



IFMSA

International Federation of
Medical Students' Associations

IFMSA Policy Document Abolishing Child Marriage

Proposed by IFMSA Team of Officials

Adopted at to the 69th IFMSA Online General Assembly August Meeting 2020.

Policy Commission

- Mauli Mehta - MSAI India - mehtamauli98@gmail.com
- Sama Eleraki (IFMSA Egypt)- samaeleraki@gmail.com
- Eglė Janušonytė – Liaison Officer for Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights including HIV and AIDS, ira@ifmsa.org



IFMSA

International Federation of
Medical Students' Associations

Policy Statement

Introduction

Child marriage is defined as any formal or informal marriage, where one or both parties are under the age of 18. Non-reliable sources of income, lack of equal opportunities, multiple children, and a lack of education as well as cultural and ethnic factors are a few causes for inherent poverty; one of the major driving forces behind child marriage. Preventing child marriage is not only essential to ensuring the rights of the individual children concerned, but is also fundamental to breaking the cycle of intergenerational poverty and to achieving the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

IFMSA position

The IFMSA condemns all forms of child marriage, as it believes that child marriage is a human rights violation that perpetuates the cycle of poverty and is a barrier to sustainable development. The IFMSA affirms the need to combat intersectional and multiple forms of gender inequality. Thus, we need to address and eliminate child marriage in order to benefit the health and wellbeing of individuals and communities worldwide.

Calls to action

Therefore, IFMSA calls on:

1. Governments to:
 - a. To make the legal age of marriage as 18 years, even with consent.
 - b. Adopt laws and policies that promote and protect the rights of women and children, stated in international declarations and conventions, especially the elimination of child marriage.
 - c. Develop and implement legislation supporting gender equality in social and healthcare settings with an intersectional perspective.
 - d. Train government officials and law enforcement officers to support the effective implementation and enforcement of the law and related policies
 - d. Develop laws and policies that Guarantee accessible, safe and quality education for children regardless of their marital status, along with addressing the factors that threaten families who don't stop the girls of the house from continuing with school
 - e. Allocate financial and social resources to address the medical treatment, rehabilitation and elimination of child marriage.
 - f. Provide shelter, legal support, assistance services, information and other necessary resources on where girls can find help if they are in danger.
 - g. Create mechanisms that aim to improve documentation of birth and marriage registration to help identify victims and increase the outreach of governmental schemes.
2. Governments, NGOs and International Agencies to:
 - a. Recognize child marriage as a public health issue and a violation of human rights, that affects all areas of society.
 - b. Establish measures to prevent child marriage as a central part in development programmes related to education, health, economic empowerment and other issues.
 - c. Develop evidence-based strategies to address and prevent the occurrence and consequences of child marriage.
 - d. Make the elimination of child marriage a priority in international health and development discussions.
 - e. Raise awareness on the topic of child marriage, including causes, implications, consequences and methods of prevention.
 - f. Address underlying factors which perpetuate child marriage, which include, but are not limited to, poverty, societal/cultural norms and limited access to education.
 - g. Promote the empowerment of children and youth, to enable them to affirm their rights and speak out on the issue of child marriage.
 - h. Ensure the participation of key stakeholders in prevention programmes in particular young people and community stakeholders such as parents, religious and community leaders to strengthen and implement policies and laws.



IFMSA

International Federation of
Medical Students' Associations

- i. Conduct and promote research on the epidemiology and the consequences of child marriage.
3. Healthcare Sector to:
 - a. Support and provide appropriate sexual and reproductive health information and services, including family planning services, for young girls (especially vulnerable populations) to prevent early and frequent pregnancies.
 - b. Provide sensitive and safe psychosocial support and medical treatment for victims of child marriage.
 - c. Ensure that essential and appropriate referral processes are in place as well as connection with government agencies, NGOs and community organisations that specialise in the recognition and rehabilitation of victims of child marriage.
 - d. Train all healthcare providers to effectively identify, manage and prevent cases of child marriage, including ongoing professional development training.
 4. Medical faculties and Teaching Institutions to:
 - a. Incorporate the prevention, recognition and how to address issues of child marriage within the curriculum.
 - b. Ensure that faculty development programs are instilled to support teachers in presenting topics relating to child marriage to their students adequately.
 - c. Incorporate curriculum content that examines gender equality as a determinant of health, the relationship between gender norms and child marriage, and the importance of gender equity in health care with an intersectional perspective.
 5. Medical Students & National Medical Students Associations to:
 - a. Participate in and develop awareness, education campaigns and activities on the topic of child marriage, causes, implications, consequences and ways of prevention.
 - b. Acquire evidence-based knowledge pertaining to child marriage and its relation to health.
 - c. Acknowledge intersectional and multiple forms of gender inequality present socially and systemically within medical schools and institutions.
 - d. Develop necessary skills and resources for the prevention of child marriage, while increasing the visibility of these inequalities.
 - e. Identify stakeholders and work actively on advocating for the elimination and prevention of child marriage.



IFMSA

International Federation of
Medical Students' Associations

Position Paper

Background Information

For centuries around the world, child marriage has been practised cross cutting religions, ethnicities and cultures. It is estimated that 1 in 5 girls are married globally (1) and 1 in 21 males (2) are married globally below the age of 18 - a child, according to The Convention on the Rights of the Child (3). Child marriage is defined as a "formal marriage or informal union, by one or both parties, before age 18" (1).

There are several international conventions and agreements that address the issue of child marriage. The United Nations Human Rights Council adopted a resolution in 2015, to strengthen efforts to prevent and eliminate child, early and forced marriage, that recognized child marriage as a violation of human rights. Other international agreements related to child marriage are the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women(4)(5)(6).

Child marriage produces poor health outcomes in girls, including higher rates of sexual and reproductive health issues, malnutrition and depression (7). Girls in such unions often face physical, sexual and emotional violence. The consequences of child marriage are not only limited to health of the child but extends to the community as well. Preventing child marriage is not only essential to ensuring the rights of the individual child concerned, but is also fundamental to breaking the cycle of intergenerational poverty and to achieving the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).(8)

Discussion

Prevalence

Globally, 21% of young women aged (20-24) were married before the age of 18; out of those, 5 % were married before the age of 13. It is estimated that 650 Million girls and women alive today entered into union before their 18th birthday with 12 Million girls under 18 years married each year. (9,10) While child marriage disproportionately impacts girls, the practice is a rights violation to both sexes. Worldwide, 115 million boys and men were married before age 18 and in the 15 countries with the highest rates of child marriage, 8.4 to 27.9 % of men aged (20-24) were married before the age of 18.(11,12) Child marriage is a common international phenomenon, not limited by cultures, religions or ethnicities. The highest levels of child marriage are found in Sub-Saharan Africa, where 35% of all young women joined union before 18 years of age, followed by South Asia (30%). It is also commonly observed in Latin America and Caribbean (24 %) and the Middle East and North Africa (17 %). Incidents have been reported in certain European and North American communities among girls from disadvantaged populations as well. (9,10,12)

Vulnerable Populations

There are certain factors that predispose girls towards child marriage. The girls at greatest risk of early marriage are often uneducated, from poor families living in rural areas or marginalized groups such as refugees.

Poverty is one of the major driving forces behind child marriage. Non-reliable sources of income, lack of equal opportunities, multiple children and lack of education are a few causes for inherent poverty. "Marrying off" a daughter reduces the financial burden on a family to feed, clothe and educate her. In certain communities, there is a monetary transaction referred to as dowry or bride price which benefits the family. Girls married at a younger age commission less dowry than older girls thereby encouraging their early marriage.(13) Globally, 54% of females in the poorest households marry as children, compared to 16% in the richest. (14)

Across all regions, girls who live in rural areas are more likely to become child brides than their urban counterparts. This difference is especially striking in some countries in West and Central Africa, Latin America and the Caribbean, where the prevalence of child marriage in rural areas is about twice the level found in urban areas according to the UNFPA.(15)



IFMSA

International Federation of
Medical Students' Associations

Girls with no to little education are three times as likely to marry before 18 as those with secondary or higher education.(7) This disparity is greatest in Sub-Saharan Africa where girls are five times as likely to marry as children than those with secondary or higher education.(7)

Another predisposing factor for child marriage is crises and humanitarian situations. Recent studies found that 7 out of the 20 countries with the highest levels of child marriage face humanitarian crises.(16) In times of crisis, families use child marriage to cope with economic instability, and to protect girls from the increased risks of sexual and gender-based violence, and/or to protect the honour of the family in response to the disruption of social networks and routines (17). For instance, in Syrian refugee communities in Jordan, child marriage has rapidly increased. Between 2011 and 2014, the rates of child marriages almost tripled, rising from 12% to just under 32%. (18)

Consequences of Child Marriage

Sexual and Reproductive health

Child marriage results in poor health outcomes in girls. Due to limited autonomy and access to family planning information and services, married teens are less likely to use contraceptives than their unmarried counterparts, not to mention the judgmental provider attitude that represents a barrier to their access to contraception. Married girls are also more likely to have unprotected sex than unmarried girls or married adult women, due to low negotiating power within their marriages. Because of these factors, child brides face higher risks of contracting sexually transmitted infections (STIs) and, in some settings, are more likely to be HIV positive.(8) Maternal mortality is 28 percent higher among females 15 to 19 than 20 to 24.(19) Of all adolescent pregnancies, 90 percent occur within marriage (20)(21). Early pregnancy among girls, whose bodies are not ready, often leads to medical complications, such as obstetric fistula and hemorrhaging.(22) Moreover, Child marriage often leads to girls dropping out of school, which limits their access to information and education about sexual and reproductive health and rights (23).

Mental health

Girls who are married at a young age can experience higher rates of malnutrition, isolation, and depression. Girls married early are often subjected to intimate partner violence, physical, sexual and emotional abuse. Girls who marry early are also more likely to believe that a husband is sometimes justified in beating his wife.(7) Child marriage was also associated with increased odds of suicidality. (24)

Health of infants

Children born to mothers under the age of 15 are more likely to suffer from low birth weight, undernutrition, and late physical and cognitive development. These children are also 2.5 times more likely to die before age 5 than those born to mothers 24 to 27. (7)

Economic and financial consequences

Child marriage produces subsequent losses to the economy of a society. Part-time work continues to be a predominantly female domain and is often, in view of persisting gender roles, the only solution to balancing work with family responsibilities. In many advanced economies, gender-specific career paths, characterized by more part-time work and career breaks for child care among women, and results in higher risk for old-age poverty among them. While often a prerequisite for women's labor market participation, part-time work arrangements can perpetuate gender roles, resulting in disadvantages in career development.(7)

Social and political consequences

Child marriage isolates women and decreases their participation in social and political environments. Social distancing decreases investment in community based decisions. Women's involvement in these decision making processes helps to ensure that community investments go towards women-friendly services. Research also shows that when women are involved in political decision-making, investments are more likely to be placed into social services, including those directly related to economic growth.(7)



IFMSA

International Federation of
Medical Students' Associations

Child marriage in reference to United Nations Sustainable Development Goals Agenda

Child marriage can directly or indirectly affect 8 Sustainable Development Goals (25) (26):

- Goal 1 : No poverty;
- Goal 2 : Zero hunger;
- Goal 3 : Good health and wellbeing;
- Goal 4 : Inclusive and quality education;
- Goal 5 : Gender equality;
- Goal 8 : Economic growth;
- Goal 10 : Reduced inequalities;
- Goal 16 : Peace, justice and strong institutions.

Child Marriage and Human Rights

The United Nations Human Rights Council unanimously adopted the first substantive resolution on child marriage in 2015, to strengthen efforts to prevent and eliminate child, early and forced marriage (CEFM). The resolution recognizes child marriage as a violation of human rights that has “wide ranging and adverse consequences on the enjoyment of human rights, such as the right to education, the right to the highest attainable standard of health, including sexual and reproductive health”, “that prevents individuals from living their lives free from all forms of violence”. Further, the resolution states that child marriage “helps to perpetuate the cycle of poverty” and is a “barrier to sustainable development”, making women more vulnerable to discrimination and abuse, which prevents their full participation within the sociopolitical and economical settings (27). There are several additional international conventions and agreements that address the issue of child marriage. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights (article 16.2), states that “Marriage shall be entered into only with the free and full consent of the intending spouses”. (5) The right to ‘free and full’ consent to marriage cannot be present in child marriage, when one of the parties involved lacks sufficient maturity to make an informed decision regarding a future partner. The right to protection from child marriage, is addressed in the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (article 16), stating that “The betrothal and the marriage of a child shall have no legal effect, and all necessary action, including legislation, shall be taken to specify a minimum age for marriage...”.(28) Marriage is not directly mentioned in the Convention on the Rights of the Child, however, links can be made between child marriage and the violation of other rights, the right to protection from all forms of abuse, and the right to be protected from harmful traditional practices, the right to health, the right to education, to name a few.(29) Further, child marriage is often addressed by the Committee on the Rights of the Child. There are a variety of ways in which an offender can gain access to children. For instance, abusers may seek out children on the streets, at the beach, in hotels, karaoke clubs and brothels. In countries where child marriage is common, families may accept money for their young girls and arrange the marriage for the length of the visitor’s stay, in certain countries where such marriages exist. Illegal adoptions by foreigners serve as another point of entry for sex offenders. (30) Other international agreements related to child marriage are the Convention on Consent to Marriage, Minimum Age for Marriage and Registration of Marriages, the Supplementary Convention on the Abolition of Slavery, the Slave Trade, and Institutions and Practices Similar to Slavery and the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child. (31) (32) (33)

Prevention of Child Marriage

Many non-governmental and governmental organizations have put different measures in place, both nationally and internationally, in order to achieve the prevention of child marriage (34). The Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 5 states, “Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls”. Some progress has been seen for the past few decades as less girls are forced into early child marriages. (35)

Tackling the underlying causes

There are several factors that predispose girls to child marriage such as poverty, non-reliable sources of income, lack of equal opportunities, lack of education and gender inequality (8). The best way to tackle the underlying causes is to identify them and develop mechanisms to prevent them, the most important mechanism being promotion of their education by supporting the development and participation of



IFMSA

International Federation of
Medical Students' Associations

adolescent girls. (36) (37). Quality Education is a powerful tool in child marriage prevention. A girl that knows her rights and the harmful effects of child marriage is less likely to agree to such practices (34). Educated girls are more likely to get healthier and wealthier and reinvest in their families' income which helps them deal with poverty and hence prevents early child marriages.(23) Educating parents is equally important as educating children which will help broaden their horizon in regards to the importance of educating their children.(38) There is also a need to raise awareness about the importance of equal rights and gender equality as per SDG 5. Globally, the prevalence of child marriage among boys is one sixth than that among girls. (39)

Prevention through Birth Registration

Enhanced registration of births has numerous benefits for children, granting them rights and protecting them from violations of their rights. For many children, the lack of birth registration is an enabling factor for violation of laws and policies that protect them, including those related to child marriage.(40) The absence of birth registration and recognition under the law puts girls at risk of not obtaining full judicial protection and encountering obstacles when seeking access to justice.(41) Today,171 million children under five are unregistered at birth, leaving them without a legal identity and legal protection, posing them vulnerable to rights abuse such as child marriages. (42) As birth certificates are required in order to establish that a person is of the legal age for marriage, undocumented births hinder judicial application of anti-child marriage laws. (43)

Prevention by Empowering Girls

Empowering girls is an important means of prevention of child marriage and is also highlighted in SDG 5 (25). Education in itself is an empowerment tool. Girls from societies where child marriage is prevalent are sometimes seen as economical burdens (21) and their early marriage is considered as a means of helping their families. Girl empowerment is the responsibility of the government, families and communities a girl belongs to. The communities and government can, for instance, provide access to alternatives to marriage, as well as opportunities outside of domestic work, such as education, work or savings and loan activities. (34) External organizations which believe in aiming to eliminate child marriage find barriers in reaching the vulnerable groups. To overcome this barrier, one can target community and religious leaders, for they can influence their communities to a higher extent in regards to child marriage. (34)

Medical assessment of the victims of child marriage

Health programming should target the unique needs of adolescents—married and unmarried—to ensure they have the information and resources to make informed decisions about their sexual and reproductive health and rights. This information often starts with basic facts about puberty, menstruation, pregnancy, and sex, through fertility awareness or body-literacy programmes. (44) In child protection cases, where a child is at risk of serious harm, the interests of the child override those of parents or carers. All doctors working with children, parents and other adults in contact with children should be able to recognise and know how to act upon signs that a child may be at risk of abuse. Programmes should address gender- and age related biases among providers so that they fully respect the reproductive desires of married girls, rather than reinforce the societal pressures often faced by young brides to prove fertility (44) When concerns about deliberate harm to children or young people have been raised, they must keep clear, accurate, comprehensive and contemporaneous notes. They must also be aware of, and have access to their local Area Child Protection Committee's Child Protection Procedure manual at their place of work. (45)

Psychosocial support for victims of child marriage.

Girls who run away from unhappy marriages need emergency support. Community based and women's groups provide the best services, but they often lack support from traditional institutions, are poorly funded, and may have to operate in secrecy – may be attacked for undermining cultural values. Some local NGOs working in this field have begun to assist such girls and women, but their efforts are generally confined to towns and cities. Those girls and young women who remain in their marriages can benefit from the support of others through peer counselling, local women's groups and so on.(46) Girls whose marriages have been prevented need some degree of emotional, moral, and financial support to be able to continue with



IFMSA

International Federation of
Medical Students' Associations

their studies and their lives in a normal way. It is important that their families do not treat them as a burden and that their own community and the larger society does not stigmatise them. To ensure this, the families and wider communities need to be sensitised and made part of the change-making process.(47) Often, while the girls themselves are happy that their wedding has been stopped or postponed, they continue to face the brunt of their family's anger at having lost money and pride. There are often extreme reactions from the family members, usually from one of the parents, that the girls have to deal with.(47)

Some factors stand out clearly: one is the need to work with the parents to address their fear of their girls becoming unprotected and falling prey to violence. This has to be addressed both at the level of creating a more protective environment for them, as also showing the parents how unprotected they become as a result of child marriage.

Benefits of the Prevention

There are numerous benefits to preventing child marriage, both on a local and international level. The underlying assumption behind the prohibition of child marriage is that if child marriages are prevented, the age of marriage can be raised, and girls can be retained in school longer and be protected. This would lead to empowerment of girls, and enable them to make their own life choices, thereby improving the status of girls and women in society as a whole.(47) The benefits include the prevention of early pregnancies and the many health challenges that are associated with it, such as obstructed labors and the resultant obstetric fistulas, stillbirths and the fatal maternal deaths (21).

A good quality gender sensitive and rights-based education is a powerful tool to end child marriage. Quality education is much broader than immediate academic learning outcomes, and includes a broad, rights-based approach to learning, including global citizenship and life skills such as comprehensive sexuality education. It is concerned with ensuring all children are learning in a child friendly, safe and inclusive environment that promotes gender equality and encourages all children to fulfil their capabilities. Quality education is grounded in respect for human rights and gender equity, is accessible to all children without discrimination, encourages all children to fulfil their capabilities, and includes mechanisms to prevent and respond to violence. A quality education is accountable to children through the participation of children, families and communities in school governance and decision-making. (40)



IFMSA

International Federation of
Medical Students' Associations

References:

1. UNICEF; Child Marriage; <https://www.unicef.org/protection/child-marriage>
2. UNICEF; Child Marriage Among Boys: A Global Overview of Available Data; 2019
<https://data.unicef.org/resources/child-marriage-among-boys-available-data/>
3. United Nations General Assembly, 20 November 1989, Convention on the Rights of the Child
4. United Nations Human Rights Council; Strengthening efforts to prevent and eliminate child, early and forced marriage; 2 July 2015
5. United Nations General Assembly; Universal Declaration of Human Rights; 10 December 1948
6. United Nations General Assembly; Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women; 3 September 1981
7. United States Agency for International Development; Child, Early and Forced Marriage Resource Guide; September 2015:
https://www.usaid.gov/sites/default/files/documents/1865/USAID_CEFM_Resource_Guide.PDF
8. United Nations; Progress of Goal Five in 2019: <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/sdg5>
9. United Nations Children's Fund, Child Marriage: Latest trends and future prospects, UNICEF, New York, 2018: [https://www.unicef.org/protection/files/Child_Marriage_data_brief_20June\(1\).pdf](https://www.unicef.org/protection/files/Child_Marriage_data_brief_20June(1).pdf)
10. State of the World's Children, 2019: https://www.unicef.org/media/63016/file/SOWC_2019.pdf
11. (Child marriage among boys in high-prevalence countries: an analysis of sexual and reproductive health outcomes: <https://bmcinthealthhumrights.biomedcentral.com/articles/10.1186/s12914-019-0212-8>
12. UNICEF; Data on Child Marriage: <https://data.unicef.org/topic/child-protection/child-marriage/>
13. UNFPA, Marrying Too Young: End Child Marriage, 2013 : <https://www.unfpa.org/sites/default/files/pub-pdf/MarryingTooYoung.pdf>
14. ResearchGate, Understanding and addressing child marriage A scoping study of available academic and programmatic literature for the 'Her Choice' Alliance, July 2016:
https://www.researchgate.net/profile/Esther_Miedema/publication/324862590_Understanding_and_addressing_child_marriage_A_scoping_study_of_available_academic_and_programmatic_literature_for_the_'Her_Choice'_Alliance/links/5ae8565745851588dd7fe4e3/Understanding-and-addressing-child-marriage-A-scoping-study-of-available-academic-and-programmatic-literature-for-the-Her-Choice-Alliance.pdf
15. United Nations Children's Fund, Ending Child Marriage: Progress and prospects, UNICEF, New York, 2014: https://www.unicef.org/media/files/Child_Marriage_Report_7_17_LR..pdf
16. Girls Not Brides ; Child Marriage in Humanitarian Settings, August 2018:
<https://www.girlsnotbrides.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/05/Child-marriage-in-humanitarian-settings.pdf>
17. Child, early and forced marriage in humanitarian settings Report of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, 2019:
<https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/G1911783.pdf>
18. UNICEF Child Marriage in humanitarian settings MENA,
<https://www.unicef.org/mena/sites/unicef.org.mena/files/2018-08/CM%20in%20humanitarian%20settings%20MENA.pdf>
19. World Health Organization (WHO), Adolescent Pregnancy Blanc, A., Winfrey, W., & Ross, J., 2013, New Findings for Maternal Mortality Age Patterns: Aggregated Results for 38 Countries, 2008
20. Patton et al., Global patterns of mortality in young people: a systematic analysis of population health data, 2009
21. UNICEF, Early Marriage: Child Spouses. UNICEF Innocenti Research Centre. Florence, Italy: UNICEF, 2001
22. Nour, N.M., Child marriage: a silent health and human rights issue. Review of Obstetric Gynecology, 2(1), 51–6, 2009
23. Girls Not Brides, What is the impact of Child Marriage: Education: <https://www.girlsnotbrides.org/>
24. PubMed, Association of Child Marriage with Suicidal Thoughts and Attempts among Adolescent Girls in Ethiopia, May 2013: <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/23433537/>
25. United Nations Sustainable Development Goals, 25 September 2015:
<https://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/sustainable-development-goals/>
26. Girls Not Brides, What is the Impact of Child Marriage: Sustainable Development Goals:
<https://www.girlsnotbrides.org/themes/sustainable-development-goals-sdgs/>
27. United Nations Human Rights Office of the High Commissioner; Child, Early and Forced Marriage, including in Humanitarian settings
<https://www.ohchr.org/en/issues/women/wrgs/pages/childmarriage.aspx>
28. United Nations General Assembly, Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination



IFMSA

International Federation of
Medical Students' Associations

- against Women, 3 September 1948
29. United Nations General Assembly, Convention on the Rights of the Child, 20 November 1989
 30. United Nations Human Rights Office of the High Commissioner, Combating Child sex tourism, April 2013: <https://www.ohchr.org/EN/NewsEvents/Pages/ChildSexTourism.aspx>
 31. United Nations General Assembly, Convention on Consent to Marriage, Minimum Age for Marriage and Registration of Marriages, 9 December 1964
 32. United Nations General Assembly, the Supplementary Convention on the Abolition of Slavery, the Slave Trade, and Institutions and Practices Similar to Slavery, 30 April 1957
 33. The African Member States of the Organization of African Unity, the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child, November 29, 1999
 34. UNESCO, Preventing Child Marriage in the Commonwealth, 2015: <http://www.commonwealthcbc.com/reports/preventing-child-marriage-in-the-commonwealth>
 35. United Nations, Goal 5: Achieve gender equality and empowers all women and girls: <https://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/gender-equality/>
 36. UNICEF: <https://www.unicef.org/>
 37. United Nations, Goal 1: End poverty in all its forms everywhere: <https://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/poverty/>
 38. Theirworld: <http://theirworld.org/>
 39. UNFPA: <https://www.unfpa.org/>
 40. International Centre for Research on Women (ICRW), 2013, Solutions to end child marriage, Summary of the Evidence: https://www.icrw.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/10/19967_ICRW-Solutions001-pdf.pdf
 41. UNICEF, Birth Registration: Right from the Start, Innocenti Digest, No. 9, Innocenti Research Centre, Florence, 1- 2, 5-6, March 2002: <https://data.unicef.org/>
 42. Girls Not Brides, The Contribution of Laws to Change the Practice of Child Marriage in Africa: <https://www.girlsnotbrides.org/resource/solutions/birth-and-marriage-registration/>
 43. Patton et al., Global patterns of mortality in young people: a systematic analysis of population health data, 2009
 44. Girls Not Brides: Taking Action to address Child Marriage: the role of different sectors <https://www.girlsnotbrides.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/03/1.-Addressing-child-marriage-Health.pdf>
 45. BMA, July, Victims of Forced Marriage: Guidance for Health Professionals, BMA Ethics Department, UK, 2008: <https://www.bma.org.uk/advice-and-support/ethics/medical-students/ethics-toolkit-for-medical-students/ethics-of-treating-children-and-young-people>
 46. UNICEF, March, Early Marriage: Child exposes, Innocenti Digest, No. 7, Innocenti Research Centre, Florence, 2001
 47. Prevention of Child Marriage - Impact on Girls, January 2015 https://www.researchgate.net/publication/308513916_Prevention_of_Child_Marriage_Impact_on_Girls