

What's Known and What's Next: Charting Future Action on the Mental Health Consequences of Child Marriage

20 March 2024

Hosted by: UCL Global Network on Mental Health and Child Marriage, UCL with The Child Marriage Research to Action Network (CRANK)

This half-day symposium will bring together researchers, practitioners, policymakers, and donors to explore the existing evidence on the mental health consequences of child marriage, and on what works to support girls who are – or have been – married.

This will be a space to explore:

- **What's known:** The evidence and intersections between mental health and child marriage.
- **What's working:** Case studies and research reflections on existing and potential programmes targeting girls and adolescents who are married, in a union, pregnant or parenting.
- **What's next:** Policy and practice priorities, including consolidated guidelines to support programme design and implementation.

PROGRAM

WEDNESDAY MARCH 20TH

12:00 – ARRIVAL, REGISTRATION AND BUFFET LUNCH FOR IN PERSON ATTENDEES

13:00 – 14:00: SESSION 1: WHAT'S KNOWN: THE EVIDENCE AND INTERSECTIONS BETWEEN MENTAL HEALTH AND CHILD MARRIAGE (CHAIRIED BY: ROCHELLE BURGESS, UCL)

Julius Baruwa (online) – GCRF Adolescent Hub - Child Marriage and Mental Distress: A Multi-country Analysis of the Violence Against Children and Youth Survey, in Lesotho, Namibia and Zimbabwe

Farirai Gumbonzvanda (in person) – March-Zim project findings – in Zimbabwe - mixed methods (survey and life history with women) - Depression, suicidality

Kimberly Howe (in person) – Tufts University (Humanitarian contexts) - mental health and psychosocial support (MHPSS) of female youth in displacement, differentiated by marital status in Northern Iraq.

Nicola Jones (in person) – GAGE (Ethiopia, Jordan, child marriage/mental health, humanitarian conflict & crisis) - midline findings (mixed methods) from the GAGE longitudinal study with adolescents in Ethiopia and Jordan, which includes ever-married girls and measures of psychosocial wellbeing.

Q&A and Discussion

14:00 – 14:15: BREAK

14:15 – 15:30: SESSION 2: WHAT'S WORKING - EXPLORING THE PRACTICE – EXAMPLES OF PROGRAMMES ADDRESSING THE INTERSECTION BETWEEN CHILD MARRIAGE AND MENTAL HEALTH ACROSS DIVERSE CONTEXTS (CHAIRIED BY: JEAN CASEY, MUNDIA SITUMBEKO, GIRLS NOT BRIDES)

Olubukola Omobowale – The Ending Child Marriage in Nigeria through Community-Led Media series (ENCASE project) is a controlled pre/post intervention to change attitudes toward child marriage in Southwestern Nigeria using targeted radio programming (drama).

Christina Mallie – Colors of Connection – The Girl Awakening Program in Goma, Democratic Republic of the Congo, facilitates safe spaces and mentorship for young adolescent girls around expressive accessible arts activities linked to mitigating trauma.

Prabhleen Tuteja – The YP Foundation (TYPF), Uttar Pradesh, India – TYPFs adolescent and youth-centric work through Know Your Body, Know your Rights and Butterfly Projects addressing mental health and care practices with adolescents and young people.

PROGRAM

CONTINUED SESSION 2: WHAT'S WORKING

Sam Muhumuza - Windle International Uganda - this programme integrates MHPSS into education interventions to achieve better learning outcomes for girls at risk of child marriage, married girls and ever-married girls in refugee and host communities.

Abu Naser - UNFPA, Bangladesh - a community-based intervention, which aims to reduce the impact of child marriage on the mental health of young women and girls in Bangladesh. The project aims to increase awareness of mental health consequences of child marriage, improve access to localized MHPSS support for affected individuals and reduced stigma within communities.

Q&A and Discussion

15:30 - 15:50: BREAK

15:50 - 17:00: SESSION 3: WHAT'S NEXT: WORKING NOW WITH WHAT WE KNOW - POLICY AND PRACTICE PRIORITIES (CHAIRER BY: VENKATRAMAN CHANDRA-MOULI, FORMERLY OF THE WHO)

Facilitated dialogue session with speakers: **Dr. Christina Pallitto, World Health Organisation and Loveness Mudzuru, Rozaria Memorial Trust**

Q&A and Discussion

16:45 -17:00 Closing by Rochelle Burgess, UCL