



GIRLS NOT BRIDES

The Global Partnership
to End Child Marriage

GENDER-TRANSFORMATIVE COLLECTIVE ACTION TO ADDRESS CHILD MARRIAGE AND ADVANCE GIRLS' RIGHTS

**THE EXPERIENCE OF THE COALITION OF
CIVIL SOCIETY TO END CHILD MARRIAGE
IN NIGERIA**

JULY 2023

CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION	3
Who is this report for	3
What is this report for	3
Acknowledgements	3
List of Acronyms	4
A collective gender-transformative journey: Actions taken by the National Coalition on Ending Child Marriage in Nigeria	5
REVIEW OF CHILD MARRIAGE EVIDENCE AND DATA: ROOT CAUSES AND OPPORTUNITIES FOR GENDER-TRANSFORMATIVE ACTION IN NIGERIA	6
Education	8
Sexual and reproductive health, rights and services for girls	9
Poverty, economic rights and employment	10
Crisis and humanitarian settings	11
Gender-based violence	11
National-level commitments: The National Strategy to End Child Marriage	12
GTA RANKING	13
1. GTA ranking for Adolescent girls' skills, agency and leadership (GTA core element 1)	14
2. GTA ranking for Enabling environment, family and community mobilisation (GTA core element 2)	15
3. GTA ranking for Addressing masculinities and engaging boys and men (GTA core element 3)	16
4. GTA ranking for Systems and services (GTA core element 4)	17
5. GTA ranking for Policy and structures (GTA core element 5)	17
THE GTA ROAD MAP: GENDER-TRANSFORMATIVE PRIORITIES AND COLLECTION ACTION	18
GTA Road Map Priority 1: Adolescent girls' skills, agency and leadership	19
GTA Road Map Priority 2: Enabling environment: family and community mobilisation	20
GTA Road Map Priority 3: Addressing masculinities and engaging boys and men	21
In conclusion	22
ANNEXES	23

INTRODUCTION

Who this report is for

This report is for any group of civil society organisations (CSO) working collectively on child marriage at the national or sub-national level. African CSOs working to address child marriage are the primary audience, but other CSOs using a rights-based approach to advance gender justice and/or minority rights more broadly may also find it useful.

What this report is for

The need to accelerate progress on child marriage and the link between child marriage and gender equality make intentional gender-transformative collective action critical. This report shares the experience of the national-level Coalition of Civil Society to End Child Marriage in Nigeria. They invested in a series of steps to strengthen their gender-transformative skills, knowledge and leadership to systematically analyse and address the root causes of gender inequality at the individual and systems levels.

By sharing the experience of one CSO collective – what they did and the difference it has made to their collective work – we hope to inspire and encourage other groups of CSOs to begin similar intentional gender-transformative journeys to accelerate higher impact and more sustainable change in the attitudes, systems and structures that perpetuate and promote child marriage.

Acknowledgements

This report complements a 7-step guide on [How civil society organisations can use gender-transformative collective action to address child marriage and advance girls' rights](#), produced by *Girls Not Brides: The Global Partnership to End Child Marriage*.

The guide is an adaptation – by and for CSOs – of the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA)-United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) Global Programme to End Child Marriage's [Gender-transformative accelerator tool](#). This Tool was produced by the UNFPA and UNICEF headquarters' offices, in collaboration with Collective Impact. It's adaptation into the 7-step guide and activities was made possible thanks to support from UNICEF and funding from the EU/Spotlight Initiative.



KEY TERMS

Gender-transformative approaches (GTAs)

GTA recognise and strengthen positive norms that support equality and aim to create an environment in which girls and women can exercise their rights, and make and act on their decisions - that is, have agency. We call this an “enabling environment”. This means promoting the relative position of girls, women and groups that have been marginalised, and transforming the underlying social structures, policies, systems and broadly-held social norms that perpetuate and legitimise gender inequalities. GTAs are intentional about challenging the status quo, rebalancing power, and redistributing resources towards people who have been historically marginalised, excluded and discriminated against on the basis of their gender.

a. We use the term “child marriage” to refer to all forms of marriage or union where at least one party is under the age of 18 years.

This country report was made possible through the hard work, support and active participation of members of the *Girls Not Brides*-supported National Coalition on Ending Child Marriage in Nigeria, during the GTA Intensive Week. Particular thanks go to Child and Youth Protection Foundation (CYPF), the CSO Lead for this collaboration, for their support in coordinating other members of the National Coalition both in person and online.

We acknowledge and appreciate the Federal Ministry of Women Affairs, specifically the Deputy Director for Girl Child Education, Mr Musa Aliyu and his team. Likewise, the Acting Director, Violence Against Persons Prohibition, of the National Agency for the Prohibition of Trafficking in Women, and her team, who provided valuable context on the relationship between child marriage and child trafficking.

We also appreciate the UNICEF West and Central Africa Regional Team for their support, funding and technical assistance for this collaboration, and the UNICEF Country Office for the data, contextualising perspectives, and technical support.

Thanks also to Dorinda Odonghanro, Peace Adebola Okeshola and Zainab Yahaya Tanko, the Gender Advocates who brought in perspectives from their different professions and networks, and supported the Facilitation Team to ensure an engaging GTA Intensive Week.

Thanks to Collective Impact for their technical guidance during the GTA Intensive Week and capacity enhancement for member organisations.

List of acronyms

AGE Network	African Girls Empowerment Network
CSACEFA	Civil Society Action Coalition on Education for All
CSO	Civil society organisation
CYPF	Child and Youth Protection Foundation
FGD	Focus group discussion
GCC	Girls Child Concern
GTA	Gender-transformative approaches
IEC materials	Information, education and communications materials
NDHS	National Demographic and Health Survey
SIRP	Society for the Improvement of Rural People
SRH	Sexual and reproductive health
STEM	Science, technology, engineering and mathematics
TWG	Technical Working Group
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund

A collective gender-transformative journey: Actions taken by the National Coalition on Ending Child Marriage in Nigeria

Formed in December 2015, the National Coalition on Ending Child Marriage in Nigeria (from here on, the Coalition) is currently comprised of 73 CSO members – 32 of which are also members of Girls Not Brides – working across the country's six geopolitical zones. Individual coalition members engage with schools, parents and community and faith leaders to transform discriminatory norms and practices. Working in and with schools and government service providers, they also support girls' access to education and adolescent sexual and reproductive health (SRH), rights and services; girls' participation in decision-making; girls' life, livelihood, leadership and advocacy skills; and citizen-led budget advocacy.

The Coalition has developed tools and messages to help its members work collectively to address child marriage in Nigeria. These include an advocacy strategy, communication protocol, operational framework and context-specific regional (zonal) messages on the key drivers of child marriage and how these can be addressed. It also offers webinars for members that focus on experience-sharing and peer reviewing members' activities and interventions, to share promising practice and build members' capacity for collective action to address child marriage.

In July 2022, 35 Coalition members gathered for a three-day Gender Intensive Week of workshops to assess and rank the Coalition's collective action to end child marriage. Using a version of the UNFPA-UNICEF Global Programme's Gender-transformative accelerator tool – now adapted by *Girls Not Brides* into a [7-step guide](#) – the Coalition reviewed their work from gender-blind/gender-unaware to gender-transformative in relation to six core elements of a GTA to address child marriage.

This report shares one stage – the GTA Intensive Week, or steps three to five – of the 7-step gender-transformative skills and leadership-building journey undertaken by the Coalition.

The report is divided into three sections:

- 1. A review of evidence, data and learning** for background on the root causes of child marriage in Nigeria, with a strong focus on the link with gender equality, and priorities for gender-transformative action at the national and sub-national levels. This section includes the Coalition's collective priorities to overcome challenges and catalyse multiple positive, sustainable gender equality outcomes at scale.¹
- 2. A gender-transformative ranking of the Collective's work.**
- 3. The Collective's GTA Road Map.**

The annexes contain the more detailed GTA Road Maps for two of the Coalition's chosen priorities, the list of workshop participants, and the Nigeria legal and policy framework.

1. UNICEF has a collection of [country profiles](#), which present statistics compiled from nationally representative data to create an overview of child marriage in each country.

REVIEW OF CHILD MARRIAGE EVIDENCE AND DATA: ROOT CAUSES AND OPPORTUNITIES FOR GENDER-TRANSFORMATIVE ACTION IN NIGERIA

Child marriage prevalence has not significantly declined in Nigeria in the last 20 years. Data from the 2018 National Demographic and Health Survey (NDHS)² shows that 43% of women aged 20-24 (23.6 million) were married before age 18, and 17% before age 15. The prevalence for boys and men is 3%.

There are significant differences across the country, and gender, poverty, disability, conflict and location intersect to differentially decrease life opportunities and increase the risk of child marriage for girls. Gender and other forms of inequality are major drivers of child marriage, which is significantly higher in poorer communities, where education levels are low, in rural areas and/or those affected by conflict.

Although prevalence is generally higher in the poorer north – exacerbated by insecurity and conflict – child marriage is not an exclusively northern problem. That said, girls in the north are significantly more likely to be married before age 18 and to a man 10 or more years older than them. They are also more likely to face economic hardship and less likely to go

to school, complete their studies and have decision-making autonomy. For example, only 4% of poor young women in the North West zone can read, compared with 99% of rich young women in the South East zone.

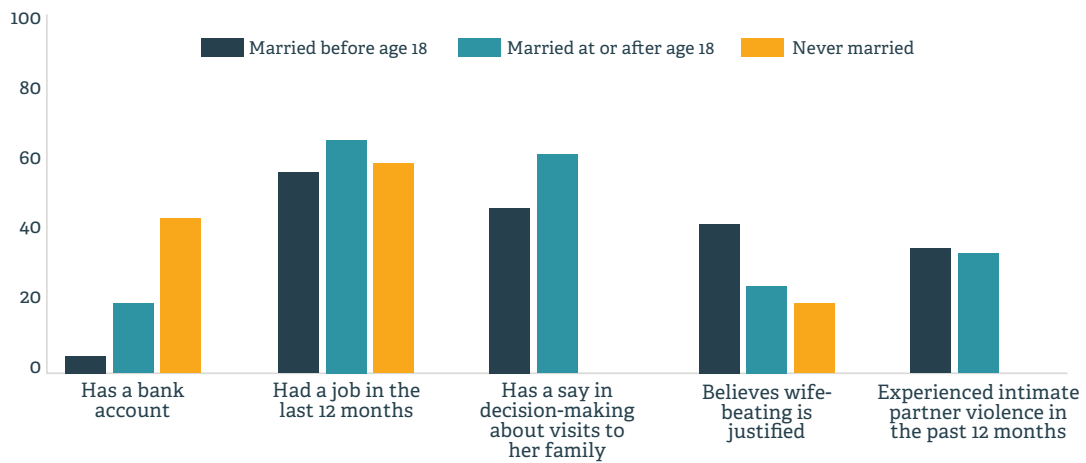
The data shows a clear link between child marriage and loss of autonomy and agency, normalisation of gender-discriminatory attitudes and a higher probability of intimate partner violence (IPV). Figure 1 shows that very few 20- to 24-year-old women who were married before age 18 have a bank account, compared to those who married older or not at all. They are also far more likely to believe wife beating³ is justified.

Addressing child marriage through gender-transformative action can unlock girls' potential and catalyse multiple gains for gender equality, the economy, and peace and security. This means supporting efforts to end child marriage with multisectoral investment and by changing norms and reducing poverty, inequality and insecurity.

2. UNICEF, 2021, *Data warehouse: Nigeria*, accessed 8 February 2023. UNICEF has also compiled a series of [child marriage country profiles](#) which summarise the data on child marriage.

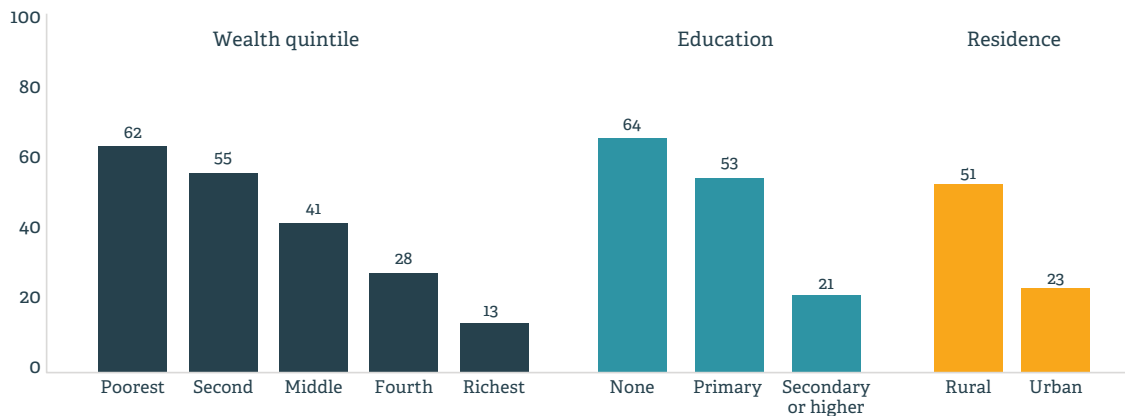
3. The NDHS uses the term "wife beating" to report its findings on attitudes towards domestic violence in Nigeria. They use the Social Institutions and Gender Index definition: "Percentage of women aged 15-49 years who consider a husband to be justified in hitting or beating his wife for at least one of the specified reasons." *Girls Not Brides* refers to this type of violence as intimate partner violence.

Figure 1. Autonomy, power and violence towards women in Nigeria who married or entered union before age 18



Source: Adapted from the UNICEF Child marriage [country profile](#) for Nigeria (using data from the Nigeria Demographic and Health Survey, 2018)

Figure 2. Wealth, education and residence of women in Nigeria aged 20 to 24 who married or entered union before age 18



Source: Adapted from UNICEF, 2022, [Child marriage in West and Central Africa: A statistical overview and reflections on ending the practice](#).

Education

Global evidence shows that for every additional year a girl spends in secondary education, the likelihood of marrying and giving birth before age 18 drops by six percentage points, with only 2.4% of girls aged 15-19 who are married still in school.⁴ Girls' education is one of the most significant ways to prevent child marriage,⁵ and Nigeria is home to one in five of the world's out-of-school children.⁶ Figure 2 shows that 81% of women aged 20 to 24 years who were first married or in union before age 18 had no education, 53% had primary level and only 21% had secondary level education.

This strong link between child marriage and education means the Coalition is clear about the need to advocate for every child to have guaranteed access to 12 years of free, safe and quality education.

The scale of the challenge is enormous. Despite the 2004 Compulsory, Free Universal Basic Education Act, more than 10 million children in Nigeria are not in school – the largest number in the world – and 60% of them are girls.

With children under 15 accounting for 45% of the country's 200 million population, the resources required for education are considerable. Due to inadequate government funding, the education sector has deteriorated over the last 20 years, and a state of national education emergency was declared in 2020, a month before COVID-19 hit. Despite promises of an increase, the allocation of public budget to education has declined steadily since 2016, falling to 5.4% in 2022, well below the 8.4% recommended by UNICEF.⁷

Safety in school, inadequate menstrual hygiene provision, a lack of female class and head teachers, and discriminatory attitudes disproportionately impact girls, while updating the curriculum, improving teaching quality and providing age-appropriate comprehensive sexuality education are priorities for all children.



Coalition priorities for education

- Remove barriers to girls' access to primary and secondary education by sensitising traditional and community leaders, parents and girls on their right to education and the benefits for girls and their communities.
- As key gatekeepers of social norms with significant potential to influence parents' decisions about family matters, the Coalition advocates to religious and traditional leaders to encourage equal educational opportunities for girls and boys, and to use their influence to advocate for a better quality of educational provision.
- Advocate for the removal or reform of laws and policies that prevent girls' equitable access to education, informed by intersectional analysis that shows the compounding erosion of educational opportunities due to poverty, disability and stigma around adolescent pregnancy to improve the supply side of education.

4. Q. Wodon et al., 2018, *Missed opportunities: The high cost of not educating girls*, Washington DC, World Bank.

5. *Girls Not Brides*, 2022, *Girls' education and child marriage*.

6. UNICEF, n.d., *Nigeria: Education*.

7. Tyessi, K., 2022, "*UNICEF faults Nigeria's 2022 education budget, says it ought to be N1.14trn*", This Day.

Sexual and reproductive health, rights and services for girls

Adolescent pregnancy, lack of bodily autonomy, stigma and discrimination for girls who are pregnant or already mothers are all strong drivers of child marriage and early school leaving.⁸ Fear of social exclusion and loss of status due to premarital pregnancy is one of parents' most-cited reasons for removing their daughters from school.

As with child marriage, the prevalence of unintended pregnancy has remained the same (6.8%) since 1990. But during the same period, the abortion rate increased by 39%.⁹ In Nigeria, 32% of women have their first child before age 18, most of which are unplanned. At 512 maternal deaths per 100,000 live births,¹⁰ the country has one of the world's highest maternal mortality rates.¹¹

Some 69% of adolescent girls aged 15-19 have unmet contraception needs.¹² The country spends around US\$3.11 per person per year on contraceptive, maternal, newborn and abortion-related services, compared to the \$27.25 required to meet the needs of all girls and women. With adequate investment, unintended pregnancies and those ending in abortions would both drop by 67%, and maternal deaths by 60%. At the same time, every \$1 spent on contraceptive services beyond current levels would save \$2.33 in maternal, newborn and abortion care.¹³

Powerful social norms and beliefs that link a girl's virginity with family honour are among the strongest drivers of child marriage around the world, and Nigeria is no exception. The high number of unintended pregnancies – due largely to the unmet need for contraception and SRHR services – and high levels of stigma and poverty mean that pregnant girls are often forced to marry, even when the pregnancy is the result of non-consensual sex. Adolescent girls report not seeking SRHR services for fear of being labelled immoral or wayward.¹⁴



Coalition priorities for sexual and reproductive health, rights and services

- Improve girls' access to reproductive and health services by engaging with girls who are married, adolescent girls and boys, parents, communities, and religious and traditional leaders about SRH rights, the benefits of informed choice in preventing unwanted pregnancy and supporting girls' rights to make reproductive and life-changing choices.

8. MSI Reproductive Choices, 2021, [Her body, her future: The role of reproductive choice in girls' access to education](#).

9. Guttmacher Institute, 2022, [Nigeria country profile](#).

10. WHO Nigeria Country Office, 2021, [2020 annual report](#).

11. Reference missing?

12. Guttmacher Institute, 2022, op. cit.

13. Sully, E. A., et al., 2020, [Adding it up: Investing in sexual and reproductive health 2019](#), New York, Guttmacher Institute.

14. Christian Aid Nigeria, 2017, [Religion and the adolescent girl: A formative study in Kaduna State, Nigeria](#).

Poverty, economic rights and employment

In Nigeria, giving a girl in marriage to a richer man is considered a means to support a family and reduce the pressure on scarce supplies. As such, worsening food security due to conflict – particularly in the North East zone – is a growing concern.

Poorer families are less likely to complete education, reducing their future prospects. According to the NDHS data from 2018, only 35% of children from the poorest families complete primary education and 15% complete secondary education, compared to 97% and 88% of children from the wealthiest socioeconomic groups.

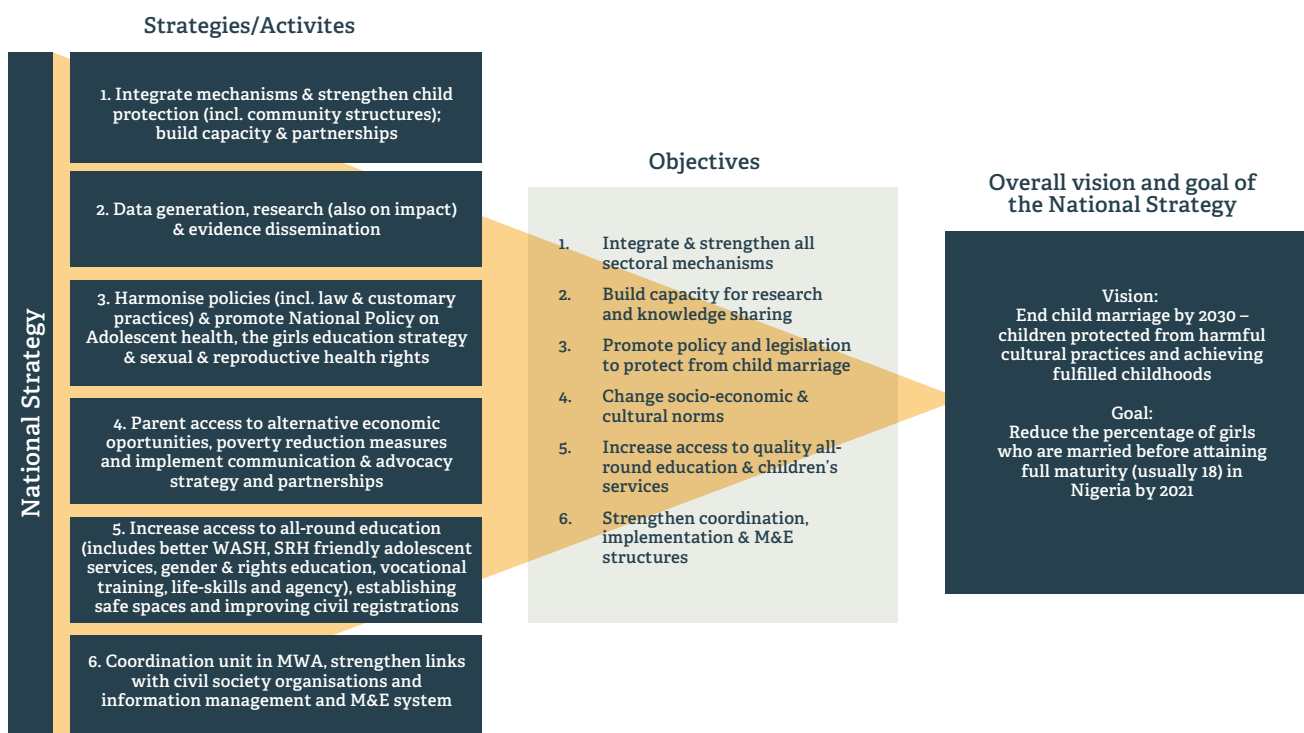
Women are also less likely to be in employment than their male counterparts, with rural women again at a particular disadvantage. Discriminatory gender norms mean that from a young age, girls and women spend more time than boys and men on household chores and caring responsibilities, making them less able to take up economically productive jobs outside

the home. In the 2018/19 National Living Standards Survey, almost half of women (47%) and one-third of men (32%) reported household responsibilities as the reason for not looking for a job.

Child marriage comes with many costs, and reducing it brings many benefits. According to the 2017 [Economic impacts of child marriage study](#),¹⁵ child marriage costs Nigeria \$7.6 billion in lost earnings and productivity every year, and global analysis of child marriage projections and trends shows a strong association between economic growth and reduction in child marriage prevalence.¹⁶

Nigeria's 2016-21 [National Strategy to End Child Marriage](#)¹⁷ (see Figure 3) addresses the need to increase the economic opportunities of families and children, introduce mechanisms to alleviate poverty (including social protection), and shift the views and prejudices of society and elected representatives.

Figure 3. National Strategy to End Child Marriage in Nigeria (2016-21)



15. ICRW, 2018, [Economic impacts of child marriage](#).

16. UNICEF, 2021, [Towards ending child marriage: trends and profiles of progress](#).

17. Federal Ministry of Women Affairs and Social Development, 2016, [National strategy to end child marriage in Nigeria \(2016-2021\)](#).



Coalition priorities for poverty and girls' economic agency

- Support girls who are already married and/or pregnant to continue education and training or to return to school.
- Build girls' employable skills to gain economic freedom and a better life.
- Mobilise families and communities to address cultural norms and traditions.



Coalition priorities for crisis and humanitarian settings

Some members are supporting the education needs of girls living in camps for people displaced by the conflict, however the Coalition does not as a collective support the needs of adolescent girls who are married and/or mothers, or communities affected by humanitarian crisis, climate change or natural disasters.

Crisis and humanitarian settings

Global data shows that child marriage is exacerbated by humanitarian crisis, with prevalence in fragile contexts nearly double the global average (35% and 19%, respectively).¹⁸ When facing economic hardship and increased violence, families may turn to child marriage to protect their daughters from sexual and other forms of violence. Adolescent girls in countries affected by fragility and conflict are nearly 90% more likely – and 2.5 times more likely than boys – to be out of secondary school.¹⁹

The North East zone of Nigeria is home to one of the world's largest humanitarian crises, with 8.3 million people estimated to need assistance in 2023.²⁰ Girls are abducted in large numbers from their schools, forcibly married and used for domestic activities in terrorist camps.²¹ Living conditions in camps for internally displaced people also put girls under 18 at greater risk of child marriage, as crimes are chronically underreported due to stigma and social norms.

Gender-based violence

Global evidence shows that girls who are married before age 18 are more likely to experience intimate partner violence during their lifetime.²² Despite this, insecurity and increased sexual and gender-based violence also lead parents and families to choose marriage as a form of security for their daughters.

The findings of a study by Plan International²³ that spoke to more than 7,000 girls and boys in 11 countries found that gender-based violence – including sexual violence – in and on the way to school was a major reason for adolescent girls' early school leaving. Globally, 246 million girls and boys experience some form of school-related violence every year, with girls disproportionately affected.²⁴ One in four girls report never or seldom feeling safe travelling to or from school.²⁵

In Nigeria, 33% of girls and women aged 15-49 have experienced physical and/or sexual violence; while 36% of women who are or have been married have experienced emotional, sexual or physical violence from their current or most recent partner.²⁶ Entrenched inequality, combined with a culture of silence, inadequate prevention and response mechanisms, and widespread impunity for perpetrators, means that gender-based violence is endemic across Nigeria.²⁷

18. *Girls Not Brides*, 2020, [Child marriage in humanitarian contexts](#).

19. Salem, H., 2018, [The transitions adolescent girls face: Education in conflict-affected settings: Literature Review](#), REAL Centre, University of Cambridge.

20. OCHA, 2023, [Global humanitarian overview](#).

21. UN Women with UNFPA, UNODC and UNICEF, 2020, [Gender-based violence in Nigeria during COVID-19: The shadow pandemic](#).

22. Kidman, R., 2017, ["Child marriage and intimate partner violence: A comparative study of 34 countries"](#), International Journal of Epidemiology, 46: 662-675.

23. Plan International, 2014, [Hear our voices](#).

24. UNGEI, 2020, [Safe education for girls](#).

25. Plan International, 2014, op. cit.

26. NPC/Nigeria and ICF, 2019, [Nigeria demographic and health survey 2018](#), Abuja, Nigeria, and Rockville, Maryland, USA: NPC and ICF.

27. Womankind et al., 2020, [Supporting civil society and women's rights organisations in fragile and conflict-affected contexts](#).

National-level commitments: The National Strategy to End Child Marriage

An independent review of literature and published budgets indicates that there has been little explicit and purposeful implementation of the National Strategy to End Child Marriage. Levels of funding have been low and there has been little inter-ministerial cooperation. Most national strategy funding (98%) is allocated to transforming social norms and increasing access to quality education. Nearly 90% of expenditure on national strategy objectives and service categories is in two ministries, with 44.9% going to education.

Not enough additional funding has been put towards achieving the National Strategy objectives, as most funds are reallocated from the Universal Basic Education Commission's infrastructure budget for schools. Investment in girls' education is welcome, given its importance for the prevention of child marriage, but there remains a funding shortfall for other activities in the Strategy.

The bulk of the remaining expenditure is in the Ministry of Humanitarian Affairs, Disaster Management and Social Development (43.4%) and the Ministry of Women Affairs (nearly 10%).



Coalition priorities for collective advocacy and community engagement

The Coalition is committed to creating an enabling environment to address child marriage and bring about positive outcomes for gender equality – including freedom from violence, coercion and exploitation – in all domains that impact on girls' lives. In 2023, the Coalition aims to use its collective voice to:

- Connect to regional and global interventions to address child marriage and amplify these for impact in the Nigeria sociocultural context.
- Advocate for the investments, policies and quality needed for more girls to enter and complete primary and secondary education, and vocational training.
- Improve girls' access to sexual and reproductive health, rights and services.
- Promote policies, legislation and programmes that protect children from marriage.
- Transform discriminatory attitudes, beliefs and practices of community stakeholders who promote child marriage.

GTA RANKING

As part of their 7-step gender-transformative journey, the Coalition undertook a process of critical reflection and discussion of their collective work. Supported by a facilitator, they ranked their strategies and approaches along the Gender

Integration Continuum (GIC). They did this for each of the core elements for a gender-transformative approach to address child marriage. The results of this process are shared in this section, with members' rationale when available.



KEY TERMS

Gender Integration Continuum (GIC)

Gender integration can helpfully be viewed across a continuum that progresses from gender-unaware (or gender-unequal), to gender-aware (or gender-sensitive), to gender-responsive, to gender-transformative. The aim of gender-transformative approaches is to move programmes and interventions towards the right of this continuum. If applied to programming, gender-aware (or gender-sensitive) programming acknowledges gender inequalities and may act on gender analysis insofar as needed to reach programme objectives. It does not necessarily prioritise girls' and women's needs specifically or address structural causes of gender inequality. Gender-transformative programming goes further by actively aiming to promote gender equality and women's and girls' outcomes as a primary objective. It deliberately tackles discriminatory and harmful gender norms, roles, structures and institutions that perpetuate gender inequalities and gendered risks in the long-term.

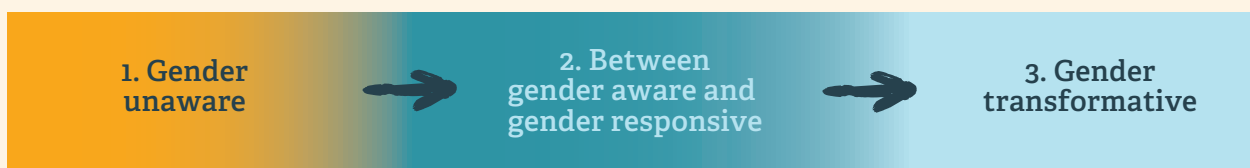
Gender-transformative core elements

The core elements for gender-transformative programming and advocacy to address the root causes of child marriage and advance gender equality are: 1) Adolescent girls' skills, agency and leadership; 2) Family and community mobilisation; 3) Addressing masculinities and engaging boys and men; 4) Services and multi-sectoral collaboration; 5) Policies, laws and structural change; and, cross-cutting through all of these, 6) Gender norms and inequalities.

For further information on the GTA ranking and how to use it, please refer to Chapter 2, Steps 2 and 3 of the *Girls Not Brides* 7-step guide: [How civil society organisations can use gender-transformative collective action to address child marriage and advance girls' rights.](#)

More information on the GIC, see the UNFPA-UNICEF Global Programme to End Child Marriage [Technical note on gender-transformative approaches in the Global Programme to End Child Marriage.](#)

Figure 4: The Gender Integration Continuum



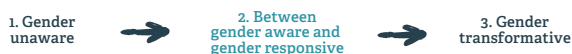
28. UNICEF, [Gender Policy and Action Plan Compendium](#), UNICEF Innocenti Office of Research.

At the start of each session, the Facilitator gave a brief presentation on the scale definition for that GTA core element. Each scale definition was followed by a presentation from a Coalition member to highlight the element's importance for a gender-transformative approach to end child marriage in Nigeria and share their CSO's work in this area. This underlined the importance of ensuring advocacy

and programme design is informed by context and considers nuanced differences in the sociocultural drivers of child marriage.

The Facilitator used sli.do, a free online polling tool, to simplify voting and make the results immediately visible. This helped encourage the groups to discuss and interrogate results.

1. GTA ranking for Adolescent girls' skills, agency and leadership (GTA core element 1)



Coalition ranking: Gender responsive

The Coalition and its members create safe spaces where girls are supported to strengthen science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) skills. They also connected girls with female STEM professionals – like doctors and engineers – to provide mentorship.

Other activities supported by members that promote girls' skills, agency and leadership include engagement to address myths and norms around contraceptive use; advocacy to increase girls' and women's access to sexual and reproductive health information and services, including modern contraceptive methods; enhancing the SRH capacities of traditional birth attendants and informal health care providers to ensure they offer accurate messaging and services to adolescents; support for livelihood activities and income for girls and their families with savings and loans groups; and support for girls to engage in productive after-school activities.

Coalition members were involved in the launch of the [Keeping Girls in School Africa](#) pan-African campaign, where they engaged with traditional and religious leaders from more than 10 countries. The Coalition also plays an active role on the Federal Capital Territory Gender Response Team, participating in sensitisation, capacity enhancement and gender-based violence response strategies and systems. In one instance, after a rape was reported to a Coalition member, they aimed to support the survivor and understand the underlying causes of the incident, to prevent recurrence.

Prevention of violence against women and girls is a key focus of the work of many Coalition members with some coordinated action at geopolitical zone level. However, there has been little collective advocacy or programmatic learning. Individual Coalition member programmes recognise the specific needs and roles of women and men, but they do not work collectively or identify what role they can play as a national Coalition to prevent gender-based violence or to support girls who experience gender-based violence.

Spotlight: Girls Child Concern (GCC)



To address child marriage, Coalition members advocate for increased education for girls as a basic right and one of the most effective ways to prevent child marriage. GCC works in rural communities, where they identify families where girls are kept out of school because of poverty and other factors. These girls are invited to sit for specially-prepared exams and selected for potential sponsorship, based on their performance and enthusiasm, in consultation with traditional leaders (district heads).

The shortlisted girls' parents sign a pledge to support their daughters to remain unmarried and complete senior secondary education. The scholarships cover all school-related costs for the duration of their studies, and successful candidates are also introduced to life and livelihood skills to build alternatives to child marriage and ensure they have the tools they need to support themselves and their children, if and when they marry.

GCC runs an academy in Maiduguri (North East zone) for girls from the internally displaced persons camp and their mothers, supporting them with stipends so they can comfortably allow their children to go to school. It also supports out-of-school girls to build skills in electricity installation, laptop repairs, painting and carpentry. GCC also provides access to safe spaces where girls can build their confidence, improve positive practices and knowledge about their bodies, and talk freely to mentors.

2. GTA ranking for Enabling environment, family and community mobilisation (GTA core element 2)



Coalition ranking: Gender responsive

Although some member CSOs ranked themselves as transformative in this element, the Coalition's collective ranking is responsive. Through safe spaces, the Coalition and its members organise community dialogue sessions with girls to identify challenges and set up and support community groups to sensitise community members on gender-based violence. They also collaborate with communities, community groups and area coordinators to influence policy change at the local level. One Coalition member works with the Education Board at both national and local levels.

Several members have adapted [Tostan's methodology](#) to unite CSOs and other stakeholders to address gender-based violence against women and girls. First used in Nigeria in 2015 through the Tostan-Ford Foundation project, Tostan's focus on aligning religion with human rights and its methodologies for community entry and fostering community participation in project implementation have helped improve the Coalition's community-led interventions and strategies on child marriage and female genital mutilation/cutting (FGM/C). Ten members of the Coalition had participated in five-day seminars in locations across the country, led by a Coalition member who is a trained Tostan facilitator. The training has supported capacity enhancement for rights-based community engagement within the Coalition, and the development of more effective advocacy messaging.



Spotlight: Child and Youth Protection Foundation (CYPF)

Some members of the Coalition – like CYPF – aim to achieve inclusive change for girls, ensuring that parents, youth groups and other community groups are included in conversations around addressing child marriage and the harmful effects of perpetuating the practice. Coalition member efforts include facilitating social dialogue among groups of women, men, girls and boys, and mobilising community gatekeepers to identify community strengths in addressing harmful and discriminatory traditional practices. This ensures the sustainability of actions taken to address identified issues, especially child marriage. The Tostan model has been a useful resource for this work.

Gatekeepers are a key resource for identifying the root causes of traditional practices and historical implications. This means that community decision-makers are identifying the dangers of harmful practices and can then identify community-based strategies to help addressing them.

3. GTA ranking for Addressing masculinities and engaging boys and men (GTA core element 3)



Coalition ranking: Gender responsive

Members of the Coalition engage boys and men in community activities that promote SRH services, and life and social skills. In projects where girls and women are the key participants, they also engage boys and men as supporters to avoid and reduce backlash for girls, women and the implementing

organisation. They also engage boys and men in their roles as brothers, partners and fathers, target interventions towards challenging traditional gender roles, and engage traditional leaders as peer advocates and to influence other boys and men to practice positive masculinity.

Some Coalition members have pooled resources and expertise, collaborating on projects focused on engagement with boys and men to transform attitudes and inequitable gender norms to become advocates for girls' and women's rights and choice.



Spotlight: Society for the Improvement of Rural People (SIRP)

As the secretariat for [MenEngage Alliance Nigeria](#), SIRP's approach to ending child marriage centres on how boys and men can contribute to and be accountable for gender justice.

In implementing activities to address child marriage, SIRP takes a critical look and reflects on political, economic and sociocultural forces in Nigeria, as these shape the contexts in which its work on transforming patriarchal masculinities and engaging boys and men for gender and social justice takes place. Under SIRP's coordination, MenEngage Alliance Nigeria carried out the following activities in 2019 and 2020:

- An unprecedented gender justice mobilisation across feminist CSOs in Nigeria's six geopolitical zones to highlight the need for systemic change in subnational governments.
- Advocating for conversations on gender injustice and inequality issues – like child marriage and FGM/C – has become a central focus of work on human rights and sustainable development.
- Ensuring members understand the meaning and practice of patriarchal masculinities, the way they intersect with political, economic and sociocultural forces to shape gender hierarchies and power relations, and the opportunities and constraints these forces have for girls and women, and gender equality.

SIRP's work is moving beyond individual change to address the institutional and ideological structuring of male power, privileges and supremacy. The approach is one that strengthens gender justice movement-building, and is led by – and is accountable to – girls and women, who are most impacted by gender injustice.

4. GTA ranking for Systems and services (GTA core element 4)



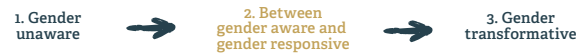
Coalition ranking: Gender transformative

Coalition members support access to youth-friendly SRH information and services that support adolescents to reflect on unsafe sexual activities and counter misinformation from peers. This includes ensuring girls have information about mobile applications and hotlines on menstrual hygiene and for locating SRH care professionals in their location. Tools include the Belle by Choice Padi and Belle by Choice hotline; Ally Chat bot via WhatsApp (hosted by Women First Digital); Honey and Banna Connect hotline (hosted by DKT International Nigeria); and the Belle by Choice Facebook live chat for youth-friendly SRH rights information and referrals.

This approach supports girls to overcome barriers to accessing information on contraception, HIV, sexually transmitted infections and other SRH services. Referral services are also available through the hotlines. Other interventions employ peer educators on social media to share accurate information, and use focus group discussions to gather feedback on mobile apps, so they can be improved in line with the SRH issues faced by girls, as communicated by them.

Coalition members have engaged with the United Nations' Belle by Choice campaign, which aims to destigmatise girls' sexuality and offers girls free contraceptives. Some members have enhanced the capacity of village health workers to serve as first responders and support with community care needs before making formal hospital referrals. With support and funding from Coalition member ActionAid Nigeria, CSOs offered vocational training for adolescents and SRH capacity enhancement and psychosocial support for girls and women who had experienced gender-based violence, including in one shelter/safe house.

5. GTA ranking for Policy and structures (GTA core element 5)



Coalition ranking: Gender aware

The Coalition mostly focuses on raising awareness and advocating for the implementation of existing policies. However, it has also advocated for the passage of the national Gender Bill and for the passage and implementation of the Child Rights Act in states where it has not yet been passed.

Members identified the potential of using individual members' credibility to influence the review of policies, laws and budgets at different levels. The Coalition has joined the Technical Working Group (TWG) on Ending Child Marriage, through which they can influence the review of the National Strategy on Ending Child Marriage. Using the safe space model and working with girls in their network, the Coalition works to bring girls' voices and priorities into the National Strategy. As a member of the TWG, the Coalition can advocate for the policies, laws, budget and services needed to create alternatives to child marriage.

Coalition members also noted that unequal power structures are so entrenched in Nigeria that girls often aspire to get married and start a family. They agreed on the need to engage girls and adolescents – in and out of school – in discussions of human rights, gender and power. This should also enhance their communication skills, confidence, self-esteem and aspirations, and support them to reconsider their perceptions around the link between marriage, safety and economic stability.



Spotlight: Gender and power relationships

An important question – posed during their Gender Intensive Week workshop – for the Coalition is “Should women take power, ask men's permission to take power, or should men give power to women?”

THE GTA ROAD MAP: GENDER-TRANSFORMATIVE PRIORITIES AND COLLECTION ACTION

The GTA Intensive Week is a three-day workshop covering steps three to five of a collective's gender-transformative journey, as set out in the *Girls Not Brides* [7-step guide](#).

On Day 1, the Nigeria Coalition familiarised themselves with the GTA core elements, and on Day 2 they chose two or three priority core elements to look at in more detail. On Day 3, they deepened their critical reflection to identify opportunities, bottlenecks and barriers for stronger gender-transformative action.

This formed the basis of the Coalition's action planning, which resulted in them developing a GTA Road Map and identifying several GTA pilots that would put into practice gender-transformative skills and leadership, with support through small grants.

The priority voting session was participatory and inclusive, with sli.do ensuring that in-person and online participants were equally involved in deciding the Coalition's priorities for using the funds for GTA pilots.

For each of the priority GTA core elements, Coalition members reflected on opportunities to shift power and resources, address the root causes of child marriage and gender inequality, accelerate progress on child marriage and catalyse positive outcomes for girls at scale, recognising the need to catalyse change across all levels from individual to institutional.

When choosing which GTA core elements to prioritise, a high value was given to the potential for structural change in norms and practices that promote child marriage, the potential acceleration that efforts in those areas would have on the other elements, the overall project and programme goals, and available opportunities to progress toward gender transformation.

The Coalition prioritised three GTA core elements:

1. Adolescent girls' skills, agency and leadership

Rationale: The need to enhance girls' soft and hard skills cannot be overemphasised. Coalition members have made progress in enhancing girls' livelihood skills and supporting their decision-making abilities, but these efforts have had limited reach and gaps remain in ensuring girls have the skills they need to advocate for change for themselves and other girls at risk, and to compete for higher-paying employment.

2. Enabling environment, family and community mobilisation

Rationale: The responsibility for change cannot and should not rest with girls alone; without broad-based support, the pace of change will be slow and unsafe.

3. Addressing masculinities and engaging boys and men

Rationale: Efforts to address discriminatory gender norms also need to target the custodians and perpetrators of these norms. Boys and men need to be engaged as active co-advocates for girls' and women's rights.

During the facilitated deep-dive session on Day 2, Coalition members shared and documented work in each of the GTA priority areas. They reflected on and shared challenges that have impacted on transformative approaches, and opportunities to accelerate progress towards gender transformation. The session was facilitated in groups to ensure in-depth conversations between participants. The deep-dive was followed by the road map action planning session (see Annex 1), where members agreed on actions that would take the identified opportunities forward and accelerate progress toward gender transformation.

GTA Road Map Priority 1: Adolescent girls' skills, agency and leadership

Although Coalition members are doing extensive work engaging with girls in their communities, they are not complementing this with collective action as a Coalition. Member actions include African Girls Empowerment (AGE) Network's virtual space for capacity enhancement and mentorship for girls in STEM; Girls Voices Initiative activities to commemorate the International Day of the Girl 2021; rights training for girls (including SRH rights); forming and facilitating safe spaces for girls as a platform for mentorship; rights, child marriage and adolescent pregnancy sensitisation; and livelihood skills training.

Members noted that, although the geographical spread of Coalition members poses some difficulties for acting collectively to build girls' rights and agency, organisations can build on existing efforts and ensure that they are more gender transformative. During COVID-19 lockdown, Coalition members collectively advocated for SRH to be included as essential services. As a result, key CSO team members received "movement passes", allowing them to support girls and women experiencing gender-based violence. Whilst not taking away from the value



Collective actions agreed to strengthen gender-transformative approaches

- Advocate for including life and livelihood skills and safe spaces in schools and communities.
- Organise capacity enhancement sessions for 36 teachers/mentors and 300 girls on rights, voice and agency, negotiation, leadership, decision-making and other life skills, and support them to facilitate safe space sessions on the skills with other in-school girls.
- Create 12 safe spaces in schools or communities for running comprehensive sessions, coaching, mentoring and peer learning.
- Enhance girl advocates capacities through training on girls' rights and advocacy skills.
- Collaborate with coalition members to continue girls' rights education and disseminate information on adolescent SRH and rights, family life and HIV/AIDS education through existing structures, like schools clubs.
- Map/assess girls' rights coalitions and advocacy efforts or structures, such as the Civil Society Action Coalition on Education for All (CSACEFA) and the TWG on Adolescent Health.
- Support girls and women to advocate to political actors to honour their commitment to ending child marriage.

GTA Road Map Priority 2: Enabling environment: family and community mobilisation

of these services, members noted that they were reactive rather than proactive.

Members use flyers, stickers and other media materials to sensitise communities and media on norms that act as barriers to gender equality, the negative consequences of child marriage and the importance of educating girls. They also support community leaders to develop bylaws that outlaw practices like FGM/C, and undertake engagements with parents (women and men) and community leaders to promote girls' rights.

Coalition members highlighted the need to take advantage of the election year to mobilise communities to develop manifestos that set out their needs for candidates seeking election at different levels. This would require a lot of investment, and regionally-contextualised prioritisation.



Collective actions agreed to strengthen gender-transformative approaches

- Map communities where members are working.
- Map and develop a database of community-led actions to address child marriage, focusing on context/region-specific drivers of child marriage.
- Introduce/systematise the concepts and a rights-based framework around sexual and gender-based violence, child marriage, bullying, referral pathways and rights awareness at all levels within secondary schools and the civic education curriculum.
- Collaborate with other international partners and coalitions working in different sectors/areas such as girls' education, humanitarian and sexual and reproductive health.
- Provide gender equality and social norm capacity enhancement for government agency officials in gender units.
- Continue working with the media, as this work is having positive results – for example, both women and men are starting to accept the right of women to leave an abusive situation and are less likely to blame the woman.
- Research the potential of working with school guidance counsellors in public and private schools, who could play a role in supporting the aspirations, self-confidence and career path of girls and adolescents, and providing information, advice and referral.
- Advocate for pro-bono therapeutic services for girls and adolescents. Therapy is expensive and unaffordable for children and women living in poverty; yet the demand for mental health services is growing in Nigeria.

GTA Road Map Priority 3: Addressing masculinities and engaging boys and men

As national chair for MenEngage Alliance Nigeria, Coalition member SIRP has skills and experience of working with boys and men to address discriminatory norms and practices. MenEngage has raised awareness and run capacity-enhancement sessions for boys and men on positive masculinities, harmful social norms and how to transform them.

The Coalition has also developed online messages around how to recognise and address unhealthy masculinities. Some members are partnering with the United Nations (UN) on the [HeForShe](#) campaign, promoting key messages on equal rights and promoting boys and men as positive role models and advocates for change in discriminatory systems.

Members also provide technical support to community groups developing bylaws aiming to address child marriage. This includes communities in the Federal Capital Territory's Abaji and Bwari Area Council and the South South zone, where Coalition members have engaged male lawmakers as allies for passing and implementing policies. One member, SOAR Initiative, has been able to support the development of bylaws in some communities in Abaji Area Council and communities of internally displaced people in Benue state.



Collective actions agreed to strengthen gender-transformative approaches

- Facilitate peer-to-peer “education” for male lawyers who advise on divorce and family law.
- Develop and spread positive messaging on masculinities, like the importance of not vilifying boys, men or the qualities society has deemed masculine. Reconstruct a more positive model of masculinity that makes room for the many ways to be a boy or man and allows all individuals to feel secure in their masculine identity.
- Capitalise on resources and training opportunities through membership and engagement with MenEngage and Tostan, particularly training on masculinities with community leaders.
- Develop messaging and approaches to be used in masculinities training to include the voices and perspectives of students; share and discuss positive and negative examples of the masculine roles and behaviours they come across in their daily lives or in the media.
- Identify/map pro-feminist men's organisations and strengthen engagement with groups like the [White Ribbon Campaign](#) and the MenEngage Alliance.

Joining the UNICEF-Federal Ministry of Women Affairs-chaired TWG on Ending Child Marriage is a great opportunity for the Coalition to rally support for ending child marriage. Through it, they can influence government decisions around activities, and resource and funding commitments in the National Strategy to End Child Marriage in Nigeria. By actively participating in the TWG, the Coalition can also facilitate the inclusion of girls' views and voices (from community engagements) in the conversations.

UNICEF colleagues identified birth registration as an opportunity to access, identify and engage with out-of-school girls (who are most at risk of child marriage), and the Coalition is encouraged to identify and work collaboratively with agencies and organisations that lead on birth registration.

Road Map workplans

For this GTA project implementation period and with the funds available, the Coalition has streamlined the agreed actions into achievable and implementable activities as outlined in Annex 1. The focus is on plans and activities that are sustainable and trackable within the implementation period. If further funding becomes available, other activities may be added and integrated into individual organisation plans. At present, all activities fall within GTA Road Map priorities 1 and 3.

In conclusion

The gender-transformative journey undertaken by the Coalition in Nigeria was the beginning of an ongoing process of critical reflection and planning for collective action to address child marriage and gender inequality. By following – and adapting – the seven steps of the journey they deepened their individual and collective understanding and skills in gender-transformative approaches, and how they can be applied to their context.

They then used this shared knowledge to reflect on their collective approaches, structures, policies and activities, and to plan together. Through it, they have moved their collective work along the Gender

Integration Continuum, towards transformative actions – from collective advocacy for safe spaces in schools, to capacity enhancement with adolescent girls, and forging new partnerships with boys and men – that address the root causes of gender inequality.

This report outlines the key moments and collective priorities from the journey so far. It is intended to bring the [7-step guide](#) to life with real examples of how civil society organisations can use gender-transformative approaches to address child marriage and advance girls' rights. We hope it inspires organisations working collectively towards gender equality in contexts like Nigeria to undertake a similar reflective and planning process.

Annex 1: GTA Road Map workplans for priorities 1 and 3

Priority 1: Adolescent girls' skills, agency and leadership

Objective 1: Enhance capacity of marginalised girls in social, health, cognitive and economic assets, to reduce their risk of child marriage in six states by September 2023

Activities: (1) Advocate for including life and livelihood skills and safe spaces in schools and communities from January to September 2023; (2) Organise capacity enhancement sessions for 36 teacher/mentors and 300 girls on rights, voice and agency, negotiation, leadership, decision-making and other life skills and support them to facilitate safe space life skills sessions for other in-school girls; (3) Create 12 safe spaces in schools or communities for running comprehensive sessions, coaching, mentoring and peer learning.

Strategic actions	Responsible focal point/organisation	Indicator	Resources needed	Output	Expected outcome	Means of verification	Timeline
<p>Select/map secondary schools in selected states</p> <p>Get approval from school or relevant authorities</p> <p>Contextualise tools to support capacity sessions e.g., UNICEF's Technical note on adolescent girls' empowerment through life skills</p>	<p>Coalition steering committee members</p> <p>Leadership of implementing organisations</p>	<p>Number of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Trainings held • Schools selected and benefiting from the activities • Teachers trained • In-school girls trained • Safe spaces created and functional • Girls reached with peer learning, mentoring and coaching sessions 	<p>Teachers</p> <p>Project supervisors from implementing organisation</p> <p>Funds (logistics, transportation, training materials, etc.)</p>	<p>300 girls trained and supported to facilitate sessions</p> <p>36 teachers/mentors trained</p> <p>12 safe spaces created in 12 schools</p> <p>Training sessions held in 12 schools</p> <p>Harmonised training modules for use at the safe space centres</p>	<p>Sustained peer learning in 12 schools across 6 geopolitical zones</p>	<p>Activity reports</p> <p>Pictures</p> <p>Attendance sheets</p> <p>Success stories</p>	<p>Sept 2023</p>

Priority 1: Adolescent girls' skills, agency and leadership

Objective 1: Build capacity of 90 in-school girls as girls' rights advocates contributing to local, regional and international efforts by September 2023.

Activities: (1) Conduct capacity enhancement training on girls' rights and advocacy skills for girls' advocates; (2) Collaborate with Coalition members to continue girls' rights education and disseminate information on adolescent sexual and reproductive health and rights, family life and HIV/AIDS education through existing structures, like schools clubs; (3) Map/assess existing girls' rights coalitions and advocacy efforts or structures, such as CSACEFA and the TWG on Adolescent Health.

Strategic actions	Responsible focal point/organisation	Indicator	Resources needed	Output	Expected outcome	Means of verification	Timeline
<p>Get approval from Ministry of Education/State Universal Basic Education Board (SUBEB) to carry out activities</p> <p>Select schools</p> <p>Select girls</p> <p>Select topics from harmonised training modules</p> <p>Identify and select facilitators</p> <p>Agree on dates and venue</p> <p>Carry out the training</p> <p>Map partner coalitions</p>	<p>Coalition steering committee members</p> <p>Leadership of implementing organisations</p>	<p>Number of capacity enhancement activities conducted</p> <p>Number of girls trained to be girls' rights advocates disaggregated by states</p>	<p>Project supervisors from implementing organisation</p> <p>Funds (logistics, transportation, training materials, etc.)</p>	<p>90 girls trained as girls rights advocates</p> <p>Increased girls' knowledge on advocacy issues</p>	<p>Trained advocates championing advocacy across six states in Nigeria</p> <p>Amplified voices and assets of girls' rights advocates</p> <p>Strengthened advocacy influencing efforts at all levels</p> <p>Increased knowledge among stakeholders on the effects of child marriage</p> <p>Developmental programmes reintroduced in secondary schools</p> <p>Increased evidence-based advocacy for integrating comprehensive sexuality messaging in education</p>	<p>Training report</p> <p>Pictures</p> <p>Attendance sheets</p> <p>Short videos</p> <p>Training evaluation report</p>	<p>Dec 2022 - Sept 2023</p>


Priority 3: Addressing masculinities and engaging boys and men							
Objective 1: Reduce harmful masculinity among 500 boys and men in Nigeria by the end of September 2023							
Objective 2: Promote gender inclusion and participation amongst boys and men in ending child marriage in the North East zone							
Strategic actions	Responsible focal point/organisation	Indicator	Resources needed	Output	Expected outcome	Means of verification	Timeline
Activity 1: Reinforce engagement with traditional leaders and religious leaders on using GTA to end child marriage in their communities.							
Engage traditional and religious leaders and other identified leaders on abandoning social norms like child marriage Engage focal persons	Child Shield Initiative, Abuja SIRP, Enugu AGE Network Lagos	Number of community gatekeepers and key stakeholders visited	Focal person for the community Funds (communication, transportation) Community leaders Coalition members	Gatekeepers and community stakeholders engaged	Buy-in from gatekeepers and stakeholders	Pictures Videos Reports Attendance	1-15 Oct 2022
Activity 2: Dialogue sessions with traditional and religious leaders using GTA to support them to identify barriers that girls face within their context and what they can do with their positions to address these barriers in their community.							
Collaborate with focal persons to schedule date and identify location of event Send invitation to participants Conduct dialogue session	Child Shield Initiative SIRP AGE Network Lagos Responsible Coalition member	Number of persons participating in the dialogue session	Facilitators Community leaders Community members Funds (refreshments; transportation reimbursement; stationery; information, education and communication (IEC) materials)	Community dialogue conducted	Increased understanding on the barriers on issues of child marriage	Attendance Pictures from community dialogue sessions Event report Short videos	19-24 Oct 2022
Activity 3: Intersectional dialogue with boys and men in changing perception from harmful masculinity and practices to end child marriage using GTA approach.							
Identify and mobilise boys and men in the community Conduct intersectional dialogue session with boys and men	Child Shield Initiative SIRP AGE Network Lagos Responsible Coalition member	Number of boys and men participating in the intersectional dialogue	Coalition members Community leaders Community members Funds (refreshments, transportation reimbursement, stationery)	Inter-sectional community dialogue conducted	Change in perception of harmful masculinity, and understanding on the issues of child marriage and how it affects women and girls in their community	Attendance Pictures from community dialogue sessions Event report Short videos	30 Oct - 17 Nov 2022
Activity 4: Media sensitisation (traditional and social media).							
Identify community radio stations and town criers Carry out an advocacy visit to the radio station Develop key online messages targeting boys and men addressing unhealthy masculinity Promote and share the developed key messages targeting boys and men to address unhealthy masculinity	Child Shield Initiative SIRP AGE Network Lagos Responsible Coalition member	Number of radio sessions held Number of messages posted on the social media platform Number of people reached via the social and traditional media platform	Funds (data, airtime, transportation) Media personnel Guest speaker	Radio sessions Social media posts/ tweetchats, etc.	Increased knowledge of harmful and positive masculinity	Pictures from the community radio Radio recording Social media report	Feb 2023

Activity 5: Make male champions and build their capacity to champion against harmful masculinity that promotes child marriage in their community.							
<p>Identify existing structures in the community</p> <p>Identify influential and interested potential male champions in the community</p> <p>Use face-to-face and open theatre methods to build male community advocates' capacity to advocate against harmful masculinity and end child marriage in their community</p>	<p>Child Shield Initiative SIRP</p> <p>AGE Network Lagos</p> <p>Responsible Coalition member</p>	<p>Number of male champions identified</p> <p>Number of male champions that participated in the capacity enhancement session</p>	<p>Funds (refreshments, stationery, IEC materials, transportation reimbursement, venue)</p>	<p>Capacity building session</p>	<p>Increased in knowledge of the effect of harmful masculinity on women and girls in their community and how it serves as a barrier in ending child marriage</p>	<p>Attendance</p> <p>Pictures from community dialogue sessions</p> <p>Report from event</p> <p>Short videos and assessments before and after capacity building sessions</p>	<p>Apr – Jun 2023</p>
Activity 6. Strengthen existing structures (UN HeForShe campaign and MenEngage Alliance Nigeria), inaugurate male advocates, create local bylaws that will declare zero tolerance status to end child marriage in their community.							
<p>Visit UN Women and Male Advocates</p> <p>Provide technical support for creation of local bylaws that will declare zero tolerance status to child marriage in their community</p> <p>Inaugurate Male Advocates who will advocate against child marriage in their community</p> <p>Identify local media to cover the event</p> <p>Community leaders sign bylaws</p>	<p>Child Shield Initiative SIRP</p> <p>AGE Network Lagos</p> <p>Responsible Coalition member</p>	<p>Number of male champions inaugurated in the community</p>	<p>Community leaders</p> <p>Community members</p> <p>Funds (refreshments, transportation reimbursement, IEC materials)</p>	<p>Community leadership structure more knowledgeable on the issues of child marriage.</p> <p>Commitment of community leaders to develop and institutionalise bylaws against child marriage</p> <p>Signed bylaw</p>	<p>Zero tolerance of child marriage and harmful masculinity</p> <p>Commitment to ending harmful masculinity and child marriage in communities</p>	<p>Attendance</p> <p>Pictures from Bylaw inauguration or signing ceremony</p> <p>Report from event</p> <p>Short videos</p> <p>Copy of the signed bylaw</p>	<p>1 Aug 2023</p>
Activity 7. Outcome harvesting							
<p>Develop the outcome harvesting plan/ template</p> <p>Gather data and description</p> <p>Engage with community</p> <p>Substantiate outcome</p> <p>Analyse and interpret results</p> <p>Share findings with the Coalition, media and community</p>	<p>Child Shield Initiative SIRP</p> <p>AGE Network Lagos</p> <p>Responsible Coalition member</p> <p>Media personnel</p>	<p>Number of persons engaged during the outcome harvesting</p>	<p>Community leaders</p> <p>Community members</p> <p>Funds (refreshments, transportation reimbursement, IEC materials, media personnel)</p>	<p>Completed outcome harvesting in the community</p>	<p>Evidence of whether or how an intervention has contributed to intended change</p>	<p>Attendance, pictures from event</p> <p>Reports from event</p> <p>Short videos</p>	<p>1 Sept 2023</p>

Annex 2: Workshop participants

NAME	ORGANISATION
Hadiza Abba	UNICEF
Iweanya Priscillia	Federal Ministry of Women Affairs
Damilola Babaranti	Active Voices
Elejo Fatai-D	Hope Aid
Solomon Asuquo	African Girls' Empowerment (AGE) Network
Hajara Opaoluwa Adama	ActionAid Nigeria
Levi Yakubu	SOAR Initiative
Maria Machicado	UNICEF
Rumunse Obi	Education as a Vaccine
Nuratu Abdulrasheed	Girls Child Concern (GCC)
Ali Andrew Maidugu	Federal Ministry of Women Affairs
Ijeoma Mary Amugo,	National Agency for The Prohibition of Trafficking in Persons
Abolarin Bimbo	National Agency for The Prohibition of Trafficking in Persons
Mker Mimi	Daughters of Abraham Foundation
Jonathan Abakpu	Plan International Nigeria
Kyaharan Sude	Girl to Woman
Christopher Josephine	Women's Right Advancement and Protection Alternative (WRAPA)
Doom Ikyatoor	Global Initiative, Lagos
Dr. Chris Ugwu	SIRP
Bella Akhagba	Bella Foundation for Child and Maternal Care
Amina Inuwa	GCC
Ruth Ataguba	Hope Aid Organisation
Carolyn Seaman	Girls Voices
Dr. Zubaida Abubakar	United Nations Population Fund Nigeria
Martina Ebri	AGE Network
Vivian Obinwa	International Federation of Women Lawyers – FIDA (Nigeria)
Zainab Yahaya Tanko	Project Gender Advocate,
Odonghanro Dorinda	Project Gender Advocate, Equitable Health Access Initiative
Peace Okeshola	Project Gender Advocate, Lawyers Alert
Chinwe Onyekwu	CYPF
Miriam Aituma	CYPF
Kyenpya Katkuk	CYPF
Shaibu Husseina	CYPF
Pannan Henry	CYPF
Olatosimi Kolawole	CYPF

Annex 3: Legal and policy environment

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- 1985 Nigeria ratifies the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW 1979).
- 1991 Nigeria ratifies the Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC 1989).
- 1999 The Nigerian Constitution outlaws discrimination on the grounds of gender (S15(2)) and directs the State to ensure that “children, young persons and the elderly are protected against any exploitation whatsoever, and against moral and material neglect” (S17(3f)). However, it does not explicitly outlaw child marriage and FGM/C or clearly define childhood. By giving the Sharia Court of Appeal jurisdiction with regard to “Islamic personal law regarding a marriage”, it acknowledges the “tri-partite legal system composed of civil, customary and religious law”, leading to conflicts between customary and statutory law and creating instances where customary law can prevail to allow child marriage.
- 2001 Nigeria ratifies the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child, which says: “Child marriage and the betrothal of girls and boys shall be prohibited and effective action, including legislation, shall be taken to specify the minimum age of marriage to be eighteen years and make registration of all marriages in an official registry compulsory.”
- 2001 Nigeria adopts the National Reproductive Health Policy and Strategy.
- 2003 Nigeria passes the Child’s Right Act 2003. Part III, paragraphs 21-23, prohibit child marriage and child betrothal, prescribing punishment for offenders. It clearly defines a child as “a person under the age of 18”. State legislatures must pass the legislation separately before it becomes applicable and implementation is constrained by its limited jurisdiction when in conflict with religious law. As of 2021, 26 of Nigeria’s 36 states had adopted the Act as state law, with some states amending the definition of “child”.
- 2004 Nigeria passes the Compulsory, Free Universal Basic Education Act 2004.
- 2006 National Gender Policy
- 2007 National Policy on Health and Development of Adolescents and Young People in Nigeria
- 2008 National Gender Policy Strategic Implementation Plan
- 2013 National Policy and Plan of Action for the Elimination of FGM in Nigeria (2013-2017)
- 2015 Violence Against Persons (Prohibition) Act identifies physical violence, rape and other sexual harassment as offences and prohibits FGM/C with maximum sentences prescribed.
- 2016 Presidential Campaign to End Violence Against Children by 2030 launched.
- 2018 National Standards and Minimum Service Package for Adolescent and Youth-Friendly Health Services.
- 2018 UN publishes Nigeria Country Programme of the Spotlight Initiative to Eliminate Violence Against Women and Girls.
- 2019 Ministry of Humanitarian Affairs, Disaster Management and Social Development created.

“WE CAN ONLY END CHILD MARRIAGE IF WE ADDRESS THE ROOT CAUSE: GENDER INEQUALITY. WE WILL NOT ACHIEVE GENDER EQUALITY UNLESS WE ADDRESS CHILD MARRIAGE.”

HOW CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANISATIONS CAN USE GENDER-TRANSFORMATIVE COLLECTIVE ACTION TO ADDRESS CHILD MARRIAGE AND ADVANCE GIRLS’ RIGHTS
The experience of the Coalition of Civil Society to End Child Marriage in Nigeria

Girls Not Brides is a global partnership of over 1,400 civil society organisations from more than 100 countries committed to ending child marriage and ensuring girls can fulfil their potential.



The Global Partnership
to End Child Marriage

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