## Causes of child marriage and early unions

- Child marriage and early unions are **5 times more likely to occur in poor households.**
- Women's reduced economic autonomy exposes girls and adolescents to a greater risk of child marriage.
- Girls whose mothers live in situations of poverty, gender-based violence, early motherhood and low educational attainment are more at risk for child marriages and early unions.
- Adolescent pregnancy increases the likelihood of an early union.
- Adolescent girls under the age of 18 in union or married are more likely to experience violence at the hands of their partner.
- Staying in school and finishing high school decreases the likelihood of child marriage and early unions.
- Weak development and implementation of adequate legal frameworks to protect girls.
- Being a woman and a minor increases conditions of gender inequality.
- Child marriage and early unions **tend to be higher among 15-18-year-old adolescents.**

# CHILDHOOD AND ADOLESCENCE ARE CRUCIAL STAGES OF LIFE

Ending child marriage and early unions help girls exercise their rights and to have the opportunity to develop all their abilities to reach their full potential and have a prosperous, healthy and full life.



Americas and Caribbean Regional Office **Yeliz Osman** 

Policy Specialist, Eliminating Violence against Women yeliz.osman@unwomen.org



Regional Office for Latin America and the Caribbean **Neus Bernabeu** 

Regional Gender and Youth Advisor bernabeu@unfpa.org



Latin America and Caribbean Regional Office **Shelly Abdool** 

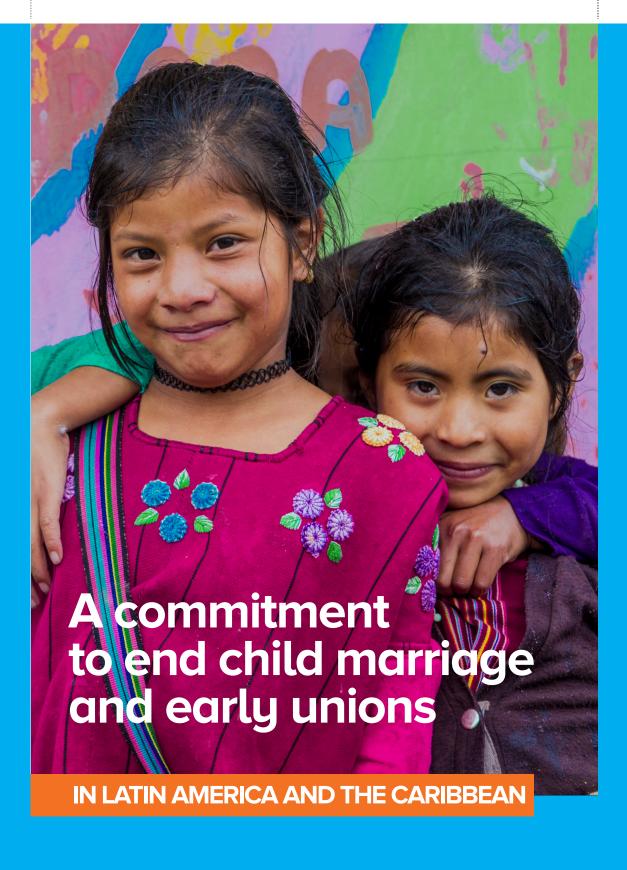
Regional Gender Advisor sabdool@unicef.org unicef.org/lac

lac.unwomen.org



Photo: PNUD Guatemala/ Fernanda Zelada

SOURCES USED IN THIS BROCHURE: OFFICIAL DATA AND PUBLICATIONS FROM UNWOMEN, UNICEF, THE WORLD HEALTH ORGANIZATION, THE PAN AMERICAN HEALTH ORGANIZATION, OTHER UNITED NATIONS ORGANIZATIONS AND COUNTERPARTS.



Child marriage
and early unions
are complex
phenomena related
to gender inequalities,
violence, poverty,
dropping out of school
and adolescent
pregnancy.

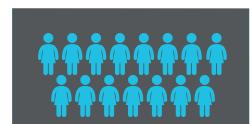




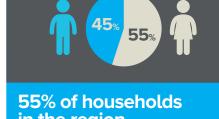


SOLAPA CONTRA CONTRATAPA TAPA SOLAPA TAPA

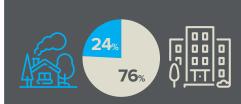
#### Who are the girls and adolescents of Latin America and the Caribbean?



Over 107 million girls between 0 and 19 years live in the region.







76% of girls live in urban areas and 24% in rural areas.



1/3 of their homes are in situations of multidimensional poverty.



1 out of every 4 girls gets married or enters into an early union.

## Why is it so urgent to invest in ending child marriage?

Without accelerated actions and investments, Latin America and the Caribbean will occupy the second highest place in child marriage and early unions by 2030. SDG 5 is at risk!

- If current trends continue, by 2030, the number of child brides per year will increase, affecting 9.7 million girls.
- This is the **only region in the world where child marriage and early unions are not decreasing.**
- The region has the second highest rate of adolescent fertility in the world.
- More than 60% of married women in Latin America and the Caribbean before age 18 are from the lowest income quintiles.
- Early non-marital unions are more frequent than formal and legal marriage.

In the past 10 years, the average annual reduction rate of child marriage and early unions in Latin America and the Caribbean has been 12 times lower than in the region with the second lowest decrease (West and Central Africa).

To achieve the goal established in the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and achieve ending it by 2030, the average annual reduction should reach 21.5%, that is, 200 times greater than the current 0.1%.



The Joint Interagency Programme recommends focused attention on adolescents, indigenous, rural, and middle-and low-income areas to end child marriage

### How can you make difference?

By making a financial commitment to provide better opportunities for girls in Latin America and the Caribbean.

(\$)

By joining forces with UNFPA, UNICEF and UN WOMEN to support partners and ensure regional efforts.

By breaking the silence and eliminating the myth that child marriage and early unions do not have a real impact in the region.

By sharing this information with interested partners and organizations working on girls' equality.



The projected budget for 4 years for the elimination of child marriage and early unions in Latin America and the Caribbean is \$18.5 million USD.

### The Joint UNFPA, UNICEF and UN Women Programme

to End Child Marriage and Early Unions: 2018-2021

- A joint, interagency effort within the UN System with governments and strategic partners.
- UNFPA, UNICEF and UN Women have committed to developing actions that contribute to the achievement of the following Sustainable Development Goals:







- The programme seeks to achieve 4 results:
  - Compliance with the international human rights framework
  - Develop a package of key policies and services to reduce child marriage and early unions
  - Empower girls and adolescent girls to fulfill their rights and delay marriage and early unions
  - Break the silence, strengthen evidence and create alliances
- The First Stage will be implemented in 5 countries:
  - Colombia
  - Dominican Republic
  - El Salvador
  - Guatemala
  - Mexico

The Joint UNFPA, UNICEF and UN Women Programe focused attention on adolescents, indigenous, rural, and middle-and low-income area to end child marriage and early unions.