

The Role of Parliamentarians in Ending Child Marriage

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*Girls Not Brides: The Global Partnership to End Child
Marriage*

Accra, Ghana

2 March 2016



Outline

1. About *Girls Not Brides*
2. Introduction to *Girls Not Brides* toolkit “The Role of Parliamentarians in Ending Child Marriage”
3. Prevalence of Child Marriage
4. Drivers and Impact of Child Marriage
5. Child Marriage and the Law
6. The Role of Parliamentarians
7. What can Parliamentarians do?



What is *Girls Not Brides*?

- A global partnership to end child marriage
- Founded by *The Elders*, launched in 2011
- Over 550 civil society organisations from over 75 countries
- What we do: raising awareness, building partnerships, increasing evidence base, call for laws, policies and programmes addressing child marriage



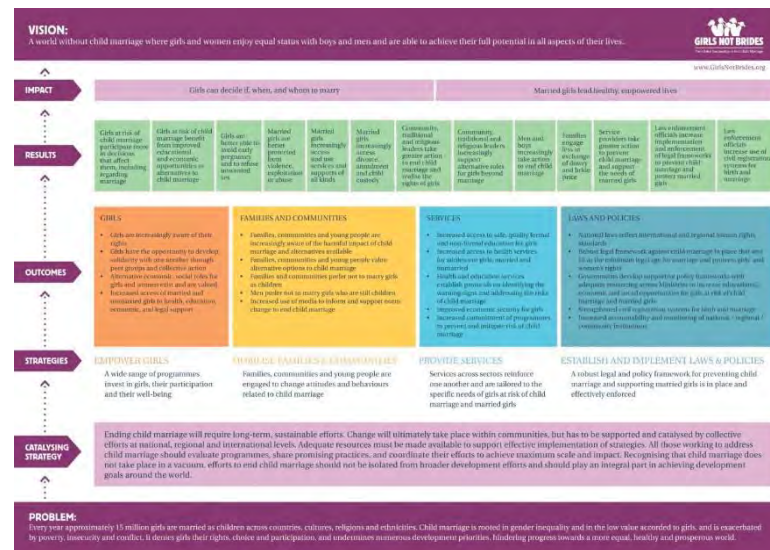
Girls Not Brides Theory of Change

4 strategies

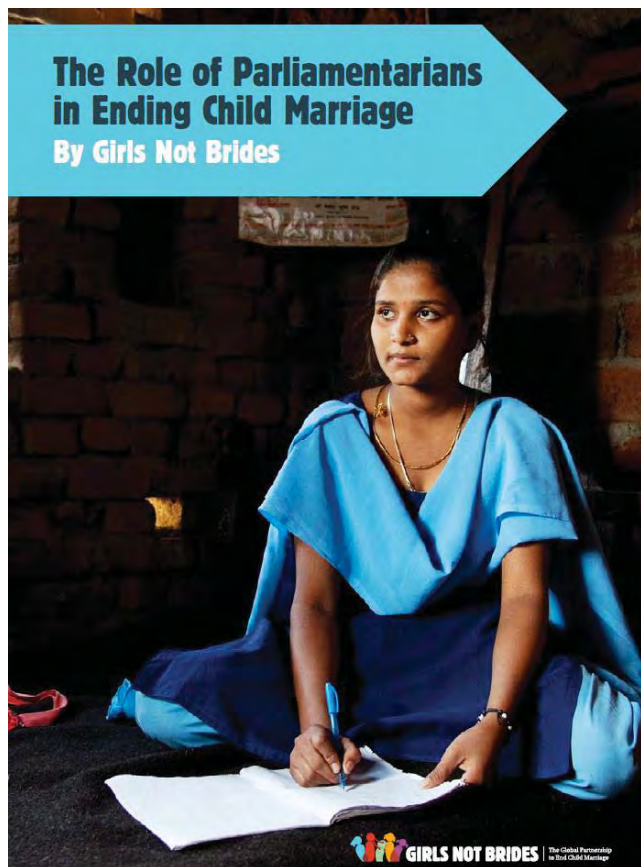
- Empower girls
- Mobilise families and communities
- Provide services
- **Establish and implement laws and policies**

Overarching strategy

- **Long-term**, sustainable efforts
- Action at **all levels**
- **Coordination** and partnership for maximum impact
- **Integrated** & comprehensive approach
- Adequate **resources** for effective implementation
- **Learning** and sharing



Introduction - *Girls Not Brides* toolkit



Toolkit contains:

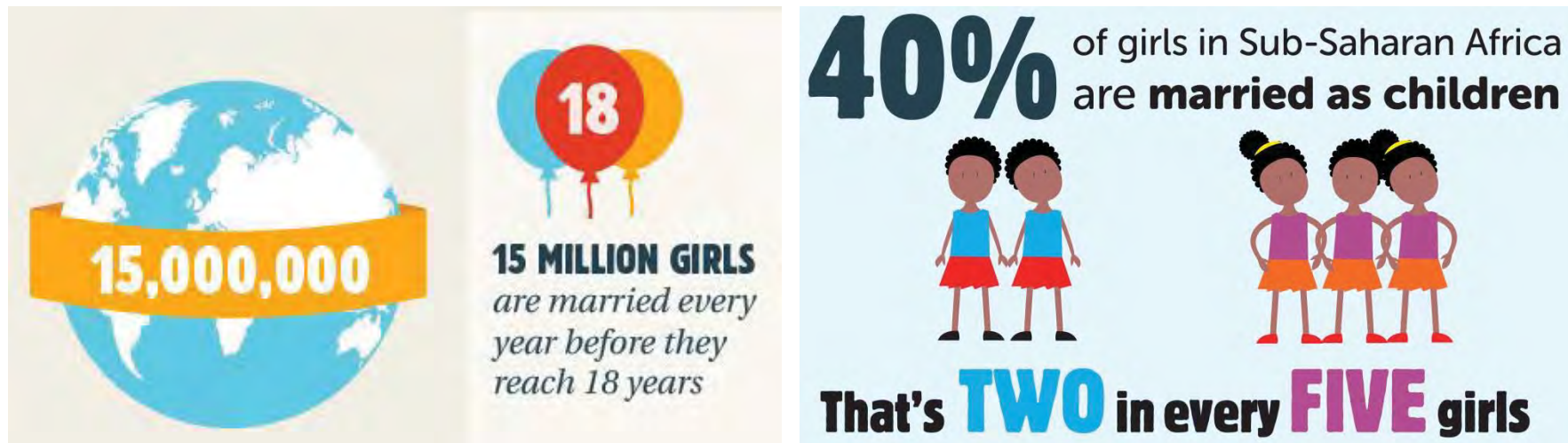
- Definition of child, early and forced marriage, prevalence
- Drivers and impact of child marriage
- Child marriage and the law
- Role of Parliamentarians
- What can Parliamentarians do?



Prevalence of Child Marriage

720 million women alive today were married before 18
→ *nearly 10% world's population*

Child marriage is widespread in West and Central Africa (42%) as well as in East and Southern Africa (37%)



Prevalence – Countries Represented

UNICEF 2015 State of the World's Children:

- Ghana 21%
- Kenya 26%
- Mozambique 48%
- Sierra Leone 44%
- United Republic of Tanzania 37%
- Zimbabwe 31%



Drivers and Impact of Child Marriage

Drivers:

- Traditional culture and religion
- Poverty – bride price or dowry as income
- Insecurity – risk of abuse and exploitation
- Lack of legislative framework – minimum age of marriage 18

Impact:

- Cycle of poverty
- Gender inequality
- Undermine maternal, newborn and child health.



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The Global Partnership
to End Child Marriage

Child Marriage and the Law

- Infringes on human rights of the child
- Domesticate, ratify and report on regional and international instruments e.g. African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child, African Charter on Human and People's Rights, Protocol on Women's Rights (Maputo Protocol)
- Human rights principles of non-discrimination, participation, protection



Role of Parliamentarians

- **Leadership in policy and law** formation, development and implementation of policies in consultation with civil society organisations.
- **Harmonise laws** with international and regional legal instruments with national legislation.
- Ensure that the government develops a **national strategy on child marriage** and corresponding action plan which is clearly monitored, evaluated and reported.



Role of Parliamentarians (continued)

- **Allocate budgets** to end child marriage through various ministries such as gender, health, education, judiciary and interior as well as follow-up on accountable expenditure and reporting.
- **Build partnerships** with civil society organisations in addressing child marriage.
- **Represent different constituencies** including the voices of women, youth and girls.



What can Parliamentarians Do?

- Organise parliamentary Hearings in committees
- Discuss and influence budget allocations
- Meet with CSOs
- Dialogue with local authorities
- Build your capacity and knowledge, and raise awareness.
- Be accountable by reporting back to colleagues and parliamentary committees
- Demand accountability from ministries and other stakeholders
- Monitor reporting to regional instruments
- Call for implementation of target 5.3 of Sustainable Development Goals.



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How can *Girls Not Brides* support Parliamentarians?

- Connect to *Girls Not Brides* members
- Review the toolkit “[The Role of Parliamentarians in Ending Child Marriage](#)”
- Engage with the Africa Union Campaign on Child Marriage e.g. training for Traditional Leaders and Parliamentarians (October 2016)
- Partner to become champions on ending CEFM at national and regional levels including ECOWAS, EAC and SADC (e.g. SADC Model Law on CM)



The End

Thank you

Questions and Answers



Discussion Questions

- How has your country aligned the legal framework on marriage to the definition of a child?
- What are ways of addressing child marriage that occur under customary or religious law, not statutory law?
- How can registration of births and marriages be improved.
- What are ways of addressing law enforcement even in remote rural areas?
- What can budgets be allocated towards child marriage?
- What ways can civil society organisations add value to the work of Parliamentarians?

