



# GIRLS NOT BRIDES

The Global Partnership  
to End Child Marriage

## A guide to using the anthem to end child marriage on Day of the African Child 2016

In February 2016, the *Girls Not Brides* team headed out to Zambia to film “We are Girls, Not Brides”, a two-minute music video about ending child marriage. The song was written, composed and sung by a group of talented young girls from Lusaka Girls School, who take part in a girls’ empowerment club run by *Girls Not Brides* member [Continuity Zambia](#). The song is a powerful reminder that girls want to be girls not brides, and that governments must deliver on their commitments to end child marriage in Africa.

For the past few years, *Girls Not Brides* members have used Day of the African Child (16 June) as an opportunity to bring attention to child marriage and call for urgent action. In 2016, we have an opportunity to speak together with one voice to sustain the incredible momentum to end child marriage across Africa, and encourage other countries to follow.

We encourage you to use the song in your own activities for Day of the African Child 2016 – and beyond! Below are:

- A list of [suggested activities](#),
- [Key messages](#) to celebrate Day of the African Child together,
- Tips on [how to facilitate sensitive discussions with young people](#),
- Tips on [how to run a tweet chat](#).

## We are Girls, Not Brides The anthem to end child marriage



Launch: Day of the African Child 16 June

#GirlsNotBrides #DAC2016



## Suggested activities for Day of the African Child 2016

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Most *Girls Not Brides* members work with very tight budgets, and we recognise that funding for activities can be difficult to secure. The list below is therefore focused on activities that have no or minimal financial cost. Feel free to pick and choose the activities that are most appropriate to your organisation and local context.

***Please note: the video and audio are embargoed. Do not share them online before Thursday 16 June. The downloadable video is for planning purposes only. The video will be made public at midnight BST on Thursday, 16 June at [www.GirlsNotBrides.org/Anthem/](http://www.GirlsNotBrides.org/Anthem/)***

- [Download the video](#) (password: GNBDAC2016)
- [Download the audio](#)
- [Download the template press release](#)
- [Download the social media toolkit](#)

### ***Kick-start your event or panel discussion with the video***

- If you are already planning an event for Day of the African Child, start the event with the video!

### ***Share the video with journalists (TV, radio, online)***

- Send the press release to journalists: include [statistics](#) from your country/region/district, a quote from your organisation, and your policy ask to the government/ministry/local officials, etc.
- If you already have a press release planned, include a link to the video in the materials available to media.
- Ask a local radio to play the song on Day of the African Child. Make sure to offer local [statistics](#) about child marriage and suggest a spokesperson from your organisation.
- Share the video with your local TV station.
- Write a blog or an opinion piece for a local or national newspaper. Highlight the video and your call to action, which can be developed using the suggested messages below.

### ***Screen the video in schools or youth/girls' clubs/safe spaces and start a debate on child marriage***

- Ask teachers to organise a discussion on child marriage with their students.
- Here are some conversation starters:
  - How did the film/song make you feel?
  - The film/song sends out a powerful message about how girls are not brides – they have rights and want to attend school, meet their friends and play sport – and not get married. Do girls in your community have the opportunity to do all of these things? Do they know what their rights are (e.g. age of marriage) and who they can turn to for help? If not, what or who is stopping them?
  - What do you think needs to happen for practices like child marriage to end?
  - Who are your female role models in your community? Why do they inspire you?
- If you have never facilitated a discussion with young people, [here are some top tips](#).
- Invite girls and boys to sign a petition to campaign to end child marriage within their communities and within their schools, helping their peers to avoid child marriage.

### ***Show the video to community members and/or leaders***

- Invite community members to a special screening of the song and the behind the scenes video. Discuss the impact of child marriage in your community and what can be done to end it.
- Organise a screening with a group of peers from your community. Ask young people to share their views on child marriage and the importance of empowering young people.
- If it is not possible to organise a screening, share the link with leaders and community members in advance or show them the video on your phone.

### ***Organise a Facebook or tweet-chat with youth advocates on social media.***

- Post the video and ask your followers why girls should be #GirlsNotBrides and what must happen to #EndChildMarriage.
- Make sure to use #DAC2016 to tap into other Day of the African Child conversations.
- If you have never run a tweet-chat, [here are some top tips](#).

### ***Share the video with influential individuals and organisations on social media***

- When sharing the video, tag influential individuals or accounts (celebrities, musicians, politicians, online media, etc.) to bring it to their attention. If you can, send them a direct message.
- Use WhatsApp groups to share the video with friends, colleagues and other groups of interest.
- Use our social media toolkit to bring attention to child marriage and young people's call to action.

### ***Write a blog and post the video on your website***

- The video is an opportunity to talk about child marriage in your country. Write a blog about what needs to be done and embed the video. Include stories of girls who have benefited from your work.
- [Let us know](#) about your blogs on child marriage!

### ***Get young people to sing the song at an event***

- If you are already playing music or performing a play at an event, why not make the song part of the programme?
- Try singing the song in another language or adapt the lyrics to your context. If you record it, please share it with us!

These are just a few ideas to get you started! If you have any questions, please contact Sophie [Sophie.Drouet@GirlsNotBrides.org](mailto:Sophie.Drouet@GirlsNotBrides.org).

## **Key messages for Day of the African Child 2016**

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*Feel free to use and adapt these messages according to your local context and advocacy targets for Day of the African Child.*

Key message: Girls want to be girls, not brides! It's time to deliver for children and youth across Africa.

### **Message 1: Now is our chance to make progress on child marriage at an unprecedented scale. Let's seize it!**

- A growing number of countries are developing or implementing national strategies, action plans or country-wide initiatives to address child marriage.
- The African Union Campaign to End Child Marriage in Africa has been launched in over 12 countries, and more countries are due to launch the campaign in 2016 and 2017.
- Target 5.3 of the Sustainable Development Goals aims to end child, early and forced marriage by 2030.

### **Message 2: If we work together, we can translate commitments into reality and accelerate progress towards ending child marriage in Africa.**

- All governments should develop and implement well-resourced, comprehensive, cross-sectoral policies, programmes and plans to end child marriage and support married girls.
- Everyone has a role to play in ending child marriage: governments, development agencies, donors, civil society, youth, as well as girls themselves. All sectors should be involved in addressing child marriage.
- African countries should champion the issue of child marriage in regional fora such as the Southern African Development Community (SADC), the Eastern African Community (EAC), and the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS).

### **Message 3: Young people need to be at the heart of efforts to end child marriage in Africa.**

- With almost 200 million people aged 15-24, Africa has the youngest population in the world.
- In many countries where child marriage is common, young people make up approximately half of the population. To achieve large scale results, we must involve young people.
- Young people must be at the front and centre of development, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of initiatives to end child marriage.

### **Message 4: The longer we wait, the bigger the problem will become.**

- Africa is home to 16 of the 20 countries with the highest child marriage rates in the world. In sub-Saharan Africa, 40% of women were married as children.
- If we do nothing, the number of child brides in Africa is expected to double by 2050, and Africa will overtake South Asia to become the region with the largest numbers of child brides in the world.
- However, if we accelerate progress, we could halve the prevalence of child marriage in Africa by 2050 (UNICEF, 2015). What are we waiting for?

## **Top tips: facilitating discussions on child marriage with young people**

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- 1. Think about safety:** hold your event/ activities in a space which is physically and emotionally safe for the girls you are inviting. Make sure girls can arrive and get home safely.
- 2. Be flexible:** consider the time of day to ensure girls can attend without missing school, work or responsibilities in the home. Acknowledge that girls' time is important and valuable.
- 3. Not all girls are the same:** consider girls' ages, development stages and capacity to engage in the activities you are running. It may be useful to have a variety of activities or ways for girls to engage. Make sure each girl has a chance to share or ask questions (even the quiet ones!)
- 4. Gain consent:** ensure you have consent from girls and their parents before running your activities. If you are engaging girls who are vulnerable this will require extra levels of care and preparation.
- 5. Be sensitive:** talking about issues such as child marriage may be difficult and upsetting for some girls. Consider some warm up activities so everyone feels relaxed and be conscious that everyone has different experiences and reactions. Consider girls' mental health and psycho-social needs by making sure girls feel comfortable, giving them an option to step-out at any point and providing them with support if needed.
- 6. Ensure staff are equipped:** make sure staff are confident in facilitating discussions around sensitive issues and know how to react if a girl becomes upset and requires additional support. Having an approachable female member of staff on hand who is able to fulfil this role is a good idea.
- 7. Treat girls as powerful agents of change,** make sure you **follow up after the activities** and make the **sessions fun and informative.**

## Top tips: running a tweet-chat

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- **What's a tweet chat?** A tweet-chat is a public Twitter conversation around a specific hashtag (#) at a set time and date. They are a great way of engaging and growing an online community, sharing experiences and raising awareness of an issue.
- **Why a tweet-chat?**
  - Share facts and knowledge about a specific topic. Organise a Q&A about child marriage in your region or on its links with another issue. Invite 2-3 knowledgeable participants and encourage questions from the public.
  - Exchange experiences and learn from like-minded individuals. Use a tweet-chat for organisations working with religious leaders to share their learning and experiences.
  - Give access to influential or interesting individuals/organisations. For instance, invite a youth advocate, the head of an organisation or a celebrity to share why they care about ending child marriage.
  - Recurring or one-off. A tweet chat can be a regular appointment (weekly, monthly) with your followers with a different topic each time, or it can be a one-off event around specific moments or hooks (a conference, a regional day, etc.).
- **Before the chat:**
  - Pick a time, date, and topic. Tweet-chats usually last approximately one hour.
  - Choose your hashtag. A hashtag should be short, memorable and clear. Remember: Twitter has a 140-character limit.
  - Plan your questions. Have between 6 and 10 questions ready
  - Invite participants and share the questions in advance so they can prepare for the conversation.
  - Promote the tweet chat!
- **During the chat:**
  - Welcome participants to the chat and remind people how they can take part (hashtag, handle, and topic).
  - Re-tweet interesting questions and comments.
  - Answer questions from the public. Don't forget to include the hashtag in your posts.
  - Don't over promote! A tweet-chat is an informal conversation for participants to connect, share and learn. It's not a place to share everything your organisation has ever produced.
- **After the chat:**
  - Follow up with participants. Thank them for their time via Twitter, email or even in person.
  - Do a recap. Use tools like [Storify](#) to share highlights from the conversation on your website or social media channels.
- Here are **examples of tweet-chats** that *Girls Not Brides* has run or taken part in:
  - [Protecting girls from child marriage: survivors, activists speak out](#)
  - [#GlobalGoals: How to #EndChildMarriage by 2030](#)
  - [#16Days teach-in: child marriage and conflict](#)