



GLOBAL **INTERFAITH** WEEKEND **TO END CHILD MARRIAGE**

CHILD MARRIAGE INFORMATION SHEET

Children are gifts, and everyone has a responsibility to nurture and protect them throughout their childhood. Marriage is a serious institution which should be entered into by two people who have a full understanding of the commitment they are making to each other.

All of the faiths are united in these beliefs.

No doctrine in any religion says that children should be married to each other, or that an adult husband must have a child bride. In fact, leaders of many of the faiths all over the world have publicly stated that child marriage is a violation of the teachings of their religion, as it directly places children in the path of harm. Similarly, faith leaders have provided clear direction that marriage cannot be undertaken by children, as they are unable to make a solemn, informed commitment under their faith.

This leaflet has some basic information about child marriage, but more is available on our [website](#).

Child marriage facts

- 1. Child marriage is much more likely to happen to girls than to boys.**
 - 640 million women and 115 million men alive today were married as a child.
- 2. Worldwide, one in five young women were married as children, many aged 12, 13, and 14.**
- 3. Child marriage is reducing slowly, but in some parts of the world, it is increasing among girls from poorer backgrounds.**



GLOBAL **INTERFAITH** WEEKEND TO END **CHILD MARRIAGE**

4. **Child marriage is in every region of the world, but rates vary.**

- In sub-Saharan Africa, 30% of young women were married as children. Some countries have much higher rates than others - Niger is 76%, Rwanda is 6%
- India is home to a third of all women worldwide who were married as children.

5. **Where you live in a country matters.**

- Girls who live in rural areas are more likely to be married as children, compared to girls who live in towns and cities.

Impacts of child marriage

1. Child marriage **usually ends a girl's formal education**, limiting her literacy, skills, and her ability to understand their rights.
2. When a girl enters a marriage, she often ends up taking on many hours of household chores for her husband's family **forcing her into child labour**.
3. When girls get married they are more likely **to be victims of domestic abuse** given the power dynamics between a girl and an older husband.
4. Often girls in child marriages are below the legal age of consent meaning the child marriage **results in child sexual abuse and child rape**.
5. When a married girl becomes pregnant, her body may not be developed enough to cope with pregnancy **risking her and her baby's life**.