



Federal Ministry of Women
Affairs and Social Development



NATIONAL STRATEGY TO
END CHILD
MARRIAGE
IN NIGERIA



2016 - 2021

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Foreword

This document is the premium edition National Strategic Plan to End Child Marriage in Nigeria 2016 - 2021. Child Marriage, defined as a formal or an informal union before the age of full maturity, usually 18, is a multi-faceted sociocultural and endemic harmful practice which adversely impacts the personal development and future opportunities of the Nigerian children. The document which contains the conceptual frameworks used in understanding the drivers of child marriage, situational analysis, and key identified strategies to address the gender inequality, social and economic, and health drivers of child marriage in Nigeria and includes a monitoring framework has as key objectives:

- i. To Integrate and strengthen all sectoral mechanisms to end child marriage in Nigeria;
- ii. To build nationwide capacity for research and knowledge sharing on child marriage to improve programming
- iii. To promote relevant policies, legislation and programs that protect children from child marriage;
- iv. To change negative socioeconomic and cultural norms that promote child marriage in the society;
- v. To increase children's access to quality all round education and promote the retention of the girl child in school in order to reduce their vulnerability to child marriage; and
- vi. To establish and strengthen coordination, implementation, monitoring and evaluation structures for the implementation of the strategy.

The National Strategic Plan to End Child Marriage in Nigeria 2016 – 2021 aims to highlight the multi-sectoral, multi-faceted activities needed to bring about successful elimination of this harmful practice based on the premise of a strengthened coordination platform led by the Federal Ministry of Women Affairs and Social Development. The key actors for this include but are not limited to various MDAs such as health, education, internal affairs, budget and planning; traditional and religious bodies, civil society organisations, foreign and National donors and implementing partners. Key to effective results is the necessary support of the three executive arms of Government to ensure the necessary governance, conducive policy environment and a sensitized judiciary for enforcement of punitive laws and regulations if Nigeria is to indeed make headway in advancing gender equality and for achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals.

While the situational analysis provides insight into the breadth of the challenges that will be helpful in advocacy and programming, it also identifies the need for greater depth in areas of research and data to compliment National efforts towards effective programming. This document has a built in monitoring and log framework which all stakeholders must buy-in to for ensuring a coordinated and sustainable collective response. Without any hesitation, therefore, I recommend the strategic plan to all key sector stakeholders, especially policymakers, practitioners in social protection, researchers, civil society and the general public.

The Government of Nigeria, UNFPA, United Nations Populations Fund and Save the Children appreciate the contributions of various individuals and institutions towards the success of the development of the strategic plan.



Senator Aisha Alhassan (Mrs) Minister of Women Affairs and Social Development Federal Republic of Nigeria 2016



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We also acknowledge all of the key stakeholders that contributed to the rich input into the document including staff of the Federal Ministries of Women Affairs and Social Development, Education, Health, UNICEF, UNWomen, and EngenderHealth who took the time out of their busy schedules to participate in this survey.

Abbreviations and Acronyms

AUCRWC	African Union Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child
AIDS	Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome
ANPPCAN	African Network for Prevention and Protection against Child abuse and Neglect
CAN	Christian Association of Nigeria
CBOs	Civil Based Organisations
CCT	Condition Cash Transfer
CEDAW	Convention on Elimination of All Forms of Violence Against Women
CM	Child marriage
CM&TP	Child Marriage and Teenage Pregnancy
CMS	Child marriage strategy
CRA	Child Rights Act
CRC	United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child
CSOs	Civil Society Organizations
CYPL	Children and Young Persons Law
ECM	End Child Marriage
EMIS	Education Management Information System
FGD	Focus Group Discussion
FMoA	Federal Ministry of Agriculture
FMoH	Federal Ministry of Education
FMoE	Federal Ministry of Health
FMWA&SD	Federal Ministry of Women Affairs and Social Development
FMoJ	Federal Ministry of Justice
FGM/C	Female Genital Mutilation /Cutting
FIDH	International Federation for Human Rights
GBV	Gender Based Violence
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GPECM	Global Partnership to End Child Marriage
HIV	Human Immuno deficiency Virus

ICPD	International Conference on Population and Development
ICRW	International Centre for Research on Women
IEC	Information Education Communication
IMS	Information Management System
IRB	Institutional Research Board
KABPS	Knowledge, Attitude, Belief and Practice Survey
KII	Key Informant Interview
LGA	Local Government Area
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MDGs	Millennium Development Goals
MIS	Management Information System
MoV	Means of Verification
NGO	Non-Governmental Organizations
NSCM	National Strategy on Child Marriage
NSECM	National Strategic on Ending Child Marriage
PLHIV	Persons Living with Human Immunodeficiency Virus
PTA	Parents Teachers Association
RH	Reproductive Health
SCI	Save the Children International
SGBV	Sexual and Gender Based Violence
SMCs	School Management Committees
SMWASD	State Ministry of Women Affairs and Social Development
SRHR	Sexual Reproductive Health rights
STD	Sexually Transmitted Disease
NBS	National Bureau of Statistics
NDHS	Nigeria Demographic and Health Survey
UN	United Nations
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
UNICEF	United Nations Children Fund
UBE	Universal Basic Education
USAID	United Nations Agency for International Development
VACiS	Violence Against Children in School
WAEC	West African Examination Council
WHO	World Health Organization



THE OFFICIAL LOGO FOR THE
CAMPAIGN TO END CHILD MARRIAGE



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Child Marriage is one of the developmental challenges affecting children in Nigeria. Prevention of child marriage in Nigeria, the largest country in Africa, remains a significant social, economic and health problem. Nigeria still faces the daunting task of harnessing its vast natural and human resources to effectively reduce this harmful practice. There is increased need especially now than ever before to evolve strategies, build structures and institutionalize social, legal and educational system reforms to facilitate a sustainable National response to end child marriage and all the associated ills.

SITUATION ANALYSIS

In 2015, an estimated 6 million girls were married by age 15 and 36 million girls were married by age 18 nationwide. Child marriage is more prevalent in the Northwest and Northeast regions, where 48 percent of girls were married by age 15 and 78 percent were married by age 18. Northern Nigeria has some of the highest rates of child marriage in the world with an estimated 65% among children below the age of 18 years. Geographic location or cultural landscape, poverty and education have been identified as key risk and protective factors for child marriage.

Child marriage is described as a multi-faceted sociocultural and endemic harmful practice which adversely impacts the personal development and future opportunities of the Nigerian children. These detrimental consequences on children, women, families, communities and nations at large are evident in high maternal mortality and morbidity, illiteracy, lack of skills, unemployment, low income and wide spread misery among the women victims. The Government of Nigeria has pursued policies and legislative framework to end the problem of child marriage. The efforts of the Government to end child marriage are also complemented and supported by stakeholders working separately and independently on the issues in different parts of the country.

The situational analysis revealed that: the policies on ground (Child Rights Convention, Child Rights Act, etc) lack implementation structures to address child marriage and sensitive root causes at all levels, there is a dearth of data in some parts of the country that are known to have high rate of child marriages, empirical studies on participation of different sectors to end child marriage at National, State and Community levels are limited in the literature, the spatial and temporal evidence-based studies on the trend of child marriages prosecution and culprits at National and local levels are lacking. Other revelations include: the near absence of documented

evidence on the perception of child marriage by some religious and traditional leaders, the scanty evidence to ascertain the amount, success and failures of previous interventions by governments, partners, stakeholders and other agencies and the almost complete lack of evidence of coordinated multi-sectoral approach to ending CM in the country.

The National Strategy Document on Ending Child Marriage in Nigeria by 2030 therefore outlines, discusses and suggests what can and should be done to end child marriage: harnessing relevant policies and legislation, changing harmful cultural norms, supporting community programs, maximizing foreign assistance, increasing access to girls' education, providing young women with economic opportunities, addressing the unique needs of child brides and evaluating programs to determine what works that can be brought to scale.

VISION

"End child marriage in Nigeria by 2030"

A Nigeria where every young child is protected from harmful and impeding traditional practices and whose fundamental human right to a fulfilled childhood is achieved.

GOAL

The overall goal of the campaign is to reduce the percentage of girls who are married before attaining full maturity (usually 18) in Nigeria by 2021.

PRINCIPLES AND VALUE STATEMENT

The implementation of the strategy to end child marriage in Nigeria will be guided by the following principles:

- ✓ Best interest of the child
- ✓ Survival and development of every child
- ✓ Protection
- ✓ Partnerships and linkages as well as the following values:
- ✓ Accountability
- ✓ Transparency
- ✓ Equality and non-discrimination.

OBJECTIVES

The objectives of the National strategy to end child marriage in Nigeria are as follows:

- I. To Integrate and strengthen all sectoral mechanisms to end child marriage in Nigeria;
- ii. To build nationwide capacity for research and knowledge sharing on child marriage to improve programming
- iii. To promote relevant policies, legislation and

- programs that protect children from child marriage;
- iv. To change negative socioeconomic and cultural norms that promote child marriage in the society;
- v. To increase access to quality all round education including reproductive health education and services to out of school; and
- vi. To establish and strengthen coordination, implementation, monitoring and evaluation structures for the implementation of the strategy.

KEY PROPOSED STRATEGIES

- Promoting coordination among partners and sectors
- Conducting more research to better understand the problem
- Harnessing relevant policies and legislation,
- Changing harmful cultural norms,
- Supporting community programs that increase access to girls' education including, providing young women with economic opportunities, addressing the unique needs of child brides and
- Evaluating programs to determine what works that can be brought to scale.

ENABLING FACTORS/CONDITIONS FOR EFFECTIVE IMPLEMENTATION The successful implementation of the National strategy to end child marriage in Nigeria depends on the following conditions:

- i. Harmonization of all existing relevant policies and legislation, and the identification of gaps in such policies that are relevant to the prevention of child marriage;
- ii. Continued political will and support from the Government of Nigeria;
- iii. Active participation of all the relevant ministries, parastatals and agencies;
- iv. Creation of a National coordination body for the harmonization and effective joint implementation of the strategy among ministries, parastatals, agencies, and civil society organisations at all levels;
- v. Allocation of adequate resources including dedicated human resources to the operationalization of the strategic plan;
- vi. A coordinated and multi-sectoral approach among government ministries, Non-Governmental Organisations, Community Based Organisations, Civil Society Organisations and other stakeholders; and

- vii. Meaningful participation of adolescents and young people as drivers of change

MONITORING AND EVALUATION PLAN

The Plan proposes the establishment of a National Coordination Unit at the Federal Ministry of Women Affairs and Social Development that will oversee the implementation of the Strategic Plan. The Monitoring and Evaluation plan is to include two components: Monitoring and Evaluation of Project Performance and Monitoring and Evaluation of project impact.

Monitoring and Evaluation of Project Performance, monitoring will focus on the management and supervision of project activities, seeking to improve efficiency and overall effectiveness of project implementation. It will be a continuous process to collect information on actual implementation of project activities compared to those scheduled in the annual work plans, including the delivery of quality outputs in a timely manner, to identify problems and constraints (technical, human resource, and financial), to make clear recommendations for corrective actions, and identify lessons learned and best practices for scaling up, etc. Performance evaluation will assess the project's success in achieving its objectives. The project will be monitored closely by the Coordinating Unit and by the Project Steering Committees through semi-annual reports, quarterly implementation reviews, technical reports, and regular technical supervision missions fielded as required to enhance success.

Monitoring and Evaluation of Project Impact, evaluation of the project's success in achieving its outcomes will be monitored continuously throughout the period of implementation. The key indicators will be developed, reviewed/refined during which all the key stakeholders, tools, methods and indicators for measuring impact would have been determined and agreed on to ensure that a standardized framework is shared by the participating stakeholders.

Finally it points out that success of this strategic plan will depend on proper allocation of resources to the various components. This will include the human, material and financial resources if the vision of ending child marriage in Nigeria is to be achieved.



1

GENERAL INTRODUCTION

Nigeria is the most populous country in Africa. The 140.4 million people in 2006 is estimated to grow to 201.3 million in 2017 with 24.8 percent women of reproductive age and 31.7 percent young people 10-24 years. With an annual growth rate of 3.2 percent, total fertility rate of 5.5 children per woman and youthful population, the country's population is estimated to double by 2026 (UN, 2015). The country is vast and diverse in its geography, people and culture. There are over 250 ethnic groups who speak more than 500 languages. Currently, Nigeria has the largest economy in Africa with an estimated 2015 gross domestic product (GDP) of \$521.8 billion. Despite this, the country is classified as a lower-middle-income country with 62 percent of its citizens living in extreme poverty and the resultant illiteracy and ignorance (UN, 2015). The Government of Nigeria and development partners fund many programs to reduce poverty; increase income, ensure the survival and health of infants, children and women and invest in girls' education. In spite of government's commendable development efforts to improve the socioeconomic wellbeing of the generality of the populace, there are still inherent attitudes, beliefs and practices militating against government's development efforts in different parts of the country.

Child Marriage, defined as a formal or an informal union before the age of full maturity (usually 18) , is one of such practices. Prevention of child marriage in Nigeria remains a significant social, economic and health problem. Nigeria still faces the daunting task of harnessing its vast natural and human resources to effectively reduce many of these harmful practices affecting children and women. There is increased need especially now than ever before to evolve strategies, build structures and institutionalize social, legal and educational system reforms to facilitate a sustainable National response to end child marriage and all the associated ills.

1.2 JUSTIFICATION FOR ENDING CHILD MARRIAGE

Child Marriage is described as a multi-faceted sociocultural and endemic harmful practice in most parts of Africa which adversely impacts the personal development and future opportunities of children. The detrimental consequences on children, women, families, communities and nations at large are evident

in high maternal mortality and morbidity, illiteracy, lack of skills, unemployment, low income and wide spread misery among the women victims (Jensen and Thornton, 2003; ICRW and UNICEF, 2006; Adebambo, 2010; Godha, Gage and Hotchkiss, 2012).

Justification and legal backing for ending child marriage in Nigeria are found in: commitments for the promotion and protection of children's rights as enshrined in the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child; the Convention on the Rights and Welfare of the Child; the various international and African Union policy documents and instruments related to strengthening child rights, in particular the girl child; the Child Rights Act addressing children's needs, improving their general welfare, and enhancing opportunities available to them. The international instruments to which Nigeria is a signatory are to provide a framework for universal cooperation to fight the problem of child marriage. The National Strategy to End Child Marriage in Nigeria has been developed to strengthen, and coordinate the responses of all stakeholders in addressing the vulnerabilities as well as the consequences of child marriage on children, families, the community and the society.

The National Strategy on Ending Child Marriage will attempt to provide answers to questions relating to:

- I. What do we do to integrate and strengthen all sectoral mechanisms to end child marriage in Nigeria?
- II. How do we build nationwide capacity for research and knowledge sharing on child marriage for effective programming?
- III. How do we promote relevant policies, legislations and programs that protect children from child marriage?
- IV. What should be done or put in place to change negative socioeconomic and cultural norms that promote child marriage in the society?
- V. How can we increase children's access to quality all round education and promote the retention of the girl child in school in order to reduce their vulnerability to child marriage?
- VI. How can we strengthen coordination, implementation, monitoring and evaluation structures for the implementation of the strategy?

1.3 ORGANIZATION OF THE REPORT

The document is presented in seven sections. Section one provides introduction to the National Strategy on ending Child Marriage in Nigeria, Section two describes the conceptual models employed in the analysis of child marriage in Nigeria and suggested intervention strategies. The models presented in this section therefore guided the situation analysis, choice of vision, goal, objectives, strategies, activities, including the monitoring and evaluation plan. Section three presents reviews on the meaning which people attach to the problem of child marriage, the nature of the problem, geographical patterns and trends, the causes and consequences, the various intervention attempts and the key gaps as presently experienced in the country. Section four, five and six outline, discuss and suggest what can and should be done, what works that can be brought to scale to end child marriage in Nigeria by 2030. Section seven presents recommendation on the implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the Strategy for effective and efficient achievements of its goal and objectives while section eight discusses the funding approach for the strategy.

1.4 METHOD

Data collection for preparation of the Strategy to end child marriage entailed rigorous participatory processes. It began with a desk review of government policy and legal documents on child protection as well as the program documents of government ministries, civil society organizations (CSOs), UN agencies, and other stakeholders implementing interventions on children particularly girl child and women followed by extensive review of both published and grey literature on child marriage.

The preparation further involved interviews with key informants in the relevant ministries, Civil society, Development partners, and extensive consultations in twelve states of the federation (Kaduna, Jigawa, Bauchi, Adamawa, Niger, Kwara, Ogun, Ekiti, Bayelsa, Edo, Abia, and Ebonyi states) with community leaders, parents, children, policy makers and NGOs managers that are implementing programs/ interventions explicitly targeting prevention of child marriage.





2

CONCEPTUAL APPROACHES TO THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE STRATEGY

2.1 ECOLOGICAL MODEL

More recently, researchers have used the ecological model which provided a system approach to the understanding of social problems with its emphasis on the functional relationships between factors. The ecological model proposed by Dahlber and Krug (2002) when used to explain Child Marriage will also embrace multi-sectoral approach now generally

recommended. The model goes beyond providing understanding of causes of the problem to explaining the consequences and to proffer solutions to the problem at different levels of the society. The Ecological Model as originally conceived and applied to social problem consists of four complex interplay among individual, relational, community, and societal factors relevant to child marriage (See Figure 1).

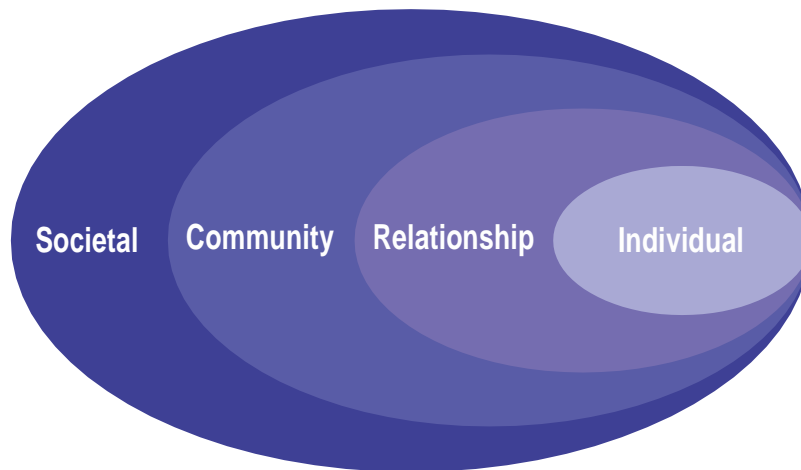


Figure 1: **Ecological Model of Child Marriage**

The individual level of the model identifies biological and personal history factors that increase the likelihood of becoming a victim or perpetrator of child marriage. Some of these factors are age, education, income and a possible history of abuse and trafficking. The relationship level includes factors that increase risk because of relationships with peers, intimate partners, and family members. It argues that a person's closest social circle: peers, parents, partners and family members influence their behaviour and contribute to their range of experiences. The community level explores the settings, such as: schools, organizations (religious, traditional), and neighbourhoods, in which social relationships occur, and seeks to identify the characteristics of these settings that are associated with becoming victims or perpetrators of child marriage. The Society or the fourth level looks at the broad societal factors that help create a climate in which child marriage is encouraged or inhibited. These factors include social and cultural norms. Other large societal factors include the health, economic, educational and social policies that help to maintain economic or social inequalities between groups in society. The Ecological Model has been used to develop strategy to end Child Marriage in Uganda (UNICEF, 2015).

2.2 MARRIAGE AS A GIFT EXCHANGE

The theory of marriage as a gift exchange between social groups - bride wealth – has been used to describe the system of marriage in Africa (ICRW, 2006; Fuseini, and Dodoo, 2012). It is argued that African traditional societies are maintained by a system of reciprocal gifts between individuals, families, and clans that is facilitated and reinforced by marriage. Several empirical works conducted within different parts of Africa have provided evidence for this view. Families and societies have treated women as commodity in exchange for gifts and as sources of wealth, social status, and prestige, especially when given in exchange for livestock such as cattle, goats, and sheep or even cash in the form of bride price (Accilien, 2008; Birech, 2013). The implication of bride price for child marriage and the consequences on the girl child socioeconomic wellbeing have been well elaborated in literature (Mbaye and Wagner, 2013; Frost and Dodoo, 2010; Nukunya, 1999). Strategies to change mind sets and norm on sociocultural drivers of child marriage will benefit considerably from this model.

2.3 POLYGAMY AND MONOGAMY

Another closely related explanatory view is the belief that men can 'use' between two to three women in their life time. The right of a man to have more than one wife – is a feature of much of rural West and Central Africa. This view, it is argued, has traditionally given rise to polygyny or polygamy in West Africa, described to have the world's highest rates of polygamous marriages (Therborn, 2006). Polygamists would naturally go for younger women to their first wives thus, polygamy continues to be common even among younger women and hence, promotes child marriage (ICRW, 2006; Familusi, 2012). Many complex reasons behind the practice of polygamy include: economic (i.e. income inequality across males), demographic (i.e. skewed sex ratios from higher male mortality rates due to risky labour force, political (i.e. warfare) to cultural (i.e. religious taboos or reflecting a man's social and economic status) (ICRW, 2006; Dalton and Leung, 2011; Gould, Moav and Simon, 2008; Jacoby, 1995; Fainzang, 1991). Knowledge of these concepts can lend understanding to the practice of Child marriage which could lead to possible solution to the problem.

2.4 ENDOGAMY/EXO GAMY

One other framework that has influenced child marriage analysis in the literature is the concept of Endogamy/Exogamy (ICRW, 2006). Endogamy, a practice which requires a person to select a mate within one's own group, may promote child marriage as suitors bound by such traditional belief may face

shortage of eligible spinsters and the preference for a particular family offspring which traditionally supports betrothal or arranged marriage with strong family influence. Thus in a closed society, proximity and prolonged exposure to would-be spouse may lead to child marriage. On the other hand, where the society practices exogamy (requiring marriage outside one's own group), the experience will differ. In such an arrangement, it will be a taboo to marry within the group and lack of close interaction with other groups will mean longer time to meet and acquaint with suitors from other groups thereby reducing contact and child marriage. In Africa, and Nigeria, rules around a traditional marriage vary tremendously depending on the ethnic, social and cultural groups. While some societies may follow endogamous principles, others may rely on exogamous rules. In modern times, however, young people are increasingly taking an active role in choosing their own partner, making parents less of a central figure in the marriage process and marriage itself less of a function by which to engrave family within a lineage system – endogamy, as traditionally expected (ICRW, 2006). In spite of their limitations, these ideas enabled a holistic understanding of the context of the drivers, the consequences and probable community approach to solving the problem of child marriage. The models therefore guided the situation analysis, Choice of vision, goal, objectives, Strategies, activities, including the Monitoring and Evaluation Plan.





3

THE SITUATION ANALYSIS

This section of the report presents reviews on the meaning which people attach to the problem of child marriage, the nature of the problem, geographical pattern and trends, the causes and consequences, the various attempts at remediation, the key gaps, and the lessons learnt/best practices that can be brought to scale to end the problem of child marriage in the country.

3.1 MEANING AND NATURE OF THE PROBLEM

Literature describes child marriage as a hidden crisis perpetrated by mature adults on the adolescent girl child (Erulkar and Bello, 2007; Nguyen and Wodon, 2014). USAID's (2015) studies in South Asia, East and Southern Africa, West and Central Africa, Latin America and the Caribbean describe child marriage as characterized by force, and without the free and full consent of both spouses. Child marriage affects both boys and girls but, girls and women suffer disproportionately as 720 million women alive today were married as children, compared to 156 million men. In Africa, about 17% of women and girls alive today were married before their 18th birthday (UNICEF, 2015). Generally, girls are married at younger ages and there is often a large age difference between the female and male spouses.

The practice of child marriage spans diverse cultures, and each child bride has her own unique story. Niger

Republic tops the list of the 20 countries with highest rates of child marriage (76.6%). Nigeria is in the 19th position with 43.3% while Zambia is the 20th with 42.1% of girls married at younger than 18. In all these countries, child marriage takes the form of arranged marriage; betrothal at an earlier age; the girls are not consulted and the husbands are sometimes more than thrice the age of the child bride. The husband depends on the fathers of the child bride to elicit compliance to marriage and, in some cases, submission after marriage. Majority of these girls see themselves as victims in their marriages where they are bound by the duty to respect parents, in-laws and spouse. Some parents (very poor ones) believe that child marriage is the only way to guarantee a secure future for their daughters.

3.2 PREVALENCE OF CHILD MARRIAGE

In 2015, an estimated 6 million girls were married by age 15 and 36 million girls were married by age 18 nationwide. Child marriage is more prevalent in the Northwest and Northeast regions, where 48 percent of girls were married by age 15 and 78 percent were married by age 18. The practice of polygyny is decreasing in Nigeria; 27 percent of married girls aged 15–19 are in polygynous marriages. Northern Nigeria has some of the highest rates of child marriage in the world with an estimated 65% among children below the age of 18 years. (NDHS 2013)

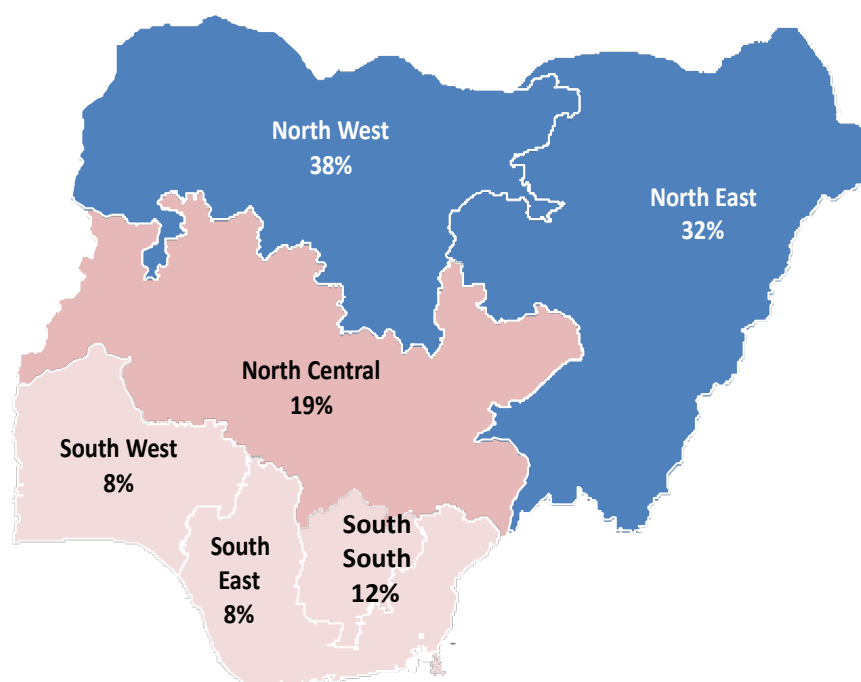


Figure 1: Percentage of 20-24 years women married in Geopolitical Zones by the age of 18 (NDHS, 2013)

Figure 1 shows the percentage of 20-24 years women married by the age of 18 in 2013. Northwest and Northeast top the zones with the highest 38% and 32%, respectively, while the least percentages were recorded in South East and South West geopolitical zone (8%). Geographic location or cultural landscape, poverty and education have been identified as key risk and protective factors for child marriage. There is no detailed data but, about 50 million children in Nigeria may be married and, according to UNFPA (2010), in the absence of intervention, the number is estimated to increase to 100 million by the year 2030. (NDHS 2013)

3.3 THE PATTERNS AND TREND OF AGE AT MARRIAGE

In Nigeria, the pattern and trend of age at marriage vary geographically and socioeconomically among the population. According to figure 2, the lowest median age at marriage among women aged 25 to 49 years in 2013 were recorded in Zamfara 14.4 years, Sokoto 14.7 years, and Katsina 14.9 years in the northwest geopolitical zone. Generally the phenomenon decreases as one goes southward where median age at marriage for girls were generally higher with the highest recorded in Abia state 24.3 years.

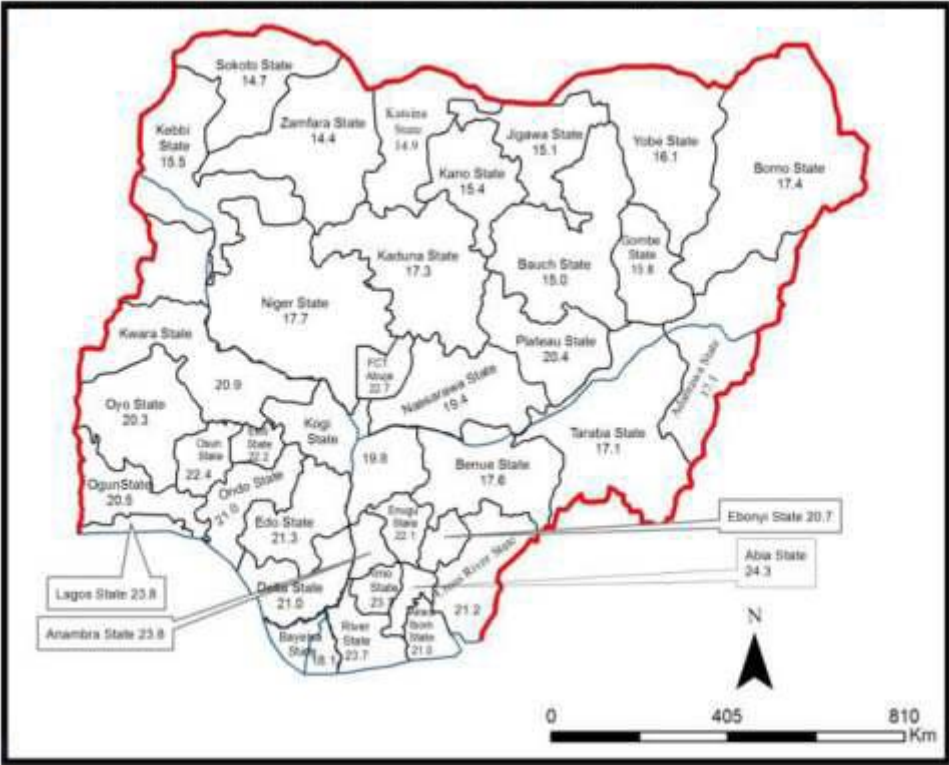


Figure 2: Pattern of median age at marriage by States among women age 25 to 49 in Nigeria: (NDHS 2013 data).

Table 1 presents the median age at first marriage among women age 25 to 49 in 2008 and 2013, by their selected socio-economic background characteristics. The median age at marriage decreased among those living in urban areas 21.1 years in 2008 to 20.8 years in 2013), among those residing in rural areas it decreased from 16.9 years in 2008 to 16.6 years in 2013. By zone, the lowest median age at marriage among women was observed in the North West 15.2 years in 2008 and 15.3 years in 2013, while the highest were in the South East 22.8 years in 2008 and 22.7 years in 2013. There is a marked relationship between women's level of education and their median age at first marriage. The

median age at first marriage among women aged 25-49 with no formal education was the same 15.5 years in 2008 and 2013. While mean age at marriage reduced from 22.0 years to 21.5 years among those with secondary or higher education in 2008 and 2013, respectively. There is a positive association between wealth and age at marriage. The median age at marriage among women age 25-49 years in the lowest wealth quintile is eight years lower than among women in the highest quintile (15.2 and 23.2 years, respectively, in 2013). Median age at marriage increases with increasing education and wealth.

Median Among Women aged 25-49		
Background	2008	2013
Residence		
Urban	21.1	20.8
Rural	16.9	16.6
Geopolitical Zone		
North Central	18.3	18.9
North East	15.6	16.3
North West	15.2	15.3
South East	22.8	22.7
South South	20.9	21.5
South West	20.9	21.8
Education		
No Education	15.5	15.5
Primary	18.3	18.0
Secondary and higher	22.0	21.5
Wealth Quintile		
Lowest	15.4	15.2
Second	15.9	16.0
Middle	17.9	17.9
Fourth	19.9	19.5
Highest	23.1	23.2

Source NDHS 2008, 2013

Table 1: Background characteristics, median age at marriage among women 25-49 years, 2008 and 2013 in Nigeria

3.4 REGIONAL PERCEPTIONS AND OPINIONS ON CHILD MARRIAGE

The perceptions and opinions about child marriage vary from locality to locality in Nigeria. This section presents the summary of the views of the key informants in the different geographical zones on the issue.

In the North West Region the research team found that most of the girls were allowed to make a choice of their marriage partners but not allowed to determine the period they should marry. According to women and girls interviewed in this region, their mothers are usually more eager to get them married especially once they suspect that the girl has started "zance" (courtship). According to a female respondent in Jigawa, this is out of the fear that a girl might bring dishonour to the family if she is left to have a long courtship.

A traditional ruler who was interviewed in Sabon Gari Zaria LGA explained that "In Islam, early marriage is acceptable for control; it prevents waywardness and unwanted pregnancies". However, he explained that the trend is changing in his community because of education; making education a priority is becoming a norm for some families and community members no longer frown at families who decide to allow their daughters to complete secondary education. According to him, "people understand Islam more as they will say that it is proper to educate your children". He further said that "Prophet Mohammed (SAW) says 'a Muslim should seek education'; he did not specify either boy or girl. This message was to all Muslims Ummah"

In Jahun LGA of Jigawa State, KII respondents in Ministry of Education, and Budget and Planning Directorate argued for the empowerment of parents as a strategy for ending child marriage. They suggested that once

parents are economically empowered, they will have the opportunity to send their children to school and keeping girls in school will give them longer adolescent years and save them from child marriage.

Also in the state, the research team gathered that some of the girls would like to go to school if given the opportunity but they do not see anything wrong in marrying early. They believe they could marry and still go to school. However, other girls believe that it will be better to acquire skills and trade from home because even if they complete school, they will not be allowed to work.

In the North East, the research team discovered that the practice of arranged marriages still prevails. This is used to foster political, economic and social alliances. Child marriage also prevailed as a result of the belief that Islamic religion does not prohibit it and any attempt to prohibit child marriage is seen as a western invasion of a social order that has guided the lives of the people for centuries. Even though the Child Rights Act has not been domesticated in most north eastern states, there are local laws which protect the rights of a child. For instance, in Taraba State, apart from the Child Rights Act, there is also the Children's Law No 4 (2005) and the CYPL but these laws only deal with the administration of justice for juveniles. An imam in Misau LGA of Bauchi state explains that:

Child marriage dominance among Muslims is to preserve the chastity of our youth. When a girl reaches the level of maturity, it is recommended to marry her off as soon as possible. Allah has created human beings with sexual desires. The urge for copulation can be very strong, especially in adolescent children, and in most cases the urge must be satisfied either in Halal (legally) or Haram (forbidden). And to preserve Halal, the children must be married off.

Christians in the North East are against child marriage. They believe that religion precedes culture and there is nowhere the Bible states that children should be married off. According to a member of CAN in Taraba state:

A child is a gift from God and needs to be taken care of by his parents, giving him/her education, care and protection. For this reason,

there are committees set up in most churches to counsel families where they create awareness on the dangers of child marriage. Therefore, marrying children off early is very rare amongst Christian communities in Northeast.

In the North Central, respondents described child marriage as a phenomenon that is gradually phasing out. In Kwara state, respondents explained that education was responsible for reducing the incidence of child marriage: 'Here people value education and go to school. There is no difference between a boy and a girl', says one of the respondents in the Ministry of Education. A male respondent from Ilorin South LG during the FGD explained that in Kwara state, child marriage is still prevalent among the Hausa and Nupe speaking ethnic groups. One of the clerics interviewed in Niger state lent argument in support of child marriage for family honour. He was of the opinion that:

No one should talk about capital punishment for marrying your child young. If government takes me to prison for marrying my girl child early, then I will hold government responsible if anything happens to her, like becoming pregnant in my house when she is not married.

According to respondents, the Child Rights Act has been domesticated in both Niger and Kwara states and has been modified to suit local context. Niger state government sponsors jingles on girl's education and UNICEF has a conditional cash transfer program in the state to help drive enrolment and keep children interested in school.

In South Eastern Nigeria, the survey team gathered from respondents that the practice of child marriage was steeped in tradition and culture. In Ebonyi state, majority of the respondents maintained that their major problem was not child marriage but teenage pregnancy. Respondents from the state mentioned that factors which were responsible for child marriage in the past were:

- The preference for education of the boy child over the girl child;
- Material gain – parents will always get something for marrying off their girl child;
- Societal pressure that questions why parents should

waste time training a girl child

Discussions with respondents in Abia state showed that the practice of child marriage probably started declining in the 1960s but it took Ebonyi State a much longer time for the practice to decline. In both states, girls prefer to get married after senior secondary school, a time at which they will be at or above 18 years. The acting permanent secretary of MWASD explained that child marriage in Ebonyi has reduced, the Ministry has not received any case on child marriage, but there had been reported cases on teenage pregnancy and rape. In response to the rising incidence of teenage rape, the communities have a law which forces a man responsible to marry a woman (or girl) he impregnates or to cohabit with her. The essence of the law is to make the perpetrators aware of the consequences of their acts.

Clearly, the research revealed that while child marriage has considerably declined in the southeast to the extent that it was no longer a grave issue, teenage pregnancy and cohabitation of under aged girls has become a more critical issue.

In the South-South, child marriage is not prevalent. There are ample laws to end child marriage in the region. The Child Rights Law was passed in 2008 and 2016 in Edo and Bayelsa states respectively; there are other policies and laws vicariously protecting children and young persons (CYPL), constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria and Criminal Code Law. In Bayelsa, there is the Education Policy thrust which encourages child mothers to return to school, backed with provision of free school books, uniforms, sandals, bags and sometimes free WAEC enrolment. There is also a law prohibiting street hawking and a declaration of Free Education for all from pre-primary to post primary education. In Edo state, there are: Anti-Human trafficking law, Law prohibiting Female Genital Mutilation, Law against Negative Widowhood Rites, Anti- Cultism Laws, Anti stigma and discrimination against PLHIV with probable positive effects on child marriage.

In the South West, the research team gathered from responses that there is no known period when child marriage was most prevalent. According to parents and CBOs responding during the FGD, the society

entrenches a manner of restraint and teaches the youth to extend gratification until they are ready for responsibilities of adulthood. It is therefore common to hear the proverb "it is easy to get married, what is difficult is to provide daily food for the family" (Ati Gbe iyawo o le, owoobe lo soro).

According to some of the respondents, what is now common outside the entrenched social discipline and morality in Yorubaland of the past is the prevalence of teenage pregnancy and this occurs even in girls of ages 13 and 14. Often times, when older girls of ages 16 or 17 gets pregnant, they are encouraged by their families to move in with the male responsible for the pregnancy and live with him as the mother of his child, and in cases where the male is too young to take responsibility of a partner, his family is asked to take care of the girl and her child. To back this claim, respondents from the South Western region of Nigeria mentioned that child marriage is unacceptable in their society and there is no basis for contemplating it.

In Ekiti state, like other South Western states, the Child Rights Act is domesticated and enforced. The state government takes action against any parent violating provisions of the Act. For instance, children seen roaming the street during school hours or hawking at any time, are picked up and their parents are fined. Another measure taken in Ekiti state to enforce the CRA and prevent child marriage and cohabitation is through an unwritten law which forbids landlords from renting a house to any child below the age of 18. Respondents agreed that child marriage is an abominable act but can also not be ruled out entirely.

Table 2 presents the summary of perceptions, opinions and beliefs reported by the participants on the roles of different stakeholders in Child Marriage practices in the community during the focus group discussion and key informant interviews conducted in the six geopolitical zones visited during the fieldwork in preparation for the development of the National Strategy on Ending Child Marriage in Nigeria.

Table 2: **Perceived Roles of Stakeholders in Child Marriage by Geopolitical Zones**

STAKEHOLDER	PERCEIVED ROLE
NORTH WEST GRAND PARENTS (PATERAL GRANDMOTHERS)	Grandparents are authorities. In most cases, members of family do not dare go against their words. They decide when children should get married (both for boys and girls). Respondents claim that they are the main forces behind the parents' decisions.
PARENTS	Main drivers of child marriage. They decide when their daughters should marry and, in cases where daughters refuse, they forcefully marry them off.
TRADITIONAL LEADERS	They are influential. Often times, children who do not want to get married to partners chosen for them in rural communities report the cases to them and they end up convincing the children to listen to their parents. In Jigawa, the traditional leader gave examples of six cases he solved within the year and five out of the six girls are married, one refused and ran away from home until her parents gave in and got her married to her choice of partner.
GIRLS	Do not see anything wrong in marrying early, especially at age 16. They have accepted it as a norm. They are allowed to decide who they want to marry. The respondent in the Ministry of Justice in Jigawa said, "It is very common to hear secondary school girls, even at junior level, when asked what they intend to do after their secondary education, they reply ABU- 'Aure Bautan Ubangiji' (meaning, marriage an act of worship)." A young respondent in Jahun LGA of Jigawa state said "when I was told that it is time to get married, I didn't know what to do so I spoke with a man I knew in my area and asked him to go and seek for my hand in marriage, luckily he agreed, otherwise I would have settled for whoever my parents bring if I can't produce anyone"
RELIGIOUS LEADERS	They influence family decisions through sermons. They do not enforce that parents must marry their children at any particular age. If parents decide to allow their children to finish their education, they do not stop it. What might create a problem with them is any attempt to set and legalize a particular age of marriage or attempts to sanction families who marry their children early. On that, they could mobilize communities to truncate the efforts. Their interpretations of religious injunctions are determinants of what shapes decisions which families mostly make in Nigeria. The Christians have a lot of reverence for the words of their pastors which is why the church could preach to its community to stop child marriage in Northern Nigeria. Similarly, the Imams have a wide reaching influence on decisions made by community members of the Muslim faith. According to one of the respondents in Taraba state, 'The 'malamansoro' (the local Mallams) are so rigid and set in their ways, one needs innovation to get them to change their stance on child marriage, they know that it is not an obligation on any Muslim to marry his/her child at an early age, yet they will keep insisting that The Prophet (SAW) did it but you will never hear them talk about how the prophet gave out his own daughter Fatima, at 18 years to her husband'.
NORTH EAST PARENTS	The male parents make the decision and have the final say. If the girl or boy refuses, it is the duty of the female parent to convince the child.
GIRLS	Only refuse to get married when they do not like the choice of partner made for them. In the rural areas, the girls are not given the opportunity to make a choice but in urban areas, the girls sometimes decide the choice of their partners. A young respondent interviewed in Taraba said 'If we don't get married what will we be doing? We are not in school, we only hawk in the mornings and for some part of the afternoon, but now we are becoming too big to hawk. We can't just remain at home doing nothing'

RELIGIOUS LEADERS	Influence through preaching
TRADITIONAL LEADERS	Girls report cases of child marriage to them and they try to convince parents not to marry their daughters. In most cases, the parents do not change their minds.
NORTH CENTRAL FATHERS	The main drivers are the fathers. In some cases, they face strong resistance from the mothers and when social welfare committee members are brought in, they are forced to either stop the marriage or sign a marriage withdrawal edict which ensures that the girl completes her education.
GIRLS	Culture of silence prevents them from getting the necessary support when they are forced to get married.
RELIGIOUS LEADERS	Influence decisions through preaching, supports the parents when cases are brought before them
SOUTH WEST PARENTS	Parents accept child marriage in most cases in the region because of poverty.
GIRLS	Agree to marriage as a result of teenage pregnancy
SOUTH-SOUTH PARENTS	Parents accept child marriage in most cases in the region because of poverty or the desire to have grandchildren.
GIRLS	Agree to marriage as a result of teenage pregnancy
SOUTH EAST PARENTS	Parents accept child marriage in most cases in the region because of poverty.
GIRLS	Agree to marriage as a result of teenage pregnancy

Source: **Fieldwork August, 2016**

3.5 THE SOCIOECONOMIC AND CULTURAL DETERMINANTS

Sociocultural and economic correlates of the problem of child marriage have been variously documented. Child marriage in Nigeria and elsewhere has a direct relationship with poor socioeconomic conditions and cultural/religious factors. Global Partnership to End Child Marriage (2014) reported that child marriage is seen by patriarchy in the family as a means of preserving the girl child from societal moral degeneration. Adebambo (2010) reported that cultural beliefs and norms rank high in the motivation for child marriages. Parents and girls, he argued, are conditioned to accept child marriage as the way out of either poverty or stigmatization which comes with the

immorality ascribed to both the girl and her family if she does not marry early. Child marriage is therefore seen as a way of safeguarding the virginity of a girl child before marriage. Parents and guardians see child marriage as a sure way of giving away virgin brides because of the value attached to marriage and virginity in the society (Population Council, 2004; Wetheridge and Antonowicz, 2014).

Poverty, the interpretation of Islamic prescriptions to justify personal desire to take in younger wife, strong cultural norms that place emphasis on a girl's virginity as well as low societal values for the girl child are some of the factors found to encourage child marriage in northwest Nigeria (UNICEF, 2015; Olatunbosun, 2015).

Similarly, the Global Partnership to End Child Marriage (2014) identifies: lack of education, the low status of girls – underlying norms and traditional roles which view girls only as future wives and mothers, insecurity especially in the northeast, lack of alternative opportunities for girls, gender inequality and families' inability to keep their children in school owing to the quality and relevance of education services to the needs of the girl, safety concerns and accessibility (in terms of finances), as risk factors and key determinants of child marriage in northern Nigeria.

3.6 THE SOCIAL, ECONOMIC AND HEALTH CONSEQUENCES

The harmful practice of Child Marriage has been shown to have severe socioeconomic and health consequences on children, families, communities and the nation globally. In Nigeria, the identified consequences of child marriage include: introduction to early sexual life, sexual violence, high rate of school dropouts and a cycle of illiteracy and poverty, gender gap in education, loss of educational and economic opportunities that help lift out of poverty and which are necessary to build a sustainable and prosperous future for the community and the country (The Global Partnership to End Child Marriage – GPECM, 2014; Olatunbosun, 2015).

The International Centre for Research on Women (2006) also catalogues the consequences of early sexual debut and marriage in the developing countries to include: Sexually Transmitted Diseases (STD), sexual violence including rape, teenage pregnancy with its attendant complications and early widowhood among others. They pointed out that girl widows 20 years or less with no skills are forced into sex work to survive and take care of their children with the associated psychological trauma. In Kano and Kaduna states, child bearing at a tender age with the increased risk of maternal morbidity, Vesico-Vaginal Fistula (VVF) and Recto-Vaginal Fistula (RVF), are some other most noticeable consequences of child marriage in Nigeria (Nnandi, 2014) and in Brazil (Greene et al., 2015).

Lifetime dependency on the husband and inability to have economic freedom are obvious, while incidences of death have been reported in some parts of northern Nigeria. It has also been documented by USAID that individuals involved in child marriages represent a critical population with high fertility rates which could

spur population growth and momentum, crippling already poor economies. Girls often enter into a servitude-like relationship with their husband and new in-laws. In severe cases, child marriage can result in bonded labour, enslavement, or commercial sexual exploitation (USAID, 2015).

3.7 POLICIES AND PROGRAMS

The Government of Nigeria has pursued policy and legislative framework to end the problem of child marriage. Adebambo (2010) identifies a number of international human rights conventions and instruments which Nigeria is signatory to in order to kick against child marriage. These include:

- (i) Universal Declaration of Human Rights, 1948 Article 16;
- (ii) Convention on Consent to Marriage, Minimum Age for Marriage and Registration of Marriages, 1964. Articles 1, 2, and 3;
- (iii) African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child, 1990; and
- (iv) Convention on the Rights of the Child, 1989, Articles 19, 24, 28, 29, 34, and 36.

The government of Nigeria, aware that education is the most potent weapon against child marriage, ratified the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC), in March 1991 which provides for access to education and stipulates that every child has the right to free, compulsory, and universal basic education (primary and junior secondary school) and it shall be the duty of the government in Nigeria to provide such education with the assistance of parents and guardians of children. Section 18 of the 1999 Nigeria Constitution, states that government shall direct its policy towards ensuring that there are equal and adequate educational opportunities at all levels. The problem is not a lack of instruments for eradicating child marriages, but rather, it is in the implementation requiring all stakeholders to key into the existing framework to eradicate the problem. Stakeholders have a stake to ending child marriage. It is therefore important to secure and renew commitments from stakeholders to invest more to accelerate an end to child marriage.

NGOs, CBOs and CSOs have been very active in the fight against child marriage. Some of these organizations have employed additional strategies which, in addition to education, include: skills like cooking, cleaning, soap and facial powder making, self-confidence and belief in

self-training workshops, provision of scholarships, and education of the girl child about the harms of child marriage and offering legal services, among other activities. The following approaches have also been known to be effective in reducing child marriages:

- a) Empowering already married girls with information, skills, and supportive networks;
- b) Ensuring girls' education;
- c) Shifting attitudes via community mobilization and outreach; and
- d) Enacting and enforcing laws and policies that delay marriage.

In Brazil, engaging men and boys in the crusade against child marriage has worked to alter unequal gender and social norms, and help males of all ages who hold some gender inequitable attitudes to understand the benefits of adopting more equitable attitudes. This understanding means valuing, and therefore respecting and supporting one's wife and children, especially girls, by respecting their thoughts and feelings, hopes and dreams, and aspirations.

These programs were conceptualized into the following:

- i) Involvement of traditional and religious leaders to end child marriage;
- ii) Mobilizing community members;
- iii) Working with husbands of young brides;
- iv) Working with fathers;
- v) Working with young men and future husbands;
- vi) Working with boys and brothers; and
- vii) Publicizing the example of prominent individuals who are positive change agents.

The United States Agency for International Development (USAID, 2015) has pointed out that efforts to combat child marriage must adopt a multi-sectoral approach because overcoming it through the effort of one sector is not usually effective.

The following stakeholders must be taken into consideration in the fight against child marriage: (i) Legal and police officers; (ii) Judicial officers, including judges, magistrates, lawyers, and paralegals; (iii) School administrators and teachers; (iv) Healthcare workers; (v) Community, traditional, and religious leaders; (vi) Families, including parents, and in-laws; (vii) Community members; (viii) Girls; (ix) Women; and (x) Men and boys.

3.8 THE SUMMARY OF GAPS

1. The policies on ground (CRC, CRA, etc.) lack implementation structures and there are gaps in specification of the required action(s) at all levels, sectors and regions to address the religious/culturally sensitive root causes of child marriage at National and community levels.
2. There is a dearth of data in some parts of the country that are known to have a high rate of child marriages and this means that the figures and estimates of occurrence of child marriages may be more alarming than existing records show.
3. Empirical studies on participation of government at both state and community levels in the response to curb child marriages is limited in the literature, giving the idea that as at 2013, Kano and some state governments especially in the Northern part of the country do not see child marriage as a social evil.
4. Spatial and temporal evidence-based studies on the trend of child marriages, prosecution and culprits who have been found guilty and punished at National and local levels are lacking. This understanding provides important insight on the effectiveness of the existing laws in prosecuting offenders and further highlights the need for attitudinal change by all stakeholders.
5. Preferences, views and choices of girl children regarding marriage and future life on attainment of puberty, especially in northern Nigeria, have not been documented in the literature. Such studies can inform proactive strategies and provide avenues for the necessary actions that will help girl children achieve their full potentials in life.
6. There is need for specific, rigorous and context-sensitive studies that would focus on interventions tailored to findings that assess the relative significance and direction of different risk factors within a certain community or locality due to regional differences.
7. Further studies are required to understand variations in spatial and temporal prevalence of child marriage and associated community and state-level predictors as well as the characteristics of both individuals and the states especially in the southwest, southeast and south-south Nigeria. The characterization of states and communities

into high and low prevalent areas will help in determining levels of risk and the design of required action(s) aimed at eradicating child marriage in Nigeria.

8. Documented evidence on the perception of child marriage by religious and traditional leaders who are partly the custodians of religious and cultural practices that predispose girl children to forced marriage and are bent on the continuity of native and religious rites which causes the discrimination against women and young girls are limited in the literature. These understandings can provide important insight into child marriage in the context of religion/culture and signpost avenues for synergy between government and religious/traditional institutions in tackling the

social evil of child marriage in Nigeria.

9. There is scanty evidence to ascertain the amount, success and failures of previous interventions by governments, partners, stakeholders and other agencies. Findings from such studies can serve as important tools for measuring the impact of previous interventions aimed at eradicating the menace of child marriage in Nigeria.

There is no strong evidence of coordinated intervention among stakeholders: National, State, Local Government, Line Ministries, NGOs, and development partners.



4

STRATEGIC DIRECTION ON ENDING CHILD MARRIAGE

This National Strategy Document on Ending Child Marriage in Nigeria by 2030 outlines, discusses and suggests what can and should be done to end child marriage: harnessing relevant policies and legislation, changing harmful cultural norms, supporting community programs, maximizing foreign assistance, increasing access to girls' education, providing young women with economic opportunities, addressing the unique needs of child brides and evaluating programs to determine what works that can be brought to scale. A National strategic framework is needed which should be implemented to prevent the millions of girls in Nigeria today from being married with all the associated social and health challenges in the next decade(s).

4.1 VISION

End child marriage in Nigeria by 2030"

A Nigeria where every young child is protected from harmful and impeding traditional practices and whose fundamental human right to a fulfilled childhood is achieved.

4.2 GOAL

The overall goal of the campaign is to reduce the percentage of girls who are married before attaining full maturity (usually 18) in Nigeria by 2021

4.3 PRINCIPLES AND VALUE STATEMENT

The implementation of the strategy to end child marriage in Nigeria will be guided by the following principles: best interest of the child, survival and development of every child, protection, partnerships and linkages, as well as the following values: accountability, transparency, equality and non-discrimination.

4.4 OBJECTIVES

The objectives of this National strategy to end child marriage in Nigeria are as follows:

- I. Integrate and strengthen all sectoral mechanisms to end child marriage in Nigeria;
- II. To build nationwide capacity for research and knowledge sharing on child marriage to improve programming
- III. To promote relevant policies, legislation and programs that protect children from child marriage;
- IV. To change negative socioeconomic and cultural

- V. norms that promote child marriage in the society; To increase access to quality all round education including reproductive health education and services to out of school;
- VI. To establish and strengthen coordination, implementation, monitoring and evaluation structures for the implementation of the strategy

4.5 ENABLING FACTORS/CONDITIONS FOR EFFECTIVE IMPLEMENTATION

The successful implementation of the National strategy to end child marriage in Nigeria depends on the following conditions:

- a) Harmonization of all relevant policies and legislation relevant to the prevention of child marriage;
- b) Continued political will and support from the Government of Nigeria;
- c) Active participation of all the relevant ministries, parastatals and agencies;
- d) Creation of a National coordination body for the harmonization and effective joint implementation of the strategy among ministries, parastatals and agencies at all levels;
- e) Allocation of adequate resources (including human resources) to the strategic plan; and
- f) A coordinated approach among government ministries with NGOs, CBOs, CSOs and other stakeholders.

4.6 KEY TARGET GROUPS

The National Strategy to End Child Marriage in Nigeria will have as its targets the following; **Primary targets:** Include stakeholders like: parents, the extended family head, the vulnerable children particular those living difficult situations such as conflict and disaster prone areas (refugees, internally displaced persons), and men and boys who perpetrate and or are victims of the practice of child marriage.

Secondary targets: these will include community leaders, school teachers and officials, local government, police, paralegals, health workers, religious, traditional and cultural leaders, and peers.





5

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES AND INTERVENTIONS

The proposed approaches are described under the respective strategic objectives to end child marriage namely; integrate and strengthen all sectoral mechanisms to end child marriage in Nigeria; to build nationwide capacity for research and knowledge sharing on child marriage to improve programming; to promote relevant policies, legislation and programs that protect children from child marriage; to change negative socioeconomic and cultural norms that promote child marriage in the society; to increase children's access to quality all round education and

promote the retention of the girl child in school in order to reduce their vulnerability to child marriage; to establish and strengthen coordination, implementation, monitoring and evaluation structures for the implementation of the strategy these strategies addressed the problem of child marriage at individual, interpersonal, community and societal levels that influence child marriage in line with the ecological model that guide the conception and design of the strategy.

5.1 Objectives and Suggested Strategies

Table 3: **Proposed Objective and Strategies for the Achievement of the Goal of National Strategy to End Child Marriage**

Objective 1: Integrate and strengthen all sectoral mechanisms to end child marriage in Nigeria	
Strategies:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Develop mechanisms to integrate and streamline stakeholders' programs on ending child marriage with the National Strategy 2. Promote and support the establishment of community child protection structures to prevent child marriage through awareness raising and counselling 3. Strengthen existing and new child protection institutions and mechanisms for promotion of awareness on child marriage and for referral of victims of child marriage 4. Strengthen the capacity of existing co- ordination mechanisms to address children's vulnerabilities to marriage and other related risks at National, state, local governments, districts, and community levels 5. Organise annual state and local government joint sector review meetings 6. Establish strategic partnerships to share best practices
Objective 2: To build nationwide capacity for research and knowledge sharing on child marriage to improve programming	
Strategies:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Generate evidence using both primary and secondary data (publications) to demonstrate the benefits of delaying marriage and of keeping girls in school during adolescence at National and sub- National levels. 2. Strengthen child marriage related research 3. Conduct gender disaggregated research on the impact of child marriage in key sectors and target groups 4. Disseminate evidence through structures such as community forums, legislative forums, conferences, seminars, print and electronic media that advocate for children
Objective 3: To promote relevant policies, legislation and programs that protect children from child marriage	
Strategies:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Review government policies and stipulate the roles and responsibilities of the different stakeholders at National, state, local government and community levels in policy and law enforcement

2. Promote and implement the revised National Policy on Adolescent Health and Development, and girls education strategy
3. Sensitize communities about the relevant legislation and policies on girls education, SRH rights, and gender equality
4. Harmonize existing policies and customary and statutory legislation on child marriage

Objective 4: To change negative socioeconomic and cultural norms that promote child marriage in the society

Strategies:

1. Increase parental access to alternative economic opportunities to increase household income
2. Create linkages with relevant poverty reduction institutions
3. Develop and implement a communication and advocacy strategy on ending child marriage
4. Develop IEC and edutainment materials on child marriage
5. Launch country wide end child marriage campaigns through media and dissemination of IEC materials.
6. Establish and promote partnership with elected representatives at National and sub National levels as strong advocates against child marriage through community engagements
7. Promote and highlight positive deviance among parents, girls, boys, law enforcement officers, and leaders using community dialogues and role models

Strategy objective 5: To increase access to quality all round education including reproductive health education and services to all children

Strategies:

1. Build the capacity of families to address and change the expectations, attitudes and practices in regard to child marriage
2. Promote access to, retention of girls in primary and secondary education through refurbishment of facilities (e.g. wash rooms for girls, separate toilets for boys and girls).
3. Capacity building of school administrators (PTA, SMCs) teachers and other staff to create protective and safe environments for girls
4. Integrate gender and rights education (with a focus on child marriage) in the primary and secondary school curriculum.
5. Facilitate access of adolescents at risk of child marriage and girls (especially the out of school young mothers) to vocational training institutions
6. Strengthen civil registration systems in Nigeria as a means to protect boys and girls from sexual and physical violence that lead to or arise from child marriage
7. Improve menstruation and hygiene management for girls in school through dissemination of the menstruation management readers in print, audio and video
8. Build girls' and boys' capacities in life skills and agency including self-esteem, self-defence and confidence to end CM
9. Facilitate and support the establishment of adolescents' groups which offer safe spaces for girls and boys to talk about sensitive issues.
10. Build capacities of senior women and male teachers in schools
11. Provide both in and out of school girls and boys with accurate reproductive health information to enable them manage their growth and development.

12. Equip health workers with adolescent counseling skills to promote adolescent health friendly services and rights in health facilities.
13. Facilitate access of girls and married adolescents to friendly adolescent health services

Objective 6: To establish and strengthen coordination, implementation, monitoring and evaluation structures/institutions for the implementation of the strategy

Strategies:

1. Establish and Support a coordination unit within the FMWA&SD, Child Development Unit to coordinate and monitor the implementation of the NSCM.
2. Strengthen government's relationship with CSOs to facilitate optimum coordination of activities relating to ending child marriage in the country
3. Develop and operationalize an information management system (IMS) that is capable of capturing child marriage and other child protection data of all children.
4. Develop and implement an M&E system (including information management system and M&E plan)

5.2 COLLABORATION OF STAKEHOLDERS

The implementation of the NSCM will require multiple actors to address the various drivers of child marriage in the society. These stakeholders will collaborate with each other to meet the complex needs of vulnerable children and their families, aid the general population to achieve set objectives. Ensure equitable constituency

representation in various sub-committees to end child marriage. Strengthen information sharing and knowledge management mechanism within the Country. In this case FMWA&SD, FMOE, FMOH, FMOA, FMOA and MoJ will take the lead. The different roles and responsibilities of the stakeholders engaged in the implementation of the NSCM&TP are shown in table 3.

Table 4: Key stakeholders and their roles and responsibilities in the implementation of the NSCM

Key stakeholder and Actors	Roles and Responsibilities
Federal Ministry of Women Affairs and Social Development	This is the main coordinating ministry for implementation of the NSCM. It will provide overall leadership, coordination, monitoring and evaluation.
Federal Ministry of Education, Federal Ministry of Health, Ministry of Justice, The Presidency	The role of these ministries is to work in partnership with FMWA&SD to implement sector specific interventions; Office of the Vice President will provide overall oversight and coordination of the sectors.
Ministry of Finance	To ensure child marriage issues receive sufficient resources in the National budget - especially the key sectors of education, health and women Affairs.
Ministry of Agriculture and Ministry of Industries	To provide standards and support nutritional care for teenage mothers and their children.
State Ministry of Local Government and Chieftaincy Affairs	The delivery of policies and action plans will take place in local governments with the gender focal point persons and other technical people taking the lead role. Local government will offer the primary structures for the implementation of the strategy.

Development partners for example UNFPA, USAID, Save the Children UNICEF and EU	These will largely provide financial, material and technical resources for the implementation of the strategy. In addition, they will play a key monitoring role.
Civil Society Organisations	These shall be operational partners to implement strategy at the community.
Community members: men, women, cultural and religious leaders	The community consists of key gatekeepers of social norms and practices. They will be the major implementers, advocates and monitors of the progress in respect of changing of norms and practices to end child marriage.
Children: Girls and boys	These are key actors and beneficiaries of the strategy. They will be engaged at all levels in all activities to end child marriage.

5.3 COMMUNICATION PLAN FOR THE NATIONAL STRATEGIC PLAN

The preparation of the National Strategic Plan accommodated key stakeholders. These stakeholders include government agencies: FMoE, FMoH, FMoA, FMoJ, civil society organizations, international non-governmental organizations, faith-based groups and vulnerable children and their families. However, for an effective coordination of the response to end child marriage based on the plan,

- FMWA&SD will produce and popularize the document among key stakeholders aforementioned including the private sector.
- The FMWA&SD assisted by development partners will fund strategies and activities derived from the NSECM
- FMWA&SD will convene a bi-monthly meeting with line ministries, which will precede the quarterly meeting with stakeholders at the State level
- Stakeholders implementing child marriage interventions in the State and Local Government will derive objectives, strategies and activities relevant to their thematic focus from the National Strategic Plan to End Child Marriage
- FMWA&SD and stakeholders will monitor, evaluate, document and disseminate reports of

activities of stakeholders in the State in line with the NSECM

- FMWA&SD will convene quarterly meetings with key constituencies e.g. women groups, youths, faith-based, civil society, line ministries and other parastatals, and the private sector to disseminate progress of implementation of the NSECM and receive feedback from the constituencies.
- SMWA&SD will hold stakeholders meeting at the local level, the meeting will precede FMWA&SD/SMWA&SD meeting SMWA&SD will provide feedback to FMWA&SD on responses at the local level
- FMWA&SD will produce a quarterly newsletter as a platform to communicate with stakeholders highlighting key activities, achievements, upcoming events and other relevant issues.
- FMWA&SD Conduct annual review of the NSECM at the End Child Marriage Summit and make necessary adjustments in event of emerging issues.
- FMWA&SD, in the course of this period (2016-2021) will develop a website for the publication and wide dissemination of National Response Report, Plans, study reports etc., to a much wider audience.





6

IMPLEMENTATION MONITORING AND EVALUATION PLAN

A National Coordination Unit at the Ministry of Women Affairs and Social Development will oversee the implementation of the NSECM. The monitoring and process evaluation will be aided and guided by detailed costed work plan produced to implement the strategy, by the participating organisations and stakeholders. The work plan will contain very clear deliverables and targets which will be harmonized by the National coordinating unit in collaboration with the implementing partners in the community, district, local government, state and National level. A reporting structure will be established to ensure coordination, close cooperation and partnership by all relevant stakeholders.

The National Coordinating Unit shall regularly monitor the implementation of the Strategic Plan, obtain feedback and gauge progress toward set goal, objectives and targets. The National Coordination Unit will draw on the submission of involved stakeholders (different line Ministries, Cooperating Partners, CSOs and CBOs) based on agreed template to produce progress report on the implementation of the work plans annually. The reports will be submitted to Ministry of Women Affairs and Social Development for final review and approval.

THE MONITORING AND EVALUATION PLAN WILL INCLUDE TWO COMPONENTS:

Monitoring and Evaluation of Project Performance, monitoring will focus on the management and supervision of project activities, seeking to improve efficiency and overall effectiveness of project implementation. It will be a continuous process to collect information on actual implementation of project activities compared to those scheduled in the annual work plans, including the delivery of quality outputs in a timely manner, to identify problems and constraints (technical, human resource, and financial), to make clear recommendations for corrective actions, and identify lessons learned and best practices for scaling up, etc. Performance evaluation will assess the project's success in achieving its objectives. The project will be monitored closely by the Coordinating Unit) and by the Project Steering Committees through semi-annual reports, quarterly implementation reviews, technical reports, and regular technical supervision missions fielded as required to enhance success.

Monitoring and Evaluation of Project Impact, evaluation of the project's success in achieving its outcomes will be monitored continuously throughout the period of implementation. The key indicators will be developed, reviewed/refined during which all the key stakeholders, tools and methods and indicators for measuring impact would have been determined and agreed to ensure that a standardized framework is shared by the participating stakeholders.

The process and impact implementation of this Strategic Plan will also be assessed through an external evaluation. The baseline will be established in 2017, with a mid-term review completed by 2019. This external evaluation at mid-point will focus, but not be limited to:

- i. The implementation of the objectives in the Strategic Plan as measured against the agreed targets;
- ii. Identifying shortcomings, challenges and areas in need of improvement or acceleration;
- iii. Feedback from targeted beneficiaries to understand the impact of the already implemented strategies; and
- iv. Recommendations on any necessary modifications in the plan, the objectives, the targets or the implementation strategies.

A final evaluation will take place in the last quarter of 2021 to assess what has been achieved, identify areas of best practice, analyse challenges and make recommendations on any next steps needed to end child marriage in Nigeria.

6.1 RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE CHILD MARRIAGE COORDINATION UNIT

Overall implementation Monitoring and evaluation of the strategy will include all the participating stakeholders: government, development partners and civil society organizations at community, districts, local government, state and National levels. This is Nigeria's comprehensive response framework designed to end child marriage. For effective implementation and monitoring the plan suggested the establishment of a coordination unit situated at the FMWA&SD

The unit will be headed by a senior officer with wide experience on child rights and protection. The unit should be financed within the FMWA&SD financial

framework and provided for in the medium and long term government financial budgetary framework. The unit will;

1. Mobilize key stakeholders /actors to participate in the implementation of the NSECM.
2. Establish and coordinate an NSECM network involving all key partners and actors namely government departments, civil society, international NGOs, religious institutions and development partners.
3. Develop annual work plans and budgets for the implementation of the NSECM strategy.
4. Coordinate program activities for implementation of the NSECM strategy
5. Prepare NSECM strategy performance reports in line with the reporting requirements of FMWA&SD and the respective implementing partners.
6. Carry out monitoring and evaluation on all NSECM strategy programs.
7. Maintain a collaborative network with state and local government and international organizations working towards ending child marriage.

8. Coordinate the development, production and dissemination of information and publications on child marriage; and organize expert group meetings to share research findings and jointly identify subsequent research themes.

6.2 ILLUSTRATIVE LOGICAL FRAMEWORK MATRIX

The matrix is composed of four columns. Below is an explanation on the item on each column.

Column 1: Strategies. This is the operational strategy.

Column 2: Target: These are the activities that emanate from the strategy to be implemented within a target period. They are arranged in a logical sequence, and are detailed because of lack of capacity at lower tiers to translate the strategies into activities.

Column 3: Performance Indicator. The indicator will assist program implementers and evaluators to ascertain the degree to which an activity has been implemented.

Column 4: Means of Verification (MOV). The documentary source from where the indicator would be found.

STRATEGIC INTERVENTIONS	TARGET FOR 2021	PERFORMANCE INDICATORS	MEANS OF VERIFICATION (MOV)
Objective 1: Integrate and strengthen all sectoral mechanisms to end child marriage in Nigeria			
1.1. Develop mechanisms to integrate and streamline stakeholders' programs on ending child marriage with the National Strategy	Consolidated National multi-sectoral response plan developed by March 2017	Number of ministries, NGOs, CSOs and development partners that contributed to consolidated work plan	A consolidated multi-sectoral report
	National Strategy on Ending Child Marriage is informed and reflected in all relevant Stakeholder's programs and strategies.	Stakeholders implementing the consolidated multi-sectoral work plan reporting by 2017 on their activities to end vulnerability to child marriage.	Monitoring & Evaluation reports
	Number of Stakeholders reporting to the FMW&SD Coordination Unit, on their activities to reduce vulnerability to child marriage and its effects	All implementing stakeholder institutions submitting annual reports	Monitoring & Evaluation reports

STRATEGIC INTERVENTIONS	TARGET FOR 2021	PERFORMANCE INDICATORS	MEANS OF VERIFICATION (MOV)
Objective 1: Integrate and strengthen all sectoral mechanisms to end child marriage in Nigeria			
	Number of institutions with focal point persons on ending Child Marriage	Focal point persons appointed in all implementing partner institutions by June 2017	Monitoring& Evaluation reports
	Total number of child protection organizations/units identified at the local level	Number of child protection units in districts or local governments reporting with knowledge and skills to promote delay of marriage, support, track and refer victims of child marriage	Monitoring& Evaluation reports
1.2. Promote and support the establishment of community child protection structures to prevent child marriage through awareness raising and counselling	All districts in 774 LGAs have functional child protection structures.	Number of districts with functional child protection structures	Monitoring& Evaluation reports
1.3. Strengthen existing and new child protection institutions and mechanisms for promotion of awareness on child marriage and for referral of victims of child marriage.	All district child protection officials equipped with knowledge and skills to promote delay of marriage; support, track and refer victims of child marriage.	Number of child protection officials with knowledge and skills to promote delay of marriage, support, track and refer of victims of child marriage;	Monitoring& Evaluation reports
		Proportion of districts with functional referral mechanisms for provision of social, health and protection services for boys and girls;	Monitoring& Evaluation reports

STRATEGIC INTERVENTIONS	TARGET FOR 2021	PERFORMANCE INDICATORS	MEANS OF VERIFICATION (MOV)
Objective 1: Integrate and strengthen all sectoral mechanisms to end child marriage in Nigeria			
		Proportion of districts reporting through management information systems (MIS)	Monitoring & Evaluation reports
1.4. Strengthen the capacity of existing co- ordination mechanisms to address children's vulnerabilities to marriage and other related risks at National, state, local governments, districts, and community levels	Capacity building plan for co- ordination mechanism developed and implemented	Number of Capacity building program in various mechanisms involving stakeholders (ministry officials, traditional authorities, CSOs, health workers, etc.) implemented by December 2017	Monitoring & Evaluation reports Training reports
1.5. Organise annual state and local government joint sector review meeting.	Annual joint meetings of stakeholders organized to develop action plan	State peculiar plans developed for all local sectors to implement activities to end child marriage.	Minutes of meetings, Monitoring & Evaluation report Joint Action Plan document
1.6. Establish strategic partnerships to share best practices	Number of partnerships (international, National regional and local) established/strengthened	Number of functional (international, National regional and local international) partnerships	Meeting reports Activity reports
	Quarterly forums/symposia held on child marriage	At least 3 fora/symposia held annually	Meeting reports
	Total number of partners supporting End Child Marriage (ECM) programs	A comprehensive stakeholder mapping exercise conducted by March 2017	Baseline survey reports
		Number of active partners supporting programs per annum	Monitoring & Evaluation reports

STRATEGIC INTERVENTIONS	TARGET FOR 2021	PERFORMANCE INDICATORS	MEANS OF VERIFICATION (MOV)
Objective 2: To build nationwide capacity for research and knowledge sharing on child marriage			
2.1. Generate evidence using both primary and secondary data (publications) to demonstrate the benefits of delaying marriage and of keeping girls in school during adolescence at National and sub-national levels.	Formative research commissioned and conducted on child marriage that unpacks social norms and other drivers of child marriage.	Number of research on child marriage commissioned and completed.	Research report, data collection tools, lists of study respondents and participants
2.2. Strengthen child marriage related research	Establishment of IRB in all research institutions and universities on child marriage	Number of inaugurated and functional IRB at regional and state levels	Institutional Board meeting reports Research proposals
	Identify, prioritize and disseminate research needs and studies	Number of research areas identified, prioritized and disseminated	Call for proposal on priority areas of Child Marriage (CM)
	Provide support to research institutions and stakeholder organizations on gender disaggregated data collection, processing and dissemination of data.	Number of programs on gender-sensitive research carried out	Research reports
2.3. Conduct gender disaggregated research on the impact of child marriage in key sectors and target groups	Identify, prioritize and conduct impact studies in key sectors and among specific target groups by 2018	Number of studies/surveys conducted	Research reports Journal articles
	Equip National and all state research institutes with necessary equipment, facilities and infrastructure to support research activities on CM	Number of research institutions with enhanced capacity to carry out research	Monitoring & Evaluation reports

STRATEGIC INTERVENTIONS	TARGET FOR 2021	PERFORMANCE INDICATORS	MEANS OF VERIFICATION (MOV)
Objective 2: To build nationwide capacity for research and knowledge sharing on child marriage			
2.4. Disseminate evidence through structures such as community forums, legislative forums, conferences, seminars, print and electronic media that advocate for children	All targeted communities reached with research findings	Number of people reached and aware of the drivers and impact of child marriage and demonstrating the benefits of delaying marriage and of keeping girls in school during adolescence.	Monitoring & Evaluation report Research reports
Objective 3: To promote relevant policies, legislation and programs that protect children from child marriage			
3.1 Review government policies and stipulate the roles and responsibilities of the different stakeholders at National, state, local government and community levels in policy and law enforcement	National Policy on Adolescent Health and Development and the strategy for girls' education include child marriage issues and VACiS	Revised National Policy on Adolescent Health and Development and the strategy for girls' education include child marriage issues and VACiS	Reviewed National Policy on Adolescent Health and Development document
	All stakeholders understand their roles and responsibilities in policy and law enforcement	Number of operational sector guidelines in line with revised policies	Reviewed operational guidelines
3.2 Promote and implement the revised National Policy on Adolescent Health and Development, and girl's education strategy	Revised policies disseminated and popularized in all the states and local government areas	Number of local governments where the policies and strategies have been disseminated and popularized	Dissemination reports, lists of participants, distribution lists, monitoring reports
	All 774 local government areas adopt and are using the policy and strategy in the appropriate language.	Number of local government areas that adopt and are using the revised National Policy on Adolescent Health and Development in the appropriate language	Monitoring & Evaluation report on communities, districts, and local governments

STRATEGIC INTERVENTIONS	TARGET FOR 2021	PERFORMANCE INDICATORS	MEANS OF VERIFICATION (MOV)
Objective 3: To promote relevant policies, legislation and programs that protect children from child marriage			
	All schools in targeted local governments are using the policy and strategies in the appropriate language	No of schools using the policy and strategies in the appropriate language.	Monitoring & Evaluation reports
3.3 Sensitize communities about the relevant legislation and policies on girls' education, reproductive and health rights, and gender equality	All targeted communities are aware and appreciate the relevant legislation and policies on girls' education, reproductive and health rights, and gender equality	Number of women, men, boys and girls in target communities who are aware and appreciate the relevant legislation and policies on girls education, reproductive and health rights, and gender equality	Monitoring & Evaluation reports
	All targeted communities have their children marrying at later age of 18 years and above	Number of boys and girls in targeted communities marrying later than age 18	Research reports Monitoring & Evaluation reports
3.4 Harmonize existing policies and customary and statutory legislation on child marriage	Undertake a comprehensive review of relevant existing policies and statutes to identify gaps by March 2017	Number of policies and statutes that have been reviewed and revised	Reviewed and harmonized policy documents
	Existing policies and statutes have been reviewed with amendments to address ending child marriage proposed by 2021	Existing policies and statutes reviewed with amendments to address ending child marriage	Monitoring & Evaluation reports
Objective 4: To change negative socioeconomic and cultural norms that promote child marriage in the society			
4.1 Develop and implement a communication and advocacy strategy on ending child marriage	Communication and advocacy strategy developed by 2017	Number of communication and advocacy strategy materials developed	Monitoring & Evaluation reports

STRATEGIC INTERVENTIONS	TARGET FOR 2021	PERFORMANCE INDICATORS	MEANS OF VERIFICATION (MOV)
Objective 4: To change negative socioeconomic and cultural norms that promote child marriage in the society			
	All targeted men, women and young people have positive attitudes, behaviours, beliefs and practices towards ending child marriage by 2021	Proportion of targeted men, women and young people with positive attitudes, behaviours, beliefs and practices by 2021	Knowledge, Attitude, Belief and Practice Survey (KABPS) reports
	Program for engaging the media developed and operational by July 2017	Level of involvement of the media development program	Monitoring & Evaluation reports
4.1 Develop IEC and edutainment materials on child marriage	All targeted communities reporting a reduction in the prevalence of child marriage	Percentage of adolescent girls and boys 10-18 years with the correct knowledge delaying marriage and sexual debut;	NDHS Monitoring & Evaluation reports
		Percentage of girls 15-18 who have started child-bearing;	NDHS Monitoring & Evaluation reports
		Guidelines on child marriage developed and rolled out in schools;	Monitoring & Evaluation reports
		Percentage of communities reached with IEC/edutainment materials	Monitoring & Evaluation reports
4.2 Launch country wide end child marriage campaigns through media and dissemination of IEC materials.	Over 5 million boys and girls in schools and out of school reached	Number of boys and girls demonstrating a positive change in their agency and aspirations that impact on their behaviour (e.g. delayed sexual relations and marriage);	Monitoring and evaluation reports
		Completion rate at Primary 6 for boys and girls;	Education Management Information System

STRATEGIC INTERVENTIONS	TARGET FOR 2021	PERFORMANCE INDICATORS	MEANS OF VERIFICATION (MOV)
Objective 4: To change negative socioeconomic and cultural norms that promote child marriage in the society			
		Completion rate at Senior Secondary for boys and girls	Education Management Information System
	Over 10 million families in the targeted local governments with a positive attitude	Number of families that have enrolled or re-enrolled their girl children in school	Monitoring & Evaluation reports
	Over 500,000 male figures and other male action groups are established within communities to promote the abandonment of child marriage	Number of male figures and other male action groups are established within communities to promote the abandonment of child marriage	Monitoring & Evaluation reports
	36 states and 774 local governments have made public declarations and have abandoned the child marriage practice	Number of communities that have made public declarations and have abandoned the child marriage practice	Monitoring & Evaluation reports
4.3 Establish and promote partnership with elected representatives at National, state and local government levels as strong advocates against child marriage through community engagements	All of the targeted parliamentarians, sector committee members of key ministries, religious and traditional cultural leaders and other opinion leaders promote and advocate against child marriage	Number of parliamentarians, sector committee members of key ministries support and advocate the end of child marriage.	Monitoring & Evaluation reports
	All Partnerships established at National, state and local government levels involving elected, religious and traditional cultural leaders and other opinion leaders in the communities for child marriage	Number of functional partnerships at National state and local government levels involving elected, religious and traditional cultural leaders and other opinion leaders in the communities for ending child marriage.	Monitoring & Evaluation reports with participants' list in the partnerships

STRATEGIC INTERVENTIONS	TARGET FOR 2021	PERFORMANCE INDICATORS	MEANS OF VERIFICATION (MOV)
Objective 4: To change negative socioeconomic and cultural norms that promote child marriage in the society			
4.4 Promote and highlight positive deviance among parents, girls, boys, law enforcement officers, and leaders using community dialogues and role models	Over 1000 community dialogues conducted	Number of communities promoting and practicing positive deviance as part of a strategy to end child marriage.	KABP survey Monitoring & Evaluation reports
	All schools visited by	Number of girls and	Monitoring &
	role models in the targeted communities	boys aspiring to marry at a later age	Evaluation reports
Objective 5. To increase access to quality all round education including reproductive health education and services to all children			
5.1 Build the capacity of families to address and change the expectations, attitudes and practices in regard to child marriage	All vulnerable families with adolescent girls identified country wide and attending school	Number of vulnerable families with adolescent girls attending school	Monitoring & Evaluation reports
	Conditional Cash Transfer -CCT, Bursary scheme established and over 1,000,000 girls supported to access secondary education	Number of girls from vulnerable families benefiting from a bursary and/or CCT scheme	Monitoring & Evaluation reports
5.2 Promote access to, retention of girls in primary and secondary education through refurbishment of facilities (e.g. wash rooms for girls separate toilets for boys and girls).	All the schools in the targeted communities have facilities refurbished to provide separate washrooms for girls and boys	Number of girls completing primary secondary education due to improved facilities	Monitoring & Evaluation reports Gender Responsiveness in Education Monitoring Reports

STRATEGIC INTERVENTIONS	TARGET FOR 2021	PERFORMANCE INDICATORS	MEANS OF VERIFICATION (MOV)
Objective 5. To increase access to quality all round education including reproductive health education and services to all children			
5.5 Facilitate access of adolescents at risk of child marriage and girls (especially the out of school young mothers) to vocational training institutions	At least 5 million girls enrolled in vocational institutes in 5 years	Number of girls enrolled in the institutes and completing their training	Monitoring & Evaluation reports
	At least 1 million girls with vocational skills are engaged in productive income generation activities and delaying marriage in 5 years	Number of girls with vocational skills, engaged in productive income generation activities and delaying marriage;	Monitoring & Evaluation reports
5.6 Strengthen civil registration systems in Nigeria as a means to protect boys and girls from sexual and physical violence that lead to or arise from child marriage	All 774 local governments and their communities have functional birth and death registration system	Proportion of local government with functionality of Mobile Vital Records Systems	Monitoring & Evaluation reports
		% of children (boys and girls) under 5 whose births are registered	NDHS
		% of children (boys and girls) under 5 who have birth certificates	Monitoring & Evaluation reports
5.7 Improve menstruation and hygiene management for girls in school through dissemination of the menstruation management readers in print, audio and video	All girls in targeted local governments have knowledge on menstruation and hygiene management	Proportion of girls dropping out of school due to pregnancy	Gender Responsiveness in Education Monitoring Reports

STRATEGIC INTERVENTIONS	TARGET FOR 2021	PERFORMANCE INDICATORS	MEANS OF VERIFICATION (MOV)
Objective 5. To increase access to quality all round education including reproductive health education and services to all children			
5.3 Capacity building of school administrators (PTA, SMCs) teachers and other staffs to create protective and safe environments for girls	All targeted school administrators, teachers and school staff provide protective and safe environments for girls	Number of school administrators (PTA, SMCs) teachers and other staffs with knowledge and create protective and safe environments for girls	Monitoring & Evaluation reports
5.4 Integrate gender and rights education (with a focus on child marriage) in the primary and secondary school curriculum.	Primary and secondary curriculum reviewed	Reviewed primary and secondary curriculum with gender and rights issues integrated	Review primary and secondary curriculum
5.8 Build girls' and boys' capacities in life skills and agency including self-esteem, self-defence and confidence to end CM	Life skills education integrated in primary and secondary school curriculum to end CM	Number of Schools (primary and secondary) implementing curriculum on life skills education to end CM in all local governments	Reviewed school curriculum (primary and secondary)
	All girls and boys equipped with life skills and delaying marriage and sexual relations	Number of girls and boys with life skills and delaying marriage in the targeted communities	Monitoring & Evaluation reports
		Proportion of girls and boys marrying before the ages of 15 and 18;	NDHS
		The teenage pregnancy rate.	NDHS
5.9 Facilitate and support the establishment of adolescents' groups which offer safe spaces for girls and boys to talk about sensitive issues.	All boys and girls in targeted communities are members of at least one club/group	Number of in school and out of school adolescents who are members of adolescent clubs/groups	Monitoring & Evaluation reports

STRATEGIC INTERVENTIONS	TARGET FOR 2021	PERFORMANCE INDICATORS	MEANS OF VERIFICATION (MOV)
Objective 5. To increase access to quality all round education including reproductive health education and services to all children			
5.10 Build capacities of senior women and male teachers in schools	All schools have senior women and men teachers with knowledge and skills to support girls and boys, monitor and prevent child marriage and teenage pregnancies	Number of senior women and male teachers with knowledge and skills to support girls and boys, monitor and prevent child marriage.	Monitoring & Evaluation reports
5.11 Provide both in and out of school girls and boys with accurate reproductive health information to enable them manage their growth and development.	All girls and boys are accessing reproductive health information in and out of school	Number of girls and boys accessing reproductive health information. The teenage pregnancy rate.	Monitoring & Evaluation reports NDHS
5.12 Equip health workers with adolescent counselling skills to promote adolescent health friendly services and rights in health facilities.	All the facilities in targeted communities have at least 2 providers trained in adolescent and youth friendly services	Number of health workers providing youth friendly sexual and reproductive health services;	Monitoring and evaluation reports
		Priority actions for adolescents integrated within the National HIV Testing and Counselling guidelines;	Monitoring and evaluation reports
		Priority actions for adolescents integrated within the National HIV Care and Treatment guidelines	Monitoring and evaluation reports
5.13 Facilitate access of girls and married adolescents to friendly adolescent health services.	All the targeted communities have adolescent/youth health corners established and equipped	Number of boys and girls accessing youth/ adolescent corners in health facilities;	Monitoring and evaluation reports

STRATEGIC INTERVENTIONS	TARGET FOR 2021	PERFORMANCE INDICATORS	MEANS OF VERIFICATION (MOV)
Objective 6: To establish and strengthen coordination, implementation, monitoring and evaluation structures/institutions for the implementation of the strategy			
6.1 Establish and Support a coordination unit within the FMWA&SD, Child Development Unit to coordinate and monitor the implementation of the NSCM.	A strong and effective Coordination Unit established	A fully functional coordination unit established and strengthened	Monitoring & Evaluation report Process Reports
	Staff assigned to the unit and equipment procured	Staff with wide experience on child rights and protection recruited and office equipment (computers, furniture) for the Unit procured	Monitoring & Evaluation reports
	Orientation of Staff undertaken	Number of staff oriented	Monitoring & Evaluation report Workshop reports
	Quarterly review meetings	Number of quarterly review meetings on NSCM for all stakeholders in the implementation of the strategy held	Minutes of the meetings Monitoring & Evaluation reports
	Annual performance reviews	Number of Annual performance review meetings on NSCM for all stakeholders in the implementation of the strategy held	Performance review reports Monitoring & Evaluation reports
6.2 Strengthen government's relationship with CSOs to facilitate optimum coordination of activities relating to ending child marriage for the country	Facilitate the inclusion of CSO, private sector and community representatives in the state technical working group and formal inauguration of Community Working	Number of CSO included in the State Technical Working Group Number of Community Working Groups formally inaugurated and functional	Monitoring & Evaluation reports

STRATEGIC INTERVENTIONS	TARGET FOR 2021	PERFORMANCE INDICATORS	MEANS OF VERIFICATION (MOV)
Objective 6: To establish and strengthen coordination, implementation, monitoring and evaluation structures/institutions for the implementation of the strategy			
6.3 Develop and operationalize an information management system (IMS) that is capable of capturing child marriage and other child protection data of all children.	An information management system established and operational at FMWA&SD and line ministries and implementation partner organizations	Functional Management Information System that captures information on child marriage, teenage pregnancies, protection, and health indicators	An information management system Monitoring & Evaluation reports
		Number of communities with functional child help line services linked to functional referral and case management systems	Monitoring & Evaluation reports
	All targeted communities have been oriented and sensitized about the MIS for ending child marriage services;	Number of health workers providing youth friendly sexual and reproductive health	Monitoring and evaluation reports
6.4 Develop and implement an M&E system (including information management system and M&E plan)	M&E system in place by March 2017	M & E System on ending child marriage developed	Monitoring & Evaluation Plan document Report of the Process
	A robust M&E framework is established and is guiding tracking and reporting of progress within the first 6 months of implementation of the strategy	An M&E plan/document is in place and shared with partners	Distributed Monitoring & Evaluation documents and tools
2021	Quarterly M&E activities conducted and reports prepared by December	Number of M&E reports prepared	Monitoring & Evaluation reports

STRATEGIC INTERVENTIONS	TARGET FOR 2021	PERFORMANCE INDICATORS	MEANS OF VERIFICATION (MOV)
Objective 6: To establish and strengthen coordination, implementation, monitoring and evaluation structures/institutions for the implementation of the strategy			
	Mid-term review of the strategy undertaken June 2019	A National database on child marriage updated regularly	Monitoring & Evaluation reports
	End term evaluation undertaken by 2021	Effects of interventions on child Marriage indicators available Nationally	Impact Evaluation Reports

TARGET FOR 2021

MEANS OF VERIFICATION (MOV)

Objective 6: To establish and strengthen coordination, implementation, monitoring and evaluation structures/institutions for the implementation of the strategy

Mid-term review of
the strategy undertaken
June 2019

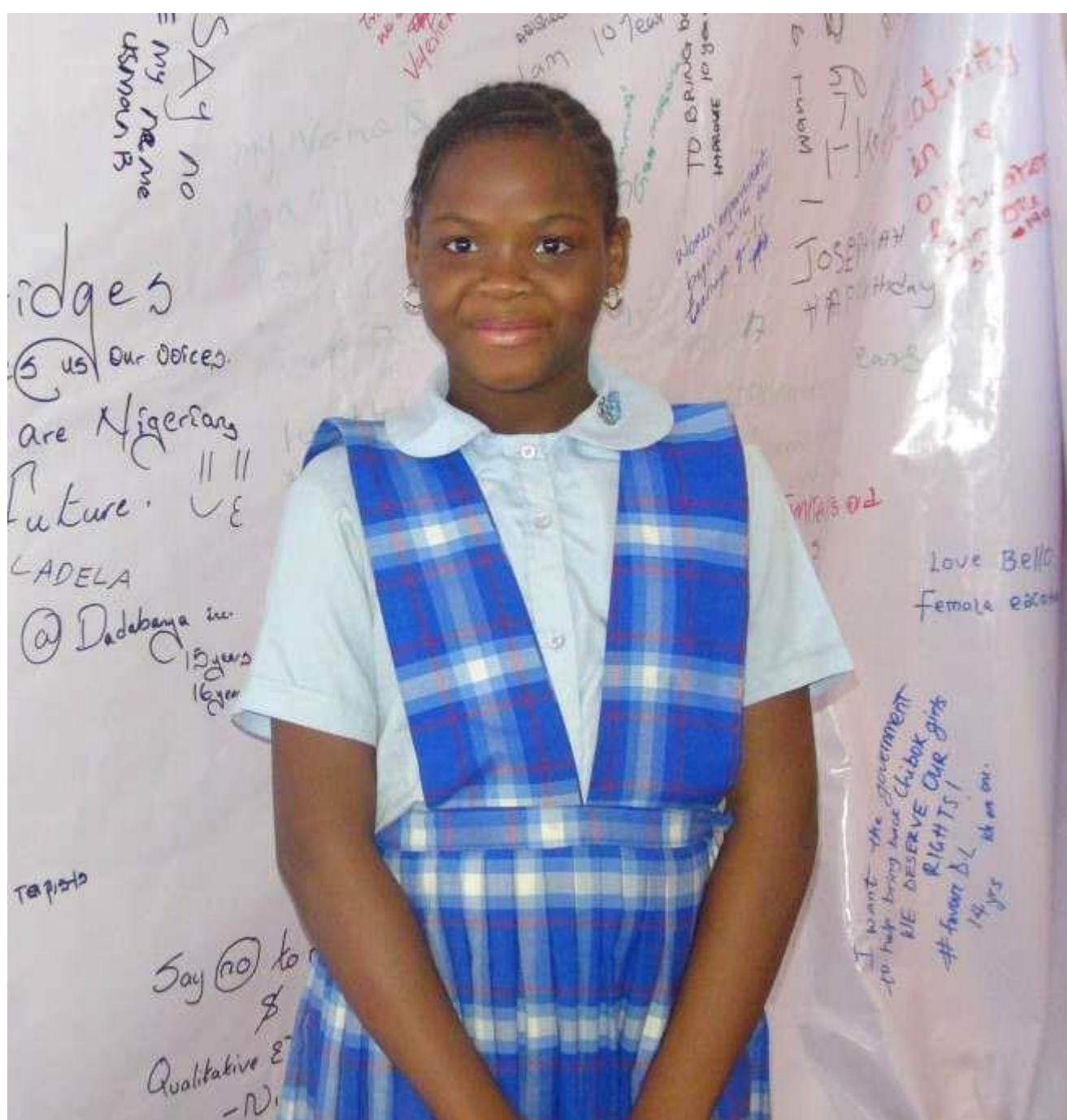
A National database on
child marriage updated
regularly

Monitoring & Evaluation reports

End term evaluation
undertaken by 2021

Effects of interventions on child Marriage indicators available Nationally

Impact Evaluation Reports





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7

FUNDING FOR THE
STRATEGIC PLAN

7.0 FUNDING FOR THE STRATEGIC PLAN

The success of this strategic plan will depend on proper allocation of resources to the various components. This will include the human, material and financial resources. There will be a need to develop an operational/action plan, properly cost the action plan with the various activities to ensure the realization of the set goals and objectives. It is suggested that the

National coordinating body should initiate the process of budgeting using a bottom-up approach that is, involving all the implementing partners at community, district, local, state and National levels. The resulting budget (which is participatory and inclusive) can be used to mobilise resources from government development partners, line ministries, and private concerns for the implementation of the strategy



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