"Early marriage is bad for boys and girls," says Atul. "I had to help my father work in the fields. They told me that I had to get married. If I don’t, they’ll kill me. But my father does not want me to get married."

There was a lot of expectation to get married before age 18. He had never spoken to his bride before the marriage. "I also want to make sure my wife finishes her education and she gets a job she likes," he explains. "I also want to be more responsible."

"I used to play a lot before marriage. Now if I hear of a child marriage, I feel angry. I take it as my responsibility to stop it," he explains. "I feel angry because my sister was married at the age of 16. She told me that she had given up hope of stopping child marriage."

The 17 year old from Banaskantha district in Gujarat says: "Girls are as likely to be married as boys. Children as girls. They are ready to find work and prepare for the future for both himself and his family."

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In India, 1 in 3 girls are married as children than richer women.7 Furthermore, women with no education and those in rural areas twice as likely to be child brides as urban women.9 Child marriage can also lead to serious health issues such as the risk of abuse. Around one in four girls are exposed to physical abuse at the hands of their husband/Girl right to health services.10 Ending child marriage is essential for girls' education and their future as women.10 Ending child marriage will not only help girls, but will also help their families and communities. Ending child marriage is an opportunity to create a better future for girls and boys, and to break the cycle of poverty, illiteracy, and child abuse.11

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To change 5 key routes governments, organizations and young people themselves are working in partnership to form a unique holistic approach to services through ongoing dialogue, engage young people in decision-making, and address problems that any of them may face. The two agencies are aiming to boost the ability of adolescents to speak up for their rights and address problems that any of them may face.

EMPOWERED GIRLS

In the group we talk about different health issues, we do a lot of work to help link girls to education and we also discuss child marriage and how it should not take place.

MOBILIZING COMMUNITIES FOR CHANGE

Now leaders from other caste groups are getting in touch with the Thakor leaders, hoping to emulate their example.

LINKING GIRLS TO SERVICES

The plan will include two-year, five-year and ten-year targets, with five-year targets to be linked to services through ongoing dialogue, engage young people in decision-making, and address problems that any of them may face.

5 KEY ROUTES TO CHANGE

The Global Programme will:

1. Usage and build the data and environment to end child marriage over the past ten years.
2. Ensure that health, education, and key services like healthcare and support and increase access to economic support to families in the village. But now we have to say, “In the group we talk about different health issues, we do a lot of work to help link girls to education and we also discuss child marriage and how it should not take place.”

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5 KEY ROUTES TO CHANGE

The Global Programme will:

1. Ensure adolescents get to school services through ongoing dialogue, engage young people in decision-making, and address problems that any of them may face.
2. Support governments to make child marriage more difficult to achieve.
3. Provide spaces for girls and boys to talk about their experiences.
4. Work towards a world where girls and boys have equal opportunities.
5. Work with communities and young people to end child marriage.

The group in the village is getting in touch with the Thakor leaders, hoping to emulate their example.

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