

Call to Action

It takes a world to end child marriage



Globally more than 700 million women alive today were married before their 18th birthday. An estimated one in five of these girls entered into marriage before the age of 15¹. Unless the practice is curtailed, the number will further increase to 950 million child brides by 2030². Approximately half of all child brides today live in South Asia, primarily in India³. Seventeen percent or 125 million live in Africa. It is estimated that with no progress, by the year 2050 almost half of the world's child brides will live in Africa⁴.

Child marriage is a major threat to the survival, health and well-being of children and mothers. It places children, especially girls, at an increased risk of sexual, physical and psychological violence throughout their lives. Child marriage denies girls and boys their human rights, including their rights to be heard and participate, and their rights to health, protection and education, as specified in the Convention on the Rights of the Child.

There are proven integrated, multi-sectoral solutions that can help end child marriage in our lifetime but implementing them requires everyone to do their part. Among them governments and community leaders have particular responsibility and opportunity to make a difference.

For More Information and a Copy of this Document

<https://www.wvi.org/publications/call-action-it-takes-world-end-child-marriage>

<https://www.girlsnotbrides.org/where-does-it-happen/atlas/#/>

¹ UNICEF (2014a). *Ending Child Marriage: Progress and Prospects*. New York, NY: UNICEF. Available at: http://www.unicef.org/media/files/Child_Marriage_Report_7_17_LR..pdf

² Ibid

³ UNFPA. (2013a). *Marrying Too Young: End Child Marriage*. New York, NY: UNFPA. Available at: <http://www.unfpa.org/sites/default/files/pub-pdf/MarryingTooYoung.pdf>

⁴ UNICEF, 2015.

Call to Action

It takes a world to end child marriage

I. We call on governments to:

1. **Ban child marriage.** Adopt or enforce existing legislation with 18 as the legal age for marriage
2. **Listen to girls, and empower and support them.** Create platforms for girls to speak and be heard.
3. **Invest in education systems** that guarantee girls' access.
4. **Invest in changing harmful traditional norms and practices that condone child marriage** by designing, implementing and scaling up national awareness-raising campaigns.
5. **Recognize the heightened risk of child marriage in emergencies and fragile contexts** and ensure action to prevent and respond to these risks.
6. **Invest in services for the rehabilitation of victims of child marriage**

II. We call on faith leaders to:

1. **Champion the fight against child marriage** by identifying it, speaking out against it, and taking action to address child marriage and related harmful norms.
2. **Refuse to perform** child marriages.

World Vision International's Commitment

World Vision commits to continue working with governments, community leaders and children to end child marriage. Through our programs, and through our global campaign *It Takes a World to End Violence Against Children*, in which 17 field offices have prioritized child marriage as the main focus, we will work to empower girls and boys with education, life skills and income-generating opportunities, and ensure that they have access to the support services they need.

In addition, World Vision commits to scaling up its signature *Channels of Hope* program, which partners with faith leaders to challenge and transform harmful social norms, to reach **150,000 additional faith leaders by 2025**.