

CHILD BRIDES

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Facilitator Guide: Global Applications

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Tips for Holding A Discussion

Before holding a screening:

Make sure you are aware of cultural norms for discussion events and work with local leaders to ensure you are proceeding in a way that addresses community needs and concerns. Do you need to ask local leaders for permission? Will you need a co-sponsor to ensure you can draw your target population to the screening? Will it be held at a location that is accessible to your target population?

Be clear about the objectives of your event:

What do you hope to accomplish? Why? Are your goals shared? By whom? Are your goals realistic?

Explore your own cultural lens:

As a facilitator, your job is to *facilitate* discussion about the issue. Steer clear of forcing personal opinions and conclusions upon others.

Be informed about how child marriage impacts members of your community:

What are their concerns? How are the stories in the documentary similar to stories in your community, and how are they different? Knowing your community will help you maintain relevancy and cultural sensitivity in the discussion.

Ensure that everyone has an opportunity to be heard:

Women and young children will oftentimes find it more difficult to speak up so make an effort to include them in the discussion; this may mean allowing more time to respond to questions. Encourage others to help you make space for quieter audience members to speak up, without putting them on the spot. Sometimes it's helpful to break into smaller groups.

Make sure there is time for audience-members to discuss next steps:

How will they address the issue of child marriage in their communities?

Pre-screening Talking Points

- Be sure and define child marriage: a union between two people where one or both partners are under the age of 18 years.
- Child brides typically experience high rates of childbirth complications (fistula, stillbirths and even death), HIV infection, partner violence and abuse.
- Girls married at a young age are often pulled out of school.
- When girls are pulled out of school early, their ability to positively contribute to the health and financial success of their families and the political, social, and economic development of their communities is more limited.
- Child marriage therefore traps families and communities into cycles of poverty.
- Child marriage is a concern in 64 countries. The film explores stories in three regions: Asia, Africa, and Latin America.

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Post-screening Discussion Questions

Ask audience members to discuss the following questions. You may ask them to break up in smaller groups and designate one theme per group; ask them to present their thoughts to the larger groups.

Why do the girls do it?

- Why did the girls in the documentary get married early? Did they have a choice? Why or why not?
- Why do girls in your community get married early? Do they have a choice? Why or why not?
- What are some of the similarities and differences between the various stories in the film?
- What are some of the similarities and differences between the stories in the film and child marriage in your own community?

What are the consequences?

- What are some consequences of child marriage that the documentary explores? (Physical, mental, emotional, financial)
- What are some consequences of child marriage in your community? (Physical, mental, emotional, financial)

Why does child marriage exist?

- What role does poverty play in the stories told about child marriage?
- What role does poverty play in child marriage in your own community?
- Are there alternatives to early marriage in your community?
- What role does education play in the stories told about child marriage? Why is education so important for young girls?

Challenges?

- What are some of the challenges to reducing child marriage in your community?
- What are some ways that the communities in the film tried to address the issue of child marriage and its consequences?
- What are some of the challenges to educating girls in your community? How can these challenges be addressed?
- In India, what were the struggles that the social worker faced when trying to help the young girls in her community? What did she do?

What can you do?

- Should child marriage be reduced in your own community? Why or why not?
- In Niger, which community members were allies to the young girls? Why did they care? What did they do to help?
- Would the strategies used in the film to address the issue of child marriage be appropriate for your community? Why or why not?
- What role can men play in helping to end child marriage in your community? What role can women play? What will you do to help end child marriage in your community?

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Suggested Activity for Community Members

1. Ask community members to sit in a circle.
2. Place a blanket in the middle of the circle and give it the name of your village or community.
3. Place a flower pot containing good moist soil in the middle of the blanket and give it the name of a local school.
4. Place a pile of seeds in the middle of the circle somewhere near the blanket but not on it.
5. Ask community members to begin to discuss the negative consequences of early marriage for young girls versus the potential benefits of an education for them.
6. Every time a community member names a negative consequence of child marriage, ask them to take a seed from the pile and place it on the blanket *next* to the flower pot.
7. Every time a community member names a potential benefit of educating young girls, ask them to take a seed from the pile and place it in the flower pot with fresh soil.
8. At the end of the activity, ask participants to discuss the results:
 - How many seeds were planted in the pot?
 - How many seeds were not planted at all?
 - What happens to seeds planted in fertile wet soil?
 - What happens to seeds that are not planted at all?
 - What are some conclusions that participants might arrive at?