to economically and socially empowering girls and women, which reduces their need to rely on exploitative/ transactional sex or marriage for economic security. There is, however, little evidence that cash can reduce child marriage in humanitarian contexts – though Syrian parents in Jordan report that they would leave their daughters in school rather than encourage them to marry if they could afford to do so.

Research report: UNICEF
December 2021 | **89/22/18/17/14 pp.** | **English**
Contact: Ruth Graham Goulder (rugraham@unicef.org)

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✏ Programme review
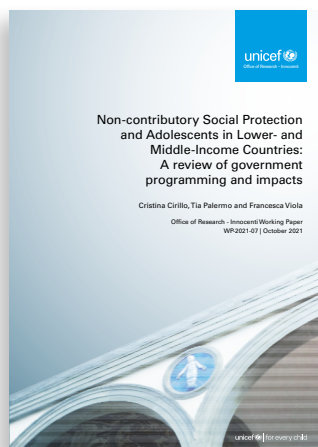
Non-contributory social protection and adolescents in lower- and middle-income countries

Adolescents face unique vulnerabilities related to their health, schooling and the intensification of gender socialization. As the next generation in line to become adults, their transition has major implications for the future health, economic growth and well-being of nations. Yet, children and adolescents have low rates of social protection coverage globally – a missed opportunity for investment.

This report examines how social protection can promote adolescent well-being and facilitate safe and productive transitions to adulthood in lower- and middle-income countries. Focusing on government non-contributory programmes, the following questions are examined: (1) whether and how current non-contributory social protection programmes are adolescent-sensitive and (2) what is the impact of non-contributory social protection programmes on adolescents?

Research report: UNICEF Office of Research – Innocenti
October 2021 | **110 pp.** | **English**
Contact: Dominic Richardson (drichardson@unicef.org)

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Preventing school dropout and early marriage in Nepal

To address the discriminatory gender norms that continue to impact the lives of girls and women in Nepal – namely early marriage, school dropout, sex selective abortion and gender-based violence in the home, community and school – two of the country's provinces have set up girl-focused social protection programmes.

This document highlights the objectives and key components of the two programmes, explores their main successes and challenges and provides recommendations, particularly for programme implementers and social protection partners, on how they can support the provincial governments to strengthen programme design and implementation.

Research report: Fiona Samuels, Anita Ghimire, UNICEF Nepal
August 2021 | **76 pp.** | **English**
Contact: Pragya Shah Karki (pkarki@unicef.org)

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Social protection
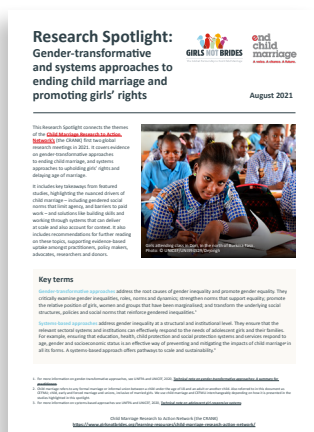
Gender-transformative and systems approaches to ending child marriage and promoting girls' rights

This research spotlight covers evidence on gender-transformative approaches to ending child marriage and systems approaches to upholding girls' rights and delaying age of marriage.

It includes key takeaways from studies featured in the first two calls of the Child Marriage Research to Action Network (the CRANK) in 2021, highlighting the nuanced drivers of child marriage – including gendered social norms that limit agency and barriers to paid work – and solutions such as building skills and working through systems that can deliver at scale and account for context. It also includes recommendations for further reading on these topics, supporting evidence-based uptake amongst practitioners, policymakers, advocates, researchers and donors.

Brief: Girls Not Brides, UNFPA–UNICEF Global Programme to End Child Marriage
August 2021 | 4 pp. | English, French and Spanish
Contact: Jean Casey (jean.casey@girlsnotbrides.org) and Satvika Chalasani (chalasani@unfpa.org)

Global   Education   Download

Programme review

Girls' education and child marriage

This brief explores the key facts, two-way impacts, common drivers and solutions on education and child marriage. Keeping girls in school is one of the best ways of preventing child marriage. At the same time, child marriage remains a significant barrier to girls' access to quality education. Whatever the reason for a girl dropping out of school, once married it is often very difficult for her to return.

The relationship between child marriage and girls' education works both ways, and decisions around them are complex and influenced by a variety of factors. For example, a girl may drop out of school for an unrelated reason and then find marriage is one of the only options open to her; or the decision for her to get married may force her to drop out of school.

Brief: Girls Not Brides
July 2021 | 8 pp. | English, French and Spanish
Contact: Emma Pearce (Emma.Pearce@girlsnotbrides.org)

Global   Education   Download
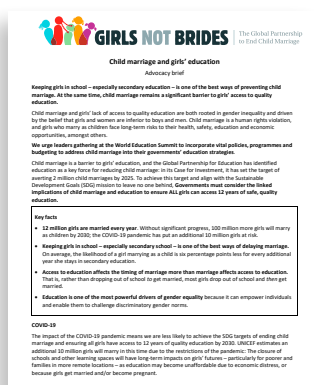
Child marriage and girls' education

This advocacy brief outlines key links between child marriage and girls' education, with recommendations for practical actions for governments, to encourage governments to incorporate measures to address child marriage into national education plans.

Advocacy brief: Girls Not Brides
July 2021 | 2 pp. | English, French and Spanish
**Contact**: Zoe Birchall (zoe.birchall@girlsnotbrides.org)

Global   Education   Download

Child protection and child marriage

This brief focuses on how investing in effective child protection systems can expand and accelerate action to prevent and respond to child marriage at scale.

Girls are less likely to marry as children if they are empowered, live in enabling and protective environments, can access services that are tailored to their needs and are supported by laws that uphold their rights. Child protection systems are a key element in creating these conditions. They are also a critical part of a multisectoral approach to preventing child marriage and responding to the needs of girls who marry as children.

Brief and working paper: Girls Not Brides
May 2021 | **8/33 pp.** | **English, French and Spanish**
Contact: Zoe Birchall (zoe.birchall@girlsnotbrides.org)

Global	Child protection	Download
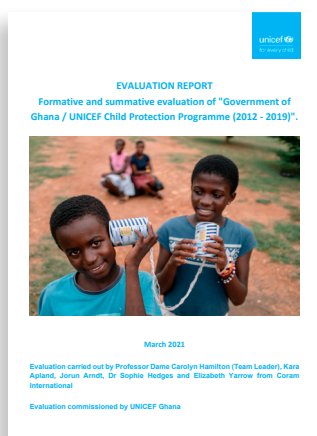
Formative and summative evaluation of 'Government of Ghana/ UNICEF Child Protection Programme (2012–2019)'

This evaluation looks at two programme cycles (2012–2017 and 2018–2022) of the Ghana child protection programme. The evaluation finds a strong alignment between the UNICEF child protection programme design and approaches and the government's priorities. The programme was found to have made significant contributions to strengthening the national child protection system in Ghana. The participatory methodology applied in community activities was particularly effective in promoting community engagement.

In terms of child marriage, the evaluation found a positive change in community members' perceptions towards the practice and service providers noting this was a key issue they respond to – even though some cases are still challenging, especially when it is the adolescents themselves pushing for the marriage. The programme continues to work to ensure an inter-sectoral response to support adolescent girls at risk of and affected by child marriage.

Research report: UNICEF Ghana
March 2021 | **122 pp.** | **English**
Contact: Miho Yoshikawa (myoshikawa@unicef.org)

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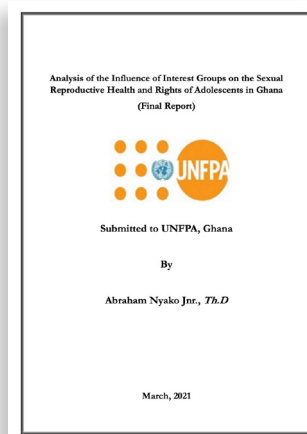
Analysis of the influence of interest groups on the sexual reproductive health and rights of adolescents in ghana

Of the interest groups identified in the study, defined as actors providing sexual and reproductive health services in Ghana, most of them provide services aimed at promoting and protecting the sexual and reproductive health rights of adolescents. Empowering young people to know their rights and providing reproductive health education were the areas that most of the interest groups engaged in. An area that received less attention was the provision of counselling and family planning services. The impact of the services provided by these actors includes a reduction in adolescent pregnancy, improved girl-child education, contribution to policy development and reproductive health education curricula, and improved knowledge on contraception. Barriers to sexual and reproductive health services were also identified, and included e.g. cost involved in seeking the services; health workers' attitudes; and lack of adolescent-friendly services at the facilities. Ignorance about available services, limited parental and community support, the need to seek parental consent and the COVID-19 pandemic were identified as some of the challenges facing the actors in implementation of their sexual and reproductive health and rights interventions.

Research report: UNFPA Ghana
March 2021 | **76 pp.** | **English**
Contact: Selina Owusu (sowusu@unfpa.org)

Ghana · Health · Available upon request

Linked issues
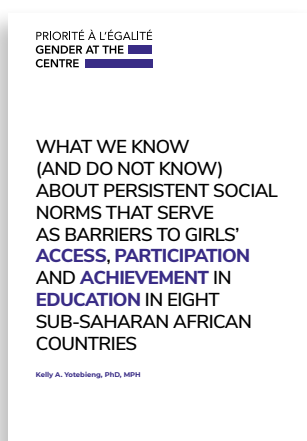
What we know (and do not know) about persistent social norms that serve as barriers to girls' access, participation and achievement in education in eight sub-Saharan African countries

This paper is a literature review of existing studies on gendered social norms that serve as barriers to girls' education. The paper: (1) explores and documents social norms that impede girls' education access, participation and achievement in the eight countries covered in the study; (2) identifies gaps in understanding the multi-level factors that serve to keep these social norms in place; and (3) proposes a research agenda and methodology to bolster practitioner understanding and to effectively inform the piloting of new ways to disrupt multi-level factors so that communities and societies can transform in positive ways that will help them achieve gender equality in and through education.

Research report: Gender at the Centre Initiative, UNGEI
2021 | **39 pp.** | **English**
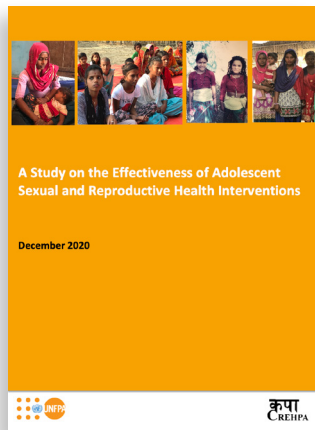**Contact**: Eline Versluys (eversluys@ungei.org)

Sub-Saharan Africa · Education · Download

Linked issues

A study on the effectiveness of adolescent sexual and reproductive health interventions

This study reviewed the extent to which UNFPA's work on adolescent sexual and reproductive health is contributing to improved capacity for adolescent-friendly health services (AFHS) in two districts in Nepal.

The clinic hours for AFHS were not conducive to adolescents as the timings conflicted with school. Only two health facilities in Baitadi district ensured privacy of service to adolescents. Separate space for adolescents was not observed in most health facilities of Rautahat. A range of sexual and reproductive health-related problems and concerns were listed by the adolescent boys and girls during the focus group discussions. Adolescent girls graduating from the Rupantaran financial and social skills programme identified a longer lists of concerns compared to other girls. Their lists included risk factors associated with teenage pregnancies such as miscarriage, difficult in delivery and pregnancy-related deaths.

The majority of the adolescents and less than half of the young women in the study had married before the age of 18. Pressure to bear their first child was higher among married adolescents girls compared with young married women.

Research report: UNFPA Nepal, CREHPA
December 2020 | **122 pp.** | **English**
Contact: Apekchya Rana Khatri (khatri@unfpa.org)

Nepal   Health   Available upon request

Linked issues

Programme review
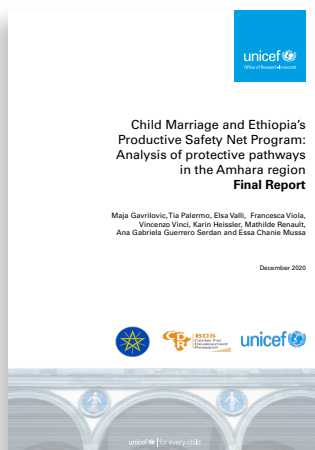
Child marriage and Ethiopia's Productive Safety Net Program: Analysis of protective pathways in the Amhara region

Emerging evidence suggests that social protection programmes can have a positive role in delaying marriage for girls. But the pathways and design features by which programmes may influence child marriage outcomes remain unknown. This mixed-methods study explores whether and how the Productive Safety Net Program (PSNP) in Ethiopia, given its national reach and potential to address poverty, can also affect child marriage. It draws on descriptive quantitative and qualitative data from an ongoing impact evaluation of the Integrated Safety Net Program pilot in the Amhara region.

It finds that PSNP, through an economic channel, is effective in reducing financial pressures on families to marry off girls and in improving girls' education opportunities. Income-strengthening measures must, however, be accompanied by complementary efforts – including girls' empowerment, awareness-raising and legal measures – to transform deep-rooted social and gender norms and attitudes that perpetuate the harmful practice of child marriage.

Research report: UNICEF Office of Research – Innocenti, UNICEF Ethiopia
December 2020 | **83 pp.** | **English**
Contact: Celine Herbiet (cherbiet@unicef.org)

Ethiopia   Social protection   Download

Programme review

A cash plus model for safe transitions to a healthy and productive adulthood: Round 3 report

This report provides Round 3 findings from the impact evaluation of *Ujana Salama*: a cash plus model for safe transitions to a healthy and productive adulthood pilot, implemented within the Government of the Republic of Tanzania's Productive Social Safety Net. This impact evaluation is a 26-month, mixed-methods study aimed at providing evidence on the potential for an additional, plus, component targeted to youth layered on top of a government cash transfer programme to improve youths' future economic opportunities and facilitate safe transitions to adulthood.

The intervention did not have any effects overall on marriage/ cohabitation, likelihood of having a girlfriend or boyfriend, sexual debut or pregnancy. In gender-stratified analyses, the programme delayed sexual debut among females by approximately four months. Qualitative interviews underscored how several females experienced unintended pregnancies as a result of relationships where men promised marriage or financial support to attend school or start a business but then left without providing further support once a pregnancy occurred.

Research report: Tanzania Social Action Fund (TASAF), Tanzania Commission for AIDS (TACAIDS), UNICEF Tanzania, UNICEF Office of Research – Innocenti, University at Buffalo, EDI Global
December 2020 | **196 pp.** | **English**
Contact: Maud Droogleever Fortuyn (mdfortuyn@unicef.org)

Tanzania	Social protection	Download
	Linked issues	
	Programme review	

Report of child protection system mapping and assessment in FATA

This report focuses on priority child protection issues in the Federally Administered Tribal Areas of Pakistan, including birth registration; child labour; harmful practices, including child marriage; physical, sexual and psychological abuse of children; neglected children, including children without adequate family care or being placed in alternative care; child trafficking; commercial sexual exploitation; children in conflict with the law; and child protection in emergencies and armed conflict. The assessment focuses on applicable standards of public child protection service delivery, including a basic mapping of the informal sector.

Research report: UNICEF Pakistan
July 2020 | **42 pp.** | **English**
Contact: Farrah Ilyas (filyas@unicef.org)

Pakistan	Child protection	Download
	Linked issues	

Civil registration in South Asia: Regulations, relationships and the role of ICT

Civil registration is a policy priority for the countries of South Asia. The 2019 meeting of the Civil Registrars Professionals of South Asia discussed three common areas of concern: legislative frameworks, marriage and divorce registration and the use of ICT.

The participants agreed that (1) the civil registration legislation should recognize civil registration as the foundational register for identity management, and that it is imperative that the laws ensure confidentiality and privacy of civil registration; (2) marriage and divorce registration needs to reflect the sociocultural practices in a country and the value of the resulting vital statistics to inform policy responses; and (3) that ICT solutions should be designed not only in line with the civil registration laws and structures but also considering any connectivity required within the overall ID-management architecture.

Research report: UNICEF Regional Office for South Asia, ESCAP
June 2020 | **76 pp.** | **English**
Contact: Amanda Bissex (abissex@unicef.org)

 South Asia   Child protection   Download

 Linked issues
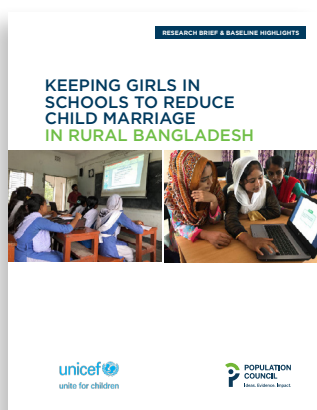
Keeping girls in schools to reduce child marriage in rural Bangladesh

Bangladesh has made considerable progress in improving access to education at all levels over the last two decades, but continues to face challenges of student dropout at the secondary level. Girls drop out of school earlier than boys because of child marriage. Targeted policies and interventions designed to improve mainstream educational attainment and decrease child marriage may be an effective and sustainable way to address both issues.

The Population Council implemented 'Keeping Girls in Schools to Reduce Child Marriage in Rural Bangladesh', an intervention research project to test a life-skills and tutoring support model to reduce school drop-out among secondary-school girls and to build aspirations for livelihood skills among unmarried girls who have dropped out of school.

Brief: Population Council, UNICEF Bangladesh
April 2020 | **21 pp.** | **(English)** – end line report to come
Contact: Iqbal Hossain (iqhossain@unicef.org)

 Bangladesh   Education   Download

 Programme review

Rapport final de l'évaluation sommative du projet: Protection des enfants mauritaniens contre la Violence, l'Exploitation, les Discriminations, les Abus et la Négligence (VEDAN)

[Final report of the summative evaluation of the project: Protection of Mauritanian children against Violence, Exploitation, Discrimination, Abuse and Neglect (VEDAN)]

Available data suggest that nearly a third of Mauritanian children over the age of 10 are exposed to violence, exploitation, abuse, discrimination or neglect. According to the results of the Multi Indicator Cluster Survey in 2015, child marriage affects 32.5 per cent of girls.

The evaluation finds that the programme has helped strengthen the child protection system and contributed to establishing a political dialogue that has ensured progress towards bringing national legislation in line with international standards. Results have been obtained in the fight against child marriage through awareness raising and a specific focus on girls' rights and empowerment.

Research report: UNICEF Mauritania
January 2020 | **116 pp.** | **French**
Contact: Kristine Peduto (kpeduto@unicef.org)

Mauritania   Child protection   Download

Linked issues

Programme review

WORKING WITH COMMUNITIES

Research Report

Primary Research Outcomes

Redesigning the Community
Conversations Toolkit

June 2021

ThinkPlace

Redesigning the community conversations toolkit

Findings from this study indicate that a health risk-based argument to ending harmful gender norms is insufficient for shifting behaviours away from these norms. Communication that focuses on health risks highlights what not to do, inadvertently encouraging practices to develop that are perceived as somehow less risky yet still compliant with the messaging. This shows communities how to halt harmful practices without providing communities with a clear set of new norms. This argument has historically reduced the prevalence of a certain type of practice but has also created more problems.

In many cases, the research revealed that for those who continue to remain non-compliant to the health risk messaging (i.e. continue to practice harmful norms), social disapproval has driven these harmful practices 'underground', into secrecy. Because the Community Conversations model in Ethiopia relies primarily on conversation as a mechanism for widespread social norm change, it is likely to be more effective when thought of as a preventative measure than a responsive measure. Conversations act as a 'safe space' where core values can be surfaced, real lived experiences can be exchanged, and attitudes can begin to alter and shift.

Research report: UNICEF Ethiopia, ThinkPlace
June 2021 | **45 pp.** | **English**
Contact: Celine Herbiet (cherbiet@unicef.org)

Ethiopia   Community   Available upon request

Programme review

Multi-Country Evaluation of Community Engagement to End Child Marriage in Ghana (2016-2019)

Evaluation Report (April 19, 2021)

Multi-country evaluation of community engagement to end child marriage in Ghana (2016–2019)

This report suggests that almost all the community engagement approaches are appropriate and highly effective in achieving the programme objectives and encouraging social and behavioural change. Overall, the multisectoral approach, community engagement and public declarations, involvement of religious and traditional leaders and the use of the child and adolescent protection toolkit to facilitate community engagement was found to be coherent with the programme design/framework.

For outcome achievements, the programme could not be assessed because of lack of consistent quantifiable data. Where possible, data suggests that the programme was on track to achieve its targets. In terms of output achievements, the programme has done well and could be rated as largely effective. However, although community engagement approaches demonstrate notable success, norms around child marriage, driven by culture and customs will take time to change.

Evaluation report: UNICEF Ghana, AAN Associates
April 2021 | **107 pp.** | **English**
Contact: Miho Yoshikawa (myoshikawa@unicef.org)
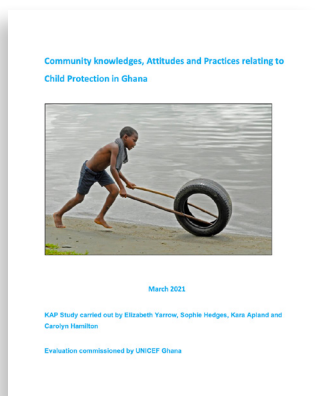
Ghana   Community   Available upon request

Programme review

Community knowledges, attitudes and practices relating to child protection in Ghana

The findings show that in addition to achieving widespread reach and endorsement (the 'Ghanaians Against Child Abuse' campaign is estimated to have reached a fifth of the population), the data from a knowledge, attitude and practice survey suggests that UNICEF's campaign and mobilization efforts may be contributing to transforming community norms and behaviours related to child protection, including related to family separation, violence against children, child marriage, child justice and help-seeking behaviours – although a similar change can also be seen in comparison sites in the country.

Ending child marriage (acceptability) in communities has been a key focus of UNICEF community mobilization campaigns. Evidence from the survey indicates that these efforts may be working: attitudes towards child marriage appear to have improved over time, with significantly lower levels of acceptance of child marriage in 2020 compared with 2013. As with attitudes towards family separation, rates of change in attitudes concerning child marriage were found to be broadly similar across intervention and control sites, making it difficult to determine the extent to which these changes can be directly attributed to UNICEF's programme.

Research report: UNICEF Ghana
March 2021 | **34 pp.** | **English**
Contact: Miho Yoshikawa (myoshikawa@unicef.org)

Ghana | Community | Available upon request

Programme review
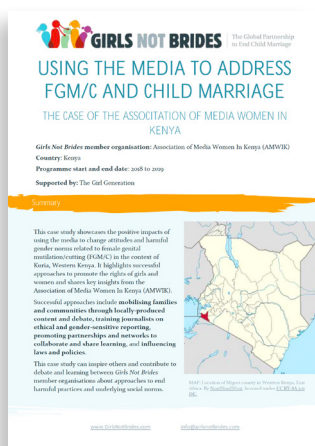
Using the media to address FGM/C and child marriage: The case of the Association of Media Women in Kenya

This case study showcases the positive impacts of using the media to change attitudes and harmful gender norms related to FGM in the context of Kuria, Western Kenya. It highlights successful approaches to promote the rights of girls and women and shares key insights from the Association of Media Women in Kenya.

Successful approaches include mobilizing families and communities through locally produced content and debate, training journalists on ethical and gender-sensitive reporting, promoting partnerships and networks to collaborate and share learning, and influencing laws and policies.

Case study: Girls Not Brides
February 2021 | **8 pp.** | **English and Kiswahili**
Contact: Arwyn Finnie (Arwyn.finnie@girlsnotbrides.org)

Kenya | Community | Download

Media
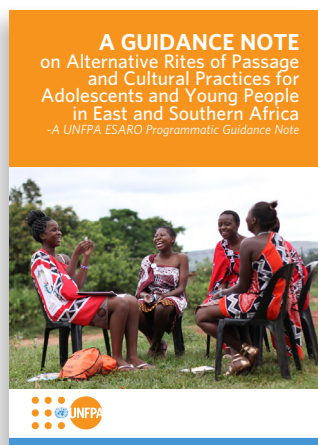
Alternative rites of passage and cultural practices for adolescents and young people in East and Southern Africa

This guidance note describes the dominant adolescent rites of passage and initiation ceremonies in four countries in the Southern African region – Eswatini, Malawi, South Africa and Zambia – to raise awareness about those practices that are limiting young people's potential and, in some cases, harming them physically, socially and emotionally.

These countries, as part of their participation in the Safeguard Young People Programme, have already begun to acknowledge some of the negative physical, social, emotional and psychological impacts of certain adolescent initiation practices and have undertaken a review of their rites of passage. In some cases, they have begun implementing programmatic and policy changes.

Guidance note: UNFPA East and Southern Africa Regional Office
2020 | 30 pp. | English
Contact: Anandita Philipose (philipose@unfpa.org)

Malawi, Eswatini, South Africa, Zambia	Linked issues	Download
	Leaders	
	Community	

Working with traditional leaders to end child marriage

This publication aims to showcase traditional and community leaders' best practices in ending child marriage as one part of the '18+ strengthening civil society to end child marriage in Eastern and Southern Africa' subregional project. The study serves as a reference document for best and innovative practices for traditional leaders in supporting and implementing customary laws to end child marriage.

Case study: Plan International, German Cooperation Deutsche Zusammenarbeit
2020 | 36 pp. | English
Contact: Lynn Chinene (Lynn.Chinene@plan-international.org)

East and Southern Africa	Leaders	Available upon request
	Community	

PROGRAMME REVIEWS
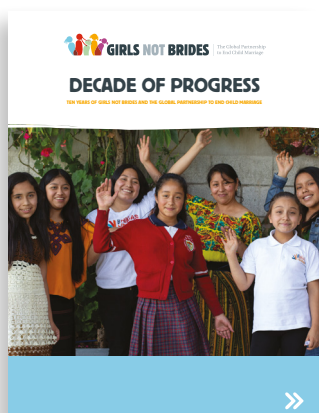
Decade of progress: 10 years of *Girls Not Brides* and the global partnership to end child marriage

This report assesses the progress that Girls Not Brides and member organizations have made, outlines insights gained and proposes the steps that must be taken to harness this collective energy and accelerate change over the next decade.

Report: Girls Not Brides
September 2021 | **35 pp.** | **English, French and Spanish**
Contact: Jacky Repila (jacky.repila@girlsnotbrides.org)

🌐 Global   ✎ Programme review   ⬇ Download

Multi-sectoral approaches to addressing harmful practices in Eastern and Southern Africa

Taking an integrated approach to child protection in development and humanitarian settings allows for a range of actors, including governments and civil society organizations, to work together to articulate appropriate strategies.

Rather than seeing communities' issues and needs in isolation, including as they relate to FGM and child marriage, multisectoral approaches allow for greater convergence, ensuring better allocation and use of resources and avoiding duplication of work among partners.

Programme brief: UNICEF East and Southern Africa Regional Office
May 2021 | **19 pp.** | **English**
Contact: Mona Aika (maika@unicef.org)

🌐 East and Southern Africa   ✎ Programme review   ⬇ Download

👥 Linked issues

Ending child marriage programme mapping report in Bangladesh

This mapping is an attempt to collate information on a few key programmes and their strategies to address the complex challenge of child marriage in Bangladesh. As the mapping shows, child marriage is not a homogenous activity. The findings demonstrate the multidimensionality of child marriage programmes and confirm that multisectoral action is aligned to the wider preventive and responsive measures to address child marriage in the country.

While the mapping is not an exhaustive indication of the range of programmes and interventions being implemented across Bangladesh, it does suggest that if stakeholders are to fulfil the potential of all girls predicted to be married at an early age, swift and strategic action is needed. Interactions with stakeholders, including donors, government officials, United Nations agencies and implementation bodies, show that there is no dearth of recognition or understanding of what works and what investments are required, but are critical which gaps need greater focus for enhanced outcomes.

Research report: UNICEF Bangladesh
April 2021 | **77 pp.** | **English**
Contact: Tahmina Huq (thuq@unicef.org)

🌐 Bangladesh   📝 Programme review   ✉ Available upon request

Successfully addressing FGM/C and child marriage: The case of Msichana Empowerment Kuria, Kenya

This case study highlights the importance of a comprehensive response to preventing child marriage and FGM in the context of Kuria, Kenya. It examines the complexity of addressing these issues, highlights successful approaches and shares key insights provided by Msichana Empowerment Kuria.

Successful approaches include supporting girls to stay in school, supporting access to justice, empowering girls, engaging communities and building effective partnerships. These interventions have been made possible by strong partnerships between a number of community-based organizations working together locally against both child marriage and FGM. This case study also highlights the importance of long-term funding for community-based organizations to support social change, as they best understand the local context and the needs of the girls they serve.

Case study: Girls Not Brides
February 2021 | **8 pp.** | **English and Kiswahili**
Contact: Arwyn Finnie (Arwyn.finnie@girlsnotbrides.org)

🌐 Kenya   📝 Programme review   ⬇ Download

👥 Linked issues

LAWS, POLICY FRAMEWORKS, BUDGETS AND COSTING
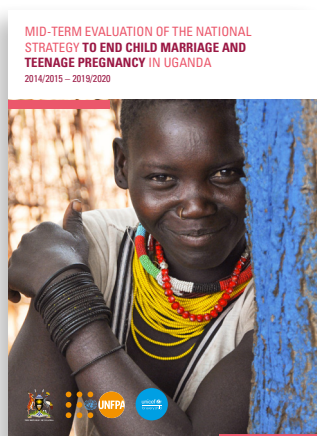
Mid-term evaluation of the National Strategy to End Child Marriage and Teenage Pregnancy in Uganda

This evaluation assessed the extent to which the National Strategy to End Child Marriage and Teenage Pregnancy in Uganda targets are being achieved and documented, what works or does not work and the emerging issues around ending child marriage and teenage pregnancy in Uganda. Relying on qualitative and quantitative approaches, the evaluation examined the strategy's strategic interventions at both national and subnational levels and their impact on the lives of children susceptible to child marriage and teenage pregnancy.

The evaluation found that the laws on age of marriage were contradictory, which complicates enforcement. The evaluation found evidence of countrywide child rights campaigns based on partnerships across sectors. These campaigns promote positive conduct among children, parents, law enforcers, and leaders with the aim of eradicating child marriage and teenage pregnancy. However, despite this positive progress, the broader acceptance and integration of child marriage and teenage pregnancy into district plans and the activities of some development partners still require significant investments and commitments to change societal orientation towards the practice. The evaluation indicates that civil registration systems are not yet effective to protect adolescents from child marriage, that adolescent-friendly health services fail in promoting the rights of children, with some teenagers seeking help first when they are already pregnant and that reporting of sexual violence is still limited due to, among other issues, social pressure.

Evaluation report: UNICEF Uganda, UNFPA Uganda, Uganda Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development
October 2021 | **188 pp.** | **English**
Contact: Hariret Ndagire (hndagire@unfpa.org), Rachel Ogolla (rogolla@unfpa.org) and Vedasto Nsanzugwanko (vnsanzugwanko@unicef.org)

Uganda   Policy framework   Download
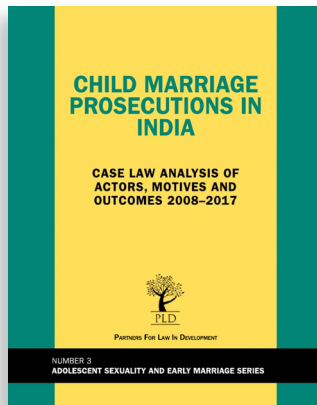
Child marriage prosecutions in India: Case law analysis of actors, motives and outcomes 2008–2017

In the context of calls for no-exception stringent child marriage laws, both nationally and globally, this report offers evidence on how the law in its practice aids social hierarchies within the Indian context. The study qualitatively reviews district and High Court case law between 2008–2017 from across the country, to evaluate whether the law serves its intended purpose.

The recommendations of the study draw on judicial principles that minimize unintended harm of the law on girls, by being attentive to context, and by upholding the girls' right to be heard in decisions affecting their lives. In doing so, this study enriches the contemporary policy discourse on child marriage, freeing it from the binary of treating child marriage as absolutely valid or as invalid without exception.

Research report: Partners for Law in Development
August 2021 | **83 pp.** | **English**
Contact: resources@pldindia.org

India   Laws   Download
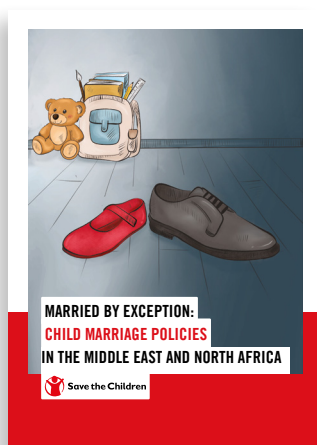
Married by exception: Child marriage policies in the Middle East and North Africa

This comprehensive desk review and consultation with adolescent girls and boys and young adults from refugee and local communities in Egypt, Iraq, Lebanon and Turkey aimed to better understand how child marriage laws protect girls affected by crisis in the Middle East and North Africa region.

In April 2021, Save the Children spoke to 123 adolescents and young adults about their knowledge of child marriage laws in their country, their views on whether these laws help protect girls from child marriage and, if not, what they think needs to change.

Research report: Save the Children
June 2021 | **47 pp.** | **English and Arabic**
Contact: Caitlin Smith (Caitlin.Smith@savethechildren.org)

Egypt, Iraq, Lebanon, Turkey   Laws   Download
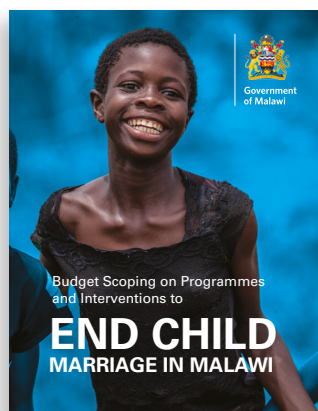
Budget scoping on programmes and interventions to end child marriage in Malawi

Tackling child marriage is not only a legal obligation – it is also smart economics and a strategy for achieving Malawi's vision for inclusive and sustainable development. Malawi has one of the highest rates of child marriage in the world, with approximately 42 per cent of girls married before the age of 18, and 9 per cent below the age of 15.

This report assesses the size, composition and equity of public spending on programmes and interventions to end child marriage by the government and its development partners between fiscal years 2016/17 and 2018/19. To date, there has been no investigation of how much of the annual government budget has been committed to implementing the National Strategy on Ending Child Marriage and other relevant sector strategies. This report is part of broader efforts by the government to ensure that public spending on child-focused sectors and programmes is adequate, equitable, efficient and effective.

Research report: UNICEF Malawi
April 2021 | **48 pp.** | **English and Arabic**
Contact: Kristina Wesslund (kwesslund@unicef.org)

🗺 Malawi	🧾 Budget scoping	⬇ Download
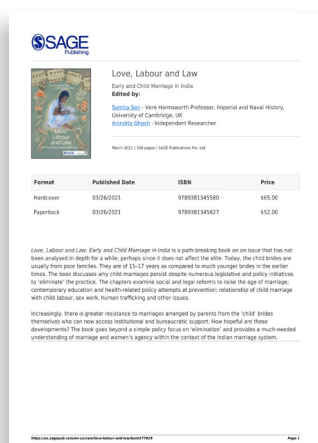
Love, labour and law: Early and child marriage in India

This book discusses child marriage in India, showing that today, child brides are usually from poor families. They are generally aged 15–17 years, as compared with much younger brides earlier. The book considers why child marriage persists despite numerous legislative and policy initiatives to eliminate the practice.

Topics covered include social and legal reforms to raise the age of marriage; contemporary education and health-related policy attempts at prevention; and the relationship of child marriage with child labour, sex work, human trafficking and other issues. Increasingly, there is greater resistance to marriages arranged by parents from the child brides themselves, who can now access institutional and bureaucratic support.

Book: Samita Sen and Anindita Ghosh
March 2021 | **308 pp.** | **English and Arabic**
Contact: Samita Sen (samitasen@yahoo.co.uk)

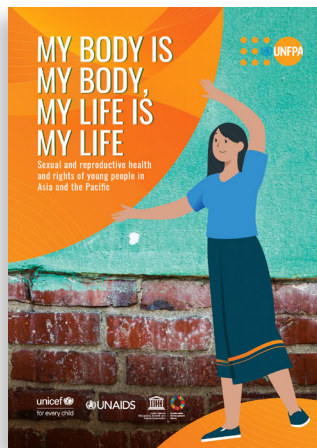| 🗺 India	⚖ Laws	⬇ Download
	🏛 Policy framework	
	👥 Linked issues	

My body is my body, my life is my life: Sexual and reproductive health and rights of young people in Asia and the Pacific

This publication collates the information available on the status of young people's sexual and reproductive health and rights and how well we are supporting. In many areas we still have a long way to go, particularly in meeting the needs of sexually active adolescents. This report documents the gaps in data, policy and programmes in Asia and the Pacific, but above all it underscores how adolescents' evolving capacity and their rights are simply not being realised - to the detriment of their ability to obtain crucial information, take responsible decisions and strengthen their foundation for life. It discusses the issue of child marriage and early unions and discusses the dilemma of rights versus protection when it comes to understanding the different forms of early marriage and union in the context of adolescent development and agency, critical to ensuring the implementation of child marriage legislation does not cause harm.

Research report: UNFPA, Burnet Institute
2021 | **148 pp.** | **English**
Contact: Josephine Sauvarin (sauvarin@unfpa.org) and Maki Akiyama (akiyama@unfpa.org)

Asia and the Pacific   Laws   Download

Policy frameworks

Linked issues
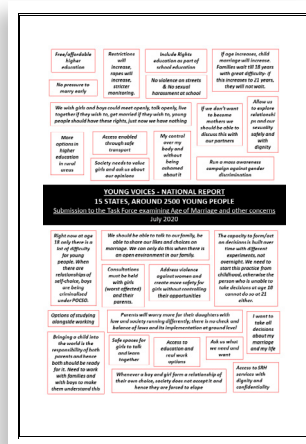
Young voices: National report

This report summarizes findings from a consultation with young people in India to hear their views on a proposed increase in the age of marriage in the country. It is the result of a collaborative process led by a coalition of 96 civil society organizations. The consultation ensured that young people – those most affected by the proposed change – could be heard by the Government Task Force responsible for the review.

Nearly 2,500 young participants (aged 12–25 years) from some of the most marginalized communities across 15 states in India shared their views on what they want from the government to truly build their voice, choice and agency.

Consultation report: Girls Not Brides
July 2020 | **38 pp.** | **English and Hindi**
Contact: Matilda Branson (Matilda.Branson@girlsnotbrides.org)

India   Laws   Download

Civil society and budget advocacy to end child marriage: Six case studies

These case studies describe six budget advocacy pilot projects designed and implemented by Girls Not Brides member organizations in Kenya, Mexico, Nigeria, Pakistan and Togo at the end of 2019. Each case study includes information on the national background and project objectives, key partners, achievements and lessons learned.

Case studies: Girls Not Brides
June 2020 | **23 pp.** | **English, French and Spanish**
Contact: Matilda Branson (Matilda.Branson@girlsnotbrides.org)

Kenya, Mexico, Nigeria, Pakistan, Togo   Budget advocacy   Download
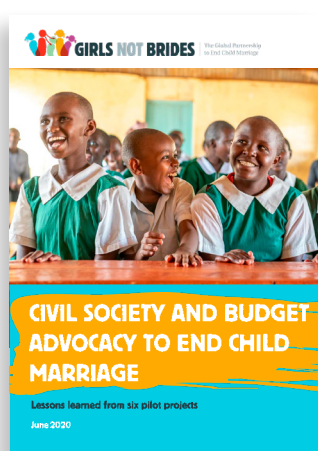
Civil society and budget advocacy to end child marriage

This report examines the role that civil society organizations can play in budget advocacy to address child marriage. It presents the key lessons from six pilot projects (see 'Civil society and budget advocacy to end child marriage: Six case studies', above) and provides key insights into how to conduct budget advocacy to hold governments accountable for budget allocation, and ensure that national policies and programmes addressing child marriage are effectively implemented across sectors and at different levels.

Research report: Girls Not Brides
June 2020 | **41 pp.** | **English, French and Spanish**
Contact: Matilda Branson (Matilda.Branson@girlsnotbrides.org)

Kenya, Mexico, Nigeria, Pakistan, Togo   Budget advocacy   Download
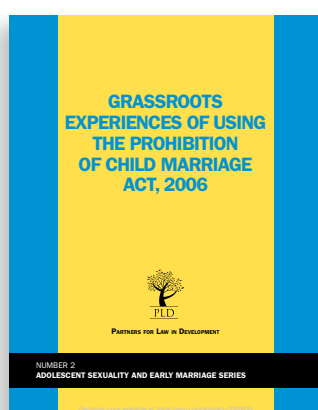
Grassroots experiences of using the prohibition of child marriage act, 2006

Documented case studies from 25 community-based organizations reveal that 'using the law' to prevent or exit forced child marriages in fact means negotiating informally with concerned families, rather than formal legal prosecution. Despite risks to girls and front-line workers in child marriage interventions, these case studies demonstrate possible long-term benefits to girls where such negotiations are successful.

The power of the law lies not so much in the formal legal action as in ensuring support of child protection agencies and administration in processes of negotiating with families and the community. Even as the law remains inaccessible to girls, it serves an important role. This reality calls for addressing the root causes of child marriage, rather than advocating stricter laws that limit possibilities for negotiation.

Research report: Partners for Law in Development
April 2020 | **56 pp.** | **English**
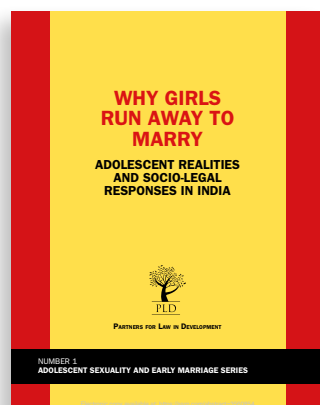**Contact**: resources@pldindia.org

India   Laws   Download

Why girls run away to marry: Adolescent realities and socio-legal responses in India

Based on in-depth interviews with girls from three cities in India, this study introduces the issue of self-arranged marriages into the debate on child and early marriage. It provides qualitative insights into the contexts within which young relationships develop and are compelled into elopements, the relationship with poverty and deprivation and the harm of punitive legal responses on young lives. The study reviews the legal framework on young self-arranged marriages from the perspective of external agencies that work with young couples, to call for making law and policy more empathetic to adolescents and their realities, especially in contexts of marginalization.

Research report: Partners for Law in Development
March 2020 | **88 pp.** | **English**
Contact: resources@pldindia.org

🗺 India   ⚖ Laws   ⬇ Download

Costing the three transformative results

This report focuses on new research to estimate the costs associated with the global effort to end preventable maternal deaths, the unmet need for family planning, gender-based violence and all harmful practices, including child marriage and female genital mutilation.

This new analysis goes beyond calculating costs; it also identifies the specific interventions needed to achieve these three transformative results by 2030 – the deadline for achieving the SDGs – including developing country investment cases and costing of the work of UNFPA country programmes. This publication contains the methodologies and resulting cost estimates towards the achievement of each result.

Research report: UNFPA
January 2020 | **36 pp.** | **English, French and Spanish**
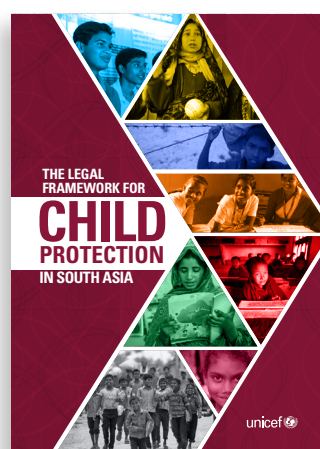**Contact**: Satvika Chalasani (chalasani@unfpa.org)

🗺 Global $ Costing   ⬇ Download

The legal framework for child protection in South Asia

This study reviews the legislation in eight countries in South Asia and their alignment with international laws and standards. While progress has been made, the review finds significant gaps in the legal framework for childcare and protection services, prohibition of all forms of violence against children and justice for children. The report provides recommendations in areas where countries may need to consider strengthening.

Research report and executive summary: UNICEF Regional Office for South Asia
2020 | **426/24 pp.** | **English**
Contact: Amanda Bissex (abissex@unicef.org)

🗺 South Asia   ⚖ Laws   ⬇ Download
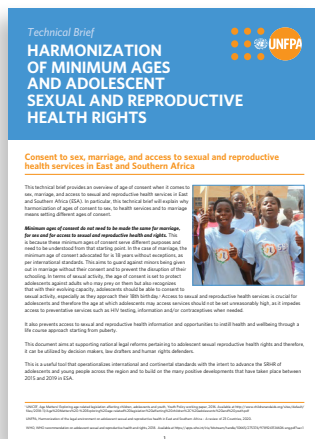👥 Linked issues

Harmonization of minimum ages and adolescent sexual and reproductive health rights

Minimum ages of consent do not need to be made the same for marriage, for sex and for access to sexual and reproductive health and rights. This is because these minimum ages of consent serve different purposes and need to be understood from that starting point. In the case of marriage, the minimum age of consent advocated for is 18 years without exceptions, as per international standards. This aims to guard against minors being given out in marriage without their consent and to prevent the disruption of their schooling.

Technical brief: UNFPA East and Southern Africa
2020 | 8 pp. | English
Contact: Anandita Philipose (philipose@unfpa.org)

🌐 East and Southern Africa   ⚖ Laws   ↓ Download

👥 Linked issues

The early marriages in conflict with law and society: The case of young girls in Gujarat

Against the backdrop of increasing violence against and cases of abduction and kidnapping of young girls, this research provides a detailed analysis of 731 First Information Reports relating to cases of kidnapping and abduction involving young girls from 2014–2016, in the districts of Dahod, Panchmahal and Morbi of Gujarat state. The research also includes 29 in-depth personal interviews with young girls who are survivors of abduction or who have exercised their agency of leaving their homes to be with their chosen partners without parental consent.

Research report: Research brief Anandi
2020 | 6 pp. | English
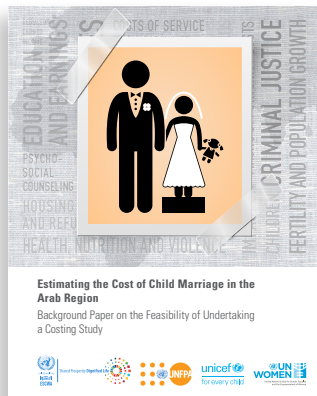**Contact:** Sejal Dand (sejal@anandi-india.org)

🌐 India   ⚖ Laws   ✉ Available upon request

Estimating the cost of child marriage in the Arab region

Child marriage is a violation of human rights and a form of gender-based violence (GBV) that results in numerous adverse outcomes for a child's development. In the last 25 years, the Arab region has experienced a decline in child marriage, yet progress has slowed over the past decade.

As well as impeding girls' educational and economic opportunities, child marriage increases their risk of being subjected to additional forms of GBV and exploitation. Ending child marriage is fundamental to gender equality, women's empowerment and improving maternal and child health worldwide. It is also an important part of safeguarding the stability of communities and the global economy.

This report provides an overview of the scope, drivers and consequences of child marriage in the Arab region. It discusses the importance of estimating the cost of child marriage, examines the feasibility of undertaking a costing study in the Arab region, and reviews the availability of data needed to implement such a task, as well as the appropriate framework to consider when approaching costing child marriage in the region.

Research report: UNFPA Arab States Regional Office, UNICEF Middle East and North Africa Regional Office, UN Women, ESCWA
2020 | **45 pp.** | **English**
Contact: Shadia Elshiwy (elshiwy@unfpa.org) and Indrani Sarkar (isarkar@unicef.org)

Arab States region $ Costing   ↓ Download

Prevalence

Drivers

Consequences

Por un desarrollo integral de niñas y adolescentes: Erradicación del matrimonio infantil en el Perú

[For comprehensive development of girls and adolescents: Eradication of child marriage in Peru]

This factsheet presents the issue of child marriage and early unions in Peru by highlighting the structural gender inequalities that this reality creates for girls around the world. Forming a marriage or union may not really be a 'choice' because of the low expectations placed on girls, the control they experience in their natal homes, the low commitment of their families to their education, and the domestic work they often undertake. It presents the analysis of data and evidence against the normative and human rights framework in the country and proposes the normative changes that would be necessary to accelerate the elimination of this harmful practice.

Research report: UNFPA, GIFAMILIAS
2020 | **9 pp.** | **Spanish**
Contact: Carmen Murguia (murguia@unfpa.org)

Peru   Laws   Download

Drivers

Consequences

Linked issues

Young people and the law: Laws and policies impacting young people's sexual and reproductive health and rights in the Asia-Pacific region, 2020 update

This report provides an update to the 2013 report highlighting recent legal and policy trends and developments affecting the sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR) of young people in Asia and the Pacific. The review considers recent legal and policy developments that are supporting or impeding countries in meeting the goals and targets of the SDGs relating to SRHR, which include achieving universal access to sexual and reproductive health services and ending the HIV epidemic by 2030. The report has a particular focus on whether countries recognize the evolving capacities of adolescents in their laws and policies on the age of access to contraceptives, access to safe abortion services, HIV testing services, age of consent to sex and the minimum age of marriage.

Research report: Research report UNFPA, UNICEF, UNESCO, UNAIDS, UNDP, Youth LEAD, Y-Peer Asia Pacific
2020 | **80 pp.** | **English**
Contact: Josephine Sauvarin (sauvarin@unfpa.org) and Maki Akiyama (akiyama@unfpa.org)

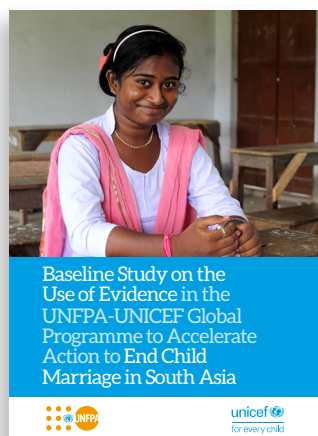Asia and the Pacific   Laws   Download

Policy frameworks

Linked issues

EVIDENCE REVIEWS AND USE OF KNOWLEDGE

Baseline study on the use of evidence in the UNFPA–UNICEF Global Programme to End Child Marriage in South Asia

This study establishes a baseline on the use of evidence within Phase II (2020-2023) of the UNFPA–UNICEF Global Programme to End Child Marriage in Bangladesh, India and Nepal. The study develops a set of indicators and tools for measuring the use of evidence in the Global Programme Phase II that can be replicated at the mid-term and at the end of Phase II. The study analysed the use of evidence by UNFPA and UNICEF offices in the three countries in programming, design and delivery, advocacy, and monitoring and evaluation interventions during the first six months of Phase II.

Research report: UNFPA Asia and the Pacific Regional Office, UNICEF Regional Office for South Asia
March 2021 | **38 pp.** | **English**
Contact: Amanda Bissex (abissex@unicef.org) and Upala Devi (devi@unfpa.org)

Bangladesh, India, Nepal | Methods | Download
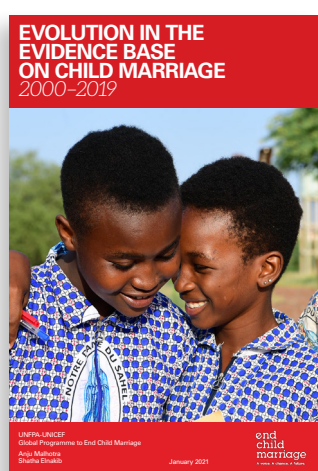
Evolution in the evidence base on child marriage (2000–2019)

This scoping review of the evidence base on child marriage from 2000–2019 covers 386 articles that (1) focus on child or early marriage or informal unions in lower- and middle-income countries; (2) provide new research insights based on a specified methodology; and (3) are published in English in either peer-reviewed or grey literature (i.e. research not released by traditional academic or commercial publishers). The findings are arranged around (1) prevalence of child marriage; (2) its determinants, correlates and context; (3) its consequences; and (4) interventions to address child marriage.

The review indicates that the evidence base on child marriage in the last 20 years has been robust and varied, providing important insights on prevalence and measurement, determinants, correlates and context, consequences and interventions.

Research report, executive summary, infographic: Anju Malhotra, Shatha Elnakib, UNFPA–UNICEF Global Programme to End Child Marriage
January 2021 | **108/14/1 pp.** | **English**
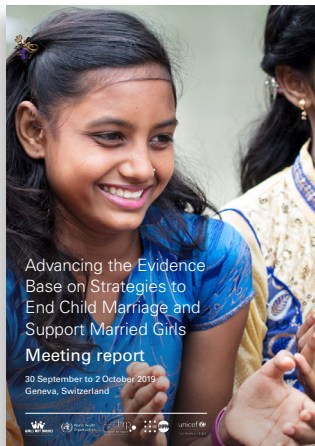**Contact**: Nankali Maksud (nmaksud@unicef.org) and Satvika Chalasani (chalasani@unfpa.org)

Global | Methods | Download

Advancing the evidence base on strategies to end child marriage and support married girls

In October 2019, the World Health Organization/the Human Reproduction Programme, the UNFPA–UNICEF Global Programme to End Child Marriage and Girls Not Brides convened a meeting with experts globally to review progress made in addressing research priorities for preventing child marriage and supporting married girls, to identify an updated set of research priorities for the next five years, and to determine options for strengthening the dissemination and uptake of research findings and the execution of the new research agenda.

Four key messages emerged from the stock-taking exercise:

1. The evidence-base on child marriage has grown substantially over the past 5 to 10 years, especially with regard to its levels and trends, causes and consequences.
2. Much more clarity exists around some key issues, such as levels and trends, drivers, and protective factors.
3. Less clarity exists around other key issues, such as levels, trends and characteristics of child marriage at subnational levels; the factors that lead to large scale declines; the effectiveness, cost and cost-effectiveness of interventions to prevent child marriage and support married girls; and what it takes to deliver such interventions at scale and in a sustainable manner.
4. There is a need to be more transformational in linking research to policy and programme needs.

Based on these key messages, research priorities and options to strengthen dissemination and uptake of research findings were identified.

Meeting report: World Health Organization, UNFPA–UNICEF Global Programme to End Child Marriage, Girls Not Brides
August 2020 | **31 pp.** | **English and French**
Contact: Nankali Maksud (nmaksud@unicef.org) and Satvika Chalasani (chalasani@unfpa.org)

Global   Methods   Download

ANNEX: RESEARCH SORTED BY GEOGRAPHICAL AREA

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East and Southern Africa

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