



CHILD MARRIAGE AWARENESS PACK

Guided activities for young people (aged 11-18)

Do these activities with
your **SCHOOL**

Discuss this pack at home with
FAMILY AND FRIENDS

Inspire through sharing with your
CHURCH COMMUNITY

Did you know that
approximately
12 million girls will get
married before they turn
18 this year?

That's 23 girls every
minute.*

The consequences can be
severe: becoming pregnant at
a young age can lead to health
complications and, tragically, a higher chance of
the baby dying before their fifth birthday;
dropping out of school; domestic violence; social
isolation; and continuing the cycle of poverty for
another generation.

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IMAGES: Elizabeth (in blue), a former sponsored child from Uganda, shares her story with students. @ 2018 Damalie Nankunda Mukama / World Vision

* Source: <https://www.girlsnotbrides.org/about-child-marriage>



GETTING STARTED

Child marriage can be a sensitive topic to learn and teach about, so we'd advise doing some ground-work before you get started. Following the checklist that we have provided will help to ensure that you feel prepared and confident talking about child marriage. This session has been prepared for children and young people above 11 years old.

Ensure that those leading the sessions are confident with the terminology that is being used and that they are aware they can contact a World Vision representative at any point if they need to.



12 million child brides every year *



CHECKLIST FOR FACILITATOR

- Watch Karima's video beforehand, so you know what to expect: bit.ly/KarimaVideo
- Watch the example session with Milton Keynes Youth Cabinet: bit.ly/YouthGroupDiscussion
- Notify parents and carers in advance and encourage them to get in touch if they have any concerns (example page 22)
- Read through the glossary (on page 23)
- It is important to be familiar with your safeguarding policy and the support that you can offer for children who might have further questions if it's used at school or in your church group
- Make sure there is a safe learning environment at the start of every session

Do not worry about being an expert – you have everything in this pack to prepare for the lesson.

-  Ask questions to World Vision: itaw@worldvision.org.uk



RIGHT: Marion, 11, Kenya, enjoys learning at school © 2020 Nick Ralph / World Vision

LEFT: Milton Keynes Youth Cabinet discussing issues about child marriage © 2019 Miguel Pilgrim / World Vision



* Source: <https://www.girlsnotbrides.org/about-child-marriage>



SESSION PLAN



ACTIVITY 1 - WATCH KARIMA'S VIDEO

10 mins

What you need:

CHECKLIST

- Access to a computer and projector
- Print the case studies on page 18 to 20
- Internet connection



Facilitator guidelines are highlighted throughout the pack:

Facilitator:

Learning outcomes:

CHECKLIST

- Understand what child marriage is
- Explain what the causes of child marriage are
- Understand what you can do in the UK to advocate for change



IMAGE BELOW: Children in Northern Uganda are having fun at the Child-Friendly Space. They love coming here every day and enjoy speaking to the World Vision staff.
© 2016 Stefanie Glinski / World Vision



Start the session by watching Karima's video on child marriage:

bit.ly/KarimaVideo

What do you think about the video, write or discuss your thoughts.

Guide the discussion through their first reaction to the video.

Facilitator:

Child Marriage definition:

Child marriage refers to any formal marriage or informal union between a child under the age of 18 and an adult, or another child. Forced marriage includes any marriage where one or both people do not consent to the marriage and pressure or abuse is used. Pressure can include threats, physical or sexual violence, and financial pressure.

While both girls and boys can be subjected to child marriage, girls are disproportionately affected due to cultural traditions which support gender discrimination.

Blank lined area for notes or discussion.





The facts:

- An estimated **12 million girls** are married before the age of **18** each year. That's **23 girls every minute**, nearly **1 every 3 seconds**.^[1]
- **9 out of 10** countries with the highest child marriage rates are in fragile or extremely fragile contexts.
- Across the globe, rates of child marriage are highest in Sub-Saharan Africa, where around **1 in 8** girls marry before age 18; about one in eight were married or in union before age 15.

125 million child brides live in Africa. But that's only 17% of all the child brides in the world.^[2]

Child marriage happens in the UK too. Between 2011 and 2017 the Forced Marriage Unit (which is a branch of the British government) provided support for **1,338** cases per year.

But rates of child marriage are most prevalent in Sub-Saharan Africa where the percentages of girls marrying before the age of 18 are very high – in countries such as Niger (**76%**) and the Central African Republic (**68%**) and in South Asia – in countries such as Bangladesh (**52%**) and India (**47%**).^[3]



[1] Source: <https://girlsnotbrides.org/about-child-marriage>
 [2] Source: UNICEF (2015), 'A profile of child marriage in Africa'
 [3] Source: UNICEF (2016), 'State of the World's Children'

RIGHT: Pricilla, 12, is raising awareness in a refugee camp in the DRC
© 2020 Didier Nagifi Sademoke / World Vision

Facilitator:

Guide a discussion on child marriage with the facts on the left. Then ask children to guess the answers of the questions below or use the quiz as a multiple choice activity. Do not lead the children's answers, let them guess and discuss amongst themselves.



1. What would be your guess on the number of girls under 18 that will marry in the next hour?

- a) 5
- b) 13
- c) 138
- d) 526
- e) 1680



2. What percentage of child marriages take place in countries that are fragile and extremely fragile states?

- a) 30%
- b) 45%
- c) 80%
- d) 90%



3. Which area of the world has the most cases of child marriage?

- a) Asia
- b) America
- c) Middle East
- d) Sub-Saharan Africa
- e) Europe
- f) Northern Africa



ANSWERS: 1. (e) 2. (d) 3. (d)





ACTIVITY 3 - CASE STUDIES

10 mins

Case Studies

Read Karima and Rahila's stories on page 18 and 19. Decide on one case study and take it in turns, reading a paragraph at a time to go through it with your group. It is important to let children's voices amplify the case study.

Facilitator:

Ask the group: What do you think about this story after reading it? Let this be a chance for the children to reflect with each other, maybe in small groups about how the stories have made them feel.

These stories highlight not just the educational and economic opportunities that child marriages curtail, but also the acute mental health risks and social isolation that many adolescent girls face when pressured into marriage at a young age.

However, these stories also identify opportunities for change, and in particular the powerful role that community and religious leaders can play in shifting parental attitudes towards child marriage.



My dream of becoming a doctor was over.

Rahila, 14, Afghanistan

LEFT: Rahila, 14, Afghanistan, almost got married to help her family financially. © 2019 Narges Ghafary / World Vision



ACTIVITY 4 - CAUSES OF CHILD MARRIAGE

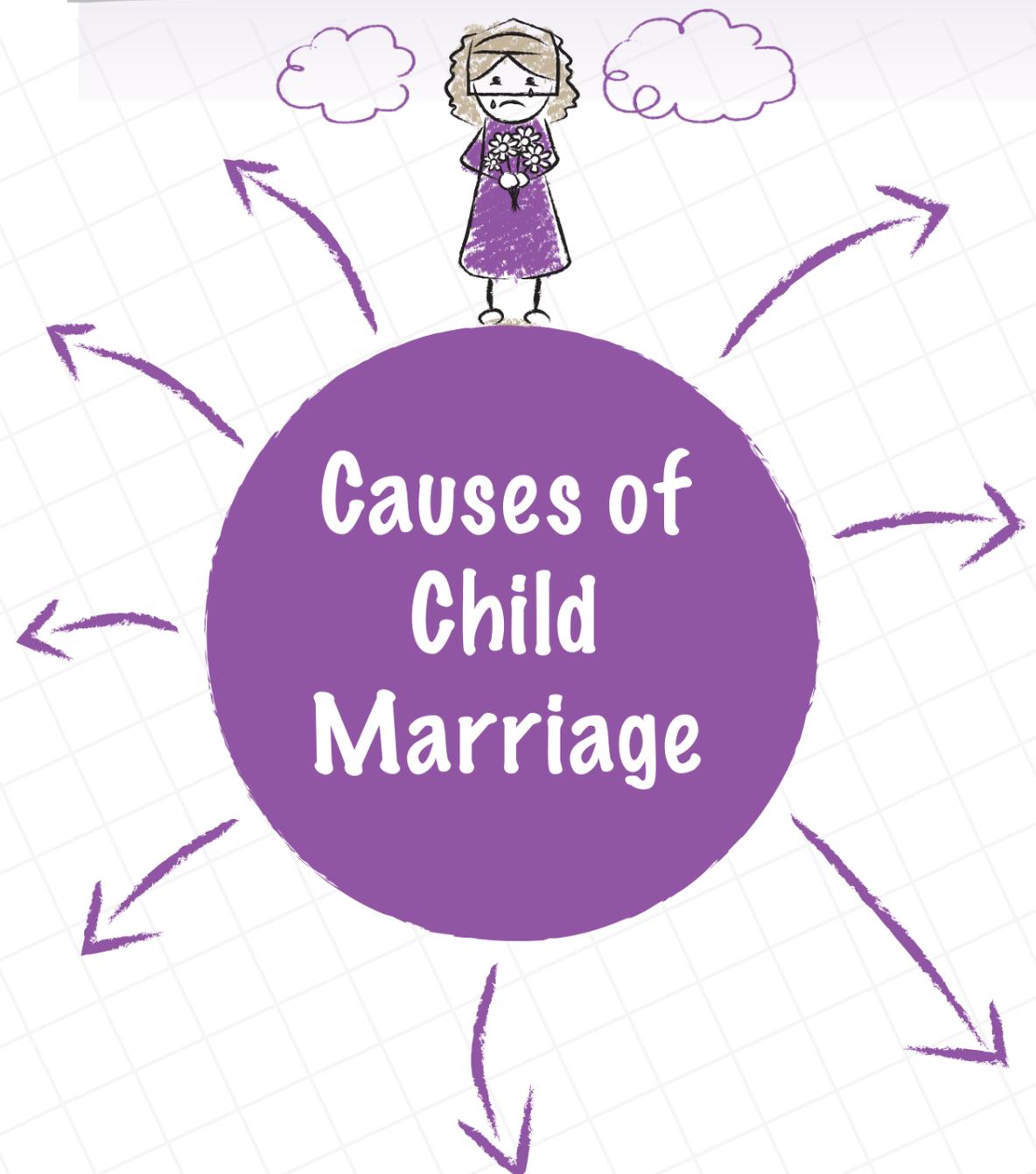
5 mins

Facilitator:

Ask the group: What do you know about the causes of child marriage?

Why are girls getting married? You might want to do this on sheets of paper in small groups or you could run it on a white board with students suggesting their ideas.

Use Rahila's and Karima's story to guide a discussion on the causes of child marriage. In your discussion think about what differences and similarities there are between UK context and fragile and emergency states. Use the information on page 21 on the causes of child marriage to help with this.





ACTIVITY 5 - EFFECTS OF CHILD MARRIAGE

5 mins

Not all marriages can be prevented. Read through Parvina's story on page 20 and compare with Karima and Rahila's stories. Think about the effect of child marriage and what happens when child marriage is not prevented.

Facilitator:

You can guide the children's answers through asking them questions around the themes below (if the children have not asked these questions already).

These are just suggestions to add to the discussion.

Health and lives at risk

Child brides often become pregnant during adolescence with greater risks: babies are more likely to be born prematurely and to suffer low birth weight, and they're more likely to be malnourished. Being a child bride can also isolate girls from family, friends and exclude them from participating in their communities. It can all have heavy consequences on their physical and psychological wellbeing.



Education cut short

When girls' education is cut short, girls lose the chance to learn the knowledge and skills they need to secure a good job.



Extremely vulnerable to violence

Girls who marry as children are often married to older men, which intensifies power imbalances in the relationship. Domestic violence is more prevalent and more severe amongst girls who marry as children.

I was not mature enough to get married.

Parvina, 17, Bangladesh, Cox's Bazar



Parvina did get married but with the right support, she and her child have better hopes for the future.



RIGHT MAIN AND INSET: : Parvina, 17, Bangladesh, Cox's Bazar, was 15 when she got married and now has a baby. © 2019 Md. Shabir Hussain / World Vision



RAISE YOUR VOICE



These are groups of young people in the UK, Niger and Bangladesh who were involved in our research on child marriage – these are some of their views on what the UK government can do to stop child marriage

LEFT: Young people from Niger commenting on Zarghona's story. © 2019 Tabita Ali Soumaila / World Vision

"We need to ensure that all parents who have a girl at school promise that she will finish the curriculum."
Salamatou, 15, Niger

We need to change people's personal views, people are becoming blind to child marriage and see it as a norm.
Toby, 16, UK



"Adults can prevent child marriage by raising awareness about the negative consequences."
Hamid, 14, Bangladesh, Cox's Bazar

ABOVE: Young people from Rohingya refugee camp, Cox's Bazar, Bangladesh, commenting on Parvina's story. © 2019 Md. Shabir Hussain / World Vision



REFLECTIONS

10 mins

Now you have read other young people's recommendations, come up with your own!



Question 1:
In your opinion, what do you think people can do to prevent and stop child marriage?

Lined writing area for Question 1.

Question 2:
Write down your top recommendation for your government to stop child marriage.

Lined writing area for Question 2.



RAISE YOUR VOICE

Facilitator:

Discussing child marriage can bring up all sorts of feelings – confusion, anger, empathy, and more.

Make sure your young people have a safe place to express and explore those feelings.

They can also use the energy it gives them to make something positive happen.

Use the ideas below to help young people raise their voices and spread the word about child marriage.

You've already got great ideas. Here are some tips to help bring them to life.



Make a poster of what you've learned and display it at your school/local community or online



Ask your family and friends what they think about child marriage



Find out what other young people say in the 'No Happily Ever After' report: bit.ly/ITAW-ChildVoiceReport



Write to your local MP - Contact us for further information: itaw@worldvision.org.uk



Organise an event to raise money. Find out more at worldvision.org.uk/fundraise

Don't forget to share

Share your thoughts and activities on social media using @WorldVisionUK and #ItTakesAWorld



RAISE YOUR VOICE



- FINALLY -
HAVE FUN
and remember you are helping the children who need it most.

LEFT: Girl Power groups, like this one, have helped World Vision staff stop at least nine child marriages during the lockdown in India © 2020 Neola D'Souza / World Vision

BELOW: Group of young people in Niger after discussing the 'No Happily Ever After' report © 2020 Paco Anselmi / World Vision





Karima's* story

"I live in a hut in a village in Niger with my mother and father and I have two sisters.

Last year, when I was 10 years old, my parents arranged my wedding ceremony with my cousin. I didn't know his age. I was not informed about the date of the wedding. My parents said I should go to live with my husband now. I was crying, I was not eating, I was very angry.

I said that I disagreed with the decision and they should give the money back. I did not like this man, I wanted to continue to go to the school.

It was my teacher who informed the child protection committee about the marriage. They went to visit my parents, discuss with them and the marriage was cancelled. I really loved my teacher.

My message for the girls is not to get married at an early age because when you are young, it's difficult to deliver the baby, but also when you don't like the husband it's difficult to deal with that.

Now, I'm back to school. I'm in grade two, in primary school. I'm so happy to learn, it is my future. But sometimes, I'm still worried about getting married. I want to become a teacher, so children can learn. For me, I'd like to be married but not before the age of 20."

* Names changed to protect their identity.

1+1=
ABC
123456

I want to become a teacher

Karmina, 11, Niger



ABOVE: Karima, 11, Niger, avoided becoming a child bride thanks to her teacher. © 2020 Paco Anselmi / World Vision



Rahila's* story

"My name is Rahila. I'm 14. I had to move to another village three years ago because of drought and insecurity. There was fighting between the government and Taliban most of the time.

My father has a small stall selling snacks to children. My mother is a maid. Neither can read or write. I'm studying with the hope of becoming a doctor. One afternoon, three women came to our home who were from the same village as us. I overheard one of the women tell my mother that they have a son and would like me to marry him.

The boy's family promised my father to give him **US\$6,400** and a piece of land as a **bride price**. My father was happy. With the money, he could start a new business and pay the rent of our house.

My dream of becoming a doctor was over. One night I told my father how I felt, and he got angry and slapped me.

My mother used to participate in World Vision's community change sessions. I asked my mother to talk with the facilitator to see if she could do anything for us. The facilitator and a few other community elders (a faith leader and the head of the women's council) came to talk to my father.

After three days, my father changed his mind. He asked my mother to tell the boy's family that our answer is 'No'. The facilitator and elders had told my father about the negative consequences of child marriage and what Islam has mentioned about child marriage.

My father explained that he is struggling with his business and needs money. The facilitator talked with our house owner to see if he could help us. He agreed to allow my father to build a small shop in our

yard so my father could use it without paying for the rent of the stall and save more money to provide for us.

I think most families either don't know about the negative impacts of child marriage or they have to marry off their girls because they need money.

I would like the UK Government to not forget girls in Afghanistan and support them to be empowered, to get an education, and to have enough money to be independent.

Today I'm able to share my story with you because of World Vision's community change sessions. If the facilitator didn't help me, I'm not sure what would have happened to me.

I'm doing my best to be once again a top student in my class. I'm more determined to finish high school and study medicine."



ABOVE: Rahila, 14, Afghanistan, is more determined than ever to study and become a doctor. © 2019 Narges Ghafary / World Vision



Parvina's* story

"My name is Parvina. I'm 17 years old. I'm a Rohingya Muslim and I used to live in Myanmar. I thought, if I get married, I will have peace then and I will have shelter. I got married when I was 15 years old and now we have a baby. When I was pregnant, I was still a child. I did not have self-confidence.

Tamanna, a World Vision worker, heard about my difficulties. She supported me a lot. I went to the hospital for regular check-ups with her. She brought me nutritious food.

I was not mature enough to get married. If I hadn't got married, I could have enjoyed my life.

My wish is for other girls to get married after they are 18 years old when they are mature. I wish a better life for them.

If you want to stop early marriage, you can do one thing: you can organise meetings and invite girls along with their parents and speak with them."

* Names changed to protect their identity.

"Tamanna, a World Vision worker heard my difficulties. She supported me a lot."

Parvina, 17, Bangladesh, Cox's Bazar



LEFT: Parvina, 17, moved to the refugee camp in Bangladesh where she met her future @ 2019 Md. Shabir Hussain / World Vision



The causes of child marriage

1 Marriage as a safeguard: in humanitarian crises (armed conflicts, famine, natural disasters), families living in crisis-affected contexts often anticipate a rise in violence and see marriage as a way to protect girls and ensure their safety.

2 Poverty plays a significant role in driving the practice of child marriage. In many parts of the world, parents marry off their daughters while they are still children, in the hope that the marriage will relieve their family's financial burden. Giving a daughter in marriage allows parents to reduce family expenses by ensuring they have one less person to feed, clothe and educate.

3 Lack of access to safe and affordable education – especially beyond primary level – further fuels the practice of child marriage. Lower levels of education are found amongst women who married in their childhood.

4 Cultural norms and traditional practices are a leading cause of child marriage. Parents still arrange marriage ceremonies without informing relatives or the girls. Younger wives are considered better as they are expected to be more obedient.

5 Gender norms and inequality are a root cause of early or forced marriage. Patriarchal beliefs and low value placed on girls leads to expectations like girls becoming wives and mothers. When there are limited opportunities for education and work, this sometimes seems like the best option.

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Sample letter for schools to send out to students and parents/carers



Young people's voices are very important



Glossary

Cultural norms: They are the shared expectations and rules that guide behaviour of people within social groups. Cultural norms are learned and reinforced from parents, friends, teachers and others while growing up in a society. Norms often differ across cultures.

Fragile contexts: Contexts where political and social pressure make them vulnerable to conflict and have fractured the institutions that would normally provide protection and security to residents, including children. Fragility can cover one or many states or only a few neighbourhoods and can change rapidly. In fragile contexts, children suffer from extreme levels of violence, exploitation, abuse, and neglect.

Gender discrimination: Granting or denying rights or privileges to a person based on their gender.

Gender norms: Sets of expectations about how people of each gender should behave, according to notions of masculinity and femininity. These are not determined by biological sex but rather are specific to particular cultures or societies, and often to particular social groups within those societies.

Inequality: Structural inequality happens when resources are distributed unevenly within society. This means some people have easier access to things like education and jobs. Social inequalities are based on roles and expectations in society. This is impacted by your class, religion, gender, race, nationality and (dis)ability among other things.

Poverty: The state or condition of having little or no money, goods, or means of support; condition of being poor. This can be caused by many different things like natural disasters, unemployment, political crises and social isolation.

Safeguarding: This is the action that is taken to promote the welfare of children and protect them from harm. It means protecting children from abuse and maltreatment; preventing harm to children's health or development, ensuring children grow up with the provision of safe and effective care.

ABC

About **World Vision**

World Vision has over 70 years of experience working with communities, donors, partners, and governments to create opportunities for better futures for vulnerable children... even in the toughest places.

We serve alongside the poor and oppressed as a demonstration of God's unconditional love for all people.

World Vision serves all people, regardless of religion, race, ethnicity, or gender.

We empower communities and guide them to set their own goals and equip them so that progress made is sustained, and continued, long after we've left.

When disaster strikes, we are on the ground, quickly providing immediate support – and we stay helping to rebuild lives for children, families, and communities.

World Vision's approach to ending violence against children protects them today and empowers them for tomorrow. We do this by equipping them, their communities, and local partners with the tools to address the root causes of violence against children.

It Takes a World to End Violence Against Children is a global campaign run by World Vision International since 2016. In the UK, the It Takes a World campaign was launched in November 2018 to make ending violence against children a priority for the UK's humanitarian policies, programmes, and international aid.

#ItTakesAWorld

*Through World Vision's work, every 60 seconds... a family gets water... a hungry child is fed...
a family receives the tools to overcome poverty.*



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FRONT COVER: Parvina, 17, Bangladesh, Cox's Bazar @ 2019 Md. Shabir Hussain / World Vision - Pricilla, 12, DRC
© 2020 Didier Nagifi Sademoke / World Vision - Milton Keynes Youth Cabinet © 2019 Miguel Pilgrim / World Vision

ABOVE: Girl Power groups, like this one, have helped World Vision staff stop at least nine child marriages during the lockdown in India
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