

BURKINA FASO

end
child
marriage
A voice. A chance. A future.

COUNTRY PROFILE
2022



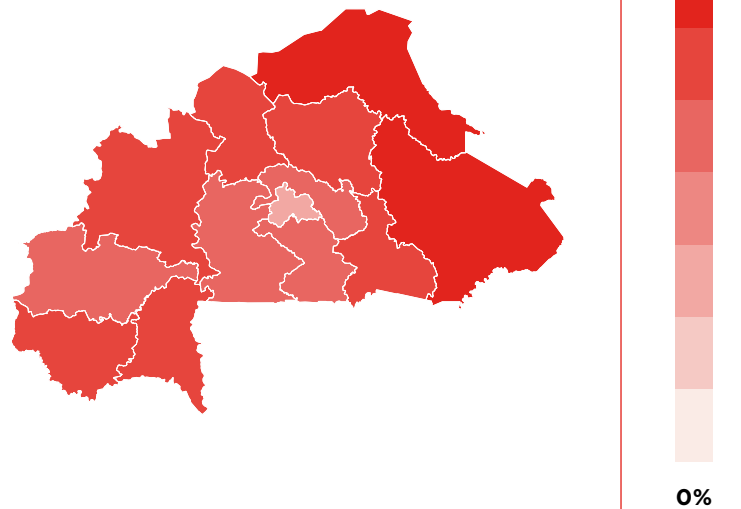
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“ Even in a traditional society, a young girl cannot legally marry until she is 17 years old. This is important because, before that, the girl is not mature. And since we don't get married in even years, the girl who has an impediment when she is 17 will have to wait until she is 19 or 21. So there is no opposition with our traditions.”

— Customary leader during a workshop in Koudougou

BURKINA FASO

FIGURE 1: Percentage of women aged 20 to 24 years who were first married or in union before age 18.



Note: This map is stylized and not to scale. It does not reflect a position by UNFPA or UNICEF on the legal status of any country or area or the delimitation of any frontiers.

The global context

Child marriage threatens the lives, the well-being and the futures of girls around the world. Globally, the prevalence of child marriage has declined by around 15 per cent since 2010. Nevertheless, COVID-19, climate change and conflict have had lasting effects on poverty, school dropout and inequality, triggering increases in child marriage. UNICEF estimates that the COVID-19 pandemic alone will have put more than 10 million additional girls at risk of child marriage by 2030.

Ending child marriage is a global priority:

93 governments have signed up to Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) target 5.3 to end child, early and forced marriage, and 43 countries either have, or are working on, national action plans to end child marriage. Girls' education is a consistent protective factor against child marriage, with child marriage rates among girls who complete secondary school 66 per cent lower than among girls with no education, and 80 per cent lower among those who complete higher education. COVID-19 increased the number of school dropouts, thereby increasing the risk that girls who are out of school will not return. Girls who drop out of school are significantly more likely marry early, and 87 per cent of married adolescent girls are out of school.

Global advocacy and dialogue

In 2022, the international community made key commitments to end child marriage at global and regional forums. On 15 November 2022, the United Nations General Assembly Third Committee resolution on child, early and forced marriage,¹ led by Zambia and Canada, was adopted by consensus. A total of 125 Member States sponsored the resolution (compared to 114 co-sponsors the last time the resolution was put forward in 2020). Countries which sponsored the resolution for the first time included: Antigua and Barbuda, Bangladesh, Bhutan, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Mauritius, Nepal and Sri Lanka. Several of the countries have a high prevalence of child marriage — and, by sponsoring, demonstrated their political commitment to ending it. The resolution highlights the urgent need to reach the poorest and most marginalized girls and women—while calling upon the international community to increase its efforts to end child, early and forced marriage. It recognizes how global health threats, climate change, conflicts and forced displacement can have a particularly negative impact on women and girls and which, by extension, can also increase child, early and forced marriage. The resolution appreciates the UNFPA-UNICEF Global Programme to End Child Marriage and other

1 See *Official Records of the General Assembly, Seventy-seventh Session, Third Committee agenda item 64(a) (A/C.3/77/L.19/Rev.1)*

similar global, regional, and national initiatives, encouraging coordinated and comprehensive approaches across sectors and at all levels.

In March 2022, the Global Programme and partners led a high-level side-event at the sixty-sixth session of the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW), a session which culminated in the CSW66 Agreed Conclusions, calling for action to achieve gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls in the context of policies and programmes on climate change, and environmental and disaster-risk reduction. This session, “No Time to Lose: Child Marriage and the Triple Crisis”, enabled United Nations Member States and other stakeholders to improve their collective understanding of the effects of the triple crisis on child marriage, and what could be done in response.



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Key highlights in 2022



268,875 people engaged in dialogue sessions on the consequences of, and alternatives to, child marriage, the rights of adolescent girls and gender equality.



83,412 adolescent girls were trained in life-skills or comprehensive sexuality education (CSE).



2,008 vulnerable adolescent girls were provided with support to continue their education, including receiving bicycles to help them travel to and from school.



1,414 village committees in six regions were reached with social communication activities on gender norms, the causes of child marriage and its consequences on the lives of adolescents.



Another **1,095** villages publicly declared the abandonment of harmful practices such as child marriage, FGM and violence against children.



1,095 community-based child protection units were established, and **8,031 influential community members** were enabled to support community surveillance mechanisms in their villages to prevent child marriage.



5,920 traditional, religious and community leaders were mobilized to act in dialogues and consensus-building platforms to end child marriage.



More than **1.5 MILLION** people were reached with messaging addressing child marriage through the campaign ‘Don’t call me madam’.

Child marriage country context

Child marriage is common in Burkina Faso, with 52 per cent married before the age of 18. UNICEF estimates that there are more than three million child brides in Burkina Faso, and of these, more than 500,000 married before age 15. Child marriage persists here largely due to traditional and familial practices and beliefs. The COVID-19 pandemic profoundly affected the everyday lives of girls in Burkina Faso, and the rights of children were also severely affected by the security and humanitarian crises in the north, centre-north, east, Boucle du Mouhoun, Sahel and centre-east regions.

Overall, in 2022, the insecurity has led to the closure of 6,253 primary and post-primary schools. These

represent almost a quarter of the country's educational institutions, with more than 500,000 girls affected. The security and humanitarian crises have also led to the closure or only partial functioning of 606 health facilities in eight regions. These represent 42 per cent of the nation's health facilities, depriving nearly two million people of access to health care. The closure of some courts, police and gendarmerie stations and the widespread presence of internally displaced people has also exacerbated the number of child marriages in the eight most crisis-affected regions.

Overall programme performance

TABLE 1: Summary of output indicator performance (2022)

Indicator	Target	Result
Indicator 1111: Number of adolescent girls (aged 10–19) who actively participated in life-skills or CSE interventions in programme areas	149,503	83,412
Indicator 1121: Number of girls (aged 10–19) supported by the programme to enrol and/or remain in primary or secondary school	4,200	2,008
Indicator 1211: Number of boys and men actively participating in group education/dialogues that address harmful masculinities and gender norms	35,000	97,722
Indicator 1221: Number of individuals (boys, girls, women and men) who participate in group education/dialogue sessions on consequences of and alternatives to child marriage, the rights of adolescent girls and gender equality	256,151	268,675
Indicator 1222: Number of individuals (boys, girls, women and men) reached by mass media (traditional and social media) messaging on child marriage, the rights of adolescent girls and gender equality	5,680,000	1,595,470
Indicator 1223: Number of local actors (e.g., traditional, religious and community leaders) with meaningful participation in dialogues and consensus-building to end child marriage	6,000	5,920
Indicator 1231: Number of CSOs newly mobilized in support of challenging social norms and promoting gender equality by the Global Programme (cumulative)	3	10
Indicator 2121: Number of primary/secondary/non-formal schools in programme areas providing quality gender-friendly education that meets minimum standards	50	1,004
Indicator 2131: Number of service delivery points in programme areas providing quality adolescent-responsive services (health, child protection/ gender-based violence) that meet minimum standards	63	110
Indicator 2211: Number of partnerships (both formal and informal) established to deliver adolescent-responsive social protection, poverty reduction and economic empowerment programmes and services	10	10
Indicator 3111: Number of policies or legal instruments addressing child marriage drafted, proposed or adopted at national and subnational level with Global Programme support (cumulative)	5	4
Indicator 3121: Number of subnational plans with evidence informed interventions to address child marriage	45	45
Indicator 3211: Number of generated evidence and knowledge that focus on what works to end child marriage (cumulative)	6	2
Indicator 3212: Number of generated evidence and knowledge that apply a gender analysis (cumulative)	6	3
Indicator 3221: Number of south-to-south cooperation events (conferences, expert visits, peer consultations, study tours, communities of practice) supported	1	1

Providing intensive support to marginalized girls

The Global Programme not only works with adolescent girls at risk of child marriage, but also with family members, including women, men and boys, influential community members such as religious and traditional leaders and female leaders, law enforcement authorities, health facilities, and schools and community structures such as village development committees. This wide approach takes into account the importance of the interaction between these groups and structures, complemented by interventions to bring meaningful change.

In 2022, the Global Programme supported the establishment of 1,353 adolescent clubs and 1,394 safe spaces in 1,458 villages to ensure that adolescent girls are empowered to make informed choices about their lives. Some 83,412 adolescent girls at risk of child marriage (44,536 girls out of school and 241 girls with disabilities) were empowered, through the Global Programme, with life-skills education and training in sewing and garment making. Another 2,025 vulnerable girls were trained and provided with specially adapted equipment and materials for the development of income-generating activities.

The Global Programme has supported 38,876 girls who participate in club activities to remain in school. Adolescent girls have been systematically identified and their families, as well as local leaders and influencers, have been engaged in discussions about the girls' fundamental right to education and information on sexual and reproductive health, as well as their right to make choices about when and who to marry without constraint. As institutional

protection through education is a key factor in preventing child marriage, another 2,008 of the most vulnerable adolescent girls were supported to enrol and remain in school, with 1,740 receiving help with school fees and 268 being given bicycles to ensure they can get to and from school.

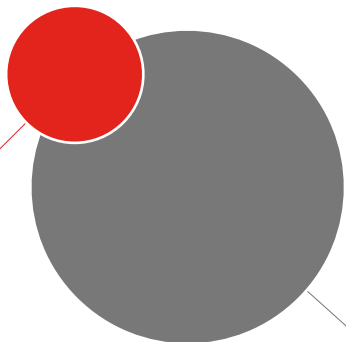
Challenges, lessons learned and next steps

The ongoing insecurity in some regions of the country undermines national efforts to promote girls' education as an alternative to child marriage. Indeed, the closure of 6,253 primary and post-primary schools due to the deterioration of the security situation in six regions, including attacks directed against children in schools, deprived 523,194 girls of appropriate institutional protection. By being out of school for long, these adolescent girls are vulnerable to child marriage, sexual violence and teenage pregnancies.

Targeting out-of-school girls in order to empower them is challenging as, without schools, there is no strong platform to bring girls together. This affected the programme results, with most planned school-based interventions and targets not fulfilled. In response, the programme is supporting the development of an evidence-based implementation manual and monitoring framework — led by the charity CARE International — to ensure a stronger involvement of girls who are out of school.

The programme will continue to identify and support schoolgirls attending clubs while ensuring that the Ministry of Social Action and the Ministry of Education finalize a harmonized package for school support. Girls already enrolled will be monitored and a new cohort will be identified and supported.

584,800
married
before
age 15



3.2 MILLION
married
before age 18

Burkina Faso is home to over **3 million child brides**; **1 in 2** young women were married in childhood.

FIGURE 2: Number of girls and women of all ages who were first married or in union before ages 15 and 18.

Enhancing the family and community environment

The programme in Burkina Faso, despite its political transition and security, humanitarian, economic, and food crises, increased the number of people who received messages on child marriage or who have participated directly in community dialogues promoting the ending of child marriage and female genital mutilation (FGM). To engage people effectively, the programme used key strategies such as community involvement, communication for behaviour change, social mobilization and the capacity-building of local actors. The programme brought together technical staff from the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), UNICEF, the Government and civil society to develop a gender-transformative approach including the promotion of positive masculinities, and in maintaining momentum through advocacy at the highest levels to accelerate the sustainable abandonment of child marriage.

Overall, 97,722 men, including 50,012 adolescent boys, were engaged in dialogues on positive masculinities and the consequences of harmful practices. Transforming social norms to accelerate the elimination of child marriage requires strengthening community dialogues and advocating for adolescent girls' rights. The programme reached 268,675 people, including 158,968 girls and women, through community dialogues, with key messages

on the school monitoring of adolescent girls, child marriage, FGM, unwanted pregnancies, adolescent family planning, gender-based violence (GBV), environmental protection and conflict management.

The programme mobilized 5,920 traditional, religious and community leaders to take part in dialogues and consensus-building platforms to end child marriage. UNICEF mobilized traditional and religious leaders from nine regions (centre-west, centre-east, centre-north, Boucle du Mouhoun, Hauts-Bassins, Cascades, north and Sahel) to renew their commitment to continue challenging social norms that perpetuate child marriage, by signing a declaration to promote the rights of girls and women in their communities.

As a result, in 2022, 1,095 new villages publicly declared their abandonment of harmful practices such as child marriage, FGM and violence against children. There are now a total of 4,549 villages which have publicly declared this since the start of the programme. The programme is supporting this by helping to establish community-based child protection units (CCPE) in each village, supervised by Government structures and institutions.

UNFPA continued its high-level advocacy for the protection of adolescent girls from child marriage through its '[Don't put the ring on her finger](#)' campaign. Additionally, UNICEF, renewed its '[Don't call me madam](#)' campaign, reaching 30,000 young



people and an estimated 10 million television viewers. The strengthening of strategic alliances with traditional and social media networks helped the programme also reach 1.6 million people, including 656,699 girls and women, with key messages on ending child marriage, adolescent girls' rights and gender equality.

Challenges, lessons learned and next steps

The effects of the insecurity and COVID-19 has continued to push men and boys away from local communities, especially rural ones, in search of better living conditions. This has affected the programme's strategy of dialogues with boys and men on promoting positive masculinities. At national level, political instability has resulted in shifting Government priorities, directly affecting the mobilization of domestic resources to support programmes and coordination activities.

However, the use of community members to implement activities within villages has facilitated access to the most at-risk children. Indeed, their involvement enabled the programme to be deployed in areas difficult to access – including those under the control of armed groups, despite these groups' direct threats to the activities.

Strengthening systems

Child Protection, education and health systems, including information management systems, have been made more effective and efficient in how they deliver services for adolescent girls. Due to the prevailing insecurity, humanitarian access in most of the crisis-affected regions is increasingly restricted. Measures which the programme implemented to ensure the continuity of services during the first wave of COVID-19, can now be used during the security crisis. These include the use of community members to implement activities in villages under the control of armed groups. The programme has also adjusted its targeting to consider areas heavily impacted by insecurity, and areas hosting internally displaced people, to strengthen actions to protect vulnerable and at-risk adolescent girls from different social groups.

The programme also supported the establishment of 1,095 CCPEs and identified and helped 8,031 influential community members to continue raising awareness in their villages, and to identify and report protection issues. The implementation of CCPEs emphasizes the need for women and young people to participate, to counter power dynamics within communities. Thus, more than 53 per cent

of the members of the newly established CCPEs are women or young people. The fact that community members are monitoring harmful practices within communities affected by insecurity has enabled the implementation of measures to mitigate the risks of child marriage and FGM. Overall, community-driven interventions enabled the identification and protection of more than 210,351 girls at risk of, or survivors of, child marriage or FGM, including 122,968 adolescent girls who received prevention and care services related to child marriage.

UNICEF supported the Ministry of National Education, Literacy, and the Promotion of National Languages to implement the 'Child-Friendly Quality School' initiative (EQAME), particularly at primary school level, to ensure the retention of girls in education. Some 1,004 schools with the EQAME label provide a good quality education that considers gender and meets minimum standards in the areas targeted by the programme. The EQAME training guide includes specific modules on parental education and child protection and gender and gender-sensitive pedagogy. The initiative has also established a systematic referral mechanism between child protection and education practitioners to manage social issues that may hinder education for young girls, such as child marriage.

In 2022, UNFPA supported 55 service delivery points to ensure the continuity of health services offered to adolescents in the Diapaga, Dori and Nouna health districts.

- **25,617 adolescent girls** benefited from modern **contraceptive methods**
- **14,770** of the girls were **new users**
- **4,124** were **treated** for sexually transmitted infections
- **1,366** were **tested for HIV**, of which 11 tested positive.

UNFPA also trained 70 judicial staff on the use of the Child Marriage Data and Information Collection Guide to enable them to help disseminate information and data needed for decision-making and programming on ending child marriage.

Social services and CSOs supported by UNICEF, enabled 676 survivors of child and forced marriage to receive care, including psychosocial support, family mediation, alternative care, sexual and reproductive health and legal care. In addition, 643 girls who are survivors of various forms of violence, as well as 40 boys, were also provided with protection services.



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Challenges, lessons learned and next steps

The political transition and the multiple crises have disrupted the working of institutional structures, hampering them from delivering protection and care services to adolescent girls. However, the establishment and training of CCPEs has ensured continuity in providing prevention and response services for girls who are survivors, or at risk of violence and harmful practices.

The programme has made it possible to provide each village with enough trained community-based actors who can monitor, carry out communication and advocacy activities and/or make referrals. The introduction of these actors has meant an end to the potential duplication of community initiatives and limited the exposure of actors to direct attacks by armed groups.

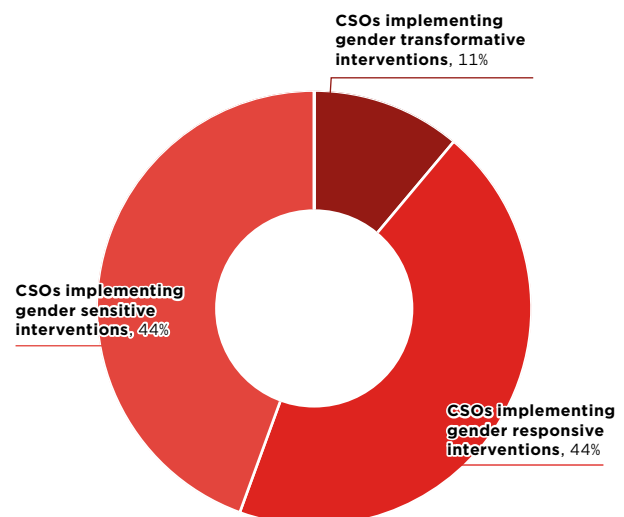
Building partnerships

Investment in and support to youth-led, women-led and feminist CSOs

Partnerships are important for advancing gender-transformative programming and, recognizing this, in 2022, the Global Programme assessed the extent to which the CSOs were implementing gender-transformative approaches – based on the partners

identified as focusing on promoting girls' and women's rights from the previous year (nine in Burkina Faso). The assessment aimed to guide UNFPA and UNICEF on how better to identify and support opportunities to advance gender-transformative approaches within the Global Programme.

FIGURE 3: Assessment of interventions of partner organizations in Burkina Faso, on the gender equality continuum



The assessment was conducted by building information from various online resources, including the CSOs' websites, reviews of available annual reports, analysis of strategy documents, social

media pages, descriptions and commentary about the CSOs from external parties (for example funders, coalitions, or networks), and news articles.

The gender-responsive organizations demonstrated a relatively nuanced understanding of gender-transformative approaches. The CSO projects show their attempts to address gender norms and sociocultural barriers to gender equality. With very minor improvements, many of the gender-responsive CSOs can become gender-transformative, both structurally and substantively.

The association Voix de femmes stands out as a good example of this, having multiple policies, staff gender training and good team and leadership dynamics. The organization uses a two-year period for strategy development and publishes annual reports, which track progress against gender equality targets. Changing the social and cultural environment is seen as a central part of its efforts to end GBV, and the organization focuses on empowering people to defend and advance their own rights. It has implemented numerous programmes targeting gender norms and beliefs and institutional power relations, e.g., strategic litigation to recognize customary marriages. The organization appears to work with teenagers in order to change their social and cultural beliefs and combines the provision of direct services with awareness-raising efforts among the general community.

Challenges, lessons learned and next steps

The organizations listed as gender-sensitive appear to struggle with fully understanding gender-transformative approaches. For example, while the organizations score relatively well on some of the institutional measures, such as policies, they did not appear to have a deep understanding of the meaning of gender-transformative programming or of the systemic/institutional causes of gender inequality, and they do not appear to be addressing the underlying social and cultural practices that affect gendered outcomes. There appear to be some gaps in training, monitoring and evaluation, and understanding systemic change as a metric.

Greater support is needed to ensure CSOs conduct gender analyses and gender training. Guidance may be necessary for supporting CSOs to network with other international feminist groups, especially those promoting children's rights. There is also a need to provide support for getting policies in place and potentially training on what transformative gender work means in practice.

Facilitating supportive laws and policies

The Government coordinated a multisectoral platform to end child marriage, which monitored progress and served as a framework for accountability. This framework offers the opportunity to highlight challenges and propose solutions, including adaptation to life post-COVID-19, and to strengthen partnerships. The programme's support has enabled the country to adopt an operational action plan with a budget for 2022-2024, implemented with the help of practitioners specializing in the protection of children's rights. At a humanitarian level, the platform's frameworks for the areas of responsibility on gender-based violence and child protection take into account the issue of child marriage. Thanks to the momentum generated by these coordination efforts, both the humanitarian needs overview and the humanitarian response plan integrate the issues of risk mitigation and prevention, and the response to survivors of child marriage.

UNICEF provided technical support to the Government in revising the relevant provisions of the Personal and Family Code. The process began several years ago and experienced delays as successive governments



changed priorities, and also because of social issues related to the proposed changes. In 2022, the advocacy of UNICEF and UNFPA, in partnership with CSOs, led to the resumption of discussions on the code, and its finalization during a national workshop. The proposed reform addresses the social determinants of child, and forced, marriage. It harmonizes the age of marriage of 18 years for both boys and girls. A judge's ability to make exemptions on age is maintained but cannot be less than 17 years for both boys and girls. The code also recognizes customary and religious marriages and recommends their transcription in the civil registers, plus the inclusion of the place of celebration of the marriage or the place of residence of the spouses. This transcription enables oversight on the age of the spouses, their consent and the ability to report any offenders.

The public policy maturity model

Elimination of harmful practices such as child marriage requires the integration of strategic approaches, processes, systems and information. UNFPA and UNICEF recognize the role national action plans play in strengthening policy coherence to achieve this. Lessons from the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development peer review process emphasize that the plans need:

- political commitment and policy statements
- policy coordination mechanisms
- systems for monitoring, analysis and reporting.

UNICEF has developed and tested a policy maturity model and tools for assessing public policies to end harmful practices and achieve SDG 5.3 by 2030 in 12 countries (Bangladesh, Burkina Faso, Ethiopia, Ghana, India, Lebanon, Mozambique, Nepal, Niger, Sierra Leone, Uganda and Zambia).

The maturity model provides a framework for key national stakeholders to review and assess national policy approaches and systems for

- eliminating and preventing female genital mutilation (FGM) and child marriage
- identifying priorities or critical investments
- building consensus around the interventions.

The model is structured around six intermediate outcomes and different subdomains that are defined by distinct levels of maturity i.e., weak-building; average-enhancing; good-integrating; and excellent-mature (see Figure 4).

TABLE 2: Snippet of the policy maturity model

Intermediate Outcome	Sub-Domains	Score
Governance and Coordination	A1: Political Commitment	✓
	A2: Coordination structures	✓
	A3: National Action Plans	✓
Policy and Legislation	B.1: Legislation, policies and implementation mechanisms	✓
Engagement and Participation	C1: Independent complaint mechanism exists for children and women	✗
	C2: Civil Society Engagement, including women and children	✓
	C3: Community based mechanisms for Harmful practices prevention	—
Financing & HR	D1: Financing of harmful practices services	✓
	D2: National budget establishment	—
	D3: National Budget execution	—
	D4: National Budget amount	✗
	D5: National Budget monitoring and review	✗
	D6: Human Resources	✓
Access to Services	E1: Availability of Standard Operating Procedures and/or Protocols for harmful practices services	—
	E.2: Understanding and articulation of harmful practices system	✓
	E3: Modelling testing and scaling of harmful practices services	—
	E4: Availability of harmful practices services, case management and referral systems	✓
Data collection, M&E	F1: Administrative data systems and monitoring to routinely generate data on FGM	—
	F2: Data security and governance	✗
	F3: Research and surveys	—

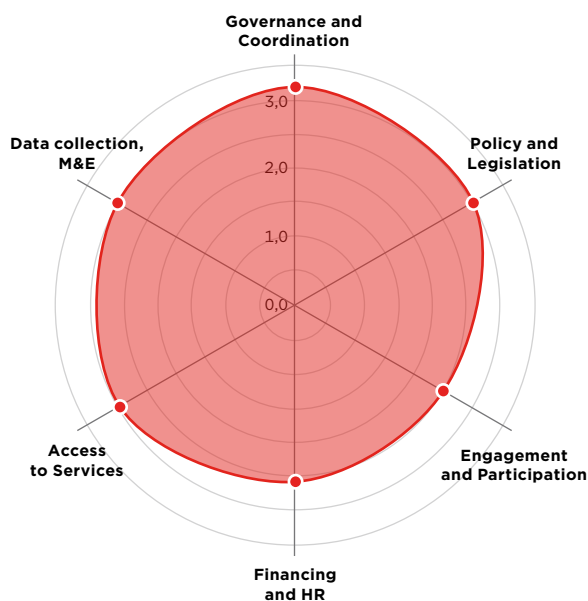


The benchmarks for each level of maturity have been defined and require certain priorities, processes, and results to be achieved for each subdomain, and can be contextualized by country. Feedback from the testing emphasized the role of the model as:

- a useful advocacy tool
- something that builds Government accountability and action towards elimination of harmful practices
- a tool to review and track the implementation of a national action plan.

On average, overall country ratings on a 4-point scale ranged from 1.8 (weak-building in Bangladesh) to 3.0 (good-integrating in Zambia). Financing and human resources (rating 1.3) emerged as the area where countries were rated the least, while governance and coordination (rating 2.7) were rated highly.

FIGURE 4: Policy maturity assessment for Burkina Faso



The policy maturity assessment for Burkina Faso has several highlights:

- The country has a strong political commitment to eliminate harmful practices, with a high-level declaration outlining its commitments. It has coordinated multisectoral organizations with an official mandate which meet regularly, and a clear action plan aligned with national statistical frameworks.
- Laws and policies specifically protect women and girls, including those most at risk of harmful practices. They are enforced at national and subnational levels and monitoring and routine review mechanisms ensure the laws are in line with international human rights standards.
- There is an independent complaints procedure. This enables complaints from, or on behalf of, women who have been denied services, or who have received services related to harmful practices. There is a specified time given for responding.
- CSOs are widely engaged in strengthening political commitment, planning and budgeting processes, monitoring and reporting on harmful practices and there are engagement forums for women, young people and children supported by the Government. Community protection mechanisms are also in place to engage with women and children, and are fully accountable.
- The Government and partners have allocated adequate financial resources on interventions to eliminating harmful practices. Funding is timely and is accessible to the relevant sectoral ministry(ies), with regular reviews. Key stakeholders benefit from regular capacity-building and monitoring services for harmful practices.

Challenges, lessons learned and next steps

Due to the political situation, the revised Persons and Family Code could not be presented at the Ministerial Council. The continuity of services has been jeopardized by the closure, or relocation, of some civil registration services due to the security situation. The biggest challenge in the near future is to leverage resources to sustain civil service modernization, including its digitization.

An active civil society alongside Government action contributes significantly to the implementation of national policies and the application

of legal sanctions. The work of civil society has been instrumental in ensuring the continuity of preventive and curative services for children.

Generating and applying data and evidence

In 2022, the programme helped the National Coalition to End Child Marriage in Burkina (CONAMEB) to conduct an analysis of administrative and secondary data on the impact of the security and health crisis on child marriage. The findings outline the crises' effect on the availability and supply of preventive and curative services, and the effect of the crises on the prevalence of child marriage.

- The challenges in accessing these services in the most affected communities become worse in security and humanitarian crises. This is especially so in the regions where child marriage prevalence rates are above the national average (north centre, north, Boucle du Mouhoun, east and Sahel) as they are the most affected by insecurity and therefore inaccessible by humanitarian workers. Similarly, care services and schools here are closed due to insecurity.
- The closure of some courts, police and other law enforcement stations due to insecurity leaves survivors without recourse to appropriate legal protection.
- Intensive campaigns are impossible in communities where armed groups are in control. The groups prevent anyone in these communities from advocating change and trying to improve people's knowledge about the consequences of child marriage.
- The Government's coordination, monitoring and evaluation of public policies on child marriage has been directly affected by political transitions and the change in national priorities, as a large part of the state budget is now devoted to the fight against insecurity.

Effect of the crisis on the prevalence of child marriage:

- The regions most affected by insecurity are areas that have a high prevalence of child marriage.
- The widespread presence of internally displaced people has exacerbated the issue of child marriage and affects many vulnerable and at-risk adolescent girls

and could, if this crisis continues to worsen, lead to a spread of child marriage as a survival coping mechanism for families.

- High death rates among men could lead to higher rates of child marriage among boys due to 'sororate' practice.

In addition, the programme supported the use of the Gender-Transformative Accelerator tool in the analysis of approaches related to gender-transformative change. As well as analysing the level of ownership of strategies and their contributions to accelerate change, the gender-transformative assessment made it possible to develop a plan to accelerate progress.

Strengthening gender-transformative programming to end harmful practices in Burkina Faso

A Gender-Transformative Accelerator (GTA) tool workshop was held in April 2022 with the active participation and engagement of technical staff from UNICEF (9), UNFPA (4), the Government (4) and CSOs (12 representing 6 organizations). Much of this workshop was reactivating the national coalition's activities and strengthening overall programming.



The workshop focused on identifying opportunities for shared action among the coalition members. The GTA process is meant to incorporate gender-transformative elements into existing workplans, so key stakeholders were asked to identify crucial areas within their activities where gender-transformative approaches can have an immediate, and potentially amplified, impact. Participants underlined the need to consider the specific context of Burkina Faso which is marked by:

- political transition
- security and humanitarian crises
- COVID-19 and its lingering effects on the economy
- a looming food crisis due to low rainfall.

The National Strategy to End Child Marriage is also under review and will be updated in 2023.

Through participatory discussion, the workshop participants decided to focus on:

- girls' skills, agency and empowerment
- addressing masculinities and engaging men and boys
- community mobilization to create an enabling environment
- systems-strengthening.

Participants prioritized three types of actions to take:

- scale up safe spaces and adolescent girls' clubs
- policy advocacy and parliamentary engagement and systems-strengthening work
- social mobilization of communities, and the facilitation of more dialogue.

The programme supported the development of a policy brief on child marriage to guide the UNICEF country office in understanding trends and drivers for child marriage, and options to accelerate and scale up efforts to end the practice in different contexts. The brief also provides a way of analysing the country situation and identifying high-impact investment areas to end child marriage. The brief will be further used to facilitate a platform for south-south knowledge exchange on issues related to child marriage in West, central, eastern and southern Africa.

Challenges, lessons learned and next steps

There are few evaluations of child marriage interventions in Burkina Faso – and fewer still have costed the interventions and the costs per beneficiaries. UNFPA and UNICEF in Burkina Faso are producing detailed annual updates of programme achievements in the form of the annual reports and country profiles. These documents present the quantitative outputs and targets reached during 2022, as well as challenges and lessons based on programme implementation. However, these reports include very little monitoring of outcomes or evaluation of findings. Possible reasons for this include:

- gathering and analysing outcome and impact level data is expensive and requires a relatively high level of technical expertise
- the Global Programme has prioritized output monitoring, statistical analysis of Demographic and Health Survey (DHS) and multiple indicator cluster data, baseline studies and qualitative research on child marriage patterns and drivers
- the Global Programme has not yet invested adequate resources in measuring outcome-level results.

This limits the amount and depth of the programme's learning and its contributions to the country's evidence base related to child marriage programming.

end child marriage

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COUNTRY PROFILE

2022

