Reducing Child Marriage in India

A model to scale up results
New Delhi 2016

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Acknowledgements

Preface

The elimination of child marriage has finally reached the global policy agenda with the adoption of the Sustainable Development Goals. This achievement required many years of investments in research and evidence generation, programming, advocacy and lobbying. Dedicated organizations, such as Girls Not Brides, have been set up and in recent years we have seen an increase in international donor funding for programmes to reduce child marriage. Ending child marriage is a corporate priority for UNICEF's child protection, gender equality and adolescent empowerment work globally, across South Asia and in India.

In 2014, UNICEF India began to develop a strategy to scale up efforts to reduce child marriage. Global evidence on programming to reduce child marriage showed some encouraging results, but none of the evaluated projects had reached more than 35,000 adolescent girls. In India, UNICEF had been able to organize more than 200,000 girls into adolescent groups. However, in a country where an estimated 3 million girls are married every year, these numbers were simply too small to have a significant impact on the prevalence of child marriage. Moreover, UNICEF's community and district-level programming approach relied heavily on implementation through NGOs. While these projects were often of good quality and effectiveness, they were too complicated and expensive and could not be replicated with the existing social infrastructure and government schemes. It became clear that any effort to achieve truly large-scale results in reducing child marriage and reaching tens of millions of girls had to start with and focus on existing government services and schemes for adolescent girls and boys.

Efforts to develop a strategy for scaling up the reduction in child marriage therefore had to go back to the drawing board. UNICEF collaborated with the International Center for Research on Women to carry out an in-depth district-level analysis of the current trends and patterns of child marriage in India. Based on this analysis, UNICEF engaged the Centre for Budget and Policy Studies to review the drivers of change in child marriage and to develop a strategic framework for scaled-up programmes to reduce child marriage.

This report is the result of efforts to develop strategies to accelerate the decline of child marriage in India. It breaks new conceptual ground and applies a broad social policy and governance framework to the reduction of child marriage. The report highlights the need for context-specific strategies that take into consideration the pattern and prevalence rate of child marriage in a given location, as well as the social, cultural, economic and political forces and dynamics that determine the age at which girls get married.

It is hoped that this report will find a wide readership among government, non-government and donor agencies and academic institutions involved in programming and research to accelerate the decline in child marriage in India. The report has opened up a new way of approaching efforts to reduce child marriage. It has also highlighted the need for further research, more granular data analysis and more evidence-based programming.

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New Delhi, January 2016

Contents

Acronyms and abbreviations

AIDS	Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome
ASHA	Accredited Social Health Activist
AWC	Anganwadi Centre
BPL	Below Poverty Line
BRAC	Bangladesh Rural Advancement Committee
BREADS	Bangalore Rural Educational and Development Society
CCT	Conditional Cash Transfers
CREAM	Child Rights Education and Action Movement
DISE	District Information System for Education
DLHS	District Level Household Survey
EPW	Economic and Political Weekly
FRDS	Formative Research and Development Studies (New Delhi)
GoI	Government of India
GP	Gram Panchayat
HIV	Human Immunodeficiency Virus
ICPS	Integrated Child Protection Scheme
ICRW	International Center for Research on Women
KGBV	Kasturba Gandhi Balika Vidyalaya
KSY	Kishori Shakti Yojna
MS	Mahila Samakhya
MSK	Mahila Shikshan Kendra
MVF	MV Foundation
MWCD	Ministry of Women and Child Development
NCPCR	National Commission for Protection of Child Rights
NCW	National Commission for Women
NFHS	National Family Health Survey
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
NGPS	New Girl Protection Scheme
NPEGL	National Programme for Elementary Education for Girls
OBC	Other Backward Class
PANI	People's Action for National Integration
PCMA 2006	Prohibition of Child Marriage Act, 2006
PRI	Panchayati Raj Institution
RMSA	Rashtriya Madhyamik Shiksha Abhiyan
RSOC	Rapid Survey on Children
RTE 2009	Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education Act, 2009
SABLA	Rajiv Gandhi Scheme for Empowerment of Adolescent Girls
SC	Scheduled Caste
SCPCR	State Commission for Protection of Child Rights
SCW	State Commission for Women
SHG	Self-Help Group
SoFEA	Social and Financial Empowerment of Adolescents Programme
SSA	Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan
ST	Scheduled Tribe
UN	United Nations
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
USAID	United States Agency for International Development

Executive summary

Prevalence and trends of child marriage: Child marriage remains widespread in India, where about 30 per cent of all women 20-24 years of age were married before reaching their 18th birthday. Child marriage rates declined by 1 per cent per year between 1990 and 2005. Over the past decade, the rate of decline has accelerated to about 2 per cent per annum. The decline has been particularly pronounced among girls below the age of 15 years.

Patterns of child marriage: Child marriage is more common in rural than in urban areas. It is also strongly correlated with low levels of education. Girls with a secondary school education or higher are much less likely to marry early than those with primary education or less. There is also a strong correlation between poverty and child marriage. Across India, girls from the poorest households are much more likely to marry early than those from the richest quintiles. However, in areas with child marriage rates of 50 per cent and higher, girls marry early regardless of wealth. Moreover, in some parts of India, such as Rajasthan and Gujarat, child marriage is strongly associated with caste membership and, in some districts, child marriage rates are highest among richer, high caste girls.

Purpose of the report: Efforts to reduce child marriage have often been small scale, with little possibility of being replicated. Small-scale projects are therefore no models for reaching millions of girls. This report analyses the factors that perpetuate and those that reduce child marriage in order to develop a model to accelerate the reduction in child marriage. While the focus is on India, the conclusions of the report should be relevant for other countries as well, especially those in South Asia.

Drivers of high prevalence of child marriage include: widely accepted and sanctioned social norms; poverty, high wedding costs and other economic considerations; lack of easy access to schooling, especially at secondary level; political patronage, which weakens law enforcement agencies; vested interest groups and networks; and gender norms and pre-

scriptions. Together, these drivers have ensured that child marriage continues to persist in India and has resisted government efforts to ban the practice.

Drivers of change: Counteracting the drivers of high prevalence are drivers that bring about change in child marriage and in the attitudes and beliefs that underlie the practice. The five drivers of change are: access to safe, affordable and good quality secondary education; empowerment of women and girls, and engagement with men and boys; incentivizing the change through social protection; agenda building and influencing public opinion to promote behaviour change; and consistent laws and stricter enforcement. By amplifying these drivers of change it is possible to accelerate the decline in child marriage.

Adapting strategies to the context: It is important to tailor strategies to local patterns and prevalence. Broadly, three different contexts can be identified:

- **Areas where child marriage is highly prevalent and a deeply entrenched social norm**, require (a) broad-based social policy, media and advocacy initiatives to build an agenda and create public opinion against child marriage; (b) targeting specific constituencies, such as religious leaders, parliamentarians, etc.; (c) using mass media to raise awareness and project alternative role models for adolescent girls; (d) safe and affordable access to upper primary and secondary education; (e) incentivizing change, for example through cash transfers; and (f) forming adolescent groups for empowerment and engaging with women and men.

- In **communities where child marriage rates have begun to decline more rapidly**, and where families are investing more in education for girls, more intensive work is needed to amplify and accelerate the child marriage transition by (a) broadening opportunities for education, training and livelihoods for adolescent girls; (b) promoting girls' empowerment and a change in gender norms

and expectations; and (c) publicly identifying, rewarding and celebrating child-marriage-free communities and Gram Panchayats.

- Where **change has occurred and child marriage is regarded as a deviation from the new social norms**, support targeted interventions in pockets of high prevalence and strengthen governance and accountability through (a) strict vigilance and law enforcement; (b) public identification and censuring of child marriage; (c) public identification and celebration of child-marriage-free communities and Gram Panchayats; and (d) intensive engagement with 'closed' communities that are resisting social change.

Strengthening government schemes: The Government of India is supporting a wide range of schemes and programmes related to the five drivers of change (education, empowerment, incentives, campaigning and mobilization, and law enforcement). However, the effectiveness, coverage and impact of these investments are variable. By systematically strengthening existing government schemes, especially those most appropriate for particular contexts, it is possible to accelerate the reduction of child marriage and to achieve greater scale.

Implementation of the scale-up model consists of the following components:
- Core implementing agencies include Panchayati Raj Institutions and local service providers: accredited social health activists, anganwadi workers, women's self-help groups, schools and collectives.
- Local support and internal monitoring agencies include police, and district, sub-district and state administration.
- Capacity building, technical support and mobilization rely on non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and academic institutions.
- External monitoring and evaluation are the responsibility of the State Commission for Protection of Child Rights, Women's Commissions and academic institutions.

- Policy reform is led by state and union governments.
- Funding support comes from state and union governments, foundations, NGOs and the private sector.

Core principles: Five principles define the approach and the choice of actions.

1. **Consistency of messages across all interventions:** An intervention aimed at mainly addressing one driver of high prevalence should not give a contradictory message to the other drivers of high prevalence.

2. **Incentivizing the change:** Incentives are critical for change. They can be either monetary or non-monetary, material or non-material. Disincentives may be used to dissuade child marriage – but only as a last resort.

3. **Prioritizing and monitoring for effective implementation:** Close internal monitoring at different levels is key to link policies and practical action. Monitoring is important for sending signals in a hierarchy: closely monitored indicators receive greater attention, which helps in setting the agenda for policies and resource allocations.

4. **Decentralization is critical for scaling up:** Local institutions are responsible for bringing about community-level change, while being enabled by support institutions. Without effective decentralization the scale becomes unmanageable and programmes prone to failure.

5. **Collectives are key for agenda building and sustaining change:** Collectives play an important role in promoting changes in attitudes and perspectives. Women, men, youth and adolescent girls gain greater strength when they belong to a collective and start commanding more power in negotiations and in promoting changes in behaviours.

1. Introduction

Child marriage is a complex issue with intergenerational implications, from both the gender and child rights perspectives. Child marriage is defined as a union where either one or both parties are under the legal age of marriage; in India it means girls below 18 years of age and boys below 21 years of age (PCMA 2006). More than 47 per cent of women in the age group of 20-24 years were reported to have married before attaining the age of 18 in 2005-2006 (NFHS-3). The 2011 census estimates nearly 17 million children in the age group of 10-19 years to be married.

The consequences of child marriage are adverse for both sexes but much more stark and significant for girls as compared to boys. Firstly, it severely curtails the freedom of choices and opportunities pertaining to almost every aspect of life. Secondly, the health consequences due to early childbearing and greater role in household chores result in harmful outcomes at both individual and societal levels; higher infant, child and maternal mortality rates are partly attributable to child marriage. Statistics also suggest that the prevalence of domestic violence is higher for those who have been married at an early age. At the macro-level, it also contributes to maintaining the intergenerational cycle of poverty and further marginalizing women in society.

India is not a signatory to the UN Convention on Consent to Marriage, Minimum Age for Marriage and Registration of Marriages (1962). This means it has not committed itself to the provisions of marriage only by clearly expressed consent of both parties, who have to be of an age competent to give legal consent. However, India is a signatory to the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women, which mentions elimination of child marriage. Irrespective of the ambiguity in its commitment to the international community, India has adopted laws to declare the practice of child marriage illegal and implemented a number of schemes to prevent it. The first act against child marriage, the Sarda Act, came as early as 1929. It was later renamed as the Child Marriage Restraint Act, 1929. After almost seven decades, it was replaced by the new Prohibition

of Child Marriage Act (PCMA 2006). Despite the new law and designated officials and roles, the enforcement has been extremely slow and the number of cases reported is very low. The 2014 compendium of Crime in India lists just 280 reported cases of child marriage (National Crime Records Bureau), which obviously does not begin to reflect the true extent of child marriage in India.

This paper is an attempt to develop a model for scaling up interventions to reduce child marriage in India. Although a substantial body of research exists on the factors that contribute to the prevalence, and a large number of policy and programme interventions are in place, the rate of change in child marriage has been slow in India, the country that houses almost one third of child brides worldwide. Between 1990 and 2005, child marriages declined at a rate of just 1 per cent per year. Since 2005, the rate in the decline has accelerated to 2 per cent per year (see Figure 1). [1]

Figure 1: Trends in child marriage in India
(women aged 20-24 married by age 18 years, various data sources)

1990 to 2005: decline of **1% per year**

Since 2005 decline of **2% per year**

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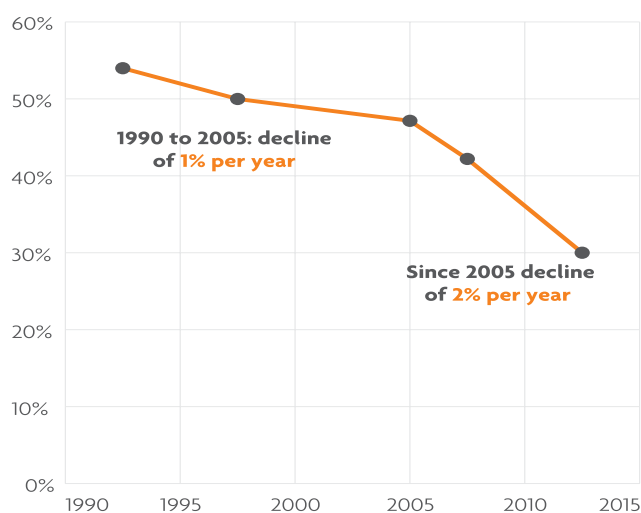
[1] Figure 1 combines data from DLHS-3, Annual Health Survey and Rapid Survey on Children (RSOC). Since the RSOC data were not available at the time of data analysis for this report, the current document draws predominantly on earlier data sources.

This paper presents a model for contextual strategizing and scaling up of interventions to accelerate the pace of reduction of child marriage, with particular reference to India, and within India with greater attention to four states, namely, Andhra Pradesh, Gujarat, Rajasthan and West Bengal. The suggested model is based on a theory of change that was developed taking into consideration the existing evidence base for the known drivers of high prevalence as well as the drivers of change in different contexts. The development of the model has also taken the review of existing policies and interventions into consideration.

The paper is divided into three main sections. The first section is an introduction to the issue of child marriage in India and the need for a model to scale up interventions. The second section describes the methodology for designing the model. The third section identifies the main trends and patterns that emerge from the analysis of available data with special reference to the four focus states. The trends and patterns have been analysed with the objective of identifying pointers for designing the model.

The fourth section, which is the main body of the paper, presents the model. The first subsection looks at the drivers of high prevalence and attempts to understand the process by which a particular factor drives child marriage. An attempt has also been made to see whether the same factor acts differently in different states, and to see which factor plays a more important role in a particular context, especially with reference to the four focus states. The second subsection discusses the interaction between the drivers of high prevalence and the drivers of change, identified from available literature and various other information sources. Here, an attempt has been made to understand the process of change: how and in what manner a particular driver brings about the change. This is followed by the third subsection on a theory of change that emphasizes local planning and a decentralized approach to scaling up.

The fourth subsection provides a review of existing policies and interventions. The fifth subsection describes the implementation model and roadmap for scaling up. It separates core implementing agencies from support agencies, identifies the influence process and outlines the progression for different stages: initial, intermediate and final. The model then goes on to identify the main actions expected of all core and support agencies at different levels. An important feature of the model is that it differentiates the broad set of strategies based on the nature of prevalence for high, medium and low prevalence contexts. The model also provides core principles for the choice of strategies, and identifies possible risks as well as strategies that could mitigate the risks.

Annex 1 provides the tools for adapting this model for planning and budgeting in different contexts, especially at the level of panchayat (village council) and district. The use of these tools in conjunction with the principles and other details provided in subsection five is aimed at helping policy planners and implementers design and implement a local model for action. Though designed for India, the model can be useful for other countries as well, especially in South Asia.

2. Methodology

The model for designing interventions to address child marriage in India has been developed primarily through data analysis, and an intensive and deep desktop review of existing literature, schemes and approaches that various organizations have attempted. The initial review of existing literature made it clear that the subject was well researched and well analysed; a number of published works exist looking at the phenomenon in India at the aggregate level, and with special emphasis on certain known high prevalence states like Rajasthan. The recent series of research carried out by UNICEF and the International Center for Research on Women (ICRW) provided deep insights and a district-level analysis using District Level Household Survey (DLHS) data. However, the authors felt the need to go deeper to understand a more disaggregated picture. Both web search and physical collection of documents were used to access literature and sources of information. Feedback received from the UNICEF Child Protection team in New Delhi helped in sharpening the ideas and detailing the approach.

The first task was to look at the prevalence of child marriage and to assess whether the relationships between high prevalence and other variables, such as poverty, caste and location, are as valid as they appear to be at the aggregate level. This led us to take a closer look at the highest and lowest prevalence districts in the four focus states. For this study, we used the ICRW analysis of DLHS data (ICRW &UNICEF, 2015), which led to the interesting finding that poverty is important but not necessarily the most critical driver everywhere. We also used 2011 census data to understand the age-specific patterns and prevalence of child marriage.

The literature review clearly highlighted the need for disaggregating the understanding of the drivers of child marriage. In addition to published and academic work, we scanned newspaper reports as well as other journalistic and non-academic writings from activists and professionals from non-governmental organizations (NGOs). This helped to sharpen our effort to isolate the root cause, which invariably is related to women's secondary position and prevalent gender prescriptions, from other drivers. What emerged was that although there are similarities, there also are significant differences in the factors driving the practice in different contexts.

This distinction played an important role in the development of the model, as it provides a clear frame for carrying out this analysis for any state, district or other location. The analysis also identified factors that are barriers to implementing the law against child marriage.

The existing literature provided clear pointers for drivers of change. We tried adding value by unpacking the process through which a driver of change interacts with various drivers that perpetuate the practice of child marriage. We did this by analysing various success stories from India and elsewhere in the context of child marriage and experiences of work against other social practices that violate fundamental human rights, e.g. child labour. An important outcome of this analysis was that the nature and prevalence of child marriage determines the choice of intervention; areas where child marriage is a common social norm need to be distinguished from the areas where change has begun, as well as from areas where child marriage has become an exception. Existing policies and programmes that wholly or partially address the issue of child marriage were examined from the perspective of the identified drivers of change based on available literature.

The work on developing a theory of change was preceded by a review of existing theories of change, developed by different organizations working on the issue of child marriage. The theory of change emerged as a result of brainstorming within the research team and was later refined based on feedback from colleagues and UNICEF. Given our focus on disaggregation, a decentralized approach emerged as logical. We felt taking the Gram Panchayat, the lowest level of government, as the site for 'local' action would be strategic. If policy circles are strategic in encouraging action against child marriage, using the Gram Panchayat would also give an agenda to newly elected women members, as more and more states are moving from 33 per cent to 50 per cent reservation of seats for women in the village councils.

The scaling-up model was evolved through these processes. The review of the literature on scaling up also informed the design of the model.

3. Patterns and trends of child marriage in India

Child marriage is practiced across India, with large numbers of girls being married below the age of 18 years. States with the highest prevalence of child marriage (50 per cent and above) are Bihar, Rajasthan, Jharkhand, Uttar Pradesh, West Bengal, Madhya Pradesh, Andhra Pradesh and Karnataka. However, there also exist variations between districts within a given state. For example, Tamil Nadu has a low state prevalence rate for child marriage, but one of its districts has a prevalence rate close to the national average. Such variations need to be translated into district-level (or sub-district) interventions for maximum impact.

In the last decade, the overall child marriage prevalence has declined. However this has largely been confined to girls below 15 years of age. According to the 2011 Census, there were no girls in the age group 0-9 years who were currently married but significant percentages of girls (both in urban and rural; illiterate and educated till Class 8) are still being married at ages 15-17 years. Regression analysis conducted on the DLHS data set (DLHS-3, 2007-2008) by the ICRW, supported by UNICEF, reveals that many socio-economic and developmental indicators, especially those related to the status of women in society, are linked to child marriage prevalence

Table 1: Number and percentage of girls by marital status: India and sample states, 2011*

Age Group	Currently Married	Widowed	Separated	Divorced	Total Ever-Married	Total Females	% Ever-Married
India							
10-14	1,709,811	63,647	32,246	6,496	1,812,200	63,290,377	2.9
15-18*	3,232,919	78,247	26,724	7,773	3,345,663	33,592,084	9.6
10-18*	4,942,730	141,894	58,970	14,269	5,157,863	96,882,461	5.3
Andhra Pradesh (undivided)^							
10-14	95,912	4,472	1,752	310	102,446	3,992,711	2.6
15-18*	209,239	5,103	1,931	389	216,662	2,228,059	9.7
10-18*	305,151	9,575	3,683	699	319,108	6,220,770	5.1
Gujarat							
10-14	100,143	4,183	1,596	811	106,733	2,865,611	3.7
15-18*	181,551	4,600	1,565	888	188,604	1,609,061	11.7
10-18*	281,694	8,783	3,161	1,699	295,337	4,474,672	6.6
Rajasthan							
10-14	162,756	2,156	1,416	199	166,527	3,949,822	4.2
15-18*	324,866	3,082	1,677	274	329,899	2,045,474	16.1
10-18*	487,622	5,238	3,093	473	496,426	5,995,296	8.3
West Bengal							
10-14	107,199	5,022	2,564	760	115,545	4,479,017	2.6
15-18*	319,522	8,054	2,860	1,686	332,122	2,492,292	13.3
10-18*	426,721	13,076	5,424	2,446	447,667	6,971,309	6.4

*Census 2011 data combine the respondents aged 17 years and 18 years in the same age group. Hence, a percentage of those married within the age group 15-18 years and 10-18 years include those who were married after they completed 18 years of age (legal age of marriage). ^Andhra Pradesh was bifurcated on 1 March, 2014. Source: Compiled from Census 2011 data.

in the districts. Education, at least until completion of secondary classes, is another important indicator that seems to have a positive impact on the prevalence of child marriage.

## Figure 2: Rural-urban spread of married girls (all India)
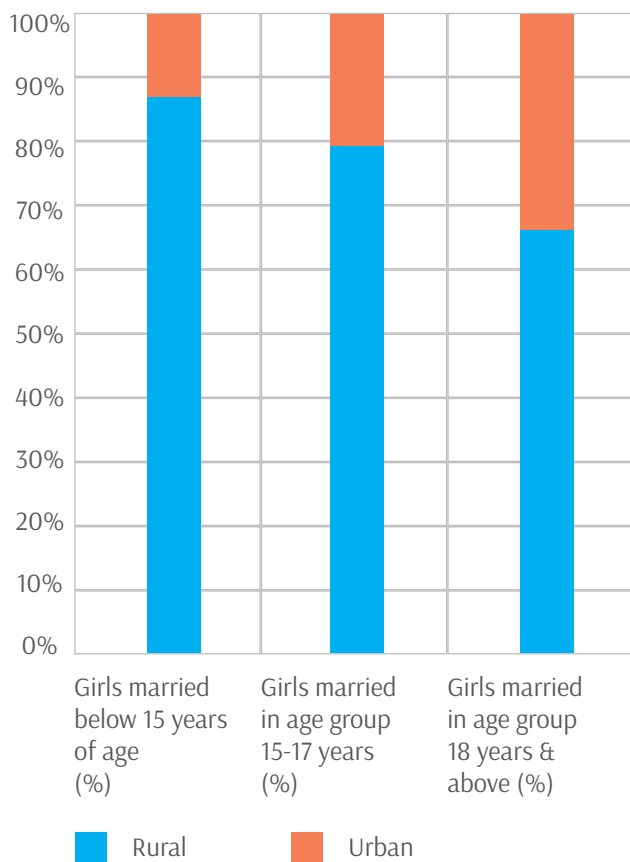
A comparative analysis of Census 2001 and 2011 reveals that there has been a change of -1.04 percentage points for married girls in the age group 15-19 years. Table 1 highlights the higher percentages of child marriage prevalence in the age group 15-18 years[2] as compared to the age group 10-14 years. This trend is common for All India as well as high prevalence states (Andhra Pradesh, Gujarat, Rajasthan and West Bengal). The ratio of girls married below the age of 18 is much higher in rural areas compared to urban areas (69:31) in relation to the overall distribution of the rural-urban population in the country (Census 2011). DLHS-3data(2007-2008) show that among girls married below 15 years of age, 87 per cent live in rural areas (see Figure 2), while 66 per cent are illiterate, 17 per cent have had five years of schooling and 14 per cent have had eight years of schooling (see Figure 3).

Figure 3 points towards an important strategy for addressing child marriage prevalence. Girls who pursue higher secondary education and above have a higher probability of avoiding child marriage as compared to those completing only secondary education.

The lower prevalence of child marriage in urban areas raises one question: is migration to urban areas a solution to end child marriage? The answer is not straightforward. Some evidence from recent research in India points to the contrary: "Migrant families leaving their villages in search of jobs often arrange marriages for their daughters before leaving, as a way to manage their concerns about their ability to feed and protect the girls in the urban slums where they are likely to be living. In contexts like these, marriage is often the only so-

Figure 3: Highest education attained by married girls in India
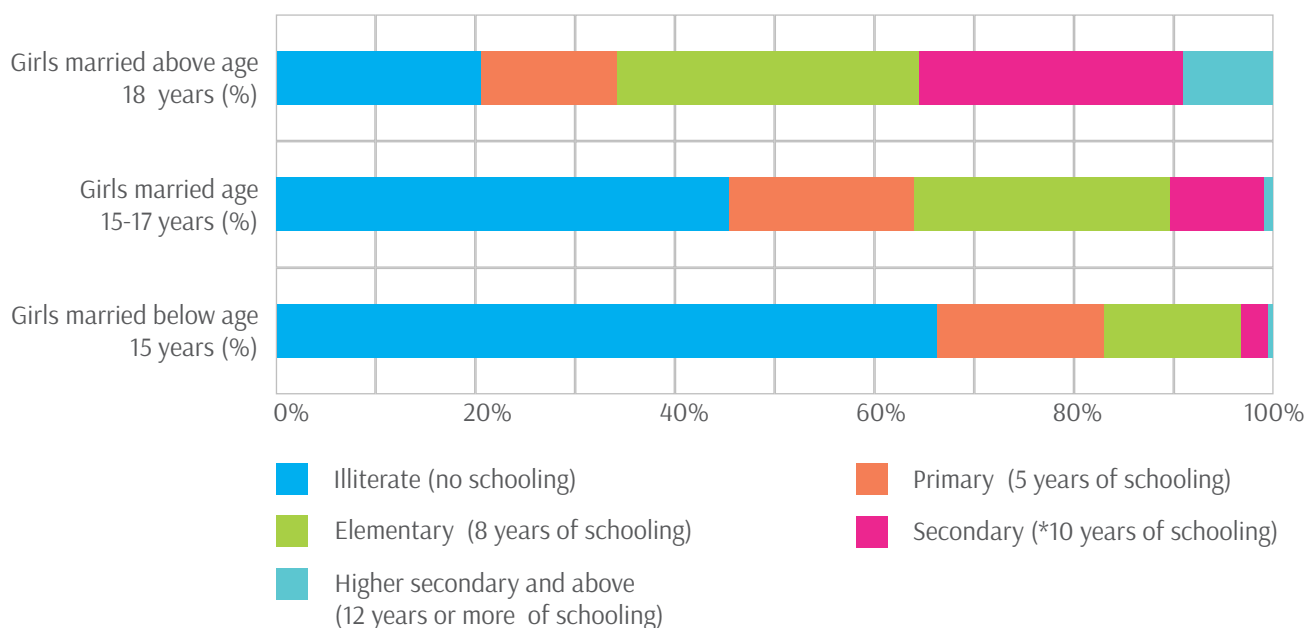
Source: Re-calculated from Table 8a, 'District-level study on child marriages in India: What do we know about the prevalence, trends and patterns ?' Appendices, ICRW and UNICEF, January 2015.

[2] Census 2011 data combine respondents aged 17 and 18 years in the same age group.

cially sanctioned and accessible way for families to provide security for their daughters." (Nirantar Trust, 2015).

Assuming a positive connection between education and the reduction in child marriage, it is worth taking a closer look at the evidence on linkages between migration and education. The evidence from India and neighbouring countries, such as Bangladesh, provides mixed signals: while in some cases, migration leads to higher demand for and investment in education of boys and girls, in others it leads to higher engagement of boys and girls in paid or unpaid work. Girls are either engaged in sibling care and household chores to relieve their mothers for paid work, or are married off to ensure their 'security' (Sward & Rao, 2009; Jha & Jhingran, 2005). In general, it can be concluded that although urbanization is linked with upward shifts in marriage age, rural-urban migration undertaken in search of livelihood opportunities does not necessarily result in these shifts in the short run.

According to the national average, there is a strong correlation between poverty and child marriage. An analysis of DLHS-3 data shows that child marriage is much more prevalent among the poorest than among the richest quintiles (see Figure 4).

This generalization, however, does not hold true for all high prevalence or low prevalence districts. A comparative analysis of data for districts in the high prevalence states of Bihar, Rajasthan, West Bengal, Telangana and Gujarat shows that the inverse relationship between wealth quintiles and high prevalence of child marriage does not always hold true. While the relationship holds for the high prevalence districts in Bihar and West Bengal, it is either the opposite (Gujarat) or more erratic in the rest (Andhra Pradesh and Telangana). Except in Bihar, child marriage prevalence is higher for the highest wealth quintiles compared with the lowest quintiles in the same low prevalence districts. This indicates that the richer groups in these districts hold on to the practice of child marriage much more in situations where it is no longer a widespread phenomenon.

The existing literature does not suggest any clear explanation for this variation, and for the fact that child marriage is not necessarily linked solely to poverty. One possible explanation lies in child marriage being strongly linked to social and community norms in these states. Specific 'high caste' and landed communities are known to practise the tradition of child marriage in parts of Rajasthan and Gujarat. This is discussed in greater detail in section 4.1 on drivers of high prevalence. This indicates the need for greater inquiry and disaggregated analysis, and also that solutions in Gujarat, Andhra Pradesh and Telangana must not be targeted at only the poorest groups but also at middle and high wealth groups (see Table 2).

Figure 4: Prevalence of child marriage by wealth quintile, DLHS-3 (2007-2008)
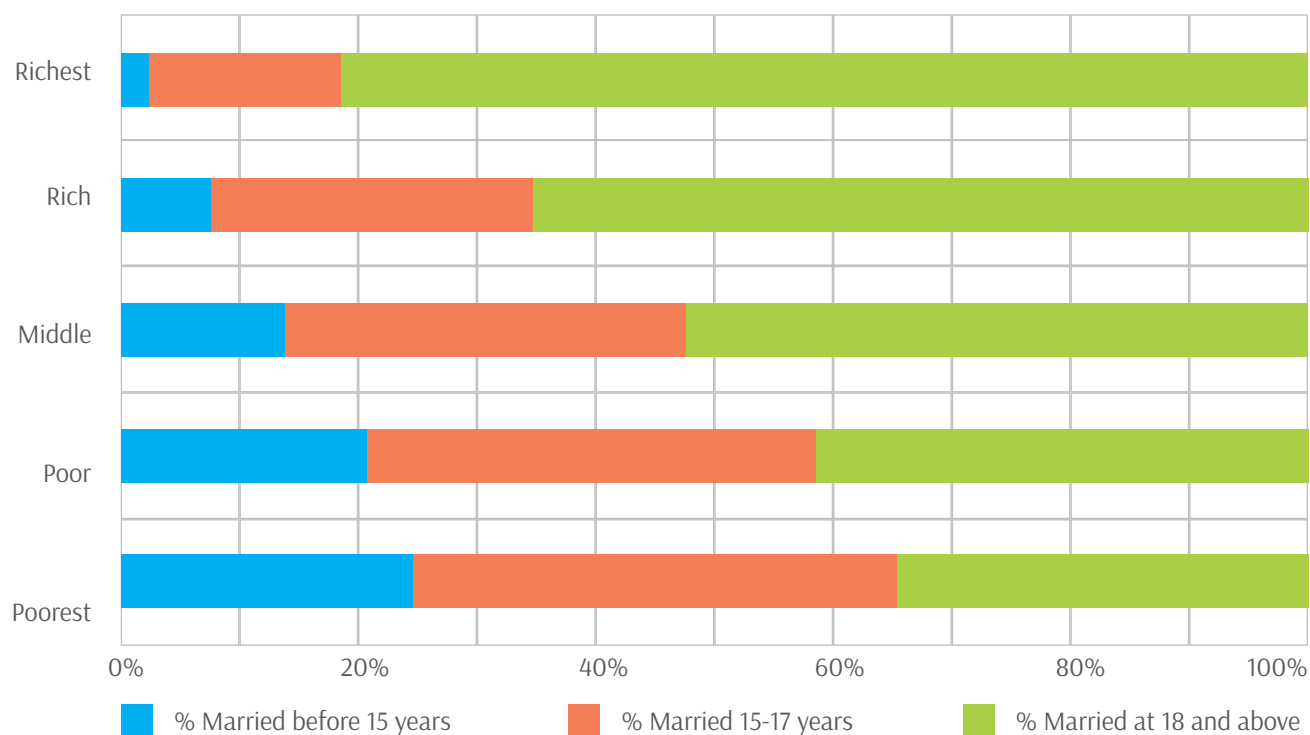
Legend:
- % Married before 15 years
- % Married 15-17 years
- % Married at 18 and above

Source: Reproduced from 'District-level study on child marriages in India: What do we know about the prevalence, trends and patterns?' Appendices, ICRW and UNICEF, January 2015.

Table 2: Prevalence of child marriage* and distribution of child marriage by wealth quintile in select districts

Districts with high prevalence of child marriage				
	Prevalence of child marriage (%)	Distribution of child marriage by wealth quintile (%)		
State (District)		Poor	Middle	Rich
Bihar (Jamui)	85.3	81.0	11.2	7.8
Rajasthan (SawaiMadopur)	73.3	53.1	19.9	27.0
West Bengal (Murshidabad)	70.8	57.5	19.9	22.6
Telangana (Mahbubnagar)	61.0	25.2	40.4	34.4
Gujarat (Patan)	54.2	15.5	27.8	56.7
Districts with low prevalence of child marriage				
	Prevalence of child marriage (%)	Distribution of child marriage by wealth quintile (%)		
State (District)		Poor	Middle	Rich
Bihar (Siwan)	39.4	47.2	29.4	23.4
Rajasthan (Ganganagar)	29.7	14.5	23.7	61.9
West Bengal (Haora)	34.8	19.8	20.6	59.5
Telangana (Hyderabad)	21.0	0.4	2.1	97.5
Gujarat (Jamnagar)	16.9	4.6	13.7	81.7

* Percentage of girls married before turning 18 years old.

Source: Reproduced from 'District-level study on child marriages in India: What do we know about the prevalence, trends and patterns ?' ICRW and UNICEF, 2015.

Child marriage prevalence does not occur in isolation. Correlation analysis[3] indicates that gender gap in literacy (0.538), literacy rate of females (-0.638) and amenities available to villages (namely, upper primary school (-0.211), anganwadi centre (-0.213), primary health care centre (-0.288), and all-weather road (-0.150), have a close association with the prevalence of child marriage. It is possible that educating women, ensuring access to post-primary schooling, providing day-care centres for working women (so that older girls do not dropout of school for sibling care), health services and access to roads for safer and faster travel to health and educational facilities ensure that families do not subject their under-aged daughters to marriage. However, it is important to use caution in interpreting this association, especially in view of the absence of a clear and one-directional relationship between poverty and the prevalence of child marriage.

State and district-level analyses speak volumes about diversity in the spread of child marriage prevalence. While very high prevalence of child marriage (>75 per cent) is concentrated around high prevalence district clusters in Bihar and Uttar Pradesh, the prevalence is less concentrated and more widespread across districts in other high prevalence states like Rajasthan, Andhra Pradesh and West Bengal.[4] In Rajasthan, the prevalence of child marriage in the western districts is between 20 and 50 per cent, while in eastern districts the prevalence rates are higher at between 50 and 75 per cent. Only 5 out of 32 districts in Rajasthan have a prevalence of more than 75 per cent. In West Bengal, only 1 out of 12 districts has more than 70 per cent prevalence. Among other districts, the prevalence is predominately between 50 and 75 per cent. While Gujarat does not have very high prevalence of child marriage in any of its districts, the prevalence in the majority of districts ranges between 25 and 50 per cent.

[3] Figures in parenthesis show the correlation values for All India.
Source: 'District-level study on child marriages in India: What do we know about the prevalence, trends and patterns?' ICRW and UNICEF, 2015.

[4] DLHS-3 (2007-2008) data analysis in ICRW and UNICEF, 2015.

These variations in prevalence do have an impact on strategy and therefore any programming model addressing child marriage should take the differences in the spread of prevalence rates into account. In Bihar and Uttar Pradesh, it is necessary to explore the preconditions that perpetuate very high rates of child marriage in certain district clusters, whereas in Andhra Pradesh and Gujarat there is a need to understand why child marriage remains high across the state. Section 4.1 on drivers of high prevalence attempts to answer these questions to the extent possible based on the available data.

Although Gujarat does not have a very high rate of prevalence (see Annex 2), it is unique in not showing any significant change in prevalence between 2007-2008 and 2012-2013 (DLHS 2007-2008 and 2012-2013).[5] In Rajasthan and West Bengal, there has been an increase in prevalence in one of the districts while in Andhra Pradesh, there has been moderate to steep decline across districts. Such a wide variation across districts within a state calls for decentralization of approaches and of implementation agencies to end child marriage. This again reinforces the need to understand child marriage locally using a broad framework, and, accordingly, design a targeted model of interventions.

Comparing socio-economic indicators from the highest and lowest prevalence districts in the focus states (Andhra Pradesh, Gujarat, Rajasthan and West Bengal), shows that in low prevalence districts, both men and women have a higher level of education, a higher proportion of adolescent girls going to schools and more equitable distribution of wealth. However, with respect to access to upper primary schools, Rajasthan and West Bengal have better access in their high prevalence districts. This could also indicate that the lack of access to education might not be the prime reason for the high child marriage prevalence in these districts, but could be driven by social norms, vested interest groups, gender prescriptions and political patronage. It is imperative that the knowledge of these probable drivers of high prevalence informs the strategy adopted for addressing the issue of child marriage in Rajasthan and West Bengal.

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[5] Although RSOC shows a halving of the child marriage rate compared to DLHS-3.

4. Model to accelerate reduction of child marriage

Policy makers in India have given attention to reducing child marriage since pre-independence days and yet the pace of change has remained slow. This section attempts to develop a model for scaling up efforts to reduce the prevalence of child marriage in India. There are five subsections: (i) Drivers of high prevalence; (ii) Interaction between drivers of high prevalence and drivers of change; (iii) Theory of change; (iv) Review of existing policies and interventions; and (v) for implementation.

4.1 Drivers of high prevalence

In general, the factors that contribute to the prevalence of child marriage are fairly wellknown and largely common, but their relative importance varies from one place to another. Gender norms and expectations, poverty and economic considerations, lack of awareness about the law as well as about the illeffects of child marriage, cultural-religious customs and practices, and lack of access to education and skills training are commonly identified factors that play a role in the high prevalence of child marriage in an area (GB Pant Institute of Rural Studies, 2013; UNICEF, 2014; UNICEF & ICRW, 2011). However, the same factors could have different impacts in different places and the significance of a particular factor could vary from one context to another. We have therefore identified the following drivers of high prevalence from the perspective of their manifestations in different states i.e., how critical the driver is and how it impacts in a particular location. Table 3 provides a summary of the drivers of high prevalence in the context of the four focus states.

a) Widely accepted and sanctioned social norm

A perusal of existing evidence from reviews and newspaper reports reveals that deeply entrenched and widely practised social customs with wide social approval is a major, often the most critical, driving factor of high prevalence of child marriage in states such as Andhra Pradesh, Rajasthan and Gujarat. This subsection provides a snapshot of common practices.

Sibling and cross marriages: UNICEF and ICRW, 2011, identify widely prevalent practices such as sibling marriages (marrying multiple sisters/cousins in the same ceremony) and attasatta, which is a major driver of child marriage in Rajasthan (however, no quantitative data are available on the prevalence and precise geographic spread of these practices). Atta satta refers to the practice of one set of brother and sister being married to another set of brother and sister. Sibling marriage and a form of attasatta, known as saata, are also common in Gujarat. In the event of irreconcilable differences of one couple, the other couple has to perforce break their marriage as well. The declining sex ratio in the state, where child marriage is prevalent for both boys and girls, has forced communities to marry off their children as soon as they find a suitable alliance (UNICEF, 2012).

Mrityu bhoj and other practices where the wedding is linked to another important event: In parts of Rajasthan, when an elderly person dies the family organizes a big feast, the mrityu bhoj, inviting members from the community, and at the same time arranges marriages to take place alongside. In all these practices, the pressure to link one wedding to another event, either a funeral or a feast, often means children below the age of 18 are married off (UNICEF & ICRW, 2011).

Marriage within the extended family: A common practice in Andhra Pradesh and also in other southern Indian states is to marry the daughter to her maternal uncle, known as the mathamma system. In such marriages, it is common to find a large age gap between the bride and groom. Another common practice in some parts of Andhra Pradesh is to marry a younger sister to the elder sister's husband if the elder sister has failed to conceive after marriage (Vasavya Mahila Mandali, 2013). The prevalence of bigamy is also high in Andhra Pradesh. Since bigamy is illegal, it is hard to find hard data but available information from sources, such as newspaper reports, suggests that it could be one of the highest in the country (Kumar & Srivastava, 2010). Single parents, either mother or father, are reported to choose to marry daughters early to get rid of their responsibility of looking after a young girl. Widowers also see the possibility of marrying again if their daughters are married off early (Vasavya Mahila Mandali, 2013).

Communal relationships: Another common practice reported from Andhra Pradesh is known as 'communal relationships'

where fathers marry off their daughters in lieu of debt to be repaid or to take a loan. Such marriages are acceptable even if the bride and groom are from two different communities and therefore referred to as 'communal relationships'. Girls are accepted in lieu of debt because of the high demand for labour. It has also been reported from the state that, on the advice of quacks, growth hormones have been administered to young girls to accelerate their physical growth in order to marry them off early (Pagadala, 2013; Pagadala, 2012).

Mass child marriages: The practice of mass child marriages on the 'auspicious' days of Akshaya Tritiya and Mahashivrathiri is common in Andhra Pradesh and Rajasthan. Much has been reported about these events in newspapers and, despite greater vigilance, there has been an increase in the number of festival days declared as 'auspicious' for the purpose of marriage (UNICEF & ICRW, 2011). Mass marriage fairs are also common in certain parts of West Bengal (Hindu, 21 October 2013). The wide prevalence of mass child marriages with social approval and religious links has made it difficult for both the administration and activists to stop such practices.

Awareness of the law does not appear to inhibit deeply entrenched social practices. However, a study commissioned by the Planning Commission[6] revealed that a significant proportion of parents are not aware that child marriage is illegal. Parents cited tradition, growing demands for dowry and pressure from relatives as reasons for marrying off their daughters at an early age. A significant proportion of parents in this study mentioned the concern for their daughter's safety as a reason (GB Pant Institute of Rural Studies, 2013).Muslim groups have been opposing the law on child marriage on grounds that it is against the Muslim Personal Law (Hindu, 22 September 2013), and a recent judgement by the Gujarat High Court upholding the marriage of a minor Muslim girl as legal has started another debate on the role of religion in social issues (Mandhani, 2014). Nonetheless, experiences also suggest that the existence and awareness of laws does not play a major role when it comes to widely prevalent and acceptable social practices.

b) Poverty, high wedding costs and other economic considerations

Poverty has been identified as a driver of high prevalence but it is important to deepen this understanding by tracing how poverty manifests itself. The literature shows that the high cost of weddings, which is commonly associated with marriages, is one of the important drivers of a number of social practices that are responsible for child marriages. Hence, even parents who are not necessarily extremely poor would take recourse to such practices to lower expenses. For instance, the group marriages and other opportunities, such as mrityu bhoj, for organizing weddings or mass marriages have their roots in saving the high costs usually associated with weddings.

[6] The following states were covered in this study: Uttar Pradesh, Rajasthan, Bihar, Maharashtra, Madhya Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand, West Bengal, Gujarat and Odisha.

Evidence shows that the availability of certain opportunities fuel certain practices, e.g., child labour has been found to be higher in areas that practise intensive agriculture and, therefore, have a high demand for labour as compared to poorer, single crop dependent areas that practise subsistence farming, even though poverty levels are higher there (Jha & Jhingran, 2005). Similarly, the political economy of child marriage is also determined by high demand for labour and high female work participation in certain geographic areas. This could be true for coastal areas such as Krishna district in Andhra Pradesh, where intensive agriculture leads to high demand for labour. Young girls are welcome and this, therefore, acts as a rationale for practices such as communal marriage. A study from Adilabad district in Andhra Pradesh suggests that local leaders promote child marriages in order to bring in large numbers of labour to their large tracts of land at low or no cost to them (Pagadala, 2012).

The demand for brides in adverse sex-ratio states is fuelling the practice of child marriage in many states where parents are responding by saving wedding and other costs associated with looking after and educating girls. In West Bengal, this recent trend is being referred to as 'marriage migrants'. It is reported that parents usually marry off one of their daughters within the state, while other daughters are given to families outside the state, making them marriage migrants. Girls who are marriage migrants often end up living with men under disadvantaged circumstances, as many of these men are physically challenged or much older than the girls, or are widowers with many children to be taken care of. With no dowry demanded by such poor men, parents see this as an attractive option that can ensure both marriage and work opportunity for the new bride (Kaur, 2010). Migration for marriage may involve payments from the groom's side, thus replacing dowry with a form of brideprice. While the adverse sex ratio is helping in doing away with dowry, it is in no way contributing to lessening the misery of girls or enhancing their agency. In fact, in some cases 'marriage migration' may be a form of 'marriage trafficking'.

c) Lack of easy access to schooling, especially at secondary level

Lack of schooling facilities, especially at upper primary and secondary levels, has also been identified as a major driver of child marriage. The perusal of the literature suggests that the lack of safe and affordable access to schools acts as an impediment to later marriage, especially in a context where the concern for the safety and chastity of girls is a major concern of parents. In such situations, the spread and location of schools become important. Schools do not act as a viable alternative to marriage if they are located far away. Figure 5 shows that the spread of secondary schools, especially publicly funded secondary schools, which include government and aided schools, is particularly poor in Gujarat; there are only two secondary schools for every 100 upper primary schools in Gujarat.

The recent Joint Review Mission for the Rashtriya Madhyamik Shiksha Abhiyan (RMSA)[7] in Gujarat identifies lower participation of girls at secondary stage as a major concern, linking it to the practice of child marriage:

> "For every 100 boys enrolled, only 69 girls are enrolled at secondary level in Gujarat. The gaps exist for all social groups but are higher for OBCs [Other Backward Classes] and Muslims; this is a cause of concern as OBCs form a substantial proportion of the state's population. This ratio is much worse than the existing sex ratio of 918 in the total population in the state. The gap further widens if one takes the number of boys and girls appearing for the class 10 board examinations. Although the pass percentages are higher for girls than for boys, the number of girls taking the examination is lower for all social groups, the gap being the widest for OBCs (UDISE, 2013-14). Several reasons were cited during our interactions: distance, lack of transport, parental lack of interest and child marriage being more important than others. The Monitoring institution report has also highlighted child marriage and lack of women teachers as reasons" (RMSA Joint Review Mission Report 2015).

It is likely that child marriage is both a cause and a consequence of the lack of adequate secondary schooling facilities within reasonable distance in Gujarat.

d) Political patronage weakens enforcement agencies

Social acceptance and wide prevalence translate into political patronage as politicians find it difficult to oppose the practice of child marriage as it may mean losing votes and support. This in turn makes the strict enforcement of the law difficult. For instance, newspapers and other media have been regularly publishing and telecasting reports of mass child marriages being attended by political leaders across party lines with no subsequent action or change.

Enforcement agencies find it difficult to take action against their own political bosses. Communities practising child marriage are numerically strong and often well organized in the form of caste panchayats[8] and other similar bodies. They form important voting blocks, which influence electoral politics and aim at sustaining the practice. This is especially relevant for states such as Gujarat and Rajasthan.[9] These groups draw their strength from political connections and are often hostile towards officials and frontline functionaries trying to prevent child marriages. The case of Bhanwari Devi, a sathin (female grassroots worker) who was raped because she tried to stop a child marriage, is well known, but many more incidents remain unnoticed, unreported and unpunished.[10]

Figure 5: Proportion of schools at different levels in the four focus states
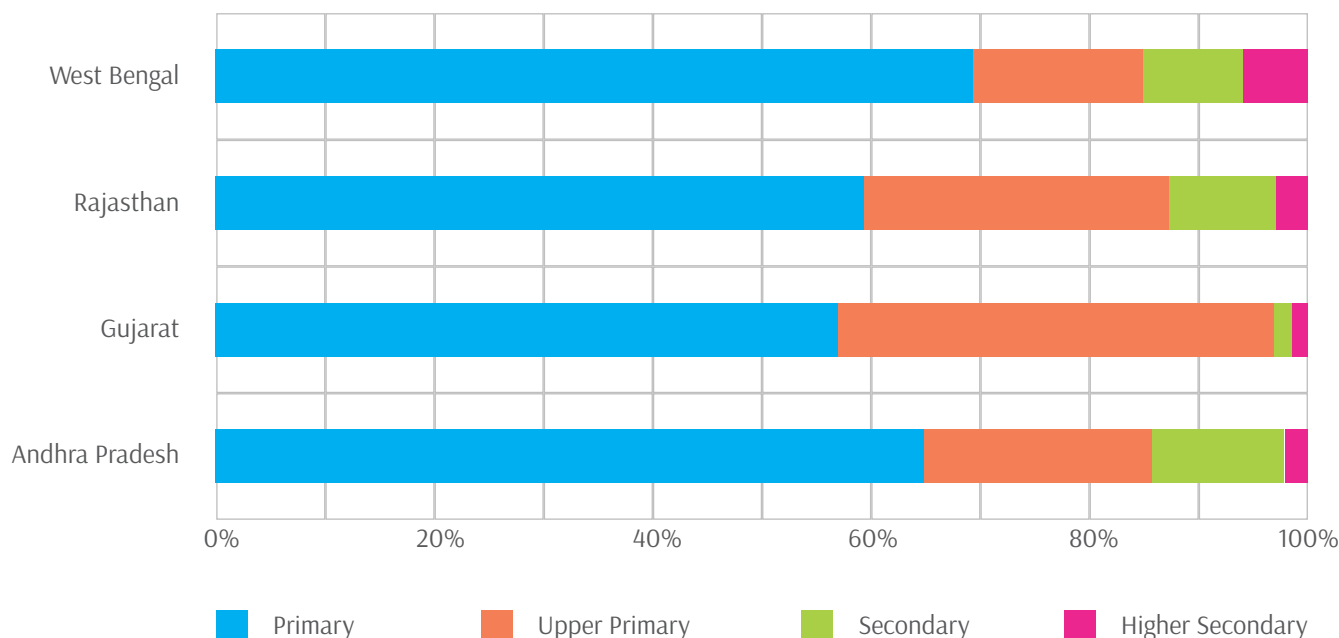
Source: Tabulated from District Information System on Education raw data, 2013-2014.

[7] Rashtriya Madhyamik Shiksha Abhiyan is the national programme for secondary education funded by both union and state governments, and supported by selected bilateral and multilateral agencies. http://mhrd.gov.in/rmsa

[8] Caste panchayats are caste-specific juries of elders of a particular caste for a village or a higher level in India. A village panchayat is distinct from a caste panchayat in that it is a statutory body that serves all villagers regardless of caste.

[9] For instance, please refer to the following newspaper and TV reports:www.youtube. com/watch?v=lyO9ttxG-Xc#t=67; http://ibnlive.in.com/news/gehlot-in-trouble-for-attending-mass-wedding-of-minors/63973-7-1.html;http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/jaipur/Preventing-child-marriages-still-an-uphill-task/articleshow/34305077.cms

[10] For instance,see<www.ndtv.com/cities/officials-attacked-while-stopping-child-marriages-in-rajasthan-477999> for a report on how government officials were chased and beaten in Jhalawar, Rajasthan.

Social acceptance, translated into political pressures, may also be reflected in institutional forms that can be detrimental in preventing child marriage. The Rajasthan government's Compulsory Registration of Marriages Bill 2009 is a case in point. The Bill's clause that calls for a memorandum from the parents or guardians of parties who have not completed 21 years of age at marriage to be given to the registrar within 30 days from the date of solemnization of the marriage contradicts the national PCMA 2006 (Mishra, 2010).

e) Organized vested interest groups and networks

West Bengal, with its image of a progressive state and a history of the longest serving leftist governments in India, is an unlikely entry in the list of states with high prevalence of child marriage. Unlike Andhra Pradesh, Gujarat or Rajasthan, West Bengal does not have marriage customs such as sibling marriage or mathamma that promote child marriage. None of West Bengal's districts ranks among the districts with the highest rates of child marriage in India. The practice is largely driven by economic factors such as marriage migration. Child marriage in the state is also widely reported to be used as a disguise to traffic girls from poor and tribal families for either the sex trade or as cheap labour. Although it is not easy to assert the proportion of child marriages used for trafficking, the state accounts for about 52 per cent of cases of 'selling girls for prostitution' in the country (Halim, 2014), and a number of these are believed to be linked to child marriages (Pandey & Ghosh, 2013). Although poverty plays a role, it is the presence of organized networks that provide these opportunities, which acts as one of the main drivers of high prevalence of child marriage in West Bengal.

f) Gender norms and prescriptions

Gender norms and prescriptions emerge as the root causes everywhere, whether they are social customs or driven by poverty, the fact that girls and women have an inferior position in society is the driving cause. Patriarchal control of and concerns with puberty, chastity, family honour, fertility, boy preference, arranged marriage and caste endogamy are at the root of many social customs and beliefs, such as that girls are paraya dhan – someone else's property – and that their main responsibility is to bear children. Fear of losing family honour in case of a premarital sexual relationship and the viewing of child marriage as the means to save the family from any possible dishonour is grounded in the prevalent gender norm of virginity. Even the seemingly poverty-driven act of marrying off girls in lieu of debt has its roots in prevalent gender norms that privilege men in every respect and do not give any voice to girls. This emerges from an analysis of the literature on child marriage in general and from an analysis of practices in all four states in particular (UNICEF & ICRW, 2011; Economic and Political Weekly, 2009; Economic and Political Weekly, 2013; Pagadala, 2012, Nirantar Trust, 2015). The belief that women's reproductive life is much shorter than that of men is also prevalent in parts of the country, as the evidence from Andhra Pradesh and Maharashtra shows. This drives parents to child marriage so that girls can bear children from a young age (Vasavya Mahila Mandali, 2013).

The different drivers of child marriage are inter-connected. One common thread across all states is the absence of agency and autonomy of girls. Girls have no say or control over their lives and are in many ways regarded as commodities under the control of those in power.[11] This is a main driver of high prevalence and lies at the root of unequal and exploitative practices towards girls and women. Although it is one of the most difficult aspects to address, it is important to identify this as a practical constraint to address in any model that is developed to contain the practice of child marriage.

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[11]   A personal anecdote of a colleague (T. Shanmuga Priya) of her experience as a Masters of Social Work student posted with the Community Health Initiative and Research Action Group in Mumbai for fieldwork during 2008-2009 confirms this. She had an opportunity to interact with HIV/AIDS patients – both men and women. A significant proportion of women met during the eight months   mentioned that they were second wives and contracted the disease from their husbands. It became clear during counselling sessions that there were beliefs related to the disease becoming curable if the HIV positive man married a young virgin; the blood would become purified and the Man would be cured of the disease. This then explained the rather disproportionate presence of married women with two or three children, aged 21 and HIV positive.

Table 3: Drivers of high prevalence of child marriage in the context of the four focus states

Drivers of high prevalence	States			
	Andhra Pradesh	**Gujarat**	**Rajasthan**	**West Bengal**
Widely accepted and sanctioned social norm	The most critical factor that needs to be addressed			Contributory factor
	Common to marry girls: to maternal uncle often with wide gap in age; to same man married to elder daughter if the elder daughter was unable to conceive; in lieu of debt; and in mass child marriages on auspicious days.	Widely prevalent practice cutting across caste and economic groups, but slightly more common in rural areas, and among certain communities.	Mean age for boys and girls is below the legal age of marriage. Mass child marriages on auspicious days like AkshayaTritiya; widely reported and celebrated with no legal action.	Tribal child marriage fairs are common in border districts.
Poverty, high wedding costs and other economic considerations	Contributory factor			
	Single parents resort to the practice as this reduces their burden and responsibility.	A number of social customs that push younger girls into marriage (sibling marriage, *saata*, etc.) to save on wedding cost.	Custom of *mrityubhoj*, where marriages are organized when someone dies in the community (cost saving).	Marriage migration saves families from spending on their daughters.
Lack of easy access to schooling, especially at secondary level	Contributory factor			
	Spread of schools with secondary classes relatively better than in other states but fewer girls than boys are enrolled.	Very poor spread of government and aided secondary schools across the state; enrolment of girls is much lower than boys in Class 9 and 10.	Poor spread of secondary schools, and enrolment of girls is much lower than boys in Class 9 and 10.	Spread of secondary schools relatively better. More girls enrolled than boys.
Political patronage weakens enforcement agencies	Makes the implementation of the chosen strategies difficult			
	Not so evident. But no enforcement of law is visible.	Mass marriages organized by local leaders for popularity allow the practice to thrive. It also weakens the authority of local enforcement agencies.	Practice supported by the caste panchayats; local communities hostile to those trying to prevent child marriages. State laws not consistent with national PCMA.	Weak policing and law enforcement/ possible police-violators nexus.
Organized vested interest groups and networks	Makes the implementation difficult			The most critical driver
	Child marriage encouraged by landlords to bring in labour for intensive agriculture; growth hormones administered to young girls by quacks.	–	–	Marriage migrants (girls are married off to men from states with adverse sex ratio) facilitated by organized networks; child marriage used as a disguise to traffic girls from poor and tribal families.
Gender norms and prescriptions; lack of girls' agency	Root cause for prevalence of child marriage across all four states			
	Perceptions of family honour play a major role; girls have no voice or control over their own lives.	Girls viewed as *parayadhan* (someone else's property). Patriarchal perceptions on puberty and chastity dominate decisions in marriage.		Patriarchal views on puberty and chastity dominate decisions on marriage.

4.2 Interactions between drivers of change and drivers of high prevalence

A significant body of work identifies the drivers of change for mitigating the prevalence of child marriage. This includes evidence from India, other South Asian countries as well as other parts of the world. Based on a systematic review of 23 programmes in different parts of the globe (including India) that had been evaluated and shown results, ICRW (2011) has identified five strategies to combat child marriage: (i) Empowering girls with information, skills and support networks; (ii) Educating and mobilizing parents and community members; (iii) Enhancing the accessibility and quality of formal schooling for girls; (iv) Offering economic support and incentives for girls and their families; and (v) Fostering an enabling legal and policy framework. This is largely in line with the strategies identified by most other small-scale studies and documentations undertaken on child marriage in India.

In addition, evidence is also available on a few other programmes that have achieved success in particular contexts, e.g., mitigating the practice of child labour or increasing girls' participation in secondary schools. There is also information on particular programmes in the context of child marriage that has not been covered by existing reviews. A perusal of the literature and case studies on child marriage shows a commonality in terms of drivers of change. Hence, we identify the following five drivers of change: access to safe, affordable and good quality secondary education; empowerment of women and girls, and engagement with men and boys;

incentivizing the change (social protection) and disincentivizing the practice; agenda building and public opinion (behavioural change); and consistent laws and stricter enforcement.

This subsection maps the ways in which each of these drivers of change interacts with the respective driver(s) of high prevalence to understand the process of change, and in so doing, identify strategizing principles. In this process, the effort has largely been to look at evidence from India, with further evidence from Asia. The understanding of this process then informs the review of existing schemes and efforts in order to be able to identify strengths and gaps, and suggest improvements to these schemes.

a) Access to safe, affordable and good quality secondary education

Education emerges as a driver of change almost universally. Almost every study on child marriage reports a positive correlation between the decrease in child marriage and an increase in school participation rates. Education impacts child marriage in various ways: the opportunity of schooling acts as a choice, and parents start viewing this as a viable option. To be a viable option, schooling needs to fulfil certain preconditions: it offers a safe environment (often seen in terms of availability of separate toilets for girls, presence of women teachers, safe transport and no fear of abuse) and is affordable. Affordability should be viewed in terms of all direct costs, including transport, uniforms, tuition and books (Economic and Political Weekly, 2014).

Table 4: Summary of impact of access to safe, affordable and good quality secondary education on drivers of high prevalence of child marriage

Driver of change	The ways in which it interacts and influences drivers of high prevalence		
	Widely accepted and sanctioned social norms	Poverty/high wedding costs	Lack of easy access to secondary schools
Access to safe, affordable and good quality secondary education	A change in social norm may occur when awareness about schooling is created through visible benefits to girls who attend school (e.g., reading, writing, mathematical abilities, new knowledge, receiving an award, higher education). Education also leads to empowerment; girls become more capable of articulating and negotiating; they also influence the choices made for siblings, and inter-generational gains are also reported to be high, all of which contribute to shifts in social norms.	Access to affordable secondary education reduces direct costs for parents and, therefore, could act as a constraint to withdraw the girl from school and marry her off in absence of other choices.	Access to affordable and safe schools starts influencing parental decisions for continued schooling; it also influences the social norm when more and more parents from the community start sending their girls to school.

Education may also contribute to empowerment. Girls attending school are exposed to new knowledge and information, start questioning some of the prevalent social customs and are able to better negotiate with their parents and community. Education leads to aspirations and opens up new opportunities for the girl and, through her, even for the family in some cases. This can happen even if schooling and education processes are mundane and routine. But the impact can be more immediate and widespread if the education is based on the principles of women's empowerment and questions gender prescriptions and norms. Schools should then consciously include empowerment-oriented content and pedagogic approaches, which enable girls (and at times mothers as well, depending upon the programme and its focus) to question the practice of child marriage, among other issues (Brown, undated; ICRW, 2014; Vasavya Mahila Mandali, 2013; Ramachandran et al., 2004).

A number of organizations and programmes have used education, either through formal schooling or other forms of community education, for empowerment and the available evidence indicates positive impact on postponing the age of marriage (see Annex 3). Residential schools, with the feature of a captive group of adolescent girls living and learning together, have also been used for the purpose of collectivizing and influencing girls' attitudes towards child marriage. A recent study on residential schools for girls in India examined the impact on empowerment and noted that awareness about the legal age of marriage and resolve to oppose any pressure to marry before 18 years of age was visible among girls in both government and non-government schools (Jha et al., 2015).

b) Empowerment of women and girls and engaging with men and boys

The empowerment of women and girls can be promoted through collectivization, schooling, information sharing, exposure, encouragement and support to help them think differently, question existing gender norms and prescriptions, become more confident, aspire for themselves and their siblings and daughters, and negotiate better with their families. This has an impact on postponing the age of marriage, which is evident from reviews from various contexts around the world (Ramachandran et al., 2004; ICRW, 2014; Sunita, 2012). A number of community-based programmes, such as Mahila Samakhya, Deepshikha and Rajiv Gandhi Scheme for the Empowerment of Adolescent Girls (SABLA), have used the force of the collective through adolescent and women's groups to initiate changes in gender identity and norms, the root cause that translates into child marriage. Box 1 provides examples of empowerment programmes in India.

Box 1: Examples of actions against child marriage through empowerment and transformative education

Anti-arrack campaign in Andhra Pradesh: The National Literacy Mission classes that discussed the issue of excessive drinking triggered a women's movement against liquor consumption in Nellor district (Andhra Pradesh). This movement, the 'Anti-Arrack Campaign', led to the formation of women's self-help groups across the state, acting as a forum to discuss issues related to child marriage, trafficking, domestic violence, etc. These groups were successful in preventing child marriages, and rescuing girls from child labour and enrolling them in residential schools. A study by the Centre for Economic and Social Studies (Hyderabad) indicated that the prevalence of child marriages reduced among the participants in this programme.
Sources: http://infochangeindia.org/women/backgrounder/women-background-a-perspective.html; www.worldbank.org/en/news/feature/2011/07/04/india-women-empowerment

Nirantar: Mainstreaming transformative education: Nirantar has worked extensively in comprehensive curriculum development. Through their involvement in the Mahila Shikshan Kendra (Mahila Samakhya) comprehensive curriculum, they have empowered young girls to question practices like child marriage. Their innovative means for sharing ideas, issues and problems through Mahila Dakiya (local newsletter) and Khabar Lahariya (weekly newspaper) also raised issues related to child marriage. Such initiatives encourage women to raise their voices against social issues affecting women and girls.
Source: www.nirantar.net/index.php/page/view/5

Mahila Samakhya: Empowering education through residential accelerated learning programmes and women's collectives: Mahila Samakhya, introduced by the Government of India in the 1980s, aims to empower women and girls through collectivization. The 11-month residential accelerated learning programme mainstreams out-of-school girls into the formal education system, preventing child marriages. The collectives also discuss the perils of child marriage and empower women to negotiate with families to continue their daughter's education and delay marriage. Awareness of the Prohibition of Child Marriage Act, Protection of Women against Domestic Violence Act, and Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education Act has accelerated their participation in Nari Adalats [an informal legal alternative presided over by women who act as arbiters in cases relating to domestic violence, divorce, remarriage and property disputes].
Source: Fourth Joint Review Mission of Mahila Samakhya, Aide Memoire, March 2013: www.eruindia.org/files/Education,%20literacy%20and%20empowerment%202000.pdf

Child Rights Club: Transformation through education on child rights: Child Rights Education and Action Movement (CREAM), an initiative of Bangalore Rural Educational and Development Society (BREADS), has initiated awareness campaigns about child rights to differe holders

through women self-help groups, Child Rights Clubs in schools, children's gram sabhas and NGO task forces. Child marriage was one of the issues addressed during these campaigns. A number of child marriages (both individual and mass) were stopped by different district (e.g., Davangere) task forces, using the Childline services.
Source: BREADS Team

Doosara Dashak: It is a project for the holistic education of adolescents aged 11-20 years. The programme aims at leadership development among adolescents to enable them to play a role in the process of social transformation. The manner in which Doosara Dashak processes impacts adolescents can be best seen in their personal and family life, in their involvement with Doosara Dashak work and as role models. As a result of emphasis on life skills, these adolescents acquire social skills, thinking and analytical skills, and negotiation skills. Boys, as well as girls, are seen discussing with parents about the need for delayed marriage.
Source: www.doosradashak.in

BRAC's SoFEA: Educating through peer groups: The Social and Financial Empowerment of Adolescents (SoFEA) programme, led by the Bangladesh Rural Advancement Committee (BRAC) imparted life skills education through informal club meetings and peer groups. The modules covered issues like child marriage, dowry, reproductive health, gender-based violence and awareness of HIV/AIDS. Participants were made aware of the ill effects of child marriage and influenced to delay their marriage.
Source: www.icrw.org/sites/default/files/publications/More%2 Power%20pages%20Web.pdf

CARE's residential accelerated learning programme: CARE's intervention, Udaan, is a residential accelerated learning programme that aims to help never enrolled/out-of-school/drop-out girls from marginalized communities to complete their primary education in 11 months. Although Udaan involved stakeholders at all levels, the thrust was mainly upon 'empowering education' through its residential accelerated learning programmes. One of the first Udaan students who negotiated with her family to delay her marriage recently completed a post-graduate programme and then married. Similarly, another student was able to delay her marriage by four years, and continued to attend school after marriage. The social learning curriculum raised awareness of the consequences of child marriage and early pregnancies.
Source: The Udaan Experience: A transformational journey for tribal adolescent girls, CARE India, 2012; Case study document shared by Udaan in February 2015.

Child clubs in Nepal: Awareness raising activities in remote areas of Nepal includechildren's and women's clubs that teach members about human rights and how child marriage violates child rights. Child club members spread awareness through street performances with messages against child marriage. These clubs also intervened with parents who planned to conduct their children's marriage before the legal age was attained.
Source: Improving Children's Lives, Transforming the Future: 25 years of child rights in South Asia, UNICEF, 2014.

Deepshikha: Empowering girls through adolescent collectives: Deepshikha, initiated by UNICEF in Maharashtra in 2008, focused on adolescent girls' collectives. Child marriage was identified as one of the key issues that was discussed by the groups. Through this programme, adolescent girls were able to question practices like child marriage and domestic violence. They were successful in averting 280 child marriages in four districts. More than 1,000 female adolescent dropouts were re-enrolled in schools and about 17,000 girls were linked with village-level health service providers.
Source: 'Evaluation of Empowering Young Girls and Women in Maharashtra, India', Commissioned by UNICEF, Sambodhi, March 2014.

MV Foundation: Ensuring children attend school: MV Foundation works with a social mobilization strategy to ensure all children below 18 years of age are in school. Although they work primarily with child labour, their inclusive definition ensures reaching out to girls. This has led to a large number of girls exercising their agency in defiance of child marriage. MV Foundation has data for 4,679 child marriages that were stopped as a result of their initiatives.
Source: http://mvfindia.in/impact

Breakthrough's 'Nation Against Child Marriage' Campaign: Breakthrough's study in Bihar and Jharkhand over a period of two years revealed that fathers considered it unsafe for their daughters to travel far for school and wanted them married to ensure their safety. This was also grounded in the fear of their daughters' "sexual promiscuity" that could bring "dishonour" to the family. Breakthrough initiated a campaign against child marriage, in which they engaged students (upper primary and high school) through talks, training, folk theatre, video screenings and mobile shows.
Source: www.jagranjosh.com/current-affairs/global-human-rights organization-breakthrough-launched-a-campaign-against-early-marriage-1382426969-1

Balika Shikshan Shivir - accelerated learning: Balika Shikshan Shivirs (education camps) in Rajasthan, run by NGO Urmul Jyoti Sansthan, offered an accelerated learning programme with residential facility, where girls from marginalized groups, who were either dropouts or had never attended school, were prepared for Class 5 exams in a span of seven months. If the students were not able to enrol in a government school after passing the exam, they attended another residential camp that prepared them for Class 8 exams. Although the girls were not charged any fee, parents paid 1 rupee per day for the 210 days of the camp or donated kitchen groceries and provisions to help Urmul meet the costs of the camp.
Source: www.urmul.org/?p=46

The perusal of reviews and evaluations of a number of programmes clearly shows that collectivization supported by transformative education has generally been helpful in leading to change in marriage age in a relatively short period of time, and is an important driver of change (see Box 1). The review shows that the use of certain approaches, such as role model, literacy and life skill education with a focus on empowerment and access to information, coupled with support mechanisms, go a long way to change the aspirations and confidence of adolescent girls. It is also clear that 'empowerment' does not become the focus of a programme just by mentioning it, but needs to be conceptualized and delivered well to be effective.

Kabeer (1999 and 2009) defines empowerment as a process of capability enhancement for those who had been denied the right in the past and therefore involves a reduction in power of the group that previously held all the power. The process of women's empowerment does shake the equilibrium of power and, therefore, it helps to engage with men and boys to prepare them to play a positive role in the process of change. It also helps for boys and men to realize that this process of change contributes to improvements in their own well-being, since prevalent gender norms and prescriptions also cause unfair pressures on them.

While the evidence of working with men and boys is limited in India, examples of work with men influencing the process of change in gender norms and impacting social practices are available from other parts of the world. The experiences of the Sonke Gender Justice Network in South Africa is well known and worth exploring for its strategies and impact. Men have been involved in campaigns, training and other initiatives aimed at influencing their attitudes towards gender equality, violence and reproductive health.[12] Evidence from different countries (including India) has shown that once boys and men come on board, it becomes easier to expedite the process of change (Critical Half Journal, 2007; Kulkarni, 1994; Sonke Network, undated).

c) Incentivizing the change (social protection)

Theories of behaviour change tell us that a change in behaviour is possible and can be incentivized. This has been the basis for policy formulations across the world, where a range of financial – monetary and non-monetary – incentives are now part of the policy regime in the areas of health, education, population and climate change. Any transformation is heavily dependent on changes in people's attitude, behaviour and practice. A number of transfer schemes, cash and non-cash, conditional or unconditional, fall in this category. Conditional cash transfer (CCT) schemes have been widely used across Latin America and Africa to influence education and health related behaviour with varying degrees of success.

Closer to home and more relevant in the context of child marriage is the stipend programme implemented in Bangladesh, where girls received stipends to continue secondary school subject to attendance, performance and no-marriage. Evaluations show that though the programme did not have much impact on the quality of education and the empowerment of girls, it succeeded in improving school attendance and delaying the marriage age (Kabeer & Mahmud, 2009; Schurmann, 2009).

In Bangladesh, the stipend was transferred directly to the girls' bank accounts, which also helped in making these girls bank-literate. Many cash transfer schemes in Latin America and Africa have made it mandatory to transfer the money to the woman of the household and evaluations suggest that the response is more positive and the diversion of the money

Table 5: Summary of impact of empowerment of women and girls and engagement with men and boys on drivers of high prevalence of child marriage

Driver of change	The ways in which it interacts and influences drivers of high prevalence			
	Widely accepted and sanctioned social norms	Poverty/high wedding costs	Gender prescriptions and norms	Vested interests
Empowerment of women and girls, and engagement with men and boys	The prevalence of child marriage reduces when women are exposed to new ideas, gain confidence and voice, and start questioning and demanding their rights in every sphere, including the household and social practices. Girls' groups act as support systems for questioning practices like child marriage. Such groups have also empowered girls to refuse unacceptable social practices and negotiate their rights, especially on child marriage.	Empowerment has a potential to impact the issue of high wedding costs, especially when girls themselves start questioning such practices. Girls and boys taking an oath to opt for only a simple wedding/no dowry.	Efforts aimed at women's and girls' empowerment use the gender equality perspective and help in influencing and altering existing gender norms, expectations and prescriptions; this in turn impacts the practices that affect girls adversely, e.g., child marriage.	Empowerment induces collective identity and assertion, and in turn helps in mobilization for agenda building, leading to shifts in public opinion.

[12] http://contexts.org/articles/changing-men-in-south-africa; www.genderjustice.org.za; www.genderjustice.org.za/international-programmes-networks/menengage-africa

for other purposes is less when women operate the account. The very process of holding and operating an account can be an empowering experience for women and thereby help in changing gender norms. In India, the union government, as well as a number of state governments, have initiated a wide range of schemes aimed at incentivizing schooling of girls and ensuring that they do not marry until they attain 18 years of age. The rationale for cash and in-kind transfers comes from the belief that poverty and cash shortages drive certain practices and therefore the provision acts as an incentive. It is difficult to know the impact of these schemes since most of the programmes are yet to complete one cycle (girl reaching the age of 18 years).

Financial incentives are not the only interventions that influence behaviours. Naming and shaming has been widely used as a disincentive but it is effective only where child marriage is not commonplace and does not have wide social support. Once the support for a particular cause, such as sending girls to school, increases, naming and shaming could become an effective strategy. Disincentives, however, should be used only as a last resort. The opposite, i.e., public recognition of those who have gone against the tide through widespread positive publicity, can play a greater role in influencing others to change their behaviour. One such example comes from the work of the MV Foundation in Andhra Pradesh, which successfully used public garlanding and felicitation of employers and priests to celebrate their actions against child labour. This made it difficult for the priests and employers to later revert to the practice (MVF, 2012; MVF website).

ed). Hindu priests in parts of Madhya Pradesh have refused to solemnize child marriages and the prevalence is reported to have declined as a result. Local governments can be very powerful because of their influence and closeness to the community: 30 villages in Malda district (West Bengal) have been declared free of child marriage, largely because of the concerted campaign and support of the local government.[13]

When communities resolve to honour the birth of a girl, practices like child marriages are addressed effectively (e.g., a village in India planted 111 trees at the birth of a girl, Hindu, 2011). The practice of planting trees when a girl is born reflects the engaged nature of local institutions in positively impacting gender notions. An effective example of changing a social practice comes from the anti-arrack movement in Andhra Pradesh (see Box 1) and parts of Karnataka (World Bank, 2011; Info Change Women website). Women's groups, having come together through the Total Literacy Campaign, opposed the availability of arrack (locally manufactured alcohol) and the movement became so strong that the respective state governments had to ban the production of arrack.

There are several examples of campaigns and mobilization, led by the government and NGOs, contributing to building public opinion against child marriage. The campaigns here refer to various forms of advocacy to influence public opinion leading to change in behaviour. However, these are localized and the impact appears to be limited to local areas. In an effort to change public opinion, working with children, especially girls at risk of being married, can be effective

Table 6: Summary of impact of incentivizing the change on drivers of high prevalence of child marriage

Driver of change	The ways in which it interacts and influences drivers of high prevalence		
	Widely accepted and sanctioned social norms	Poverty/high wedding costs	Gender prescriptions and norms
Incentivizing the change/disincentivizing the practice (social protection)	Public recognition of people who go against the tide helps in creating individual commitment and has the potential to impact behaviour of others as well.	Cash or in-kind transfer programmes incentivizes particular behaviour; households facing poverty and cash crunch respond as it fulfils a basic need, and removes financial constraints to an extent (Hindu, 2014).	It helps in changing gender norms if the scheme is designed in a manner that incentivizes women's control of the transferred amount or object.

d) Agenda building and public opinion (behavioural change)

Any practice driven by social support can be effectively mitigated or wiped out only by building an alternative agenda and social opposition. Several examples exist that prove that an effective group can create an impact once it takes up an agenda. Experiences from Rajasthan and West Bengal show that initiatives by local leaders have helped in reducing the prevalence of child marriage in those areas. For instance, Bairwa and Sen communities in Tonk district in Rajasthan vowed not to promote or engage in any child marriage in their caste panchayat (Kulkarni, 1994; ICRW & PLAN, undat-

(UNICEF, 2014; Save the Children, 2014). The much-publicized case of Nujood Ali in Yemen, who was married when she was 10 years old and decided to walk out of her marriage and apply for a divorce, shows how she was able to become an icon of an anti-child-marriage campaign in the country. Such positive role models can help in agenda building.

[13] UNICEF intervention with support of local NGOs.

Table 7: Summary of impact of agenda building and public opinion on drivers of high prevalence of child marriage

Driver of change	The ways in which it interacts and influences drivers of high prevalence		
	Widely accepted and sanctioned social norms	Strong political patronage making the enforcement agencies weak	Organized vested interest groups and networks
Agenda building and public opinion	Persistent and widespread public opinion against a particular practice helps in reducing it's prevalence. Once a critical mass supports a cause, those who are not fall inline are identified and singled out, and slowly the social sanctioning turns the other way.	Agenda building and public opinion helps in countering political patronage. Political leaders gain more by aligning with the local agenda.	Widespread public opinion and clear commitment to specific agendas also create fear amongst those who are taking advantage of existing social practices for vested interests.

e) Consistent laws and stricter enforcement

Clarity and consistency of messages are important in communication, even more so when the effort is aimed at changing a deep-rooted social practice. Laws are critical as they define entitlements, but they become weak if all existing laws and practices do not speak the same language, and the enforcement is poor. Currently, there are inconsistencies in the laws regarding child marriage, child labour and the Indian Penal Code. There are also some inconsistencies between national and certain state laws. Removing these inconsistencies, primarily by defining a single age for attaining adulthood, will resolve many issues. Compulsory registration of childbirth and marriages, as practised in many countries, also helps, and has been incentivized by some schemes in India. More coordinated monitoring and stricter enforcement strengthens the message. Consistency of messages is also important across various schemes and programmes, as messages would not be taken seriously if one scheme is contradicting another.

Table 8: Summary of impact of consistent laws and stricter enforcement on drivers of high prevalence of child marriage

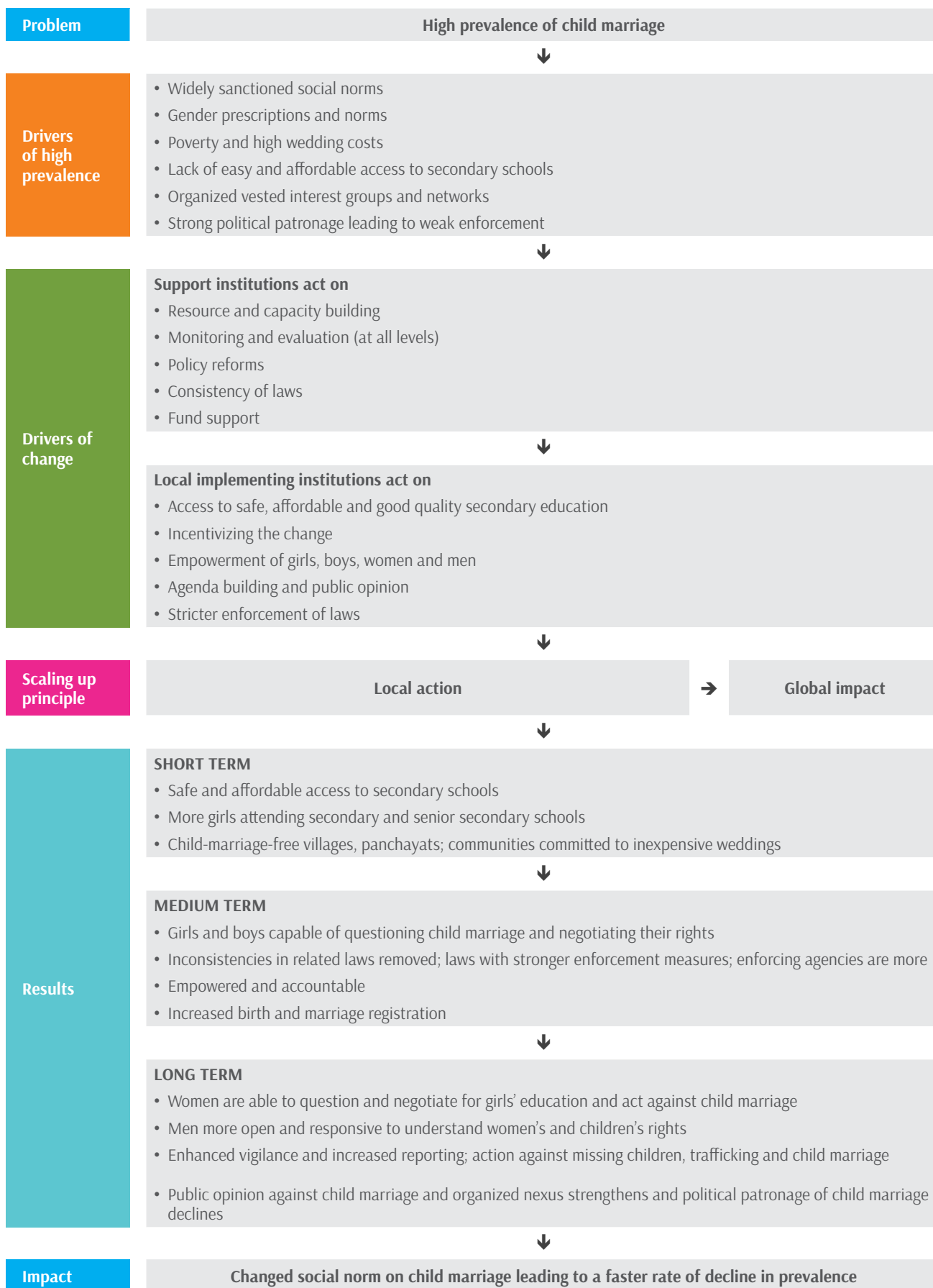| Driver of change	The ways in which it interacts and influences drivers of high prevalence	
	Widely accepted and sanctioned social norms	Organized vested interest groups and networks
Consistent laws and stricter enforcement	The communication is clearer and stronger if laws, policies and programmes are consistent and aimed at passing on the same message.	Consistent laws mean the absence of loopholes that can be used by vested interest groups to exploit children to their advantage.

4.3 Theory of change for scaling up

The theory of change was developed based on the analysis of the drivers of high prevalence, taking note of the specific contexts in India in general and in the four focus states in particular. The analysis of drivers of change takes note of examples from across states and regions. An important departure from other theories is that by emphasizing local planning and action, this theory tries to build in the contextual variations in how the drivers of high prevalence operate in different locations and contexts, and in the choice of subsequent strategies that could lead to change. For instance, although poverty can be traced as a driver of high prevalence, that knowledge alone does not help much in strategizing unless it is known how poverty influences a particular context. While in one context it could mean marrying a girl for a price to someone who wants a young bride for labour, in another, it could convert itself into postponing marriage to retain unmarried girls for the same reason: the need for labour. It would be difficult to identify the most appropriate strategy without unravelling this contextual process. For instance, as discussed earlier, the way in which the adverse sex ratio is playing a role in pushing child marriage in Gujarat manifests itself differently in West Bengal. These differences can be taken into account only if the unit for planning and action is localized.

Drivers of change also need to be understood in the context of the nature and combination of the drivers of high prevalence in a certain location, and how widespread the practice of child marriage is. For instance, the vigilance and enforcement of law becomes easy and effective in areas where (i) the practice is concentrated in a small geographic pocket, or (ii) though the practice is widespread, it does not have high social support. Similarly, the presence of secondary schools alone does not make a difference. Education has to be affordable, perceived to be safe and empowering. For instance, examples of girls attending schools yet being married are common in some areas (like Gujarat and Karnataka) but they show that though the girls are not forced to drop out due to marriage, their life choices are very limited. Therefore, this theory of change includes the need for shaping strategies after taking the drivers of high prevalence and change in a particular context into account.

An important challenge in India and other large federal countries is that of scaling up. The sheer size and numbers pose a challenge, compounded by the presence of layers of government resulting in a multiplicity of laws, institutions and agencies. This has led a number of organizations to focus on coordination between departments, institutions and agencies as an important goal. Coordination is indeed important, especially because of the centrality of the bureaucracy, which is department driven and fragmented in its approach.

However, scale also impacts the quality of coordination: the larger the scale, the more difficult it is to coordinate effectively. Therefore, drawing on experiences of decentralization, the mantra for change that could work is: 'act locally, impact globally'. This means breaking down the 'scale' itself into smaller units for direct action, and when several of these smaller units are successful in changing the situation, the impact becomes global. Given that smaller units are not completely independent to make decisions and also need to source support for monetary and technical inputs, other agencies come into being as support institutions. The 10 identified results listed in our theory of change have been divided into different time frames: short term (1-2 years), medium term (2-3 years) and long term (3-5 years) (see Figure 6). In the long run, all 10 results need to be monitored and sustained.

Figure 6. Theory of change for scaling up strategies against child marriage [14]

Problem	**High prevalence of child marriage**

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Drivers of high prevalence	• Widely sanctioned social norms • Gender prescriptions and norms • Poverty and high wedding costs • Lack of easy and affordable access to secondary schools • Organized vested interest groups and networks • Strong political patronage leading to weak enforcement

↓

Drivers of change	**Support institutions act on** • Resource and capacity building • Monitoring and evaluation (at all levels) • Policy reforms • Consistency of laws • Fund support

↓

	Local implementing institutions act on • Access to safe, affordable and good quality secondary education • Incentivizing the change • Empowerment of girls, boys, women and men • Agenda building and public opinion • Stricter enforcement of laws

↓

Scaling up principle	**Local action**	→	**Global impact**

↓

Results	**SHORT TERM** • Safe and affordable access to secondary schools • More girls attending secondary and senior secondary schools • Child-marriage-free villages, panchayats; communities committed to inexpensive weddings

↓

	MEDIUM TERM • Girls and boys capable of questioning child marriage and negotiating their rights • Inconsistencies in related laws removed; laws with stronger enforcement measures; enforcing agencies are more • Empowered and accountable • Increased birth and marriage registration

↓

	LONG TERM • Women are able to question and negotiate for girls' education and act against child marriage • Men more open and responsive to understand women's and children's rights • Enhanced vigilance and increased reporting; action against missing children, trafficking and child marriage • Public opinion against child marriage and organized nexus strengthens and political patronage of child marriage declines

↓

Impact	**Changed social norm on child marriage leading to a faster rate of decline in prevalence**

[14] References: Theory of Change of Deepshikha, phase 1 ('Evaluation of Empowering Young Girls and Women in Maharashtra, India, UNICEF and Sambodhi, March 2014). Theory of Change for Child Marriage proposed by Girls Not Brides (ww.GirlsNotBrides.org). UNICEF India's Theory of Change for Child Marriage proposed in 'Implementing Interventions to address Child Marriage', March 2014. Theory of Change – Ending Child Marriage in Bangladesh, UNFPA, ICRW & Plan, Febrary 2014.

4.4 Review of existing polices and interventions

A good number of schemes and programmes are operational across the country that directly or indirectly aim to reduce the prevalence of child marriage. These include schemes run by different government departments. While some of these are state-specific, others are conceptualized and supported by the union government and are operational in either all or a number of states. There are also similarities across some of the state-specific schemes. Based on a review using the theory of change as the framework for the exercise, Annex 3 classifies these schemes and programmes based on the main driver of change that they address, identifies their strengths and gaps, and lists some recommendations for strengthening them. The discussion in this subsection identifies the strategies and schemes that have played a positive role in the context of a specific driver of change in order to provide pointers for the future approach towards accelerating the decline in the rate of child marriage.

a) Safe, affordable and good quality schooling

Universal elementary education has been high on India's policy agenda since the late 1980s. The New Education Policy 1986 was translated into several schemes, including Sarva-Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA), and ultimately the Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education Act, 2009 (RTE 2009), making eight years of schooling a fundamental right of every child between 6 and 14 years of age. This was followed by Rashtriya Madhyamik Shiksha Abhiyan, the national scheme for secondary education, which started in 2009. The specific strategies that help in improving girls' access to upper primary and secondary schooling include:

(i) **Upgrading of existing schools or opening of new schools,** leading to better availability of upper primary sections (under SSA) and secondary schools (under RMSA). Reviews indicate that this is especially important for states such as Gujarat, where the spread of government/aided schools in the secondary sector has been very poor in rural areas(RMSA Joint Review Mission Report 2015).

(ii) **Residential schools**[15] have helped disadvantaged girls to continue with their education at critical points such as end of primary and end of upper primary school that report high prevalence of dropout. While the debate on efficacy and desirability of residential schools as an effective public policy choice is open and the jury is still out because of its relatively high cost, it is widely acknowledged that it works well for girls coming from marginalized and poor households by taking care of all expenses for food, uniform, books and other related needs for schooling, and also addressing the is-

sue of distance and transport. Although rigorous studies on impact are rare, most of the available research highlights the impact of residential schools on delaying the age of marriage (Jha et al., 2015).

(iii) **A number of states support bicycle distribution schemes,** known by different names in the various states (see Annex 3). The evaluation of the Bihar scheme concluded that it "increased girls' age-appropriate enrolment in secondary school by 30 per cent and also reduced the gender gap in age-appropriate secondary school enrolment by 40 per cent". The impact on enrolment holds true even after introducing controls for household demographics (caste and religion), socio-economic status, and village characteristics including closeness to facilities. It also concluded that "the Cycle program was much more cost effective at increasing girls' enrolment than comparable conditional cash transfer programs in South Asia, suggesting that the coordinated provision of bicycles for girls may have generated externalities beyond the cash value of the program, including improved safety from girls cycling to school in groups, and changes in patriarchal social norms that proscribed female mobility outside the village, which inhibited female secondary school participation"(Prakash & Muralidharan, 2014).The same effect is apparently not visible everywhere and feedback from Gujarat suggests that a bicycle alone does not make much of a difference (UNICEF, 2012).

This brings home some important points for the scheme design and context. The Bihar scheme was applicable to all girls enrolling in Class 9, whereas the Gujarat scheme was limited to girls from below poverty line (BPL) households. In a social milieu where all girls face disadvantage, separating girls from BPL households may not be very wise. Making all girls living more than three kilometres away from a secondary school eligible would lead to a bigger collective of girls who could take the journey together, thereby impacting the cost as well as safety concerns. Bigger numbers of girls using bicycles create a critical mass and therefore could be more effective in changing norms. Also, social norms are almost universally formed by those who are more influential; it would be difficult for only girls from BPL families to use bicycles if girls from other families are not using them.

Also important to note is that bicycling is not viewed as a safe option if schools are located very far from the residence. This could be the case in Gujarat where the spread of government schools is very poor in rural areas. Unlike some other countries in the region, no state in India has experimented with providing bus services to girls and women teachers, and therefore no conclusive comment can be made. In a successful experiment from Baluchistan in Pakistan, buses were used to bring in female teachers to remote rural areas to facilitate girls' participation (USAID, 1999; UNESCO, 2000), pointing again to both safety and transport cost issues.

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[15] These include Kasturba Gandhi Balika Vidyalayas (KGBVs) under SSA for upper primary classes, girls' hostels built through RMSA and often located next to KGBVs, and model schools.

b) Empowerment of women and girls, and engagement with men and boys

Table 9 provides a glimpse of various state sponsored schemes that attempt to include girls' empowerment as a focus area. Although a number of schemes exist, the implementation and effectiveness have been varied and limited (Dasra, undated). The information base itself is limited because of the paucity of reviews and the absence of rigorous evaluations. Some major schemes and approaches with important learning for devising strategies for an empowerment-based approach are described in this subsection.

(i) Mahila Samakhya (MS): It is a state-sponsored programme of women's education that uses the frame of empowerment as the approach for all its strategies. It mainly operates through close engagement with women's collectives, a residential 8-10-month programme for educating women and girls known as Mahila Shikshan Kendra (MSK), a number of other training programmes that vary from state to state, and adolescent girls' collectives. It also engages with formal schools in a variety of ways, the management of Kasturba Gandhi Balika Vidyalaya (KGBV) being the most important route in several states. Some of the methods used for breaking gender stereotypes and building aspirations include the use of feminist methods that encourage girls and

women to share their own experiences to be used as a resource, vocational training in areas that are not necessarily viewed as 'feminine', training in self-defence and use of the collective to build a support system to question unjust practices together.

Although the available feedback suggests wide differences in implementation across states and also a dilution in the approach when extended to KGBVs, one universal feedback is that it has helped in postponing the age of marriage for girls (GoI, 2007; GoI, 2013). It is, therefore, important to learn from Mahila Samakhya the kind of inputs that can add to both school-based and community-based interventions to influence practices regarding the age of marriage of girls. MS has also used adolescent collectives as one of the means of empowerment, which has been singled out as an effective strategy with potential for immediate gains because of their receptivity and also because of the high inter-generational returns (MHRD, 2014).

Table 9: Key government programmes for empowering girls and their limitations

Ministry of Health and Family Welfare	Ministry of Human Resource Development	Ministry of Labour and Employment	Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports	Ministry of Women and Child Development
• The Reproductive and Child Health Programmeprovides maternal care, including pre- and post-natal care, prevention of unwanted pregnancies and safe abortion facilities. • Adolescents are included under the target population of women, without any specific programmes or provision of services. • Unwritten code denying services to unmarried adolescents. • A number of HIV/AIDS related programmes, including school education and through radio and TV.	• Mahila Samakhya aims to ensure equal access to education for young women but is not implemented uniformly acrossthe country. • Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan provides quality education to children upto 14 years of age.	• Facility forregistration in employment exchanges for job placements, career counselling and vocational guidance for adolescents. Industrial training institutes provide vocational training after Class 8 and 10. • These opportunities are quite limited due to inadequate provision.	• Nehru Yuva Kendras undertake the following activities aimed at youth: health awareness units to educate and adopt health and family welfare programmes; youth awareness drives to address issues such as HIV/AIDS; self-employment projects to equip youth with income generating vocational skills. • There is significant variation in the implementation of this programme amongst states.	• Three flagship programmes aimed at adolescent girls: Apni Beti Apni Daulat; Kishori Shakti Yojana and SABLA. • SABLA is the first multi-sectoral approach targeted specifically at adolescent girls with an outlay of INR 7.5 billion and poised to roll out across all states.

Source: Reproduced from Dasra and the Kiawah Trust, *Owning Her Future, Empowering Adolescent Girls in India,* undated.

(ii)) SABLA (or the Rajiv Gandhi Scheme for the Empowerment of Adolescent Girls) and Kishori Shakti Yojana (KSY): These are the most important government sponsored community-based schemes focusing on adolescent girls. According to the original plans, at least one of these two union government supported schemes is in operation in all states. The schemes work through community-based adolescent girls' groups that include both school-going and out-of-school girls, and have linkages with anganwadi centres. The schemes aim at providing life skill and vocational training, literacy and numeracy skills, health and nutrition awareness and, through these, postponing marriage.

These schemes (similar in nature and design) are comprehensive in design but there is not much feedback available about their functioning and impact. One study undertaken to review KSY in Rajasthan and Uttar Pradesh concluded that the implementation was weak, leaving a lot to be desired and therefore the impact also limited, especially in Rajasthan (MWCD & FRDS, 2006). This points to the fact that although the design may be comprehensive, implementation and monitoring also need to be worked out in detail for high effectiveness. In this case, heavy dependence on the anganwadi centre, which is already overburdened with responsibilities and run by poorly paid workers, as the main implementation vehicle needs a relook. The cut in social spending in the union budget is threatening the survival of these schemes.

(iii) Residential school model: A number of NGOs and MSKs have used the residential school model to promote the empowerment of girls through the curriculum and through the way the residential schools are managed. The design of KGBVs reflects this approach. The rationale is based on several assumptions: (i) girls, when away from their regular environment, which is generally very demanding with no free time, are more likely to aspire to a different life, especially if their new experiences encourage them to do so; (ii) a residential set-up allows use of 'living and learning together' situations to learn in an experiential manner; and (iii) each of the girls has the potential to act as a change agent back home, influencing parental and community decisions about themselves, their siblings and other girls.

Various reviews and evaluations indicate that these are fair assumptions, provided the implementation is according to the design, which has been hard to ensure on a large scale. While CARE in its Udaan model, Urmul in its shivirs (education camps), Doosra Dashak, Nirantar and MV Foundation (see Box 1) have been more loyal to their principles and design in implementation, KGBVs have shown dilution and greater variation. MSK, however, is one example that has been fairly large scale and yet largely successful in retaining its empowerment focus. Despite limitations, even KGBVs have been noted for being successful in postponing marriage (Jha etal., 2015; Ramachandran et al., 2004). However, KGBVs only go up to Class 8 and very little is known about what happens to the girls once they leave the relatively sheltered environment of the residential school.

(iv) Engaging men and boys: There are no clear state sponsored strategy or schemes that encourage engagement with men and boys on the issues of empowerment and child marriage (except the Beti Bachao, Beti Padhao programme,[16] which had not been launched at the time this report was prepared). However, a number of NGOs have engaged with boys. Based on an analysis of work undertaken by several organizations working in India, Dasra (undated) identifies youth engagement, both boys and girls, as one of the most effective strategies in making a difference in the lives of adolescents. Dasra identifies youth groups and peer educators as effective strategies with high potential for 'scalability' that have worked in several cases in terms of delaying marriage and enhancing women's agency.

c) Incentivizing the change (social protection)

Although both monetary and non-monetary transfers have been part of the education and health delivery systems and acted as incentives (e.g., scholarships linked to the continuation of schooling and academic performance, monetary incentives to limit family size), conditional transfers have entered the policy regime in a more comprehensive manner only in the last decade. The bicycle, discussed earlier, is one such example that is seen as a major incentive for continuing secondary education.

The most recent incentive scheme was introduced during the Union Budget 2015-2016. The Sukanya Samriddhi scheme is an incentive scheme that encourages parents to build a savings fund for their daughters for education and future marriage expenses. The scheme offers high interest rates for the savings accounts opened under the scheme and provides favourable tax benefits on the deposits. The money may be used for education or marriage only after the girl turns 18 years of age.

A large number of states have adopted conditional cash transfer schemes, linking cash transfers to the continuation of secondary education and not getting married before turning 18 years old. These programmes represent a shift in the government's approach from focusing on the supply side to a demand-driven approach. The evidence across the country indicates that the schemes provide incentives to households to adjust their behaviour towards nationally accepted social goals in situations where supply constraints are not serious (UNDP India, 2009). Table 10 lists these major schemes and gives an idea of the coverage.

There are different conditional cash transfer schemes in the focus states. In Andhra Pradesh, two schemes exist: the New Girl Protection Scheme (NGPS) and the Dhanalakshmi Scheme. Both the Dhanalakshmi and NGPS make it mandatory for the girl to be unmarried and complete schooling until Class 8 and Class 12, respectively. Gujarat's Balika Samriddhi Yojana also promotes education and dissuades child marriage. West Bengal's Kanyashree Scheme gives annual

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[16] The Beti Bachao, Beti Padhao (save girl child, educate girl child) programme aims to address the child sex ratio in 100 critical districts and to ensure the survival and education of girls.

Table 10: Select conditional cash transfer schemes in India

Name of scheme	2007-2008	2008- 2009	2009-2010
	Number of beneficiaries		
Balika Samriddhi Yojana (Gujarat)	26,031	30,263	132,684
Balika Samridhi Yojana (Himachal Pradesh)	7,955	13,031	17,038
Balri Rakshak Yojana (Punjab)	62	52	62
Bhagyalakshmi scheme (Karnataka)	123,789	297,764	144,749
Dhan Lakshmi scheme (Government of India)		79,555	42,077
Girl Child Protection scheme (Andhra Pradesh)	96,487	72,046	70,302
Indira Gandhi Balika Suraksha Yojana (Himachal Pradesh)	152	318	233
Kunwarbainu Mameru scheme (Gujarat)	8,762	6,775	7,628
Ladli Lakshmi scheme (Madhya Pradesh)	214,134	209,848	40,854
Ladli scheme (Delhi)		135,645	140,006
Ladlischeme (Haryana)	49,558	72,624	105,113
Mukhya Mantri Kanya Suraksha Yojana (Bihar)		475,220*	
Mukhya Mantri Kanya Vivah Yojana (Bihar)		157,256*	
Mukhya Mantri Kanyadan Yojana (Madhya Pradesh)	32,621	43,297	19,579

* Total number of beneficiaries since inception. **Source:** Sekher, T. V., 'Ladlis and Lakshmis Financial Incentive Schemes for the Girl Child', *Economic and Political Weekly*, 28 April 2012, p. 59.

stipends to girls enrolled in schools/institutions. A one-time grant is also given to girls attaining 18 years of age if they remain unmarried and continue their schooling in any stream: academic, vocational or sports. Samuhik Vivah Yojana in Rajasthan addresses the issue of high wedding costs by providing cash incentives to conduct community marriages after attaining adulthood.

Most CCT schemes are yet to be evaluated in India and, therefore, it is difficult to comment on their functioning and impact. However, two evaluations have appeared recently in the literature, both for Haryana. Haryana was one of the first states to introduce a CCT scheme called Apni beti apna dhan in 2004. The scheme targeted poor households and disadvantaged caste groups, offering two points of transfer: (i) a small cash disbursement to mothers (INR 500) within 15 days of delivering an eligible girl; and (ii) within three months of birth, and on enrolment, the government purchases a savings bond of INR 2,500 in the name of the daughter, which is redeemable at a maturity of INR 25,000 when the girl turns 18 years, provided she has not married.

The initial cohort of beneficiaries turned 18 years of age in 2012-2013, marking the first opportunity to determine whether the cash incentive has been a sufficient motivator for delayed marriage. The first phase of the evaluation is also important as it concluded that:

> "the girls who were beneficiaries attained higher levels of schooling, were more likely to continue their education and less likely to drop out than non-beneficiary girls, controlling for all other factors. While over the duration of this CCT, families had not availed the cash benefit, the knowledge of the benefit clearly influenced their decision to invest in their daughters' education. However, educa-

tion for girls is fraught with contradictions. Prevailing gender roles and expectations, particularly those that prioritize girls' roles as future wives above all, limit the impact of education on girls' empowerment, suggesting that other interventions are needed to help girls fulfil their potential. Conditional cash transfer programs with immediate or protracted benefits need to also interact with the attitude and aspiration space. Financial incentives cannot trigger effective change without shifting underlying values or aspirations" (Nanda et al., 2014).

Krishnan, et al. (2014) arrive at a similar conclusion based on another evaluation of the same scheme: "The apparent lack of impact on the societal mind-set calls for a revision in the current approach of addressing a social issue by a purely conditional cash transfer program." Ghatak and Narayanan (2013), based on the analysis of design, and Krishnan, et al. (2014), based on empirical research, arrive at a similar conclusion: the presence of multiple conditionalities that do not take into account the prevalent son preference in society and bureaucratic imposition of documentary proofs for availing benefits while designing a scheme could limit its potential impact. Ghatak and Narayanan (2013) also question the way such schemes are named, e.g., jananis and lakshmis[17] refer to stereotypical images of women as mothers and homemakers, and therefore reflect an absence of consideration for changing gender prescriptions and norms, one of the root causes of child marriage.

[17] Janani refers to the mother and lakshmi refers to the Hindu goddess of wealth: these symbolize women's association with motherhood and homemaking.

d) Agenda building and public opinion through campaigns and mobilization

There are two kinds of social mobilization: one is self-generated and therefore organic to the group, while the other is induced through an external agent (Mansuri & Rao, 2012). The building of an agenda against child marriage would mostly fall in the latter category. Experiences show that mass campaigns are successful in inducing mobilization against a deeply entrenched social norm only if combined with continuous engagement at local level (Dasra, undated). Such an approach has so far not been visible at large scale although there are many NGOs in different parts of the country that have led successful campaigns against child marriage in specific areas. Some of the successful examples discussed earlier reflect that focusing on child rights and making children champions of their own rights have been effective in some contexts. In general, collectives (women, youth, adolescents, boys, girls) are effective in forming an enthusiastic and committed group that can work on a social agenda (Dasra, undated).

Rajasthan and West Bengal, among the four focus states, have included campaigns and mobilization as a major activity in their approach, and UNICEF is playing a key role as a supporting partner. The range of mobilization activities is wide and often goes beyond mobilization: starting from the use of mass media to local folk media, and from individual counselling to institutional support. PCMA 2006, which has led to the setting up of Childline services (a toll-free number 1098) for reporting child rights violations, indicates progress in the right direction. NGOs are also important partners in most such activities at local level. Although evaluations are rarely available, the documentation suggests notable successes, especially as a result of local activities.

One learning from these examples is that NGOs are much better able and suited to being catalysts and facilitators; government agencies are far more rigid and distant in their functioning and therefore not suited for this role. Another agency that has not been tested enough in this context is the panchayat. Although certain states, such as Rajasthan and West Bengal, are focusing on panchayats, they are still not central to the whole programme design. The panchayat has been successfully used for other campaigns, such as the Total Sanitation Campaign, and being the third level of government with assured one-third female participation has the potential of becoming an interlocutor for inducing change.

Rajasthan recently made an announcement through its budget presented for 2015-2016 (No. 167) that the state government will provide three annual awards to the Zila Parisad (district), Panchayat Samiti (block) and Gram Panchayat (village) for exemplary work in the prevention of child marriage with the award money being in the range of INR 100,000 to INR 2,500,000. The state has also introduced another scheme named Ladli Samman, under which girls playing a major role in preventing child marriage, child labour or child abuse will be publicly celebrated and rewarded. Although these schemes are promising in their design and concept, they are too new to gauge their impact.

e) Consistent laws and stringent enforcement

Although PCMA 2006 signifies an improvement in the legal provisions against child marriage, there still exist inconsistencies in laws relating to children (child marriage, child labour, Indian Penal Code laws) that cause laxity in vigilance. West Bengal has made marriage registration compulsory but enforcement is weak. Rajasthan made a provision for those who marry before the legal age to register when legal age is attained, making it inconsistent with the national law. Further, although the Child Labour (Prohibition and Regulation) Act 1986 prevents employment of children below 14 years of age in certain hazardous industries and occupations, it does not prevent, only regulates, their employment in other occupations. This is in contradiction to the Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education Act, 2009 that makes eight years of schooling mandatory for children aged between 6 and 14 years. The 10-state study commissioned by the Planning Commission provides a detailed discussion on how laws are not always consistent and, at times, even contradictory (GB Pant Institute of Rural Studies, 2013).

Some states have started giving great importance to strict vigilance on certain auspicious days that are considered ideal for marriage, which has created some fear and led to the prevention of some child marriages. Mass child marriages are known to be rampant on these occasions. However, enforcement agencies, such as police and local administration, themselves are not fully aware of the legal provisions and often not even convinced of the need for such a law (GB Pant Institute of Rural Studies, 2013). This calls for a strategy that also helps in changing the attitude of enforcement agencies.

Table 11 provides a few examples of key interventions that could be adopted by the four focus states to tackle the key drivers of child marriage.

Table 11: Key interventions: Examples for focus states to address key drivers of child marriage

	Key interventions
Andhra Pradesh	• Policy initiative to incentivize panchayats to prevent child marriages/take action against child marriage. The nature of incentives should be such that it has public externalities and the benefits are visible to everyone, e.g., additional development fund allocation for the ward/village that reports no child marriage has taken place within a panchayat. The community in that ward/village could collectively decide the use of this additional funding. • Campaign against customs such as marrying maternal uncles and cross cousins with an emphasis on possible adverse impact on infertility and genetic disorders. Using both mass media and targeted campaigns utilizing frontline workers such as accredited social health activists (ASHAs)/anganwadi workers could be effective. • Stricter vigil on mass marriages on auspicious days, with emphasis on celebrating and public recognition of any community initiative as incentives to prevent these events. • Stricter anti-child labour laws and better enforcement using panchayats and frontline workers. • Both school and community-based interventions with a focus on gender awareness and empowerment involving girls/women and boys/men (single and mixed sex activities).
Gujarat	• Increasing the number of government secondary schools for both girls and boys in rural areas; increasing free and appropriate transport facilities to enable girls to attend secondary schools located at long distances; general incentives such as cash or bicycles for all girls to attend schools and not to communities so that schooling becomes a social norm. • Laws against policy makers including politicians and officials either supporting or seen as endorsing child marriage in any form; clear instructions against any kind of political patronage by political parties; media and public campaign against leaders who are seen as endorsing the practice. • Campaigns for low-cost weddings and against customs such as sibling marriages; incentivizing low-cost/simple and adult weddings through appropriate transfer schemes, e.g., interest-free loan to the couple for self-employment/entrepreneurship. • Stricter vigil on mass marriages on auspicious days, with emphasis on celebrating and public recognition of any community initiative as incentives to prevent these events. • Both school and community-based interventions with a focus on gender awareness and empowerment involving girls/women and boys/men (single and mixed sex activities).
Rajasthan	• Engagement with caste panchayats to build an agenda against child marriage. The initiative could come from either the government or civil society groups or both. Any kind of initiative by a caste panchayat or the community should be publicized and celebrated. • Policy initiative to incentivize panchayats to prevent child marriages/take action against child marriage. The nature of incentives should be such that it has public externalities and the benefits are visible to everyone, e.g., additional development fund allocation for the ward/village that reports no child marriage has taken place within a panchayat. The community in that ward/village could collectively decide the use of this additional funding. • Stricter vigil on mass marriages on auspicious days, with emphasis on celebrating and public recognition of any community initiative as incentives to prevent these events. • Increasing free and appropriate transport facilities to enable girls to attend post primary/secondary schools located at long distances; general incentives such as cash or bicycles for all girls to attend schools and not to communities so that schooling becomes a social norm. • Both school and community-based interventions with a focus on gender awareness and empowerment involving girls/women and boys/men (single and mixed sex activities). • Removal of inconsistencies in the marriage registration act to disallow any form of child marriage.
West Bengal	• Strict laws and action against child trafficking; incentivizing civil society as well as police action against child marriages used to disguise trafficking. Strict message to police force against any possible nexus and strict action against any such nexus being identified. • Stricter enforcement of compulsory registration of marriages by panchayats, especially in cases of girls being married off in other states/countries; incentivizing such acts by local bodies through recognition and material incentives. • Rigorous evaluation of Kanyashree scheme and policy reforms based on the results/feedback. • Engagement with communities arranging marriage fairs where children are married off in order to stop such practices.

4.5 Implementation model for scaling up: roadmap for action

One lesson that emerges from the analysis of literature and experiences is that given the difference in the context and nature of prevalence, the 'one size fits all' approach may not work. Although the characteristics of areas with high prevalence and those of low prevalence are usually easy to distinguish, this does not necessarily guide us in developing targeted strategies that will accelerate the decline in child marriage. The district-level analysis undertaken by ICRW (2015) to understand the patterns and associations in child marriage prevalence in India tells us that high prevalence districts generally have higher concentration of Scheduled Caste (SC), Scheduled Tribe (ST) and OBC populations, low spread of education and generally low level of development in terms of electricity and other basic facilities. However, it cannot be interpreted to assert that a higher level of development would necessarily result in a significant change in the prevalence rate of child marriage in these areas in the short term.

Another important aspect is that scaling up has different connotations in different contexts. The very reference to 'scale' changes with the context: in India, the sheer size of the country or even of states is so large that any reference to scaling up involves millions. Although a number of strategies have been tried, no ready model for addressing the issue of high prevalence of child marriage exists. Therefore, the task of developing a model for scaling up in this context involves the following challenges:

- Identification of an implementation model for scaling up.
- Identification of the combinations of strategies and interventions that could address the issue in specific contexts; roles and responsibilities of the core and support actors.
- Identification of the main principles, constraints and risks for the successful implementation of such interventions may have, taking the social, economic, financial and political climate into account, and identification of strategies that minimize the risks and maximize the chances of success.
- Roadmap for scaling up.

4.5.1 Implementation model for scaling up: rationale, roles and responsibilities

The model and roadmap proposed here follow the principle of iteration and incremental change, leading to some radical shifts in the end as opposed to planning a radical process of change; the underlying assumption being that while it is possible to invoke the human as well as organizational agency and influence the processes and goals leading to transformation, it is much more difficult to radically change the organizational behaviour of several institutions (bureaucracy, elected bodies, voluntary groups) simultaneously in a short period of time.

The village or Gram Panchayat (GP), the elected body at the local level, is a legal, political and administrative entity. Although its size varies across states, it is a relatively small unit (based on population size usually varying between 3,000 and 30,000 people depending upon state rules) and the designated unit responsible for delivery of services in several sectors including education, health and water. Although departmental controls continue to be strong for units, such as school, primary health centre and anganwadi, the panchayat usually has a legally mandated monitoring role and some organic linkages with these organizations in all states. The GP is the only level of government with one third of seats reserved for women, and the average age of women GP members/presidents is usually lower than that of men (Ghatak & Mahendiran, 2015). There is a growing focus on making GPs more active and effective, and the union government has launched a major scheme of Gram Swaraj (village self-rule) and instituted awards based on various performance criteria. All these act as the rationale for choosing the panchayat as one of the primary implementation units and the GP as one of the core implementing agencies. There is great potential for mobilization and incentivization of GPs, as well as the space for linking this to the performance of other core implementing agencies.

Figure 7 depicts the implementation model following the principle of 'act locally, impact globally'.

Figure 7: Implementing the scaling-up roadmap

SCPCR: State Commission for Protection of Child Rights

Although the financial powers vary greatly among states, GPs and other elected bodies at the third level of governance receive substantial grants from union and state governments. Except for a very small number of states, the GP is usually the only body among the three levels of panchayat to have the powers to raise its own revenue through taxes and fees. Barring a few exceptions, grants are largely tied

but these local bodies have access to sizeable funds under several headings, making it possible for them to prioritize in a coordinated manner (Vyasulu, 2003). This becomes more significant with the Fourteenth Finance Commission's recommendation to radically enhance the share of the states from the current 32 per cent to 42 per cent of the central divisible tax pool, which would be the biggest ever increase in vertical tax devolution, and its proposal of several other types of transfers including grants to rural and urban local bodies (Economic Survey 2014-2015). Although the full implications of these recommendations on the panchayat budget is still to be fully understood, what is clear is that GPs will continue to have access to funds and perhaps more untied funds in the future.

Other core implementing agencies (schools, health centres, anganwadis, self-help groups, women's groups, adolescent groups, youth groups) are final points of delivery for various services, such as education, health, nutrition, financial inclusion, skill development and livelihood, and therefore the space and potential for interface with individuals and groups of all age groups is high. As these organizations function within the ambit of GPs, it would be possible to link their interests and performance and develop a joint commitment towards a common goal. This is the rationale for identifying these organizations as the second set of core implementation agencies. Despite a significant transfer of powers and autonomy, GPs are almost entirely dependent on state and union governments for finances, technical knowledge, know-how and guidance. Similarly, most other frontline organizations are not autonomous; they depend on various schemes and departments for financial and technical support, and respond to demands and guidance from above. This makes the role and responsibilities of the support agencies extremely critical.

4.5.2 Roadmap for scaling up: support and influence process

Figure 8 depicts the influence process. On one hand, institutions at the district, state and national levels work as support agencies to the GP level to allow local political and delivery institutions to work on various interventions. On the other hand, these institutions also become the vehicle for wider influence and change at community level. This means that the support agencies at district, state and national levels have the dual responsibilities to provide support by creating enabling conditions and ensure close monitoring of activities, as well as to consolidate, strengthen, publicize and demand change.

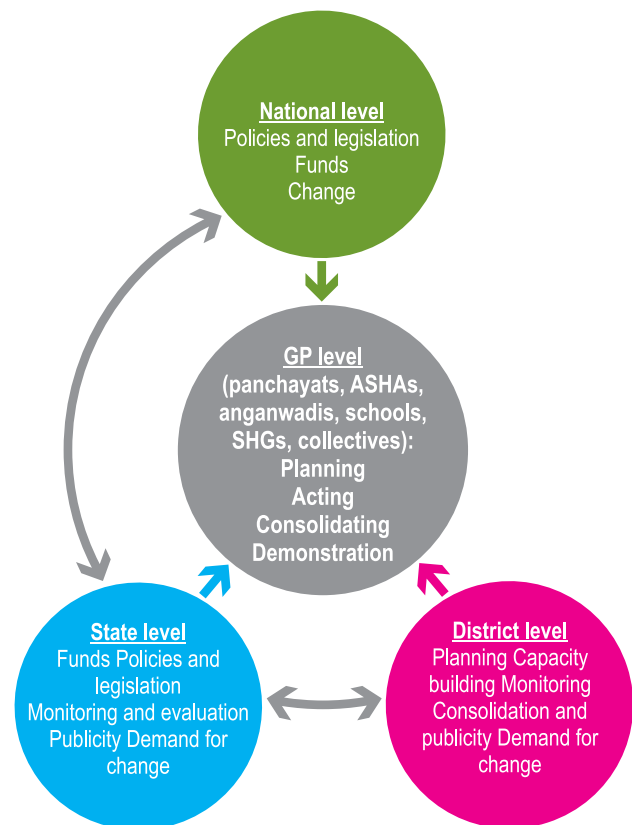**Figure 8: Influencing actions and change from panchayat to national level**

Figure 9 outlines the progression for the district, state and national levels. In doing so, it describes the roadmap for scaling up in terms of initial, intermediate and final stages. When all core implementing agencies work in tandem to make a particular GP free of child marriage, the pace of decline will quicken. The basic principle of scaling up in this roadmap is to work intensively with some GPs and incentivize the change. When a significant number of GPs are successful and receive acclaim, it will create pressure on the rest. It is important to reiterate that this model takes the GP as the nucleus and each GP within the identified area (block, a group of blocks, district) is to be viewed as one complete region throughout the process of change. All other agencies and institutions work as supporting and facilitating organizations.

The following sections outline the actions and describe the principles that should guide the choice of interventions at various levels.

Figure 9: Roadmap for scaling up: progression model for district, state and national levels

Initial stage

- State to review the schemes and their implementation models; revise them as necessary keeping the consistency and incentivization principles in view (union and state level).
- Prioritize child marriage as a political agenda for the state as a whole but select a few GPs spread over at least two districts for intensive monitoring (state and district level).
- Streamline the support actions in general, strengthen these for the selected GPs in particular (state, district and block level).
- Integrate rigorous evaluation in focus areas as part of the model (district and state level).

Intermediate stage

- Identify the GPs for intensive support, organize funding and capacity building support, help in planning and strategize close monitoring.
- Document the processes in selected GPs and work out the steps in detail (district level).
- Reinforce the incentives and streamline the policies / monitoring further, if required (state and national level).
- Give wide publicity to the positive results (district, state and national level).
- Encourage inclusion of more GPs / cluster of GPs for intensive engagement (district and block levels).
- Do not try to scale up by 'universalizing' a diluted version of the approach that worked; important to remember that the model of the GP being the core and primary actor needs to be retained (state and national level).

Final stage

- Further consolidation of the model by including the experiences of the new entrants: identification of steps, constraints and risks (district and state level).
- Identification of strategies that minimize the risks and maximize the chances of success (district and state level).
- Customizing principles taking the nature and stage of prevalence into account for all the above to be able to contextualize the model for other locations (state and national level).

4.5.3 Implementing agencies and their respective actions

Tables 12 and 13 list the actions that various core and support actors are expected to undertake to bring the desired change. The activities are simple and not necessarily new; it is more a matter of agenda building and re-engineering the processes around that agenda. This applies to all levels. At the ground level, it demands the acceptance of the GP as a nodal and credible agency by all other actors, which would also need to be induced through external facilitation. This makes the role of support functions extremely important. Monitoring plays a significant role in hierarchical systems and, therefore, messages from the above are crucial. A simple step, such as making child marriage the first agenda item in monthly reviews, can turn this into a priority at several levels. Similarly, it would be important to recognize that NGOs are better placed in external facilitation and inducing mobilization and their engagement for these purposes must be enabled by policy and bureaucratic avenues. The disconnect between policy and action can be bridged by more intensive monitoring.

Table 12: Core implementing agencies and actors and their actions

Core implementing agencies/actors	Actions
School (especially upper primary and secondary schools)	· Reviews transport arrangements and ensures that girls have safe and affordable transport; it does not take action. · Makes the school a safe physical and emotional space; reviews all facilities and processes from that perspective. · Includes 'empowerment-based' content and processes in its teaching, learning and management practices. · Engages with parents to dissuade them from marrying off their children early; gives them information on ill effects of child marriage and motivates through various means. · Engages with other agencies to make 'stop child marriage' a common agenda for the GP; close monitoring of 'absent' children.
Anganwadi, ASHA, health centre	· Engages with adolescent girls and young women on the issue: gives them information on ill effects and motivates through various means; information on possible options: opportunities and support in realizing those options, invoking their agency to bring change. · Engages with older women to dissuade them from marrying off their children early; invokes their agency to give their daughters a different life than their own. · Engages with other agencies to make 'stop child marriage' a common agenda for the GP.
Women collective, adolescent collective	· Information on rights and choices. · Collective identity and responsibility; invokes their agency to bring change. · Negotiates with men/boys/other agencies. · Engages with other agencies to make 'stop child marriage' a common agenda for the GP; facilitates collectivization of all women – elected women representatives, women teachers, ASHAs, anganwadi workers – and uses that for agenda building.
Youth group	· Information on rights and choices; information on the ill effects of child marriage on men's lives and well-being. · Collective identity and responsibility; invokes their agency to bring change. · Negotiates with other men/boys/other agencies. · Engages with other agencies to make 'stop child marriage' a common agenda for the GP; watches against political patronage/vested interests.
Gram Panchayat	· Makes 'stop child marriage' a top and shared agenda for the GP; brings together the actors and organizations for common vision building. · Close monitoring of the enabling processes and actions in the GPs, as well as the activities of supporting organizations and actors. · Maps schooling and transport facilities (could go beyond the GP boundary) in order to plan for better school participation including safe and affordable transport; helps schools in monitoring of 'absent' children. · Social mobilization; engages with the electorate (people at large) to influence their decisions. · Incentivizes the efforts as well as the change by adopting innovative practices (e.g., public recognition – naming and faming; cash incentives to organization and individuals). · Demands support (monetary and technical) from other levels of Panchayati Raj Institutions/governments. · Streamlines monetary and technical inputs by ensuring better and deeper coordination at GP level.

Table 13: Support functions, agencies and their actions

Support functions	Actors/agencies	Actions
Local support and internal monitoring	State, district and taluk (sub-district) administration including Panchayati Raj Institutions, police	· Prioritizes child marriage as an issue for internal monitoring at all levels (taluk, district, state) to give a strong signal (e.g., first agenda item for monthly review meeting). · Incentivizes the change e.g., open recognition – naming and faming – of actors/agencies/GPs for efforts and progress; cash incentives for the GPs making faster progress; includes the reduction in child marriage as a criterion for evaluating progress of different actors/agencies/GP. · Police to be more vigilant and sensitive in dealing with offenders and protecting identities; strict action where the practice is linked with trafficking and organized crime.
Capacity building, technical support; garnering social mobilization	NGOs, academic institutions, other resource agencies	· Inclusion of content related to women's empowerment, gender discourse and unjust social practices in the various ongoing capacity building programmes for different actors (teachers, elected panchayat members, ASHAs, anganwadi workers, self-help group members, youth and other groups/collectives), with suitable pedagogy for the delivery of such content; makes one or two 'credible' agencies responsible for ensuring this inclusion. · Capacity building of law enforcement agencies (e.g., police) on the rationale for stopping child marriage, and dealing with social crimes. · Mobilizes public opinion through various means: mass media (including newspapers and TV), local media (including local language newspapers, theatre), community meetings, working with youth groups and other collectives, supporting GP members/leaders. This will help in creating support for the agenda and discouraging political patronage.
External monitoring and evaluation	Academic institutions, mandated commissions for women's and child rights (SCPCR, NCPCR, NCW, SCW)	· Mandated bodies for protection of rights to be proactive and regularly organize public hearings, social audits and other such events to (a) reinforce the priority, (b) send strong signals about adherence and compliance, and (c) incentivize positive change. · Academic institutions to regularly conduct evaluations (both formative and experimental following rigorous methods) to see how the policy is unfolding and impacting, and to enable desired changes.
Policy support and reforms	State government, union government	· Reviews existing policies and scheme designs based on feedback from reviews and evaluations; makes space for and organizes periodic evaluations. · Removes inconsistencies in the messages for sustained and long-term gains (e.g., while incentivizing the postponement of marriage, a conditional cash transfer scheme should not reinforce women's secondary position in society); social security schemes to be more gender-responsive. · Incentivizes the change (e.g., include reduction in child marriage prevalence as a criterion for GP awards). · Removes bureaucratic hurdles in use of incentive-based schemes. · Strengthens local delivery institutional arrangements for crucial actors to be more motivated and accountable (e.g., better job conditions for ASHAs and anganwadi workers)
Funding support	State government, union government, development agencies, foundations	· Makes provisions for fund support for various activities including monitoring and evaluation. · Makes related activities acceptable under various schemes running under various departments. · Allows and encourages GPs to raise funds through foundations and other such sources for specific purposes such as reducing child marriage.

SCPCR: State Commission for Protection of Child Rights; NCPCR: National Commission for Protection of Child Rights; SCW: State Commission for Women; NCW: National Commission for Women.

4.5.4 Stage of prevalence and choice of strategies

It is important to differentiate the nature of child marriage practice and stage of prevalence while choosing the strategies. Broadly, three different contexts can be identified in communities: (i) child marriage is deeply entrenched as a social norm; (ii) transition has begun, where families have looked at prioritizing education for girls; and (iii) change has occurred and child marriages are more of a deviation than a custom/practice. All these situations cannot be treated in the same way. Table 14 identifies the strategies that could be more important than others in a particular context.

Table 14: Nature of practice and stage of prevalence: choice of strategies[18]

Practice is common and deeply entrenched as a social norm	Transition has begun	Change has occurred and child marriage is more of a deviation
Broad-based social policy, media and advocacy initiatives: 1. **Agenda building** and creating public opinion against child marriage. Target and work with specific constituencies: religious leaders, parliamentarians, etc. 2. Use of **mass media** for raising awareness and projecting alternative role models (Meena Radio, soap operas). 3. Safe and affordable access to upper **primary and secondary education** (residential and non-residential). Identify major barriers to girls' education (e.g. lack of and distance to secondary schools). 4. **Incentivize change** for individuals, agencies, parents (both) and other actors, including law enforcement agencies. 5. Form/energize **adolescent and youth groups**; engage with women and men with empowerment agenda.	**Intensive work to amplify and accelerate the child marriage transition:** 1. Widen opportunities for **education, training and other choices** – respond to emerging demand for more services (e.g., livelihood opportunities, tertiary education). 2. Focus on **empowerment** of different groups and changing gender norms and expectations. 3. Public **identification and celebration** of child-marriage-free communities and Gram Panchayats.	**Targeted interventions in pockets of high prevalence; governance approaches:** 1. Strict **vigilance and law enforcement.** 2. Public identification and **censuring of the action.** 3. Public identification and **celebration of child-marriage-free communities** and Gram Panchayats. 4. **Intensive engagement** with 'closed' communities.

Table 15 summarizes the model discussed so far for the nature of the practice and stage of prevalence and links it with the strategies and monitoring indicators that are more important to monitor at a particular stage.

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[18] Notes on Table 14: Do not further marginalize, blame and ostracize the most marginalized population groups (SCs, Muslims). Beyond the 'big picture' of the three phases of the Z-curve, micro-trends exist across the country (e.g. marriage migration and trafficking). Trial alternative ways of working with adolescent groups, promoting adolescent empowerment and life skills: (a) life skills with adolescent groups outside of school; (b) life skills in school; (c) Meena Radio; (d) tele-serials on adolescent issues.

Table 15: Adaption of strategies to nature of practice and stages of child marriage prevalence

	Child marriage is a widely practised social norm	Transition has begun (tipping point reached)	Child marriage in social and geographic pockets
Prevalence	Above 50%	50%-20%	Below 20%
Nature of practice	· Generalized social norm. · Child marriage is practised across many social and economic groups. · Enforcement of law difficult.	· Child marriage rates are beginning to decline more rapidly, especially among the better off, better educated, creating a virtuous cycle. · Less change in the poorest and most marginalized population groups/certain 'closed' castes and community groups.	· Child marriage is becoming 'invisible' to the majority of the population. · Child marriage is a 'deviation' from new social norms. · Child marriage is concentrated in the (i) poorest and most marginalized population groups (economic reasons rather than social norm), and (ii) certain 'closed' castes and community groups.
Pattern and rate of decline	· Slow decline.	· Accelerated decline in child marriage.	· Stagnant decline. · Child marriage concentrated in 'hard to reach' socio-economic and geographic pockets.
Underlying drivers of change	· Primary as well as secondary education for girls and boys. · Collectivization of girls/women with empowerment agenda and working with men/youth. · Greater awareness of and commitment to women's fertility and health issues. · Exposure and shifts in aspiration, widening of information and opportunities.	· Long-term investments in education and social security are showing significant results. · Economic change and new opportunities. · Engagement with youth/ collectivization of girls/ engagement with community leaders.	Main barriers: · Lack of opportunities for poorest and most marginalized girls and their families. · Lack of universal secondary education. · Lack of engagement with 'closed' communities. · Weak law awareness and enforcement.
Strategies and approaches	**Broad-based social policy, media and advocacy initiatives:** · **Agenda building** and creating public opinion against child marriage. Targeting and working with specific constituencies: religious leaders, parliamentarians, etc. · Use of **mass media** for raising awareness and projecting alternative role models (Meena Radio, soap operas). · Safe and affordable access to upper **primary and secondary education** (residential and non-residential). Identify major barriers to girls' education (e.g. lack of and distance to secondary schools). · **Incentivize change** for individuals, agencies, parents (both) and other actors. · Form **adolescent and youth groups** and engage with women and men with empowerment agenda.	**Intensive work to amplify and accelerate the child marriage transition:** · Widen opportunities for **education, training and other choices** – respond to emerging demand for more services(e.g., livelihood opportunities, tertiary education) · **Disincentivize the practice:** bar access to certain public benefits. · Focus on **empowerment** of different groups and changing gender norms and expectations. · Public identification and **celebration** of child-marriage-free communities and Gram Panchayats.	**Targeted interventions in pockets of high prevalence; governance approaches:** · Strict **vigilance and law enforcement**. · Public identification and **censuring of the action**. · Public identification and **celebration of child-marriage-free communities** and Gram Panchayats. · **Intensive engagement** with 'closed' communities.
What to measure?	· Correlation between child marriage and distance to secondary school (Gujarat).	· Correlation between child marriage and wealth quintiles. · Disaggregate patterns of decline in child marriage by state and district.	· Mapping of hot spots. · Correlation between child marriage and wealth quintiles.

4.5.5 Core principles for choice of actions

There are five fundamental principles that define this approach and the choice of actions:

a) Consistency of messages taking all drivers of high prevalence into account: An intervention aimed at mainly addressing one driver of high prevalence should not give a contradictory message to the other drivers of high prevalence. For example, the way some of the conditional cash transfer schemes are named and designed (e.g., Bhagyalakshmi, Dhanlakshmi) reinforce rather than question some of the existing, unjust gender norms. This needs to be corrected and avoided. There are also positive examples where a scheme, such as bicycle distribution to all girls enrolled in Class 9 in Bihar, has resulted in positively impacting prevalent gender norms in addition to addressing the direct objective of incentivizing and solving the transport issue.

b) Incentivizing the change: Incentivizing is critical for change; incentives are important for both individuals and organizations, and not only for parents. All other actors, including individuals such as accredited social health activists (ASHAs) or anganwadi workers and the school or GP, are likely to respond to incentives. Incentives can be either monetary or non-monetary, material or non-material. Disincentives in the form of naming and shaming could be adopted as a last resort in certain situations.

c) Prioritizing and monitoring are key to effective implementation: In order to break the policy-action disconnect, close internal monitoring at different levels is key. As discussed earlier, monitoring is very important for giving signals in a hierarchy: closely monitored indicators receive greater attention, which also helps in setting the agenda.

d) Decentralization is critical for scaling up: It is important that decentralization is viewed as an important principle, with local institutions mainly responsible for bringing about the change and support institutions acting to enable that. In the absence of decentralization, the scale becomes daunting and unmanageable, and therefore more prone to failure.

e) Collectives are the key for agenda building and sustaining the change: Child marriage in India is linked to social customs and therefore any change also presupposes a change in attitude and perspective. Collectives play an important role: women, men, youth and adolescent girls gain much more strength when they belong to a collective and therefore start commanding more power when it comes to negotiations and vetting the changed behaviour.

4.5.6 Constraints and risks: Strategies for mitigating the risks

Given that child marriage is fairly widespread with social sanctions, any effort to mitigate it involves risks. The likely constraints and risks can be classified into four broad headings. Table 16 classifies the risks and identifies the strategies that could minimize or alleviate the risks.

Table 16: Risks and risk mitigation

Risks and constraints	Strategies to mitigate/alleviate the risk
1. Social backlash: In a situation where powerful communities and groups practise child marriage, they can oppose any effort to curb the practice.	Anticipate this possibility and address it through a variety of ways, e.g., training the interlocutors, attempt to find champions from within the community, and building a support mechanism for urgent action in case of a backlash. Collectives can play an important role in countering such opposition.
2. Lack of political support at various levels: In a democracy based on electoral politics, the numerically strong and powerful communities can influence political will and this can imply lack of political support.	Assess and address the issue, taking the specific context into account. Lack of political support at top level is difficult to handle but in cases of the lack of support at local levels, support from other levels could be used as a counter. Also, building the agenda using collectives could be useful in changing the political view, as collectives also represent numbers and are important for opinion making.
3. Administrative inefficiencies and poor implementation	This could be a real risk unless mitigation measures are built in as part of the whole approach. Capacity building and close internal and external monitoring can reduce this risk.
4. Financial constraints	The need for additional finances may not be huge given the nature of this model, which is highly dependent on encouraging existing actors and organizations work differently and more in tandem. Resources available from various sources and schemes could be more efficiently spent with better planning and strategizing.

Annex

Annex 1: Adapting the model for planning at different levels

The planning exercise has to be a decentralized process given that context needs to play an important role in the use of this model to design the plan for any given GP, district, sub-district or state. As noted earlier, the situations vary from one state to the other, and also from one district to another within a state, and also at times within districts; this makes it difficult to have one uniform plan for the whole state or for that matter even for a full district. This section, therefore, provides three tools that can be used for planning for particular GPs, districts and states using this model.

The first tool, Tool A, is in the shape of lists of questions that need to be asked at various levels; once these are answered, it would be easy to use this model for selection of strategies and actors, and then for developing a comprehensive plan for action and monitoring. The information can be collected from known published/credible sources as well as through consultations in workshops, as suggested in the third tool. This ensures that information received/gathered is triangulated, and also that field realities help in refining or deepening the understanding of the real situation.

The second tool, Tool B, is to guide the planning and budgeting; once the information has been collected using Tool A, the gaps can be identified and interventions planned accordingly. The budgeting for the interventions would require an analysis of funding opportunities available through existing sources, and an estimation of additional resources required from possible sources that could fill the gap.

The third tool, Tool C, is in the form of a tentative outline for the planning process, subject to adaptations based on the real situation on the ground and the level at which it is being used.

These tools when viewed in conjunction with the roadmap described earlier provide directions for both the process and content for planning a detailed and coherent strategy for addressing the issue of child marriage in a comprehensive manner.

Planning Tool A: List of information for different levels

Planning Tool A lists information sought for the level of state, district, sub-district and GP. The review and analysis of the information will help in classifying the GPs and selecting the relevant strategies for each level. The idea behind the tools is to allow the answers to lead to differential planning for different contexts. These are detailed but can easily be collected if all sources are put together and discussed during consultations, which would also ensure triangulation of information.

Planning Tool A: List of information

Gram Panchayat level

1. Nature, extent and kind of child marriage

- Is it common for all castes and communities, or specific social or/and economic groups – which are those?
- Is it common for both girls and boys? What is the common age group?
- What is the common form (mass, festival days, individual, mixed)?
- Has there been a shift in the nature, extent and kind in recent past – what, how much and how?

2. School (separately for all school levels)

- Is there a primary/upper primary/secondary school?
- Which kind: government/aided/private unaided?
- Where is the school located – which communities are located close by and which are not?
- Single sex or co-educational? Enrolment by sex. Teacher in position by sex.
- Distance from the village/s?
- List school facilities. Is there a separate, functioning toilet for girls?
- Is life skill/social learning/health and nutrition/gender component part of the school curriculum at any level? Details.

3. Anganwadi

- Is there an angawadi in the GP?
- Where is it located? Which communities are located close by and which are not?
- Enrolment details.
- Anganwadi worker: which caste/community, how educated, how old?

4. Collectives (separately for all groups)

- Is there a collective (women/adolescent girls/adolescent boys/youth) present? How many? In which villages?
- How was it formed? Under which scheme/programme?
- What is the membership profile in terms of age, caste, literacy (political affiliation, if any)?
- Purpose and role.
- How old? How active?
- Training: what kind, how frequent?

5. Gram Panchayat

- Physical, demographic, socio-economic details – size, how far from the block/district headquarters, number of villages, population size, main occupations, migration, main communities, women's participation in work, literacy levels, what facilities, etc.
- GP composition: when was the election held and when is it due, reservation status for the president, political party affiliation, literacy, etc.
- Schemes present in social sector (education, health, women, rural development, livelihood). Any performance related information: any award, reward, mention?
- List institutions: school management committee, Rogi Kalyan Samite (health), self-help groups, Meena Manch (girls' collective), others?

6. Budget

Availability of budgets under different headings, revenue from different sources and expenditure patterns: utilization, unspent balances, deficits, etc.

District/sub-district level

- List and map GPs by nature, kind and extent of child marriage; literacy levels; media outreach (connectivity for TV/radio/internet); population profile (sex, community, socio-economic), educational institutions spread, health institutions (including ASHA) spread, anganwadi spread.

- List and map institutions and mechanisms that are used for internal monitoring by department (all important departments that have linkages with GP); reporting formats and processes, periodicity (monthly meetings, quarterly meetings, site visits, etc.); levels of reporting (cluster, block, district).

- List academic/technical/training and research resources: NGOs, universities, other academic institutions (with their expertise).

- List and map 'influential' networks: informal and formal (caste panchayat, rights activists, etc.)

- List social security schemes (including conditional cash transfers, other transfers, etc.) and their reach; eligibility criteria, real uptake, any other relevant information on delivery and functioning.

- Map police services, spread and orientation.

- Availability of budgets under different schemes: utilization, unspent balances, deficits, etc.

State level

- List and map districts/blocks by nature, kind and extent of child marriage; literacy levels; media outreach (connectivity for TV/radio/internet); population profile (sex, community, socio-economic), educational institutions spread, health institutions (including ASHA) spread, anganwadi spread.

- List and map institutions and mechanisms that are used for internal monitoring by department (all important departments that have linkages with district/sub-district level); reporting formats and processes, periodicity (monthly meetings, quarterly meetings, site visits, etc.); levels of reporting (what level of officer).

- List and map academic/technical/training and research resources: NGOs, universities, other academic institutions (with their expertise).

- List social security schemes (including conditional cash transfers, other transfers, etc.) and their design details, reach; eligibility criteria, real uptake, any other relevant information on delivery and functioning (by department).

- List and map rights protection bodies and their mandates, resources and potential.

- List related laws, acts and policies, and implications for panchayats and child marriage, and also schemes dealing with social security, education, health, livelihood, etc.

- List and map studies, researches, evaluations, clippings related to child marriage, known drivers of high prevalence and drivers of change.

- List and map (presence, processes, mechanisms for monitoring) 'influential' networks: informal and formal (judiciary, commissions, caste panchayat, rights activists, etc.).

- Budget details and criteria of relevant schemes/programmes.

Planning Tool B: Interventions and budget

Planning Tool B helps in making a plan and budget for the core implementing agencies at the GP level. Once the plans are ready for the GPs identified for intensive intervention, the sub-district and district plans could be prepared using Tool B (ii). The district tool is both a component plan to support GPs, and a plan for the district as a whole.

Planning Tool B (i): Interventions and budget at GP level

Areas (examples)	Interventions (What)	Process (How)	Responsibility (Who)	Timeline with milestones (When)	Money required	Money from existing sources	Budget gaps and possible sources	Capacity enhancement needs and
Education	1. 2. 3.							
Empowerment/ collectives	1. 2. 3.							
Social protection								
Mobilization								

Planning Tool B (ii): Interventions and budget at district level

Areas of support for GPs	Interventions (What)	Process (How)	Responsibility (Who)	Timeline with milestones (When)	Money required	Money from existing sources	Budget gaps and possible sources	Policy/ technical support required from state
GP 1	1. 2. 3.							
GP 2	1. 2. 3.							
GP 3								
District level interventions								

Planning Tool C: Suggested process of planning

Planning Tool C outlines the suggested steps for the planning process and identifies the main actors and participants for all steps. This is for the initial planning and, although based on the principle of decentralization, the main action happens at state, district and block levels with participation of the GPs. At a subsequent stage, GPs can be made the central and active actor in planning. While the GP plan is more for action, the district and state plans will be for policy reform, support, monitoring and evaluation. The actors can vary from one place to the other depending upon the approach that a particular district or state adopts. Local NGOs and academics can play an important role in supporting the planning exercise at all levels.

Planning Tool C: Process of planning

Step	Main actor	Main participants
1. State-level workshop to discuss the issue, identify the tasks (based on Tool A) and develop a planning timeline with responsibilities.	State government and main partner/s.	State actors and identified districts.
2. State actors to work on the responsibilities (collect information) that they have undertaken, then develop a tentative plan of action taking various elements of the model into account.	State actors.	Concerned departments and agencies.
3. Each district to have a district-level workshop to discuss the issue, identify the tasks (based on Tool A) and develop a planning timeline with responsibilities.	District main actors (government and partner/s).	District and sub-district actors and identified GPs.
4. Districts, blocks and GPs to work on the responsibilities that they have undertaken.	District and sub-district actors and identified GPs.	GPs and other core institutions at GP level.
5. Consolidation of GP, block and district information and develop a tentative plan of action taking various elements of the model into account.	District main actors (government and partner/s).	District and sub-district actors and identified GPs.
6. Consolidation of GP, block and district plans and identification of additional inputs for the state component plan.	State government and main partner/s.	State actors and identified districts. Concerned departments and agencies.
7. Sharing and elaboration of the plan at all levels, including the support, monitoring and evaluation elements.	State government and main partner/s; district main actor (government and partner/s).	District and sub-district actors and identified GPs.

Annex 2: State-wise child marriage prevalence (major states)

State	Child marriage prevalence (%)
Andhra Pradesh	51.8
Assam	39.9
Bihar	68.1
Gujarat	35.4
Haryana	27.8
Himachal Pradesh	9.1
Karnataka	50.2
Kerala	15.5
Madhya Pradesh	53.8
Maharashtra	40.4
Odisha	37.7
Punjab	15.7
Rajasthan	57.5
Tamil Nadu	23.9
Uttar Pradesh	54.8
West Bengal	54.7

Source: DLHS 2007-2008

Annex 3: Review of existing schemes according to drivers of change

Drivers of change	Related existing schemes	Strengths	Gaps	Recommendations
Access to safe, affordable and good quality secondary education	**1. All India** · Construction of hostels near secondary schools · Kasturba Gandhi Balika Vidyalaya (KGBV) · National Programme for Elementary Education for Girls (NPEGL) · Rashtriya Madhyamik Siksha Abhiyan (RMSA) · Sarva Siksha Abhiyan (SSA) **2. State-specific** · Ambedkar Technical Scholarship of Welfare –Jharkhand · Bicycle Distribution System – Jharkhand · Chief Minister's Fund for Girl Child Education –Gujarat · Cycle scheme and Transport Voucher Scheme–Rajasthan · Develop sanitation facilities in primary and middle schools in rural areas–Gujarat · Mahila Shikshan Kendra–Assam, Andhra Pradesh, Bihar, Chhattisgarh, Gujarat, Jharkhand, Karnataka, Kerala, Uttar Pradesh and Uttarakhand (bridge course) · Mukhya Mantri Balika Cycle Yojana-Bihar · Saraswati Bicycle Plan –Chhattisgarh · Saraswati Sadhna Scheme and Vidya Sadhana Scheme (Bicycle distribution)–Gujarat **3. NGO initiatives (some examples)** · Balika Shikshan Shivir (Rajasthan) · MV Foundation (Andhra Pradesh) · Nirantar (Rajasthan) · Udaan(Uttar Pradesh, Gujarat	· Universalization of elementary education · Residential schools are set up at upper primary and secondary level for girls belonging to SC, ST, OBC and other minority communities. · Hostels near secondary schools also facilitate transition from elementary to secondary. · Additional support in the form of scholarships, textbooks and uniforms. · Provision of free bicycles for commuting ensures safe and affordable commute to secondary schools, usually away from villages. · Comprehensive bridge courses with a special social learning and empowerment component by NGOs.	· Low fund utilization in some states. · Access to secondary schools still remains a challenge. Often, the commute (safe and affordable) acts as a hurdle. · Artificial droppingout of girls (who have been attending school regularly) to gain enrolment in KGBVs, instead of those who are genuine lyout of school. · Bicycles are often used by other family members. · Lack of clean and separate toilets in schools. In many states, separate toilets do exist, but are not accessible by girls as they are locked. · More focus given on enrolment of students than on retention.	· Identify and enrol 'real' dropouts. For instance, for KGBVs managed by Mahila Samakhya, the teachers to do a survey in the block to identify and enrol genuine dropouts. · Active role of School Management Committee to curb child marriage below 14 years of age in the 1-km and 3-km radius of primary and upper primary schools, respectively. · Stringent vigilance of bicycle distribution schemes so that only the girls use the bicycles. · Schemes and programmes should not only focus on increasing enrolment but also on retention of students by improving the quality of infrastructure and teaching methods. · Schools set up under NPEGL should be exclusively for girls so that parents feel comfortable enough to send their daughters to school. · Engagement of religious leaders and male members of the society in campaigns will help in changing the social norm to a great extent.

Annex 3: Review of existing schemes according to drivers of change

Drivers of change	Related existing schemes	Strengths	Gaps	Recommendations
Empowerment of women, girls, men and boys	**1. All India** · Integrated Child Protection Scheme (ICPS) · Kishori Shakti Yojana · Rajiv Gandhi Scheme for Empowerment of Adolescent Girls (SABLA) **2. State-specific** · Adhyapika Manch – Rajasthan · Ajeevika – Rajasthan · Devnarayan Scheme – Rajasthan · Gyan Jyoti and Hunnar – Bihar · Maharashtra Life Skills Program (India) · Mahila Samakhya – Assam, Andhra Pradesh, Bihar, Chhattisgarh, Gujarat, Jharkhand, Karnataka, Kerala, Uttar Pradesh and Uttarakhand · Meena Manch – Rajasthan · National Rural Livelihoods Mission – Rajasthan · Rashtriya Kishor Swastha Karyakram– Gujarat, West Bengal, Jharkhand, Andhra Pradesh · Swawalamban Scheme (vocational training for women) – Rajasthan **3. NGO initiatives** · MV Foundation · Nirantar · Sandhan (resource partner for KGBVs in Rajasthan) · Udaan (resource partner for KGBVs in Gujarat)	· Health and nutrition related awareness and health needs of women and girls. · Life skills and vocational training for women and girls. · Collectives of adolescent girls under few schemes – forum for discussing issues, creating awareness and acting as a support group. · Resource partners for KGBVs also ensure empowered learning experiences. · Focus on all-round capacity building. · Meena Manch provides a platform to discuss adolescent girls' issues.	· Some of the residential bridge courses for girls in Rajasthan were discontinued because of sporadic attendance and the schools were costly to maintain. · Collectives maintained by NGOs are more regular in attendance than those managed by government schemes. · Feminization of vocational and life skill training courses. · Poor and complex organizational structure of Mahila Samakhya, resulting inlack of proper documentation, funding irregularities and poor research.	· Expansion of Mahila Samakhya in all states and its funding centralized though supervision and monitoring. Publicity and training should be the responsibility of block and district authorities. · Provide resource support to all KGBVs, similar to those provided by various NGOs in certain states. · Livelihood training for girls beyond tailoring, beautician and similar courses.

Annex 3: Review of existing schemes according to drivers of change

Drivers of change	Related existing schemes	Strengths	Gaps	Recommendations
Incentivizing the change	**1. Conditional cash transfer scheme** • Apni Beti Apna Dhan – Haryana • Balika Samridhhi Yojana – Gujarat • Balika Shree Yojana – Uttar Pradesh • Balri Rakshak Yojana – Punjab • Bangaru Thalli – Andhra Pradesh • Bhagyalaxmi – Karnataka • Dhanalaxmi – Andhra Pradesh • Gaonki Beti Yojana – Madhya Pradesh • Girl Child Protection Scheme – Andhra Pradesh • Indira Gandhi Balika Suraksha Yojana – Himachal Pradesh • Kanya Jagriti Jyoti Scheme – Punjab • Kanyashree – West Bengal • Ladli Laxmi Yojana – Madhya Pradesh • Ladli Scheme – Delhi, Haryana • Mahamaya Garib Balika Ashirwad Yojana –Uttar Pradesh • Majoni – Assam • Mukhya Mantri Kanya Suruksha Yojana – Bihar • Mukhyamantri Ladli Lakshmi Yojana –Jharkhand • Pratibha Kiran Yojana– Madhya Pradesh • Rakshak Yojana– Punjab • Sahyog Yojana– Rajasthan • Vidyalakshmi Bond Scheme – Gujarat **2. Scholarships, transfers, grants, freeships** • Ambedkar Technical Scholarship of Welfare – Jharkhand	**1. Conditional cash transfer scheme** • Special financial incentives are given to girls on fulfilling certain conditions like enrolment and retention in school until a minimum standard, on immunization, staying unmarried until they attain the legal age for marriage, not engaging in child labour. • The girl will get the cash when she turns 18 years only if she is unmarried and educated until a certain grade. This will encourage girls to continue their education, thus delaying the age of marriage. **2. Scholarships, transfers, grants, freeships** • Scholarships, financial incentives, free textbooks, clothes and cycles are distributed mostly among underprivileged girls to encourage them to continue education, thus delaying the age of marriage. • Through a few schemes, the government provides financial incentives to girls at their wedding to reduce the burden of wedding cost onthe family. **3. Awards/recognition** • Several children have received the National Bravery Award from the union government for stopping child marriages in their local areas.	• The mass marriages in some places are difficult to host because government-sponsored community marriages are not considered to be equivalent to family-sponsored marriages, given that marriage is linked to the family's honour and social standing within the community. • There is no scrutiny whether the cash transferred under the conditional cash transfer scheme is being used by the girls for education/marriage or not. • Too many eligibility criteria make the schemes complex. • A few states have more than one financial scheme but beneficiaries are eligible to enrol in any one of them, resulting in confusion at the field level.	• Cash transfers to girls, as a form of demand draft/directly in their bank accounts/fixed deposits, might ensure that the money is used only by them. • Special focus should be given to implementation and monitoring of the schemes and programmes. • Simplify the eligibility conditions and application procedure.

Annex 3: Review of existing schemes according to drivers of change

Drivers of change	Related existing schemes	Strengths	Gaps	Recommendations
Incentivizing the change	• Apani Beti Yojana – Rajasthan			
	• Beti Hain Anmol Scheme – Himachal Pradesh			
	• Bicycle Distribution System – Jharkhand			
	• Construction worker daughter marriage support scheme – Rajasthan			
	• Girls Motivating Plan – Chhattisgarha			
	• Indira Gandhi Priya-darshini Viwah Sahgun Yojna – Haryana			
	• Kalyanamasthu Programme – Andhra Pradesh			
	• Kanya Vidya Dhan – Uttar Pradesh			
	• Kunwarbainu Mameru Scheme – Gujarat			
	• Mukh Mantra Subh Laxmi Yojana –Rajas-than			
	• Mukhya Mantri Balika Cycle Yojana – Bihar			
	• Mukhya Mantri Balika Poshan Yojana –Bihar			
	• Mukhyamantri Kanyadaan Yojana – Madhya Pradesh			
	• Mukhyamantri Kanya-Vivah Yojana – Bihar			
	• Mukhyamantri Kanyadaan Yojana – Himachal Pradesh			
	• Odisha Girls Incentive Program – Odisha			
	• Saatpherasamooh Lagna – Gujarat			
	• Samuhik VIvah – Rajasthan			
	• Saraswati Bicycle Plan – Chhattisgarh			
	• Student Accident Insurance Scheme – Chhattisgarh			
	3. Awards/recognition			
	• National Bravery Award			
	• Ladli Samman – Rajas-than			

Annex 3: Review of existing schemes according to drivers of change

Drivers of change	Related existing schemes	Strengths	Gaps	Recommendations
Agenda building and public opinion	• Aapani Dikari Ro Haq (Our Daughter's Right) initiated by Vikalp Sansthan, Udaipur–Rajasthan, established 2002 • Amar Saishob, Amar Adhikar (My Childhood, My Right), by UNICEF– in collaboration with Government of West Bengal • Bachpan Bachao Andolan – PanIndia, established 1980 • Bal Jagriti Manch established by PANI – Uttar Pradesh • Bal Vivah Virodh Abhiyan, National Commission for Women – Rajasthan, Bihar, Chhattisgarh, Madhya Pradesh, Jharkhand and Uttar Pradesh (2005) • Beti Bachao, Beti Padhao – All India (2015) • Deepshikha, by UNICEF– Maharashtra • Dignity of the Girl Child by Urmul Trust, Bikaner – Rajasthan, established 1986 • Girls Not Brides – global advocacy initiative • HAQ – Pan India • Kanya Kelevani Rath Yatra and Shala Praveshotsav – Government of Gujarat • Play for Peace by DISHA – Rajasthan • Youth Leadership Program by Vyakti Vikas Kendra – Bihar	• Programmes and campaigns aimed at empowering adolescent girls and creating awareness in society against child marriage. • Conducting workshops to provide life skill and vocational training to young girls and boys. • Mobilizing the community by creating peer leaders (groups of boys and girls) and capacity building. • Sensitizing the village, caste leaders, religious leaders and parents. • Child marriage awareness through conducting street plays, games, shows and songs. • A few state governments (e.g., Gujarat) conducted drives to ensure 100% retention of girls in schools. • Village-level Poorna Shakti Kendras were established, bringing women together and strengthening their participation in local self-governance. Women's sabhas (meetings) are also mobilized under this project, which take up issues relating to women and girls, including child marriage.	• Most of the campaigns are not at national level. • Commitment from the state exists but not at the district and sub-district levels. • Since 1980, there has been no national level movement for curbing child marriage, until the introduction of Beti Bachao, Beti Padhao Yojana in 2015, which essentially targets female foeticide and promotes girls' education but does not specifically target child marriage.	• A nationwide campaign through different media is essential. Aligning the practice with shame (for the family) mayalso be effective in the campaign. • Utilize the root cause of child marriage in specific areas to campaign against it. • Make each strata of government responsible for the number of child marriages in their jurisdiction.

Annex 3: Review of existing schemes according to drivers of change

Drivers of change	Related existing schemes	Strengths	Gaps	Recommendations
Consistent laws and stricter enforcement	· Prohibition of Child Marriage Act, 2006 – All India · Compulsory Registration of Marriage Act, 2005 –All India · Child Marriage Restraint Act, 1929 · Chief Minister's7 Point Programme, which prioritized the eradication of child marriage – Rajasthan	· Parents, parents-in-law,relatives, those solemnizing or becoming a party to a child marriage will be penalized according to the Prohibition of Child Marriage Act, 2006. · Helpline for children and women to report any child marriage. · All marriages must be registered according to the Compulsory Registration of Marriage Act.	· Reporting under PCMA 2006 has been extremely low in a few states like West Bengal, Andhra Pradesh. · There are also minimal consequences for not registering a marriage, as failure to register does not affect its validity. The implementation is reportedly inconsistent. · Limited awareness on the exact provisions, especially the penalties associated with the laws pertaining to child marriage, trafficking and domestic violence. · The Child Marriage Prohibition Officers in some states (Haryana, West Bengal, Andhra Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh) are in charge of other duties as well, and are often overburdened with so much responsibilities that they do not have time to deal with the issues of child marriage.	· Sensitize the police and other implementation agencies for stricter vigilance. · Consistency across laws – especially those against child marriage, child labour. · Stricter enforcement of the Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education Act, 2009.

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