CHILD MARRIAGE

Among Nepali women and men, aged 20-25

10.4% Married before age 18

36.6% Married before age 20

If progress is accelerated in Nepal, it will take 20 years to end child marriage

WOMEN LIVING IN RURAL REGIONS ARE 3 TIMES MORE LIKELY TO HAVE MARRIED AS CHILDREN

WOMEN LIVING IN URBAN AREAS ARE 1.5 TIMES MORE LIKELY TO HAVE MARRIED AS CHILDREN

Note: Based on population projections between 2017-2025

EARNED RELGIOUS, POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC INFLUENCE

AMONG THOSE WHO MARRIED AS CHILDREN, 68% WOULD NOT ALLOW THEIR DAUGHTERS TO MARRY AS CHILDREN

CHILDREN ARE MORE LIKELY TO BE MARRIED AS CHILDREN IF THEY ARE FROM RAMSHACKLE HOUSEHOLDS

CHILDREN FROM THE RICHEST WAREHOUSE ARE THE LEAST LIKELY TO BE MARRIED AS CHILDREN

CHILDREN FROM THE POOREST WAREHOUSE ARE THE LEAST LIKELY TO BE MARRIED AS CHILDREN

Percentage of women aged 20-49 married before age 18 by wealth quintile

Richest 32%

Middle 57%

Fourth 52%

Third 49%

Poorest 63%

Note: Confidence intervals are not available at this time. Caution should be used in interpreting values, as apparent differences may not be significant.

The prevalence of child marriage varies significantly by wealth and residence. Women living in the richest quintile are less likely to marry before age 18 than those in the poorest quintile. In cities, the percentage of women who marry before age 18 is lower than in rural areas. These differences are due to a variety of factors, including education levels, economic opportunities, and cultural norms. Women from wealthier backgrounds are more likely to have access to education and better economic opportunities, which can delay marriage and childbearing. In contrast, women from poorer backgrounds may have limited options and may be more vulnerable to early marriage as a means of securing financial stability for themselves and their families. These differences highlight the need for targeted interventions to address the root causes of child marriage and ensure that all girls have the opportunity to realize their full potential.
She is seven months pregnant and is spending her last trimester at her mother’s bare one-room home in Kanakpur, in Rautahat District in southern Nepal. More than a third of young women aged 20-24 report that they were married by the age of 18, and just over one in ten by 15.

Child marriage is a human rights violation, restricting children’s choices, changing their course in life, and putting them and their families at risk of violence and poverty. A UNICEF study found that girls who marry younger than the legal age of 18 are at higher risk of physical violence, experience less sexual and contraceptive autonomy, and are at higher risk of dropping out of school due to early pregnancy. Girls who marry young have a shorter life expectancy, are more likely to have children who die young, and are at higher risk of maternal death. They also have a lower chance of accessing healthcare and education. A child’s education is also significantly affected, with married girls in Nepal 10 times more likely not to be in school than their unmarried peers.

Ending child marriage requires action at multiple levels. For girls and young women to be able to make decisions about when to marry, how to marry, and whether or not to marry, they must have access to education. Parental and community actors must be educated about the risks of early marriage so that they can support the decision that girls make. Governments must support girls’ right to make an informed choice about their marriage and end child marriage entirely. Child marriage can only be stopped if the roots of the problem are tackled, from ensuring access to education and economic opportunities to challenging harmful social norms and cultural practices that normalize young marriage.

Girls and boys in Nepal have the right to choose when to get married, and to decide who they will marry. It is time to end child marriage.
“A child’s increase in position,” says learn: 

They join forces through a

programme to accelerate action

In 12 countries with some of

Empower adolescent girls at risk

to promote

Empower girls (including economic empowerment)

make child marriages void ab initio (invalid from the outset), ii) defining “free and full consent”, iii) reviewing the types of punishments, fines and compensation imposed, iv) increasing the minimum legal age for marriage and v) increasing the cost of dowry will rise as girls increase in position.”

The Global Global Prog: 

(Transformation) programme, to change marriage, “she explains. “We also talk to the community.

Some also consider them too old to marry.”

Partly for these reasons, the girls turn up at people’s doors. They use their connections to their families to talk to parents and negotiate and decision-making powers.

Mobilizing communities for change: 

In 2018 the Government of Nepal launched its National Strategy to end child marriage, with support from UNICEF and other partners. The plan aims to end child marriage by 2030, with particular focus on the spread of child marriage, “she explains. “We also talk to the community.

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MOBILIZING COMMUNITIES FOR CHANGE

The first ever opportunity he can: Friday prayers, lessons for the 600 pupils who attend his Madrasa ceremonies...

EMPowered ADOLEScENT GIRLS

“We go around the community and we speak to them about child marriage...”

The Nepal government organized the Nepal Girl Summit to follow the landmark London Girl Summit in 2014 to reaffirm their commitment to end child marriage by 2030, with particular focus on the implementation of key policies, laws and strategies. The summit brought together 72 countries to discuss and share examples of best practices. The event was co-hosted by the Government of Nepal, the United Nations (UN), the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) and the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) and was attended by over 800 delegates.

The Nepal government has reformed legal frameworks and incorporated anti-child marriage strategies into health and education policies. The government has also worked to increase the legal age for marriage, provide incentives for delaying marriage and punish perpetrators of child marriage. In 2016, the government passed the Marriage Act, which sets the minimum age for marriage for girls at 18 and boys at 20. However, some districts in the country still have the traditional minimum age for marriage of 16.

The government has also worked to increase awareness of child marriage and its consequences. In 2017, the government launched the “End Child Marriage in Nepal” campaign, which aims to raise awareness about child marriage and promote the legal age for marriage. The campaign includes a multimedia campaign, public service announcements, and social media campaigns. The government has also launched a national helpline for girls who are at risk of child marriage, and has provided training to girls and their parents about the legal age for marriage and the consequences of child marriage.

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5 KEY ROUTES TO CHANGE

The Global Programme with

1. Enhance awareness about the importance and benefits of marriage
2. Increase access to information and awareness raising, B案例
3. Strengthen and provide services
4. Secure governments to move towards the removal of the legal age
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MOBILIZING COMMUNITIES FOR CHANGE

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At the heart of the programme is the belief that communities can play a crucial role in ending child marriage. This is especially so in rural areas where traditional values and customs are deeply ingrained. Communities can be powerful agents of change, and by mobilizing them, we can make progress towards ending child marriage.

The programme focuses on the following key strategies:

1. Enhancing awareness about the importance and benefits of marriage
2. Increasing access to information and awareness raising
3. Strengthening and providing services
4. Ensuring governments move towards the removal of the legal age for marriage
5. Mobilizing communities for change

These strategies aim to support communities in understanding the risks and consequences of child marriage, accessing information and support services, and advocating for changes in laws and policies that protect children.

EMPOWERED ADOLESCENT GIRLS

“We go around the community and we speak to them about child marriage.”

The message is clear: girls need to be empowered to speak up about child marriage and to seek help when they need it. This empowerment is crucial for ending child marriage.

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ENVIROMENT AND POLICY

The Nepal government organized the Nepal Girl Summit to follow the recommendations of 2015, with particular focus on the role of women's organizations.

In 2016 the Government of Nepal launched the National Strategy to end child marriage, with a focus on the 12 countries with some of the highest rates in the world. The strategy includes six strategies:

1. Mobilize families and communities to change social norms
2. Strengthen and provide services
3. Secure governments to move towards the removal of the legal age
4. Increase awareness about the importance and benefits of marriage
5. Mobilize communities for change
6. Enhance awareness about the importance and benefits of marriage

The strategy aims to address the root causes of child marriage, including poverty, lack of education, and cultural norms.

Responsive Health Services

Healthcare is provided in a number of ways. In some cases, community health workers are involved, such as in the Nepal case. They are trained to provide basic health services and to support communities in ending child marriage.

The programme includes the following key components:

1. Mobilizing communities for change
2. Enhancing awareness about the importance and benefits of marriage
3. Increasing access to information and awareness raising
4. Strengthening and providing services
5. Ensuring governments move towards the removal of the legal age for marriage

These components work together to create a holistic approach to ending child marriage.

POSITIVE LEGAL, AND POLICY ENVIRONMENT

The programme has several key elements to support positive changes in laws and policies:

1. Mobilizing communities for change
2. Enhancing awareness about the importance and benefits of marriage
3. Increasing access to information and awareness raising
4. Strengthening and providing services
5. Ensuring governments move towards the removal of the legal age for marriage

These elements aim to create a supportive environment for ending child marriage.
\textbf{MOBILIZING COMMUNITIES FOR CHANGE}

TheGlobal Programme with

- List of countries (e.g., Bangladesh, Burkina Faso, Sierra Leone, Ghana, Nepal, Yemen)
- Description of strategies

\textbf{RESPONSIVE HEALTH SERVICES}

- Information on health services
- Examples of successful interventions

\textbf{POSITIVE LEGAL AND POLICY ENVIRONMENT}

- Details on policy and legal framework
- Impact of legal reforms

\textbf{EMPOWERED ADOLESCENT GIRLS}

- Examples of girls' empowerment
- Impact of education and economic empowerment

\textbf{5 KEY ROUTES TO CHANGE}

- Overview of approaches

\textbf{ENVIROMENT}

- Information on environmental sustainability

\textbf{LEGAL}

- Legal aspects and policies

\textbf{POSITIVE}

- Positive attitude and behaviors

\textbf{SERVICES}

- Services and interventions

\textbf{HEALTH}

- Health-related interventions

\textbf{EMPOWERMENT}

- Empowerment strategies and outcomes

\textbf{ADULT MEN AND BOYS}

- Involvement of adult men and boys

\textbf{SOUTH AFRICA}

- South Africa's role

\textbf{EASTERN AND SOUTHERN AFRICA}

- Regional focus

\textbf{MIDDLE EAST AND NORTH AFRICA}

- Middle East and North Africa

\textbf{SOUTH}

- South region

\textbf{GLOBAL}

- Global perspective

\textbf{NORTH AFRICA}

- North Africa

She is seven months pregnant and says she was married to her husband, 20, seen here in the District in southern Nepal. More than a third of young women aged 20-24 report that they were married by the age of 18, and just over one in ten by 15.

Child marriage is a violation of human rights, reducing boys' and girls' choices, changing their course in life, and keeping them at a higher risk of death or injury during childbirth.

Poverty, the low value attached to girls’ education and family pressures have contributed to child marriage in Nepal. People often marry children to avoid ‘bad luck’ or to escape norms that are not compatible with their own personal beliefs and preferences. Other parents may marry their children to avoid dowry costs, to avoid losing their house if they are not married, and to escape their own parents or rules of the home.

However, the effects of child marriage are lasting and long-lasting: girls who marry young are less likely to continue their education, to marry someone they love themselves, and to move towards their goals. Furthermore, the complications of child birth are increased when a woman is not fully grown.


A child in Nepal is more likely to be denied the protection of marriage laws and may not receive the benefits of marriage, and may face the consequences of being married off even before they reach puberty.

The devastating earthquakes of 2015 led to fears that child marriage could increase. Studies in other countries have shown that child marriage is more likely to increase in crises because of issues such as the lack of safe homes and community support systems.

Child marriage is a violation of human rights, restricting children’s choices, changing their course in life, and putting them at a higher risk of death or injury during childbirth. A child marriage in Nepal is a human rights violation, restricting children’s choices, changing their course in life, and putting them at a higher risk of death or injury during childbirth.
Samina, 14, Kanakpur

She is seven months pregnant. “If I have a girl, I want her to be educated,” she says.

Samina was married last year. She was 13. Her husband was 19. She is discouraged from leaving home in Kanakpur, in Rautahat, Nepal. She attended school.

To Protect Her Honour : Child Marriage in Emergencies –the fatal confusion between protecting girls and sexual violence


The devastating earthquakes of 2015, a few days after child marriage could increase. Studies in other countries have shown that poverty puts girls at risk of sexual violence.


“Children are among the most likely in the world to be child grooms. More than one in ten is married before they reach 18.”


5. Save the Children, Plan and World Vision, 2011. 10. Spencer, D., “The marriage of women aged 15 to 19 today’s levels by 2050 a third of them are at a higher risk of death or injury during childbirth.5

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4 and married 36.6% Married by 18


11. Ibid., p.191.

17. Ibid.

16. Ibid., p.191.

14. Overview of Child Marriage in South Asia


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