

Girls' empowerment & child marriage: Evidence & insights in practice



Based on the evidence, the WHO conditionally recommends:

Implementing interventions to empower girls by building their knowledge, skills, assets & social networks. This recommendation is conditional on context (conditions) & the individual involved (circumstances).



Check out the evidence, more considerations & references in our [Research Spotlight](#).



Why focus on girls' empowerment & child marriage?

Girls' empowerment interventions aim to increase girls' agency & ensure they have the resources, knowledge & skills to avoid child marriage through:



Internal transformation: Participation can build girls' awareness of their rights, opportunities & alternatives.



Reducing risks & expanding opportunities: Building girls' protective assets, like resources, knowledge, skills & social support.



Building solidarity & influencing others: Increasing girls' mobility, visibility & voice at home & in the community can promote wider change.



What works to improve girls' empowerment & child marriage outcomes?

1. Grounding activities in local context, systems & services:

- Assess girls' agency & decision-making around child marriage, including existing opportunities & alternative pathways.
- Involve girls in the design, delivery & monitoring of interventions (e.g. through safe space committees, focus groups & girl-friendly evaluation tools).
- Contextualise & adapt promising methodologies, considering power dynamics & risks.
- Provide childcare & infant/child-friendly meeting spaces.

2. Safe spaces & girl-centred asset or skill-building interventions:

- Offer peer-facilitated reflective dialogues & gender rights/empowerment training.
- Offer interactive life skills training, including social & emotional skills (e.g. how to influence decisions), digital literacy & critical thinking.
- Offer/link with non-formal education, non-traditional vocational training, small grants & livelihood empowerment programmes.
- Facilitate access to trusted mentors (e.g. trained facilitators from the community).
- Develop a culturally relevant curriculum with girls & community members.

3. Working in partnership across levels & sectors:

- Link girls' empowerment with sexual & reproductive health, norms-based & economic support-focused interventions (e.g. cash transfers).
- Engage boys, leaders, service providers, parents, mothers-in-law & husbands/partners as allies, including around girls' status, household decision-making & violence.
- Anchor social norms interventions in existing women's collectives & work with women's rights/led organisations & feminist movements to shift gender norms & division of labour.
- Advocate for long-term, flexible funding to respond to girls' evolving needs.
- Work with governments to embed empowerment & gender-transformative approaches in emerging priority work areas (e.g. climate crisis & green growth).



Some practical tools:

- She's the First's [hub for girl-centred programmes](#), [Just for girls](#) area & [girl-centred tools & resources](#), including the [What would you do?](#) game, [feminist mentorship manual](#) & [listening to girls toolkit](#).
- Population Council's collection of [girl-centred programme tools](#) and curricula.
- EMpower [learning together toolkit](#).
- [Launch Girls](#) girl-centred entrepreneurship programming.
- [Women & girls' safe spaces toolkit](#) (humanitarian).
- [Girl Shine](#) resources & self-paced [training](#) (humanitarian).
- [ENGAGE](#) lifeskills & group curriculum (humanitarian).
- [Adolescent programming toolkit](#) & [parenting and adolescent life skills programme](#) (emergency & protracted crises).
- [Girls Decide lifeskills curriculum](#) (migration & displacement).
- [SenseMaker](#) storytelling tool.
- [Tipping Point intervention package](#) & [structured allyship manual](#).
- [Stand Up, Speak Out!](#) youth activism training.
- [Why wait?](#) report on funding women-led & women's rights organisations (humanitarian).



Working on girls' empowerment & child marriage?

[Submit](#) your research to the CRANK.



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The Global Partnership to End Child Marriage

