

ANDHRA
PRADESH

**STATE
ACTION
PLAN**
**TO PREVENT
CHILD
MARRIAGES**



**Department of
Women Development & Child Welfare
Andhra Pradesh**

**STATE ACTION PLAN TO PREVENT
CHILD MARRIAGES BY 2030
(SAPPCM)**

2020

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FOREWARD

Marriage before the age of 18 is known as child marriage and it is a fundamental violation of human rights. It is one of the most prevalent forms of gender-based violence and social evil. Child marriages deny children of their child rights and hampers their physical, emotional and psychological growth, mitigates the opportunity to fully develop into healthy, productive and empowered citizens. Child marriages also affect boys, but to a lesser degree than they affect girls. It often compromises a girl's development by resulting in early pregnancy and social isolation, interrupting her schooling, limiting her opportunities for career and vocational advancement, and placing her at an increased risk of domestic violence. Many factors come into play to place a girl at risk of child marriage; these include poverty, family honor, social norms, customary or religious laws that condone the practice, lack of proper education facilities, an inadequate legislative framework, etc.

Though several efforts have been taken up to eradicate this problem, it still persists at a significant level in our country. In India, the prevalence of child marriage declined from 47 percent of girls married before age 18, in 2005-2006 to 27 percent in 2015-2016. In Andhra Pradesh, where according to NFHS 4, 33 percent of women aged 20-24, were married before the age of 18 years. That means one in every three children in the state of Andhra Pradesh is a victim of child marriage.

To address the issue of child marriages, Plan India has been implementing the 'Girls Advocacy Alliance' project in Andhra Pradesh since 2016. The program lays emphasis on the elimination of violence against girls and young women and their economic exclusion as policy priorities. The project works closely with the government, religious leaders, CSOs, and corporates on ending child marriages by promoting education for girls. GAA collaborated with reputed academic institutions and brought out research studies on factors contributing to child marriages, the situation of child brides, implementation of GO Ms. NO 13, PCMA and CMRA, and conditional cash transfers in the state of Andhra Pradesh. This helped with evidence-based advocacy to policymakers and enabled key stakeholders to understand the gravity of the problem, and to take proactive steps to stop child marriages. GAA supported the Government of Andhra Pradesh in bringing out a manual on 'strengthening of village-level child protection committees' and to develop a State Action Plan to Prevent Child Marriages to comprehensively address the problem of child marriages.

I take this opportunity to congratulate the Government of Andhra Pradesh and the Department of Women Development and Child Welfare for their tireless efforts in addressing the issue of child marriages as well as bringing new schemes like Ammavodi, which help to promote education among children, especially girls. Along with these efforts, I am sure that the State Plan Action Plan to Prevent Child Marriages document will serve as an effective tool to end child marriages in Andhra Pradesh before 2030 as was committed towards achieving under the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). I reassure the support of Plan India to the Government of Andhra Pradesh in making Andhra Pradesh a 'Child Marriage Free State'.

Mohammad Asif
Executive Director, Plan India

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ABBREVIATIONS

ACDPO	Assistant Child Development Programme Officer
ANM	Auxiliary Nurse Midwife
ASHA	Accredited Social Health Activist
AWW	Anganwadi Worker
AWC	Anganwadi Centre
BBBP	Beti Bachao Beti Padoo
BC	Backward Caste
BRB	Bala Raksha Bhavan
CCT	Conditional Cash Transfer
CESS	Centre for Economic and Social Studies
CEDAW	Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women.
CDPO	Child Development Protection Office
CMPO	Child Marriage Protection Officer
CMRA	Child Marriage Restraint Act
CPC	Child Protection Committee
CRC	Committee on the Rights of the Child
CRC	Convention on the Rights of the Children
CSO	Civil Society Organization
CWC	Child Welfare Committee
DCPO	District Child Protection Officer
DCPU	District Child Protection Unit
DCPS	District Child Protection Committee
DLHS	District Level Household Survey
EBC	Economically Backward Class
ECM	Early/Child Marriage
FGM	Female Genital Mutilation
GP	Gram Panchayat
HIV	Human Immunodeficiency Virus
HRC	Human Rights Committee
ICPS	Integrated Child Protection Scheme
ICRW	International Center for Research on Women
IEC	Information, Education and Communication material
IMR	Infant Mortality Rate
JJ ACT	Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act, 2000
JOVT	Job-oriented Vocational Training
KGBV	Kasturba Gandhi Balika Vidyalaya
KPI	Key Performance Indicators
MCPC	Mandal Child Protection Committees
MDO	Mandal Development Officer

MEO	Mandal Education Officer
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MIS	Management Information System
MMR	Maternal Mortality Rate
MoU	Memorandum of Understanding
MPV	Mahila/Women Police Volunteers
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
NFHS	National Family and Health Survey
OBC	Other Backward Caste
PCMA	Prohibition of Child Marriages Act
PHC	Primary Health Care
PLF	Poverty Learning Foundation
PRI	Panchayati Raj Institution
PRD	Panchayati Raj Department
RDO	Revenue Divisional Officer
RKSK	Rastriya Kishor Swasthya Karyakram
SAPPCM	State Action Plan for Prevention of Child Marriages
SAARC	South Asia Association for Regional Cooperation
SC	Scheduled Caste
SCPCR	State Commission for Protection of Child Rights
SCERT	State Council of Education and Training
SCPS	State Child Protection Society
SDG	Sustainable Development Goal
SEM	Socio-Ecological Model
SHG	Self-Help Groups
SJPU	Special Juvenile Police Unit
SMECM	State Mission to End Child Marriages
SOP	Standard Operating Procedure
ST	Scheduled Tribe
ToC	Theory of Change
UN	United Nations
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
VAO	Village Administrative Officer
VCPS	Village Child Protection Committee
VCPC	Village Child Protection Committees
VDP	Village Development Plan
VRO	Village Revenue Officer
WCD	Women and Child Welfare Department
WDCW	Women Development and Child Welfare Department

STATE ACTION PLAN TO PREVENT CHILD MARRIAGES BY 2030



When my parents mentioned marriage, I had no idea what ‘marriage’ even meant

~~ Kamla, Indian girl married at 13.



There are several girls, like Kamla who do not know what marriage is and mentally, physically are not ready for it. Child marriage is a human rights violation under international law. It adversely affects girls’ and women’s rights to consensual marriage, education, equality, economic opportunity, healthcare, mobility, and freedom from fear, violence, and exploitation.

UN bodies and conventions, for instance, the Convention on the Rights of the Child, the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), the Committee on the Rights of the Child (CRC), and the Human Rights Committee (HRC)¹ consider 18 to be the minimum age when a person is able to make a significant life decision such as marriage.

Accordingly, India has committed to eliminating child, early, and forced marriage by 2030 in line with target 5.3 of the Sustainable Development Goals. India acceded to the Convention on the Rights of the Child in 1992, which sets a minimum age of marriage of 18, and ratified the Convention on Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) in 1993, which obligates states to ensure free and full consent to marriage.

India is also a focus country of the UNICEF-UNFPA Global Program to Accelerate Action to End Child Marriages. Representatives of the South Asia Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC), including India, asserted the Kathmandu Call to Action to End Child Marriage in Asia in 2014. During its 2017 Universal Periodic Review, India agreed to consider recommendations to improve enforcement of legal provisions against child marriage².

In line with the commitments made by the Government of India, the nodal agency – the Department of Women Development and Child Welfare, the Government of Andhra Pradesh has been putting in remarkable efforts to end child marriages by 2030. The High-profile campaigners, for instance, Plan India, Save the Children, World Vision and UNICEF have been advocating and trying to establish a child marriage free state.

To end child marriages, the Department of Women Development and Child Welfare, Government of Andhra Pradesh has drafted “State Action Plan to prevent Child Marriages by 2030” with the technical support of Poverty Learning Foundation, Plan India, and Mahita. It strengthens the implementation mechanism with specific strategies.

Strategy: Andhra Pradesh State aims to achieve Sustainable Development Goal 5.3 and ensure zero child marriages by 2030. To achieve the target, the Department of Women Development and Child Welfare is taking an integrated and holistic approach by working with key departments strengthening the implementation mechanism and monitoring the status from time to time, and provide all levels of opportunities to the girl children to utilize their full potential and contribute to the overall growth of the state.

¹ UN General Assembly (2018) “Promotion and Protection of Rights of the Children”, <https://undocs.org/A/C.3/73/L.22/Rev.1>

² Girls Not Brides, <https://www.girlsnotbrides.org/child-marriage/india/>

Vision: To make Andhra Pradesh state a “Child Marriage Free State” where all girl children, irrespective of their social identity, get access to secondary education, health, and employable skills and are able to enter the job market.

Aim: Through better understanding, the social, economic, and cultural factors driving child marriages, policymakers, policy implementers, and civil society leaders will be able to curb, and eventually eliminate child marriages by 2030.

Validity: The State Action Plan to End Child Marriages will be valid for five years, till the end of 2025 from the date of notification. After reviewing the situation and progress, with needed changes and strategies, it will continue till the end of 2030.

STRUCTURE

Limitations:

Non-availability of information on budgetary allocations from WDCW and other stakeholder departments.

PART ONE

INTRODUCTION

METHODOLOGY AND CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

PREVALENCE OF CHILD MARRIAGES

DRIVERS OF CHILD MARRIAGES

POLICIES AND PROGRAMS TO END CHILD MARRIAGES

1. INTRODUCTION

Child marriage refers to any formal marriage or informal union between a child under the age of 18 and an adult or another child. The prevalence of child marriage has decreased worldwide—from one in four girls married a decade ago to approximately one in five today. Despite several measures taken, the practice remains wide spread³.



“Children must get the best possible start in life. Their survival, protection, growth and development in good health and with proper nutrition are the essential foundations of human development. We will make concerted efforts to fight infectious diseases, tackle major causes of malnutrition and nurture children in a safe environment that enables them to be physically healthy, mentally alert, emotionally secure, socially competent and able to learn”

The basic principle adopted by UN general assembly in 2002 and committed to create a **WORLD FIT FOR CHILDREN**



In view of the UN declaration, the government of India has committed to ensuring quality growth for all its children irrespective of gender and ethnicity. After ratifying and accepting the Convention on the Rights of the Children (CRC), several steps have been taken to ensure the well-being of children with the quality of services. The Indian Government has adopted the National Policy for Children, 2013 to reiterate the commitment to the rights-based approach for children.

According to UNICEF, every year around 12 million girls across the world are forced into child marriage. About 650 million girls and women alive today were child brides. If similar trends continue, another 150 million girls will become child brides before 2030⁴. Child marriage puts forth a sequence of critical challenges for girls - adolescent pregnancy and pregnancy complications leading to the death of girls aged 15-19 world wide⁵. Survivors often suffer from pre-birth complications, fistulas, sexually transmitted diseases, stillbirth, and other physical ramifications inflicted upon them and their children⁶.

Children born to child brides have a higher susceptibility to low birth weight, malnutrition, failure to thrive, and physical and cognitive underdevelopment, which can undermine their educational and economic prospects; thus, leading to poverty and more child marriage⁷. To break this cycle, efforts must be undertaken to not only prevent child marriage but also to provide aid to existing child brides and their children grappling with these onerous challenges—all of which dovetail into many SDGs⁸.

3 UNICEF, Child marriages, <https://www.unicef.org/protection/child-marriage>

4 UNICEF (2020) “Child Marriages around the world” <https://www.unicef.org/stories/child-marriage-around-world>

5 WHO (2012) “Child Marriages a Threat to Health” <https://www.euro.who.int/en/health-topics/Life-stages/sexual-and-reproductive-health/news/news/2012/12/child-marriage-a-threat-to-health>

6 World Vision, <https://www.worldvision.org/child-protection-news-stories/10-worst-places-child-marriage>

7 Berkeley School of Law and Save the Children (2018) “Towards the end of child marriages” https://www.law.berkeley.edu/wpcontent/uploads/2018/08/Toward-an-End-to-Child-Marriage-Report_FINAL.pdf

8 Carnegie Council for Ethics in International Affairs (2019) “Prioritizing the Linkages Between Sustainable Development Goals to Eradicate Child Marriages” https://www.carnegiecouncil.org/publications/ethics_online/prioritizing-linkages-between-sustainable-development-goals-eradicate-child-marriage

Of several challenges that are negatively influencing the well-being of children, child marriages are one of the issues challenging the Indian Government. India ranks fourth among the eight South Asian countries in terms of child marriage prevalence—says the report from UNICEF⁹. One in three of the world's child brides live in India. Of the country's 223 million child brides, 102 million were married before turning 15¹⁰.

This ancient practice still flourishes in several states of India, including Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, West Bengal, Maharashtra, Madhya Pradesh, Jharkhand, and Rajasthan. Uttar Pradesh is home to the largest population of child brides of 36 million girls. In Andhra Pradesh, 13 million child brides were identified¹¹. This practice is largely driven by poverty, deeply embedded cultural norms, traditions, and pervasive discrimination against girls in society. Child marriages are still celebrated en-masse, in public festivals sometimes involving children under ten, who are effectively betrothed until puberty¹²⁻¹³.

Every child has the right to be protected from this harmful practice, which has devastating consequences for individuals and society. Preventing child marriage is now firmly on the global development agenda, most prominently through its inclusion in Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) target 5.3, which aims to eliminate the practice by 2030. Although indicator 5.3.1 measures child marriage among girls, the practice occurs among boys as well. Regardless of gender, marriage before adulthood is a breach of children's rights¹⁴.

Besides SDG 5.3, there are other goals, which have strategic linkages with goal 5.3. Unless we have a proper mechanism and action plan to address these goals, it will become a challenging task to zero down child marriages by 2030. Following are the SDGs, either directly or indirectly, linked with child marriages:

In this context, it is to be noted that equality in the family is the precondition for Sustainable Development Goal 5, which talks about –

- i. **Elimination of violence and an end to harmful practices**
- ii. **Ensuring women's access to economic resources; and**
- iii. **Shared responsibilities for unpaid care and domestic work.**

The other SDGs that are either directly or indirectly linked to end child marriages are –

Goal 2: Zero hunger: End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition, and promote sustainable agriculture;

Goal 5: Gender equality: Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls;

Goal 10: Reduce inequalities: Reduce inequality within and among countries; and

Goal 16: Peace, justice and strong institutions: Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels

Several scholars, activists, and donors including UN agencies agreed that it is not easy to end child marriages, as it is a cultural and social norm among many communities. In such a situation, the efforts

⁹ UNICEF (2019) Ending Child Marriage - A profile of progress in India, <https://data.unicef.org/resources/ending-child-marriage-a-profile-of-progress-in-india/>

¹⁰ Ibid

¹¹ Ibid

¹² UNICEF, (2008) Child Marriage and the law, p. 23; see also UNICEF, "Early Marriage: Child Spouses," Innocenti digest no. 7, March 2001, p. 2.

¹³ CESS (2018) "Facing Constraints and Seizing Opportunities: Child Marriages in Andhra Pradesh State", Centre for Economic and Social Studies, Hyderabad, http://www.mahita.org/wpcontent/uploads/2019/12/Facing_Constraints_and_Seizing_opportunities_Child_Marriages_Stud

¹⁴ Ibid

made by stakeholders like government officials, multilateral organizations, and CSOs may not be sufficient, unless there is a strategic direction to address these critical drivers. It needs long-term investments into programs that work and can be scaled up. Effective interventions to end child marriage must be comprehensive and cross-sectoral.

Government of India's Response to end Child Marriages:

To address the situation, the Union Government has endeavoured to curb the practice and has replaced the Child Marriage Restraint Act of 1929 with a more progressive Prohibition of Child Marriage Act, 2006. It includes punitive measures against those who perform, permit, and promote child marriage. With this Act, the States are vested with powers to formulate rules for implementation of this legislation and carrying out the provisions.

The National Plan of Action for Children, 2005 also includes goals on eradicating child marriage. One of the notable initiatives taken by India towards the protection of children including the girl child has been the establishment of a National Commission for Protection of Child Rights in 2007 for proper enforcement of children's rights and effective implementation of laws and programs relating to children. Several National level policies formulated since 2000, including the National Population Policy 2000, the National Youth Policy 2003, and the National Adolescent Reproductive and Sexual Health Strategy have advocated delaying the age of marriage and the age of conceiving the first child¹⁵.

In this process, the National Strategy Document on the Prevention of Child Marriage was drafted in 2013. Besides there are few other policy initiatives, for instance—Child Marriage Restraint Act 1929 (amended in 1978), Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act 2000, Domestic Violence Act 2000, Child policy 2003, Prohibition of Child Marriage Act 2006 (GO.No:13), Adolescent and Youth policy 2007, Right to Education 2009, Girl Child policy 2013, Prohibition of Children from Sexual Offence Act 2012 and the National Plan of Action for Children 2017 that were brought into enforcement.

Two flagship programs - National Adolescent Health Strategy Rashtriya Kishor Swasthya Karyakram (RKSK), and Beti Bachao, Beti Padhao (BBBP), a program to address the gender imbalance in sex ratios and child marriage in 100 districts across India was launched.

Similarly, the State Government of Andhra Pradesh launched YSR Kalyana Laxmi/YSR Giriputrika/YSR Shadi Tohfa to encourage girls' education and thereby end child marriages. Ending child marriages is one of the non-negotiable commitments made by the Government of Andhra Pradesh State. This initiative indicates the commitment of the state government. However, the results are far behind the expectations.

It is, therefore, to be noted, that more effective and better jointed interventions and collaborations are needed to address child marriage and early childbearing. The State governments should have specific action plans to address the situation where all stakeholders work together.

¹⁵ Press Information Bureau, Gol 2013, Child marriages in India, <https://pib.gov.in/newsite/PrintRelease.aspx?relid=100741>

Why should child marriages be prevented?

It is clear that child marriages, especially girls early marriage impacts the individual, society, and the country in the following ways¹⁶:

- i. Child marriage effectively ends a girl's childhood, curtails her education, minimizes her economic opportunities, increases her risk of domestic violence, and puts her at risk for early, frequent, and very high-risk pregnancies.**
- ii. Adolescent mothers are at a higher risk of maternal mortality and morbidity than mothers just a few years older**
- iii. Girls under 15 are five times more likely to die in childbirth than women in their 20s and face higher risk of pregnancy-related injuries, such as obstetric fistula.**
- iv. Child brides are often unable to negotiate safer sexual practices and are therefore at a higher risk of HIV and other sexually transmitted infections**
- v. The negative consequences of child marriage reach beyond the girls themselves: children of child brides are 60 percent more likely to die in the first year of life than those born to mothers older than 19, and families of child brides are more likely to be poor and unhealthy.**

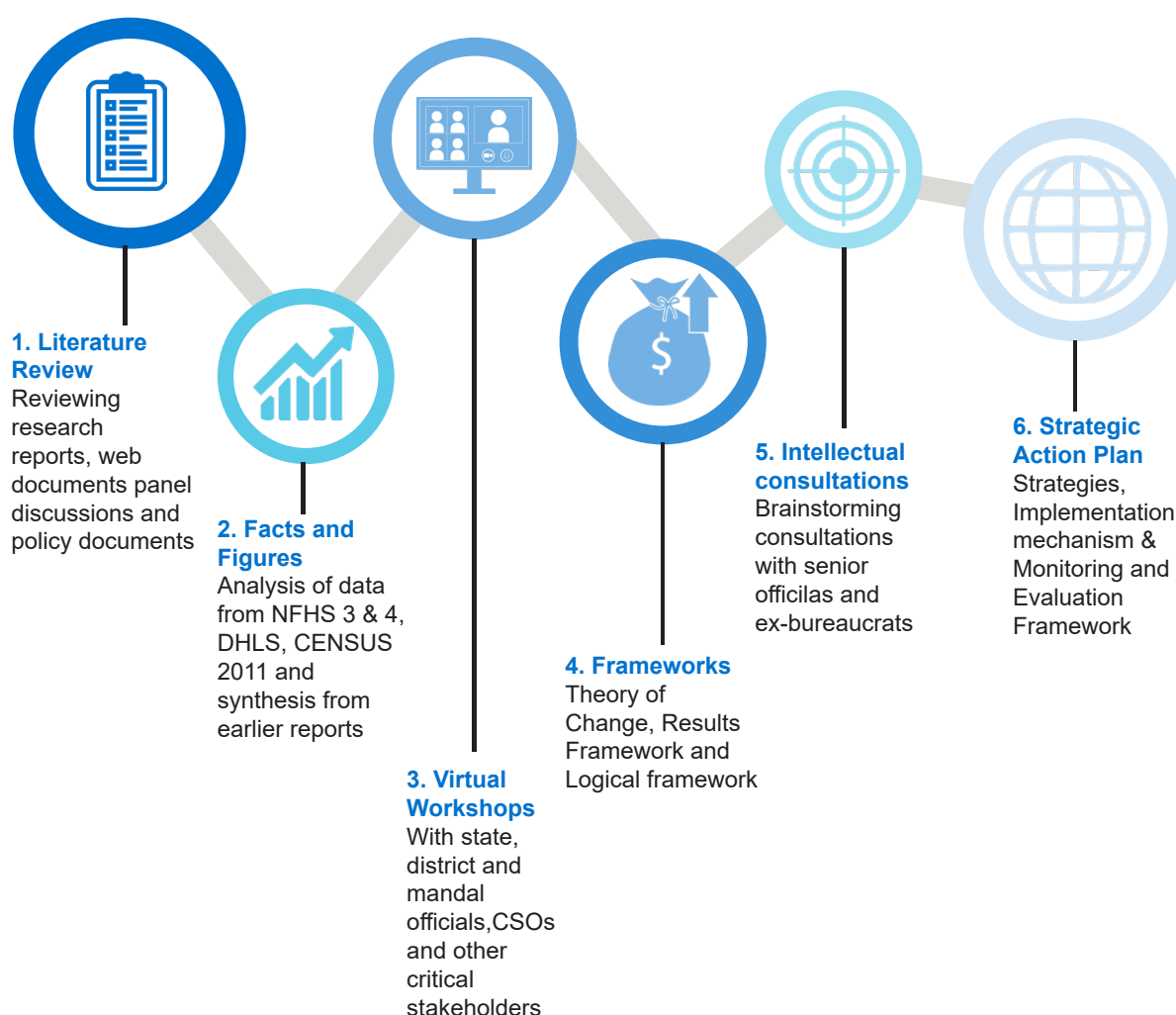
The impacts of child marriage under five key domains are: fertility and population growth; health, nutrition, and violence; educational attainments and learnings; participation in the labour force and type of work; and participation in decision making and investments are discussed by several scholars. Many governments have recognized the impact of child marriage on their economy. According to the International Centre for Research on Women and the World Bank, ending the practice of child marriage would save billions of dollars in annual welfare expenditures, resulting in global savings of more than \$4 trillion by 2030¹⁷. In other words, the world cannot afford to allow child marriage to continue.

¹⁶ <https://iwhc.org/resources/facts-child-marriage/>

¹⁷ World Bank and ICRW (2017) Tea Economic Impact of Child Marriages, <https://www.worldbank.org/en/news/press-release/2017/06/26/child-marriage-will-cost-developing-countries-trillions-of-dollars-by-2030-says-world-bank-icrw-report>

2. METHODOLOGY & CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

The preparation of the State Action Plan to Prevent Child Marriages entailed a rigorous participatory process. It involved a bottom-up approach that considered the ground level realities to formulate the State Action Plan. To accomplish the objectives of the study, a four-stage merging methodology framework was formulated as shown in the figure below:



To bring the evidence and draw the strategies, the merging methodology¹⁸ model has been applied. This process has 6 stages. In the first stage, available literature on the subject has been reviewed and synthesized to understand the international and national policies on child rights with special focus on child marriages. Mainly reports from UN agencies, international bilateral and multilateral agencies, policy research organizations like Council for Foreign Relations were used. Besides, it brings to light ground realities that are driving child marriages in the state. Relevant synthesis has been used to set the introductory sections in the State Action Plan.

In the second stage, data analysis has been done to understand the prevalence (facts & figures) of child marriages in the state. In this context, data from NFHS 3&4, DLHS, Census 2011, UNICEF databank, and data from the Department of Women Development and Child Welfare has been accessed to illustrate the prevalence of child marriages. Virtual workshops¹⁹ (through zoom meetings) and one-to-one interviews with all critical stakeholders were conducted during the third stage. As a part of information gathering, child brides were also interviewed to understand their perceptions about their future.

Key outputs from first (literature review), second (analysis of facts and figures), and third stage (virtual workshops) of work have been merged and logically segregated into core sections – strategies, implementation mechanism, and monitoring and evaluation framework were drafted. This is a part of the fourth stage of work (framework), which was followed by constructing the theory of change, results in a framework and logical frame to finalize the verifiable activities to end child marriages by 2030.

The preliminary document has been placed before intellectuals for review and feedback. Based on the feedback, the draft of the State Action Plan has been worked out at the sixth stage of work. It was reviewed by Plan India, Mahita, and the Department of Women Development and Child Welfare.

Conceptual Framework

The strategy for the State Action Plan is informed by a socio-ecological model that takes into consideration a holistic approach and recognizes the various factors that come into play to create conditions for child marriages to thrive. One such theory that explains the interplay between the environmental, social, and individual factors on human behaviour is the Socio-Ecological Model. This model was developed by an American psychologist Urie Bronfenbrenner in 1989. The Socio-Ecological Model (SEM) is a theory-based framework for understanding the interactive effects of individual and environmental factors on human behaviour.

There are five levels in the SEM model: individual, interpersonal, community, organizational, and policy enabling environment:

- i. The individual level includes characteristics of an individual that influence behaviour like age, sex, knowledge, values, financial status, etc.
- ii. The interpersonal level includes formal and informal social support systems like friends and family, peers and co-workers that can influence one's behaviour
- iii. Institutional level includes the rules and regulations of organizations that can impact behaviour such as stigma, parental consent, office rules, referral systems, etc.

¹⁸ Merging methodology is a facilitation technique, which involves bringing the evidence and other relevant resources together, on equal footing, perspectives from relevant groups: researchers, child brides, parents, community, religious leaders, teachers, front line health functionaries, government officials at Mandal and district level, who have direct, and or indirect stakes in ending the child marriages.

¹⁹ Originally, it was planned to organize the workshops at the state and district level, with key stakeholders to understand their opinions and challenges in implementing the Act to prevent child marriages. However, due to sudden health emergency (Corona Pandemic), and adhering to specified protocols, physical workshops were replaced with virtual workshops with stakeholders.

- iv. The community level includes relationships among organizations and institutions and informal networks like village associations, social and cultural norms, services and facilities in the community, etc., and
- v. The policy level includes the local, state, and national policies that shape human behaviour.

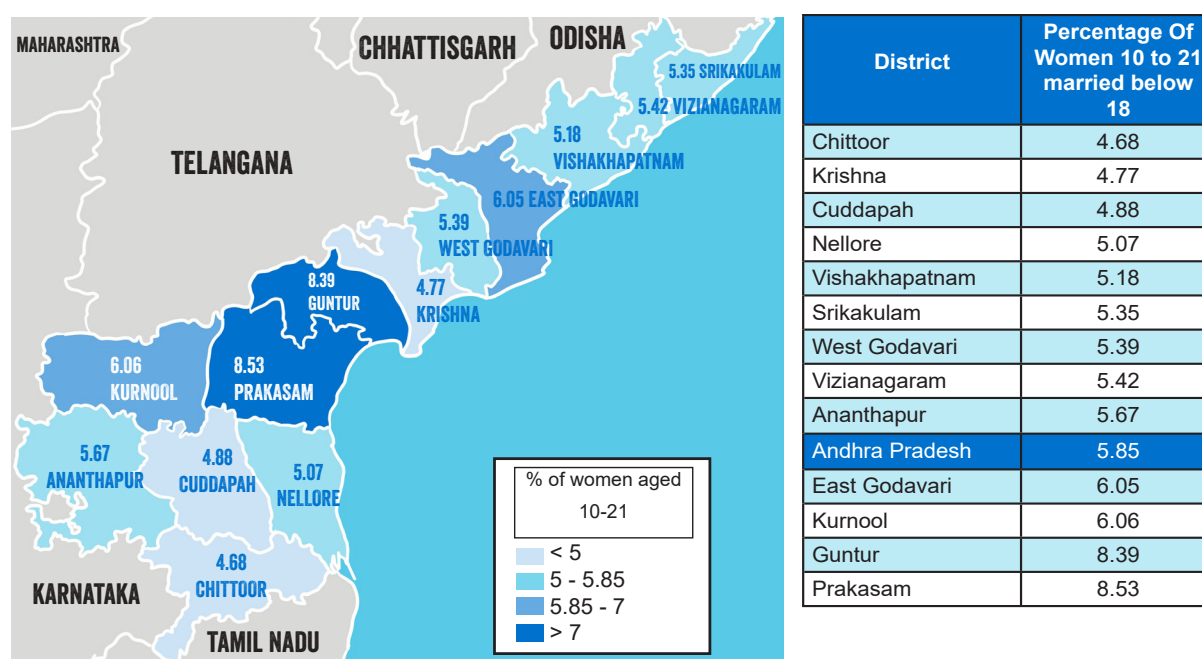
The model assumes that changes in the social environment will also create changes in individuals and therefore it is essential that interventions aimed at changing human behaviour should be directed at changing the five levels of the model (McLeroy et al., 1988). Applying the SEM model to understand child marriages is useful to identify the key drivers that influence the practice and how they all interact to make this practice still prevalent.

Broadly, this State Action Plan has been drawn by using the social norms approach, gender transformative approach, multi-sectoral approach, and socio-ecological framework approach to ascertain the best results by the end of 2030.

3. PREVALENCE OF CHILD MARRIAGES

In its recent report on child marriages in India, UNICEF²⁰ stated that one in three of the world's child brides lives in India. Of the country's 223 million child brides, 102 million were married before turning 15. Approximately one in four young women in India were married or in union before their 18th birthday.

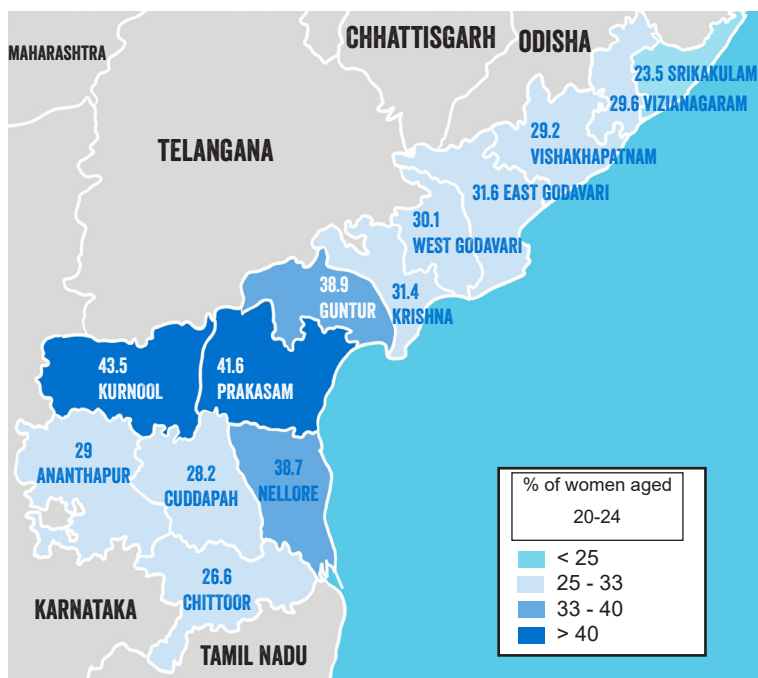
The Census of India, National Family and Health Survey (NFHS), and District Level Household Survey (DLHS) are the important government agencies enumerating the number of child marriages across the states in India. While drafting the programs, several state governments are using the same data.



PERCENTAGE OF WOMEN AGED 10 - 21, BY RESIDENCE, WHO WERE MARRIED BELOW 18 YEARS OF AGE (CENSUS 2011)

The Census data of 2011²² says that in Andhra Pradesh, 5.85 % of women aged 10 to 21 were married below the age of 18. Prakasham (8.53%), Guntur (8.39%), Kurnool (6.06%), East Godavari (6.05%) districts are recording above the state average and the rest of the five districts are below the state average and the rest of nine districts are below the state average.

²⁰ UNICEF (2019) "Ending Child Marriages: A Profile of progress in India", UNICEF India, <https://data.unicef.org/resources/ending-child-marriage-a-profile-of-progress-in-india/>

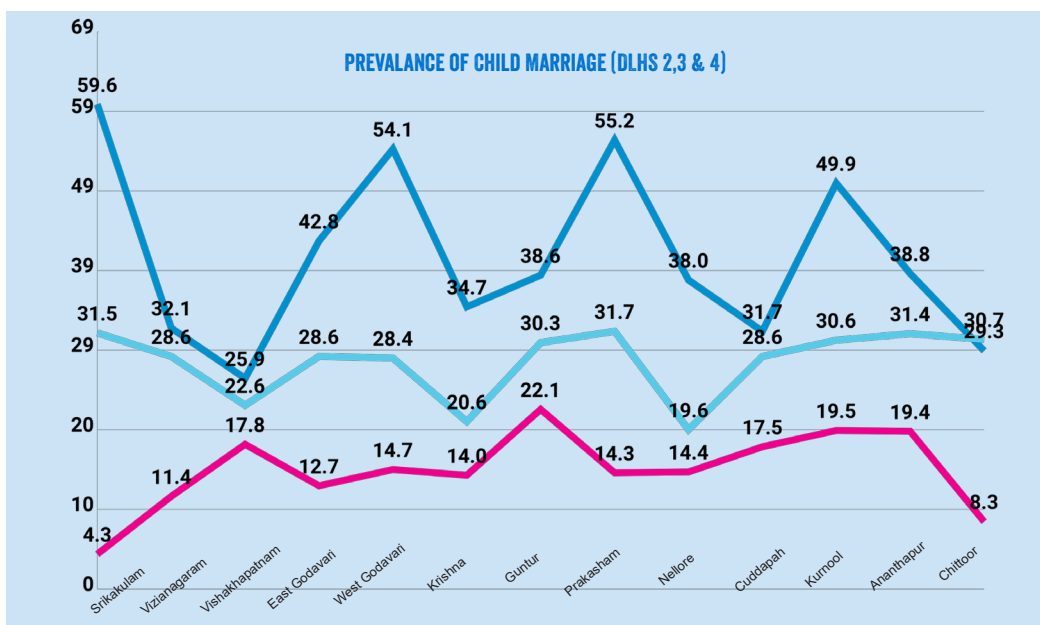


District	Percentage Of Women 20 to 24 married below 18
Kurnool	43.5
Prakasam	41.6
Guntur	38.9
Nellore	38.7
Andhra Pradesh	33
East Godavari	31.6
Krishna	31.4
West Godavari	30.1
Vizianagaram	29.6
Vishakhapatnam	29.2
Ananthapur	29
Cuddapah	28.2
Chittoor	26.6
Srikakulam	23.5

PERCENTAGE OF WOMEN 20 TO 24 MARRIED BELOW 18 YEARS OF AGE (NFHS 4)

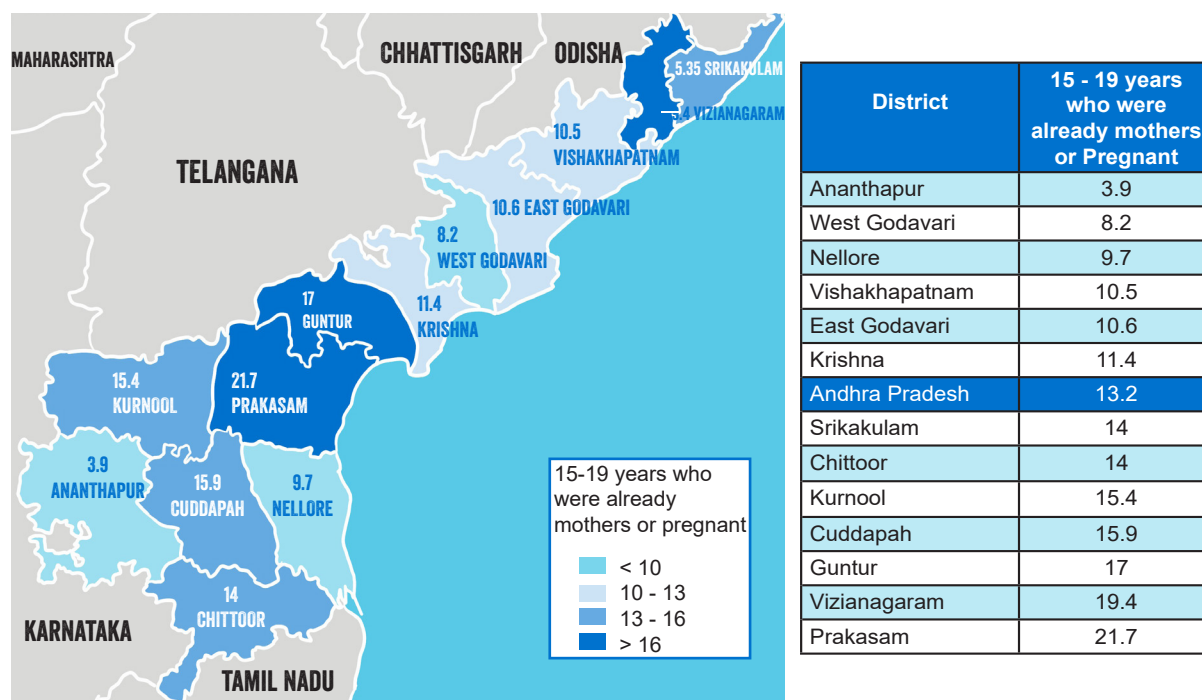
According to NHFS 4 (2015-16), 33% of women aged 20 to 24 were married below 18 in the state. It is important to note that the incidence of girl-child marriages in four districts is higher than the state average. For instance, Kurnool (43.5%), Prakasam (41.6%), and Guntur (38.9%), Nellore (38.7%) are districts showing above the state average. Districts, for instance East Godavari (31.6%), Krishna (31.4%), West Godavari (30.1%), Vizianagaram (29.6%), Vishakhapatnam (29.2%), Ananthapur (29%), Cuddapah (28.2%), Chittoor (26.6%), and Srikakulam (23.5%) are below state average.

DLHS series data sets (2002-04, 2007-08, and 2012-13) are showing the declining trends in child marriages in Andhra Pradesh state. The first-round data (2002-03) shows Srikakulam, West Godavari, and Prakasham districts having the highest number of child marriages. During the second round (2007-08), the number of child marriages increased in Prakasham, Srikakulam, and Ananthapur. During the third round (2012-13) Guntur, Kurnool, Ananthapur districts have emerged as the top three districts with the highest child marriages in the state. Overall, the comparison between DLHS 2, 3, and 4 indicates the declining trends across the districts.



Census 2011 identified 5.85% of married girls between 10 to 21 years of age in Andhra Pradesh. NFHS4 says that 33% of the women in the age group of 20 to 24 years married before 18 years of age. Here it is important to note that four districts (erstwhile) are above the state average of 25.7%. Of the total child brides, 13.2% (state average) are already mothers or pregnant. Three rounds of DLHS-data sets (2002-03; 2007-08 and 2012-13) observe the declining trends but the situation is alarming.

Census 2011 indicates that In Andhra Pradesh state, 29.11% of literate women aged 10 to 21 married below 18 years. It further says that 69.86% were illiterates, 4.86% were literates but below primary education, 25.38% completed primary but below middle schooling, and 15.67% who have completed middle but below secondary education were married before they reached the legal age of marriage. It is also evident that 0.18% married before legal age but completed graduation. This indicates the need of making at least secondary education, mandatory for the girls.



PERCENTAGE OF RURAL WOMEN AGE 15 - 19 YEARS WHO WERE ALREADY MOTHER OR PREGNANT AT THE TIME OF SURVEY

The NFHS 4 highlights that in rural Andhra Pradesh, out of the total married girls, 13.2% are already mothers, or pregnant at the time of the NFHS survey (2015-16). Particularly districts – Anantapur, West Godavari, and Nellore are having the highest percentage of girls in this category.

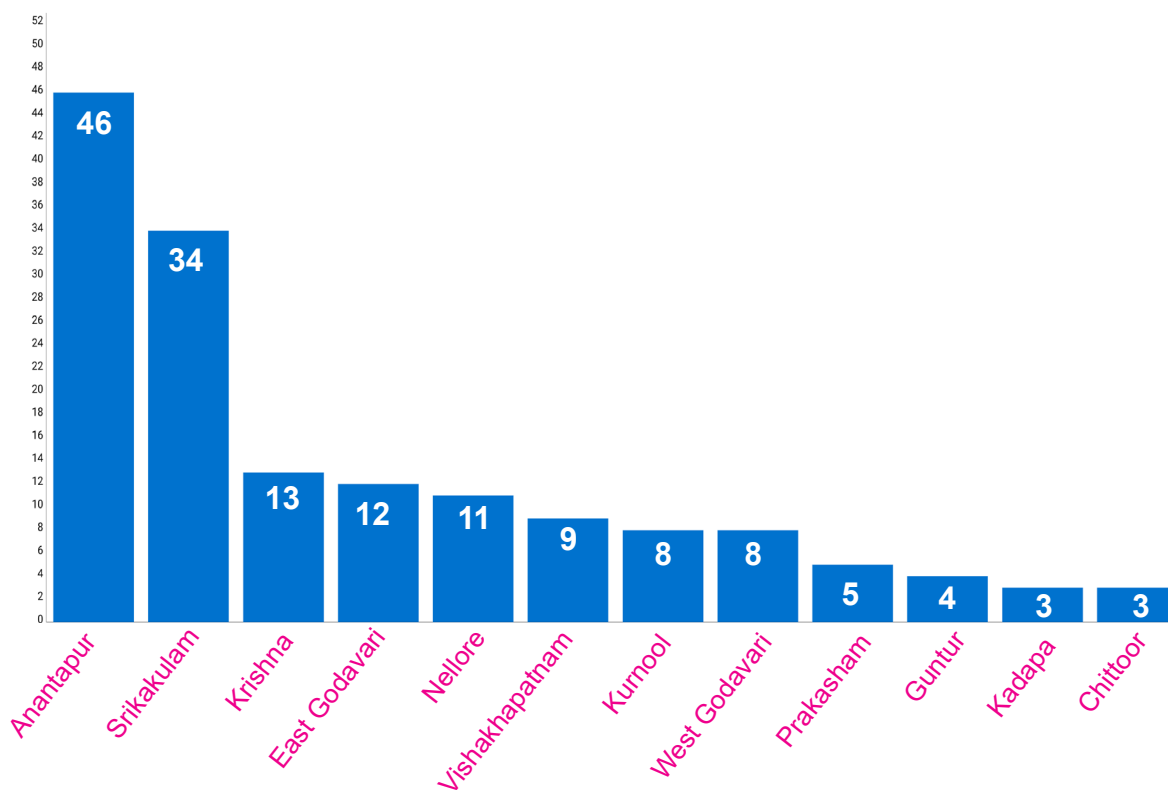
The consequences of early marriages result in an increased risk for sexually transmitted diseases, cervical cancer, malaria, death during childbirth, and obstetric fistulas. Girls' offspring are at increased risk for premature birth and death as neonates, infants, or children.

IMPACT OF A HEALTH EMERGENCY (COVID-19)

The COVID-19 crisis magnifies existing challenges and poses new ones in relation to ongoing child marriage preventive measures. As predicted by United Nation²³, women and girls will experience a “catastrophic impact”, which includes increasing levels of poverty and physical and sexual violence, interrupted education, and stress.

The economic crisis of pandemic could push nearly 86 million more children (an increase of 15%) into household poverty by the end of 2020—says the recent analysis by Save the Children & UNICEF²⁴. It further stated that the families are less able to afford the basics, including food and water, less likely to access health care and education, and more at risk of child marriage, violence, exploitation, and abuse. When fiscal contraction occurs, the reach and quality of the services families depend on, can also be diminished. Poverty is a known driver of child marriage—with families more likely to marry off their daughters in times of economic stress to alleviate the perceived burden of caring for them. The anticipated economic fallout of the pandemic is expected to result in millions of early marriages. Together, it is expected that 13 million more child marriages could take place by 2030 than would have otherwise.

Besides increasing poverty levels and inequalities, school closure contributes to child marriages, particularly in rural areas where most of the families are under stress. In Andhra Pradesh, few parents have taken advantage of pandemic-driven lockdown for 90 days (April, May, and June 2020) and conducted child marriages. The data collected by the Department of Women Development and Child Welfare confirmed 156 such cases across 12 districts.



NUMBER OF CHILD MARRIAGES DURING LOCK DOWN PERIOD (25 MARCH TO 11 MAY 2020) SOURCE: AP WDCW

4. DRIVERS OF CHILD MARRIAGES

Poverty, social norms and beliefs, access to secondary education, and social pressure are the critical driving forces behind child marriages in Andhra Pradesh state. Although each one of these factors influences child marriages, poverty stands as the prime reason²¹.

Research says that structural factors such as economic, geographic, and environmental factors are the key drivers. Besides, the considerable influence of social norms and community perceptions are also major drivers. The cost of marriage plays a big role in families sliding further into poverty, and these high costs lead to girls being forced to marry when other ceremonies are taking place in the family or when older siblings are being married²².

IN ANDHRA PRADESH STATE CHILD MARRIAGES ARE DRIVEN BY

- **Widely accepted gender & social norms**
- **Lack of economic opportunity for low income group women leads to generational poverty**
- **Limited scope for adolescents to realise their aspirations and choices**
- **Lack of institutional capacity to implement programs/schemes to prevent child marriages**
- **Strong political patronage/weakness in the enforcement mechanism**
- **Lack of authenticated data and proper monitoring**
- **Limitations in law**
- **Less accountability of policy implementing agencies**

²¹CESS (2018) "Facing Constraints and seizing opportunities: Child Marriages in Telangana and Andhra Pradesh", Centre for Economic and Social Studies, Hyderabad.

²² <https://unicef.in/Whatwedo/30/Child-Marriage>

Following synthesis is extracted from secondary literature reviewed:

1. CULTURAL PRACTICES

- Child marriages are used as a means of propagating the existing caste hierarchies, as when the children are married they would not be at an age where other considerations they might have would overrule this injunction and their parents or other adults would put forth before them, a union which would be within their existing caste.
- Similarly, is the case of consanguineous marriages as well, which are done to ensure that the bloodlines remain pure and so that family assets remain within the family itself.
- Another consideration is that adolescent boys and girls would indulge in “immoral practices” as viewed by the orthodox societies still found in the rural areas of modern-day India, and marriage is a way to avoid this or view them as moral.
- Apart from this, married women and unmarried women are viewed very differently by society and child marriage is seen as a means of social security and a means of thwarting malicious intentions and crimes against girls.
- Child marriages are also undertaken in the name of following traditional practices put forth by ancestors and upholding cultural values which run in the family.

2. ECONOMIC FACTORS

- A child marriage would not be a grand and extravagant affair in comparison to an adult marriage and this is one of the factors which perpetuates child marriages, especially in the economically weaker sections of society. There are also instances where the wedding of the younger sibling is combined with an older sibling so as to avoid double expenditure on the ceremony, and this results in child marriage.
- Child marriages are usually a reflection of the fact that girls are still considered as property that can be passed on from their father and family to their husband and in-laws. They are done so that any expenditure on the education of the girl child can be avoided.
- The fact that child marriages are often accompanied by an exchange of dowry is indicative of the fact that a girl child is still looked at as a burden to the family that she is born into, and the more educated she is the more the family will have to spend in the form of dowry at the time of her wedding. She is seen as an extra mouth to feed and unable to be economically independent or contribute to the family income.
- Female children are also thereby denied their share in ancestral property, bypassing their property rights as they are already married and they fail to demand that their rights are fulfilled, hence benefitting the male heir of the family.

3. LACK OF EDUCATION, EMPOWERMENT & IMPLEMENTATION

- Secondary education is the right way for girls to avoid early marriage. However, lack of proper infrastructure, including girls’ toilets, and lack of female teachers are some of the critical factors. Besides, many girls and their parents give the highest priority to secondary education linked with vocational education. Through that, they can get into the job market. Unfortunately, in the state, the skill gap on the supply and demand side exists.
- There is a severe lack of education and awareness regarding both—the pertaining ill effects of child marriages and the existing laws which are in place in order to protect children from them.
- There is no proper implementation of the laws which are in place due to a variety of reasons.
- There is also a lack of empowerment of women or girls, as a result of which they are unable to voice their needs and wishes and are subjected to the will of their parents and guardians. The girl child has no agency and is subjected to the patriarchal gender norms which are prevailing in society.

In this context, the summary says that—widely accepted gender and social norms are the most critical factors and root causes that need to be addressed. Poverty, lack of access to quality secondary and higher secondary education with vocational skills, and other economic considerations are the contributing factors. Organized vested interests of elders, cast groups, networks, and political patronage largely weaken or challenge the implementation strategy.

²³ PLF (2019) “Child Brides in Telangana and Andhra Pradesh”, Poverty Learning Foundation, Hyderabad

ASPIRATIONS OF CHILD BRIDES:

- **SMALL FAMILY NORMS:**

Many aspired to have a small family with two children, however, awareness of family planning is very low. Mothers-in-law and husbands are the decision-makers in determining the size of the family. Many of them demanded proper counselling for their husbands and mothers-in-law on the consequences of early marriage, sexual life, and birth spacing. In this context, there is a need to improve the reach out of primary health care and Anganwadi services to those girls who were married before 18 years of age.

- **ECONOMIC INDEPENDENCE:**

Most of the child brides aspire for economic independence, however, their educational background does not support them. Some of them have said that they need vocational training on job-oriented programs including soft skills. Those who are not interested to pursue further education after marriage, strongly aspire to have a skill training course that will give chance to earn. Therefore, job-oriented vocational skill training has to be embedded into the present curriculum starting from secondary/higher education. The Department of Education has to rethink how best the existing curriculum at secondary and high schools can be linked with vocational training courses, including soft skills. It is essential to map the local skill training centres run by the government, corporates and NGOs and link them with the existing structure of education.

- **SCHOLARSHIPS TO PURSUE HIGHER EDUCATION:**

It is one of the widely discussed points. Some of the child brides have said that due to financial difficulties in the family, they were forced to drop out of school. If such support exists and is accessible to them, perhaps their parents would have not thought of early marriage and forced them to drop out of school. In such cases, it is important to think about conditional cash transfers, bicycles to girls in secondary education, hygienic sanitation facilities in schools, and embedded vocational education in secondary schools.

- **HEALTHY LIFE:**

The majority aspired to lead and provide a healthy life, particularly to their infants. Those who had early pregnancy demanded Anganwadi services. Those who are not pregnant also look for Anganwadi services. Particularly this category of child brides is either malnourished or anaemic. Here, primary health care has to focus more on adolescent girls (either married early or unmarried) provide proper knowledge about the menstrual cycle and hygiene, the importance of Iron Folic, family planning methods, pre-and post-natal care, and immunization.

- **DEMAND FOR SERVICES:**

Anganwadi, Panchayat, PHC, and Secondary education are the most demanded services by child brides. Particularly to the Gram Panchayat, their demand is to get involved at right time to prevent child marriages. Those who are in urban areas demanded timely support from the policy as well as from legal services. Members of Gram Panchayat have to be sensitized on the socio-economic consequences of child marriages and made accountable to prevent such incidents. If they act properly, most child marriages can be prevented.

- **DEMAND FOR INFORMATION:**

The majority of the child brides have no or low awareness about their entitlements, the Child Marriage Prevention Act, and other child protection measures. It is essential to include such an informative syllabus from the secondary education level. It is the issue between choice and chance of lifestyle of child brides. Their voice is not counted, they have lesser education opportunities, their husband's age is also low to have matured thinking and take appropriate decisions. In such circumstances, though there is a chance, they are not able to make choices in many issues related to their personal and family life.

The summary of aspirations of child brides²³ indicates the need for vocational education along with secondary education, information on health and healthy lifestyles, and information on legal as well as other welfare entitlements.

5. POLICIES & PROGRAMS TO PREVENT CHILD MARRIAGES

To prevent child marriages, the Government of India has brought quite a few policies and programs. Child marriage was made illegal in India in 1929 by the '**Child Marriage Restraint Act**'. It was later replaced by the '**Prohibition of Child Marriages Act, 2006**' (PCMA) on which widespread awareness has been created. Thereafter, to strengthen the implementation of PCMA, the Government of India has appointed 'Child marriage Prohibition Officers' to prevent child marriages and to sensitize communities over this issue.

However, the results are not encouraging, because people feel that the traditions and socio-cultural norms are stronger than the law and the institutions and rarely report cases. Besides, there is limited capacity among officials and a lack of willingness to go against the decisions made by the community and political representatives²⁴.

PREVENTION OF CHILD MARRIAGES ACT (PCMA), 2006

Under the PCMA, a Child Development Protection Officer (CDPO) is appointed in every district and is the nodal point of dealing with the offences related to child marriages. The offences are categorized under Prevention, Protection, and Prosecution of offenders. Child Marriage Prohibition Officers (CMPO) are empowered to provide all necessary aid to victims of child marriage and can produce the children before the Child Welfare Committee (CWC) or a First-Class Judicial Magistrate. Despite the implementation of the law, the number of child marriages registered in the state has significantly remained high wherein 25.7% of the women who are currently in the age group of 20-24 years were married below the age of 18 years in Andhra Pradesh.

YSR PELLI KANUKA

Recently, the Chief Minister of AP has introduced the YSR Pelli Kanuka in February 2020. Under this scheme, financial security is provided to the poorest families before and after marriage to support poor girls and eliminate child marriages in the state. The scheme is also known as the Giri Putrika/Dulhan scheme. Under the Giri Putrika, an incentive benefit of Rs.40,000-75,000 is provided for SC beneficiaries, Rs.50,000-75,000 is provided for ST beneficiaries, an incentive of Rs.35,000-50,000 For BC beneficiaries. For minorities beneficiaries under the Dulhan scheme, an incentive of Rs.50,000 has been provided. For the differently-abled beneficiaries, a financial incentive of Rs. 1.00,00 is provided. For the AP Building and Other Construction Workers Welfare Board beneficiaries, a financial incentive of Rs. 20,000 is provided. To avail of the benefits of the scheme, the girls must be above 18 years of age. The money is deposited directly in the bank account of the girl.

²⁴CESS (2018) "Facing Constraints and, Sizing the Opportunities – Child Marriages in Andhra Pradesh", Centre for Social and Economic Studies, Hyderabad, http://www.mahita.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/12/Facing_Constraints_and_Seizing_opportunities_Child_Marriages_Study_Andhra_Pradesh.pdf

BETI BACHAO, BETI PADHAO

Beti Bachao, Beti Padhao recently operationalized for multi-sectoral action in the following districts—Anantapur, Chittoor, Prakasam, Krishna, Kurnool, Sri Potti Sriramulu Nellore, and Guntur. In these districts, the central government is undertaking measures to ensure the protection and survival of the girl child, as well as education and participation. Although this directly does not address the issue of child marriage, ensuring the education and empowerment of girls will result in tackling the problem to a certain extent. The mandate of the scheme also explicitly states “Prevention of Early/Child Marriage may be done aggressively in order to highlight the importance of allowing girls to complete their school education and preferably opt for higher education/career/skill-building/vocational education etc”.

KASTURBA GANDHI BALIKA VIDYALAYA (KGBV)

The KGBV scheme was launched by the Government of India in August 2004 to ensure access and quality education for girls belonging predominantly to the SC, ST, OBC, and minorities in difficult areas. This scheme is being implemented in educationally backward blocks where the female rural literacy is below the national average and the gender gap in literacy is above the national average. KGBVs are mainly mainstreaming out-of-school/dropout children and taking up enrolment drives in villages. Particularly mobilization drives in communities involving KGBV girls on child marriages, dowry system and motivating the parents of irregular, dropout and never enrolled girls to send their daughters to schools.

MAHILA POLICE VOLUNTEERS

The Central government has issued guidelines for appointing Mahila/Women Police Volunteers (MPV) who will serve as a bridge between the police and those women subject to domestic violence, sexual abuse, sexual harassment, and child marriages among other things.

SAKHI CENTRES

Sakhi Centres (One Stop Centres)²⁵ offer integrated services like medical, legal, psycho-social, and temporary shelter under one roof. The objectives of the Scheme are: (i) to provide integrated support and assistance to women affected by violence, both in private and public spaces under one roof and (ii) to facilitate immediate, emergency, and non-emergency access to a range of services including medical, legal, psychological and counselling support under one roof to fight against any forms of violence against women. Victims of child marriage can also access necessary support through these centres. As of 2020, 13 centres have been established in Andhra Pradesh²⁶.

²⁵ https://wcd.nic.in/sites/default/files/OSC_G.pdf

²⁶ http://sakhi.gov.in/assets/site/main/resource_directory/1578401136_645-OSCDirectory-07.1.2020.pdf

²⁷ Vikaspedia(2020) GirlChildProtectionScheme, <https://vikaspedia.in/social-welfare/women-and-childdevelopment/child-development-1/girl-child-welfare/state-wise-schemes-for-girl-child-welfare/girl-childprotection-scheme-of-andhra-pradesh>

²⁸ <https://www.childlineindia.org/a/about/childline-india>

GIRL CHILD PROTECTION SCHEME

The Girl Child Protection Scheme of the Government of Andhra Pradesh is aimed at preventing gender discrimination by empowering and protecting the rights of girl children through direct investment from Government. It aims to promote enrolment and retention of the girl child in school and to ensure her education at least up to intermediate level, encourage girls to get married only after the age of 18 years, encourage parents to adopt family planning norm with two girl children, protect the rights of the girl child and provide social and financial empowerment to a girl child, eliminate negative cultural attitudes and practices against girls, strengthen the role of the family in improving the status of the girl child, and extend a special dispensation to orphans/destitute and differently-abled girls²⁷.

CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANIZATIONS

In addition to the above schemes and intervention policies, various Civil Society Organizations also support the departments in enforcing the rules of the Child Marriage Act.

CHILDLINE

CHILDLINE is a toll-free emergency helpline number (1098)²⁸ which any child can call in the case of any adversity or emergency. It is available 24-hours a day and 365 days a year. It is functional in 13 districts of Andhra Pradesh and manned by various NGOs and nodal agencies, they aim to provide extraction and rehabilitation services, free of cost to any child in need of the same.

CHILD PROTECTION COMMITTEES

As a part of the Integrated Child Protection Scheme (ICPS), Village level Child Protection Committees (VCPC) and Mandal level Child Protection Committees (MCPC) are functioning to protect the rights of children. The members in these committees from the community, including duty bearers, are primarily responsible for creating and promoting a child-friendly and safe environment wherein all children's well-being, safety, and rights are protected. CPCs will be responsible for monitoring, reporting, and responding to the issues of child protection. The cases of child marriage are being reported to the DCPU and CHILDLINE through these CPCs.

6. CHALLENGES

BEFORE POLICY MAKERS AND IMPLEMENTERS

Preventing child marriages has been a historically slow and challenging task. The Indian Government has passed the “**Sarda Act**” in 1929, which made marriage illegal for girls before 18 years of age. Thereafter, several legislations have been brought to the forefront, for instance, **Child Policy (2003); The Prohibition of Child Marriages (2006), Adolescent and Youth Policy (2007), Right to Education Act (2009), Girl Child Policy (2013), Juvenile Justice Act (2016), Compulsory of Registration of Marriages Act, 2002, and National Plan of Action for Children (2017)**. Subsequently, the Government of Andhra Pradesh also brought certain programs, for instance, GO. MS No 13 to end child marriages by strengthening the education system.

In implementation, including the Women Development and Child Welfare Department, other sectoral departments are facing certain challenges that have to be addressed. To make the State Action Plan more viable with a strong implementation mechanism, a little exercise has been done to understand the most critical challenges before the policymakers and implementers. For this purpose, the following key staff from sectoral departments and other stakeholders were virtually contacted:

i.	Women Development and Child Welfare (n. 36, DCPOs, CDPOs, ACDPOs, CM-POs, BRBs, Sakhi coordinators and AWW)
ii.	Panchayat Raj Members (n. 18, Sarpanches & members)
iii.	Education department (n. 35, MEOs, Headmasters, teachers including female teachers
iv.	Health Department (n. 60, Doctors, ANMs, ASHAs)
v.	Revenue Department (n. 21, Joint Collector, MDOs and VROs)
vi.	Police Department (n. 16, Sub-inspectors, Circle Inspectors & Head Constables)
vii.	Self-Help Groups (n.69, Leaders & members)
viii.	Community Society Organizations (n.9)
ix.	Community Leaders (n. 4)
x.	Religious leaders (n. 9)
xi.	Parents (n. 32 families)

Their reflections are synthesized in the following section-

Women Development & Child Welfare

Women Development and Child Welfare Department is one of the key line departments tasked with the responsibility of implementing the Prevention of Child Marriage Act and also plays a crucial role in Government Order 13. The critical challenges before department staff at Mandal and GP level are:

- i. Due to overburdening and being tasked with multiple responsibilities, officials are unable to focus on the task of prevention of child marriages.
- ii. Other departments tasked with the implementation of PCMA 2006 fail to take on

- responsibility and there is no inter-departmental coordination.
- iii. Mother of the bride (being a woman) is exempt from punishment under the existing law and this leads to scope for continuation of child marriages.
- iv. Politicians intervene and pressure government officials to turn a blind eye towards child marriages that are taking place.
- v. Community and caste leaders pressure officials not to get involved in personal matters.
- vi. Information regarding impending child marriages doesn't reach officials in time and they are unable to prevent them.
- vii. There is no budgetary allocation for the expenditure incurred by officials while preventing child marriages (logistical difficulties).
- viii. Officials are subject to harassment and abuse from parents and family members when they intervene and prevent child marriage, and parents even threaten to commit suicide.
- ix. There is a lack of proper facilities in one-stop centres to provide rehabilitation to the child bride in case of successful prevention of child marriage.
- x. There is a lack of IEC materials which becomes a hurdle when they are trying to create awareness regarding prevention and ill-effects among the community.
- xi. At times of mass solemnization of marriages, officials from the WDCW lack institutional support and are therefore unable to stand up to a large number of people in order to prevent child marriages.

Panchayat Raj Department (Elected representatives from Gram Panchayat)

Fundamentally, the Gram Panchayat is the link between the community, the school, the Anganwadi, the health centre, and the government. They play an active role in planning, implementation and monitoring of the institutions related to children and in also protecting child rights. However, the following challenges were expressed by the elected members—

- i. They do not have the cooperation of caste/community leaders.
- ii. Mass solemnization happens under the watch of religious leaders.
- iii. Parents of both bride and groom plead with GP members to let the marriage take place as it is a matter of pride for them.
- iv. There is a lack of awareness among members of the GP itself regarding their roles and responsibilities as part of PCMA.
- v. Once stopped, parents choose to go ahead with the marriage in a different geographical region which is outside the jurisdiction of the GP, thereby preventing interference.
- vi. When child marriages are being solemnized for financial reasons, GP members do not have adequate resources to support families as a result of which they are forced to allow them to take place.

School Education Department

Access to primary and secondary education is crucial to increase self-reliance among girls and delay early marriages. The school education department plays a crucial role in mobilizing girl children to secondary schools by conducting regular campaigns and back-to-school programs. KGBVs also play an important role in retaining girls in secondary education. In spite of such efforts, staff in schools face certain critical challenges –

- i. Lack of infrastructure in schools such as proper toilets leads girls to drop out and as parents do not want to keep them at home, they choose to indulge in child marriages.
- ii. Female teachers provide parents with some comfort and the lack of female teachers also encourages dropouts.
- iii. Teachers do not receive any official training or guidelines on how to combat this problem in an official capacity if they are faced by it.
- iv. They are warned against interfering in issues of child marriage by caste/community

- elders and political leaders.
- v. Child marriages are usually executed in places far off from the villages in order to make accessibility difficult. There is no task force at the village level which has resources to be able to act quickly and prevent it from taking place.
- vi. There is no coordination among the different departments at the village level as a result of which child marriages are not prevented effectively.
- vii. Mass solemnization during festivals such as Akshaya Tritiya, they are pressured and made to feel powerless by local authorities.

Health and Family Welfare Department

The front-line health functionaries (ANMs and ASHAs) provide health services, including maternal and child health services to women in the village. They have a limited role in tracking the families where girls are at risk of early marriages. Their opinions and challenges are—

- i. There is a lack of integration between the Women Development & Child Welfare and Health and Family Welfare Departments with regard to the prevention of child marriages, and guidelines need to be formalized to outline roles and responsibilities.
- ii. Lack of awareness campaigns both among parents and children presents a problem to them and gives rise to an increase in health complications post child marriage and early pregnancy.
- iii. Community leaders threaten ANMs and ASHAs when they try to prevent child marriages or report impending marriages to CDPOs, sometimes villagers even boycott them.
- iv. There is a taboo on talking about issues of child marriage and sex education among the community, making it difficult for ANMs and ASHAs to carry out counseling or awareness programs.

Revenue Department:

Under the chairmanship of the district collector, joint collector, Mandal Development Officer (MDO), Revenue Divisional Officer (RDO), Village revenue officer (VRO), Village Administrative Officer (VAO), Panchayat Secretary and CDPOs, the Revenue Department has to oversee the implementation of marriage registrations, and the PMCA properly. It also acts upon any information of the solemnization or proposed solemnization of any child marriage that may be received through any mode of communication and initiates all necessary action, including addressing the police and Officers concerned. Besides, it associates and works in Co-ordination with the respective Village/Mandal/ Divisional/District Child Marriage Prohibition and Monitoring Committee, NGOs, SHGs, VDP, Mandal Samakhya, Zilla Samakhya, and departments concerned and initiate legal action and cause the registration of cases under appropriate provisions of the Act, and Rules for their violation. However, the challenges before the concerned officials of the Revenue Department are—

- i. There is no reporting mechanism or system in place which provides officials with reliable data.
- ii. Such issues are not prioritized within the department and this is no inter-sectoral department dedicated to this task.
- iii. There is no awareness that the Revenue Department has a role to play as part of GO 13 as most of the training is only directed towards WDCW department.
- iv. They are not intimated in time and by the time they reach the location, the marriage has already been solemnized.
- v. There is pressure from political representatives to allow child marriages to take place.
- vi. Parents vehemently oppose the interference of officials in matters they view as private.
- vii. Community leaders also pressure officials to not initiate any action.

Police Department:

The police department has an important role in preventing child marriages. They have to work in coordination with all sectoral departments, particularly with the WDCW and Revenue Department. However, their challenges are –

- i. They do not receive information with ample time to prevent a child marriage.
- ii. There is political interference and pressure from caste and community leaders on the police to turn a blind eye towards child marriages that are taking place.
- iii. Police require direct orders from the magistrate in order to arrest offenders and this serves as a hindrance to upholding the law.
- iv. The PCMA has a statute of limitations of a period of 1 year on the child marriage and once it is reported beyond this period, it dictates that no action be taken.
- v. Inconsistencies between PCMA and personal religious laws make implementation more difficult.

Self Help Groups:

The Self-Help Group network in Andhra Pradesh is extremely well connected, widespread and seen as a sure-shot way of reaching the remotest parts of the state to bring about social changes for development.

- i. They do not have a system in place to monitor children within their jurisdiction to pre-emptively take a stand and stop child marriages.
- ii. When they intervene to prevent a child marriage from taking place, the parents are very adamant and difficult to convince especially when they have the support of caste elders/police.
- iii. SHG women do not have an official role in upholding the law and therefore have no stronghold to prevent child marriages in an official capacity.
- iv. Child marriages often take place in mass solemnization, where caste leaders, religious leaders, and elected members of the GP play a major role, making it difficult to prevent them.
- v. Often, girls are not interested in pursuing higher education and this becomes a challenge when preventing their child marriage as they themselves are for it.

Civil Society Organizations

Legally speaking, Civil Society Organizations do not have a fundamental role to play in the prevention of child marriages, except being on the 'Village Child Marriage Prohibition and Monitoring Committee' as specified by GO13. However, the ground reality is far from this with CSOs actively intervening and preventing child marriages, creating awareness among parents and children regarding the ill effects of child marriages, and looking for the effective implementation of the law through the state-wide network of Childline, capacity building of CMPOs and more. Their presence in the field and regular interaction with the community give them a unique position of value as a trusted partner to prevent child marriages from taking place while minimizing conflict with the families. However, they face a myriad of issues including opposition from various sections of the community when it comes to the prevention of marriages. The challenges expressed by CSOs are–

- i. Caste leaders defend child marriages in the name of customs and traditions.
- ii. Families view marriages as a private affair and resent interference from outside sources, they resort to harassing and abusing officials.
- iii. Politicians exert pressure in order to allow child marriages to take place.
- iv. Once a child marriage is prevented, there is no follow up and results in a wasted effort as the child marriage takes place anyway – at a different time/location.
- v. There is negligence of duty or lack of awareness of their responsibilities among officials who are supposed to be implementing PCMA 2006.
- vi. The law does not clearly outline a clear strategy to create awareness among the

- people.
- vii. Punishments recommended by the law are not carried out to their full extent.
- viii. There is no awareness regarding the schemes which have been put in place for the prevention of child marriage.
- ix. There is a lack of coordination and cooperation within the departments of the government which are tasked with the prevention of child marriage.

Community Leaders

Community leaders play a key role in the prevention of child marriages due to the influence exerted over the members of their community. They have a greater role in preventing child marriages, and the challenges flagged by them are–

- i. Age of child marriage within their community is still below legal age despite government efforts.
- ii. Parents choose to discontinue girl child education due to security concerns.
- iii. Lack of awareness regarding ill-effects on the mental and physical well-being of girl child due to child marriage among parents and family members.
- iv. Poverty and cultural traditions are two major factors that encourage early marriages and are difficult factors to counter.

Religious Leaders:

Religious leaders have a huge role to play in ending child marriage since many people are guided by their religious beliefs. They can help change existing norms in their communities and be critical allies in preventing child marriage and work with other stakeholders. However, they too expressed certain factors that are influencing them–

- i. Different religious leaders are of different opinions regarding child marriage and sometimes, they do not align with the law.
- ii. There are certain cultural or religious beliefs that promote child marriage, and as religious leaders, it becomes difficult to prevent them.
- iii. There is pressure from political representatives to allow child marriages to happen.

Parents:

It is the responsibility of the family and parents to decide when to perform marriages of their children. Although few families and parents are aware of the negative consequences of child marriages, certain pressures forcing them to opt for child marriages–

1. The economic burden of having a girl child pushes them into opting for child marriage as a means of alleviating their financial burden.
2. Societal and familial pressure to uphold customs and traditions makes them adopt practices of child marriage.
3. When a girl child discontinues education (due to various reasons) the family feels that they have no choice but together married off even at an early age because as per societal norms it is unsafe to keep an unmarried girl child at home.
4. During extreme conditions such as drought, girl children are married off at an early age in exchange for receiving support from the family of the groom.
5. When a family is migrating, a girls child is married off so as to alleviate the burden of taking along an additional family member, as well as to overcome the problem of leaving behind a girl child who is coming of age.

PART TWO

ACTION PLAN STRATEGIES

IMPLEMENTATION MECHANISM

MONITORING AND EVALUATION

7. ACTION PLAN

STRATEGIES

Despite significant measures taken by the state government to eliminate child marriages, the prevalence of child marriages still remains very high. The drivers of child marriage are complex and require a holistic approach to address them. The strategies need to consider the role of different stakeholders and the inter-linkages between them to achieve the overall objectives. Thus, there is a need for the implementation of a systematic approach towards strengthening policy-making and their implementation at various levels and ensuring coordination between all the stakeholders. Therefore, there is a need for a comprehensive state-level strategy and action plan which must be constructed taking into consideration the unique challenges of the state.

VISION

A society free from child marriages.

GOAL

To end child marriages in Andhra Pradesh by 2030

OBJECTIVES

- i. To design a comprehensive policy framework that provides and ensures the application and implementation of interventions to end child marriages.
- ii. To facilitate the execution of key stakeholders' roles and responsibilities in order to ensure improved coordination.
- iii. To formulate interventions that reduce the vulnerability of girl children (through sensitization, mobilization, and outreach programs) and to provide them free will in decision making.
- iv. To devise a monitoring and evaluation framework that enables a timely assessment of the progress of the State Action Plan.
- v. To strengthen the implementation structures of existing policies by designing strategic activities with improved inter-departmental and stakeholder coordination.

Core Principles of the Strategic Action Plan

To begin with, the State Action Plan to Prevent Child Marriages focuses on creating an enabling environment by–

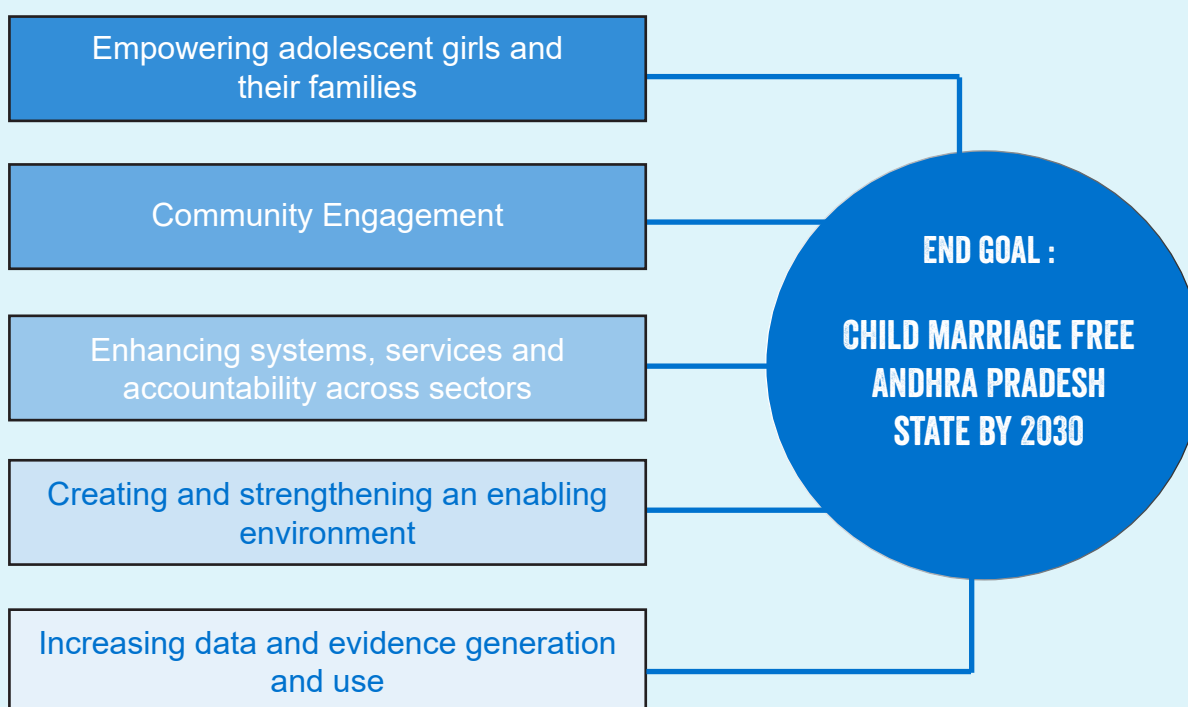
- i. Improving data and monitoring systems. Introducing mechanisms to enable regular monitoring of national laws and policies relating to child marriage to help assess progress. Listening and responding to the voices of child brides and those at risk of child marriage when conducting a situation analysis.
- ii. Assessing the role of customary and religious laws that condone child marriage and promote dialogue with traditional and religious leaders to identify practical ways to reduce child marriage.
- iii. Training key government officials, judiciary, law enforcement officers, and policy makers at all levels, on the law and related gender equity and human rights to support the effective implementation and enforcement of the law and related policies.
- iv. Supporting awareness-raising and public education programs about the negative effects of child marriage, and related human rights of girls and women, to help change attitudes and strengthen duties of parents, guardians, and the community to

- v. protect vulnerable girls
- v. Supporting Civil Society Organizations, including financially, and ensure they have the skills and capacity to mobilize communities to end child marriage.
- vi. Create opportunities for dialogue with men, including traditional and religious leaders, on women's and girls' rights within marriage, and discriminatory cultural norms

Pillar strategy:

The drivers of child marriage are multidimensional, and the State Strategic Action Plan, therefore, requires multi-sectoral interventions and underpinned by well-coordinated responses from different stakeholders. In this context, the State Action Plan has to adopt five-pillar strategies in order to achieve the goal of ending child marriage:

Action 5 pillar Strategy



The following critical approaches will be used to underpin these five pillars in designing and implementing programs²⁹:

- i. Social norms approach to address collective behavior changes, foster community empowerment, and create positive social norms.
- ii. Gender transformative approach which promotes gender equality (the shared control of resources and decision-making) and women's empowerment are central to interventions addressing the root causes of child marriage.
- iii. Multi-sectoral approach to address the different drivers and causes of child marriages through coordination of mandates to empower girls and work with communities to strengthen health, education, child protection, the legal system, and services.
- iv. Application of the social-ecological framework to reach all those who play a role: "girls at the center", families, communities and their structures, service providers, and policy makers.

Based on these strategies, a theory of change has been developed identifying the problem, drivers, strategies, outcomes, and results in a pathway to achieve those outcomes.

Theory of Change Framework

The Sate Action Plan is based on a ‘Theory of Change’ (ToC) framework that identifies the root causes of the problems to be addressed and the interventions needed to achieve the intended outcomes and vision. It is a hypothesis of how we think change occurs. TheToC was developed based on the analysis of the drivers of child marriages, taking note of the specific contexts in Andhra Pradesh state across 32 districts.The analysis on strategies/drivers of change is drawn from the evidence from the earlier studies. By using context based predictive analysis, outcomes were drawn.

In the present context, the Theory of Change reflects six guiding principles:

- i. It is important to state that the theory does not only focus on preventing child marriage but also on the mitigation and support of girls who are already married.
- ii. The focus on the impact of child marriages on girls does not mean the impact on boys should be neglected. However, focusing on girls is necessary in order to highlight the importance of gender equality.
- iii. The theory includes both forms of child marriages: formal and informal unions.
- iv. In order to end child marriage, action by multiple actors at many levels is required.
- v. Although change happens locally, national, regional, and global actions are necessary in order to “create an environment that offers girls opportunities beyond the traditional roles envisages for them”.
- vi. Both parties should be freely and fully agreed to their marriage. However, this is rarely the case where one of the spouses is under the age of 18.

VISION	CHILD MARRIAGES FREE ANDHRA PRADESH STATE BY 2030					
IMPACT	CHANGED SOCIAL NORMS, ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT OF GIRLS AND EFFECTIVE ENFORCEMENT OF LAW RESULTS IN A FASTER DECLINE OF CHILD MARRIAGES					
RESULTS	Strong community mechanisms to encourage a gender-equal environment and promote reporting of possible cases of child marriages; Widespread public opinion and clear commitment to end child marriages;	Women empowered to question and negotiate for girls’ education and act against child marriage; Men are responsive to understand child and women’s rights;	Increased number of girls entering the job market and access potential benefits from skill training; Girl’s able to raise their concern on child marriages in different platforms and negotiating for their rights;	Enhance sustainability and impact of child marriage and adolescent empowerment programs including the increased capacity of service providers to deliver integrated and coordinated services;	Strong public opinion against child marriage and an organized nexus strengthens and political patronage of child marriage declines; Increased birth and marriage registration;	Strong accountability; Effective data bank to judge the progress; Enhanced vigilance at village level and increased reporting, action against missing girls and boys and child marriage;
OUTCOMES	Effective participation of all stakeholders at village level (especially Religious leaders, Community leaders,	Families with conditional financial assistance will keep their children in secondary education and postpone child marriages;	Increase access to quality education and skill development programs for girls;	Effective Implementation of programs to promote adolescent empowerment;	Agenda building and public opinion (mass support) help in countering political patronage;	Enabling environment for reporting of child marriage cases;

²⁹ Framework has been adopted from National Alliance to end FGM & ECM, <https://www.unicef.org/ethiopia/reports/national-costed-roadmap-ending-child-marriage-andfgmc>

	PRI functionaries, Opinion makers, adolescent girls and boys, men and women) in campaigns to prevent child marriages and ensure early reporting about preparation for child marriage, if any;		Girls and women are empowered to exercise their life choices;		Political leaders gain more by aligning with the local agenda;	Consistent (zero down the loopholes) and stricter enforcement of laws;
STRATEGIES (DRIVERS OF CHANGE)	<p>Community mobilization to change social norm;</p> <p>Promote dialogue and raise awareness of gender inequalities and their consequences, for women, men, girls, and boys across economic status and social groups;</p>	<p>Create livelihood opportunities for low-income group families through linking them with income generation programs;</p> <p>Providing Conditional Cash Transfers to the families under poverty and where the possibility of child marriages may take place;</p> <p>Incentives to girls from poor families to attend schooling after the elementary level and vocational training after secondary school;</p>	Empower girls and women with information on affordable and quality secondary and higher secondary education and improve access to job skills and leadership programs;	Strengthen governance system to prevent child marriage, violence against women and implementation of schemes/ programs to promote adolescent empowerment;	<p>Influence Parliamentarians and state legislators to set an agenda to end child marriages;</p> <p>Sensitize them on legal provisions; Motivate them on strengthening the civil registrations;</p> <p>Build capacities to demand accountability of implementing machinery;</p>	<p>Establish data lab to ensure authenticated data from grass root level;</p> <p>Strong and systematic monitoring and evaluation strategy (starting from village level to state level);</p> <p>Use SHGs for effective monitoring (Introducing workbook model);</p> <p>Integrating child marriage prevention and response into conflict (Ex: Insurgency areas) and humanitarian crisis programs (Ex: health emergencies);</p>
DRIVERS OF PREVALENCE	Widely accepted gender & social norms;	Lack of Economic opportunities for lower-income group families leads to generational poverty;	Limited scope for adolescents to realize their aspirations and choices;	Lack of institutional capacity to implement programs/ schemes to prevent child marriage;	Strong political patronage weakens the enforcement mechanism;	<p>Lack of authenticated data and proper monitoring;</p> <p>Limitations in law;</p> <p>Less accountability of policy implementing agency;</p>
PROBLEMS	33 % of women aged 20-24 years are married before the legal age of marriage. If a similar trend continues, Andhra Pradesh will not reach its goal of ending child marriages by 2030.					

KEY STRATEGY AND STRATEGIC FOCUS AREA	
Strategy 1: Community mobilization to change social norms by promoting dialogues and raising awareness of gender inequalities and their consequences for women, men, girls and boys across economic status and social groups.	
Strategic Focus Area	Activities
<p>1. Leverage strengths of religious bodies, community leaders and trade associations to influence the mind set of communities to act against child marriage.</p>	<p>a) Hold rounds of consultation on development & standardisation of communication materials on the issue.</p> <p>b) Issue guidelines to various trade organisations/associations concerned with marriage arrangements for prevention of child marriages.</p> <p>c) Organise quarterly/ bi-monthly meetings with religious bodies, community leaders and trade associations throughout the year to discuss the consequences of child marriage and legal provisions to penalise the persons who take part in such marriage in any capacity.</p> <p>d) Recognise the active members of religious bodies, community leaders and trade associations who are able to report the incidents of child marriage and share their contribution as Child Rights Champions in large forums.</p>
<p>2. Empower men and women with information on consequences of child marriage and involve them in changing social norms.</p>	<p>a) Develop and disseminate information briefs and edutainment material about the implications and consequences of child marriage and use the same during the occasions of community gatherings at village/ mandal/ district level.</p> <p>b) Integrate resource material on child marriage into the existing capacity building programmes/ trainings for grass-root level committees at village including SHGs.</p>

<p>3. Engage with media to sensitise the community on negative consequences of stringent social norms against gender and to promote positive role models to break the gender norms.</p>	<p>a) Hold a sensitisation workshop for various forms of media – print and electronic, on how to report cases related to child marriage, upholding the rights of the child.</p> <p>b) Develop partnerships with media to advocate for girls’ rights and to highlight stories which promote positive role models and break the gender stereotype.</p> <p>c) Use social media and other media to gather public against the issue.</p>
<p>4. Launching of gender transformative interventions to address the root causes of child marriages.</p>	<p>a) Initiate gender transformative intervention like annual activities led by women/ girls, women football match, girls cricket clubs etc. with village level institution like SHG, PRI.</p> <p>b) Collaborate with NGOs/ CSOs and initiate innovative activities or intervention to break the gender norms.</p>
<p>5. Engage with community level stakeholders that include opinion makers and Village Child Protection Committee (as gatekeepers) to adopt a stand against child marriage and provide rehabilitative support for those affected by it.</p>	<p>a) Share communication briefs and actionable points on child marriage for PRI and SHGs which they can pursue in their constituency with PRI members.</p> <p>b) Establish Standard Operating Procedures for rehabilitation of the rescued child bride in line with JJ Act.</p> <p>c) Identify existing barriers in providing rehabilitation and redressal services to girls affected by child marriage.</p> <p>d) Rehabilitation spaces for children affected by child marriage or at risk of child marriage, allocated in shelter homes, care homes, health institutions and facilities like safe homes run by established and recognised NGOs.</p> <p>e) Prepare policy recommendations for making the child marriage annulment procedure easy and fast.</p>

Strategy 2: Create livelihood opportunities for low income group families through linkage with income generation programmes.	
Strategic Focus Area	Activities
<p>1. Providing Conditional Cash Transfers to the families under poverty and where possibility of child marriages may take place.</p>	<p>a) Improve the implementation of the existing CCT and increase the number of beneficiaries under the scheme.</p> <p>b) Introduce scheme to financially assist mothers specially single mothers, widows etc. who are sending their kids to school.</p>
<p>2. Incentives to girls from poor families to attend schooling after the elementary level and vocational training after secondary school.</p>	<p>a) Review the existing scholarship programmes and other government schemes (for instance SABLE, Kalyana Lakshmi/Sahdi Mubarak) for girls and create provisions to cover more number of beneficiaries under those programmes.</p> <p>b) Engage with private partners, corporates, NGOs to introduce sponsorship programmes for girls for continuing their education at least up to intermediate.</p>
<p>3. Strengthen the delivery of existing programmes and schemes related to skills and livelihood for enabling adolescents to access them.</p>	<p>a) Identify barriers in accessing existing programmes and schemes related to skills and livelihood by adolescents, especially girls.</p> <p>b) Monitor progress on improvement in access to existing programmes and schemes related to skills and livelihood by adolescents.</p> <p>c) Engage with private partners, corporates and training institute to design demand driven skill development courses for adolescents.</p>
<p>4. Promote government programs to improve economic empowerment of women.</p>	<p>a) Create awareness about existing programmes on both wage employment and self-employment for the economic empowerment of women.</p> <p>b) Develop materials on entrepreneurship development and financial literacy.</p> <p>c) Work in collaboration with PRI and SHGs to identify most vulnerable families and link them with income generation programmes.</p>

Strategy 3: Create and expand opportunities for the empowerment of adolescent girls and boys to realise their rights.	
Strategic Focus Area	Activities
1. Ensure that all adolescents' girls and boys have access to and complete quality age appropriate schooling.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Increase the number of schools with secondary education at the village level for girls. b) Develop a retention strategy for girls and boys between the age of 12-18 in schools. c) Improved access of residential schools like KGBVs and Social Welfare Residential Educational Institutions for girls. d) Improve sanitation facilities including the provision of functional toilets and running water facilities in schools. e) Develop resource materials for integration of gender and child rights education in existing training of teachers in coordination with SCERT.
2. Preparing older adolescent girls and boys for livelihoods and school-to-work transitions.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Collaborate with CSOs and SHGs and provide training in JOVT for out of school girls and young mothers. b) Establish coordination between School Education Department and Employment Generation Marketing Mission for smooth transition of school to work aiming at employment after job training.
3. Build girls' agency and empower them to exercise life choices (legal rights, age-segmented and age-appropriate gender transformative life skills education and comprehensive sexuality education).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Form adolescent clubs at school, for school going children and at AWC for out-of-school girls and undertake capacity building of the members to act as a change agent. b) Develop and disseminate guidelines for discussions on the rights and issues for children and women, legal rights, schemes and programmes for adolescents etc.

<p>4. Identify local role-models and champions, specially child marriage survivors to showcase their achievements despite challenges.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">a) Identify local role models and organise interaction of role models with adolescent boys & girls.b) Use the media to highlight the stories of role models.c) Select a youth icon as brand ambassador for creating mass awareness generation and sensitisation on child marriage and it's consequences.
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Strategy 4: Strengthen governance system to prevent child marriage, violence against women and implementation of schemes/programs to promote adolescent empowerment.	
Strategic Focus Area	Activities
1. Empower the mechanism at the community level (PRI, SHG, etc.) and strengthen the systems that act as a safeguard against child marriage.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Sensitize PRI members by integrating the issue of child marriage in the training module of Panchayat Raj Department. b) Share communication briefs and actionable points which SHGs and PRI can pursue at the village level. c) Hold a special Gram Sabha on the issue of child marriage throughout the state. d) Introduce incentive/ awards for such committees across the state for reporting highest number of child marriages. e) Issue guidelines to facilitate child marriage-free Gram Panchayats aimed at GPs with high no. of child marriage cases reported for the incentive.
2. Enhance legal awareness on various child protection and gender-related legislations.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Enhance legal awareness on various child protection and gender related legislations. b) Organise legal literacy camps on a regular basis at block and panchayat level. c) Sensitise judicial officers and public prosecutors in all districts, on child marriage, PCMA and annulment. d) Organise Public Hearing with SCPCR in high child marriage prone districts.
3. Increase scale and reach of ending child marriage and adolescent empowerment programs and laws especially for the most marginalised, leveraging, coordinating and stipulate the roles and responsibilities and accountability of different stakeholders at state, district, block and community level in policy and law enforcement.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Motivate the ASHA worker and AWW to create awareness on ill health effects of marriage and child bearing before the age of 18 with adolescent girls at village level and also help the local government to link those families with various schemes and programmes under social protection. b) Strengthen capacity of GP, SHGs, CPCs, Frontline workers like (AWW, ASHA, school teacher) to identify the high risk families for child marriage, play key role in awareness generation and sensitization. c) Build capacities of grass root level committees like Village Health Sanitation Committees and Child Protection Committees

	<p>at village and mandal level, Standing Committees on Social service at gram panchayat to spread awareness on child marriage and to increase reporting on the incidents of child marriage.</p> <p>d) Develop an SOP for stakeholders who are involved under provisions of PCMA Act and JJ Act to ensure prevention and protection of children from child marriage at the state and district level.</p>
<p>4. Strengthen rehabilitation and redressal mechanisms for children affected by marriage.</p>	<p>a) Facilitate the fast-track redressal system for those adolescents who want to nullify their marriage and explore provision of compensation through victim compensation scheme and provide legal aid.</p> <p>b) Build capacity of Child Welfare Committee members/district child protection units for rehabilitation of children rescued from incidents of child marriage.</p> <p>c) Strengthen capacities of the ASHAs and AWWs to engage with young married couples in order to motivate them to delay and promote spacing between births.</p>
<p>5. Competency-based capacity development program of the CMPOs, Marriage Registration officers, DCPUs, and Special Juvenile Police Units on a continuous basis.</p>	<p>a) Conduct a training need assessment for CMPOs, Marriage Registration Officers, DCPUs and SJPU and identify the skill gap to deal with the issue of child marriage.</p> <p>b) Develop training materials for sensitisation of CMPOs, Marriage Registration Officers and SJPU on issues related to child rights and organise sensitisation workshop.</p> <p>c) Prepare a training calendar for responsible stakeholders and planned continuous capacity development programmes to address the issue.</p>
<p>6. Influence Parliamentarians and state legislators to set agenda to end child marriages.</p>	<p>a) Analyse district-specific data on child marriage, and related factors like girls' dropout rate, MMR, IMR, low birth weight and malnourishment of children and develop prepare report cards for legislators and parliamentarians.</p> <p>b) Prepare advocacy brief and undertake advocacy campaign with public representatives.</p>

Strategy 5: Establish data lab to ensure authenticated data from grass root level; Strong and systematic monitoring and evaluation strategy (starting from village level to state level); Use SHGs for effective monitoring (Introducing workbook model); Integrating child marriage prevention and response into conflict (Ex: Insurgency areas) and humanitarian crisis programs (Ex: health emergencies).	
Strategic Focus Area	Activities
1. Involve the village and mandal level mechanism to record and track vulnerable families for child marriage.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Strengthen the capacity of Gram Panchayat and the CPC at Village and Mandal level by conducting at least by-monthly meetings facilitated by DCPU. b) Ensure proper maintenance of records and registrations of meetings and issues discussed. c) Link with village SHGs and identify the vulnerable families in the village and maintain a regular follow up of these families and their children. d) Use SHGs for effective monitoring (Introducing workbook model).
2. Revive the village level committees to implement the PCMA and track the implementation of child protection schemes and services.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Develop a management information system for PRI to track interventions related to addressing child marriage. b) Monitor and review progress by using the MIS c) Strengthen registration systems for marriage to capture child marriages.
3. Create specific indicators for child marriage data bank at district (DCPU) and state level (SCPU).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Identify the gap and review the child marriage MIS at the district and state level and link the indicators with management information system for PRI to track interventions related to addressing child marriage. b) Generate data & evidence and share it with the concerned stakeholders on the district-specific situation. Monitor progress by obtaining data from the district level MIS.
4. Partnership with research institutions, development partners, and resource agencies to generate evidence on child marriage in the state.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Develop partnership for the analysis of data related to the issues of education, health, and protection of children and prepare policy brief or advocacy brief as required from time to time to implement the plan of action.

	<p>b) Conduct qualitative research to better understand changes taking place in the lives of the girls and to gain insights on the effectiveness of the different components of the action plan.</p> <p>c) Generate evidence on the gaps of programme and schemes.</p>
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8. IMPLEMENTATION MECHANISM

The Ministry of Women Development and Child Welfare, Government of Andhra Pradesh, is committed to ending child marriages by 2030 by focusing on and adopting a multi-sectoral implementation approach on mission mode.

To achieve the intended results, the action plan document suggests the setting up of a Steering Committee at the state level to take key decisions and review the progress of the implementation of the action plan. The Steering Committee will be chaired by the Hon'ble Minister of Women and Child Development and the Principal Secretary of Women and Child Development will be the advisor.

At the implementation level, The Commissioner, Department of Women Development and Child Welfare will chair the State Mission to End Child Marriages (SMECM) which oversees the implementation of the State Action Plan to Prevent Child Marriages. Senior officers nominated by the concerned sectoral departments - Department of Education, Revenue Department, Department of Health and Family Welfare, Panchayat Raj and Rural Development, Police Department, and the Law Department will be the members in SMECM.

SMECM is the institutional mechanism that will plan, implement and monitor the implementation of the activities specified in the strategic action plan. Since multiple departments have a critical role in ending child marriages in the state, the responsibility for implementation will be shared across departments with specific roles and responsibilities. As the highest administrative body, SMECM will be accountable for the success or failure of the State Action Plan. The responsibilities of the SMECM include:

- To provide direction and guidance for strategies and initiatives for the implementation a team down the line, and make go/no-go decisions,
- To evaluate the implementation of the action plan periodically,
- To allocate funding for the implementation of the action plan,
- In consultation with the Steering Committee, to review and approve changes to action plans and priorities,
- To assist the implementation when required (especially in an out-of-control situation) by exerting organizational authority and the ability to influence,
- To help resolve implementation boundary issues (between the sectoral departments and other stakeholders),
- To advise the district level teams on protocols, political issues, and potential sensitivities,
- To make the action plan visible within the organization,
- To encourage stakeholder involvement, build and maintain their ongoing commitment through effective communication strategies,
- To closely monitor the team working on M&E of the action plan and data lab to understand the trends, and

- To Communicate and coordinate with all categories of stakeholders, including sectoral departments.

Furthermore, the SMECM will be responsible for developing a communication platform to communicate with all stakeholders on key activities, best practices, events, training modules, etc. Most importantly, it will play a crucial role in maintaining and strengthening collaboration with regional and international organizations working towards ending child marriages.

SMECM meets once every month to review the progress and report it to the Steering committee, which meets once every quarter. The life period starts from the financial year 2021 and ends in 2030.

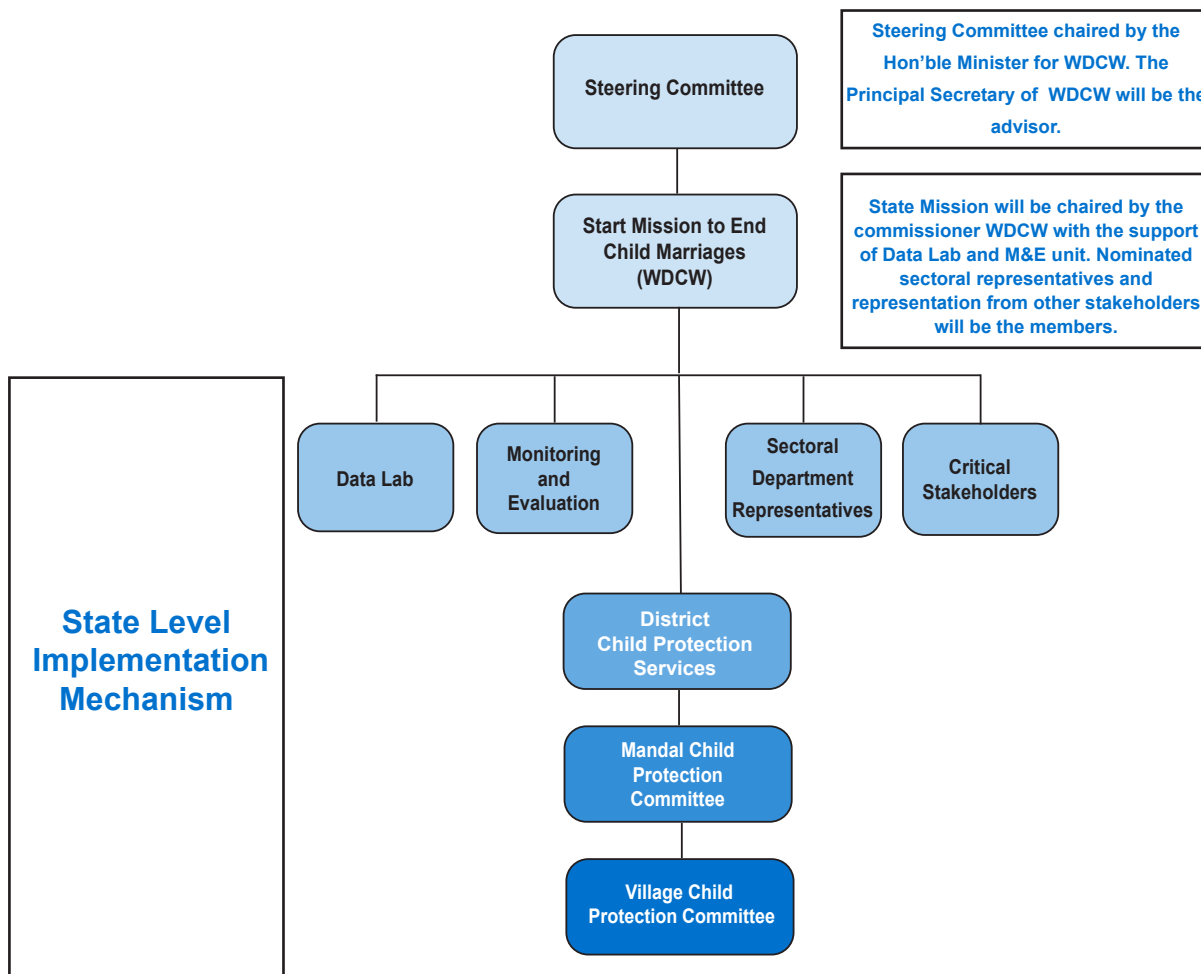
Data Lab:

To assist the SMECM, a data lab has to be set up in the WDCW department. The Data Lab collects real-time data from all 13 districts in Andhra Pradesh, analyzes and prepares a dashboard for the SMECM review. Ground-level real-time data will be collected by SHGs using the workbook model, which will be reviewed and transferred to State level Data Lab for further analysis and dashboard.

Monitoring and Evaluation:

Monitoring and Evaluation are critical for quality and impact assessment of interventions addressing the prevention of child marriages. With the support of Data Lab, SMECM will play an instrumental role in monitoring the implementation of the state action plan. In order to measure the progress and impact of the action plan, it is essential that accurate baselines are identified and current data collection mechanisms are integrated into the M&E framework.

Implementation Mechanism to Drive State Action Plan to Prevent Child Marriages in Andhra Pradesh



Sectoral Departments in Implementation

The State Action Plan to Prevent Child Marriages puts forth a result-oriented action plan with a multi-tiered mechanism to oversee its implementation, along with a monitoring framework that will enable the state departments to identify vulnerable child brides over time and act in a preventive manner, rather than a reactive manner. In order to ensure the smooth functioning of all institutions involved in the SAPPCM, their roles and responsibilities are outlined below.

Key Stakeholders and their roles and responsibilities:

Key Stakeholders and Actors	Roles and Responsibilities
Women Development and Child Welfare Department	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nodal co-ordination ministry for implementation of the SAPPCM. It will provide overall leadership, support, and execution of the plan. It will be in charge for the overall implementation of the action plan and will act as the nodal co-ordinator between the other line department and key stakeholders. • Building capacities of duty bearers from relevant departments is another important responsibility of WDCW, which will strengthen the implementation of the State Action Plan.
Department of School Education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To work in partnership with the Department of WDCW and support in tracking school drop-outs and preventing child marriages. • To play a key role in identifying vulnerable girl children in the school and support them in overall development and create awareness on child marriages. • Ensure vocational education component in secondary school curriculum that will help in preventing child marriages. • Ensure sufficient number of female teachers in all secondary schools so that chance for girl children to continue schooling. • Ensure running water female toilets in all secondary schools to protect privacy of girl children.
Department of Health and Family Welfare	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To work in partnership with the Department of WDCW and support in creating awareness about the negative impacts of child marriages on children's health and their future and ensure adolescents get proper nutritional and medical support as required. • To create awareness on the effects of child marriage on girls physical and mental development and reinforce the importance of sex education to adolescent girls.
Revenue Department	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To work in partnership with the Department of WDCW and identify and prevent child marriages by ensuring registration of births and marriages. • To ensure that every birth, marriage and death is registered in the village records, to help in easy detection of cases of child marriage.

Rural Development and Panchayat Raj	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To work in co-ordination with the department of WDCW and prevent and rescue victims of child marriage. • To act as agents of community awareness creation and play an active role in reduction of child marriages in villages.
Law Department	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To work in coordination with the Department of WDCW and play a role in effective enforcement of the PCMA and rehabilitation of the child bride. • To ensure that the regulation and rehabilitation measures are streamlined and implemented after rescue of the child bride.
Civil Society Organizations and NGOs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To work as on-field partners for WDCW to prevent child marriages and serve as operational partners of WDCW to implement this action plan at the village, block, district and levels. • To provide technical support to the government for implementation of this action plan.
Community Leaders: Cultural and Religious Leaders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To play a role as key advocacy agents against child marriages and contribute to changes in social and community norms on child marriage. • To generate awareness on prevention of child marriages and act as frontline workers to prevent child marriages and rescue child brides.
Self Help Groups	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To play a key role in the identification and prevention of child marriages and play an active role in the Village Child Protection Committees. • To play a key role in regular monitoring of cases of child marriage and timely prevention of any such incidences.
Children; Girls and Boys	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Boys and men to be change agents for girls, especially saying no to child marriage and all forms of gender-based violence in all settings. • Active partners in developing and implementing village, block, district and state plans of action to address child marriage and all forms of gender based violence.
Gram Panchayat	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • GP has to take lead role in monitoring the situation, organise regular interactions with stakeholders at GP level, coordinate with sectoral departments, council the parents who are opting child marriages, coordinate with community and religious leaders.

Coordination and Collaboration

Overall implementation of the Action Plan will include the involvement of all the different stakeholders; government departments, development organizations, Civil Society Organizations, NGOs, community and religious leaders, families, and children. The SAPPCM will build on the existing committees in order to ensure better coordination and collaboration.

The key platforms for coordination of child protection in Andhra Pradesh are:

Integrated Child Protection Services:

ICPS is an integrated framework of implementation that administers at national, state (SCPS), district (DCPS), and village levels (VCPS). It is based on principles of protection of child rights' and 'best interests of the child'. Its primary function is to put in place both preventive and curative mechanisms for a child needing protection from exploitation, harassment, health hazards, etc. and ensure implementation at different levels

District Child Protection Committees:

The District Child Protection Committee enables the effective functioning of ICPS at the district level. The primary function of DCPC is to coordinate the function in go fall Mandal Child Protection Committees and help them in developing plans and budgets. Under the SAPPCM, the district CPCs will also report to the project management unit on a quarterly basis.

Mandal Child Protection Committees:

The main function of the Mandal Child Protection Committee is to coordinate the functioning of all Village Child Protection Committees in the Mandal. The committee provides assistance and training to VCPCs in preparing plans, increasing awareness about issues, and resolving them.

Village Child Protection Committees:

Village Child Protection Committees (VCPCs) is headed by the village sarpanch. The committee consists of individuals and children in the village, ASHA and Anganwadi workers, local NGOs, Community Leaders, and Self-Help Groups. The primary role of VCPC is to ensure that all the children in their village are protected. The VCPC ensures that there is no child labour, child marriages, or any other form of violence against the children.

Apart from these committees, it is necessary to establish a unit that will be responsible for overseeing the overall coordination efforts to prevent child marriages in Andhra Pradesh. Hence, for effective implementation of the action plan, it is suggested to establish a project management unit within the Women Development and Child Welfare department that will ensure proper coordination and cooperation. The Unit will be headed by an officer who has extensive knowledge and experience in Child Rights and Protection.

9. MONITORING & EVALUATION FRAMEWORK

The general objective of the Monitoring and Evaluation framework for the State Action Plan to Prevent Child Marriage is to provide space for dialogue and decision making on the general status of the implementation, based on evidence-based data collected from program interventions. M&E will ensure effective and efficient implementation of the priority actions and interventions at all levels. The specific objective is to inform whether changes need to be made to strategic areas of interventions and the irrespective activities.

A standardized framework (as shown below) includes the objectives, set the targets for 2030, and defines the Key Performance Indicators (KPI). This framework brings accountability to various stakeholders for meeting their targets.

Monitoring and Evaluation Framework

STRATEGIC FOCUS AREA 1: COMMUNITY MOBILISATION TO CHANGE SOCIAL NORMS BY PROMOTING DIALOGUES AND RAISE AWARENESS OF GENDER INEQUALITIES AND THEIR CONSEQUENCES FOR WOMEN, MEN, GIRLS AND BOYS ACROSS ECONOMIC STATUS AND SOCIAL GROUPS.						
OBJECTIVES	TARGET FOR 2030	ACTIVITIES	TIMELINE			MEANS OF VERIFICATION
			SHORT TERM (UP TO 2023)	MEDIUM TERM (UP TO 2025)	LONG TERM (UP TO 2030)	
Strategy 1: Community mobilization to change social norms by promoting dialogues and raise awareness of gender inequalities and their consequences for women, men, girls and boys across economic status and social groups.						
1.1 Leverage strengths of religious bodies, community leaders and trade associations to influence the mindset of communities to act against child marriage.	All community leaders and religious leaders are aware of the legal and policy implications of child marriages.	a) Hold rounds of consultation on development & standardisation of communication materials on the issue. b) Issue guidelines to various trade organisations/ associations concerned with marriage arrangements for the prevention of child marriages. c) Organise quarterly / bi-monthly meeting with religious bodies, community leaders and trade associations throughout the year to discuss the consequences of child marriage and legal provisions to penalise the persons				Standardised IEC materials; Number of meetings organised.

		<p>who take part in such marriage in any capacity.</p> <p>d) Recognise the active members of religious bodies, community leaders and trade associations who are able to report the incidents of child marriage and share their contribution as a Child Rights Champion in the large forums.</p>					
<p>1.2. Empower men and women with information on consequences of child marriage and involve them in changing social norms.</p>	<p>Community as a whole is empowered to prevent and eliminate child marriages.</p>	<p>a) Develop and disseminate information briefs and educational materials about the implications and consequences of child marriage and use the same during the occasions of community gatherings at village/ mandal/ district level.</p> <p>b) Integrate resource materials on child marriage in the existing capacity building programmes/ training for grass-root level committees at villages including SHGs.</p>			<p>Number of officials trained; IEC material available in capacity building programs for grass-root level committees.</p>	<p>WDCW, Police Department, State Legal Services Authority, Department of Social Welfare.</p>	<p>a) Guidelines prepared and shared with the stakeholders.</p> <p>b) Materials shared with enforcement officials.</p> <p>c) Minutes of trainings and capacity building workshops conducted.</p>

<p>1.3. Engage with media to sensitise the community on the negative consequences of stringent social norms against gender and to promote positive role models to break the gender norms.</p>	<p>The media plays an influential role in the community to prevent child marriages.</p>	<p>a) Hold a sensitisation workshop for various forms of media – print and electronic, on how to report cases related to child marriage, upholding the rights of the child.</p> <p>b) Develop partnerships with media to advocate for girls’ rights and to highlight stories which promote positive role models and break gender stereotyping.</p> <p>c) Use social media and other media to gather public opinion against the issue.</p>				<p>Number of sensitisation workshops.</p>	<p>WDCW, Police Department, Revenue Department, Legal Department, and CSOs.</p>	<p>a. SOP prepared and shared with the media and communication materials.</p> <p>b. Number of promotional materials printed, promoted and distributed.</p>
<p>1.4. Launching of gender transformative interventions to address the root causes of child marriage.</p>	<p>Women are empowered to make their own decisions especially related to age of marriage.</p>	<p>a) Initiate gender transformative intervention like annual activities led by women/ girls, women football match, girls cricket clubs etc. with village level institution like SHGs, PRIs recognised NGOs</p> <p>b) Collaborate with NGOs/ CSOs and initiate innovative</p>				<p>Social media movements on prevention of child marriages</p> <p>Extra curricular activities towards women empowerment.</p>	<p>Revenue Department, WDCW.</p>	<p>Number of partnerships developed and advocacy campaigns conducted.</p> <p>Number of public opinion polls and awareness campaigns conducted.</p> <p>Number of women participants in annual activities.</p>

<p>2.3. Strengthen the delivery of existing programmes and schemes related to skills and livelihood to enable adolescents access to them.</p>	<p>Last mile outreach of programs and policies for preventing child marriages</p>	<p>a) Identify barriers in accessing existing programmes and schemes related to skills and livelihood by adolescents, especially girls.</p>					<p>WDCW, Skill Development Department, CSOs, NGOs.</p>	<p>Number of revisions or alterations made to existing schemes for skills and livelihoods development for girls.</p>
		<p>b) Monitor progress on improvement in access to existing programmes and schemes related to skills and livelihood by adolescents.</p>					<p>WDCW, Skill Development Department, CSOs, NGOs.</p>	<p>Number of beneficiaries of skill and livelihood training programs for adolescents.</p>
		<p>c) Engage with private partners, corporates and training institute to design demand driven skill development courses for adolescents.</p>			<p>Number of skill-institutes for adolescents.</p>	<p>WDCW, Corporates, NGOs.</p>	<p>Number of partnerships developed with private partners and corporates for skill development.</p>	
<p>2.4. Promote government programs linked to improve economic empowerment of women.</p>	<p>Re-enforce the resolve of the government to work on eliminating child marriages</p>	<p>a) Create awareness on existing programmes on both wage employment and self-employment for economic empowerment of women.</p>				<p>WDCW, private NGOs, agencies.</p>	<p>Number of awareness programs conducted on employment schemes.</p>	
		<p>b) Develop materials on entrepreneurship development and financial literacy.</p>		<p>IEC material on entrepreneurship and financial literacy.</p>	<p>WDCW, SHGs and Skill Development Department.</p>	<p>Number of training material developed on entrepreneurship and financial literacy.</p>		
		<p>c) Work in collaboration with PRI and SHGs to identify most</p>		<p>Number of families that are linked with</p>	<p>WDCW, PRI and SHGs.</p>	<p>Number of vulnerable families identified and linked to income</p>		

		vulnerable families and link them with income generation programmes.					income generation programmes.	generation programmes.
Strategy 3: Create and expand opportunities for the empowerment of adolescent girls and boys to realise their rights								
<p>3.1. Ensure that all adolescents' girls and boys have access to and complete quality age appropriate schooling.</p>	<p>Education curriculum includes modules on creation of awareness of child marriages.</p>	a) Increase the number of schools with secondary education at the village level for girls.				a) Number of secondary schools at village level.	WDCW, Education Department.	Number of new schools established at village levels.
		b) Develop a retention strategy for girls and boys between the age of 12-18 in schools.				b) Number of dropouts.	WDCW, Education Department.	Number of girls and boys who complete secondary and higher education.
		c) Improved access of residential schools like KGBVs and Social Welfare Residential Educational Institution for girls.				c) Enrollment rate.	WDCW, Education Department.	Number of girls enrolled and continuing education in residential schools.
		d) Improve sanitation facilities including the provision of functional toilets and running water facilities in schools.				d) Gender and child right modules in teacher training programs.	WDCW, Education Department.	Number of functional toilets with running water facilities in schools.
		e) Develop resource materials for integration of gender and child rights education in existing training of teachers in coordination with SCERT.					WDCW, Education Department.	Number of resource materials developed and training programs conducted for teachers.

<p>3.2. Preparing older adolescent girls and boys for livelihoods and school-to-work transitions.</p>	<p>Improve employability and employment options for adolescent girls and streamline the transition process from school to work.</p>	<p>a) Collaborate with CSO and SHGs and provide training in JOVT for out of school girls and young mothers. b) Establish coordination between the School Education Department and the Employment Generation Marketing Mission for smooth transition of school to work aiming at employment after job training.</p>				<p>JOVT for out of school and young mothers.</p>	<p>WDCW, Education Department, CSOs and SHGs.</p>	<p>Number of training programs conducted for out of school girls and young mothers.</p>
<p>3.3. Build girls' agency and empower them to exercise life choices (legal rights, age-segmented and age-appropriate gender transformative life skills education and comprehensive sexuality education).</p>	<p>Girls are empowered to make their own decisions and have autonomy on decisions.</p>	<p>a) Form adolescent clubs at school for school going children and at AWC for out-of-school girls and build capacities of the members to act as a change agent. b) Develop and disseminate guidelines for discussions on the rights and issues for children and women, legal rights, schemes and programmes for adolescents etc. c) Issue guidelines/or- ders to the secondary and higher secondary schools to display the</p>				<p>a) Number of adolescent clubs for girls in schools b. Number of IEC materials for adolescents on child rights.</p>	<p>Education Department. WDCW, Education Department and Legal Services Department.</p>	<p>Number of adolescent clubs formed for girls in schools Guidelines developed and disseminated on rights issues of children. IEC materials displayed and notes on discussions on issues of child marriages in</p>

<p>4.3. Increase scale and reach of ending child marriage and adolescent empowerment programs and laws especially for the most marginalised, leveraging, coordinating and stipulate the roles and responsibilities and accountability of different stakeholders at state, district, block and community level in policy and law enforcement.</p>	<p>Enhance the outreach of child protection laws and child marriages.</p>	<p>c) Sensitise judicial officers and public prosecutors in all districts, on child marriage, PCMA and annulment. d) Organise Public Hearing with SCPCR in high child marriage prone districts.</p>					<p>WDCW, PRI, Legal Services Department.</p>	<p>Number of awareness and training programs conducted for judicial officers and public prosecutors.</p>
		<p>a) Motivate the ASHA worker and AWW to create awareness on ill health effects of marriage and child bearing before the age of 18 with adolescent girls at village level and also help the local government to link those families with various schemes and programmes under social protection.</p>					<p>WDCW, PRI, Health Department.</p>	<p>Number of training sessions conducted for ASHA and AWW workers.</p>
		<p>b) Strengthen capacity of GP, SHGs, CPCs, Frontline workers like (AWW, ASHA, school teacher) to identify the high risk families for child marriage , play key role in awareness generation and sensitization.</p>				<p>Capacity building programs for Frontline workers.</p>	<p>WDCW, PRI, Health Department.</p>	<p>Number of training programs conducted for GP, SHGs, CPCs, frontline workers to strengthen their capacities.</p>

		<p>c) Build capacities of grass root level committees like Village Health Sanitation, Committees and Child Protection Committees at village and Mandal level, Standing Committees on Social service at Gram Panchayat to spread awareness on child marriage and to increase reporting on the incidents of child marriage.</p> <p>d) Develop an SOP for stakeholders who are involved under provisions of PCMA Act and JJ Act to ensure prevention and protection of children from child marriage at the state and district level.</p>					<p>WDCW, PRI, Health Department, PRI, Police Department.</p>	<p>Number of training programs conducted for Village Health Sanitation Committees and Child Protection Committees.</p>
<p>4.4. Strengthen rehabilitation and redressal mechanisms for children affected by marriage.</p>	<p>Redressal and Rehabilitation mechanisms are streamlined and strengthened for victims of child marriage.</p>	<p>a) Facilitate the fast-track redressal system for those adolescents who want to nullify their marriage and explore provision of compensation through victim compensation scheme and provide legal aid.</p> <p>b) Build the capacity of</p>				<p>Status reports of victims of child marriages.</p>	<p>WDCW, PRI, Legal Services Department.</p>	<p>SOP developed and implemented for PCMA and JJ act.</p>
							<p>WDCW, PRI, Legal Services Department.</p>	<p>Streamlining and regulation of redressal and rehabilitation mechanisms.</p>
						<p>Number of</p>	<p>WDCW, PRI.</p>	<p>Number of capacity</p>

<p>4.5. Competency based capacity development programme of the CMPOs, Marriage Registration officers, DCPUs and Special Juvenile Police Units on continuous basis.</p>	<p>All Child Marriage Prevention Officers are capacitated to prevent and eliminate child marriages.</p>	<p>Child Welfare Committee members/ district child protection units for rehabilitation of children rescued from incidents of child marriage.</p>				<p>capacity building programs.</p>	<p>WDCW, PRI.</p>	<p>building programs conducted for Child Welfare Committee members and district child protection units.</p>
		<p>c) Strengthen capacities of the ASHAs and AWWs to engage with young married couples in order to motivate them to delay and promote spacing between births.</p>				<p>Number of Asha and AWW workers trained on child marriage prevention module.</p>	<p>WDCW, PRI, Health Department.</p>	<p>Number of capacity building programs conducted for ASHA and AWWs on child births and spacing between pregnancies.</p>
		<p>a) Conduct a training need assessment for CMPOs, Marriage Registration officers, DCPUs and SJPU and identify the skill gap to deal with the issue of child marriage.</p>				<p>Needs assessments for all officials implementing child marriage prevention act.</p>	<p>WDCW, PRI, Revenue Department</p>	<p>Results of needs assessment conducted for CMPOs, marriage registration officers, DCPUs and SJPU.</p>
<p>b) Develop training materials for sensitisation of CMPOs, marriage registration officers and SJPU on issues related to child rights and organise sensitization workshop</p>				<p>Training materials on child marriage prevention for officials.</p>	<p>WDCW, PRI.</p>	<p>Training materials developed and distributed.</p>		
<p>c) Prepare a training calendar for responsible stakeholders and planned continuous capacity development</p>				<p>Capacity building programs conducted.</p>	<p>WDCW.</p>	<p>Development of training calendar.</p>		

<p>5.4. Partnership with research intuition/s, development partners and resource agencies to generate evidence on child marriage in the state.</p>		<p>b) Generate data & evidence and share it with concerned stakeholders on the district specific situation and progress by obtaining data from the district level MIS.</p>					<p>WDCW, PRI</p>	<p>Reports developed and shared at the district level.</p>
	<p>Evidence based research reports are generated and help inform policy makers on issues related to girls and child marriages.</p>	<p>a) Develop partnership for analysis of data related to the issues of education, health and protection of children and prepare policy brief or an advocacy brief as required time to time to implement the plan of action.</p> <p>b) Conduct qualitative research to better understand changes taking place in the lives of the girls and to gain insights on the effectiveness of the different components of the action plan.</p> <p>c) Generate evidence on the gaps of programme and schemes.</p>			<p>Policy and advocacy briefs pertinent to child protection and development.</p>	<p>WDCW, PRI, NGOs</p>	<p>Number of partnerships developed and established to monitor the data of MIS.</p> <p>Number of partnerships developed and established to monitor the data of MIS.</p>	
						<p>Research articles and reports on child marriages and gender specific issues.</p>	<p>WDCW, NGOs</p>	<p>Number of research reports developed and dissemination of findings.</p>
						<p>Reports and documentation on programs and schemes</p>	<p>WDCW, NGOs</p>	<p>Publication of materials and reports on gaps of programmes and schemes of child marriages.</p>

PART THREE

ANNEXURES - RESULTS FRAME WORK

ANNEXURES

RESULTS FRAMEWORK

It brings together several distinct streams of results under the state action plan, which function synergistically to reach the expected goal by 2030.

Results Framework
State Action Plan to Prevent Child Marriages in Andhra Pradesh
Time frame: 2020 to 2030 (ten years)

IMPACT

Girls fully enjoy their childhood which is free from the risk of early marriage; they experience healthier, safer, and more empowered life transitions while in control of their own destiny, including making choices and decisions about their education, sexuality, relationship formation/marriage, and childbearing.

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE

To accelerate action to address child marriage by enhancing investments in and support for married and unmarried girls and making visible the corresponding benefits of this support; engaging key actors – including young people as agents of change – in catalyzing shifts towards positive gender norms; increasing political support, resources, policies and frameworks promoting positive change; and improving the data and evidence base.

IMPACT INDICATORS:
1. Percentage of women aged 20–24 married/in-union before age 18
2. Percentage of women aged 20–24 married/in-union before age 15, among all women aged 20–24 married/in-union before age 18
3. Percentage who gave birth before age 20 among all women aged 20–24 married/in-union before age 15,
4. Percentage who gave birth before age 18
5. Percentage of adolescent girls of lower-secondary school-age that are out of school
6. Percentage of women aged 15–19 who have their need for family planning satisfied with modern methods
7. Percentage of births to girls aged 15–19 attended by skilled health personnel

OUTCOME 1: Community Leaders (especially Religious leaders, Community leaders, PRI functionaries, opinion makers, adolescent girls and boys, men and women) are active participants in eliminating gender inequalities and changing social norms thereby ensuring strong prevention and early reporting on child marriages.

OUTCOME 1 INDICATORS:
a) All stakeholders at the village level uphold gender-equitable attitudes.
b) Gender Transformative programs are mainstreamed in community-level activities

OUTPUT 1.1 :
Guidelines, SOPs, and IEC material are developed and shared with Media, PRI functionaries, Community leaders, NGOs, and SHGs
OUTPUT INDICATOR 1.1 :
Number of training and awareness sessions conducted with community leaders, PRI functionaries, NGOs and SHGs
OUTPUT 1.2 :
Rehabilitation and Redressal mechanisms for girl children are streamlined and adolescent girls have easier access to such facilities
OUTPUT INDICATOR 1.2 :
The number of rehabilitation spaces created in shelter homes and the number of adolescent girls who are at risk of child marriage or victims of child marriage access such programs.
OUTCOME 2: Livelihoods opportunities are enhanced thereby leading households to demonstrate positive attitudes and behaviours towards investing in and supporting adolescent girls
OUTCOME 2 INDICATORS:
Number and proportion of households that are gainfully employed in income generation activities
OUTPUT 2.1 :
Economic incentive helps households delay the age of marriage of girls in the household
OUTPUT INDICATOR 2.1 :
a) Number of beneficiaries of the Conditional Cash Transfer programs
b) Number of girls who are enrolled into secondary and higher education
c) Number of girls who availed scholarships in schools
OUTCOME 3 : Expansion of opportunities for the empowerment of boys and girls
OUTCOME 3 INDICATORS:
a) Number and proportion of adolescent girls in program areas who have enrolled in secondary and higher education
b) Percentage point difference in exam-pass rates between boys and girls in program areas
OUTPUT 3.1 :
Improved access to schools and improved gender-sensitive infrastructure in schools
OUTPUT INDICATOR 3.1 :
a) Number of schools available at village level for secondary and higher education
b) Number of toilets available at schools with running water facility
OUTPUT 3.2 :
Recreational/Safe spaces created for girls for awareness creation and discussion forums on their rights, schemes and, program and to discuss their issues
b) Percentage point difference in exam-pass rates between boys and girls in program areas



**STATE
ACTION
PLAN TO
PREVENT
CHILD
MARRIAGES**

