

Ending Child Marriage: A Partner Convening
Ford Foundation
Addis Ababa, 19-22 October 2014

Table of contents

Day 1

- Opening session
- Exploring regional campaigns in Africa
- Short partner presentations
- Presentations by grantees
 - Data and research
 - Policy and the law
 - Intersectionality of child marriage with other development issues
 - Social norms

Day 2

- Reflections from Ford Foundation program officers
- Communications strategies
- Breakout groups
 - Community interventions
 - Research and policy
- Marketplace

Day 3

- Ethiopia: A conversation with community organizations
- Final remarks from participants and from our host

Recommendations organized by the meeting objectives:

Programmatic, Strategic, Organizational, Contextual

The rich discussions that took place after every panel yielded many ideas that have been integrated together into the recommendations and next steps; these in turn are organized according to the meeting objectives in an effort to hold ourselves accountable.

Next steps, by region

Day 1: 20 October 2014

Opening Session

Margaret Hempel and Tanya Khokhar opened the meeting with background on how the Ford Foundation came to work on the issue of child marriage, what the portfolio of work in this area looks like, and how the meeting program would flow.

Vanita Mukherjee provided background for an introductory session in which she divided the group in various ways by region, country, and whether participants were advocates, NGOs, researchers, Ford Foundation staff or government representatives. She noted that the meeting was intended to provide a

place where people can share information, strengthen partnerships and develop transcontinental connections.

Exploring regional campaigns in Africa

Ambassador Olawale Maiyegun, Director of Social Affairs, African Union welcomed participants on behalf of African Union Chairman. She noted that the Social Affairs Commission has put children on the agenda for two decades, disseminating studies on key issues for policy, including:

- Welfare of the African Child in 1990
- State of African Children – looking at the irreversible damage done to children by poor nutrition
- AU Campaign to end child marriage – launched after a town meeting with survivors of child marriage on May 29. The purpose of the campaign, starting in six priority countries (Burkina Faso, Chad, Ethiopia, Malawi, Niger, and Mauritania), is to raise awareness of child marriage and to bring the practice to an end by coordinating efforts on legal, social and economic measures. The recently named Special Rapporteur on child marriage will release a report on child marriage and will conduct high-level investigations taking governments to task.

Goodwill ambassador on child marriage Nyaradzai Gumbonzvanda was unable to join the meeting for the convening but sent a video message welcoming participants and reinforcing the importance of this issue.

Nena Thambu of AU's Regional Campaign reviewed the definition of child marriage and presented UNFPA statistics on African countries with high prevalence. The practice is driven by a number of factors – poverty, culture, traditions and gender discrimination – and has devastating, long-term impacts. The African Union Campaign to End Child Marriage was started with Ford Foundation support and has since been joined by other groups. It will initially run for two years, and builds on three strands of existing work:

1. Advocacy
2. Monitoring and evaluation
3. Provide technical support to partner governments

Françoise Moudouthe, Africa Regional Officer, Girls Not Brides

Fifteen of the 20 countries with the highest levels of child marriage are in Africa. Girls Not Brides's initial focus was on increasing the capacity of its partner organizations. Recently, however, they have seen more political commitment, and so are shifting to tapping into that commitment and transforming it. At the national level, GNB supports and highlights country-wide initiatives and national NGO partnerships. At the sub-regional level, it focuses on Southern Africa and West Africa, where the highest rates of child marriage and lowest levels of political commitment exist. At the continental level, GNB will contribute to implementation of African Union campaign, work with AU institutions to improve their focus on child marriage, and mobilize its membership around key advocacy moments (e.g., day of the African Child, next year 16th of June theme will be child marriage).

Girls Not Brides connects local, national, regional and global efforts by enabling members to reach consensus and speak with one voice; building consensus via a common Theory of Change for members and policymakers; working together on joint advocacy initiatives; and learning and planning together via member meetings, which they acknowledge are effective yet time-consuming and expensive. GNB gives members' work global exposure by using the media, providing opportunities for members to present their work on a global stage, elevating girls' and young people's voices, and building member capacity to

participate in regional and global initiatives, keeping them informed of the latest research and building their capacity to raise funds in ways that meet international donors' standards

Short partner presentations

Cristina del Valle, UNICEF described UNICEF's ongoing commitment to working on child marriage, a key priority of both the Child Protection Strategic Plan and the Gender Action Plan 2014-2017. She noted the new momentum being driven by the Global Girls Summit and the AU Campaign and referenced UNICEF's new analysis of data showing the percent of women aged 20-24 who were first married or in union before ages 15 and 18.

UNICEF is engaged in a new multi-stakeholder, multi-country programme in association with UNFPA in 12 countries of which 8 are in Africa. The four-year timeframe will permit them to reach girls and communities to support girls' empowerment, education, health and skills acquisition. An inception phase to develop viable national strategies appropriate to each country is underway, and includes, for example, the development of a national strategy in Mozambique.

UNICEF's five-element program to accelerate action to end child marriage in Africa promotes:

1. Use of data for programs, advocacy, tracking progress – e.g., collecting data in West and Central Africa to track factors that have contributed to change
2. Enhanced legal and development policy frameworks
3. Enhanced systems and services across sectors
4. Increased social action, acceptance and visibility around investing in girls
5. Increased agency and resources for adolescent girls at risk of and affected by child marriage

At the regional level, UNICEF's strategies include focusing on scale and promoting systemic change by leveraging existing platforms; strengthening regional and continental partnerships; providing technical assistance to countries to develop gender-focused national strategies and to implementing existing national action plans for child marriage; linking the program on child marriage and FGM to promote positive gender norms; and embedding child marriage interventions into broader efforts to strengthen the national child protection system and its linkages with other sectors.

- In Niger, the approach of the Joint Programme on FGM/C has been applied to child marriage. Resistance by some segments upstream has favored working directly at the community level in community-based human rights education and social dialogue on practices and values related to the well being of girls and women that does not address child marriage up front. This effort involves conducting a baseline survey and another three years into the work.
- In Sierra Leone, UNICEF's entry point for child marriage has been adolescent pregnancy. They have contributed to a multisectoral national strategy for reduction of teen pregnancy linked to child marriage; promoted allocation of national budget for reduction of teen pregnancy and established coordination structures; established a national behavior and social change communications strategy; supported social mobilization and generational dialogue in 14 districts to develop local solutions; supported an analysis of customary laws and how to harmonize this with state legislation; contributed to the development of a standardized life skills curriculum, training of service providers, inclusion of SRH and gender; and are driving research and evaluation.

Annabel Erulkar, Population Council described the Berhane Hewan program in Ethiopia as a package of interventions including:

- Community conversations on the dangers of early marriage (social norms)
- Provision of school supplies to address economic barriers to schooling (to support education)
- Conditional cash transfer (goat) promised to girls and their families for keeping her in school and unmarried for two year duration of program
- Safe spaces, mentoring groups especially for married girls, offering life skills, RH information, subsidy of a clinic card for RH and MCH and – key – accompaniment to the clinic
- Eligible girls and parents/guardians come to central place to make a public commitment

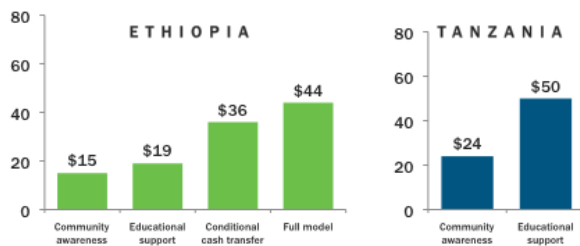
Berhane Hewan has been very successful among 10-14 year olds who are 1/10 as likely to be married

and 3 times more likely to be in school. Married girls are 3 times more likely to use family planning than their peers who did not participate.



Monitoring cost of interventions

Cost of strategies to delay marriage per girl per year, by model and country *



Source: Costing spreadsheet; Note: *In USD, preliminary analysis; Data for Tanzania conditional cash transfer and full model not included as no CCT/ goat has been given yet. Population of girls in community awareness model is estimated based on available population data

Although the program showed that it is possible to make dramatic reductions in child marriage in a relatively short time, it was hard to analyze the contribution of each element, since many girls were exposed to multiple elements of the program. USAID is therefore now supporting a 6-year intervention study that builds on Berhane Hewan and evaluates the impact of various program components to delay marriage in three child marriage ‘hotspots’ in Africa (Ethiopia, Tanzania, Burkina Faso). These intervention

studies have reflected commitment to four key principles:

1. Using percentages enrolled to see where to intensify efforts to find the highest-risk girls;
2. Directing the bulk of resources directly at girls themselves;
3. Focusing on scale-up from the outset;
4. Tracking costs per girl (see slide, above).

The discussion emphasized the importance of tracking the savings and benefits to girls and how these map onto the costs per girl.

Chigozirim Ihuoma Bodart, UNFPA Ethiopia discussed UNFPA’s work to end child marriage and its focus on building the positive, protective assets of girls. They emphasize health, social and economic assets, but have realized that policy and a legal enabling environment is also very important. UNFPA has partnered with Ford Foundation and UNICEF to support the continental launch of the AU Campaign to End Child Marriage and is supporting national End Child Marriage Campaigns in high prevalence countries through UNFPA country offices:

- Mozambique – Geração Biz tailored to poorer, younger girls in Maputo, Nampula, Zambezia; the materials were revised, personnel trained, M&E framework developed, political support mobilized, media outreach and training conducted 1999-2009
- Ethiopia – support for Berhane Hewan program in collaboration with the government of Ethiopia
- Malawi – advocacy for harmonization of laws, including repeal of law to establish 16 as legal age of marriage, multisectoral program for adolescent girls and elimination of child marriage 2010

- Tanzania – National launch of national Ending Child Marriage Campaign (child marriage free zone). Very strong support from ministries, traditional authorities, civil society orgs 2014-
- Togo – situation analysis and development of national programme to fight early pregnancy and marriages 2014-
- Zambia – girl-centered program in several provinces, plus leadership in national campaign to end CM 2014-
- Niger – Target to reach 255,000 vulnerable girls aged 10-14, 15-19 during 2014-2018 period, revising the law, integrating girls ‘ needs in national policy, changing social norms, involving community leaders, empowering girls with knowledge, life skills, and access to information and services

Emmily Kamwendo-Naphambo, Sub-Regional Programme Manager, Plan International described the need to adapt its work to prevent child marriage to each cultural setting. Plan partnered with ICRW to develop this plan whose key elements are to:

- Mobilize girls at risk of child marriage so they have the capacity to determine their own futures
- Transform through social movement building
- Build an enabling environment for programs and policies

Their complex program works at the sub-regional level in Southern Africa with the SADC council of chiefs. The sub-regional component is also the resource hub for participating countries, which draw on these materials and then produce country-specific policy analysis and research briefs.

Dr. Nkatha Murungi, Head, Children and the Law Programme, African Child Policy Forum introduced ADPF as a pan-African NGO focused on bringing children to the public agenda. Child marriage is treated as a child protection issue as well as a legal and rights issue, through the work of Children and the Law Programme. ACFP views the incidence of child marriage as an indicator of child-friendly governance.

ACPF conducts thematic summaries of specific challenges and conduct an annual review of government performance on child protection issues, including child marriage. High prevalence is associated with low harmonization of legal framework with international standards. Their focus is to establish an evidence base that can be used to influence policy. They are now working to document violence in the context of child marriage.

PRESENTATIONS BY GRANTEES

Data and research

Negar Ashtari, Development Research and Projects Centre

Maria Lafuente Funes, Officer of Alliances, UNFPA

José Roberto Luna Manzanero, Youth Specialist in Education and Masculinity, UNFPA

These presentations focused on the critical types of data needed and the challenges to data collection:

- DRPC believes that all development interventions should be informed by quality, participatory data, both qualitative and quantitative. The Centre sits on reference groups on big research issues. They recommend conducting child marriage audits of programs on health, education and economic empowerment to see how the issues are dealt with within those sectors.

- There is a strong need to collect data that makes girls more visible and also to work directly with girls to highlight their experiences. In Latin America, child marriage is not present in the public agenda, which poses challenges to data collection. Nationally representative data could convince people that child marriage *exists* as a problem. We know nothing about consensual unions. And if we did, we would know a lot more about child marriage. So in Latin America, the first priority is to make child marriage visible. Early unions in Central America are closely linked with sexual violence against girls. Some protection laws are not enforced.
- The perception exists in Brazil that child marriage occurs only in most remote areas, so Promundo chose two capital cities in the two states with the highest prevalence. The research is raising the issue of consent within the marriage and the issue of choice, which is made possible in part by the existence of divorce!!!
- The costs of this kind of study are also quite high, since we need to collect complex data on attitudinal and behavioral change related to child marriage.
- How should researchers work with programs? It works best to bring together policymakers, the research on what works and specific programs. But a lot of research is conducted by small, low-capacity organizations at the community level. Need to bring together people from various sectors and institutions to draw up organizational action plans.

Policy and the law

Nyasha Chingore, Project lawyer, Sexual and Reproductive Rights Programme, Southern African Litigation Center, Botswana highlighted that plural legal systems are a real problem. Litigation is one approach to explore the interpretation of law where there are dual legal systems and customary law is in conflict with human rights. This way we see whether customary law adheres to certain tenets of human rights.

Hala Youssef, Chair, National Population Council, Egypt noted that very conservative high-level voices are promoting child marriage in the face of Egypt's progressive law. These are very influential in certain geographical areas and appear to be increasing in some governorates. Community mobilization is very important to support ending child marriage. In Egypt and elsewhere, it is important to harmonize the civil, religious and legal guidance for marriage, prevent customary solemnization, provide for local leaders/chiefs to be registrars, assess girls' age, provide access to justice, develop a cadre of lawyers and share experiences of what happens in the country or region.

Intersectionality of child marriage with other development issues

Zeinab Heada, CARE Egypt talked about how at the community level, the issues are being dealt with, but in the organizations that work on child marriage, you find strong silos and likewise with the ministries who do not talk to each other. What is happening in Zambia now is good practice. Working at the community level is deeply intersectional and multi-dimensional, for example, CARE Egypt provides SRH to everyone in community, not just girls but parents as well. Egypt has just concluded drafting a Strategy to End Child Marriage; the process was very difficult and required bringing together very different groups, which nonetheless saw the benefits of working together.

Rotimi Sankore, Coordinator, Africa Health and Social Development Alliance stated that the whole future of Africa depends on the resolution of the problem of child marriage, which knocks out half of the women on the continent with regard to education, maternal mortality, sexual and reproductive health. We need to understand marriage as a prison in which young women are trapped. Niger has a TFR of 7.6

children per woman so in 15 years, the population will more than double, with serious implications for violence, peace, youth unemployment and security. The challenges are enormous.

Social norms

Sailen Sharma, Child In Need Institute described effective ways of working with men and boys? CINI has been working with boys as well as girls for the past 14 years. They start by mapping every household in a focus community in terms of its vulnerabilities and tracking and intervening with parents and the *panchayat* when marriages are being arranged. Their work has benefited from the power of street theater, through which they raise questions for the audience and oblige the community to engage on issues related to early marriage. Recognizing the need to involve parents and other male community members, they also organize exchange among community members. CINI has also worked to challenge gendered norms that keep girls out of public spaces by organizing soccer and *kabadi* games between the boys and girls and get the community talking about the public presence of girls.

Bilkisu Yusuf, Executive Director, Advocacy Nigeria described high levels of child marriage and numbers of children out of school in Northern Nigeria: boys leave schools to attend madrasas, girls either never enroll or drop out early. Reinforcing early marriage are the reality of poverty, and the benefits of the financial transaction for families, the fact that it is a tradition in royalty to marry girls off young, and that those who make policy locally are all men. It is very dangerous for people to speak out against the practice because they risk being seen as against the Qur'an. The key is to keep girls in school, which Islam supports, and to emphasize also the health implications of early marriage. Men must be brought along to keep girls in school. Bilkisu Yusuf noted that the practice in Nigeria reflects much the same set of reasons as in India.

Key themes from Day 1

- How can we deepen our discussion of community interventions?
- How can we amplify our work on the protection side for women in these relationships?
- How do we work in partnership at community and national levels to avoid duplicating efforts?
- How do we target: Whose community? Which groups? Parents?

Day 2: 21 October 2014

Reflections from Ford Foundation program officers

Three themes were addressed in discussion with Ford Foundation program officers:

- Why did you choose child marriage to work on?
- What do you see as the intersectionalities?
- What are the connections with youth and sexuality?

Friday Okonofua, West Africa: Working in field of SRH he has come to see the harmful consequences of child marriage: maternal mortality, fistula and other physical consequences. High fertility. Governments and policymakers are not handling key issues like sexuality education. Won't succeed with MDGs if we don't address the norms that stand in the way of youth development. "Social disequilibrium." Child marriage as one reflection of the harmful practices that young people are subject to.

Montasser Kamal, MENA: Very interested in social justice issues and child marriage arose as a focus area for the Foundation. We became interested in our office because we already had a strong base of partners who were interested in these issues. Our researchers are connecting with our community-

based organizations, and our policy work is informed by the work the others are doing. So this has been a very useful sub-focus of our youth work.

Vanita Mukherjee, Asia: Since 2009, started doing a mapping and scoping what was going on with adolescent girls in India. Population Council and IIPS had done a huge study in 6 states, collecting a variety of data. These highlighted a number of key issues, child marriage among them. India has the largest number of child brides. And this issue has been addressed in the reproductive health framework. And we are engaging with large government programs, including one called Sabla – our grant-making is taking place through 13 grants on related topics, and at a variety of levels. What has the government promised and how can we make them accountable? Mamta is looking at inter-departmental convergence.

Eka Williams, Southern Africa: Didn't come to child marriage directly, but started to see that with instability in the region, adolescent girls were increasingly marrying earlier. What was the work we could do with adolescents in this area, in addition to sexuality education? It turned out child marriage was a concrete area of work for us. Regarding intersectionality, for us it has been the connections between child marriage, teen pregnancy, etc. The AU Campaign also provides us with a great opportunity.

Specific challenges that you or partners are facing in your work on child marriage?

- **Eka Williams:** Fragmented work on the ground and how to pull it together and understand what the priorities are for partners.
- **Vanita Mukherjee:** How with your limited resources you can reach out to people on the ground and connect with the good work that is happening. Keeping up to date with what is on the ground is hard. Donor collaboration is challenging since donors often work without connecting with others.
- **Friday Okonofua:** Social norms are so difficult to even begin to confront, religious fundamentalism, misunderstandings, etc. Level of instability and insurgency in the region and the need to address these root causes – for which we need to maintain faith that we will be able to deal with them in our lifetime. Lack of political will, governance issues and weak governance infrastructure.
- **Montasser Kamal:** We already have some gains in our context: we have a law and national strategy in Egypt. We have had a regime in the past two years that wanted to challenge these gains so we need to protect them. And we have to operationalize these gains. How do we make law enforceable? How do we scale up community interventions that work? Would like to have all the partners working on child marriage to work as one if we want this work to add value to our societies in the future. How do we link what we are doing to/across the bigger levels (community, national, regional, continent, global)?

Discussion and response by program officers:

- Research is important, and donors have not been emphasizing this area. We can't begin to design programs without knowing in detail what is happening in a particular setting. Nor can we see whether our interventions are working if we don't invest in research. We want our grantees to document their work and to share it widely with others.
- We mustn't think of research as a standalone activity, but rather as fully integrated into our grants so that we improve the quality of our grantmaking. We have supported our partners in national-level consultations for exchange of learning and to facilitate sharing with other peer organizations.
- We will not be abandoning issues of SRHR, but rather observe that we can have a strong impact on SRHR by investing in child marriage at this time. Our limited resources on SRHR have made us very strategic about how to invest and what research will add value.

- M&E – we all approach it in different ways and capacity in M&E varies very significantly. State of M&E in West Africa is not strong and we don't know why the practice of early marriage is still going on. Community conversations have been very useful and informative.
- A recent study by AWID shows new money coming in from private donors and other new players. Vanita is being approached a couple of times a week by a variety of donors on what Ford is funding on adolescent girls, and since the Girl Summit, child marriage has been highlighted. The UNICEF-UNFPA collaboration, DFID, Canada, Gates, Human Dignity Foundation mean that huge amounts of donor money are pouring into India on this issue: We try to match donors and grantees, because the new donors don't know the bona fides of the organizations on the ground.
- *When government sits in the drivers' seat, we can see big change. Ford supported the Zambia initiative, and now much more additional money is coming into Zambia on the issue of child marriage. Likewise with the AU, we put in \$300K and during the launch other partners came in with matching grants. The experiment in Zimbabwe with CASWE is interesting.
- Girls' education is gaining momentum and governments are stepping up to this issue.

Communications strategies

Kathy Bonk, Executive Director, Communications Consortium Media Center on tracking media coverage and framing the issues described a media analysis conducted for the child marriage donors group in 2013 (see illustrative slide below). Her analysis found that there was a focus on the problem with little attention to solutions: only 9% of the coverage focused on successes and programs that work. She also identified a number of other challenges:

- Backlash from ignorant reporters who should know better.
- Religious opposition and extremist groups are pushing back.
- We tend to emphasize rates rather than the numbers. Niger has high rates but smaller numbers than India, for example, and has few programs that work.
- Highlights of 2014 include the AU campaign launch, the launch of the Ethiopia alliance and campaign, the Zambia government commitment and campaign, work on engaging men and boys.
- Setbacks include the difficulties in Egypt and Bangladesh, and the abduction of the Nigerian schoolgirls.

Ending Child Marriage
IN A GENERATION

WHEN: Media Coverage by Year



Stories 50+ Words in More Mainstream Global Media

Year	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
Child/Early Marriage Global	1637	2450	3228	3781	5211	6945
USA	632	771	636	716	875	1026

Kenneth Oliko, CARMA Consultant, African Union Campaigns Communication Strategy described what they have been able to do with the AU campaign. They did not want to have a high-level launch and then no follow up as has happened in a number of countries. They identified strong voices in communities who would be the champions whenever there is a case of child marriage. They established social media platforms to get people to discuss the issues Twitter #EndChildMarriageNow, Facebook

presence, Google hangouts). They will engage with regional bodies such as ECOWAS, EGAT, and ECAS and will also target the private sector.

In terms of a call to action, they developed agreement on what actions we want, what they hope for from our audiences, discussed what child marriage represents to many of these communities. They are working to obtain testimonies from people working on the ground and feed these field experiences right up to the highest levels and have also developed key messages and questions to disseminate.

Specific goals they have set for themselves include:

- Domesticating the AU strategy in different settings by lining up the organizations that have expressed interest in supporting the effort, so the strategy can be adapted to local concepts.
- Use Google News and other tools to track the events that burst out after launches.
- Approach the US Black Caucus to mobilize funds for African countries of special interest.
- The media are currently dominated by older people. The AU has identified a youth ambassador on child marriage and we need much more youth participation.
- Link with the African Youth Charter.

Sohini Bhattacharya, Vice President, Breakthrough Trust on “Making Early Marriage Everybody’s Business” described the work of Breakthrough, an international human rights organization working to make violence against women and young girls unacceptable. Their goal is to create a breakthrough generation of young people who have a new view of these issues.

Breakthrough takes a three-pronged approach:

- Mass media campaign to create awareness around CM and ignite public dialogue. Integrated mobile and radio programming: Users call and listen to contributions as well as leave comments on early marriage on IVR system; content is centrally moderated centrally and published on IVR; content is analyzed and shared back with Breakthrough Bell Bajao style campaign.
- Training influential community members
- Direct interaction – community theater – calls community members to provide solutions

Early marriage remains invisible to many people in India so they reached out by a digital campaign in partnership with Vodaphone to reach urban hipsters on child marriage, and Vodaphone would then pay an NGO partner working in Rajasthan to send ten girls to school.

Question: can media campaigns really change people’s attitudes? The answer is yes. Also: communities are much more responsive to the solutions narrative than to our emphasizing the problems.

Films of interest

- Difret (Ethiopia)
- MenEngage, Skoll Foundation and Girls Not Brides film on the Co-exist Initiative in Kenya and Wanjala Wafula mobilizing men to oppose child marriage and other forms of GBV.
- “Come Together” by HAQ Child Rights Centre

Breakout groups

Community interventions

Vanita Mukherjee and Monica Aleman chaired the two sessions on community interventions. The groups came up with many interesting ideas, many of them shared:

Defining the community

- Geographical location
- People know each other
- Mostly speak the same language
- Share a political leader

Drivers

- Issues related to safety and who will care for the girl child
- Ignorance regarding education, lack of education
- Patriarchy
- Misconception of religious tenets
- Peer pressure among girls
- Fear of social exclusion
- Overarching nature of cultural norms – everyone is under pressure and in agreement
- Poverty and the vulnerability this gives rise to
- Competition for resources – remove them from the girl and transfer them to boys
- Parents who want to relieve themselves of the burden of girl children
- Lack of awareness of the harm and disadvantage conferred by child marriage
- Girls attract bride price to their families of origin

Challenges

- Defensiveness of communities
- Engaging traditional leadership as gatekeepers and custodians of the culture
- Need males as part of programs, too.
- Lack of sectoral coordination
- Manipulation of religion and culture
- Politicization of change – so politicians stand back from these issues
- Patriarchal domination of public space
- Cultures of impunity

Strategies

- No single solution
- Very important to keep the context and community in mind when applying approach
- Educate girl children
- Talking about health implications – can get community to listen better
- Verses from the Qur'an or other scriptures can be mobilized.
- Publicize role models – those who have supported and promoted change
- Vocational skills training for girls

Research and policy

Montasser Kamal and Friday Okonofua chaired two sessions on research and policy; those ideas are consolidated here:

Gaps

- Basic data exist in most regions, though child marriage is largely invisible in Latin America
- Need more on 10-14 year-olds
- Politics of DHS reports – when you get all of the information you need
- Much data exists but reports need to be brought together at the national and regional level – need to assemble these to get a more complete picture, and these can be analyzed at the regional level.
- Many important research activities are underway and many of us are involved in these.
- Harder to translate research into policy ***
- Monitoring and evaluation very important but has to be more systematic
- Forced marriage for girls who are just *over* age 18
- Situation of divorced or widowed girls
- Research on child sex
- Men and boys – impact on boys married as children; exploring demand side of child marriage
- Psychological consequences of child marriage
- Real-life impact of our work on the lives of girls

What research accomplishes

- Increases donor support
- Validates our work
- Shows progress is being made – ICRW program review has influenced what our organizations do

Interesting areas of work

- Costs of child marriage being done by ICRW and WB
- Research on gender and violence – draw some indicators from there
- Academic research can be relevant but we don't know about it
- Qualitative research
- Should we be trying to conduct research on child marriage via health, education, etc.?

Translating research into policy

- What to do with poor quality research
- How to ensure that the research gets to the highest levels?
- Examples from Girls Not Brides USA on how to use data for advocacy purposes.
- Need to define who policymakers are very precisely to understand how to influence them
- Use of regional platforms and campaigning for regional policies
- Designing research for advocacy needs to be fine-tuned to the audience
- Success stories around economic empowerment and around use of the media
- Continually developing policy implications of your research
- Finding specific policy processes to engage with
- Researchers conduct the research but don't have a plan to disseminate it. Incorporate from day 1 the plan for dissemination (and involve policy makers)
- Address the discrepancies in the various indicators we use – so we are sometimes unable to compare studies
- Timeframe in studies is not adequate to see real change
- How do we engage the policy level *regionally*?

Exchange of ideas via the Interactive Marketplace

This was a fun, informal way for us to get to know each other's work. Participants found it a pleasant break from the more structured agenda and were inspired by the varied activities the colleagues gathered there were engaged in.

Day 3: 22 October 2014

Ethiopia: A conversation with community organizations

Former EGLDAM – Committee for the Protection of Women and Children described its experience with conducting a baseline survey on the prevalence of a variety of harmful practices and how important that was for advancing the issues.

Anubkan

Much experience in combating child marriage, mainly working with community-based organizations. Trying to support community care and structures and to leverage government services while also building the capacity of girls and young women so they can protect themselves from various forms of violence. They work also to integrate child protection into school settings. At the community level they work to enhance awareness, implement or engage with diverse community-based structures: religious institutions, community-based organizations, community conversations on sexual violence. They build the capacity of local government via training, support for research, support of regional and national events. They support young divorced women via the girls' committees and clubs; in some urban settings we link girls with other interventions, including vocational training; addressing sexual violence by linking girls with services. They had organized a Child Parliament in 4 regions to reflect their concerns to the Ethiopian government, but due to the human rights restrictions by the GOE, this activity has been discontinued.

Hundee - Oromo Grassroots Development Initiative

Community workshops separate sexes, ages, then bring everyone together. They identify issues for traditional law-making processes through consensus and then engage local government authorities and representatives of law enforcement agencies. The impact of their work includes an improved understanding of the health and psychological impact of HTPs; mobilized local leaders; created women's groups to work toward eradication of these practices; changed views of traditional circumcisers and community elders in their mediation of abduction cases.

Salma, Addis NGO

Prevention, participatory approach

Build capacity of primary and secondary stakeholders

Discussion of Ethiopian government and a few key factors, despite their objectionable position on human rights:

- Strong commitment and passion and focus on addressing poverty, health and education;
- One of the few countries where the strong economic growth has translated directly into the improved social welfare of the people;
- Government structures exist from the national level down to the *kebele*.

Final remarks from participants and from our host

Final remarks from participants

- Participants especially appreciated the networking opportunities.
- Appreciated chance to become more familiar with African organizations especially.
- The meeting offered a macro view of what is happening across countries and in global advocacy
- Realization of common challenges dealing with these issues in divergent regions.
- People feel energized to go home and work hard on this issue
- Government people are not so bad!

Final remarks from Ambassador Olawale Maiyegun, Director of Social Affairs, African Union

He noted that he should be the one thanking us: the timing of this meeting is good and we are building on the work of the AU. Together we can bring an end to child marriage, bring an end to this cultural bias, the preference for boys over girls. We know we can do it, and we are doing this for our children's children. The AU is very proud of what we are doing and will be calling upon us to support the work of the AU in this area. He thanked us for coming to Addis Ababa and warned us to be prepared: "We will get you back here again!"

Recommendations

The overall objective of the Addis meeting was **to foster cross-country and cross-region learning on combating child marriage**. How do we hold ourselves accountable to the meeting objective and the many questions we asked ourselves? To this end, the recommendations are organized around the framework of four key areas for achieving the meeting objective: programmatic, strategic, organizational and contextual issues. One clear idea that came through over these two days: community work cannot be separated from research cannot be separated from policy.

Programmatic questions to answer

- *Insights into the work and building of a field of work on Child Marriage across the different countries and regions; what is working and what is not and what can we learn?*
 - *Contribute to a learning and programmatic action plan for this work in regions and globally.*
 - *Bringing local and global agendas in line on combating child marriage. Also, determine how national and regional efforts intersect in the context of Africa; what role regional bodies like the AU can be expected to effectively play in promoting national and regional efforts to end child marriage*
 - *Learn through partners' work how Ford is forging key responses to address CM in different contexts. What are the South-south similarities and differences in contexts and responses?*
 - *What can we learn about specific interventions that hold the most promise for effective and lasting results?*
- Capacity gaps in various areas – all very important challenges for all of us. But we need to think of our capacity building support is to *do* something, to *achieve* something. So your best calling card for more funding is to show some achievement, not just outcomes.
 - Importance of sharing rights language with community members, yet being aware of what messages will be accepted by the community. We need to portray the benefits and transformative approach and not always lead with human rights.
 - Really need to be thinking about scale when we talk about community interventions.

- When are we going to do a complete mapping of what works so we can all work from this base? The Ford-funded review by M. Greene was mentioned as a map of key gaps in our knowledge.

Strategic questions to answer

- *How do we create evidence from our collective body of work on child marriage?*
- *What are some of the broad trends our interventions are addressing? Or moving? How do we use this evidence to communicate and for our learning? In what ways do we build evidence for advocacy?*
- We must plan for scale from the beginning of any work. Our accomplishments at the community level will not be scalable if we do not bring in governments. Advocacy by civil society is crucial for getting big institutions to do their work and to get governments to carry through on their commitments.
- We must be strategic and consider how best to frame child marriage in each setting. Angles from which people have approached child marriage include:
 - Via gender-based violence, human rights mandates, adolescent sexual and reproductive health, and child protection.
 - The need to sanitize our language around sexuality for others prevents us from fully addressing the root causes of child marriage. We need to call this what it is: sexual abuse and domestic slavery. Using strong language will catalyze our efforts.
 - We need to make the economic case for investing in ending child marriage and it is good to know that ICRW and the World Bank are collaborating on a study of the costs of CM.
- We need strong leadership and partnership from very high levels, yet the Ministries we have to work with are among the weakest and some policymakers themselves practice child marriage. The AU campaign provides us with an important opportunity: it enters countries through the governments and engages at the highest levels first, obtaining buy-in by decision-makers. The Campaign will be conducting impact assessments to follow up on what happens after the launches. A side event on child marriage with heads of state will take place at the January AU Summit and this must be built upon.
- The language that our policymakers understand must reference the issues that impact them, e.g., they must understand the governance or security implications of not acting on CM. What will change policymakers' minds? Research? Costing data? Rights arguments? Technical assistance? Financial support? Take a cooperative approach with government. Alternatively, shame by showing ranking in relation to other countries. Having girls themselves as advocates moves the discussion away from theory. Focus on the economics: Each dollar spent prevented how many child marriages?
- Policymakers are sometimes reluctant to respond decisively to egregious instances such as the case in Nigeria in the mid-1980s when Hawa ran away from her abusive husband several times and he cut off her leg. This was a missed opportunity to conduct a huge public education campaign on the rights of women and the conditions within marriage.
- Zambia launched a national campaign already, and Mozambique has launched some activities on adolescent pregnancy. How do you strengthen larger regional processes to reinforce change at the national level? The AU campaign cannot ignore adolescent sex and parenthood, and these should be part of the campaign. Poverty should also be a theme related to child marriage.
- Education is not just about someplace to put the girls – but a place to educate and change norms.
- We need to empower men to take positive roles in empowering girls.
- What is the role of the law? Can it help people who are not completely aware of their rights? In South Africa, girls and women are now getting abducted and then parents are not letting girls come

home until the man pays the damages. Law is important but we need an integrated approach with all of the services, mobilization, training of enforcement agents, etc. Need to be sure birth registration, poverty, health, and so on are all harmonized.

- What is the role of outside organizations when addressing sensitive issues? The strategy is generally to stay as under the radar as possible.

Organizational questions to answer

- *As insight into the Ford Foundation's GSRJ Unit's work on Child Marriage, what is Ford bringing to the table that other donors are not?*
- *How this work connects with our initiative?*
- *What should be our priorities for work on CM going ahead? What kind of priority setting do we need to engage in the field of CM?*

- From the perspective of girls' lives and from our understanding of the problem of child marriage, we need to engage in multi-sectoral collaborations.
- We need to invest in comprehensive youth and girl child development but this 'intersectionality' argument may not get us anywhere because the concept is diffuse.
- We must continue to emphasize the need to address child marriage across the post-2015 goals, not just via the one indicator.
- We know what works when it is completely comprehensive and close to engaged leadership. What about when interventions are more diluted? How can we translate the good program research findings from Berhane Hewan into policy, for example? We need to start moving from piecemeal to working at a larger scale from the data we have.

Contextual questions to answer

- *What are the specificities that we observe across the countries? While we know that socio-cultural and economic drivers are similar across the countries that have a high prevalence of early marriage; what do they tell us in terms of contextual strategies?*
- *How can we build South-South partnerships?*
- We lack national and sub-national data to guide vulnerability mapping and programme design.
- We need to do better on collecting data via girls and communities themselves. And at the same time, we should take the ethical issues of working with minor adolescent girls into account. By going directly to households we may put girls at risk.
- Specific topics about which we need to know more include: sexuality; the linkages between FGM/C and CM; marriage zones; sub-populations.
- We must choose the sector/s through which work to end child marriage can have the greatest impact: Africa, for example, differs from other regions in that changes in education are strongly driving changes in child marriage. In other regions, school dropout and early marriage are often driven jointly by low aspirations for girls. In Africa, therefore, important opportunities exist to change the practice of child marriage by working through the education sector.
- We need to unpack what we mean by community – specifically family – ultimately child marriage occurs inside family. And child marriage is expressed differently in different communities.
- Who are the bearers of tradition and culture? The chiefs are the emphasis of the Zambia campaign.
- We need to learn more about the nature of the marital relationship and the impact on the lives of girls of clinical depression, loss of childhood. This should go hand in hand with meeting the needs of married adolescents.

- Limited availability or use of evidence and lack of rigorous M&E of programs
- Limited scope of programs, many initiatives project driven
- Technical capacity and human resources at the national level are limited

Next steps

South Asia breakout group next steps

- Start linking nationally with Ford grantees and others working on child marriage and form a national voice and platform
- Link with SAARC and others
- Link with Girls Not Brides
- The South Asia group plans to stay connected by having a follow up meeting.
- It will hold some regional consultations throughout the country and then will organize a national strategic forum on early and child marriage in 2015, and plan to bring in other funders as well as government representatives. The big consultation will also include Nepal, Bangladesh and Pakistan.

Central America and Brazil breakout group next steps

- Something different from other regions is the lack of recognition that child marriage is a problem. How can we make the topic of child marriage more visible in the region?
- The group plans to bring together partners in the region, build on some good work, and expand their capacity to work on child marriage. The first step will be to share information through web-based tools and develop our relationships with allies.
- Engage with Girls Not Brides to establish a Latin American chapter as part of showing that child marriage does indeed happen in the region.
- Engage bilateral organizations, sub-regional mechanisms, NGOs, government representatives, OAS and other UN agencies in the region on child marriage. We need to engage a broad range of institutions. We will be reaching out to contacts and starting to engage these mechanisms when we are at a slightly later stage in our own work.

MENA and Africa breakout group next steps

- We need to go beyond the AU launch to create sub-regional and country strategies. The AU campaign has brought in new partners with whom to engage. Girls Not Brides could help link us to AU and we will reach out to them.
- Key opportunities exist for using the general assembly at the UN.
- We need to use reporting mechanisms on rights of the child and others to highlight child marriage.
- Importance of engaging men and boys and engaging with religious texts in these regions.
- We need greater harmonization not only across organizations but across issues related to CM.
- We will stay connected with others in our region via:
 - ICT
 - AU is connecting with its partners and developing a website
 - Need to have common goals with milestones as an incentive to all of us
 - Sharing information – it would be good to develop a website for this

Global and North America breakout group next steps

- Participants highlighted the need to network more with one another and with other implementers and advocates working on child marriage. The Ford grantee forum must stay connected.

- We need additional information about everyone's projects so that we can increase shared knowledge about what works and where. We must, for example disseminate research reports widely so as to build on the evidence.
- The group discussed how we can bolster the role Girls Not Brides plays in creating a global research repository. We need to send them our materials! marta.welander@girlsnotbrides.org is the person.
- People involved in regional and global strategies need to think concretely about connecting with country strategies and indicators. On a related note, we also need to coordinate our advocacy strategies at the policy level. GNB/USA has made some good progress on coordination.

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