[INSERT YOUR ORGANISATION’S LOGO AND/OR THE [GIRLS NOT BRIDES MEMBERS LOGO](http://www.girlsnotbrides.org/resource-centre/member-of-girls-not-brides-logo/). ALSO INCLUDE LOGOS OF PARTNERS IF THIS IS A JOINT STATEMENT BY GIRLS NOT BRIDES MEMBERS IN YOUR COUNTRY.]

**PRESS RELEASE: On Day of the African Child 2016, [INSERT YOUR ORGANISATION’S NAME] launches “We are Girls, Not Brides”, the anthem to end child marriage**

16 June 2016

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

To mark the Day of the African Child, 16 June 2016, [INSERT NAME OF YOUR ORGANISATION], as a member of *Girls Not Brides: The Global Partnership to End Child Marriage*, is launching a music video and calling for renewed action to end child marriage in [INSERT COUNTRY NAME].

The song “We are Girls, Not Brides” 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 Organization](http://www.continuityzambia.org/). 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.

In addition to a regional campaign to end child marriage and the increasing number of national initiatives, more African leaders are committing to end the practice.

[CONSIDER INCLUDING A QUOTE FROM THE HEAD OF YOUR ORGANISATION ABOUT THE FILM AND/OR CHILD MARRIAGE IN YOUR COUNTRY]

EXAMPLE: [INSERT NAME OF YOUR ORGANISATION] is calling on the Government of [INSERT COUNTRY NAME] to [SELECT APPROPRIATE CALL TO ACTION]

* Develop and implement a national strategy and action plan to end child marriage and support married girls that is comprehensive, multi-sectoral and well-resourced.
* Integrate child marriage prevention and support to married girls across a range of interventions and sectors.

Comprehensive strategies should include initiatives to empower girls, mobilise families and communities as agents of change, provide adequate services (particularly health, education and justice services), and provide a legal framework that protects girls from marriage and its negative consequences. The government should also work closely with civil society and other actors to protect all girls at risk and support married girls.

**Child marriage: still prevalent and jeopardising the future of** [INSERT COUNTRY NAME]

Child marriage is still a reality for millions of girls across [INSERT COUNTRY NAME]. The African continent is home to 16 out of the 20 countries with the world’s highest rates of child marriage. In [INSERT COUNTRY NAME], it is estimated that [INSERT RELEVANT DATA SPECIFIC TO YOUR COUNTRY] are married before the age of 18 years.

Child marriage jeopardises efforts to improve maternal and infant health and has devastating consequences for the girl, her family, and her future children. Child brides face higher risk of death and injury in pregnancy and childbirth: girls aged 15-19 are more likely to die in childbirth than young women aged 20-24, and girls under the age of 15 are at an even greater risk. Their children suffer too: when a mother is under 20 her baby is 50% more likely to die within the first few weeks of life.

There is a perception that the impact of child marriage is limited, but that is not the case. This practice curtails [INSERT COUNTRY NAME] development and economic prosperity by denying millions of girls the education and opportunities that would have empowered them to lift themselves and their families out of poverty. Over 60% of child brides in developing countries have received no formal education.

Ending child marriage could help [INSERT COUNTRY NAME] achieve at least eight of the seventeen [Global Goals for Sustainable Development](http://www.globalgoals.org/), including health, poverty, education, nutrition and violence against women and girls.

**Through effective partnership, [INSERT COUNTRY NAME] can lead the way to change**

Given the scale and complexity of child marriage, this practice cannot be ended by politicians alone. All actors, from lawmakers and community leaders, to the media, civil society actors and the girls themselves, have a role to play in making child marriage history.

Young people in particular need to be at the heart of efforts to end child marriage. With almost 200 million people aged 15-24, Africa has the youngest population in the world. [INSERT COUNTRY NAME] cannot achieve results on a large scale without involving youth.

**Media contacts**

[INSERT CONTACT INFORMATION FOR THE MEDIA CONTACT PERSON AT YOUR ORGANISATION]

The Day of the African Child is marked on 16 June each year to honour the memory of the school children killed in 1976 during a demonstration in Soweto, South Africa.

**Media resources** [INSERT RESOURCES BY YOUR ORGANISATION]

* Music video [EMBARGOED UNTIL 16 JUNE]: [“We are Girls, Not Brides”: the anthem to end child marriage](https://vimeo.com/169706559). Password: GNBDAC2016
* Song [EMBARGOED UNTIL 16 JUNE]: [“We are Girls, Not Brides”: the anthem to end child marriage](http://bit.ly/22Pa0uZ).
* [Flickr page](https://www.flickr.com/GirlsNotBrides). Please credit *Girls Not Brides*.

For more information about *Girls Not Brides*, visit [www.GirlsNotBrides.org](http://www.GirlsNotBrides.org)

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