



To mark the first ever [International Day of the Girl Child](#) , the United Nations Population Fund ( [UNFPA](#) ) released a new report on child marriage around the world and what should be done to eradicate it.

The report, " [Marrying Too Young: End Child Marriage](#) ", sheds light on child marriage prevalence and trends in developing countries, and provides a glimpse into the future by describing what countries may face if current trends in child marriage continue.

It finds that girls who are poor, have little or no education and live in rural areas are most likely to enter child marriages. Girls living in rural areas of the developing world are twice as likely to wed before age 18 as their urban counterparts, and girls with no education are over three times more likely to do so than those with secondary or higher education.

Child marriage violates girls' rights, denies them of their childhood, disrupts their education, jeopardizes their health, and limits their opportunities.

Therefore, the report calls on governments and leaders to end child marriage by:

- enacting and enforcing national laws that raise the age of marriage to 18, for both girls and boys;
- using data to identify and target areas with high proportions and numbers of girls at risk of child marriage;
- expanding prevention programmes that empower girls at risk of child marriage and address the root causes underlying the practice;
- mitigating the harmful impact of child marriage on girls.

The Day's observance also included the launch of "[Too Young To Wed](#)", an art exhibition and social media campaign hosted by UNFPA and

[VII Photo Agency](#)

. Featuring photography by Stephanie Sinclair and video by Jessica Dimmock, the show highlights the personal narratives of girls from Afghanistan, Ethiopia, India, Nepal and Yemen.

**Additional links:**

- UNFPA [Press Release](#) : '142 Million Girls Could Be Married before 18 in the Next Decade, Warns New Report'
- [European Week of Action for Girls](#) ;
- [UN Secretary-General's message](#) for the International Day of the Girl Child;
- [Girls Not Brides](#) - a global partnership of more than 190 non-governmental organisations committed to ending child marriage, funded in 2011 by The Elders.

**Source:** [UNFPA](#) | Original article published on [www.unbrussels.org](http://www.unbrussels.org)