



**GIRLS NOT BRIDES**

The Global Partnership  
to End Child Marriage



# Stand Up, Speak Out!

Youth leadership to address child,  
early and forced marriages and unions in  
Latin America and the Caribbean

Training manual

# Acknowledgements

We would like to thank the young female activists from Latin American and the Caribbean who contributed to this work.

Blanca Ketzal'í Sipac Patal – Guatemala  
Lídice Laurel Chávez Gammie – Nicaragua  
Vanessa Virginia Blanco Mejía – Venezuela  
Danha Alejandra Alvarado Jiménez – Guatemala  
Lina María Cárdenas Castañeda – Colombia  
Cecilia Pérez Diego – Mexico  
Katherine Paola Díaz Osorio – Honduras  
Daniela López Córdoba – Colombia  
Edith Orestila Martínez Espinal – Honduras  
Martina Posadas – Argentina  
Raquel Mamani Calzada – Bolivia  
María Sofía Quiroga – Argentina  
Karla Rax Choc – Guatemala  
Nery Margot Chocce Santi – Peru  
Cintia Soledad Gerez – Argentina  
Valeria María Escalante Ávila – Mexico  
Rosa María de la Cruz de la Cruz – Mexico  
Indira Gabriela Kadhi – Brazil  
Micaela Camacho – Ecuador  
Natalia Barbosa Viana – Brazil  
Sasha Dieguez – Uruguay  
María Fernanda Quipildor Paz – Bolivia

To Laura Patricia Villa Torres, author of the Latin American and Caribbean version.

The *Girls Not Brides* technical team: Gabriela Garcia Patiño, Learning and Operations Coordinator for Latin America and the Caribbean, and Eugenia López Uribe, Head of Latin America and Caribbean Engagement.

The UNFPA technical team: Neus Bernabeu, Regional Gender and Youth Advisor, UNFPA LACRO, and José Roberto Luna, Technical Specialist Adolescents and Youth, UNFPA HQ/ UNFPA-UNICEF Global Programme to End Child Marriage.

To UNFPA<sup>1</sup> and CAMY Fund<sup>2</sup> for considerable support in carrying out the approval process of this manual.

The texts included in this publication do not necessarily reflect the views of UNFPA and UNICEF. This document is for general distribution. Copyright is reserved and permission is granted for reproductions and translations, provided the source is cited. Any use of this publication, its reproductions or translations for commercial purposes is prohibited.

Cover photo: Two participants in GoJoven programmes in Livingston, Guatemala.

Photo: *Girls Not Brides*/Priscilla Mora Flores/Colectivo Nómada.

Design: [www.alikecreative.com](http://www.alikecreative.com)

Illustration: de Ariadna Vásquez

1. United Nations Population Fund: <https://www.unfpa.org>

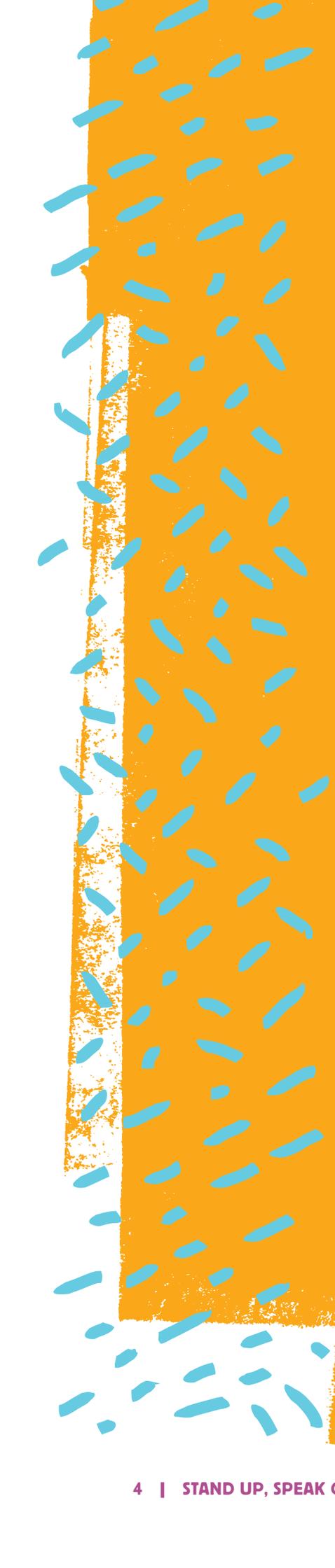
2. The Central America and Mexico Youth Fund: <https://camyfund.org>

# **Stand Up, Speak Out!**

---

**Youth leadership to address child,  
early and forced marriages and unions in  
Latin America and the Caribbean**





**W**e are increasingly seeing youth groups speaking out against unjust situations and in favour of human rights, gender equality and ending poverty, or about the many social causes that move us today. These include student movements, civil society mobilisations and political activism. Child, early and forced marriages and unions (CEFMU) is an issue that has not received much attention in Latin American. However, I am very pleased to see that this trend is changing; it is becoming a pressing concern for people of all ages, and it is even more gratifying to know that young people are taking the lead in these changes.

An example of this is our recent *Jóvenas Latidas* campaign, which we developed with several young women in Latin America to create visibility of the effects of the coronavirus pandemic (COVID-19) on girls, adolescents and young women. We developed messages on what is happening, what the problems are and what solutions could be put forward. Interestingly, this space is made up of a group of girls—*chamas, chavas, pibas*—who have been exchanging reflections and experiences with *Girls Not Brides* since 2019. The first time we met was at a consultation to find out how much we knew about CEFMU in the region, which brought together young people who had experience working on issues such as childhood, youth, sexual and reproductive rights, abortion and feminism. We wanted to see how informed we were and how our knowledge could help *Girls Not Brides* with projects in the region. In a second meeting, we shared this manual, and we not only learned a great deal more about how we can use it but were also able to make suggestions and put it into

Girls and young women  
want to dream freely and  
achieve our goals.

Vanessa, Venezuela



practice over several days of hard work. This ensured that this manual is a truly functional tool that can be understood by anyone, including those who are younger and have different backgrounds.

I am very excited about this manual, not only because I was involved in its approval, but also because it is the kind of tool that I always dreamed of when I first became an activist and a volunteer. I have been active in this area since I was 15 years old, and I have witnessed how friends of mine, daughters of my mother's friends and acquaintances got married at an early age, leaving behind dreams and opportunities, without really knowing what I could do about it. I had the empirical knowledge about what was happening, but I still had concerns and could not find anything that explicitly spoke to the issue. Also, in the places where I was engaging in activism, talking about this

issue was not always an option because people did not know how to address it. Now, however, with this tool, I am sure that more people will find a way to overcome the fear of speaking out loud and clear about CEFMU, and, more importantly, they will be able to raise awareness among a wider range of people in a single place.

I cannot help feeling incredibly happy to know that, with this manual, more people of all ages will be able to raise awareness about CEFMU and more girls will be able to grow up both free and fearless. But that will be gradual and require persistent work that we will do together, so please feel free to use and share all the information you find here.

**Vanessa Blanco, Jóvenas Latidas,  
Caracas, Venezuela.**  
October 2020

# Contents

<b>I. Manual introduction and objectives</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>II. Manual outline</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>III. Preparing for the workshop</b>	<b>14</b>
Group presentations	14
Basic tips on facilitation	15
Key advice for working with young women and men together	19
Working with girls, adolescents and young women affected by CEFMU	20
What should I do before starting the training?	20
HELP! How should I respond when dealing with sensitive issues?	21
<b>Module 1. Introduction</b>	<b>22</b>
Session 1.1 Introduction to the workshop	24
Session 1.2 Introduction to CEFMU	27
Module 1 supporting teaching materials	29
Factsheet: Introduction to the global and regional context of CEFMU	30
<b>Module 2. Intersectionality – The power structures that drive CEFMU</b>	<b>32</b>
Session 2.1 What is intersectionality?	34
Session 2.2 What is gender?	36
Session 2.3 Egalitarian masculinity models	39
Session 2.4 Intersectional analysis of CEFMU	42
Module 2 supporting teaching materials	44
Worksheets	44

<b>Module 3. Human Rights – The importance of recognising how CEFMU limit the human rights of girls and women</b>	<b>64</b>
Session 3.1 What are human rights?	66
Session 3.2 CEFMU and human rights	68
Module 3 supporting teaching materials	70
Worksheets	72
<b>Module 4: Youth leadership and participation – Tools for leading community conversations on CEFMU</b>	<b>76</b>
Session 4.1 Youth participation	78
Session 4.2 Socio-ecological analysis of CEFMU to identify levels of participation and political influence	82
Module 4 supporting	84
Worksheets	84
<b>Module 5. Workshop close</b>	<b>100</b>
Session 5.1 Workshop evaluation	102
Session 5.2 Making commitments	104
Module 5 supporting teaching materials	105
<b>Annex I. Supporting material</b>	<b>106</b>
Activities for dividing participants into working groups	107
Activities for integration and ice-breaking	108
Activities for emotional support	109
Extra case study	112
<b>Annex II. Taking action – How to develop an advocacy strategy</b>	<b>113</b>
Session All.1 Defining the change you want to achieve	114
Session All.2 Developing advocacy strategies	116
Session All.3 Creating effective communication messages	118
Annex II supporting teaching materials	120
Worksheets	124
External resources	131

# I. Manual introduction and objectives

## The purpose of this manual

The main objective of this manual is to raise awareness among young activists of the issue of child, early and forced marriages and unions (CEFMU) in Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC).

*Girls Not Brides'* vision is a world in which girls, adolescents and young women enjoy equal status with boys and men and are able to achieve their full potential in all aspects of their lives. The impact of *Girls Not Brides* Global Partnership will be achieved to the extent that girls, adolescents and young women can decide when, how and with whom to join in union; we also seek to ensure that girls, adolescents and young women who are married or in unions lead healthy and empowered lives.

The four pillars of the *Girls Not Brides* theory of change are:

1. Empower girls, adolescents and young women
2. Mobilise families and communities to address CEFMU
3. Provide services to address the provision of services to address the specific needs of girls and adolescents, as well as of women who have experienced child, early and forced marriages or unions
4. Establish and implement laws and policies that address CEFMU in a comprehensive way

Our aim is to ensure that young people who are already activists and leaders in their communities are familiar with the reality of CEFMU and to raise awareness of the impact it has on the lives of girls and adolescents in LAC.

## Who should read this manual

This manual is aimed at young activists who are involved in social movements in LAC.

## What the young people who participate in this *Stand Up, Speak Out!* workshop will learn

Having completed the activities included in this manual, the youth participants will be able to:

1. Analyse the impact of CEFMU on the lives of girls, adolescents and young women from a human rights perspective
2. Develop an intersectional analysis of CEFMU and of how it affects communities in different ways, with a particular focus on gender and the importance of promoting egalitarian masculinity models
3. Discuss the importance of youth leadership in addressing CEFMU in LAC
4. Identify different action levels to integrate the work on CEFMU within the framework of their existing advocacy and participation

## II. Manual outline

This manual consists of five modules, each containing a different set of activities. There are also two annex modules with additional, complementary activities. Below is a table

showing the contents of the manual, together with the annexes, so you can browse through them quickly.

### Module 1. Introduction – What is CEFMU?

Session	Session objectives	Session activities	Required time	Required materials
1.1 Introduction to the workshop	To allow facilitators and participants to get to know each other	1. Introduction of facilitators and participants	15 min	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Self-adhesive labels</li> <li>• Markers</li> </ul>
	To clarify the objectives of the workshop	2. Presentation of workshop objectives and expectations	20 min	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Workshop objectives</li> <li>• Blank flipcharts</li> <li>• Markers</li> <li>• Adhesive tape</li> </ul>
	To provide space for participants to express their expectations		25 min	
	To draft a list of practice and conduct agreements for the workshop	3. Discussion on handling sensitive issues, child safeguarding, and practice and conduct agreements		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Child safeguarding notice</li> <li>• Blank flipcharts</li> <li>• Markers</li> <li>• Examples of practice and conduct agreements</li> </ul>
1.2 Introduction to CEFMU	To become aware of the current state of CEFMU in the world and in LAC	1. Brainstorm on CEFMU	15 min	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Brainstorming instructions</li> <li>• Blank flipcharts</li> <li>• Markers</li> </ul>
		2. Analysis of life experiences to encourage reflection: Lucia's story	30 min	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Case study: Lucia's story</li> <li>• Questions to guide reflection</li> </ul>
		3. Introduction to CEFMU terminology and statistics	15 min	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Factsheet: Introduction to the global and regional context of CEFMU</li> </ul>

**Module total time: 2 hours**

## Module 2. Intersectionality – The power structures that drive CEFMU

Session	Session objectives	Session activities	Required time	Required materials
2.1 What is intersectionality?	To understand the issue of intersectionality, including race/ethnicity, class, gender, disability, sexual diversity and immigration status categories	1. Guided visualisation: A walk around the square	20 min	• Text for the exercise and discussion questions
	To reflect on the social and power structures that determine people's lives	2. Exercise: Intersecting paths	40 min	• Presentation on intersectionality • The definitions of different power categories • Worksheet: Intersecting paths
2.2 What is gender?	To become familiar with the concept of gender, specifically: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the difference between sex and gender</li> <li>• gender identity and gender expression</li> <li>• sexuality and sexual diversity</li> <li>• patriarchy and the binary system of heteronormativity as forms of oppression</li> </ul>	1. Brainstorm: Sex or gender?	15 min	• Flipcharts • Markers
		2. Exercise: Find the definition	15 min	• Separated concepts and definitions • Adhesive tape
		3. Presentation on gender and related issues	15 min	• Presentation
		4. Exercise: Who am I?	15 min	• Worksheet: Who am I?
2.3 Egalitarian masculinity models	To become familiar with the issue of egalitarian masculinities	1. Interacting with "the man box"	30 min	• Blank flipcharts • Markers
	To discuss how boys, adolescents and young men are also affected by CEFMU in the region			
	To analyse the role of boys, adolescents and young men in addressing CEFMU			
2.4 Intersectional analysis of CEFMU	To apply the concept of intersectionality to the situation of CEFMU	1. Conducting a gender analysis	30 min	• Presentation on what is gender analysis?
		2. Learning about Claudia and Roberto's story	30 min	• Case study: Claudia and Roberto's story • Worksheet: Claudia and Roberto's intersecting paths

**Module total time: 3 hours 30 minutes**

## Module 3. Human rights – The importance of recognising how CEFMU limits the human rights of girls, adolescents, young women and women

Session	Session objectives	Session activities	Required time	Required materials
3.1 What are human rights?	To understand human rights and the way states guarantee and protect these rights	1. Brainstorm on human rights	30 min	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Blank flipchart</li> <li>• Markers</li> <li>• Adhesive tape</li> </ul>
	To understand and discuss the principles of children's rights as well as their evolving capacities and best interests	2. Presentation on human rights, the principles of children's rights and the evolving capacities and best interests of the child	30 min	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Worksheet: Human rights and CEFMU</li> <li>• Presentation</li> </ul>
3.2 CEFMU and human rights	To analyse which human rights are affected by CEFMU	1. Learning about Romina's story	30 min	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Worksheet: Romina's story</li> <li>• Markers</li> </ul>

**Module total time: 1 hour 30 minutes**

## Module 4. Youth leadership and participation – Tools for leading community conversations on CEFMU

Session	Session objectives	Session activities	Required time	Required materials
4.1 Youth participation	To discuss what youth participation is and learn about models, levels and key elements of participation	1. Defining youth participation	45 min	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Blank flipchart</li> <li>• Markers</li> <li>• Adhesive tape</li> <li>• Worksheet: Models for studying levels of participation</li> <li>• Worksheet: Risk analysis</li> </ul>
		2. Finding your own voice	30 min	
	To recognise security measures for young activists	3. Defining safety measures for young activists	45 min	
4.2 Socio-ecological analysis of CEFMU to identify levels of participation and political influence	To analyse which human rights are affected by CEFMU	1. Conducting a socio-ecological analysis	60 min	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Worksheet: Socio-ecological analysis of CEFMU</li> <li>• Markers</li> </ul>

**Module total time: 3 hours**

## Module 5. Workshop close

Session	Session objectives	Session activities	Required time	Required materials
5.1 Workshop evaluation	To evaluate the workshop and discuss opportunities for improvement	1. Exercises: Happy face, neutral face, sad face and learning storm	5 min	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Worksheet: Happy face, neutral face sad face</li> <li>• Markers</li> </ul>
		2. Group discussion	20 min	
5.2 Commitments	To draft a commitment for working on the issue of CEFMU	1. Writing a postcard to myself	15 min	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Blank postcards</li> <li>• Envelopes</li> </ul>

Module total time: 40 minutes

## Annex modules

### Annex I. Supporting materials

Activities for dividing participants into working groups	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Paper figures</li> <li>2. Fruit</li> <li>3. Number sequence</li> </ol>
Integration and ice-breaking activities	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Thunder</li> <li>2. Shopping at the market</li> <li>3. The elephant says</li> </ol>
Emotional support activities	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Collage of feelings</li> <li>2. The emotional energy beans</li> <li>3. Guided meditation</li> </ol>
Extra case study	Renuka's story

## Annex II. Taking action – How to develop an advocacy strategy

Session	Session objectives	Session activities	Required time	Required materials
All.1 Defining the change you want to achieve	To define the desired change	1. Setting out your ideal future	30 min	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Magazines</li> <li>• Scissors</li> </ul>
	To define the expected advocacy outcome	2. Presentation on expected advocacy outcomes and advocacy objectives	30 min	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Glue</li> <li>• Flipchart</li> <li>• Markers</li> <li>• Adhesive tape</li> </ul>
	To set advocacy objectives	3. Defining an expected advocacy outcome and advocacy objectives	45 min	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Presentation on advocacy objectives</li> </ul>
All.2 Developing advocacy strategies	To learn how to develop an advocacy strategy	1. Presentation on advocacy strategy development	10 min	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Flipcharts</li> <li>• Markers</li> <li>• Adhesive tape</li> <li>• Presentation on how to develop an advocacy strategy</li> </ul>
		2. Developing an advocacy strategy	20 min	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Template: Advocacy strategy</li> </ul>
All.3 Creating effective communication messages	To learn about the characteristics of an effective message aimed at your target audience: How to make them think, feel and act	1. Exercise: Whisper, whisper	10 min	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Notes with phrases to be read</li> </ul>
	To learn how to work with the media and the implications of communication activities	2. Presentation on effective messaging and media management	20 min	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Presentation on effective communication and media management</li> </ul>

Module total time: 2 hours 45 minutes

# III. Preparing for the workshop

## **This *Stand Up, Speak Out!* training manual has five modules.**

Each module includes:

- Module learning objectives
- An outline of each session in the module
- Required materials
- List of module's supporting materials
- List of module's factsheets

Each module session includes:

- Session outline
- Required time for the session
- Required materials for the session
- Detailed instructions on how to conduct the session
- Required worksheets for the activities
- Factsheets with key data and concepts for each module

We suggest that you work through each module in the order presented here so that participants have a detailed understanding of the topics and how they relate to each other. However, depending on your context and experience, you can change the order or omit modules that you consider less useful for your participants.

You may have access to the internet, a projector and a laptop, and perhaps a formal space to hold these sessions. However, these may not be available to you. Don't worry! You can facilitate these sessions anywhere and you don't need to have special equipment. We have highlighted key points that can either be displayed on a computer or written on a flipchart. Our presentations are suggestions of the information you could share with participants and are highlighted throughout the manual to help you prepare and present your sessions. Feel free to use our presentations as they are, or change them so they are more relevant for your participants. It is useful to keep some of the important facts and explanations outlined in the guide in sight of the participants (e.g. by taping them to the wall) so they can be read and remembered at any time during the sessions.

### **One last important reminder:**

You know your participants, your community and your country better than anyone else, so you know what works best for you and the young people you work with. Please adapt and/or change the suggested session plans so that you can carry out the trainings at the pace that works best for you and your participants. Don't forget that the focus is on reflection and action for change.



Melody, a youth leader in the Levantemos municipal network in Chimaltenango, Guatemala. Photo: *Girls Not Brides*/James Rodríguez/Arete.

**Leading a training workshop (or a series of training workshops) is a way of exercising leadership without taking too much control and thus guiding the participants as they learn and come to their own understanding of the issues.**

### **Basic tips on facilitation**

#### **What is a facilitator and what do they do?**

A facilitator is a guide, mentor or discussion leader for a group. There are many other names for this role, but “facilitator” is commonly used. Leading a training workshop (or a series of training workshops) is a way of exercising leadership without taking too much control and thus guiding

the participants as they learn and come to their own understanding of the issues. The facilitator is well prepared and will guide a session’s content and process. Session “content” consists of activities, topics and issues you want to address. The “process” refers to the way in which issues are discussed and shared in a session, including methods, procedures, formats, tools, interaction styles and activities.

## TOP TIPS

# TEN TIPS FOR BEING A GOOD FACILITATOR

- 1. Plan in advance:** Become familiar with the training manual so you can feel confident about the content, timing and process you will be leading. Put yourself in your participant's shoes and anticipate questions they may ask or concerns they may have. If you don't understand something, ask someone who might know.
- 2. Manage your time:** If necessary, ask a participant to help you keep track of the time and let you know when you are coming to the end of an activity or if you need to move faster to conclude a session.
- 3. Have flipcharts and colour markers:** Make sure you have them on hand and that someone helps you take notes. Notes will be useful for summarising discussions or taking up points later on.
- 4. Be clear about the purpose of the training:** From the beginning, establish an agreement on the session's purpose and what you want to achieve together.
- 5. Get to know the participants and let them get to know you:** Introducing yourself and the other participants will help create a comfortable and safe space. Opening up and sharing with others is an important step for people to learn and support each other.
- 6. Stay neutral and listen:** It's fine to share your views and experiences, but don't impose them. Make sure you listen to everyone and build on each other's experiences and reflections. Make sure everyone is participating and feels confident in doing so. If someone has an off-topic or sensitive issue to discuss, let them know that you have heard them and that the issue can be further discussed at the end of the training.
- 7. Create a safe but fun learning environment:** We all participate in the learning process. Support participants so they can learn the range of topics discussed in a clear, sensitive and fun way.
- 8. Promote debate and discussion:** It's your role to keep the discussion going. Prepare questions and answers in advance to generate dialogue and brainstorming with all participants.
- 9. If you don't know an answer, look it up:** Act honestly and openly, because everyone is in the session to learn together. An alternative is for you to tell participants "I don't have that information at the moment, I'll look into it and let you know." Ask other participants if they know the answer or go back to the point after you have looked up the correct information.
- 10. Summarise and state the next steps:** Make sure you summarise the session's achievements and conclusions and review the action points, confirming who will be responsible for meeting those points. This will help achieve great results.

**It is your role and responsibility to present each session's content and activities as clearly as possible so that everyone can easily understand and follow them.**

## Who do you want to work with?

The young people who will take part in the training workshops must have expressed interest or have experience in the topic of CEFMU in their communities. We suggest that you work with 10–24 people in each session to ensure good group management; too large a group can be challenging and leave little time for in-depth discussions.

Some people prefer working with peers of a similar age or of the same gender, as this makes it more comfortable for them to talk about personal or difficult issues. We recommend that you think carefully about how you group participants to ensure that everyone feels confident and comfortable enough to open up and join in.

## STEPS FOR FACILITATING THE WORKSHOP

---

### 1. First, read the training summary at the start of each module

In this *Stand Up, Speak Out!* training manual, the “Your training guide” section contains a step-by-step description of each activity to be carried out in the sessions and explains the information you should cover. We provide you with an outline and explain all the activities in detail, especially the suggested “icebreakers” that you can use in your sessions. We also detail what information and content you should have in mind to present to the participants. Read this section carefully and practice each activity so that you feel comfortable in your role as facilitator.

### 2. Safeguarding a notice on sensitive issues and child protection

It is important to start each session with a notice on sensitive issues and child protection. We recommend that you draw from the *Girls Not Brides* Safeguarding Standards (<https://beta.girlsnotbrides.org/our-partnership/become-member/membership-policies/>) to develop your

own safeguarding principles for conducting workshops. Write the child protection notice on a flipchart or include it on one of your presentation slides so you can remind participants every session. You can also stick it on the wall permanently so that it can be consulted at any time..

- Let those participating know that CEFMU is a sensitive issue that can be upsetting to some people. Explain that if anyone is uncomfortable and wants to leave, they can do so at any time. Make sure they know who to turn to for support.
- Assure participants that everything expressed in the sessions is confidential and that these sessions are a safe space to talk and share experiences. Explain that no one will be forced to reveal personal experiences and that their participation should always be voluntary.
- Explain that keeping the space safe is a responsibility shared by all participants. Everyone should be committed to respecting other people’s contributions and must not judge their experiences in



a negative way.

It is also important to identify a trusted person in your community who has the skills and knowledge to provide emotional and practical support to any young person who feels uncomfortable or discloses abuse during the sessions. This person could be a health professional, a member of a women's group, a child protection professional or a trusted teacher, and they do not have to be present at the training but should be available for follow-up and support afterwards.

### **3. Establish basic practice and conduct agreements for group interaction**

Do this at the beginning of Module 1, Session 1 and remind participants about them each time you meet. It is essential that everyone considers themselves an important part of the session and that they join in with group activities and comply with the agreements. Everyone should help if someone else causes disruption, holding each other accountable so that the training can be completed as a cohesive group. Establishing basic agreements is a good way of encouraging participants to maintain good dynamics and ensure that everyone achieves their goals.

For example, “the use of mobile phones is prohibited” is a good agreement, especially so that people are not distracted by text messages or calls and do not disturb others with noise. Respecting the session time is also an important agreement. An effective way to involve everyone is to appoint a participant to keep track of the time allocated to the activities or to ensure that no one speaks for much longer than others. Another important agreement is that everyone's voice is equally valid and that the training environment represents a safe space so that, even if differences of opinion arise, all are respected.

**Another important agreement is that everyone's voice is equally valid and that the training environment represents a safe space so that, even if differences of opinion arise, all are respected. Respect for others is an essential point, which must be made very clear.**

Respect for others is an essential point, which must be made very clear.

Make agreements together and write them on flipchart paper attached to the wall as a permanent reminder. Refer back to the agreements at the beginning of each session so that all participants remember how to carry out the group work. If someone breaks an agreement, refer to them and ask that person to abide by them, since they were agreed upon collectively.

### **4. Facilitating your session: Your role in building trust**

Some young people, due to shyness or unfamiliarity with this type of training session, may take longer to open up and participate. You can include exercises to “break the ice,” helping participants get to know each other and develop bonds. These are short and fun activities to build trust, support teamwork and increase energy.

Icebreaker activities are very important for promoting cohesion between participants. The recommended time is 25 to 35 minutes, depending on how many participants you have and the activity. Take your time with them and let people relax and express themselves. When you notice people starting to disperse, you should bring the activity to a close. Some activities are shorter and simpler than others and may take less time. We have suggested several of these activities throughout the training manual.

## 5. Conducting your session: All the way through

### “The car park”

Explain this at the beginning of each session and repeat it at the end of the workshop. At the end of a session, it's useful to ask the participants to share the lessons learned or to mention whether some of the points discussed have given them new ideas or opened their minds in some way. If a participant raises an important point or ask a question during a session that you don't have time to respond to right then, you can write it down on a flipchart to come back to at the end of the session. You can call this list “the car park,” “the fridge” or “the wardrobe.” This is a good practice to ensure that no one is left with unanswered

**At the end of a session, it's useful to ask the participants to share the lessons learned or to mention whether some of the points discussed have given them new ideas or opened their minds in some way.**

questions or important issues to share.

## Key advice for working with young women and men together

When working with young women and men together, consider the following points before you start:

- **Think about gender dynamics.** Depending on the subject, it may be better to divide men and women into separate groups if that makes them feel more comfortable when working together on sensitive issues.
- **Remember that people learn in different ways.** The session plans suggest many ways of addressing the main topics, and we have included a range of activities and tasks. As you gain experience and get to know people, adapt the sessions to what works best for all participants, always prioritising those activities that keep them interested and active.
- **Get periodic feedback from participants.** One way to help people learn and ensure understanding is to repeat and summarise the main points for them to remember. Ask questions frequently, such as “Do you remember what the main drivers of early unions are?” so participants can review the important points.
- **Remember that it's okay for people to disagree.** Don't worry. Talking about certain things, even difficult issues that people disagree on, is a constructive practice, as it helps people understand difficult ideas and how other people may have different perspectives. At the start of the session you will have established basic agreements on how people should interact with each other, listening and respecting each other's opinions (see point 3 above).

- 
- **Create a strong dynamic so that people feel like part of a team and are willing to work and share with others.** If you consider it appropriate, you can invite some members to co-facilitate the sessions with you, as this can help generate a sense of belonging and understanding.

### **Working with girls, adolescents and young women affected by CEFMU**

It's essential to be sensitive when working with girls and young women who are married or in unions or with those who have experienced a union as girls or adolescents. Consider that, over the course of the workshop, you can always tell if a participant has been through one of these experiences. Think about these cases specifically and create a safe space for these young women and adolescents. Here are some points you may want to consider:

- **For child safeguarding reasons, anyone under 18 needs permission to participate, so their guardians will need to be consulted first.** Check if, in your context, adolescents and girls in unions need permission from an adult to take part in the activities. Make sure that all participants know that their participation is voluntary and that they do not have to talk about their experiences if they do not want to.
- **Find out in advance how CEFMU is perceived in the community where you are working.** If participants discuss personal issues, it is essential that you create a safe space for them to share their experiences.

- **Find the schedules that work best for them.** Adolescent girls who are married or in unions may also be mothers and need to be home at certain times of the day, so take this into account when scheduling sessions.
- **Ensure that the facilitator is a woman.** You should know who to turn to (the best person or institution in the community) if adolescent girls share stories of abuse or are particularly affected by the issues discussed in the session. This person may be a community child protection worker, a social worker, a health professional or a member of a local women's organisation who is experienced in dealing with strong emotions. It is important that they are available to provide support if needed.

### **What should I do before I start the training?**

- **It's important that you meet with community decision-makers so that they are aware of your plans.** This includes key actors such as local leaders or teachers who have power and influence in the community and who may be able to stop or interrupt your sessions or support you in your work at some point. In a respectful way, explain what you want to do and, if they object, find an alternative venue or time, but first it is important to try to get their support.
- **Have at least a couple of free hours before your session to prepare.** You may also want to share your facilitation role with other people from your organisation or group. If you decide to share your role, you will need to prepare the sessions together.

## If you meet in an open or public space, make sure that disruptions such as noise, weather conditions or distractions are kept to a minimum.

- **Think about practical issues such as location and timetables; sessions must be accessible, safe and convenient for participants and adapted to their needs.** If you meet in an open or public space, make sure that disruptions such as noise, weather conditions or distractions are kept to a minimum. Think about whether the venue should be informal, such as a park, garden or community centre for young people, or more formal, such as a school. Make sure it is a safe place for adolescents and young people to reach and that, while they are there, they feel confident and safe.
- **Think about any language needs.** You may need local language interpretation support to ensure that people feel free to express themselves in their own language.

### HELP! How should I respond when dealing with sensitive issues?

CEFMU is a sensitive issue that some people may find difficult to address. Sometimes differences of opinion may arise and lead to complicated situations or challenging comments during discussions. Here are some possible responses that you can use if a complicated situation arises:

- “I appreciate you sharing your opinion with us. Could you share why you feel this way? It is important to understand that not all people share the same opinions.”

- “If you would like to discuss this further, I would be happy to talk to you at the end of the workshop or introduce you to people who can give you more information on the subject.”

Remember not to overlook potentially harmful views or comments. For example, there may be some people who say that it's okay for girls and adolescents to get married at a younger age than boys. You could reply in the following way:

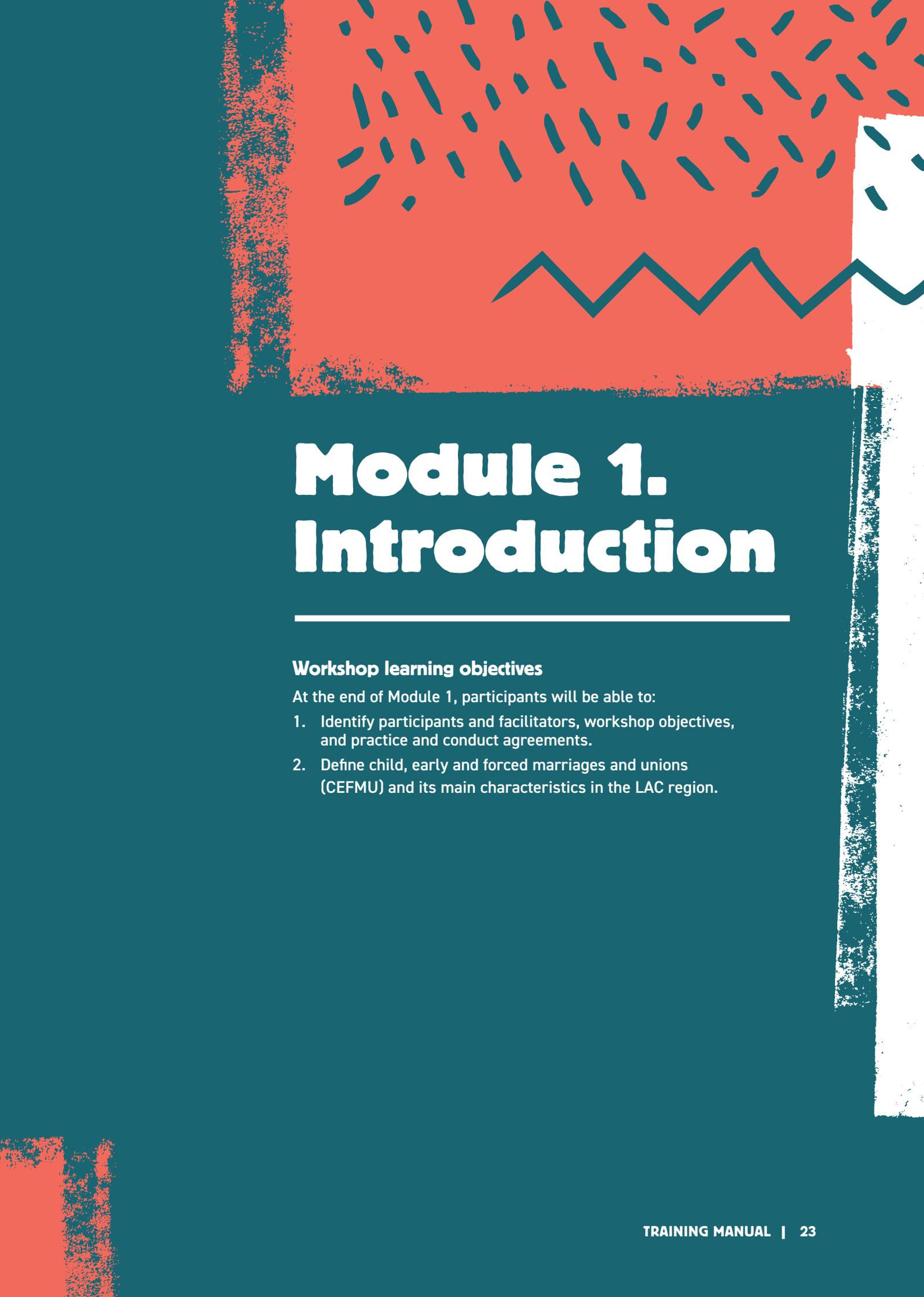
- “Thank you for sharing your opinion. What do others think? Does anyone here have a different opinion?”

If no one offers an alternative point of view, then be sure to offer it yourself. If possible, use data and evidence to support your argument. For example:

- “I know many people who would disagree with this view. In fact, international law stipulates that there should be no difference in the minimum age of marriage for girls and boys, because of the harmful consequences this would have. This is a human right aimed at ensuring gender equality.”



Photo © Jessica Podraza/ Unsplash



# Module 1. Introduction

---

## Workshop learning objectives

At the end of Module 1, participants will be able to:

1. Identify participants and facilitators, workshop objectives, and practice and conduct agreements.
2. Define child, early and forced marriages and unions (CEFMU) and its main characteristics in the LAC region.

# Module 1 – Session 1.1

## Introduction to the workshop

 Session	 Session objectives	 Session activities	 Required time	 Required materials
1.1 Introduction to the workshop	To allow facilitators and participants to get to know each other	1. Introduction of facilitators and participants	15 min	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Self-adhesive labels</li> <li>• Markers</li> </ul>
	To clarify the objectives of the workshop	2. Presentation of workshop objectives and expectations	20 min	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Workshop objectives</li> <li>• Blank flipcharts</li> <li>• Markers</li> <li>• Adhesive tape</li> </ul>
	To provide space for participants to express their expectations	3. Discussion on handling sensitive issues, child safeguarding, and practice and conduct agreements	25 min	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Child safeguarding notice</li> <li>• Blank flipcharts</li> <li>• Markers</li> <li>• Examples of practice and conduct agreements</li> </ul>
To draft a list of practice and conduct agreements for the workshop				

Total time: 1 hour

### Activity 1. Introduction of facilitators and participants

#### Instructions:

1. Start the workshop by welcoming the participants, saying your name and the name of the organisation, collective or group you are part of and how you became interested in the issue of CEFMU.
2. Ask the participants to introduce themselves by saying their name, their preferred pronoun and something funny about themselves that is unknown to others. Make sure everyone writes their name on a self-adhesive label so they start getting to know each other.

### Activity 2. Presentation of workshop objectives and expectations

#### Instructions:

1. To start this activity, divide the participants into small groups. There are several activities to help you do this in the annex section of this manual.
2. Once the participants are divided into groups, present the workshop objectives on a flipchart or a slide. You can find the workshop objectives in the introduction section of this manual and in the teaching materials of this module.

3. Provide each group with a flipchart and ask them to write two things they expect from the training as a group (what they want to achieve or learn). They can also say if they have any concerns about the training or about working on the issue of CEFMU. Ask the group to briefly present this information to other participants. It is very useful to carry out this exercise at the beginning, as it will allow you to frame and manage unrealistic expectations or clarify misunderstandings at any time. Ask each group to select a secretary to report on the group's discussions.
4. Ask the group to display their expectations in a visible place and keep them there so they can be reviewed at the end of the workshop.

---

### Activity 3. Discussion on handling sensitive issues, child safeguarding, and practice and conduct agreements

#### Instructions:

In this section you will open the discussion on how sensitive issues and the child safeguarding notice will be handled in the workshop, which you will find in the teaching materials. Also, together with the participants, you will create the workshop's practice and conduct agreements.

1. Show understanding that CEFMU may be a sensitive issue for some participants who have experienced it personally or through someone close to them. In addition, to understand the issue it is necessary to talk about other topics, such as violence, discrimination and poverty, that can also generate feelings of sadness, anger and anxiety (among others) and and these need to be recognised within the group work. Remind the participants that, although this is not a therapeutic space aimed at working on these feelings, there are extra activities to deal with these emotions that can be carried out whenever needed. These activities are available in the annex of this manual. Ensure you are familiar with at least two of these activities and have them ready in case they are needed.
2. After discussing the handling of sensitive issues, introduce participants to the child safeguarding notice, which is part of the *Girls Not Brides*' policy to safeguard anyone under the age of 18. Have the child safeguarding notice written on a flipchart that can be displayed throughout the training as a reminder of what you are trying to achieve together and the basic safety rules that need to be followed.



3. After introducing the notice, ask the participants to help you put together the practice and conduct agreements to be followed during the workshop. Ask one person to help you write the agreements on a flipchart. Doing this with participants is key to ensuring a conducive working environment. If such basic agreements are not established at the outset, training sessions can be disrupted by a number of problems. If the agreements are decided by those involved, then the commitment to the process and to its follow-up will be greater. If any important agreement is left out, do not hesitate to mention it. Examples are: arriving at the workshop on time, not having parallel conversations when one person is speaking, making sure that everyone respects and listens to each other, and ensuring that mobile phones are not used during the session. There are many simple agreements that can help us respect each other in order to achieve a safe working space for the trainings. More examples of practice and conduct agreements can be found in the supporting materials for this session.
4. Finally, introduce the participants to the “car park” space, where they can write down ideas that are not discussed within the sessions, either because they will be addressed in subsequent sessions or because they are not within the workshop’s objectives. The “car park” will be a space where you can add points throughout the session. At the end of each training day, they can be discussed or they can provide input for future sessions – whatever best suits the needs and requests of the group.



# Module 1 – Session 1.2

## Introduction to CEFMU

# Session	O Session objectives	? Session activities	L Required time	✂ Required materials
1.2 Introduction to CEFMU	To become aware of the current state of CEFMU in the world and in LAC	1. Brainstorm on CEFMU	15 min	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Brainstorming instructions</li> <li>Blank flipcharts</li> <li>Markers</li> </ul>
		2. Analysis of life experiences to encourage reflection: Lucia's story	30 min	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Case study: Lucia's story</li> <li>Questions to guide reflection</li> </ul>
		3. Introduction to CEFMU terminology and statistics	15 min	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Factsheet: Introduction to the global and regional context of CEFMU</li> </ul>

Module total time: 1 hour

### Activity 1. Brainstorm on CEFMU

#### Instructions:

1. Ask the participants to break into groups again. Once everyone is in their groups, ask them to write down all the ideas that come to mind when they hear the concept of “child, early and forced marriages and unions” on a flipchart. Explain that this is an open discussion: whoever wants to speak can raise their hand and say what comes to mind and someone in the group will write it down on the flipchart. Encourage them to consider the differences between *early* child marriages and unions and *forced* child marriages and unions. Many people do not know the difference between these terms, so it is good to discuss them. Encourage participants to question each other. Give them 5 minutes to write down their ideas.
2. Now, ask the groups to share their flipchart notes with the rest of the participants. Tell them that any doubts, myths and concepts will be clarified throughout the workshop. Also, mention that in many materials they will see the concept abbreviated with the acronym CEFMU. Assign 10 minutes for this discussion.
3. Thank them for participating and let them know that they can stay in their groups for the next activity.

---

## Activity 2. Analysis of life experiences to encourage reflection: Lucia's story

### Instructions:

1. Hand out copies of the case study of Lucia's story and questions to guide participant reflection. You can find Lucia's story in the teaching materials for this module.
2. Ask each group to read the story and discuss it based on the questions included in the handouts. While the groups are discussing, you can go from group to group and listen to some of the arguments. Give them 15 minutes for this activity.
3. When time is up or you notice that the groups have finished talking, ask groups to share what they discussed with the other participants. You can write down the most important points on a flipchart. You can use the following questions as a guide for this group discussion:
  - a. What is Lucia's story?
  - b. What events in Lucia's life facilitated the early union?
  - c. How has this early union affected Lucia's life?

Assign 10 minutes for this plenary discussion.

4. Thank the participants for their work. Ask them to write down any questions or concerns they may have in the "car park."

---

## Activity 3. Introduction to CEFMU terminology and statistics

### Instructions:

1. Provide participants with information about CEFMU, its definition, global statistics and the situation in LAC; you can do this either with a digital presentation or with flipcharts that you have prepared beforehand. Use the information included in the factsheet for this module. You can also find additional information in a list of reports available online, which is included in the annex. Deliver your presentation in 10 minutes and then open a short Q&A session.
2. Once the Q&A is completed, thank the participants for their work in this module and invite them to contribute to the "car park" with ideas and questions. Remind them that, while working on the following modules, questions regarding the issue of CEFMU will be clarified.



# Module 1: Supporting teaching materials

1. Child safeguarding notice
2. Examples of practice and conduct agreements
3. Case study: Lucia's story
4. Factsheet: Introduction to the global and regional context of CEFMU

---

## Child safeguarding notice

This notice serves to guide workshop participants on appropriate behaviours when working with people under 18 years of age. It is not an exhaustive list and the intention is to avoid situations that may facilitate child abuse. A space that empowers minors must always be guaranteed.

When working with minors, you should always:

- Pay attention to their questions and needs and respond in an appropriate manner.
- Plan activities in advance to ensure that age, gender, sexual orientation and other needs and abilities are taken into account.
- Maintain confidentiality.
- Avoid being alone with them for long periods of time. Make sure there are other adults or that the groups have more than one minor.
- Avoid any inappropriate physical contact.
- Avoid jokes or comments of an adult nature.

When working with minors, you should never:

- hit or physically attack them, or otherwise abuse them or put them in situations where they can be abused.

- have sexual intercourse with them or behave in an inappropriate manner.
- behave in ways that embarrass, humiliate, belittle or degrade minors.
- ignore reports of physical, sexual or emotional abuse, violence or harassment made by a minor.

## Examples of practice and conduct agreements

- Speak in the first person when expressing an opinion or feeling: "I think," "I feel," "I believe."
- Participation is voluntary, if some people do not want to participate, that must be respected.
- People who are more outgoing should allow space for people who speak less.
- Confidentiality of the personal experiences that are shared must be respected.
- It is important to be punctual.
- Mobile phones should be switched off or kept quiet so as not to interrupt the session.

### Case study: Lucía's story

Lucía was born in a rural community in the Dominican Republic. She was the oldest of five children. When she was 10 years old, her father died and her mother had to start working as a domestic worker in the nearest town. Lucía had to start taking care of household chores, including washing clothes and dishes, cooking, looking after her siblings and cleaning the house, among others. At the age of 12, Lucía stopped going to school because she needed to devote herself to looking after her brothers and sisters and the house full time while her mother continued to work full time.

Lucía was sad to leave school and was exhausted from all the work she had to do at home. Although two of her brothers were almost her age, 10 and 11, because they were boys, her mother told her, they could not help at home

because men should not do domestic work. When she was 14, she met a man 15 years older than her and they started dating. The man asked her to live with him, and she decided to accept, thinking that by living with him she could go back to school.

They did not marry, because in the Dominican Republic the law does not allow adolescent girls under 15 to marry. A few months after moving in with him, she fell pregnant and the school refused to take her back; they said she would be a bad influence on the other students. Although she did not want to have so many children, Lucía was never informed about contraception.

When she turned 20, Lucía already had four children and had to start working as a domestic worker to make ends meet. Lucía never made it back to school and continued to live in poverty.

---

### Here are some questions to guide reflection:

- What life situations led Lucía to take care of her siblings?
- What other situations limited Lucía's opportunities?
- How did this early union affect Lucía's life?

## FACTSHEET: Introduction to the global and regional context of CEFMU

### What is CEFMU?

Child, early and forced marriages and unions (CEFMU) are formal unions (legal marriage) or informal unions (common-law unions) in which one or both individuals are under the age of 18. According to recent data from the United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF), an estimated 12 million girls and adolescents under 18 years of age enter unions worldwide every year. This means that 23 girls and adolescents enter unions every minute or one every two seconds; many women are forced to enter unions too early or too young, putting them at risk of not achieving their personal development, health and general wellbeing.

This practice affects girls and adolescents more than their male peers. There are 650 million women alive today who entered unions before their 18th birthdays, compared with 156 million men. That is, for every male adolescent or boy who marries or enters a union before the age of 18, there are five girls or adolescents who do so.<sup>3</sup>

CEFMU is a human rights violation and a form of violence against girls and adolescents. It is on the global agenda, included in the United Nations (UN) Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) as part of Goal 5 to “achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls.” Target 5.3 aims to “eliminate all harmful practices, such as child, early and forced marriage and female genital mutilations.”

### CEFMU in LAC and around the world

CEFMU is a global problem that cuts across regions, countries, cultures, religions and ethnicities.

Some countries have very high total numbers (burden) and/or percentages (prevalence) of people under 18 who are in unions. India has the largest number of people who entered unions as children, with almost 27 million

people. Niger has the highest prevalence in the world, with 76% of all women aged 20–24 reporting that they had entered a union before age 18.

Informal unions are very common in LAC, where adolescent girls and young women go to live with their partners rather than marrying legally. Twenty-five percent of women in the region entered a union or married before they were 18 years old. Girls and adolescents living in rural areas, in poverty and with less education are more likely to experience an early marriage or union. Most women who entered a union at an early age got pregnant before turning 18. There has been no change in the prevalence of early marriages and unions in the region over the past 25 years. There is also a high number of adolescent boys who marry or enter unions before the age of 18 in LAC. The global average for this is 3%, but nine countries in LAC have prevalence rates well above this, including Belize (22%) and Nicaragua (20%).

A major challenge in the region is the lack of a common language to define the problem. Some terms used in Spanish include: *unión de hecho*, *unión conyugal*, *convivencia*, *unión libre*. In English, the terms “consensual union,” “forced union,” “early union” and “informal marriage and cohabitation” are used. In Portuguese, *união consensual* is used. Having different terms, it is difficult to keep track of the number of people under 18 who marry or enter unions, under what conditions, and what works best to address this.

### MORE INFORMATION:

Please refer to the *Girls Not Brides* website for more information about CEFMU and updated global country statistics: [www.girlsnotbrides.org](http://www.girlsnotbrides.org)

3. <https://www.unicef.org>



PICTURED: Adolescents participate in GoJoven activities in Livingston, Guatemala. Photo: *Girls Not Brides*/Priscilla Mora Flores/Colectivo Nómada.



# **Module 2.**

## **Intersectionality**

### **The power structures that drive CEFMU**

---

#### **Learning objectives**

At the end of the module, participants will be able to:

1. Define the concepts of intersectionality, gender and new masculinities.
2. Apply the intersectional perspective to the situation of CEFMU in the region.
3. Analyse the situation of CEFMU in the region by using the concept of gender.
4. Exemplify necessary changes that boys, adolescents and young men can make to transform the situation of CEFMU.

# Module 2 – Session 2.1

## What is intersectionality?

# Session	○ Session objectives	? Session Activities	⌚ Required time	✂️ Required materials
2.1 What is intersectionality?	To understand the issue of intersectionality, including race/ethnicity, class, gender, disability, sexual diversity and immigration status categories	1. Guided visualisation: A walk around the square	20 min	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Text for the exercise and discussion questions</li> </ul>
	To reflect on the social and power structures that determine people's lives	2. Exercise: Intersecting paths	40 min	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Presentation on intersectionality</li> <li>The definitions of different power categories</li> <li>Worksheet: Intersecting paths</li> </ul>

Total time: 1 hour

### Activity 1. Guided visualisation: A walk around the square

#### Instructions:

In this session, you will introduce the concept of intersectionality to the participants:

1. Ask the participants to form a circle and sit in a position where they feel comfortable. Let them know they can close their eyes if they want to.
2. Tell the participants that you are going to lead them on an imaginary walk around a square and that they should try to imagine the people, smells, colours, tastes, etc.
3. Read the text included in the supporting teaching materials “A walk around the square” to the participants. Read the text slowly. We recommend that you read the text beforehand to familiarise yourself with the details. You can adapt the text to your context.
4. Once you have finished reading the text, remain silent for a minute and then ask them to open their eyes and turn their attention back to the session.
5. Facilitate the discussion using the questions listed under the guided visualisation.
6. Thank them for participating in the activity and let them know they can stay in a circle for the next activity.

---

## Activity 2. Exercise: Intersecting paths

### Instructions:

In this session, you will further develop the concept of intersectionality with the participants:

1. Share with the participants that – as shown in the previous exercise – there are many personal and social characteristics that determine our specific experiences.
2. Introduce the definitions of class, race/ethnicity and gender categories. Explain that in the next set of activities you will elaborate on the concept of gender to address issues of gender identity and sexual diversity. During the presentation, name other categories included in the intersectionality studies, such as immigration status (irregular immigrant, refugee status) or physical and mental disabilities. Use the factsheet on intersectionality and understanding CEFMU in LAC to help you; it is included at the end of this module. Allow participants to ask questions during the presentation and/or open a space for questions at the end.
3. After the presentation and questions, share the worksheet on intersecting paths. Ask them to place their name in the middle, where the paths form an intersection. Ask them to think about the categories that define their life experiences most significantly. Ask them to use the questions on the worksheet to guide their reflections. Give them 5 minutes to complete the exercise.
4. Once participants have filled out the worksheet, give them 5 minutes to discuss what they have written with the person next to them.
5. After the discussion in pairs, ask some participants to share their experiences with everyone. Facilitate the discussion by using the questions on the worksheet.
6. Conclude the activity by saying that the most important thing to understand about intersectionality is that we are talking about the place where paths cross. Unlike multiple discrimination or the sum of inequalities, intersectionality attempts to reveal the unique experiences that occur when various categories intersect. It helps to better understand the needs of different peoples and the ways these needs can be met while respecting differences. When implementing an intersectional analysis, it is advisable to put one category at the centre and, from there, see how other categories affect this central category. In the case of CEFMU, the gender category is at the centre of the analysis, particularly because girls, adolescents and young women are most affected by this situation. Let them know that you will discuss this further later on. Thank the group for their participation and ask them to go back to their places.



---

### NOTE

At the end of this activity, ask participants how they feel and if they would like to carry out an emotional care exercise. If so, you can use one of the activities in the annex of this manual. Remember to become familiar with these activities beforehand.

# Module 2 – Session 2.2

## What is gender?

# Session	O Session objectives	? Session Activities	L Required time	✂ Required materials
2.2 What is gender?	To become familiar with the concept of gender, specifically: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the difference between sex and gender</li> <li>• gender identity and gender expression</li> <li>• sexuality and sexual diversity</li> <li>• patriarchy and the binary system of heteronormativity as forms of oppression</li> </ul>	1. Brainstorm: Sex or gender?  2. Exercise: Find the definition  3. Presentation on gender and related issues  4. Exercise: Who am I?	15 min  15 min  15 min  15 min	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Flipcharts</li> <li>• Markers</li> </ul> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Separated concepts and definitions</li> <li>• Adhesive tape</li> </ul> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Presentation</li> </ul> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Worksheet: Who am I?</li> </ul>
Total time: 1 hour				

### Activity 1. Brainstorm: Sex or gender?

#### Instructions:

Welcome the participants to this session on gender. Let them know that, throughout the activities in this module, the concept of gender and other related topics such as sexual diversity and masculinities will be reviewed. Share with them that many concepts and definitions will be discussed, so it is important for them to ask all the questions they have. Remind them that they can write down concerns, thoughts and questions on the “car park” of ideas, which will be reviewed at the end of each exercise or at the end of the session. Make sure you are well prepared for this session.

1. Ask participants to form groups.
2. Once in groups, ask them to divide a flipchart in two and write or draw everything that comes to mind with the word sex in one column and everything that comes to mind with the word gender in another. Give them 5 minutes for this activity.
3. After the group work, ask them to share what they wrote down or drew with the rest of the group. You can clarify any concerns that come up from this discussion and may wish to tell participants that this list will be reviewed at the end of this session’s activities.
4. Thank groups their participation and ask them to join the other participants for the next activity.

## Activity 2. Exercise: Find the definition

### Instructions:

1. Divide participants in two groups. Hand out concepts written on sheets of paper or cards to one group and provide the definitions of the concepts to the other. Use the concepts and definitions included in the teaching materials for this session. The concepts you should be familiar with for this session are patriarchy, heteronormativity, sex, gender, gender identity, gender expression, sexual diversity, biological sex, sexual orientation, homosexual, gay, lesbian, transgender, transsexual, bisexual, intersex, queer. If there are more concepts than participants, give more than one concept or definition to each person. If you have fewer concepts than participants, ask those who have no concept or definition to help others find their match.
2. Once each person has a concept or definition, ask them to find their match. Give them ten minutes to complete the activity.
3. When they have found the match, hand them the list of correct concepts and definitions and ask them to try again if they have made the wrong choice.
4. Once all the correct matches have been made, ask them their thoughts on the concepts, on the definitions, and whether they have any doubts.
5. Thank groups for their participation and ask them to join the other participants for the presentation of the concepts.



---

### Activity 3. Presentation on gender and related issues

#### Instructions:

Before the workshop, be sure to prepare a presentation based on the gender factsheets and the concepts and definitions of sexual diversity. You can prepare this presentation in a digital version or on a flipchart.

1. Share the presentation on gender and sexual diversity with the participants. Invite people to ask questions during the presentation. If there is something you don't know, you can leave the question in the "car park" of ideas to revisit later. Reassure participants that having doubts is normal and that it is a good idea to have the definitions at hand and check them frequently.
2. Thank the participants for their attention and invite them to stay in their groups for the next activity.

---

### Activity 4. Exercise: Who am I?

#### Instructions:

In this activity, you will ask participants to reflect on their own identities. It can be a very private exercise, so you should emphasise that only those who feel comfortable sharing their reflections should do so.

1. Explain the Who am I? worksheet, which contains a human silhouette that represents what we think and feel and how we express ourselves through our bodies in terms of our gender identity and expression, sexual orientation and our biological sex. Ask them to guide their reflection using the questions on the worksheet.
2. Hand out the worksheets and ask them to think about who they are. If they want to, they can write, draw and mark things down on the sheet. Give them 5 minutes for this personal reflection.
3. After they have completed their worksheets, ask them to share with someone else.
4. Ask if anyone would like to share their worksheet with the other participants. Ask them to reflect on how the Who am I? worksheet relates to the worksheet on intersecting paths. Invite them to share their thoughts. To bring the discussion to a close, tell them that the focus of the Who am I? exercise is on the categories of gender and sexual diversity, while the intersecting paths exercise broadens the discussion to include other factors that define us and determine our particular experiences.
5. Thank the participants for taking part.

# Module 2 – Session 2.3

## Egalitarian masculinity models

# Session	O Session objectives	? Session Activities	⌚ Required time	✂️ Required materials
2.3 Egalitarian masculinity models	To become familiar with the issue of egalitarian masculinities	1. Interacting with “the man box”	30 min	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Blank flipcharts</li> <li>• Markers</li> </ul>
	To discuss how boys, adolescents and young men are also affected by CEFMU in the region			
	To analyse the role of boys, adolescents and young men in addressing CEFMU			

Total time: 30 min

### Activity 1. Interacting with “the man box”

#### Instructions:

1. Ask participants to form groups. Ask each group to draw two rectangles, one inside the other, on a blank flipchart. Use the sample included in the teaching materials for this module. Ask them to put the word “Woman” in the outer rectangle and the word “Man” in the inner rectangle. To save time, you could prepare the flipcharts with the rectangles in advance.
2. Ask groups to write down or draw everything that is considered a traditional role, activity, behaviour or expectation for the women and men in their communities inside each rectangle. Make it clear that what they write does not necessarily reflect what they themselves think, but what people in their community think.
3. Once the groups have finished, ask them to share and reflect on what they wrote in the rectangles with the rest of the participants.

4. Let groups know that now they will focus specifically on the construction of traditional masculinity. Point out that the inner rectangle labelled “Men” represents “the man box”. Ask them to reflect again on this traditional masculinity, using the following questions to guide their reflection:

- How common is it for men to fulfil these traditional roles in your community?
- At what age do men start to learn how to “act like a man” in your community?
- What are the messages that a boy receives when he is told to “act like a man”?
- What part do race/ethnicity, class and sexual diversity play in these messages?
- Who specifically delivers these messages and in what context? For example, is it from parents, at school, on the street while playing?
- What are the advantages and privileges for men that come from following these traditional masculine roles?
- What happens to a boy, adolescent or young man who does not fulfil or follow these roles?
- What are the devices used to keep boys, adolescents, young men and men in “the man box”?
- What are the disadvantages and costs of staying in “the man box” for boys, adolescents, young men and men?
- What do you think about women’s roles or roles outside “the man box”?
- What are the advantages of being able to experience the roles that are outside “the man box” for boys, adolescents, young men and men? How can we get men to move out of this box?
- What messages can we create so that boys, adolescents and young men can live more egalitarian masculinities?

5. Next, ask participants to reflect on how traditional male gender roles play a part in enabling boys and adolescents to experience CEFMU. Then, ask them to reflect on how these roles make men want to enter unions with girls and adolescents.

- What work should be done with men to prevent CEFMU?
- What work should be done with boys to prevent the occurrence of CEFMU among boys and adolescents?

6. End the activity by sharing the following reflections: “The man box” represents the roles and expectations that boys, adolescents, young men and adult men should follow and fulfil. These expectations come from family, peer groups, society, media, religion and institutions. It is common for the men who stay within this box to be perceived as better men and be more respected in their communities; therefore, men want to stay inside this box. Conversely, men who dare to live other roles outside the box are singled out, insulted, isolated and even violently harassed. Some consequences of sexist masculinity are that many men behave in ways they do not want to (e.g. take risks, abuse women or other men) and feel isolated and suffer from mental health problems. When men manage to get out of the box, they have more satisfying life experiences and contribute to a decrease in other social problems such as violence against women. It is important to open up the opportunity for boys, adolescents and young men to live outside the norm to achieve equal societies where all people have equal development opportunities.



# Module 2 – Session 2.4

## Intersectional analysis of CEFMU

# Session	○ Session objectives	?Session Activities	⌚ Required time	✂️ Required materials
2.4 Intersectional analysis of CEFMU	To apply the concept of intersectionality to the situation of CEFMU	1. Conducting a gender analysis	30 min	• Presentation on what is gender analysis?
		2. Learning about Claudia and Roberto's story	30 min	• Case study: Claudia and Roberto's story • Worksheet: Claudia and Roberto's intersecting paths
Total time: 60 mins				

### Activity 1. Conducting a gender analysis

#### Instructions:

- Briefly explain what a gender analysis is. Prepare a presentation, either digital or with flipcharts, containing key information on what a gender analysis is. This is provided in the factsheet "What is a gender analysis?"
- Open the session up to questions.
- At the end of the session, highlight that gender analysis:
  - Helps to identify key characteristics that contribute to gender inequality.
  - Highlights disparities between men and women in the household, community and country.
  - Explains how gender norms and power relations affect (and often reinforce) CEFMU.
  - Highlights differences between the roles and norms assigned to women and men, girls and boys: the different levels of power that each has; their different needs, constraints and opportunities; and the impact of these differences on their lives.

## Activity 2. Learning about Claudia and Roberto's story

### Instructions:

1. Explain to participants that in this session you will discuss a story and carry out an intersectional analysis of Claudia and Roberto's life experiences.
2. Hand out a copy of the case study Claudia and Roberto's story and a copy of the accompanying worksheet.
3. Ask the participants to form groups and read Claudia and Roberto's story.
4. Once they have finished reading the life story, ask them to fill in Claudia and Roberto's path intersection on the worksheet. Let them know that they can use the questions to discuss Claudia and Roberto's case as they complete the worksheet.
5. When the groups have finished, ask them to share their work and discussions with the rest of the participants. You can use the following questions to guide the discussion:
  - What were the main factors that led Claudia and Roberto to an early marriage?
  - What power systems were decisive in Claudia and Roberto's lives?
  - How can intersectional analysis be used to analyse CEFMU?
  - Why is it important for gender to be at the centre of an intersectional analysis? Is there another category that is more important for analysing and understanding CEFMU in this life story?



## Module 2: Supporting teaching materials

1. Guided visualisation: A walk around the square
2. Worksheet: Intersecting paths
3. Worksheet: Who am I?
4. Worksheet: “The man box”
5. Case study: Claudia and Roberto’s story
6. Worksheet: Claudia and Roberto’s intersecting paths
7. Module’s concept definitions
8. Factsheet: Intersectionality and understanding the situation of CEFMU in LAC
9. Factsheet: Gender as a decisive driver of CEFMU

### Guided visualisation: A walk around the square<sup>4</sup>

Welcome to this walk around the square. Today is a beautiful day and you have decided to take a walk around your favourite square. The square is a very beautiful place, full of people and plenty of food smells and music. You walk through a narrow street that leads to a square with a kiosk, benches, gardens, a church, some local government buildings and an esplanade. Before reaching the square, you notice a person selling woven tablecloths and napkins with colourful embroidery. You buy a table runner with embroidered flowers from them. You walk on and notice some children playing with dolls. You find the way the children pretend to feed the dolls and change their nappies to be funny. You keep walking and see another group of children playing ball. They run and scream; they seem to be playing football and the goal posts are made of jumpers and shoes. You keep walking and realise that there is a person selling food. You feel hungry. You decide to buy some food and sit down on a bench to enjoy your meal. While you are enjoying your meal, you pay attention to the band playing on a small stage. The person leading the band seems very intelligent

and skilful at leading. You watch a group of foreign people taking pictures and recording their music. You also notice a person asking foreigners for money. That same person comes up to you and asks for your food. You give them what you have not yet eaten. You get up and keep walking, and on the next bench you see a couple hugging and kissing each other. You continue your walk and observe another person cleaning the atrium of the church and another couple ready to enter the church – it looks as if they are going to get married because of how they are dressed. You walk in front of the government building and notice that they are working on some repairs. There are people painting the façade and others fixing the benches. You see some people from the local police making sure that no one steps on the fresh cement on the curb. You continue your walk and see other people selling handicrafts made from wood. You buy a small wooden box. After a while of watching a group of young people taking turns dancing, you decide to go home. To leave, you walk down the same narrow street that you took to get there. Now, you notice that there is another person selling fresh fruit and vegetables. You buy some items to take home. You leave, happy to have walked around your favourite square.

4. This activity was adapted from “Guided fantasy: A walk in the park,” in *Intersectionality Toolkit*, Canadian Research Institute for the Advancement of Women (CRIAM), 2020.

---

## Ask the following questions:

- What colours came to mind with your visualisation walk?
- What day of the week and time of day did you visualise your walk?
- What kind of music were you listening to in the square?
- What food were you and other people eating in the square?
- How did you imagine the people who sold embroidery, handicrafts and fruit and vegetables? Were they women? Were they men? How old were they? Were they Indigenous, Black, or mixed race? Why do you think you imagined this?
- Who were the people playing dolls and playing ball? Girls, boys? Why do you think that?
- Who was the person selling food? And the person leading the musicians? Was it a man, a woman, a transperson? Why did you imagine this?
- Who were the foreigners? What skin colour did the foreigners have? Do you think the foreigners were rich, middle class or poor?
- How did you imagine the person who was asking for money? Was it a man, a woman, a boy or a girl? Why did you think this? What did you feel when they asked for your food?
- When you saw the couple sitting on the bench, whom did you imagine? And what about the couple at the church? Did you imagine a couple of two men or two women? Were they teenagers, young people or adults? Why did you think this?
- When you walked in front of the government building, how did you imagine the security guards and the people repairing the building? Were they poor, middle class, rich? Were they men, women, trans? What made you think this?
- How would you describe the young people dancing? Why?



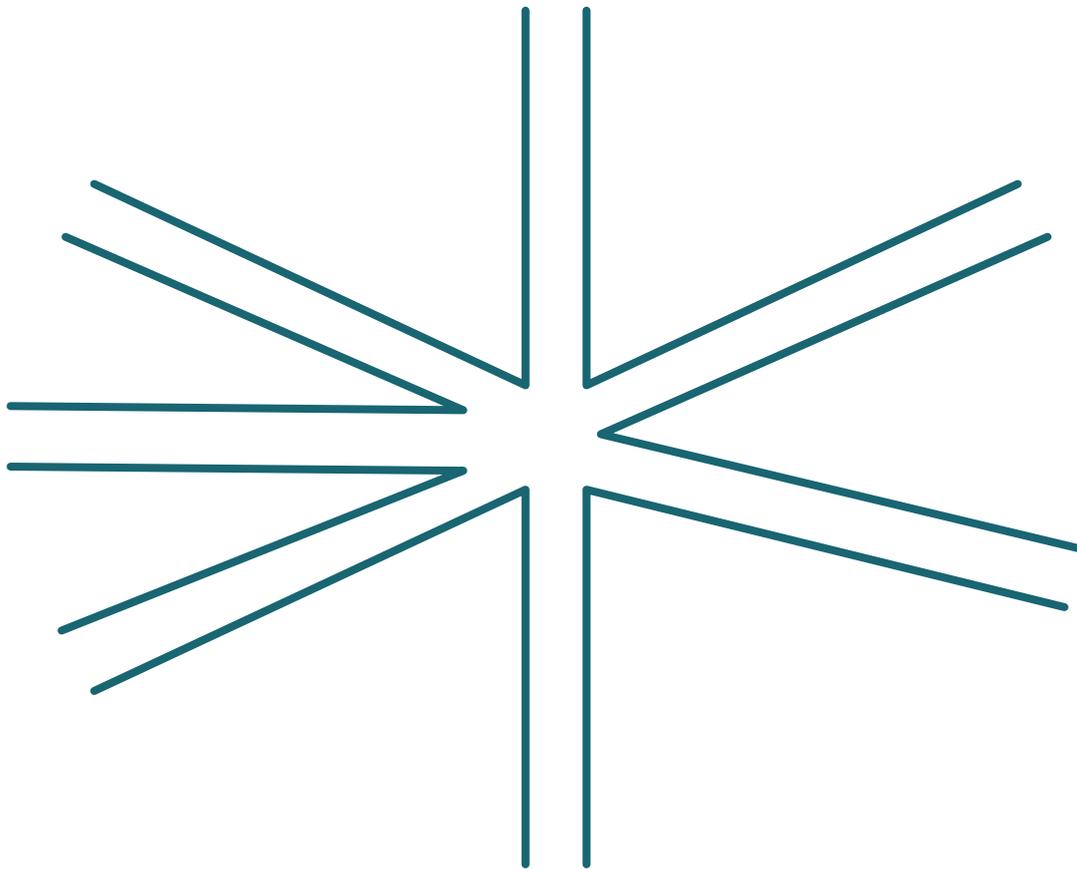
---

## FINAL NOTE AFTER THE QUESTION SESSION:

You may have noticed that there are several prejudices about age, race/ethnicity, sex, gender identity, sexual orientation and gender roles in our daily lives regarding our own lives and the lives of others. In a simple imaginary walk around the square, we realise that we assume that a person with specific characteristics performs a certain task. But also, through discussion, it is possible to realise that not all of us think the same way and that we imagine different things. That is how diverse we are in everyday life. In this module, we will learn about these different ways of being and how this builds up our specific realities in life. All of this will help us to better understand which personal characteristics and social conditions determine whether a girl, adolescent or young woman will experience CEFMU.

---

## WORKSHEET: Intersecting paths



Write your name where the paths intersect and think about all your personal characteristics (sex, gender, skin colour, physical abilities) and social conditions (nationality, social class) that make your life experiences unique.

---

### Use these questions as a guide for reflection:

- Which spaces do you have access to because you are a woman or a man?
- How does your social circle determine which social class you belong to?
- If you have a disability, how has that affected your life?
- Which of your personal characteristics or aspects of your social background has played the most important role in defining your experiences? Please reflect on two or three of them.
- What are your privileges?
- What types of oppression have you experienced?
- Has a change in any of these characteristics altered your way of life?

## WORKSHEET: Who am I!



### Gender Identity



Woman

Trans

Male

### Gender Expression



Female

Androgynous

Male

### Sexual Orientation



Homosexual

Bisexual

Heterosexual

### Biological Sex



Woman

Intersex

Man

### Use these questions as a guide for reflection:

- What is your gender identity?
- What is your gender expression?
- What is your sexual orientation?
- What is your biological sex?
- Why is it important to reflect on our gender and sexual identities?
- What are the types of discrimination and oppression that are based on gender and sexual identities?
- What are your privileges in relation to your gender and sexual identities?
- What kind of oppressions have you experienced that are related to your gender and sexual identities?

---

## WORKSHEET: “The man box”<sup>5</sup>

**Woman**

**Man**

---

5. This activity was adapted from “The Man Box”, in *Manhood 2.0, A curriculum promoting a gender-equitable future of manhood*. Washington, D.C. and Pittsburgh, Promundo and University of Pittsburgh, 2018.

### Case study: Claudia and Roberto's story

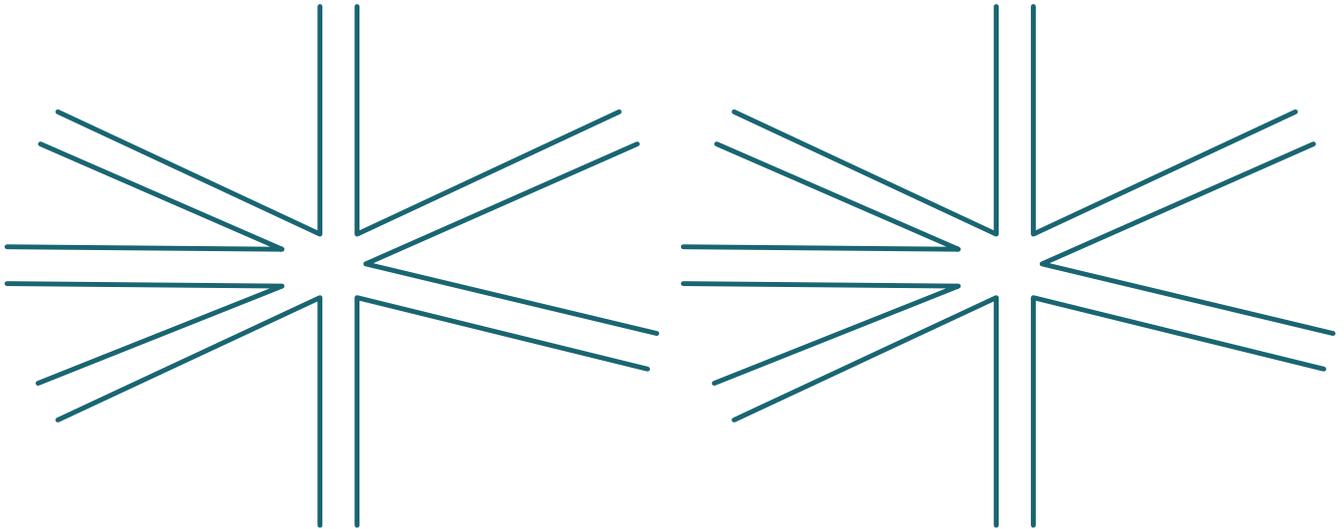
Claudia and Roberto were born in a rural community in Nicaragua and married when Claudia was 14 and Roberto was 16. Claudia grew up with her grandparents because her parents had emigrated to the United States when she was still a child. Claudia's parents sent money frequently to support her, but it was not enough to pay the household expenses. Her grandfather suggested to her grandmother that it might be better for Claudia to marry soon so that they would no longer have to support her. Claudia was not happy about this because she wanted to finish school and eventually travel to the United States and join her parents. She tried to convince her parents to help her go to the United States, but they told her it was too expensive and dangerous. Claudia continued going to school, but her grandfather insisted that she was old enough to find a boyfriend to live with, even though she was only 13 at the time. Claudia ignored her grandfather and concentrated on studying and helping with the housework so that her grandfather would stop bothering her.

Roberto was the third of five children in his family. His parents married at a very young age and found it difficult to support all their children. Roberto's two older brothers started working in a nearby village when they were 12, picking coffee on a farm. Soon after, one of his brothers entered a union with an adolescent girl his age, and they had a daughter within a year. Roberto did not want to start working like his brothers because he really liked going to school; however, when he turned 12, his father told him he would have to start working, as his older brother could no longer help out because he had to support his own family. Roberto started working on the farm and quit school. On the farm, he met other adolescents and young men who had started working to help at home. While picking coffee, the young men talked about entering unions with their girlfriends and starting a family. Roberto told them that he wanted to go to school, but they teased him and told him that now it was their turn to become "good men" and take responsibility for their families. Roberto kept dreaming that one day he would return to school.

One day, at a community party, Claudia and Roberto, who had known each other since they were children, began to talk. They liked each other and started dating. They shared the idea that it was better to study than to marry young. However, they never received any education about sexuality and contraception, so did not know how to prevent a pregnancy. A few months after they started dating, Claudia realised she was pregnant. They both talked to their parents and grandparents to decide what to do, and the families decided that they should get married. However, in Nicaragua people cannot marry before the age of 16, and people between 16 and 18 must have parental permission. Because Claudia was not yet 16, they could not legally marry. Claudia and Roberto moved into a rented room near the farm where Roberto worked. Claudia could not continue her schooling as it was too far away. The relationship lasted a few years until Roberto decided to emigrate to the United States because, although they used contraceptives and only had one daughter, they could not make ends meet. Roberto left for the United States, and Claudia never heard from him again.

---

## WORKSHEET: Claudia and Roberto's intersecting paths



Use one of the above intersections for Claudia and one for Roberto and, based on their stories, use the following questions to guide your reflection:

- What were the personal and social conditions that led Claudia and Roberto to an early union?
- Thinking about the intersection of paths, how does the intersectional approach help in understanding what happened in Claudia and Roberto's lives? What social systems/ structures contributed to this early union?
- What could have helped Claudia and Roberto continue with school and have other opportunities in life?

---

## Concept definitions

<b>Intersectionality</b>	Intersectionality is a theory developed by African American feminist theorists in the United States. Intersectionality explores how people's social position – according to their gender, class and race – generates an intersection where systems of power and oppression reinforce each other. The experiences that occur at the intersection are unique, and it is from this intersection that the claims of diverse groups for justice and equality are raised. As the theory evolved, other social categories were added, such as age, sexual orientation, ethnicity, disability and immigration status, among others.
<b>Class</b>	A social class is a group within society that shares similar levels of financial income, education, occupation and, often, values, political affiliations and culture. Traditionally, class strata are high, middle and low, although there are subdivisions (lower middle class, middle middle, upper middle) or quintiles (five groups, from the highest quintile to the lowest quintile).
<b>Race</b>	Race is a social construction where people are classified based on phenotypical characteristics: facial features, skin colour, etc. At a biological level, there are no differences between the various human groups; however, many groups have formed identity ascriptions from belonging to certain racial groups.
<b>Ethnicity</b>	A characteristic of social groups that contain a combination of cultural, historical, racial, religious or linguistic aspects as well as shared ancestral origins.
<b>Immigration status</b>	The documentation status of people who have migrated from one country to another. There are many conditions under which people migrate, for example with work visas, tourist visas, refugee status or an irregular status in which they do not have formal permission to be in the host country.
<b>Sex</b>	The biological characteristics that classify a person as a man, woman or intersex, and include the genital organs, the reproductive apparatus, the chromosomes and the hormones.
<b>Gender</b>	Gender is the social construction of roles, behaviours, aesthetics, expectations and distribution of power in people's public and private spheres. The binary gender system only recognises two genders – men and women – and it is under these two categories – male and female – that roles are classified. However, sexual diversity and gender diversity movements have proposed that gender is fluid, that there are more than two genders and that people, regardless of their biological sex, can choose how to express their gender.

<b>Gender identity</b>	The gender we feel part of, i.e. man, woman or other choice. When people have an identity that matches their biological sex, they are called “cis women” or “cis men,” while people whose biological sex does not match their identity are called “trans women” or “trans men.”
<b>Gender expression</b>	The way we express and experience our gender. There are certain forms and aesthetics that define gender, and people decide how they want to express it (using skirts, make-up, short hair, etc.).
<b>Gender equality</b>	Gender equality is the principle by which men and women are recognised as equal and, therefore, have the same right to access social, economic and political resources, regardless of the differences that exist because they are biologically different.
<b>Substantive equality</b>	Substantive equality refers to the full exercise of universal rights and the ability to enforce them in everyday life. It recognises that women have grown up in contexts of inequality, so governments are required to implement actions that level the playing field so that women have equal access to all resources and, therefore, can fully enjoy all their human rights. The principle of substantive equality is described in General Recommendation No. 25 of the Committee of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW).
<b>Sexuality</b>	Sexuality is central to people’s lives and encompasses sex, gender identities and roles, sexual orientation, eroticism, pleasure, intimacy and reproduction. Sexuality is experienced and expressed through thoughts, fantasies, desires, beliefs, attitudes, values, behaviours, practices, roles and interpersonal relationships. While sexuality can include all of these dimensions, not all of them are always experienced or expressed. Sexuality is influenced by the interaction of biological, psychological, social, economic, political, cultural, legal, historical, religious and spiritual factors.
<b>LGBTQI+</b>	<p>The acronym used by the sexual diversity community that represents the different gender and sexual identities that people may have. The + (plus) sign represents the possibility of adding more identities.</p> <p>L = Lesbian: emotional, romantic, sexual or affective attraction that a woman has for another woman.</p> <p>G = Gay: emotional, romantic, sexual or affective attraction that a man has for another man.</p> <p>B = Bisexual: emotional, romantic, sexual or affective attraction that a person from one sex may feel toward other people regardless of their sex, which includes both women and men.</p> <p>T = Transgender: a person who does not agree with their gender as assigned at birth and lives their life as the opposite gender or as a non-gendered person.</p>

T = Transsexual: a person who does not agree with their biological sex and gender and undergoes surgical, hormonal and psychological treatment, as well as the process of changing their identity in official documents, to live as a person of the sex/gender of their choice.

Q = Queer: a person who does not want to adhere to the behavioural and aesthetic patterns of the male-female binary system and believes and lives as a person who transits through the genders.

I = Intersex: a person who has biological characteristics (at the genital and chromosomal level) of both men and women.

**Sexual diversity**

The diversity found in the ways people relate emotionally, romantically, sexually and affectively. It also tells us about the diversity in which we express who we are in terms of gender.

**Sexual orientation**

The emotional, romantic, sexual or affective attraction to another person. Sexual orientation is a continuum, which ranges from exclusive homosexuality (attraction to persons of the same sex), to exclusive heterosexuality (attraction to persons of the opposite sex), to various forms of bisexuality. Sexual orientation is self-defined.

**Masculinity**

The set of socially and culturally constructed characteristics, roles and expectations placed on men. Traditionally, masculinity has included traits that oppress women and also men themselves, such as the use of violence. The study of masculinities is an increasingly strong branch of gender studies and of work with men, which seeks to promote the development of egalitarian masculinities. Models of egalitarian masculinities aim to encourage men to relinquish some of their gender privileges and take on responsibilities in parenting and domestic work, as well as to abandon behaviours and attitudes such as the use of force and violence against others. Along with progress towards women's rights, the aim is to overcome the patriarchal system and pursue egalitarian societies.

**Femininity**

The set of socially and culturally constructed characteristics, roles and expectations placed on women. Depending on the culture and specific moment in history, femininity has been associated with motherhood, care and domestic tasks, in addition to being represented by certain aesthetic characteristics, such as having long hair or wearing skirts, dresses and high heels. Based on the changes and discussions within the different branches of feminism, it has been suggested that we should refer to femininities in the plural, since each woman, including trans women, expresses her femininity in different ways.

**Patriarchy**

The system of social organisation where the public and private spheres are dominated by men. Women are considered second-class citizens, dependent on men, having no power, authority or resources.

<b>Sexism</b>	The discrimination suffered by people based on their sex/gender identity. It is more common for women to experience sexist attitudes, such as job discrimination or the idea that women should stay at home to take care of children.
<b>Male chauvinism</b>	An expression of masculinity where women and other people, such as youths, adolescents and children, are subjected to the will and desires of adult men, often through the use of violence, including psychological, financial, sexual and physical violence. This subjugation translates into privileges for men, such as the holding of private and public power and social and economic benefits, and places women, youths and children in a disadvantaged position.
<b>Heteronormativity</b>	The assumption that heterosexuality is the only sexual orientation and the belief that people should fit into one of the groups of the binary gender system.
<b>Classism</b>	The discrimination that people suffer for belonging to a certain social class, commonly the lower social classes.
<b>Racism</b>	The discrimination and hatred experienced by people due to phenotypical characteristics, such as facial features and skin colour.
<b>Gender-based discrimination</b>	A form of discrimination based on the fact of belonging to a particular gender. The incidence of discriminatory acts is higher for women or transgendered women.
<b>Adultism or adult-centrism</b>	The preference for the voice, participation and ideas of people who consider themselves to be adults, to the detriment of the voice, needs and participation of youths, adolescents and children.
<b>Xenophobia</b>	Discrimination and hatred of foreigners.
<b>Discrimination based on sexual orientation</b>	Discrimination and hatred of people who are not heterosexual. It is known as homophobia, biphobia and lesbophobia.
<b>Ableism</b>	The lack of attention and adaptation of physical spaces, work and school conditions, and programmes and policies to the needs of people who were born with or acquired a disability, visible or invisible, and the discrimination experienced by people living with these disabilities.

## FACTSHEET: Intersectionality and understanding the situation of CEFMU in LAC

Intersectionality allows us to analyse the intersection of different systems of oppression, such as:



and its secondary forms of oppression:



Intersectionality is a theory developed in the United States by African American feminists. Kimberly Crenshaw is recognised as the modern theorist who used the term intersectionality to shine a light on the reality of black women in the United States who experienced, and still experience, specific situations because they are black and women, and often poor. They have not shared the same reality as black men or white women. The reality and life experiences of black women in the United States are located at the intersection of their race, gender and class. As academics and people from diverse social movements have started to use the concept of intersectionality, other categories of analysis have been added, such as sexual orientation, age, disability, and immigration status, among others. What intersectionality ultimately reveals is not just the intersection of categories but the intersection of oppressions. Thus, people can experience racism, classism, sexism, xenophobia and homophobia – to name a few forms of oppression – at the same time, simply because of who they are.

Intersectionality is a very useful tool for analysing the situation of CEFMU. Other factors in addition to gender and patriarchy determine the causes and consequences of CEFMU in LAC.

The first consideration is age. Girls, adolescents and young women – although protected by international human rights instruments and national laws that prohibit marriage before the age of 18 – are de facto under the custody of their parents, and they are often subject to their decisions.

On the other hand, poverty – quite often extreme – can lead a low-income family to believe that marrying off their daughter early will lighten their burden, as they will have fewer



mouths to feed. It is no coincidence that this practice is most widespread in poor rural areas and poorer urban areas. Limitations on opportunities for education, economic empowerment and well-paid jobs contribute to using these unions to try and improve poverty conditions.

CEFMU is also used to control the sexuality of girls, adolescents and young women. There is no recognition of their right to live their sexual and affective lives in a free and protected way; nor are other rights recognised, such as the right to education or to live a life free of violence. Families and communities accept these unions under the guise of protecting girls and adolescents from violence, abuse and harassment, or even as redress for sexual violence by a man who is many times older than them.

Moreover, in countries with extremely conservative and punitive laws and customs regarding people with sexual orientations other than heterosexual, there are a number of “correcting” practices, one of which is through forced marriages or unions.

In many cases, CEFMU is also considered an accepted cultural and religious practice; however, it is necessary to establish processes within the community to discuss how these unions affect the lives of girls, adolescents and young women.

At the structural level, weak government systems and corruption prevent laws from being enforced. Although the LAC region has some of the best legislation on human rights and the regulation of CEFMU, in practice, such legal frameworks are not implemented. Governments often lack the capacity and the will to put these laws into effect, and exemptions in the law are used against minors. Likewise, laws on violence against women and child protection are not implemented. There are no policies that guarantee access to education, health and vocational training for girls and adolescents and also prevent and address CEFMU.

Ethnic and racial discrimination are also structural problems that impact on CEFMU. Due to the colonial heritage of discrimination and hatred based on skin colour, Indigenous and Black communities usually live in more precarious social conditions and with less institutional support; when European colonies were in the region, Indigenous communities were decimated, displaced and, together with Black populations, enslaved to work for the enrichment of the colonising countries. Even though nations are now committed to ensuring that all people are equal, practices of ethnic discrimination and racism are common, and they reinforce the situations that put a person at risk of CEFMU.

In terms of the consequences of CEFMU, a girl, adolescent or young woman involved in one is less likely to break out of the cycle of poverty and is more likely to experience sexual and reproductive health problems; have multiple children and live with violence; and receive less institutional and social support for her family to continue her education. Ultimately, without the strategic, multi-sectoral interventions of governments and the community-based work of grassroots organisations and civil society, along with the implementation of policy frameworks, CEFMU will likely remain an intergenerational practice.

As we can see, intersectionality allows us to analyse the different oppressive structures that must be addressed strategically, differentially and simultaneously to reduce the practice of CEFMU in the region.

---

## FACTSHEET: Gender as a decisive driver of CEFMU

When working to address CEFMU, it is important to understand how it is perpetuated by harmful gender norms. Gender refers to roles and behaviours as well as the economic, political, social and cultural attributes and opportunities associated with being a man or a woman in a society.

“Gender roles” or “gender norms” are the specific roles that men and women are expected to play in society or in the family, defining what men or women in a society can do, be or have. Different cultures may have different gender roles or expect men and women to do things or behave in different ways. For example, some cultures expect women to stay at home and do housework while men must go out to work. Gender roles vary from generation to generation, from era to era and from culture to culture. For example, in ancient Egypt, men stayed at home and did the weaving, and women ran family businesses and inherited property. In contemporary Egypt, these roles have changed. Roles also vary within the same society, according to the social, political and economic group.

The process of learning these gender roles begins at birth. People are born with a biological sex – female, male or intersex – but then they learn to be girls or boys, who grow up to become women and men, according to their society’s gender norms. Girls and boys learn what behaviours and attitudes, roles and activities are “appropriate” for their gender and how they should relate to other women and men. This learned behaviour is what constitutes “gender identity” and determines gender roles and responsibilities.

### Differences between sex and gender

#### SEX

- **Is biological:** anatomical and physiological bodies.
- **Is determined at birth:** the differences in sexual organs and gametes, and the differences corresponding to the functions of biological reproduction.
- **Can be modified** by means of hormonal therapy and/or surgery.

#### GENDER

- **Is cultural.**
- **Is learned through socialisation:** it is created by culture and, therefore, taught.
- **Can be changed and challenged:** roles that have been assigned to men and women can be called into question and disrupted (eg, women can work as engineers, pilots, etc).

It is important to mention that, under patriarchal societies, these gender roles are commonly divided into a binary man–woman order. Modifying gender roles is difficult, so they stay the same over time without changing significantly. However, many activists for gender equality, sexual diversity and sexual and reproductive rights, among others, have struggled to break out of this patriarchal binary system. This not only means that men can engage in activities that are considered to be women’s activities, or vice versa, but that the wide and multiple spectrum of activities and experiences is available to all people and that each person can define themselves as they wish. It also means that all people have equal access to all opportunities for a satisfying and happy life, regardless of their gender identity and sexual



orientation. The recognition of women's activities in our societies as being important and valuable, such as child rearing and domestic care, and the creation of conditions for women to develop beyond these areas if they so wish, require changes in laws, public policies, public programmes and budgets.

### **Gender equality or gender equity? Working towards substantive equality**

Ever since the need to change the way women are treated in our societies has been recognised, different terms have been used for the initiatives advocating for these changes. The main terms are “gender equality” and “gender equity.” “Gender equality” refers to differences between women, men and people with diverse gender expressions equal access to social, political and economic resources for their development; “gender equity” refers to the differentiated access to these resources according to the needs of each person.

Gender equality means that everyone—irrespective of sex or gender—enjoys the same level of recognition and status within society and, therefore, equal access to human rights. It means that similarities and differences are recognised and valued equally so that everyone can realise their full human potential. In other words, all people can participate in, contribute to and benefit from national, political, economic, social and cultural development. The central principle of gender equality is that differences between women, men and people with diverse gender expressions must not have a negative impact on their living conditions, nor prevent the equal sharing of power in all aspects of life and access to their rights.

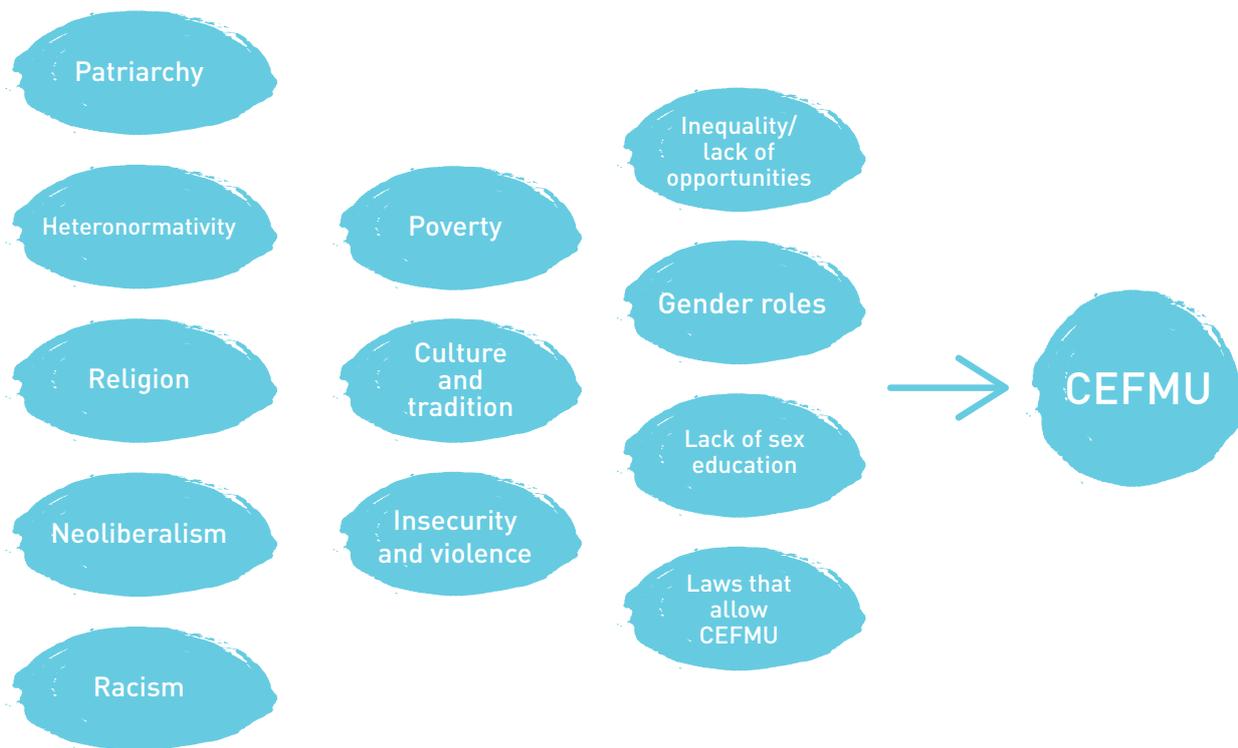
Over the past seven years, the UN has promoted the use of the principle of substantive equality. This concept is very important because in addition to the legal and human rights principle that says that all people are equal, it focuses on assessing whether all people actually have equal access to all resources. Achieving substantive equality for all requires governments to implement: 1) actions aimed at achieving equal opportunities for women, men and people with diverse gender expressions and 2) actions that redress power inequalities between women, men and people with diverse gender expressions. Achieving this requires changes in laws and policies to ensure equal access to resources and opportunities for women, men and people with diverse gender expressions. For example, not only is it important that there is a law that recognises that women, men and people with diverse gender expressions have the same right to work, but there must also be conditions for women, men and people with diverse gender expressions to be able to work, such as childcare, public transport and vocational training. This is important since countries in LAC have laws that recognise the equality of men and women, but in reality there are still many inequalities that leave women in a disadvantaged position.<sup>6</sup>

### **The importance of gender in addressing CEFMU**

CEFMU is a complex issue brought about by many different factors, which we call the “structural drivers” of this problem. They can vary across countries and communities, over time, and within the same community or context, from the neo-liberal economic system to the legislation that allows these unions to occur. The following diagram shows drivers related to gender, ranging from the patriarchal system to unequal opportunities for girls and adolescents.

---

6. Facio, A., Morgan, M., 2009, *Equity or equality for women? Understanding CEDAWs Equality Principles*: <https://www.law.ua.edu/pubs/lrarticles/Volume%2060/Issue%205/faciot.pdf> (Consulted in August 2020.)



We can analyse the structural drivers that result in CEFMU by group, as shown in the diagram above and the sections below.

### **Patriarchy and gender inequality**

- Patriarchy or a patriarchal system is one where men dominate the public and private spheres and where women are considered second-class citizens, dependent on men, with no power, authority or resources. This patriarchal system prevails in LAC societies. Overvaluing the masculine over the feminine is what generates gender inequalities, which are at the root of CEFMU. Boys are often considered to be of greater value to the family because of their future role as providers and for having greater economic potential.
- In many communities where CEFMU is practiced, girls and female adolescents are not valued as highly as boys and are often considered an extra burden on the family. Marrying off a young daughter can be seen as a way of reducing concerns for low-income families by transferring this “burden” to the spouse’s family.
- CEFMU is strongly linked to patriarchy and to controlling women’s sexuality, which includes control over how a girl or adolescent should behave or dress, and who she can see or marry; this is usually controlled by her father or other men in the family or community. Virginity is highly valued and considered essential for protecting and supporting girls and female adolescents, as it is associated with family honour and a girl’s purity. Girls and adolescents who have sex or become pregnant outside of marriage are thought to bring shame and dishonour to the family.

- One of the strongest values of the patriarchal system is heteronormativity, which only recognises the erotic-affective relationships established between a man and a woman as being valid.
- Boys or girls with different sexual and gender orientations or identities are not only discriminated against but also pressured to correct them. CEFMU between people of different sexes is seen as a way of correcting this.

### **Cultural values and tradition**

- In many communities, CEFMU is considered to be part of a greater tradition, culture, or religion that has persisted over generations. For example, in some communities the moment a girl begins to menstruate she becomes a woman. Marriage is considered the next step in forging her status as a wife and mother, regardless of her age.
- There are other traditional practices that are harmful to girls and adolescents and often associated with CEFMU. For example, female genital mutilation/cutting is sometimes a rite of passage to “being a woman” and is practiced to ensure that a girl is considered “clean.”
- Although the practice of CEFMU is rooted in tradition and culture, these customs are created by the patriarchal system and can therefore be transformed. It is possible to respect cultural practices and traditions while promoting changes to end practices that are harmful to girls, adolescents and young women.

### **Insecurity and violence**

- Insecurity and violence such as sexual harassment, sexual abuse and sex trafficking are important drivers, as families consider marrying off their daughters early as a way of providing security.
- In countries that are at war, facing armed conflict, generalised violence and forced displacement, girls and adolescents are at high risk of being harassed or attacked physically or sexually. In unsafe regions, their guardians may be convinced that having their daughters enter a union is the best way to protect them from danger.
- However, girls and adolescents in unions face significantly higher risks of violence and have less power to exercise their rights, especially in relation to their spouses and families.

### **Poverty and lack of opportunities**

- In communities with high levels of poverty, families, and sometimes even girls and adolescents themselves, believe that an early union will help them secure their future. This allows their families to reduce expenses because they have fewer people to feed, dress and educate.
- In communities where a dowry is customary or a “bride price” is paid, this money is welcomed as an economic income for families with limited resources. In cases where the bride’s family pays a dowry to the groom, they often have to pay less if the bride is very young and uneducated, so families choose early unions to reduce the cost.



## **Going to school or getting higher levels of education helps protect girls and adolescents from CEFMU and contributes to their empowerment by making them aware of their rights.**

- The economy has a great impact on attitudes towards the practice of CEFMU because girls and adolescents are seen as financially dependent, not as income earners. However, it is important to bear in mind that, in the long term, this practice perpetuates the cycle of poverty, as girls and adolescents who marry at a younger age will not receive a good education or be part of the paid labour force.

### **Lack of information and education**

- Many people, particularly girls and adolescents, do not know their rights or how to exercise them.
- Going to school or getting higher levels of education helps protect girls and adolescents from CEFMU and contributes to their empowerment by making them aware of their rights. In many countries a girl's education is still seen as less important than a boy's.
- When being a wife, mother and homemaker is believed to be a woman's most important role, girls' education and preparation for working life are not considered a priority. Some families want to send their daughters to school, but lack access to quality schools nearby, and the financial means to cover the costs. Very often it is considered safer and more cost-effective to invest a family's limited resources in educating boys rather than girls.
- CEFMU also results from a lack of knowledge of national laws and policies and children's and women's rights by families, communities, and girls and adolescents themselves. Many people are unaware of international human rights conventions or how to have their rights protected and respected.

### **Lack of regulatory frameworks and enforcement of existing regulations**

- CEFMU is illegal in many countries, but it is difficult to prevent the law from being distorted or implemented in different ways. For example, it is possible to include exceptions to the law, such as permission from guardians to go against the decisions of girls and adolescents. Laws are subject to different or disparate interpretations that serve to perpetuate inequality between men and women.
- In many countries, the minimum age of marriage is lower when customary or religious practices apply, which is contrary to national civil laws and international human rights agreements. Many countries lack legislation on this issue or the means to enforce it, in addition to having very weak governance structures. Therefore, laws are important, but they are not sufficient in themselves; it is important to include policies that address CEFMU and promote change in social norms and advance gender equality.



## Why work with young men when addressing CEFMU?

Boys also marry before the age of 18; more than 156 million men alive today have done so. But girls are disproportionately affected, being seven times more likely to experience CEFMU than their male peers. It is important to remember that male adolescents and young men are both victims of CEFMU and agents of change.

Recent studies have shown that involving boys and men of all ages is key to promoting gender equality. To improve equality between men and women, it is important that boys and men change their attitudes and practices towards their female peers. Males must play a key role in addressing CEFMU. They need to be aware of and understand this harmful practice. If we exclude them from initiatives, then we can only address the negative consequences experienced by girls and women of all ages, while the real problem – the imbalance of power between men and women – remains unchanged.

To address CEFMU we must understand the social and gender roles that contribute to this practice in a given society. In many countries, boys and men are socialised to assume the role of family providers, to be dominant and to be responsible for most family decisions. Girls and women are educated to do household chores: cooking, cleaning, and having and caring for children.

The role of all people in society needs to be questioned and hard work needs to be done to change social norms and behaviour at all levels: fathers, mothers, brothers, sisters, husbands, community authorities, religious leaders, decision makers, etc. For this harmful practice to end, we must all work together, enlist the support of all boys and men who know that this practice is harmful and unjust, and work together to persuade those who do not yet know. It is important to involve them in addressing CEFMU because:

- CEFMU do not exclusively concern girls and women.
- As decision makers and potential partners, boys and men of all ages are central to any effort to address the issue.
- Religious and community leaders are the main decision-makers in communities where CEFMU is widespread. Engaging and educating men is key to changing a community's attitude towards the practice.
- Social expectations of what it means to be a man dictate how boys and men behave.
- Boys and men must question gender roles.
- Roles, such as father, husband, son and brother, must evolve towards greater empathy and non-violence, as well as shared decision-making and household chores.
- Boys and men are often not given the space to question these norms.
- Boys and men have a direct influence on the lives of their female peers.
- If we do not engage them, then we cannot bring about change on an issue as sensitive as CEFMU.
- Boys and men must know the rights of girls and understand that CEFMU can be harmful to their health and happiness, and also be destructive to families.

## What is gender analysis?

Gender analysis is a way of investigating and identifying the key characteristics that cause or reinforce gender inequality. This is important in understanding the reasons and drivers of gender inequality and, subsequently in addressing and transforming them.

Gender analysis helps in understanding the inequalities between men and women. It helps identify, understand and explain the gaps that exist between men and women in the household, community and country. It helps pinpoint how these differences in gender and power relations have an impact on, and often reinforce, CEFMU. It is a research method that considers the different levels of power held by women and men, their different needs, constraints and opportunities, and the impact of this on their lives.

When conducting a gender analysis, there are five main issues that can be taken into consideration for understanding the role or position of men and women:

- Laws, public policies and social norms
- Cultural practices and beliefs
- Gender roles and responsibilities and the time spent on each
- Access to, or control over, resources
- Power and decision-making dynamics

Gender analysis is used to collect, analyse and interpret information about a given situation by considering the roles, responsibilities, needs and opportunities that girls and boys/women and men have. It aims to:

- Identify differences between groups
- Understand why these differences exist
- Include the specific actions/issues that influence CEFMU in the analysis

---

### Some questions to ask yourself when conducting a gender analysis with a focus on CEFMU are:

- What groups of girls and adolescents in particular are being affected?
- Which of them are the most vulnerable?
- How old are girls and adolescents likely to be when they marry or enter a union?
- Do they attend school or not?
- Are they part of a historically excluded or marginalised group within the community?



PICTURED: Adolescent girls participate in activities to end generational poverty through education and empowerment with the Mariposa Foundation, Dominican Republic. Photo: *Girls Not Brides*/Fran Afonso.



# Module 3.

## Human Rights.

### The importance of recognising how CEFMU limits the human rights of girls and women

---

#### Learning objectives

At the end of the module, participants will be able to:

1. Understand the human rights framework
2. Know the human rights principles included in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child necessary to protect children: evolving capacities and the best interests of the child
3. Analyse the issue of CEFMU from a human rights perspective.

# Module 3 – Session 3.1

## What are human rights?

# Session	🎯 Session objectives	❓ Session activities	🕒 Required time	✂️ Required materials
3.1 What are human rights?	To understand human rights and the way states guarantee and protect these rights	1. Brainstorm on human rights	30 min	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Blank flipchart</li> <li>• Markers</li> <li>• Adhesive tape</li> </ul>
	To understand and discuss the principles of children's rights as well as their evolving capacities and best interests	2. Presentation on human rights, the principles of children's rights, evolving capacities and the best interests of the child	30 min	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Factsheet: Human rights and CEFMU</li> <li>• Presentation</li> </ul>

Total time: 1 hour

### Activity 1. Brainstorm on human rights

#### Instructions:

With this activity, you will introduce the participants to the subject of human rights. Although the issue is very broad, what matters is that they acquire basic information on the topic.

1. Ask the participants to divide into groups, then invite them to try to answer the following questions on a flipchart:
  - What are human rights?
  - What human rights do you know?
  - Who is responsible for protecting human rights?
  - What are the human rights of people under 18 years old?

Assign 15 minutes for this activity.

2. Once groups have finished writing their answers, ask them to place their flipchart sheets somewhere that everyone can see them.
3. Ask each group to share their answers with all participants. Allow people from other groups to comment or ask questions.
4. After every group has presented, ask them if they have any concerns. Answer their questions, but let them know that in the next activity they will view a presentation on human rights, relevant principles for people under 18 years old, and those responsible for safeguarding these rights.

## Activity 2. Presentation on human rights, the principles of children's rights, evolving capacities and the best interests of the child

### Instructions:

For this activity, you'll need to prepare a presentation on what human rights are, the principles of children's rights, evolving capacities and the best interests of the child, and the bodies in charge of safeguarding these rights.

1. Prepare your presentation using the concept definition provided in this module, as well as the factsheet on human rights and CEFMU.
2. Introduce the material you prepared to the participants and allow them to ask questions.
3. End the session by saying that the human rights framework is very broad, but that it is important to know that all people are entitled to all the rights, and that these rights change according to changes in societies, as they acknowledge the rights of groups, individuals or communities that had previously been excluded. It is difficult to exercise all rights in full, but we must work to make this happen. The international human rights framework, while not perfect, is a global tool for us to improve the lives of all people.



# Module 3 – Session 3.2

## CEFMU and human rights

 Session	 Session objectives	 Session activities	 Required time	 Required materials
3.2 CEFMU and human rights	To analyse which human rights are affected by CEFMU	1. Learning about Romina's story	30 min	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Case study and worksheet: Romina's story</li> <li>• Markers</li> </ul>
Total time: 30 min				

### Activity 1. Learning about Romina's story

#### Instructions:

In this activity, you will ask the workshop participants to analyse the story of a young woman who experienced an early union by using the human rights framework:

1. Ask them to break into groups and hand them the Romina's story worksheet.
2. Ask them to read Romina's story and discuss the following questions, making notes on the worksheet:
  - What circumstances led Romina to an early union?
  - In terms of intersectionality, what social structures made Romina vulnerable to early union?
  - What aspects of Romina's circumstances are related to patriarchy and traditional gender roles?
  - What human rights were violated or not fully enjoyed by Romina?
  - What human rights are still being violated even after experiencing an early union?

Give them 15 minutes to read the case and discuss the questions.

3. Once they have discussed the questions in their group, ask them to share what they discussed with the other participants. Depending on how much time is left, you can ask some or all of the groups to present. Allow the participants to ask questions and express their concerns.

4. To conclude, mention that it is important to understand how all the topics discussed in the workshop relate to each other. Intersectionality allows us to observe multiple aspects of our identity and socio-economic conditions that determine our life experiences. Gender, as one of these identity axes, is a decisive factor for CEFMU, since the construction of gender within patriarchal and heteronormative societies controls women's lives and bodies, including their erotic-affective relationships and their life opportunities. Finally, the human rights framework provides great clarity for identifying what aspects of our lives can be improved, such as access to education, economic empowerment, food and decent housing. The intersection of power structures, including traditional gender constructions and systematic human rights violations, are strongly linked and increase the chances of CEFMU. Although we have worked on differentiated analyses to better understand the concepts, when a girl or adolescent experiences CEFMU, it is a consequence of poverty and violence as well as traditional gender constructions. The result is a series of violations of her human rights, such as lack of access to education or sexual and reproductive health services..



## Module 3: Supporting teaching documents

1. Case study and worksheet: Romina's story
2. Factsheet: Human rights and CEFMU

### Case study and worksheet: Romina's story

Romina was born and raised in a small town in northern Brazil. Romina had three younger brothers. When she was a child, her father moved away, leaving them in a precarious financial situation. In time, her mother remarried. When Romina became an adolescent, her stepfather began to harass her and once even sexually abused her. Romina was very afraid of what happened and did not want to tell her mother about what her stepfather had done; with financial problems and sometimes not even enough money to eat, she did not want to leave the family without the stepfather's income. Romina dropped out of school and started working as a domestic cleaner at the age of 14. At that time, she met a friend who introduced her to huffing inhalants as a way of dealing with hunger. Among the group of friends with whom she used to huff, Romina started dating several boys and became sexually involved with some of them. Once, when she was with her friends, João, who was 24 years old, offered them drugs. At that point, João and Romina started a relationship. After a few months, Romina got pregnant. João suggested that they move in together and she accepted, thinking that it would help her get out of her house and stop being harassed by her stepfather. Once pregnant, Romina stopped huffing and also stopped working. João decided to quit selling drugs and looked for a job in construction. They both made these changes because they believed that since they were going to have a child and were already living together, they needed to behave like adults.

During her pregnancy, Romina suffered different kinds of abuse in the health services, as those responsible for her care criticised her for being so young and pregnant. Even though Romina did not want to have more children in the near future, nobody gave her information on how to prevent another pregnancy. When the baby was born, Romina tried to go back to school but was not allowed to enter the regular system because they did not want her to be a bad influence on her classmates. Romina got pregnant a second time, but decided to terminate her pregnancy because of financial problems. She also decided to end her relationship with João because he had returned to selling drugs. She sought help to terminate her pregnancy and met a group of young feminists who helped her do so safely and provided her with information on contraception. The group also helped her enrol in an adult school to finish her studies and helped her get a job and day care for her child.

Romina is now 20 years old and her son is four; she finished high school and is thinking of enrolling in a technical course. In addition, she became an active member of the group of young feminists that helped her out, and now she helps other girls and adolescents who are facing similar situations.

---

### Questions to start a discussion about Romina's story:

- What circumstances led Romina to an early union?
- In terms of intersectionality, what social structures made Romina vulnerable to entering an early union?
- What aspects of Romina's circumstances are related to patriarchy and traditional gender roles?
- What human rights were violated or not fully enjoyed by Romina?
- What consequences did early union have on Romina's life?
- What human rights are still being violated even after experiencing an early union?
- How did Romina manage to overcome these adversities?



## FACTSHEET: Human rights and CEFMU

### What are human rights?

Human rights are principles and norms that recognise and safeguard people's dignity. They regulate the way people in societies live and relate to each other. They also regulate people's relationships with the state in which they live, and the states' obligations towards them. The human rights framework aims to be universal; that is, for all people around the world to be able to exercise and enjoy all human rights.

Human rights are contained in various documents known as international conventions and agreements, which are convened during the United Nations General Assembly meetings. For these conventions and agreements to be binding (i.e. become law in the countries that sign the agreements), two steps are required: 1) their signing and 2) their ratification. The signing takes place when government representatives at global meetings endorse their adherence to the treaty or agreement that is being discussed during the meeting. Ratification means that the congress, legislative assembly or parliament of each country gives formal consent to the signing of the agreement; that is, it accepts the country's adherence to the treaty or convention.

Any international human rights treaty or convention that is signed and ratified by a state becomes domestic law. The government must then implement changes, including laws and policies, to guarantee and safeguard all the human rights of its citizens. The United Nations Human Rights Council is an intergovernmental body made up of 47 countries that are elected from all the countries that make up the United Nations General Assembly (193 countries). This council is responsible for promoting and safeguarding human rights worldwide.

Human rights have four very important characteristics:

- **Universality and inalienability:** All people are entitled to all rights, regardless of age, birthplace, sex, race or any other personal characteristic. No one can take away another person's rights. There are some exceptions, such as people who are in prison, who lose their right to free movement, and, in some places, their right to political participation, such as voting for their leaders, even after they are released.
- **Interdependence and interrelatedness:** The fulfilment of one right depends on the fulfilment of another right. In other words, rights are related to each other, so when one right is affected, all other rights are affected too. For example, when a girl or adolescent who marries is not allowed to continue with her studies, this not only affects her right to education but also affects other rights; by quitting school, the possibilities of having a decent job, participating in politics, and having access to health services, among many others, are reduced.
- **Indivisibility:** It is not possible to be entitled to some rights and not to others, and there are no hierarchies of rights; all are equally important. In the case of the right to vote, everyone is entitled to it, but people are unable to exercise it until they reach the age of majority in their country.
- **They are historical:** Rights have changed over time and have adapted to societies' needs and new circumstances, recognising the rights of groups or communities that had not been acknowledged before. For example, women gained the right to vote in many countries throughout the 20th century.

The following treaties and conventions are the most relevant when working on the issue of CEFMU:

- Universal Declaration of Human Rights
- International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights
- International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights
- Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples
- International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination
- Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women
- Convention on the Rights of the Child
- Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities
- Convention on Consent to Marriage, Minimum Age for Marriage and Registration of Marriages
- International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families
- International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance

The list of human rights includes the right to:

- a dignified life
- decent work
- food
- housing
- education
- freedom of thought, conscience and religion
- living a life free of violence
- freedom of expression
- freedom of assembly
- leisure
- social security
- culture
- freedom of movement
- freedom from slavery and servitude
- freedom from torture
- a name and nationality
- health
- information
- to enjoy the benefits of scientific and technological progress

This is not an exhaustive list. For a complete list you can visit the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights website:

<https://www.ohchr.org/EN/pages/home.aspx>

### **Evolving capacities and the best interests of the child<sup>7</sup>**

The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child defines two fundamental principles for the first time. “Evolving capacities” refers to the fact that as girls and boys grow up they have experiences that allow them to mature in different aspects of their lives. Through this process, children, and later adolescents, require less direction and guidance from adults and increase their ability to make decisions and take responsibility, while the state is still obliged to safeguard their rights.<sup>8</sup>

To ensure a smooth transition into adulthood for children and adolescents, they need their rights and opportunities safeguarded at various levels. They need to have personal and social lives so they learn to make decisions in different spheres. A balance is needed to respect their decisions and promote their independence while not exposing them prematurely to responsibilities associated with adulthood, especially if these will have a negative effect on their lives. For example, as girls and boys become adolescents, they can start making decisions regarding their bodies and sexuality freely and without violence. They gradually gain autonomy and the ability to make some decisions without needing to consult their parents or guardians, such as the decision to use contraceptives. However, in many places, even though the law allows adolescents to request contraceptive services without the authorisation of their parents or guardians, health service providers consider them to be immature and do not provide them with information and services, and may even tell their parents.

The second principle, “the best interests of the child,” derives from this balance. Neither the state nor parents or guardians have unlimited rights over minors. It is the state’s responsibility to guarantee, respect and safeguard the human rights of minors and, therefore, to ensure that parents or guardians do not affect their lives by making decisions that go against their human rights. Therefore, both the state and parents and guardians should always make choices that will be of the greatest possible benefit to minors. CEFMU is a clear violation of the principle of the best interests of the child. In many countries in LAC, despite the existence of legislation prohibiting marriage for minors, such legislation is not enforced or there are grounds or exemptions whereby this prohibition is overturned, such as parental consent. This is particularly serious when the union occurs to protect the minor from violence or, worse, when it is used to redress having suffered sexual violence, the matter being settled by the girl, adolescent or young woman marrying her aggressor.

---

7. Save the Children and UNICEF, *The evolving capacities of the child*, 2005, <https://www.unicef-irc.org/publications/pdf/evolving-eng.pdf>, Consulted: 3 August 2020.

8. For more information on the evolving capacities and respect for adolescent autonomy, see the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, *General comment No. 20 (2016) on the implementation of the rights of the child during adolescence*, 2016. [https://tbinternet.ohchr.org/\\_layouts/15/treatybodyexternal/Download.aspx?symbolno=CRC%2fC%2fGC%2f20&Lang=en](https://tbinternet.ohchr.org/_layouts/15/treatybodyexternal/Download.aspx?symbolno=CRC%2fC%2fGC%2f20&Lang=en)

### **CEFMU is, and represents, a systematic violation of human rights**

When a state fails to protect minors from CEFMU, it places them in a position where they undergo experiences that they are still not ready for biologically, socially or economically. In other words, the principle of evolving capacities is violated and the higher interest of the child is not safeguarded. The causes that lead a girl, adolescent or young woman to CEFMU and the consequences of this derive from and entail a series of human rights violations.

Poverty, structural and gender-based violence, sexual abuse, lack of education, lack of information on contraceptives, and relationships between older men and adolescents or girls reflect the lack of state guarantees to basic rights such as to housing, food, a life free of violence, equality, education, information and sexual and reproductive health education. In addition, when girls, adolescents and young women cannot return to school after they have married or are denied information about contraceptive methods, rights such as that to non-discrimination or access to technological advances and health are being violated.

To address the issue of CEFMU, we must tackle the structural inequalities that generate all these human rights violations. In addition, we must work so that all women, adolescents and girls who have experienced CEFMU and its negative consequences can access services and resources that will help them improve their present and future lives.



Photo © Princeakachi / Unsplash



# **Module 4:** **Youth leadership and participation** Tools for leading community conversations on CEFMU

---

## **Learning objectives**

At the end of the module, participants will be able to:

1. Define what youth participation is.
2. Learn strategies to safeguard their safety when working to address CEFMU.
3. Analyse CEFMU using the socio-ecological model and identify opportunities to actively address CEFMU.

# Module 4 – Session 4.1

## Youth participation

# Session	🎯 Session objectives	? Session activities	🕒 Required time	✂️ Required materials
4.1 Youth participation	To discuss what youth participation is and learn about models, levels and key elements of participation	1. Defining youth participation	45 min	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Blank flipchart</li> <li>• Markers</li> <li>• Adhesive tape</li> <li>• Worksheet: Models for studying levels of participation</li> <li>• Worksheet: Risk analysis</li> </ul>
		2. Finding your own voice	30 min	
	3. Defining safety measures for young activists	45 min		
	To recognise security measures for young activists			

**Total time: 2 hours**

### Activity 1: Defining youth participation

#### Instructions:

In this module you will introduce participants to the topic of youth participation. They may have talked about these issues before, so it is important that they share their experiences to enrich the workshop and everyone's experience.

1. Ask participants to form groups, and in their groups brainstorm what youth participation is and write their ideas on the flipcharts. Give them 10 minutes for this activity.
2. Once they have finished the exercise, explain that several models of youth participation have been developed to understand what it is and how it is implemented in political programmes and processes. Hand out the "Youth participation models" worksheet; ask them to review it as a group and compare each model's elements with the ideas they wrote on the flipchart. Give them 10 minutes to discuss the models.
3. When they have finished, allow each group to share their work. You can use the following questions to guide the discussion:
  - What is youth participation?
  - How did you as young people decide to be activists on the issues you work on?
  - What types of training, coaching or mentoring did you undergo to carry out your activities as young leaders?
  - How can we ensure that young people are engaged and not merely tokens?

4. End the activity by clarifying some concepts on what youth participation is and how to ensure that the promotion of youth inclusion is real and meaningful. For this part, you can use the information provided in the factsheet “Youth participation and leadership in addressing CEFMU.” Mention that young people’s participation is key to advancing many social justice issues, as young people are often directly affected by injustices. Furthermore, even if young people are not directly affected by a certain issue, they have the energy and creativity to think of solutions and push for change. Participation is a right that young people – including minors – have, and the spaces and mechanisms for their participation must always be guaranteed.

---

## Activity 2: Finding your own voice

### Instructions:

This activity provides participants with a space to reflect on their role as agents of change in their communities, especially on how to become young activists in addressing CEFMU. It aims to build confidence and the conviction that they can do something about this issue and that their actions can make a difference. Through this exercise, young women, adolescents and girls can think about how they can each contribute to creating a future with less CEFMU.

1. Ask people in the group to work in pairs. Encourage them to choose someone they have not worked with before.
2. Let them know that they will now do a role play where each person will take on the role of a character in a discussion. Someone will play an influential adult from their community; for example, it could be a teacher or a community leader. The other character will be a young person from the community.
3. The situation they will recreate is as follows: the adult does not believe that CEFMU is an important issue or that young people are capable of taking action to end this practice. They also think that young people should not interfere with this type of issue, as it is a community and traditional practice. However, the young person believes that the issue must be addressed and that young people must be involved in ending this practice. They believe that their community must change.
4. Ask the pairs to take 10 minutes to do this exercise, each playing their respective role, so that each character can make their case for or against young people participating to change this issue.
5. At the end of the role play, ask everyone to reflect on the following questions:
  - What arguments did the adult use to claim that young people should not get involved with this issue?
  - What were the young person’s arguments?
  - In your opinion, who won the discussion in your team?
  - How could they have come up with stronger arguments as young activists?

6. Now, ask the participants to briefly express how they feel after this role play. If they believe that young people can take action to address CEFMU and that they can be effective agents of change, ask them to stand on one side of the room; if they do not agree, ask them to stand on the other side. If some still believe that they cannot and should not get involved in this issue, ask them to explain their reasons and discuss them with everyone. It is important that they feel empowered to make a change and that they see themselves as agents of change. Each of the participants has the power to influence and change their situation.

---

### Activity 3: Defining safety measures for young activists

#### Instructions:

In this session you will address the issue of young activists' safety. When working on issues that are controversial in our societies it is important to know how to take care of ourselves, both physically and emotionally.

1. Start the activity with a brief brainstorm. Ask participants what comes to mind when they hear the word "risk." Ask someone to take notes on a flipchart. Take 5 minutes for this activity.
2. Ask the participants what risks they think they might face when working on the issue of CEFMU. Again, ask someone to take notes on the flipchart. Take 5 minutes for this activity.
3. Once they have finished brainstorming, share what is considered a risk with the group. Let them know that a risk is something that exposes a person to physical or emotional harm, or loss or failure to achieve something that is expected. Risks are not the same for everyone, and the way people experience them can vary, depending on factors as complex as gender, sexual orientation, race, age and the existence of disabilities, among others. It is important to be able to assess both the overall risk and the potential risks involved in any initiative; from holding a meeting to implementing a project to address CEFMU. When planning activities, it is important to carry out a risk analysis to fully understand the context in which you are working, as well as the possible challenges you may face. As advocates seeking to address CEFMU, you will be questioning deeply-held cultural beliefs, norms and values, so it is important to take the time to write down the potential risks and think about how to mitigate their negative impact and, more importantly, when the risk is too high to continue the activity.
4. Now, ask participants to divide into groups and perform a case study risk analysis. Hand out the worksheet on risk analysis to the groups. Ask them to follow the instructions on the worksheet and use the table to assess the possible risks that the group of young people in the example may face and how they could mitigate or prevent them. Give each team 10 minutes to discuss and complete the table.
5. When time is up, start a discussion in which each group presents one of the identified risks and the proposed solution for mitigating it. Allow 10 minutes for this discussion.

6. Open the discussion to include the personal risks faced by participants working on a sensitive topic such as CEFMU. Ask them to share risks they have personally faced and how they were able to mitigate or prevent them. To guide this last reflection, you can use the following questions:

- What risks do you think you will face when becoming activists addressing CEFMU in your communities?
- What do you think the personal risks will be?
- How do you think you will be able to reduce or prevent them?
- How can you support each other?
- What individual and social care strategies can you implement when working on the issue of CEFMU in your communities?

If you run out of time, prioritise discussion of the final two questions and ask participants to write answers to the others.



# Module 4 – Session 4.2

## Socio-ecological analysis of CEFMU to identify levels of participation and political influence

 Session	 Session objectives	 Session activities	 Required time	 Required materials
4.2 Socio-ecological analysis of CEFMU to identify levels of participation and political influence	To analyse which human rights are affected by CEFMU	1. Conducting a socio-ecological analysis	60 min	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Worksheet: Socio-ecological analysis of CEFMU</li><li>• Markers</li></ul>

**Total time: 1 hour**

### Activity 1: Conducting a socio-ecological analysis

#### Instructions:

In this activity, you will share the socio-ecological framework for understanding CEFMU with the participants.

1. Introduce participants to the socio-ecological framework, using the information in the worksheet on the socio-ecological analysis of CEFMU. Explain that the socio-ecological framework is used for conducting a complex and comprehensive analysis of a social problem or phenomenon, as it shows how different layers of society influence the problem or phenomenon's prevalence in society. Allow 10 minutes for this presentation.
2. Ask participants to form groups. Ask groups to use the worksheet to see how each level of the socio-ecological model affects the prevalence of CEFMU; for example, by asking them what leads a girl, adolescent or young woman to decide to marry or enter a union. Ask them to brainstorm for each level. They can replicate the model on a flipchart for more space. Give them up to 20 minutes to write down all their ideas.
3. Once they have finished, ask each group to present their socio-ecological analysis of CEFMU. Allow 10 minutes for this activity.

4. Ask all participants to think about the work they already carry out as young activists. Ask them to mark the level at which they work with a star or a cross. As they stand up to draw their marks, ask some of them to say what they do out loud. Some examples might be: “I give peer education on sexuality,” “I work with primary schools on violence prevention issues,” “I work with the health sector to increase access to contraceptives,” etc. Give them 5 minutes for this activity.
5. Ask them how and at what levels of the socio-ecological framework they could start working to address the issue of CEFMU. You can guide the discussion using the following questions:
  - How could you incorporate the issue of CEFMU into your current work?
  - At which level of the socio-ecological framework do you feel most comfortable working and why?
  - At which level would you like to start working to reduce CEFMU?
  - Which level do you consider it is most important to start working at?
  - Which level do you find most difficult when working on CEFMU?
  - What resources and training would you need to work on the issue of CEFMU at each level?

Thank participants for taking part in the discussion and allow them to ask any questions.



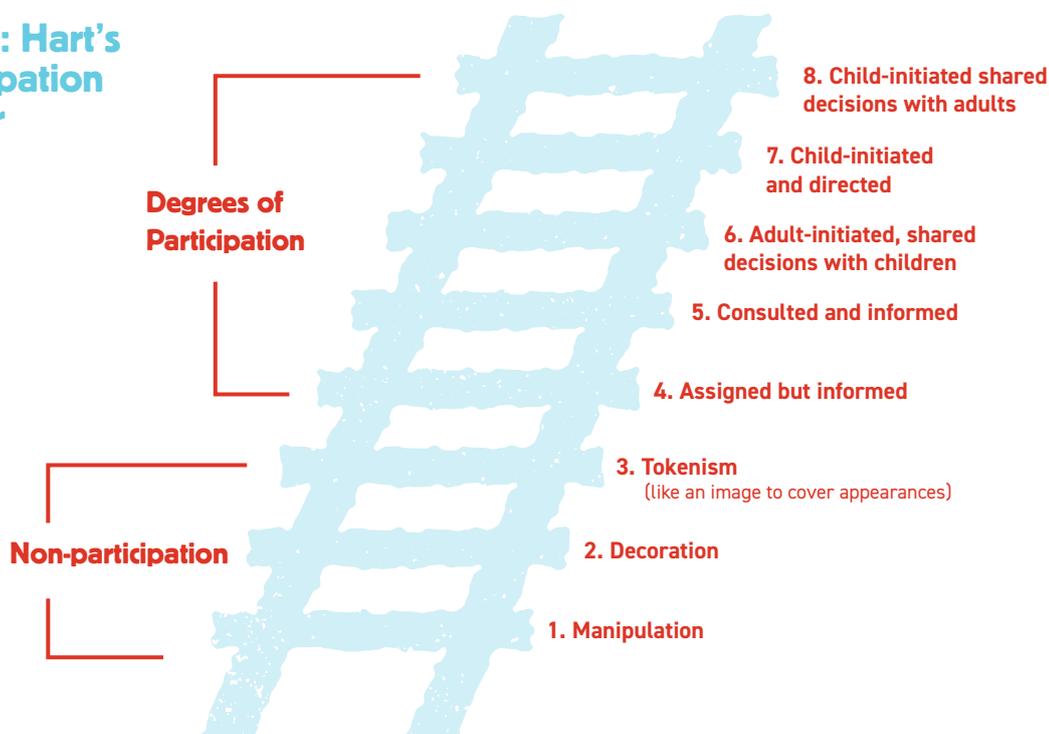
## Module 4: Supporting

1. Worksheet: Models for studying levels of participation
2. Worksheet: Socio-ecological analysis of CEFMU
3. Worksheet: Risk analysis

### WORKSHEET: Models for studying levels of participation

Below are several models which have been created to understand youth participation. Study them and think about the different elements in each one, and how they relate to your experience of being an activist.

#### Model: Hart's participation ladder



Source: Hart, 1992

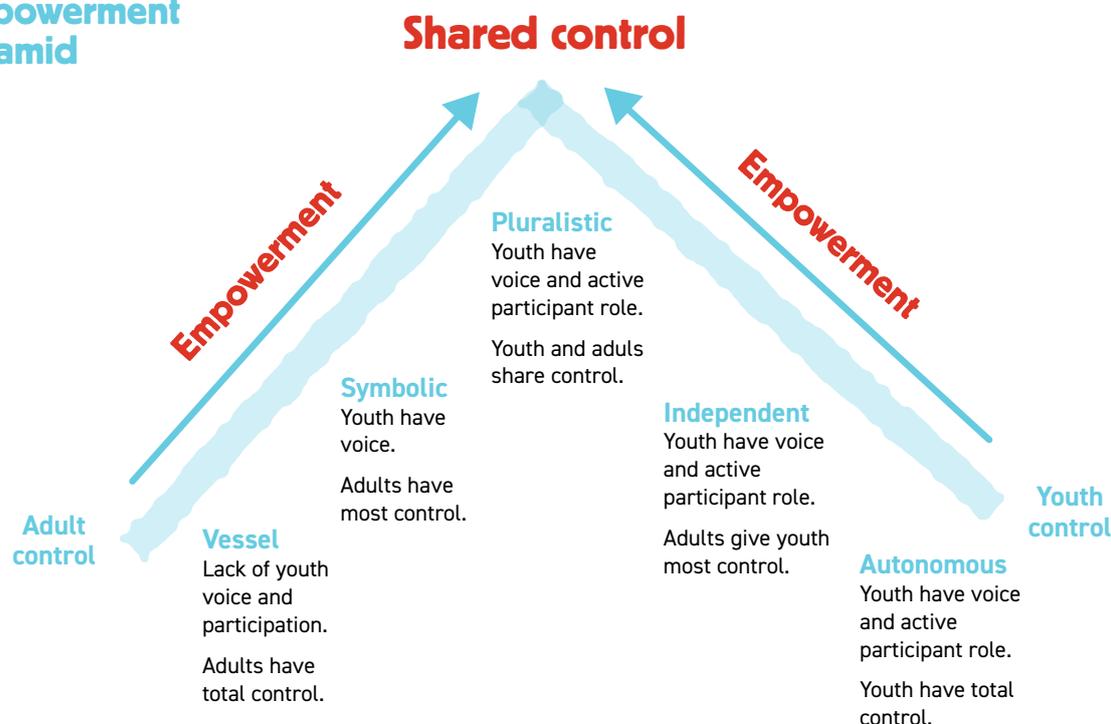
Hart's participation ladder describes the possible levels of participation. According to this model, there are eight levels of participation, ranging from the "decorative" to a level where both young people and adults participate in processes as equals. In this model, the final level corresponds to the ideal of participation, but we will see that in other models this level is not always considered the best.



Source: Treseder, 1997

Treseder iterates or repeats Hart's ladder but preserves the first three levels, which Hart does not consider to be real participation. However, instead of hierarchically ranking the levels of participation, Treseder arranges them in a circular fashion, which gives the same value to each type of participation. Treseder clarifies each form of participation and this allows programmes and policies that claim to foster youth participation to make a more objective assessment of the level of participation they are promoting.

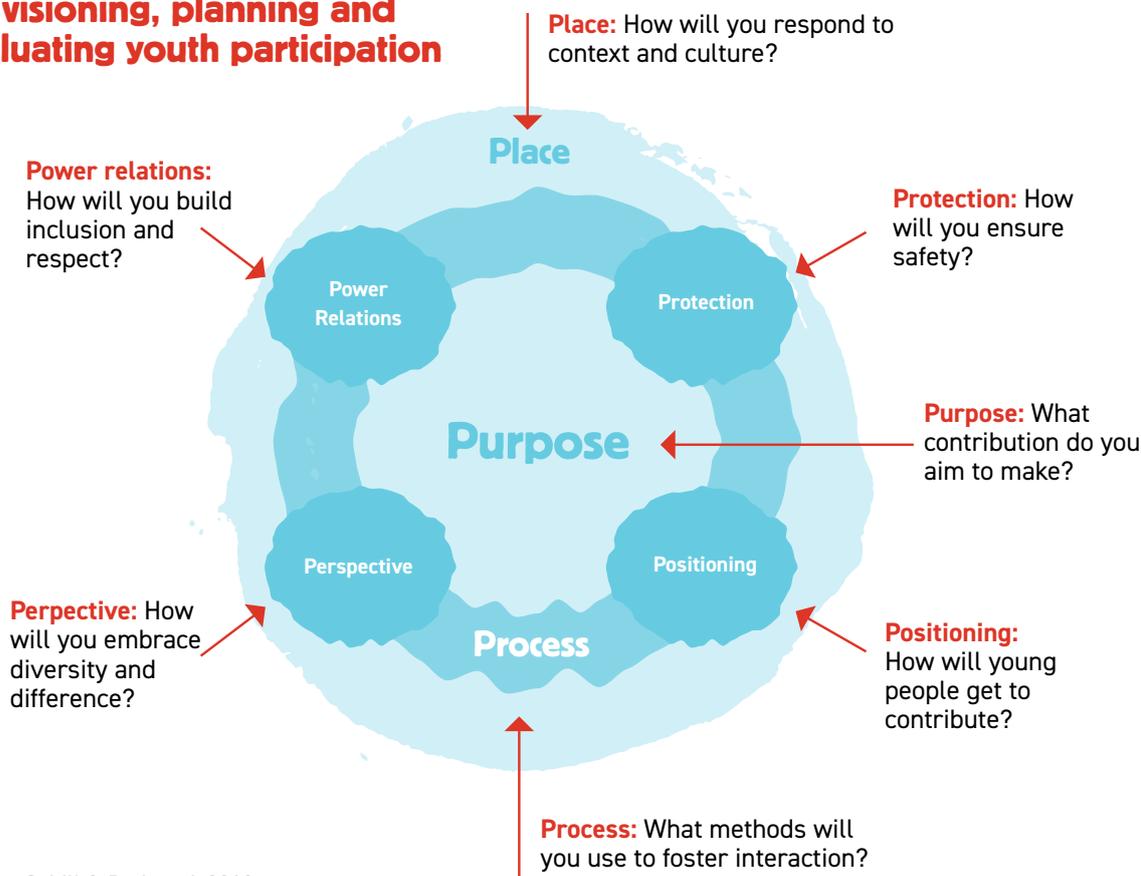
## Model: Typology of youth and empowerment pyramid



Source: Wong, et al, 2010

The typology of youth and empowerment pyramid introduces the issue of power and control. It contrasts adults with young people so that, at one end, adults have full control of the process and, at the other end, young people have full control. According to this typology, participation processes range from youths being recipients of policies and programmes to them being independent and empowered leaders with a voice and power of their own. As progress is made towards more autonomous participation and collaboration with adults, empowerment processes are achieved for both groups.

## The P7 Model: A thinking tool for visioning, planning and evaluating youth participation



Source: Cahill & Dadvand, 2018

The P7 model is a recent model, in which the authors consider adult and youth participation and discuss the issue of power, and also put forward four important issues. These are youth diversity, safety of young people, context in which participation will take place and purpose. While this model may seem more complex, it considers many aspects that, in practice, affect how young people can effectively participate and, more importantly, to what extent they can have an impact with their actions.

### Here are some questions to encourage discussion:

- What do you think of the different models of participation?
- What elements of the different models did you find most important or relevant to your work?
- How have you experienced your own process of youth participation?
- What elements are missing from these models?
- What would be your ideal model of youth participation and what is required to achieve it?
- Why is youth participation important for the issue of CEFMU?
- What contributions can young people make to the agenda for reducing CEFMU and its impact on young women's lives?

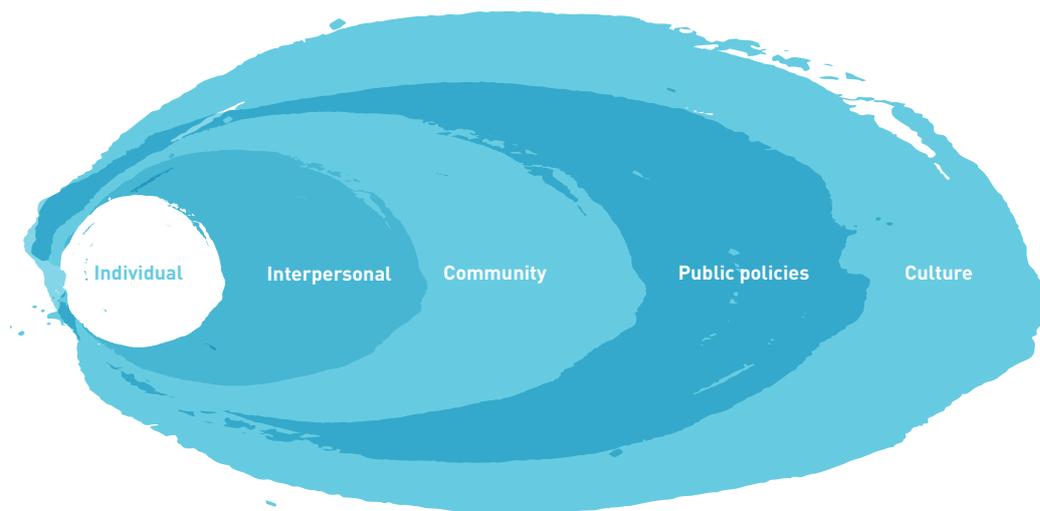
## WORKSHEET: Socio-ecological analysis of CEFMU

### Instructions:

Consider the levels of the socio-ecological framework and think what factors affect or are related to CEFMU. You can copy the following diagram on a blank flipchart and brainstorm each level.

Use the following questions to guide you:

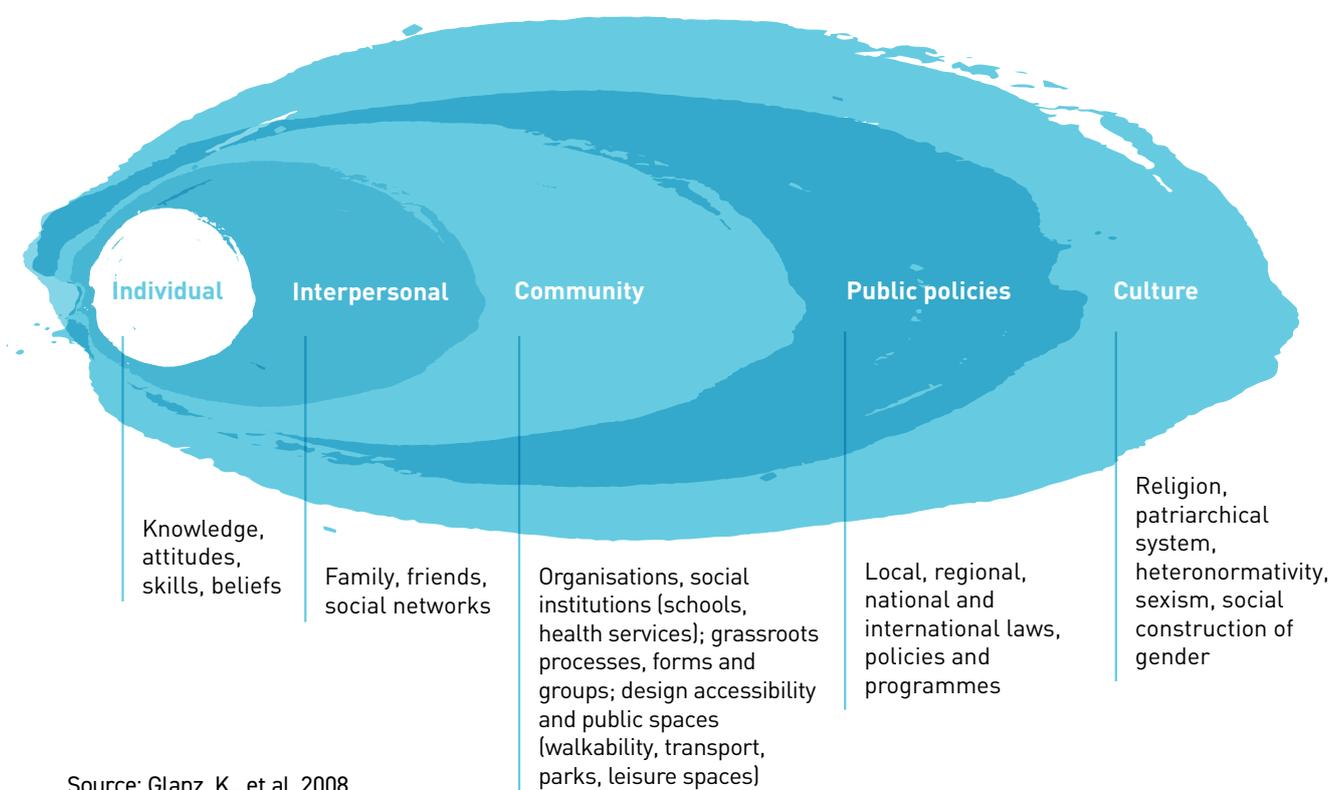
- What factors at the individual level influence whether a girl, adolescent or young woman decides to enter (or is forced to enter) a relationship, whether it is a union or a marriage?
- What factors at the interpersonal level – i.e. family, friends, social networks – influence girls, adolescents and young women to enter a union or marry?
- What conditions facilitate or promote CEFMU at the community level?
- What influence do laws, policies and programmes have on the existence of CEFMU?
- How do culture and socio-cultural systems influence the existence of CEFMU?



Glanz, K., Rimer, B.K. & Viswanath, K. (Eds.), 2008, Health Behavior and health education: theory, research and practice, John Wiley & Sons.

Now, think about actions or activities you would like to implement to address the issue of CEFMU.

- At what level do you have experience?
- At what level would you like to work?
- Remember that you can work on both the prevention of CEFMU and on behalf of women who have experienced CEFMU and lived through its negative consequences. What type of work is required to help girls, adolescents, young women and women who have experienced CEFMU?



Source: Glanz, K., et al, 2008

---

## WORKSHEET: Risk analysis

Risk assessment is a tool that helps you think, in a systematic and reasoned way, about possible risks and challenges, as well as their impacts. It will also help you think about ways to set limits on these risks and what you can do to prevent or mitigate them, or to recognise when the risk is too high for you to take.

For this exercise, read the case study at the bottom of the page about a group of young people and their work on CEFMU. After reading the case study, fill in the table provided to conduct a risk analysis.

---

### To use the tool in a real situation you must:

- Conduct a risk assessment well in advance, before you start to plan an activity.
- Brainstorm as a group to ensure you cover all the risks that each group might face.
- Start with the left column and discuss possible risks for each activity in your strategic plan; discuss and complete the other four columns.
- Prioritise the risks by assessing which are more likely to happen and which are potentially more severe than others.

### You should also consider NOT pursuing an activity if:

- The probability of a risk and its possible severity and impact are high (eg, if physical or verbal abuse is very likely, or if there is a risk of injury).
- There are no support services or partner organisations that can provide you with advice or support.

---

### CASE STUDY:

A group of six young people (two women and four men) from Brazil have created a project that raises awareness about the impact of CEFMU in their region. They are the team that has developed the project and are responsible for its implementation with the help of a young collaborator. The team sets out to visit a community they have never been to before to carry out a community project aimed at raising awareness about the prevention of CEFMU. The area they are visiting is remote and the community has little contact with outside organisations. In addition, weather conditions in the area are often extreme during the month of the visit. A donor will be visiting the community with the group of young people to observe their work and prepare a report.



## NOTE

When conducting a risk analysis, the following questions may be considered a person responsible for outreach programmes:

1. What are the local attitudes towards CEFMU?
2. What are the existing roles, norms and stereotypes for girls, boys, adolescents and young women and men?
3. How might your organisation's or youth group's intervention affect different community members?
4. Which individuals or groups might oppose your advocacy work?
5. What is your strategy for addressing these issues?

## Example of how to complete the table:

Potential risk/ threat?	What could go wrong?	How can you mitigate the risk?	Who is in charge of preventing it?	When should the necessary measures be taken?
Example: Negative or violent reaction in the community.	Religious leader rejects you or gets very aggressive.	Create a space for safe and open dialogue where you can discuss your points without anger or retaliation (eg, as part of a radio programme). Talk to people who might challenge your work early in the programme.	Esperanza and Jacobo	A week before the radio programme.

### Now it's your turn

Potential risk/ threat?	What could go wrong?	How can you mitigate the risk?	Who is in charge of preventing it?	When should the necessary measures be taken?

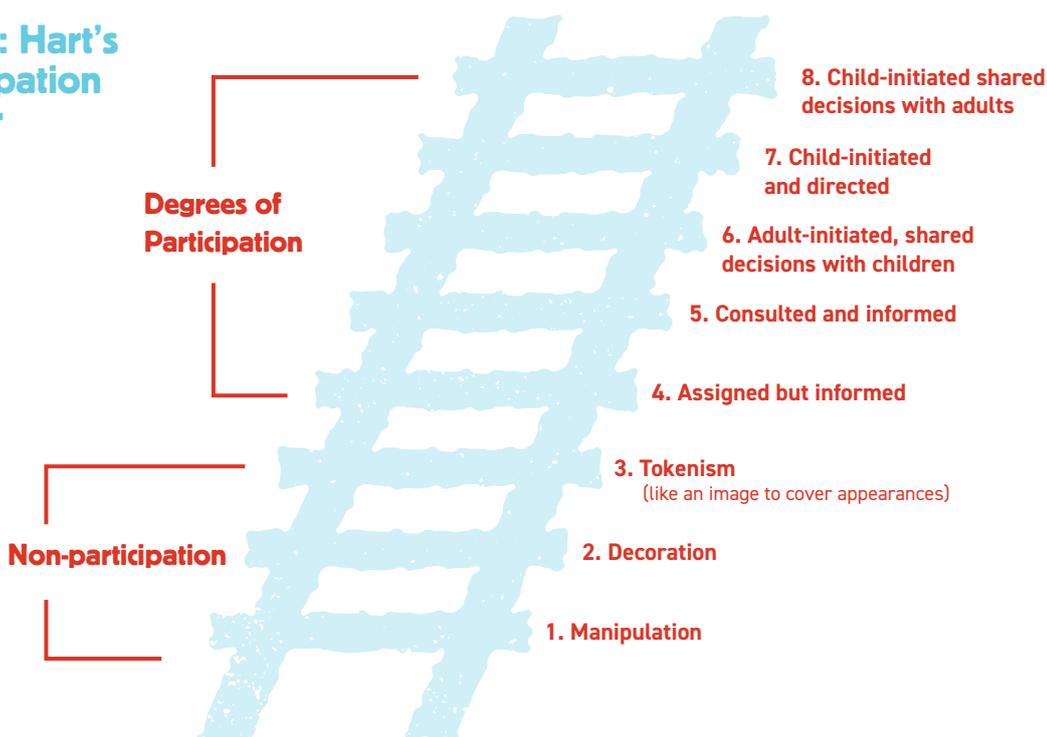
## Module 4: Factsheets

### WORKSHEET: Models for studying levels of participation

Youth participation is about taking an active part in the processes of designing, implementing and evaluating laws, policies and programmes that affect society in general and young people in particular. Furthermore, participation is a human, civil and political right (eg, voting in elections) and an economic, cultural and social right (eg, participating in the development of social agendas and programmes). Some forms of participation are: seeking information, expressing ideas, taking an active role in the creation steps of public policies or government programmes, being informed and consulted on decisions of public interest, particularly on aspects that affect people directly, and being able to make decisions about people's own lives and bodies.

Models have been developed to better understand what youth participation is and how to help achieve it. Below is a summary of some of them:

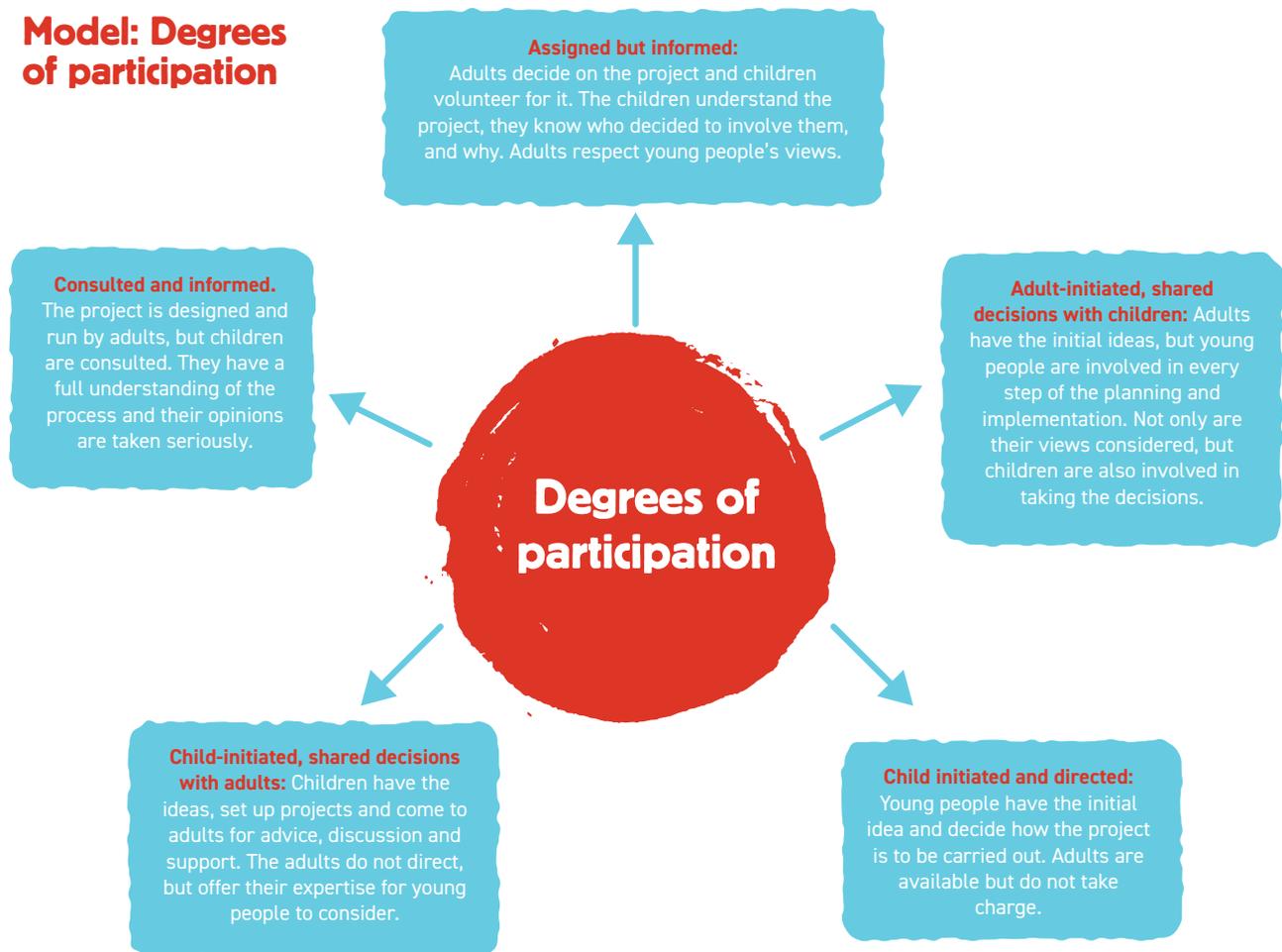
#### Model: Hart's participation ladder



Source: Hart, 1992

Hart's participation ladder describes the possible levels of participation. According to this model, there are eight levels of participation, ranging from the "decorative" to a level where both young people and adults participate in processes as equals. In this model, the final level corresponds to the ideal of participation, but we will see that in other models this level is not always considered the best.

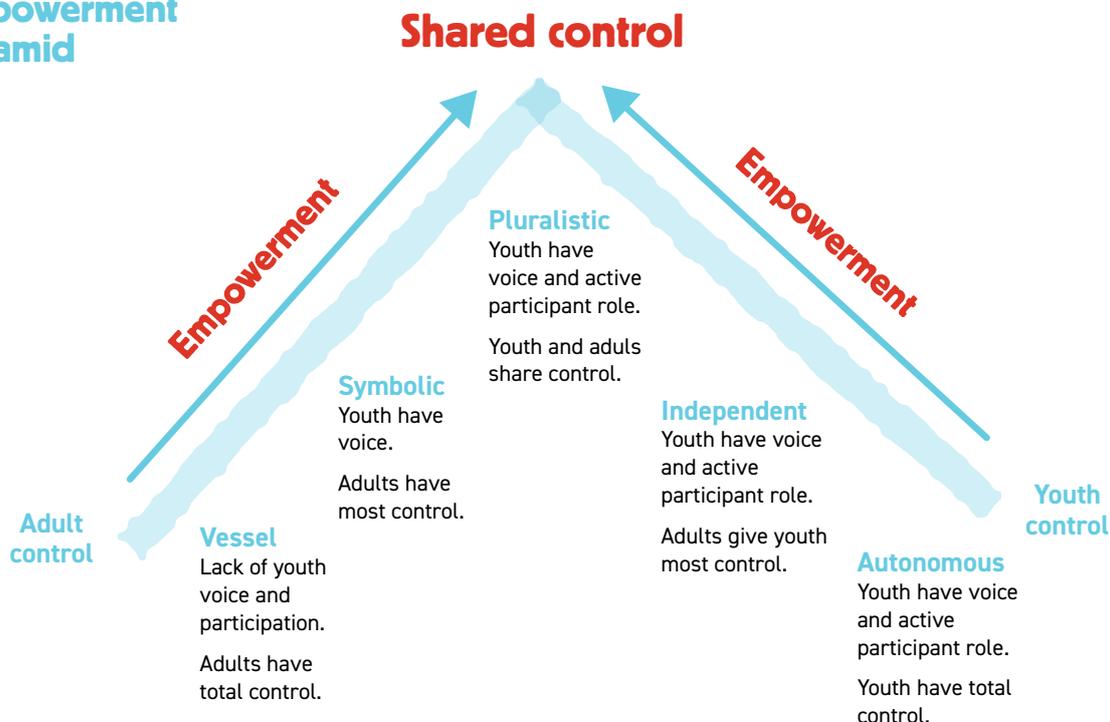
## Model: Degrees of participation



Source: Treseder, 1997

Treseder iterates or repeats Hart's ladder but preserves the first three levels, which Hart does not consider to be real participation. However, instead of hierarchically ranking the levels of participation, Treseder arranges them in a circular fashion, which gives the same value to each type of participation. Treseder clarifies each form of participation and this allows programmes and policies that claim to foster youth participation to make a more objective assessment of the level of participation they are promoting.

## Model: Typology of youth and empowerment pyramid



Source: Wong, et al, 2010

The typology of youth and empowerment pyramid introduces the issue of power and control. It contrasts adults with young people so that, at one end, adults have full control of the process and, at the other end, young people have full control. According to this typology, participation processes range from youths being recipients of policies and programmes to them being independent and empowered leaders with a voice and power of their own. As progress is made towards more autonomous participation and collaboration with adults, empowerment processes are achieved for both groups.

## The P7 Model: A thinking tool for visioning, planning and evaluating youth participation



Source: Cahill & Dadvand, 2018

The P7 model is a recent model, in which the authors consider adult and youth participation and discuss the issue of power, and also put forward four important issues. These are youth diversity, safety of young people, context in which participation will take place and purpose. While this model may seem more complex, it considers many aspects that, in practice, affect how young people can effectively participate and, more importantly, to what extent they can have an impact with their actions.



Many young people who get involved in social issues become young leaders and activists. The growth of a young leaders comes from a combination of experiences in the field, formal and informal education on the subject, mentoring by other young leaders or adults and opportunities to lead processes.

In the following table, you will find some characteristics that should be preserved or promoted for effective youth leadership:

---

### **Being an effective activist requires:**

- Passion and energy.
- Perseverance to be able to have a discussion and fight.
- A clear picture of what you want to see/ achieve.
- Teamwork skills.
- A willingness to devote time and energy to the cause.
- Understanding that not all people share your point of view and that strategies are needed to persuade those who think differently.
- The ability to communicate messages clearly and simply to get people on your side and build alliances.
- Commitment to preparing with key points for every event or conversation you have with key stakeholders.

### **Young people make good activists in addressing CEFMU because:**

- The situation affects and involves them directly.
- They have access to information that is not available to adults and to different opinions about social and traditional norms that may vary from generation to generation.
- They can help to identify girls and adolescents who are at risk of CEFMU and assist in intervening.
- They understand the pressures that young people face from both their families and their communities, particularly with regard to traditional practices.
- They can analyse proposed solutions, determining whether they will work or not, and thus suggest solutions or interventions that have not been considered.

---

## The importance of young leaders' care and safety regarding CEFMU

People engaging with the issue of CEFMU face different risks. A risk is a situation in which something or someone is exposed to danger, harm or loss. Risk has two parts: the likelihood that something will go wrong and the negative consequences that may result.

Risks can be avoided or mitigated by conducting a risk analysis and adopting appropriate precautions. As activists seeking to address CEFMU, young people will be confronted with many deep-rooted belief systems and community values, which may pose a risk to them.

### **For young leaders, some of the risks include:**

- Views or opinions of conservative and fundamentalist people who will try to stop their work because they do not want them causing problems, challenging people or simply because they do not believe what they are being told.
- Violent reactions or resentment from the community and from religious, community or traditional leaders.
- A lack of understanding on the part of their families regarding their position and resentment for insisting on addressing this practice, which is often deeply rooted in their social practices.
- The time used in addressing CEFMU can take time away from other important activities, such as their education, job search, etc., and it can have a negative impact on their ability to perform important tasks.
- Social exclusion and diminished freedom of expression due to negative reactions to their views.
- Lack of resources or support for carrying out their work as activists.

### **For girls, adolescents and young women who are not in unions, the risks include:**

- Increased risk of being forced to join in union by their guardians.
- Frustration in recognising inequality, wanting to see immediate change in their community and realising that they do not have the power to bring about that change.
- The impossibility for girls and adolescents to resist CEFMU and the lack of alternatives or services to help them.

### **For girls, adolescents and young women in unions, the risks include:**

- Potential abuse by their partners (which may be verbal, physical or sexual), especially when they learn more about their human rights, start setting limits on their private life and express their position against this practice.
- Community disapproval or retaliation against girls, adolescents, young women and women who openly question their unions.
- Difficulties in balancing family demands and household commitments with their ability to assist in advocacy activities.
- Reliving the trauma of the violence they have suffered if they choose to share their experiences with the group. This is a particularly high risk if they cannot access support services.
- Unfulfilled expectations by not receiving adequate support after asking for help.
- People opposing their leadership or feeling threatened by their new role as activists in the struggle for change.

There are many ways in which you can protect yourself as a young activist for change. The UN has many protocols to protect activists and human rights defenders seeking a better future, including the right to free association and expression. It is important to check your country's constitution to understand what laws and policies protect young activists. Working as a group makes your voice stronger and showing strength as a group is a very important way of protecting each other.

It is important to bear in mind that planned activities should not be pursued if the risk involved, as well as the potential severity of the impact, are high (eg, if there is a high probability of physical or verbal abuse or injury). Nor should they be pursued if no support services or partner organisations are available.

### **The importance of self-care activities**

Finally, it is important to talk about physical and emotional care for young activists. There are different ways to care for oneself physically, emotionally, socially and cognitively:

- Physical care: sleeping, resting, eating healthily, exercising.
- Emotional care: resilience, stress management, support groups, specialised psychological therapy for activists and even psychiatric treatment.
- Social care: knowing how to ask for help, being heard, giving and receiving affection, maintaining healthy relationships.
- Cognitive care: meditating, connecting with nature, reading, enjoying silence.



PICTURED: A young GoJoven participant at home in Livingston, Guatemala. Photo: *Girls Not Brides*/Priscilla Mora Flores/Colectivo Nómada.



# Module 5: Workshop close

---

## Learning objectives

1. Creating a space for reflecting on the lessons learned and for bringing the workshop to a close
2. To evaluate the workshop, lessons and opportunities for improvement

# Module 5 – Session 5.1

## Workshop evaluation

 Session	 Session objectives	 Session activities	 Required time	 Required materials
5.1 Workshop evaluation	To evaluate the workshop and discuss opportunities for improvement	1. Exercises: Happy face, neutral face, sad face and learning brainstorm	5 min	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Worksheet: Happy face, neutral face, sad face</li> <li>• Markers</li> </ul>
		2. Group discussion	20 min	

Total time: 25 min

### Activity 1. Exercises: Happy face, neutral face, sad face and learning storm

#### Instructions:

Welcome the participants to this final module by explaining that it provides an opportunity to close the workshop and receive feedback.

1. Put a flipchart on the wall with three columns, as in the example provided at the end of this module. Ask the participants to put a mark on the column with the face that represents how they feel after the workshop. You could even carry out this activity at the end of each workshop day to allow for modifications or changes.
2. When participants have finished, ask them to write down three things they have learnt in the workshop on a blank flipchart.
3. Read out loud what the participants have written and thank them for their participation.

## Activity 2. Group discussion

### Instructions:

With this last activity you will invite participants to discuss what they thought of the workshop, what they have learnt and any changes they would suggest to improve it. You can use the following questions to guide the discussion:

- What did you think of the workshop?
- What was your favourite activity?
- What were your most valuable lessons?
- What are your suggestions for improving the workshop for other groups?
- Would anyone like to share any specific feedback?

Once the discussion is over, thank participants for their feedback and recommendations.



# Module 5 – Session 5.2

## Making commitments

#	🎯	?	🕒	✂️
Session	Session objectives	Session activities	Required time	Required materials
5.2 Commitments	To draft a commitment for working on the issue of CEFMU	1. Writing a postcard to myself	15 min	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Blank postcards</li> <li>• Envelopes</li> </ul>
Total time : 15 min				

### Activity 1. Writing a postcard to myself

#### Instructions:

1. Let the participants know that this is the last activity in the workshop.
2. Hand out a postcard and an envelope to each participant and ask them to write a CEFMU-related task or activity that they will commit to over the next six months.
3. Let them know that they are writing this postcard to themselves and that they will receive it by mail in six months as a reminder; they should write a physical address on the envelope. Give them 10 minutes to write the postcard and the address.
4. Collect the postcards inside the envelopes and let them know that there are, at least, as many commitments to addressing CEFMU as there are participants in the workshop.
5. Thank them again for their participation and bring the workshop to a close.



## Module 5 supporting teaching materials

---

### WORKSHEET: Happy face, neutral face, sad face

Here is an example of how to put the faces on the flipchart when asking participants their opinion about the workshop and what they have learnt during these sessions:



# Annex I.

## Supporting material

Activities for dividing participants into working groups

1. Paper figures
2. Fruit
3. Number sequence

Activities for integration and ice-breaking

1. Thunder
2. Shopping at the market
3. The elephant says

Activities for emotional support

1. Collage of feelings
2. Emotional energy beans
3. Guided meditation

## Activities for dividing participants into working groups

---

### Activity 1. Paper figures

For this activity you need colourful images from magazines. You will need to prepare these images beforehand. You will need as many images as there are groups, each cut into the same number of pieces as there are members in each group. For example, five groups = five images; three people per group = three pieces per image. When planning this activity, you should know the number of workshop participants in advance. It is best to divide the total number of participants into equal-size groups. For example, if there are 24 participants, divide them into four groups of six people. Or, if you want smaller groups, you can divide them into six groups of four people.

Once in the session, fold and place the pieces of image into a basket or bag and ask participants to take one. Ask them to unfold their piece of paper and find the participants with similar pieces in order to complete the picture. Once they have found them, ask them to form a group.

---

### Activity 2. Fruit

You should calculate the number of groups you want to have for the total number of participants in advance. Try to organise small groups; if there are 20 people, four groups of five participants will work best. If you follow this example, you will need the names of four different types of fruit and five pieces of paper with the fruit's name or picture on each one. Fold and place the pieces of paper into a basket or bag and ask participants to take one. Then, they should look for their "fruit partners" so that all the mangoes are together, and so on.

---

### Activity 3. Number sequence

Divide the participants into groups by asking each to count "one," "two," "three" and so on, depending on the number of groups you want to have. Suppose you want five groups, then the fifth person calls out number five and the next person starts again with number one. All the participants with the same number will form a team together.

## Activities for integration and ice-breaking

---

### Activity 1. Thunder

The “Thunder” activity is designed to create a good mood and positive energy among the participants. Ask everyone to form a circle (or stay where they are, as long as there is enough space for them to move freely). Explain that they will act out the following words through body movements:

- Rain: slap your palms on your knees quickly.
- Thunder: stomp your feet quickly.
- Lightning: extend your arms quickly, with the right arm pointing upwards to the right and the left arm pointing downwards to the left.

When explaining, do a demonstration of the movement that corresponds to each word and ask the participants to repeat the movements together to practice. To start the activity, say the words out loud and encourage the group to make the movements at the pace you set. At first, say the words in the same order and, then, mix them up. Do it faster and faster. Soon, everyone will start mingling and laughing!

---

### Activity 2. Shopping at the market

Activities help participants come together and create a relaxed and fun atmosphere. They also serve to ensure that participants are awake, alert and ready to work. Explain to the group that this is a memory game. Ask them to stand in a circle; choose one person to start and explain that everyone should add something to the list of those that come before them, so they should listen carefully. The first person says, “At the market, I buy...” and then they must mention an item they want to buy, for example, apples. Then the next person says, “At the market, I buy apples and also...(a new vegetable, fruit or item)”. The circle is completed by each participant adding an item and saying the list of the preceding items without leaving anything out.

---

### Activity 3. The elephant says

For this activity, ask participants to stand in a circle or in two rows facing each other. Explain the rules of the game: when you say “the elephant says ...” and add an activity, for example, “stand on one leg”, then the group should do what you say and stand still in that position. If you give the command without using the phrase “the elephant says...” then the participants should ignore the command (and stand still in the previous position). Practice! For example, say, “The elephant says to... touch your left ear with your right hand” and use your arm as if it were an elephant’s trunk to touch your ear. Then say, “Scratch your head and your stomach at the same time”. The participants should stay with their right hand touching their left ear because you did not add the phrase “the elephant says...”. Keep playing until the participants are ready to move to the next activity.

## Activities for emotional support

---

### Activity 1. Collage of feelings<sup>9</sup>

**Materials:** Coloured paper, thin marker and glue

**Time:** 30 minutes

This activity can be used for participants to talk about the feelings that the workshop's content may have triggered in them. It can be done in pairs or individually.

Let them know that they will create a collage of feelings. Share with the participants that a collage is an image made from different pieces, in this case, of paper. Ask them to think about the reactions or feelings they have had during the workshop. For each feeling or reaction, they will tear off a piece of paper and glue it to a sheet of coloured paper, saying it out loud and naming it. Encourage them to start with the feelings or reactions that are considered negative, such as sadness, anger or fear. For people who are working in pairs, ask them to verbalise what part of the content has triggered these feelings. For people working alone, ask them to do the same exercise in silence. Give them 10 minutes to do the first part of the collage.

Next, ask participants to think about feelings that are considered positive, such as joy, excitement and curiosity, and repeat the process. Ask participants to, once again, share what part of the content triggered these feelings, either with a partner or internally.

Finally, ask participants if they would like to share their collages and reflections with the others. Invite two or three people share. When they have finished, let them know that, when addressing CEFMU, we need to talk about other issues that can often trigger difficult feelings. This is because we have experienced many of these situations personally or through someone close to us, but also because many of the situations leading to CEFMU reveal situations that are unfair and painful for people. Let participants know that it is normal to have all these emotions and feelings and that, when working on CEFMU and any other social justice issues, we must take care of our emotional health. This can be because we are hurt by others' suffering (in psychology this is called "vicarious trauma") or because we have lived through it ourselves and must work to heal the pain of having undergone these experiences. Let participants know that therapeutic work, to address personal or vicarious trauma, is beyond the scope of this workshop, but it is something activists should consider as necessary. Thank everyone for participating and sharing their feelings.

---

9. Adapted from Katherine M. Hertlein & Felisa M. Huene, *Anger Collage*. In Sori, C. F., & Hecker, L. L., 2016, *The therapist's notebook for children and adolescents: Homework, handouts, and activities for use in psychotherapy*. Psychology Press.

---

## Activity 2. Emotional energy beans<sup>10</sup>

**Materials:** Blank writing paper, thin markers, small plastic or paper bags and a beanbag

**Time:** 30 minutes

This activity can be used to talk about the energy levels among workshop participants, particularly after several days of the workshop or after a session where difficult issues have been addressed.

Before starting the activity, hand out a handful of beans (no more than 20 beans) to each participant in a bag. Let them know that you will talk about energy levels and how to take care of yourself while working on complex issues such as CEFMU. Explain that each person has a limited amount of emotional energy and that we need to be careful not to run out of it when we are working for social change. Ask them to think about the days they have spent together in the workshop and to write down the topics that have triggered strong emotions in them on the sheet of paper. For example, you can mention that some of them may have had emotional reactions to the issue of poverty or to racism or violence, either because they have experienced it or because someone close to them has. Emotions can have a name or be felt in the body. For example, “I experienced sadness” or “I had a stomach ache.” Give them 5 minutes to write down their emotions on the topics.

Once they have written down their feelings, ask them to now think about their personal lives and their responsibilities as young activists, and to write these down as well. Give them another 5 minutes for this. Now, ask them to take a bean out of the bag for each item they wrote down. Explain that each item requires emotional energy on their part and that the beans represent the amount of energy available in a day. Guide the reflection using the following questions:

- How many beans did you take out of the bag?
- How many beans were left in the bag?
- How do you feel about the beans left in the bag?
- What did you think and feel when you saw the list of feelings and responsibilities together with the beans?
- What activities do you carry out to recharge your batteries every day, i.e. how do you take care of yourself?

Now, ask them to go back through the list and choose two feelings or responsibilities that they can cross off for today. Once they do, ask them to put two beans back in the bag. Ask participants to get into a comfortable position, take the bag in their hands and move it around. They can close their eyes if they want to. Remind them that it is important to take care of ourselves, especially when working on complex issues that seek social change, such as CEFMU. Remind them to keep moving the bag so that it continues to charge energy. Ask them to think about something they like to do, a song they like to listen to, or a meal they like to eat and imagine themselves doing it. You can let them be in silence for two or three

---

10. Adapted from Sarah Schonian, 2017, *Emotional Energy and Self-Awareness. An Experiential Activity*. In *The Group Therapist's Notebook. Homework, Handouts, and Activities for Use in Psychotherapy*. Routledge.

minutes, then ask if anyone would like to share how the experience made them feel. Invite one or two people to share their feelings. Finally, let them know that their homework – for the rest of the workshop and as a recommendation for the rest of their lives – is to think about how to save energy for self-care activities that will allow them to stay strong and continue working for equality and social justice.

---

### Activity 3. Guided meditation

**Materials:** Relaxing music

**Time:** 15 minutes

This exercise provides a quiet space within the workshop, which is particularly useful after having discussed a difficult topic. Explain to the participants that you will be doing a guided meditation in which you will read a text to them while listening to music, and then you will leave them in silence. At the end, a sound or word will indicate that the meditation is over. Let them know that this exercise's aim is to calm the mind after having discussed complex issues.

Ask the participants to get into a comfortable position, either standing, sitting or lying down; let them know they can close their eyes if they want to. When the participants are in the position of their choice, you can play soft background music, preferably instrumental. Then read the following text slowly:

*Imagine that you are a tree leaf. You were born from a beautiful branch. As the seasons pass, you grow, and you change from bright green to dark green. When autumn comes, you change colours until one day a strong wind comes and blows you off your branch. You fly through the air, spin around several times and blend in with the clouds. Finally, you fall gently onto a stone at the edge of a stream that flows from the top of a mountain. The wind blows again, and now you are blown to the water. The current is not very strong, so you float slowly downstream. You notice how the clouds start to gather in the sky, turn grey and a rumble of thunder gives way to a heavy and thick rain that reaches the river. You start descending more strongly, going down small waterfalls. You wonder if you will ever stop. The rain keeps falling hard, causing the water level in the river to rise. You get confused and get lost in the water, along with other leaves. As time passes, the rain stops, and you continue your journey in a river that is slowing down. You can see a lake at the bottom of the hill; a lake that looks very quiet. You continue downstream, slowly, slowly. You come to the lake. You float quietly again. You're there and you're floating. There is nothing but peace and quiet. It is a peacefulness that makes the blue sky reflect on the water of the lake as if it were a mirror. You are there and you float peacefully. You breathe and wait. Peacefulness. The slight current takes you to the lake's shore, you reach the mainland. You breathe. You have arrived, and you rest. The cold comes and the cycle begins again.*

When you have finished reading the text, leave the music for another three to five minutes and then turn down the volume until the group is left in total silence. Leave the group in silence for three to five minutes, depending on how they have responded to the meditation. Finally, ask them to come back slowly; they can start moving their hands and their feet and gradually open their eyes. You can ask for someone to comment on how they felt about the experience. After having one or two people participate, thank them for allowing themselves to be guided in this meditation.

---

## EXTRA CASE STUDY

### Renuka's story

Renuka was born into a traditional Hindu family in the eastern region of Trinidad and Tobago. She was the fourth child of seven siblings. Her mother died after the birth of her youngest brother. Her father was left in charge of the family, so he decided to engage all his daughters in marriage to ease some of the financial pressure. Renuka was eight years old when she first met the man she would marry when she turned 14 in 2018.

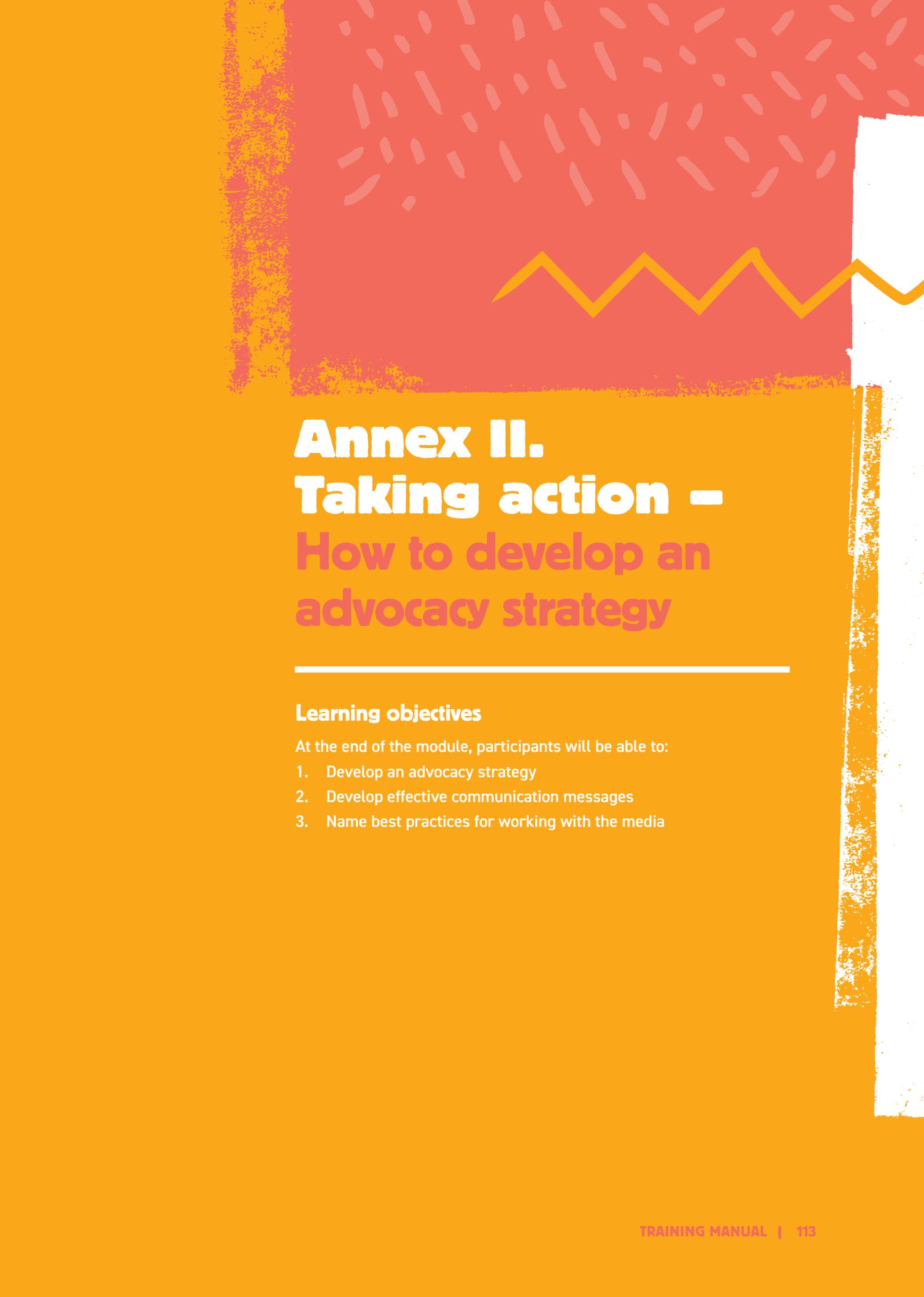
Although the law in Trinidad and Tobago prohibits legal marriage before age 18, for many years different communities were allowed to practice child marriage in a variety of ways. For example, Muslim girls could marry at age 12, Hindu girls could marry at age 14, and Christian girls had no age limit under different religious laws. After much advocacy by various groups of women, a law was enacted that harmonised the laws and prohibited child marriage, but these unions still continue in practice.

Renuka, now 16, has a daughter and is expecting another child, and she is not working or studying. Her husband, who is 20 years older than her, is a very religious and also a very violent person. He has hurt Renuka seriously, even putting her second pregnancy at risk. Renuka wants to end the relationship. She does not know that her marriage is not legal. She also does not want to become pregnant again, as she has witnessed her sisters having many children. However, Renuka does not have access to contraception either.

---

### Here are some questions to encourage discussion:

- What led Renuka to enter into an early marriage?
- What are the barriers that prevent the enforcement of laws such as those in Trinidad and Tobago?
- What can be done to help Renuka have a better life and leave the relationship she is in?



# **Annex II.**

## **Taking action –**

### **How to develop an advocacy strategy**

---

#### **Learning objectives**

At the end of the module, participants will be able to:

1. Develop an advocacy strategy
2. Develop effective communication messages
3. Name best practices for working with the media

# Session All.1

## Defining the change you want to achieve

 Session	 Session objectives	 Session activities	 Required time	 Required materials
All.1 Defining the change you want to achieve	To define the desired change	1. Setting out your ideal future	30 min	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Magazines</li><li>• Scissors</li></ul>
	To define the expected advocacy outcome	2. Presentation on expected advocacy outcomes and advocacy objectives	30 min	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Glue</li><li>• Flipchart</li><li>• Markers</li><li>• Adhesive tape</li></ul>
	To set advocacy objectives	3. Defining an expected advocacy outcome and advocacy objectives	45 min	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Presentation on advocacy objectives</li></ul>

Total time: 1.45 hours

### Activity 1: Setting out your ideal future

#### Instructions::

1. Divide the participants into groups and ask each group to imagine that they have been travelling for 10 years. They have just come back to find that their dreams regarding the issue of CEFMU have been fulfilled. All the problems have been solved and the society is functioning as they had always dreamed of. Ask groups to draw a picture (or use pictures from magazines) using colours, figures, words and/or images to represent this ideal society. Ask them to define a clear picture of how they imagine this ideal society. They have 10 minutes to draw their perfect society and discuss their plans with the team.
2. Allow each group to briefly present their drawing to the rest of the participants. During their presentation, write down any key words associated with the main topic. Allocate a total of 10 minutes to the presentation of the teams' work.
3. Once each group has presented its drawing, use the key words you have noted to determine if participants can choose a common advocacy objective. Take 10 minutes to open the discussion on what the overall advocacy objective of the group should be.

---

## Activity 2: Presentation on expected advocacy outcomes and advocacy objectives

### Instructions:

Now, it is your turn to describe what an expected advocacy outcome, a general objective and specific advocacy objectives are, including how they are set and what is meant when referring to the creation of “SMART objectives.” To prepare your presentation, use the information in the worksheet on how to set advocacy targets.

---

## Activity 3: Defining an expected advocacy outcome and advocacy objectives

### Instructions:

1. Explain to the participants that now they have completed most of the training sessions, they know there are several important factors associated with CEFMU, including its multiple drivers. They have conducted research on these issues in their communities or country. They have also reflected on how gender influences and impacts these issues in various ways. Now, they can take action and set an advocacy goal.
2. Divide the participants into three groups. Ask the teams to brainstorm an expected advocacy outcome, a general objective and two or three specific advocacy objectives. Assign 15 minutes to the group discussion and then 15 minutes to report back on their work.
3. In the last 10 minutes of the session, you can ask some brief questions and then move on to the discussion. This way you can make sure that everyone understands the ideas that have been discussed. Some questions you could ask are:
  - What is an expected advocacy outcome?
  - What is an overall advocacy objective?
  - What is a specific objective?
  - What are the differences between an overall advocacy objective and a specific objective?
  - What is a SMART objective?

Ask participants to mention what the most important lesson they learned in this session was, then bring the session to a close.

# Session All.2

## Developing advocacy strategies

 Session	 Session objectives	 Session activities	 Required time	 Required materials
All.2 Developing advocacy strategies	To learn how to develop an advocacy strategy	1. Presentation on advocacy strategy development	10 min	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Flipcharts</li><li>• Markers</li><li>• Adhesive tape</li><li>• Presentation on advocacy strategy development</li><li>• Template: Advocacy strategy</li></ul>
		2. Developing an advocacy strategy	20 min	

Total time: 30 min

### Activity 1: Presentation on advocacy strategy development

#### Instructions:

Now it is your turn, as facilitator, to set out what the group should do to develop an advocacy strategy for the advocacy work of youth activists. Introduce the main ideas that are included in the factsheet on how to develop an advocacy strategy.

### Activity 2: Developing an advocacy strategy

#### Instructions:

1. Divide the participants into the same three groups from the last activity and let them know that they are going to develop an advocacy strategy. This is a strategy or plan that will help us decide what, when and who will be engaged in our activities to achieve our advocacy goal. Hand out a copy of the template for an advocacy strategy to each participant. Each group should go through the columns of the table and fill in as much as possible to develop their strategy. Ask each group to fill in the specific objectives in the table and to think of activities they can do to help achieve those objectives, writing all these points on the worksheet. Ask them to use the general and specific objectives

they developed in the previous session as support. This exercise is just an example to get participants thinking about the areas and issues that need to be considered when planning their advocacy activities. It is, therefore, worth testing a model so that everyone is aware of what is involved in developing a strategy. Remind participants that it is also important to think about the timing, who will be in charge of each task and the resources they have to carry out these activities. They will have 20 minutes to discuss the sections of the worksheet and to begin their strategic planning.

2. Once the time is up, ask each group to briefly present their advocacy strategy and their action plan for achieving their goal.
3. Allow 5 minutes at the end of the activity for feedback or to answer questions from the group. It is important that everyone understands how to do this exercise and what is needed to fulfil the plan.



# Session All.3

## Creating effective communication messages

 Session	 Session objectives	 Session activities	 Required time	 Required materials
All.3 Creating effective communication messages	To learn about the characteristics of an effective message aimed at your target audience: How to make them think, feel and act	1. Exercise: Whisper, whisper	10 min	• Notes with phrases to be read
	To learn how to work with the media and the implications of communication activities	2. Presentation on effective messaging and media management	20 min	• Presentation on effective communication and media management

Total time: 30 min

### Activity 1: Exercise: Whisper, whisper

#### Instructions:

We recommend you use this activity as a very simple but effective way of illustrating how messages can be distorted or changed entirely through communication. It helps highlight the importance of keeping communication clear and simple, especially when dealing with a complex issue such as CEFMU.

1. Ask participants to form two rows facing the front of the room and make sure there is enough space between them. Beforehand, write down some funny or incorrect press releases, or some beliefs about CEFMU on pieces of paper.
2. Give one of these phrases to the first person in each row. Ask them to read the message silently and then whisper it to the person behind them. Every person will do the same: whisper the message to the person behind them. Keep doing this until the message reaches the end of the line.
3. Ask the last person to say the message they received out loud. Usually, the result is very funny because the message is distorted as it goes from one person to another.

Use this activity to discuss message delivery and the communication failures that can occur in the process. Ask the participants to tell you what went wrong and why. Have them think about how they could have avoided these failures or improved communication. Allow 10 minutes for this exercise and for reflection.

## Activity 2: Presentation on effective messaging and media management

### Instructions:

Prepare a presentation on communication messages and media management using the factsheet on how to develop effective communication messages and work with the media. Allow 15 minutes for the presentation and 5 minutes for questions and answers and closure.



# Annex II supporting teaching materials

- 1. Template: Advocacy strategy
- 2. Factsheet: How to set advocacy objectives
- 3. Factsheet: How to develop an advocacy strategy
- 4. Factsheet: How to develop effective communication messages and work with the media

## Template: Advocacy strategy

This template is to support the development of an advocacy strategy. Follow the instructions and answer the questions within the template. If you have any further questions, you can look at the example of a completed template to guide you.

Write down your overall advocacy objective:

---

---

---

---

<b>Specific objectives</b> What do you want to achieve? What is the change you want to see?	<b>Target audience</b> Who are the key people you need to target or influence to achieve the change you want to see?	<b>Key stakeholders</b> Who do you need to work with and who can help you achieve your overall advocacy objective?	<b>Activities</b> What steps or actions do you need to take and in what order to achieve each specific objective, and within what time frame, so that you can achieve your overall advocacy objective?	<b>Resources</b> What specific resources will you need to achieve your overall advocacy objective? If you need budget, determine how much you need and where it will come from.

<b>Potential risks and mitigation</b> What are the possible risks, negative impacts or challenges that may arise from your work as an activist? Include gender issues.	<b>Timeframe</b> Have a very clear idea of the steps to be taken, the order in which they should be implemented and in what timeframe they should be accomplished.	<b>Who is in charge?</b> Be clear about who is in charge of each action and what their role is.	<b>Success criteria</b> How will you know if you have achieved your objective? Know what progress you need to record aligned with what you want to achieve.

These questions may help you to define possible activities for your advocacy strategy:

1. What are the personal characteristics of your target audience: what do they like, what don't they like, what interests them, what do you know about what they do and how you can get their attention? Think about what activities or tactics have worked before with these people so that you can get their attention or make direct contact. For example, if your target audience is a shy politician who dislikes receiving too much media attention, then you may choose to produce a short report containing clear evidence of what works to address CEFMU, which will be more appropriate than organising a protest outside their office or collecting signatures. In that document, you can also outline the reasons why this issue is important so that it is more targeted and relevant to them.
2. Do you have a budget for your activities? If not, then planning an event that involves costs such as paying for refreshments and renting a space may be unrealistic. Consider activities you can do that will not cost money if you don't have the budget to carry them out: for example, involving the media is usually free of charge. Or, if the activity is essential, then consider working with another person or organisation so that you can carry out the actions together; this can reduce costs and may also provide some extra money.
3. How much time can you realistically invest in this project? Be serious about this and what you expect to achieve.

## Example of a completed template

**Overall advocacy objective:** Remember, this is a brief description of what you aim to achieve in the long term through your work as an activist.

**Example:** Reduce the number of early unions by 25% in two locations in your community in one year.

<b>Specific objectives</b> What do you want to achieve? What is the change you want to see?	<b>Target audience</b> Who are the key people you need to target or influence to achieve the change you want to see?	<b>Key stakeholders</b> Who do you need to work with and who can help you achieve your overall advocacy objective?	<b>Activities</b> What steps or actions do you need to take and in what order to achieve each specific objective and within what time frame, so that you can achieve your overall advocacy objective?	<b>Resources</b> What specific resources will you need to achieve your overall advocacy objective? If you need budget, determine how much you need and where it will come from.
To present a radio debate on the effects of CEFMU	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Local education authorities</li> <li>• Police headquarters and other authorities</li> <li>• Community members</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Local media</li> <li>• Police</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Talk to a cousin who knows a radio DJ for advice on how to present this proposal and structure the discussion</li> <li>• Present the proposal to the local radio station</li> <li>• Ensure that young women participate in the programme and discussion</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Money for transportation of team and to ensure young women participate in the programme and discussion</li> </ul>

<b>Potential risks and mitigation</b> What are the possible risks, negative impacts or challenges that may arise from your work as an activist? Include gender issues.	<b>Timeframe</b> Have a very clear idea of the steps to be taken, the order in which they should be implemented and in what timeframe they should be accomplished.	<b>Who is in charge?</b> Be clear about who is in charge of each activity and what their role is.	<b>Success criteria</b> How will you know if you have achieved your objective? Know what progress you need to record aligned with what you want to achieve.
The local community is hostile to these views, so we will invite a respected elder to the programme	In two months: to be completed by the end of February	Pedro: Talk to the DJ or the host of the radio programme  Selina: Write a script and detail the main points of discussion  Marta: Invite an elder to the programme	The discussion is defined and presented in the radio programme

---

## Worksheet: How to set advocacy objectives<sup>11</sup>

An advocacy strategy involves different steps. To start, an expected advocacy outcome, the general objective and the specific objectives of the strategy must be established.

One of the key aspects of advocacy work is to be clear about the change you want to bring about. Defining the expected advocacy outcome is one of the most important steps in achieving a successful strategy.

### The elements of an expected advocacy outcome are:

- **The desired political change or action:** what decision do you want to see taken at the political or programme level?
- **Political actors:** who are the decision-makers?
- **Specifications:** what are the characteristics of the decision? For example, the period for achieving the expected advocacy outcome, the basic elements or principles (gender perspective, rights of girls and adolescents, respect for sexual diversity, intersectional perspective), the geographical scope, the populations targeted for change, the budget.

### An example of an expected advocacy outcome related to CEFMU is as follows:

The design and implementation of a social programme that provides educational and economic support with an intersectional perspective aimed at young Indigenous women from the Ixmiquilpan area in Hidalgo, Mexico, who experienced CEFMU during the 2021–2023 administration.

### Setting an overall advocacy objective requires:

1. **Define the overall change you would like to contribute to.** Have a clear idea of the world you want to create and what you want to achieve in the long term. It must be inspiring and clearly explain what you are working towards. It is not something you can achieve on your own, but collectively. For example, at *Girls Not Brides* our vision is a world without child marriage in which girls, adolescents and young women enjoy equal status with their male peers and are able to achieve their full potential in all aspects of their lives.
2. **Reflect on the size and scale of your actions.** Calculate how much time each person can invest to reach the overall advocacy objective. Be realistic. The more you inform yourself and the more people you work with, the more your overall objective and ambitions can grow. You may want to focus your objective on a specific community or a particular group of people so that you have a key group and work on specific issues.
3. **Evaluate what your gender analysis has revealed in your community.** Based on your findings, what might be your general objective? What specific issues emerged from this research that you can address specifically?

---

11. Information adapted from: Alcalde, M.A. and Cano, G., *Manual de Planeación en Advocacy*, Federación Internacional de Planificación de la Familia, Western Hemisphere Region, 2009.

## Overall and specific objectives defined

Overall objective	Specific objectives
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The main change you seek to achieve</li><li>• The broad vision of what you want to see happening in the world</li><li>• A challenge you want to take on</li><li>• Measurable; the change can be observed</li><li>• Falls within a long-term timeframe</li></ul> <p><b>Example: “I want a future without child marriage.”</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Concrete actions that you direct your efforts towards to achieve your overall objective</li><li>• Consist of smaller and more specific steps that will help you achieve your overall objective</li><li>• Must be measurable and tangible</li><li>• Fall within a short- to medium-term timeframe</li></ul> <p><b>Example: “By the end of the year, I want to raise the awareness of my community leaders about the importance of addressing CEFMU.”</b></p>

Once you have an overall objective, you should think of concrete solutions that will support you in addressing CEFMU. This will help you focus on achieving the overall objective through your work as an activist and prioritise the tasks you need to carry out. Your specific objectives indicate what changes and outcomes you want to achieve in the short to medium term.

As a group, brainstorm specific objectives that can help you achieve your overall objective. These should be SMART objectives, i.e. they should be Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant and Time-oriented. Below is an explanation of each of these terms.

- **Specific:** What concrete action needs to be taken? Why do we want to achieve this objective?

Indicate specifically which area is to be improved and write the objective in such a way that there can be no different interpretations. Specific objectives should be concrete actions of small steps. For example, if the overall objective of your advocacy strategy is “To reduce the occurrence of CEFMU in my community,” the specific objective should be something you can start working on tomorrow if you decide to do so.

- **Measurable:** How will you know that you have succeeded in the strategy? How much do you want something to change?

You need to be able to measure the impact of your advocacy work. Some examples of measurable actions are: the number of people who benefited from your strategy, the number of people who got the message you developed, the number of printed materials, and the number of CEFMU-related laws that were changed. If your specific objectives cannot be measured, they should be changed.

- **Achievable:** Do you have the resources to achieve the objectives? Is the effort you will put into achieving the objective reasonable?

Your specific objectives must be achievable, i.e. the change you want to see must be possible, working collectively and with strategic partnerships.

- **Relevant:** Is the objective worthwhile? Can we commit to meeting it?

It is important that there is a clear understanding of how these specific partnerships relate to the group’s overall advocacy objective or to the advocacy work you are doing.

- **Time-oriented:** What is the deadline for achieving this objective? When will the actions begin and end?

Develop a clearly worded timeline showing when the specific objectives will be achieved.

Here is an example of a general objective and specific SMART objectives that illustrates how the specific objectives should be analysed. You can use this table in your presentation and ask the participants to help you analyse the other two objectives. What makes them SMART?

Overall objective	Specific objectives	Elements that make the objective SMART
To end CEFMU in the Central Valley region of Oaxaca	1. To create a partnership of diverse civil society organisations prepared to work on the issue of CEFMU by mid-2021	<p><b>Specific:</b> A partnership is pursued</p> <p><b>Measurable:</b> One alliance, a number of organisations that form the partnership</p> <p><b>Achievable:</b> Having the time and resources, promoting a local partnership is a feasible activity</p> <p><b>Relevant:</b> A partnership can help engage various sectors in the region to address CEFMU</p> <p><b>Time-oriented:</b> The aim is to achieve the specific objective by the end of 2021</p>
	2. To conduct four workshops to raise awareness about CEFMU with legislators from the Central Valley region in 2021	
	3. By 2025, to reduce the occurrence of CEFMU in the Central Valley region of Oaxaca by 50%	

---

## **FACTSHEET: How to develop an advocacy strategy**

### **Group presentation**

There are many definitions of advocacy. It can be defined as a process carried out by organised civil society to transform reality and influence public laws, policies and programmes. Advocacy actions are usually targeted at decision-makers or legislators in a particular setting. The aim of advocacy is to achieve changes that benefit members of a community and are carried out according to a strategic plan and within a given period.

Once you have developed your overall and specific advocacy objectives, you are ready to analyse them in more detail and think about practical steps you can take to achieve them, one step at a time. An advocacy strategy is one way to start planning this process: it allows you to plan each activity that will help achieve your overall advocacy objective, helps you divide roles and responsibilities to people in your team, and identify your target audience or key stakeholders.

This involves planning the steps needed to achieve your desired change. You should consider the following questions:

- Where do we stand on the issue of CEFMU?
- Where do we want to get to with this issue?
- How can we get there?

### **Each step must include:**

- Effective working arrangements, considering the opportunities and challenges of the context you are working in.
- How to allocate available resources.
- How to handle relationships between key actors and the network of people you are working with.
- Tailored messages to target audiences that will help you achieve your overall advocacy objective.

It is very important to have a strategic and systematic vision when planning for advocacy; that is, to plan everything that needs to be done step by step, to guarantee that each action is carried out, and to help others learn about your plans and get involved.

You must set the final goal and then divide this into small actions. This can only be done by taking a conscious and proactive approach. Strategic messages are necessary and important to achieve the change you want to see. It is essential that you address these messages to key audiences, thereby producing effective communication and effective advocacy. Breaking down broader objectives into concrete steps and more manageable actions will help you.

Decide whether you will discuss and review your strategy every month or every two months, according to your schedule and your overall advocacy objective. Advocacy strategies require adjustment and correction as you move forward, given that the context in which you work also changes. You will need to review and adjust activities and actions as you implement them to ensure that you address the issue in the best possible way. You need to ensure that you work with the right people and your work reflects the reality of the group or community in which you are working.

### To summarise:

An advocacy strategy helps you plan each step or activity that will help you achieve the overall advocacy objective or “long-term vision” you have established for your work as an activist. The strategy helps you clarify where you are now, where you want to go and what you need to get there. Advocacy strategy activities should help you:

- Assess the opportunities and challenges that may arise when working in a specific context, as well as the steps to be taken to overcome any challenges or risks.
- Ensure you have allocated the available human, material and financial resources to the relevant activities, and that you have distributed the activities, including the production of reports and evaluations, among the people you are working with.
- Handle relationships between key actors and manage your support networks; it should also help you see whom you need to work with.
- Create tailored messages that engage the target audiences you want to address.

Strategic planning is a systematic approach that enables others to be aware of our plans for engaging with a given issue. Creating strategic messages will help you target relevant audiences, producing more effective communication with greater impact. It also helps you structure the overall advocacy objective so that you can define the small steps or actions that are most achievable. This will bring you closer to achieving the change you want to see as a result of your advocacy work.

---

## **FACTSHEET: How to develop effective communication messages and work with the media**

Once you have developed your advocacy strategy, it is important that you identify the key messages: short statements that explain your vision, the change you want to achieve and how you want to achieve it. A message should clearly convey to the target audience what the main issue is, why it is important, what they are being asked to do, why they should get involved and the positive impact of such action.

A single, strong statement or overall message is important to unite your advocacy strategy. If you have too many messages or if they are too vague or complex, they may not capture the interest of your target audience or their impact may not be long-lasting. The statement does not have to be a single sentence, but try to keep it short and concise to maintain your target audience's interest.

### **Advocacy messages should:**

- Persuade and motivate people, make them feel inspired to contribute to a change.
- Raise awareness of the issue and make people aware of its importance.
- Create an emotional feeling about the issue: if you can get people to show solidarity with the injustices behind CEFMU, you can get more support. You have to tell them exactly why they should care about the issue.
- Get the media and influential people in your community concerned and engaged.
- Have an impact and stand out from all the “junk communication” that people face every day. Everyone receives lots of information from the news and media; try to keep your message simple but outstanding.

### **An advocacy message should include:**

- A central statement that explains your main idea or the cause of the problem. Clearly state why change is important and what your overall advocacy objective is. All key stakeholders must have an immediate understanding of this.
- Examples of evidence to support the central statement, including easy-to-understand facts and figures.
- Language aimed at attracting your target audience's attention; for example, you could use a real-life case study that illustrates its impact and gives the issue you are communicating a human face.
- The actions that need to be implemented to find a solution to the problem and what your target audience can do to contribute to change.

**To summarise, an effective message must have the following characteristics. It should:**

- Outline the change you want to bring about.
- Be brief and simple.
- Be targeted and tailored to a specific audience.
- Include the reasons why it is important to make a change.
- Be memorable.
- Combine emotional and rational messages.

You can use the following essential elements to guide the development of key messages:

1. Appeal to the heart. Why should they care about the issue? Conveys the need and what has to be changed.
2. Appeal to the hands. What can they do?
3. Appeal to the mind. What can be changed? Use inspiring examples and powerful ideas of what can be achieved.

### **Working with the media**

Working with the media is essential to any advocacy initiative or campaign. This includes all types of media, from the most traditional to new platforms such as social networks. Working with different media will be essential to get your message across to the target audiences you want to connect with, and also to help you spread the message to a wider audience.

Consider the following points:

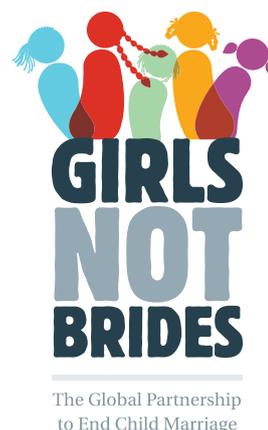
- Create a list of relevant media contacts, including youth-focused radio stations and TV personalities/channels that can be important allies.
- Write articles about your cause and send them to local or national newspapers.
- Speak on community radio to get your message across and be heard.
- Create your own platforms to amplify your voice. This can include activities such as performing public plays, creating street art, producing leaflets or brochures, or writing an online blog. There are many options that you may use to your advantage.
- Research how other activists and organisations have created successful campaigns and messages.

---

## External resources:

- *Girls Not Brides, Child, early and forced marriage and unions in Latin America and the Caribbean*, 2020: <https://beta.girlsnotbrides.org/learning-resources/resource-centre/child-marriage-and-unions-in-lac/>
- UNICEF, *A profile of child marriage and early unions in Latin America and the Caribbean*, 2019: <https://data.unicef.org/resources/profile-of-child-marriage-and-early-unions-in-latin-america-and-the-caribbean/>
- *Girls Not Brides, Ending child, early and forced marriage is crucial to gender equality*, 2020: <https://beta.girlsnotbrides.org/learning-resources/resource-centre/ending-child-marriage-is-crucial-to-gender-equality/>
- UN Sustainable Development Goals and Objectives: <https://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/sustainable-development-goals/>
- Greene, M., E., *A hidden reality for adolescent girls: Child, early and forced marriages and unions in Latin America and the Caribbean*, Plan International and UNFPA, 2019: [https://lac.unfpa.org/sites/default/files/pub-pdf/UnionesTempranas\\_ENG\\_Web.pdf](https://lac.unfpa.org/sites/default/files/pub-pdf/UnionesTempranas_ENG_Web.pdf)
- UNFPA, *Against my will: Defying the practices that harm women and girls and undermine equality*, 2020: <https://www.unfpa.org/swop>
- United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, *General comment No. 20* (2016) on the implementation of the rights of the child during adolescence: [https://tbinternet.ohchr.org/\\_layouts/15/treatybodyexternal/Download.aspx?symbolno=CRC%2fC%2fG-C%2f20&Lang=en](https://tbinternet.ohchr.org/_layouts/15/treatybodyexternal/Download.aspx?symbolno=CRC%2fC%2fG-C%2f20&Lang=en)
- Cahill, H. and Dadvand, B. Re-Conceptualising youth participation: A framework to inform action, *Children and Youth Services Review*, Vol. 95, pp. 243-253, 2018.
- World Association for Sexual Health, *Declaration of sexual rights*, 2014: [https://worldsexualhealth.net/wp-content/uploads/2013/08/declaration\\_of\\_sexual\\_rights\\_sep03\\_2014.pdf](https://worldsexualhealth.net/wp-content/uploads/2013/08/declaration_of_sexual_rights_sep03_2014.pdf)

***Girls Not Brides* is a global partnership of more than 1,500 civil society organisations from more than 100 countries committed to addressing child, early and forced marriage and unions and enabling girls and adolescents to fulfil their potential.**



Published in March 2021 by  
*Girls Not Brides*  
Seventh Floor  
65 Leadenhall Street  
London, EC3A 2AD  
United Kingdom

T: 0203 725 5858  
F: 0207 603 7811

 [www.GirlsNotBrides.org](http://www.GirlsNotBrides.org)

 [info@GirlsNotBrides.org](mailto:info@GirlsNotBrides.org)

 [www.facebook.com/GirlsNotBrides](https://www.facebook.com/GirlsNotBrides)

*Girls Not Brides* is a company limited by guarantee (Reg. No. 8570751) and a registered charity in England and Wales (Reg. No. 1154230)