### Global Programme Phase II Theory of Change

**Problem:** Child marriage and early union of adolescent girls and boys persists as a common practice in many societies and is associated with a combination of structural, economic, socio-cultural factors and broader gender inequality. Lack of locally acceptable alternative life opportunities pushes adolescent girls and boys into marriage. A total of 650 million women and girls alive today were married or in a union before age 15 and before age 18.

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<th>Impact</th>
<th>Sustainable Development Goal Target</th>
<th>Intermediate Outcomes</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Target 5.3:</strong> Eliminate all harmful practices, such as child, early and forced marriage and female genital mutilation. Indicator 5.3.1: Proportion of women aged 20–24 years who were married or in a union before age 15 and before age 18.</td>
<td>1000 Adolescent girls at risk of and affected by child marriage are effectively making their own informed decisions and choices regarding marriage, education and sexual and reproductive health.</td>
<td>1100 – Intensive Support to the Most Marginalized Girls: Enhanced knowledge, education and life skills, and attitudes of marginalized adolescent girls including in humanitarian contexts, on matters such as their rights, relationships, sexual and reproductive health, and financial literacy.</td>
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<td>1200 – Family and Community Environment: Adolescent boys, families, traditional and religious leaders, community groups, and other influencers demonstrate more gender-equitable attitudes and support for girls’ rights.</td>
<td>2000 Relevant sectoral systems and institutions effectively respond to the needs of adolescent girls and their families in targeted Global Programme areas.</td>
<td>2100 – System Strengthening: Increased capacity of education, health, gender-based violence, and child protection systems to deliver coordinated, quality programmes and services that are responsive to the needs of adolescent girls and their families, including in humanitarian contexts.</td>
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<td>2200 – Poverty Drivers: Increased capacity of national and sub-national social protection, poverty reduction, and economic empowerment programmes and services to respond to the needs of the poorest adolescent girls and their families, including in humanitarian contexts.</td>
<td>3000 Enhanced legal and political response to prevent child marriage and to support pregnant, married, divorced or widowed adolescent girls.</td>
<td>3100 – Laws and Policies: Enhanced capacity of governments to coordinate and implement national and sub-national action plans and systems to end child marriage.</td>
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<td>3200 – Data and Evidence: Increased capacity of governments and civil society organizations to generate, disseminate and use quality and timely evidence to inform policy and programme design, track progress and document lessons.</td>
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**Strategies**

- Create and expand opportunities for the empowerment of adolescent girls: Increase scale and reach of child marriage programmes, especially for the most marginalized, leveraging, coordinating and complementing other government-, United Nations- and civil society-led initiatives in line with national action plans.
- Promote a supportive and gender equal environment: Create dialogue and raise awareness of gender inequalities and their negative consequences for women, men, girls and boys, the economy and society, and work with local champions and influencers at all levels including in households, communities, local institutions (including schools and health centers) and at all levels of government to address them.
- Strengthen governance to prevent child marriage: Foster an enabling legal and policy environment, government leadership, financing and accountability. Include voices of civil society, youth-led organizations and women’s rights organizations, researchers, media, traditional and religious leaders and other influencers for effective actions to end child marriage.
- Enhance sustainability and impact of child marriage programmes: Support contextually relevant programmes and strategies at national and local levels.
- Build partnerships: Leverage additional resources and co-investments in preventing and responding to child marriage in Global Programme areas.
- Gender inequality and control of adolescent girls’ sexuality: social norms that promote harmful and discriminatory gender stereotypes for girls, women, boys, and men.
- Manifestations of multidimensional poverty: material deprivation to meet basic needs, social isolation, inequality, exclusion and powerlessness, denial of fulfilment of one’s capabilities, physical and psychological well-being.
- Lack of economic opportunities, disruption of the economy.

**Causes and Drivers**

- Adolescent pregnancy.
- Inaccessible or low-quality health (including sexual and reproductive health), education, social protection, gender-based violence and child protection services.
- Lack of implementation of laws and policies that protect adolescent girls.
- Conflicts, natural disasters, displacement, lack of respect for International Humanitarian Law.

**Outputs**

- Undersevered/marginalized adolescent girls [aged 10–19] who are at risk of child marriage, married, divorced or widowed, and adolescent girls who are pregnant or already have children, are engaged in gender-transformative life skills and comprehensive sexuality education programmes that build their knowledge, skills, and awareness of their rights, and connect them to services.
- Adolescent girls are supported to enroll and remain in formal and non-formal education, including through the transition from primary to secondary school.
- Boys and men are engaged in gender-transformative programmes (including comprehensive sexuality education for boys) that promote healthy relationships and positive masculinities and gender equality.
- Families, communities, traditional and religious leaders, and other influencers are engaged through the transition from primary to secondary school.
- Women’s organizations and youth-led organizations are included and supported to mobilize the voices of the marginalized (particularly girls), challenge harmful social norms, and promote gender equality.
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