

Annex: F

CHILD MARRIAGE ADVOCACY STRATEGY

Current situation

- The South African Marriage Act states that no boy under the age of 18 years and no girl under the age of 15 years is capable of contracting a valid civil marriage
- There is no forced marriage specific criminal legislation
- In South Africa alone, around 6% of girls marry before they turn 18
- Child marriage figures might be higher but they don't get reported
- Traditional practices like *Ukuthwala* which are practiced primarily in rural parts of South Africa, in particular the Eastern Cape and Kwa Zulu-Natal provinces resemble forced marriage and can also lead to child marriages
- Forced marriages do occur in South Africa and the enforcement of laws meant to prevent forced marriages is limited in several ways, including: poor policing and monitoring of violations of such laws, significant under-reporting by victims, limited access by victims to courts, a lack of response by the court system, shortages of employees and funding in the health and social services sectors, and in the case of a customary marriage, community disapproval of the use of public means of solving marital problems¹.

SWOT ANALYSIS

What are the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities (entry points), and threats to the advocacy?

<p>STRENGTHS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The Marriage Act and the Recognition Act require the consent of both parties for a marriage to be valid and under Section 1 of the Children's Act, exploitation in relation to a child is defined to include all forms of slavery or practices similar to slavery, including forced marriage.	<p>WEAKNESSES</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Susceptibility to adapt to social ills easily• There is no forced marriage specific criminal legislation• Lack of support from traditional groups and FBOs• Customary law can also interfere with the enforcement of domestic violence laws and women living in rural areas that adhere to customary law may encounter further obstacles to safety and justice
---	--

¹ <https://preventforcedmarriage.org/forced-marriage-overseas-south-africa/>.

<p>OPPORTUNITIES</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Effective Justice system • Establishment of forced marriage criminal legislation 	<p>THREATS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Poor coordination across government and between sectors when it comes to implementation and enforcement • Lack of political will • Cultural Bodies and leaders • Women and Girls due to patriarchal systems and cultural norms
---	---

Key partners and influencers

- CSO
- Government ministries
- Faith Based Organizations
- Community leaders
- Women’s Movement
- Development partners
- International NGOs
- Political parties
- Media

Key targets

- Parents
- Community Leaders /Traditional Leaders
- Church/ religious Leaders
- Teachers
- Children
- Men
- Adolescent and Young People
- LGBTQI

Key messages

Parents should let their children decide/giving children a voice and a choice

Adjustment of traditional norms

#SayNO

OBJECTIVES AND ACTIONS	ACTIVITIES	WHO RESPONSIBLE	TIME FRAME	OUTPUTS	RESOURCES
Strategic objective	To ensure that South Africa knows about child marriages and understands the negative consequences thereof				
Specific objectives: Conflict in legislation regarding age of marriage for boys and girls					
1	Eliminate Child marriage incidences.				
2	Capacitate service providers to deal effectively with incidences of child marriage.				
3	To engage community and families to be agents of change.				
<i>Agree on objectives with key partners and influencers (based on partner mapping – including youth organisations)</i>	Meet with all identified partners and potential influencers <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Agree on objectives - Finalise messaging 	Members of the Alliance working with SAWID and Gender Links	November 2021	Meeting reports	
<i>Develop/adapt advocacy material</i>	Using situation analysis, objectives and messaging prepare advocacy material – different material for different targets?	Members of the Alliance working with SAWID and Gender Links	November 2021	Advocacy materials	
<i>Meetings with targets (at least 5 policy-makers)</i>	Meeting with key officials (who?)	Members of the Alliance working with SAWID and Gender Links	November 2021	Meeting reports	

OBJECTIVES AND ACTIONS	ACTIVITIES	WHO RESPONSIBLE	TIME FRAME	OUTPUTS	RESOURCES
	Meetings with parliamentarians (who?)	Members of the Alliance working with SAWID and Gender Links	Jan/Feb 2022	Meeting reports	
	Meetings with statutory bodies – eg law reform commissions – who?)	Members of the Alliance working with SAWID and Gender Links	Jan/Feb 2022	Meeting reports	
<i>Engage with the mainstream media in obtaining space/airtime/ media coverage leveraging special dates in the calendar</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Sixteen days of activism - 10 December- International Human rights day - 8 March - International Women’s Day - 16 June - Youth Day 	Members of the Alliance working with SAWID and Gender Links	Nov 2021 – March 2022	Days commemorated	
<i>Set up and conduct follow up meetings with the relevant policy makers on the key actions and the way forward on safe abortion policies</i>	Follow up meetings with policy makers	Members of the Alliance working with SAWID and Gender Links	Jan-Feb 2022	Meeting reports	
	Track policy and legislation process	Members of the Alliance working with SAWID and Gender Links	Jan - March 2022	Reports on progress	
<i>Document the policy and legislation development case study</i>	Write a case study on the policy and legislation development process on safe abortion policy	Members of the Alliance working with SAWID and Gender Links	March 2022	Case studies	

