



Stop Stealing Her Childhood Campaign Next Steps

Congratulations on the launch of your #StopStealingHerChildhood campaign! 🎉

We're excited to have you campaign with us to shine a spotlight on child marriage and encourage governments to take action.

You've [set up your petition](#) and now it's time to promote it and mobilise as much support as possible for your campaign.

In this toolkit you'll find tips on the following:

1. [How to promote your petition online and get signatures..... 1](#)
2. [How to carry out advocacy for your campaign 4](#)
3. [How to hold a campaign event or petition hand-in 5](#)
4. [Support from the Girls Not Brides Secretariat 6](#)

1. How to promote your petition online and get signatures 📣

Your petition is up and running and now it's time to spread the word and encourage people to sign and share the message as broadly as possible. There are number of ways you can do this online.

Email ✉️

Email is one of the most effective online channels you can use to reach your audience and get signatures for your petition. Email your contacts with a clear call to action: stand up for girls and sign the petition. You can also ask them to share the petition with their friends or on social media.

You need your email to stand out. It's important to attract and keep people's attention by writing a strong and persuasive email.

Here are some tips to help you write an effective campaign email:

- **Write as if you're only emailing one person**, even if you are sending your email to a big list of people at the same time. This will make your message feel more personal and persuasive to your recipients.
- **Use a familiar 'from' name**. More people are willing to open an email from a real person, who is contacting them personally.
- **Use a short and compelling subject line**. Try to keep your subject line under 30 characters long. This will ensure that it appears in full on all devices. It's also a good idea

to appeal directly to your recipients through the subject line to increase the chances of them opening your email. For example: “Will you stand up for girls?”

- **Write your email in simple, clear and compelling language.** Use short and strong sentences. Get to the point quickly. The goal of your email is to encourage people to click and sign your petition. Here is a [free tool you can use](#) to help make your writing bold and clear.
- **Have a clear call to action.** Tell your readers what you expect them to do and why it’s important. Make sure the link to the petition stands out. You could make it bold or use a button if you have the right email software.

Social media 📱

Share your petition link on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram Stories and ask people to sign.

Here are some tips and ideas to make your social media content stand out:

- **Where are your audience?** Define who you’re trying to reach. Is it policy-makers, people in your community, your friends and family? Focus your efforts on the social networks that your target audiences use.
- **Use images and videos.** Posts with an image are more likely to grab people’s attention. And posts with a video are even more likely to engage people.
- **Tell stories.** Do you have any stories of girls or community members who have been affected by child marriage? What about activists? This can really help to bring the issue to life and will encourage more people to sign your petition. ****Please ensure that you have informed consent and a [signed consent form](#) from any girls or vulnerable adults whose stories you share. Make sure not to give their full name or location away and that sharing their story will not put them at risk.****
- **Use graphics.** You can download and use the graphics that we’ve created for the campaign. You can also use free online tools like [Canva](#) to make your own graphics.
- **Use data.** Many people may not know the scale or the impact of the issue of child marriage in your country and some compelling facts can help to spread awareness. You can use our [child marriage atlas](#) to find data from your country. You can also use the [Out of the Shadows Index](#) to show how child marriage is a form of violence against children.

We’ve put together some [key messages, graphics and template social media posts](#) you can use to help you get started.

Don’t forget to **use the campaign hashtag**. Tag your posts with #StopStealingHerChildhood and we’ll share them from the *Girls Not Brides* social media accounts.

Media 📰

A press release can help you attract valuable media coverage for your organisation and raise awareness of the importance of ending child marriage. If you’re holding an event, don’t forget to invite local media.

- **Complete the template press release** with your organisation's details, adding appropriate quotes or information as needed.
- **Send the press release to your local media contacts.** If you don't know who your local press contacts are, get in touch.
- Most journalists get hundreds of emails every day, so it's a good idea to **include "press release" in the subject line** of your email, along with a catchy headline.
- **Journalists may only spend a few seconds reading your email.** If you send the press release as an attachment, copy the text into the main body of the email to make sure they don't miss it.
- **Remember: a press release isn't a story.** Journalists may need to contact you for more information or to arrange interviews. Make sure you are available to respond.

For local press contacts, or if you have any questions about working with the media, contact the Communications Team at Girls Not Brides: media@girlsnotbrides.org

Template press release

[Your organisation's logo]

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

World leaders must act now to protect girls' childhoods says [organisation name]

Date of press release

[City] – [Organisation name] today publicly called on [local leaders/Head of State] to reinforce their commitment to end child marriage in [country] at an event held in [city]. [Outline what you did. For example, holding an event to deliver the petition to local leaders.]

Every year, 12 million girls are married globally before the age of 18, depriving them of their rights to education, health and a life of their choosing. In [country] [%] of girls marry before 18.

[First name, surname], [position] of [organisation name], said that [Insert quote from your organisation].

The petition is part of a wider #StopStealingHerChildhood campaign, led by Girls Not Brides: The Global Partnership to End Child Marriage. Civil society members, activists and members of Girls Not Brides from around the world are calling on leaders to accelerate action to end child marriage at this year's Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) Summit, 24-25 September 2019 (New York, United States of America).

In 2015, world leaders agreed to end child marriage by 2030 as part of the SDG commitment. In September, heads of government are meeting for the first time since 2015 to review progress on the SDGs. [Organisation] wants to make sure that girls aren't forgotten at the summit, and that world leaders make commitments to address child marriage.

Rachel Yates, Interim Executive Director of Girls Not Brides, a global partnership of over 1,200 civil society organisations committed to ending child marriage, said: "Child marriage exposes millions of girls to violence. It prevents girls from fulfilling their potential and leading happy,

safe and productive lives. World leaders have the power to end this human rights violation. Together, let's show them we won't stand for child marriage."

Child marriage puts girls at greater risk of physical, sexual and emotional violence. Girls who marry before 18 are more likely to face violence from an intimate partner throughout their life. The greater the age difference with their husbands, the more likely they are to experience violence.

[Organisation name] will [insert short description of your next steps.]

ENDS

For more information, or to arrange interviews, please contact [Name], [position], [organisation]: [email] / [phone]

Notes to editors

[Insert short organisation bio and website]

[Organisation name] is a member of Girls Not Brides, a global partnership of more than 1200 civil society organisations from over 100 countries committed to ending child marriage and enabling girls to fulfil their potential. For more information visit www.girlsnotbrides.org.

2. How to carry out advocacy for your campaign

As well as promoting your petition with the public and the media, an important part of your campaign is to attract the attention of decision-makers to encourage them to take action. One of the ways to do this is by sending a letter to your campaign target outlining the asks of the campaign and urging them to act.

How do I find the contact details for my letter:

- You should be able to find the contact details for the office of your Head of State or a Government Minister on your official government website.
- If you have contacts in the government already, send a letter to them or ask them who is best to send your letter to.

Send a letter to your campaign target – use our template letter:

Dear [name of campaign target],

I am writing to ask you to register a UN '[SDG Accelerator Action](#)' on ending child marriage for the UN SDG Summit on 24-25 September 2019.

[%/number] girls under 18 are married in [country]. Child marriage has serious, far-reaching consequences for a girl. She's at greater risk of violence and remaining trapped in poverty, often pulled out of school, and she can be left with serious health complications or even face death due to early pregnancy. [You may want to include some more details about child marriage in your country]

The SDG Summit this September is a big moment for change. As governments meet to discuss how to achieve the 2030 Agenda, we call on you to champion this cause and make sure child marriage is not forgotten. Unless we end child marriage we won't achieve eight of the 17

Sustainable Development Goals, including those on poverty, food security, health, education, gender equality, economic growth, and peace and justice.

[Names of organisations involved in campaign] and Girls Not Brides: The Global Partnership to End Child Marriage have launched a campaign to call on world leaders to show they are serious about ending child marriage. [number of petition signatures] people in [country] have signed our petition to call on you to make an SDG Accelerator Action outlining your plan to implement and fund national action on SDG 5.3 – helping to bring an end to child marriage [you may want to replace this with your specific campaign ask for your government around child marriage].

Show you stand with us and take the issue of child marriage to the SDG Summit this September.

Yours sincerely,

[Your name and organisation]

Engage with your decision-makers:

If you already have good contacts in government, you could try and arrange a meeting with a decision-maker to talk to them about your campaign.

Here are some tips for meeting government officials or Ambassadors in person:

- **Come prepared!** Plan what you will say before you get there. In particular, make sure you think of any difficult questions you may be asked and have some answers ready.
- **Think about who you are meeting.** What will interest your target the most about this campaign? How can you appeal to your target to encourage them to support it?
- **Be clear on how you can help them.** What information and support can you provide to your target to help them take the action you are asking them to?
- **Take along a resource.** It's always a good idea to leave a short brief outlining what you want your target to do.
- Don't forget to **follow up your meeting** by sending an email with the key points from the meeting and carry out any follow up you have arranged.

3. How to hold a campaign event or petition hand-in

Once you've built up your petition and spread the word about your campaign, it is time to think about how to deliver your petition to your campaign target. This is an opportunity to make a big splash and draw a lot of attention to your issue. It is best to do in the days or weeks before the SDG Summit (24-25 September) so that the message is fresh in the minds of your target.

We're taking your signatures to New York!

We will be taking all the petition signatures from the global campaign and all *Girls Not Brides* members' national campaigns to New York in September for the SDG Summit.

Many government officials, decision-makers and NGOs will be gathering in New York for the SDG Summit. This will be our opportunity to show how much support there is from around the world for world leaders to address child marriage.

We will keep you updated on how our campaign rolls out in New York through email and social media, as well as providing ways for you to get involved virtually. This way we can make a lot of noise online and offline!

Hold your own campaign event

As well as sending your signatures to New York with the other *Girls Not Brides* petitions, you can help build momentum by holding your own campaign event or petition delivery in the lead up to the SDG Summit.

An event is a great way to get attention for your campaign, and is an opportunity to engage your target or a relevant decision-maker, for example, the Minister for Gender or government official.

Things to think about for your campaign event:

- **Be creative.** What can you do to attract attention? Think about interesting speakers who could speak about child marriage, videos or materials you may have to share, or even publicity stunts to attract attention.
- **How you will deliver the petition.** Invite your campaign target or relevant decision-maker and think about creative ways to deliver your petition to them.
- **Publicise the event.** Share invitations with your supporters, the media and decision-makers. Take lots of photos and share with your online supporters – don't forget to tag *Girls Not Brides* so we can amplify too!

Deliver your petition signatures

If you decide not to hold a campaign event, there are other ways you can deliver your petition.

- **Arrange a meeting with your petition target or decision maker.** This is a great way to directly engage your target on the relevant issues.
- **Drop off the petition to your target's office.** Think about a creative way to present your petition, such as including photos or graphics that make it stand out.
- **Email or send it in the post to your petition target.** Attach a cover letter including your petition text.

4. Support from the *Girls Not Brides* Secretariat

If you have questions or need support from the Secretariat, please contact:

Zoe Birchall at zoe.birchall@girlsnotbrides.org

Yasmin Mace at Yasmin.mace@girlsnotbrides.org

Matilda Branson at Matilda.branson@girlsnotbrides.org

Tag us on social media (see below) and don't forget to use the campaign hashtag:
#StopStealingHerChildhood

Twitter: @GirlsNotBrides Instagram: @GirlsNotBrides Facebook: Girls Not Brides

Good luck!