Unless I have a good job and we are both ready, we won't have a marriage. Now if I hear of a child marriage, I also want to find work and prepare for a positive change.

The 17 year old from Banaskantha Thakor. Atul became a member of a local child marriage committee. He had never received support to continue his education. Because of the pressure he was receiving from his parents. In Gujarat, as in several other states across India, child marriage is a problem. It is estimated that 55% of women aged 20-24 were married before age 18 in the last decade, and the overall decline, a few districts vary by region, caste and tribe. The reasons behind child marriage are complex. Societal norms, poverty, lack of education, and lack of economic opportunities.

Child marriage violates children's rights and places them at high risk of violence, exploitation, and poor health. It affects their right to have a proper education, and their right to marry when they are not ready or prepared.

Girls who marry young are more likely to have married women in their 20s. They are more likely to have a child before age 20. They are more likely to have high maternal mortality rates.

The effects of child marriage are serious, and it is important to address them. Education is key to reducing the prevalence of child marriage. It is important to raise awareness about the harmful effects of child marriage, and to encourage families to prioritize their children's education. It is important to provide support and resources to families who are struggling to make ends meet. It is important to work towards a future where all children have the right to a quality education. It is important to work towards a future where all children have the right to make decisions about their own lives. It is important to work towards a future where all children have the right to health care.
This year, the Global Programme will: The aim is to empower the most vulnerable of girls, and create a new generation of peer educators to run campaigns on child marriage. We have also helped to ensure that child marriage is now illegal in all of South Asia, with the exception of Afghanistan. For the first time, the Indian state government has committed to end child marriage, and has drafted a law that will be presented to Parliament. In addition, we have supported the formation of a National Child Marriage Monitoring Unit, which monitors the implementation of the law. This is an important step forward, as it will help to hold the government accountable for ending child marriage.

In the group we talk about different health issues, we do a lot of work to help link girls to education and we also discuss child marriage and how it should not take place... "When girls are productively engaged – targeting people from the village to the state level – to inspire not just respect for the law, but social change. This includes policies that protect and promote rights, and also address gender discrimination – the first time the group had heard that child marriage was illegal.

"Other girls are probably going to face the same problem. They think that it is normal, but I know that it is not normal. Child marriage is not normal. Our group is working with the block administration, and in the Thakor assembly, and in the village, and in the school, and we want to change this."

"The campaign includes large scale events, community outreach, social media and a major programme to end child marriage through peer education.

The programme was launched in 2005 to end child marriage and gender-based violence in South Asia. It works in 10 countries in the region, including Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Nepal, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Afghanistan, and Bangladesh. The programme is managed by the UN women’s organization, UN Women, and supported by the UN Development Programme, UNICEF, and the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA). The programme works with governments, civil society organizations, and young people to end child marriage. It has helped to improve laws on child marriage, and has trained and supported peer educators to run campaigns on the issue. The programme has also helped to improve access to education, health, and sanitation, and has helped to protect girls from child marriage.

Social change comes from within, and we want to make sure that girls have a voice in changing the world. Through the Global Programme, girls are entering politics, helping to change the laws and systems that protect and empower them. In the meantime, girls can be safe and happy, and healthy. The changes are happening across the region – in Africa, Asia, and Europe – and we are proud to be a part of this.