



GIRLS NOT BRIDES

The Global Partnership
to End Child Marriage



Stand up, Speak out!

Youth activism training – to help you end child marriage

Participant Guide



Acknowledgements

We would like to thank all *Girls Not Brides* member organisations, staff and expert consultants in the field who helped contribute to the development of this manual.

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“Every small step we take will make a difference and get us closer to our goal of ending child marriage.”

We often hear people say “young people are the leaders of tomorrow” and “young people should be given the opportunity to lead.” But I know that youth are already leading. Over one third of *Girls Not Brides* members are youth-led organisations, which is fantastic. That means organisations where young people are in charge of day-to-day management, decision-making and other activities that ensure the effective running of a civil society organisation. That number confirms that young people are already leading change in their communities. Yet despite this, their work is often not given the legitimacy or credit that it deserves, or they are not being heard.

That’s why I am so excited about this activism training. Co-created with young activists, it will help amplify and strengthen the role that young people can, and do, play in ending child marriage across the world. In it there are dynamic and fun methods and strategies for training young people to champion change in their communities. As well as being community-level champions, the strong work that young people are



doing should guarantee them a place and role in national-level processes. They need a seat at the table when important decisions are taken about what policies are necessary to end child marriage. Without them, decision-making will be ineffective and we will not see the change we need.

I know first hand what it is like to be faced with people wanting to make a decision about your future without consulting you. People who think being married as a child is the only route your life should or could take.

I was living as a refugee in Tehran when my brother back home in Afghanistan decided to get married. My family needed to raise money so that he could buy his bride. They decided to sell me into marriage to raise that money. I was devastated. That was not the life I wanted for myself. I wanted to go to school. I wasn't someone's property to be bought and sold. I couldn't imagine having to go back there to live a life of servitude. So I wrote a song in protest. I called it *Daughters for Sale* and with the help of a friend made a music

video of it and posted it on YouTube. It went viral! People from all over the world got in touch and with the help of some of those wonderful people I came to live in America. Today, for the first time, I am in a real school, and looking forward to a future that I will choose. Even though my life has changed in many ways, one thing remains central: my role as an activist to end child marriage.

So, I ask you – as a young person, as an activist and as a global champion for *Girls Not Brides* – to use this manual and spread the hope and the power. Every small step we each take in this work will make a difference and get us closer to our goal of ending child marriage. Please work with and encourage young people of all races, genders and backgrounds to get involved, because it is only if we are all together that we will be able to end child marriage. I believe we can do it. Thank you.

Sonita Alizadeh

Youth activist and Global Champion for *Girls Not Brides*



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Introduction

Girls Not Brides is a global partnership of more than 1000 civil society organisations from over 95 countries around the world, committed to ending child marriage and enabling girls to fulfil their potential. We share the conviction that every girl has the right to lead the life that she chooses and that, by ending child marriage, we can achieve a safer, healthier and more prosperous future for all.

Stronger together, Girls Not Brides members work on multiple levels to achieve our vision and mission on ending child marriage. They help bring the issue of child marriage to global attention, build an understanding of what it will take to end child marriage and call for progressive changes in laws, policies and programmes at the national and community levels; all actions that will make a difference in the lives of millions of girls.

Championing youth

At *Girls not Brides: The Global Partnership to End Child Marriage*, we are proud that currently around one third of our members are youth-led, or youth-facing organisations. In addition to this, even more of our members work closely with young people through programmes and projects, supporting and empowering them to shape their own futures. We believe that we will not achieve our goal to end child marriage without the sustained and active engagement of youth.

Here's why we think so.

- **Young people are powerful agents of change.** Young people are the most directly affected by child marriage and their voices must be heard. They can raise awareness of this critical issue and help their communities to understand the harmful consequences for girls, their families and communities.
- **Failing to engage young people in efforts to end child marriage is a missed opportunity to achieve results at scale.** In so many countries where child marriage rates are high, young people make up the largest proportion of the population. For example, in Uganda nearly half the population is under the age of 24, while India has over 200 million young people.
- **Youth participation is an effective and important way of addressing child marriage at the community level.** Our experience shows that when young people become active agents of change, they have achieved great things in their communities. This includes helping to increase the reach and scale of interventions and programmes, and to engage a range of different groups, particularly marginalised groups.
- **Youth engagement can make calls to action and policy demands more daring and more creative.** Working together with young people can open up what are seen to be “closed” policy spaces with influential people.



Photo © Abduillah al Kafi / Girls Not Brides

Our experience shows that when young people become active agents of change, they have achieved great things in their communities.

Sensitivity and safeguarding notice

- Everyone needs to understand that we will be discussing the issue of child marriage in the sessions and that this is a sensitive topic, which may upset some people.
- If anyone in the group does get upset and wants to leave, then please feel you can do so at any time. Anyone who is feeling their views are not being heard, or you become upset or have concerns, please raise this with your trainers as soon as possible so that we can help prevent any issues or discomfort straight away.
- Whatever is said in the group is confidential: this is a safe space for talking and sharing.

- No one will ever be forced to disclose personal experiences – participation is always voluntary.
- Maintaining sensitivity awareness and safeguarding is the responsibility of everyone in the group. We all respect the contributions of others and do not judge other people's experiences negatively.

There is external support on standby if anyone needs additional support or comfort. Make sure you come to us if you want to talk to a skilled person who can offer you emotional support.

Module 1 – Getting started

Module 1 – Session 1 Let's work together



Objective

To get to know each other and create a happy, safe and trustworthy relationship together.



Session outline

- Introduce participants
- Module overview: main issues covered in the training sessions ahead
- Expectations: your hopes for and concerns about the training
- Safeguarding warning
- Establish general ground rules

Activity	Time allocated	Outline
1	10 mins	Introductions
2	15 mins	Group work: Why this training and introductions
3	10 mins	Trainer presentation: Introduction to the issues you will be covering
4	10 mins	Group work: Expectations and objectives
5	10 mins	Group work: Establishing principles for working together
6	5 mins	Close of session: Reminder of next steps

We are all together to talk about how to end child marriage and how to advocate effectively to stop it. This training will help you strengthen your skills to end child marriage. We will go through each step together – from how to clearly plan your advocacy, how to strategize and longer term, how to track impact and evidence to strengthen your work. This first session will help you to get to know each other more, and set the ground rules for how you will work together through the training.

Module 1 – Session 2

What is child marriage? An introduction



Objective

Helping participants understand the definition of child marriage, how it is caused, and the drivers of the problem



Session outline

- Brainstorming about child marriage and what participants know about the issue
- Introduction to the issue: basics of child marriage

Activity	Time allocated	Outline
1	5 mins	Welcome <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Reminders and introductions (if doing a stand-alone session)• Energiser activity (if doing this as immediate follow-on from Module 1: Session 1)
2	35 mins	Group work: Defining child marriage <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Open discussion (10 mins)• Group work (15 mins)• Present back from groups (10 mins)
3	10 mins	Trainer presentation: Basics of child marriage
4	20 mins	Group work: Causes of child marriage in your community
5	15 mins	Trainer presentation: Causes of child marriage
6	5 mins	Quick quiz and conclusion

The basics of child marriage

- The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child is the most important human rights treaty outlining ALL rights of children.
- Child marriages are informal or formal unions where one or both parties are under 18 years old.
- 12 million girls are married every year before they are 18: 1 every 2 seconds. This has to stop!
- It is a violation of human rights and affects girls more than boys.
- It happens around the world and across cultures and religions.
- The *Girls Not Brides* website has much more information, so visit www.girlsnotbrides.org

Background information for Trainer presentation 1 on child marriage

What is a child?

- The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (commonly abbreviated as the CRC or UNCRC) is a human rights treaty that sets out the civil, political, economic, social, health and cultural rights of children. You can read more about it here: <https://bit.ly/2HjzOxV>
- The Convention defines a child as any human being under the age of 18.

What is child marriage?

- Child marriage is the formal or informal union where one or both parties are under the age of 18.
- According to recent UNICEF data, it is estimated that 12 million girls are married every year before they reach the age of 18. This means 23 girls every minute, or 1 every 2 seconds – married off too soon and too young, endangering their personal development, health and overall wellbeing.
- The practice affects girls more than boys. Six hundred and fifty million women alive today were married before their 18th birthday, compared to 156 million men.
- Child marriage is widely considered as a violation of human rights and a form of violence against girls.

Where does it happen?

- Child marriage is a truly global problem that occurs across regions, countries and cultures. It happens in almost every country around the world and across all religions and ethnicities.
- Certain countries have very high rates of either burden (the percentage of the population that is married under 18) or prevalence (the number of those affected by child marriages). Niger has the highest burden rate in the world with 76% of all 20 to 24 year old women in the country stating that they were married before the age of 18. India has the highest absolute number of child marriages with nearly 27 million women and girls affected.

For more information

- Visit the *Girls Not Brides* website for more information on child marriage and up-to-date statistics globally and per country: www.girlsnotbrides.org



The main causes of child marriage

- Gender inequality is the root cause of child marriage. The way girls and boys and women and men are treated in a society is not equal and often girls are not valued and are seen as a burden.
- Poverty: if a family is poor, marrying their daughter early is seen to lessen the burden on the family, on limited income and money, and is one less person to feed.
- Child marriage is often seen as a part of a community's culture and tradition. At times even some religions allow the practice.
- Early, forced and child marriage is often thought to be a way of protecting girls against sexual abuse, sexual harassment, 'illegal' sexual activity, voluntary sexual relationships and sexual promiscuity.
- Insecurity and violence is also a cause, as families think getting daughters married early is a way of offering them safety.
- Weak government systems: there are laws against child marriage but these are often not implemented by government, or there are exceptions to the law.
- Limited education and economic options for girls is an important driver for families marrying off their daughters too young.
- Lack of awareness: many people, particularly young girls, are not aware of their rights, how to exercise those rights or how to protect themselves.

Causes of child marriage

- Child marriage is a complex issue caused by many different factors – which we call 'drivers' of this problem. These can be different from one country to another and even one community to another, and can change over time within one community or context.
- The root cause of child marriage is gender inequality and the low value given to girls and women in society. Boys are often considered as higher value for the family due to their seemingly higher income making potential.

Gender refers to social differences and relations between men and women and the roles they play in society – not the biological difference between them.

Gender equality is the equal rights, responsibilities, opportunities, treatment and value given to women and men, girls and boys – in life and at work. Gender equality means that people of all ages and both sexes have equal chances to succeed in life.

-
- In many communities where child marriage is practised, girls are not valued as much as boys and are often seen as an extra burden on their family. Marrying off a daughter at a young age can be seen as a way to reduce worries of families with little income, by transferring this “burden” to her husband's family.
 - Child marriage is also very closely linked to male values (called patriarchal values or beliefs) that dominate many societies, and control over female sexuality. For example, this includes control over how a girl should behave, how she should dress, who she should be allowed to see, and who she marries – usually by her father, or males in the family or community.

- In many communities, families closely guard their daughters' sexuality. Virginity is highly prized and is essential to protect and maintain, as it is associated with family honour, and for a girl to be considered as pure. Girls who have sexual relationships or become pregnant outside marriage are often seen as bringing shame and dishonour on a family.

Culture and tradition

- In many communities child marriage is a tradition, considered to be a part of tradition or culture, or sometimes religion, and one that has continued for generations.
- In some communities for instance, when a girl starts to menstruate she becomes a woman in the eyes of the community. Marriage is seen as the next step towards giving her status as a wife and mother, regardless of her age.
- Other traditional practices are often linked, particularly harmful practices against girls, such as female genital mutilation or cutting (FGM/C). This is considered a rite of passage to womanhood and to ensure the girl is seen as "clean".
- Although the practice of child marriage is rooted in tradition and culture, these are man-made practices that can be changed and updated. So there is hope for ensuring change and putting an end to these harmful, damaging practices on girls.

Poverty

- In communities with high levels of poverty, families (at times even the girls themselves) believe that marrying early will be a solution to secure their future. It allows parents to decrease family expenses as they have one less person to feed, clothe and educate.
- In communities where a dowry or "bride price" is paid, it is often a welcome source of income for poor families. In those where the bride's family pay the groom a dowry, they often have to pay less money if the bride is young and uneducated, so families do this to keep down the costs.
- Economics has a strong impact on attitudes to practices of child marriages because girls are seen as economic dependents, not income generators. But child marriage continues the poverty cycle, as girls who marry young will not be properly educated or take part in the workforce.

Insecurity and violence

- In countries suffering from war and conflict, girls are at high risk of harassment and physical or sexual assault. In unsafe regions, parents often genuinely believe that marrying their daughters early is in their best interest to protect them from danger.
- The reality is that child brides face much higher risks of violence, and have less power to exercise their rights, particularly with their partners.

Weak government systems

- Child marriage is illegal in many countries around the world. But the law can be altered in many ways and contexts, for example if it includes exceptions, such as through parental consent as legal guardians. Laws are subject to different or unequal interpretations.
- In many countries the minimum age for marriage is lower under customary or religious law, which contradicts national laws and international conventions. Many countries also lack legislation, or the means to enforce laws, and have weak governance structures – so laws are important but are not enough by themselves.

Limited education and economic options

- Attending school and having higher levels of education helps protect girls from the possibility of child marriage and empower them about their rights. In many countries, educating girls is less of a priority than educating boys.
- When a woman's most important role is considered to be that of a wife, mother and homemaker, schooling girls and preparing them for working life is not considered important. Even families who want to send their daughters to school often lack access to nearby, quality schools and money to cover the costs. It is often seen to be safer and economically more rewarding to spend limited resources on educating boys, over girls.

Lack of awareness

- Child marriage also is a result of lack of awareness among parents, communities and the children themselves on national laws and on the rights of children and women. Many do not know about international human rights or conventions – or how to make sure their rights are protected.



Module 1 – Session 3

Child marriage – consequences and prevention



Objective

The participants will understand the impact of child marriage on girls, the broad range of prevention strategies that are available, and the role different people can play in addressing this issue.



Session outline

- Learning about the consequences of child marriage
- Brainstorming issues around the possible solutions to ending child marriage

Activity	Time allocated	Outline
1	5 mins	Welcome <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Reintroductions and reminders (if doing a stand-alone session)• Brief introduction of the session's aim and topics (if doing this as immediate follow-on from Module 1: Session 2)
2	10 mins	Trainer presentation: Impacts and consequences of child marriage
3	15 mins	Group discussion: Consequences of child marriage that you see in your community or from your experience.
4	30 mins	Group work session: What prevention strategies would work in your community?
5	15 mins	Trainer presentation: Strategies for prevention
6	15 mins	Open floor discussion and close of the session

Consequences of child marriage

- There are so many negative things that happen as a result of child marriage. The most important one is that it stops girls from having their basic rights to health, education and development protected and enforced.
- Child marriage impacts on all elements of girls' basic human rights: health, education, economy, inequality, and increases their risk of violence and poverty.
- Child marriage denies girls the right to education.
- It keeps her locked in a cycle of poverty.
- It denies her the right to a healthy life or to control her own sexual and reproductive health and rights through forced pregnancy and early motherhood. This leads to increased risk of death or injury during pregnancy and childbirth.
- It leaves her with little or no access to information or services to prevent either pregnancy or infection, and more likely to have more children closer together.
- It removes her power to negotiate or control her own decisions. For example, it can make people more vulnerable and exposed to HIV/AIDS, and can lead to girls not being able to negotiate safe sex practices. It also increases her chances of experiencing physical, emotional or verbal abuse.

What does child marriage mean for girls?

POVERTY

Child brides do not receive the educational and economic opportunities that help lift them and their family out of poverty.

THEY ARE MORE LIKELY TO BE POOR AND REMAIN POOR.



EDUCATION

Child brides are likely to **DROP OUT OF SCHOOL**, hindering their personal development, preparation for adulthood and reducing their earning potential..



INEQUALITY

Child brides normally have **LITTLE SAY IN WHEN OR WHOM THEY WILL MARRY**. Marriage often ends girls' opportunities for education, better paid work outside the home and decision making roles in their communities.



HEALTH

Child brides face high risk of death or injury: girls who give birth before the age of 15 are **MORE LIKELY TO DIE IN CHILDBIRTH** than women aged 20-24. Their children are less likely to live beyond their 1st birthday.



HIV/AIDS

Child brides are exposed to frequent, unprotected sex in part due to the pressure to demonstrate their fertility, and lack the knowledge or power to negotiate safer sexual practices. Child brides often marry older husbands, **WHICH IN TURN INCREASES THEIR RISK OF HIV.**



VIOLENCE

Child marriage puts women and girls at increased risk of violence throughout their lives. Child brides are **MORE LIKELY TO DESCRIBE THEIR FIRST SEXUAL EXPERIENCE AS FORCED.**



This is a sample infographic that you can use for your presentation as they are useful to show visually what you are discussing. For more such resources, visit our website:

www.girlsnotbrides.org

- Child marriage is a violation of human rights. It deprives young girls of their basic rights to health, education, development and protection. These dynamics affect not only the girls themselves, but also their children and households, as well as communities and entire societies.
- Health: marrying early denies girls the right to a healthy life. They are often pressured into motherhood at a young age, which increases risk of death or injury during pregnancy and childbirth. It also increases risk of death and long-term health complications for newborn children.
- It increases girls' exposure to HIV/AIDS, as girls cannot negotiate safe sex practices. It increases their risk of physical, sexual and emotional violence. Girls who marry before age 18 are more likely to experience violence within marriage than girls who marry later, due to imbalanced power relationships.
- It denies girls the right to choose and make key decisions for themselves about their own lives. Child brides have little say about if, when and who they marry.
- Child marriage denies a girl the right to education. Getting married often results in a girl being removed from school. This affects her ability to learn the skills she needs to secure a job and have access to the same economic opportunities as boys. Without this, she will be unable to break the cycle of poverty and remain trapped.

Strategies for prevention

- Because there are so many causes or drivers of child marriage, it is no wonder that there are many ways that we can work to end this practice.
- Preventing child marriage means we need action at all levels: from the global right down to the community. And we need an inclusive, collective approach from so many different groups all working together across sectors: from governments to civil society, parents and community leaders, right through to you, the most directly affected groups.
- The *Girls Not Brides* Theory of Change shows that everyone has a role to play in helping to prevent child marriages, as well as to support married girls. It is available on our website.

What governments can do...

- Make laws to ban child marriage and remove any clauses that allow exceptions, such as underage marriage with parental or religious consent.
- Governments need to create national strategies which are action plans to prevent or delay child marriage. In these national strategies, dedicated investment is needed to target opportunities for the poorest and most marginalised girls, as they are the most vulnerable to child marriage.
- Provide quality services such as education, health care and protection, and work to make sure girls can access these services, regardless of their backgrounds or incomes. This will also help encourage parents to send their girls to school and keep them in school for as long as possible.

What civil society organisations (CSOs) can do...

- Help raise awareness on the issue and everything it involves! As this is still a taboo subject in many countries, encouraging discussion helps raise awareness and educate communities. Sharing the consequences of child marriage – through to information about people's fundamental human rights – all helps people to understand the range of impacts this has on girls and women. It's important to engage men and boys so that they can also become active in the fight to end child marriage.
- Implement projects to empower girls and their communities to say no. This is by building skills, knowledge and access to support networks that will help increase girls' decision-making abilities and access to opportunities. Peer support networks are very important in this.
- Work with other stakeholders: support government legislation against child marriage, push for the development of laws where they do not exist. Mobilise and educate religious leaders and community elders on the harmful effects of traditional practices, such as child marriage.

What community and traditional leaders can do...

- Help change opinions – traditional and cultural practices that harm girls and women can be changed. It's no longer enough to say "it's our culture" – and traditional leaders are so important in understanding the negative impacts and helping to change practices, most importantly around changing traditional, discriminatory views on girls' access to education.
- Support government and civil society's efforts to get legislation against child marriage passed, and help ensure that these laws are upheld. Also to help spread information as far as possible so that all members of the community are on board with change.
- There would be no child marriage if men in affected communities did not choose to marry children. So it is vital that men are educated on the rights of girls and how early marriage can be harmful to girls' health and happiness, as well as being destructive to the family unit. As most traditional or religious leaders are men, they are fundamental in helping the community to change so as to see the value of women and girls.



Module 2 – Researching child marriage in your community

Module 2 – Session 1

Exploring gender



Objective

For everyone in the group to understand what we mean by gender equality and how to carry out a gender analysis. We will also explore why we need to involve boys and men when dealing with the issue of child marriage.



Session outline

- Learning about gender; what is gender equality
- How to do a gender analysis
- Looking at how to work with men and boys as champions for the cause

Activity	Time allocated	Outline
1	5 mins	Welcome <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Reintroductions and reminders (if doing a stand-alone session) OR <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Energiser and brief introduction of the session's aim (if doing this as immediate follow on from Module 1)
2	5 mins	Open discussion: What is gender?
3	20 mins	Discussion in groups: First memories of gender
4	10 mins	Presentation – What is gender?
5	10 mins	Open discussion: Gender equality
6	25 mins	Discussion in groups: Gender inequality
7	10 mins	Presentation – What is gender equality versus inequality?
8	10 mins	Presentation – Gender analysis
9	35 mins	Group work: Doing a gender analysis
10	5 mins	Brainstorm: Why involve men and boys?
11	10 mins	Presentation – Working with men and boys
12	10 mins	Conclusion and close the session

Gender

- **Gender** refers to the economic, social and cultural roles and responsibilities assigned to a man or a woman in society.
 - **Gender roles** can change and are different from generation to generation and culture to culture. For example, in Ancient Egypt men stayed at home and did weaving.
- Women handled family business. Women inherited property and men did not. In modern day Egypt, these roles have changed completely.
- **It specifies what a man or woman can do, what they can be, and what they can have in a specific society.**

Difference between sex and gender

SEX

- **Is biological** (physical bodies).
- **Given by birth** (is natural and refers to visible differences in sex organs of boys and girls and related differences in procreative function).
- **Cannot be changed** – unless through hormone replacement or surgery.

GENDER

- **Is cultural.**
- **Learned through socialisation** (is created by society and hence is taught and learned).
- **Can be changed and challenged:** women can work as engineers, pilots etc.

When you work to tackle child marriage, it's important to understand how gender norms play a role in maintaining the practice of child marriage. Gender is not the same as sex. Sex refers to the biological characteristics of men and women. For example: males produce sperm, females produce eggs. Gender refers to socially defined roles and behaviours for men and women. When we expect men and women to act in a certain way, just because they are male and female, then we follow "gender norms". Different cultures can have different gender norms or different ways they expect men and women to behave. For example, some cultures expect women to stay at home and do household chores, while men should go out to work. These norms are also called gender roles, which are specific roles men and women are expected to perform in society or even in the family. Gender refers to the economic, social and cultural attributes and opportunities associated with being a man or a woman in a given society. It specifies what a man or woman can do, can be or can have in a specific society. Gender roles vary from generation to generation, time to time and culture to culture.

- People are born female or male, but learn to be girls and boys who grow into women and men.
- Gender roles are learned behaviours in a given society, community or other social group. They determine activities, tasks and responsibilities that are seen to be fitting for males or females.
- Girls and boys are taught what the right behaviour and attitudes, roles and activities are for them, and how they should relate to other people. This learned behaviour is what makes up gender identity, and determines gender roles and responsibilities.

- Gender roles vary greatly from one culture to another, and from one social, political and economic group to another within the same culture.
- Gender roles also vary over time. Socially defined roles for girls and boys and women and men in one society may change over generations, whereas in other societies they may continue far longer in the same way. For instance, in Ancient Egypt men stayed at home and did weaving. Women handled the family business. Women inherited property and men did not. In modern-day Egypt, these roles have changed.



What is gender equality versus inequality?

Gender equality

- Gender equality does not mean that women and men are the same, but that they have equal value and should be given equal treatment.
- Equal valuing of the roles of women and men.
- This is essential to overcome the barriers of stereotypes and prejudices.
- An equal sharing of power among women and men.
- Removal of all kinds of inequalities in access to resources, opportunities and services, and the promotion of equal rights.
- Equality recognises that men and women have different roles and needs.

Gender equality

- Gender equality does not simply mean equal numbers of men and women or boys and girls participating in all activities, or that women and men are the same. It means that men and women enjoy equal recognition and status within society and should have equal respect.
- It means that our similarities and differences are recognised and equally valued so that we can all realise our full human potential. This means we can all participate, contribute and benefit equally from national, political, economic, social and cultural development.
- Gender equality refers to the equal valuing of the roles of women and men, and their contributions, activities and what work they do.
- It works to stop stereotypes and prejudices so that both sexes are able to equally contribute to and benefit from economic, social, cultural and political developments within their society.
- The main point of gender equality is that the differences between women and men should not have a negative impact on their living conditions or prevent an equal sharing of power among women and men in various aspects of life.
- Gender equality refers to equal opportunities and outcomes for women and men. This involves removal of all kinds of inequalities in access to resources, opportunities and services, and the promotion of equal rights.
- **Equality does not mean that women should be the same as men. Promoting equality recognises that men and women have different roles and needs, and emphasises the importance of taking these into account in development planning and programmes.**



What is gender inequality?

- Men and women are physically different but it is the social, economic, political and legal interpretation of these differences that lead to inequality between them.
- Discrimination against women and girls – such as gender-based violence, economic discrimination, reproductive health inequities and harmful traditional practices – remains the most pervasive and persistent form of inequality.
- Inequality in social settings/society: when men’s work has a higher status and is recognised as more valuable and important than women’s work (such as child rearing, cooking and cleaning). This also occurs when women have less access to services (for example, education and health), and when there is violence directly against women and girls because of their gender.
- Economic inequalities: women have unequal access to economic resources, such as opportunities for skills training, capital, credit, labour and land, and limited opportunities for employment and career advancement.
- Political inequality: women are poorly represented at all levels of formal decision-making in society, and particularly at regional and national levels.
- Legal inequality: the legal system in many countries discriminates against women in the areas of family law, inheritance, property and land ownership, citizenship and criminal law. Prosecuting cases involving violence against women is particularly difficult.

What is a gender analysis

- A gender analysis helps to identify key issues contributing to gender inequality.
 - Highlights any gaps between men and women that exist in the household, community and country.
 - Explains how gender norms and power relations impact (and often reinforce) child marriage.
 - Examines the differences in roles and norms for women and men, girls and boys: the different levels of power they hold; their differing needs, constraints, and opportunities; and the impact of these differences in their lives.
-

- A gender analysis is a way to research and find the key issues that create or enforce gender inequality. This is so that you fully understand the reasons and causes so that they can be properly addressed and fixed.
- It helps you to understand the unequal differences between men and women. It helps you to identify, understand and explain gaps between men and women that exist in the household, community and country.
- It helps show you how these gender differences and power relations impact (and often reinforce) child marriage.
- It is a research method that looks at the different levels of power women and men hold; their different needs, constraints, and opportunities; and the impact of these differences in their lives.

When doing a gender analysis, there are five main issues you can look into to understand the role or position of men and women.

- Laws, policies and rules in society.
- Cultural practices and beliefs.
- Gender roles, responsibilities and time spent on each.
- Access to, or control over, resources.
- Patterns of power and decision-making.

A gender analysis will collect, analyse and interpret information about a specific situation by looking into the roles, responsibilities, needs and opportunities of girls and boys/women and men. This aims to:

- Identify the differences between the groups.
- Understand why these differences exist.
- See what specific actions/issues influence child marriage.

Some questions to ask yourself when doing a gender analysis to look into child marriage:

- Which particular groups of girls are affected by child marriage?
- Who is most vulnerable?
- What age do girls tend to be when they are married?
- Are they in school or out of school?
- Do they belong to any minority or marginalised groups in the community?



Areas for gender analysis	Guiding questions	Resources that can help you find answers
<p>1. Laws, policies and regulations</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Are there national laws on the minimum age of marriage, marriage certification and birth registration to prevent gender discrimination? 2. Are these laws enforced at national and local levels? Are women and girls able to access justice (such as the police and courts) or do they struggle to do so? Are people, households and communities aware of the laws? 3. How do laws and policies actually influence decisions about marriage at local level? Or does customary law allow for child marriages, over the national law? For example, if the national law states a minimum age of marriage, is this law actually what people are listening to? 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Policymakers, local legal institutions, CSOs working on the issue. You can also search these on the internet or visit the country specific information on the <i>Girls Not Brides</i> website. 2. Speak to a range of people who can help: judges, the police, government officials and civil servants, local legal institutions and CSOs active on the issue or working in your community, women and girls themselves. 3. Traditional, religious and community leaders, local government, religious leaders, elders, women and girls, men and boys.
<p>2. Cultural practices and beliefs</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What are the accepted practices and beliefs about girls' and women's roles as wives and mothers – and boys' and men's roles as husbands and fathers? 2. What cultural and traditional practices are connected with marriage? These could include bride price, dowry, female genital mutilation/cutting (FGM/C), polygamy, bride abduction and emphasising female chastity. Does marriage signify a financial transaction, such as a dowry or bride price? 	<p>Traditional, religious and community leaders; elders; parents; women and girls; men and boys.</p>

<p>3. Gender roles, responsibilities and what time is spent on these</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. How much time do women and girls spend on housework and care? This could include looking after younger siblings, old parents, or physically challenged members of the family. How does this compare to the time men and boys spend on these tasks? Are girls ever taken out of school to carry out housework and care work? 2. How do women and girls who were married young (before 18) spend their time differently from women and girls who are unmarried? And is there any difference between how girls and boys are expected to use their time? 	<p>Women and girls, men and boys, family elders.</p>
<p>4. Access to and control over resources</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What is the difference between men and women when it comes to having access to income, owning land or having access to other assets and resources (such as a phone)? 2. Do women and girls who have experienced child marriage face social isolation? For example, are they no longer allowed to see their friends or go to school? 	<p>Women and girls, men and boys.</p>
<p>5. Patterns of power and decision making</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Who in the family or community makes decisions about if, when, and who a girl should marry? Which community and religious leaders influence decisions over marriage? 2. How does the age of marriage and the difference in ages between the partners influence the relationship? Who has the power and holds all decision-making in the marriage? 	<p>Traditional, religious and community leaders; elders; parents; women and girls; men and boys.</p>

Engaging men and boys

- We all need to understand the complicated gender and cultural norms that promote the practice of child marriage. Child marriage is not only a women's/girls' issue.
 - Decision-makers in a community/home are mostly men. As decision-makers and potential husbands, men and boys are central to any efforts to end child marriage.
 - Men and boys are socialised to take on the role of breadwinner, to be dominant and make most of the family decisions. Women are raised to look after the home (cook, clean, have children and take care of them).
 - The traditional roles of father, husband, son and brother need to shift towards being caring, supportive and non-violent, sharing decision-making and domestic chores.
 - Men and boys need to question and change gender roles.
 - Men and boys have a direct influence in women's and girls' lives.
-

Boys also marry as children, with 156 million men alive today married before the age of 18. But girls are disproportionately affected by child marriage, and are almost seven times more likely to be affected by the practice. It is important not to forget that young men are both victims and agents of change.

Recent research has shown that involving boys and men is important in building gender equality. To improve equality between men and women, it is important that men and boys change their attitudes and practices toward women and girls. If we want to end child marriage, then boys and men must play a vital role in achieving this. It's crucial that they understand and believe it is a harmful practice. Leaving men and boys out of any initiative will mean that only the symptoms experienced by young women and girls are addressed. The main problem remains unchallenged, such as existing imbalanced power relations between men and women.

To end child marriage we must understand the cultural and gender roles in a society that contributes to this practice. In many countries, men and boys are socialised to take on the role of breadwinner, to be dominant and make most of the family decisions. Women are raised to run the household: cooking, cleaning, having children and caring for them. Ending child marriage requires questioning everyone's role in society and working hard to change social norms and behaviours at all levels of society. Fathers, brothers, husbands, village chiefs, religious leaders, decision-makers – for this harmful practice to end, we need to work together with everyone, get the support of all the men/boys who know this is wrong, and work together to persuade all those who don't. It is important to engage men and boys in eliminating child marriage because:

- Child marriage is not only a women's or girls' issue.
- As decision-makers and potential husbands, men and boys are central to any efforts to end child marriage.

- Religious elders and community leaders are often the key decision-makers in communities where early or child marriage is common. They are often men. Engaging and educating these powerful men is key to changing a community's attitude to child marriage.
- Social expectations of what it means to be a man or boy dictate how men and boys behave.
- Men and boys should question gender roles.
- Roles like father, husband, son and brother need to shift towards being caring, supportive and non-violent, sharing decision-making and domestic chores.
- Men and boys do not have the space to question these norms.
- Men and boys have a direct influence in women's and girls' lives.
- If we don't engage men and boys we cannot bring about change on sensitive issues like child marriage.
- Men and boys need to know about girls' rights and how early marriage can be harmful to her health and happiness and destructive to the family unit.



Module 3: Take action – Developing an advocacy strategy

Module 3 – Session 1 Goals and objectives



Objective

Defining the change you want to see and the steps you need to achieve this!



Session outline

- Learn how to define the change you want to see
- How to set your goals and objectives
- What is your ideal future
- How to achieve the change you need

Activity	Time allocated	Outline
1	5 mins	Welcome <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Reintroductions and reminders (if doing a stand-alone session) OR <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Energiser and brief introduction of the session's aim (if doing this as immediate follow-on from Module 2)
2	35 mins	Group work: What is your perfect future?
3	15 mins	Trainer presentation: Setting goals and objectives
4	15 mins	Group work: Defining your goal – what is the change you want to see?
5	10 mins	Concluding discussions and close of session

Definitions and differences between goals and objectives

Goal

Definition

- The main aim that you are working to achieve.
- This is the big picture or vision you want to see in the world.
- This is something that we want to strive towards.
- Goals are not strictly measurable or tangible.
- Has a longer-term time frame.

Example: "I want to succeed in eliminating child marriage."

Objective

Definition

- Something that we aim our efforts or actions to achieve; it's our purpose or target.
- These are smaller, more specific steps that will help you achieve your goal.
- Must be measurable and tangible.
- Mid- to short-term time frame of action.

Example: "I want to do research on child marriage by the end of the month."

Setting a goal means:

1. Defining the ultimate change you want to contribute to. A goal is a clear idea of the world you want to create – the desired end state you want to see realised and the ultimate vision you want to achieve through your work. It should be inspirational and clearly explain what you are fighting for. A goal is not something you can achieve on your own. For example, at *Girls Not Brides* our ultimate vision and goal is: a world without child marriage where girls and women enjoy equal status with boys and men and are able to achieve their full potential in all aspects of their lives.
2. Thinking through the size and scale of your actions. Work out how much time you can each give to achieving your goal. Be realistic. The more you learn, and the more people you include to work with, the more your goal and ambitions can also grow. You may want to focus your goal on a specific community or group of people, to have a specific target group and address their specific issues.
3. Assessing what your research and gender analysis has uncovered in your community. What are you now motivated and enthusiastic to work on as a goal? What specific issues did this raise that you can work on?

Defining your goal

- A goal sets out a clear idea of the world you want to create.
 - This is the ultimate, desired state or condition you want to see realised at the end of your work.
 - To start, you need to outline what you want to change, what are the main issues you are working on, and what steps you need to take to achieve these.
 - This helps to move you on from unclear ideas to planning out specific actions and achievable changes that you want to see in your community/country.
 - Goals are longer term (say five years as a plan) but there are very specific steps you can take to achieve them.
-

Once you have a goal statement, you need to think through concrete solutions to the problem of child marriage to achieve your goal. These will help you to achieve the goal through your work, and help focus and prioritise your work and what you will need to do so. Your objectives show what specific change or outcome you want to achieve in the short term.

As a group, brainstorm on objectives that will help you reach your goal. They should be SMART, which means they are:

- **Specific:** they tell you specifically how much (a clear number target – such as 40%) of what you want to be achieved or changed (what behaviour of which group you want to impact, or what outcome you want to see as a result of your intervention) and include a time frame by when you aim to achieve this (a clear date to work towards – for example, by 2020).
- **Measurable:** that information concerning the objective can be collected, detected, or obtained (at least potentially) so that you can assess the impact and measure the change that occurs as a result of your intervention.
- **Achievable:** your objectives should be realistic and the change you want to see possible. This means that not only are the objectives themselves possible, but it is also likely that you collectively (working together with allies) will be able to achieve them successfully.
- **Relevant to the vision:** there is a clear understanding of how these objectives fit in with the overall vision of the group or the work that you are doing.
- **Timed:** your group can develop a clear timeline for when the objectives will be achieved. Make this clear in the objective itself.

Defining objectives

Create a set of concrete solutions for the problem of child marriage to reach your goal. These are the smaller steps you need to take to help you achieve your vision. Objectives should be SMART, which means:

- **Specific:** a clear number or target for what you want to be achieved or changed; what outcome you want to see as a result of your intervention; and a time frame by when you aim to achieve this.
- **Measurable:** that information concerning the objective can be collected, detected or

obtained so that you can assess the impact and measure the change that occurs as a result of your intervention.

- **Achievable:** realistic, and that the change you want to see is possible to achieve working together with allies.
- **Relevant to the goal:** fit in with the overall goal of the group or the work that you are doing.
- **Timed:** a clear timeline for when they will be achieved.



Module 3 – Session 2

Drafting an advocacy strategy



Objective

To develop an advocacy strategy and know what makes a good message that targets your audience’s “head, heart and hands” – how to make them think, feel and do. We include ideas about how to work with the media and understand how to undertake such communications activities.



Session outline

- Drafting an advocacy strategy
- What is a message and how to develop an effective message
- How to use communications to create powerful messages and impact

Activity	Time allocated	Outline
1	10 mins	Welcome • Reintroductions and reminders (if doing a stand-alone session)
2	15 mins	Group work: Finding your voice and power
3	10 mins	Trainer presentation: What is an advocacy strategy
4	40 mins	Group work: Building your advocacy strategy
5	10 mins	Energiser
6	15 mins	Trainer presentation: Developing effective messages
7	15 mins	Group work or energiser: Effective communications
8	10 mins	Conclusions and close of session

Finding your voice and power

You have the power to become an important influencer in your community, through becoming a young activist and advocate calling for change! We want to help you find your voice and feel empowered to demand a better future for all.

Being an effective advocate requires:

- Passion and energy.
- Perseverance to carry on the discussion and the fight.
- A clear vision for the change you want to see/achieve.
- Ability to work with others.
- Willingness to allocate some time and energy to your cause.
- Understanding that not everyone has the same view as you, and how to persuade people who don't.
- Strong communication skills to explain your message clearly and simply, and get people on your side.


Young people make very good advocates on child marriage issues because:

- They are directly affected by and involved in the issue.
- They have access to information that adults may not have, and different opinions about traditions or social norms that can change for each generation, rather than having to stay the same.
- They can help to identify girls who are at risk and often can help intervene.
- They understand the pressures young people are under from their parents and communities, especially around traditional practices.
- They can analyse whether a proposed solution to the issue is going to work or not, and offer solutions or interventions that others haven't thought of.

Developing an advocacy strategy

Now we will go into how an advocacy strategy can help you achieve the changes you want to see through your work. This is a strategy or plan that will help us to decide what, when and who we will carry out our activities with – all to achieve our main goal we have chosen.

- An advocacy strategy helps you to plan each step or activity that will help you to achieve the “big picture” or goal you have set for your work.
- In simple terms, a strategy helps you to be clear about: where we are now, where we want to go and what we need to get there.
- Activities in an advocacy strategy need to help you in:
 - Assessing opportunities and challenges that can come from working in a specific environment, and what steps you need to take to overcome any challenges or risks.
 - Making sure you have allocated available resources and budgets, and have allocated tasks and activities like reporting and evaluation.
- Managing relationships with other stakeholders or actors, and managing your network. It will also help to show you who you need to work with.
- How to tailor your messages to persuade the target audiences you need to address.
- Strategic planning is a systematic approach that makes it possible for others to be aware of our plans to become involved with an issue.
- Creating strategic messages will help you to target relevant audiences and produce more effective communication, so achieving a bigger impact.
- It also helps break down your overall big picture goal (or broad aim) into much more manageable steps. These will help you get closer to achieving the change you want to see as a result of your work.



Now that you have developed your main goal and objectives, you are ready to break these down into more detail and think through what practical steps you can take together to achieve them – one step at a time. An advocacy strategy is one way to help plan this process. It enables you to plan each individual activity that will contribute to achieving the “big picture” or goal you are working towards. It also helps you to think through who in your team will do what activity, and who your target audiences or stakeholders will be. This is mapping out the steps you need to take to achieve the change you want to see. Your strategy will explain the set of activities that needs to be done in pursuit of the long-term goal. In simple terms, you should work through the following questions:

- Where are we now?
- Where do we want to go?
- How do we get there?

Each step will need to include:

- Ways of working effectively, given the opportunities and challenges of the environment/context that you work in.
- The allocation of the resources you have available.
- How to manage relationships between stakeholders, and the network you work in.
- Tailored messages to target specific audiences and groups who will help you in your goal.

Being strategic when planning your advocacy strategy is an important way to tackle it. Being strategic and systematic, in other words thinking through step by step what needs to be done, helps make sure you address each activity needed, and helps others to be aware of your plans and see how they can be involved.

You need to set the target of where you want to go, and then break the journey into sections. This can't be done without a considered, proactive approach. Strategic messages are necessary and important in helping achieve the change you want to see. It is critical to make these targeted to relevant audiences, producing effective communication and advocacy on your issue. It also helps to break down broad aims and bigger goals into more manageable steps.

It's up to you whether it's useful to discuss and review your strategy each month, or every couple of months, according to the timeline you develop and what your ultimate goal is. Advocacy strategies are not straightforward in their design and implementation and will need changing and correcting as you go along, as the context and environment you work in can change too. You will need to review and rework some activities and actions as you begin actual implementation. This is to make sure you are addressing the full range of issues as best you can, and are not leaving anyone out, or failing to address the reality in the group or community you are working in. We will now go through a suggested template that includes examples of each piece of the puzzle you need to develop to help shape your strategy.

Using a template to help you map out your advocacy plans

We will now go through a template that we suggest you use when developing your advocacy strategy and planning your activities. This includes examples of each piece of the puzzle you need to develop to help shape your strategy.

- Start by completing your goal in the top row – this is the ultimate change you want to achieve through your work.
- Next, add in your objectives in the far left column. Try to have three to five objectives you want to achieve through your work.
- Working from left to right through each column, brainstorm ideas such as activities needed and who can do them together in your group and include them in each section.
- If you managed to complete the gender analysis we went through earlier, refer to it here. It and any other research and analysis you have done will help you determine who your targets are, what will be realistic time frames, and what the possible solutions could be.
- Read the examples included in the table if you get stuck or if you need more inspiration.

Here are some questions to help you choose possible activities in your advocacy strategy:

1. What are the personality traits of your target or targets; what are their likes and dislikes and what interests them? What do you know about their work and how you can grab their attention? Think about what activities or tactics have worked before with them to make them notice or that got them interested, or how best to reach out to them directly. For example, if your target is a quiet politician who does not like big attention or the media, then a short report showing clear evidence about what works to end child marriage and why this issue is important will be more appropriate and relevant to target them than a big protest outside their office or a petition.
2. Do you have a budget for your activities? If not, then organising an event, with associated costs such as refreshments, venue hire etc., may be unrealistic. Think about possible things you can do that don't cost money that you don't have budget for: for example, involving the media often doesn't have a cost. Or if the activity is essential, then consider working with a partner to do this together; this can help cut back on costs or they might be able to help with extra budget support.
3. How much time do you really have to give to this? Be realistic about how much time you can actually spend on this and what you are aiming to achieve.

1. Example of a completed advocacy strategy template

Goal: This is a short aspirational description of what you want to achieve in the long term, or the “big picture” you want to achieve through your work or your intervention.

Example: To reduce the number of child marriages by 25% in two villages in one year.

Objectives	Targets	Allies	Activities	Resources	Possible risk/s	Time frame	Who is responsible?	Success criteria
What do you want to achieve? What is the ultimate change you want to see?	Who are the most important people you need to target or influence to achieve the change you want to see?	Who are the people who you need to work with and who will help you in your work?	What steps or actions will you need to take to achieve each goal and for you to be successful?	What will you need to actually achieve your goal? If you will need money or budget, be clear about how much and where this will come from.	What are the risks, negative impacts or challenges that could result from your work on this issue? Also think about what gender issues are involved.	Be very clear about what steps need to be taken, what order they need to be taken in, and when they need to be done by.	Be clear who leads on which specific task, and what their role is in making sure it is completed.	How will you know if you achieved your goals, and what do you need to track your status to achieve what you need to?
Host a radio discussion on effects of child marriage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Local education officers Police chief and other officers Community members 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Local media Local teachers Police force 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Visit local radio station to pitch idea Speak to cousin who knows a radio DJ and ask his advice for how to pitch this and how to structure the discussion 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Transport money Make sure young women are part of the show/panel 	Local community are hostile to views, so invite elder to be on show	In two months: completed by the end of February	Peter: to speak to DJ or radio host Selina: to draft script and main talking points	Radio talk show is completed

2. Template for your advocacy strategy: to use in your groups

Goal:

Objectives	Targets	Allies	Activities	Resources	Possible risk/s	Time frame	Who is responsible?	Success criteria
What do you want to achieve? What is the ultimate change you want to see?	Who are the most important people you need to target or influence to achieve the change you want to see?	Who are the people who you need to work with and who will help you in your work?	What steps or actions will you need to take to achieve each goal and for you to be successful?	What will you need to actually achieve your goal? If you will need money or budget, be clear about how much and where this will come from.	What are the risks, negative impacts or challenges that could result from your work on this issue? Also think about what gender issues are involved.	Be very clear about what steps need to be taken, what order they need to be taken in, and when they need to be done by.	Be clear who leads on which specific task, and what their role is in making sure it is completed.	How will you know if you achieved your goals, and what do you need to track your status to achieve what you need to?

Designing your message

A message tells your target audiences what they should do to help to achieve your goal: what they are being asked to do, why it is worth doing, and the positive impact of getting involved.

A message should look at:

- What you want to achieve.
- Why you want to achieve it (and why others should want to achieve it as well).
- How you plan to achieve it.
- What specific action you want the audience to take.

Messages should:

- Persuade and motivate people, make them feel inspired about how they can make a change.
- Create awareness about the issue, and make people care about why this is important.
- Create a sense of injustice in order to mobilise support: tell people why they should care.
- Get the media and important influencers in your community interested and involved.
- Have impact and stand out from other “communications clutter” that people are bombarded with every day.

After developing your advocacy strategy, it is important to identify key messages. These are short statements that explain your mission and goal, the change you want to see or achieve, and how you want to achieve this. A message clearly tells your target audience/s what the issue is, what they are being asked to do/need to do to help achieve this, why it is worth doing, and the positive impact of such action.

A strong overarching statement or message is important to hold your advocacy strategy together. If you have too many messages, or they are vague or too complex, they might not grab the attention of your target audience or have any lasting impact. This doesn't have to be just one sentence, but do try to be short and to the point to keep the attention of your targets.

Your messages should:

- Persuade and motivate people, make them feel inspired about how they can make a change.
- Create awareness about the issue, and make people care about why this is important.
- Create a sense of emotion around your issue. For example, getting people to be aware of the injustice, or the bad causes of child marriage, will help to mobilise support. You need to tell them why they should care.
- Get the media and important influencers in your community interested and wanting to get involved.
- Have impact and stand out from other “communications clutter” that people are bombarded with every day. Everyone faces so much in the news and on all forms of media – try to make your message simple but strong to stand out from the rest.

A message should include:

- A core statement that explains your central idea or the cause of the problem. It outlines why change is so important, and what your ultimate goal is. Your main goal is ultimately what you want to achieve through your advocacy, so all stakeholders need to understand and get that straight away.
- Some examples of evidence to support the statement, with easy-to-understand facts and figures.
- Tailored language that will appeal to your main target audiences. For example, a real-life example of the situation you are drawing attention to and its impact helps to attract attention and get people to understand, as this adds a human face when communicating on your issue.
- What actions need to take place, and what your audience can do to contribute to change, so that a solution to the problem can be reached.



Effective messages

Effective messages:

- Should summarise the change you want to bring.
- Should be short and simple.
- Tailored to the audience.
- Should include deadline of when you want to achieve your goal/objective.
- Include why change is important.
- Should be memorable.
- Should combine emotional and rational messaging.
- It's important to discuss and think through which messages will be most effective.
- Working with different types of media will be critical to help you get your message across to the targets you want to connect with.

Section 2 of the presentation: What makes a good message?

Communications, or how you get your message across, is a critical part of your advocacy work. It's important to think through which messages will be most effective for you to make your case, especially for your different target groups. Brainstorming and discussing together helps to make sure everyone on your team or in your group is on the same page and has the same understanding. Working together, especially on quite challenging activities like creating your messages, really helps to create powerful communication.

Effective messages:

- Should summarise the change you want to bring.
- Should be short and simple.
- Tailored to the audience.
- Should include deadline of when you want to achieve your goal/objective.
- Include why change is important.
- Should be memorable.
- Should combine emotional and rational messaging.
- It's important to discuss and think through which messages will be most effective.

Below are some useful tips from the Plan International Toolkit on how to create powerful messages. It encourages activists to think about how a good message will help you connect with the groups you are targeting or need to engage. There are three areas you should target to get people thinking and acting on your cause.

- Their head: this is the intellectual, intelligent messaging that will make them think, become aware or learn about something that they didn't know about before, and what the consequences or impact of that negative trend is.
- Their heart: this is more emotional and personal, and makes them feel something strongly enough to make them want to act.
- And lastly their hands: this shows them in simple language and ways what they can do or what actions they can take to help contribute to change and help with your cause.
- Don't forget though – messages should always be short and to the point.



1. Appeal to the heart.
Why should they care?
Communicate the need and what needs to change.

2. Appeal to the hands.
What can they do?
What are you asking of your target audience?

3. Appeal to the head.
What can change?
With inspiring examples and strong ideas of what's possible.

Section 3 of the presentation: Working with the media

Working with the media is essential to any good advocacy or campaign initiative. This includes all types of media – more traditional forms as well as new platforms such as social media. Working with different types of media will be critical to help you get your message across to the targets you want to connect with, and will help spread your message to a broader audience. Consider the following:

- Building a list of relevant media contacts, including youth-focused radio stations and TV channels and personalities – they can be strong allies.
- Writing articles about your issue and submitting them to your local or national newspapers.
- Talking on community radio shows is another important way to get your message across and get your voice heard.
- Creating your own platforms to amplify your voice: this could include activities such as public theatre performances, doing street art, creating self-published newsletters or blogs online. There are so many options for you.
- Do some research about how other organisations have managed to create successful messaging and campaigns.

Module 4: Together, we are stronger!

Module 4 - Session 1

The riskier side of activism



Objective

To understand the idea of risk and how you can work to limit any risks during your activism work.



Session outline

- Introducing the concept of risk for a young advocate
- How to assess and prevent risks

Activity	Time allocated	Outline
1	5 mins	Introduction
2	5 mins	Energiser
3	20 mins	Trainer presentation: What do we mean by risk, managing risks and safeguarding youth activists
4	20 mins	Group work: Assessing risk
5	10 mins	Trainer presentation: Risk assessment and how we do it
6	10 mins	Group work: Risks
7	10 mins	Trainer presentation: The power of partnership – working together for change
8	10 mins	Group work: Benefits and challenges of working together
9	10 mins	Conclusion

What do we mean by risk, managing risks and safeguarding youth activists

The session aims to introduce possible challenges and opportunities for youth engaging in adult-led spaces, and possible difficulties they could face as young activists working on such complex issues as child marriage.

Young people have unique and important views and ideas on issues that impact their lives. They are best placed to know what is best for them and are creative about how to solve issues. So decisions affecting them directly or indirectly must be taken in close consultation with them. In addition, when youth are listened to and play a leading role in society, they develop competences and skills that improve their self-esteem, wellbeing and prospects. You have an important role to play in making sure people listen to you and are taking you and your views seriously, all because you are strong as a powerful young activist calling for a better future!

But being a youth activist does come with potential obstacles or challenges, and it is not always easy work. Adults often hold power over youth and end up making the decisions for them. Many people disregard working with you, as they “know better” than you because you are too young to understand. The result is that young people are not treated as equal partners. This is a sad reality, and one we need to work to change. There are steps that can help you create a space to be heard, and help you make a loud noise on this issue.

You are going to need to make an extra effort to make a space for your voice to be heard. By knowing about what possible risks or challenges are out there, and how you can prevent or reduce these, you can protect yourself, feel empowered and succeed as a young activist. By making sure you have simple but effective messages, and a clear plan for your advocacy, you will know what steps you need to take, who to target, and what activities you need to do to achieve the change you want to see in the world. By working together as a network or partnership, you can help establish a strong, united voice. This is why we hope this training will help show you some important tools and tips to be an amazing young activist!

Risks

A risk is something that exposes a person to harm, loss or danger. Risks are not the same for everyone. All individuals face different risks and can experience these at different levels, including particularly complex issues such as gender, age, disability, etc. It's important to assess risk, and the potential risks of any initiative – this could be an activity such as a meeting, right through to a whole project addressing child marriage.

When you start planning your activities, it's important you do a risk analysis first so that you fully understand the context you are working in, and the possible challenges you may face. A risk is a situation that exposes something or someone to danger, harm or loss. As an activist against child marriage, you will challenge rooted cultural beliefs, norms and values. So it's important that you take the time to map out potential risks, and decide on ways to limit these or the negative impact they could have on you, your peers or your work.

Potential risks you may face...

For youth activists:

- There are many people who have conservative views or opinions who will try to stop you in your work as they don't want to cause problems, challenge people, or just don't believe in what you are telling them.
- Backlash and resentment from community, religious or traditional leaders.
- Family members not understanding your views and resenting you trying to get them to stop this practice that is usually very much part of their traditions.
- Time spent on fighting child marriage can detract from other important activities such as your education, or seeking jobs, and could have a negative impact on your life and your capacity to do important tasks.

For young, unmarried girls:

- Increased risk of being forced into marriage by their parents.
- Frustration as they recognise inequality and want to see immediate change in their community, but are ultimately powerless to change this.
- Girls not being able to resist forced marriages, and having no alternatives or services to get help from.




For young women who are married:

- Potential abuse from husbands (this could be verbal, physical or sexual), especially as they become more knowledgeable about their rights and more outspoken against the practice.
- Community criticism or the retaliation of girls and young women who openly question why they are married.
- Many will struggle balancing family demands and expectations at home with their ability to help with advocacy activities.
- Reliving the trauma of violence if they choose to share their experiences with the group. This is especially a risk if they are not able to access any support services as a result.
- Failed expectations if they are not fully supported after asking for help.
- There is potential danger from anyone who opposes their position or who feels threatened by their new role as activists, speaking out for change.

Risks

A risk is a situation that exposes something or someone to danger, harm or loss. It can be avoided by doing a risk analysis and taking the right measures. As a child marriage activist, you will challenge often deeply held cultural belief systems and community values, which will pose a risk for you.

Risk is made up of two parts: the probability of something going wrong, and the negative consequences if it does.



This may sound scary or overwhelming, but don't worry! There are many different ways you can protect yourself as a young advocate for change. The United Nations have many conventions to protect activists calling for a better future, including rights of freedom of association and expression. Check your country's constitution and laws to make sure you know what laws and policies can protect you legally too. Working together as a group helps to make your voice stronger and louder, by showing unity in numbers, which is a really important way to protect each other. Don't forget to ask for help from people you work with or in your community! You are not alone in dealing with risks by yourself.

Risk assessment and how we do it

A risk assessment is a tool that helps you to think through possible risks and challenges that could arise and their impacts – all in a systematic and well thought through way. It will also help you think through how you can go about limiting these possible risks and what you can do to prevent or stop them. See the table below for details, including an example of how to complete it.

Risk assessment

- Risk assessment register is a tool to think through possible risks and their impacts.
 - Use the example risk assessment template that we have included in your participant guide to help you go through what possible risks you may face. Start with the far left column, and ask what potential risks you have for each activity in your strategy plan. Refer back to your strategy plan itself.
 - Discuss and complete the other four columns in turn.
 - Prioritise risks by assessing which are more likely to happen as well as which are potentially more severe than others, as these should be your priority focus.
 - Do not go ahead if the risk is high and potential severity and impact are also high (for example, if physical or verbal abuse or injury is very likely). Also if there are no support services and/or partner organisations that you can align with.
-

1. Example of a risk register

Potential risk/threat?	What could happen?	How can you limit the risk?	Who is responsible for avoiding it?	When do the measures need to be taken by?
E.g. Community backlash.	Religious leader shuns you, or is very aggressive.	Create a safe, open dialogue space to discuss points clearly and without anger or retaliation. For example, this could be as part of a radio show. Speak with the people who are likely to be problematic before the show.	Hope and Jacob	One week before the show.

2. Now it's your turn

Potential risk/threat?	What could happen?	How can you limit the risk?	Who is responsible for avoiding it?	When do the measures need to be taken by?

To use this tool you should:

- Start doing a risk assessment or register well in advance, before you are planning an activity.
- Ideally, brainstorm the risks as a group to make sure that you have covered all possibilities that each group may face.
- Begin with the far left column, and ask what potential risks you have for each activity in your strategy plan.
- Discuss and complete the other four columns.
- Prioritise risks by assessing which are more likely to happen and which are potentially more severe than others.

You should NOT go ahead if:

- The likelihood of a risk and potential severity and impact are high (for example, if physical or verbal abuse or injury is very likely).
- There are no support services and/or partner organisations that you can seek advice and support from.



NOTE

Questions to consider for peer educators or those responsible for outreach in communities

1. What are local attitudes to child marriage?
2. What are the existing roles, norms and stereotypes for girls, boys, young women and men?
3. How could your intervention affect different people in the community?
4. Who (individuals or groups) may oppose your work?
5. What is your strategy to address this?

Example situation for a risk assessment

A group of six young people (two girls and four boys) from Sierra Leone has set up a project that aims to raise awareness on the impacts of child marriage in their country. These six young people are the main team that developed the project and were responsible for its management, with the help of another youth worker. The group is going into a community that they have not been to before to do some grassroots awareness raising on child marriage prevention with young girls and boys. The area they are visiting is remote and the community has not had much contact with outside organisations. The area is also prone to extreme weather conditions during the month that they are visiting. A donor is visiting the community along with the group to observe their work and will be doing a report.

The power of partnership – working together for change

One important way to limit risks or challenges to your work, and to you as a young activist, is to find people working on the same issue as you and join forces to have a stronger voice together. A coalition or a partnership is a group of people from different organisations, or within a community group, who join up to work together to achieve a common aim. They are formed for a limited or indefinite time, and can vary in size. They exist to bring broader attention and action to a large goal that affects many people. They generally have more impact than individual organisations because they can reach more people, access more resources and bring different perspectives. They are often led by a co-ordinator and/or a core executive team. We believe you are louder and stronger when you work together.

Working with coalitions or in groups

Creating coalitions or partnerships/advocacy groups is the process of building relations with organisations or people that have the same goal as you, and will work with you to achieve this shared vision. Advocacy work can be made much stronger through coalitions that create platforms for organisations to share ownership of common goals. Organising in a coalition is an important strategic step to help make activists' voices louder, and helps to put increased pressure on your targets, such as those who make decisions.

The benefits of working together include:

- Exchange of information, skills, experience, materials, opportunities for collaboration etc.
- Collective voice that can speak out as a united force and spread messages more widely.
- Enlarged networks and connections: you can achieve more together than you can alone.
- Greater access to decision-makers or your key targets.
- Increased access to human and financial resources.
- Protection for members who may not be able to take action alone, particularly when operating in a hostile or difficult environment.
- Reduced duplication of effort and improved efficiency.
- Enhanced credibility, influence and impact.

- Diversity can strengthen a campaign by broadening perspective and bringing innovation. It can also assist outreach by appealing to a wider population base with differing priorities and interests.
- Personal and professional development of individuals and organisations: peer support, encouragement, motivation and professional recognition.

Working in a coalition does also come with some challenges:

- Reputation impact on individual organisations if the coalition's work is not successful.
- Loss of autonomy.
- Conflicts of interest.
- Drain on resources.
- Time-consuming as you have to bring everyone together and develop consensus as a group.
- Diverging opinions impairing or slowing down decision-making and implementation.

Module 5: Monitoring progress, sharing and learning



Objective

Understand the value of evaluation and tracking evidence of the impact of your work.



Session outline

- Learn why monitoring and evaluation is useful
- Know how and what type of information you need to collect to effectively monitor your project
- Learn how to share lessons learnt and ways to make the initiative sustainable in the longer term

Activity	Time allocated	Outline
1	5 mins	Introductions
2	5 mins	Open discussion: How to get the information you need
3	10 mins	Discussion: What is monitoring and evaluation?
4	5 mins	Trainer presentation: Monitoring and evaluating your work
5	10 mins	Trainer presentation: Collecting your information
6	30 mins	Group work: Using an M&E template
7	10 min	Open discussion: Sharing your experience
8	5 mins	Trainer presentation: Knowledge sharing
9	20 mins	Concluding discussion and end of training

Gathering information and building your evidence base

Have a think about the following questions:

- What information do you need to collect to know if your project is a success?
- How can you collect this information?
- How will you share this important information (especially around your impact) with other people to show off your work?
- What do you know about monitoring and evaluation (M&E)?
- Why do you think it is important to do M&E?

Monitoring and evaluation – often called M&E – is a set of activities or a process that helps you to assess your impact and achieve better results from your projects or your activism. It describes a way of tracking your work and what changes take place through what you are doing, both short term and longer term. It also provides a way for you to check that what you are doing, the activities you put on and the impact you are having is actually positive and is helping to improve the situation you are trying to influence. If not, you can then change what you are doing midway and strengthen your work.

It's M&E time!

Monitoring and evaluation (M&E) is a set of activities or a process that helps you to assess your impact and achieve better results from your projects or your activism.


Monitoring is about regularly gathering information about whether your project is having a positive or negative impact. This helps to limit risks and show gaps that you may not have noticed when planning your work.

Evaluation is generally a more in-depth assessment of your project to measure the degree of success you have achieved. This can be done at a midpoint in the project, but usually takes place at the end of a project to look at all the work that has been done, what went well and what needs to be improved.

Why monitor and evaluate?

- To understand whether your activities and resources were effective.
- To help identify problems that occurred and find solutions.
- To help work out if the way an activity was planned is the most appropriate way of solving the problem, or offer guidance on improving planning in the future.

Remember: Activists should always be able to say what they did, why, what impact they had, and what they learned.



Monitoring is about regularly gathering information on whether your project is having a positive or negative impact. This helps to limit risks and show gaps that you may not have noticed when planning your work. It also allows you to change your approach or how you do things, or even what activities you are doing, while you are working so that you can improve your work, and ultimately your impact.

Evaluation is generally a more in-depth assessment of your project to measure the degree of success you have achieved. This can be done at a midpoint in the project, but usually takes place at the end of a project to look at all the work that has taken place, what went well and what needs to be improved. Gathering evidence is really important for your work to prove that you are making a change, and to prove that change itself is possible. Showing that you are having an impact will help strengthen your voice, your advocacy, and get more people to listen to you.

Why should I bother to monitor and evaluate?

- Monitoring and evaluation will help you PROVE if you are making a difference and achieving success.
- Monitoring will help you IMPROVE your work – it lets you review what is working, what isn't and allows you to change the way you are doing things.

More about M&E

- The information you collect for M&E does not always need to be formal or complicated.
- Asking questions is sometimes the best way of monitoring our work.
- Make it easy – choose methods that aren't time-consuming.
- Don't collect too much information – especially if you don't have time to use it.

Internal questions (for people involved in implementing the project) include:

- What did we learn?
- What went well? What could have been improved?
- What tactics were most successful?
- How have we managed to influence our targets?
- Did we anticipate all the risks?

External questions – for people we have tried to influence:

- What worked well from their point of view? And why?
- What could we improve? How?
- How did they view the overall success/ impact of the work?

Useful sources of information include:

- Simple surveys
- Statistics
- Interviews with key stakeholders
- Media
- Focus group discussions
- Regular review meetings with people involved in the project

Information that you choose to collect to learn if your project has been successful doesn't always need to be formal information or collected through formal ways. Sometimes personal perspectives and simply asking people for their opinions or insights can be the most valuable sources of information. Useful questions to ask each other as well as other actors involved in the project include:

Internal questions

- What did we learn?
- What went well? What could have been improved?
- What tactics were most successful?
- How have we managed to influence our targets?
- Did we anticipate all the risks?

External questions – for people we have tried to influence

- What worked well from their point of view? And why?

- What could we improve? How?
- How did they view the overall success/impact of the work?

Useful sources of information and ways of monitoring your work include:

- Simple surveys
- Statistics
- Interviews with key stakeholders
- Media
- Focus group discussions
- Regular review meetings with people involved in the project

TOP TIPS

- Make M&E easy. Avoid anything too time-consuming.
- Don't collect too much information. Stick to the essentials.

We are now going to go through an example of a monitoring and evaluation template (see below) and how you can input information you need to be tracking and monitoring into the template. This template is a useful way of planning what activities you will need to do and what you need to be tracking so that you can test if you are making the impact and the change that you want to see through your work:

- Avoid time-consuming method.
- Only collect essential information.

It would be useful if you have completed the table based on the strategy that you developed previously in Module 3: Session 2

Monitoring and evaluation template

Objectives What do you collectively want to achieve? What are your main goals?	Activities/ Outputs What will you do? What are your main outputs?	Resources/ Inputs What tangible things need to happen to help you achieve your goal?	How will you measure if it's achieved? What tools, information sources, or indicators do you need to collect to see if you have achieved your goal? When and how will you collect them?	What difference was made in the short term? What were your short-term outcomes and achievements?	Possible risk/s What are the risks, negative impacts or challenges that could result from your work on this issue? Also think about what gender issues are involved.	What difference was made over a longer period of time? What was the evident long-term impact (for example, one year on)? Longer term, have you seen any changes?	Were there any risks or assumptions involved? Be clear who leads on which specific task, and what their role is in making sure it is completed.

Knowledge sharing

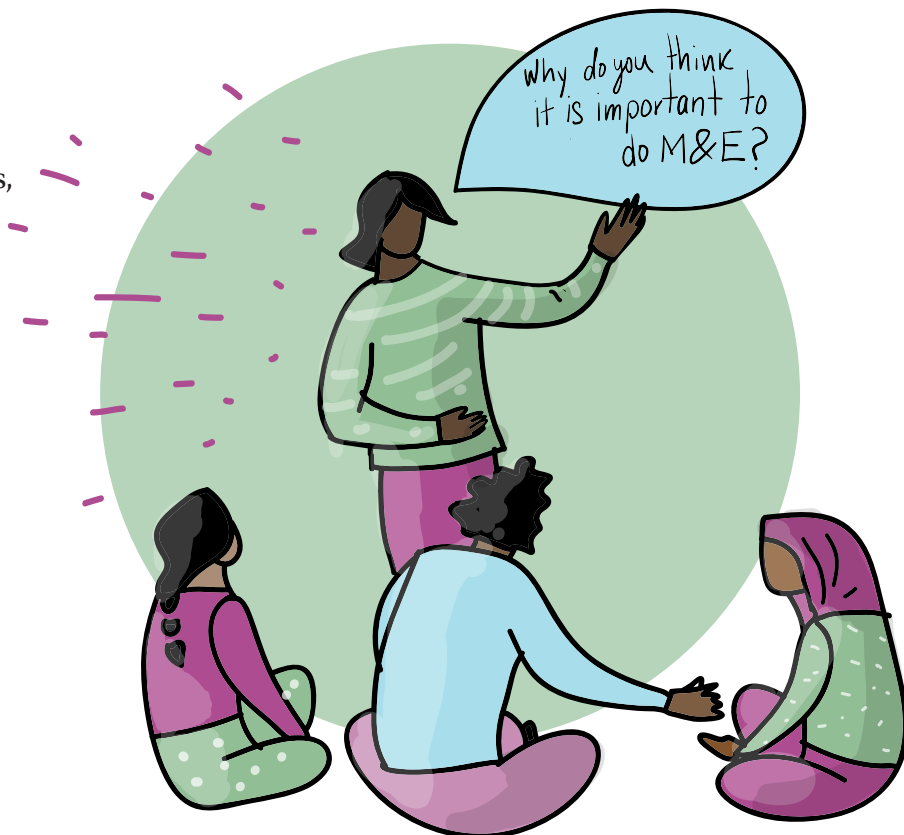
So it's not enough to monitor your work and evaluate it at the end – it's also best practice to share your findings (positive or negative) with other people, especially those you work with and people you have connected with or involved in your work. Think about how you would go about sharing your learning and experiences from your work with others in your network – people you have been working with, or new parties who could be useful in your work, or interested in working with you.

- Knowledge and experience sharing helps strengthen our work.
- Share lessons through informal discussions (for example, at a youth group meeting or at a school) or online (through email groups, newsletters or Facebook groups) and more widely with other *Girls Not Brides* members.

The next step is to share what you have learned and experienced with allies and peers, particularly those you have been working with. Sharing the lessons and experience you have learned, including failures and challenges you have experienced, is vital as it helps everyone strengthen their work.

You can share lessons through:

- Informal discussions (for example, at a youth group meeting or at a school).
- Online (through email groups, newsletters or Facebook groups).
- More widely with other *Girls Not Brides* members by contacting the *Girls Not Brides* secretariat or any national coalitions working on similar issues, including *Girls Not Brides* National Partnerships.
- Documenting your work in a short case study.



Congratulations! Now is your time to stand up and speak out!

You have now completed your training. Well done for all your hard work.

We can achieve our common vision of a world where every child can choose the future they want for themselves, a world where all young people have a strong voice to speak out against injustice and inequality. Together we can end child marriage.

Don't forget to stay in touch with other people in your group and help to support each other in your work.



Key concepts explained

- Abuse:** The violation of an individual's civil and/or human rights. It can be a single act or repeated acts. It can be physical, sexual or emotional. It also includes acts of neglect or failure to act against the abusive action.
- Activist:** A person who actively works to push for some kind of social and/or political change. There are many different types of activists and many ways to advocate for change, and not every activist would use this term to describe themselves. Girls Not Brides uses this term to mean being a strong supporter of a socio-political cause.
- Advocacy:** set of activities to bring about changes in policy or practice aimed at specific audiences such as decision-makers. Decision-makers can be government officials, traditional leaders, teachers or other influential people. Advocacy is based on reliable and documented evidence.
- Brainstorm:** To hold a group discussion to produce ideas and plans collectively.
- Child:** Any person under the age of 18.
- Child marriage:** Any formal or informal union where one or both parties are under the age of 18. It affects girls more than boys. It is also referred to as early marriage.
- Child rights:** Children, as well as adults, have human rights. Children also have specific rights, such as the right to special protection because of their extra vulnerability to exploitation and abuse. The main international human rights treaty on children's rights is the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC). The CRC is the most widely ratified human rights treaty in the world.
- Coalitions:** Similar to alliances, coalitions have shared objectives and work together on joint actions. They may be more formal in structure and have staff to co-ordinate the leadership of the group. They usually involve longer-term relationships among the members.
- Forced marriage:** Any marriage which occurs without full and free consent of one or both parties and/or where one or both parties is unable to end or leave the marriage, including as a result of intense social or family pressure.
- Gender:** Refers to social differences and relations between men and women, not the biological difference between them.
- Gender equality:** The equal rights, responsibilities, opportunities, treatment and value given to women and men, girls and boys in life and at work. Gender equality means that people of all ages and both sexes have equal chances to succeed in life.

Human rights:	The basic rights and freedoms that belong to every person in the world, from birth until death, which are based on the United Nations' Declaration of Human Rights of 1948. They apply to everyone, everywhere. No one individual human right is more important than any other.
Informal unions:	This is a union between two people who live together, but are not legally married.
Patriarchy:	A social system where males hold most of the power in all levels and areas of society. Most countries around the world have patriarchal structures. In the family, this is when fathers hold authority over women and children.
Physical abuse:	Involves physical harm to a person such as hitting, shaking, burning, throwing, poisoning or suffocation.
Policy:	Is a set of principles to guide and frame decisions and achieve outcomes, usually led by government; these are then to be implemented, often through a government-led action or national plan.
Sexual abuse:	The act of forcing a person or child into sexual activity against their will.
Social norms:	Rules of behaviour that are considered acceptable within a group or society. People who do not follow these norms may be negatively targeted by others. Such norms are often responsible for maintaining traditional practices.
Youth:	The period between childhood and adult age. Age definitions vary from culture to culture and in different contexts. Girls Not Brides recommends that this guide is used by young people aged at least 15 up to to 24 years old. It is not intended for use by younger children.
Youth-adult partnership:	Relations between young people and adults whereby each contributes different perspectives and skills towards achieving a common goal. It is a relationship of two equals in which the contributions of each party are valued.
Youth engagement/ participation:	Is the principle and practice of proactively engaging and working together with young women and men on issues that directly affect them. "Nothing about us, without us!"
Youth-led organisation:	An organisation where young people play a leading role in guiding the internal work, such as in management, strategic development or other aspects of the organisation.
Youth-serving organisation:	Targets youth as the primary recipient of its work. It may not necessarily include young people in strategic decision-making positions or in its internal governance (though it may do so).




***Girls Not Brides* is a global partnership of over 1000 civil society organisations from more than 95 countries committed to ending child marriage and enabling girls to fulfil their potential.**



The Global Partnership
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