



ANNUAL REPORT 2021

Fighting the Odds, Catalyzing Change: A Strategic Approach to Ending the Global Problem of Child Marriage

UNFPA-UNICEF Global Programme to End Child Marriage

The Global Programme to End Child Marriage is generously funded by the Governments of Belgium, Canada, Italy, the Netherlands, Norway, and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland; the European Union through the Spotlight Initiative; and Zonta International.

Front cover (*top to bottom*): © UNICEF/UN0652678/Panjwani; © UNICEF/UN0535806/Dejongh

On the front page (bottom): Barira is 18 years old and lives in Diffa, in the southeast of Niger. Today is her wedding day and today she chooses a marriage out of love. However, when Barira was only 14 years old she was married off against her will – but luckily she managed to escape from that marriage and was supported by the police and the child protection center in her community to be reunited with her mother.

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September 2022

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UNFPA-UNICEF Global Programme to End Child Marriage

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List of Abbreviations and Acronyms

AU	African Union
CISP	International Committee for the Development of Peoples
COVID-19	coronavirus disease 2019
CRANK	Child Marriage Research to Action Network
CSE	comprehensive sexuality education
CSO	civil society organization
DHS	Demographic and Health Survey
ECOWAS	Economic Community of West African States
EU	European Union
FGM	female genital mutilation
GAGE	Gender and Adolescence: Global Evidence
GBV	gender-based violence
Global Programme	UNFPA-UNICEF Global Programme to End Child Marriage
GPSU	Global Programme Support Unit
GRASSP	gender-responsive age-sensitive social protection
GTA	Gender-Transformative Accelerator
HACT	Harmonized Approach to Cash Transfers
IDP	internally displaced person
IOM	International Organization for Migration
LGBTQI+	lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer and intersex
LTA	long-term agreement
MICS	Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey
MKUY	Mukhyamantri Kanya Utthan Yojana

MoRES	Monitoring Results for Equity System
NFHS	National Family Health Survey (of India)
NGO	non-governmental organization
PDAC	Community-Based Approach to Child Protection
PSA	public service announcement
PSNP	Productive Safety Net Programme
SADC	Southern African Development Community
SBC	social and behaviour change
SDG	Sustainable Development Goal
SEA	sexual exploitation and abuse
SIDA	Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency
SNNPR	Southern Nations, Nationalities and Peoples' Region (of Ethiopia)
SRHR	sexual and reproductive health and rights
STAR	Strategic Technical Assistance for Research
STEM	science, technology, engineering and mathematics
SWEDD	Sahel Women's Empowerment and Demographic Dividend
UNDG	United Nations Development Group
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UN Women	United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women
WHO	World Health Organization



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Executive Summary

Over the past decade, the proportion of young women who were married as children decreased by 15 per cent.

Trends in child marriage and programming context

Child marriage has declined across most regions in the past 25 years. Over the past decade, the proportion of young women who were married as children decreased by 15 per cent, from one in four to about one in five. While the global reduction in child marriage is to be celebrated, no region is yet on track to meet the Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) target of eliminating this harmful practice by 2030. For child marriage to end globally by this date, the rate of progress would need to be 15 times faster than the pace recorded over the last decade. Furthermore, over the next 10 years, up to 10 million more girls will be at risk of

child marriage because of the coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) pandemic.

The recent analysis presented in the 2021 UNICEF report *Towards Ending Child Marriage: Global trends and profiles of progress*¹ highlights that, while substantial progress has been made in reducing the prevalence of child marriage in the Middle East and North Africa over the past 25 years, progress appears to have slowed within the last decade. In Latin America and the Caribbean, levels of child marriage today are as high as they were 25 years ago. In contrast, a girl's risk of marrying in childhood in South Asia has declined by more than one third, from nearly 50 per cent a decade ago to 28 per cent today, largely driven by rapid progress in

India. Increasingly, the global burden of child marriage is shifting from South Asia to sub-Saharan Africa, where levels of child marriage have declined at a modest rate. Where progress has been made, it is associated with improvements in economic development and poverty reduction, access to employment and educational attainment.

COVID-19 continues to upend the lives of children, adolescents and families across the globe, and adversely affected programmes to end child marriage in 2021. During the year, the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) and UNICEF Evaluation Offices conducted a joint assessment to identify and analyse the UNFPA-UNICEF Global Programme to End Child Marriage (the Global Programme) response, mitigation and protection measures adopted during the pandemic. Despite school closures and lockdowns, the Global Programme continued to maintain advocacy and technical support to enhance the capacity of governments to end child marriage through national and subnational plans, as well as through strengthening coordination between sectors and service providers. Adoption of digital and mass media approaches demonstrated a high potential for sustaining engagement of adolescent girls at scale, although the digital divide needs to be considered, as not all girls have the same access to and possibility to use digital platforms and technologies. Overall, COVID-19 programme adjustments as a response to the pandemic generated a high demand for data and evidence on adopted approaches, and several learnings from these adjustments have the potential to shape future programming. These include: the use of virtual methods with beneficiaries,

allowing wider reach; the need for multipronged approaches in programmes aimed at changing gender norms or developing skills; and flexibility in adjusting programming and reallocating budgets.²

Key accomplishments

COVID-19 pandemic restrictions continued to affect programme implementation and results during 2021, leading to delays in implementation and a reduction in the achievement of planned targets in many countries. However, country programmes continued to experiment with different combinations of virtual and in-person engagements. Hybrid or blended implementation modalities are here to stay and are transforming the way the Global Programme does its work and delivers results. The gradual increase of in-person engagement improved the quality and efficacy of interventions. However, the digital divide among adolescent girls has reduced the Programme's reach as phone owners – usually male members of the household – have been spending less time at home since the end of lockdowns, for instance, when they have gone back to work.

The following programmatic results were achieved in 2021:

- Close to 2.6 million adolescent girls (aged 10–19) received life skills and comprehensive sexuality education. This number includes vocational training and start-up capital for small economic investments for some girls across the 12 Global Programme countries.
- Close to 16 million community members, including adolescent boys

Despite school closures and lockdowns, the Global Programme continued to maintain advocacy and technical support to enhance the capacity of governments to end child marriage.

and girls, were engaged in meaningful community dialogues on child marriage, the rights of adolescent girls and gender equality.

- Addressing harmful masculinities and gender norms was a key focus for the Programme, with over 1.1 million boys and men engaged in dialogues and education sessions.
- Over 55 million individuals were reached by traditional mass media and social media messaging on child marriage, the rights of adolescent girls and gender equality.
- Dialogues with traditional and religious leaders and other community influencers was a key Programme approach, with over 163,000 people engaged in meaningful discussions and consensus-building to end child marriage.
- Currently, 6,067 service delivery points are receiving Programme support to provide quality adolescent-responsive services that meet minimum standards.

BIENNIAL MIDTERM REVIEW

To share bold and innovative approaches to meet the SDG 5.3 target, a global meeting was convened from 19 to 21 October 2021. The online event attracted 364 participants who explored how to get back on track and accelerate to meet the child marriage elimination goal, solutions for scaled-up responses, new models for effective programming in a COVID-19 world, and latest data and evidence on child marriage programming. Key

takeaways from the meeting included: the need to obtain and use context-specific knowledge and better evidence on what works and does not work at scale to end child marriage; the need to adapt strategies, connect with communities and advocate more effectively in policy development and programming; the need to engage adolescents meaningfully through digital spaces; and the need for programming adaptations that open up new possibilities for upholding the rights of groups with sexual and gender diversity.

GENDER-TRANSFORMATIVE ACCELERATOR

The Global Programme made significant progress to promote gender-transformative approaches towards system-wide change throughout the planning, implementation and measurement of Phase II. The Global Programme developed and field-tested a Gender-Transformative Accelerator (GTA) tool³ in four ‘trailblazer countries’ committed to implementing the tool (India, Ethiopia, Mozambique and the Niger). This is part of the technical assistance strategy to operationalize gender-transformative programming during Phase II of the Programme (2020–2023). The GTA tool is a self-contained, process-oriented, rapid analysis and action planning tool for implementers, advocates and technical staff working on initiatives to prevent and respond to child marriage and unions.

The GTA tool was coupled with an [e-course on gender-transformative approaches, girls’ empowerment and child marriage](#). The course is part of a learning series on adolescent girls’ agency, safety and well-being which assists learners to understand what makes a programme

The learning series builds on ongoing efforts to operationalize gender-transformative approaches into country-led programme implementation.

gender-transformative, why it matters for quality and results-based programming, and what strategic adjustments can be made to make a programme more gender transformative. The learning series builds on ongoing efforts to operationalize gender-transformative approaches into country-led programme implementation and is a welcome addition to existing technical guidance.

RESEARCH STRATEGY

The Global Programme launched its research strategy⁴ in 2021 to improve, unify and amplify the Programme's contribution to evidence on child marriage both nationally and globally. Specifically, the research strategy promotes looking at effectiveness of interventions; implementation research; under-researched at-risk groups; secular changes in marriage, such as macro trends (demographics, economics, social, etc.) and how they impact child marriage; and gender-transformative approaches as an overall strategy.

The research strategy also links to the **Strategic Technical Assistance to Research (STAR) initiative**, a partnership between the Global Programme and the UNICEF Office of Research – Innocenti to provide support to UNFPA and UNICEF country offices on the priority research agenda. To address gaps in research coordination and to support the dissemination and uptake of research globally, Girls Not Brides and the Global Programme established the **Child Marriage Research to Action Network (the CRANK)** which brings together over 300 researchers, practitioners and advocates from diverse organizations

– including women- and youth-led organizations, universities, and United Nations agencies – from around the world. The initiative works to strengthen the global evidence base and facilitate shared learning across regions and countries.

Key lessons

The use of digital online platforms for girls' empowerment interventions requires more interactive and participatory enhancements of the platforms, coupled with mentorship support:

In addition to adolescent clubs and schools, adolescents are now being reached through mobile phones and internet platforms and apps, thereby overcoming some of the barriers to accessing adolescent sexual and reproductive health information. More research is needed to explore ways to increase the utilization of services through a sustainable and cost-effective service delivery model.

Support to national and local partners is essential to build bridges and improve capacities to listen to the voices of adolescents:

Mobilizing adolescents to enable them to exercise their agency is a powerful tool to empower them and help them become change-makers. Support for adolescent and youth participation has to be reviewed and adapted so it can become part of mainstream structures. This includes supporting youth-led networks that engage adolescent girls to enhance their voices and build their capacity to advocate and engage duty-bearers; these have been shown to bring about positive changes in the attitudes and perspectives of adolescent girls.

Sustainable social and behaviour change (SBC) requires a common understanding around processes and adequate capacities of civil society organizations (CSOs) and their staff to plan, implement, monitor and improvise community engagement and SBC interventions:

There is growing acceptance that child marriage and female genital mutilation (FGM) are complex and deep-rooted issues that require multidimensional and multi-stakeholder interventions. Evidence from the UNICEF multi-country evaluation in West and Central Africa (report forthcoming) indicates an evolution of understanding among public stakeholders as well as UNICEF country offices around the design and implementation of community engagement approaches or interventions. Emphasis is now placed on the integration of community perspectives and aspirations into the continued improvisation and evolution of community engagement interventions. The evaluation highlighted the gaps in developing integrated, independent and dedicated community feedback mechanisms able to systematically generate and synthesize information. Recommendations arising from the evaluation are being integrated into ongoing activities.

Improve adaptation of norms-focused interventions using measurements:

SBC interventions have to be adapted to each specific purpose and context. This has been especially true during the COVID-19 pandemic, when in-person interventions were restricted. Further, culture, traditions and behavioural drivers are unique to each context. The Programme therefore needs adequate

mechanisms to determine the drivers it needs to focus on.

Influencing national social protection programmes requires close partnerships with social policy and education sectors:

In partnership with the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, UNICEF commissioned a study to examine scalable sectoral interventions with the potential to reduce child marriage at scale. The research examined three large-scale cash transfer programmes in Ethiopia and India with a strong evidence base and clear conceptual framework. The case studies showed that cash transfer programmes with increased investment in girls' education and improved knowledge on child marriage have the ability to reduce child marriage. The Global Programme is promoting the lessons from the case studies in other countries.

Next steps and key Programme focus

GENDER-TRANSFORMATIVE PROGRAMMING

With momentum for gender-transformative programming generated, the Global Programme is working to institutionalize the systematic approach to support design, implementation and monitoring of the GTA milestones as an integral part of programming work. Going forward, the Global Programme will develop a practical toolkit to guide the implementation of gender-transformative programming, while further strengthening the Programme's monitoring framework to capture gender-transformative change, including the perceptions of service providers, staff and implementing partners.



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ADOLESCENT GIRLS' EMPOWERMENT AND ACCESS TO SERVICES

The Programme will strengthen its efforts to reach marginalized girls, partnering with governments and supporting CSOs to reach girls living in communities with high prevalence of child marriage. Curricula will continue to be improved to be more engaging, responsive to girls' needs, and transformational when it comes to gender and power relations. Country efforts include the Bangladesh Programme which will produce a compilation of good practices in adolescent girls' empowerment. The Ethiopia Programme will roll out the gender-transformative empowerment manual for out-of-school girls. Based on a pilot in two areas, the Ethiopia Programme will also expand the girls' empowerment component to the seven target regions. The Ghana Programme will support mentorships through the 'Girls Role Model' concept. Role models include adolescent mothers who have returned to school, adolescents who overcame financial difficulties and those who, against the odds, succeeded in their education. The Programme will strengthen the leadership and advocacy

capacities of the mentors to provide guidance to other adolescent girls in any areas of their career interests. These more intensive programmes for marginalized girls will be paired with services in education, health and protection with the goal of continuing to leverage large-scale platforms and investments that are financed both domestically or through overseas development assistance.

SBC PROGRAMMING

In 2019, the Global Programme embarked on strengthening evidence-based SBC programming through implementation research and formative research. Using tools developed by UNICEF in partnership with the IPSOS research agency, countries sought to uncover behavioural drivers that needed to be addressed to shift norms and behaviours. After having been delayed due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the research was restarted in 2021. The research aims to uncover drivers that influence decision-making and action around child marriage, thus providing insights into specific drivers that need to be targeted through SBC interventions. The research is also enabling the development of intermediate indicators

UNFPA and UNICEF will continue to engage gatekeepers and community influencers to shift the norms that perpetuate child marriage and amplify positive norms, promoting a gender-transformative approach, and engaging champions for gender equality and ending child marriage.

to measure progress towards change in key behavioural drivers of child marriage for each context, and to track whether activities are moving behaviours in the right direction.

Results from this research are already being used by some countries to design multi-channel interventions framed across key themes identified. Mozambique's research, for example, emphasized the need to invest more in men's and boys' engagement, while Yemen is shifting its approach to champion positive deviance and strengthen community engagement. Additionally, capacity development activities will be strengthened across regions through implementation of the recently finalized social norms programming and measurement training package. UNFPA and UNICEF staff, as well as government and non-government partners and academia, will all be part of these capacity development efforts. Staff and partners in Kenya, Malawi and Somalia have already benefited from this training. Trainings in Eritrea and Uganda are planned for the fourth quarter of 2022. Moreover, to enhance access to this type of capacity development, UNICEF has adapted the training into an online module which will be

launched by the end of the third quarter. At the community level, UNFPA and UNICEF will continue to engage gatekeepers and community influencers to shift the norms that perpetuate child marriage and amplify positive norms, promoting a gender-transformative approach, and engaging champions for gender equality and ending child marriage.

RESEARCH AND EVALUATION

The Programme will accelerate the implementation of its research strategy with strong technical support (through the STAR initiative) and focus on wide dissemination for action (through the CRANK). UNFPA and UNICEF will provide technical and financial support to ensure the generation of quality and timely data, and to advocate for the inclusion of the Global Programme indicators in surveys, such as the Ghana Demographic and Health Survey (DHS) in 2022. The survey will provide up-to-date estimates of demographic and health indicators, including those related to the development and protection of adolescent girls. The Zambia Programme will conduct a study on gender norms driving interrelated practices of child marriage, traditional initiation rituals and adolescent pregnancy.

In preparation for the evaluation of Phase II of the Global Programme in 2023, the independent Evaluation Offices of UNFPA and UNICEF will conduct an impact feasibility assessment. The aim of the assessment is to understand the feasibility and most appropriate evaluation design to evaluate Global Programme effects at the outcome and eventually impact levels.





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Recent Trends in Child Marriage

1.1 Effects of COVID-19 on adolescent girls and child marriage

For a second year, the COVID-19 pandemic profoundly affected the everyday lives of girls, including their physical and mental health, education and the economic circumstances of their

families and communities. Up to 10 million more girls are estimated to become child brides globally by 2030, as a result of the pandemic (see Figure 1).

UNFPA and UNICEF Evaluation Offices conducted a joint assessment of the Global Programme adaptations to the COVID-19 crisis in 2021.⁵ The COVID-19 assessment aimed to:

- Assess relevant contingency planning and implementation and alternative delivery and management arrangements for the Global Programme due to the COVID-19 pandemic, taking into account the views of vulnerable adolescent girls, their families and communities, and key implementing partners.

FIGURE 1. Additional child brides expected due to COVID-19

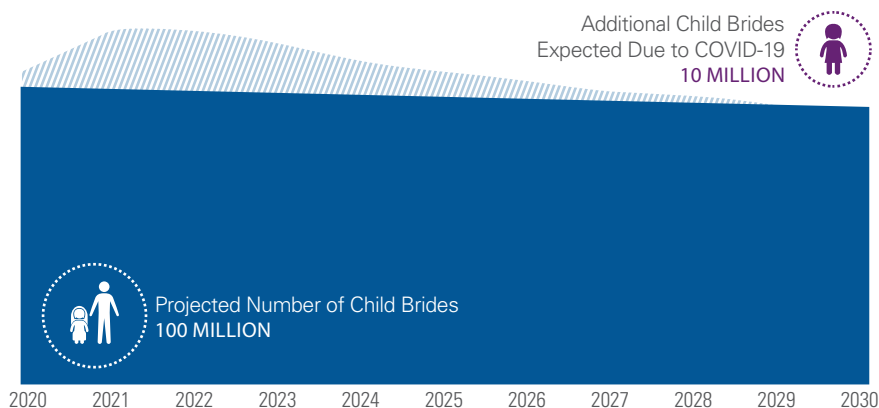


TABLE 1. Conclusions and recommendations from the assessment

CONCLUSION	RECOMMENDATION
Programme advocacy and engagement efforts during the COVID-19 pandemic kept child marriage on national agendas.	Advocate with governments to continue developing legal and operational frameworks contributing to ending child marriage with a rights-based and multisectoral focus.
The COVID-19 crisis underscored the vulnerability of adolescent girls in rural and remote areas.	Reinforce efforts to reach the most vulnerable and marginalized adolescent girls, boys and their families.
Adoption of digital and mass media approaches demonstrated a high potential for sustaining engagement of adolescent girls at scale, although the digital divide should be considered.	Develop complementary multi-channel approaches to reach target populations, ensuring that they foster two-way communication.
COVID-19 restrictions limited adolescent girls' access to health and social welfare services.	Continue technical support and explore the most effective approaches to ensure adolescent girls have access to essential services.
The Programme theory of change remains valid but poverty and economic drivers need to be stressed further in operational strategies.	Articulate further the strategy to leverage social protection schemes such as cash transfer and income generation opportunities for adolescent girls and their families.
COVID-19 programme adjustments created a high demand on data and evidence for adopted approaches.	Continue adjusting monitoring, data generation and analysis in order to reinforce evidence-based programming.

It is critical to keep the focus and efforts to reach the most vulnerable and marginalized adolescents, including those in remote areas.

- Make recommendations for the immediate to midterm improvement of the Global Programme response to COVID-19, identify ongoing programme changes, and recommend any additional support required to implement those programme changes and shifting priorities.
- Make any recommendations required to adjust the Global Programme Phase II to the new context, including its theory of change and the targets established before the COVID-19 pandemic.

The results of the assessment indicate that:

- It is critical to keep the focus and efforts to reach the most vulnerable and marginalized adolescents, including those in remote areas. Lessons could be extracted from

experiences using multi-channel and two-way communication approaches, while being attentive to the implications of the digital divide.

- Vulnerable adolescents must continue to have access to education (especially if provided remotely), health and social welfare services. It is also essential to overcome drivers of poverty by leveraging existing social protection schemes.
- Ensuring the use of evidence to inform programming is important, as is advocating with governments to keep child marriage prevention and response on the national agendas and continue developing legal and operational frameworks that help to accelerate the end of child marriage.

Additional findings related to COVID-19 from South Asia

The ongoing COVID-19 pandemic will have long-term detrimental impacts on children:

- Before the pandemic, 240 million children in South Asia were categorized as poor. In the worst-case scenario, the number of South Asian children living in poverty could grow to more than 360 million.
- 430 million children have suffered from lost learning, and there is concern that some children may never return to the classroom.
- Telephone helplines are reporting more calls from children suffering violence and abuse, and children also report they are struggling with depression and mental illness.
- Children are losing parents and sole caregivers to the virus, leaving them at risk of separation and in need of alternative care.
- Children living in humanitarian situations are particularly vulnerable to disruption of services that protect them in normal times.

The conclusions and recommendations from the assessment (*see Table 1*) will inform further programme adjustments in order to continue delivering and accelerating the pace of eliminating child marriage and to achieve the SDGs by 2030.

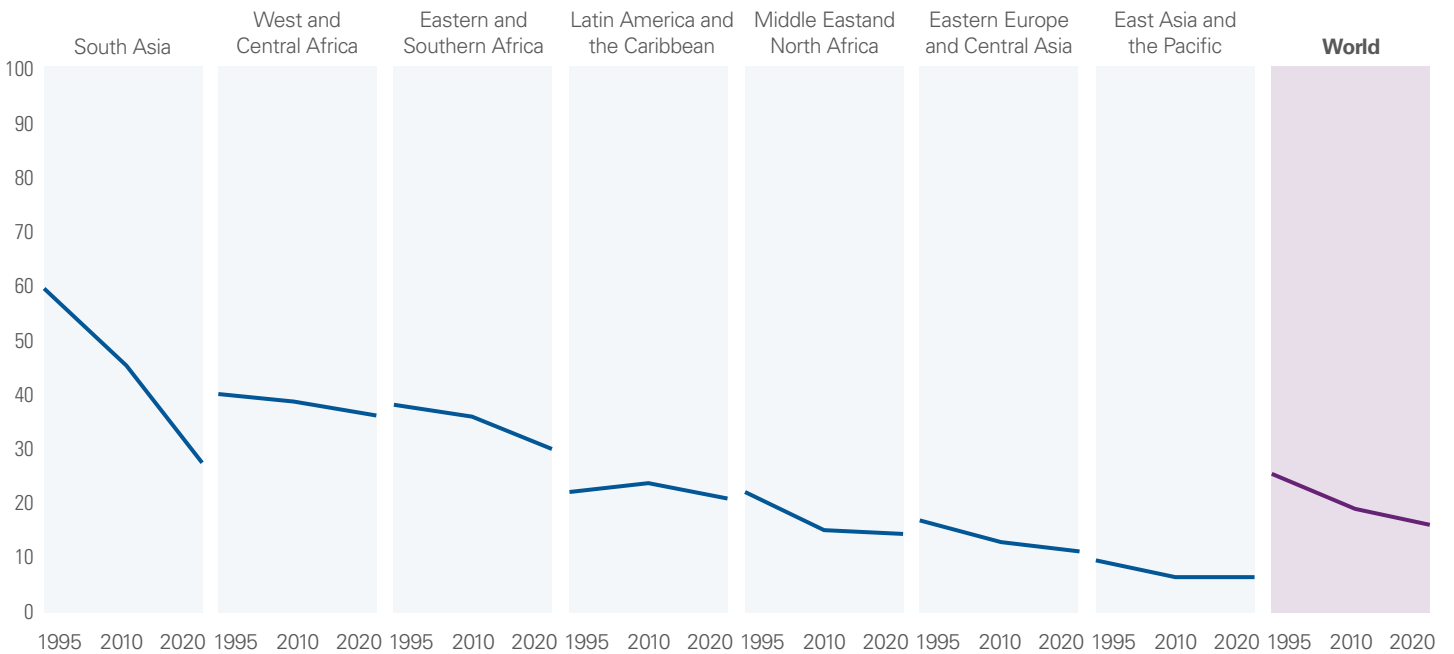
1.2 Recent evidence on child marriage

Ending child marriage is now a global priority. Thanks to increased evidence and advocacy, it is well embedded in not only the SDGs but also in the national agendas, policies and commitments of a growing number of countries. This increased attention has been accompanied by accelerating declines in prevalence.⁶

Key messages on the current stage of child marriage:⁷

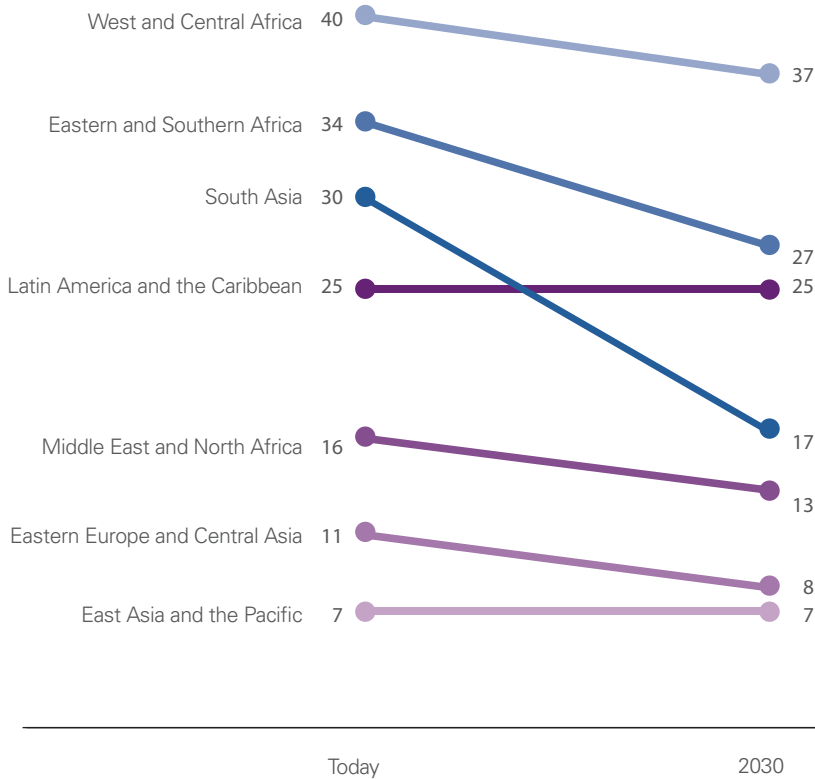
- Child marriage is becoming less common. Still, it affects 650 million girls and women around the world, and global progress is not fast enough to achieve the SDG target of eliminating child marriage by 2030.
- The amount of progress has varied substantially across different contexts.
- Progress is possible under the right conditions – with significant shifts in the well-being of society, the status of women and the provision of key services over the course of several decades.
- Opportunities for girls are fundamental to success. Countries that saw significant progress against child marriage have also seen improvements in economic development and poverty reduction, access to quality employment and educational attainment. Child marriage becomes a less attractive option when productive alternatives are available to girls.
- Reductions in child marriage are possible in a variety of settings, among countries with both high and low income levels. Several countries show that progress can be achieved equitably, with girls from the poorest households benefiting alongside those from the richest households.
- Gains made must not be lost. Poverty reduction, access to education and labour force participation are key to ending child marriage. We cannot afford to lose gains in these areas, especially given the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic.
- The SDGs are deeply interconnected. Progress on target 5.3 (eliminating child marriage) is dependent on progress in other areas, especially education, employment and poverty reduction.

Figure 2. Percentage of women aged 20–24 years who were first married or in union before age 18



Notes: Estimates are based on a subset of 98 countries covering 79 per cent of the global population of women aged 20–24 years. Regional estimates represent data covering at least 50 per cent of the regional population. Data coverage was insufficient to calculate regional estimates for Western Europe and North America.

Figure 3. Percentage of women aged 20–24 years who were first married or in union before age 18, by region



Source: UNICEF global databases, 2020, based on Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey (MICS), DHS and other nationally representative sources.

Child marriage has declined across most regions in the past 25 years. Over the past decade, the proportion of young women who were married as children decreased by 15 per cent, from one in four to about one in five. The decline in child marriage varies substantially across different contexts (see Figure 2).

While the global reduction in child marriage is to be celebrated, no region is yet on track to meet the SDG target of eliminating this harmful practice by 2030 (see Figure 3). For child marriage to end globally by this date, the rate of progress would need to be 15 times faster than the pace recorded over the last decade. Furthermore, over the next 10 years, up to 10 million more girls will be at risk of child marriage as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Even as commitments and interventions on child marriage are proliferating, few

programmes are operating at scale, and the evidence on successful strategies that have been scaled up remains limited. Furthermore, it is not clear whether programmes are always reaching the most vulnerable girls or the areas that have the highest prevalence or burden of child marriage. Rigorous empirical evidence on what drives large-scale population-level changes in child marriage is also lacking, although there are emerging lessons about the effectiveness of interventions aimed at household vulnerability reduction for girls' school attendance and creating opportunities for livelihood alternatives. The factors that contribute to a girl's risk of child marriage have been studied extensively when it comes to influences at the individual and household levels. Yet there are also societal factors at play that affect levels of child marriage across the population. A more complete understanding of the context in which decisions about marriage are made requires looking beyond the individual and considering factors outside of each girl and her family's individual circumstances.

The analysis presented in the 2021 UNICEF report *Towards Ending Child Marriage: Global trends and profiles of progress*⁸ touches on this broader context in a subset of countries that have made impressive strides in reducing child marriage. In addition to progress against child marriage at the societal level, these countries, typically, have also seen improvements in economic development and poverty reduction, access to employment and educational attainment.

While the relationship between child marriage and socioeconomic development is intuitive, important nuances can be uncovered by delving deeper into the data. For example, for greater national wealth to translate into reduced rates of child marriage, economic growth must be inclusive and its benefits equitably shared. The tax revenues such growth generates must also be invested in programmes and services that make a difference for children, particularly in education and social protection.

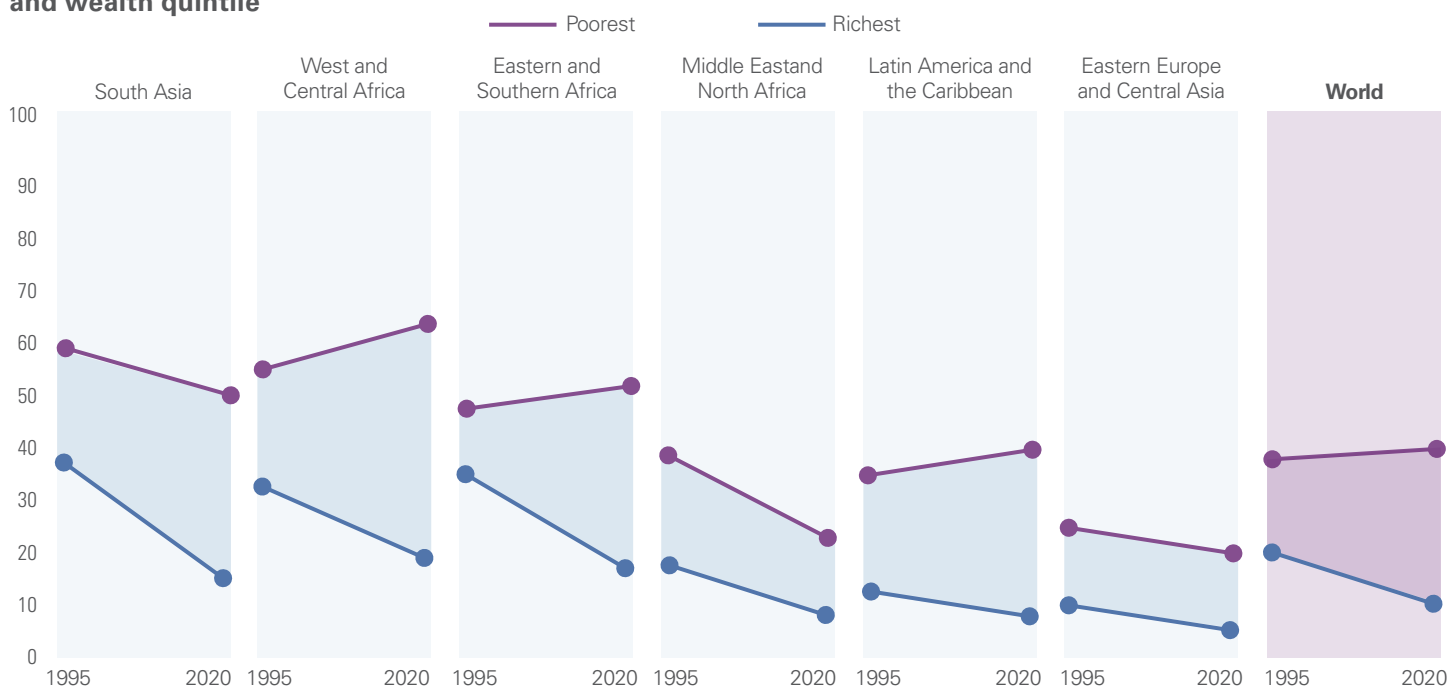


The gap in child marriage prevalence between the richest and poorest households has widened in most parts of the world (see Figure 4). The UNICEF *Child Marriage Country Profiles*⁹ provide country-specific details on child marriage differences between socioeconomic groups and other criteria.

Labour force participation is another area in which its general relationship with child marriage is less meaningful than the detailed findings. Both the literature on this subject and the analysis in the 2021 UNICEF data report indicate that the availability of any type of work for women is not sufficient to reduce child marriage, particularly if the work is in the informal sector.

Similar distinctions can be found in the domain of education. At the individual level, the literature suggests that the level of educational attainment that is protective against child marriage varies by context. At the population level, primary school completion is protective against child marriage. However, this relationship appears to have weakened with rising education levels in recent decades; secondary school completion is now emerging as a more strongly correlated factor. Greater improvements at the upper-secondary level could mean continued declines in levels of child marriage across all regions, as more girls achieve the higher educational attainment typically associated with delayed marriage. The analysis, however, also shows that increasing access to education alone is not enough. Rather,

Figure 4. Percentage of women aged 20–24 years who were first married or in union before age 18, by region and wealth quintile



Notes: Estimates are based on a subset of 105 countries covering 58 per cent of the global population of women aged 20–24 years. Regional aggregates are based on at least 50 per cent population coverage. Data were insufficient to calculate regional averages for East Asia and the Pacific, North America and Western Europe.

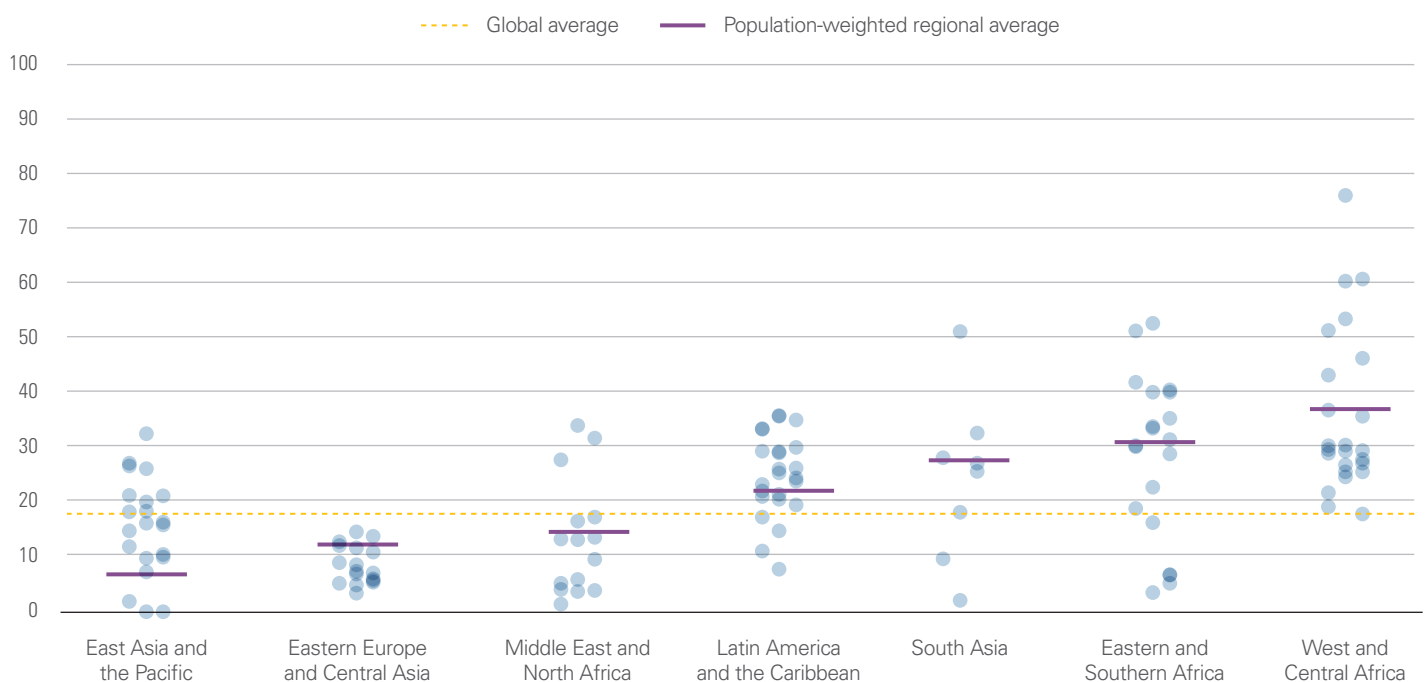
improved access needs to go hand in hand with opportunities for reliable and skilled employment. Child marriage becomes a less attractive option as other (and more lucrative) alternatives become available. Countries in which advances in girls' education have not been accompanied by improved access to earnings through female employment have been able to delay the age at marriage for some girls, but not for all. The analysis in the 2021 UNICEF data report is not meant to establish causal links but to foster a deeper understanding of the association between shifts in child marriage rates and key macro-level factors. Its findings are also intended to inform the global research agenda, by highlighting patterns in trends and dynamics of change that warrant further investigation. A promising area for future research, for example, is the relationship between

macro-level factors and programmatic interventions already known to influence child marriage.

Although improvements in economic development, education and the labour market imply large and sustained investments nationally, action at this level reinforced with an enabling environment at different levels is essential, and should complement programmatic efforts targeting girls at risk, if the promise to end child marriage in this decade is to be realized.

Sub-Saharan Africa stands out as the region with the highest prevalence of child marriage (*see Figure 5*). The UNICEF Country Data Profiles provide more in-depth country-specific data and analysis.

Figure 5. Percentage of women aged 20–24 years who were first married or in union before age 18, by region



Notes: Each dot represents a country. The global estimate is based on a subset of 98 countries covering 79 per cent of the global population of women aged 20 to 24 years. Regional estimates represent data covering at least 50 per cent of the regional population. Data coverage was insufficient to calculate regional estimates for Western Europe and North America.

Spotlight on West and Central Africa

Child marriage programming has to differentiate between younger and older adolescent girls

The latest data from West and Central Africa show that the percentage of girls aged 20–24 married before age 18 stands at 37 per cent in 2021, compared to 41.1 per cent in 2018.³⁷ This 4 per cent point decline in prevalence means that an additional 3 million girls will not be married as a child. In Ghana, child marriage prevalence for girls under 18 decreased from 21 per cent in 2018 to 19 per cent

in 2021, but prevalence for girls married before age 15 remained the same since 2018, at 5 per cent. Sierra Leone is showing encouraging progress to eliminate child marriage. In 2018, 39 per cent of girls aged 20–24 were married before age 18, compared to 30 per cent in 2021. There has similarly been a decline in child marriage prevalence for girls married before age 15, from 13 per cent in 2018 to 9 per cent in 2021. These results show that the situation differs for younger and for older adolescent girls; therefore, specific attention should be paid to this in regard to age- and context-specific programming.





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Global Programme Achievements

Together, 364 meeting participants explored how to get back on track to meeting the elimination goal, solutions for scaled-up responses, new models for effective programming in a COVID-19 world and much more.

2.1 Midterm review of Phase II of the Global Programme

The Global Programme held its biennial meeting for the midterm review of Phase II in an all-new virtual event format in 2021.¹¹ From 19–21 October 2021, the virtual event gathered leading global experts, innovators and UNFPA and UNICEF staff involved in the Global Programme to engage in powerful, inspired and practical conversations across a range of topics related to effective child marriage programming and policies. Together, 364 meeting participants explored how to get back on track to meeting the elimination goal, solutions for scaled-up responses, new models for effective programming in a COVID-19 world and much more.


The virtual biennial meeting was a meaningful space for critical reflection – an opportunity for UNFPA and UNICEF staff, implementing partners and strategic allies working in the Global Programme countries and beyond to come together and revisit the agenda, priorities, challenges and lessons learned. The virtual space and derived resources have been used as a public good in the service of ending child marriage globally.

2.2 Gender-transformative approaches


In 2021, the Global Programme continued to operationalize a gender-transformative approach. Current global evidence reinforces the Phase I recommendations

Top 10 takeaways from the biennial meeting for the midterm review

- **No region is on track to achieve SDG 5.3**, and COVID-19 has set the agenda further back. There is a need for localization, integration and partnerships to accelerate action to offset this negative impact, end harmful practices and achieve gender equality.
- **The evidence base on child marriage is growing**, but there is a need to obtain context-specific knowledge, better evidence on what works and does not work at scale to end child marriage, innovative measurement practices, and more research led by researchers from low- and middle-income countries.
- **When programmes are well documented, agencies and organizations are able to learn more**, adapt their strategies, connect with communities and advocate more effectively. Documentation and the use of learnings in policy development and programming have to be incentivized and require adequate capacities.
- **Fulfilling our mission under COVID-19 conditions demands sustained advocacy** with governments for maintaining access to critical health, education and protection services; leveraging social protection mechanisms for girls and their families; building partnerships with grassroots and women-led organizations and movements for outreach to communities; and mixing digital and face-to-face approaches based on the specific context.
- **Adolescent digital engagement has the potential for innovation with and for young people**. Engage youth meaningfully through digital spaces but consider the value proposition ('what's in it for them?') before implementing the technology. Engagement must be long-term, with two-way communication, and mindful of the digital divide in order to leave no one behind.
- **Never has it been more important to leave no one behind**. In an increasingly unequal world, driven by COVID-19 and the digital divide, girls with disabilities, already married girls and lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer and intersex (LGBTQI+) youth need to be heard, seen and served. Programming adaptations made in recent times have opened up new possibilities for upholding their rights.
- **Gender-transformative programming has gone from 'the sidelines' to the mainstream** and is now an institutional commitment for both UNFPA and UNICEF. To address the structural causes of gender inequality and child marriage, resources and power need to be shifted and rebalanced. This means investing in critical pathways of change, including gender-synchronized approaches promoting the empowerment of girls and positive masculinities for boys.
- **Taking a human rights-based approach means asking who has to be reached (which girls are most affected), why (what are the root causes), who has an obligation to do something about it and what, and how duty-bearers can be held to account**. Diverse human rights accountability mechanisms are real, practical tools to advance the agenda to end child marriage, as shown in examples from across the globe during the meeting.
- **Child marriage is being addressed through health, education and protection systems and services in humanitarian settings**, by empowering adolescent girls to lead change and by partnering with different actors, including governments and youth-led feminist organizations. Nevertheless, there are gaps still to be filled: there is a need for more preventative work, relevant and accessible digital innovations, services that are more adolescent friendly, increased visibility of girls in data, programme evaluations and continued advocacy to prioritize child marriage in humanitarian contexts.
- **The commitments to end child marriage expressed by the Global Programme donors are multisectoral**, whether targeting child marriage directly or through support to gender equality, young people, sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR), education, social protection, or research. Core, flexible and long-term support to feminist movements is also key to advancing the agenda.



The Global Programme made significant progress to promote gender-transformative approaches towards system-wide change throughout the planning, implementation and measurement.



on the need to influence and support transformative approaches beyond community-driven behaviour change strategies that prominently call for influencing shifts in power and resources at structural and policy levels. During the year, the Global Programme made significant progress to promote gender-transformative approaches towards system-wide change throughout the planning, implementation and measurement of Phase II.

2.2.1 TECHNICAL GUIDANCE

Technical guidance was provided to Global Programme countries, regions and beyond by developing technical resources and expanding outreach. The translation of technical notes and resources into French, Portuguese and Spanish made them accessible to local partners, CSOs, social movements and practitioners across the globe, especially those in the Latin America and the Caribbean region.

The Global Programme is expanding the common understanding of gender-transformative approaches comprehensively. The technical guidance developed for Phase II has informed both UNFPA and UNICEF Strategic Plans for 2022–2025, raising the need for maintaining gender-transformative programming as a core strategy for the elimination of harmful practices and the achievement of sustainable change in gender equality.

In partnership with the regional offices, technical guidance was provided to country offices to align programmatic interventions at country level to international standards and evidence-based approaches, through various regional fora.

2.2.2 CAPACITY-BUILDING FOR GENDER-TRANSFORMATIVE PROGRAMMING

Capacity-building work under the Global Programme includes technical guidance, online training, workshops, and providing technical support for gender programming that is tailored to each country. The Global Programme launched an online course on Adolescent Girls' Agency, Safety and Well-Being¹² that aims to clarify what makes a programme gender transformative, why it matters for effective and results-based programming, and what strategic adjustments can be made to existing programmes so interventions become responsive to adolescent girls' empowerment and gender equality outcomes. The course covers two foundational modules – 'Foundations of Gender-Transformative Approaches' and 'Adolescent Girls Programming' – and two sub-modules on approaches – 'End Child Marriage' and 'Eliminating Female Genital Mutilation'.

2.2.3 WORKSHOPS ON 'AGENCY' AND 'POSITIVE MASCULINITIES'

The Global Programme ran two interactive three-hour workshops to build capacities of staff and select partners on gender-transformative programming. The workshop on 'Agency: Starting with Girls at the Centre' addressed how to programme for adolescent girls' empowerment, while the workshop on 'Positive Masculinities' unpacked how to engage men and boys in gender-transformative work that promotes positive masculinities and shifts unequal power dynamics in a meaningful way. Efforts continue to learn and improvise, and also to aim to strengthen capacities to

address internal gender biases within staff and among service providers.

2.2.4 KNOWLEDGE EXCHANGE SESSION WITH THE SPOTLIGHT INITIATIVE

The Global Programme conducted a knowledge sharing session with the Spotlight Initiative's Secretariat to present the GTA tool. The presentation was followed by an interactive conversation, question-and-answer sessions, and sharing of learning. The space allowed both the Spotlight Secretariat and the Global Programme headquarters team to share common areas of expertise and collaboration, with an important emphasis on how best to provide support to countries and partners.

2.2.5 DEDICATED TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

The Global Programme developed and field-tested the GTA tool¹³ in four countries (India, Ethiopia, Mozambique and the Niger), as part of its technical assistance strategy to operationalize gender-transformative programming under Phase II. The GTA tool is a self-contained, process-oriented, rapid analysis and action planning tool for implementers, advocates and technical staff working on initiatives to prevent and respond to child, early and forced marriages and unions. It facilitates interactive programme reflection and action planning through a three-day process that involved the following:

- **Day 1:** Core Elements of a Gender-Transformative Approach – A collective assessment of programme interventions, while clarifying concepts, across the socio-ecological framework, through a consultative

ranking process across the gender equity continuum.

- **Day 2:** Deep Dives – In-depth reflection and analysis of barriers and bottlenecks, and exploration of opportunities, based on a prioritization of programme priorities.
- **Day 3:** Roadmap of Actions – Building on the second day, and based on a shortlist of actions, articulation of strategic actions along with details of the time frame, support needed and measures of success, and with assignment of responsibilities among team members.

2.2.6 LAUNCH OF THE GTA TOOL

In December 2021, the Global Programme convened an external event with 113 attendees to officially launch the GTA tool through an interactive event that included panel sessions with country staff engaged in implementing the tool. The event aimed to promote a cross-country and cross-regional peer learning and exchange forum. Global Programme countries were the primary audience. In order to share the GTA tool as a public good, the secondary audience included other countries working on ending child marriage or implementing programming for adolescent girls.

2.2.7 STRENGTHENING GENDER-TRANSFORMATIVE APPROACHES TO ADDRESSING CHILD MARRIAGE

The Global Programme is committed to addressing gender-transformative

Example of the roll-out of the GTA tool from the Niger

In 2021, the Niger was one of the countries that rolled out the GTA tool. A three-day GTA workshop was held in June 2021 with the active participation and engagement of technical staff from UNFPA, UNICEF, the Government and CSOs. The discussions focused on identifying one or two priorities, or catalytic opportunities, within the Nigerien context to focus on during the GTA process. Because the GTA process is meant to support country programmes to focus existing resources, country leads were asked to identify crucial areas within their existing workplan where gender-transformative approaches can have both an immediate and potentially amplified impact. Two promising priorities emerged: improved understanding on how to reinforce positive masculinities at all levels of the socio-ecological model; and strengthening a gender-transformative approach within service systems

to increase girls' use of and demand for sexual and reproductive health services (including access to family planning services, access to and quality of education such as comprehensive sexuality education in schools, and gender-transformative child and social protection systems).

The Niger team prioritized participatory discussion and ranking of three elements as most relevant to the priority focus areas: (1) girls' skills, agency and empowerment; (2) information and services; and (3) addressing masculinities and engaging men and boys. Participants prioritized three types of actions to move ahead within their areas of focus: (1) strengthening existing work through incremental improvements; (2) scaling existing interventions and promising practices; and (3) testing new interventions to directly address gender norms transformation.

Through the GTA exercise, we realized that gender norms transformation starts from within. We cannot design and implement gender-transformative approaches if we are not all at the same level of understanding of what this means, and if we are not willing to challenge ourselves and our own biases. This means prioritizing internal advocacy and capacity-building, for both our teams and implementing partners.

–Elsa Burzynski, UNFPA Niger

programming as a core element to ending child marriage. For example, at the global level, UNFPA is partnering with Equimundo – a global leader in promoting positive masculinities and gender equality, and preventing violence – to develop an evidence review of ending child marriage through engaging with boys and promoting positive masculinities. This will include a programmatic review and will inform further programming in this area. At the regional level, UNFPA and UNICEF continued to engage men and boys as partners to prevent and eliminate harmful practices. The UNICEF Middle

East and North Africa Regional Office is partnering with Promundo to co-design a Programme toolkit to engage men and boys to prevent FGM and child marriage in Djibouti, Egypt, Sudan and Yemen. The aim of this initiative is to build the knowledge and capacity of country office staff, partners and stakeholders to adopt a gender-transformative approach to prevent harmful practices, and to engage men and boys to advocate for the elimination of child marriage and FGM and address discriminatory gender norms that drive harmful practices.

The partnership with the Bangladesh Football Federation and the Cricket Board aimed to enable girls to play football and cricket and to demonstrate that girls can engage in non-traditional activities for girls, thereby challenging existing social and gender norms in concrete ways.

2.2.8 COUNTRY EXAMPLES OF WORK TO PROMOTE PATHWAYS FOR GENDER-TRANSFORMATIVE APPROACHES

The Bangladesh Programme supported adolescent girls' empowerment by building the skills and knowledge of girls at risk of child marriage through nationwide adolescent clubs and a gender-transformative SRHR-inclusive life skills and comprehensive sexuality education curriculum. The adolescent clubs included virtual and in-person adolescent clubs for both girls and boys as well as girls-only adolescent clubs. The mixed-gender adolescent clubs included dialogue and sharing of ideas between adolescent boys and girls, and enabled boys to work with girls to challenge and change harmful gender and social norms and ensure both girls and boys are protected. Peer dialogues and community media further engaged more than 103,247 adolescent boys and male caregivers/fathers in intervention areas. The partnership with the Bangladesh Football Federation¹⁴ and the Cricket Board aimed to enable girls to play football and cricket and to demonstrate that girls can engage in non-traditional activities for girls, thereby challenging existing social and gender norms in concrete ways.

Following the application of the GTA tool, the Ethiopia Programme influenced the SBC manual of the national social protection programme 'Productive Safety Net Programme' (PSNP), by incorporating modules on gender and gender-based violence (GBV) to support linkages to available social services, including response to GBV, and justice and legal services (e.g., for cases of

child marriage and GBV).¹⁵ Further, the Ethiopia Programme contributed to an SBC baseline-midline study focusing on social and gender norms. The study will allow the Global Programme to measure the success of the programme in influencing social and gender norms. In addition, the country office collaborated with CARE to apply the 'Social Analysis and Action' tool to strengthen the gender-transformative capacity of service providers.

In India, the states of Assam, Rajasthan, West Bengal, Gujarat, Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh and Maharashtra mainstreamed positive masculinities and gender sensitization in schools and communities. In Assam, the pilot on positive masculinities is being institutionalized through standard operating procedures for the departments of social welfare, health, education and home to prevent sexual violence and GBV. Partnerships were established with women's collectives and youth-led organizations to mobilize the voices of adolescents and communities, challenge harmful social and gender norms, and promote gender equality in the most marginalized communities. Subsequent to the application of the GTA tool, the country office drafted a gender transformative checklist to support Breakthrough's review of curricula, modules and manuals for adolescent girls' empowerment programmes. The state of Rajasthan received technical assistance from UNFPA for the development of the State Women's Policy, which incorporates gender-transformative approaches for the empowerment of women and girls, including action plans to address child marriage. The state of Maharashtra

received support from UNICEF to publish the Gender and Child Budget Statements for fiscal year 2021–2022 for the second consecutive year. The state of Gujarat completed a baseline ‘Knowledge, Attitudes and Practices’ survey on gender in Kutch district. The survey will aid the impact assessment of gender-transformative programming in the district which was rolled out in partnership with the district administration. The Global Programme is partnering with the Gender Resource Centres in Gujarat and Rajasthan to assess the strength of the GBV response in these states.

Concrete recommendations to strengthen gender-transformative programming in Mozambique emerged from the GTA tool exercise and included: explicit investments in men’s and boys’ engagement and masculinities; stronger gender-transformative SBC content in SBC manuals and strategies; and improved investments in adolescent girl agency-building livelihood programmes. The men’s and boys’ mentorship manual aims to increase adolescent boys’ and young men’s awareness of issues related to SRHR, GBV, positive masculinities and bodily autonomy.

The Global Programme in Zambia is partnering with the UNICEF Office of Research – Innocenti to measure gender-transformative change using the STAR survey on gender norms.¹⁶ The survey will serve as a baseline for new districts and will be repeated in two years’ time.

2.3 Grounded in human rights

The Global Programme applies a human rights–based approach to programming to protect, respect and fulfil human rights. Taking this approach means asking which girls are most affected, what the root causes are of why they are affected, who has an obligation to do something about it and what, and how they can be held accountable. Child marriage is a violation of human rights, and governments have specific obligations in international and national laws. Beyond legal protection, ending child marriage requires multisectoral and comprehensive responses to address the underlying root causes and drivers. Human rights accountability is not just a lofty principle – it comes with different tools to achieve real change, including social, administrative, political, legal, quasi-

Descriptions of approaches to human rights accountability

- **Legal/judicial:** Courts apply the law to protect human rights.
- **Quasi-judicial:** National human rights institutions, child rights commissions, etc., investigate human rights violations and assess government policy progress.
- **Political:** Parliaments oversee government policies and budgets.
- **Administrative:** Government-led mechanisms, including policies, are used to promote and protect human rights.
- **Social:** Monitoring and social audits of budgets and service delivery are conducted.
- **International:** Violations are reported to international human rights mechanisms, as well as status and progress of human rights in the country.

judicial or international accountability. The Global Programme biennial meeting showcased examples of the use of different human rights accountability mechanisms in different contexts.

The following paragraphs highlight some examples of how the Global Programme takes on a human rights–based approach to end child marriage.

2.3.1 POLITICAL ACCOUNTABILITY: ENGAGING WITH PARLIAMENTARIANS

The Global Programme partnered with the Inter-Parliamentary Union, Girls Not Brides and the World Health Organization (WHO) to engage parliamentarians in advocacy and policy dialogue on the importance of ending child marriage during the pandemic. Six countries were initially prioritized to advance these parliamentary conversations across regions, namely Bangladesh, Burkina Faso, Guatemala, Uganda and Zambia. Country mappings and rapid analysis were conducted to identify the areas of opportunity at the national or regional levels, and technical support was provided to the country offices to advance on advocacy and policy dialogue to end child marriage. As a result of national conversations, common needs were identified that prompted the organization of a global webinar to convene parliamentarians, CSOs and United Nations agencies to discuss the situation, needs and evidence-based strategies to end child marriage, with a particular emphasis on a call to action to political stakeholders to sustain critical investments for adolescent girls.

The global webinar “Ending Child Marriage in the Time of COVID-19: What role for parliaments?” was held with the participation of guest speakers from the parliaments of India, Mexico and Zambia. The event was attended by close to 200 participants from 68 countries, including parliamentarians, parliamentary staff, government officials, civil society representatives and United Nations representatives. During the webinar presentations, the Global Programme and Girls Not Brides presented an overview of the situation of child marriage and the risks that COVID-19 poses on girls’ rights and well-being, while at the same time making a call to action for parliamentarians to engage within this challenging context. A panel discussion with parliamentarians provided country-specific examples of the impact of the pandemic on the lives of children and adolescents, particularly adolescent girls, and the redressive action taken by parliaments. Several other participants added their own countries’ experiences. The convening to the global webinar was leveraged by country offices as an opportunity to engage with parliamentarians at the national level in countries such as Bangladesh, Colombia, the Dominican Republic, El Salvador, India, Mexico, Peru and Zambia. After the global webinar, a brief summary with resources was sent out by the Inter-Parliamentary Union to parliamentarians worldwide, and some country offices are following up with their representatives at the national level.

2.3.2 GUIDANCE NOTE: APPLYING A HUMAN RIGHTS–BASED APPROACH TO PROGRAMMING

In 2021, UNFPA released a guidance note that provides a road map for institutionalizing a human rights–based

With a particular emphasis on a call to action to political stakeholders to sustain critical investments for adolescent girls.

approach in the work of UNFPA. It responds to the key challenges and opportunities for advancing the rights-based dimensions of the International Conference on Population and Development today. The guidance note is built around three key components for action: (i) equality and non-discrimination, (ii) quality and (iii) accountability. It provides a clear, strategic and comprehensive direction for UNFPA's efforts to elevate the centrality of rights and choices and achieve the transformative rights-based vision of the Conference. It also provides illustrative examples of applying a human rights-based approach across UNFPA's three transformative results: zero unmet need for contraception; zero preventable maternal deaths; and zero GBV and harmful practices, including child marriage. This guidance note will contribute to the implementation of the Global Programme and the UNFPA Strategic Plan's accelerator on human rights and gender-transformative approaches.

2.3.3 LEAVE NO ONE BEHIND: REACHING THE MOST VULNERABLE

All countries involved in the Global Programme have stepped up efforts to include the most marginalized groups through geographic targeting in high prevalence and hard-to-reach areas, and by adapting the Programme to the specific needs of the most excluded groups of adolescent girls. The Programme in Bangladesh established partnerships with grassroots women's and youth-led organizations to engage married girls and women with restricted mobility in remote and isolated tea garden communities in Dhaka, Chattogram, Bogura, Jamalpur and Patuakhali districts. In Bangladesh, married

adolescent girls are often prevented by their families from accessing public services. The country programme therefore further tailored community-based courtyard meetings to include 3,082 married adolescent girls in community mobilization interventions.

The Programme in Ethiopia adapted its interventions to reach girls and communities affected by humanitarian crises, including internally displaced persons (IDPs). This includes the delivery of a condensed life-skills curriculum through radio and mobile phones, and a community dialogue guide tailored to emergency contexts developed in collaboration with the child protection in humanitarian action sector, ThinkPlace and Population Media Centre.

The India Programme expanded its work with tribal populations in Odisha and with Musahar Dalit communities in Bihar. The Nepal Programme identified the most disadvantaged families through a vulnerability assessment that aims to include girls and boys from historically marginalized communities. The assessment also identified girls unable to access information and services because they are out of school, already married and from ultra-poor families. In Uganda, the Programme targeted areas with high child marriage prevalence, high poverty rates, limited access to education and other essential services, communities affected by natural disasters, and adolescents in refugee communities.

In Ghana, the Programme prioritized the 'Shaping Futures Programme' community engagement intervention to include pregnant adolescent girls, adolescent

All countries involved in the Global Programme have stepped up efforts to include the most marginalized groups through geographic targeting in high prevalence and hard-to-reach areas, and by adapting the Programme to the specific needs of the most excluded groups of adolescent girls.

mothers, adolescent girls who have dropped out of school, and adolescent girls from economically disadvantaged families. Particular attention was paid to head porters (*Kayaye*) and adolescent girls with disabilities. The Autism Aid App was upgraded to include adolescent sexual and reproductive health information for adolescents with autism.

The Mozambique Programme has targeted women and girls who are survivors of violence and abuse, living with HIV, and those with disabilities or albinism. In the Niger, adolescent girls who have had a child out of wedlock are often stigmatized by their families and communities. The adolescent 'Illimin' initiative and the Community-Based Approach to Child Protection (PDAC) stepped up efforts to include these young women in Programme activities and support their reintegration into their communities. In Zambia, the Programme recruited a mentor who was proficient in sign language to include hearing-impaired adolescent girls and boys in the mentorship programme; and in Sierra Leone, UNFPA is working with the Ministry of Social Welfare to adapt materials for adolescent girls with disabilities.

2.3.4 PARTICIPATION: PROMOTING SHARING OF VIEWS

In Burkina Faso, the Programme actively supported the rights of all boys and girls to participate and express their views on all issues affecting them – in accordance with their gender, age, maturity level and abilities – through safe clubs and spaces. The participation of girls and boys in the implementation of the Programme was facilitated in a responsible and ethical

manner, while respecting confidentiality. The Bangladesh Programme was designed to empower adolescent girls (70 per cent of the target population) and boys by providing them with life-skills education and comprehensive sexuality education and engaging with influential community members so that adolescents can stand up against child marriage and harmful practices. The Programme also aimed to educate communities in understanding the consequences of marrying girls below the age of 18.

2.3.5 RIGHT TO EDUCATION: EMPOWERING BOTH DUTY-BEARERS AND RIGHTS HOLDERS

At the beginning of each school year, the Niger Programme works with schools, parents and students to promote the right to education through a mass enrolment drive. As a result of this drive, 1,649 girls returned to school thanks to an awareness of the importance of girls' enrolment sparked by PDAC. According to the teachers, parents have changed their behaviour towards monitoring their children's schooling. Some communities set up additional schools to meet the growing awareness of the importance of the right to education. Parents are becoming increasingly involved in the management of schools, the quality of teachers and their attendance; and teachers do not hesitate to hold the administrative authorities to account, so that the rights of children are realized.

2.3.6 CULTURAL RELEVANCE: THE ROLE OF COMMUNITY GATEKEEPERS

Child marriage is a violation of children's rights and is a gender-based social norm



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perpetuated by families and communities. In Ethiopia, community gatekeepers who set norms, behaviours and standards are highly respected community members. The Ethiopia Programme is being implemented through a respectful, consultative and empowering approach that values the role and capacity of community gatekeepers to change the situation by themselves.

2.3.7 PUSHBACKS: SAFEGUARDING RIGHTS

Given the resistance to the term ‘comprehensive sexuality education’ in Ghana, the Programme re-labelled it as ‘reproductive health education’. To ensure that adolescent girls are fully enjoying their right to education, reproductive health education sessions have been delivered through various community engagement interventions (e.g., SISTAs Clubs, PASS, Orange Girls Network, etc.), in alignment with international standards and guidance on comprehensive sexuality education.

2.3.8 HUMAN RIGHTS PRINCIPLES: CONTRIBUTING TO A CLIMATE CONDUCTIVE TO HUMAN RIGHTS

Since the inception of the Global Programme, focus countries have been guided by human rights principles,

including the recognition that child marriage is a denial of children’s fundamental rights, including the right to education; the right to choose if, when and whom to marry; and the choice of whether and when to have children. In Bangladesh, the Global Programme is engaging with parliamentarians to increase government budgetary provisions to reduce GBV, end child marriage, ensure midwifery-led maternal health services, and provide resources for family planning and adolescent and youth development. As a result of this advocacy, two members of parliament conducted local consultations in their constituencies to ensure more effective implementation of the legal and policy framework related to child marriage.

2.4 Addressing child marriage in humanitarian settings

A growing number of countries involved in the Global Programme experienced humanitarian emergencies in 2021, including Bangladesh, Burkina Faso, Ethiopia, Mozambique, the Niger and Yemen. In addition to the COVID-19 pandemic, other crises included armed conflict and drought, among others. Highlighted in this section are some of the programming examples to address child marriage in humanitarian settings in Global Programme countries, including the development and roll-out of technical guidance to support this area of work.

2.4.1 PROGRAMME RESPONSE TO CHILD MARRIAGE IN DROUGHT-AFFECTED AREAS IN ETHIOPIA

The Horn of Africa is experiencing one of its worst droughts in recent history, with 12

to 14 million people severely food insecure in Ethiopia, Kenya and Somalia. In Ethiopia, families are struggling to survive following three consecutive failed rainy seasons. The most severely impacted areas are the lowlands of Afar; Somali; the Southern Nations, Nationalities, and Peoples' Region (SNNPR); and the southern and eastern parts of the Oromia region. The drought has had a devastating impact on livelihoods and livestock, with food security deteriorating rapidly. More than 70,000 animals have died, with the number increasing daily in all affected regions due to a lack of animal feed and water, leading to further negative impacts to livelihoods. Internal displacement is spreading, with severe consequences for displaced people, livestock, and the children and families left behind, as caregivers seek livelihood opportunities for their survival.

In terms of protection issues, according to the Deyr assessment conducted from October to December 2021 by the Somali Region Disaster Prevention and Preparedness Bureau, 63.2 per cent of key informants reported increased child marriage due to the drought and displacements as a result of the conflict. Similarly, the Bureau of Women and Child Affairs reported more than 400 child marriage across 11 *woredas*. Administrative data from Oromia's East Hararghe zone show that the number of child marriage cases increased from 70 to 106 compared to six months earlier. The drought exacerbates other child protection concerns, including family separation, migration and displacement; and the separation of boys from their families as they are sent to search for water for livestock. For girls and women, the risks of GBV have increased as the number of women- and child-headed households increase.

With funds from the Global Programme and other sources, the country team has made programme adjustments to respond to the humanitarian crisis by:

- Integrating child marriage into the humanitarian response plans and by collaborating with the education sector and with cash transfers schemes.
- Expanding the evidence base of the impact of drought on child marriage – for example, through ongoing multisectoral assessments in Afar and Somali regions of Ethiopia.
- Extending the child marriage programme to IDP camps (locations where targeted adolescent girls at risk of child marriage and their families have moved to) and sustaining interventions for the drought-affected populations, under the leadership of the Regional Bureau of Women and Children Affairs and in partnership with CSOs. Interventions include community conversations; sexual and reproductive health and life skills for adolescent girls; operationalization of safe spaces for girls and women that includes the provision of sanitary materials and dignity kits; and the activation of community surveillance for the detection and prevention of and response to harmful practices.
- Promoting the prevention, mitigation and response messaging (radio spots, dramas and structured programmes) on ending child marriage via community-based radio stations. This is being done by aligning the existing child marriage prevention

UNICEF and UNFPA regional offices used advocacy platforms and programmatic approaches to ensure an increased focus on prevention and response to child marriage in humanitarian contexts.

and response messaging with the current humanitarian contexts. Plans are underway to work with the water, sanitation and hygiene; health; and nutrition sectors to disseminate the revised child marriage messages around water points and through mobile health and nutrition teams.

- Providing psychosocial support to children and their parents/caregivers at the affected *woredas*.

2.4.2 INTEGRATION OF IDPS IN INTERVENTIONS TO END CHILD MARRIAGE IN MOZAMBIQUE

In Mozambique, the implementation of programmes continued to be affected by the humanitarian crisis in Cabo Delgado, with the Government requesting to prioritize interventions in the province and many donors redirecting funding to respond to the humanitarian needs. The humanitarian context also impacted Nampula Province, one of the target areas for the Global Programme, with an influx of IDPs. In response, UNFPA provided assistance to displaced girls and young women and ensured they are integrated in ongoing interventions to prevent and respond to child marriage.

2.4.3 ADVOCACY AND EVIDENCE BUILDING FOR PREVENTION AND RESPONSE IN MIDDLE EAST AND NORTH AFRICA

UNICEF and UNFPA regional offices used advocacy platforms and programmatic approaches to ensure an increased focus on prevention and response to child marriage in humanitarian contexts. The regional offices provided technical

support to six countries (Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon, Morocco, Sudan, the Syrian Arab Republic and Yemen) for a strategic approach to prevent child marriage through government advocacy and national action plans, as well as strategic intersectoral community-level interventions.

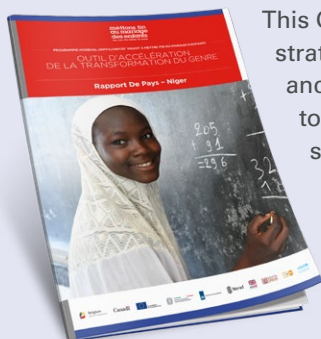
The UNICEF regional office is also supporting the Syrian country office to conduct a scoping study to understand the extent of child marriage in the country and identify platforms for the prevention of and response to child marriage and related vulnerabilities. The scoping study will inform the design of a strategic approach to the specific needs of girls and boys at risk of early and forced marriage.

A UNFPA study across three governorates of Yemen showed that rates of child marriage were highest among displaced populations, with 1 in 5 displaced girls aged 10–19 years being married, compared to 1 in 8 girls in the host community. One in 10 girls younger than 18 lose their baby during childbirth.

Further, UNFPA and UNICEF in the Arab States/Middle East and North Africa, in collaboration with Johns Hopkins University and Girls Not Brides, conducted a global workshop to disseminate key takeaways from *The Practitioner's Guide to the Ethical Conduct of Research on Child Marriage in Humanitarian Settings* among practitioners, researchers and advocates working on child marriage in humanitarian settings. The virtual workshop created a space to share learning on ethics and connect actors working on child marriage research in humanitarian settings.

Technical guidance related to child marriage in humanitarian settings

Addressing Child Marriage in Humanitarian Settings



This Global Programme guide presents a strategic approach for UNFPA, UNICEF and partners to prevent and respond to child marriage in humanitarian settings in different stages of crises.¹⁷ Supplemented by a list of resources and tools, the guide consists of three main sections: It starts by discussing the issue of child marriage in humanitarian settings and increasing global

attention on this issue, including within UNFPA and UNICEF. The second section situates work on child marriage within the humanitarian programme cycle, describing how child marriage-specific actions can be incorporated into needs assessment, planning, resource mobilization, implementation and operational review stages. It then focuses on work on child marriage in the humanitarian cluster/sector architecture, identifying child marriage-specific actions that can be taken by the protection, education, health and other clusters/sectors.

Child Marriage and Early Unions in Latin America and the Caribbean in Humanitarian and Crisis Settings

The COVID-19 pandemic strongly impacted the economy of families and has caused an increase in poverty levels. This may cause families to consider marrying their daughters as an economic relief strategy. One in four adolescent girls in Latin America and the Caribbean marries a man at least 10 years older than themselves. UNFPA, UNICEF and the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN Women) developed a technical guide¹⁸ to

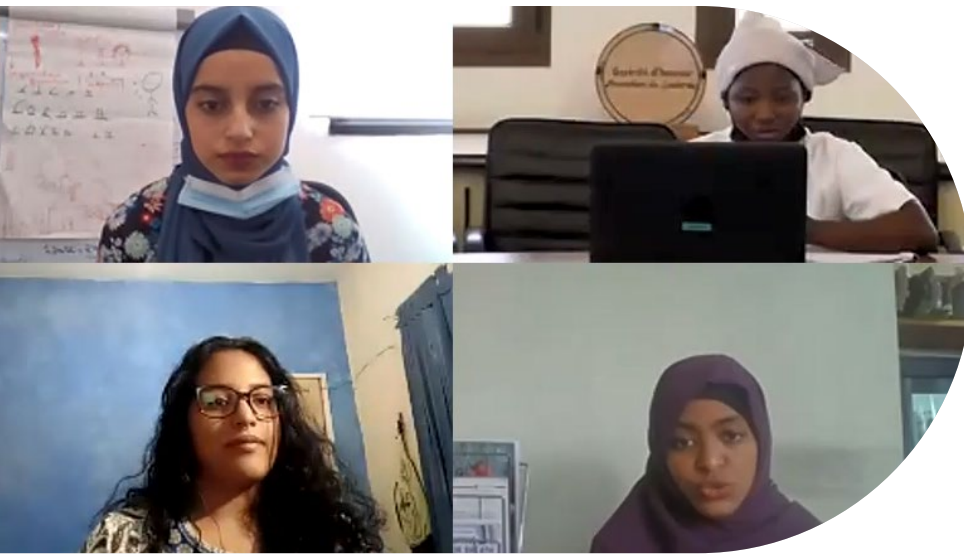
address child marriage and early unions in humanitarian and crisis contexts at different stages of the response, by providing strategic recommendations to action.

Youth, Peace and Security: A programming handbook

This programming handbook¹⁹ from UNFPA, United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the Peacebuilding Support Office and the Folke Bernadotte Academy seeks to contribute to the operational readiness and capacity of practitioners to implement the youth, peace and security agenda. It supports organizations to build youth-inclusive and youth-sensitive peace and security programming, emphasizing the importance of enabling the meaningful participation of young women and men in decision-making at all levels, including in their local communities and on a national level. It underscores gender-specific context analysis to understand if adolescent girls and young women have the same access and opportunities as their male counterparts/peers, whether they face specific challenges or barriers to access, and whether and how their needs and aspirations differ from those of their male counterparts.

Guidelines for the Provision of Remote Psychosocial Support Services for GBV Survivors

Due to containment, mitigation and mobility restriction measures in many countries in Latin America and the Caribbean, governments, as well as United Nations agencies, international and national non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and CSOs are offering remote psychosocial assistance and case management services for survivors of GBV, including child brides. This technical guide²⁰ by UNFPA focuses on how to best provide remote psychosocial support services in the context.



UNFPA/UNICEF 2021

2.5 Advocacy and influencing global policy

The Global Programme continues to work to influence global, regional and national policies and key stakeholders through advocacy, establishing of partnerships with influential actors and through the convening of strategic meetings and events.

2.5.1 GLOBAL ADVOCACY EFFORTS

To highlight the need to tackle gender inequality to end child marriage, the Governments of Canada and Zambia, together with UNFPA, UNICEF and Save the Children, hosted an inter-generational dialogue at the United Nations Commission on the Status of Women, attended by over 400 people from 80 different countries. They included youth participants from Burkina Faso, Ethiopia, the Syrian Arab Republic and the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela (see picture), as well as ministers and government representatives from Canada, Ethiopia, Lebanon, the Netherlands, Sierra

Leone, the United Kingdom and Zambia. Along with the engaging conversations that occurred throughout the event, the occasion was an opportunity to raise awareness on social media around the need to end child marriage, with 86 users on Twitter posting over 750 tweets on child marriage, reaching over 1.3 million people globally.

2.5.2 REGIONAL ADVOCACY IN EASTERN AND SOUTHERN AFRICA

UNICEF's Eastern and Southern Africa Regional Office partnered with the African Council of Religious Leaders in 2021 to engage with religious leaders and members of inter-faith councils at the national level to address the frequently incorrect interpretation of the sacred scriptures in relation to child marriage. In collaboration with Religions for Peace and the Joint Learning Initiative for Faith and Local Communities, a new 'Faith for Positive Change for Children' guidance was produced that provides a framework on how to engage and communicate with religious leaders on violence against children, child marriage and FGM in the time of COVID-19. In addition, the partnership piloted the global monitoring and evaluation framework for the Faith for Positive Change for Children guidance in Kenya and Malawi. Further, UNFPA and UNICEF made a joint presentation on what traditional and religious leaders can do to end child marriage at a meeting with the council of traditional leaders hosted by Plan International in May 2021, and the regional offices put out a call to action for the traditional leaders to continue using their influence within their respective congregations to end child marriage.

UNICEF also established a cooperation agreement with the [International Committee for the Development of Peoples \(CISP\)](#) to build the capacities of civil society and government partners to enhance the quality of social norms programming and measurement in four countries. UNICEF will roll out the social norms training package in Ethiopia, Kenya, Malawi and Somalia. The training package was developed in 2021 in collaboration with UNICEF headquarters and the West and Central Africa Regional Office.

UNFPA's East and Southern Africa Regional Office and the African Coalition for Menstrual Health Management – in collaboration with other partners – convened the second African Symposium on Menstrual Health in May 2021. The symposium brought together 717 participants from 75 countries around the world, the majority coming from Africa. The symposium took stock of progress since the inaugural Africa Menstrual Health Symposium in 2018 and provided a platform to strengthen partnerships for advocacy and collective action, as well as shared learning and innovation across Africa.

In April 2021, a special Southern African Development Community (SADC) Parliamentary Forum was held, where UNFPA and UNICEF regional offices presented on regional efforts to end child marriage. The session was attended by over 75 parliamentarians from across the region. The main objective of the session was to share progress made in the region over the past five years under the Global Programme, explore the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on child marriage, and reaffirm the critical role the SADC Model

Law can play in strengthening legislation, policy and accountability frameworks at country level to end child marriage.

On the Day of the African Child (16 June 2021), UNICEF Eastern and Southern Africa further launched a compilation of promising practices²¹ to end harmful practices and violence against children; the office also facilitated a discussion on the linkages between FGM and child marriage at the Girls Not Brides learning workshop attended by over 100 Girls Not Brides members.

2.5.3 REGIONAL ADVOCACY IN WEST AND CENTRAL AFRICA

UNFPA and UNICEF regional offices in West and Central Africa actively engaged in the 3rd African Girls' Summit (held in Niamey on 16–18 November 2021). The Summit was co-convened by the African Union Commission and the Government of the Niger. It provided an opportunity for governments, the United Nations, civil society, children and young people to convene around issues related to girls and to influence and leverage key stakeholders. The event provided a forum for participants, including representatives from UNICEF and UNFPA, to discuss and share data and evidence on the impact of COVID-19 on efforts to eliminate child marriage and other practices harmful to girls, and to draw attention to the need for further investments to accelerate action towards the SDG agenda. UNICEF West and Central Africa supported the African Union to organize a session at the summit on culture and religion influencing harmful practices. The outcome of the summit was the Niamey Call to Action and

It provided an opportunity for governments, the United Nations, civil society, children and young people to convene around issues related to girls and to influence and leverage key stakeholders.

Commitment to End Harmful Practices. The Niamey Call to Action²² was circulated to country offices in Africa to encourage implementation of the agreed actions.

UNFPA and UNICEF regional offices in West and Central Africa further engaged with the World Bank, the African Union and the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) in 2021 to strengthen their commitment to end child marriage, and to enact, enforce and influence regional legislation, protocols and policies, in line with international human rights standards. Both agencies supported the implementation of the ECOWAS five-year roadmap on child marriage (2019–2024) through regular meetings and follow-up with the ECOWAS Gender Unit. An assessment on the status of the roadmap is scheduled for 2022–2023.

The UNICEF West and Central Africa Regional Office published an advocacy toolkit on ‘KRC6: Ending child marriage’²³ (UNICEF key result for children #6 in the region) to support and guide advocacy efforts on child marriage with national and subnational governments, parliamentarians and regional institutions. The document provides resources, guidelines and examples for country office communication specialists to organize events and campaigns tailored for different audiences.

2.5.4 REGIONAL ADVOCACY IN MIDDLE EAST AND NORTH AFRICA/THE ARAB STATES

The UNICEF Middle East and North Africa Regional Office participated in a side event at the fifth Senior Officials

Meeting on the Syrian Arab Republic in 2021 to inform Member States, donor agencies and key stakeholders about the needs of adolescent boys and girls, with a specific focus on intersectoral solutions for preventing child marriage. Further, the Regional Office continued to strengthen partnerships with multilateral and regional organizations to help ensure that social protection, poverty reduction and economic empowerment programmes and services respond to the needs of the poorest adolescent girls and their families, including in humanitarian contexts.

The Regional Accountability Framework of action on ending child marriage (which convenes development and humanitarian partners) continues to be a platform for collaboration on child marriage research, despite the lack of face-to-face meetings. The platform has also been useful for discussing evidence-based approaches to the prevention of child marriage in the context of COVID-19.

In 2021, UNFPA and UNICEF participated in various meetings organized by the League of Arab States on child marriage and related subjects. The two agencies contributed to the online symposium on ‘Girls’ Early and Forced Marriage in the Arab Region’ to highlight the importance of developing regional and national strategies and action plans, reforming legislation, and taking other measures to end child marriage. The Global Programme has an opportunity to develop a more consistent relationship with the League of Arab States through annual action plans on harmful practices.

The Shamekhat platform promoted by the UNFPA supports partnerships with religious leaders to encourage their engagement in the prevention of child marriage. One Shamekhat meeting was held in 2021 between religious leaders from Egypt and Somalia on FGM. The cooperation will continue in 2022 to expand the work of religious leaders in addressing child marriage.

UNFPA developed a training for country offices working on adolescent girl-centred programming, aimed at enhancing their capacities to promote girls' empowerment to prevent child marriage by equipping them with social, health, cognitive, human and economic assets. This capacity-building process will continue in 2022.

2.5.5 REGIONAL ADVOCACY IN ASIA AND THE PACIFIC/SOUTH ASIA REGION

UNFPA and UNICEF maintained partnerships with the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific, the South Asian Association for Regional

Cooperation, the South Asian Initiative to End Violence Against Children, the South Asia Coordinating Group on Action against Violence against Children and Plan International to coordinate and share new knowledge and evidence on ending child marriage. A child marriage regional forum planned with the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation was again postponed due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The forum was to take stock of efforts to end child marriage in South Asia.

2.6 Coordination with the European Union – United Nations Spotlight Initiative Africa Regional Programme

The Spotlight Initiative is a global partnership between the United Nations, the European Union (EU) and the African Union with continental scope. The Initiative enhances a regional approach to end violence against women and girls, sexual violence and GBV and harmful practices, strengthening SRHR. The Africa Regional Programme prioritizes strengthening



existing strategies and initiatives, such as the African Union Gender Strategy 2017–2027, Agenda 2030, Agenda 2063, and the Maputo Plan of Action on the operationalization of the Continental Policy Framework for Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights (2016–2030). The Africa Regional Programme was built on the programmatic and operational framework, including governing structures, of the Global Programme and the UNFPA-UNICEF Joint Programme on the Elimination of Female Genital Mutilation. As such, the Africa Regional Programme is fully aligned with the United Nations reform efforts that encourage inter-agency coordination to implement as one United Nations system, as well its goal to significantly increase joint programming on gender equality. The Programme adopts a strategy of harnessing the respective strengths of multisectoral, multi-level partnerships which support the acceleration of transformative change. Guided by the principle of ‘leaving no one behind’, the Africa Regional Programme launched innovative approaches to intensify efforts to reach the most vulnerable, despite the physical distancing challenge caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, and even where access to digital resources remained limited.

2.6.1 KEY RESULTS FROM THE SPOTLIGHT INITIATIVE AFRICA REGIONAL PROGRAMME IN 2021

- **Adopting data-driven gender-transformative approaches** (Pillar 5: Data): The Global Programme and partners, informed by the need for a systematic approach to addressing discriminatory gender norms within
 - **Data country profiles on child marriage for advocacy** (Pillar 5: Data): Country profiles were produced for six Spotlight countries in two languages. The profiles provide a snapshot of the situation in each of
- and across programming cycles, has embraced a gender-transformative approach. This approach supports programming to specially address the critical role of key players within the wider socio-ecology – including boys, men and gatekeepers, systems and policy-makers – in transforming unequal gender norms. Based on a comprehensive capacity-building approach, and building on the need to adopt data-driven approaches, a gender-transformative accelerator tool brief that examines structural barriers to gender equality, drivers and bottlenecks, has been adapted to ensure gender-transformative programming, leading to development of immediate actions across the gender continuum with governments and civil society. The tool, implemented by UNFPA and UNICEF in Ethiopia, India, Mozambique and the Niger (with plans for roll-out in Bangladesh and Burkina Faso in 2022), includes strengthening the capacity of countries to implement gender-transformative actions. Through the Spotlight Initiative, this approach will be expanded in collaboration with Girls Not Brides in the Africa Spotlight Initiative countries, with particular focus on Mozambique and Nigeria, based on the positive outcomes of the experiences in the four countries.

the countries with respect to levels and trends in child marriage as well as a core set of related indicators. They were developed to support evidence-based advocacy efforts of civil society partners, UNICEF, UNFPA and other partners, in addition to providing a better understanding of the situation of child marriage in the respective countries to thus help improve programming and decision-making.

- **Measuring social norms change** (Pillar 5: Data): Under the Spotlight Initiative, the ACT framework – which measures and tracks changes in social norms in relation to FGM – is being adapted and implemented in Eritrea, Ethiopia, Kenya and Sudan to establish child marriage and FGM SBC baseline indicators. The results from the ACT surveys are informing programme design, especially at community level, where reflective dialogues are being held to change beliefs and norms that reinforce adoption of these harmful practices by the community. They also provide a baseline to track progress towards abandonment of the practice. Similarly, a partnership with IPSOS has been formed to conduct studies on behavioural drivers addressing harmful practices in nine countries across Africa and the Middle East (Djibouti, Jordan, Lebanon, Mozambique, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Sudan, Yemen and Zimbabwe). These studies provide a baseline and important insights into what is driving behaviours. Results are being used to tailor interventions and to track changes towards

abandonment of child marriage and FGM. To improve the capacity of UNICEF and UNFPA country teams in designing, implementing and monitoring, a team of human-centred design experts has been recruited to develop a social norms programming and measurement training package to be tested and rolled out across the UNICEF and UNFPA country offices supporting the Spotlight Initiative. After review of the existing Programme guidance and measurement toolkits, a needs assessment was completed engaging programme specialists from governments, civil society, UNFPA and UNICEF country offices in seven selected countries to identify key learnings and recommendations to deliver a highly engaging, impactful and user-centred course. Resources for the course have been completed and consist of a facilitator's manual, a participant's handbook and a slide deck. The online version will be completed in 2022. A shorter, online course aimed at building a common understanding of behavioural drivers and how they influence decision-making and actions was also launched this year. It uses the case of child marriage to illustrate the multiple forces that influence behaviour and how these can be addressed through programming.

- **Faith in education – safe re-opening and back to school campaign** (Pillar 6: Women's Movements and Civil Society): UNICEF and the African Council of Religious Leaders – Religions for

In addition to providing a better understanding of the situation of child marriage in the respective countries to thus help improve programming and decision-making.

Peace²⁴ – convened an interfaith virtual conference on 8 October 2021 to advocate for the safe reopening of all schools in Eastern and Southern Africa. The online event brought together 140 stakeholders from Ethiopia, Kenya, Malawi, Uganda, the United Republic of Tanzania, Zambia and Zimbabwe, from multi-faith religious leaders to CSOs, academics and technical experts. This type of engagement will be repeated in 2022 to discuss the role of religious leaders to end harmful practices.

- **Enhancing civil society capacity in programming and measurement of social norms on harmful practices**

(Pillar 6: Women’s Movements and Civil Society): UNICEF developed and pilot tested in Kenya a new social norms training package which will be adapted into self-paced online training modules. Through a partnership cooperation agreement with CISP, the training has started to be rolled out in Ethiopia, Kenya, Malawi and Somalia to enhance the quality of social norms programming and measurement at national and subnational levels. In addition to training, CISP will also offer mentorship support to local CSOs. In 2022 the course is being adapted and contextualized for the South Asia region.

- **Reimagining youth engagement to lead advocacy and change initiatives**

(Pillar 1: Policy): UNICEF and the African Union Commission Youth Division, with support from the Spotlight Initiative, organized a pre-summit youth event with the

theme ‘Culture Matters – Protecting and Enhancing the Role of Youth in Creative Arts to Accelerate an End to Harmful Practices in Africa’ during the 3rd African Girls’ Summit in the Niger. The young people at the Africa Girls Youth Pre-Summit 2021 came together as inspired and determined youth leaders who believe that the youth of Africa must be fully involved, empowered and meaningfully engaged in ending harmful practices. More than 100 young people from across the African continent gathered virtually on 12 November for the pre-summit and called on Member States to accelerate the end of harmful practices highlighting the concepts of culture, human rights and accountability. They focused on a call to action to work closely with traditional and faith-based leaders to bridge knowledge gaps and support and engage adolescent girls and young women in national COVID-19 responses, as well as to empower girls and boys with digital skills. They asked for the establishment of an eVillage to be considered as a platform to showcase and incubate innovations, particularly in ending harmful practices; to scale up mentorship programmes to foster intergenerational knowledge and skills exchange; and for investments to be made in capacity-building and research to address gaps in evidence around harmful practices. Further to this, a hybrid side session was also organized during the summit, focusing on young people engaging with Member States on action/accountability to end harmful practices. The session aimed at highlighting the role of accountability



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of different stakeholders in working and reporting to end harmful practices, outlining existing concrete actions from youth-led initiatives and networks, and recommending ways to accelerate the implementation of the campaign to end harmful practices in Africa. The event stressed the need for immediate action beyond development of frameworks or platform protocols – all actors have enough instruments to act and change the current situation. A key recommendation was the urgency to mobilize young people to break the vicious circle and identify more champions among young people who can drive action. The event also pointed out the need to use social media more creatively to reinforce actions.

Within the context of the Spotlight Programme, UNFPA, UNICEF and the African Union also developed the African Union 'Accountability Framework on Child Marriage and FGM'. The UNFPA East and Southern Africa Regional Office also

collaborated with SADC Parliamentary Forum and Equality Now on a scoping study of the implementation of the SADC Model Law on Child Marriage. These documents will be disseminated in early 2022 to further strengthen the impact of the Global Programme in the Eastern and Southern Africa Region and beyond.

2.7 Advancing global research

The Global Programme developed a global research strategy in 2021²⁵ to guide its work in advancing global and national research priorities. The aim of the research strategy is to improve, unify and amplify the Global Programme's contribution to evidence on child marriage both 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 strategy also supports the Global Programme's aims


of making enhanced contributions to the global knowledge base as a global good. Finally, the strategy supports improved accountability for results in the Global Programme, particularly at the outcome and impact levels. The research strategy is part of a comprehensive learning approach that integrates programming, monitoring, evaluation, and quantitative and qualitative research. It defines new learning objectives and research priorities for Phase II. It also describes how planning of research is integral to the Programme, by using all stages of the programme cycle as learning points for strategic programme design, reorientation, implementation (and course correction as needed), evaluation and learning. It offers a series of tools to facilitate reflection on current and future research to ensure that it is designed, focused and implemented to build the evidence base on which interventions work, why they work and how they work, in diverse contexts and for various subpopulations. The following examples highlight some of the key interventions taken by the Global Programme in 2021 to implement the research strategy and advance the global research field on child marriage.

2.7.1 EVIDENCE REVIEW


During the year, the Global Programme published the report *Evolution in the Evidence Base on Child Marriage 2000–2019*.²⁶ 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. This scoping review

of the evidence base on child marriage from 2000-2019 covers 386 articles that: focus on child or early marriage or informal unions in lower and middle-income countries; provide new research insights based on a specified methodology; and are published in English in either peer-reviewed or grey literature. The findings are arranged around the prevalence of child marriage, its determinants, correlates and context, its consequences, and interventions to address child marriage.

The review found that the last ten years have seen a wave of new research on child marriage including by the Global Programme. The surge in child marriage research is part of broader investments in research on adolescent girls by the Population Council, Gender and Adolescence: Global Evidence (GAGE) and other academic institutions and civil society organizations. While these research initiatives are generating important evidence on key drivers of child marriage and what works in different contexts, their implications are not being synthesised or disseminated consistently. Moreover, research is often poorly coordinated and communicated, leading to duplication and gaps in research efforts. There are also significant power imbalances in relation to what research is commissioned, who defines the research priorities, who undertakes the research and how it is disseminated. The existing evidence base often fails to inform policy and programming at a regional, national, and subnational level in part because it is unresponsive to the needs of policy makers, programme designers and practitioners, and in part because of a coordination gap.



To strengthen the Global Programme's contributions to the global evidence base and better measure programmatic effectiveness, the Programme partnered with the UNICEF Office of Research – Innocenti to establish the STAR initiative to end harmful practices.



2.7.2 RESEARCH COORDINATION AND DISSEMINATION

To address these gaps in coordination, Girls Not Brides and the Global Programme established the 'Child Marriage Research to Action Network' (the CRANK) in 2021. As the Secretariat for the Global Partnership to End Child Marriage, Girls Not Brides is well positioned to provide this coordination. In its first year, the CRANK launched its website in English, Spanish and French, and convened four global meetings responding to priority themes in child marriage research and evidence: gender-transformative approaches to end child marriage; investing in and building systems capacities to end child marriage; child marriage in humanitarian settings; and challenging gender norms to end child marriage. These meetings engaged close to 400 researchers, practitioners and advocates from all regions globally. CRANK also published two research spotlights that synthesize key takeaways, case studies and resources from the quarterly research meetings to strengthen the uptake of evidence by practitioners, advocates, researchers and donors. In addition, the CRANK published quarterly updates of published or ongoing child marriage research by CRANK members. To ensure that the CRANK platform is widely accessible, research meetings provide interpretation in English, French and Spanish, and meeting notes and the research spotlights are translated into the three languages. In order to redress the power imbalance in relation to what research is commissioned, who undertakes the research and how it is disseminated, the CRANK actively

disseminates research findings from the regions most affected by child marriage and engages researchers from the Global South to present at the research meetings.

2.7.3 TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE AND CAPACITY-BUILDING

To strengthen the Global Programme's contributions to the global evidence base and better measure programmatic effectiveness, the Programme partnered with the UNICEF Office of Research – Innocenti to establish the STAR initiative to end harmful practices. STAR aims to strengthen evidence generation, synthesis and uptake of research findings for the development of effective strategies that can be scaled up to sustainably reduce child and early marriages and forced unions. UNICEF Innocenti provides technical expertise and support to Global Programme countries to conduct rigorous impact evaluations, process evaluations, and SBC and gender-transformative research. Some examples include:

- **Ethiopia:** Evaluation and qualitative study to measure norms change over the course of four years, concentrating on norms and SBC indicators with a focus on community conversations and media engagement intervention components.
- **Sierra Leone and Zambia:** Formative social behavioural change survey, and an impact evaluation of SBC interventions.
- **Nepal:** Formative mixed-methods study on trends and drivers of self-initiated marriage; and monitoring of

adolescent sexual and reproductive health through a nationally representative survey concentrating on the links between child marriage and other harmful practices, with a focus on at-risk groups (e.g., youth with disabilities, transgender youth, etc.).

The Global Programme also built national capacity for the collection, analysis, interpretation and use of data on harmful practices. UNICEF developed a virtual training workshop entitled 'Harnessing the Power of Data to End Harmful Practices'. The focus of the training was to familiarize participants with the available data and to illustrate how data can be used for programming, monitoring and advocacy. The emphasis during the two-week course was on child marriage data. The virtual training workshop took place via Zoom from 25 October to 18 November 2021. Simultaneous translation was provided in French, Spanish, Arabic, Portuguese and Bahasa Indonesia. Participants of the virtual training workshop included practitioners who work on child marriage programmes in government, CSOs, UNICEF and other United Nations partners and national statistical offices.²⁷ A total of 175 participants from 33 countries²⁸ attended the workshop; 106 participants regularly attended the sessions and 67 received the end-of-course certificate. By the end of this course, participants were able to:

- Determine data needs and identify common data sources for child marriage and FGM analysis
- Describe and interpret basic statistical and analysis techniques

- Use key child marriage and FGM indicators to track outcomes and impact data
- Use data to shape national targets, identify populations to target, bring awareness through social media and the press, influence and monitor the impacts of changes in legislation
- Generate data stories that communicate data for action.

2.7.4 EXAMPLES OF GLOBAL, REGIONAL AND NATIONAL RESEARCH FROM THE GLOBAL PROGRAMME

Prevalence, drivers and consequences:

UNICEF published *Towards Ending Child Marriage: Global trends and profiles of progress* in October 2021.²⁹ The 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 together with 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. This was accompanied by statistical country profiles on child marriage to meet the perpetual demand for data in a simple, focused format, giving an overview of the state of child marriage in each country.³⁰ The statistical profiles draw upon nationally representative data to present an overview of the practice in each country, detailing how common the practice is across the population, describing the characteristics of unions, providing insights into the lives of child brides across key domains of well-being,



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and illustrating trends in the practice and the acceleration required to reach the 2030 SDG target. The profiles were designed to provide a brief, visually engaging overview of levels and trends in child marriage, as well as a core set of related indicators.

UNICEF Sierra Leone conducted a 'Baseline Study on Social Norms and Behavioural Drivers Related to Child Marriage' in 2021. The study showed that 73 per cent of female respondents married before age 18 are happy with the age of marriage; 22 per cent of respondents believe cohabitation among boys and girls under 18 is on the rise compared to last year, with the major reason mentioned that girls are seeking financial support; and 86 per cent of respondents believe that child marriage is a form of violence against children. The study adds to the evidence to inform child marriage programme interventions in the country and beyond, and will constitute a baseline to measure social and behaviour norms change.

Baseline studies on behavioural drivers and social norms related to child marriage were also conducted in Yemen and Zimbabwe with support from UNICEF. In Zimbabwe, the findings revealed that some progress has been made in knowledge, attitudes, beliefs, values and intentions around

child marriage. Knowledge of the law on child marriage was high, although over 50 per cent of respondents believed that girls should be able to marry at 16, which is below the legal age. The negative consequences of child marriage were known by most; however, perceived consequences for girls were limited to health risks, with little awareness of the financial and psychosocial effects, which interestingly were considered paramount for boys. The study also revealed the role of gender norms, with over 50 per cent of respondents stating that a woman's most important role is in the home. While respondents themselves said they support the abandonment of child marriage, they noted that a girl would be disadvantaged in the community if she did not marry before 18, indicating a possible disconnect between personal beliefs and social norms and expectations. The results have helped identify key behavioural drivers as well as preferred communication approaches of community members, and these are now being used to tailor SBC interventions.

In Yemen, the study results revealed some surprising and at times contradictory findings. For example, while 80 per cent of respondents believe that child marriage can protect a girl, a similar percentage believe that education is also protective. Interestingly, rural respondents on average had a significantly higher likelihood of believing that child marriage should be discontinued, compared to urban respondents, and higher educational attainment was significantly associated with weaker support to end child marriage. Overall, across governorates, less than half of respondents felt they were able to influence decisions on child marriage

in their communities. The results have helped the Yemen country team to strengthen SBC activities to place greater focus on community engagement and the promotion of collective efficacy.

In 2022, similar baseline studies on social norms and behavioural drivers are being implemented in Mozambique and Sudan. In addition, the Spotlight Initiative commissioned an assessment of the level of integration of national and sectoral policies and plans on ending child marriage into national and local budgets in six countries in sub-Saharan Africa. The reports are currently being finalized and will be published in 2022. The results of the assessment will have implications for Global Programme country programmes.

Building knowledge related to COVID-19:

The UNFPA and UNICEF regional offices in the Middle East and North Africa/ Arab States conducted a study on 'Child Marriage in the Context of COVID-19' in 2021.³¹ The study documented good practices and interventions to curb the impact of COVID-19 on child marriage in the region. The impact of the pandemic on fertility outcomes has been of immediate and serious interest. While current data are not age-disaggregated, available reported data from UNFPA and the Short-Term Fertility Fluctuation study in low- and middle-income countries suggest short-term declines in births and subsequent recoveries. In Bangladesh and Benin, for example, births increased temporarily during the pandemic and then reverted to pre-pandemic trends. In Bangladesh, the temporary rise in births was consistent with evidence that family

planning services were acutely disrupted at the height of the pandemic.³² In Ethiopia, it is estimated that the pandemic resulted in declines of roughly 3.5 per cent in the numbers of adolescents receiving modern contraceptive care and those giving birth with a skilled health worker.³³

Systems approaches:

UNICEF developed a compendium of three subnational sectoral case studies during the year.³⁴ The compendium describes and analyses the mechanisms through which large-scale sectoral interventions have contributed to the prevention of child marriage in three settings: in Ethiopia and in the states of West Bengal and Bihar in India. The case studies highlight the successes and challenges of the approaches taken in each context and identify practical ways to embed efforts to end child marriage within existing programming in the areas of education, social protection, economic opportunities, poverty reduction and sexual and reproductive health.

In Ghana, UNFPA conducted an analysis of the influence of actors providing sexual and reproductive health services in the country. Most of them provide services aimed at promoting and protecting the SRHR of adolescents. Most of the interest groups were engaged in empowering young people to know their rights and providing reproductive health education. An area that received less attention was the provision of counselling and family planning services. Barriers identified included the cost involved in seeking the services; health workers' attitudes; lack of adolescent-friendly services at the facilities; ignorance about available services; limited parental

and community support and the need to seek parental consent; and COVID-19-related regulations.

Estimating the cost of child marriage:

UNFPA and UNICEF are providing technical and financial support to a study led by the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia and UN Women to estimate the economic costs of child marriage in the Middle East and North Africa region. The findings of the study will help country offices to build an investment case for policy advocacy with national governments.

Promising programming practices:

UNICEF Eastern and Southern Africa published a compendium of promising practices to highlight programmatic approaches or interventions to address child marriage, FGM and violence against children in the region.³⁵

Legal and policy frameworks:

Given the criticality of the enabling environment within which programming takes place, several evidence pieces focused on this area. For example, UNFPA supported Partners for Law in Development to document 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 when such negotiations

are successful. The power of the law lies not so much in the formal legal action as in ensuring the support of child protection agencies and administration during the process 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.

UNFPA and UNICEF supported the Government of Uganda to conduct a mid-term evaluation of its National Strategy to End 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 country-wide 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, significant investments and commitments are still needed to change societal orientation towards this practice and for broader acceptance and integration of interventions addressing child marriage and teenage pregnancy into district plans and the activities of some development partners. The evaluation indicates that civil registration systems are not yet effective in protecting adolescents from child marriage; that adolescent-friendly health services fail in promoting the rights of children, with some teenagers seeking help only when they are already pregnant; and that reporting of sexual violence is still limited due to social pressure and other issues.



The power of the law lies not so much in the formal legal action as in ensuring the support of child protection agencies and administration during the process of negotiating with families and the community.





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Programme Performance Against the Results Framework

3.1 Overall performance

COVID-19 pandemic restrictions continued to affect Programme implementation and results during 2021. In Sierra Leone, for example, the work of most implementing partners was delayed by COVID-19 restrictions. As a result, less than half of the targeted adolescent girls were reached with life skills and comprehensive sexuality education (CSE). Country programmes continued to experiment with different combinations of virtual and in-person engagements. Hybrid or

blended implementation modalities are here to stay and are transforming the way the Global Programme does its work and delivers results. The gradual increase of in-person engagement improved the quality and efficacy of interventions, but the reduction in digital interaction led to a decline in quantitative outputs. Aside from the pandemic, the security situation had a major impact on programme achievements in Burkina Faso, Ethiopia and Yemen, in particular. Table 2 summarizes the performance of output indicators in 2021.

Table 2. Summary of output indicator performance (2021)

INDICATOR	TARGET	RESULT	PER CENT ACHIEVED
Indicator 1111: Number of adolescent girls (aged 10–19) who actively participated in life skills or comprehensive sexuality education interventions in programme areas	4,068,171	2,589,915	64%
Indicator 1121: Number of girls (aged 10–19) supported by the Programme to enrol and/or remain in primary or secondary school	422,573	135,746	32%
Indicator 1211: Number of boys and men actively participating in group education/dialogues that address harmful masculinities and gender norms	1,223,437	1,148,127	94%
Indicator 1221: Number of individuals (boys, girls, women and men) who participate in group education/dialogue sessions on consequences of and alternatives to child marriage, the rights of adolescent girls and gender equality	15,268,603	15,997,882	105%
Indicator 1222: Number of individuals (boys, girls, women and men) reached by mass media (traditional and social media) messaging on child marriage, the rights of adolescent girls and gender equality	70,093,613	55,097,021	79%
Indicator 1223: Number of local actors (e.g., traditional, religious and community leaders) with meaningful participation in dialogues and consensus-building to end child marriage	61,745	163,177	264%
Indicator 1231: Number of civil society organizations newly mobilized in support of challenging social norms and promoting gender equality by the Global Programme	214	122	57%
Indicator 2121: Number of primary/secondary/non-formal schools in programme areas providing quality gender-friendly education that meets minimum standards	882	865	98%
Indicator 2131: Number of service delivery points in programme areas providing quality adolescent-responsive services (health, child protection/gender-based violence) that meet minimum standards	5,046	6,067	120%
Indicator 2211: Number of partnerships (both formal and informal) established to deliver adolescent-responsive social protection, poverty reduction, and economic empowerment programmes and services	58	53	91%
Indicator 3111: Number of policies or legal instruments addressing child marriage drafted, proposed or adopted at national and subnational level with Global Programme support	62	63	101%
Indicator 3211: Number of generated evidence and knowledge that focus on what works to end child marriage	26	21	81%
Indicator 3212: Number of generated evidence and knowledge that apply a gender analysis	26	21	81%
Indicator 3221: Number of South-South cooperation (conferences, expert visits, peer consultations, study tours, communities of practice) supported	21	12	57%

IMMEDIATE OUTCOME INDICATOR	TARGET	RESULT
Indicator 1101: Proportion of girls (10–24) who have comprehensive sexual and reproductive health knowledge	39.1%	49.5%
Indicator 1102: Proportion of girls who express increased sense of self-efficacy; who feel confident in their ability to negotiate and delay early marriage; who feel comfortable speaking without fear	39.0%	44.8%
Indicator 1103: Proportion of adolescent girls of lower-secondary school age that are out of school	18.1%	32.0%

3.2 Providing intensive support to marginalized girls

3.2.1 IMMEDIATE OUTCOME 1100: Enhanced knowledge, education and life skills, and attitudes of marginalized adolescent girls on matters such as their rights, relationships, sexual and reproductive health, and financial literacy, including in humanitarian contexts

Girls in the intervention areas were significantly more likely than girls in control areas to list adverse effects of child marriage, initiate use of modern contraception before first birth, and have increased confidence and trust of parents in terms of mobility.

In Bangladesh, UNICEF implemented an intervention research study to test a life skills and tutoring support model to keep girls in school and reduce child marriage. The study, ‘Keeping girls in schools to reduce child marriage in rural Bangladesh’, is part of UNICEF’s Education for Adolescents initiative and the Global Programme. The study found that the ‘keeping girls in schools’ programme had a protective impact on child marriage. Relative to the baseline, girls were more likely to be married at end line in control areas whereas there was no discernible increase in child marriage prevalence in the intervention areas. Similarly, school dropout as a result of marriage and learning loss in analytical skills were significantly greater in control areas. The Global Programme also raised critical awareness skills among the girls reached by the initiative, and girls in the intervention areas were significantly more likely than girls in control areas to list adverse effects of child marriage, initiate use of modern contraception before first birth, and have

increased confidence and trust of parents in terms of mobility, including being able to go home after sunset and visiting friends alone.

In Sierra Leone, UNICEF conducted a survey among a sample of 2,305 adolescent girls who had actively participated in adolescent safe spaces prior to 2021. The survey showed a 22 per cent increase (from 58 to 80 per cent) in the proportion of girls who had an increased sense of self-efficacy and confidence in their ability to negotiate and delay early marriage. Likewise, the proportion of adolescent girls aged 15–19 years who think that children should have the final say in deciding when to get married increased from 41 per cent to 80 per cent, and the proportion of girls aged 15–19 years who make their own informed decisions regarding sexual relations, contraceptive use and reproductive health care increased from 33 to 75 per cent.

Results from an evaluation of adolescent safe spaces in Ghana showed an increase (78.6 per cent compared with 76 per cent in the baseline study) in the proportion of sampled girls who said they would refuse a spouse chosen for them by their parents. As many as 53 per cent of the sampled girls (compared to 45 per cent at the baseline) complained that it is wrong for unmarried boys and girls to have sexual intercourse even if they love and respect one another.

Table 3. Indicator 1111: Number of adolescent girls (aged 10–19) who actively participated in life skills or CSE interventions in programme areas, disaggregated by age and disability

COUNTRY	2019 RESULTS	2020 RESULTS	2021								
			TARGETS	RESULTS	UNMARRIED	MARRIED	10–14 YEARS	15–19 YEARS	WITH DISABILITIES	GIRLS REACHED USING OTHER FUNDING STREAMS	BOYS REACHED WITHIN THE GLOBAL PROGRAMME
Bangladesh	89,974	88,770	80,720	96,592	77,255	3,465	35,705	60,887	6,294	57,414	35,513
Burkina Faso	310,042	112,123	103,016	44,825	44,825	0	21,964	22,861	257	88,709	23,665
Ethiopia	261,244	152,782	105,772	49,449	44,835	4,614	31,281	18,168	170	153,718	6,366
Ghana	20,046	27,274	18,690	19,376	18,328	1,048	7,790	11,586	15	100,189	2,816
India	2,496,395	3,610,573	3,413,602	2,041,980						8,400,000	815,163
Mozambique	51,676	4,185	56,533	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
Nepal	4,175	3,533	33,000	75,062			36,949	38,113		10,000	
Niger	9,505	12,471	41,200	43,009	38,558	4,451	23,927	19,082	140	52,994	3,639
Sierra Leone	26,192	12,000	25,500	11,058	10,920	138	6,209	4,849	76		
Uganda	135,690	74,335	181,690	200,407							88,998
Yemen	5,324	2,457	2,508	2,049	2,049	0	819	1,230		6,689	4,649
Zambia	3,447	5,923	5,940	6,108			3,925	2,183	32		5,743
Total	3,413,710	4,106,426	4,068,171	2,589,915	236,770	13,716	168,569	6,984	6,984	8,869,713	986,552

NA, not applicable

3.2.2 OUTPUT 1110: Underserved/marginalized adolescent girls (aged 10–19) who are at risk of child marriage or who are pregnant, married, divorced or widowed are engaged in gender-transformative life skills and CSE programmes that build their knowledge, skills, awareness of their rights, and connect them to services

The Global Programme countries use multiple approaches to reach adolescent girls with information and life-skills training that include integrated life-skills programming into formal education and non-formal education settings, working with teams of volunteers and CSOs to facilitate community learning and use of digital platforms for life-skills education and health information dissemination. However, due to the school closures and restrictions

on community gatherings during the pandemic, most of the formal education and non-formal education life trainings were interrupted, thereby impacting the Programme's reach targeting adolescent girls. As a result, the Programme was only able to reach close to 2.6 million adolescent girls with life-skills education (64 per cent of the target), including close to 1 million adolescent boys who were targeted as part of the initiatives to promote positive masculinity and gender equality through adolescent clubs. While the Programme was able to adapt and shift to digital platforms for life-skills education during the lockdown in 2020 that enabled increased reach of adolescent girls, the digital divide – with marginalized communities and lack of access to digital technology for girls from

low-income households – continues to be a serious impediment to equitable reach. While the Global Programme embarked on advocacy around the issue of the gender gap in digital spaces, the quality of delivery of digital content to users emerged as a key issue and impeded further scale-up efforts in 2021. In 2022, the Programme will focus on developing and improving on the digital engagement strategy and curriculum on life-skills education as well as advocacy campaigns to reduce the gender digital gap with marginalized communities. Table 3 summarizes the results for Indicator 1111.

The Bangladesh Programme shifted towards a systems approach that integrates life-skills programming into formal and non-formal education in 2021. UNFPA and UNICEF are working within the programme framework of the 4,883 Kishor-Kishori Clubs (adolescent clubs) established by the Ministry of Women and Children Affairs in every union and municipality in Bangladesh to scale up life skills, empowerment and

CSE for adolescent girls. To ensure that no adolescent girl is left behind, the Programme is also supporting courtyard meetings to reach married girls who are facing restrictions on their mobility. In Burkina Faso, the Government adopted an animated guide in adolescent clubs – developed with UNICEF support – to provide sessions on life skills, gender equity, human rights and GBV.

In Ethiopia, despite the ongoing crises due to climate change and internal conflict, girls are increasingly influencing decisions by seeking legal services to end marriage arrangements which are against the law and violate their rights. During the reporting period, 2,051 child marriage arrangements were cancelled through girls running away from perpetrators or through child protection services. In India, UNFPA leveraged funding to develop user-friendly learning tools, training manuals, Braille books, and video files with sign language to impart life-skills education to adolescents with disabilities in 155 special schools in the state of Odisha. The Yemen Programme leveraged community-based components of the ‘Integrated Model of Social and Economic Assistance and Empowerment’ to target adolescent girls who are at risk of or survivors of child marriage, including girls living in slums. Through these community-based organizations, the Programme supported 2,049 adolescent girls with life-skills education and employability/ entrepreneurship and literacy training. The Zambia Programme supported the development of a career club facilitator’s guide that contributed to a policy directive requesting all secondary

“These engagements have improved the ability of young people to avoid risky sexual behaviour and have also influenced their skill to interact effectively with their peers. It has also helped in building self-confidence of these adolescent girls and boys[,] building a certain comfort level that have helped them to develop greater self-confidence and broader interests, developed leadership skills focusing on the development of teamwork, having higher aspirations and greater motivation and most importantly allowing girls to be themselves in an environment where they feel safe to express themselves and engage in an open and safe exchange of ideas.”

— Family Support Unit Officer (Police) in Charge
of Kondembaia community, Sierra Leone

Table 4. Indicator 1121: Number of girls (10–19) supported by the Global Programme to enrol and/or remain in primary or secondary school, disaggregated by age

COUNTRY	2019 RESULTS	2020 RESULTS	2021								
			TARGETS	RESULTS	UNMARRIED	MARRIED	10–14 YEARS	15–19 YEARS	WITH DISABILITIES	GIRLS REACHED USING OTHER FUNDING STREAMS	
Bangladesh	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
Burkina Faso	27,197	32,956	9,752	14,070	14,070	0	6,894	7,176	0		32,829
Ethiopia	58,580	NA	39,000	7,413	7,043	370	2,055	5,358	0		2,513
Ghana	1,000	1,029	1,030	1,094	1,094	0	708	386	0		200
India	217,731	114,740	325,000	84,983							
Mozambique	1,576	1,226	1,740	384	361	23	241	143	0		
Nepal	7,908	7,716	11,908	7,691	7,691	0					
Niger	NA	276	5,000	1,649	1,649	0	0	1,649	0		52,335
Sierra Leone	NA	NA	500	2,593	1,614	0	859	755	76		70
Uganda	23,108	183	25,174	14,144							
Yemen	273	88	1,300	736			0	736			1,509
Zambia	NA	2,264	2,169	989							
Total	337,373	160,478	422,573	135,746	33,522	393	10,757	16,203	76		89,456

NA, not applicable

schools to open career and skills clubs. A national scale-up plan for career and skills development is being developed to support the roll-out of the programme.

3.2.3 OUTPUT 1120: Underserved/marginalized adolescent girls supported to enrol and remain in formal and non-formal education, including through the transition from primary to secondary school

The closure of education institutions in most areas targeted by the Programme due to the prolonged pandemic affected learning across education levels. In most countries this increased girls' vulnerability to sexual violence, unwanted pregnancies, sexual exploitation and mental illnesses. As a result, the Global Programme could

not meet the 2021 target in 11 countries. In some programme areas, the Global Programme supported the setting up of community learning centres and safe spaces to enable adolescent girls to better prepare them for transition to secondary school level. These community-based learning centres established in India, Nepal and Uganda supported adolescent girls to improve their numeracy and literacy skills when they re-enter formal schools. Table 4 summarizes the results for Indicator 1121.

In 2021, the Global Programme directly supported 135,746 girls to stay in school; 89,456 additional girls were supported through complementary funds and leveraging strategies. In Burkina Faso, the Global Programme supported 14,070

“Very many girls have got married because of the high need for money. Men come and buy wine for the girl and take them out and this all is because of hunger since the parents are not able to provide all the meals for their children. When corona [COVID-19] came, many workplaces were closed. So, when a girl gets a man who buys for her chips to eat and then later asks her for sex, she accepts because that man has become like her rescuer. In those kinds of relationships, girls have got pregnant and also infected with sexually transmitted diseases. When she gets pregnant, most of them are denied by these men; so, they are left to sort out alone and I blame corona for all this because if it had not come, the parents of these girls would be working and earning money to care for their children and their children also would be at school learning. Since schools were closed, children have become idle at home without anything to do. With the hunger that had resulted, girls could just accept to be used for money to be able to dress well and drinks and food just to keep pushing with days. The lives of many girls have now gone into a big mess because of these things; and as a result, they get married, pregnant and some are now sick.”

— *Testimony from a boy aged 17 who was married before COVID-19 broke out, in an urban setting in Moroto, Uganda.*

vulnerable adolescent girls with school materials, payment of school fees, and case management to stay in school. UNICEF mobilized additional funds from the OCCITANE Foundation and the UNICEF Japan National Committee to provide education support through school payments and provision of school materials to 32,829 adolescent girls. In India, UNICEF set up community learning centres and safe spaces with trained young volunteers in Madhya Pradesh and Chhattisgarh states, providing children with the opportunity to continue their studies. A digital platform called Seekh was initiated as part of the interventions, which helped reach around 12,500 girls with education support during the peak of the pandemic when schools and hostels were closed. In Yemen, completing basic, lower- and upper-secondary education remains a

distant dream for many children, especially in rural areas and for girls in poor and hard-to-reach areas. While an estimated 46 per cent of girls and 54 per cent of boys are enrolled in school, secondary-level girls continue to be more likely to drop out due to security issues, lack of female teachers and the lack of appropriate water, sanitation and hygiene facilities. UNICEF played an important role in keeping adolescent girls in secondary school through advocacy for the recruitment and provision of incentives to female teachers, school rehabilitation and construction, and leveraging education support through the existing social protection agenda. The Uganda Programme in partnership with CSOs supported the delivery of home- and community-based learning, enabling 14,144 adolescent girls to better prepare to transition to secondary school.

Volunteers ending child marriage

“Child marriage is a human rights violation and largely undermines the chances of young people to fulfil their potentials. Ending it requires providing young people with the opportunities and skills to thrive,” said 23-year-old Mabinty Ramadan Kamara, a volunteer for Restless Development, a local partner of UNFPA in the campaign to end child marriage in the Koinadugu district in the north of Sierra Leone.

Sierra Leone has one of the highest rates of adolescent pregnancy in the world: 21 per cent of girls between the ages of 15 and 19 have begun childbearing, according to the country’s DHS 2019. According to the same survey, 8.6 per cent of women aged 20–24 years had married before the age of 15 years, and 29.6 per cent of women in the same age bracket had married before the age of 18 years.

UNFPA and UNICEF, through the Global Programme, continue to deliver on the commitment to reduce child marriage by supporting girls in making choices and decisions about marriage and childbearing.

In Sierra Leone, one of 12 countries implementing the Global Programme, UNFPA works with implementing partners like

Women in Crisis Movement and Restless Development in Kambia, Pujehun and Koinadugu districts to increase access to quality health information and services, education and life skills for adolescent girls.

The support to the local NGOs led to the establishment of safe spaces for adolescent girls in the three districts, and the training of 80 mentors and 10 volunteers in asset-building and life skills topics to support the girls in these safe spaces.

“Serving as a volunteer in the campaign to end child marriage is a dream come true. It became my passion right from my early days at Fourah Bay College, University of Sierra Leone, whilst pursuing my first degree,” explained Mabinty, now a third-year law student at University of Makeni.

In Koinadugu, through Restless Development, UNFPA supports adolescent girls in 27 communities in five chiefdoms (Diang, Kasunko, Sengbe, Wara Bafodia and Wara Yagala) with safe space facilities, mentorship and training in life skills, and referrals to sexual health service providers for issues related to SRHR.



Mabinty With UNFPA support, these volunteers contribute in the campaign to End Child Marriage in the Koinadugu district

Since the establishment of the safe spaces in 2021, 2,007 girls have successfully been provided with SRHR information by the volunteers and mentors trained by Restless Development, with funding support from UNFPA in Koinadugu district.

Reflecting on how her work with Restless Development has changed her, Mabinty said, “Volunteerism has helped in shaping me and it has been a great experience. Despite being a graduate, I was never a bold person. Now, I can facilitate meetings, I can write reports and I am now research minded. Volunteerism enabled me to come out of my comfort zone and cohabit with people and work with communities in the campaign to end child marriage.”

“When I first arrived in Koinadugu, I was shocked to see pregnant adolescent girls. But then, I took it as a challenge to talk to them on the importance of being educated and provide them with life skills, sexual and reproductive health and family planning information.”

About the safe space engagements, she said, “As volunteers, we had series of girls-led sessions where girls are given opportunities to talk to community people in the marketplaces, in the schools, etc., and this was a way of making them bold.”

In countries like Sierra Leone, child marriage and teenage pregnancy are largely fuelled by a diverse set of drivers, particularly social and gender norms that make girls vulnerable to early sex and pregnancy, as well as poverty, sexual violence and exploitation. This is compounded by weak institutions and services and a lack of information, knowledge and skills.

“In Koinadugu, some communities see it as a curse for a girl to be pregnant and not married. In some communities, poverty remains a key factor. Koinadugu is known for forest logging and those engaged in the trade would normally camp young girls as wives,” Mabinty explained.

The work of volunteers like Mabinty has impacted the lives of adolescent girls in Koinadugu. “By talking to adolescent girls who became pregnant at some point and felt left out because they could no longer afford to go back to school, I was able to convince [a] few to return to school,” she said joyfully.

Data provided by Restless Development show that two girls in the communities where Mabinty served as a volunteer – Janu Kamara in Kafogo community and Marie Sesay in Sangbanba community – were able to return to school. In Koinadugu II hub, two students – Hawa Samura in Nyafrando community and Isata Koroma in Yataya community – successfully returned to school, all thanks to the work of Mabinty and other volunteers.

“I am proud to have worked with those communities in the district, successfully convinced young girls to return to school. Also, community leaders like section chiefs now call for an end to child marriage. They now know the value of educating their girls. For me, this was the little thing I could do to serve society and humanity in general,” Mabinty said. For Mabinty, this empowering experience has led her to decide that she would advocate for the rights of adolescent girls when she finishes her law studies.



Mabinty Ramadan Kamara, a volunteer for Restless Development, a local partner of UNFPA in Koinadugu district

IMMEDIATE OUTCOME INDICATOR	TARGET	RESULT
Indicator 1201: Proportion of respondents who believe that all/most individuals in their community are marrying children before 18	45%	23%
Indicator 1202: Proportion of adult respondents who can identify sanctions (punishments) and benefits (rewards) associated with child marriage abandonment	51.2%	55%
Indicator 1204: Proportion of respondents who think that marrying their daughter/female household members before 18 is the best option	6.0%	13.0%

3.3 Enhancing the family and community environment

3.3.1 IMMEDIATE OUTCOME 1200:

Adolescent boys, families, traditional and religious leaders, community groups, and other influencers demonstrate more gender-equitable attitudes and support for girls' rights

UNICEF headquarters developed an online course on behavioural drivers using the case of child marriage to strengthen learners' understanding and appreciation of how behaviour is shaped by multiple drivers, including social and gender norms. Employing a story-based approach, the course takes the learner on a journey through two fictional scenarios illustrating the diverse drivers that shape decision-making and action in child marriage. The learner becomes familiar with the Behavioural Drivers Model and the Social Ecological Model as frameworks to understand behavioural influences, the role of social and gender norms, reference groups and social networks in shaping behaviours, as well as illustrative approaches and activities to promote desired SBC. To complement the course and ensure that all UNFPA and UNICEF staff and partners have a common understanding of what social norms are and how they influence behaviours, a social norms definitions paper has been developed in English and French.

UNICEF West and Central Africa conducted a multi-country evaluation of community-based interventions to address child marriage and FGM, to better understand the results of interventions that are being implemented at community level. The regional report – which includes the country-level evaluations of Ghana, Guinea, Mali, the Niger and Nigeria – will be finalized in early 2022. The findings and recommendations of the study will inform steps to further strengthen community engagement in the region. The regional office also supported a number of country offices to conduct a positive deviance study on child marriage. The UNICEF regional adolescent unit is the lead on a study called 'Building Adolescent Resilience in the Sahel: A mixed-methods participatory research programme' (implemented in partnership between UNICEF and Gender and Adolescence: Global Evidence [GAGE]). A social norms measuring framework was tested in Guinea in collaboration with UNICEF headquarters, and programming guidelines were developed under 'Everybody Wants to Belong', a cross-regional initiative between Eastern and Southern Africa, Middle East and North Africa, and West and Central Africa regions. Experiences from these frameworks and initiatives will further guide the Global Programme and strengthen the component on social

norms change. UNICEF West and Central Africa also supported governments and CSOs in data generation, analysis and use of quality data through capacity-building initiatives and ongoing technical support.

In 2021, the SBC team continued to support the implementation of the cross-regional 'Social Norms Measurement Initiative', including implementation of the baselines in Mozambique and Zimbabwe. To strengthen the social norms programming and measurement capacity of UNICEF and UNFPA country teams, UNICEF Eastern and Southern Africa Regional Office recruited a team of human-centred design experts to develop a social norms programming and measurement training package which has been tested and is now being rolled out in the region through implementing partners. It is expected that the training will be implemented in West and Central Africa in 2022 and it will then be adapted to other regions. The UNICEF Eastern and Southern Africa Regional Office completed a needs assessment in seven countries to identify key learnings and recommendations to deliver an engaging, impactful and user-centred course on SBC, with the course being tested in Kenya.

In Sierra Leone, key informant interviews were administered with the police, district council, and other government and allied agencies during the UNICEF-supported study to assess and measure key Programme indicators towards the implementation of empowerment and gender-transformative interventions for adolescent girls and boys in safe spaces. The results from the study show that gender norms lag behind attitudinal shifts around child marriage – from attitudes

about domestic violence to believing a father should have the final say on the marriage of his children. Further work on the meta-norms that underlie the constructs of child marriage may be a way to continue to make progress on the elimination of this practice. Though the consequences of child marriage are well understood, the cultural context of Sierra Leone may continue to implicitly support the practice until there is progress on this aspect. Based on the results of the advanced analysis, demographic factors (namely age and gender) and environmental factors (specifically income and education level) bear most heavily on decision-making around child marriage in Sierra Leone. There is a correlation between the desire to end child marriage and men, older people, higher income levels and higher education levels. Perceptions and attitudes around parents making child marriage decisions seem to be shifting, but it seems that children are still subject to expectations of early marriage and being judged for promiscuity if they are not married by a particular age.

The Bangladesh Programme increased knowledge and changed attitudes through group counselling on positive gender norms and motivated people to adopt positive practices. The evaluation of UNICEF's work found that courtyard community meetings and the involvement of women as mothers and gatekeepers have been critical for shifting social and gender norms. The evaluation also found that men as fathers, gatekeepers and leaders in community dialogues helped to create a more supportive environment for adolescent girls to exercise their rights and to challenge gender norms and stereotypes.

In Ethiopia, observations and feedback from community members signal a shift in attitudes towards ending child marriage, and a growing willingness to respect girls' choices in relation to marriage and access to education and economic opportunities. More child marriage arrangements are being reported and forced to pass through an age examination process. In 2021, 16,003 cases of marriage arrangements were identified and reported, of which 5,115 cases were directly reported by members of non-formal community structures.

In Mozambique, preliminary results from the social norms baseline study

show that the proportion of individuals who demonstrate willingness to change harmful practices has increased by 37 per cent because of the efforts of the community dialogues. Due to the community awareness campaigns, an additional 40 per cent of individuals feel the urgent need to change some of the practices of initiation rites for girls that are described as a step to adulthood and acquisition of gender and sexual identities; in addition, 16 per cent of individuals can now cite at least three benefits resulting from delayed marriage.

Table 5. Indicator 1211: Number of boys and men actively participating in group education/dialogues that address harmful masculinities and gender norms

COUNTRY	2019 RESULTS	2020 RESULTS	2021			
			TARGETS	RESULTS	BOYS	MEN
Bangladesh	159,029	44,529	64,964	23,177	20,639	2,538
Burkina Faso	76,151	176,775	45,000	73,560	23,665	49,895
Ethiopia	37,481	178,501	32,968	41,031	25,973	15,094
Ghana	792	4,986	3,265	4,392	2,816	1,576
India	NA	5,900,558	1,000,000	951,126	478,868	472,258
Mozambique	742	1,295	3,100	4,875	4,875	0
Nepal	4,100	432	11,500	1,262	901	361
Niger	NA	6,296	14,040	16,130	3,639	12,491
Sierra Leone	NA	5,276	10,750	4,870	2,628	2,242
Uganda	NA	28,000	41,000	10,120		
Yemen	1,000	604	1,700	8,638	8,638	0
Zambia	NA	4,325	5,150	8,946	6,117	2,829
Total	159,029	6,351,577	1,223,437	1,148,127	578,759	559,284

NA, not applicable

3.3.2 OUTPUT 1210: Boys and men are engaged in gender-transformative programmes (including CSE for boys) that promote healthy relationships and positive masculinities and gender equality

The Global Programme has adopted a systems approach that includes the recruitment of boys into adolescent clubs and the integration of specific sessions on positive masculinities within both formal and non-formal education settings. At the community level, the Programme has established male clubs or groups where boys and men are engaged in discussions around the promotion of positive masculinity and gender equality. In countries where male/husbands' clubs have been established (Burkina Faso and the Niger) and boys are integrated into adolescent clubs with specific sessions on positive masculinities, the Programme overachieved against the 2021 targets. Table 5 summarizes the results for Indicator 1211.

The Bangladesh Programme includes boys in adolescent clubs (about 30 per cent boys per club) and integrates

sessions on positive masculinities in the adolescent empowerment package. The 2021 evaluation of UNICEF's work on accelerating action to end child marriage found that the inclusion of boys in adolescent clubs and increased engagement of fathers and mothers was positive and encouraged a shift in power relations between girls and boys, men and women. However, due to prolonged school closures because of the COVID-19 pandemic, only 20,639 boys and 2,538 fathers were reached through community engagement. The evaluation of the community engagement component of the Burkina Faso Programme shows that gender inequalities in the country persist, in part due to: the pervasiveness at the community level of social systems based on patriarchy; the trivialization of GBV as a social norm; the low involvement of men and boys as agents of change; the collapse of social protection mechanisms and norms regulating behaviour; and weak law enforcement, especially when the perpetrator is the husband or a relative of the husband. The Programme has focused on promoting positive masculinities through husbands' schools that engage boys and men to develop responsible behaviours regarding their sexuality. The launch of the 'Grâce à moi' (*thanks to me*) initiative commits every boy to protect at least one girl from child marriage, and enabled social communication networks to engage 73,560 boys and men.

In Gujarat and West Bengal states of India, the Global Programme leveraged programme partnerships with adolescent and youth networks like Kanyashree

clubs, Seekh Mitras, the National Service Scheme, Nehru Yuva Kendra Sangathan, Bharat Scouts and Guides and district platforms to mobilize out-of-school boys and engage them in discussions on gender and positive masculinities, including defining their role in child marriage prevention. The UNFPA Niger Programme leveraged the Sahel Women's Empowerment and Demographic Dividend Project and the Illimin adolescent initiative to engage more than 16,000 boys and men in dialogues related to gender equality, human rights, sexual and reproductive health, CSE, hygiene and sanitation, and harmful practices. In Uganda, 1,389 male champions facilitated dialogue sessions with 10,120 men and boys on sexual and reproductive health, the rights of girls and women, GBV and child marriage, and on changing behaviours and power dynamics at home and in the community.

The Yemen Programme engaged 8,638 adolescent boys and 8,991 adolescent girls in peer-to-peer dialogues on child marriage and child recruitment to the armed conflict. The Zambia programme used the 'Coaching Boys into Men' approach to train 36 community sports coaches as facilitators of community dialogues that engaged 6,117 boys on the importance of developing positive masculinity and respectful, non-violent relationships and behaviours in the family and community. The 'Coaching Boys into Men' approach is linked to the community case management approach that plays a critical role in the identification, linking and referral of boys to protection services, including supporting boys to remain in school.

Rashmita from Odisha in India says no to child marriage and yes to education

Adolescent courageously fights against her own child marriage and becomes the flagbearer for girls her age

The rate of child marriage in the state of Odisha, India, is 21.3 per cent, and in the region of Dhenkanal it is even higher, with a rate of child marriage of 25.4 per cent. Hence, special focus has been given to conversations with communities, including adolescents, around child marriage in Dhenkanal. Despite concerted efforts, large numbers of adolescents continue to be victims of early and forced marriage.

Rashmita lives with her family in Dhenkanal village. Her entire family was in favour of her getting married and kept telling her that education will not help her as much as settling down with a man. Rashmita has always understood her father's socioeconomical condition but was not ready to compromise on going to school.

Rashmita's parents kept increasing pressure on her, giving examples of girls who had gotten married in her community and in nearby villages. Despite her trying to avoid the conversations, in 2017, while Rashmita was still in intermediate school, her parents finalized her marriage without involving her in the discussions.



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When she became aware of her parents' decision, Rashmita saw a ray of hope in the Anganwadi centre where she used to attend the meetings that are held every third Saturday to build awareness among children, adolescents, community members, parents, caregivers, and community, caste, traditional and religious leaders on child marriage, child labour, domestic violence, female foeticide, etc.

During the next meeting, Rashmita discussed the issue with a little hesitation but with the support of an Anganwadi worker, and she remained adamant – she was now also aware of where she needed to go if she needed help. Despite her marriage being planned and preparations ongoing, Rashmita fought against her entire family. Finally, with support from her brother-in-law, she was able to convince her parents by educating them about the harmful effects of child marriage. Ultimately her parents agreed not to force her to marry, and that was the day Rashmita decided she wanted to focus on higher education which would finally give her financial stability. However, her fight for education continued, and it took her a few more months to convince her parents to allow her to continue her education.

Once her parents agreed for Rashmita to continue her education, she regained her confidence and was determined to educate people in her community to eliminate the harmful



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practice of child marriage. Now Rashmita is not only active in college but has also joined a forum for the elimination of child marriage (Odisha Balya Bibaha Pratirodh Manch) after finding out about it from a front-line Anganwadi worker in the community. Consequently, Rashmita was also recognized as a peer leader by the 'ADVIKA' village-level programme, which supports the participation of adolescents in ensuring their rights. Presently, Rashmita is creating awareness among adolescents, parents, caregivers and community members on the causes and consequences of child marriage, on the importance of education, and on child marriage reporting mechanisms.

Rashmita is now a role model for adolescents in her village. Her peers become even more inspired when they see her participating in state-level forums digitally – in October 2021 she was part of 'MU PARIBI-I CAN, ADVIKA', a state-level programme, on the eve of the International Day of the Girl as a representative from Dhenkanal district.

Rashmita's story demonstrates the importance of encouraging adolescents in being change-makers by supporting them at village, district and state level. Adolescents will not only have the power to change their lives but also the lives of other children and adolescents around them, thereby decreasing risk factors for them.

Through her social activism, Rashmita wants to share her experience of and opinions on fighting with her parents and community, and later successfully convincing them to cancel her child marriage and allow her to continue

her education. During the COVID-19 pandemic, Rashmita created awareness on the increasing risk of child marriage in the community and stopped one child marriage in her own village with the support of service providers for children (an Anganwadi worker and a supervisor representing the Integrated Child Development Services). Today Rashmita is continuing her education and is still deciding on the career she wants to pursue – she has a special interest in engineering.

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3.3.3 OUTPUT 1220: Families, communities, traditional and religious leaders, and other influencers are engaged in dialogue and consensus-building on alternatives to child marriage (including education), the rights of adolescent girls, and gender equality

Since the launch of Phase II, the Global Programme has met and exceeded targets for this indicator. The COVID-19 pandemic led the Global Programme country programmes to increasingly integrate messaging on ending child marriage into radio talk shows on COVID-19. Even before the pandemic, the country programmes were integrating messaging about ending child marriage

into other media platforms around gender equality, development and humanitarian discussions that impact girls and women. The Global Programme also used various SBC approaches to engage individual community members on dialogues and discussions on ending child marriage, including the use of youth caravans, theatre platforms, and limited face-to-face interactions with COVID-19 social distancing measures. Table 6 summarizes the results for Indicator 1221.

With the continued restrictions on in-person meetings, the Burkina Faso Programme used educational radio talks, youth caravans, community theatre and

multimedia campaigns to build social support for ending child marriage. A total of 607 monitoring units were set up in 1,235 new villages to ensure existing public declarations to abandon child marriage are respected and sustained. The India Programme reached a significant number of community members through a variety of platforms, including WhatsApp groups to reach adolescents and their parents, and peer group phones or personal check-ins for adolescents without access to smartphones.

UNFPA Sierra Leone supported nationwide engagements by religious leaders affiliated

with the Interreligious Council of Sierra Leone. The Programme also provided girls and boys with a platform to freely express their views, share their experiences and demand action from local authorities to end child marriage and remove barriers to higher education and preventive services. The Uganda programme supported positive parenting initiatives in targeted communities and the development of a national comprehensive and inclusive parenting manual to strengthen the capacity of adolescents, families and communities, as well as traditional and religious institutions to identify risks and prevent and respond to risk factors influencing child marriage.

Table 6. Indicator 1221: Number of individuals (boys, girls, women and men) who participate in group education/dialogue sessions on consequences of and alternatives to child marriage, the rights of adolescent girls, and gender equality (by sex)

COUNTRY	2019 RESULTS	2020 RESULTS	2021					
			TARGETS	RESULTS	GIRLS	BOYS	WOMEN	MEN
Bangladesh	560,412	11,301,743	5,700,000	5,203,668	261,920	350,131	1,724,116	2,867,501
Burkina Faso	204,809	237,555	206,151	346,828	102,709	98,439	88,424	57,256
Ethiopia	471,890	484,696	540,267	504,626	139,103	91,116	126,699	147,708
Ghana	95,686	41,719	80,000	85,301	19,434	16,329	36,905	12,633
India	1,347,245	8,252,151	8,293,000	9,328,524	0	0	3,112,981	6,215,543
Mozambique	44,216	4,819	148,616	150,754	2,791	2,429	21,481	24,522
Nepal	4,256	8,014	45,000	46,229	0	0	24,057	22,172
Niger	80,709	17,852	76,880	73,943	0	0	43,066	30,877
Sierra Leone	580	15,927	14,950	112,009	7,688	10,113	37,109	57,099
Uganda	55,568	46,876	118,000	101,924			23,116	46,232
Yemen	28,564	17,529	13,000	11,392				
Zambia	2,739	2,200	32,739	32,684	8,449	6,486	10,565	7,184
Total	2,896,674	20,444,685	15,268,603	15,997,882	542,094	575,043	5,248,519	9,488,727

NA, not applicable

While the Global Programme reached tens of millions of people through mass media, results still fell short of targets. This was partly due to the end of lockdowns and the fact that the owners of mobile phones spent less time at home, preventing other household members from accessing and using social media. However, the Global Programme country programmes continued to forge new partnerships with local media outlets to amplify messaging around ending child marriage. Table 7 summarizes the results for Indicator 1222.

In Bangladesh, UNICEF equipped 480 child journalists (240 girls) with the capacity to generate video content to report on child marriage, girls’

empowerment and gender inequality, which was disseminated on the first-ever children’s online news platform in 2021.³⁶ The nationwide multimedia campaign ‘#Raisethebeat4ECM’ aimed to foster public resistance to child marriage. It reached over 164 million people through public service announcements and engaged over 87 million people on social media during the year. In Burkina Faso, UNICEF’s ‘Ne m’appellez pas madame’ (‘Do not call me madam’) campaign and other social media initiatives raised awareness about child marriage among more than 7 million individuals. UNICEF also funded the Fitini show, one of Burkina Faso’s largest youth festivals. More than 30,000 children (including

Table 7. Indicator 1222: Number of individuals (boys, girls, women and men) reached by mass media (traditional and social media) messaging on child marriage, the rights of adolescent girls and gender equality

COUNTRY	2019 RESULTS	2020 RESULTS	2021					
			TARGETS	RESULTS	GIRLS	BOYS	WOMEN	MEN
Bangladesh	1,000,000	38,497,147	10,602,720	10,004,148	462,160	650,371	3,224,116	5,667,501
Burkina Faso	3,120,687	3,000,000	14,500,000	7,300,000				
Ethiopia	1,131,326	2,063,000	13,000,000	1,026,690	151,646	155,518	391,851	327,675
Ghana	NA	65,253	450,000	1,051,599				
India	3,159,000	3,110,515	23,600,000	19,833,878	5,075,442	1,224,758	5,541,393	3,804,698
Mozambique	2,500,000	2,000,000	2,500,000	2,213,000				
Nepal	1,208,396	21,618	1,508,396	2,600,000				
Niger	158,570	36,369	1,245,625	6,910,617	2,009,318	2,032,128	1,466,726	1,402,445
Sierra Leone	NA	3,649,144	300,000	352,089				
Uganda	1,485,744	338,060	2,081,872	3,005,000			1,518,000	782,000
Yemen	10,000	5,560	5,000	NA				
Zambia	NA	NA	300,000	800,000				
Total	13,773,723	78,438,433	70,093,613	55,097,021	7,698,566	4,062,775	12,142,086	11,984,319

NA, not applicable

The Global Programme endeavored to maintain contact with adolescent girls and their families during the COVID-19 pandemic mobility restrictions through digital platforms or mass media, and through community-based relays and networks.

3,750 displaced children) attended awareness-raising skits, plays and dances on child marriage during the festival. In Ethiopia, the Programme partnered with the Ethiopian Government and the Population Media Center to produce the Yalaleke Guzo ('Unfinished Journey') edutainment talk show on child marriage and FGM. The 30-minute episodes broadcast short stories, interviews, poems, music, health tips, short audio plays and features to target communities in Afar, Oromia, Sidama and SNNP regions. However, the show could not be broadcast in the conflict-affected parts of Afar and Oromia regions.

UNFPA Ghana supported the Government to broadcast the third season of the Girlz television talk show to over 1 million viewers. UNFPA supported the state of Rajasthan in India to develop radio jingles to be broadcast at local festivals during which large numbers of child marriages are likely to be solemnized; over 32,000 calls were registered on the edutainment channel during the launch. In Mozambique, the Programme supported a new live radio talk show 'Ouro Negro

da Malta' ('Maltese Black gold') produced by adolescents to increase discussions and exchange of information among teenagers and young people on themes addressed in the radio drama 'Ouro Negro'. The Nepal Programme improved public service announcements (PSAs) on harmful practices based on a content analysis of data from helplines, administrative data and other online sources. The PSA scripts were translated into multiple languages to ensure broad reach. The Niger Programme supported social media and radio campaigns leading up to the African Girl Summit to mobilize over 6 million people around themes of child marriage and girls' rights. The Sierra Leone Programme engaged students in debates on the topic 'MY BODY MY RIGHT'. The Uganda Programme supported the leadership of seven main religious denominations to mobilize communities through dialogues and mass media campaigns aimed at ending child marriage. Finally, in Zambia, the Programme used 26 phone-radio programmes and other media platforms to reach over 800,000 people with messages related to child marriage, the rights of adolescent girls and gender equality.



The Global Programme country and regional teams increased reliance on local actors in the communities, such as community, religious and traditional leaders, and other local influencers, to communicate messages on COVID-19 as well as issues related to child marriage and gender equality issues more broadly. The Programme provided training to local actors to enhance their knowledge and skills in convening dialogues advocating and promoting appropriate messages on ending child marriage. Through these trainings and increased reliance on local actors, the Programme reached more than 2.5 times the number of traditional, religious and community leaders. Table 8 summarizes the results for Indicator 1223.

Table 8. Indicator 1223: Number of local actors (e.g., traditional, religious and community leaders) with meaningful participation in dialogues and consensus-building to end child marriage

COUNTRY	2020 RESULTS	2021			
		TARGETS	RESULTS	FEMALE	MALE
Bangladesh	13,510	35,000	23,409	10,926	12,483
Burkina Faso	9,978	2,800	6,428	1,607	4,821
Ethiopia	147,108	1,322	22,497	8,442	14,055
Ghana	1,200	706	2,116	926	1,190
India	16,745	17,745	67,634	39,904	27,730
Mozambique	157	200	663		
Nepal	378	310	836	387	449
Niger	734	606	772	0	772
Sierra Leone	1,538	775	980	193	787
Uganda	1,623	1,681	37,602		
Yemen	143	100	150	22	128
Zambia	141	500	90		
Total	193,255	61,745	163,177	62,497	62,415

NA, not applicable

The training of religious leaders in Burkina Faso enabled the start of marriage registration in 455 new villages, bringing the total number of villages that systematically register religious marriages in dedicated registers to 1,524. In Ethiopia, the Programme mobilized 22,497 religious and other community leaders to champion change towards ending child marriage. As a result of intensive community mobilization and educational interventions spearheaded by religious and community leaders, nearly all communities in Sidama and Oromia regions have issued by-laws that stipulate social sanctions against families that marry their girls before the age of 18. The Ghana Programme supported the Government to convene a national durbar that brought together 95 queen mothers and 2 paramount queen mothers from all 16 regions to build their capacity as community facilitators and advocate against inequalities and harmful practices, including sexual violence and GBV, child marriage, FGM, witchcraft accusation and human trafficking.

UNFPA Niger worked with the Association of Traditional Chiefs to organize a symposium of traditional leaders on the theme of 'Traditional Leaders as Agents of Change'. A total of 772 traditional leaders recognized the commitment and political will of the Government to capture the demographic dividend in the Niger for the acceleration of its economic and social development. They pledged not to take girls under the age of 18 as wives and to fight to prevent the marriage of girls under the age of 18, inviting other authorities to follow suit. In Uganda, the Global Programme engaged 37,602 local actors – including traditional and

religious leaders, parents, local councils and community leaders – in culturally sensitive messaging on SRHR and GBV. The modality of engagement included targeted and context-specific messages through sermons, Nikka (Islamic marriage ceremonies) Hakiika (Islamic naming ceremonies) and Darass (Islamic education sessions and Christian weddings).

3.3.4 OUTPUT 1230: Women’s organizations and youth-led organizations are included and supported to mobilize the voices of the marginalized (particularly girls), challenge harmful social norms, and promote gender equality

The Global Programme endeavored to maintain contact with adolescent girls and

their families during the COVID-19 pandemic mobility restrictions through digital platforms or mass media, and through community-based relays and networks. Among the community-based relays and networks were civil society groups; the Programme has continued to rely increasingly on these networks in order to continue the engagement of adolescent girls and promote gender equality. The Programme continues to mobilize support from women’s organizations and youth-led organizations despite the number of challenges many are facing due to loss of funding and staffing as a result of the effects of the pandemic and the ongoing internal crises in some countries. This has impacted the Programme, resulting in failure to meet the targets for this indicator. Table 9 summarizes the results for Indicator 1231.

Table 9. Indicator 1231: Number of CSOs newly mobilized in support of challenging social norms and promoting gender equality by the Global Programme

COUNTRY	2020 RESULTS	2021				
		TARGETS	RESULTS	WOMEN'S RIGHTS	CHILDREN'S RIGHTS	YOUTH-LED
Bangladesh	5	17	26	21	1	4
Burkina Faso	4	9	0	0	0	0
Ethiopia	1	10	1	1	0	0
Ghana	2	12	1	1	0	0
India	22	95	73	61	0	12
Mozambique	2	2	2	2	0	0
Nepal	5	22	1	0	0	1
Niger	1	5	0	0	0	0
Sierra Leone	0	1	0	0	0	0
Uganda	4	11	0			0
Yemen	3	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
Zambia	30	30	18	5		13
Total	79	214	122	91	1	30

NA, not applicable

The partnership with the NGO Voix de femmes (Voices of women) in Burkina Faso enabled high-level advocacy with customary and religious leaders on the rights of women and girls, with a signed renewal of the commitment towards the protection of the rights of girls and women. In Ghana, UNFPA partnered with the International Federation of Women Lawyers to deliver community paralegal training to 152 marginalized adolescent girls that included teenage mothers. In India, UNFPA and UNICEF mobilized 60 women’s and youth-led organizations to build their capacities to prevent and respond to GBV and harmful practices, and to challenge discriminatory social norms. Through the collaboration with Partners in Law and Centre for Women’s Development Studies, the Programme mobilized 13 feminist research and advocacy organizations to advocate for a rights-based approach to

address harmful practices against women and girls, including child marriage.

In Mozambique, UNFPA established a formal partnership with the national network Rede Hopem, which facilitates community dialogues engaging men and traditional and religious leaders on child marriage, and the CSO Kutenga, which focuses on educating communities on the prevention of GBV, to develop a manual for male mentorship with the aim to enhance the focus on the enabling environment for adolescent girls and young women, and to engage with boys and young men in a way that promotes positive masculinities and bodily autonomy. Also in Mozambique, UNFPA launched the Child Marriage Innovation Challenge/ Hackathon with the aim of engaging youth in sourcing new solutions to challenges concerning child marriage from the tech, innovation and entrepreneurship community. The interest for the initiative was large, with over 100 initial applications received from across the country. The winning project, 'It's Just A Girl', is focusing on community awareness raising of the new child marriage law through a network of youth activists in Cabo Delgado, the northernmost province of the country. In collaboration with community leaders, It's Just A Girl youth activists disseminate messages through community debates and dialogues together with girls and their parents/guardians.

The project is targeting to reach internally displaced populations and adolescent girls

displaced due to the ongoing conflict in Cabo Delgado. The It's Just A Girl initiative had been working with local populations and authorities for two years before entering the Hackathon and is currently in the process of legalizing the association.

The Nepal Programme established a strategic partnership with Hami DajuVai, a feminist organization focusing on men and masculinity, intersectionality, youth engagement and feminist leadership. This partnership resulted in the organization of the Second Feminism and Men Conference that created a platform for participants to learn and share ideas on effective approaches and innovative strategies to end GBV through the meaningful and active participation of men and boys, reaching more than 500,000 viewers through social networks.

3.4 Enhancing sustainability of interventions by building resilient systems and expanding partnerships

3.4.1 IMMEDIATE OUTCOME 2100: Increased capacity of education, health, child protection and gender-based violence (GBV) systems to deliver coordinated, quality programmes and services that meet the needs of adolescent girls and their families, including in humanitarian contexts

UNFPA and UNICEF enhanced multisectoral capacity for the delivery of

IMMEDIATE OUTCOME INDICATOR	TARGET	RESULT
Indicator 2101: Proportion of adolescent girls of lower-secondary school age who stayed away from school during the past month and past 12 months because they felt unsafe at, or on the way to/from school or online	80%	36%
Indicator 2102: Number of girls and boys in programme areas who accessed prevention and protection services	459,955	243,136
Indicator 2201: Number of girls (10–19) benefiting from social protection, poverty reduction, and economic empowerment programmes	4,938,640	913,077

“I stay in Msamwacale village in Katiula where the community welfare assistant committee members are doing a lot of things for the community. The first thing we have learnt from community welfare assistant committees was about financial literacy. From that time, me together with the family, we are saving, and the children are as well involved in the saving scheme process. The other benefit I have experienced because of community welfare assistant committees’ interaction is the issue of school dropouts going back to school. For example, I have a daughter who is 18 years old. She got pregnant and lost interest in school while in grade eight. As parents we equally lost interest and thought it was a waste of time and resources. The option was that she stops school and starts farming but with the help of a community welfare assistant committee member who visited our family and engaged us over the issue of our daughter; after the discussion we saw that it was beneficial to give our child a second chance and go back to school. Our daughter went back to school after delivering a baby and we remained to take care of the baby. She wrote her grade nine and made it into grade ten. Right now, I have bought all the school requirements and [she] is in school at Katiula Day Secondary School while we have continued to take care of her child, who is our grandchild. One other issue I have learnt about is cattle herding, my children now go to school while I take care of the cattle. The information is very beneficial, and we appreciate what the community welfare assistant committee members are doing in our community.”

— A father whose 18-year-old daughter had become pregnant while in school

coordinated quality services to adolescent girls and their families that contributes to the success and sustainability of interventions to end child marriage. The development and roll-out of guidelines and toolkits to support implementation of policies that address the needs of adolescent girls – including improving the capacity of service providers to deliver quality services – has contributed to better coordination, collaboration/partnership and leveraging of resources between governmental actors (related public sectors such as education, health care, child protection, gender, social welfare and law enforcement), NGOs, community-based organizations, women’s rights and youth-led groups, and community child protection committees. The Global Programme partnership modality has enabled interventions to address child marriage to be implemented through the use of existing national and

community-level organizational structures and leadership as well as institutional resources, expertise and amenities such as community adolescent clubs established and facilitated by the government and other skills training centres.

3.4.2 OUTPUT 2120: Formal (primary and secondary) and non-formal schools supported to provide quality, gender-responsive education for adolescent girls, including comprehensive sexuality education

Only six countries reported activities to support the strengthening of formal and non-formal schools during the year. Despite continued school closures in most countries, the Programme managed to meet 98 per cent of its targets. Most of the support was provided to enhance the capacity of teachers through training to implement national guidelines and curricula that had been developed with

the support of the Global Programme. In addition, the Programme supported the establishment of community-based learning centres in Uganda, a country that imposed the longest school closures worldwide. Table 10 summarizes the results for Indicator 2121.

In Bangladesh, the Global Programme supported the development of the national menstrual health management strategy, with 144 secondary schools supported to raise awareness and sensitize adolescents on girls-friendly toilets in support of the implementation of the strategy. The Burkina Faso Programme engaged teachers and community actors representing 1,018 primary,

post primary and secondary schools to monitor vulnerable girls at risk of child marriage, including the reporting of cases of child marriage taking place during the school closures. In Ethiopia, despite the security situation in parts of Afar, Oromia, Somali and Amhara regions, the Global Programme enhanced the capacity of 370 schools to operationalize gender-responsive pedagogy and safe schooling guidelines, and school code of conduct and school-related GBV handling mechanisms.

In Ghana, UNFPA supported the Non-Formal Education Division of the Ministry of Education to review and update the national manuals and curriculum, known as 'Readers'. The Readers are used to

Table 10. Indicator 2121: Number of primary/secondary/non-formal schools in programme areas providing quality gender-friendly education that meets minimum standards

COUNTRY	2019 RESULTS	2020 RESULTS	2021				
			TARGETS	RESULTS	PRIMARY	SECONDARY	NON-FORMAL
Bangladesh	96	NA	200	144	0	144	0
Burkina Faso	351	NA	50	0	0	0	0
Ethiopia	320	NA	213	370	197	0	173
Ghana	NA	3	6	7	0	7	0
India	10,313	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
Mozambique	150	160	100	102	0	102	0
Nepal	120	368	35	34	0	34	0
Niger	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
Sierra Leone	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
Uganda	969	492	231	208	0	0	208
Yemen	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
Zambia	52	58	47	0	0	0	0
Total	12,371	1,081	882	865	197	460	208

NA, not applicable

enhance functional literacy skills of out-of-school youth through informal education/vocational training facilities. In Mozambique, UNICEF supported the Ministry of Education to disseminate the violence against children in school operational plan and to enhance the capacity of provincial- and district-level officials to coordinate the implementation of the violence against children referral mechanism at school level. In Nepal, the Global Programme partnered with the Center for Education and Human Resource Development to support the capacity-building of 537 head teachers and gender focal persons from 34 schools to strengthen complaint response mechanisms aimed at supporting

girls' access and retention in schools. The Uganda Programme established and strengthened community-based learning clubs to support adolescent girls' transition from non-formal to formal education. A total of 388 non-formal education facilitators and 663 formal education teachers were trained on sexuality education as well as reporting, tracking, response and referral mechanisms to prevent violence against children. The Programme also supported 178 adolescent community-based learning clubs for vulnerable girls to deliver quality gender-responsive education.

Table 11. Indicator 2131: Number of service delivery points in programme areas providing quality adolescent-responsive services (health, child protection/GBV) that meet minimum standards

COUNTRY	2019 RESULTS	2020 RESULTS	2021			
			TARGET	RESULTS	HEALTH	CHILD PROTECTION/GBV
Bangladesh	67	182	2522	3574	70	3504
Burkina Faso	126	NA	50	14	0	14
Ethiopia	529	358	759	670	90	580
Ghana	505		996	634	518	116
India	4,702	NA		438	438	0
Mozambique	52	6	36	26	8	18
Nepal	5	124	106	106		13
Niger	159	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
Sierra Leone	NA	NA	15	14	4	10
Uganda	2,314	NA	231	274	33	241
Yemen	83	33	NA	NA	NA	NA
Zambia	49	191	331	317	14	303
Total	8,591	1,150	5,046	6,067	1,188	4,879

NA, not applicable

3.4.3 OUTPUT 2130: Health (including sexual and reproductive health), gender-based violence (GBV) and child protection systems supported to implement guidelines, protocols and standards for adolescent-friendly and gender-responsive coordinated, quality services for unmarried, married, divorced and widowed adolescent girls, adolescent girls who are pregnant or already have children

Overall, the Global Programme greatly exceeded the target for this indicator, mainly through contributions towards capacity-building of child protection and health service providers from the reported service delivery points. The measurement of this indicator is also not harmonized, as some countries are reporting on numbers of capacity-building activities while others (for example, Nepal) are reporting on those service delivery points that meet minimum standards. Table 11 summarizes the results for Indicator 2131.

In Bangladesh, UNFPA established 70 new service delivery points to provide quality adolescent responsive services. UNICEF established an [adolescent health website](#) and mobile application to help adolescents

learn more about SHRH, gender, mental health and nutrition. The analysis of data from the website shows that over 180,000 adolescent girls have received adolescent-friendly health services, 19,362 married adolescent girls and 55,686 unmarried girls received sanitary napkins, and 41,275 girls received treatment for reproductive tract infections, including sexually transmitted infections. UNICEF enhanced the capacity of 3,504 child marriage prevention committees to implement the 2017 Child Marriage Restraint Act and the National Action Plan to End Child Marriage at the sub-district level. In Burkina Faso, UNICEF strengthened the community-based child protection system and set up community-based child protection units in 1,235 new villages that declared the abandonment of harmful practices. A total of 342,059 adolescent girls received multisectoral child protection services, including 10,257 girls with reported cases managed through the revised case management tools.

The Ethiopia Programme contributed to building the capacity of health and child protection service providers. In addition, government and CSO actors and United Nations programme staff received training in data analysis and management organized by UNICEF through the Spotlight Initiative Africa Regional Programme. The Global Programme's partnership with CARE further provided gender-transformative training using social analysis and action. In Ghana, UNICEF supported the Government to launch the Social Welfare Information Management System, Inter-sectoral Standard Operating Procedures for child protection and family welfare, a Directory of Social Services and a suite of policies, assessments, standards, tools and

guidance designed to strengthen the social service workforce. This was accompanied by the scale-up of the Integrated Social Services model to 100 districts. The India Programme developed a 22-module capacity enhancement e-learning module to provide accessible quality training to counsellors of the National Adolescent Health Programme (Rashtriya Kishore Swasthya Karyakram), with 428 medical doctors' capacity improved to provide comprehensive adolescent-friendly health services in 314 Ujala (adolescent-friendly health programme) clinics and 147,788 adolescent girls and boys seeking services from these clinics in Rajasthan state.

In Mozambique, UNFPA and UNICEF supported the Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Action to improve the infrastructure of service delivery points for integrated service delivery – including health, child protection and GBV services – and support the multisectoral coordination mechanism at the district level. In Nepal, joint supervision visits with the government health team pre-certified 13 adolescent-friendly sites in different districts using the Government's quality improvement tools that were developed with support from the Global Programme. In Sierra Leone, UNFPA supported the Ministry of Gender and Children Affairs to set up four adolescent and youth sexual and reproductive health hubs in four hard-to-reach communities in Koinadugu district. UNICEF provided technical assistance to the Family Support Units – specialized units attached to police stations with the mandate to investigate all forms of child abuse and violence against children. In Uganda, the Programme strengthened the national protection system at central and decentralized levels.



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Nine districts targeted by the Programme were supported to demonstrate a sustainable and integrated child protection system through the training of 402 (209 male and 193 female) justice, health and social workers from 241 service delivery points in case management, case referral and coordination, which contributed to providing multisectoral protection services to 16,403 adolescent girls.

In Zambia, the Programme prioritized capacity-building of service providers and district authorities to ensure they take leadership in rolling out gender-responsive interventions. In Katete and Senanga districts, training of 180 (79 female and 101 male) community welfare assistant committees in community-based case management and gender-transformative community dialogues resulted in 32,686 community members participating in dialogues, 2,716 adolescent girls reached with prevention and protection services, and an additional 250 girls referred for sexual and reproductive health, HIV and

GBV services. Currently, 303 community welfare assistant committees have been established as service delivery points to support vulnerable children and are implementing the guidelines for adolescent girl-friendly health and protection services in the Katete and Senanga districts. The role of community welfare assistant committees in community-based case management is demonstrating a positive change in the community. For example, more boys are going to school as opposed to herding cattle – promoting boys to go to school rather than collect cattle for marriage – and girls are empowered to continue their education, even if they have given birth. For instance, six girls in Katiula ward of Katete district, who had given birth, went back to school and took their grade 12 examinations in 2021, following the interventions made by the community welfare assistant committee.

3.4.4 OUTPUT 2210: Partnerships with governments, civil society organizations and other implementers supported to ensure that social protection, poverty reduction, and economic empowerment programmes and services are adolescent-friendly, gender-responsive and reaching the poorest adolescent girls and their families

The country programmes are playing a catalytic role in influencing government, development partners and NGOs to invest in social protection measures that will provide adolescent-responsive social protection, poverty reduction and economic empowerment to adolescent girls at risk of child marriage and their families. In 2021, the Programme was able to meet 91 per cent of its target for this indicator through partnerships

In Zambia, the Programme prioritized capacity-building of service providers and district authorities to ensure they take leadership in rolling out gender-responsive interventions.

with CSOs to empower adolescent girls with economic skills through vocational training to delay child marriage. Table 12 summarizes the results for Indicator 2211.

In Burkina Faso, the Programme partnered with women-led organizations at the community level to provide technical training and in-kind and cash grants to 2,637 vulnerable adolescent girls at risk of child marriage. Support included weaving and sewing equipment, training in cattle and sheep fattening, training in processing of agricultural products, and direct cash transfers. In Ethiopia, the Global Programme continued to leverage

the Rural Productive Safety Net, the Urban Safety Net and Job Programmes to extend support to over 910,000 adolescent girls at risk of child marriage and family poverty in the targeted areas. In Ghana, UNFPA and UNICEF established eight partnerships with the Government and CSOs to improve the delivery of social protection, poverty reduction and economic empowerment services and programmes to the poorest adolescent girls and their families. In India, technical support was provided to states in designing, implementing, reviewing and monitoring of social protection schemes to ensure access to education and employment opportunities for marginalized adolescent girls at risk of child marriage.

Table 12. Indicator 2211: Number of partnerships (both formal and informal) established to deliver adolescent-responsive social protection, poverty reduction and economic empowerment programmes and services

COUNTRY	2019 RESULTS	2020 RESULTS	2021			
			TARGET	RESULTS	FORMAL	INFORMAL
Bangladesh	4	8	1	1	1	0
Burkina Faso	3	1	4	3	0	3
Ethiopia	1	2	2	2	2	0
Ghana	3	6	6	8	4	4
India	3	26	31	30	30	0
Mozambique	1	NA	2	1	0	1
Nepal	2	1	6	2	2	0
Niger	1	NA	2	2	2	0
Sierra Leone	10	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
Uganda	4	3	4	4	4	0
Yemen	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
Zambia	1	1	0	0	0	0
Total	33	48	58	53	45	8

NA, not applicable

In Nepal, UNICEF commissioned a study to review two social protection schemes to identify implementation gaps and challenges and to develop a roadmap to strengthen their design and implementation. In the Niger, UNFPA and the Ministry for the Promotion of Women and the Protection of Children established new partnerships with private vocational schools to support the vocational training of adolescent girls at risk of child marriage and the integration of more professional courses. Over 4,000 adolescent girls are benefiting from the vocational training, with 3,000 involved in model styling in Niamey and Zinder regions and 300 engaged in the manufacture of cosmetics and sewing clothes in the Tahoua region. In Uganda, UNFPA supported CSOs to implement the Empowerment and Livelihood for Adolescents model and to provide social protection interventions to over 389,000 adolescent girls at risk of or affected by child marriage.

3.5 Addressing poverty

In 2021, UNICEF commissioned case studies on leveraging large-scale sectoral programmes to prevent child marriage. The subsequent report³⁷ describes and analyses the mechanisms through which large-scale sectoral interventions have contributed to the prevention of child marriage in three settings. It presents case studies from Ethiopia and the states of West Bengal and Bihar in India. Its purpose is to highlight the successes and challenges of the approaches taken in each context, and to identify practical ways to embed efforts to end child marriage within existing programming in the areas of education, social protection, economic opportunities, poverty reduction and sexual and reproductive health.

The three case studies demonstrate that:

- The pathways to ending child marriage are complex and differ

according to context. It cannot be assumed that such schemes will automatically have a positive impact on preventing child marriage or gender inequality; to articulate context-specific pathways of change requires context-specific data analysis, research and evaluations, rather than just repackaging existing global or national evidence. Context-specific research has to inform all aspects of programming, not just at the beginning of a programme, but throughout its implementation.

- What works in one setting does not necessarily work elsewhere. In all three examples, UNICEF supported piloting to test approaches, to learn how things work and to obtain context-specific evidence to influence large-scale programmes. This type of support is crucial to ensuring the existence, appropriateness and effectiveness of interventions to end child marriage.
- Government and donor commitment are essential prerequisites for successful leveraging of large-scale interventions. UNICEF succeeded in adding cash plus components to the design of the PSNP, Mukhyamantri Kanya Utthan Yojana (MKUY) and Kanyashree Prakalpa programmes. Similar efforts in other settings offer much promise.
- State and district plans of action to end child marriage can provide a framework for collaboration across departments and agencies. Engagement with these types



of policies and plans, and the perspectives of departmental staff across sectors, offer important opportunities for cooperation that the Global Programme could capitalize on.

Table 13 summarizes some key learnings – and their implications for the Global Programme – from the development and analysis of the case studies on the effectiveness of efforts to end child marriage via single-sector interventions.

In 2021, the Global Programme in the West and Central Africa region began to identify large-scale country-level education and social protection systems and programmes that have the potential to transform the lives of adolescent girls and influence child marriage prevalence. This work will be taken forward in 2022 in order to find out how cash plus interventions can be leveraged more systematically for the prevention of child marriage and for more gender-transformative results in general.

Table 13. Key learnings and implications for the Global Programme

KEY STEPS	ACTIONS	IMPLICATIONS FOR THE GLOBAL PROGRAMME
1. Analyse the problem	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Identify and understand the drivers of child marriage in a given context ● Advocate to build political commitment and leadership to tackle child marriage 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Deepen and refine context-specific analysis of the drivers of child marriage
2. Identify large-scale programmes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Identify large-scale programmes that could help influence the drivers of child marriage 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● In promising countries, identify large-scale programmes that can be leveraged to prevent child marriage ● Develop methodology for identifying such programmes
3. Analyse the pathways	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Analyse how different large-scale programmes affect or have the potential to affect the prevalence of child marriage 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Use data, research and evaluations to analyse the various pathways through which large single-sector programmes can influence child marriage prevalence
4. Invest in understanding how to amplify positive pathways via cash plus add-ons	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Identify, pilot and evaluate additional components that can amplify the positive effects of large-scale programmes on child marriage 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Identify cash plus components through reviews, piloting and evaluations to amplify the positive effects of large-scale programmes on preventing child marriage ● Develop methodology for identifying and piloting cash plus activities
5. Advocate and support the inclusion of cash plus components	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Use evidence from research, evaluations and pilots to influence the design of large-scale programmes and advocate for the inclusion of cash plus activities to amplify the effects of large-scale programmes on child marriage 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Develop strategies to influence the design of large-scale programmes with the potential to prevent child marriage (in partnership with social policy and education sectors) ● Support the implementation of cash plus activities ● Promote inter-departmental convergence ● Strengthen the capacities of service providers and implementers
6. Monitor and evaluate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Monitor and evaluate large-scale programmes and make further adjustments to amplify their effects on preventing child marriage ● Share learning and advocate for broader implementation of the cash plus side of the intervention(s). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Support programme evaluations ● Strengthen management information systems of large-scale programmes ● Advocate for programme revisions in line with monitoring and evaluation findings ● Advocate for broader implementation and learning exchange.

IMMEDIATE INDICATOR	TARGET	RESULTS
Indicator 3102: Expenditure on subnational action plan as a percentage of the subnational expenditure in programme areas.	38%	10%

3.6 Facilitating supportive laws and policies

3.6.1 IMMEDIATE OUTCOME 3100: Enhanced capacity of governments to fund, coordinate and implement national and subnational action plans and systems to end child marriage

Since the inception of the Global Programme, the focus on child marriage among the 12 Programme countries has become more specific. With the support of UNFPA, UNICEF, CSOs and other partners, governments of 11 of the 12 countries developed national costed road maps to end child marriage and established national coordination mechanisms led by the governments. Of the 11 countries with costed road maps, 8 have resources budgeted by their governments and also have operational monitoring and evaluation frameworks.

Based on national legislation, progress has been made towards almost universal establishment of a legal minimum marriage age of 18 for both girls and boys. In all countries except Yemen, the minimum age of marriage for girls is 18 years. However, national legal provisions for the minimum age of marriage in many countries can be superseded by customary and religious laws, which often do not set a minimum age of marriage that complies with global agreements, or any minimum at all. In many religious and ethnic communities these laws provide weaker protections against child marriage

for girls. Within the Global Programme focus countries, when all exceptions are taken into account, only in India and Ghana are marriages of girls under age 18 prohibited under any condition whether civil, customary or religious.

3.6.2 OUTPUT 3110: Capacity-building and technical support provided to government to enact, enforce and uphold laws and policies, in line with international human rights standards, aimed at preventing child marriage, protecting those at risk and addressing the needs of those affected

In most Global Programme countries, many planned advocacy efforts and technical support initiatives advancing policy and legal instruments at national and subnational levels continued during the pandemic. Most technical support initiatives were focused on advancing social protection policies in the different states of India that are linked to mitigating the risks of child marriage. In a few countries, advocacy work and policy advancements were delayed or postponed due to different crises, including the pandemic. The Programme's ability to meet the targets for this indicator can mainly be attributed to the results from India, which has not set clear targets for this indicator. Table 14 summarizes the results for Indicator 3111.

In Bangladesh, guided by a multisectoral technical steering committee led by the Ministry of Women and Children Affairs

and supported by UNICEF, the Government approved the National Adolescent Strategy. In Burkina Faso, UNFPA and UNICEF support towards strengthening of legal frameworks resulted in the adoption of the budgeted operational action plan for 2022–2024 of the National Strategy for the Prevention and Elimination of Child Marriage. The revised Personal and Family Code discussed by the Council of Ministers was referred back for better consultation with stakeholders on aspects relating to polygamy and the age of marriage for girls and boys. UNFPA provided technical and financial support to the Government of Ghana to update its National Gender Policy. In India, UNICEF supports increasing

the number and improving capacities of Child Marriage Prohibition Officers to strengthen the implementation of the Child Marriage (Prohibition) Act. UNFPA and UNICEF provided technical support to the Odisha State Government to develop draft guidelines for declaring villages and Gram Panchayats child marriage free. The Indian Federal Government introduced the Prohibition of Child Marriage (Amendment) Bill in Parliament to increase the age of marriage from 18 to 21.

In Mozambique, UNFPA and UNICEF, together with the Ministry of Gender and Girls Not Brides in Mozambique hosted a National High-Level Round Table conference on the dissemination and legal enforcement of the child marriage law. The conference reviewed progress and challenges encountered in implementing the child marriage law. The Government of the Niger, through continued advocacy and support from UNFPA and UNICEF, signed an order that institutionalizes adolescent health clubs in schools. In Uganda, the Global Programme supported civil society advocacy efforts, resulting in the review of national guidelines to re-integrate pregnant girls and teenage mothers in school. In Zambia, UNFPA and UNICEF supported the Government to develop the draft Children’s Code Bill. The draft bill is aligned to international and regional human rights standards and sets the minimum age of marriage for girls at 18 years and strengthens the statutory response for children in need of care and protection. Support for other legal instruments included: the Child and Family Welfare Framework; the National Prevention and Response Plan to End Violence against Children; the Statutory Case Management Handbook for

Table 14. Indicator 3111: Number of policies or legal instruments addressing child marriage drafted, proposed, or adopted at national and subnational level with Global Programme support

COUNTRY	2019 RESULTS	2020 RESULTS	2021				
			TARGET	RESULTS	DRAFTED	PROPOSED	ADOPTED
Bangladesh	2	NA	1	1	0	0	1
Burkina Faso	2	1	5	2	0	1	1
Ethiopia	2	NA	2	2	0	2	0
Ghana	NA	1	0	1	1	0	0
India	NA	4		56	25	13	11
Mozambique	4	2	7	0	0	0	0
Nepal	NA	NA	2	0	0	0	0
Niger	NA	NA	1	1	0	0	1
Sierra Leone	6	NA	1	1	1	0	0
Uganda	2	0	2	1	0	0	1
Yemen	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
Zambia	2	1	3	5	4	0	1
Total	20	9	62	63	31	16	16

NA, not applicable

social welfare officers to respond to cases of children at risk of significant harm; the National Volunteer Policy; and the Social Workers' Association of Zambia Bill.

3.6.3 OUTPUT 3120: Capacity-building and technical support provided to government to implement a budgeted multisectoral gender-transformative plan on ending child marriage across ministries and departments at subnational levels

The Global Programme continues to provide technical support and coordination support to governments in revising laws and strategies, developing plans and budgets, revising protocols and guidelines, and supporting specific capacity development interventions aimed at strengthening action plans on ending child marriage. During the year, most of these capacity development interventions were delayed, especially in countries that are in the process of renewing their national action plans and

strategies on ending child marriage (e.g., Mozambique and Uganda). Table 15 summarizes the results for Indicator 3121.

In Burkina Faso, the Directorate-General for Family and Children received additional funding from the Government to support the coordination and implementation of activities within the budgeted operational action plan for 2022–2024 of the National Strategy for the Prevention and Elimination of Child Marriage. At the provincial level, UNFPA and UNICEF supplemented the government financial contributions to support the implementation of activities in the annual action plans in the 45 provinces. In Ethiopia, government and non-governmental actors increased funding to implement the costed road map for the elimination of harmful practices (2020–2024) based on the expenditure tracking exercise that was supported by the Global Programme in 2020. In Ghana, UNFPA and UNICEF provided coordination support – including financial and technical support – to the Domestic Violence Secretariat to convene a national stakeholders' meeting to review the implementation and tracking of progress of the Strategic Framework on Ending Child Marriage and the Adolescent Pregnancy Strategy. In addition, UNICEF supported the National Development Planning Commission to include 21 child protection-related SDG indicators in the National Medium-Term Development Policy Framework for 2022–2025. In India, UNFPA and UNICEF supported national and state governments to support action plans in 175 districts for adolescent empowerment, continuation of girls' education, linkages to career guidance opportunities, school-to-work transition, social protection programmes, and the

Table 15. Indicator 3121: Number of subnational plans with evidence-informed interventions to address child marriage

COUNTRY	STATUS OF NATIONAL PLAN OF ACTION	NUMBER OF SUBNATIONAL ACTION PLANS
Bangladesh	Costed	0
Burkina Faso	Costed and financed	45
Ethiopia	Costed and financed	11
Ghana	Costed and financed	8
India	Costed and financed	10
Mozambique	Renewing but interventions funded	6
Nepal	Costed	2
Niger	Costed	0
Sierra Leone	Costed and financed	0
Uganda	Renewing but interventions funded	15
Yemen	NA	NA
Zambia	Costed and financed	2

NA, not applicable

improvement of social protection services, in a bid to ending child marriage.

UNFPA and UNICEF supported the Government of Mozambique’s evaluation of the National Strategy to Prevent and Eliminate Child Marriage 2016–2019 during the year and UNICEF also supported the development of District Plans to include child marriage and violence against children as priority areas in six districts in two provinces. In Nepal, as a result of technical support and advocacy from the Global Programme, 66 municipalities (up from 51 in 2020) developed funded action plans addressing child marriage and scaling up of the ‘Rupantaran’ adolescent empowerment programme. In the Niger, the National Strategic Plan of Action to End Child Marriage is in its final year of implementation. Through support from the Global Programme, an analysis of the national legislative framework was

commissioned to guide the process of developing a new framework and to inform the alignment with the Government’s Economic and Social Development Plan for 2022–2026.

3.7 Building a new generation of data and evidence

3.7.1 OUTPUT 3210: Capacity-building and technical support provided to government and civil society organizations to generate and use quality data and evidence on what works to end child marriage and support married girls

The pandemic continued to present challenges as well as opportunities to explore alternative mechanisms for collecting data and generating evidence on some of the key markers of progress towards ending child marriage. Previously established workplans and targets for data collection and evidence generation continue to suffer due to COVID-19 restrictions. Most countries had trouble contracting and carrying out previously planned baseline studies, evaluations and other implementation research studies, and these continue to be delayed. In many cases, rapid assessments using online tools were used to collect data to inform immediate actions taken by the Programme during implementation. Only in Bangladesh, Ghana, Mozambique, Nepal and Sierra Leone and was the Programme able to carry out face-to-face studies at the household level. Table 16 summarizes the results for Indicator 3211.

In Bangladesh, UNICEF implemented an intervention research study to test a life-skills and tutoring support model to keep girls in school and reduce child marriage.

Table 16. Indicator 3211: Number of generated evidence and knowledge that focus on what works to end child marriage

COUNTRY	2019 RESULTS	2020 RESULTS	2021 TARGETS	2021 RESULTS
Bangladesh	4	4	4	5
Burkina Faso	1	1	2	1
Ethiopia	3	0	5	5
Ghana	2	0	3	3
India	NA	8	3	3
Mozambique	NA	NA	4	2
Nepal	NA	NA	NA	NA
Niger	2	1	NA	NA
Sierra Leone	2	0	1	1
Uganda	NA	NA	NA	NA
Yemen	NA	NA	1	1
Zambia	1	NA	3	0
Total	15	14	26	21

NA, not applicable

The study found that the ‘Keeping Girls in Schools’ programme had a protective impact on child marriage – relative to the baseline, girls were more likely to be married at endline in control areas whereas there was no discernible increase in child marriage prevalence in the intervention areas. Similarly, school dropout as a result of marriage and learning loss in analytical skills were significantly greater in control areas. In Burkina Faso, UNICEF completed a multi-country formative evaluation of the programme for the Promotion and Protection of the Rights of the Child (2017–2019). Findings from the evaluation show that door-to-door household visits, adolescent clubs and community dialogues have gradually contributed to changes in social norms and acceptability of the refusal of norms considered harmful both by parents and by customary and religious leaders. Interventions targeted to empowerment of adolescent girls have increased their knowledge and skills to delay early marriage, and provided alternative opportunities to early marriage.

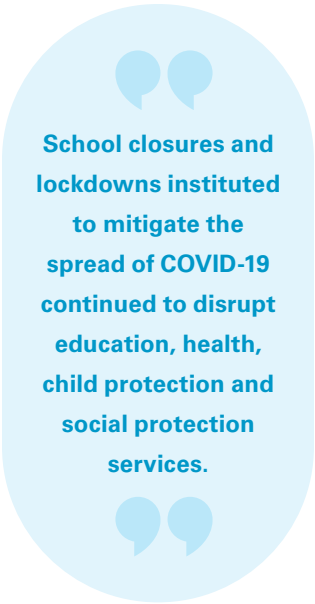
In Ethiopia, the Global Programme supported three formative assessments on: the out-of-school girls’ empowerment manual, men’s and boys’ engagement, and the community conversation toolkit. The learnings from the assessments are being used to improve delivery of the community conversations model throughout the country. The Global Programme also supported a SBC baseline study focusing on social and gender norms change aimed at measuring the contribution of the Programme, as well as informing the required programme adjustments. In Ghana, UNICEF produced a statistical snapshot on ‘Protecting and Empowering

Adolescent Girls in Ghana’ and an evaluation of community engagement interventions. The India Programme undertook a qualitative assessment on the impact of COVID-19 on child marriage based on government data and data compiled by implementing partners.

UNICEF supported a study on violence against children in Mozambique that found that 3 in 10 females and 4 in 10 males aged 18–24 years experienced violence while growing up. In response to the study findings, Global Programme funding was used to develop district-level plans of action to respond to violence against children and child marriage. In Sierra Leone, UNICEF supported a study to assess and measure key programme indicators towards the implementation of empowerment and gender-transformative interventions for adolescent girls and boys in safe spaces. In Yemen, UNICEF completed a study on the drivers of child marriage in December 2021. The study aimed to unpack the drivers of child marriage in Yemen, analysing the forces that perpetuate the practice as well as those that support its abandonment.

3.8 Challenges

A main challenge for programme implementation during 2021 was the COVID-19 pandemic, which dragged on for a second year. The pandemic continued to increase the risk of child marriage for many girls in the 12 Global Programme countries and impacted the delivery of programme interventions at regional and country levels, resulting in lower rates of programme implementation. Some other notable challenges in programme implementation are listed below.



School closures and lockdowns instituted to mitigate the spread of COVID-19 continued to disrupt education, health, child protection and social protection services.

3.8.1 ADDRESSING VULNERABILITIES AND IMPLEMENTING PREVENTIVE AND CARE SERVICES

School closures and lockdowns instituted to mitigate the spread of COVID-19 continued to disrupt education, health, child protection and social protection services, including empowerment through life-skills education and CSE to adolescent girls, thereby increasing their vulnerability to child marriage. Limitations in direct engagement with girls in life-skills programmes also created constraints in quality of mentorships. For example, almost 15 million learners across different education levels in Uganda were affected by the longest school closure globally, including about 52 per cent adolescent girls and young women who experienced increased vulnerability to sexual violence, teenage pregnancies and child marriage. The Programme in Uganda supported the establishment of community-based learning clubs to provide literacy and numeracy education to marginalized, underserved adolescent girls, including sexuality education, referrals and access to sexual and reproductive health services. In Ethiopia, the Global Programme supported the remote learning arrangement through radio and supported non-formal schools to provide tutorial programmes focused on STEM (science, technology, engineering and mathematics) subjects as part of the accelerated learning to vulnerable and marginalized adolescent girls. In Bangladesh, the Programme partnered with grassroots women- and youth-led organizations to organize courtyard meetings in remote and isolated tea garden communities to deliver life-skills education.

3.8.2 OVERCOMING CONSTRAINED ACCESS TO ADOLESCENT-RESPONSIVE SERVICES

Access to services and linkages to key adolescent-responsive services is becoming limited. In Mozambique, social mobilization increased demand for health and protection services, but service providers lack the capacity to respond to demand. In Sierra Leone, as in many other countries, inter-ministerial coordination on GBV response services is weak; further, while the GBV toll-free hotline managed by the Ministry of Gender and Children Affairs has provided referral support to GBV survivors, case management needs to be strengthened. In Mozambique, local protection mechanisms lack the financial and human resources to respond to cases of GBV and child marriage identified by the communities. Yemen lacks specialized organizations providing GBV response and protection services for adolescent girls; and the lack of marriage and divorce certificates and identity certificates for survivors of child marriage puts them at additional risk and hinders their access to services. In response, the Programme supported the establishment of 18 service delivery points in Mozambique to provide GBV services targeting in- and out-of-school adolescents.

In Sierra Leone, the Programme provided technical assistance to family support units – specialized units attached to police stations with the mandate to investigate all forms of child abuse and violence against children – by training 100 officers (74 male and 36 female) on the revised sexual violence and GBV guidelines. In addition, 50 family support unit court monitors and police prosecutors of the

Legal and Justice Department (25 male and 25 female) were trained on crimes data collection and management. In India, the Programme is planning to launch a campaign to engage gatekeepers in families, communities and schools to address the gender digital divide issue.

3.8.3 PROVIDING TECHNICAL SUPPORT AND MONITORING DURING THE PANDEMIC AND OTHER CRISIS CONDITIONS

Safety protocols imposed by the COVID-19 pandemic and other emergency crises – such as travel restrictions and telework – have affected in-person technical support and field site visits and other monitoring by UNFPA, UNICEF and implementing partners. While the Global Programme issued a guidance note on how to monitor and assess child marriage interventions during the pandemic and other humanitarian crises, staff need to adapt to new techniques that work in their specific country context. The pandemic and other crises have also affected the ability of the Programme to carry out workplans and achieve the established targets. The Global Programme continues to ensure that reliable data are being used for programme management and reporting, and has commissioned a consultant to assess the current monitoring and reporting systems and approaches, including implementing partners' capacity to monitor interventions. With the lifting of travel restrictions, staff at country and regional levels are being encouraged to carry out field site visits, including technical support to implementing partners.

3.8.4 ACCESSING AND ADAPTING TO TECHNOLOGY

The lack of connectivity affected programming for adolescents living with disabilities in Bangladesh, girls from poor households in India, and girls in remote areas in Mozambique. In Ghana, internet connectivity and virtual tools were inadequate for engaging with adolescents. Some participants also had difficulties adapting to new technologies. In Uganda, the pandemic heralded a new era of technology to accelerate learning; schools adapted computers for online learning and radios to promote distance learning, although with limited access for rural populations.

3.8.5 ADDRESSING MONITORING AND EVIDENCE GAPS TO IMPROVE PROGRAMME IMPLEMENTATION

While country offices are aware of the importance of using evidence to guide programming decisions, there were mixed results in using evidence in programme design and monitoring. Strengthening available evidence, use of relevant and timely evidence, monitoring impact of use of evidence, and building capacity of teams on evidence generation and use remain priorities. Regional governments in Ethiopia did not roll out the monitoring tools developed with support from the Programme as expected. The monitoring system in Nepal is unable to track changes among beneficiaries of the radio 'Rupantaran' sessions. Yemen is experiencing difficulties in documenting programme activities due to security reasons and prohibition of photography; as

The Global Programme drew several lessons throughout the year from research and evaluations as well as from programme adaptations during the COVID-19 pandemic and other humanitarian contexts.

a response, qualitative measures such as human-interest story documentation are being used to fill this gap.

3.9 Lessons learned

The Global Programme drew several lessons throughout the year from research and evaluations as well as from programme adaptations during the COVID-19 pandemic and other humanitarian contexts. Some of the key learnings, either applicable across all implementing countries or specifically for a specific country or region, are listed below.

3.9.1 INFLUENCING NATIONAL SOCIAL PROTECTION PROGRAMMES REQUIRES CLOSE PARTNERSHIPS WITH SOCIAL POLICY AND EDUCATION SECTORS

With support from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, UNICEF commissioned a research study to develop a methodology to help in identifying large single-sector or scalable sectoral interventions with the potential effect of reducing child marriage at large scale. The research examined three case studies in India and Ethiopia with strong data and clear conceptual frameworks. While all three case studies have a cash transfer component at their core, the programmes differ significantly from each other in terms of their overall aims, design, implementation and delivery modalities, and additional cash plus components. In Ethiopia, the case study focus was on the PSNP, whose conceptual framework was aimed at addressing the needs of chronically food-insecure households in famine-prone rural areas. Following an empirical study that showed that the PSNP did contribute to a reduction

in child marriages among participating households from 60 per cent in 2005 to 40 per cent in 2016, the conceptual framework was redesigned to look at cash plus components such as increased investment in girls' education and improved knowledge on child marriage, so as to optimize its ability to reduce child marriage. However, evaluations of the Livelihood Empowerment Against Poverty programme in Ghana and of social cash transfer in Zambia did not find a reduction in child marriage. Only empirical research can provide insight into what is happening in a specific context and target group and in the design of programmes.

In India, the Kanyashree Prakalpa case study indicates that in West Bengal state, child marriage does not decline automatically because of higher levels of girls' education or improved household economic security. A decline in child marriage requires first an increase in the autonomy and empowerment of adolescent girls and young women. Empirical research on the nationwide Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act shows that cash-for-work for women is in and of itself insufficient to make a difference in gender equality and women's empowerment. It has to be pointed out that there is a strong norm in India for women to stay at home and not to work in public. As a result of growing economic prosperity, the percentage of women's labour force participation has declined, especially among middle-income households in India. Findings from a review of the MKUY scheme in Bihar indicate that, while cash transfers play a significant social protection role, they alone are

not sufficient to enable adolescents to make a successful transition into adulthood, and a multisectoral approach is needed that supplements cash transfers with programmes that address the vulnerabilities that young people – and particularly girls – face.

3.9.2 SUSTAINABLE SOCIAL AND BEHAVIOUR CHANGE REQUIRES A COMMON UNDERSTANDING AROUND PROCESSES AND ADEQUATE CAPACITIES OF RELEVANT PUBLIC, CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANIZATION, UNICEF AND UNFPA STAFF TO PLAN, IMPLEMENT, MONITOR, AND IMPLEMENT COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT INTERVENTIONS

There is growing acceptance that child marriage and FGM are complex and deep-rooted and require multidimensional and multi-stakeholder interventions. Evidence from the UNICEF multi-country evaluation in West and Central Africa indicates an evolution of understanding among public stakeholders as well as UNICEF country offices around the design and implementation of community engagement approaches or interventions. The evaluation highlighted gaps in developing integrated, independent and dedicated community feedback mechanisms able to systematically generate and synthesize information. This information could then be used to integrate community perspectives and aspirations into the continued improvisation and evolution of community engagement interventions. For most countries, there has been limited focus on measurement of norms change and on establishing its connection to ongoing work to drive community engagement. These future

interventions and investments must focus on methodological guidance and allocations of resources for regular assessment of change (including drivers of change) to inform the investments and focus on community engagement interventions.

3.9.3 IMPROVE ADAPTATION OF NORMS-FOCUSED INTERVENTIONS UNCOVERING BEHAVIOURAL DRIVERS AND USING MEASUREMENTS

SBC interventions have to be adapted to each purpose and context. This has been especially true during the COVID-19 pandemic, when in-person interventions were restricted. The Global Programme has to have adequate mechanisms to determine the drivers of harmful practices in order to measure whether programme adaptations achieve the desired changes in attitudes and behaviours. Accordingly, it has to enhance the quality of monitoring by developing and providing the necessary tools, guidelines and training.

3.9.4 SUPPORT TO NATIONAL AND LOCAL-LEVEL PARTNERS IS ESSENTIAL TO BUILD BRIDGES AND IMPROVE CAPACITIES TO LISTEN TO THE VOICES OF ADOLESCENTS

Mobilizing adolescents and youth to enable them to exercise their agency is a powerful tool to empower them and support them to become change-makers. Support for adolescent and youth participation has to be reviewed and adapted so it can become part of mainstream structures (e.g., in Madhya Pradesh in India). Supporting youth-led networks in Sierra Leone to engage adolescent girls to enhance their voices and build their capacity to advocate

and engage duty-bearers has brought about positive change in the attitudes and perspectives of adolescent girls. In Nepal, rather than establishing a separate economic empowerment component for out-of-school adolescent girls, the Programme connected them with local women's cooperatives. This was highly effective, ensures long-term sustainability, and highlights the need for closer collaboration with women's cooperatives.

3.9.5 THE USE OF DIGITAL ONLINE PLATFORMS FOR GIRLS' EMPOWERMENT INTERVENTION REQUIRES MORE INTERACTIVE AND PARTICIPATORY ENHANCEMENTS OF THE PLATFORMS

In addition to adolescent clubs and schools, adolescents are now being reached through mobile phones and via the internet, thereby overcoming some of the barriers to access to adolescent sexual and reproductive health information. More research is needed to explore ways to increase the utilization of services through a sustainable cost-effective service delivery model. In Nepal, interactions

with adolescents showed that life-skills content delivered through radio has limitations as the medium lacks a means of two-way engagement. The Global Programme supplemented the radio broadcasts with face-to-face interactions with trained facilitators across the programme areas. Continuous innovations and reprogramming are essential in the context of COVID-19, to ensure that the programme is implemented with fidelity and quality; digital platforms and radio programmes have to be paired with two-way communication and supported by mentors and one-on-one support while adhering to protocols and guidelines. In 2022, the Global Programme – together with the UNFPA-UNICEF Joint Programme on the Elimination of Female Genital Mutilation – is contracting a company to conduct an assessment of technology-based (and technology-enabled) solutions to end harmful practices globally, including assessing current interventions and existing evidence, to inform a strategy for digital engagement to end child marriage within the Global Programme.



Lessons and recommendations from the evaluation of UNICEF's work for accelerating action towards ending child marriage in Bangladesh:

- Incentives and conditional cash transfers seem to have worked well in some cases.** This needs to be examined more closely, including drawing lessons on effective approaches to complement cash and in-kind transfers from large-scale interventions in countries such as Bangladesh, Ethiopia and India. In case it is found to make a positive impact, a solution to this may be found to provide incentives to girls, perhaps by helping the Government to design a suitable scheme.
- UNICEF should work towards providing social protection to vulnerable children and their families for overall poverty reduction.** As per UNICEF's definition, "*social protection covers the range of policies and programmes needed to reduce the lifelong consequences of poverty and exclusion.*" Therefore, the focus of interventions in the future should be to ensure that essential services are provided to all vulnerable families to reduce inequality, poverty and vulnerability. This would require working together with other organizations with a similar mandate for poverty alleviation, as well as incorporating lessons from the evidence on cash plus interventions such as complementary interventions (e.g., UNICEF – Innocenti's work on gender-responsive age-sensitive social protection [GRASSP]).³⁸
- The existing monitoring system within UNICEF is not designed to collect relevant data on child marriage.** The mismatch in monitoring programmes makes collation of relevant data collection very challenging and there is likelihood of missing out on information that may provide evidence for planning and guiding implementation.
- There is a need for a more robust and user-friendly surveillance system and research to analyse the impact of interventions and to collate information related to an area effectively.** It is also important to collect disaggregated data for disadvantaged groups to analyse the impact on vulnerable groups, while complementing quantitative data with qualitative data that capture nuances (e.g., shifts in gender-transformative change), including perceptions of service providers and staff.
- UNICEF should limit the number of interventions it carries out to address child marriage.** Research has shown that programmes with fewer strategic interventions reach a larger population and demonstrate better sustainability. Therefore, UNICEF may consider focusing on fewer interventions that have achieved better results and aim at scaling up the pilots.
- UNICEF should limit its intervention in skills development programmes to the extension of technical support to identify vulnerable adolescents and to the development of soft skills.** There are organizations which have significant experience in skills development and would therefore be more effective in implementing programmes related to this area of expertise. UNICEF can extend technical support to identify vulnerable adolescents and develop programmes for soft skills training.

3.10 Innovative approaches

The Global Programme aims to test and scale up different innovative approaches to accelerate action to end child marriage, to reach a broader – and sometimes the not yet converted – audience with key

messaging, to engage adolescents and young people in a more meaningful way, and to reach marginalized girls and girls in hard-to-reach areas. In 2021, some of the innovative approaches utilized are listed below.

3.10.1 A FICTIONAL SERIES TO RAISE AWARENESS AND SPARK DISCUSSIONS

[Vaillante](#) is a fictional three-part miniseries developed by UNICEF and released on YouTube in November 2021 (read more about the series under section 4.3 *Visibility and communication*). The series is set in West Africa and aims to offer a platform for the representation of the harms of child marriage, as well as serve as a starting point for discussion and change. It is being screened in a number of countries throughout Africa. *Vaillante* tells the story of the painful past of a young woman, Sali, who campaigns against child marriage and whose fate intertwines with the uncertain fate of a soon-to-be-married girl, Adi. Both protagonists must overcome family and social adversity in order for their rights to be respected.



Through innovative approaches such as this video series, UNICEF – through the Global Programme – aims to raise awareness and

spark conversations about child marriage in order to better seek solutions for young girls and women. Going forward, this series is being leveraged through additional platforms to reach a larger audience with its messaging (including television channels in various West African countries). There is now an ongoing conversation around the topic of child marriage thanks to the series being screened at film festivals, award ceremonies, and in various advocacy events in Africa and beyond.

3.10.2 TEEN JOURNALISM

The child journalist programme in Bangladesh used online training in mobile journalism to equip children to produce reports for digital platforms. Mobile journalism includes conducting virtual round tables, expert interviews and vlogging focusing on COVID-19 prevention, children’s mental health, reopening of schools, and other related topics. One child journalist participated in a first-of-its-kind reality-based miniseries, [Coping with COVID-19](#), which launched its second season in 2021 and features the lives of adolescent girls around the world facing the onslaught of the COVID-19 pandemic and standing up to other social injustices in their communities. The approach of the series was in itself an innovation when initiated in 2020: when physical isolation was a fact in many parts of the world, the programme equipped 16 girls aged about 15 years old with mobile phones to allow them to share their stories, their worries and their hopes and dreams for the future with a global audience – something that the girls themselves said was empowering and helped them build self-confidence when they returned in 2021 in Season two.



The Global Programme needs to develop a practical toolkit to guide the implementation of gender-transformative programming, while strengthening the Programme's monitoring framework to capture gender-transformative change, including the perceptions of service providers and staff.



3.10.3 YOUTH INNOVATION CHALLENGE

To ensure youth engagement and participation, UNICEF – in partnership with the Spotlight Initiative Africa Regional Programme – launched a seed fund with the Youth Reference Group to test innovative youth ideas that promote the mental well-being of children and young people in their communities. Young people will receive funding to implement innovative approaches that will help survivors of harmful practices cope with the psychosocial consequences as well as create awareness on the impact of harmful practices on mental health. The projects are expected to: empower girls and support girls affected by harmful practices; work more directly with youth peers and communities; and advocate for laws and policies that create an enabling environment for girls and that engage girls in their development. The winners of the challenge will be announced in 2022 and they will receive seed funding to implement their ideas in their communities. The expectation is that they will report back on progress and results, and that promising ideas may potentially be scaled up.

3.10.4 BUSINESS CONTINUITY PLATFORMS

Since 2019, UNICEF has been exploring a suite of tools to support scale-up of reach to targeted beneficiaries, especially adolescent girls with restricted mobility, and to ensure uninterrupted delivery of preventive and protection services during crises. The Programme in India launched Seekh, a digital platform to make the learning of language, mathematics, basic science, environmental science and sports fun. The platform is accessible to parents,

children and teachers. It aims to mobilize and harness the positive energy within local communities towards supporting children's learning. In the state of Bihar, UNICEF initiated 'Mobile Learning Centers' in a van equipped with digital facilities like television screens, and educational resources such as videos, math games and illustrated posters to teach children in an interactive way, with special focus given to caste communities.

In Bangladesh, UNICEF initiated the '[Digital Platform for Adolescents](#)' that is providing adolescents with safe access to information, social networks and emergency child helplines. In 2021, a two-way communication feature was added to enable adolescents to communicate, ask questions and share their thoughts, experiences and stories. The Ethiopia Programme uses mobile phones in collaboration with VIAMO to provide training through interactive voice recordings. The approach has huge potential in reaching adolescent girls and in customizing life-skills training sessions and community conversations. Based on the pilot in two areas, the Global Programme plans to scale up the girls' empowerment component across the seven target regions in 2022. To increase the level of exposure and access to the content, it will be shared using school mini media, establishing Telegram and WhatsApp groups, and regular face-to-face review and exchange sessions among trainees. Only those with a mobile phone can access the training opportunity. In Uganda, the Programme explored different approaches to the provision of sexual and reproductive health services to young people by popularizing the SafePal app which provides information on psychosocial support and information on sexual and reproductive health, GBV and HIV.

Art for Advocacy to End Child Marriage



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3.10.5 CHILD MARRIAGE PHOTO MURALS

The 'Art for Advocacy to End Child Marriage' campaign in Ghana uses murals to depict the effects and consequences of child marriage. The colourful wall paintings attract public attention to the issue of child marriage, elicit public discourse and garner community support to end the practice. The unveiling of the murals, which is preceded by a caravan campaign, is used to demand action from relevant stakeholders for improved services for adolescent girls. In 2021, two photo murals were produced in the Volta and Western regions to call for an end to child marriage and improve development outcomes for adolescent girls.

3.11 Next steps and priorities for the way forward

This section outlines some of the key next steps and priorities for the Global Programme in 2022 and beyond. Specific plans for each country programme can be found in the corresponding country profiles.

3.11.1 ADVANCING GENDER-TRANSFORMATIVE PROGRAMMING

The Global Programme has begun to operationalize gender-transformative programming in Phase II. There is now a repository of technical and capacity-building resources and a gender-transformative accelerator tool to guide implementation of gender-transformative approaches. More than six countries have committed to applying the tool and four are already applying it. While momentum for gender-transformative programming has been generated, the Global Programme needs to institutionalize a systematic approach to support design, implementation and monitoring milestones as integral and inseparable components of programming work. Going forward, the Global Programme needs to develop a practical toolkit to guide the implementation of gender-transformative programming, while strengthening the Programme's monitoring framework to capture gender-transformative change, including the perceptions of service providers and staff.



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The Uganda Programme will assess its gender-transformative approaches. Evidence from this evaluation will be used to engage with men, boys, cultural and religious institutions, Male Action Groups, youth, women-led organizations and influencers. The programme will build the capacity of implementing partners to address knowledge and capacity gaps related to gender-transformative approaches. The Zambia Programme will scale up gender-transformative dialogues to an additional 10 districts. The UNFPA and UNICEF regional offices for North Africa/the Middle East and North Africa will organize a meeting to bring together regional and country focal points for child marriage and FGM. The meeting will discuss harmful practices and discriminatory gender norms, poverty, gender inequality and education, and the need for concerted multisectoral approaches for prevention and response.

3.11.2 ENGAGING MEN AND BOYS AND PROMOTING POSITIVE MASCULINITIES

The Ethiopia Programme will roll out the intervention package and implementation guide for adolescent girls' empowerment and engaging men and boys. It is currently rolling out the Social Analysis Action approach for capacity strengthening of service providers in partnership between CARE Ethiopia, UNFPA and the Ministry of Women and Social Affairs. UNFPA in Ghana will support the Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Protection to develop the 'National Toolkit for Engaging Men and Boys' as a standard approach for all stakeholders nationwide. The India Programme will develop capacities on positive masculinities for engaging boys, bringing in male facilitators, male role models, and using storytelling. The Mozambique programme will roll out the boys' mentorship approach, including the

training of male mentors in all six districts in the country. The Nepal Programme plans to form men's and boys' groups in communities to promote discussions on positive masculinities and gender equality. Young boys, adolescents and men already championing gender equality will form male peer groups to foster collective action and to create a more conducive environment to promote gender equality.

3.11.3 EXPANDING ADOLESCENT GIRLS' EMPOWERMENT

The Bangladesh Programme will produce a compilation of good practices in adolescent girls' empowerment. The Ethiopia Programme will roll out the transformative empowerment manual for out-of-school girls. The Ghana Programme will support mentorships through the 'Girls Role Model' concept. Role models include adolescent mothers who have returned to school, adolescents who overcame financial difficulties and those who, against the odds, succeeded in their education. The Programme will strengthen the leadership and advocacy capacities of the mentors to provide guidance to other adolescent girls on any aspect of their career interests. Based on a pilot in two areas, the Ethiopia Programme will expand the girls' empowerment component to the seven target regions.

3.11.4 CONTINUING SBC PROGRAMMING

UNICEF will support community screenings of films addressing the topics of child marriage and FGM across West and Central Africa in collaboration with country offices and communication teams. The community screenings will be

followed by facilitated discussions on the themes addressed to challenge dominant norms. The regional office will explore edutainment approaches to stimulate public dialogue and action around child marriage as well as to promote new norms. The UNICEF West and Central Africa Regional Office is commissioning the development of a regional SBC framework with focus on child marriage and FGM. The framework will contain guidance on how to implement holistic and contextual SBC addressing harmful practices. The development of the framework will aim to build capacity by engaging country offices and stakeholders in a co-creation process throughout.

A partnership is being established with a research firm to implement the ACT Framework for measuring social norms change in child marriage and FGM across three countries (Guinea, Mali and Sierra Leone). The exercise will not be limited to implementation within those three countries, but will include adaptation approaches, learning webinars, and guidance on how to adapt and implement the framework to different contexts in an effort to support more countries to take up the measurement tool.

At the same time, the capacity side of the Global Programme will be strengthened globally through implementation of the social norms programming and measurement training package. Implementation has already started in Kenya through an implementing partner delivering the training and providing mentorship to training participants to apply the lessons learned. This model will be replicated in other countries. To support

The UNICEF West and Central Africa Regional Office will then focus in 2022 and 2023 on differentiating child marriage interventions for adolescent girls above and below age 15.

countries to address the challenges they face in SBC programming, a series of problem-focused webinars is planned to bring together relevant country offices as well as internal and external experts, with the intention of zooming into specific programming challenges. Topics to be addressed include: what is different about implementing SBC and social norms programming in urban settings? How do you maintain positive behaviours post declaration? What is the most effective way to engage faith leaders for change? Importantly, these webinars will be preceded by an overview of what SBC is and how it can support programming to ensure a common understanding for all.

3.11.5 IMPLEMENTING THE GLOBAL RESEARCH STRATEGY

The Bangladesh Programme will map existing government and non-government economic empowerment interventions for young women in new intervention areas. Ghana will conduct its DHS in 2022. The survey will provide up-to-date estimates of demographic and health indicators, including those related to the development

and protection of adolescent girls. UNFPA and UNICEF will provide technical and financial support to ensure the generation of quality and timely data, and to advocate for the inclusion of the Global Programme indicators in the survey. The Ghana Programme will further conduct a study on the drivers of sexual violence. The study aims to assess the drivers of child sexual abuse and exploitation and to better understand the pervasive social norms and other dynamics – including structural and institutional drivers – that create the conditions in which violence occurs. The Zambia Programme will conduct a study on gender norms.

The Regional Office for South Asia will review how country offices have adapted to working through online platforms during the COVID-19 pandemic, as well as conduct a study on the impact of COVID-19 on child marriage determinants in the region. While there has been a significant decrease in child marriage prevalence in West and Central Africa for girls under 18, the prevalence rate for girls under 15 has decreased only slightly, from 14 per cent in 2018 to 13 per cent in 2021. Therefore, UNICEF regional offices for West and Central Africa and Eastern and Southern Africa will leverage resources from the Spotlight Initiative to review and revise programme strategies in select countries, and to strengthen knowledge dissemination and exchange. The UNICEF West and Central Africa Regional Office will then focus in 2022 and 2023 on differentiating child marriage interventions for adolescent girls above and below age 15. This will be one of the main shifts in programming required across the regional country offices to accelerate efforts to end child marriage.





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Programme Governance and Management

4.1 Joint programming, implementation and advocacy: Global Programme effectiveness and efficiency (enablers) measures taken to strengthen joint implementation and achieve better synergies among UNFPA and UNICEF

Since the inception of the Global Programme, UNFPA and UNICEF have significantly increased joint programming to promote greater coherence among United Nations agencies at country, regional and headquarters levels. During the second phase of the Global Programme, UNICEF headquarters has continued to provide guidance on joint programming processes at country and regional levels.

4.1.1 PLANNING

During the annual work planning process, UNFPA and UNICEF regional offices jointly convened their respective country offices to discuss workplans, joint activities and programme implementation challenges. The regional offices in West and Central Africa organized monthly calls with each of the four country offices engaged in the Programme in the region. These monthly calls ensured close follow-up by the regional offices on programme implementation and challenges at country level. UNFPA and UNICEF in Burkina Faso are supporting the Government and other stakeholders through the multisectoral coordination platform to end child marriage. In Ethiopia, the two agencies have set up

a technical coordination structure that meets monthly to discuss progress, challenges and future plans. The two agencies also support the National Alliance to End Child Marriage and Female Genital Mutilation to roll out the costed road map and jointly provide technical support to implementing partners at federal and district levels. The UNICEF Middle East and North Africa Regional Office and UNFPA Arab States Regional Office organized a two-day strategic planning meeting in October 2021 to take stock of the two joint programmes on child marriage and FGM and to identify strategic approaches to prevent and respond to harmful practices in the region in line with the global agenda.

4.1.2 COORDINATION

UNFPA and UNICEF in Ghana support national coordination of multisectoral gender-transformative plans to end child marriage across ministries and departments at subnational levels. UNFPA and UNICEF in the Niger meet regularly to monitor the implementation of interventions. At the global level, UNFPA and UNICEF organized a series of webinars on child marriage during the year. On a regional level, the two agencies in Eastern and Southern Africa organized two webinars on social norms change programming and measurement. UNFPA and UNICEF country offices in India are part of the Global Programme's trailblazer initiative and undertook the gender-transformative accelerator exercise, agreeing on a collective road map to strengthen their child marriage programming with a gender-transformative lens. The two

agencies have also systematically led learning series and webinars on gender-transformative approaches.

4.1.3 JOINT MISSIONS

The UNICEF and UNFPA regional offices for the Middle East and North Africa/the Arab States conducted a joint mission to Egypt to strengthen the cooperation between the two country offices on child marriage interventions. UNFPA and UNICEF Ghana organize annual joint monitoring visits to receive direct feedback from beneficiaries, monitor programme results and provide feedback to address any challenges that require attention.

4.1.4 RESEARCH

UNFPA Asia and the Pacific Regional Office and UNICEF Regional Office for South Asia worked with the India Country Office to develop terms of reference for a study on compulsory marriage and provided inputs on ongoing research via online meetings. The regional offices also jointly developed the terms of reference and selected the institution for a study on the impact of COVID-19 on child marriage determinants in South Asia. UNFPA and UNICEF India have been working together on two evidence pieces: one on the age of consent (commissioned by UNICEF) and one on compulsory marriage (commissioned by UNFPA). UNFPA and UNICEF Mozambique supported the Government of Mozambique in the evaluation of the National Strategy to Prevent and Eliminate Child Marriage 2016–2019.

4.1.5 SPECIAL EVENTS

The Eastern and Southern Africa region marked the five-year anniversary of the Global Programme in 2021 with a two-day virtual event arranged by the two regional offices. The event brought together more than 200 government representatives from countries in Eastern and Southern Africa, regional bodies, representatives from civil society, traditional and community leaders, and youth networks. The event reflected on progress made so far and considered how to move the Global Programme forward, ending with a Call to Action in which governments and partners recommitted their efforts to accelerate action to end child marriage by 2030. UNFPA and UNICEF in Bangladesh continued to jointly advocate for the effective implementation of the National Plan of Action to End Child Marriage. UNFPA and UNICEF Mozambique supported a National High-Level Round Table on dissemination of the child marriage law and the development of an Unstructured Supplementary Service Data application for the reporting and referral of child marriage cases. The two agencies, jointly with the

Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Action, organized a high-level meeting led by Graça Machel to discuss the operationalization of the child marriage law, its challenges and successes, resulting in a call for action. UNFPA and UNICEF in Nepal supported programme coordination through the cluster/sub-cluster mechanism and continued joint advocacy for increased public financing for activities to end child marriage.

4.1.6 PROGRAMMING

UNFPA and UNICEF Ghana jointly support the Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Protection in the development of the Girlz Power Talk Show, especially with the conceptualization of the television show, strategic selection of topics for each episode and technical inputs. UNFPA and UNICEF India jointly support the ADVIKA programme for the empowerment of girls in Odisha – the ADVIKA adolescent engagement programme has been expanded to all 15 project districts. UNFPA and UNICEF Mozambique are providing technical support to the Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Action to strengthen multisectoral coordination and capacity-building at national, provincial and district level. In Sierra Leone, UNFPA and UNICEF worked jointly on initiating the establishment of a GBV information management system. With technical support from UNFPA and UNICEF at the global, regional and national levels, and government leadership from the Ministry of Gender and Children's Affairs, the system is scheduled to be rolled out in 2022.



Table 17. Civil society partners in Global Programme countries, 2020 and 2021

TYPE OF ORGANIZATION	BANGLADESH	BURKINA FASO	ETHIOPIA	GHANA	INDIA	MOZAMBIQUE	NEPAL	NIGER	SIERRA LEONE	UGANDA	YEMEN	ZAMBIA
Women's rights groups	19	2	1	3	10	3	7	2			3	
Children's rights groups	1	19		1	23	2	4	2	1			
Youth-led groups	4			1	11	1	1				1	
Minority people's groups	1				3							
Disability rights groups	1				2							
Groups working on religious freedom					1				1			
Groups working on diversity issues		1			9		1	1				
Academia or research					35	1	1					
International non-governmental organizations			3									
Number of civil society organizations in 2021, including academia (and international non-governmental organizations in Ethiopia)*	26	22	4	5	94	7	14	5	2	0	4	0
Number of civil society organizations in 2020	17	11	1	5	45	5	11	2	7	11	6	2

*Information for Uganda and Zambia not available in 2021 reporting.

4.2 Partnerships

The Global Programme is working in partnership with global, regional and national organizations and government entities to leverage towards efficient, technically sound, interprogrammatic and cross-sectoral interventions that positively impact adolescent girls' lives and help them delay child marriages. Table 17 gives an overview of the partnerships the Programme has with civil society and different rights-based groups in 2020 and 2021.

The following sections highlight the breadth of partnerships of the Global

Programme at the country level, focusing on civil society and engagement with other United Nations agencies and intergovernmental organizations.

4.2.1 WOMEN'S RIGHTS AND GRASSROOTS ORGANIZATIONS

At the community level, the Global Programme works with women's rights organizations and grassroots organizations to engage boys, girls, men and women in achieving gender equality, ensuring girls remain in school, and ending child marriages. In Bangladesh, UNICEF and UNFPA established partnerships with 26 grassroots women- and youth-led



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organizations to establish over 500 courtyard meetings targeting married girls and women with restricted mobility, as well as 500 tea stall meetings targeting individuals working in remote and isolated tea garden communities to scale up reach of marginalized and vulnerable communities in Dhaka, Chattogram, Bogura, Jamalpur and Patuakhali. The Global Programme provided financial support to grassroots organizations to engage the most marginalized women and adolescent girls, including with a specific focus on those living with disability. The Global Programme was able to support 6,294 adolescent girls and 147 women through the partnership with Bogura Zila Bandhan Protibondhi Songstha, and over 500 communities in tea gardens through associations working with the marginalized Dalit community.

In Ethiopia, the Global Programme established a new partnership with a women's rights organization in Somali region to strengthen the grassroots movement to bring about sustainable social change. This is done by building the capacity of community structures and women- and youth-led organizations,

and enhancing their linkages with formal structures. A total of 1,622 women's development and youth groups were mobilized to conduct community surveillance to identify child marriage arrangements, negotiate with families, and provide referrals to adolescent girls to protection and care services, ultimately benefiting 122,253 girls.

In India, the Global Programme worked with Panchayati Raj institutions and women self-help groups, teachers and front-line workers to help prevent adolescents – particularly girls – from discontinuing their education and getting married. Partnerships with women's collectives, Vikas Mitra, and other government programmes helped to reach adolescents from marginalized communities. YuWaah's programmes and campaigns successfully advocated for the empowerment and participation of adolescents in many states. UNICEF continues to create synergy between flagship programmes and departments such as the Mahila Shakti Kendra, Beti Bachao Beti Padhao, the police, the 181 Helpline and child protection structures. To strengthen the work on gender-transformative programming, partnerships with CSOs that have expertise in positive masculinities and agencies with expertise in GBV were further strengthened.

4.2.2 FAITH-BASED ORGANIZATIONS

In collaboration with headquarters and Religions for Peace, the UNICEF Eastern and Southern Africa Regional Office supported implementation of the partnership with the African Council of Religious Leaders to engage with

At the community level, the Global Programme works with women's rights organizations and grassroots organizations to engage boys, girls, men and women in achieving gender equality, ensuring girls remain in school, and ending child marriages.

members of the Inter-Faith Councils at national level and address the frequently incorrect interpretations of the sacred scriptures in relation to child marriage. UNICEF collaborated with Religions for Peace and the Joint Learning Initiative for Faith and Local Communities to produce new guidance on 'Faith for Positive Change for Children'. The guidance provides a framework for engaging and communicating with religious leaders on violence against children, child marriage and FGM in the time of COVID-19. Kenya and Malawi piloted the global Faith for Positive Change for Children monitoring and evaluation framework. In October 2022, a regional Faith in Education conference was convened in collaboration with the African Council of Religious Leaders. A total of 140 participants from 7 countries galvanized the support of religious confessions for the Back-to-School agenda, which is intrinsically linked to the prevention of child marriage in the region.

UNICEF Bangladesh developed a strategic partnership with the Islamic Foundation to engage over 5,000 imams and religious leaders to motivate communities to prevent child marriage and violence against children and women. The Burkina Faso Programme partnered with the Federation of Islamic Associations to promote the registration of marriages by religious communities. This approach requires celebrants to verify the age of future spouses and thus prevent child marriages. UNICEF partnered with the Muslim Relief Association of Ghana to engage traditional and religious leaders in campaigns to create demand for education in the most marginalized communities. A total of 680

Muslim leaders (231 females, 449 males) were trained in targeted communities to campaign for the education of Muslim adolescent girls. The campaign includes the support for continuous schooling of pregnant adolescent girls and the re-entry of young mothers who had dropped out of school due to childbirth.

4.2.3 YOUTH-LED ORGANIZATIONS

In India, UNFPA and UNICEF mobilized 60 women- and youth-led organizations to build their capacities to prevent and respond to GBV and harmful practices, and challenge discriminatory social norms. Through the collaboration with Partners in Law and the Centre for Women's Development Studies, 13 feminist research and advocacy organizations were mobilized to advocate for a rights-based approach to address harmful practices against women and girls, including child marriage. The Nepal Programme expanded its strategic partnership with the men's and boys' group [Hami DajuVai](#). Hami DajuVai is a youth-led feminist organization established in April 2019 – the first of its kind in Nepal – which focuses solely on men and masculinity along with a gender and social inclusion agenda. Hami DajuVai and the Department of Gender Studies at Tribhuvan University organized the Second Feminism & Men Conference with support from UNICEF, the EU, Plan International Nepal and ActionAid Nepal.

4.2.4 UNITED NATIONS AND INTERGOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS

UNICEF Mozambique's partnership with the International Organization for Migration (IOM) continued to take

major steps towards strengthening a multisectoral response mechanism for violence against children and child marriage nationally and in the targeted provinces of the Global Programme and the Spotlight Initiative. The reference group coordination mechanism at national and subnational levels is chaired by the Office of the Prosecutor and co-chaired by the Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Action. Following approval of the standard operating procedures of the reference group, 50 members (23 female) were trained. In Mozambique, UN Women is a partner in the economic empowerment component of the Global Programme.

The World Bank's commitment to reducing child marriage in the Niger has materialized with the recruitment of a national NGO to provide technical assistance and supervision of child protection committees in 50 pilot communes in the regions of Dosso, Maradi, Tahoua, Tillabéry and Zinder. Similarly, the World Bank's support in the framework of the Sahel Women's Empowerment and Demographic Dividend (SWEDD) Project in partnership with UNFPA is scaling up the 'husbands' school' and 'future husbands' school' approaches. Also being scaled up is the Illimin adolescent empowerment initiative with a large literacy and vocational training component for married, unmarried, and the most marginalized adolescent girls.

The Uganda Programme converged with the Spotlight Initiative, the Joint Programme to Eliminate Gender-Based Violence funded by the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (SIDA), and the Austrian-funded project in Karamoja district. Other United Nations agencies in Uganda

include UN Women and the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), which provide complementary programmes on ending GBV against women and girls. These agencies contribute key interventions, including male action groups that promote gender-transformative approaches, social norms change by religious and cultural leaders, and expanded scope for legal and health services beyond the Global Programme districts.

4.3 Visibility and communication

All global, regional and country offices continued to produce communication materials to raise awareness and inspire conversations about the need to end child marriage in 2021. The communication efforts are guided by the Global Programme's communication strategy that aims to spread awareness about child marriage and garner support for the work to end the practice. All visibility activities also make sure to include donor and partnership recognition, such as by inviting donor representatives to attend and speak at events; producing branding publications, videos and other materials with donor logos; and highlighting the partnerships in social media posts. In Uganda, UNFPA and UNICEF, together with the Government and CSOs, developed a national communication and visibility strategy and action plan to guide each partner in the implementation of events to ensure adequate visibility to end child marriage in the country.

As a final advocacy activity in 2020, the Global Programme hosted an end-of-year event, inviting partners and young girls to a discussion on what commitments different individuals and organizations would make

Figure 6. Word cloud of partners' New Year's resolutions to help end child marriage in 2021



in 2021 to accelerate action to end child marriage (see *Figure 6*). Listening to girls and amplifying girls' voices were two of the main themes that emerged from the event. The Global Programme focused on these aspects in several communication and advocacy activities during 2021 – for example, through the intergenerational dialogue hosted on the sidelines of the Commission on the Status of Women in March (see *2.5 Advocacy and influencing global policy*) and through the production and dissemination of the second season of the UNICEF-led video series *Coping with COVID*. Digital platforms such as YouTube have become an important global social mobilization tool to influence gender and social norms change, as well as to amplify the voices of young girls. Capitalizing on the global success of the breakthrough video series from 2020, the second season of *Coping with COVID* followed eight adolescent girls from different countries around the world (six of whom also participated in season one in 2020)

as they speak out and challenge cultural taboos, such as child marriage, GBV, and talking about mental health, while striving to achieve their dreams. The campaign to launch the five-part video series recorded 2.59 million impressions, leading to 1.1 million video views and a total of 5.4 billion minutes watched.

In 2021, UNFPA released a report entitled [My Body is My Own](#)³⁹ which focused on bodily autonomy for girls and women: the inherent right to choose what they do with their body, to ensure its protection and care, and to pursue its expression. Among other things, it means girls should be able to decide whether, when and whom to marry and have sex with, whether and when to become pregnant, and the freedom to seek medical care when needed. To support the idea of bodily autonomy, UNFPA launched the [Bodyright campaign](#) focused specifically on technology-facilitated GBV, which is also used to lure girls into child marriage.⁴⁰

This corporate campaign (not funded by the Global Programme) had high online engagement, with a total of 1.2 billion estimated global reach across social and online news channels. It was also shared by celebrities such as Rita Ora, Sharon Stone and Ashley Judd. The campaign video is UNFPA's most watched video as an organization, reaching 2 million views across all channels. The **bodyright** web page has also achieved record-breaking page visits for UNFPA, recording 1.7 million views (including 300,000 views in Spanish and 185,000 views in French).

The Global Programme developed and ran social media campaigns in several countries during the year. At the global level, the number of social media posts from the Programme increased, with a continuing growth in the number of followers (especially on Twitter) and a steady engagement level that is higher compared to the accounts of similar programmes and organizations. In addition, the Global Programme's web page hosted under unicef.org continued to see a high number of returning visitors compared to other pages on the UNICEF global website – a sign that audiences are interested in the information available on the web page. In terms of social media campaigns, for example, messaging on child marriage and related issues through social media in Bangladesh resulted in more than 28.5 million impressions and over 2 million engagements. A live Facebook event raised awareness on ending child marriage, violence against women and children, reproductive health, gender issues, psychosocial counselling and COVID-19 among adolescent girls and

boys. At the same time, communication around child marriage on social media in Ethiopia engaged more than 163,000 people through Facebook, Instagram and Twitter. UNFPA in the Niger used Facebook to share voices of girls engaged in the Programme.⁴¹ Table 18 summarizes some social media data for the Global Programme in 2021.

Table 18. Global Programme global social media data, 2021

	INSTAGRAM	TWITTER
Posts/tweets	291	956
Impressions	51,098	76,168
Profile views/mentions	1,032	3,164
Growth in followers	22%	50%
Engagement rate ⁴²	0.77%	0.46%

Several offices ran communication campaigns to leverage key moments and dates. To celebrate the fifth anniversary of the Global Programme, the regional offices in Eastern and Southern Africa – in collaboration with the Ethiopia and Zambia offices – developed a number of communication products. The UNFPA and UNICEF regional directors for Eastern and Southern Africa also published a joint op-ed titled 'Urgent Action is Needed to Meet SDG on Child Marriage' on 8 March, in commemoration of International Women's Day. The op-ed generated quite a buzz online and was picked up by CNBC Africa, Relief Web and All Africa. The South Asia regional offices used the International Day of the Girl to ensure

Several offices ran communication campaigns to leverage key moments and dates.

visibility of the programme. The two offices released human interest stories and social media cards, as well as a joint op-ed by the regional directors on the day. Commemorating World Refugee Day, the Global Programme and the No Lost Generation Initiative organized a panel discussion on solutions and good practices to prevent child marriage among refugees in the Middle East and North Africa region. The webinar discussion drew attention to the thousands of children facing the debilitating consequences of being married too early. Panellists represented governments, CSOs, international NGOs and youth advocates, discussing solutions and good practices to prevent child marriage and strengthen child marriage programming in humanitarian contexts. The webinar was attended by 80

participants from United Nations agencies and NGOs from across the region.

In the Niger, the celebration of International Women's Day and World Children's Day were both opportunities for communication campaigns on girls' rights and child marriage. The Day of the African Child also garnered much media attention in the country.⁴³ In 2021, the hosting of the third African Girl Summit was another great opportunity to draw the attention of African leaders to the urgency of ending child marriage. The Nepal Programme disseminated two short videos on child marriage through social media on the occasion of the International Day of the Girl, with the two videos receiving over 94,000 views on Facebook. The videos encouraged the public to speak up against child marriage and take action to stop it when witnessed. In Sierra Leone, the Programme conducted a U-Report poll on child marriage for International Women's Day, to gather young people's opinions around the issue. In India, to mark the International Day of the Girl, UNICEF partnered with Point of View to develop a social media campaign on positive actions taken by adolescent girls during the pandemic. The campaign used illustrations to capture positive stories of girls facilitating access of phones for their peers, challenging GBV, managing their mental health and preventing child marriages in their villages. It also included stories of girls taking civic actions in their communities. The illustrations were widely disseminated on social media platforms in English, Bengali, Hindi and Telugu, reaching 5,862,432 people and noting 310,217 engagements.



Wait to Wed: The Southern African Development Community (SADC) Model Law on Child Marriage

To increase understanding of the SADC Model Law on Child Marriage and its accompanying implementation guide,⁴⁵ UNFPA and UNICEF in Eastern and Southern Africa, together with the SADC Parliamentary Forum and Girls

Not Brides, developed a four-part animated video series and comic book to serve as an advocacy and awareness raising tool on ending child marriage across the region. The visual products are aimed at a broad range of stakeholders,



including parliamentarians, CSOs and youth advocates. *The Wait to Wed* series centres around two characters – young advocates to end child marriage in their community – and each episode shows how they utilize the model law to champion equal access for girls to education and health services.

- **Video 1:** How can the law help?
- **Comic 1:** How can the law help?
- **Video 2:** What is the SADC Model Law all about?
- **Comic 2:** What is the SADC Model Law all about?
- **Video 3:** What can I do to promote the SADC Model Law?
- **Comic 3:** What can I do to promote the SADC Model Law?
- **Video 4:** Promoting the SADC Model Law through parliamentary action
- **Comic 4:** Promoting the SADC Model Law through parliamentary action

The UNICEF West and Central Africa Regional Office led the production of [Vaillante](#), a fictional mini-series that explores the issue of child marriage, in collaboration with UNICEF Burkina Faso, Mali and Niger country offices, and UNICEF headquarters. The series provides key messages on how young people, especially girls, can be part of the solution if empowered to take action. *Vaillante* was launched on social media on 29 November 2021 and premiered at the Pan-African Film and Television Festival of Ouagadougou, FESPACO. The series reached more than 20 French and English markets⁴⁴ via YouTube, with over 10.6 million people viewing UNICEF

social media posts on the series. Visitors to the *Vaillante* web page came from over 100 countries worldwide. The regional office, in collaboration with country offices, is supporting community screenings across the region, coupled with a research component, to observe the results of the series on audiences. In 2022, the regional office will further explore edutainment approaches for public dialogue and action around child marriage through the series.

The Burkina Faso Country Office ensured the visibility of the Global Programme and the issue of child marriage through a youth caravan combining thematic workshops,

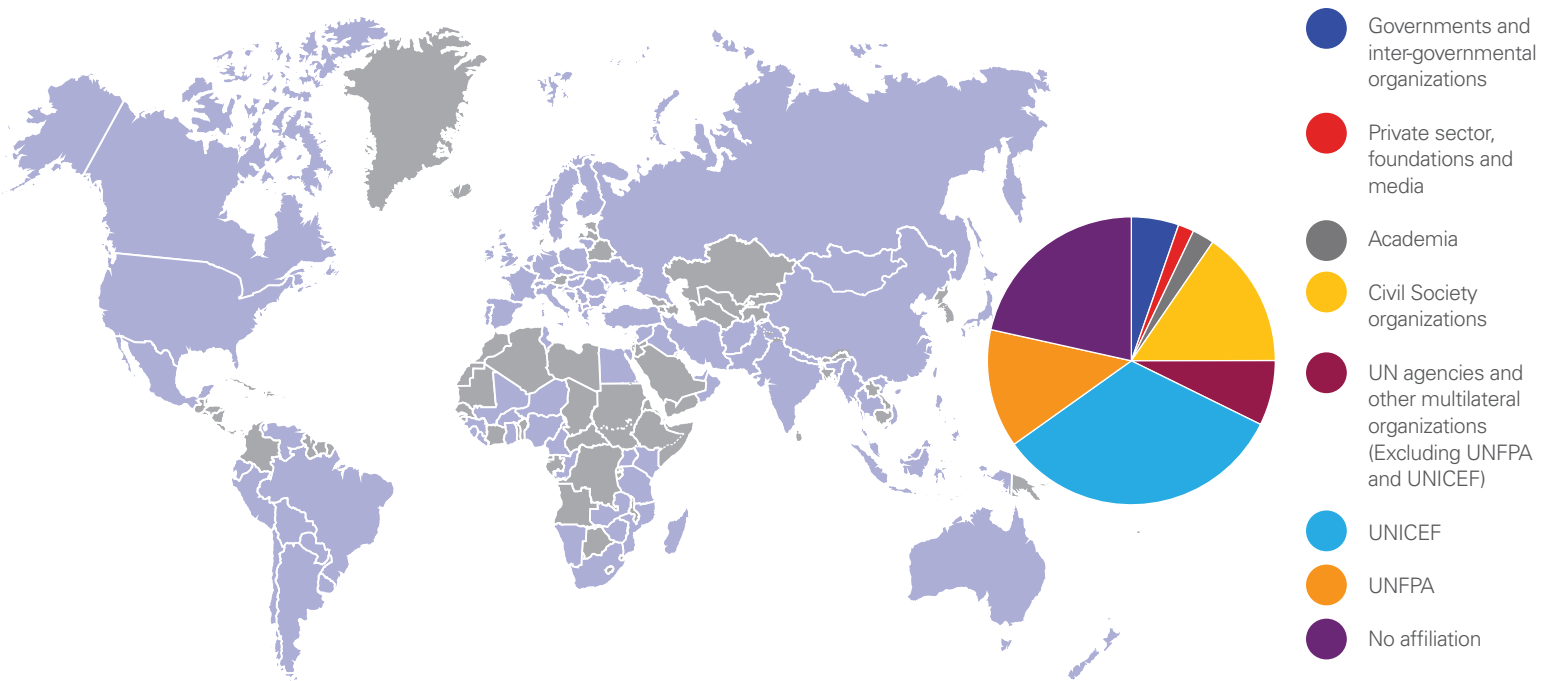
concerts and training activities across the country. The Global Programme also used digital cinema to support community interventions through forum theatres and film debates. The Ghana Programme integrated key messages on preventing child marriage in the national Ghanaian Against Child Abuse campaign, reaching more than 1.2 million people in 2021. The Global Programme in India partnered with the Department of Women and Child Development and the Police Department of Andhra Pradesh in special campaigns during the peak marriage season and also celebrated Child Rights Week in 64 villages with high rates of migration in Jalna, Maharashtra state, where young girls and boys are at risk of child marriage. A total of 13,834 men, women, girls and boys were reached with messages related to the prevention of child marriage through street plays, poster and drawing competitions, rallies and corner discussions.

4.4 Knowledge management and exchange

The Global Programme continued to strengthen its knowledge management efforts in 2021, with a focus on connecting staff and partners working on the Programme and beyond for more efficient knowledge exchange globally, leading the field forward in terms of generating and disseminating the latest evidence on child marriage, and ongoing learning for better programmes and policies.

The Global Programme regularly produces and disseminates case studies, research studies, practical tools and more, which are shared with a wide range of partners to support evidence-based programming to end child marriage. In 2021 the global reach of communication from the Programme reached 957 individuals and organizations in 112 countries, ranging

Figure 7. Profile of subscribers and readers of Global Programme newsletters and knowledge dissemination messages



from United Nations agencies, CSOs, academia and governments (see Figure 7). The average open rate of newsletters and research digests (both sent out monthly) increased during the year, from 25 per cent in 2020 to 30 per cent in 2021, above the sectoral (non-profit) average.

In terms of linking people to each other for knowledge exchange, the global virtual meeting in October was a key activity during the year, where staff from all 12 countries and 4 regions in which the Programme is being implemented joined a three-day virtual exchange and learning platform, together with partners from civil society – including young people, academia, governments, other United Nations agencies and more. On a global level, the Programme also hosted several other knowledge exchange events throughout the year, such as webinars, open clinics and – in partnership with Girls Not Brides – CRANK meetings. The webinars in 2021 focused on the topics of social protection and the launch of the gender-transformative accelerator tool, with the open clinics (a forum where a specific theme is discussed in smaller groups among the participants, sparked by some guiding questions) focusing on child

marriage programming during COVID-19 and in humanitarian settings more broadly. Five clinics were also organized with internal Global Programme staff to discuss issues more directly related to programme planning and implementation. On average, the public webinars and clinics had 196 registrants and 85 participants.

At the regional level, UNICEF's regional offices in West and Central Africa and Eastern and Southern Africa recruited a consultancy company to provide dedicated technical assistance to country offices and promote South-South learning through webinars and virtual tours. The UNFPA East and Southern Africa Regional Office also presented findings from new research on child marriage and climate change at the 2021 United Nations Climate Change Conference, COP26. The research is currently undergoing a peer-review process before being published in an academic journal. At the fourth IAAH Middle East and North Africa Adolescent Health Conference, WHO, UNFPA, UNICEF and Girls Not Brides convened a panel of global and regional speakers to discuss prevalence, drivers and interventions that have worked to prevent child marriage and





The decision to use existing institutional platforms is deliberate and ensures high engagement levels, better visibility for the Global Programme and its resources within the organizations and among partners.

mitigate its consequences. As part of the panel, UNFPA and UNICEF presented findings, programmatic implications and alternative approaches adopted by six countries in the region to address child marriage, as well as recommendations from a study conducted on child marriage in the context of COVID-19. Further, at the virtual 2021 Annual Meeting on Child Protection in Humanitarian Action on Preventing Harms to Children, the UNFPA Arab States Regional Office and the Women's Refugee Commission presented findings from a multi-country study on 'Assessing the Prevalence and Drivers of Child Marriage in Humanitarian Settings'. In South Asia, the regional offices in collaboration with the International Labour Organization developed a policy brief and organized a webinar on the findings from the study 'A Discourse Analysis on Child Labour and Child Marriage'.⁴⁶

Aside from its external web page, the Global Programme also maintains an internal online platform, which serves as a knowledge hub and reference library for the Programme staff. This platform compiles all guides, tools, studies, advocacy manuals, etc., produced by the Programme, as well as relevant key external reference materials. Programme staff regularly refer to these existing materials before developing any new products. The STAR initiative further aims to ensure that research efforts do not duplicate each other, but that country offices can learn from already completed/ongoing studies in another country or region, so that the focus can be on research efforts that will contribute to the global research agenda and close

research gaps. The decision to use existing institutional platforms (unfpa.org, unicef.org, and UNICEF's internal system SharePoint) is deliberate and ensures high engagement levels (visitors already know where to go and recognize the brands), better visibility for the Global Programme and its resources within the organizations and among partners, and allows the Programme to leverage organizational resources in terms of web development, communications and information management. It also ensures sustainability of efforts, as the platforms are managed and supported by the organizations at large and are not based on individual project.

During 2021, UNICEF in West and Central Africa also supported the establishment of a multi-stakeholder knowledge hub to facilitate South-South collaboration and learning on child marriage in the region, and the regional offices in the Middle East and North Africa created a platform for sectoral knowledge exchange on child marriage in humanitarian settings to promote solutions and good practices for preventing child marriage among refugee populations in the region. A region-specific knowledge hub on child marriage for UNFPA and UNICEF is also available for the South Asia region.

4.5 Impact beyond the Global Programme

The impact of the Global Programme in providing technical support and knowledge management has continued to spread beyond the 12 Programme countries, as well as – through complementary funds – beyond the framework of the Global Programme in 2021 (see Table 19).

Table 19. Direct technical assistance to countries beyond the scope of the Global Programme

COUNTRY/REGION	TYPE OF ASSISTANCE PROVIDED	RESULTS
Latin America and the Caribbean	Orientation session conducted on social norms and how to address them in programming	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Countries requested additional sessions to explore other areas such as measurement and implementation ● Six countries (Belize, Costa Rica, Guatemala, Honduras, Paraguay and the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela) decided to use social norms and SBC approaches to address harmful practices, including child marriage and early unions
Latin America and the Caribbean	Technical support provided to advance the agenda on ending child marriage and early unions in the region through technical assistance, capacity-building, advocacy and knowledge management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Support was provided to the UNFPA-UNICEF-UN Women Initiative to End Child Marriage and Early Unions through technical assistance and policy advocacy and knowledge management ● The global technical notes on child marriage were translated into Spanish in partnership with UNFPA Latin America and the Caribbean Regional Office ● Support was provided to the UNFPA Latin America and the Caribbean Regional Office to implement a Spanish-funded programme by: reviewing the evidence on child marriage in six priority countries (Bolivia, Colombia, the Dominican Republic, El Salvador, Guatemala and Peru); providing inputs to a proposal of a comprehensive intervention model to end child marriage in the region; and supporting a costing exercise on child marriage in Latin America and the Caribbean ● In partnership with Girls Not Brides, the manual 'Stand Up Speak Out' on youth participation to end child marriage, adapted to the region, was launched during UNFPA's Regional Youth Now Camp, with more than 600 youth advocates participating
Brazil, Nicaragua and Peru	Support to knowledge management and public advocacy events to make the issue of child marriage and early unions visible across the countries	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● There was increased visibility of child marriage and early unions in Latin America
Colombia, the Dominican Republic, El Salvador, Guatemala, Mexico and Peru	Support for advocacy and policy dialogue on ending child marriage by engaging parliamentarians in conversations about the importance of investing in adolescent girls during the COVID-19 pandemic (activity conducted as part of the partnership with the Inter-Parliamentary Union, Girls Not Brides and WHO)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Parliamentary engagement was leveraged at the country level and global discussions organized to lift the issue of child marriage and early unions
Guatemala	Technical and financial support to implement adolescent girl-centred programming, reaching out to indigenous girls in rural areas through UNFPA's 'Action for Adolescent Girls' programme	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The adolescent girl-centred programme was implemented in the country

COUNTRY/REGION	TYPE OF ASSISTANCE PROVIDED	RESULTS
Haiti	Technical assistance to the UNFPA country office to promote a social protection strategy at the national level	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support was provided for the development of a national social protection strategy
South Asia	Three-hour orientation conducted on social norms for the whole region	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 74 people attended the orientation and expressed interest in further sessions; a session on social norms measurement is planned for 2022 UNICEF Regional Office for South Asia decided to support adaptation of the social norms training package developed for the Africa regions to the South Asia region; adaptation will begin in 2022
Pakistan	Several meetings held remotely to discuss research and training options around social norms and child marriage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Terms of reference for research are being developed to uncover the psychological, sociological and environmental drivers of child marriage A partnership to deliver large-scale social norms training to staff and partners is being considered
Philippines	Technical assistance to UNFPA country office to develop an evidence-based national comprehensive plan to prevent adolescent pregnancy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support is being provided for the development of the national plan to prevent adolescent pregnancy
Middle East and North Africa	Regional workshop conducted with UNFPA country offices (Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon, Morocco, State of Palestine, the Syrian Arab Republic, Sudan and Yemen) to strengthen their capacities in adolescent girl-centred programming to empower and equip girls with social, health, cognitive and economic assets	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Gender, youth and GBV focal points at the country level have been trained through the process to implement strategies and programmes to end child marriage and empower adolescent girls in their country context
Egypt	In-country technical assistance to support the design of a national strategy for adolescent girls programming aimed at reaching the poorest girls in the country under the Presidential Initiative Haya Karima	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> National Strategy for Adolescent Girls Programming developed A contextualization process of the global theory of change on child marriage was undertaken with UNFPA and UNICEF staff by leveraging the comparative advantage of both agencies in the country in support of the national initiative
Yemen	Review of results from behavioural drivers and social norms research	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The child marriage programme is being adapted to address the findings of the research, including increasing the use of positive deviants and champions of change, strengthening community engagements, and partnering with media to promote positive narratives
Kenya	Technical assistance to UNFPA country office to develop an impact bond for girls' pregnancy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Impact bond for girls' pregnancy developed
Zimbabwe	Support for the development and validation of gender norms measurement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Gender norms measurement developed and validated
Nigeria	Support for the development of an approach for a country-wide child marriage programme	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Five-year UNICEF child marriage country programme developed

Table 20. Contributions to Global Programme valid in Phase II

DONOR	CONTRIBUTIONS TO GLOBAL PROGRAMME VALID IN PHASE II IN CONTRIBUTION CURRENCY	FUNDS RECEIVED BETWEEN 2019 AND 2022 IN CONTRIBUTION CURRENCY	FUNDS RECEIVED BETWEEN 2019 AND 2022 IN UNITED STATES DOLLARS
Belgium	EUR8,000,000	EUR8,000,000	9,132,616
Canada	CAD 30,000,000	CAD30,000,000	23,398,560
European Commission	EUR6,375,062	EUR 650,000	724,638
European Commission (Spotlight Initiative)	EUR7,500,000	USD3,416,000	3,416,000
Italy	EUR1,000,000	EUR1,000,000	1,194,030
Netherlands	EUR 30,000,000	EUR21,000,000	24,249,811
Norway	NOK296,700,000	NOK 196,700,000	20,652,958
United Kingdom	GBP 18,000,000	GBP3,000,000	3,926,702
Zonta International	USD3,465,000	USD3,465,000	3,465,000
Total			90,160,315

Note: The table reflects only the funds received in 2019–2022. The remaining funds from the European Commission were received in 2016–2018, covering Phase I. The difference between contributions and funds received under the Netherlands, Norway, the United Kingdom and the European Commission Spotlight Initiative reflects the funds in the pipeline.

4.6 Resource mobilization and expenditure

The Global Programme is being implemented with generous funding from the Governments of Belgium, Canada, Italy, the Netherlands, Norway, and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland; the EU; and private sector donor Zonta International, as reflected in Tables 20 and 21 and Figure 8.

In 2021, the Global Programme received total donor contributions of US\$34.5 million to implement activities to ensure adolescent girls enjoy a childhood free from the risk of child marriage and to broaden their life

options beyond child marriage and early childbearing. This included contributions from the European Commission through the Spotlight Initiative.

In 2021, a total of US\$28.4 million was budgeted for the Programme (see Figure 9). Of this amount, US\$21.8 million was allocated to 12 country offices, 4 regional offices, and headquarters of UNFPA and UNICEF, to implement programmatic activities to end child marriage. Total programmatic expenditure was US\$20.7 million, with an overall expenditure rate of 95 per cent, as detailed in Table 22.

In 2020, it was not possible to fully spend the allocated budget, mainly due to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, which caused delays to both ongoing and other planned activities. With different countries going through multiple waves of the pandemic during 2021 and extended lockdowns with mobility restrictions, Programme activities were further disrupted, causing additional delays in implementing both 2020 and 2021 planned activities. With this in mind, UNICEF revised the 2021 budget allocation for most countries on a case-by-case basis that took into consideration the budget delivery rates at that time.

In 2021, 81 per cent of funds were advanced to 12 country offices implementing the Programme, while 10 per cent were allocated to regional offices and 9 per cent to the headquarters of UNFPA and UNICEF. A significant portion of the expenditure in 2021 (88 per cent) was by country offices, followed by headquarters (9 per cent) and regional offices (3 per cent) (see Figure 10).

Table 21. Contributions received by Global Programme valid in Phase II by year (USD)

DONOR	TOTAL CONTRIBUTIONS RECEIVED TO GLOBAL PROGRAMME VALID IN PHASE II	2019	2020	2021	2022
Belgium	9,132,616	4,483,325	2,355,713	2,293,578	–
Canada	23,398,560	3,793,627	3,782,148	15,822,785	–
European Commission	724,638	724,638	–	–	–
European Commission (Spotlight Initiative)	3,416,000	–	2,000,000	1,416,000	–
Italy	1,194,030	–	597,372	596,659	–
Netherlands	24,249,811	7,700,770	8,225,617	8,323,424	–
Norway	20,652,958	–	13,870,574	6,782,384	–
United Kingdom	3,926,702	–	–	–	3,926,702
Zonta International	3,465,000	–	1,980,000	1,485,000	–
Total	90,160,315	16,702,360	32,811,423	36,719,830	3,926,702

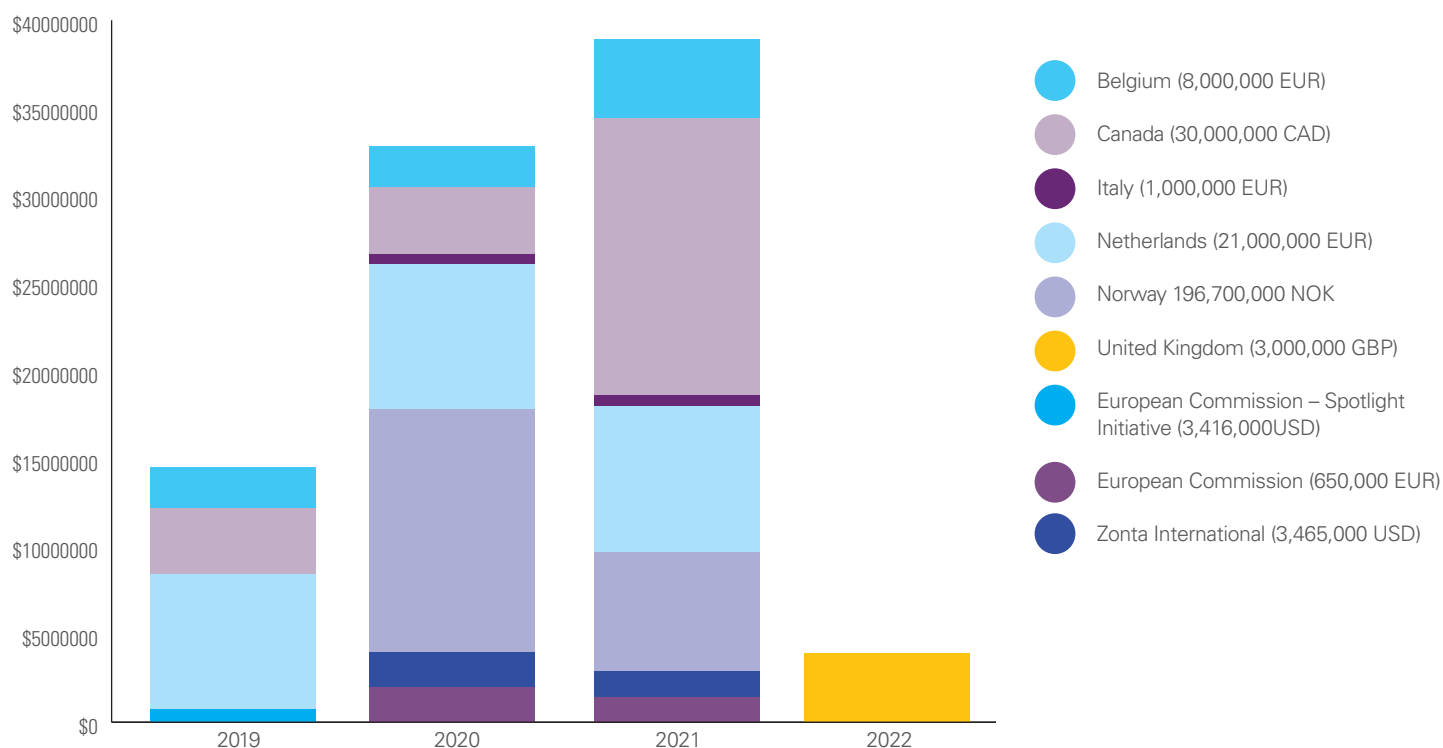
Figure 8. Contributions received for Phase II of the Global Programme

Table 22. Allocation, expenditure and expenditure rate for 2021 (USD)

BUSINESS AREA	TOTAL			UNFPA			UNICEF			
	ALLOCATION	EXPENDITURE	EXPENDITURE RATE	ALLOCATION	EXPENDITURE	EXPENDITURE RATE	ORIGINAL ALLOCATION	REVISED COVID-19 ALLOCATION	EXPENDITURE	EXPENDITURE RATE
Bangladesh	2,175,000	2,718,157	125%	1,125,000	1,438,270	128%	1,800,000	1,050,000	1,279,887	122%
Burkina Faso	1,537,500	1,550,143	101%	637,500	610,124	96%	900,000	900,000	940,019	104%
Ethiopia	2,925,000	2,641,225	90%	1,125,000	1,075,087	96%	1,800,000	1,800,000	1,566,137	87%
Ghana	1,087,500	1,523,491	140%	637,500	696,465	109%	900,000	450,000	827,026	184%
India	2,925,000	1,991,226	68%	1,125,000	808,926	72%	1,800,000	1,800,000	1,182,300	66%
Mozambique	1,087,500	1,046,965	96%	637,500	316,068	50%	900,000	450,000	730,897	162%
Nepal	1,087,500	999,979	92%	637,500	652,864	102%	900,000	450,000	347,116	77%
Niger	1,087,500	1,500,879	138%	637,500	1,014,198	159%	900,000	450,000	486,680	108%
Sierra Leone	1,087,500	991,826	91%	637,500	545,169	86%	900,000	450,000	446,656	99%
Uganda	1,087,500	1,259,324	116%	637,500	735,752	115%	900,000	450,000	523,572	116%
Yemen	656,250	614,879	94%	375,000	410,895	110%	562,500	281,250	203,984	73%
Zambia	1,087,500	1,402,772	129%	637,500	677,020	106%	900,000	450,000	725,752	161%
COUNTRY OFFICES SUB-TOTAL	17,831,250	18,240,865	102%	8,850,000	8,980,839	101%	13,162,500	8,981,250	9,260,025	103%
Asia and the Pacific/ South Asia regional office	483,750	172,088	36%	277,500	33,407	12%	412,500	206,250	138,680	67%
Arab States/ Middle East and North Africa regional office	483,750	91,439	19%	277,500	58,457	21%	412,500	206,250	32,982	16%
Eastern and Southern Africa regional office	690,000	314,898	46%	277,500	149,840	54%	412,500	412,500	165,058	40%

BUSINESS AREA	TOTAL			UNFPA			UNICEF			
	ALLOCATION	EXPENDITURE	EXPENDITURE RATE	ALLOCATION	EXPENDITURE	EXPENDITURE RATE	ORIGINAL ALLOCATION	REVISED COVID-19 ALLOCATION	EXPENDITURE	EXPENDITURE RATE
West and Central Africa regional office	483,750	19,398	4%	277,500	-	0%	412,500	206,250	19,398	9%
REGIONAL OFFICES SUB-TOTAL	2,141,250	597,823	28%	1,110,000	241,704	22%	1,650,000	1,031,250	356,119	35%
Headquarters programme budget	740,867	740,867	100%	238,926	238,926	100%	1,050,000	501,941	501,941	100%
Global Programme Support Unit (human resources)	1,157,919	1,157,919	100%	459,614	459,614	100%	1,150,000	698,306	698,306	100%
HEADQUARTERS SUB-TOTAL	1,898,786	1,898,786	100%	698,539	698,539	100%	2,200,000	1,200,247	1,200,247	100%
TOTAL (PROGRAMMABLE)	21,871,286	20,737,474	95%	10,658,539	9,921,083	93%	17,012,500	11,212,747	10,816,391	96%

Figure 9. Overall budget, allocation and expenditure in 2021 (USD)

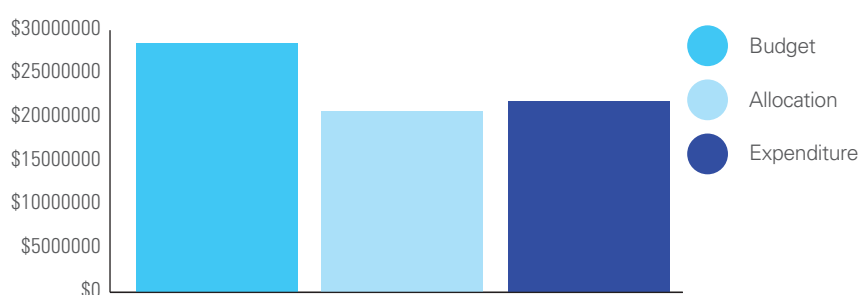
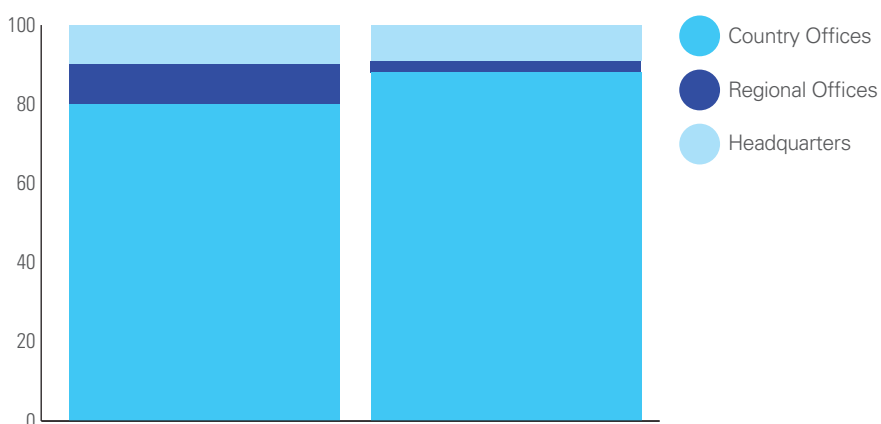


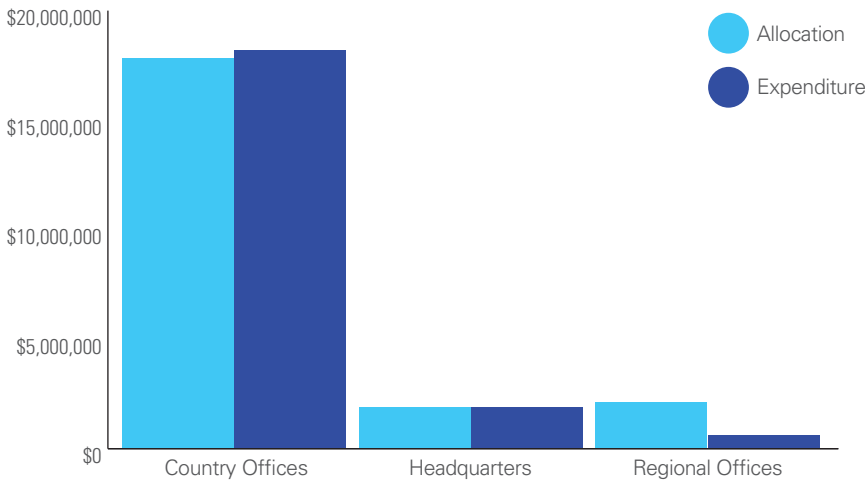
Figure 10. Budget allocations and expenditures by type of office



In 2021, a total of US\$17.8 million was advanced to 12 country offices, while a total expenditure of US\$18.2 million was reported, reaching an overall expenditure rate of 102 per cent. This slight over-expenditure by the country offices can be attributed to carry-over of the funds which were advanced to country offices in 2020 but which were not fully spent during the year mainly due to disruptions as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. A total of US\$2.1 million was allocated to 4 regional offices, out of which US\$597,000 (28 per cent) was spent. The headquarters of UNFPA and UNICEF spent a total of US\$1.8 million allocated in 2021 (see Figure 11).

Figure 12 indicates the detailed breakdown of expenditure by country offices per donor statement categories. In 2021,

Figure 11. Allocation versus expenditure by country, regional and headquarters offices in 2021 (USD)



'transfers and grants to counterparts' and 'general operating + other direct costs' were the two main donor statement categories with highest expenditure by the majority of the countries. In terms of overall expenditure by country offices, 39 per cent of the overall expenditure

belonged to the category of 'transfers and grants to counterparts', followed by 'general operating + other direct costs' at 27 per cent. The third highest expenditure was under 'contractual services', at a 13 per cent share in the overall expenditure by country offices.

Figure 13 indicates the detailed breakdown of expenditure by regional offices and headquarters of UNFPA and UNICEF per donor statement categories. In 2021, 'staff and other personnel costs' and 'contractual services' were the two main donor statement categories with the highest expenditure by regional offices and headquarters. A total of 57 per cent of the expenditure by headquarters and 39 per cent of the expenditure by regional offices fell under the category of 'staff and

Figure 12. Expenditure by country offices and donor statement categories (%)

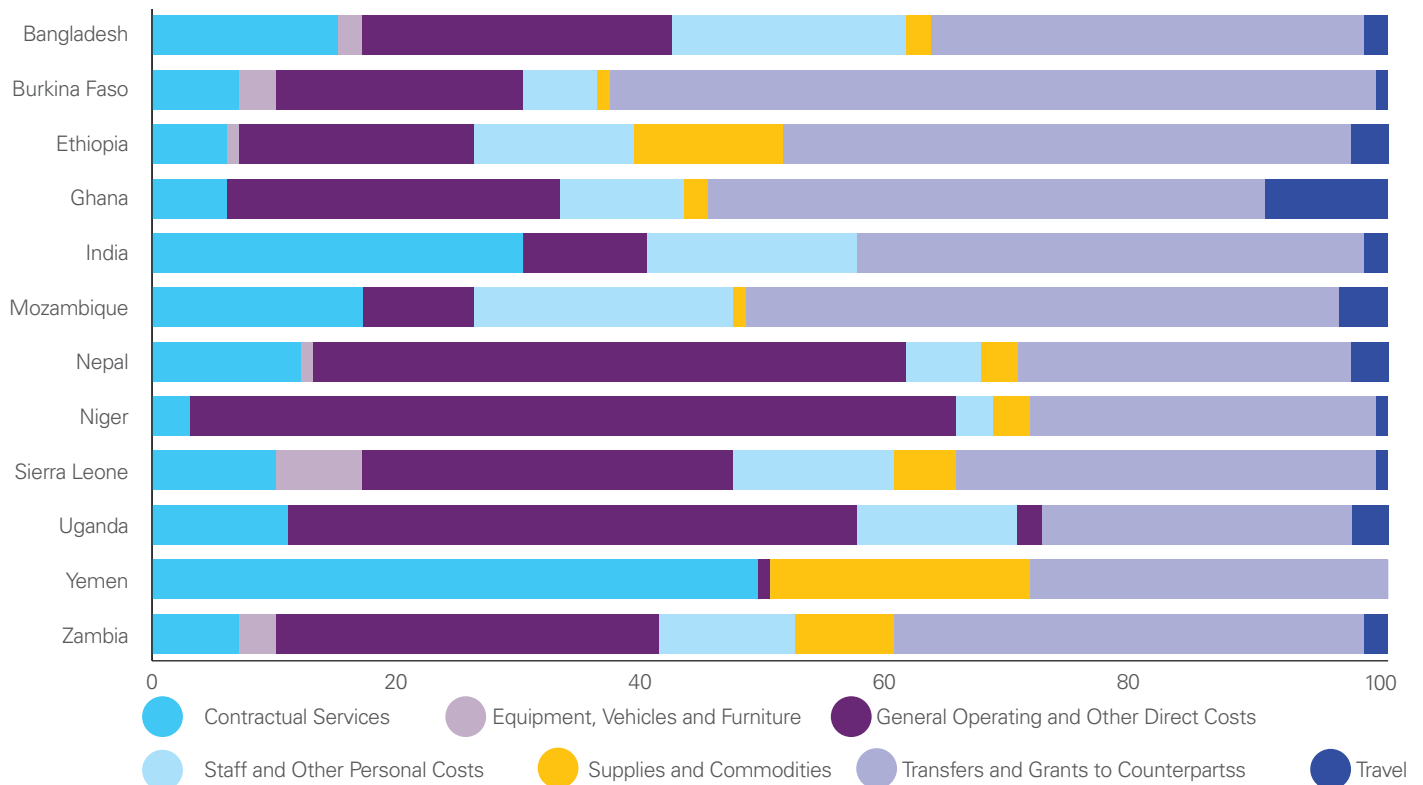
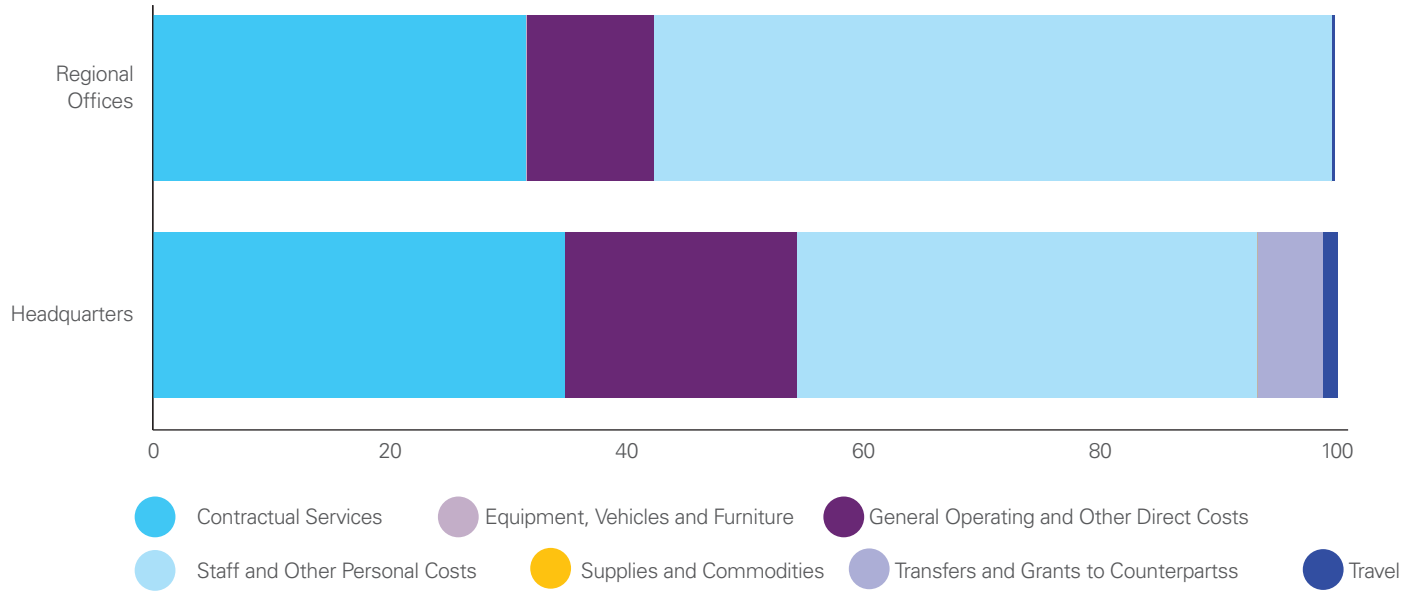


Figure 13. Expenditure by regional and headquarters offices and by donor statement categories (%)



other personnel costs’, followed by ‘contractual services’, with 32 per cent of the expenditure by headquarters and 35 per cent of the expenditure by regional offices.

Figure 14 presents an overview of Global Programme expenditure by outcome. In 2021, the greatest global expenditure was reported under outcome 1100 (‘Intensive support to the most marginalized girls’) with an overall expenditure of US\$5.8 million

(28 per cent). Outcome 2100 (‘System strengthening’) and outcome 1200 (‘Family and community environment’) were the second and third highest expenditure, with an overall US\$3.6 million (17 per cent) and US\$3.4 million (16 per cent), respectively. Human resources also had a greater share of expenditure at the global level with an overall expenditure of US\$3.2 million (16 per cent).

Figures 15 and 16 provide a brief overview of the expenditure by country offices per outcome in 2021. Outcome 1100 (‘Intensive support to the most marginalized girls’) had the greatest share of total annual expenditure by countries with an overall expenditure of US\$5.8 million (37 per cent). This was followed by outcome 2100 (‘System strengthening’) with an overall expenditure of US\$3.6 million (23 per cent) and outcome 1200 (‘Family and community environment’) with an overall expenditure of US\$3.4 million (22 per cent).

Figure 14. Global Programme expenditure by outcome (%)

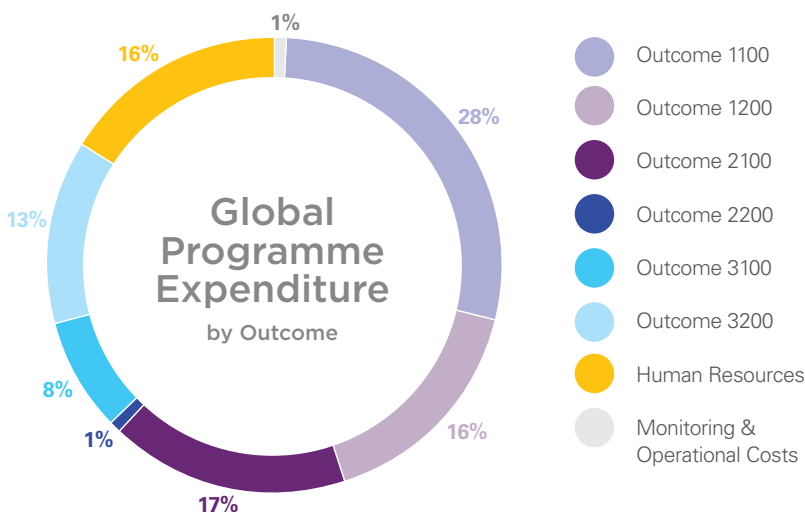


Figure 15. Expenditure by country office and outcome areas (USD)

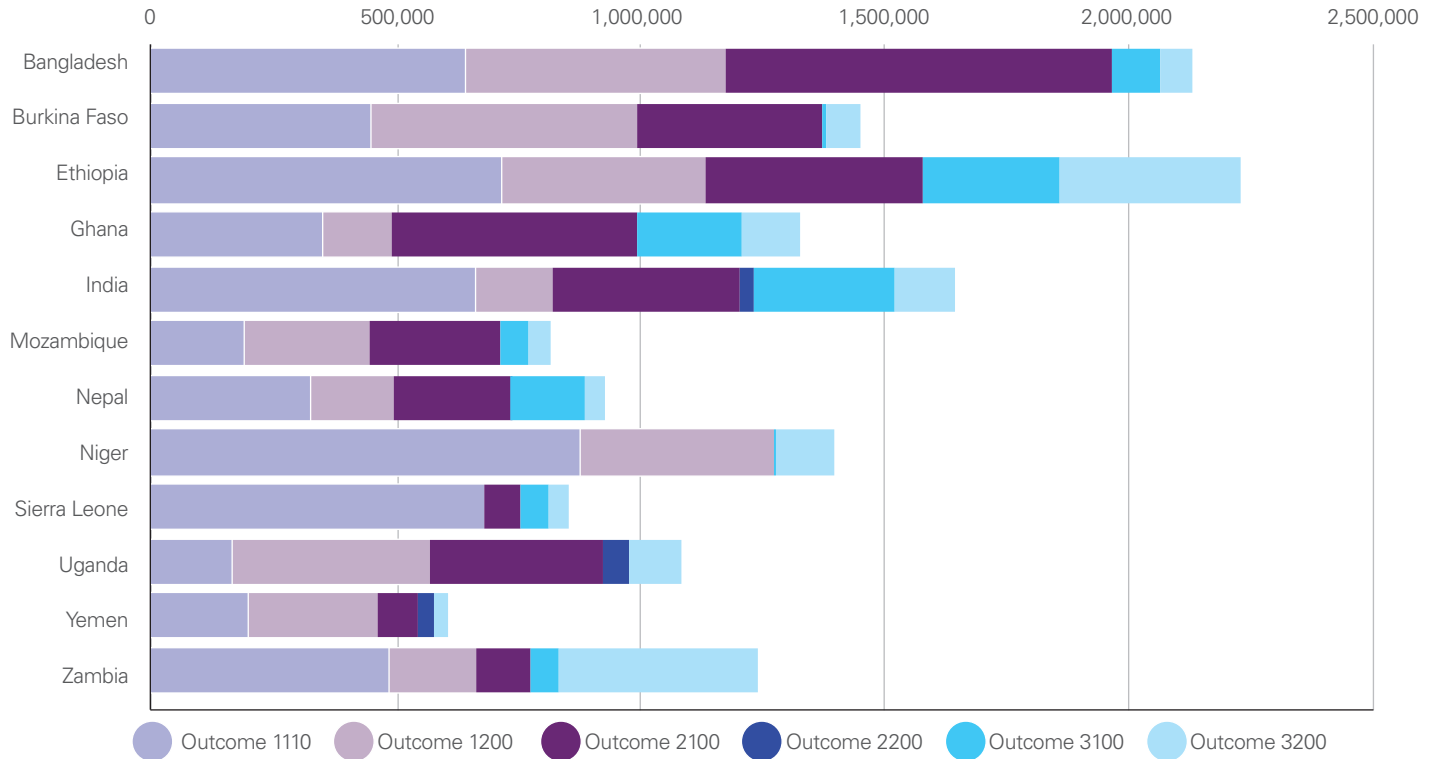


Figure 16. Expenditure by country office and outcome areas (%)

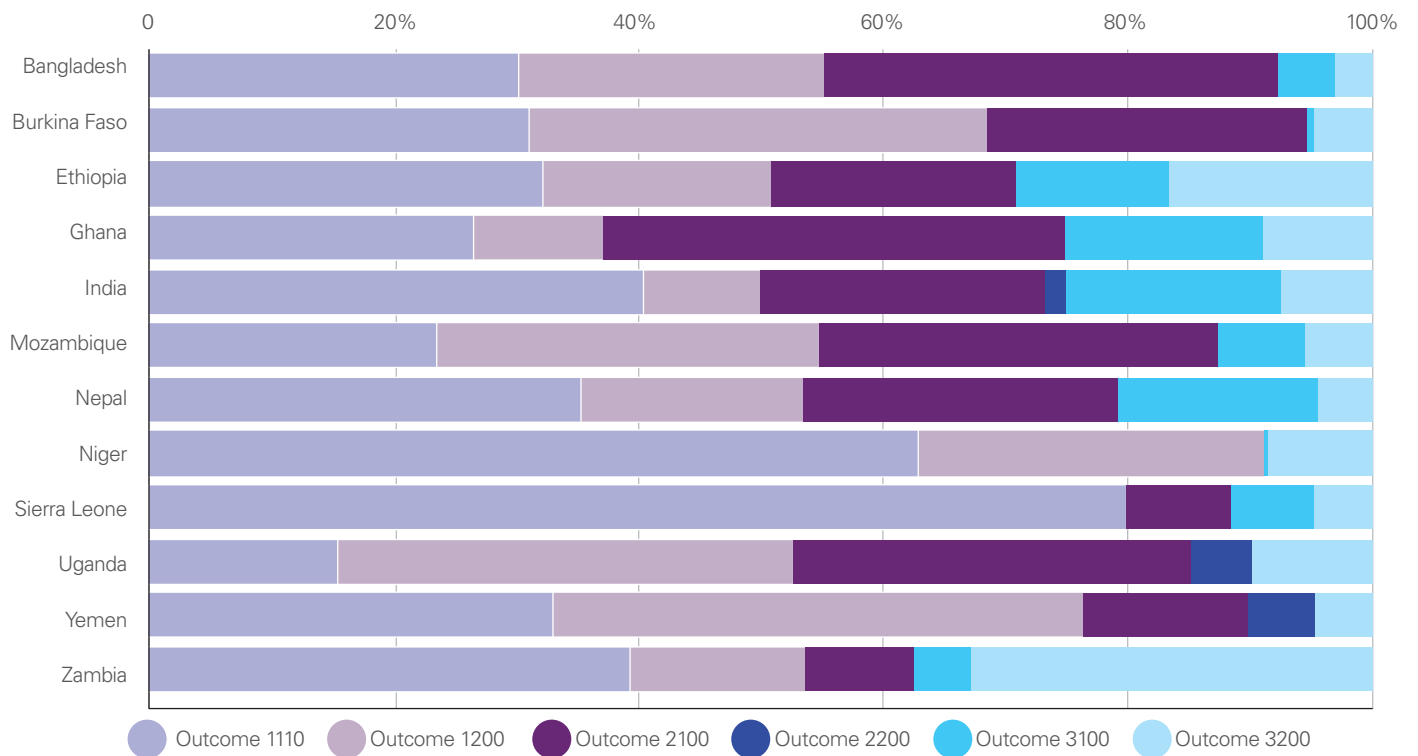
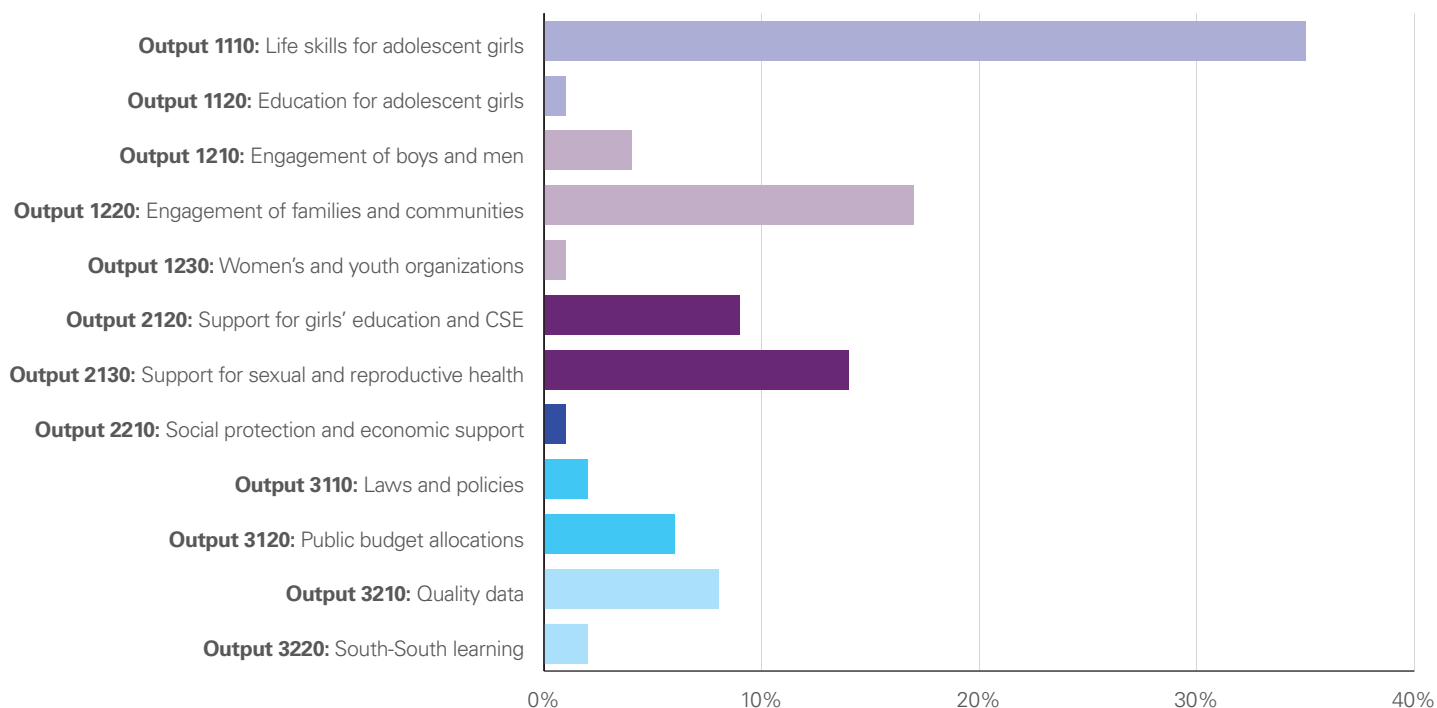


Figure 17. Share of total country office expenditure by output area

This trend was slightly different at country level share per outcome. Ethiopia, India, Nepal, the Niger, Sierra Leone and Zambia spent the greatest share of their allocated budget for activities under outcome 1100, while outcome 2100 was reported as the greatest share of the total annual expenditure by Bangladesh, Ghana and Mozambique. Burkina Faso, Uganda and Yemen had the greatest share of total annual expenditure under outcome 1200. The expenditure under outcome 3100 ('Laws and policies') ranked third in Ghana, India and Sierra Leone, while outcome 3200 ('Data and evidence') also had a greater share in some countries, ranking second greatest in Zambia and third greatest in the Niger.

Figure 17 indicates the share of the total expenditure by country offices per output area, which is aligned with the expenditure by outcomes detailed above. While outcome

1100 had the greatest share of total annual expenditure by countries, the figure indicates that output 1110 claimed a significant percentage of the expenditure under outcome 1100, ranking first among all the output areas at 35 per cent. Output 1220 (17 per cent) and output 2130 (14 per cent) were the other outputs with the second and third greatest share of the total annual expenditure. The expenditure trend as per output areas is aligned with the output indicator performance, where the achievements per indicator tend to be higher for the outputs when the total expenditure share by country offices is higher.

4.7 Value for money

The Global Programme continued to ensure value for money during the year, as highlighted below through select country office examples.

4.7.1 ECONOMY

- **42 per cent** of Programme goods and services procured through long-term agreements (target = 39 per cent)
- **11 per cent** ratio of overhead costs to programme expenditure (target = 15 per cent)
- **100 per cent** budget implementation rate (target = 95 per cent)

The use of long-term agreements (LTAs) for procurement of Programme goods and services within the Global Programme has increased from 32 per cent in 2020 to 42 per cent in 2021. In Bangladesh, 47 per cent of Global Programme procurement contracts processed used LTAs, and a UN-to-UN agreement was signed between UNFPA and UNICEF for joint procurement of services related to the development of the monitoring and evaluation framework and the costing of the National Action Plan to End Child Marriage, as well as for research. The agreement was signed so that UNICEF can utilize the LTA with the London School of Hygiene & Tropical Medicine to minimize operational costs. In Burkina Faso, with about 75 per cent of Global Programme procurement contracts being processed using LTAs, both the Global Programme as well as the UNFPA-UNICEF Joint Programme on the Elimination of Female Genital Mutilation are using the same civil society partners to support implementation of activities at the community level. The UNICEF Eastern and Southern Africa Regional Office established an LTA with the

African Council of Religious Leaders to engage with religious members of the Inter-Faith Councils at national level. In collaboration with Religions for Peace and the Joint Learning Initiative for Faith and Local Communities, Global Programme country offices in the region are using the same agreement to implement the new 'Faith for Positive Change for Children' guidelines and monitoring and evaluation framework on how to engage and communicate with religious leaders. In Sierra Leone, with close to 20 per cent of procurement contracts processed using LTAs, both UNFPA and UNICEF undertake extensive bidding processes for supplies and contractors. The budgets of implementing partners are carefully reviewed prior to partnership finalization. Whenever possible, items are locally procured, to ensure best prices and local capacity-building and sustainability.

Through the leverage of UNFPA and UNICEF resources and other initiatives – such the EU-funded Spotlight Initiative, the Rapariga Biz United Nations Joint Programme in Mozambique, the Canada-funded girls' empowerment programme in Ghana, and the Girls Access to Education initiative in Nepal and Sierra Leone – the Global Programme has maintained an 11 per cent ratio of overhead costs to programme expenditure. In Ethiopia, CSOs with partnership agreements with the Global Programme are encouraged to contribute 15 per cent of the overall budget for activities. In Odisha state in India, UNFPA and UNICEF leveraged nearly 10 million Indian rupees (about US\$130,000) of state resources for the printing and dissemination of ADVIKA resource packages. The state also

allocated and released 10.3 million Indian rupees to support the efforts of district, block and Gram Panchayat task forces to strengthen adolescent empowerment and end child marriage.

Overall, budget implementation rates across the Global Programme countries were above the set benchmark of 95 per cent as countries embarked on efforts to accelerate the implementation of interventions following the pandemic disruptions. Using the Harmonized Approach to Cash Transfers (HACT), aligned with risk management policies of both agencies, UNFPA and UNICEF country offices are routinely monitoring the utilization of funds and enhancing financial accountability. UNFPA and UNICEF in Ghana manage cash transfers in accordance with the HACT in a risk-responsive manner that promotes national ownership and stewardship of development funds to achieve results for children and adolescents. This system allows continued assurance of activities throughout the period of cooperation through regular Programme monitoring visits, financial spot checks and capacity-building of partners.

4.7.2 EFFICIENCY

- **38 per cent** of joint activities implemented with effective coordination between agencies (target = 28 per cent)
- **41 per cent** of localities with joint programme action (target = 42 per cent)

In Bangladesh, UNFPA and UNICEF signed an agreement to work jointly on the monitoring and evaluation framework and the costing of the National Action Plan to End Child Marriage, and on research studies. The agreement was signed to ensure that UNICEF is able to institutionally contract with the London School of Hygiene & Tropical Medicine without paying any added operational costs. Working jointly with the same organization for data, evidence and research pieces will increase value for money for programme implementation. Jointly developing and rolling out learning and training tools has improved the quality of the products and has ensured that the products are embedded in existing government systems.



The Burkina Faso programme has been able to achieve savings and expand its geographical coverage by using the same partners for community interventions for the two joint programmes on FGM and child marriage. This has enhanced the coordination of resources across the two joint country programmes implemented by both agencies. The two agencies participate in joint consultations and maintain an internal dialogue to harmonize opinions and better support the needs of girls and communities. Within the Global Programme, UNFPA and UNICEF employ geographical convergence, complementing each other to ensure wider coverage of affected communities. In 2021, joint programme implementation took place in the regions of Centre (six communes), Centre Nord (one commune), Centre Est (six communes), Nord (seven communes) and Boucle du Mouhoun (four communes). A total of 1,235 new villages were covered by both UNFPA and UNICEF using the harmonized intervention package and approaches.

In Zambia, UNFPA and UNICEF continued working jointly in the same wards in the two districts of Senanga and Katete to implement joint activities towards ending child marriage, including the development of guidance notes with the Government. To enable holistic support to adolescent girls and boys, complementary services are provided by the two agencies through different programme intervention approaches to reach the target community audience (traditional and religious leaders and adolescent boys and girls). The two agencies also supported joint cross-sectoral planning, oversight and implementation of activities at district and

sub-district levels. In Uganda, the Global Programme leveraged convergence with the joint programme to disseminate and roll out the continuation of essential health services guidelines that integrate SRHR and address GBV in Global Programme implementing districts, which contributed to access to health services for adolescent girls amidst the COVID-19 lockdowns.

4.7.3 EFFECTIVENESS

- **81 per cent** of technical assistance (missions, workshops, calls) rated as satisfactory by the country offices (target = 100 per cent)
- **100 per cent** of technical assistance requests (missions, workshops, calls) fulfilled by headquarters and regional offices (target = 100 per cent)

To increase effectiveness, the Ethiopia Programme is standardizing work manuals, training the workforce, and monitoring and supporting the implementation of activities at different levels. To address gender inequality and harmful masculinity, the Programme is building the capacity of the workforce using social analysis and action. Programme monitoring, field-level observations and human interest stories gathered have shown that the Programme contributes to protecting adolescent girls and empowering them to enhance their well-being.

Through systematic capacity-building and participation, the Global Programme in Nepal puts girls at the centre and aims to provide them – especially those from disadvantaged communities – with

appropriate knowledge and skills. Many ‘Rupantaran’ alumni have gone on to participate as representatives on important committees and networks, including youth networks, and been involved in government policy-building processes, etc. In addition, during the reporting period, the Programme focused on orienting local-level stakeholders – including elected representatives, social development officers, chief administrative officers and staff members – on child marriage, GBV, child protection and local-level planning. These interventions helped to influence the local planning and budgeting on these issues, thus not only building a foundation for further engagements on child marriage but also leveraging their own budgets. Without direct financial investment, the Programme has in this manner leveraged local budgets on ending child marriage, contributing value for money from an efficiency perspective.

The Ghana Programme continues to place strong emphasis on measuring effectiveness to address the multifaceted challenges confronted by adolescent girls. A number of evidence and learning activities are planned to ensure that quality

evidence improves the effectiveness of large-scale national and subnational policies and programmes that support adolescent girls at risk of and affected by child marriage.

In Rajasthan, India, the rate of child marriage has declined from 35 per cent to 25 per cent in the last five years (data from the National Family Health Survey [NFHS] 4 and the NFHS 5). This is the steepest decline in child marriage anywhere in India and an indication of the high-quality and effective implementation of programmes and policies to end child marriage in the state over the past decade.

The community engagement evaluation carried out in 2021 assessed the Niger Programme’s efforts as partially or moderately effective. The programme’s achievements benefited from catalysts such as: the joint partnership of the United Nations to leverage complementarities and influence; broader community mobilization for ownership and inclusion; the diversity of community engagement approaches deployed in parallel; and the commitment of traditional and religious leaders, which has mobilized communities.



In Sierra Leone, UNFPA and UNICEF conduct field monitoring visits to project sites on a regular basis to assess progress towards the achievement of planned results, to verify outputs, identify lessons and take corrective actions as needed. Implementation partners are required to submit reports that are aligned to the Global Programme reporting requirements. Adaption to the implementation of activities adhere to protocols according to the COVID-19 situation.

4.7.4 EQUITY

- **12 South-South cooperation** (conferences, expert visits, peer consultations, study tours, communities of practice) supported (target = 21)
- **97 per cent** of direct programme localities with child marriage prevalence in the 50th percentile and above of the country average (target = 92 per cent)
- **59 per cent** of Programme partnership agreements signed with local NGOs (target = 67 per cent)

The Ethiopia Programme targets pastoralist communities in Afar and Somali regions as they are disadvantaged in multiple ways and have a high prevalence of child marriage. Compared to girls attending school, out-of-school girls have no tailored services and platforms that respond to their needs; hence, the Programme also targets out-of-school adolescent girls to respond to their specific vulnerabilities and build their capacities by providing skills training and legal literacy, and by

establishing and strengthening platforms for this population. In Bangladesh, the Programme is ensuring that no adolescent girl is left behind through a blended modality that uses Kishor-Kishori clubs being established in every union and municipality, and courtyard meetings held in selected households in villages to target married girls with restricted mobility. In India, the Programme is supporting the 'Ratri Chaupal' initiative, which holds evening sessions in village common places using audiovisual mode, targeting adolescents and family workers who are away from the community during the day.

Populations affected by the security crisis in Burkina Faso were forced to move to safer locations. In order to continue to respond to the specific needs of different populations, the Programme had to be continuously adjusted and moved to new localities.

In Bihar, India, the Programme is reaching the most vulnerable adolescents belonging to the Mahadalit and Musahar communities at village level as well as through schools. UNICEF has been able to influence the State Government by leveraging additional funds and resources. While UNICEF has provided technical inputs to design the entire campaign as well as ensure government buy-in and leadership, the Government has agreed to contribute their own funds for the implementation of the second phase of the child marriage campaign. This will ensure the complete ownership of the State Government in this programme and the issues of child marriage and dowry.



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In Sierra Leone, the Programme is using the girl roster tool to map girls at the community level. This ensures that the most vulnerable girls, including those with disabilities, are selected to benefit from girls' clubs.

4.8 Child safeguarding

Within the United Nations, child safeguarding entails the prevention of physical, sexual and emotional abuse and maltreatment by staff and other persons for whom the implementing partner or vendor is responsible, such as partners, visitors to their work areas and volunteers. Within the reporting period there were no cases to report to the Steering Committee. The following measures have been put in place to ensure an effective system:

- The United Nations-wide policy on sexual exploitation and abuse (SEA), including zero tolerance statement.⁴⁷
- UNICEF has a [Policy on Conduct Promoting the Protection and Safeguarding of Children](#) that sets out UNICEF's commitment to

minimize risks of harm to children arising from its programmes, operations, personnel and partners. UNFPA adheres to the Secretary-General's Bulletin on SEA, applicable to all United Nations staff. Additionally, UNFPA has a dedicated policy on the prohibition of harassment, sexual harassment, abuse of authority and discrimination.⁴⁸ The UNFPA Oversight Policy embodies the principle of zero tolerance for wrongdoing, including SEA and sexual harassment. Prohibition of SEA and sexual harassment also forms part of UNFPA's cooperative arrangements with individual contractors, service contract holders and implementing partners.

- UNICEF and UNFPA report on their implementation of these policies through the Secretary-General to the General Assembly (e.g. see [here](#)) and through its Executive Board (e.g. see [here](#)). UNICEF publicly reports, in near real-time, allegations of SEA involving [personnel](#) of UNICEF or [partners implementing its programmes](#). Its Office of Internal Audit and Investigations annually [reports](#) other misconduct cases, including sexual harassment, to the UNICEF Executive Board.⁴⁹
- To strengthen the safeguarding capacity of implementing partners, UNICEF has a child safeguarding toolkit with a self-assessment tool that helps to identify the partner's strengths and weaknesses with regard to child safeguarding.

Within the United Nations, child safeguarding entails the prevention of physical, sexual and emotional abuse and maltreatment by staff and other persons for whom the implementing partner or vendor is responsible.

Likewise, UNICEF conducts follow-up assessments when new engagement opportunities are launched with existing partners to evaluate the potential for new safeguarding risks and to determine ways to mitigate those risks. Since the launch of Phase II of the Global Programme in 2020, 88 (100 per cent) CSOs with partnership and cooperation agreements with UNICEF on Global Programme interventions have a completed and verified protection from SEA self-assessment. At UNFPA, 67 per cent of all implementing partners globally have been assessed to date on their prevention of sexual exploitation, abuse and harassment (PSEAH) capacities. This is part of an overall strategy with pillars on (1) effective prevention of SEA and sexual harassment by personnel and partners; (2) timely, structured and survivor/victim-centred response to every incident; (3) high-quality support and assistance to victims of SEA and sexual harassment; and (4) all measures embedded in a robust institutional safeguarding framework.

- **Online safeguarding training:** This online training (which is available in English, French and Spanish) is designed to equip all staff with the key knowledge and skills they need to keep children safe from harm when engaged with UNICEF personnel, partners, programmes and operations. It will also be used by implementing partners to help them understand and meet UNICEF's child safeguarding expectations.
- The restrictions and school closures resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic have brought about new risks such as adolescents being exposed to inappropriate content and cyberbullying in their increased use of digital platforms for learning and interaction. Additionally, the lockdowns have increased adolescent vulnerability, specifically due to tension and conflict between adolescents, and an increase in adolescents experiencing emotional and psychological difficulties arising from a lack of socializing and the inability to attend school. Furthermore, with caregivers being unable to deal with challenging situations in the household and unable to receive necessary support from service providers in the community, including teachers, child protection staff and health workers, there is an increased risk of their using abusive or inappropriate disciplinary measures on their charges.
- The Global Programme in collaboration with its partners has put in place additional measures





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to address these new risks. In 2021, the Programme supported the following child safeguarding activities and alternative channels for reporting concerns:

- ✦ In Bangladesh, UNICEF initiated the 'Digital Platform for Adolescents' that is providing adolescents with safe access to information, social networks and emergency child helplines.
- ✦ In Nepal, a partnership with the women-led organization AAWAAJ-Surkhet was established in Karnali province to operationalize a child helpline and referral services. In India, there has been a wider dissemination of helpline 181, helpline 1098 and Umang Kishore helpline for psychosocial counselling in most of the programme states, and UNICEF has developed a child helpline –Childline – for quick relay of helpline data to front-line workers.
- ✦ In Mozambique, the child helpline Linha Fala Crianca, or LFC, has been expanded to hard-to-reach and conflict areas.
- ✦ In Ghana and Uganda, support has been provided to coordinate interventions addressing sexual violence and GBV, report abuse cases and seek referrals using the child helpline.
- ✦ The Niger introduced WhatsApp in 90 villages to promote networking among adolescent correspondents for their protection. Ethiopia introduced Telegram and WhatsApp groups for adolescents to report cases and seek support.
- ✦ Ethiopia and Mozambique are using safe suggestion boxes in schools and communities for case reporting.

ANNEX 1: List of Global Programme Publications in 2021



Annual report: Act Now to Eliminating Child Marriage: www.unicef.org/reports/act-now-eliminating-child-marriage>



Biennial meeting report: Brilliant Minds, Bold Approaches, Better Results: www.unicef.org/documents/brilliant-minds-bold-approaches-better-results>

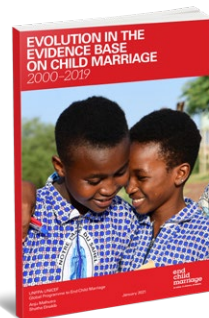


Country profiles: www.unicef.org/documents/child-marriage-country-profiles>

COVID-19 assessment: Joint Assessment of the Adaptions to the UNFPA-UNICEF Global Programme to End Child Marriage in Light of COVID-19: www.unicef.org/documents/joint-assessment-adaptations-unfpa-unicef-global-programme-end-child-marriage-light-covid>



Evidence review: Evolution in the Evidence on Child Marriage 2000–2019: www.unicef.org/documents/evolution-evidence-base-child-marriage-2000-2019>



Gender-transformative accelerator tool: www.unicef.org/documents/gender-transformative-accelerator-tool>



CRANK research spotlight: Gender-transformative and systems approaches for ending child marriage: www.unicef.org/documents/research-spotlight-gender-transformative-and-systems-approaches-ending-child-marriage-and>



Research strategy: Child marriage research strategy: www.unicef.org/documents/child-marriage-research-strategy>.



Human interest stories catalogue: Protecting girls from child marriage during COVID-19 and always: www.unicef.org/documents/protecting-girls-child-marriage-during-covid-19-and-always-stories-change>

Technical note: Monitoring and Evaluation of Child Marriage Programmes during COVID-19: www.unicef.org/documents/technical-note-monitoring-and-evaluation-child-marriage-programmes-during-covid-19>





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ANNEX 2: Selected News and Stories of Change on Child Marriage From Global Programme Offices



EAST/EASTERN AND SOUTHERN AFRICA REGION

'Renewed call to protect girls' rights and end child marriage in East and Southern Africa'

<https://esaro.unfpa.org/en/news/renewed-call-protect-girls%E2%80%99-rights-and-end-child-marriage-east-and-southern-africa>

'We are the generation that can end child marriage'

<https://esaro.unfpa.org/en/news/we-are-generation-can-end-child-marriage>

'Child marriage remains an urgent problem in East and Southern Africa'

<https://esaro.unfpa.org/en/news/child-marriage-remains-urgent-problem-east-and-southern-africa>

'Empowering girls who marry early in Malawi – Spotlight Initiative'

<https://esaro.unfpa.org/en/video/empowering-girls-who-marry-early-malawi-spotlight-initiative>

'Urgent action is needed to meet SDG to end child marriage by 2030'

<https://esaro.unfpa.org/en/news/urgent-action-needed-meet-sdg-end-child-marriage-2030>

<https://www.unicef.org/esa/stories/urgent-action-needed-meet-sdg-end-child-marriage-2030>

COVID-19 and Child Marriage: EuroNews TV interview with UNICEF spokesperson, James Elder

<https://www.unicef.org/esa/covid-19-and-child-marriage-euronews-tv-interview-unicef-spokesperson-james-elder>

ETHIOPIA	
'How this influential woman is leading social change on FGM and child marriage in Ethiopian community'	https://esaro.unfpa.org/en/news/how-influential-woman-leading-social-change-fgm-and-child-marriage-ethiopian-community
“‘You have to marry your rapist’ – Sexual violence survivor victimized by harmful tradition in Ethiopia’	https://ethiopia.unfpa.org/en/news/%E2%80%9Cyou-have-marry-your-rapist%E2%80%9D-sexual-violence-survivor-victimized-harmful-tradition-ethiopia
'A woman who forced her own girls into child marriage, saves hundreds of girls today'	https://www.unicef.org/ethiopia/stories/woman-who-forced-her-own-girls-child-marriage-saves-hundreds-girls-today
'As families favour education over marriage, girls seek a better future'	https://www.unicef.org/ethiopia/stories/families-favour-education-over-marriage-girls-seek-better-future
MOZAMBIQUE	
Global Programme 5-year anniversary video	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=F1jRcBjZe9Y
'Mpupwé community leader committed to prevent Child marriages in Zambézia'	https://www.unicef.org/mozambique/en/stories/mpupw%C3%A9-community-leader-committed-prevent-child-marriages-zamb%C3%A9zia
Success story of one of the radio producers, Joao Calisto, from Ouro Negro, who narrates his personal experience with behaviour change as a result of participating in production of talk shows as well as receiving trainings which further developed his competencies in radio production.	https://drive.google.com/file/d/1TIBkyvjcx_o7-ZyFxmvpkRIknk1Q1VS/view?usp=sharing
'Youth behind innovative solutions to combat child marriage in Mozambique'	https://mozambique.unfpa.org/en/news/youth-behind-innovative-solutions-combat-child-marriage-mozambique
'Community leaders become allies in fighting child marriage in Mozambique'	https://www.unicef.org/mozambique/en/stories/community-leaders-become-allies-fighting-child-marriage-mozambique
'Community activists are on a mission to end child marriage in Mozambique'	https://www.unicef.org/mozambique/en/stories/community-activists-are-mission-end-child-marriage-mozambique
UGANDA	
'Early marriage robbed her of her childhood, but not the resolve to re-imagine a better future'	https://uganda.unfpa.org/en/news/early-marriage-robbed-her-childhood-not-resolve-re-imagine-better-future
'Parliamentarians pass motion to end teenage pregnancy, child marriages'	https://uganda.unfpa.org/en/news/parliamentarians-pass-motion-end-teenage-pregnancy-child-marriages
'Parliamentarians urged to champion fight against teenage pregnancy, child marriage and promote gender equality'	https://uganda.unfpa.org/en/news/parliamentarians-urged-champion-fight-against-teenage-pregnancy-child-marriage-and-promote
'New cohort of adolescent mentors join forces to end teenage pregnancy, child marriage in Karamoja'	https://uganda.unfpa.org/en/news/new-cohort-adolescent-mentors-join-forces-end-teenage-pregnancy-child-marriage-karamoja
'Fourteen-year-old girl rejects her mother's demands to marry a 35-year-old man'	https://uganda.unfpa.org/en/news/fourteen-year-old-girl-rejects-her-mothers-demands-marry-35-year-old-man
Child Marriage and Teenage Pregnancies in Uganda: A lost childhood	https://youtu.be/Nx3Fio3oW3Y
'Girls Education Club members register zero teenage pregnancies and early marriages during COVID'	https://www.unicef.org/uganda/stories/girls-education-club-members-register-zero-teenage-pregnancies-and-early-marriages-during

'Adolescent saving groups move to end child marriages, teenage pregnancies in Kamuli District'	https://www.unicef.org/uganda/stories/adolescent-saving-groups-move-end-child-marriages-teenage-pregnancies-kamuli-district
'Child protection & HIV/AIDS actions enhance access to HIV care and fight against child marriage'	https://www.unicef.org/uganda/stories/child-protection-hivaids-actions-enhance-access-hiv-care-and-fight-against-child-marriage
'A mother's struggle to rescue her teenage daughter from forced marriage'	https://www.unicef.org/uganda/stories/mothers-struggle-rescue-her-teenage-daughter-forced-marriage
UGANDA	
'Early marriage robbed her of her childhood, but not the resolve to re-imagine a better future'	https://uganda.unfpa.org/en/news/early-marriage-robbed-her-childhood-not-resolve-re-imagine-better-future
'Parliamentarians pass motion to end teenage pregnancy, child marriages'	https://uganda.unfpa.org/en/news/parliamentarians-pass-motion-end-teenage-pregnancy-child-marriages
'Parliamentarians urged to champion fight against teenage pregnancy, child marriage and promote gender equality'	https://uganda.unfpa.org/en/news/parliamentarians-urged-champion-fight-against-teenage-pregnancy-child-marriage-and-promote
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'Fourteen-year-old girl rejects her mother's demands to marry a 35-year-old man'	https://uganda.unfpa.org/en/news/fourteen-year-old-girl-rejects-her-mothers-demands-marry-35-year-old-man
Child Marriage and Teenage Pregnancies in Uganda: A lost childhood	https://youtu.be/Nx3Fio3oW3Y
'Girls Education Club members register zero teenage pregnancies and early marriages during COVID'	https://www.unicef.org/uganda/stories/girls-education-club-members-register-zero-teenage-pregnancies-and-early-marriages-during
'Adolescent saving groups move to end child marriages, teenage pregnancies in Kamuli District'	https://www.unicef.org/uganda/stories/adolescent-saving-groups-move-end-child-marriages-teenage-pregnancies-kamuli-district
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'A mother's struggle to rescue her teenage daughter from forced marriage'	https://www.unicef.org/uganda/stories/mothers-struggle-rescue-her-teenage-daughter-forced-marriage
MIDDLE EAST AND NORTH AFRICA/ARAB STATES REGION	
Video on regional digital ambassador, Mariam	https://arabstates.unfpa.org/en/video/mariam
"I got married at the age of 13"	https://www.unicef.org/mena/stories/i-got-married-age-13-lebanon
YEMEN	
'Married at 12; a single mother at 16 in Yemen'	https://yemen.unfpa.org/en/news/married-12-single-mother-16-yemen
'Rural female teachers in Yemen encourage young girls to get an education'	https://www.unicef.org/yemen/stories/rural-female-teachers-yemen-encourage-young-girls-get-education





SOUTH ASIA/ASIA AND THE PACIFIC REGION

'Girls increasingly at risk of child marriage in Afghanistan' <https://www.unicef.org/rosa/press-releases/girls-increasingly-risk-child-marriage-afghanistan>

BANGLADESH

'UNFPA's life-skills education inspires adolescent girls to say no to child marriage' <https://bangladesh.unfpa.org/en/news/unfpas-life-skills-education-inspires-adolescent-girls-say-no-child-marriage>

'A win for football-playing girls in Bangladesh' <https://www.unicef.org/bangladesh/en/stories/win-football-playing-girls-bangladesh>

'UNICEF and BFF call for girls to follow football dreams in nationwide talent scout' <https://www.unicef.org/bangladesh/en/press-releases/unicef-and-bff-call-girls-follow-football-dreams-nationwide-talent-scout>

INDIA

'Mobile phone edutainment helps prevent child marriage' <https://india.unfpa.org/en/news/mobile-phone-edutainment-helps-prevent-child-marriage>

NEPAL

'A simple solution fends off child marriage amid COVID-19 in Nepal' <https://nepal.unfpa.org/en/news/simple-solution-fend-child-marriage-amid-covid-19-nepal>

Fighting Child Marriage, Championing Bodily Autonomy: Rachana Sunar's story <https://asiapacific.unfpa.org/en/video/fighting-child-marriage-championing-bodily-autonomy-rachana-sunars-story>



WEST AND CENTRAL AFRICA REGION

'Vaillante, an original series shedding light on child marriage' <https://www.unicef.org/wca/press-releases/vaillante-original-series-shedding-light-child-marriage>

'Vaillante, the UNICEF-produced mini-series on child marriage, screened at FESPACO' <https://www.unicef.org/wca/press-releases/vaillante-unicef-produced-mini-series-child-marriage-screened-fespaco>

BURKINA FASO

'Abdoulaye: un modèle d'engagement contre le mariage d'enfant' <https://burkinafaso.unfpa.org/fr/news/abdoulaye-un-mod%C3%A8le-dengagement-contre-le-mariage-denfant>

'Violences basées sur le genre: Jeunes garçons, ils montent au front contre le mariage des jeunes filles' <https://burkinafaso.unfpa.org/fr/news/violences-bas%C3%A9es-sur-le-genre-jeunes-gar%C3%A7ons-ils-montent-au-front-contre-le-mariage-des-jeunes>

'75 journalistes/communicateurs outillés sur la planification familiale, le mariage d'enfants et les violences basées sur le genre' <https://burkinafaso.unfpa.org/fr/news/75-journalistes-communicateurs-outill%C3%A9s-sur-la-planification-familiale-le-mariage-denfants-et>

GHANA

'Crippling child marriage through art' <https://ghana.unfpa.org/en/news/crippling-child-marriage-through-art>

NIGER

'COVID-19: a threat to progress against child marriage in Niger' <https://www.unicef.org/niger/stories/covid-19-threat-progress-against-child-marriage-niger>

ANNEX 3: Global Programme Results Framework

INDICATOR		MEANS OF VERIFICATION	PERIODICITY	BASELINE	MILESTONE 2020	MILESTONE 2021	MILESTONE 2022	MILESTONE 2023	
IMPACT: Adolescent girls, including the most marginalized, in countries targeted by the Global Programme, fully enjoy their childhood free from the risk of marriage; they experience healthier, safer and more empowered life transitions, including making choices about their education, sexuality, relationships, marriage and childbearing.									
5301	Proportion of women aged 20–24 years who were married or in a union before age 18	DHS; MICS; Household survey	3–5 years	TARGET	41.1%	37.3%	36.4%	35.3%	34.3%
				ACHIEVED		41.5%	39.4%		
				Baseline time frame = CY2010–2021 Average rate computed N=12 countries with current survey data					
5302	Proportion of women aged 20–24 years who were married or in a union before age 15	DHS; MICS; Household survey	3–5 years	TARGET	11.9%	10.3%	10.1%	9.1%	8.8%
				ACHIEVED		11.9%	11.0%		
				Baseline time frame = CY2010–2021 Average rate computed N=12 countries with current survey data					
INTERMEDIATE OUTCOME 1000: Adolescent girls at risk of and affected by child marriage are effectively making their own informed decisions and choices regarding marriage, education, sexual and reproductive health									
1001	Proportion of girls aged 15–24 years who make their own informed decisions regarding sexual relations, contraceptive use and reproductive health care ^Y	DHS; MICS; Household survey	2–3 years	TARGET	36.8%	39.2%	42.3%	45.4%	49.1%
				ACHIEVED		38.9%	41.2%		
				Baseline time frame = CY2010–2021 Average rate computed N=9 countries with current survey data					
1002	Proportion of respondents who think that children should have the final say in deciding when to get married ^Y	DHS; MICS; Household survey	2–3 years	TARGET	32.3%	33.9%	39.1%	41.3%	47.4%
				ACHIEVED			46.7%		
				Baseline time frame = CY2010–2021 Average rate computed N=5 countries with current survey data					
1003	Proportion of respondents who feel confident in their ability to choose not to marry their daughter before they turn 18 despite the social pressure ^Y	DHS; MICS; Household survey	2–3 years	TARGET	55.0%	57.7%	60.3%	63.0%	66.0%
				ACHIEVED			33.5%		
				Baseline time frame = CY2010–2021 Average rate computed N=5 countries with current survey data					

INDICATOR		MEANS OF VERIFICATION	PERIODICITY	BASELINE		MILESTONE 2020	MILESTONE 2021	MILESTONE 2022	MILESTONE 2023
1004	Proportion of girls and boys aged 15–19 years who consider a husband to be justified in hitting or beating his wife for at least one of the specified reasons, i.e., if his wife burns the food, argues with him, goes out without telling him, neglects the child Y	DHS; MICS; Household survey	2–3 years	TARGET	38.4%	31.7%	30.0%	28.3%	26.5%
				ACHIEVED		37.7%	37.5%		
				Baseline time frame = CY2010–2021 Average rate computed N=11 countries with current survey data					
1005	Adolescent birth rateY	DHS; MICS; Household survey	2–3 years	TARGET	92	92	91	90	88
				ACHIEVED		90	90		
				Baseline time frame = CY2010–2021 Average rate computed N=11 countries with current survey data					
IMMEDIATE OUTCOME 1100: Enhanced knowledge, education and life skills, and attitudes of marginalized adolescent girls on matters such as their rights, relationships, sexual and reproductive health, and financial literacy, including in humanitarian contexts									
1101	Proportion of girls (aged 10–24 years) who have comprehensive sexual and reproductive health knowledge	Survey of girls	2–3 years	TARGET	35.7%	38.6%	39.1%	44.3%	47.3%
				ACHIEVED			49.5%		
				Baseline time frame = CY2010–2021 Average rate computed N=5 countries with current survey data					
1102	Proportion of girls who express increased sense of self-efficacy; who feel confident in their ability to negotiate and delay early marriage; who feel comfortable speaking without fearY	DHS; MICS; Household survey	3–5 years	TARGET	37.7%	36%	42.8%	46.5%	51.5%
				ACHIEVED			53.6%		
				Baseline time frame = CY2010–2021 Average rate computed N=5 countries with current survey data					
1103	Proportion of adolescent girls of lower-secondary school age that are out of school	DHS; MICS; Household survey	3–5 years	TARGET	30.8%	22.5%	18.1%	19.6%	18.0%
				ACHIEVED			32.0%		
				Baseline time frame = CY2010–2021 Average rate computed N=1 country with current survey data					
OUTPUT 1110: Underserved/marginalized adolescent girls (aged 10–19) who are at risk of child marriage or who are pregnant, married, divorced, or widowed are engaged in gender-transformative life skills and comprehensive sexuality education programmes that build their knowledge, skills, awareness of their rights, and connect them to services									
1111	Number of adolescent girls (aged 10–19 years) who actively participated in life skills or comprehensive sexuality education interventions in programme areas	Programme records and relevant administrative data	Annual	TARGET	3,408,567	3,978,626	4,068,171	4,218,501	4,383,056
				ACHIEVED		4,106,426	2,589,915		
				Baseline time frame = CY2019 N=12 countries					
OUTPUT 1120: Underserved/marginalized adolescent girls supported to enroll and remain in formal and non-formal education, including through the transition from primary to secondary school									
1121	Number of girls (aged 10–19 years) supported to enroll and/or remain in primary or secondary school	Programme records and relevant administrative data	Annual	TARGET	337,373	354,084	422,573	480,598	553,442
				ACHIEVED		160,478	135,746		
				Baseline time frame = CY2019 N=11 countries					

INDICATOR		MEANS OF VERIFICATION	PERIODICITY	BASELINE	MILESTONE 2020	MILESTONE 2021	MILESTONE 2022	MILESTONE 2023	
IMMEDIATE OUTCOME 1200: Adolescent boys, families, traditional and religious leaders, community groups, and other influencers demonstrate more gender-equitable attitudes and support for girls' rights									
1201	Proportion of respondents who believe that all/most individuals in their community are marrying children before age 18Y	Household survey	2–3 years	TARGET	52.9%	45%	45%	50.8%	46.2%
				ACHIEVED			23%		
				Baseline time frame = CY2010–2021 Average rate computed N=5 countries with current survey data					
1202	Proportion of adult respondents who can identify sanctions (punishments) and benefits (rewards) associated with child marriage abandonmentY	DHS; MICS; Household survey	2–3 years	TARGET	44%	47.9%	51.2%	54.5%	57.9%
				ACHIEVED			55%		
				Baseline time frame = CY2010–2021 Average rate computed N=5 countries with current survey data					
1203	Proportion of respondents (community, traditional and religious leaders) who are willing to introduce sanctions if someone does not practise child marriage	Household survey	2–3 years	TARGET	TBD	TBD	TBD	TBD	
				ACHIEVED					
				Baseline time frame = CY2010–2021 Average rate computed N=0 countries with current survey data					
1204	Proportion of respondents who think that marrying their daughter/female household members before age 18 is the best optionY	Household survey	2–3 years	TARGET	8.0%	7.0%	6.0%	5%	4%
				ACHIEVED			13.0%		
				Baseline time frame = CY2010–2021 Average rate computed N=5 countries with current survey data					
OUTPUT 1210: Boys and men are engaged in gender-transformative programmes (including comprehensive sexuality education for boys) that promote healthy relationships and positive masculinities and gender equality									
1211	Number of boys and men actively participating in group education/dialogues that address harmful masculinities and gender norms	Programme records	Annual	TARGET	341,201	399,287	1,233,427	1,207,175	1,143,835
				ACHIEVED			6,351,577	1,148,127	
				Baseline time frame = CY2019 N=11 countries					
OUTPUT 1220: Families, communities, traditional and religious leaders, and other influencers are engaged in dialogue and consensus-building on alternatives to child marriage (including education), the rights of adolescent girls, and gender equality									
1221	Number of individuals (boys, girls, women and men) who participate in group education/dialogue sessions on consequences of and alternatives to child marriage, the rights of adolescent girls, and gender equality	Programme records	Annual	TARGET	2,896,674	2,941,474	15,268,603	17,111,961	18,785,895
				ACHIEVED			20,431,081	15,997,882	
				Baseline time frame = CY2019 N=12 countries					

INDICATOR		MEANS OF VERIFICATION	PERIODICITY	BASELINE	MILESTONE 2020	MILESTONE 2021	MILESTONE 2022	MILESTONE 2023	
1222	Number of individuals (boys, girls, women, and men) reached by mass media (traditional and social media) messaging on child marriage, the rights of adolescent girls, and gender equality	Programme records	Annual	TARGET	13,773,723	18,605,951	70,093,613	55,029,294	65,314,233
				ACHIEVED		52,786,666	55,097,021		
				Baseline time frame = CY2019 N=12 countries					
1223	Number of local actors (e.g., traditional, religious and community leaders) with meaningful participation in dialogues and consensus-building to end child marriage	Programme records	Annual	TARGET	5,749	33,407	61,745	62,913	66,387
				ACHIEVED		193,255	163,177		
				Baseline time frame = CY2019 N=12 countries					
OUTPUT 1230: Women's organizations and youth-led organizations are included and supported to mobilize the voices of the marginalized (particularly girls), challenge harmful social norms and promote gender equality									
1231	Number of civil society organizations newly mobilized in support of challenging social norms and promoting gender equality by the Global Programme	Programme records	Annual	TARGET	144	263	214	320	308
				ACHIEVED		79	122		
				Baseline time frame = CY2019 N=12 countries					
INTERMEDIATE OUTCOME 2000: Relevant sectoral systems and institutions effectively respond to the needs of adolescent girls and their families in targeted Global Programme areas									
2001	Proportion of girls and young women of reproductive age (aged 15–19 years) who have their family planning need met with a modern contraceptive method	DHS; MICS; Household survey	3–5 years	TARGET	40%	50%	54%	56%	60%
				ACHIEVED					
				Baseline time frame = CY2010–2021 Average rate computed N=11 countries with current survey data					
2002	Girls' transition rate from primary to lower-secondary schoolY	DHS; MICS; Household survey	3–5 years	TARGET	74%	79%	78%	80%	81%
				ACHIEVED					
				Baseline time frame = CY2010–2021 Average rate computed N=4 countries with current survey data					
IMMEDIATE OUTCOME 2100: Increased capacity of education, health, child protection and gender-based violence systems to deliver coordinated, quality programmes and services that meet the needs of adolescent girls and their families, including in humanitarian contexts									
2101	Proportion of adolescent girls of lower-secondary school age who stayed away from school during the past month and past 12 months because they felt unsafe at, or on the way to/ from school or online	Education management information data	2–3 years	TARGET	82%	81%	80%	79%	78%
				ACHIEVED			36%		
				Baseline time frame = CY2010–2021 Average rate computed N=5 countries with current survey data					

INDICATOR		MEANS OF VERIFICATION	PERIODICITY	BASELINE	MILESTONE 2020	MILESTONE 2021	MILESTONE 2022	MILESTONE 2023	
2102	Number of girls and boys in programme areas who accessed prevention and protection services	Programme records; survey of girls	2–3 years	TARGET	500,660	352,328	459,955	582,635	761,312
				ACHIEVED			243,136		
				Baseline time frame = CY2010–2021 Average rate computed N=5 countries with current survey data					
OUTPUT 2120: Formal (primary and secondary) and non-formal schools supported to provide quality, gender-responsive education for adolescent girls, including comprehensive sexuality education									
2121	Number of primary/ secondary/ non-formal schools in programme areas providing quality gender-friendly education that meets minimum standards	Programme records	Annual	TARGET	1,698	626	882	1,073	948
				ACHIEVED		1,081	865		
				Baseline time frame = CY2019 N=9 countries					
OUTPUT 2130: Health (including sexual and reproductive health), gender-based violence and child protection systems supported to implement guidelines, protocols and standards for adolescent-friendly and gender-responsive coordinated, quality services for unmarried, married, divorced and widowed adolescent girls, adolescent girls who are pregnant or already have children									
2131	Number of service delivery points in programme areas providing quality adolescent-responsive services (health, child protection/gender-based violence) that meet minimum standards	Programme records	Annual	TARGET	3,299	1,879	5,046	4,373	6,039
				ACHIEVED		1,144	6,067		
				Baseline time frame = CY2019 N=10 countries					
IMMEDIATE OUTCOME 2200: Increased capacity of national and subnational social protection, poverty reduction and economic empowerment programmes and services to respond to the needs of the poorest adolescent girls and their families, including in humanitarian contexts									
2201	Number of girls (aged 10–19 years) benefiting from social protection, poverty reduction and economic empowerment programmes	Programme records	Annual	TARGET	902,800	2,919,961	4,938,640	6,956,132	8,974,224
				ACHIEVED			913,077		
				Baseline time frame = CY2010–2021 Average rate computed N=8 countries with current survey data					
OUTPUT 2210: Partnerships with governments, civil society organizations and other implementers supported to ensure that social protection, poverty reduction and economic empowerment programmes and services are adolescent friendly, gender responsive, and reaching the poorest adolescent girls and their families									
2211	Number of partnerships (both formal and informal) established to deliver adolescent-responsive social protection, poverty reduction and economic empowerment programmes and services	Programme records	Annual	TARGET	31	36	58	51	58
				ACHIEVED		48	53		
				Baseline time frame = CY2019 N=9 countries					
INTERMEDIATE OUTCOME 3000: Enhanced legal and political response to prevent child marriage and to support pregnant, married, divorced, or widowed adolescent girls									
3001	Proportion of complaints on child marriage decided by justice (and informal justice) systems ^Y	Programme records; survey of girls	Annual	TARGET	30%	33%	35%	36%	38%
				ACHIEVED					
				Baseline time frame = CY2010–2021 Average rate computed N=9 countries with current survey data					

INDICATOR		MEANS OF VERIFICATION	PERIODICITY	BASELINE	MILESTONE 2020	MILESTONE 2021	MILESTONE 2022	MILESTONE 2023	
IMMEDIATE OUTCOME 3100: Enhanced capacity of governments to fund, coordinate and implement national and subnational action plans and systems to end child marriage									
3101	Policy effort index, as measured by the strength of the child marriage national action plan on six dimensions (political support, policies, governance, human rights, accountability, access and participation, and evaluation)	Policy assessment checklist	Annual	TARGET		8.5	8.5	8.5	8.5
				ACHIEVED					
				Baseline time frame = CY2010–2021 Average rate computed N=11 countries with current survey data					
3102	Expenditure on subnational action plan as a percentage of the subnational expenditure in programme areas	Budget reviews; expenditure tracking surveys	Annual	TARGET	20%	34%	38%	42%	45%
				ACHIEVED			10%		
				Baseline time frame = CY2010–2021 Average rate computed N=2 countries with current survey data					
OUTPUT 3110: Capacity-building and technical support provided to government to enact, enforce and uphold laws and policies, in line with international human rights standards, aimed at preventing child marriage, protecting those at risk and addressing the needs of those affected									
3111	Number of policies or legal instruments addressing child marriage drafted, proposed, or adopted at national and subnational level with Global Programme support	Annual reviews of policies and laws	Annual	TARGET	34	57	62	81	94
				ACHIEVED		10	63		
				Baseline time frame = CY2019 N=9 countries					
OUTPUT 3120: Capacity-building and technical support provided to government to implement a budgeted multisectoral gender-transformative plan on ending child marriage across ministries and departments at subnational levels									
3121	Number of subnational plans with evidence-informed interventions to address child marriage	Subnational policy document reviews	Annual	TARGET	59	82	89	102	111
				ACHIEVED		14	19		
				Baseline time frame = CY2019 N=10 countries					
IMMEDIATE OUTCOME 3200: Increased capacity of governments and non-governmental organizations, to generate, disseminate and use quality and timely evidence to inform policy and programme design, track progress and document lessons									
3201	Number of evidence and knowledge addressing child marriage which have been used in policy decisions, programme design and advocacy	Programme records and policy documents	Annual	TARGET	20	40	23	51	64
				ACHIEVED		18	17		
				Baseline time frame = CY2010–2021 Average rate computed N=8 countries with current survey data					

INDICATOR		MEANS OF VERIFICATION	PERIODICITY	BASELINE	MILESTONE 2020	MILESTONE 2021	MILESTONE 2022	MILESTONE 2023	
OUTPUT 3210: Capacity-building and technical support provided to government and civil society organizations to generate and use quality data and evidence on what works to end child marriage and support married girls									
3211	Number of generated evidence and knowledge that focus on what works to end child marriage	Programme records	Annual	TARGET	19	38	26	45	53
				ACHIEVED		17	21		
				Baseline time frame = CY2019 N=11 countries					
3212	Number of generated evidence and knowledge that apply a gender analysis	Programme records	Annual	TARGET	11	25	26	25	27
				ACHIEVED		14	21		
				Baseline time frame = CY2019 N=7 countries					
OUTPUT 3220: Regional and global coordination and support provided to facilitate South–South collaboration and cross-learning across Global Programme countries and with initiatives in other countries									
3221	Number of South-South cooperation (conferences, expert visits, peer consultations, study tours, communities of practice) supported	Programme records	Annual	TARGET	5	11	21	13	17
				ACHIEVED		4	12		
				Baseline time frame = CY2019 N=11 countries					
ENABLER 4100: Efficient and effective management of partnerships and resources enables achievement of results									
4101	Proportion of programme goods and services procured through long-term agreements (LTAs)	Programme records	Annual	TARGET	25%	39%	39%	40%	40%
				ACHIEVED		32%	42%		
				Average rate computed N=12 countries with current survey data					
4102	Proportion of programme partnership agreements signed with local non-governmental organizations	Programme records	Annual	TARGET	54%	72%	67%	65%	65%
				ACHIEVED		74%	59%		
				Average rate computed N=12 countries with current survey data					
4103	Ratio of overhead costs to programme expenditure	Programme records	Annual	TARGET	15%	15%	15%	15%	15%
				ACHIEVED		13.8%	11%		
				Average rate computed N=12 countries with current survey data					
4104	Budget implementation rate	Programme records	Annual	TARGET	95%	95%	95%	95%	95%
				ACHIEVED		86%	107%		
				Average rate computed N=12 countries with current survey data					

INDICATOR		MEANS OF VERIFICATION	PERIODICITY	BASELINE		MILESTONE 2020	MILESTONE 2021	MILESTONE 2022	MILESTONE 2023
4105	Proportion of joint activities implemented with effective coordination between agencies	Programme records	Annual	TARGET		20%	28%	58%	76%
				ACHIEVED		40%	38%		
				Average rate computed N=12 countries with current survey data					
4106	Proportion of localities with joint programme action	Programme records	Annual	TARGET	35%	41%	42%	44%	46%
				ACHIEVED		9%	41%		
				Average rate computed N=12 countries with current survey data					
4107	Proportion of direct programme localities with child marriage prevalence in the 50th percentile and above of the country average	Programme records	Annual	TARGET	84%	91%	92%	94%	98%
				ACHIEVED		100%	97%		
				Average rate computed N=12 countries with current survey data					
ENABLER 4200: Country offices and implementing partners have strengthened capacities to support implementation of interventions to end child marriage									
4201	Proportion of technical assistance (missions, workshops, calls) rated as satisfactory by the country offices	Programme records	Annual	TARGET		100%	100%	100%	100%
				ACHIEVED		100%	81%		
				Average rate computed N=12 countries with current survey data					
4202	Proportion of technical assistance requests (missions, workshops, calls) fulfilled by headquarters and regional offices	Programme records	Annual	TARGET		100%	100%	100%	100%
				ACHIEVED		100%	100%		
				Average rate computed N=12 countries with current survey data					
ENABLER 4300: Programme mobilizes resources in support of child marriage interventions									
4301	New revenue mobilized broken down by: Single agency Joint agency	Programme records	Annual	TARGET	3,793,626.71	1,500,000	1,500,000	1,500,000	1,500,000
				ACHIEVED		5,992,581.5	25,770,642.66		

ANNEX 4: Risk Matrix for the Global Programme

RISK	PROBABILITY	IMPACT	MITIGATION	26 MAY 2022 UPDATE
A. COUNTRY RISKS (POLITICAL, SECURITY, CLIMATE AND HUMANITARIAN CRISIS)				
<p>1. Political will of Member States – including commitment to legal and legislative change and financial investments – is lacking, thereby hampering positive change.</p>	Low	Medium	<p>The Global Programme has strategically selected countries where some amount of momentum exists against the issue of child marriage. Strong working relationships with the authorities and national ministries will be maintained to build a sense of common purpose and enhance national ownership of the process. The Programme will also amplify civil society voices, including alliances and external funds, which tend to enhance government accountability.</p>	<p>Risk Rating: Low</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Joint UNFPA-UNICEF advocacy strengthens country strategies for launch, implementation and budgeting of national action plans for ending child marriage. 2. Lessons learned from countries that have launched and budgeted plans (Burkina Faso, Ethiopia, Ghana, India [12 states], Mozambique, Sierra Leone, Uganda and Zambia) shared with countries in the Global Programme and beyond. 3. Continued engagement with regional economic communities such as the African Union (AU), the Southern African Development Community (SADC) and the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) through mechanisms such as the AU Campaign to End Child Marriage for enhanced 'influence' at country level. 4. Continued engagement with regional and national government entities through mechanisms such as the United Nations Commission on the Status of Women and the United Nations General Assembly for high-level advocacy. 5. Joint advocacy through civil society organization (CSO) networks such as Girls Not Brides (activated at global level and implemented at country level) to hold governments accountable.

RISK	PROBABILITY	IMPACT	MITIGATION	26 MAY 2022 UPDATE
A. COUNTRY RISKS (POLITICAL, SECURITY, CLIMATE AND HUMANITARIAN CRISIS)				
<p>2. Changes in the political context in countries, such as changes in leadership and shifts in national priorities (away from ending child marriage) affect continuation and sustainability of ongoing positive change processes.</p>	Low to Medium	Medium	<p>Country programmes are designed to implement strategic plans, in consultation with national governments and in alignment with national priorities. Both UNFPA and UNICEF have longstanding relationships with the legislative and executive arms of Member States, which permits a high degree of continuity in work, with slight changes in direction as needed to align with any new priorities. The multisectoral nature of the Global Programme permits continuity and sustainability of action through the most promising lead ministries in any given context. Country commitments enshrined in international declarations and conventions are also utilized as the basis for sustaining action.</p>	<p>Risk Rating: Low</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Continued engagement with regional economic communities such as the AU, SADC and ECOWAS through mechanisms such as the AU Campaign to End Child Marriage for enhanced 'influence' at country level. Evidence-informed advocacy with targeted sectors in all Global programme countries except Yemen.
<p>3. Climate and humanitarian crises hamper or completely restrict implementation. Examples include: New and emerging infectious diseases such as COVID-19⁵⁰ affecting Global Programme headquarters, regional and country offices (India, Jordan, Nepal, Senegal, South Africa, Thailand, United States of America); Ebola virus outbreak in Sierra Leone; earthquake in Nepal; drought and conflict in Ethiopia; conflict in Yemen; Rohingya crisis in Bangladesh; tropical cyclone in Bangladesh, India and Mozambique; Sahel crisis in Burkina Faso and the Niger.</p>	Medium	High	<p>Headquarters, regional and country offices of both UNFPA and UNICEF prioritize disaster preparedness, and temporarily shift to emergency response in affected regions and countries – which tends to usually include children and adolescents at risk of or affected by child marriage. In consultation with the Global Programme Steering Committee, to the extent possible, programme activities in unaffected regions and countries will continue, and end child marriage programme activities will be reactivated in affected regions and countries as early as possible, including during the reconstruction phase.</p>	<p>Risk Rating: Low</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> UNFPA and UNICEF continuously monitor the emergency situation in the Global Programme countries. UNFPA and UNICEF headquarters and regional offices in the Middle East and North Africa/Arab States, Western and Central Africa, and East/Eastern and Southern Africa consistently monitor the emergency situation in Bangladesh, Burkina Faso, Ethiopia, India, Jordan, Mozambique, Nepal, the Niger, Thailand, Senegal, South Africa, United States and Yemen, and through sitreps.

RISK	PROBABILITY	IMPACT	MITIGATION	26 MAY 2022 UPDATE
A. COUNTRY RISKS (POLITICAL, SECURITY, CLIMATE AND HUMANITARIAN CRISIS)				
4. The Programme does not reach the most at-risk/vulnerable girls.	Low to Medium	Low	UNICEF applies a Monitoring Results for Equity System (MoRES) approach to deliver equity-focused planning, programming and monitoring. This tool supports monitoring programmes and policies to ensure that an equity approach to reach the most marginalized children is evidence based and in support of planned impact. UNFPA uses population data to conduct age-, gender- and geographically disaggregated analyses to estimate prevalence and burden of child marriage. At the core of both these approaches are the identification and targeting of the most vulnerable, holding service providers accountable and creating better access for the most disadvantaged communities, including girls at risk of and affected by child marriage.	<p>Risk Rating: Low</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Strategic focus of the Programme continues to aim to reach the most vulnerable girls through MoRES and population data analysis.
5. Inadequate coordination between development partners working on ending child marriage results in duplication of efforts.	Low to Medium	Low	Working jointly with multiple donors (Belgium, Canada, Italy, the Netherlands, Norway, United Kingdom, the European Commission and Zonta) the Global Programme is already demonstrably mitigating this risk. In addition, Phase II will ensure programmatic resources are complementary to each other and reach areas of greatest need. At country level, UNFPA and UNICEF are coordinating with governments to ensure that their ending child marriage strategy is aligned with national priorities, and supporting a unification of civil society efforts, in order to avoid duplication.	<p>Risk Rating: Low</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Governance structure of the Global Programme (such as the Steering Committee and the Partner Advisory Group) provides a forum for coordination between development partners, CSOs and governments. 2. Active engagement in networks such as Girls Not Brides is ongoing, including participation in their annual global meeting. 3. Active engagement and support is ongoing for implementation of the Spotlight Initiative to eliminate violence against women and girls. 4. The Child Marriage Research to Action Network (CRANK) established in partnership with Girls Not Brides strengthens knowledge sharing and capacity of partners, including connecting African researchers and practitioners to global dialogue.
6. Inadequate coordination between UNFPA and UNICEF.	Low	Medium	The Global Programme works within a formalized programme structure that both facilitates and mandates various coordination systems, including through the Administrative Agent function and the Steering Committee.	<p>Risk Rating: Low</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Enhanced coordination between UNFPA and UNICEF through one Global Programme Coordinator, joint communication and joint projects in similar geographic areas.

RISK	PROBABILITY	IMPACT	MITIGATION	26 MAY 2022 UPDATE
B. DEVELOPMENT/DELIVERY RISKS				
<p>1. Inadequate capacity of government partners, civil society or UNFPA/UNICEF staff lowers effectiveness, efficiency, relevance, etc.</p>	Medium	Medium	<p>The Global Programme has a strong monitoring and evaluation framework with intermediate and immediate outcomes, including an independent evaluation in close cooperation with the independent Offices of Evaluation of both agencies. Programme baselines and regular monitoring have been established to track progress of Phase II implementation. An outcome evaluation will be carried out that will outline the degree to which results could be attributed to the Global Programme. In addition, the Programme continues to generate data and evidence that will stand alone but also critically inform the outcome evaluation of the Global Programme. Put together, these elements will be able to track the Programme's effectiveness at the intermediate and immediate outcome level as well as output levels, which will provide useful benchmarks for assessing progress.</p>	<p>Risk Rating: Medium</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Agencies undertake continuous programmatic assessments to ascertain suitability of implementing partners to ensure they are working with the best partners that are suitably positioned to achieve results and have the mandate and competitive advantage on the ground. 2. The Office of Evaluation conducts a self-assessment to strengthen accountability by providing the Global Programme with timely evidence on the status of implementation of adapted strategies during a crisis, such as COVID-19.
C. PARTNER RISKS				
<p>1. Inadequate capacity of government partners, civil society or UNFPA/UNICEF staff lowers effectiveness, efficiency, relevance, etc.</p>	Low to Medium	Low to Medium	<p>One of the key assumptions underlying the Global Programme is the existence of the need for capacity-building of a variety of stakeholders at country level. Capacity tends to vary across countries and financial support dedicated to boosting capacity will be adjusted accordingly. Technical support across the Programme (from headquarters, regional offices, between countries, and from external technical partners) will also be allocated as per capacity and needs. Where needed, external consultants and partners will be brought on board to bridge the capacity gaps.</p>	<p>Risk Rating: Medium</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The Global Programme Support Unit (GPSU) and regional offices focus on provision of technical support to enhance country capacity through sharing information, tools and technical guidelines on knowledge management platforms; webinars; communities of practices (e.g., UNICEF yammer); emails; monthly newsletters; country visits; annual consultations; and engagement of consultants. 2. Country offices provide support and training of implementing partners on financial management, implementation of the Harmonized Approach to Cash Transfers (HACT) and reporting. 3. Country offices facilitate quarterly and annual reviews of implementation, including monitoring of budget and South–South exchanges.

RISK	PROBABILITY	IMPACT	MITIGATION	26 MAY 2022 UPDATE
D. FINANCIAL RISKS				
<p>1. The Global Programme does not attract enough funding to deliver results at scale due to changes in partner priorities or other reasons.</p>	Medium	Medium to High	<p>The option of working jointly with other donors through the Global Programme will go a long way to mitigate this risk. In addition, Phase II ensures programmatic resources are complementary and reach areas of greatest need. Further, the Global Programme has focused only on 12 countries.</p>	<p>Risk Rating: Medium</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The GPSU is implementing a resource mobilization strategy, actively identifying and meeting partners to raise resources. 2. The GPSU is also implementing a communication and visibility strategy, including an advocacy calendar to enhance visibility of the Global Programme. 3. Strategic relationships with donors fostered through regular meetings to review country situations and programme are in progress. 4. Relationships with UNFPA and UNICEF National Committees are sustained through visits, teleconferences and regular country updates.
E. REPUTATIONAL RISKS				
<p>1. Risk of cultural sensitivity of the topic; risk of conservative backlash from within the communities.</p>	Low	Low to Medium	<p>It is crucial that the Programme is not perceived as imparting a particular agenda or ideological framework that is not in the best interests of the community. Hence, careful consideration will be given to how issues are conceptualized and framed in any given country and subnational context with adherence to basic do-no-harm guidelines. Community leaders, parents and guardians will be involved from the start as per ethics protocols as well as cultural considerations. UNFPA and UNICEF have strong backgrounds in community-level work and are successfully managing end child marriage programmes in many countries already, demonstrating that it is indeed possible to avoid any reputational risks to the agencies or development partners.</p>	<p>Risk Rating: Low</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Agencies are implementing in a culturally sensitive manner at country level.

RISK	PROBABILITY	IMPACT	MITIGATION	26 MAY 2022 UPDATE
<p>2. Risk of human rights violations of government partners, civil society or UNFPA/ UNICEF staff either directly, or through action (or omissions) or through business relationships or supply chain.</p>	Low	Medium	<p>The Global Programme works within the United Nations Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights.</p> <p>The Global Programme uses the human rights-based approach to child marriage programming at regional, national and global levels.</p>	<p>Risk Rating: Low</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. UNICEF is implementing the procedures for a child safeguarding framework in all countries. The framework is supported with the 2016 Child Safeguarding Policy. 2. UNICEF is implementing the framework for protection from sexual exploitation and abuse (PSEA) in all countries, which covers some issues that the Child Safeguarding framework is not covering. 3. Consistent with the guidelines for Common Country Assessment by the United Nations Development Group (UNDG) and the United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (previously UNDAF), all UNFPA and UNICEF country offices undertake independent, impartial and collective assessment and analysis of a country situation to examine progress, gaps, opportunities and bottlenecks as regards to human rights principles (equality and non-discrimination, participation, accountability) to guide planning and implementation of United Nations development activities.
F. FIDUCIARY RISKS				
<p>1. Risk that funds are not used for the intended purposes; do not achieve value for money; and/or are not properly accounted for.</p>	Low	Medium to High	<p>UNFPA and UNICEF policies on fraud and procurement are publicly available and strictly applied. Within the Global Programme framework, the Steering Committee is the highest body for strategic guidance, fiduciary and management oversight and coordination. The Administrative Agent will be accountable for effective and impartial fiduciary management. Outside the direct Global Programme framework is the UNDG Fiduciary Management Oversight Group, which will serve as the first point of contact in headquarters for fiduciary matters. It oversees the implementation of the fiduciary aspects of the UNDG policies on joint funding mechanisms and discusses any required departures from the standard Memorandum of Understanding, Letters of Agreements and Steering Committee Terms of Reference.</p> <p><i>(continued on next page)</i></p>	<p>Risk Rating: Low</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Programme countries continuously apply assurance activities through audit firms to support undertaking of spot checks, audits and micro-assessments. 2. Alternative solutions to direct cash transfer to partners are being explored to avoid fraud or misuse to the extent possible. 3. UNFPA's and UNICEF's anti-fraud and whistle-blower protection policies are shared with partners, consultants and contractors as appropriate.

RISK	PROBABILITY	IMPACT	MITIGATION	26 MAY 2022 UPDATE
			<p>UNICEF has developed a detailed anti-fraud strategy addressing fraud at all levels and has designated the Deputy Representative, Operations and Regional Chiefs of Operations as focal points at the country and regional offices, respectively. Fraud risk management efforts are ongoing, including reporting cases as and when they are brought to light. As part of these efforts and to enhance awareness, staff have been trained on the anti-fraud strategy in addition to the online mandatory fraud awareness training. Similar online training was also developed through the United Nations inter-agency collaboration, and has been translated into various key languages.</p> <p>Every allegation of fraud is fully investigated, and if substantiated, the donor is informed, efforts put in motion for loss recovery, and any implicated implementing partner barred from future engagement with UNICEF. These efforts, including the rigorous risk management through HACT processes enhance fraud awareness in UNICEF-funded projects and are expected to reduce incidents of fraudulent activities through prevention, deterrence and detection. The rigorous anti-fraud measures mentioned above target all fraud cases reported in all projects. UNICEF reports annually to the Executive Board on all fraud and corruption cases (see link to the full 2020 report: UNICEF Office of Internal Audit and Investigations 2020 annual report to the Executive Board).</p> <p>UNICEF has a whistle-blower protection policy which is internal and not publicly available. UNICEF's Ethics Office, responsible for administering the policy, and UNICEF's Office of Internal Audit and Investigations, responsible for investigating complaints of retaliation, both report publicly to UNICEF's Executive Board. The Policy and contact details of the Ethics Office are prominently posted in several locations on UNICEF's intranet, and the Ethics Office regularly engages in outreach.</p>	

Endnotes

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- 12 See 'Adolescent Girls' Agency, Safety, and Well-Being Playlist' on the UNICEF website: <<https://agora.unicef.org/course/info.php?id=31280>>.
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- 26 Malhotra, Anju, and Shatha Elkanib, *Evolution in the Evidence Base on Child Marriage 2000–2019*, UNFPA-UNICEF Global Programme to End Child Marriage, UNFPA and UNICEF, New York, 2021.
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- 29 The publication can be accessed at: <<https://data.unicef.org/resources/towards-ending-child-marriage/>>.
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- 42 Engagement rate is calculated by number of likes, comments, or shares divided by number of posts divided by number of followers, multiplied by 100, which gives a percentage value.
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