



UNFPA-UNICEF Global Programme to End Child Marriage

Assessment of adaptations to the UNFPA-UNICEF Global Programme to End Child Marriage in light of COVID-19



1 | Assessment Objectives

Purpose

Learn from **the Global Programme adjustments to the COVID-19 pandemic** and generate useful and timely evidence for Phase II implementation, on the status of implementation of these adjusted strategies and programming approaches.

Objectives

Assess relevant **contingency planning and implementation and alternative delivery and management arrangements** for the Global Programme **due to the COVID-19 pandemic**, taking into account the views of the beneficiaries (vulnerable adolescent girls, their families and community) and key implementing partners

Make **recommendations** for the immediate to mid-term **improvement of Global Programme response to COVID-19**, identify ongoing programme changes , and recommend any additional support required to implement those programme changes and shifting priorities

Make any **recommendations** required to **adjust Phase II to the new context**, including to its theory of change and the targets established before the COVID-19 pandemic

2 | Scope and Governance

Scope

All twelve Global Programme countries

East and Southern Africa: Ethiopia, Mozambique, Uganda and Zambia

Middle East and North Africa: Yemen

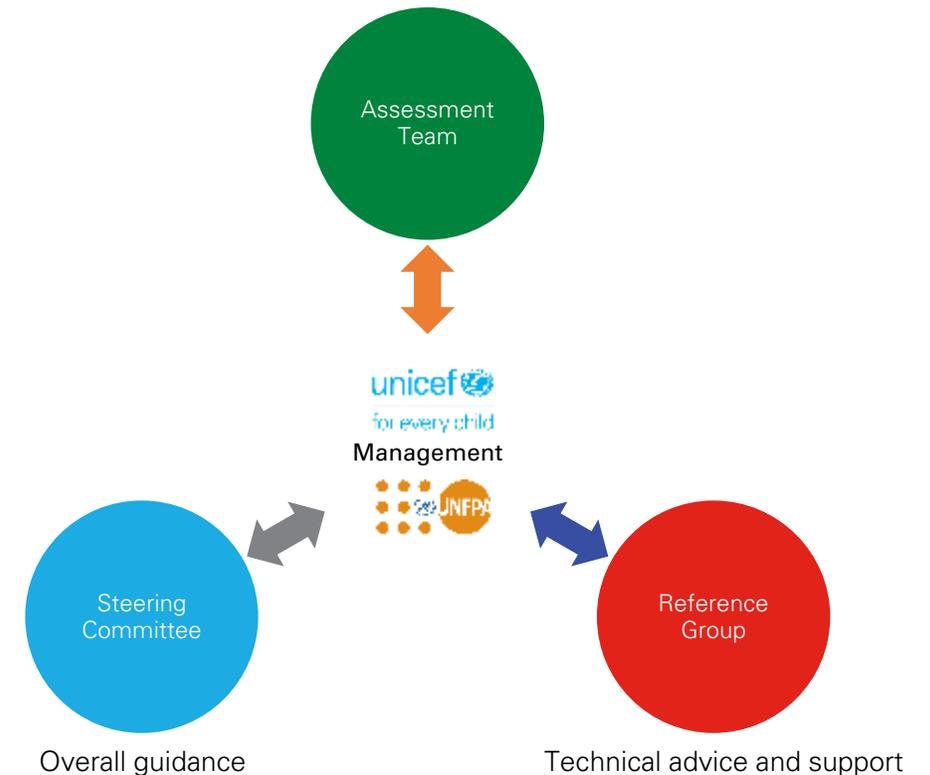
West and Central Africa: Burkina Faso, Ghana, Niger and Sierra Leone

South Asia: Bangladesh, India and Nepal

Focus on 2020

Governance

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3 | Assessment Methodology

Desk review

of background documentation, reports, workplans, research

Group discussions

With beneficiaries including girls, boys, mothers and fathers, community leaders in 3 countries



Key informant interviews

with a range of stakeholders at global, regional, country level

Online questionnaire (all countries)

UNFPA – UNICEF technical teams IP national and sub national

Remote key informant interviews

	M	F	Total
Global level	2	8	10
Donors	--	2	2
Partners Advisory Group	1	1	2
Regional level	1	9	10
Deep dive countries			
Burkina Faso	5	3	8
Niger	9	3	12
Nepal	3	5	8
Mozambique	3	5	8
Zambia	3	6	9
Non deep dive countries			
Bangladesh		2	2
Ghana	1	2	3
India	-	3	3
Ethiopia	-	2	2
Sierra Leone	1	1	2
Uganda	-	2	2
Yemen	-	2	2
Total	29	56	85

	Online survey		
	TTs	IPs	Total
Deep dive countries			
Burkina Faso	1	4	5
Niger	1	-	1
Nepal	3	7	10
Mozambique	1	1	2
Zambia	3	4	7
Non deep dive countries			
Bangladesh	3		3
Ghana	1	7	8
India	1	3	4
Ethiopia	4	4	8
Sierra Leone	-	-	0
Uganda	3	1	4
Yemen	-	2	2
Undisclosed country	12	14	26
Total	33	47	80

Remote Group Discussions

	Adolescents		Mentors		Parents		Leaders	
	Girls	Boys	F	F	M	F	M	
Niger	10	-	-	1	3	-	4	
Mozambique	6	-	6	-	-	-	-	
Zambia	6	5	-	-	-	2	3	
Total	22	5	6	1	3	2	7	



4 | Findings



| Findings



Q1 —

Emerging needs of vulnerable and marginalized adolescent girls

Identification of emerging needs in the context of COVID-19 **varied across countries** through a range of methods including some innovation.

Modes of delivery, tools and packages were adapted to **ensure continuity of interactions**. However, the “**digital divide**” is a concern for reaching vulnerable and marginalised adolescent girls.

Q2 —

Alignment of adopted measures with the GP Phase II approaches

Programme **adjustments** to COVID-19 sought to **maintain the alignment** with the Global Theory of Change Phase II as well as with national COVID-19 response strategies.

| Findings



Q3 —

Contribution of adjustments to the results of the GP Phase II

Contact could be maintained with adolescent girls through **digital platforms, mentors and community-based networks**. However virtual modes of delivery may not be optimal in terms of **content quality** and outcomes on adolescent girls' agency or social norms.

Support to **encourage adolescent girls to return to school** once reopening showed some success but was not systematically monitored.

Community-based activities were continued, in most countries, through **smaller groups, home visits or involving local leaders**. The emphasis on **mass and social media campaigns allowed a wider reach** although their potential to influence gender and social norms remains a concern.

Most countries endeavoured to adapt their **capacity** building and system strengthening activities:

- Despite **school** closures and lockdowns, capacity building activities took place, often online, and some were postponed.
- Capacity building was sustained however efforts to facilitate adolescent access to **SRH** services was constrained because of factors related to the pandemic and associated restrictions.
- **Child protection** systems were generally impacted as not considered as "essential services". Sustained advocacy helped to correct this situation over time.



Effectiveness

Q3 —

Contribution of adjustments to the results of the GP Phase II

Small-scale initiatives to address economic empowerment were undertaken but linkages with **social protection programmes** to address heightened risks of child marriage due to the pandemic were weak and **limited to a few countries**.

Advocacy and technical support contributed to continue enhancing the capacity of governments to **develop national and subnational plans** related to ending child marriage although **at a smaller scale**. Some related capacity building events were postponed.

COVID-19 **impacted the ability** of country offices **to reach targets on evidence generation**. Instead, rapid assessment and studies on the **impact of COVID-19 restrictions** were conducted in some cases using digital technologies.

The transition from a gender-sensitive approach **to a gender-transformative approach**, is underway, but has been **hampered by the pandemic**.

'Do no harm': the health and wellbeing of agency staff, partners and beneficiaries was taken into consideration while adhering to COVID-19 prevention and mitigation measures.

| Findings



Q4 —

Support to COs programme adjustments

Timely guidance and tools were provided to support adjustments but their operationalisation was sometimes **challenging**. **One-on-one support** in the reprogramming process and **sharing of good practices** were considered as the **most valuable support**

Q5 —

Adjustments likely to be maintained over time

Learnings from the adjustments to the pandemic have the **potential to shape future programming**, such as:

- The **use of virtual methods with beneficiaries** allowing to reach larger numbers provided that their outcomes are assessed before scaling them up
- **Multi-pronged approaches** necessary to address issues such as changes in gender norms or skills development
- **Flexibility** in adjusting programming and in reallocating budgets
- **Leveraging** of additional, non-Global Programme funds supported adjustments



← Coherence

Q6 —

Coherence of adjustments with key related programmes

Adjustments were generally coherent between sectors within agencies and between agencies. Overtime, the multi-sectorality of the effects of the pandemic and its related restrictions on child marriage was recognised by governments.

5 | Recommendations



Recommendations

01 —

The Global Programme should advocate with governments to **continue developing multi-sectoral legal and operational frameworks** contributing to ending child marriage, with a focus on **addressing the various drivers of child marriage at national, subnational and local levels**

- **Advocacy** with government and partners for the **integration** of child marriage in on going COVID-19 response but also in future emergency response and recovery plans
- Supporting the development of **policies and multi-sectoral operational** costed strategies at **national, subnational and local levels**
- Strengthening of a multi-sectoral and **coordinated** approach to the prevention and response to child marriage to address the various drivers of child marriage as well as the rights of adolescent girls and women supported by a reinforced internal collaboration between sectors
- Including **preparedness** for different types of emergencies, risk and mitigation analysis and **contingency planning** in Global Programme workplans.

Recommendations

02 —

The Global Programme should reinforce its efforts **to reach the most vulnerable** and marginalised adolescent girls, boys and their families through targeting them further and relying on **local partners, stakeholders and networks**

- Ensuring **that identification of the most vulnerable** and marginalized girls is institutionalized and used as a basis for policymaking;
- Involving local partners, and actors to undertake **vulnerability assessments** to be used as advocacy tools;
- **Reinforcing the reach of rural and remote communities** through partnering with local organizations, local networks and local authorities as well as other local actors to **mobilize adolescent** girls and boys and parents and to deliver **community-based activities**;

Recommendations

03 —

The Global Programme should continue to develop **complementary multi-channel approaches** to reach target populations based on country specificities and context.

- Adopting a **mix of face-to-face and digital/mass media channels** to reach beneficiaries accompanied by advocacy with **governments to address the digital/media** divide for women and girls
- Ensuring that **quality standards are developed for the design of digital approaches** and that the application of these new approaches is monitored
- Ensuring that developed **digital approaches foster two-way communication** with a view to engage with intended audiences.
- Strengthening **linkages with local authorities and networks** to further involve them in child marriage-related interventions.

04 —

The Global Programme should continue **advocacy and systems-strengthening** with governments with a view to maintaining access to essential services for adolescent girls and boys in contexts of heightened vulnerability, including in humanitarian crisis.

- Supporting system strengthening to ensure that education, **SRH and social welfare services, including help lines, are recognized as 'essential services'** for adolescent girls and that their access is improved and facilitated
- Advocating and ensuring that essential service provision is related to the **rights of adolescent girls** and women in particular during emergencies
- Strengthening **prevention components of sexual and reproductive health services** in particular as far as the prevention of unintended and early pregnancy is concerned
- Including **mental health and psychosocial support** various services as well as in life skills packages

Recommendations

05 —

The Global Programme should articulate further its strategy to **leverage social cash transfer** and other forms of **income generation** opportunities for adolescent girls and their families

- **Orienting** agencies and government departments involved in social protection and economic empowerment programmes on **the criteria used to identify girls vulnerable to child marriage**
- Strengthening **advocacy and linkages with these agencies and government departments** involved in social protection programmes, with the support of UNICEF social policy, with a view **to anchor the needs of adolescent girls in the conditionalities of these programmes**
- Building Global Programme country teams and implementing partners **technical capacities to leverage social protection programmes**

Recommendations

06 —

The Global Programme should **adjust its results framework and indicators**, and further support country offices for monitoring, data generation and analysis, in order to reinforce evidence-based programming

- **Reviewing the results framework** with a view to adding or refining some indicators, taking into consideration the differences in focus highlighted by the pandemic
- Continuing to support Global Programme country offices to **streamline reporting** with a view to harmonizing the measurement of the result framework indicators
- Ensuring that **short- and medium-term effects of the newly developed approaches are measured**, including effectiveness and coverage of digital/mass media communications and their effects on girls' agency and social and gender norms
- Facilitating the **systematic analysis of the available data** on child marriage and its drivers
- **Monitoring the effects of the COVID-19 crisis on child marriage** rates in relation to changes in gender dynamics and norms, non-return to school, hindered access to SRH services, teenage pregnancies and families economic situation

6 | Dissemination



Assessment Report & Exec. Summary

GP Network and practitioners on CM
UNICEF & UNFPA Executive Boards
National / Regional Partners



Country reports

National Government Counterparts
National Partners



Webinars: three

Regional child protection managers, UNICEF
Open Global webinar: global, general public
Bi-annual meeting Network



Multimedia: Blog(s), Social Media Content

National/Regional Partners
General Public

Thank you



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Ministry of Foreign Affairs
and International Cooperation



Belgium
partner in development

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