

11 October

International Day of the Girl Child



act:onaid



DON'T
MY SPOIL
FUTURE
End Girl Child Marriage

Origins of the International Day of the Girl Child

The UN General Assembly's decision to institute 11th October as the International Day of the Girl marks the international community's political will to promote girls' rights by highlighting the violations, inequalities, discrimination and exclusion they are suffering across the world.

SPECIAL THOUGHTS OF THE DAY



As Pakistani schoolgirl and campaigner for girls' rights Malala Yousafzai arrives in the UK for specialist medical treatment, ActionAid sends a public message of support to the young blogger:

Uzma Tahir, ActionAid Pakistan Program Manager, expressed herself on the matter:

"ActionAid Pakistan strongly condemns the brutal attack on Malala Yousafzai, an innocent girl. Malala was devoted to education and peace and inspired many girls across Pakistan to stand up for their right to an education. In Pakistan, girls of Malala's age are often forced to get married and stay at home for no other reason than to deprive them of their basic rights to education, health and a dignified life.

"We pray for Malala's good health and we want to let Malala know that all of us are on her side in the war against extremism and ignorance. Let us make a commitment today that we will take forward Malala's message of peace and girls' education to every part of our country and across the globe."

"Sometimes I imagine I am going along and a Taliban stop me. I take my sandal and hit them on the face and say what you're doing is wrong. Education is our right don't take it from us", Malala Yousafzai.

IN THIS ISSUE

As part of their project to stop violence against girls and empowering girls through education, ActionAid joined the movement and carried out various activities around the world:

- ✦ SIERRA LEONE
- ✦ MOZAMBIQUE
- ✦ PAKISTAN
- ✦ EAP/SA, THAILAND
- ✦ MALAWI
- ✦ NIGERIA
- ✦ UGANDA
- ✦ GHANA



Returning to School after Escaping Child Marriage

International education and youth team

In recent years, the international community has begun to place increased attention on girls' education generating a better understanding of the underlying causes and consequences of the disparities, and an international consensus on the need to address the issue. Much has been done to create awareness and demonstrate that change is not only necessary but also possible.

In the long-term Millennium Development Goal 3, which focuses on eliminating gender disparities in education, is one of the most important mechanisms for addressing women's marginalization and exclusion. However, getting girls into school is only part of the process and unfortunately, to date much less emphasis has been placed on what actually happens in the classroom. As a result, although progress towards gender parity continues, many countries will not achieve gender parity in education by 2015 and had the world achieved gender parity at primary level by 2008, another 3.6 million girls would now be in school (UNESCO, 2011).

In 2004, ActionAid undertook research into the obstacles to girls' education in 12 countries across Africa, Asia and Latin America demonstrating that gender stereotypes entrenched in traditions, customs and religious beliefs help perpetuate circumscribed notions about the position and worth of girls in society - limiting their capacity to enjoy some of their most fundamental human rights. In many cases, girls' every day experiences are also conditioned and controlled by various forms of violence at home, at school and within the wider community.

Across the world, violence against girls and women takes a worrying array of forms ranging from physical, emotional or sexual abuse, to institutionalized forms of repression and control that serve to limit women and girls' choices and decision-making power over their own bodies such as female genital mutilation and early marriage. All of these forms of violence constitute violations of women and girls' fundamental human rights.

Early marriage is increasingly being recognized as one of the main barriers to girls' education and evidence gathered in countries, which implicitly or explicitly condone the practice; illustrate the constraints forced upon girls' lives. Early marriage, and the consequent implications of childbearing and domestic labour, not only place serious limitations on girls' capacity to enjoy their rights to education and to develop to their fullest potential - but also in many cases leads to serious health implications and, in some instances, death.

Over the past 38 years, ActionAid has been working to increase access to quality primary education globally. Emphasizing a rights-based approach our mission objective on education – improve the quality of public education for all children and support youth to become drivers of change towards a poverty-free planet - focuses on two key change promises:

- **Transforming education for girls and boys**
- **Harnessing youth leadership to end poverty and injustice**

Key to achieving these goals is challenging and transforming the socio-economic and political factors keeping girls out of school through human rights based approach framework. Much of ActionAid's education work seeks to focus on understanding the root causes of discrimination against girls and its impact on their ability to enjoy their education rights...

...By using a combination of research, community-based initiatives and advocacy, the organization has been able to raise awareness of the links between violence and education, develop examples of best practice and lobby for concrete changes in policy and practice.

Flagship examples of this work include two multi-country girls' education initiatives being implemented across Sub-Saharan Africa: **Transforming Education for Girls in Nigeria and Tanzania** and **Stop Violence Against Girls in School**.

In the context of its new strategy 'People's Action to End Poverty', which focuses on holding governments to account for public services, transforming education for all children and increasing women and girls' control over their own bodies, ActionAid is engaged in looking at girls' empowerment through a rights-based perspective.

Using a 12-point charter, developed in collaboration with girls themselves, ActionAid has been calling on the international community to implement existing international frameworks, including the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) and to recognise the importance of violence and other barriers to girls' education by making these the subject of new targets in the MDGs.

Case Study, Zimbabwe: Our work can make a difference; Janet is back to school after 2 years.

Janet Rwodzi, 18 years old is attending 3rd grade at Nyahonye Secondary school. She dropped out of school in 2010 because she got pregnant from her boyfriend and her parents chased her away from home to go to her husband. Living with her husband was harsh since he abused her. Although she was pregnant, he made her work day and night and used to beat her despite her health conditions. Later on, the husband took in another wife arguing that Janet was too young and inexperienced to satisfy his sexual needs. With the poor living conditions and the term of her pregnancy approaching, Janet decided to go back home. Then, she gave birth to a baby boy who is now 11 months. Life has not been easier with a child and a father who rejected the newborn. However, now Janet says that she is *"so happy to be back in school after 2 years of dropping out due to teenage pregnancy and early marriage. My dream of becoming an accountant can now be achieved. Thank you FACT Rusape and Action Aid for taking me back to school,"* She expressed her appreciation to FACT and AAIZ for carrying out the Girls not Brides Campaign because it helped her parents to realise that her pregnancy does not mean she was promiscuous and that she has rights that must be respected.

"I am so happy to be back in school after 2 years of dropping out due to teenage pregnancy and early marriage. My dream of becoming an accountant can now be achieved. Thank you, FACT Rusape and Action Aid for taking me back to school," Janet.

INTERNATIONAL DAY OF THE GIRL CHILD CELEBRATION - SIERRA LEONE, Freetown Cecilia.Sannoh@actionaid.org

In Sierra Leone, the commemoration of the day was celebrated under the national theme: **“End Child Marriage” and “say no to Teenage Pregnancy” “Too Young to Wed!”**

Jointly celebrated by AAISL, key stakeholders and other partners (UNFPA, UN Women, PLAN, etc). Together they ensured their commitment in supporting the government in its call for an “End Child Marriage and Say No to Teenage Pregnancy”.

Partnerships between government, UN and others key actors of the society has been emphasized for a better investment on girls' needs and a better commitment to the protection of girls' rights. This includes also the understanding of the roots causes of such inequalities and the need to address cultural barriers and foster changes in beliefs and behaviours towards girls.

The commemoration of the day followed with activities including: radio discussions and a play performance on the theme of the day.

Actions to be followed by AAISL

- AAISL will continue work with Girls Education Movement (GEM) in the Ministry of Education Science and Technology
- Work with Girls Education Movement Chapters at the district level to be effectively engage in policy and advocacy work in education
- Continue sensitization through partners on the enrolment, retention and completion of basic education by the girl child at local and national levels



COMMEMORATION OF THIS YEAR'S INTERNATIONAL DAY OF THE GIRL CHILD – MOZAMBIQUE

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In Mozambique, ActionAid celebrated the day through a series of activities in partnership with local and international organizations.

MEPT (the Education for All Movement) in partnership with ActionAid Mozambique, The Network of Organisations working on Children's Rights, Plan International, Save the Children, Fórum Mulher, Amudeia, the Teachers' Union, Udeba-Lab, the Network of Organisations Working Against Child Abuse (RedeCame) and UNICEF, organized workshops with Civil Society to discuss and share experiences about actions taken for the protection of girls.

On the 11th of October the organisations listed above also came together to organize a ceremony of celebration for the International Day of the Girl Child which coincided with the regional launch of Plan International's campaign “Because I am a Girl”.

ActionAid Mozambique also worked with RedeCame and others to launch an information campaign around laws for the protection of girls' rights in school.

Case Study: Mozambique

My name is Dayse da Conceição I am 11 years old and I am in grade 7. I was invited to be part of girls club in August this year. Initially, I did not want it. But one day I went to visit the club and I liked very much. There were a lot of beautiful things and I wanted to learn. This is how I started participating in the activities; I have learnt a lot. Before participating in the Conference, I used to see many young girls being pregnant in my neighbourhood and I thought that was normal. Now that I participated in the conference, I have noted that it is not normal for a child to be pregnant because when that happens that child no longer goes to school and no longer plays with friends. Now I know that it is not right to be pregnant as a child. I know that I have to study so that one day I should be able to work. At the conference, I have learnt my rights and now I know that I cannot accept if someone wants to touch my private parts. I was very happy when I was selected to read the petition, a lot of people saw me on TV, my colleagues, my family and a lot of my neighbours. When I went back home, people used to ask me what early marriage is and what can be done to end this evil. I used to explain to young and old all that I learnt from the National Conference for Girls to allow girls to go school and avoid being pregnant.

COMMEMORATION OF THE DAY OF THE GIRL - PAKISTAN, Islamabad

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As part of their campaign to promote girls' education rights and, in collaboration with Blue Veins and Girls Not Brides, ActionAid Pakistan has organized various demonstrations for the commemoration of the event. One of the most spectacular manifestation has been the Dolls Demonstration, a protest that is the first of its kind organized in Islamabad and supported by a Press Conference (see picture above). The doll protest was held outside the National Press Club. It consisted in puppets holding messages addressed to people preventing girl from staying children such as "Do not steal my childhood, I am not 18 yet, do not scarify my childhood in the name of culture, let me cherish my childhood." Following the demonstration, a press conference was held and during which participants made a call to the government to take legal measures for the protection of children and women in Pakistan. The last activity has been a token rally, which took place as the others one, at the Press Club

Mothers spoke about difficulties to protect their daughters.

"My daughter got engaged when she was born. Later, when she reached 13 her in-laws started forcing us to marry her, but I never wanted this to happen and I begged in front of my husband not to do this." A mother from Pakistan

Pakistan End Girl Marriage fact sheet



October 11 "International Day Of The Girl Child"

The International Day of the Girl Child declared by the UN serves to recognize girls as a population that faces difficult challenges, including gender violence, early marriage, child labor, and discrimination at work. The term "girl child" is commonly used abroad to distinguish the unique challenges faced by those under age 18 from those faced by women. This Day will raise awareness about these life hindering obstacles, and will pro-actively breakdown those obstacles locally and globally.

Let's Join hands to end Girl Child Marriages in Pakistan.

Prevalence:

Rate of girl child marriage is 24% in Pakistan annually.

Context:

- Girl Child marriage is more common in rural areas (29%) where long standing traditions are closely followed than in more urbanized areas (16%).
- Gender discrimination, economic hardship and lack of awareness of the harmful impact of child marriage have been highlighted as common exacerbating factors.
- Misinterpretation of religion has also been cited as a factor in families marrying their daughters once girls reach puberty in accordance to Shariah law.
- Control over sexuality and protecting family honor, family ties and gender inequality are other contributing factors.
- Insecurity for girls increases during disasters and emergencies, and has been exacerbated by weak governance.

Existing legislation and government response:

- The legal age for marriage is 16 for women and 18 for men. (Child Marriage Restraint Act (CMRA) 1929).
- CMRA provides, marriages should be consensual and both parties should be above the minimum age (16 for women and 18 for men), but its adequacy and implementation have been questioned by civil society and representatives who call for legal reform.
- Under the Devolution Ordinance Act of 2001 local councils are responsible for registering births and marriages, but capacity constraints have been cited as an obstacle for proving a girls age. Most births in Pakistan's rural areas are unregistered as are early marriages.
- The prevention of anti-women practices (Criminal Law Amendment) Act 2011 was passed in December 2011, which provides that forcing a woman into marriage for settling a dispute is a non-bailable offence, punishable by three to five years jail and a fine of Rs 0.5 million.
- The punishment for forced marriages (other than those for settling disputes) is three to ten years jail and a fine of Rs.0.5 million.
- Campaigners argue that the authorities have failed to provide any clear strategy for addressing these problems with implementing the new law, and that the punishment is not strict enough.
- The Child Marriage Restraint(Amendment) Bill 2009, which proposes to raise the minimum age for girls from 16 to 18, and increase punishment from one month to two years imprisonment as well as 100,000 Rs fine instead of 1000 Rs, has been tabled in the National Assembly.



Join hands to end Girl Child Marriages in Pakistan.



October 11 "International Day Of The Girl Child,"

Child Marriage of less than 18 years is a crime.

"Child brides have little exposure to education, friends or their family. Every basic right they have is violated. When girls are married off before 18 years, they lose their childhood, dolls and friends. They are denied the right of making decisions for their own life. They have right to stay in school and gain the skills to lift them and their family out of poverty. We want to see a world without child marriage," said by Uzma Tahir, ActionAid Pakistan Policy manager.

"Our daughters are like the hope, the future of Afghanistan I think women have to stand up; they have to raise their voice" By Fawzia Koofi, female afghan MP victim of dead threats from Taliban.

INTERNATIONAL DAY OF THE GIRL CHILD COMMEMORATION – EAP/SA, THAILAND

Reported by pphumtim@unicef.org on behalf of EAPRO UNGEI

The East Asia and Pacific Regional and South Asia Regional UNGEI inaugurated the International Day of the Girl Child together with Plan International Thailand with the launch of their new report on girls and education as part of their campaign “Because I am a Girl”

Moreover, to celebrate the event, together ActionAid, UNGEI and Plan International co-hosted a high-level conference in Bangkok themed **Girl and Education**, which was presided by her Excellency Mrs. Nalinee Taveesin, Minister from the office of the Prime Minister.

Link to East Asia / Pacific Regional Fact sheet on child marriage

- http://www.unescobkk.org/fileadmin/user_upload/news/doc/EAP_SA_UNGEI_factsheet_east_asia_and_pacific.pdf

Link to South Asia Regional fact sheet on child marriage

- http://www.unescobkk.org/fileadmin/user_upload/news/doc/EAP_SA_UNGEI_factsheet_south_asia.pdf

Link to UNFPA fact sheet on child marriage

- <http://unfpa.org/files/live/sites/unfpa/files/youngtowed/WhatIsChildMarriageFactSheet2.pdf>

INTERNATIONAL DAY OF THE GIRL CHILD – MALAWI

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In Malawi, the celebration took place under the form of a public debate presided by the Minister of Gender, Mary Shawa. The national theme in commemoration of the girl day was: **What should be the Legal Age of Marriage in Malawi?**

Panellists at the conference were influential actors such as Dr Mary Shawa, Principal Secretary of the Ministry of Gender and Child Welfare and Community Services. Among others panellists were, the Chief Kachindamoto of Dedza, who put in place mechanisms to stop early marriages in her village and Justice Mzikamanda. A key moment of the debate was the participation of Salima who accepted to share her life experience as being a girl bride.

Others activities of the day have been the Symposia gathering traditional leaders, technocrats, policy makers and key actors of the society to discuss over the issues. The celebration of the day finally ended with the screening of a documentary on early marriage produced by ActionAid.

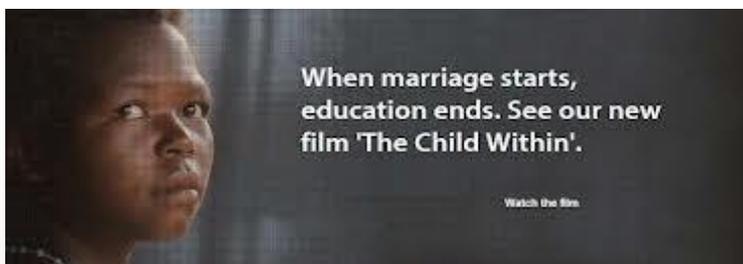
Success Story



Belita Simpokolwe was 13 years old (in stripped shirt above), when she was forced by her stepfather to quit school and get married with a 77 years old man. Despite the objections of her mother, Belita was forced to marry the old man. Fortunately, 2 weeks after the marriage, a group of women activists from the Chitipa’s Women Forum who worked jointly with ActionAid funded project “Social Empowerment on Rights for Vulnerable and Excluded Women”, interceded to help her out and successfully managed to convince her parents to cancel the marriage and let their daughter go back to school. Now Belita lives with her biological father and continues her studies.

« Sometimes I fail to concentrate in class when these things come back to my mind”

Belita Simpokolwe, Malawi



http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xUbh98dZjSw&feature=player_embedded&list=UU12rA3gPy3boiJh-wiK98g

“Every girl also has the right to an education. Education is one of the most effective strategies to combat child marriage and can open doors for girls, especially as they progress to secondary school. In fact, when a girl finishes secondary school, she is six times less likely to marry young. But this can only happen if they stay in school.

When we remove girls from school to marry early, it impacts their lives profoundly. A new short feature from Camfed – “The Child Within” – portrays the experience of child marriage from a girl’s perspective. Nabena, 15, speaks volumes of the impact it had on her life when she says, “My whole being yearns to go back to school.” The film was produced in collaboration with traditional and local government authorities, who are now using it to help lead the fight against child marriage and help keep girls in school.”

Nora Fyles, Head of UNGEI Secretariat

INTERNATIONAL DAY OF THE GIRL CHILD – NIGERIAAndrew.Mamedu@actioaid.org

In Nigeria, the commemoration of the day received a great attendance and was largely broadcasted by media.

The celebration started with a Media Briefing organised in collaboration with AAN, the Civil Society Coalition in Nigeria and the Federal Capital Territory Ministry of Education.

A key event of the day has been the Life Story Presentation, in which Madam Laraba shared her experience as being a girl bride. As for Gloria, another participant, she outlined other barriers to education when she explained how the distance from school forced her to drop out her education. The last activity that concluded the day was a Media Presentation of the issues by the Deputy Country Director of AAN, followed by some contributions and deliberations about the next steps and actions that need to be taken in order to overcome these issues and to improve the access and completion of girls' education.



In her address for the celebration of the 11th October, Mrs Ifeoma Monwuba, the Deputy Country Director of ActionAid Nigeria, said that according to its more recent report, ActionAid states that worldwide, there is approximately 36 millions of girls who are not in school and among them Nigeria account for 6 millions of girls out of school.

“Parents, extended family members, traditional and religious institutions and politicians, should encourage full education of girls and discourage early marriage”, says the Deputy Country Director of ActionAid Nigeria, Mrs Ifeoma monwuba

“We want to be seen as equals, in the eyes of others AND in our own eyes.”

THE COMMEMORATION OF THE INTERNATIONAL DAY OF THE GIRL CHILD – UGANDAHellen.Malinga@actionaid.org

The CSOs actors, together with the National Council of Children, the Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development, the Ministry of Education and Sports, the Ministry of Internal Affairs and UN bodies (UNFPA, UNICEF), celebrated the event under the national theme: **“Too Young to Marry: end Child Marriage and Teenage Pregnancy”**.

The main event of the day has been the Presentation of the Children Memorandum, which has been developed during the Children Symposium, and delivered to the Hon. Speaker of Parliament Rebecca Kadaga. The Memorandum includes a first section presenting the issues and concerns of children related to early marriage and teenage pregnancy. The second section is a compilation of recommendations to overcome these issues and pointing at different key actors to take action such as the government, organizations, parents, and children.

**What Do Girls Want?**

We want equality. In everything. **Equal access to education** opportunities, in the subjects we choose. Recognition for **how good we are** at math, science, and lots of other stuff. More opportunities to **play sports**. Media images that show girls and women who actually **look like us**. Health care that helps us live **longer, stronger lives**. **Freedom from violence**, so we can feel safe in our bodies. To make our own **choices**, regardless of the culture, stereotypes, hemisphere, or history we were born into. Equal work, equal pay, and **equal power**. Is this too much to ask? Well, **we're not asking, we're telling you** that we are the **future** of our planet and our people. **We deserve lives filled with abundance** where our **voices** have impact. We want to be **valued and respected** so we can exceed **expectations**. We want what everyone wants: to live **our lives in our OWN** ways.

INTERNATIONAL DAY OF THE GIRL CHILD – GHANA

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In Ghana, ActionAid has carried out a set of activities in two main locations Accra and Namumba District. The national theme of the event was “**Stop Child Marriage Now: Girls have Rights in Education**”

In Accra, the celebration took place over 2 days. Firstly, on the 10th of October, there has been an Introduction of the Promoting Rights in School resource pack to participants and this was followed by a presentation of the findings of the survey report from the Action on Children’s Rights in Education (ACRE) project. The last activity of the day was an Open Forum for discussion on issues related to children rights in school and recommendations to improve girls’ rights in school environment.



On the 11th of October, there have been three main activities. After their congratulations to the UN for recognizing the instituting the Girl Child Day, students made a call on government and adults to commit in the movement by allowing girls to be girls and to stay in school to prepare their future. The second activity was the screening of a documentary relating stories of girls who have been married before and have returned to school as a positive outcome of the intervention of our **Stop Violence Against Girls in School Project**. Thirdly, a Plenary Discussion was organized and at the end of which, the recommendations issued from both days were compiled in a communiqué to be presented to the Ghana Education Service and the Ministry of Education.

**INTERNATIONAL DAY OF THE GIRL CHILD – GHANA**

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GIRLS DEMAND ACCOUNTABILITY FROM DUTY BEARERS ON THE OCCASION OF INTERNATIONAL DAY OF THE GIRL CHILD.

In Namumba district a delegation of girls met with the District Assembly for an update on the petition presented to them and linked to issues they were facing, including violence and the protection of their education rights. By turns, members of the District Assembly answered them:

- The Deputy Coordinator Director informed them that the process of adoption of the by-law regarding violence against girls, was going well. He also encouraged girls to raise their self-confidence and not to hesitate to report cases of violence to the appropriate institutions. Regarding the progression of education rights, the director stated that the school feeding programme will be extended to another 24 schools.
- The Director of Education ensured that he officially requested the ban of corporal punishment. Additionally, he entitled School Management Committees and Parent Teacher Associations (PTA) to oversee and investigate cases of violence. The Director of Education asked for closer collaboration between the school sector and other institutions such as the department of social welfare, the Commission for Human Rights and Justice (CHRAJ) and the Domestic Violence Victim Support Unit (DOVVSU), in order to enforce the protection of children’s rights. After urging girls to report cases of violence he highlighted the need to involve parents in the process.
- As the others preceding him, the District Commander of Police stressed the importance for early reporting which will allow addressing accurately the cases. He also encouraged girls to come forward to the police for protection.
- The Gender Desk Officer explained how they build on platforms to advocate for girls’ rights and collaborate with other institutions to target and sensitize parents on their responsibilities towards their children. The officer also advised members of the empowering girls’ project to extend their work by including girls from junior high schools.

To conclude the debate, in his last remarks, the Director of the GES encouraged teachers to implement courses on sexual education within their teaching programme.

“I am happy to be back at school though – I remember when I was first taken out of school by my family I felt so sad, especially when I saw my friends still continuing with their studies. I know that in the long-term it is better to have an education, because I have seen that those who don’t end up suffering. My dream is to become a nurse and god-willing I will succeed”, Tabitha from Ghana.

SUCCESS STORIES

Case Study 1: Zimbabwe

"I am so happy to be back in school after dropping out for 2 years. "I was raped by my uncle and fell pregnant. I then dropped out of school in 2010 first term whilst in form three. I now have an 18 months old son. Actionaid Zimbabwe through FACT Rusape took me back in school and I am grateful to that because my future had been blurred due to child pregnancy. My professional dream of being a medical doctor can now be achieved. Thank you Fact Rusape and Action Aid for paying my school fees as well as carrying out a "Girls not Brides Campaign" Maria is one of the 20 victims of early marriages and child pregnancy, who got educational support from FACT Rusape and Action Aid Zimbabwe. Now she is attending form 3 at Gwindingwi Secondary school in Makoni and is doing very well at school.

Case Study 2: Zimbabwe

Clara was another of these girls child who were forced to drop out of school in order to get married in order to appease the dead spirit (*kuripa ngozi* in local language). She was only 12 years and in grade 6th when it happened. Clara has been rescued by the actions of Child Protection Committee, which was trained by FACT and AAIZ. The committee followed up the case of the girl until they succeeded in convincing the parents to take her back from the forced marriage family and find alternatives of paying the soul of the dead spirit. FACT and AAIZ also helped the Clara through offering counselling and psychosocial support. To avoid any embarrassing situation in her community she moved to another area. However, she is now happy to be back in her family as well as being back to school where she is attending grade 7th.

Case Study: Senegal, Mother-child at school

Coumba Ndiaye, 17 years old is attending 8th grade at the high school of Dialocoto. The Professors talk about her as "one of the best students of the school in grade 6th and 7th, but unfortunately in grade 8th, her marks started to fall down." Indeed, in 2009,



Coumba, the best student of her class, got pregnant from a relationship with a teacher in the village. She says that her mother blamed her for "ruining her studies with a child". In 2009/2010, Coumba gave birth to a little girl "after the birth of Aissatou, I satyed home for 1 year to take care of her." However, her friends from the Girls' Squad visited her and the family often.

In October 2010, Coumba went back to school "the day back to school I was really happy. I have stopped hoping to go back to school one day." Now, Coumba is back to school. She recognizes the influence of the Squad in raising awareness in order for girls to re-enter education: "We all need to study to understand life, to succeed and to help our family. I would like to continue studying until university and become a doctor"

Some interesting ActionAid documentaries focussing on the girls' right to education while outlining all difficulties that girls encounter when they want to pursue this right. On a positive note, the documentaries also demonstrate the positive outcomes when girls are enabled to access and complete their education.

- Kenya: Nipe Nfasi Give/ Give Me A Chance
<http://www.ms.dk/en/kenya/stories/nipe-nafasi-give-me-chance>



- <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3J04mAIV1dA&feature=youtu.be>
- Nigeria <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8Oco5wvCrHI>
- Girl child Education by ActionAid India Partner Righttrack
<http://www.actionaid.org/india/videos/documentary-film-girl-child-education>



- Uganda: Safe Clean Water for School Children in Kitemba
https://www.youtube.com/watch?feature=player_embedded&v=xdeOrDGabug#!

New Advocacy fact sheet

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The Right to Education Project (RTE) launched a new advocacy factsheet, *At what Age?... Early marriage and the right to education*, on the International Day of the Girl. This new factsheet is based on RTE's report *At What Age...are school-children employed, married and taken to court? Trends over time* (2011), which provides analysis of legal minimum age for education, marriage, employment and criminal responsibility across 187 countries and raises questions regarding the cross-section of these issues and their effect on the right to education.

The new advocacy factsheet is aimed at civil society organisations to enable them to advocate for legislation regarding the minimum age for marriage and the minimum age for leaving school. It gives a brief overview of the issue of early marriage and its impact on education, highlighting statistical data, good practice in law and policy, as well as case studies. It also provides policy recommendations and suggests concrete actions to promote minimum age legislation.

It is accessible online and in PDF at: www.right-to-education.org/sites/r2e.gn.apc.org/files/RTE and [Early Marriage Factsheet 10.10.2012.pdf](http://www.right-to-education.org/sites/r2e.gn.apc.org/files/RTE_Marriage_Factsheet_10.10.2012.pdf).

GALLERY

Link to the posters on 10 points charter on violence against girls at school:
<http://www.actionaid.org/what-we-do/education/girls-education-violence/stop-violence-against-girls-schools/posters-stop-viole>



Figure 1 and 2: Girls Dolls Demonstration, Islamabad, Pakistan



Figure 3: Students at the celebration in Ghana

Who are we?
Education networks

EDUCATING GIRLS IS SMART, FOR ALL OF US

When a girl receives an education, she has a real opportunity to break the cycle of poverty in just one generation. Intel believes education should be a fundamental right for everyone and is committed to making a real difference for girls across the globe.

OUT OF THE WORLD'S 130 MILLION OUT-OF-SCHOOL YOUTH, **70%** ARE GIRLS.

WHEN A GIRL GOES TO SCHOOL

SHE WILL REINVEST **90%** OF HER INCOME INTO HER FAMILY

AS COMPARED TO ONLY **30-40%** FOR A MAN.

AND

WHEN **10%** MORE OF ITS GIRLS GO TO SCHOOL, A COUNTRY'S GDP INCREASES AN AVERAGE OF **3%**

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Sources: (Human Rights Watch, "Promises Broken: An Assessment of Girls' Rights on the 16th Anniversary of the Convention on the Rights of the Child" www.hrw.org/campaign/promisesbroken/education.html (December 19, 2012)) (Doris Fokson, "Women's Rights: Link for Developing World" Web News Daily 2003) (Council on Foreign Relations)



Figure 4: "I have realised that we have to break some of the old cultures that prevails in my community. Female genital mutilation is wrong, early marriage is wrong; it is wrong when men take all the decisions; and it is wrong that men are allocated all the land " By Susan from Cheptais, Kenya



Figure 5: Fetura Mohammed, now 16, took her case to the district court when she was 14 to prevent her early marriage. (Photo: ActionAid Ethiopia/Efratan Gizaw)