



Join us and learn to ‘Make the Most of What we Know’ about adolescent female sexuality and child marriage

A multi-country learning initiative

Child marriage rates are going down globally, however, global statistics hide the fact that there is not a universal trend. In many countries hot spots remain where child marriage rates are stagnant, going up (in crisis situations) or going underground in response to law enforcement. Although there is a good understanding of the diverse drivers of child marriage, the evidence and experience base on what works in these different situations is not as strong as we would like (and need!) it to be. Especially gender inequality and concerns related to female sexuality are consistently powerful drivers of child marriage across different contexts. Social norms and taboos are often quoted as the most difficult barrier to overcome. While no two contexts are the same, there are similarities across geographies from which we can learn. Therefore, the More Than Brides Alliance is initiating a multi-country learning initiative to explore the links between female adolescent sexuality and child marriage. The aim of the project is to lay a more solid base so that organizations can implement and advocate for interventions that are grounded in promising practice and empirical evidence.

Combining research evidence and implementation experiences

With the research evidence being still quite limited, it is even more important to properly tap into an often overlooked but very rich source of insights, namely implementation experience. The ‘Making the Most of What We Know’ is a learning process both within and beyond More Than Brides Alliance that systematically combines research evidence with implementation experience on the topic of the links between female adolescent sexuality and child marriage in order to grow the knowledge base and enhance effectiveness of programming and implementation. The project consists of three core elements:

1. **Data collection and collation:** Including (a) capturing the perspectives of girls and young women themselves through participatory research involving girls who have defied social norms and have become role models, (b) systematically gathering implementation experience on sub-themes in the selected countries and (c) combining implementation experience with the results of the participatory action research and existing data sets.
2. **Learning and Exchange Fund (LEF):** A participatory small-grants mechanism for demand-led targeted technical assistance within the umbrella theme, between organizations within and across the target countries (South–South or North-South). The fund will have two application rounds in 2020.
3. Based on the data collection and collation process, the project will **produce public re-sources** such as learning briefs, pathways of change on selected sub-themes, and recommendations for designing a programme to contribute to the evidence base. These products will be presented during a one-week event scheduled in October 2020 and will benefit the Child Marriage and Adolescent SRHR community at large.



Contribute and benefit

In order to strengthen the international movement against child marriage the More Than Brides Alliance aims to stimulate exchange and learning beyond the alliance. Organizations focused on child marriage can contribute and benefit in several ways:

1. Use the opportunity to share and present scientific evidence and implementation experience nationally and internationally by participating in national and international events planned.
2. Inform and involve youth passionate about exploring the links between female sexuality in a research training and action research trajectory in the focus countries.
3. Grassroots organizations focused on child marriage can apply for the Learning and Exchange Spark Fund, small-grants mechanism and join the development and selection committee.
4. Contribute to and use public resources for intervention planning, lobbying and advocacy

About the More Than Brides Alliance

The More Than Brides Alliance (MTBA) consists of Save the Children Netherlands, Oxfam Novib, Simavi and Population Council. With funding from the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs this alliance is implementing the programme 'Marriage: No Child's Play' (2016-2020) with the aim to reduce child marriage and its adverse effects on young women and girls. The 'Making the Most of What we Know' project (2019-2021) is a complementary project funded by the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs. It is implemented in up to nine countries starting in the MTBA focus countries India, Pakistan, Malawi, Niger and Mali followed by Bangladesh, Ethiopia, Nepal and Uganda.

More information

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