

Seminar :

Violence against women and children early, child or forced marriage, human trafficking and domestic violence

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OHCHR Work on Child and Forced Marriage

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Introduction - context

- **Child marriage as a global concern**
 - United Nations:
 - GA, CSW, HRC resolutions and recommendations since 2014
 - 2015 SDG 5.3 elimination of HPs such as CEFM
 - In Asia: 2014 South Asia Regional Initiative on Violence against Children – Regional Action Plan to End Child marriage
 - In Africa: African Union 2014 Campaign on Ending child marriage
 - In **Europe**: Istanbul Convention, **child and forced marriage as serious human right violation; SRSG Roma issues**



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Few Facts

- If trend continue **142** million children will be married by **2020**
- Almost **39,000** girls become child brides every single day, often married to much older men
- **1 in 9** girls is forced into marriage before her fifteenth birthday
- **700 million** were married before their eighteenth birthday
- Girls who complete secondary school are **6xs less likely** to become child brides



OHCHR Work since 2014



- 4 resolutions issued by the UN HRC and General Assembly
- 2 panels
- 3 reports
- 1 expert workshop
- Support to efforts at regional and national levels

Lessons learned - legislative measures (I)

- Despite legislative measures adopted, at least **147 countries permit CEFM below 18**, most still exempt punishment of acts such as rape through marriage
- Prohibition of marriage contained in **contradictory or conflicting laws** – plurilegal systems and discrepancies in provisions
- Elimination of discriminatory provisions in **areas such as land, inheritance, nationality, marriage, divorce and custody**, are key complementary measures
- **Complementary and coordinated approaches are required** at national and local levels (judiciary, legislators, **Cso, communities, leaders**, etc)
- Move from small scale initiatives to **well-defined, right based and locally relevant strategies**



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Lessons learned – accountability and protection services (II)

- Despite laws that prohibit CEFM, survivors still face legal, economic and practical barriers to accessing remedial action
- **In the absence of specific legislation use other texts** to address CEFM, eg. criminal code, nationality law
- Ensuring appropriate shelters and protection services for victims, including for **those at risk** is important
- Developing support, rehabilitation services and social and economic opportunities for already married women and children is required



Lessons learned - social norms and participation (III)

- Education and access to resources are key for women and girls empowerment
- **Engaging men and boys, families and communities** are key for a change of social norms supporting CEFM
- Promoting women's and families' economic empowerment and access to productive resources are useful preventive measures
- Awareness raising to address social acceptance of CEFM – cultural issues
- Establishing networks and use of IT to facilitate exchange of information among girls and young – role models
- Develop skills of key professionals and sectors on how to identify groups at risk (social workers, teachers, judiciary, law enforcement, etc)



OHCHR opportunities to strengthen the voice of Romani women and girls

- Participation in human rights review of States
- Country visits by independent, high-level experts
- Fellowships for minorities to understand and increase cooperation with the UN human rights system
- Action at country and community level to strengthen grassroots civil society and to support human rights action



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Recommendations – next steps

- Regional and sub regional approach to contextualize the debate
- Support efforts by national and community-based stakeholders



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Next steps -

- How can OHCHR support the current efforts?
- Bring the global debate at national and community levels?



OHCHR Resources and support on women's rights and gender integration

OHCHR Women's rights and gender work:

<http://www.ohchr.org/EN/Issues/Women/WRGS>

Contact:

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