

Ending Child Marriage

A Program to Accelerate Global Action: Phase II



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US\$1,500,000 to UNFPA and UNICEF via UNICEF USA

Child marriage is globally recognized as a harmful practice and a human rights violation. Despite laws against it, the practice remains widespread and can be found in cultures, religions, ethnicities and countries around the world. Globally, 21% of girls are married before they turn 18, robbing them of their childhood.

Ending child marriage requires addressing, over a period of time, the complex sociocultural and structural factors underpinning the practice. As a result, the Global Programme to End Child Marriage was designed to cover

15 years through 2030. During this time, the priority remains on engaging adolescent girls as key agents of change in the following 12 countries with high prevalence of child marriage: Bangladesh, Burkina Faso, Ethiopia, Ghana, India, Mozambique, Nepal, Niger, Sierra Leone, Uganda, Yemen and Zambia.

Zonta supported Phase I of the Global Programme, with a US\$2 million contribution from 2018-2020.

Overall goals of Phase II:

1. Elevate the voice and agency of adolescent girls by:

- Empowering marginalized adolescent girls through life skills and knowledge building.

- Promoting gender equality in girls' families and communities.

2. Increase resources and opportunities for adolescent girls and their families by:

- Strengthening education, health and child protection systems.
- Addressing the ways that poverty drives the practice of child marriage.

3. Enhance legal and political action to prevent child marriage and to support married, divorced or widowed adolescent girls by:

- Helping governments strengthen their plans to end child marriage.
- Building the capacity of governments to make data-driven decisions and implement evidence-driven programs.

Results to date

During Phase I, the Global Programme surpassed its targets, reaching millions of people in the 12 program countries with interventions designed to end child marriage. The following progress was made during Phase I:

- **8.7 million girls** were reached through 2019.
- **46,000 service delivery points** have improved services for adolescent girls.
- **5.3 million community members** were reached with community dialogue on ending child marriage.
- **8,000 schools** improved quality of girls' education.
- **11 of the 12 countries** have national strategies addressing child marriage, out of which six are budgeted and implemented.
- **More than 125 studies** have been conducted to inform programming and policy making.



Strategies

- 1. Create and expand opportunities for the empowerment of adolescent girls.**
 - a. Improve literacy and provide girls with information about sexual reproductive health, financial competencies, gender equality and building healthy relationships.
 - b. Provide support to adolescent girls to help them enroll and remain in school.
- 2. Promote a supportive and gender equal environment.**
 - a. Engage men and boys in gender equality work, challenging toxic masculinities and empowering them to become agents of positive change.
 - b. Engage families, communities, traditional and religious leaders, and other influencers in dialogue and consensus-building programs on alternatives to child marriage (including education), the rights of adolescent girls and gender equality.
- 3. Strengthen governance to prevent child marriage.**
 - a. Provide technical support to governments in order to help them enact, enforce and uphold laws and policies that are in line with international human rights standards aimed at preventing child marriage.
 - b. Work with key ministries responsible for the implementation of the national child-protection system.
- 4. Enhance sustainability and impact of child marriage programs.**
 - a. Increase the generation, sharing and use of robust data and evidence on adolescent girls for advocacy, programming, learning and tracking progress.
- 5. Build partnerships.**
 - a. Partner with governments and organizations to ensure that social protection, poverty reduction and economic empowerment programs and services are adolescent-friendly, gender-responsive, and reaching the most vulnerable adolescent girls and their families.
 - b. Support women's organizations and youth-led organizations to mobilize the voices of marginalized girls, challenge harmful social norms, and promote gender equality.

Expected Outcomes



Marginalized adolescent girls improve their knowledge, skills and attitudes on their rights, relationships, sexual and reproductive health, and financial literacy, including in humanitarian contexts.



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



Education, health, child protection and gender-based violence systems increase capacity to deliver coordinated, quality programs and services that meet the needs of adolescent girls and their families, including in humanitarian contexts.



National and sub-national social protection, poverty reduction and economic empowerment programs and services increase capacity to respond to the needs of the poorest adolescent girls and their families, including in humanitarian contexts.



Governments increase capacity to coordinate and implement national and sub-national action plans and systems to end child marriage.

Governments and NGOs increase capacity to generate, disseminate and use quality and timely evidence to inform policy and program design, track progress and document lessons.