**Report of the Secretary General on progress towards ending child, early and forced marriage worldwide pursuant to General Assembly resolution 69/156**

**United Kingdom contribution**

Building on Girl Summit 2014

The UK Government continues to build on the success of the [Girl Summit](http://www.girlsummit2014.org/Commitment/Show) held in London in July 2014, to work nationally and internationally to support the international movement to eliminate FGM and child, early and forced marriage. Girl Summit 2014 sought to galvanise global momentum on both of these neglected issues and put them firmly on the international development agenda. The UK remains remain highly committed to working with partners towards the vision of ending both practices within a generation.

As part of the anniversary of Girl Summit in July 2015, a list of over 100 [updates](http://www.girlsummit2014.org/Content/docs/OneYearOnFullProgress.pdf) provided by stakeholders was published on the Girl Summit website and a Girl Summit ‘[One year On’](http://www.unicef.org/protection/files/6.1057_DFID_AR_Girl_Summit_Final_web_20072015.pdf) booklet was published by UNICEF and the UK Government highlighting progress to date. A Girl Summit anniversary event with donor and partner governments, civil society stakeholders and youth activists was hosted by the UK Secretary of State for International Development and the Canadian High Commission in London on the day of the anniversary. Since the London summit, Girl Summits have been held in Bangladesh, Ethiopia, Uganda, and in November 2015 the UK, Netherlands and Canada, supported the African Union in hosting the first ever African Girl Summit through our contribution to the UN global programme (see below).

Supporting International Frameworks

The UK was at the forefront of inclusion of a standalone gender goal within the Global Goals. Within this the UK advocated strongly for a target on eliminating harmful practices, including FGM and Child Early and Forced Marriage. We continue to engage on the process to determine the indicators for collection of global prevalence rates.

The UK supported the first ever UN Resolution on Eliminating Child, Early and Forced Marriage in 2014 and have since been at the forefront of efforts to support the issue across the international system, including at the Human Rights Council, where we are members of the core group.

Programme Work

In December 2014 the UK approved a new £36 million programme to Accelerate Action to End Child Marriage. £25 million of this support is for the UNICEF and UNFPA Joint Programme on ending Child Marriage, focusing on 12 priority countries (Bangladesh, India, Nepal, Ethiopia, Yemen, Uganda, Mozambique, Zambia, Sierra Leone, Niger, Burkina Faso and Ghana). This programme seeks to address child marriage through: strengthening legal and policy frameworks, scaling up access to sexual and reproductive health, education and child protection services for girls at risks of child marriage; and tackling harmful social norms underlying child marriage. This programme is reaching the end of its implementation phase and will be moving into full implementation in early 2016. With other donor support (Canada, Netherlands, Italy and EU) this programme has the potential to reach approximately 2.5 million girls at risk of child marriage and support those who marry early.

As part of the UK’s broader £36 million programme, in March 2015 the UK’s Secretary of State for International Development announced £8 million funding for civil society, through the AmplifyChange fund. AmplifyChange will work to address a broader range of sexual and reproductive health and gender issues that are associated with child marriage. This support will help to support a grass-roots movement to end child marriage and challenge harmful social norms and gender discrimination. This mechanism will also help to reach youth-led organisations championing change on child marriage.

In addition, in partnership with the Government of Ethiopia, the UK-funded Finote Hiwot is helping at least 37,500 adolescent girls, and indirectly many more, to avoid child marriage in Ethiopia. The project targets girls and boys through in-school activities, including girls clubs, by providing mentoring, school materials support and incentives for vulnerable girls. The parents of these girls and boys, and the elders and religious leaders in the community, are also supported by the project.

The UK is also funding a Global Girls Research Initiative (GGRI) of up to £31 million to generate new evidence on what works to reduce discrimination against girls and enable them to transition out of poverty, and what the impacts of this are over time. This evidence will improve our understanding and inform the policy and programmes of national governments, international agencies, and civil society organisations.

Domestically

The Forced Marriage Unit (FMU) undertakes an extensive outreach programme, with no fewer than 100 events a year being run across the country, targeting professionals and those most at risk.  In October 2015, the FMU launched a short film aimed at deterring potential forced marriage perpetrators. The film highlights the devastating impact that forced marriage can have on victims and their families, in addition to signposting where victims can turn to for further support.

Forcing someone to marry is a criminal offence in England and Wales. The legislation is part of the Anti-social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014, and came into force on 16 June 2014.

The legislation criminalises the use of violence, threats, deception or any other form of coercion for the purpose of forcing a person into marriage or into leaving the UK with the intention of forcing that person to marry. It also criminalises breaches of a Forced Marriage Protection Order (FMPO). This civil remedy continues to exist alongside the new criminal offence. Orders may include forbidding a person to be taken overseas, or ordering that they be returned to the UK.

There is a maximum penalty of seven years for committing a forced marriage offence and a maximum penalty of five years for breach of an FMPO.

Domestically in the UK, in 2014 the FMU gave advice or support related to a possible forced marriage in 1267 cases. 79% of cases involved female victims and 21% involved male victims. To date, over 800 FMPO’s have been made to prevent people from being forced into a marriage and to assist in repatriating victims.