



**ZONTA**  
INTERNATIONAL

# ENDING CHILD MARRIAGE

## Results to date

To date, more than 1 million girls have been reached through life skills and school attendance support and 1.67 million individuals have been engaged in community-based behavior change and sensitization activities.



## Program strategy

- 1. The Initial Phase (4 years):** Strengthen the critical institutions and systems in select countries to deliver quality services and opportunities for a significant number of girls.
- 2. The Midterm Phase (5-10 years):** Use the power of a critical mass of girls, families and communities and strengthened systems to further accelerate progress on a larger scale.
- 3. The Longer Term Phase (10-15 years):** Reach larger numbers of girls to ensure they fully enjoy childhood free from the risk of marriage and that they experience healthier, safer and more empowered life transitions.

## A program to accelerate global action

**2018-2020 Funding:** US\$2,000,000 to UNICEF USA

## Background

Worldwide, almost 650 million women alive today were married before their 18th birthday and an estimated 280 million more girls are at risk of becoming brides. If current trends continue, the number of girls and women married as children will reach nearly 1 billion by 2030.

Child marriage is a global violation of human rights that can be found in cultures, religions, ethnicities and countries around the world. Recognizing the broad potential impact of reducing child marriage rates, UNICEF and UNFPA have joined forces and formally launched a multi-country initiative to protect the rights of millions of the world's most vulnerable girls. The Global Programme to Accelerate Action to End Child Marriage brings together governments, civil society, families and young people in a collective effort to prevent girls from marrying too young and to support those already married as girls.

## Goals and Objectives

Recognizing that only a long-term strategy will ensure the desired outcomes, the multi-year program seeks to promote the right of girls to delay marriage, addresses the conditions that keep the practice in place and provides care for girls who are already married.

In the first phase, the program, in partnership with governments and civil society, is turning commitment into tangible action to effect meaningful and lasting change in girls' lives by focusing on five main strategies:

1. Building the skills and knowledge of girls at risk of child marriage
2. Supporting households in demonstrating positive attitudes towards adolescent girls
3. Strengthening the systems that deliver services to adolescent girls
4. Ensuring laws and policies protect and promote adolescent girls' rights
5. Generating and using robust data to inform programs and policies relating to adolescent girls.

Under the umbrella of these five main strategies, each country will have specific strategies that respond to the context and factors that lead girls into early marriage.

## Project Beneficiaries



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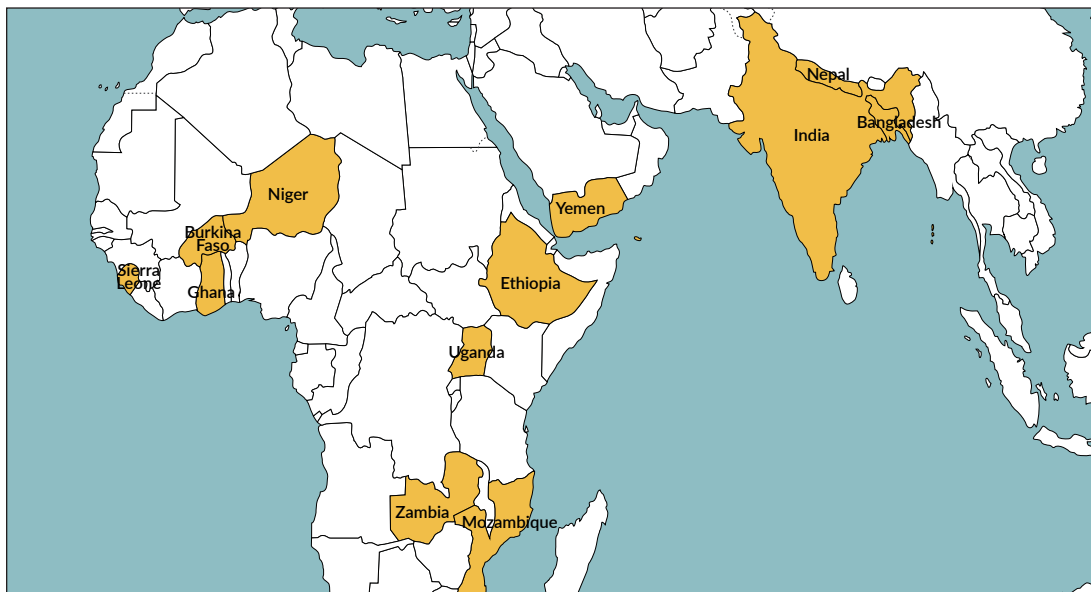
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The initial phase has the potential to directly reach 2.5 million girls across the following 12 countries by the end of 2019: Bangladesh, Burkina Faso, Ethiopia, Ghana, India, Mozambique, Nepal, Niger, Sierra Leone, Uganda, Yemen and Zambia.

## Specific Strategies

- Engage adolescent girls in the program countries through targeted initiatives, including life skills, health information, economic empowerment and social protection.
- Improve education access and retention and support interventions that encourage girls to enroll in school and make the transition from primary to secondary school.
- Provide out-of-school girls with alternative learning opportunities and income generation and financial inclusion options.
- Foster community dialogue and create public service announcements and other wide-reaching mass media campaigns to better inform and sensitize community members to the dangers of child marriage and the benefits of supporting and investing in girls.
- Strengthen health, education, child protection and social protection systems in the 12 countries, specifically by supporting the development and implementation of guidelines, packages and best practices to improve services for adolescent girls.
- Support governments to implement national guidelines for girl-friendly health services and provide training for health providers so that they may be more responsive to the specific healthcare needs of girls, including married girls.
- Support interventions that will keep girls in school, including menstrual hygiene management in schools, gender-responsive teaching, and curriculum and textbook reform.
- Maintain momentum and support for legal reform and measurable change on prevalence indicators by providing support for countries' national action plans.
- Increase the generation of and use of robust data and evidence on adolescent girls for advocacy, programming, learning and tracking progress—which will improve the quality and quantity of evidence around ending child marriage and support governments in being more effective in ending child marriage.
- Work with governments and other UN agencies to improve the quality and frequency of administrative data collection around social indicators such as age at first marriage, poverty, and sexual and reproductive health.

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## Expected Outcomes

1. National laws, policy frameworks and mechanisms to protect and promote adolescent girls' rights are in line with international standards and properly resourced.
2. Government(s) and partners within and across countries support the generation and use of robust data and evidence to inform policy and programming, track progress and document lessons.
3. Relevant regional and local government ministries deliver quality and cost-effective services to meet the needs of adolescent girls.
4. Households demonstrate positive attitudes and behaviors toward investing in and supporting adolescent girls.
5. Adolescent girls at risk of or affected by child marriage are better able to express and exercise their choices.