**Guiding questions**

1. What efforts have been made or are planned to implement General Assembly resolution A/RES/77/202 and address the recommendations of the Secretary-General’s latest report on the issue of child, early, and forced marriage (A/77/282)? Please, provide information, *inter alia*, on measures to:
   1. address the root causes of child, early, and forced marriage including social norms, gender inequalities, and stereotypes:

In the rural region of Northern Kenya, child marriage rates were particularly high due to prevailing social norms and economic challenges. In collaboration with international organizations, local NGOs, and community leaders, the government initiated a project to address the root causes of child, early, and forced marriage in the region.

* + 1. Raising Awareness: The first step was to raise awareness about the negative consequences of child marriage and challenge deep-rooted social norms. The government, with the support of NGOs, organized community meetings, workshops, and educational campaigns targeting parents, religious leaders, teachers, and young girls themselves. These initiatives aimed to dispel myths, promote girls' education, and highlight the importance of delaying marriage until adulthood.
    2. Education and Empowerment: Recognizing that education is key to breaking the cycle of child marriage, the government implemented measures to improve access to quality education for girls in the region. They built new schools, improved existing facilities, and provided scholarships and financial support to girls from disadvantaged backgrounds. By ensuring girls' education, they aimed to empower them with knowledge, skills, and confidence to make informed decisions about their lives.
    3. Economic Opportunities: To address the economic challenges that often lead to child marriage, the government implemented various programs to enhance livelihood opportunities for families in the region. They introduced vocational training programs for women and girls, promoting skills development and income generation. Additionally, microfinance schemes were established to support women-led entrepreneurial initiatives, enabling families to become economically self-reliant and less dependent on marrying off their daughters at an early age.
    4. Legal Reforms and Support Systems: The government recognized the importance of legal reforms to combat child marriage effectively. They enacted laws that raised the minimum age of marriage, strengthened child protection measures, and improved access to justice for survivors of child marriage. Specialized support systems, including counseling services and safe shelters, were also established to assist girls at risk or survivors of child marriage, providing them with a supportive environment to heal and rebuild their lives.

Over time, the combined efforts yielded positive results. The prevalence of child marriage in the region of Northern Kenya decreased significantly. More girls were enrolled in schools, and dropout rates decreased. Economic opportunities empowered families to seek alternative ways of sustaining themselves, reducing the economic pressures to marry off their daughters early.

* 1. ensure access to education, decent work, social protection, and health services, including sexual and reproductive health, for girls and women who are affected or at risk, who are already married or in informal unions, who have fled such a marriage or union, whose marriage has dissolved, and widowed girls or women who were married as girls;

In Kenya, the government identified a region where child marriage rates were alarmingly high, resulting in significant barriers to education, decent work, and social protection for girls and women. The government, in collaboration with international organizations, local NGOs, and community stakeholders, initiated a comprehensive project to empower survivors of child marriage and create opportunities for their holistic development.

* + 1. Access to Education: The government implemented measures to ensure access to quality education for girls and women affected by child marriage. They established non-formal education centers that catered specifically to survivors, providing a safe and supportive learning environment. These centers offered accelerated learning programs, vocational training, and life skills development courses to equip girls and women with the necessary knowledge and skills for future employment and empowerment.
    2. Decent Work and Economic Empowerment: Recognizing the importance of economic empowerment for survivors, the government focused on creating decent work opportunities. They collaborated with local businesses, industries, and microfinance institutions to facilitate vocational training programs, apprenticeships, and entrepreneurship initiatives for girls and women affected by child marriage. These efforts aimed to enhance their skills and provide access to income-generating activities, enabling them to achieve economic independence and break the cycle of poverty and dependence.
    3. Social Protection and Health Services: To ensure the well-being and social protection of survivors, the government established comprehensive support systems. They developed counseling services and safe spaces where survivors could receive emotional support, counseling, and guidance to overcome the trauma associated with child marriage. Additionally, healthcare facilities were equipped to provide sexual and reproductive health services, including family planning, prenatal care, and safe abortion services, ensuring that survivors had access to comprehensive healthcare and could exercise their reproductive rights.
    4. Legal Reforms and Awareness: The government enacted legal reforms to strengthen the protection of survivors of child marriage and raise awareness about their rights. They implemented laws that criminalized child marriage, provided legal aid to survivors, and facilitated their access to justice. Public awareness campaigns were launched to challenge social norms, reduce stigma, and encourage reporting of child marriage cases. These initiatives aimed to change societal attitudes and foster a supportive environment for survivors.

Through these concerted efforts, significant progress was achieved in empowering girls and women affected by child marriage. Survivors gained access to education, vocational training, and decent work opportunities, enabling them to secure better livelihoods and economic independence.

* 1. Guarantee protection measures, remedies, and support services for victims;
     1. Legal Protection: Governments should enact and enforce laws that explicitly criminalize child, early, and forced marriage and establish appropriate penalties for offenders. Legal frameworks should also include provisions for the protection of victims and their rights. These laws should be implemented effectively to ensure justice and accountability.
     2. Support Services: Comprehensive support services should be provided to victims of child, early, and forced marriage. This includes safe shelters or housing options, counseling and psychological support, medical and healthcare services, legal aid and assistance, and access to education and vocational training. These support services should be survivor-centered and take into account the specific needs and vulnerabilities of each individual.
     3. Awareness and Sensitization: Raising awareness about the issue of child, early, and forced marriage is crucial to encourage reporting, identify victims, and ensure their access to support services. Awareness campaigns can target communities, families, educational institutions, healthcare providers, and legal professionals to sensitize them about the harmful effects of such marriages and the available support mechanisms.
     4. Capacity Building: Building the capacity of frontline responders, including law enforcement officers, social workers, healthcare providers, and educators, is essential. Training programs can be conducted to enhance their understanding of child rights, gender equality, and the dynamics of child, early, and forced marriage. This enables them to effectively identify victims, provide appropriate support, and refer them to relevant services.
  2. Implement child- and gender-responsive budgeting to support effective measures to eradicate child, early, and forced marriage.
     1. Integration of Gender and Child Considerations: Child- and gender-responsive budgeting involves integrating gender and child considerations into the budgeting processes at all levels of government. It ensures that resources are allocated and targeted towards addressing the root causes of child, early, and forced marriage, and promoting gender equality and child rights.
     2. Needs Assessment and Prioritization: Conducting comprehensive needs assessments to identify the specific needs and priorities of girls and women at risk of child, early, and forced marriage is important. This includes assessing the gaps in existing services, identifying the most effective interventions, and prioritizing budgetary allocations accordingly.
     3. Allocation of Adequate Resources: Child- and gender-responsive budgeting requires allocating adequate financial resources to implement effective measures to eradicate child, early, and forced marriage. This includes funding for prevention programs, awareness campaigns, support services for victims, education initiatives, legal reforms, and capacity-building efforts. The budget should reflect the importance of addressing this issue and provide sufficient resources for comprehensive interventions.
     4. Monitoring and Evaluation: Establishing monitoring and evaluation mechanisms are essential to track the effectiveness and impact of budget allocations on eradicating child, early, and forced marriage. Regular assessments should be conducted to ensure that resources are being used efficiently, outcomes are achieved, and adjustments are made as needed to improve the effectiveness of interventions.

1. What prevention mechanisms have proved effective to eradicate child, early, and forced marriage? Please include examples of promising practices and challenges encountered in engaging family members, religious, traditional, and community leaders, in raising awareness about, and countering child, early, and forced marriage.
2. Community-Based Approaches: Engaging community members, including family members, religious leaders, and traditional leaders, is crucial in addressing child, early, and forced marriage. Community-based awareness campaigns, dialogues, and discussions can challenge harmful social norms and promote alternative perspectives. Encouraging community-led initiatives, such as youth groups, women's groups, and community watchdogs, can create a sense of ownership and sustainability.

Challenges: Some challenges in engaging community members, especially Northern Kenya communities, include deeply entrenched cultural practices, resistance to change, and the influence of traditional gender roles and power dynamics. Overcoming these challenges requires patient and long-term engagement, building trust, and addressing concerns and misconceptions.

1. Empowering Girls and Education: Empowering girls through education is a key prevention strategy. Promoting access to quality education, providing scholarships, and addressing barriers to girls' education, such as poverty, distance, and gender-based discrimination, are effective measures. Education equips girls with knowledge, skills, and confidence, enabling them to make informed choices and delay marriage.

Challenges: Challenges include overcoming socio-economic barriers, ensuring the safety of girls in schools, and addressing gender biases within educational institutions. Collaboration with education authorities, teachers, and communities is essential to address these challenges.

1. Legal Reforms and Enforcement: Strengthening legal frameworks and enforcing laws that prohibit child, early, and forced marriage are important prevention mechanisms. Increasing the minimum age of marriage, closing legal loopholes, and providing legal protection for victims are key components. This helps create a deterrent effect, raises awareness about the illegality of child marriage, and ensures accountability.

Challenges: Challenges include weak enforcement mechanisms, lack of awareness about existing laws, and limited access to justice for victims. Building capacity among law enforcement agencies, providing legal aid services, and engaging with judicial systems can help address these challenges.

1. Economic Empowerment and Livelihood Opportunities: Promoting economic empowerment and livelihood opportunities for girls and women can reduce their vulnerability to child marriage. Skills training, income-generating activities, microfinance programs, and entrepreneurship initiatives can provide alternative pathways and increase their agency and independence.

Challenges: Challenges include limited access to resources, lack of economic opportunities, and gender inequalities in employment. Addressing these challenges requires collaboration with relevant stakeholders, providing support for entrepreneurship, and advocating for gender-responsive economic policies.

1. What kind of approaches and tools have been used to collect disaggregated data on child, early, and forced marriages, as well as informal unions? Please share challenges encountered, and up-to-date information, including disaggregation categories and statistics.
2. National Surveys and Census Data: National surveys and censuses provide valuable data on marriage patterns, including child, early, and forced marriages. Questions related to age at marriage, marital status, and type of marriage can help identify and quantify the prevalence of these practices. Disaggregation categories may include age groups, geographical regions, and socio-economic characteristics.

Challenges: Challenges in collecting data through surveys and censuses include underreporting due to social stigma and cultural sensitivities, inaccurate reporting of age, and exclusion of marginalized groups or hard-to-reach populations. Efforts should be made to ensure confidentiality, build trust, and utilize culturally appropriate survey methodologies.

1. Household Surveys and Demographic Health Surveys: Household surveys, such as the Demographic and Health Surveys (DHS), often include modules on marriage and reproductive health. These surveys collect data on age at first marriage, the prevalence of child marriages, and other relevant indicators. Disaggregation can be done by age, region, education level, and wealth quintiles.

Challenges: Challenges include the reliance on self-reported data, recall bias, and challenges in reaching certain populations, particularly those in remote or conflict-affected areas. Additionally, informal unions may be underreported in surveys due to their informal nature.

1. Administrative Data and Birth/Death Registration Systems: Administrative data from civil registration and vital statistics systems can provide information on registered marriages and births, which can be used to estimate child marriages and informal unions. Birth and death registration systems can help identify early marriages through the age of parents at the time of birth.

Challenges: Challenges include incomplete or inconsistent registration of marriages, especially in rural or marginalized areas, and lack of birth registration in certain regions or among disadvantaged communities.

Up-to-Date Information and Disaggregation Categories:

Age: Disaggregating data by age groups (e.g., 0-14, 15-17, 18-24) helps identify child, early, and youth marriages and assess variations across different age cohorts.

Gender: Analyzing data separately for females and males is important to understand the gendered aspects of child, early, and forced marriages and identify specific vulnerabilities and impacts on each gender.

Ethnicity and Indigenous Status: Disaggregating data by ethnicity and indigenous status helps identify disparities and inequalities in child, early, and forced marriages among different ethnic groups.

Geographical Location: Disaggregating data by geographical location (e.g., urban, rural, specific regions) provides insights into regional disparities and allows for targeted interventions in areas with higher prevalence.

Statistics:

Statistics on child, early, and forced marriages are dynamic and vary across countries and regions. It's important that we also refer to up-to-date reports and databases maintained by reputable organizations such as UNICEF, UNFPA, and Girls Not Brides for the latest statistics and disaggregated data on child marriage. These organizations regularly publish reports and data that provide insights into the prevalence, trends, and impacts of child, early, and forced marriages globally and at the country level.

1. Have digital technologies and tools been used to address child, early, and forced marriage? If so, please share promising practices, challenges, and possible solutions.
2. Awareness Campaigns and Mobile Applications: Digital platforms, including websites, social media, and mobile applications, have been used to raise awareness about child, early, and forced marriage. Organizations have developed interactive applications that provide information, resources, and support services. These tools help disseminate information widely, reach remote areas, and engage young people in prevention efforts.

Challenges: Challenges include limited internet access in some regions, particularly in rural or marginalized communities. Solutions involve working towards improving digital infrastructure, expanding internet connectivity, and adapting offline approaches to complement digital campaigns.

1. Reporting and Helpline Services: Digital technologies have facilitated reporting mechanisms and helpline services for child, early, and forced marriages. Hotlines, SMS services, and online reporting platforms allow individuals to report cases, seek assistance, and access information confidentially. These tools help victims and concerned individuals reach out for help and support.

Challenges: Challenges include ensuring the confidentiality and safety of individuals reporting through digital platforms, particularly in contexts where privacy and security may be compromised. Addressing these challenges requires implementing robust data protection measures, ensuring secure communication channels, and providing guidance on safety measures for users.

1. Digital Education and Empowerment: Digital tools can be employed for educational purposes, providing information, life skills training, and empowerment resources to girls at risk of child marriage. Online platforms offer access to quality education, vocational training, and mentorship programs. These initiatives empower girls, increase their knowledge and agency, and provide alternative pathways for their future.

Challenges: Challenges include limited digital literacy and access to technology among disadvantaged communities, particularly in developing countries. Solutions involve integrating digital literacy programs into education systems, ensuring access to technology and connectivity, and providing training and support for girls and their families to utilize digital tools effectively.

1. Are digitalized birth and marriage registration systems being used in your country, requiring mandatory registration of all births and marriages, including childbirths at home and marriages under customary and religious laws? Do these digitalized registration systems allow to verify digitally birth certificates, before registering any marriage?

Yes, Kenya has implemented digitalized birth and marriage registration systems to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of registration processes. These systems aim to ensure mandatory registration of all births and marriages, including those that occur at home and marriages under customary and religious laws. The Civil Registration Department in Kenya is responsible for birth and marriage registration. They have developed digital systems to streamline the registration process and ensure comprehensive coverage. These systems allow for the capture and storage of vital registration data electronically.

Yes, Kenya has enabled the verification of birth certificates before the registration of any marriage. Through Birth Certificate Verification: Before a marriage can be registered, the individuals intending to marry are typically required to present their birth certificates as part of the documentation process. The digitalized registration systems have access to the database of registered births, allowing officials to verify the authenticity and accuracy of the birth certificates presented.

1. What other innovative strategies have been used to address child, early, and forced marriage, as well as informal unions, and collect data on this practice in your country?
2. National Action Plans: Kenya has developed National Action Plans to address child marriage, which outlines a comprehensive set of strategies and interventions. These plans involve collaboration between government agencies, civil society organizations, and international partners to prevent child marriage, support survivors, and raise awareness.
3. Legal Framework: Kenya has enacted laws and policies to address CEFM, such as the Prohibition of Female Genital Mutilation Act (2011), the Children's Act (2001), and the Marriage Act (2014). These legal frameworks provide a basis for protection and prosecution in cases of child marriage and informal unions.
4. Alternative Rites of Passage: Communities in Kenya have embraced alternative rites of passage as an innovative approach to replace harmful traditional practices like female genital mutilation and early marriage. These alternative rites preserve cultural values while promoting education, empowerment, and the rights of girls.
5. Education and Awareness Programs: Various organizations and government initiatives in Kenya have implemented education and awareness programs aimed at promoting girls' education, changing harmful social norms, and empowering girls and women. These programs help to prevent CEFM by emphasizing the importance of education, providing scholarships, and offering mentorship opportunities.