

GIRLS NOT BRIDES: THE GLOBAL PARTNERSHIP TO END CHILD MARRIAGE

England & Wales · Charity number 1154230

Details

Other names	GIRLS NOT BRIDES, GNB
Status	Registered
Legal form	Charitable company
Company number	08570751
Registered	2013-10-17
Register	View on the Charity Commission register

Contact

Address	Girls Not Brides 27 Old Gloucester Street Holborn London WC1N 3AX
Phone	0203 355 8951
Email	info@GirlsNotBrides.org
Website	www.GirlsNotBrides.org

Activities

Objects: THE OBJECTS OF THE CHARITY ARE ALL OBJECTS WHICH ARE REGARDED AS EXCLUSIVELY CHARITABLE UNDER THE LAWS OF ENGLAND AND WALES INCLUDING, BUT NOT LIMITED TO:(A) THE PROMOTION OF EQUALITY AND HUMAN RIGHTS (AS SET OUT IN THE UNIVERSAL DECLARATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS AND SUBSEQUENT UNITED NATIONS CONVENTIONS AND DECLARATIONS) THROUGHOUT THE WORLD INCLUDING BUT NOT LIMITED TO:I) RAISING AWARENESS OF HUMAN RIGHTS ISSUES;II) RELIEVING NEED AMONG THE VICTIMS OF HUMAN RIGHTS ABUSE;III) RESEARCH INTO AND INTERNATIONAL ADVOCACY OF HUMAN RIGHTS;IV) PROVIDING TECHNICAL ADVICE TO GOVERNMENT AND OTHERS ON HUMAN RIGHTS MATTERS;V) PROMOTING RESPECT FOR HUMAN RIGHTS AMONG INDIVIDUALS AND CORPORATIONS; ANDVI) ELIMINATING OR PREVENTING INFRINGEMENT OF HUMAN RIGHTS.(B) THE PREVENTION AND RELIEF OF POVERTY;(C) THE ADVANCEMENT OF HEALTH; (D) THE ADVANCEMENT OF EDUCATION, IN PARTICULAR BUT WITHOUT LIMITATION, BY UNDERTAKING RESEARCH AND OTHER EDUCATIONAL ACTIVITIES AND DISSEMINATING THE RESULTS OF THAT RESEARCH; AND(E) THE RELIEF OF THOSE IN NEED BY REASON OF YOUTH AND/OR ILL HEALTH.

Activities: Girls Not Brides is a global partnership of over 1000 civil society organisations from over 95 countries committed to ending child marriage and enabling girls to fulfil their potential. Girls Not Brides members bring child marriage to global attention, build an understanding of what it will take to end child marriage and call for policies and programmes that make a difference in the lives of girls

Classification

- **How:** Provides Advocacy/advice/information, Sponsors Or Undertakes Research, Acts As An Umbrella Or Resource Body
- **What:** Education/training, The Advancement Of Health Or Saving Of Lives, The Prevention Or Relief Of Poverty, Human Rights/religious Or Racial Harmony/equality Or Diversity
- **Who:** Children/young People, Other Charities Or Voluntary Bodies, The General Public/mankind

Geography

- **Area of benefit:** WORLDWIDE
- India
- Kenya
- Mexico
- Senegal
- City Of London

Finances

Period end	Income	Expenditure	Assets	Employees
2024-12-31	£5,352,027	£4,809,595	£9,593,209	26
2023-12-31	£9,412,837	£4,084,019	£9,050,777	25
2022-12-31	£4,084,817	£3,374,500	£3,721,959	24
2021-12-31	£3,430,088	£3,727,893	£3,011,642	32
2020-12-31	£3,362,142	£3,514,743	£3,309,447	30

Trustees

Name	Role	Appointed
Dr Alaa Murabit	Chair	2024-10-14
Emma Puig de la Bellacasa Mejia		2020-12-01
Michael Joseph Feigelson		2021-04-09
Ramin Shahzamani		2024-12-12
Sandra Breka		2026-05-07
Sinead Donovan		2025-01-30
Zipporah Jean Alaroker		2020-12-01

Accounts



GIRLS NOT BRIDES

The Global Partnership to End Child Marriage

**ANNUAL REPORT AND ACCOUNTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED
31 DECEMBER 2024**

Company number: 8570751

Charity number: 1154230

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LEGAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE DETAILS

TO THE MEMBERS OF GIRLS NOT BRIDES: THE GLOBAL PARTNERSHIP TO END CHILD MARRIAGE

LEGAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE DETAILS

Charity Number:	1154230
Company Number:	8570751
Registered office and: Operational Address	Seventh Floor 65 Leadenhall Street London EC3A 2AD United Kingdom
Trustees:	Dr Alaa Murabit - Chair (from 14 October 2024) Dr Anne T Gallagher (stepped down 31 October 2024) Emma Puig De La Bellacasa Georgia Arnold Michael Feigelson Ramin Shahzamani – Vice Chair (from 12 December 2024) Rita Sarin (stepped down 31 October 2024) Sinéad Donovan – Treasurer (from 30 January 2025) Zipporah Jean Alaroker
Chief Executive Officer:	Dr Faith Mwangi-Powell
Key Management Personnel:	Dr Faith Mwangi-Powell, Chief Executive Officer Akila Lingham, Director of Operations & Finance Rita Soares, Director of Regions, Partnership & Member Engagement Amanda Austin, Director of External Engagement (from Oct 2024) Loraine Stevenson, Director of People and Culture (from Oct 2024) Lara van Kouterik, Acting Director for Learning, Evidence and Impact (from April 2024)
Auditors:	Sayer Vincent LLP 110 Golden Lane London EC1Y 0TG
Bankers:	HSBC Bank plc 21 Kings Mall London W6 0QF
Solicitors:	Bates Wells 10 Queen Street Place London EC4R 1BE

INTRODUCTION TO *GIRLS NOT BRIDES*

The vision of *Girls Not Brides: The Global Partnership to End Child Marriage (Girls Not Brides)* is a world without child marriage where girls and women enjoy equal status with boys and men and are able to achieve their full potential in all aspects of their lives. We support a comprehensive approach to ending child marriage and addressing the underlying economic and social drivers of child marriage, including harmful gender and social norms that deny girls opportunities and their rights. By taking a holistic approach, we not only contribute to ending child marriage, but also achieve progress across global development goals including health, education, and poverty reduction. Our belief is that addressing child marriage in a holistic and comprehensive manner helps create a safer world for girls and leads to benefits far beyond simply delaying the age of marriage.

About child marriage

Every year, child marriage denies 12 million girls their rights to health, education, safety and control over their own lives. This is equivalent to one in five girls around the world.¹ This human rights violation occurs across cultures, countries and religions. Over 650 million women alive today were married as children, and every minute 23 more girls are married. Rooted in gender inequality and discrimination, child marriage disproportionately affects women and girls in terms of both the number of child brides and the life-long impact.

Ending child marriage is a global commitment enshrined in Target 5.3 of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) to “eliminate all harmful practices, such as child, early and forced marriage and female genital mutilations”. It is also necessary to achieve [almost half of the SDGs](#), including those related to poverty, education, health and inequalities. Before the global pandemic, we saw a decline in child marriage rates globally, but UNICEF estimated that we would see 10 million more child marriages by 2030² as a direct consequence of COVID-19, in addition to the 12 million girls already married each year. Beyond COVID-19, climate change, conflict, and the rising cost of living in many parts of the world increase the likelihood of child marriage due to increased insecurity and poverty and weaker social networks. These factors risk rolling back the significant progress we have achieved and increasing the number of girls at risk of child marriage.

Child marriage has many implications for girls, their families and their communities. Girls who are married early are at an increased risk of complications in pregnancy and childbirth, and of domestic violence. With less access to education and economic opportunities, they and their families are more likely to live in poverty. Communities and nations also feel the impact of child marriage. Systems that undervalue the contribution and participation of girls and women limit their own possibilities for growth, stability and transformation. The World Bank and International Center for Research on Women estimate that child marriage costs economies around the world [trillions of dollars](#).

One of the fundamental beliefs of *Girls Not Brides* is that if we address child marriage in a holistic and comprehensive manner, adolescent girls will be better able to claim their rights and agency and thus transform societies.

¹ For more information on child marriage prevalence rates in countries and across regions, please consult our [Child Marriage Atlas](#), which is the only source of consolidated data on the issue of child marriage. It also highlights the numbers of girls affected, the legal/policy situation in each country, and the distribution of *Girls Not Brides*' members, National Partnerships and civil society coalitions.

² UNICEF, 2021, [COVID-19: A thread to progress against child marriage](#).

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Child marriage is a complex issue with no single solution. We must work collectively across sectors – and from the local to the global level – to change the perceptions, norms and experiences that shape and hinder girls' lives. In 2014, *Girls Not Brides* worked with 150 members and partners to develop our Theory of Change [\(revised in 2023\)](#). It identifies four strategies to end child marriage: working directly with girls; mobilising families and communities; providing services (including health, education and child protection); and creating and sustaining an enabling legal and policy framework.

Our members and partners work across the four key strategies outlined in the Theory of Change, and the *Girls Not Brides* secretariat plays a distinctive catalytic role within the movement. We mobilise collective action and support at the national, regional and international levels; support member organisations to build their knowledge, skills and leadership and share their expertise; advocate for financial resources; and synthesise and disseminate learning on ending child marriage. In this role, we create a supportive environment to enable greater change. Over the past decade, *Girls Not Brides: The Global Partnership to End Child Marriage* has had an exceptional journey of growth and progress. From our beginnings as a group of around 60 individuals in 2011, we have grown into a global partnership with over 1,400 member organisations present in nearly 100 countries. 39 per cent of our members identify as youth-led, 31 per cent as women-led, 41 per cent as community-based, and 17 per cent as working in humanitarian contexts.

In 2022, *Girls Not Brides* launched a new Partnership Strategy (2022-2025)³ and a new Secretariat Strategy (2022-2025)⁴. These strategies were borne out of rich and in-depth conversations with member organisations, leaders, decision-makers, experts and *Girls Not Brides* staff and revitalised the secretariat's approach to strengthening our work. In 2024, we reflected on progress and learning as we approached the final year of these strategies and began to consider how to bring these learnings into a revised strategy from 2026.

Abbreviations

- AU – African Union
- CEFMU – Child early and forced marriage and unions
- CSW – UN Commission on the Status of Women
- FGM/C – Female genital mutilation/cutting
- GEF – Generation Equality Forum
- GTA – Gender-transformative approaches
- INGO – International non-governmental organisation
- LAC – Latin America and the Caribbean
- MoU – Memorandum of Understanding
- SAIEVAC – South Asia Initiative to End Violence Against Children
- SORP – Statement of Recommended Practice

³ <https://www.girlsnotbrides.org/learning-resources/resource-centre/girls-not-brides-partnership-strategy-2022-2025/>

⁴ <https://www.girlsnotbrides.org/learning-resources/resource-centre/secretariat-strategy-2022-2025/>

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- The CRANK – Child Marriage Research to Action Network
- UK – United Kingdom
- UN – United Nations
- UNFPA – United Nations Population Fund
- UNGA – United Nations General Assembly
- UNICEF – United Nations Children’s Fund
- WACA – West and Central Africa
- WHO – World Health Organization

Definitions

Child marriage

We use the term “child marriage” to refer to all forms of child, early, and forced marriage and unions where at least one party is under the age of 18. In this, we include all girls and adolescents affected by the practice – whether in formal or informal unions – and acknowledge the culturally-specific understandings of childhood and development, and the complex relationship between age, consent, and force.

The movement to end child marriage

The movement to end child marriage comprises an informal global network of civil society and grassroots organisations, national and international non-governmental organisations (INGOs), activists, academics, United Nations (UN) agencies, funders, governments, leaders and champions – all working towards a world without child marriage where girls can exercise their rights and reach their full potential.

The *Girls Not Brides* global partnership (the Partnership)

At the end of 2024, the *Girls Not Brides* partnership comprised over 1400 member organisations in nearly 100 countries committed to working together to end child marriage and support married girls. *Girls Not Brides* member organisations work across sectors – including health, education, human rights and humanitarian contexts – and range from small grassroots actors to large international organisations.

The *Girls Not Brides* secretariat

The Partnership is supported by the *Girls Not Brides* secretariat – a diverse team based in the UK, Guatemala, India, Kenya, Mexico, Nepal, Nigeria, Senegal and Uganda. The secretariat plays three broad roles in civil society: a central support and coordination body for the largest global civil society partnership working to end child marriage; a representative of and advocate for civil society on work to end child marriage (including to influence decision-makers and funders at different levels); and an expert, trusted thought leader, on what works to end child marriage and convenor and source of evidence and shared learning.

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National and State Partnerships and coalitions

Many *Girls Not Brides* member organisations have come together to accelerate progress to end child marriage in their countries by forming [National and State Partnerships and coalitions](#).

National and State Partnerships are networks of *Girls Not Brides* member organisations that believe in the power of collective action to end child marriage and ensure girls can reach their full potential. They have signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the *Girls Not Brides* secretariat to align their work with the [Partnership Strategy](#).

Coalitions are networks of civil society organisations committed to addressing child marriage and working together at the national level to spearhead change. They are close allies to *Girls Not Brides* but have not signed an MoU.

STRUCTURE, GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT

Girls Not Brides was incorporated as a company in the United Kingdom (UK) on 14 June 2013 and registered as a charity in England and Wales on 17 October 2013. It transferred its assets and activities from what was once an initiative under The Elders Foundation to the independent entity on 10 December 2013.

Objects

The charity's objects are all regarded as exclusively charitable under the laws of England and Wales including, but not limited to:

- The promotion of equality and human rights (as set out in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and Subsequent United Nations Conventions and Declarations) throughout the world including, but not limited to:
 - raising awareness of human rights issues
 - relieving need among the victims of human rights abuse
 - research into, and international advocacy of human rights
 - providing technical advice to government and others on human rights matters
 - promoting respect for human rights among individuals and corporations
 - eliminating or preventing infringement of human rights
- The prevention and relief of poverty
- The advancement of health
- The advancement of education, in particular but without limitation, by undertaking research and other educational activities and disseminating the results of that research
- The relief of those in need by reason of youth and/or ill health.

Board of Trustees

As of 31 December 2024, *Girls Not Brides* was governed by a Board of six (6) Trustees (the Trustees) who are responsible for overseeing the management of all *Girls Not Brides*' affairs. The Trustees are selected and elected according to procedures set out in the Articles of Association. The Trustees ensure that all activities fall within the charitable objectives. The Trustees' main responsibilities are related to administrative and financial governance, management of reserves and investments as well as guiding and overseeing strategy development and planning. In particular, the Trustees are responsible for ensuring the legal and financial compliance of *Girls Not Brides*, including compliance with the Charity Commission's guiding principles and charity law.

The Trustees meet regularly throughout the year and act on advice and information provided by the Chief Executive Officer and the senior management of the charity. All Trustees are provided with an individual induction covering all aspects of the *Girls Not Brides* organisational structure and roles and responsibilities of the Trustees within the organisation, as well as Charity Commission guidance on governance, and the duties of Trustees in the UK. Trustee-specific training courses are organised to ensure that the Board remains compliant with the Charity Commission and up to date on current trends within the non-governmental sector. In 2024, the Board of Trustees revised the two committees, being a Finance, Audit and Risk Committee, and a People and Nominations Committee:

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- The Finance, Audit and Risk Committee's overall purpose is to support the Board in its fiduciary duties and make sound recommendations to the Board with regards to the strategic direction of the charity's financial affairs. The Committee also acts, as required, as an Audit Committee, Risk Committee, and an Investment Committee. The Committee meets quarterly.
- The People and Nominations Committee's overall remit is to support the *Girls Not Brides* secretariat in the areas of board governance, trustee recruitment, diversity and inclusion, employer remuneration and benefits. The Committee was introduced in 2024 and meets every six months.

Dr Anne Gallagher stepped down as Chair in October 2024 after completing one term as Chair of the Board. Rita Sarin also stepped down as trustee after completing one term.

In February 2024, the Board started the process of engaging an executive search agency to recruit new trustees to the Board. By the end of 2024, a new Chair, Dr Alaa Murabit, and Vice Chair, Ramin Shahzamani, were appointed to the Board, with a new Treasurer Sinéad Donovan joining shortly after in January 2025. A search for two additional trustees is currently underway in 2025. This will then bring the number of trustees to nine (9).

In early 2024, as part of streamlining and digitalising the effectiveness of the Boards' ways of working, the board invested in a new Board App called Convene. This secure portal created a paperless solution to support the trustees to access board papers in real time.

Statement of Trustees' responsibilities

The Trustees (who are also directors of *Girls Not Brides* for the purposes of company law) are responsible for preparing the Trustees' annual report and the financial statements in accordance with applicable law and UK Accounting Standards (UK Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

Company law requires the Trustees to prepare financial statements for each financial year, which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the charitable company and of the incoming resources and application of resources, including the income and expenditure, of the charitable company for that period. In preparing these financial statements, the Trustees are required to:

- select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently
- observe the methods and principles in the Charities Statement of Recommended Practice (SORP)
- make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent
- state whether applicable UK Accounting Standards and statements of recommended practice have been followed, subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the financial statements
- prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis, unless it is inappropriate to presume that the charity will continue in operation.

The Trustees are responsible for keeping adequate accounting records that disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the charitable company and enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Companies Act 2006. They are also responsible for

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safeguarding the assets of the charitable company and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

In so far as the Trustees are aware:

- There is no relevant audit information of which the charitable company's auditor is unaware.
- The Trustees have taken all steps that they ought to have taken to make themselves aware of any relevant audit information and to establish that the auditor is aware of that information.

The Trustees are responsible for the maintenance and integrity of the corporate and financial information included on the charitable company's website. Legislation in the UK governing the preparation and dissemination of financial statements may differ from legislation in other jurisdictions.

Trustees of the charity guarantee to contribute an amount not exceeding £1 to the assets of the charity in the event of winding up. The total number of such guarantees at 31 December 2024 was 6 (2023: 7). The trustees are members of the charity but this entitles them only to voting rights.

The Trustees have no beneficial interest in the charity.

Disclosure of information to auditors

So far as the Trustees are aware, there is no relevant audit information of which the company's auditors are unaware. The Trustees have taken all the steps that they need to as Trustees in order to make themselves aware of any relevant audit information and to establish that the company's auditors are aware of that information.

Auditors

Sayer Vincent LLP have indicated their willingness to continue in office and in accordance with the provisions of the Companies Act it is proposed that they be re-appointed auditors for the ensuing year.

Members of *Girls Not Brides*

The *Girls Not Brides* secretariat supports the global partnership of member organisations. Membership is open to non-governmental organisations that endorse its mission statement and agree to its membership principles. These organisations are publicly and commonly referred to as "members" (as opposed to the Company Members described above).

Members contribute to the Partnership and engage with one another, as well as with the secretariat, in a variety of ways depending on their interests and capacity. The work and interests of members help define the strategy of *Girls Not Brides*, and the secretariat requests feedback from them on various issues on a regular basis.

Secretariat

Girls Not Brides' day-to-day operations are run by its staff based in its London, UK office, with additional individual team members based in Guatemala, India, Kenya, Mexico, Nepal, Nigeria, Senegal, and Uganda. In 2024, the secretariat directorates consisted of External Engagement; Operations and Finance; Partnership and Regions; Learning, Evidence, and Impact; and People and

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Culture, with a Chief Executive Officer overseeing their work. The Chief Executive Officer reports to the Trustees. The Trustees delegate the day-to-day running of the organisation to the Chief Executive Officer.

Principal risks and uncertainties

The organisation's approach to risk management includes reviewing the organisational risk register, with oversight from the Board of Trustees and input from all senior staff and updating risk management guidance for staff. *Girls Not Brides* views risk management as a continuous process that must be considered at the forefront of all activities by all staff members.

During 2024, the risks in the register were updated although some areas remained the same as the previous year. The Trustees were satisfied with the controls and procedures the secretariat had in place. The Trustees were also satisfied with progress in monitoring and mitigating previously identified potential risks, including financial risks related to its ability to raise sufficient funds, the impact of currency fluctuations, inflation, the increased cost of living, and management risks.

The change in the geopolitical landscape, including risks to civic space, the targeting of actors focused on equality and gender, and decreased international development funding, all increase the vulnerability and risk faced by our partners and members, especially those with a primary focus on protecting the rights of women and girls. A recent UN Women report highlighted that nearly half of all women-led local organisations operating in conflict and crisis affected settings were facing closure within 6 months due to funding constraints, with many already having reduced staff and operations.¹ Wider impacts on the sector, including *Girls Not Brides*, are being monitored carefully and require continual intelligence-gathering, innovation, and sensitivity to the realities faced by *Girls Not Brides* members and partners.

These risks are highlighted with the Trustees of the sub-committees and raised with the Board.

The risk register is classified into six categories (external engagement, finance and due diligence, fundraising, governance and leadership, operations, grant management, partnership and people and culture) that are further defined into specific potential risk elements. Within this, significant risks are identified and summarised. This includes the following risks and mitigation strategies:

- Losing donors or failing to raise sufficient funds in future years. This is mitigated by tracking donors' evolving strategies, cultivating strong donor relationships, ensuring accurate forecasting and building up the operational reserve.
- Significant reserves without a clear plan to spend these funds within a specific period: This is mitigated by the early review of our strategic plan and budget 2026-2030, a review of our reserves policy and thresholds, and an introduction of an investment policy aligned with the planned expenditure over the next five years.
- Failure to comply with requirements around grants and sub-granting. This is mitigated by a detailed review of contract provisions, preparing and reviewing contract summaries, tracking expenditure through activity codes and developing the organisational grant-making policy and process.

¹ <https://www.unwomen.org/en/digital-library/publications/2025/05/at-a-breaking-point-the-impact-of-foreign-aid-cuts-on-womens-organizations-in-humanitarian-crises-worldwide>

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- Unsuitable human resources and operational policies for international context. This is mitigated by an updated approach to regional working which is ongoing.
- Safeguarding incidents in the secretariat or Partnership. This is mitigated by the organisation's comprehensive and up-to-date safeguarding policies and processes and frequent highlighting of safeguarding as a key issue in organisational culture, communications, induction, project management, training and documents.
- Failure to spend existing funds in a timely manner due to potential for unstable governance structures within National Partnership model and ambitious workplans within the Secretariat. This is mitigated by working with National Partner steering committees for a smooth transition, monitoring budgets and actual expenditure more closely. Within the Secretariat, it is mitigated by more joined-up and realistic work planning.

Safeguarding and serious incidents

During the year, *Girls Not Brides* continued to its efforts in ensuring high standards of safeguarding, monitoring, and training of all relevant persons across the globe. Revisions to the Safeguarding Policy were completed in February 2024 and rolled out to team members through its annual training. Additional safeguarding checks were strengthened with its due diligence for grant making.

The charity maintains its zero-tolerance policy towards abuse or other forms of serious misconduct and sets clear standards and expectations around members' behaviour in our international Code of Conduct. All employees and other representatives are required to take part in both induction and recurring annual training on safeguarding and associated policies and controls (through webinars, face-to-face discussions, and consultations).

The Trustees are cognisant of their obligations to report the most serious misconduct or abuse to relevant authorities in the UK and other countries of operation, in particular the formal requirements for Serious Incident Reporting to the Charity Commission for England and Wales. This obligation is understood across the broader definitions of Serious Incidents in which the Commission would have an interest. There were no Serious Incident Notifications made to the Commission during the period covered by this report

Public benefit

The Trustees' report sets out *Girls Not Brides'* charitable activities contributing to ending child marriage, which we have carried out in line with our charitable objects, being the promotion of equality and human rights, the prevention and relief of poverty, the advancement of health, the advancement of education and the relief of those in need by reason of youth and/or ill health. The Board has considered the issue of public benefit and is confident that *Girls Not Brides'* activities comply with the duty in section 17 of the Charities Act 2011 to have due regard to public benefit guidance published by the Charity Commission.

Fundraising

Throughout 2024 *Girls Not Brides* raised funds from committed governments and private trusts and foundations. Funding was predominately unrestricted with a growing number of restricted grants. Fundraising activities were led by our Senior Leadership team and the Development and Outreach Team. We also benefited from the support and expertise of colleagues across the global secretariat and our Board Members.

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Fundraising activities included building a robust pipeline of prospective government and foundation funding, working to submit timely renewals to ensure donor retention, preparing new proposals and concept notes in response to new funding opportunities and meeting the reporting requirements to these donors. The Development and Outreach team led several external facing events to position *Girls Not Brides* strategically to new and existing donors and maintain positive relationship building. *Girls Not Brides'* fundraising activities are reported to and guided by the Finance, Audit and Risk Committee.

During the year under review, *Girls Not Brides* did not use professional fundraisers or commercial participators and did not actively solicit funds from the general public, including vulnerable people, for the secretariat's work. We complied with fundraising regulation and codes in 2024 and we did not receive any complaints.

Remuneration policy

Girls Not Brides applies a Global Pay and Benefits policy, which provides the organisation with a framework and principles for pay and benefits for all employees and team members, including how salaries are set, how pay increases are determined, and other pay-related topics.

In line with the values of *Girls Not Brides*, the new policy aims to provide transparency, equity, and fairness to staff following a 'Total Reward Approach', which includes financial and non-financial elements.

Girls Not Brides is guided by the following remuneration principles in line with the standards of Project Fair:

- **Competitiveness:** to attract and retain outstanding individuals, while taking into account market trends in the sector.
- **Fairness and equity:** to ensure that the compensation process remains consistent, non-discriminatory and reasonable, and that staff members in comparable positions can afford a similar standard of living in different geographical locations.
- **Transparency:** to ensure staff members have a clear understanding of the policies related to remuneration while ensuring that individual salary data remains confidential.
- **Value for money:** to ensure that the funds of *Girls Not Brides* are used for their designated purpose, and that salaries reflect the size, complexity and budget of *Girls Not Brides*.

Girls Not Brides reviewed its Global Pay and Benefits policy in 2024, and this was approved by the Board of Trustees in January 2025.

During 2024, *Girls Not Brides* undertook a salary benchmarking using data provided from the Birches Group. From the findings, incremental changes were implemented in April 2025. The next review will take place in 2028.

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MESSAGE FROM THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

This past year, from Guatemala to Mozambique, I had the privilege of meeting inspiring members and witnessing bold progress, deepened collaboration, and growing momentum to end child, early and forced marriage and unions (CEFMU). But the year was not without its challenges. Together we continued to confront the rise of anti-rights movements, growing economic instability, and a shrinking civic space. Amidst these global headwinds, the need to act collectively has become even more apparent and we appreciate every member, partner and ally who collaborated with us this year.

Girls Not Brides: the Global Partnership to End Child Marriage is the only global partnership solely focused on ending child marriage. With 1,446 members in 94 countries, our role is clear: to strengthen and connect national partnerships, drive policy and funding commitments, and generate and share evidence to guide action. Our work builds and sustains the global, regional and national ecosystems needed to secure lasting change, recognising that child marriage is driven by many interconnected factors and requires a holistic, multi-sectoral response.

Collective power in action: From Nepal to Guatemala, Burkina Faso to Uganda, we supported national and state-level coalitions in 2024, providing strategic, financial and leadership support. These partnerships ensure our continued momentum in driving change towards ending CEFMU, leading collective advocacy, shaping national policies, and mobilising communities for lasting change. In Malawi, we celebrated the launch of a new National Strategy to End Child Marriage, and in Nepal, our National Partnership ensured community voices were included in national policymaking.

A global convener for change: We continued to play a pivotal convening role, bringing together and working collaboratively with our members and partners - governments, civil society, donors and young leaders. In 2024, we witnessed major funding and political breakthroughs, unlocking millions of dollars to end child marriage and support adolescent girls, while firmly securing child marriage as a priority on government agendas around the world.

A highly effective knowledge hub: By sharing the latest evidence across our membership and with critical partners, we continue to ensure programming, policy, and investment is grounded in the latest learning. In 2024, we filled vital knowledge gaps on ending child marriage in conflict and crisis-affected settings and saw the impact of legal reform.

Girls Not Brides exists to connect the dots, amplifying the voices of those leading change. In a complex, shifting world, we are building the only global partnership dedicated to ending child marriage—and building a future where every girl is safe, educated, and free to decide her own path.

If we are going to end child marriage, we all need to rise and work within our circles of influence to make a better world for girls. The onus is on us. Thank you for standing with us.

Dr Faith Mwangi-Powell
Chief Executive Officer

REFLECTIONS FROM THE CHAIR OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES

More than 650 million women and girls alive today were married as children. Unless we change course dramatically, another 100 million will be married before 2030, the year the world committed to ending this practice. That number isn't just staggering. It's unacceptable. And it demands more from all of us.

Still, I remain hopeful. Not because the problem has gotten smaller—it hasn't. But because more people are refusing to look away. From grassroots movements to global platforms, we're seeing the momentum grow. More leaders are recognising that ending child marriage isn't a niche or side issue; it's central to achieving justice, economic growth, gender equality, and sustainable development. Girls Not Brides is playing a critical role in making that connection impossible to ignore.

The world has changed, and our approach must continuously evolve with it. The challenges girls face today are more complex, stemming from overlapping crises, growing inequality, shrinking civic space, and the breakneck speed of technological change. The old playbook won't cut it. As we move into a new chapter, we're asking ourselves: Are we listening well enough? Are we bold enough in the way we lead, fund, and partner? Are we designing solutions that truly meet the scale of the problem?

This moment calls for more than just incremental progress. It demands imagination, courage, and a willingness to challenge assumptions, especially our own. Our upcoming strategy is an opportunity not just to refine our direction, but to rethink how we lead, what we prioritize, and how we show up in a world that's changing faster than ever. To centre the girls and communities who have always led the way. To bring in new voices. To speak plainly about the political will and resources this work requires, and to build the partnerships that can make it happen.

This work isn't theoretical for me. My grandmother was married at 12 and never had the chance to learn to read or write. My mother was married at 15. Their stories shaped mine and remind me why this work is so important. Every girl deserves to choose her future. That should not be revolutionary.

I'm proud to chair a Board that is not afraid to lean into complexity, to listen deeply, and to hold ourselves accountable to the people we exist to serve. A different future is possible; one where every girl is safe, educated, and free. We have the responsibility to build it.

Dr Alaa Murabit,
Chair of the Board of Trustees

GIRLS NOT BRIDES' 2024 TRUSTEES' ANNUAL REPORT & IMPACT REPORT

Girls Not Brides achieved strong impact across its 3 pillars of work in 2024: movement-building, influencing, and learning, working to foster powerful collective action to accelerate an end child marriage.

Movement building

Ending child marriage requires collective action. When diverse organisations and local leaders come together, they can drive lasting change for girls. That's why we strengthen partnerships and build capacity to support members to lead influential national movements. We support civil society partnerships and coalitions through deep, sustained engagement, supporting them to advocate together, shift norms and create community change.

We build and sustain a vibrant, well-equipped global partnership to end child marriage

Girls Not Brides is the world's largest and only global partnership dedicated solely to ending child marriage. By the end of 2024, we had 1,446 members in 94 countries, with 37 new members joining from women-led, indigenous-led, youth-led and community-based organisations. Our members work across sectors, including health, education, economic livelihoods, violence and justice, ensuring a comprehensive approach to ending child marriage. As of the end of December 2024, 39% of members identified as youth-led, 31% as women-led, 41% as community-based, and 17% as working in humanitarian contexts.

The *Girls Not Brides* Secretariat is the backbone to this vibrant partnership, coordinating, supporting and sustaining our members to be better connected and equipped to drive change. Our members consistently highlight the value of being part of the global partnership, with our 2024 membership survey revealing that 70% of members surveyed had viewed or read a learning product at least once and, of these, 97% have applied the *Girls Not Brides* learning product(s) to their work.

“Every meeting or webinar that I've engaged in, *Girls Not Brides* has become a stepping stone towards making positive impact to our community” – *Girls Not Brides* member

We invest in and strengthen national networks of civil society organisations who unite to drive change

In 2024, *Girls Not Brides* provided £738,161 of direct financial grants to National and State Partnerships and coalitions. This dedicated financial support allows civil society organisations to organise, align, and sustain coordinated action. This focused, collective advocacy drives political commitments, policy change and effective programming to end child marriage.

Country	Name of Partnership or coalition	No. of members	2024 highlights	2024 direct financial grant
Uganda	<i>Girls Not Brides Uganda</i>	124	Partnered with the Ministry of Gender and United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) to implement and disseminate the National Strategy to End Child Marriage and Teenage Pregnancy. Advanced policy progress through the	54,110

TRUSTEES' ANNUAL REPORT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2024

**TO THE TRUSTEES OF
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			reinstatement of the Sexual Offences Bill, defining child marriage as an offence and harmonising contradictory child marriage laws.	
Tanzania	<i>Tanzania Ending Child Marriage Network (TECMN)</i>	87	Led a campaign for a reform of the 1971 Marriage Act, securing commitment from local leaders. National media coverage led to the formation of community parent, girl and youth groups, committed to amplifying the power of girls. Worked with stakeholders to implement and improve school re-entry guidelines.	80,627
Kenya	<i>Girls Not Brides Kenya</i>	62	Contributed to Kenya's first National Action Plan to End Harmful Practices. Advocated for government funding, improved data systems, and structural reforms for Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights (SRHR) access.	91,703
Nigeria	<i>National Coalition on Ending Child Marriage in Nigeria (NCECM)</i>	73	Partnered with traditional institutions in Lagos and Enugu States to develop and implement community by-laws addressing child marriage, engaging 23 traditional and local leaders and 120 girls as change agents to present policy recommendations at the State of the Nigerian Girls Summit. Contributed to the review of the National Strategy to End Child Marriage.	35,580
Mozambique	<i>Coligação para Eliminação dos Casamentos Prematuros (CECAP)</i>	56	Collaborated with The Ministry of Gender on the National Plan of Action for Children and informed teenage pregnancy technical groups at the Ministry of Health. Secured commitment from the Ministry of Justice to enforce anti-child marriage laws.	36,979
Niger	<i>Platform to End Child Marriage</i>	76	Conducted joint advocacy with national education coalitions under the Education Out Loud programme. Mentored nine youth researchers, to prepare their research and participate in an international webinar.	40,599
Burkina Faso	<i>CONAMEB</i>	60	Advocated for the National Strategic Plan to End Child Marriage 2024-28 and modifications to the Penal Code.	42,323

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			Led budget advocacy for girls' education alongside the Education Out Loud programme.	
Nepal	<i>Balika Dulahi Hoinan Girls Not Brides Nepal</i>	30	Submitted recommendations to the National Strategy to End Child Marriage, advocating to retain 20 as the legal marriage age. Co-hosted first-ever National Assembly of Child Human Rights Defenders, providing a platform for young advocates to influence child marriage policy.	59,223
Jharkhand	<i>Girls Not Brides Jharkhand State Coalition</i>	40	Held a Youth Mela featuring girls' football teams. Convened a State-Level conversation with 70 stakeholders on ending child marriage.	-
Rajasthan	<i>Girls Not Brides Rajasthan State Partnership</i>	34	Launched a two-year ending child marriage campaign in 16 districts alongside local government. Conducted workshops on child marriage in marginalised communities, integrating development-based approaches (education, SRHR, Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH)).	55, 577
Guatemala	<i>La Mesa a Favor de las Niñas y Adolescentes</i>	18	Supported government advocacy meetings resulting in the Presidential Secretariat for Women (SEPREM – the highest- level body of the Presidency in matters related to human rights and women's development) being included in the national ending child marriage action planning.	94,951
Malawi	<i>Girls Not Brides Malawi</i>	94	Input into the new National Strategy to End Child Marriage, which launched in October 2024. Built foundations for the Accelerator Initiative - a collective effort to accelerate action towards ending child marriage, spearheaded by <i>Girls Not Brides</i> Secretariat and <i>Girls Not Brides Malawi</i> .	77,002

Spotlight on... Advancing collective action to end child marriage in Nepal

Nepal country snapshot

- National Partnership name: *Girls Not Brides Nepal*
- Formed in 2015
- Total members: 30
- Prevalence: [35%](#) of women are married before the age of 18 and [6%](#) are married before the age of 15
- Minimum legal age of marriage: 20 years for girls and boys with no exceptions

Girls Not Brides Nepal has made transformative strides in the national movement to end child marriage. Building on ten years of experience, the partnership advanced commitments and action at all levels through strategic collaboration, capacity building, and inclusive advocacy.

Strategic input to national strategy

In 2024, the coalition played a central role in shaping the National Strategy to End Child Marriage, working closely with the Ministry of Women, Children, and Senior Citizens. By coordinating consultations across all seven provinces, and providing targeted feedback, *Girls Not Brides Nepal* ensured that rural community voices were included in national policymaking.

Successful budget advocacy in Madhesh province

After identifying a 2023 funding gap, *Girls Not Brides Nepal* successfully led budget advocacy in Madhesh Province. By engaging local officials through the Madhesh Task Force and submitting evidence-based recommendations, the province set a precedent by allocating new resources for awareness campaigns, education incentives, and enforcement mechanisms.

Amplifying youth voices

In a groundbreaking initiative, *Girls Not Brides Nepal* partnered with the National Human Rights Commission and the National Child Rights Council to convene Nepal's first National Assembly of Child Human Rights Defenders. The National Partnership played a key role in shaping Nepal's 2024 Voluntary National Review (VNR) by facilitating child-led consultations and developing actionable policy recommendations, which were included in Nepal's final VNR, presented at the UN High-Level Political Forum in July 2024.

Spotlight on... Grassroot and collective efforts in Guatemala to end child marriage

Guatemala country snapshot

- National Partnership name: *La Mesa a Favor de las Niñas y Adolescentes (La Mesa)*
- Formed in 2022
- Total members: 18
- Prevalence: [29%](#) of women are married or in unions before the age of 18 and [6%](#) before the age of 15
- Minimum legal age of marriage: 18 years with no exceptions

In Guatemala, *Girls Not Brides* provided technical and financial support to *La Mesa*, fostering long-term, sustainable efforts to end child marriage and early forced unions together with other experienced organisations.

Elevating the voices of members, girls and adolescents to advocate for multi-level change

Our joint advocacy efforts are critical in strengthening relationships with government, donors, and international partners. We supported representatives of *La Mesa* and *Red Voceras* to join strategic

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political events and bilateral meetings with government bodies to call for increased investment in girls and adolescents in national, regional and international policies. The advocacy led by *La Mesa* and supported by *Girls Not Brides* had a direct impact on the Presidential Secretariat for Women being included among the key actors in charge of the national action planning to end child marriage. Additionally, members issued evidence-based collective statements drawing attention to the insufficient funding for adolescent girls. This led to the new administration committing to adding a public panel considering child marriage.

Red Voceras: supporting the next generation of advocates

Red Voceras is a youth-led initiative of *La Mesa*, supporting young girls and adolescents to become community advocates for change. Through training, mentorship, and leadership development, *Red Voceras* members challenge child marriage and gender inequality in Guatemala. In 2024, the first generation of *Red Voceras* completed their training, and plans for the second generation are underway, ensuring continuity and sustainability of youth-led advocacy.

Spotlight on...Effective policy advocacy and influence in Uganda

Uganda country snapshot

- National Partnership name: *Girls Not Brides Uganda*
- Formed in 2013
- Total members: 124 (71% of members are youth-led, 53% are women-led)
- Prevalence: [34%](#) of women are married before the age of 18 and [7%](#) are married before the age of 15
- Minimum legal age of marriage: Below 18 years, considering exceptions

A trusted collaborator on ending child marriage

In 2024, *Girls Not Brides Uganda* deepened its role as a trusted government partner, through collaboration with the Ministry of Gender and the Ministry of Education on the implementation of Uganda's National Strategy to End Child Marriage. The government announced the strategy had been rolled out in 34 of Uganda's 143 districts and pledged deeper national multi-sectoral collaboration and implementation. *Girls Not Brides Uganda* was instrumental in localising the strategy by translating it into local languages and adapting it into accessible formats to support grassroots understanding and engagement.

Girls Not Brides Uganda supported the reinstatement of the Sexual Offences Bill to criminalise child marriage, signing Memorandums of Understanding with parliamentary forums focused on children and teenage pregnancy. They helped ensure the prioritisation of adolescent girls' needs by shaping the National Adolescent Health Costed Implementation Plan, and through collaboration with the Interreligious Council of Uganda, Makerere University, and cultural leaders on promoting social norm transformation, with an emphasis on the integration of the rights of women and girls.

Local engagement shaping policy and social norms change

Girls Not Brides Uganda expanded its membership from 106 to 144 civil society organisations, extending its reach into post-conflict areas in the North and East, where child marriage remains highly prevalent. Using its community networks, they engaged clan clusters in culturally sensitive dialogue around the National Strategy to End Child Marriage, leading cultural and traditional leaders in Gulu and Nebbi to become key champions in efforts to end child marriage.

Girls Not Brides Uganda organised five regional Girls Summits, a cornerstone of their country-wide mobilisation and engagement. Notably, the Central Region's summit was co-hosted by the Buganda

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Kingdom for the first time. These summits helped shape Uganda's National Sexuality Education Framework through a study covering 74 districts in the North and East, informing improved guidance on issues such as the re-entry of pregnant girls into school, credited by local leaders in the prevention of vulnerable girls being forced into early marriage. The flagship National Girls Summit served as a national platform to elevate girls' voices, share their experiences and advocate for stronger legal protections. Members presented an Issue Brief on child marriage and teenage pregnancy to Hon. Lillian Aber, Uganda's Minister for Disaster Preparedness, who committed to taking the outcomes of the summit to senior government stakeholders.

Influencing

Throughout 2024, we convened, coordinated, and influenced key actors across the end child marriage ecosystem to ensure that adolescent girls remain at the heart of policy, programming, and funding commitments. We elevated the voices and expertise of our global membership and leveraged the latest data and evidence to drive transformative change.

We influence stronger political commitments and increased funding to end child marriage

Even in the face of shrinking civic space, stronger cross-border anti-rights groups, and political and economic pressures, we saw renewed commitments to end child marriage from critical powerholders and decision-makers. We created collaborative spaces at critical moments to bring together civil society, governments, donors and allies, and created opportunities to shape and drive action and investment into ending child marriage.

After significant advocacy efforts, including a joint statement submitted by *Girls Not Brides* and 124 member organisations, child, early and forced marriage was explicitly recognised as a violation of girls' and young women's human rights in the UN [Pact for the Future](#). This reaffirmed international resolve to end child marriage, echoed in the 2024 UNGA Child Early and Forced Marriage Resolution. The Resolution, supported through [formal](#) and informal influencing at the [UN General Assembly](#) and beyond by *Girls Not Brides* and its members, was adopted by consensus in November 2024 with 123 country co-sponsors.

Together with Global Affairs Canada, we convened the annual [Strategic Donor Meeting](#) with 50 participants from funders and strategic partners to connect, re-energise, and re-commit to accelerating an end to child marriage. Conversations like these are integral to building community and consensus around the importance of protecting and increasing investments to end child marriage. 2024 saw the [Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office \(FCDO\)](#) along with [Children's Investment Fund Foundation \(CIFF\)](#) announce multi-million-pound investments towards ending child marriage and advancing the rights of adolescent girls.

In Africa, we worked closely with governments at both the Africa Union and the Southern African Development Community (SADC) Parliamentary Forum to ensure renewed commitments to addressing child marriage. In Asia, we led the Technical Working Group on Child Marriage as part of the South Asia Civil Society Group, overseeing the review of the South Asia Regional Action Plan. In Latin America and the Caribbean, we influenced a position statement at the 57th session on the Commission on Population and Development (CPD), emphasising the importance of advancing SRHR to addressing child marriage and early unions, and ensuring the practice was successfully integrated into the regional civil society declaration.

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We actively engage other sectors to ensure that ending child marriage is prioritised across all areas of policy and practice

Child marriage is driven by multiple, interconnected factors, so our influencing work spans related sectors such as education, health and climate. This approach helps build a broader, more coordinated response, ensuring holistic and multisectoral strategies to end child marriage.

In 2024, *Girls Not Brides* worked with Human Rights Watch and other partners to advocate for a new Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child, recognising the right to early childhood education and to guarantee free secondary education. We supported representatives from our National Partnership in Ghana, as well as GAMCOTRAP in The Gambia, to advocate for the Optional Protocol's establishment at the Human Rights Council in Geneva. This helped to establish an intergovernmental working group and early co-sponsorship from both countries, demonstrating strong regional leadership and civil society influence in advancing girls' rights through education.

Our Education Out Loud project in Francophone West Africa, made possible by the Global Partnership for Education's fund for advocacy and social accountability, entered its second phase, bringing together end child marriage and education networks to shape policy and research through a shared agenda. In 2024, we supported [youth activists to carry out research and advocacy](#), sponsoring one youth researcher from Niger to participate in the Gender is my Agenda Campaign (GIMAC) network Pre-Summit Consultative Meeting to the African Union Assembly of Heads of State and Government. Best practices from this project were shared through [a practical 10-step guide](#) to support other organisations to effectively conduct youth-led research.

We amplify our members' expertise and power on global and regional platforms

Local and national civil society organisations hold deep knowledge on what works to end child marriage and are critical to driving change in families, communities, and countries. We platform their voices, facilitate direct connections to influence those in power, and continue to advocate for the crucial role civil society plays in bringing about change with, and for, girls.

In 2024, we stood alongside powerful Gambian advocates calling on the government to uphold the ban on Female Genital Mutilation and Cutting (FGM/C) – an issue strongly linked to child marriage, including at the African Union Pan-African Conference on Girls' and Women's Education and at the 56th Human Rights Council. We supported Dr. Isatou Touray from our member organisation GAMCOTRAP to deliver a powerful intervention, speak at our co-hosted side event on cross-border FGM/C and met with the UN Special Rapporteur on Violence against Women and Girls. Our [advocacy efforts](#) were critical in drawing international attention and pressure, contributing to the upholding of the FGM/C ban—a major win for girls' rights.

Through storytelling and campaigns, we amplified the voices, expertise, and impact of our members to demonstrate the power of civil society actors driving change. In 2024, we saw 12,500 new followers and 2 million impressions across our social media platforms and 46,500 users on our website. Our [#MovementMakers series](#) showcased the powerful personal stories of civil society leaders across eight countries in Africa and Asia, inspiring the next generation of changemakers. The videos had a combined 2,500 views on YouTube and our 56 social media posts reached over 44,000 people. Our social media toolkits provide common messaging and graphics for our collective advocacy with our members. For example, for the International Day of Education, our toolkit of 12 graphics across three languages resulted in over 65 members' posts and reached over 282,000 people on our own platforms.

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Spotlight on... Collective power in action - Colombia passes landmark law banning child marriage

After 17 years of campaigning by civil society groups, in 2024 Colombia took a historic step by approving one of the most comprehensive laws in Latin America and the Caribbean to ban child marriage. The law not only raises the age of marriage to 18 years without exception but also incorporates the design and implementation of a National Comprehensive Programme for Life Projects for Children and Adolescents, aimed at reducing the root causes of early unions.

Child marriage in Colombia

- [23%](#) of girls in Colombia marry or enter a union before age 18 and [5%](#) before age 15.
- Child, early, and forced marriage and unions are more common in rural areas of Colombia, where [40%](#) of girls are married before the age of 18. They are also [more prevalent](#) among Indigenous and Black/Afro-Colombian communities.
- Child, Early, and Forced Marriage and Unions predominantly takes the form of an [informal union](#), rather than a formal marriage.

Working with key partners including Asociación ProFamilia, Equality Now, Girls First Fund (GFF), Fundación para el desarrollo en Género y Familia (GENFAMI), and Global Fund for Children, we collectively raised awareness of child, early, and forced marriage and unions as a form of violence against children to strengthen political will on this issue in Colombia. We provided direct support and guidance to key Senators and lawmakers who then proposed the bill in Congress, providing technical support to refine the bill proposal. *Girls Not Brides* and its members in Colombia ensured progress by facilitating space for dialogue, engaging key actors, establishing relationships with senators and targeting specific decision makers. Media coverage helped sustain public and political pressure, contributing to the successful passing of the law.

Timeline of collective actions with members and partners

- Congresswoman **Jennifer Pedraza**, with the support of **Congresswoman Alejandra Vásquez**, introduced Bill **PL 155/2023C** to ban child marriage in Colombia without exceptions, supported by *Girls Not Brides* member **Asociación ProFamilia**. [2023]
- *Girls Not Brides* held strategic meetings with Pro Familia to form an alliance for joint advocacy, including partners such as GENFAMI, Global Fund for Children, and Equality Now. [Feb 2024]
- Technical support to Colombian lawmakers drafting the bill. [March – September 2024]
- *Girls Not Brides*, Asociación ProFamilia, GENFAMI, Equality Now, and Global Fund for Children developed a collective advocacy plan. [May-October 2024]
- Co-developed a dynamic communications strategy with partners, using social media campaigns, press engagement, blogs, and [advocacy](#) materials. [September- October 2024]
- Breakfast meeting with Colombian senators to emphasise the bill's importance and ensure its final approval. [November 2024]
- Co-hosted parallel event at the first Ending Violence Against Children (EVAC) Ministerial Conference in Bogotá during which government officials from Colombia committed to advance the bill. [November 2024]
- [Press release](#) urging senators to prioritise the bill picked up by major national and international news outlets, including *El Espectador*, *Equality Now*, *Women's Media Center*, *Civicus*, *IPS*, *GNDiario*, *Radiónica*, *El País*, and *Infobae*. [November 2024]
- The Colombian Senate passed the bill to ban child marriage without exceptions. Senators used *Girls Not Brides*' key messages and materials to argue for the bill's passage. [November 2024]

Spotlight on... Accelerating legislative reform to end child marriage in southern Africa

In August 2024, we co-hosted a major regional convening to drive the implementation of the Southern African Development Community (SADC) Model Law on Eradicating Child Marriage, through a partnership with the SADC Parliamentary Forum, HIVOS, UNFPA East and Southern Africa Regional Office, Plan International's Southern Africa Programme, and UNICEF. The event brought together critical stakeholders in ending child marriage from across the region, including civil society, policymakers, traditional leaders, youth leaders and UN agencies. Dialogue across all stakeholders was critical in ensuring a rights-based, gender-transformative approach to discussions on implementation and resourcing of the SADC Model Law on Eradicating Child Marriage.

Originally adopted in 2016 by the SADC Parliamentary Forum, the SADC Model Law on Eradicating Child Marriage sets the minimum age of marriage at 18 for girls and boys without exception and provides a framework for SADC member states to end child marriage by harmonising national laws, promoting prevention and response mechanisms, and addressing root causes of child marriage.

Key outcomes included the formation of a new regional Communities of Practice (CoP) to facilitate knowledge sharing, collaboration, and continuous learning. Together, stakeholders co-created a clear, actionable path forward: one that champions legal reform, prioritises grassroots leadership, and drives collaborative accountability across the region to ensure girls and children are free from the risk of child marriage.

Learning

Girls Not Brides is a global knowledge and learning hub, driving a shared understanding of what works to end child marriage. Evidence and learning play a central role in our work, ensuring that policies, programmes and investments to end child marriage and support married girls are grounded in evidence. We play a critical role in connecting evidence with practice, sharing knowledge across our membership, the research community, funders, and policymakers.

We generate, use, and share the latest evidence to drive informed action.

Throughout 2024, we strengthened our role as a global thought leader on what works to end child marriage. We shared learning and insights at key global platforms, including [the Sexual Violence Research Initiative Forum](#) in Cape Town and our Strategic Donor Meeting in London, equipping donors, decision makers and strategic partners with the insights they need to address the root causes of child marriage.

- **Child marriage in conflict and crisis affected settings:** [Our global report](#), launched at a public seminar on Girls' Rights in War and Conflict in Sweden, highlights the drivers and consequences of child marriage in conflict and crisis affected contexts, where prevalence is twice the global average. It shares promising practices, evidence, and tools for action and calls for a fundamental shift in programming approaches, urging local, national, and international actors to prioritise the needs of girls.
- **Updating the 'Child Marriage Atlas':** In 2024, we completed a comprehensive update of our Child Marriage Atlas, the most viewed area of our website and a critical engagement entry point for audiences. We updated all 203 country profiles with the latest prevalence data, laws and policies, contextual drivers, and current efforts to address child marriage. The Atlas

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continues to be a vital tool for researchers, advocates and educators. It is used by the University of Nottingham to inform teaching on child marriage law and was cited in a civil society report on girls' rights for the Beijing+30 Review in the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE) region.

- **Filling data gaps on child marriage in the Horn of Africa:** Through a [rigorous literature review](#), we mapped interventions and organisations addressing child, early, and forced marriage across the Horn of Africa. This review fills a critical regional data gap, offering insights into community efforts and the social and cultural factors driving child marriage, providing a key resource for those working to protect girls' rights in the region.
- **Building inter-sectoral collaboration with a brief on child marriage and SDGs in India:** Offering insights to address the root causes of child marriage, our report gained a total of 13,798 impressions, 3,790 engagements, and an engagement rate of 13% - highlighting a remarkable uptake by key organisations and stakeholders in the region.

We strengthen the coordination and uptake of research and evidence

We play a pivotal role in ensuring research and evidence to address child marriage is accessible, aligned, and used to inform action at global, regional and national levels. In 2024 we deepened collaboration with leading research partners including the UNFPA-UNICEF Global Programme to End Child Marriage, UNICEF Innocenti, University College London, World Health Organization, Accelerate Hub, the MENA Regional Action Forum To End Child Marriage, and the Sexuality Working Group, amongst others, to align our research priorities and fill knowledge gaps to end child marriage.

The Child Marriage Research to Action Network ([The CRANK](#)), our joint initiative with the UNFPA-UNICEF Global Programme to End Child Marriage, continues to build on its strong record as an effective coordinator of global child marriage research. We disseminated the latest priority analysis among its 570 engaged cross-regional members and facilitated the uptake of this evidence to strengthen programme, advocacy, and policy outcomes.

New focus on child marriage and mental health: In collaboration with University College London and [the Global Network on Mental Health and Child Marriage](#), the CRANK hosted a symposium with over 200 stakeholders to explore the relationship between child marriage and mental health. Emerging evidence shows that girls who are or have been married experience a range of poor mental outcomes - from anxiety, depression, and suicidal ideation - but that support services are limited and poorly resourced. The event helped put this issue on the global agenda, resulting in a joint comment in [The Lancet Child & Adolescent Health -Mental health consequences of child marriage](#), and a forthcoming special issue in the *Journal of Vulnerable Children and Youth Studies*. Initial recommendations call for safe spaces, community-led support, and systems-level responses to improve care for girls who are or have been married.

We support our members to apply evidence and learning to strengthen their impact

Building the skills, knowledge and leadership needed to collectively address child marriage is a key component of our learning offer to members. In 2024, we held four webinars, five training sessions, and published a suite of 20 learning briefs, toolkits and reports. 70% of 209 members surveyed have accessed one learning product in the last year. 79% of those that had accessed a learning product were satisfied, viewing the products as highly relevant, timely and practical, well-researched, data-driven, expert-backed, introducing new ideas and challenging existing approaches.

Spotlight on...Using evidence for advocacy: Driving a clearer understanding of legal reform to end child marriage

In 2024, we prioritised legal reform as a central learning agenda, deepening understanding of what is required for effective, rights-based approaches to end child marriage.

Evidence synthesis

Unpacking the evidence on child, early, and forced marriages and unions and the law strengthens our call for a comprehensive response to addressing child marriage. While legal reforms remain essential to demonstrate political commitment, unlock investment, and uphold the rights of girls, emerging evidence shows that laws alone are not sufficient and can lead to unintended, harmful consequences for girls – especially those most at-risk, from marginalised communities, and those facing systemic barriers to justice.

Communication, promotion, and critical engagement

We brought this evidence to life through a strategic journey from insight to action. This included synthesising the latest research, developing practical resources, and sharing learnings with our members and partners, and more widely at global convenings. Through dialogues with policymakers, legal experts and grassroots advocates, we championed more nuanced approaches—ones that acknowledge the reality of adolescent unions and focus on building supportive systems, not just legal deterrents.

- [Global evidence review](#): A comprehensive synthesis examining how laws on child marriage and sexual consent affect prevalence, girls' rights, and autonomy. It identified critical questions for reform and implementation. [February]
- [Learning brief](#): Featured case studies from our members, key advocacy messages, and considerations for programming and policy. [February]
- [Learning webinar](#): Bringing together researchers and practitioners from Nepal and Malawi to explore implications for national advocacy, with takeaways published for wider application. [February]
- [Sexuality Working Group statement](#) and [Webinar](#): Challenges prevailing assumptions in legal advocacy, especially around the increasing trend of adolescent girls initiating underage unions. [April]
- [Latin America and the Caribbean evidence brief](#) and [Webinar](#): Reviewing regional evidence from Latin America and the Caribbean on how laws impact girls' rights. Sharing experiences from Mexico, Guatemala, and Colombia. [June]
- [CRANK research meeting](#): CRANK Research Meeting on Child Marriage Prevention Laws and their Implications: presenting key findings and recommendations from the global evidence brief to inform debates and foster uptake of this evidence through discussion and summary outputs with key takeaways. [June]
- [FAQs](#): Developed to help integrate the evidence into policy and programming decisions. [September]
- **Presenting findings** on how child marriage laws can promote adolescent girls' evolving capacities and autonomy **at the Stellenbosch International Conference on Children's Rights**. Legal practitioners welcomed the evidence, recognising its value in mitigating unintended negative impacts. [September]

Advocacy in action

These interventions have played a pivotal role in steering the global conversation on legal reform for ending child marriage towards more nuanced, rights-based, gender-transformative approaches. We have worked to shift external messaging beyond punitive legal frameworks, particularly within human rights spaces. This was evident in Colombia, where messaging strengthened advocacy for the creation of a National Comprehensive Programme for Life Projects for Children and Adolescents. This programme complements the new national law that raises the age of marriage to 18 with no exceptions, ensuring legal reform is paired with preventative programmes that centre and serve girls.

In Nepal, this evidence informed the national dialogue on proposed changes to the legal minimum age of marriage, making the case for approaches that are rooted in both rights and evidence. At the Southern African Development Community (SADC) Model Law Convening, members were supported to ensure that rights-based and gender-transformative approaches were embedded into the regional legislative discussion, resulting in the [Joint Statement](#) on Defending Girls' Rights on Ending Child Marriage in the SADC Region.

In Latin America and the Caribbean, where laws banning child marriage are already in place across most countries, our work catalysed vital conversations around implementation gaps and the need to move beyond legal reform alone. The emphasis is now shifting toward solutions that focus on opportunity, support, and protection for girls.

Operations & People: the critical foundations of our impact

In 2024, we continued to invest significant effort into the systems and structures that support the *Girls Not Brides* team to deliver impact, including safeguarding, grant management, and digitalisation.

Safeguarding

During the year, *Girls Not Brides* continued to embed standards of safeguarding, monitoring and training of all relevant persons across the globe.

Our safeguarding policy was updated to align with sector best practice through a peer participatory process, finalised and approved by the Board in February 2024. Mandatory annual training was completed by all team members of *Girls Not Brides*.

To meet member needs, a comprehensive safeguarding pack was developed, including a range of free templates around policies and guidelines. *Girls Not Brides* continued to support its members and partners with capacity strengthening initiatives including:

- Piloting a global safeguarding webinar, with over 500 members across three regions in attendance in June 2024
- Piloting a member-led training in partnership with CECAP Network, *Girls Not Brides* and with Plan International Mozambique training 24 members in October 2024
- Providing external safeguarding training for *Girls Not Brides* safeguarding focal points and mentorship to the steering committees in Nigeria, Kenya, and Uganda
- Participation in a global safeguarding network to keep abreast of best practices

Safeguarding Due Diligence in Grant Making

To ensure the appropriate safeguards for donor funds. *Girls Not Brides* continued to strengthen its safeguarding due diligence processes with a participatory approach to assess grants made to National Partnerships and Coalitions that received grants from us. This process considered safeguarding and Preventing Sexual Harassment, Exploitation and Abuse (PSHEA) best practices, including the contextual realities of the grant recipients, while ensuring adherence to the principles of safeguarding.

Digitalisation at Girls Not Brides

- In 2024, *Girls Not Brides* introduced **Convene (Board App)** to the Board of Trustees to enable more efficient management of Board meetings. This reduced printing and created a portal for Board members to review information more effectively.
- In 2024, *Girls Not Brides* started a review of its Accounts Payable functions. With peer learning from The Elders, it began the initial phases of introducing **SAP Concur** for the automation of invoices and expenses. The implementation will begin from April 2025.
- In 2024, *Girls Not Brides* partnered with **StoneX Group Inc**, an international payments provider working in over 180 countries. Their extensive knowledge of local markets provided an effective and competitive solution for international payments in multiple countries reducing the impact of fluctuating exchange rates for our member and partners.
- In 2024, *Girls Not Brides* introduced **DocuSign** for Grant Making and Service Provider agreements which helped to streamline approval process of grant contracts. This simple change has benefited our members and partners and strengthened our contracting.
- In 2024, to strengthen the due diligence and compliance process of our grant-making, *Girls Not Brides* partnered with **Santions.IO**, a global company that provided services for sanctions and Anti-Money Laundering (AML) screening to mitigate risks.

Financial

In 2024, *Girls Not Brides* revised and strengthened its credit card policy to ensure that stronger controls were put in place. Thresholds and limits were reviewed supporting the organisation in safeguarding its finances.

In the sphere of cyber-crimes, credit card fraud and email hacking, *Girls Not Brides* continues to run a mandatory annual training on the prevention of cyber security and fraud for all its team members.

STRATEGIC PLANS FOR THE FUTURE

In 2025, *Girls Not Brides* enters a pivotal year, one that marks the final phase of our 2022–2025 Secretariat Strategy and the beginning of our visioning for 2026 and beyond. As we consolidate our efforts and capture the lessons from the past three years, we will embark on a comprehensive strategic review to co-create our next chapter. This process will be rooted in inclusive consultation with our staff, members, partners, and donors, ensuring that our future direction reflects the realities and needs of those we serve while positioning us to lead boldly in an increasingly complex global context. This moment demands that we not only reflect but respond, with sharper focus, greater resilience, and renewed purpose, as we face shrinking resources, mounting crises, and alarming rollbacks on rights.

Key Highlights for 2025

Our work in 2025 remains firmly anchored in our four strategic objectives: Movement Building, Influencing, Learning, and Ensuring a Strong Secretariat. These pillars will continue to guide our actions, even as we test new ideas, push boundaries, and prepare the ground for more ambitious and transformational approaches in the years ahead.

Under our **movement-building** efforts, 2025 will focus on expanding and diversifying our global partnership. We are actively working to bring new voices into the movement, especially women- and girl-led organisations, those working in conflict and crisis-affected settings, and youth-led initiatives across underrepresented regions in Africa, Asia, and Latin America. Our aim is to grow our membership by 8% in Latin America and the Caribbean and to onboard at least 20 new organisations in Africa and Asia. Alongside this, we are enhancing our core offer to members through tailored support and resources. This includes fundraising training, capacity-building on gender transformative approaches and social norms change, regional youth leadership initiatives, two rounds of small grants, and sponsorships for strategic engagement in global and regional spaces such as the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW), the African Union, (AU) and the UN General Assembly (UNGA).

Our commitment to national and state partnerships remains strong, with continued technical support and accompaniment to 28 active coalitions across Africa, Asia, and Latin America. In 2025, we anticipate disbursing 13 grants to strengthen their collective advocacy and programmatic impact, with a particular focus on Burkina Faso, Kenya, Mozambique, Niger, Nigeria, Tanzania, Uganda, and Malawi, which is part of our flagship initiative, The Accelerator.

Anchored under the **influencing** pillar, The Accelerator is one of the most significant and strategic developments in our recent history. Sparked by a transformational financial gift from MacKenzie Scott in 2023, The Accelerator represents a bold commitment to catalyse systemic change across the child, early and forced marriage and unions (CEFMU) ecosystem. The Accelerator is framed around the pillars of “Lead, Commit, Invest,” and aims to drive momentum across the global movement to end CEFMU. In 2025, our influencing work will be closely aligned with the objectives of The Accelerator, beginning with a pilot in Malawi that will test an intensive national acceleration model. Our efforts will include mobilising and uniting key stakeholders across the movement and beyond, increasing coordination and cohesion around a shared agenda for change.

Globally, we will continue to engage with the girls’ rights donor ecosystem, promoting the findings from our “Where’s the Money to End CEFMU?” research and making the case for smarter, more targeted investment. We will use platforms such as the Skoll Forum, the Financing Feminist Futures Conference, and our Annual Donor Meeting to amplify this message and deepen alliances with philanthropic

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actors. Our **global advocacy** in 2025 will also include a creative engagement strategy to bring CEFMU into broader conversations on girls' rights. At CSW, we plan to host a screening of *Nawi*, an Oscar-longlisted film from Kenya about child marriage, elevating the visibility of emerging and established voices across the movement.

Across regions, we are aligning with existing campaigns to amplify impact. In Africa, we are engaging with the African Union's campaign on the Convention to End Violence Against Women and Girls to ensure CEFMU remains central to government commitments. In Asia, we will continue our leadership role in the South Asia technical working group on child marriage, and support national consultations in India, Bangladesh, and Nepal as part of SAIEVAC's regional action plan. In Latin America and the Caribbean, we will be active at the Regional Conference on Women in Mexico—an important space linked to the Beijing +30 platform—and deepen our influencing work with members in Mexico and Colombia.

Elevating the voices and impact of our members remains central to our mission. We will continue to spotlight grassroots leadership through the Movement Makers series, feature stories of change from recent visits to Mozambique and Guatemala, and amplify member efforts to advance the SADC model law. As the Accelerator unfolds in Malawi, we will capture and share compelling content to illustrate the power and potential of national-level acceleration in practice.

Our **learning and evidence** work in 2025 will reinforce *Girls Not Brides* as a leading knowledge hub on CEFMU. We will build on existing thematic resources—spanning education, law, sexual and reproductive health, and conflict—and create new learning products such as infographics, animations, and short videos to enhance accessibility and uptake by our members. These will be shared through enhanced knowledge platforms and integrated into national and regional strategies. The Child Marriage Research to Action Network (CRANK) will continue to facilitate knowledge exchange through research spotlight events and virtual meetings. We will also partner with UNFPA, UNICEF, WHO, and other global actors to convene a stocktaking and priority-setting process to assess global evidence progress since 2019, culminating in an event in 2026 to inform global research priorities across sectors.

To strengthen the Secretariat, we remain committed to cultivating a collaborative, inclusive, and value-driven organisational culture. In 2025, we will co-develop new organisational values and continue to evolve how we work as *One Girls Not Brides*. We will review internal communications, improve performance systems, and provide tools to help team members better understand and align their roles with the organisational mission. We will also conduct a strategic review of our operating model, identifying the most effective structure for delivering impact globally. Operational improvements will include the automation of financial systems through the rollout of SAP Concur and an overhaul of our grants delivery mechanisms to improve speed and efficiency. As part of our safeguarding commitments, refresher training will be delivered to all staff, members, and Board.

As we look to the future, 2025 is not just a year of closing one chapter, it is a year of preparation, alignment, and vision-setting. The strategic review process that begins this year will be grounded in listening, in learning, and in leadership. It will be shaped by the wisdom of our members, the needs of girls and communities, and the realities of an evolving global landscape. It will ask hard questions about where we go next and offer a collective opportunity to renew our focus, our resilience, and our resolve. In a world marked by growing uncertainty, dwindling resources, and persistent inequalities, this is our moment to stand up with clarity, courage, and conviction, to shape a strategy that is not only fit for purpose, but fit for impact.

FINANCIAL REVIEW

Income

In 2024, *Girls Not Brides'* total operating income was £5,352,027 (2023: £9,412,837), a decrease of £4,060,810 or 43%. This was due to the one-off significant unrestricted funds receive in 2023. Funding from private foundations formed the majority of the unrestricted income, with other funding from government grants. This year restricted income was £980,805 (2023: £306,991), an increase of £673,814 or 219%. Restricted funds were approximately 18% the total income.

With special thanks to our partners and donors for working with us in 2024:

- Advancing Girls Fund of Tides Foundation
- Belron Ronnie Lubner Charitable Foundation
- Catesby Foundation
- Education Out Loud (Global Programme for Education / Oxfam Denmark)
- Ford Foundation
- Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation
- Government of Canada
- Nationale Postcode Loterij
- Oak Foundation
- Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida)
- The David and Lucile Packard Foundation
- United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA)
- Wellspring Philanthropic Fund
- Windfall Foundation
- Yield Giving

Expenditure

Expenditure on charitable activities in the year was £4,809,595 (2023: £4,084,019). This was in line with the organisational budget of £5,100,000. *Girls Not Brides* was able to spend 94% of its annual budget in 2024.

Reserves

As of 31 December 2024, totals reserves were £9,593,209 (2023: £9,050,777).

These were made up of unrestricted funds £2,625,635 (2023: £2,651,403). Designated funds £6,854,366 (2023: £6,438,630) and Restricted Funds 113,208 (2023: -39,257) This included funds due to be paid in 2025 from the Oak Foundation and UNFPA.

Unrestricted Reserves Policy

At 31 December 2024, *Girls Not Brides'* unrestricted reserves (excluding designated and restricted reserves) decreased slightly to £2,625,635 (2023: £2,651,403) as a result of planned expenditure towards our work to end child marriage.

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In the past, the Trustees would assess keeping unrestricted reserves based on a policy of maintaining 3 to 6 months of unrestricted running costs to ensure future sustainability.

In line with the SORP (FRS 102), we maintain financial reserves to ensure the sustainability and resilience of our organisation. Reserves are held to protect our work against future uncertainties, manage financial risks, and provide a buffer in the event of unexpected shortfalls in income or unforeseen increases in expenditure.

Our reserves enable us to:

- Sustain operations during periods of income fluctuation or delays in grant funding
- Meet our contractual and legal obligations to staff and partners
- Respond flexibly to emerging opportunities or challenges aligned with our mission
- Invest in strategic initiatives and ensure continuity of essential projects

The level of reserves is reviewed annually by the Board of Trustees as part of our financial planning and risk management processes. This review takes into account the nature of our income and expenditure, the reliability of income streams, our strategic priorities, and the wider economic context.

In accordance with SORP requirements, we distinguish between unrestricted reserves that are freely available for general purposes and those that are designated or restricted for specific uses. Our policy aims to hold unrestricted free reserves equivalent to three to six months' core operating expenditure, a level we believe is prudent and proportionate to our risk profile and operating model.

Consequently, our policy results in maintaining a minimum resilience target of £2.8m to provide operational working capital and to mitigate against unforeseen risks. We will continue to develop plans to increase our sources of unrestricted funds, but recognise that this will take time and may, in the short term, require some investment from our existing designated reserves. We will continue to monitor our funding position closely particularly in light of the current funding crisis in the sector.

Designated Funds

At 31 December 2024, *Girls Not Brides'* designated reserves increased to £6,854,366 (2023: £6,438,630) as a result of short-term investments. These unrestricted funds were received as a gift from MacKenzie Scott in 2023. The Trustees have designated these funds as a strategic reserve to drive future growth, catalyse innovation, and ensure long-term sustainability in pursuit of our strategic objectives. These funds are being held in short-term investments and shown on the Balance Sheet.

During the year, anticipated funding gaps that initially required the drawdown of designated funds were successfully offset by new donor contributions allowing us to preserve these strategic reserves for future use.

Since the start of 2025, we have witnessed a decline in donor funding within the sector and a rapidly shifting operational environment, marked by increased uncertainty and troubling rollbacks on rights and protections for girls. These challenges have called on us to rise to the moment—to be more courageous, more focused, and more impactful in our work.

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Our **new strategy for 2026–2030** is bold, ambitious, and unapologetically focused on impact. It calls on us to lead differently - more courageously, more collaboratively, and more intentionally. In response, we are committed to deploying our resources where they are needed most.

The Trustees will begin a **phased release of designated funds from 2026 onwards**, ensuring that every pound is used to fuel transformational change. These investments will be guided by clear priorities, rigorous oversight, and an unwavering commitment to maximising impact, supporting the girls, communities, and partners at the heart of our movement.

Restricted Funds

The remaining £113,208 (2023: (£35,257)) is held in restricted funds which we are obliged to spend by our donors, bringing our total reserves to £9,593,209.

Exemptions from disclosure

This report has been prepared in accordance with the small companies' regime under the Companies Act 2006.

This report was approved by the Board on **13 June 2025** and signed on its behalf by

.....
Dr Alaa Murabit
Chair of the Board of Trustees

TO THE MEMBERS OF
GIRLS NOT BRIDES: THE GLOBAL PARTNERSHIP TO END CHILD MARRIAGE

Opinion

We have audited the financial statements of *Girls Not Brides* (the 'charitable company') for the year ended 31 December 2024 which comprise the statement of financial activities, balance sheet, statement of cash flows and notes to the financial statements, including significant accounting policies. The financial reporting framework that has been applied in their preparation is applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards, including FRS 102 The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

In our opinion, the financial statements:

- Give a true and fair view of the state of the charitable company's affairs as at 31 December 2024 and of its incoming resources and application of resources, including its income and expenditure for the year then ended
- Have been properly prepared in accordance with United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice
- Have been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006

Basis for opinion

We conducted our audit in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (UK) (ISAs (UK)) and applicable law. Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements section of our report. We are independent of the charitable company in accordance with the ethical requirements that are relevant to our audit of the financial statements in the UK, including the FRC's Ethical Standard and we have fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with these requirements. We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion.

Conclusions relating to going concern

In auditing the financial statements, we have concluded that the trustees' use of the going concern basis of accounting in the preparation of the financial statements is appropriate.

Based on the work we have performed, we have not identified any material uncertainties relating to events or conditions that, individually or collectively, may cast significant doubt on *Girls Not Brides'* ability to continue as a going concern for a period of at least twelve months from when the financial statements are authorised for issue.

Our responsibilities and the responsibilities of the trustees with respect to going concern are described in the relevant sections of this report.

Other Information

The other information comprises the information included in the trustees' annual report other than the financial statements and our auditor's report thereon. The trustees are responsible for the other

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information contained within the annual report. Our opinion on the financial statements does not cover the other information and, except to the extent otherwise explicitly stated in our report, we do not express any form of assurance conclusion thereon. Our responsibility is to read the other information and, in doing so, consider whether the other information is materially inconsistent with the financial statements or our knowledge obtained in the course of the audit, or otherwise appears to be materially misstated. If we identify such material inconsistencies or apparent material misstatements, we are required to determine whether this gives rise to a material misstatement in the financial statements themselves. If, based on the work we have performed, we conclude that there is a material misstatement of this other information, we are required to report that fact.

We have nothing to report in this regard.

Opinions on other matters prescribed by the Companies Act 2006

In our opinion, based on the work undertaken in the course of the audit:

- The information given in the trustees' annual report for the financial year for which the financial statements are prepared is consistent with the financial statements; and
- The trustees' annual report has been prepared in accordance with applicable legal requirements.

Matters on which we are required to report by exception

In the light of the knowledge and understanding of the charitable company and its environment obtained in the course of the audit, we have not identified material misstatements in the trustees' annual report. We have nothing to report in respect of the following matters in relation to which the Companies Act 2006 requires us to report to you if, in our opinion:

- Adequate accounting records have not been kept, or returns adequate for our audit have not been received from branches not visited by us; or
- The financial statements are not in agreement with the accounting records and returns; or
- Certain disclosures of trustees' remuneration specified by law are not made; or
- We have not received all the information and explanations we require for our audit; or
- The directors were not entitled to prepare the financial statements in accordance with the small companies regime and take advantage of the small companies' exemptions in preparing the trustees' annual report and from the requirement to prepare a strategic report.

Responsibilities of trustees

As explained more fully in the statement of trustees' responsibilities set out in the trustees' annual report, the trustees (who are also the directors of the charitable company for the purposes of company law) are responsible for the preparation of the financial statements and for being satisfied that they give a true and fair view, and for such internal control as the trustees determine is necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

TO THE MEMBERS OF
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In preparing the financial statements, the trustees are responsible for assessing the charitable company's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless the trustees either intend to liquidate the charitable company or to cease operations, or have no realistic alternative but to do so.

Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements

Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements as a whole are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes our opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with ISAs (UK) will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of these financial statements.

Irregularities, including fraud, are instances of non-compliance with laws and regulations. We design procedures in line with our responsibilities, outlined above, to detect material misstatements in respect of irregularities, including fraud. The extent to which our procedures are capable of detecting irregularities, including fraud are set out below.

Capability of the audit in detecting irregularities

In identifying and assessing risks of material misstatement in respect of irregularities, including fraud and non-compliance with laws and regulations, our procedures included the following:

- We enquired of management, which included obtaining and reviewing supporting documentation, concerning the charity's policies and procedures relating to:
 - Identifying, evaluating, and complying with laws and regulations and whether they were aware of any instances of non-compliance;
 - Detecting and responding to the risks of fraud and whether they have knowledge of any actual, suspected, or alleged fraud;
 - The internal controls established to mitigate risks related to fraud or non-compliance with laws and regulations.
- We inspected the minutes of meetings of those charged with governance.
- We obtained an understanding of the legal and regulatory framework that the charity operates in, focusing on those laws and regulations that had a material effect on the financial statements or that had a fundamental effect on the operations of the charity from our professional and sector experience.
- We communicated applicable laws and regulations throughout the audit team and remained alert to any indications of non-compliance throughout the audit.
- We reviewed any reports made to regulators.

INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2023

TO THE MEMBERS OF GIRLS NOT BRIDES: THE GLOBAL PARTNERSHIP TO END CHILD MARRIAGE

- We reviewed the financial statement disclosures and tested these to supporting documentation to assess compliance with applicable laws and regulations.
- We performed analytical procedures to identify any unusual or unexpected relationships that may indicate risks of material misstatement due to fraud.
- In addressing the risk of fraud through management override of controls, we tested the appropriateness of journal entries and other adjustments, assessed whether the judgements made in making accounting estimates are indicative of a potential bias and tested significant transactions that are unusual or those outside the normal course of business.

Because of the inherent limitations of an audit, there is a risk that we will not detect all irregularities, including those leading to a material misstatement in the financial statements or non-compliance with regulation. This risk increases the more that compliance with a law or regulation is removed from the events and transactions reflected in the financial statements, as we will be less likely to become aware of instances of non-compliance. The risk is also greater regarding irregularities occurring due to fraud rather than error, as fraud involves intentional concealment, forgery, collusion, omission or misrepresentation.

A further description of our responsibilities is available on the Financial Reporting Council's website at: www.frc.org.uk/auditorsresponsibilities. This description forms part of our auditor's report.

Use of our report

This report is made solely to the charitable company's members as a body, in accordance with Chapter 3 of Part 16 of the Companies Act 2006. Our audit work has been undertaken so that we might state to the charitable company's members those matters we are required to state to them in an auditor's report and for no other purpose. To the fullest extent permitted by law, we do not accept or assume responsibility to anyone other than the charitable company and the charitable company's members as a body, for our audit work, for this report, or for the opinions we have formed.

Noelia Serrano (Senior statutory auditor)

Date: 3 July 2025

for and on behalf of Sayer Vincent LLP, Statutory Auditor
110 Golden Lane, LONDON, EC1Y 0TG

GIRLS NOT BRIDES: THE GLOBAL PARTNERSHIP TO END CHILD MARRIAGE

Statement of financial activities (incorporating an income and expenditure account)

For the year ended 31 December 2024

		2024		2023			
	Note	Unrestricted £	Restricted £	Total £	Unrestricted £	Restricted £	Total £
Income from:							
Donations and Grants	2	3,955,486	980,805	4,936,291	9,063,795	306,991	9,370,786
Investments (Income from Interest)		415,736	-	415,736	42,051	-	42,051
Total income		4,371,222	980,805	5,352,027	9,105,846	306,991	9,412,837
Expenditure on:							
Raising funds	3a	312,025	-	312,025	331,845	-	331,845
Charitable activities							
Promotion of equality and human rights	3a	1,834,615	414,170	2,248,785	1,675,940	200,147	1,876,087
Prevention and relief of poverty	3a	1,834,615	414,170	2,248,785	1,675,940	200,147	1,876,087
Total expenditure		3,981,255	828,340	4,809,595	3,683,725	400,294	4,084,019
Net income for the year	5	389,967	152,465	542,432	5,422,121	(93,303)	5,328,818
Net movement in funds		389,967	152,465	542,432	5,422,121	(93,303)	5,328,818
Reconciliation of funds:							
Total funds brought forward		9,090,034	(39,257)	9,050,777	3,667,913	54,046	3,721,959
Total funds carried forward		9,480,001	113,208	9,593,209	9,090,034	(39,257)	9,050,777

All of the above results are derived from continuing activities. There were no other recognised gains or losses other than those stated above. Movements in funds are disclosed in Note 14a to the financial statements.

GIRLS NOT BRIDES: THE GLOBAL PARTNERSHIP TO END CHILD MARRIAGE

Balance sheet

Company no. 8570751

As at 31 December 2024

	Note	£	2024 £	2023 £
Fixed assets:				
Tangible assets	10		9,126	19,087
			9,126	19,087
Current assets:				
Debtors	11	123,626	161,098	
Cash at bank and in hand		1,154,427	725,396	
Short term investments		8,948,873	8,501,891	
		10,226,926	9,388,385	
Liabilities:				
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	12	(642,843)	(356,695)	
Net current assets			9,584,083	9,031,690
Net assets			9,593,209	9,050,777
The funds of the charity:				
Restricted funds	13a		113,208	(39,257)
Unrestricted funds:				
Designated funds		6,854,366	6,438,630	
General funds		2,625,635	2,651,404	
Total unrestricted funds			9,480,001	9,090,034
Total charity funds			9,593,209	9,050,777

Approved by the trustees on 13 June 2025 and signed on their behalf by:

Dr Alaa Murabit
Chair of the Board of Trustees

GIRLS NOT BRIDES: THE GLOBAL PARTNERSHIP TO END CHILD MARRIAGE

Statement of cash flows

For the year ended 31 December 2024

	Note	2024		2023	
		£	£	£	£
Cash flows from operating activities					
Net income for the reporting period (as per the statement of financial activities)		542,432		5,328,818	
Depreciation charges	10	9,960		26,238	
Decrease / in debtors	11	37,473		20,107	
Increase / in creditors	12	286,148		(153,630)	
Net cash provided by / operating activities			876,013		5,221,533
Cash flows from investing activities					
Payments for property and equipment		-		(15,101)	
Net cash (used in) investing activities			-		(15,101)
Change in cash and cash equivalents in the year			876,013		5,206,432
Cash and cash equivalents at the beginning of the year			9,227,287		4,020,855
Cash and cash equivalents at the end of the year			10,103,300		9,227,287
Cash and cash equivalents			1,154,427		725,396
Short Term Investments			8,948,873		8,501,891
Analysis of cash and cash equivalents and of net debt					
	At 1 January			Other non-	At 31 December
	2024	Cash flows		cash	2024
	£	£		changes	£
Current accounts	725,396	429,031		-	1,154,427
Deposit accounts	8,501,891	446,982		-	8,948,873
Total cash and cash equivalents	9,227,287	876,013		-	10,103,300

Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 31 December 2024

1 Accounting policies

a) Statutory information

Girls Not Brides is a charitable company limited by guarantee and is incorporated in England and Wales (company number: 8570751; charity number: 1154230).

The registered office address is Seventh Floor, 65 Leadenhall Street, London EC3A 2AD.

b) Basis of preparation

Assets and liabilities are initially recognised at historical cost or transaction value unless otherwise stated in the relevant accounting policy or note.

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland Charities SORP (FRS 102) including update bulletin 2, the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the United Kingdom and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102), the Charities Act 2011 and Companies Act 2016.

c) Public benefit entity

The charity meets the definition of a public benefit entity under FRS 102.

d) Presentational and functional currencies

The accounts are presented in sterling. The functional currencies of the charity are sterling, US dollar and euro. The accounts are presented in sterling since that is the currency in which the charity conducts most of its activities. No amounts have been rounded.

e) Going concern

There are no material uncertainties that cast significant doubt upon the charity's ability to continue as a going concern.

f) Income

Income is included in the Statement of financial activities when the charity is entitled to the income and the amount can be quantified with reasonable accuracy. The following specific policies are applied to particular categories of income:

- Voluntary income is received by way of grants, donations and gifts and is included in full in the Statement of financial activities when receivable. Grants, where entitlement is not conditional on the delivery of a specific performance by the charity, are recognised when the charity becomes unconditionally entitled to the grant.
- Any income received where the donor has specified that it is to be expended in a future accounting period is included within creditors as deferred income.
- Investment income is included when receivable.

g) Fund accounting

Unrestricted funds are available for use at the discretion of the Trustees in furtherance of the general objects of the charity. Restricted funds are only for use of the purposes prescribed by the donors.

Designated funds are unrestricted funds earmarked by the Trustees for specific purposes.

Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 31 December 2024

1 Accounting policies (continued)

h) Expenditure and irrecoverable VAT

Expenditure is recognised on an accruals basis as a liability is incurred. Expenditure includes any VAT that cannot be fully recovered, and is reported as part of the expenditure to which it relates:

- Costs of generating funds comprise the costs associated with attracting donations and grants.
- Charitable expenditure comprises those costs incurred by the charity in the delivery of its activities and services for its beneficiaries. It includes both costs that can be allocated directly to such activities and those costs of an indirect nature necessary to support them. These are split in accordance with the project codes used in the charity's accounting system.
- Support costs consist of the charity's administration budget heading. Support costs are allocated equally between the charity's two charitable activities.
- Governance costs are the costs associated with the governance arrangements of the charity. These costs are associated with constitutional and statutory requirements and include any costs associated with the strategic management of the charity's activities.

i) Grants payable

Grants payable are made to third parties in furtherance of the charity's objects. Grants to Partners, members and coalitions are recognised as per the Financial Investments Policy. Single or multi-year grants are recognised and accounted for in the year that the grant contract is signed by the third party unless there are existing grant contract conditions.

j) Operating leases

Rentals payable under operating leases are charged in the income and expenditure account on a straight line basis over the lease term.

k) Tangible fixed assets

Depreciation is provided at rates calculated to write down the cost of each asset to its estimated residual value over its expected useful life. The depreciation rates in use are as follows:

- | | |
|---------------------------|----------------------|
| • Computers and software | over 3 years |
| • Furniture and equipment | over 3 to 5 years |
| • Leasehold improvements | over length of lease |

Fixed assets with a value less than £1,000 are not capitalised.

l) Debtors

Trade and other debtors are recognised at the settlement amount due after any trade discount offered. Prepayments are valued at the amount prepaid net of any trade discounts due.

m) Cash at bank and in hand

Cash and cash equivalents comprise cash in hand and call deposits, and other short-term highly liquid investments that are readily convertible to a known amount of cash and are subject to an insignificant risk of change in value.

n) Creditors and provisions

Trade creditors are obligations to pay for goods or services that have been acquired in the ordinary course of business from suppliers. Accounts payable are classified as current liabilities if the charitable company does not have an unconditional right, at the end of the reporting period, to defer settlement of the creditor for at least 12 months after the reporting date. If there is an unconditional right to defer settlement for at least 12 months after the reporting date, they are presented as non-current liabilities.

Trade creditors are recognised at the transaction price.

Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 31 December 2024

1 Accounting policies (continued)

Provisions are recognised when the company has an obligation at the reporting date as a result of a past event, it is probable that the company will be required to settle that obligation and a reliable estimate can be made of the amount of the obligation.

o) Pensions

The company operates a defined contribution scheme for the benefit of its employees. The costs of contributions are charged to the Statement of financial activities in the year in which they are payable.

p) Foreign currencies

Transactions in foreign currencies are recorded at the rate as at the date of the transaction. Monetary assets and liabilities are re-translated at the rate of exchange ruling at the balance sheet date. Any differences are taken to the Statement of financial activities.

2 Income from donations (grants)

	2024			2023		
	Unrestricted £	Restricted £	Total £	Unrestricted £	Restricted £	Total £
Government grants	1,471,089	-	1,471,089	733,488	-	733,488
Donations	-	-	-	6,438,630	-	6,438,630
Other grants and donations	2,484,397	980,805	3,465,202	1,891,677	306,991	2,198,668
	<u>3,955,486</u>	<u>980,805</u>	<u>4,936,291</u>	<u>9,063,795</u>	<u>306,991</u>	<u>9,370,786</u>

Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 31 December 2024

3a Analysis of expenditure (current year)

	Charitable activities					2024 Total £	2023 Total £
	Raising funds £	Human rights £	Relief of poverty £	Governance costs £	Support costs £		
Staff costs (Note 6)	184,360	430,353	430,353	-	541,297	1,586,363	1,464,588
Premises costs (rent, utilities)	-	-	-	-	239,003	239,003	180,549
Travel and workshops / meetings	46,478	269,427	269,427	34,454	50,078	669,864	790,233
Consultancy	-	475,582	475,582	43,534	57,994	1,052,692	913,791
Grants (Note 4)	-	362,802	362,802	-	12,557	738,161	230,234
Professional fees	-	56,884	56,884	14,100	14,853	142,721	62,079
IT and communications	-	24,416	24,416	-	109,714	158,546	138,269
Office and other	4,481	28,463	28,463	-	160,838	222,245	304,276
	<u>235,319</u>	<u>1,647,927</u>	<u>1,647,927</u>	<u>92,088</u>	<u>1,186,334</u>	<u>4,809,595</u>	<u>4,084,019</u>
Support costs	71,180	557,577	557,577	-	(1,186,334)	-	-
Governance costs	5,526	43,281	43,281	(92,088)	-	-	-
Total expenditure 2024	<u>312,025</u>	<u>2,248,785</u>	<u>2,248,785</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>4,809,595</u>	<u>-</u>

Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 31 December 2024

3b Analysis of expenditure (prior year)

	Raising funds £	Charitable activities			Support costs £	2023	Total £
		Human rights £	Relief of poverty £	Governance costs £			
Staff costs (Note 6)	196,819	396,540	396,540	-	474,689	1,464,588	
Premises costs (rent, utilities)	-	5,944	5,944	-	168,661	180,549	
Travel and workshops / meetings	67,033	305,919	305,919	14,221	97,141	790,233	
Consultancy	1,861	419,975	419,975	6,050	65,930	913,791	
Grants (Note 4)	-	115,117	115,117	-	-	230,234	
Professional fees	-	-	-	13,440	48,639	62,079	
IT and communications	-	16,152	16,152	-	105,965	138,269	
Office and other	884	105,330	105,330	-	92,732	304,276	
	266,597	1,364,977	1,364,977	33,711	1,053,757	4,084,019	
Support costs	63,225	495,266	495,266	-	(1,053,757)	-	
Governance costs	2,023	15,844	15,844	(33,711)	-	-	
Total expenditure 2023	331,845	1,876,087	1,876,087	-	-	4,084,019	

GIRLS NOT BRIDES: THE GLOBAL PARTNERSHIP TO END CHILD MARRIAGE

Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 31 December 2024

4 Grant making

	Grants to institutions £	2024 £	2023 £
Cost - Partner			
Ciprodeni, Guatemala	-	94,951	-
Orchid Project, Kenya	-	91,703	-
The Foundation for Children's Rights, Malawi	-	77,002	-
Yawalaya, Nepal	-	59,223	-
Centre for Unfolding Learning Potentials, India	-	55,577	-
Child Rights Empowerment and Development Organisation, Uganda	-	54,110	-
Girls Lagacy Trust, Zimbabwe	-	15,490	-
Asociación Donamor, Guatemala	-	-	50,000
Association for social and human awareness - ASHA, India	-	-	23,167
SongES, Niger	-	40,599	32,627
Voix de Femmes, Burkina Faso	-	42,323	28,247
Associação Moçambicana Desenvolvimento da Família, Mozambique	-	36,979	-
Child and Youth Protection Foundation, Nigeria	-	35,580	6,660
Msichana Empowerment Kuria, Kenya	-	-	28,000
Children's Dignity Forum, Tanzania	-	80,627	12,727
Others small grants (Togo, Ghana, Ivery Coast, Benin and Senegal)	-	53,998	48,806
	-	738,161	230,234
At the end of the year	-	738,161	230,234

In line with *Girls Not Brides* Financial Investment Policy, all grants provided during the year were made to registered member and partner institutions. These were not individual beneficiaries.

Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 31 December 2024

5 Net income for the year

This is stated after charging:

	2024	2023
	£	£
Depreciation	9,960	26,238
Operating lease rentals payable:		
Property	126,280	113,290
Auditor's remuneration (excluding VAT):		
Audit	11,750	11,200
Other auditing services (EOL project)	4,925	4,700
Foreign exchange cost	13,660	42,436
	<u>136,675</u>	<u>198,264</u>

6 Analysis of staff costs, Trustee remuneration and expenses, and the cost of key management personnel

Staff costs were as follows:

	2024	2023
	£	£
Salaries and wages	1,292,271	1,175,919
Social security costs	143,868	129,104
Employer's contribution to defined contribution pension schemes	129,215	119,745
Other forms of employee benefits (medical, life and travel insurance)	21,009	39,820
	<u>1,586,363</u>	<u>1,464,588</u>

Girls Not Brides makes contributions to a defined contribution scheme. The amount of contributions due to the scheme at the year ended 31 December 2024 was £nil. (2023: £nil). During the year, *Girls Not Brides* changed pension providers and introduced a salary sacrifice arrangement for its employees.

During 2024, *Girls Not Brides* paid £663,241 (2023, £533,343) to regional contractors to continue delivering providing support to Partners and Members as part of the strategic plan. Regional contractors are based closer to our members and partners as part of *Girls Not Brides* deepening of its global and regional presence.

The number of employees whose remuneration for the year fell within the following bands:

	2024	2023
	No.	No.
£60,001 - £70,000	1	-
£70,001 - £80,000	2	2
£120,001 - £130,000	1	1
	<u>4</u>	<u>3</u>

The total employee benefits (including pension contributions and employer's national insurance) of the key management personnel were £463,766 (2023: £334,018). In 2024, the Chief Executive Officer, two directors, and an acting director were responsible for planning, directing and controlling the activities of the charity. There were two vacant positions for directors both were filled in the Q4/2024.

In 2024, *Girls Not Brides* paid £77,988 (2023: £20,270) on behalf of the Trustees for expenses related to recruitment, travel, accommodation, meals and training. The major part of the cost was £43,534 related to the recruitment of a new chair, and two trustees which occurred during 2024 and Q1/2025.

Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 31 December 2024

7a Staff numbers

The average number of UK employees (head count based on number of staff employed) during the year was 26 (2023: 26).

The average monthly number of employees during the year was:

2024	2023
No.	No.
<u>27</u>	<u>27</u>

7b Overseas contractors

The average number of overseas contractors during the year was 21 (2023: 16).

The average monthly number of contractors during the year was:

2024	2023
No.	No.
<u>21</u>	<u>16</u>

8 Related party transactions

In October 2024, Dr Alaa Murabit joined as the Chair of the Board of Trustees for *Girls Not Brides*. It is noted that at the time of joining, Dr Alaa Murabit was an employee (Director of Global Health, Advocacy and Communications) for the Gates Foundation. She left the Gates Foundation in December 2024. *Girls Not Brides* is a recipient of project funds from the Gates Foundation during 2024 £220,818 (2023: £0).

There were no other related party financial transactions for 2024. (2023: £0)

9 Taxation

The charity is exempt from corporation tax as all its income is charitable and is applied for charitable

10 Tangible fixed assets

	Short leasehold improvements	Computer & software	Furniture & equipment	Total
Cost	£	£	£	£
At the start of the year	106,515	93,718	57,875	258,108
Additions in year	-	-	-	-
Disposals in year	-	(7,811)	-	(7,811)
At the end of the year	<u>106,515</u>	<u>85,907</u>	<u>57,875</u>	250,297
Depreciation				
At the start of the year	106,515	74,631	57,875	239,021
Charge for the year	-	9,960	-	9,960
Eliminated on disposal	-	(7,811)	-	(7,811)
At the end of the year	<u>106,515</u>	<u>76,780</u>	<u>57,875</u>	241,170
Net book value				
At the start of the year	-	19,087	-	19,087
At the end of the year	-	9,126	-	9,126

All of the above assets are used for charitable purposes.

GIRLS NOT BRIDES: THE GLOBAL PARTNERSHIP TO END CHILD MARRIAGE

Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 31 December 2024

11 Debtors

	2024 £	2023 £
Other debtors	65,572	88,036
Prepayments	58,054	73,062
	123,626	161,098

12 Creditors: amounts falling due within one year

	2024 £	2023 £
Trade creditors	187,627	66,035
Taxation and social security	41,063	38,732
Grants payable	211,156	71,263
Other creditors	185,913	180,665
Creditors falling due more than one year	17,084	-
	642,843	356,695

13a Analysis of net assets between funds (current year)

	Designated Funds	General unrestricted £	Restricted £	Total funds £
Tangible fixed assets		9,126	-	9,126
Net current assets	6,854,366	2,616,509	113,208	9,584,083
Net assets at 31 December 2024	6,854,366	2,625,635	113,208	9,593,209

13b Analysis of net assets between funds (prior year)

	Designated Funds	General unrestricted £	Restricted £	Total funds £
Tangible fixed assets		19,087	-	19,087
Net current assets	6,438,630	2,632,317	(39,257)	9,031,690
Net assets at 31 December 2023	6,438,630	2,651,404	(39,257)	9,050,777

GIRLS NOT BRIDES: THE GLOBAL PARTNERSHIP TO END CHILD MARRIAGE

Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 31 December 2024

14a Movements in funds (current year)

	At 1 January 2024 £	Income £	Expenditure £	Transfers £	At 31 December 2024 £
Restricted funds:					
Oak Foundation	-	56,342	(93,782)	-	(37,440)
UNFPA	(39,257)	56,211	(64,425)	-	(47,471)
Education Out Loud (EOL)	-	253,589	(249,769)	-	3,820
Gates Foundation	-	220,813	(220,813)	-	-
Ford Foundation	-	393,850	(199,551)	-	194,299
Total restricted funds	(39,257)	980,805	(828,340)	-	113,208
Unrestricted funds:					
Designated funds:					
<i>Sustainable Growth & Innovation Fund</i>	6,438,630	-	-	415,736	6,854,366
Total designated funds	6,438,630	-	-	415,736	6,854,366
General funds	2,651,404	4,371,222	(3,981,255)	(415,736)	2,625,635
Total unrestricted funds	9,090,034	4,371,222	(3,981,255)	-	9,480,001
Total funds	9,050,777	5,352,027	(4,809,595)	-	9,593,209

The narrative to explain the purpose of each fund is given at the foot of the note below.

Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 31 December 2024

14b Movements in funds (prior year)

	At 1 January 2023 £	Income & gains £	Expenditure & losses £	Transfers £	At 1 January 2024 £
Restricted funds:					
Education Out Loud (EOL)	57,422	196,462	(253,884)	-	-
Oak Foundation	-	48,156	(48,156)	-	-
UNFPA	-	28,679	(67,936)	-	(39,257)
UNICEF	(29,162)	33,694	(4,532)	-	-
Packard Foundation	25,786	-	(25,786)	-	-
Total restricted funds	54,046	306,991	(400,294)	-	(39,257)
Unrestricted funds:					
Designated funds:					
Sustainable Growth and Innovation	-	6,438,630	-	-	6,438,630
Total designated funds	-	6,438,630	-	-	6,438,630
General funds	3,667,913	2,667,216	(3,683,725)	-	2,651,404
Total unrestricted funds	3,667,913	9,105,846	(3,683,725)	-	9,090,034
Total funds	3,721,959	9,412,837	(4,084,019)	-	9,050,777

Purposes of restricted funds

In 2024, *Girls Not Brides* signed the second phase of Education Out Loud project for strengthening collective action to end child marriage, keeping girls in school, and advancing gender equality in West Africa. The second phase is for the period from Jan 2024 to Dec 2026 and the total funding is for USD958,781. In 2024, a total amount of £249,769 was spent towards project activities.

As part of funding received from Swedish International Development Agency (SIDA), *Girls Not Brides* confirms that no funds were spent in Non-ODA countries. As part of the funding requirements, all grants to sub-grantees, less than £20k are regularly reviewed by the Finance Team for ensuring compliance with requirements.

Any grant agreement over £20k includes a clause for the grantee to complete a project audit after completing the project or after completing one financial year. *Girls Not Brides* enforces this requirement and regularly checks to ensure partners are compliant to this requirement.

In 2024, UNFPA awarded *Girls Not Brides* an additional grant of £78,706 for the Child Marriage Action to Research Network (CRANK). In the year 2024, a total expense of £64,425 was incurred for implementing activities of this project. The deficit relates to funds owed by UNFPA at 31.12.24. These funds were received in full during Q1/2025.

In 2023, *Girls Not Brides* received a restricted grant of £165,348 from the Oak foundation. This is part of a larger grant with total amount of £729,080 where the remaining part of the project will be funded by Girls Not Brides through unrestricted funds. In 2024, Girls Not Brides incurred £93,782 expenses related to this project. The financial report was submitted at the end of March 2025 and funds will be reimbursed from the donor.

Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 31 December 2024

Purposes of restricted funds (continued)

In 2024 *Girls Not Brides* received a restricted grant from the Gates Foundation which was fully disbursed for charitable activities in the year.

In 2024, *Girls Not Brides* received a restricted grant from the Ford Foundation. This was partially spent in 2024 and the remainder has been carried forward to 2025.

Purpose of designated funds

These were unrestricted funds received as a gift from MacKenzie Scott in 2023. The trustee designated this towards a fund for future growth, innovations and sustainability towards meeting its strategic objectives to 2030. These funds are being held in short-term investments and shown on the Balance Sheet. The new strategic plan under development and review from 2026-2030 will identify how we fund the delivery of key outcomes and objectives, in particular where we are anticipating shortfalls in funding given the decline in donor funding and an increase in uncertainty on the rights and protections for girls.

15 Operating lease commitments payable as a lessee

Total amount payable in respect of non-cancellable operating leases:

	2024	2023
	£	£
Less than one year	148,932	74,256
One to two years	60,555	208,913
Two to five years	-	148,932
	209,487	432,101

Accounts



**ANNUAL REPORT AND
ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEAR
ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2023**

Company number: 8570751

Charity number: 1154230

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LEGAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE DETAILS

Charity Number: 1154230

Company Number: 8570751

Registered office and:
Operational Address
Seventh Floor
65 Leadenhall Street
London
EC3A 2AD
United Kingdom

Trustees:
Dr Anne T Gallagher (Chair)
Ann Cotton (stepped down 28 March 2024)
Georgia Arnold
Emma Puig De La Bellacasa
Rita Sarin
Zipporah Jean Alaroker
Michael Feigelson

Chief Executive Officer: Dr Faith Mwangi-Powell

Key Management Personnel: Dr Faith Mwangi-Powell, Chief Executive Officer
Akila Lingham, Director of Operations & Finance
Rita Soares, Director of Partnership, Learning and Impact

Auditors: Sayer Vincent LLP
110 Golden Lane
London
EC1Y 0TG

Bankers: HSBC Bank plc
21 Kings Mall
London
W6 0QF

Solicitors: Bates Wells
10 Queen Street Place
London
EC4R 1BE

INTRODUCTION TO *GIRLS NOT BRIDES*

The vision of *Girls Not Brides: The Global Partnership to End Child Marriage (Girls Not Brides)* is a world without child marriage where girls and women enjoy equal status with boys and men and are able to achieve their full potential in all aspects of their lives. We support a comprehensive approach to ending child marriage and addressing the underlying economic and social drivers of child marriage, including harmful gender and social norms that deny girls opportunities and their rights. By taking a holistic approach we not only contribute to ending child marriage, but also achieve progress across several global development goals including health, education, and poverty reduction. Our belief is that addressing child marriage in a holistic and comprehensive manner helps create a safer world for girls and leads to benefits far beyond simply delaying the age of marriage.

About child marriage

Every year, child marriage denies 12 million girls their rights to health, education, safety and control over their own lives. This is equivalent to one in five girls around the world.¹ This human rights violation occurs across cultures, countries and religions. Over 650 million women alive today were married as children, and every minute 23 more girls are married. Rooted in gender inequality and discrimination, child marriage disproportionately affects women and girls in terms of both the number of child brides and the life-long impact.

Before the global pandemic, we saw a decline in child marriage rates globally, but with the impact of COVID-19, experts are predicting an increase in child marriages as a consequence of a variety of factors, including school closures, increased violence, and domestic poverty. UNICEF estimates that we will see 10 million more child marriages by 2030² as a direct consequence of COVID-19, in addition to the 12 million girls already married each year. We are also seeing increased vulnerabilities for young women and girls due to increased insecurity, greater poverty and weaker social networks, as a result of climate change, conflict and cost of living. These factors are also likely to roll back the significant progress we have achieved and increase the number of girls at risk of child marriage.

Child marriage has many implications for both girls and their families and communities. Girls who are married early are at increased risk of dangerous complications in pregnancy and childbirth, and of domestic violence. With little access to education and economic opportunities, they and their families are more likely to live in poverty. Communities and nations also feel the impact of child marriage. Systems that undervalue the contribution and participation of girls and women limit their own possibilities for growth, stability and transformation. The World Bank and International Center for Research on Women estimate that child marriage costs economies around the world [trillions of dollars](#).

¹ For more information on child marriage prevalence rates in countries and across regions, please consult our [Child Marriage Atlas](#), which is the only source of consolidated data on the issue of child marriage. It also highlights numbers of girls affected, the legal/policy situation in each country, and the distribution of *Girls Not Brides'* members, National Partnerships and civil society coalitions.

² UNICEF, 2021, [COVID-19: A thread to progress against child marriage](#).

TO THE MEMBERS OF
GIRLS NOT BRIDES: THE GLOBAL PARTNERSHIP TO END CHILD MARRIAGE

One of the fundamental beliefs of *Girls Not Brides* is that if we address child marriage in a holistic and comprehensive manner, it is possible to promote adolescent girls' rights and their agency and thus transform societies. Ending child marriage is a global commitment enshrined in Target 5.3 of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) to "eliminate all harmful practices, such as child, early and forced marriage and female genital mutilations". It is also necessary to achieve [almost half of the SDGs](#), including those related to poverty, education, health and inequalities.

Child marriage is a complex issue with no single solution. We must work collectively across sectors – and from the local to the global level – to change the perceptions, norms and experiences that shape and hinder girls' lives. In 2014, *Girls Not Brides* worked with 150 members and partners to develop our Theory of Change ([revised in 2023](#)). It identifies four strategies to end child marriage: working directly with girls; mobilising families and communities; providing services (including health, education and child protection); and creating and sustaining an enabling legal and policy framework.

Our members and partners work across the four key strategies outlined in the Theory of Change, and the *Girls Not Brides* secretariat plays a distinctive catalytic role within the movement. We mobilise collective action and support at the national, regional and international levels; support member organisations to build their knowledge, skills and leadership and share their expertise; advocate for financial resources; and synthesise and disseminate learning on ending child marriage. In this role, we create a supportive environment to enable greater change. Over the past decade, *Girls Not Brides: The Global Partnership to End Child Marriage* has had an exceptional journey of growth and progress. From our beginnings as a group of around 60 individuals in 2011, we have grown into a global partnership with over 1,500 member organisations present in more than 100 countries. 82% of members work in communities, and nearly 40% identify as youth-led; less than 12% identify as international organisations.

In 2022, *Girls Not Brides* launched a new Partnership Strategy (2022-2025)³ and a new Secretariat Strategy (2022-2025)⁴. These strategies were borne out of rich and in-depth conversations with member organisations, leaders, decision-makers, experts and *Girls Not Brides* staff and has revitalised the secretariat's approach to strengthening our work. We have reinforced the leadership and collective power of *Girls Not Brides'* member organisations, influencing a wide range of actors in the movement at all levels, and strengthened our collective learning about what works to end child marriage. With increased emphasis on supporting *Girls Not Brides* National and State (or sub-national) Partnerships and coalitions to lead national movements, and the growth of our presence and leadership at the regional level to deliver our vision; we seek to accelerate all our efforts for change. We are confident that together with our members, we will make huge progress in making a positive impact on girls' lives globally.

Abbreviations

- CEFM – Child early and forced marriage
- FGM/C – Female genital mutilation/cutting

³ <https://www.girlsnotbrides.org/learning-resources/resource-centre/girls-not-brides-partnership-strategy-2022-2025/>

⁴ <https://www.girlsnotbrides.org/learning-resources/resource-centre/secretariat-strategy-2022-2025/>

TO THE MEMBERS OF
GIRLS NOT BRIDES: THE GLOBAL PARTNERSHIP TO END CHILD MARRIAGE

- GEF – Generation Equality Forum
- GTA – Gender-transformative approaches
- INGO – International non-governmental organisation
- LAC – Latin America and the Caribbean
- MoU – Memorandum of Understanding
- The CRANK – Child Marriage Research to Action Network
- UK – United Kingdom
- UN – United Nations
- WACA – West and Central Africa

Definitions

Child marriage

We use the term “child marriage” to refer to all forms of child, early, and forced marriage and unions where at least one party is under the age of 18. In this, we include all girls and adolescents affected by the practice – whether in formal or informal unions – and acknowledge the culturally-specific understandings of childhood and development, and the complex relationship between age, consent, and force.

The movement to end child marriage

The movement to end child marriage comprises an informal global network of civil society and grassroots organisations, national and international non-governmental organisations (INGOs), activists, academics, United Nations (UN) agencies, funders, governments, leaders and champions – all working towards a world without child marriage where girls can exercise their rights and reach their full potential.

The *Girls Not Brides* global partnership (the Partnership)

At the end of 2022, the *Girls Not Brides* partnership comprised over 1400 member organisations from 110 countries committed to working together to end child marriage and support married girls. *Girls Not Brides* member organisations work across sectors – including health, education, human rights and humanitarian contexts – and range from small grassroots actors to large international organisations.

The *Girls Not Brides* secretariat

The Partnership is supported by the *Girls Not Brides* secretariat – a diverse team based largely in the London, UK, with teams in Kenya, India, Mexico, Nigeria, Nepal, Senegal and Uganda. The secretariat plays three broad roles in civil society: a central support and coordination body for the largest global civil society partnership working to end child marriage; a representative of and advocate for civil society on work to end child marriage (including to influence decision-makers and funders at different levels); and an expert, trusted thought leader, on what works to end child marriage and convenor and source of evidence and shared learning.

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TO THE MEMBERS OF
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National and State Partnerships and coalitions

Many *Girls Not Brides* member organisations have come together to accelerate progress to end child marriage in their countries by forming [National and State Partnerships and coalitions](#).

National and State Partnerships are networks of *Girls Not Brides* member organisations that believe in the power of collective action to end child marriage and ensure girls can reach their full potential. They have signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the *Girls Not Brides* secretariat to align their work with the [Partnership Strategy](#).

Coalitions are networks of civil society organisations committed to addressing child marriage and working together at the national level to spearhead change. They are close allies to *Girls Not Brides* but have not signed an MoU.

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STRUCTURE, GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT

Girls Not Brides was incorporated as a company in the United Kingdom (UK) on 14 June 2013 and registered as a charity in England and Wales on 17 October 2013. It transferred its assets and activities from what was once an initiative under The Elders Foundation to the independent entity on 10 December 2013.

Objects

The charity's objects are all regarded as exclusively charitable under the laws of England and Wales including, but not limited to:

- (a) The promotion of equality and human rights (as set out in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and Subsequent United Nations Conventions and Declarations) throughout the world including, but not limited to:
 - raising awareness of human rights issues
 - relieving need among the victims of human rights abuse
 - research into and international advocacy of human rights
 - providing technical advice to government and others on human rights matters
 - promoting respect for human rights among individuals and corporations
 - eliminating or preventing infringement of human rights
- (b) The prevention and relief of poverty
- (c) The advancement of health
- (d) The advancement of education, in particular but without limitation, by undertaking research and other educational activities and disseminating the results of that research
- (e) The relief of those in need by reason of youth and/or ill health.

Board of Trustees

Girls Not Brides is currently governed by Board of nine Trustees (the Trustees) who are responsible for overseeing the management of all *Girls Not Brides*' affairs. The Trustees are selected and elected according to procedures set out in the Articles of Association. The Trustees ensure that all activities fall within the charitable objectives. The Trustees' main responsibilities are related to administrative and financial governance, management of reserves and investments as well as guiding and overseeing strategy development and planning. In particular, the Trustees are responsible for ensuring the legal and financial compliance of *Girls Not Brides*, including compliance with the Charity Commission's guiding principles and charity law.

The Trustees meet regularly throughout the year and act on advice and information provided by the Chief Executive Officer and the senior management of the charity. All Trustees are provided with an individual induction covering all aspects of the *Girls Not Brides* organisational structure and roles and responsibilities of the Trustees within the organisation, as well as Charity Commission guidance on

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governance, and the duties of Trustees in the UK. Trustee-specific trainings are organised to ensure that the Board remains compliant with the Charity Commission and up to date on current trends within the non-governmental sector. The Board of Trustees has two committees, being a Finance and Policy Committee and a Fundraising and Donor Relations Committee:

- The Finance and Policy Committee's overall purpose is to support the Board in its fiduciary duties and make sound recommendations to the Board with regards to the strategic direction of the charity's financial affairs. The Committee also acts, as required, as an Audit Committee, Remuneration Committee, and an Investment Committee.
- The Fundraising and Donor Relations Committee's remit is to support the *Girls Not Brides* secretariat in the development and implementation of a fundraising strategy and related principles, outreach, and sourcing and securing new funding opportunities to finance the secretariat strategic plan for 2022–2025.

Ann Cotton has recently stepped down in March 2024 after completing two terms as a Board member at *Girls Not Brides*. In December 2023, the Board carried out a governance review with an external consultant (Patrick Dunne) to review the effectiveness of the Board and to streamline its working practices. In 2024, the two sub-committees of the Board will be revised to form an Audit and Risk Committee, and a Nominations Committee. Emma Puig De La Bellacasa, Rita Sarin, Zipporah Jean Alaroker and Michael Feigelson have been confirmed for a second term.

In 2024, the Board of Trustees will be looking to recruit new trustees to the Board.

Statement of Trustees' responsibilities

The Trustees (who are also directors of *Girls Not Brides* for the purposes of company law) are responsible for preparing the Trustees' annual report and the financial statements in accordance with applicable law and UK Accounting Standards (UK Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

Company law requires the Trustees to prepare financial statements for each financial year, which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the charitable company and of the incoming resources and application of resources, including the income and expenditure, of the charitable company for that period. In preparing these financial statements, the Trustees are required to:

- select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently
- observe the methods and principles in the Charities Statement of Recommended Practice (SORP)
- make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent
- state whether applicable UK Accounting Standards and statements of recommended practice have been followed, subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the financial statements
- prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis, unless it is inappropriate to presume that the charity will continue in operation.

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The Trustees are responsible for keeping adequate accounting records that disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the charitable company and enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Companies Act 2006. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the charitable company and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

In so far as the Trustees are aware:

- There is no relevant audit information of which the charitable company's auditor is unaware.
- The Trustees have taken all steps that they ought to have taken to make themselves aware of any relevant audit information and to establish that the auditor is aware of that information.

The Trustees are responsible for the maintenance and integrity of the corporate and financial information included on the charitable company's website. Legislation in the UK governing the preparation and dissemination of financial statements may differ from legislation in other jurisdictions.

The Trustees have no beneficial interest in the charity.

Disclosure of information to auditors

So far as the Trustees are aware, there is no relevant audit information of which the company's auditors are unaware. The Trustees have taken all the steps that they need to as Trustees in order to make themselves aware of any relevant audit information and to establish that the company's auditors are aware of that information.

Auditors

Sayer Vincent LLP have indicated their willingness to continue in office and in accordance with the provisions of the Companies Act it is proposed that they be re-appointed auditors for the ensuing year.

Members of *Girls Not Brides*

The *Girls Not Brides* secretariat supports the global partnership of member organisations. Membership is open to non-governmental organisations that endorse its mission statement and agree to its membership principles. These organisations are publicly and commonly referred to as "members" (as opposed to the Company Members described above).

Members contribute to the Partnership and engage with one another, as well as with the secretariat, in a variety of ways depending on their interests and capacity. The work and interests of members help define the strategy of *Girls Not Brides*, and the secretariat requests feedback from them on various issues on a regular basis.

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Secretariat

Girls Not Brides' day-to-day operations are run by its staff based in its London office, with additional individual team members based in New Delhi (India), Nairobi (Kenya) and Mexico City (Mexico). The secretariat is made up of four directorates (Communications & Influencing; Development & Outreach; Finance & Operations; and Partnership, Learning & Impact), with a Chief Executive Officer overseeing their work. The Chief Executive Officer reports to the Trustees. The Trustees delegate the day-to-day running of the organisation to the Chief Executive Officer.

Principal risks and uncertainties

The organisation's approach to risk management includes reviewing the organisational risk register, with oversight from the Board of Trustees and input from all senior staff, and updating risk management guidance for staff. *Girls Not Brides* views risk management as a continuous process that must be considered at the forefront of all activities by all staff members.

During 2023, the risks in the risk register remained the same as the previous year. The Trustees were satisfied with the controls and procedures the secretariat had in place. The Trustees were also satisfied with progress in monitoring and mitigating previously identified potential risks, including financial risks related to its ability to raise sufficient funds, the impact of currency fluctuations, inflation, the increased cost of living, and management risks. These risks are highlighted with the Trustees of the sub-committees and raised with the Board.

The risk register is classified into six categories (external engagement, finance and due diligence, fundraising, governance and leadership, operational and partnership) that are further defined into specific potential risk elements. Within this, significant risks are identified and summarised. This includes the following risks and mitigation strategies:

- Losing donors or failing to raise sufficient funds. This is mitigated by tracking donors' evolving strategies, cultivating strong donor relationships, ensuring accurate forecasting and building up the operational reserve.
- Failure to comply with requirements around grants and sub-granting. This is mitigated by a detailed review of contract provisions, preparing and reviewing contract summaries, tracking expenditure through activity codes and developing the organisational grant-making policy and process.
- Unsuitable human resources and operational policies for international context. This is mitigated by an updated approach to regional working which is ongoing.
- Safeguarding incidents in the secretariat or Partnership. This is mitigated by the organisation's comprehensive and up-to-date safeguarding policies and processes and frequent highlighting of safeguarding as a key issue in organisational culture, communications, induction, project management, training and documents.
- Loss of (and/or failure to recruit) key staff positions including due to uncompetitive salaries during a period of increased inflation, resulting in reduced ability to operate effectively, as well as failure to recruit staff who reflect the diversity of our members and partners. This was

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managed with a review of the salary data to ensure competitiveness. A salary benchmarking process will begin in 2024 using Birches global data from the charity sector to ensure that we remain competitive. We have also made improvements to our recruitment and retention processes, training of staff, regionalisation approach and increased the diversity in the workforce. We have been mindful of the impact of increased inflation and the cost of living especially on those on low to mid-range grades and made prudent adjustments where necessary.

Safeguarding and serious incidents

During the year, *Girls Not Brides* continued to step up its efforts in ensuring high standards of safeguarding, monitoring and training of all relevant persons across the globe. The Safeguarding Policy began its revisions and review at the end of 2023 and this is due to be completed in 2024.

The charity maintains its zero-tolerance policy towards abuse or other forms of serious misconduct and sets clear standards and expectations around members' behaviour in our international Code of Conduct. All employees and other representatives are required to take part in both induction and recurring annual training on safeguarding and associated policies and controls (through webinars, face-to-face discussions, and consultations).

The Trustees are cognisant of their obligations to report the most serious misconduct or abuse to relevant authorities in the UK and other countries of operation, in particular the formal requirements for Serious Incident Reporting to the Charity Commission for England and Wales. This obligation is understood across the broader definitions of Serious Incidents in which the Commission would have an interest. There were no Serious Incident Notifications made to the Commission during the period covered by this report.

Public benefit

The Trustees' report sets out *Girls Not Brides'* charitable activities contributing to ending child marriage, which we have carried out in line with our charitable objects, being the promotion of equality and human rights, the prevention and relief of poverty, the advancement of health, the advancement of education and the relief of those in need by reason of youth and/or ill health. The Board has considered the issue of public benefit and is confident that *Girls Not Brides'* activities comply with the duty in section 17 of the Charities Act 2011 to have due regard to public benefit guidance published by the Charity Commission.

Fundraising

In 2023, *Girls Not Brides* actively fundraised from a small pool of donors, primarily made up of governments and foundations. *Girls Not Brides* received a significant donation which is further explained under the financial review (pg. 35). Fundraising activities were led by our Senior Leadership Team and Development and Outreach Team with active support from our Global Champion, Mabel van Oranje. We also benefited from the support and expertise of other colleagues and Board Members. Activities included researching prospective government and foundation funding, a variety of communications with existing and prospective donors, and preparing concept notes, proposals and reporting for these donors. *Girls Not Brides'* fundraising activities are guided by the Fundraising and Donor Relations Committee.

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During the year under review, *Girls Not Brides* did not use professional fundraisers or commercial participators and did not actively solicit funds from the general public, including vulnerable people, for the secretariat's work. We complied with fundraising regulation and codes in 2023 and we did not receive any complaints.

Remuneration policy

Girls Not Brides applies a Global Pay and Benefits policy, which provided the organisation with a framework and principles for pay and benefits for all employees, including how salaries are set, how pay increases are determined, and other pay related topics.

In line with the values of *Girls Not Brides*, the new policy aims to provide transparency, equity, and fairness to staff following a 'Total Reward Approach', which includes financial and non-financial elements.

Girls Not Brides is guided by the following remuneration principles in line with Project Fair:

- **Competitiveness:** to attract and retain outstanding individuals, while taking into account market trends in the sector.
- **Fairness and equity:** to ensure that the compensation process remains consistent, non-discriminatory and reasonable, and that staff members in comparable positions can afford a similar standard of living in different geographical locations.
- **Transparency:** to ensure staff members have a clear understanding of the policies related to remuneration while ensuring that individual salary data remains confidential.
- **Value for money:** to ensure that the funds of *Girls Not Brides* are used for their designated purpose, and that salaries reflect the size, complexity and budget of *Girls Not Brides*.

Girls Not Brides aims to complete a salary benchmarking in 2024. The last one was completed in 2021.

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MESSAGE FROM THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

As I reflect on 2023, what is clear is the extent to which conflict, conservatism and climate change are having a real and devastating impact on how girls and women are able to live their lives. We are seeing rates of Child, Early and Forced Marriage and Unions (CEFMU, or child marriage) rise in areas of fragility and conflict – highlighting that we cannot rest on our previous wins or advances.

Despite these challenges, I see many reasons for hope. I see hope from young people, passionate leaders, and champions; hope from committed members and organisations at local, national, regional and global levels; hope from renewed government action and support; hope from global attention and media coverage; hope from increased funding commitments; and hope from inspirational collective action and collaboration at all levels.

We are committed to transforming the deeply ingrained biases and norms which hold child marriage in place. Throughout 2023, we have been building the ecosystem for the movement to end child marriage at every level. *Girls Not Brides'* role to support and convene the movement has been consolidated, with a deeper footprint in regional and national movements through our members and national partnerships. We work across sectors, with a multi-pronged approach, bringing disparate groups together to identify options for change, whether that be through legislative change or innovative funding models. We use our convening power to bring activists' voices closer to those of decision makers and duty bearers, we amplify stories of change from across the movement – highlighting where change is happening and what we are learning along the way. We are building partnerships at all levels and supporting them to develop clear and realistic strategies for change within their contexts, while building a movement of leaders to ensure civil society is strong and flourishing.

And we are doing all of this with a scaling mindset – developing and making available the evidence of what works, and what doesn't, to end child marriage. We cannot end child marriage alone. Thank you for the role you play.

Dr Faith Mwangi-Powell
Chief Executive Officer

REFLECTIONS FROM THE CHAIR OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES

As Chair of *Girls Not Brides*, I am delighted at the progress we are able to share. Throughout the world, more individuals, more organisations, and more countries are coming together to declare their opposition to child marriage and to work together towards making the world a safer and more equitable place for girls and women. National, regional, and global coalitions are helping to channel collective efforts. Better decisions are being made based on a growing body of evidence to which *Girls Not Brides* is contributing.

And there can be no doubting the strength of the global commitment to end child marriage. There is now near-universal understanding that child marriage and other forms of early union compromise every aspect of a girls' wellbeing and damage wider social and economic development. From human rights treaties to the Sustainable Development Goals, governments across our planet have loudly declared their opposition to child marriage and their intention to work towards its end.

However, it is evident that much remains to be done. In our current trajectory, we can expect an additional 150 million girls to be married by 2030 – the same year the international community has targeted as the point at which child marriage must end. This is not good enough.

An appreciation of the scale of the challenge should be used to orient direction and maintain momentum. At *Girls Not Brides* we continue to work hard to identify what needs to be done and how we can best contribute. We are constantly striving to improve in ways that will help us be better partners for change – and make a real difference to the lives of the girls and women we serve.

Dr Anne T. Gallagher AO
Chair of the Board of Trustees

GIRLS NOT BRIDES' 2023 TRUSTEES' ANNUAL REPORT & IMPACT REPORT

2023 - Impact at a glance

Annual Highlights

Year Round – Support to over 1,400 members in over 100 countries, as the backbone organisation to the movement to end child marriage. We supported our dynamic membership through capacity strengthening, amplifying voices together, convening spaces to share and learn, and joint advocacy.

On-going deep engagements with 12 priority National and State Partnerships, including developing capacity and co-creation of collective agendas.

February – Strategic Donor Meeting: We convened 10 major donors for pertinent discussions on extending funding to end child marriage.

April – Gender Leadership Programme: Bringing together leaders to gain a deeper understanding of gender-transformative approaches to ending child marriage.

June – Human Rights Council Resolution: After considerable positioning by *Girls Not Brides* and our members, we were successful in our advocacy for the adoption of a strong Human Rights Council child, early and forced marriage (CEFM) resolution, co-sponsored by 78 states.

July – Youth take the stage at Women Deliver. Standing their ground to be heard by global leaders, young activists took to the stage to make their demands known, alongside our committed champions Graça Machel, Mary Robinson and Mabel van Oranje.

September – Inaugural Regional Convening in Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC): *Girls Not Brides* hosted the first ever regional convening on ending CEFMU in the region, sparking the creation of a pioneering, shared multi-year plan to combat CEFMU.

November – President of Malawi commits to funding ending child marriage. Working with the *Girls Not Brides* Malawi National Partnership, and partners at the Clooney Foundation for Justice, our collaboration in Malawi contributed to a game-changing renewal of commitment to ending child marriage from President Chakwera.

December – First ladies of development, Melinda Gates, Michelle Obama and Amal Clooney put their voice to end child marriage winning significant global attention. Through our deepening partnership with The Gates Foundation, and collaboration with The Clooney Foundation for Justice, and the Girls Opportunity Alliance by The Obama Foundation we are positioning child marriage on the global agenda.

The First Cohort of the Movement Building and Advocacy Leadership Training: Leaders from Africa and Asia gathered to share learning and grow their leadership skills to lead the movement to end child marriage in their respective countries.

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During 2023, *Girls Not Brides* focused its efforts on four key areas as part of the delivery of the four-year strategic plan. We are proud that the collective work and collaboration of all our members and partners continues to:

- 1. catalyse collective action at the national and state level**
- 2. strengthen collective efforts to end CEFMU at a regional level**
- 3. develop the global ecosystem to support and catalyse the end of child marriage globally**
- 4. build a learning and evidence base to catalyse change**

This is how each of these areas have delivered areas of impact.

1) We catalysed collective action at national and state level

As a partnership of over 1400 members and 12 priority National/State Partnerships and coalitions in over 100 countries, we are transforming the lives of girls by focusing on different levels of influence to end child marriage. Through collaboration and collective action, we are better positioned to put Child Marriage, Early and Forced Marriage and Unions (CEFMU, or child marriage) on the agenda, working from local, community, sub-national, national, regional and global levels.

Supporting our dynamic membership

In 2023 we continued to grow and strengthen the Global Partnership to End Child Marriage. We saw our membership grow in Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC), with 11 new members coming on board. We also carried out a 'health check' of our entire membership, ensuring that all *Girls Not Brides* members still exist and are active in the CEFMU movement.

We continued to provide opportunities for collective action to our members. These included support and sponsorship to regional and global (advocacy) events; fundraising support; and opportunities for sharing and learning.

Our role is having a positive impact. Two recent evaluations confirmed this: a survey amongst members showed that an overwhelming majority are benefitting from being a *Girls Not Brides* member, and an external evaluation of our learning work revealed that *Girls Not Brides* is providing leadership on CEFMU at a global level.

- **90%** indicated that they benefit from being *Girls Not Brides* member.
- **70%** increased knowledge and capacity as a result of attending a *Girls Not Brides* learning event.
- **48%** built new partnerships and/or connections with other members.
- **25%** launched a successful advocacy campaign as a result of a *Girls Not Brides* grant.
- **20%** successful fundraising after pursuing a fundraising opportunity shared by *Girls Not Brides*.
- **70%** said *Girls Not Brides* helps prioritise the child marriage issue in key influence spaces.

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- **64%** said *Girls Not Brides* plays a role of convener with different stakeholders to build common perspectives or commitments.
- **58%** said *Girls Not Brides* helps make visible the links between child marriage and other sectors and areas.⁵

Deep engagement in 12 priority National/State Partnerships and coalitions

Our work at a national level involves working with our membership to build strong coalitions and relationships for collective action, bringing together diverse stakeholders and creating safe spaces to foster local change around priorities and approaches for ending child marriage. This work is often complex and subtle and requires time and trust between partners. In 2023, we provided strategic and technical input, facilitated the co-creation of work and advocacy planning, and supported the development of partnerships with national stakeholders, decision makers and funders, as well as providing financial support. Our continued grant-making led to much needed resources being released to 12 priority National/State Partnerships and coalitions.

Niger: (Niger Platform to End Child Marriage, 60 members)

Support from Girls Not Brides:

- Partnership/coalition strengthening
- Capacity building
- Grant to support movement building, influencing and/or learning
- Youth engagement and support Education Out Loud (EOL) project

Focus Area

As part of *Girls Not Brides'* Education Out Loud funded project, the Niger Platform to End Child Marriage is working closely with the national education coalition to raise awareness and carry out joint advocacy on issues relating to CEFMU and girls' education, particularly in crisis contexts. The Platform is carrying out advocacy around Niger's National Strategic Plan (NSP) to End Child Marriage 2024-28 and the modification of the Penal Code, which provides for a penalty for perpetrators of child and forced marriage.

2023 Highlight

Following a youth activism and public speaking training in November 2023, youth associations were able to play a lead role in organising advocacy activities as part of the 16 Days of Activism. This included mobilising the authorities, running panel sessions, and organising a digital campaign focused on promoting girls' education and ending gender-based violence.

Burkina Faso: (CONAMEB National Partnership, 76 members)

Support from Girls Not Brides:

- Partnership/ coalition strengthening
- Capacity building

⁵ Source: *Girls Not Brides* Member Survey, 2022 and *Girls Not Brides* Learning Evaluation, 2023

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- Grant to support movement building, influencing and/or learning
- Youth engagement and support
- Education Out Loud project

Focus Area

As part of *Girls Not Brides'* Education Out Loud funded project, CONAMEB is working closely with the national education coalition to raise awareness and carry out joint advocacy on issues relating to CEFMU and girls' education, particularly in crisis contexts. Working together, they have carried out budget advocacy in four regions aimed at creating and increasing a budget line for the retention of girls in school. They are also advocating to ensure the adoption of the new Code de la Personne et de la Famille which will harmonise the age of marriage at 18 for girls and boys.

2023 Highlight

In recognition of her work and that of the CONAMEB, Eulalie Ouedraogo, coordinator of CONAMEB National Partnership, was named National Champion in the Fight against Child Marriage. An interview with Eulalie and a documentary about the CONAMEB's work were broadcast on national TV, raising the profile of the coalition's work and building understanding of issues around child marriage.

Uganda: (*Girls Not Brides* Uganda (GNBU), 123 members)

Support from Girls Not Brides:

- Partnership/ coalition strengthening
- Capacity building
- Grant to support movement building, influencing and/or learning
- Movement Building and Advocacy Leadership Programme

Focus Area

The implementation of existing laws and policies to address child marriage at a national level is a key focus, as well as advocating for the costed implementation of the national strategy to end child marriage and early pregnancies. GNBU also addresses regressive social norms and attitudes, alongside supporting initiatives to strengthen the institutional capacity of the Uganda movement to end child marriage.

2023 Highlight

The strengthening collaboration between GNBU and the government – funded as part of the Secretariat's multiyear financial investment – has increased commitments to implement and disseminate the national strategy to end child marriage and early pregnancies. As a result, GNBU members have conducted advocacy to reinstate the Sexual Offences bill on the floor of parliament, which is expected to harmonise laws and policies on ending child marriage, as well as on developing strategies for supporting girls at risk and ever-married girls. During 2023, GNBU also diversified its membership in the humanitarian and indigenous communities of Uganda, such as the Northern and Eastern regions, and areas with highest prevalence rates of child marriage and post-conflict regions.

Kenya: (*Girls Not Brides* Kenya (GNB KE), 62 members)

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Support from Girls Not Brides:

- Partnership strengthening
- Capacity building
- Grant to support movement building, influencing and/or learning Movement Building and Advocacy Leadership Programme
- Youth engagement

Focus Area

Collectively working to enhance the capacities of sub-county, sub-national and national level stakeholders is the main focus for GNB KE, working with county level officials, community promoters and the “mothers to end child marriage”. They also aim to increase the use of evidence-based data for advocacy to end child marriage.

2023 Highlight

Having been initiated in 2017 as a coalition, GNB KE was officially launched as a National Partnership in 2023. The launch in 2023 saw national media coverage on child marriage issues and reinforced the need for partnerships and strengthening working relationships with the key government departments. These relationships will be crucial for GNB KE as they embark on working with the government to develop a national strategy to end child marriage as well as advocacy for the expansion of the mandate of the Anti FGM Board to include child marriage.

Tanzania: (Tanzania End Child Marriage Network (TECMN), 87 members)

Support from Girls Not Brides:

- Coalition strengthening
- Capacity building
- Grant to support movement building, influencing and/or learning
- Movement Building and Advocacy Leadership Programme
- Youth engagement

Focus Area

TECMN’s collective action focus is on legal and policy reform to harmonise domestic laws, including customary laws, in order to bring the minimum age of marriage to 18 without exceptions. Additionally, they work on social norms change through increased social action, acceptance and visibility, with a focus on girls’ education and FGM/C.

2023 Highlight

Members continued to advocate for the accelerated implementation of the school re-entry guidelines for those that may have dropped out, including adolescent mothers. TECMN sits in the working group that gave revisions for the guidelines, now due to be passed and implemented, working in partnership with youth advocates, private and public-school officials and community members through dialogue and social interventions to ensure all stakeholders understood the school re-entry guidelines and policy. Additionally, TECMN youth members, in partnership with like-minded organisations, media, community members and other stakeholders, successfully participated in media learning programmes

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and high-level national advocacy events to advocate for the change of policies and laws that safeguard the rights of girls including the Law of Marriage Act 1971.

Nigeria: (National Coalition on Ending Child Marriage in Nigeria (NCECM), 73 members)

Support from Girls Not Brides:

- Partnership/coalition strengthening Capacity building
- Grant to support movement building, influencing and/or learning
- Movement Building and Advocacy Leadership Programme
- Gender transformative approaches project

Focus Area

To advocate for the review and implementation of child marriage-related policies and laws, including the National Social Protection Policy, the national strategy on Ending Child Marriage and a costed action plan. Social Norms change on discriminatory norms and practices towards women and girls and adapting strategies using evidence and learning on what works to end child marriage are additional focus areas.

2023 Highlight

Members supported the review and analysis of the out-going national strategy to end child marriage, convening civil society organisation (CSO) partners, providing information on the level of implementation in the geo-political regions, and suggesting strategic areas for improvement in the new strategy. A key outcome of this process was the inclusion of the Coalition in the Technical Working Group on Ending Child Marriage, co-chaired by UNICEF and the Federal Government.

Mozambique: (Coligação para Eliminação dos Casamentos Prematuros (CECAP), 56 members)

Support from Girls Not Brides:

- Partnership/coalition strengthening
- Capacity building
- Grant to support movement building, influencing and/or learning
- Movement Building and Advocacy Leadership Programme
- Gender transformative approaches project

Focus Area

Members of CECAP work from the local to the international level, on advocacy, knowledge-sharing and research to address child marriage and premature unions in Mozambique. CECAP works with the government to ensure policies, laws and services are in place that support the rights of girls and young women; and with community groups and stakeholders to address discriminatory norms and practices towards women and girls. An important focus is also to contribute to the development of national legislation to put into practice the Southern African Development Community (SADC) Model Law for the Eradication of Child Marriage and Protection of Children Already Married.

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2023 Highlight

To create greater visibility for child marriage, and to address the different social issues that predisposes children to child marriage, members collectively hosted a webinar on the International Day of the African Child, focused on online safety for children from Gender Based Violence and all forms of abuse, including child marriage (premature unions in their context). Online grooming of younger girls by older males, and its linkages to child marriage, was one of the topics addressed.

Guatemala: (La Mesa a Favor de las Niñas y Adolescentes, 18 Members)

Support from Girls Not Brides:

- Partnership/coalition strengthening
- Capacity building
- Grant to support movement building, influencing and/or learning
- Youth engagement

Focus Area

La Mesa a Favor de las Niñas y Adolescentes promotes the agency and participation of girls and adolescents to demand the fulfilment of their rights. We aim to strengthen work with key sectors and duty bearers at the municipal, departmental and national levels to prioritise girls' and adolescents' rights and the prevention of CEFMU and early pregnancies.

2023 Highlight

In 2023, our work continued to support them with the first grant to support movement building, influencing and learning in the region. This allowed the project "Red Voceras" to start, aiming to promote the agency and advocacy capacities of girls and adolescents to demand the fulfilment of their rights. In the last quarter of the year, 26 girls and adolescents participated in two virtual sessions and one face-to-face, where they strengthened their knowledge about the national reality, human rights, #RedVoceras campaign, CEFMU and sorority.

Nepal: (Balika Dulahi Hoinan *Girls Not Brides* Nepal, 26 members)

Support from Girls Not Brides:

- Partnership/coalition strengthening
- Capacity building
- Grant to support movement building, influencing and/or learning
- Movement Building and Advocacy Leadership Programme

Focus Area

Focus areas include evidence-based advocacy for amendment of national strategy to end child marriage and its costed action plan; the development and amendment of sub-national strategies to end child marriage; and advocacy and awareness raising on policy provisions related to adolescents.

2023 Highlight

Girls Not Brides Nepal together with National Action and Coordinating Group against Violence Against Children (NACG) Nepal, organised a national level policy dialogue on child marriage, highlighting the

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current context of child marriage, challenges in the country and identifying ways forward to address them jointly.

Rajasthan, India: (*Girls Not Brides* Rajasthan State Partnership, 34 members)

Support from *Girls Not Brides*:

- Partnership/coalition strengthening
- Capacity building
- Grant to support movement building, influencing and/or learning
- Movement Building and Advocacy Leadership Programme
- Gender Leadership Programme
- Youth engagement

Focus Area

The main focus is evidence-based stakeholder engagement for system strengthening, especially related to education of girls in schools after Covid.

2023 Highlight

Led by adolescent girls, *Girls Not Brides* members generated evidence about girls' access to secondary education, enabling 150 adolescent girls to undertake research and share their findings with wide-ranging stakeholders, including representatives from media, government, civil society and public at large.

Jharkhand, India: (*Girls Not Brides* Jharkhand State Coalition, 40 members)

Support from *Girls Not Brides*:

- Partnership/coalition strengthening
- Capacity Building
- Grant to support movement building, influencing and/or learning
- Movement Building and Advocacy Leadership Programme
- Gender Leadership Programme
- Youth engagement

Focus Area

There are two areas of focus: capacity building of youth; creating spaces for interface between youth and different stakeholders; and learning and evidence generation to strengthen the movement and improved action to address child marriage.

2023 Highlight

The State Coalition used sports as a medium to address social norms related to girls' and women's role restricted to care work within their homes, supporting girls to be more visible in public spaces and build their aspirations for a future beyond marriage. The coalition also worked to increase community-level awareness of government schemes targeted at adolescent girls and supported them to avail scheme benefits.

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Uttar Pradesh, India: (Uttar Pradesh State Coalition for Empowerment of Girls (UPCEG), 31 members)

Support from Girls Not Brides:

- Capacity building
- Grant to support movement building, influencing and/or learning
- Movement Building and Advocacy Leadership Programme
- Gender Leadership Programme
- Youth engagement

Focus Area

UPCEG focused on multi-stakeholder engagement for strengthening adolescent girls' leadership.

2023 Highlight

A *Girls Not Brides* grant supported 3,067 girls to engage in training on government schemes and 3,000 adolescent girls engaged to raise awareness of gender inequality, education, violence and child marriage around International Day of the Girl.

Investing in leadership to strengthen national civil society movements

Ending child marriage will only be possible if we support a movement of powerful leaders who have the capacity, confidence, and support to influence across stakeholders and sectors. This is critical to sustain the movement: we need to strengthen the leadership and influencing capacities of individuals, while simultaneously building a cohort of activists who cascade influence and drive the movement forward through more impactful collective action.

In 2023, we piloted our Movement Building and Advocacy Leadership Programme (MBALP) which is inspired by the great work of Oxfam International's 'Campaigns and Advocacy Leadership Programme'. We created this bespoke programme designed for individuals with an active leadership role in a National or State Partnership or coalition in priority countries in Africa (Ghana, Nigeria, Uganda, Kenya, Tanzania, Malawi and Mozambique) and Asia (India, Nepal, Bangladesh).

A total of 23 participants completed the programme, focused on strengthening individuals' skills and expertise in movement building, influencing, leadership and leading collective action. We are supporting a movement of leaders who have the skills to build the CEFMU movement in their countries by building connections between partnerships and coalitions across countries and continents. These leaders, through enhanced knowledge and skills, contribute to better and more impactful work to end child marriage.

"MBALP has enhanced my understanding of issues in the continents and different cultures and contexts. Personally, it has also sharpened my understanding of various issues around leadership, movement building, how to take examples to global and have an impact on mobilising people."—
Nitika Pant, India

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“Among many things I have learnt not to compromise always as this will not help me to achieve my personal goals. I have learnt that in advocacy have your facts correct and support your claims with evidence.”—Eva Ankrah, Ghana

Spotlight on Nigeria and Mozambique

Embedding Gender-Transformative Approaches (GTA) deep into National Partnerships

Child marriage is rooted in gender inequality and the belief that girls and women are inferior to boys and men. Gender-Transformative Approaches (GTA) are pivotal to our current strategy and are integral to our ways of working with members.

In 2023, we worked closely with *Girls Not Brides* National Partnerships to embed GTA across their work, resulting in the co-creation of advocacy plans for each country and a deeper commitment and capacity in gender-transformative programming.

Supported by UNICEF, the gender-transformative journey was the beginning of an ongoing process of critical reflection and planning for collective action to address child marriage and gender inequality. Outputs included collective advocacy for safe spaces in schools, capacity enhancement with adolescent girls, and forging new partnerships with boys and men that addressed the root causes of gender inequality.

Focus on three GTA Activities...

- **Dedicated Gender Advocates:** *Girls Not Brides* supported six dedicated Gender Advocates as leaders in the end child marriage movement, championing gender equality and utilising their expertise to drive forward change in their communities.
- **GTA Pilots:** Dedicated grants enabled members to pilot activities aligned to three of the six core elements needed for gender-transformative action. Members identified these in terms of the potential to address the root causes of child marriage and gender inequality in their context. They included strengthening girls' advocacy and leadership; transforming masculinities; and family and community mobilisation.
- **GTA Facilitation Guide:** Using evidence and learning from our GTA programmes, we have developed a 7-step facilitation guide for civil society organisations working on child marriage. This makes our action-based learning available to the wider sector working on gender equality.

Spotlight on Malawi

Collective advocacy resulting in a political commitment to strengthening actions to end CEFMU

Girls Not Brides' collaboration and facilitation in Malawi contributed to a game-changing renewal of commitment to ending child marriage from President Chakwera. Working with the *Girls Not Brides* Malawi National Partnership and partners at the Clooney Foundation for Justice, we hosted a Round Table dialogue on the issue, bringing together human rights lawyer Amal Clooney; former First Lady of the United States and Founder of the Girls Opportunity Alliance, Michelle Obama; global

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philanthropist Melinda French Gates; representatives of *Girls Not Brides* Malawi; and a high court judge and a representative from the Women's Lawyers' Association to address the pressing issue of child marriage in Malawi.

The advocacy calls to action were echoed during an in-person meeting between Amal Clooney and the president and resulted in an announcement that his government will harmonise domestic laws with the standards laid down in the SADC Model Law on Eradicating Child Marriage and Protecting Children Already in Marriage, as well as a review of the national budget and allocation of resources for the implementation of Malawi's national strategy for Ending Child Marriage.

Spotlight on Guatemala

Promoting agency and advocacy of girls to demand the fulfilment of their rights

La Mesa a Favor de las Niñas y Adolescentes is the first and only National Partnership of *Girls Not Brides* in the LAC region. During 2023, we supported them with the first grant in the region to potentialise their collective work in Guatemala. This support included a technical accompaniment in the creation of their work plan.

In October 2023, the first grant agreement was signed with the National Partnership in Guatemala. 50% of the grant helped kickstart "Red Voceras", a project which aims to promote the agency and advocacy capacities of girls and adolescents to demand the fulfilment of their rights. To achieve their objective, a group of girls and adolescents received training related to context, leadership, communicational and advocacy skills; and were connected with key sectors and guarantors of rights at the municipal, departmental, and national levels. In these spaces, the girls and adolescents can amplify their voices and urge government and social decision-makers to prioritise issues related to their autonomy and wellbeing, mainly in the prevention of CEFMU and early pregnancies.

In the last quarter of the year, 26 girls and adolescents participated in two virtual sessions, as well as one face-to-face session, where they strengthened their knowledge about the national reality, human rights, #RedVoceras campaign, CEFMU and sorority.

What's next...

In 2024 we will continue to build the capacity and provide technical and financial support to our National and State Partnerships in priority countries across Africa, Asia and Latin America and the Caribbean. 2024 will be the year of a significant prioritisation of youth leadership across all three regions, creating working groups, youth engagement strategies, and facilitating active youth participation at key regional advocacy and learning events.

2) We continue to strengthen collective efforts to end CEFMU at a regional level

Social movements have the power to create change that no individual can achieve alone

In 2023, we continued to strengthen the movement to end child marriage at the regional level, by bringing together a diverse range of actors to form collective agendas, identify synergies and create opportunities for collaboration. We leveraged regional bodies towards ending child marriage. We

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facilitated and convened safe spaces for dialogue and discussion, combining evidence, advocacy and leadership. Together, we created powerful strategies for change.

Co-creating our collective agenda at our first regional convening in Latin America and the Caribbean

A closer look at Latin America and the Caribbean...

In Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC), the informal nature of unions (characterised by cohabitation without legal registration) contrasts with the more formalised practices that can be seen in other parts of the world. Across the region, one in five girls or adolescents marry before the age of 18. It is also the only region where no significant change in prevalence has been observed over the past 25 years.⁶

Despite the significant prevalence rates, CEFMU is not yet seen as a key issue in the LAC region. *Girls Not Brides* is playing a vital role in addressing CEFMU as a public issue. We work with civil society organisations, partners and donors to influence actors in the region to move beyond legal responses and broaden the discourse for a more holistic understanding of addressing CEFMU. We do this with a participatory, intersectional, progressive human rights and gender-transformative approach.

After more than two years of complex relationship-building, engagement, advocacy and positioning, *Girls Not Brides* consolidated our role with the first ever regional convening on ending CEFMU. The event sparked the creation of a pioneering, shared multi-year plan to combat CEFMU in the region, underlining a fortified commitment to action with the participation of 54 members. It was the culmination of a collaborative reflection process which, at its heart, used creative, non-hierarchical approaches that championed the autonomy and rights of girls and adolescents.

“Thank you for accompanying the process... it has motivated me to talk about the prevention of CEFMU, now we know the contexts of other countries ... We are different, we are diverse, the organisations, the women who are here, also in terms of intergenerational age. This is very valuable for the exchange of knowledge, and as a Mayan woman I also value the inclusion of interculturality.”—Silvia Angelica Xinico from the Ix S’um collective, part of the National Alliance in Guatemala (La mesa de las niñas y adolescentes)

Supporting civil society to advocate for financing of girls’ education in West Africa

A closer look at Africa...

16 of the top 20 countries with the highest prevalence rates of child marriage in the world are in Africa.⁷ Regional institutions are increasingly prioritising ending child marriage by putting in place policy frameworks to guide national efforts. At a national level, some governments have demonstrated a commitment to ending child marriage through the revision of national laws, the implementation of national strategies to end child marriage and investment in programmes for adolescent girls. However, despite these advancements, current data shows that child marriage is increasing in some African countries.⁸

⁶ Source: United Nations Children’s Fund, *Is an End to Child Marriage within Reach? Latest trends and future prospects*. 2023 update, UNICEF, New York, 2023.

⁷ Source: UNICEF global databases 2020, based on Multiple Indicator Cluster Surveys (MICS), Demographic and Health Surveys (DHS), and other national surveys.

⁸ Source: UNICEF data with *Girls Not Brides* analysis in 2022. [See article](#).

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Girls Not Brides' strategy in Africa focuses primarily on working with members, National Partnerships and coalitions to influence regional, sub-regional and national institutions and governments to strengthen their commitments to address child marriage and translate these commitments into effective, integrated and inclusive action that will impact the lives of married girls, girls at risk of child marriage, and their communities.

As part of our work in West Africa, the Education Out Loud (EOL) project – which is made possible by the Global Partnership for Education's fund for advocacy and social accountability – addresses the interlinked problems of child marriage and girls' lack of access to quality education.

Contributing to creating a powerful, cross-sectoral movement to advocate for girls' right to education and to end child marriage, it focuses on seven countries in Francophone West Africa with some of the highest rates of child marriage and out-of-school girls. We are doing this by bringing together end child marriage and national education coalitions for shared learning and collective evidence-based advocacy.

In 2022 and 2023, our work through EOL supported eight civil society organisations and coalitions to advocate for country or local financing of girls' education, keeping more girls in school for longer periods and ensuring completion of high school education in particular. As a direct result, we have seen the following government commitments:

- **Côte d'Ivoire:** In Côte d'Ivoire, the Ministry of Family, Women and Children committed to expanding the mandate of the shelter for survivors of Gender-Based Violence (GBV), supporting at-risk girls to stay in school. Providing shelters not only serves as a physical sanctuary but also plays a crucial role in promoting the overall wellbeing of girls and young women at risk of GBV. One significant outcome is the empowerment and encouragement of girls to continue their education, as the shelter actively supports them staying in school.
- **Niger:** In Niger, decision-makers demonstrated greater open-mindedness towards girls' education as a result of increased knowledge gained through the advocacy process. This is crucial in the current context of shrinking civic space worldwide.

The EOL project positioned young researchers as key stakeholders in the generation, analysis, and dissemination of data to provide decision-makers with evidence-based recommendations to end child marriage and promote girls' education. The youth-led research component played a significant role in fostering grassroots insights and youth engagement. In particular, it reflected concerns and priorities relevant to an age group most concerned by challenges around girls' education and child marriage and creating a culture of accountability and credibility.

"It's so important for our country to understand that young people also have the skills to advocate to end child marriage and especially through keeping girls in school."—**National coordinator of the education coalition**, Burkina Faso

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“The idea of using youths as researchers for the sensitive issues we deal with is original. Youths are more agile and are flexible to change more than older generations.”—Young Researcher, Burkina Faso

Investing in gender-transformative leaders in Asia

A closer look at Asia...

Asia is home to around 290 million child brides, accounting for 45% of the global total. While South Asia leads the world's progress in reducing child marriage prevalence, one third of the world's child brides live in India. Child marriage in South Asia is most common for girls living in households with lower incomes, who have less education and reside in rural areas. East Asia and Pacific account for another 95 million, or 15%, of the global total.

In 2023, our work in Asia centred on fortifying approaches to end child marriage so that they are gender transformative and address the root cause of CEFMU: harmful gender norms. Through the Gender Leadership Programme (GLP), in partnership with Oxfam GB, we supported a cohort of 27 gender-transformative leaders to gain a deeper understanding of gender-transformative approaches to ending child marriage. Evidence shows that laws aimed at ending child marriage are most effective when accompanied by strategies to reduce harmful gender norms and promote gender equality.

GLP is much more than a training on gender – it focuses on how to integrate Gender-Transformative Approaches (GTA), developing individuals' skills and confidence to become stronger, more selective and transformative Gender Justice Champions. These Champions will now act as “agents of change” within their own contexts, and influence the work of their organisations, coalitions and State Partnerships to address the practice.

What's next...

We will continue advocacy to increase political and financial commitments in each region to end CEFMU, influencing donors for increased funding for the region and advancing youth leadership for gender equality. We look forward to continuing our work with education and child marriage coalitions in West Africa, with renewed funding from EOL.

3) We are developing the global ecosystem to support and catalyse the end of child marriage globally

At the global level, we play a critical role in developing and supporting an ecosystem of actors; creating the enabling environment in which national and regional work sits; bringing focus to the issue of CEFMU; providing evidence to fuel discussions and commitments; and using our convening power to facilitate conversations between decision-makers and activists.

We work hard to generate political will and funding commitments to invest in evidence-based programming to end child marriage. We ensure that the expertise of sub-national, national, and regional civil society actors is escalated to policy and global development platforms.

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Developing strategic alliances to platform effective child marriage interventions on the global stage

We have developed strategic alliances with The Clooney Foundation for Justice and with the Girls Opportunity Alliance by The Obama Foundation, together with their high-profile CEOs. We connect, via our partnership, with The Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation. Together with Girls First Fund and VOW for Girls, we have created a supportive and strategic network of close collaborators to accelerate advocacy for ending CEFMU.

In November, we joined Amal Clooney, Michelle Obama and Melinda French Gates on a high-profile trip to Malawi and South Africa to profile the importance of girls' education, increase political commitment and raise awareness globally on the issue of child marriage and effective interventions to end child marriage. The South Africa event, which included a panel of leaders from civil society organisations and featured our global champion Graça Machel, resulted in significant media coverage, with articles in over 26 media sites spanning Europe, Africa, the Middle East, North America and LAC. Following this event, *Girls Not Brides* also discussed child marriage on BBC News and BBC Africa.

Integrating child marriage and activist voices within gender equality platforms

In 2023, we continued to convene and focus civil society voices to influence global commitments. Our engagement at Women Deliver 2023 highlights the role we play, acting as an interface between activists and decision-makers. At Women Deliver:

- **We sponsored 14 members including six youth advocates.** Our “Indaba” event created a space for members, friends and supporters to come together for informal discussions and peer-learning. Our members were supported to play an active role in two Adolescent Girls Investment Plan (AGIP) events on accountability mechanisms and funding for girls.
- **We convened a high-level event,** together with the Canadian Government and the UNFPA-UNICEF Global Programme to End Child Marriage, and along with our champions Graça Machel and Mary Robinson and our founder Mabel van Oranje. At the event, the Canadian Minister for International Development and Minister for Women and Gender Equality announced an allocation of \$35 million (as part of the \$200-million SheSOARS package) for the UNFPA- UNICEF Global Programme to End Child Marriage and \$3 million for *Girls Not Brides*.
- **We integrated CEFMU within vital complementary sectors.** Our CEO, Dr Faith Mwangi-Powell, spoke on a panel for the Global Programme for Education and our Head of LAC, Alma Burciaga González, spoke about the links between child marriage and menstrual health and hygiene.
- **We hosted an official side event.** Exclusively for our members, partners and supporters, this event was a space for discussion, learning, and collaboration, around specific topics relevant to ending child marriage as chosen by the end child marriage community.

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Ensuring CEFMU inclusion in global advocacy spaces and policy commitments

Our global advocacy work in 2023 focused on ensuring that new global commitments related to CEFMU were generated, that existing ones were enhanced, and that accountability was pursued at the international level.

Human Rights Council Advocacy

At the Human Rights Council (HRC), we were successful in our advocacy for the adoption of a strong CEFMU resolution, co-sponsored by 78 states. We saw increased attention to the importance of ensuring full, free and informed consent and stronger language related to equal rights in marriage (property, inheritance, managing assets) and the dissolution of marriage. The resolution also recognised forced marriage as a form of sexual and gender-based violence, and linked CEFMU to climate change.

UN Special Rapporteurs Statements

We issued three position statements – developed with and endorsed by tens of *Girls Not Brides* members – for the UN Special Rapporteurs interactive dialogues on education, violence against women and girls (VAWG) and custody rights, and the crisis in Afghanistan. We further organised a side event with Equality Now and the Pan- African Alliance to End Child Marriage.

UN General Assembly Event

At the UN General Assembly (UNGA), together with UN Women and partners from Equality in Law, we co-organised a side event 'Accelerating Action toward Equality in Law for Women and Girls by 2030' which gathered panellists from UN agencies and INGOs to evaluate gender equality legal progress and its limitations.

Creating and sustaining donor engagement and commitment to ending CEFMU

Our work at the global level also involves convening and advocating for increased funding in the ending child marriage space more broadly. We do this by bringing together like-minded donors and civil society and providing them with the space to learn, discuss and share the latest research and evidence around what is working to end child marriage and discuss priorities and key advocacy moments for the year ahead.

In 2023, we convened donors at our annual flagship strategic donor meeting, bringing together representatives from governments, United Nations (UN) agencies and private foundations – all of whom have a deep commitment to ending CEFMU. We held the first Strategic Donor Meeting on ending CEFMU focused on LAC, which illustrated the urgent need to invest in LAC, and the importance of transforming the type of funding invested in the region. We hosted a donor round table in Kampala, Uganda with the Embassy of the Kingdom of the Netherlands in Uganda with a specific focus on driving meaningful collective action to address child marriage at the national level.

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Amplifying voices, positioning key messages and engaging key audiences through strategic communication

We use communications to spark and catalyse influence for change by identifying, engaging and convincing diverse audiences to take actions within their power to end child marriage. From raising awareness of CEFMU to positioning and educating on relevant approaches and evidence – we seek to focus audiences, amplify diverse voices from across our partnership, showcase stories of collective action, and promote change through uptake of evidence. We do this by:

- **Amplifying** the voices of leaders and champions from across our global partnership, showcasing a diversity of perspectives, stories, and expertise to ensure messaging is context-specific, nuanced, and accessible.
- **Showcasing** collective action and supporting collective advocacy messages and campaigning. We developed a campaign for International Women's Day specifically focused on collective messaging and actions in the LAC region, with country-specific data and messaging.
- **Positioning** CEFMU during critical international moments, in other sectors, and informing audiences on evidence-based solutions. We shared critical messaging around child marriage and the Sustainable Development Goals to support advocacy asks for UNGA.

What's next...

In 2024, our focus turns to advocacy and donor engagement at the Commission on the Status on Women (CSW), the Summit of the Future, and the UN General Assembly CEFMU Resolution. We will convene donors for critical conversations around the sustainability of funding. We will continue to leverage strategic communications to support and amplify collective action from across the global partnership.

4) We are building a learning and evidence base to catalyse change

Facilitating learning and the uptake of evidence about what works to end child marriage is a central part of our work

We source, collate and share evidence in accessible formats across our membership and networks, with the aim of advancing understanding of critical issues affecting the movement to end child marriage and to influence multiple levers, such as civil society, academia, policy development and resource commitments. We increasingly have clarity on what works to address child marriage and what evidence gaps still exist, and we work to ensure that all investment towards ending marriage is evidence based and effective. Beyond this, we convene learning environments and work together to identify where the gaps are so these can be filled, building a peer-to-peer culture of learning and evidence generation – key to accelerating efforts to end child marriage.

Increased access to contextualised evidence on what works to end child marriage

Over 2023, we have increased access and supported members to share contextualised evidence to support efforts to end child marriage. We have provided members with opportunities to learn and

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share, either through our learning series, Child Marriage Research to Action Network (CRANK) meetings, or regional convenings and published research and evidence briefs.

One area of focus was on addressing child marriage and supporting married girls in humanitarian settings – a good example of the range of outputs and engagements we produce or host for one issue, to ensure both broad and deep uptake.

A co-ordinated learning approach:

- **Learning call** strengthening evidence uptake across humanitarian, development and peace sectors.
- **Brief published** on exploring the drivers and consequences of conflict-related sexual violence and child marriage – contributing to filling evidence gaps by presenting the latest evidence on what works and a key set of key recommendations.
- **Presented latest evidence** on child marriage in humanitarian, conflict and crisis settings at the Global Protection Forum Innovation Corner hosted by Plan International and Save the Children.
- **CRANK research meeting**, 'Child marriage in conflict- and crisis-affected settings – Learning from the latest evidence', discussing recent evidence and learnings.
- **CRANK Research Spotlight**, covering the latest research and evidence related to child marriage programming in conflict- and crisis-affected settings to strengthen interventions and better inform advocacy policy efforts.
- **Participated at a child marriage research convening** hosted by Kings College London (KCL) in collaboration with the Feminist Visions to End Child Marriage in East Africa (FVECM).
- **Participated in the Middle East and North Africa Regional Action Forum to End Child Marriage convening**, developing a joint advocacy and learning agenda to support and strengthen the efforts of all network members, with an emphasis on prevention and response efforts in conflict and crisis settings.

We are recognised as a knowledge hub and go-to platform for what works to end CEFMU globally

An external evaluation of our learning work showed *Girls Not Brides* offers a wide range of high-quality learning products, which are relevant and valuable to member organisations, enhancing their understanding of the issue. The evaluation showcased how we provide complementary, tailored support aligned to member organisations' needs and reiterated our role and commitment to being a thought leader in the ending child marriage space.

Globally, *Girls Not Brides'* role as a thought leader that uses evidence to influence policy and programmatic interventions to end child marriage was widely recognised in the evaluation. We are doing well on sharing learning, promoting promising practices and contributing to shaping the debate around the child marriage agenda.

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We are offering members a unique, highly valued and applicable evidence base:⁹

- **94%** have applied *Girls Not Brides* learning products in their work
- **50%** used the learning products to support their advocacy work
- **48%** developed new ideas or strategies
- **38%** designed or improved projects or programmes
- **91%** would recommend *Girls Not Brides* as the best source of information

We co-ordinated a global approach to research on child marriage, providing an effective go-to forum for evidence and learning

The Child Marriage Research to Action Network – or the CRANK – is a joint initiative and platform for a coordinated global research agenda on child marriage, between *Girls Not Brides* and the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) - United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) Global Programme to End Child Marriage. The CRANK provides a platform for a better coordinated global research agenda. It disseminates the latest evidence on child marriage priority topics and encourages the uptake of evidence by practitioners and policy makers.

In 2023, the CRANK held four research meetings focused on Gender-Transformative Approaches; CEFMU in conflict and crisis affected settings; CEFMU policy responses; and recent evidence reviews. It attracted contributions from researchers, programmers, policy makers and activists across the world. Since its inception in 2021, the CRANK's membership has grown to 540 with representation from all actors and from around the world. The final meeting of the year – 'Progress, Gaps and Priorities' – was a key highlight of the CRANK's work in 2023.

The external evaluation shows that the CRANK is effectively serving its core objective to disseminate evidence on child marriage priority topics and deepening many stakeholders' understanding of child marriage evidence, solutions and emerging priorities.

The CRANK is an effective go-to forum for evidence and learning, leading to strengthened action and programming:¹⁰

- **83%** find CRANK research meetings and convenings enhanced their understanding of evidence and solutions.
- **72%** report CRANK resources helped them identify child marriage research priorities or gaps.
- **44%** indicated CRANK participation strengthened their child marriage advocacy and policy efforts.

We are strengthening learning and evidence sharing at the Africa regional level

In July, the Africa Action Group to End Child Marriage (AAGECM) – which was co-created by *Girls Not Brides* and regional partners to serve as a regional hub for learning and evidence-sharing – united 30 participants from 13 countries to continue these important conversations. The meeting brought

⁹ Source: *Girls Not Brides* Learning Evaluation, 2024.

¹⁰ Source: *Girls Not Brides* Learning Evaluation, 2024.

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together researchers, young visionaries, practitioners, advocates, and activists, providing a comprehensive evidence review and assessing the current state of knowledge on child marriage. It identified gaps and paved the way for further research. The forthcoming report, featuring an extensive literature review, is set to significantly contribute to the global body of evidence on what works to end child marriage.

"The 2023 AAGECM Convening wasn't just an event; it was a catalyst for change. We are not just building a platform; we are fostering a community that applies and scales successful strategies. Our long-term goal is to put an end to child marriage, ensuring a safer, healthier future for every child." —**Fatou Ndir**, Senior Advocacy & Engagement Officer, *Girls Not Brides*

What's next...

In 2024, we will be publishing a new brief on child marriage in conflict, crisis and humanitarian settings, one of our core evidence and learning briefs this year. We will produce an evidence review and brief on CEFMU laws and their impact on child marriage and girls' agency, as well as furthering our work on CEFMU and Climate Crisis. We will implement the learnings from our external evaluation and continue our work with the CRANK.

TO THE MEMBERS OF
GIRLS NOT BRIDES: THE GLOBAL PARTNERSHIP TO END CHILD MARRIAGE

STRATEGIC PLANS FOR THE FUTURE

In 2024, *Girls Not Brides*, in line with our 2022-2025 strategy, will continue our transformative journey of accelerating efforts to end child, early and forced marriage and strengthening evidence on what is needed to support married girls worldwide. With a steadfast commitment to achieving gender equality and empowering girls and women, *Girls Not Brides* has outlined a comprehensive plan for the year ahead.

Here are some key highlights of our plans for 2024:

Under our strategic pillar of movement building, *Girls Not Brides* is placing a strong emphasis on deepening our local investments in selected countries, in close collaboration with our National and State Partnerships. We will continue to build the capacity and provide technical and financial support to our National and State Partnerships in priority countries across Africa, Asia and Latin America and the Caribbean.

2024 will also be the year of a significant prioritisation of youth leadership across all three regions, creating working groups, youth engagement strategies, and facilitating active youth participation at key regional advocacy and learning events. We are also committed to supporting broader Member Engagement and fostering a vibrant and engaged community of members dedicated to ending CEFMU. To this end, and under our broad offer, we will prioritise initiatives to enhance member engagement and leadership development, including capacity-building workshops, regional conferences, and virtual networking opportunities. By fostering collaboration and knowledge-sharing among our diverse membership base, we aim to amplify the collective impact of our efforts.

Regarding our work on influencing, our global, regional and national advocacy remains at the heart of our mission. In 2024, we will continue to advocate for national, regional, and global policy change, working closely with governments, civil society organisations, and other stakeholders. We will continue advocacy to increase political and financial commitments in each region to end CEFMU, influencing donors for increased funding for the region and advancing youth leadership for gender equality. We specifically look forward to continuing our work in West Africa with education and child marriage coalitions with renewed funding from EOL. More importantly, we believe that strategic partnerships are key to our advocacy efforts, as they enable us to advance legislative reforms and promote the implementation of existing laws and policies. Through targeted advocacy events, media outreach, and these strategic partnerships, we will amplify the voices of our members and allies and those driving collective action at the national level to drive momentum towards accelerated change. We will also continue to strengthen relationships with our donors and partners to unlock resources to not only support our work but also increase resources where this is most needed.

At the global level, our focus will be on donor engagement at the Commission on the Status on Women (CSW), the Summit of the Future, and the UN General Assembly CEFMU Resolution. We will convene donors for critical conversations around the sustainability of funding. We will continue to leverage strategic communications to support and amplify collective action from across the global partnership.

TRUSTEES' AUDITOR REPORT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2023

**TO THE MEMBERS OF
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With our pillar of learning and evidence, we remain committed to building a robust evidence base to inform and guide our efforts to CEFMU. In 2024, we will prioritise research and knowledge generation initiatives to deepen our understanding of the evidence gaps. Through collaborative research partnerships via the CRANK, we will prioritise strengthening our thought leadership so that we can be the go-to hub for all matters regarding CEFMU. Specifically, we will be publishing a new brief on child marriage in conflict, crisis and humanitarian settings, one of our core evidence and learning briefs this year. We will also produce an evidence review and brief on CEFMU laws and their impact on child marriage and girls' agency, as well as furthering our work on CEFMU and Climate Crisis. We will implement the learnings from our external evaluation following the SIDA (Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency) external evaluation.

From an organisational perspective, we must also ensure we are fit for purpose. As we embark on our ambitious agenda for 2024, *Girls Not Brides* remains committed to strengthening our organisational capacity to deliver impact effectively and efficiently. We will invest in staff development, organisational learning, and strategic planning to ensure that we are well-equipped to navigate the opportunities and challenges ahead. By fostering a culture of innovation, collaboration, and accountability, we will maximise our collective efforts to end CEFMU.

TO THE MEMBERS OF
GIRLS NOT BRIDES: THE GLOBAL PARTNERSHIP TO END CHILD MARRIAGE

FINANCIAL REVIEW

Income

In 2023, Girls Not Brides' total operating income was £9,412,837 an increase of £5,328,020 or 230% compared with 2022 income of £4,084,817 made largely of unrestricted income. Funding from private foundations formed the majority of the unrestricted income, with other funding from government grants. Restricted income was 3% of the total income.

Significant events that have affected performance in 2023

In 2023, Girls Not Brides were one of many fortunate not-for-profit recipients to receive a significant gift (£6,438,630) from the philanthropist MacKenzie Scott via Yield Giving. This was a one-time unrestricted gift to support our global work to end child marriage. It is reflected on the Statement of Financial Activities. We want to give thanks for the very generous gift from MacKenzie Scott and the collaboration with Bridgespan for this amazing gift and the opportunities this provides Girls Not Brides.

Our vision is for Girls Not Brides to contribute to a more, diverse, impactful, and sustainable end-child-marriage movement. By using these three descriptors (diverse, impactful, and sustainable) to guide the future of the movement's growth, we believe we can be more effective at achieving our 2025 strategic objectives and beyond this to 2030 for future growth and impact. It is an exciting moment in Girls Not Brides' history. We are conscious this gift allows us to make bold and exciting decisions for the future.

This gift comes at a time when we have been exploring our growth model as a secretariat and as a broader movement to end child marriage. We view our growth as deeply tied to the collective impact of the wider global movement and plans for our strategic growth to 2030. These funds will be utilised to further our charitable objectives in a way that exerts the most significant impact on the lives of vulnerable people and serves as a catalyst for greater impact, investment, and evidence in the long term.

Looking at the sector currently, we see risks around continued future fundraising, especially with unrestricted funds for the core of our continued work and future funding for our members and partners who experience the same struggles. We are being prudent and will draw down the necessary operational funds if there are gaps in future funding streams. It is the first time that Girls Not Brides has had the opportunity of pure unrestricted reserves without any donor restrictions toward the operational delivery of our work.

The Board of Trustees have discussed with the Senior Leadership Team to designate these funds in the balance sheet as a fund for future growth, innovations and sustainability to 2030 and beyond.

This will help us to better plan for what we are calling 'The Road to 2030'. This milestone-driven initiative enables us to create a clear focus of our work on accelerating efforts towards realisation of Sustainable Development Goal 5 (SDG 5), which aims to achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls. Target 5.3 specifically focuses on eliminating all harmful practices, such as child, early, and forced marriage and female genital mutilation (FGM) by 2030.

TRUSTEES' AUDITOR REPORT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2023

TO THE MEMBERS OF GIRLS NOT BRIDES: THE GLOBAL PARTNERSHIP TO END CHILD MARRIAGE

These practices are recognised as significant barriers to the health, rights, and potential of millions of girls worldwide. We believe that our roadmap to 2030 will be a transformative initiative for change. It will allow us to innovate with the gift and demonstrate what it takes to end child marriage, while leveraging these resources to unlock further resources for the movement.

In 2023, the work of Girls Not Brides was made possible through the generous support from:

- Advancing Girls Fund of Tides Foundation
- Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation
- David and Lucile Packard Foundation
- Education Out Loud (managed by Oxfam IBIS and financed by the Global Partnership for Education)
- Ford Foundation
- Government of Canada
- Kendeda Fund
- Nationale Postcode Loterij
- Oak Foundation
- Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida)
- United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF)
- United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA)
- Wellspring Philanthropic Fund
- Yield Giving

Expenditure

Expenditure on charitable activities in the year was £4,084,019 (2022: £3,374,500). This was in line with the organisational budget of £4,284,909. Girls Not Brides was able to spend 95% of its annual budget for 2023.

Reserves policy

The Board aims to build up a reserve equivalent to six months of committed costs and three months of planned but uncommitted costs as unrestricted free reserves, based on budget projections. The aim of this policy is to ensure that Girls Not Brides meets all its obligations and contractual liabilities, and continues to operate smoothly, in case of income shortfalls or unexpected expenditures. Each year the Board reviews the level of reserves and the risks the reserves are held to mitigate against to ensure that the reserves kept are sufficient, but not excessive.

TRUSTEES' AUDITOR REPORT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2023

**TO THE MEMBERS OF
GIRLS NOT BRIDES: THE GLOBAL PARTNERSHIP TO END CHILD MARRIAGE**

As of 31 December 2023, total reserves were £9,050,777 (2022: £3,721,959). These were made up of unrestricted fund £2,651,404 Designated funds £6,438,630 and includes a deficit of £39,257 in restricted funds pending an income receipt in 2024.

Designated Funds

The trustees have designated the funds £6,438,630 received from MacKenzie Scott towards a fund for future growth, innovations and sustainability towards meeting its strategic objective to 2030. These funds are being held in short-term investments and shown on the Balance Sheet.

Exemptions from disclosure

This report has been prepared in accordance with the small companies' regime under the Companies Act 2006.

This report was approved by the Board on 20 June 2024 and signed on its behalf by

.....
Dr Anne T. Gallagher AO
Chair of the Board of Trustees

Opinion

We have audited the financial statements of *Girls Not Brides: The Global Partnership to End Child Marriage* for the year ended 31 December 2023 which comprise the statement of financial activities, balance sheet, statement of cash flows and notes to the financial statements, including significant accounting policies. The financial reporting framework that has been applied in their preparation is applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards, including FRS 102 The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

In our opinion, the financial statements:

- Give a true and fair view of the state of the charitable company's affairs as at 31 December 2023 and of its incoming resources and application of resources, including its income and expenditure for the year then ended
- Have been properly prepared in accordance with United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice
- Have been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006

Basis for opinion

We conducted our audit in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (UK) (ISAs (UK)) and applicable law. Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements section of our report. We are independent of the charitable company in accordance with the ethical requirements that are relevant to our audit of the financial statements in the UK, including the FRC's Ethical Standard and we have fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with these requirements. We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion.

Conclusions relating to going concern

In auditing the financial statements, we have concluded that the trustees' use of the going concern basis of accounting in the preparation of the financial statements is appropriate.

Based on the work we have performed, we have not identified any material uncertainties relating to events or conditions that, individually or collectively, may cast significant doubt on *Girls Not Brides'* ability to continue as a going concern for a period of at least twelve months from when the financial statements are authorised for issue.

Our responsibilities and the responsibilities of the trustees with respect to going concern are described in the relevant sections of this report.

Other Information

The other information comprises the information included in the trustees' annual report other than the financial statements and our auditor's report thereon. The trustees are responsible for the other

TRUSTEES' AUDITOR REPORT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2023

TO THE MEMBERS OF GIRLS NOT BRIDES: THE GLOBAL PARTNERSHIP TO END CHILD MARRIAGE

information contained within the annual report. Our opinion on the financial statements does not cover the other information and, except to the extent otherwise explicitly stated in our report, we do not express any form of assurance conclusion thereon. Our responsibility is to read the other information and, in doing so, consider whether the other information is materially inconsistent with the financial statements or our knowledge obtained in the course of the audit, or otherwise appears to be materially misstated. If we identify such material inconsistencies or apparent material misstatements, we are required to determine whether this gives rise to a material misstatement in the financial statements themselves. If, based on the work we have performed, we conclude that there is a material misstatement of this other information, we are required to report that fact.

We have nothing to report in this regard.

Opinions on other matters prescribed by the Companies Act 2006

In our opinion, based on the work undertaken in the course of the audit:

- The information given in the trustees' annual report for the financial year for which the financial statements are prepared is consistent with the financial statements; and
- The trustees' annual report has been prepared in accordance with applicable legal requirements.

Matters on which we are required to report by exception

In the light of the knowledge and understanding of the charitable company and its environment obtained in the course of the audit, we have not identified material misstatements in the trustees' annual report. We have nothing to report in respect of the following matters in relation to which the Companies Act 2006 requires us to report to you if, in our opinion:

- Adequate accounting records have not been kept, or returns adequate for our audit have not been received from branches not visited by us; or
- The financial statements are not in agreement with the accounting records and returns; or
- Certain disclosures of trustees' remuneration specified by law are not made; or
- We have not received all the information and explanations we require for our audit; or
- The directors were not entitled to prepare the financial statements in accordance with the small companies regime and take advantage of the small companies' exemptions in preparing the trustees' annual report and from the requirement to prepare a strategic report.

Responsibilities of trustees

As explained more fully in the statement of trustees' responsibilities set out in the trustees' annual report, the trustees (who are also the directors of the charitable company for the purposes of company law) are responsible for the preparation of the financial statements and for being satisfied that they give a true and fair view, and for such internal control as the trustees determine is necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

TO THE MEMBERS OF
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In preparing the financial statements, the trustees are responsible for assessing the charitable company's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless the trustees either intend to liquidate the charitable company or to cease operations, or have no realistic alternative but to do so.

Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements

Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements as a whole are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes our opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with ISAs (UK) will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of these financial statements.

Irregularities, including fraud, are instances of non-compliance with laws and regulations. We design procedures in line with our responsibilities, outlined above, to detect material misstatements in respect of irregularities, including fraud. The extent to which our procedures are capable of detecting irregularities, including fraud are set out below.

Capability of the audit in detecting irregularities

In identifying and assessing risks of material misstatement in respect of irregularities, including fraud and non-compliance with laws and regulations, our procedures included the following:

- We enquired of management, which included obtaining and reviewing supporting documentation, concerning the charity's policies and procedures relating to:
 - Identifying, evaluating, and complying with laws and regulations and whether they were aware of any instances of non-compliance;
 - Detecting and responding to the risks of fraud and whether they have knowledge of any actual, suspected, or alleged fraud;
 - The internal controls established to mitigate risks related to fraud or non-compliance with laws and regulations.
- We inspected the minutes of meetings of those charged with governance.
- We obtained an understanding of the legal and regulatory framework that the charity operates in, focusing on those laws and regulations that had a material effect on the financial statements or that had a fundamental effect on the operations of the charity from our professional and sector experience.
- We communicated applicable laws and regulations throughout the audit team and remained alert to any indications of non-compliance throughout the audit.
- We reviewed any reports made to regulators.
- We reviewed the financial statement disclosures and tested these to supporting documentation to assess compliance with applicable laws and regulations.

TRUSTEES' AUDITOR REPORT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2023

**TO THE MEMBERS OF
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- We performed analytical procedures to identify any unusual or unexpected relationships that may indicate risks of material misstatement due to fraud.
- In addressing the risk of fraud through management override of controls, we tested the appropriateness of journal entries and other adjustments, assessed whether the judgements made in making accounting estimates are indicative of a potential bias and tested significant transactions that are unusual or those outside the normal course of business.

Because of the inherent limitations of an audit, there is a risk that we will not detect all irregularities, including those leading to a material misstatement in the financial statements or non-compliance with regulation. This risk increases the more that compliance with a law or regulation is removed from the events and transactions reflected in the financial statements, as we will be less likely to become aware of instances of non-compliance. The risk is also greater regarding irregularities occurring due to fraud rather than error, as fraud involves intentional concealment, forgery, collusion, omission or misrepresentation.

A further description of our responsibilities is available on the Financial Reporting Council's website at: www.frc.org.uk/auditorsresponsibilities. This description forms part of our auditor's report.

Use of our report

This report is made solely to the charitable company's members as a body, in accordance with Chapter 3 of Part 16 of the Companies Act 2006. Our audit work has been undertaken so that we might state to the charitable company's members those matters we are required to state to them in an auditor's report and for no other purpose. To the fullest extent permitted by law, we do not accept or assume responsibility to anyone other than the charitable company and the charitable company's members as a body, for our audit work, for this report, or for the opinions we have formed.

Noelia Serrano (Senior statutory auditor)
5 July 2024

for and on behalf of Sayer Vincent LLP, Statutory Auditor
110 Golden Lane, LONDON, EC1Y 0TG

GIRLS NOT BRIDES: THE GLOBAL PARTNERSHIP TO END CHILD MARRIAGE

Statement of financial activities (incorporating an income and expenditure account)

For the year ended 31 December 2023

				2023			2022
	Note	Unrestricted £	Restricted £	Total £	Unrestricted £	Restricted £	Total £
Income from:							
Donations and Grants	2	9,063,795	306,991	9,370,786	3,614,934	464,873	4,079,807
Investments (Income from Interest)		42,051	-	42,051	5,010	-	5,010
Total income		<u>9,105,846</u>	<u>306,991</u>	<u>9,412,837</u>	<u>3,619,944</u>	<u>464,873</u>	<u>4,084,817</u>
Expenditure on:							
Raising funds	3a	331,845	-	331,845	254,428	2,617	257,045
Charitable activities							
Promotion of equality and human rights	3a	1,675,940	200,147	1,876,087	1,248,654	310,073	1,558,727
Prevention and relief of poverty	3a	1,675,940	200,147	1,876,087	1,248,654	310,073	1,558,727
Total expenditure		<u>3,683,725</u>	<u>400,294</u>	<u>4,084,019</u>	<u>2,751,736</u>	<u>622,764</u>	<u>3,374,500</u>
Net income for the year	5	<u>5,422,121</u>	<u>(93,303)</u>	<u>5,328,818</u>	<u>868,208</u>	<u>(157,891)</u>	<u>710,317</u>
Net movement in funds		<u>5,422,121</u>	<u>(93,303)</u>	<u>5,328,818</u>	<u>868,208</u>	<u>(157,891)</u>	<u>710,317</u>
Reconciliation of funds:							
Total funds brought forward		3,667,913	54,046	3,721,959	2,799,705	211,937	3,011,642
Total funds carried forward		<u>9,090,034</u>	<u>(39,257)</u>	<u>9,050,777</u>	<u>3,667,913</u>	<u>54,046</u>	<u>3,721,959</u>

All of the above results are derived from continuing activities. There were no other recognised gains or losses other than those stated above. Movements in funds are disclosed in Note 15a to the financial statements.

GIRLS NOT BRIDES: THE GLOBAL PARTNERSHIP TO END CHILD MARRIAGE

Balance sheet

Company no. 8570751

As at 31 December 2023

	Note	£	2023 £	£	2022 £
Fixed assets:					
Tangible assets	10		19,087		30,223
			19,087		30,223
Current assets:					
Debtors	11	161,098		181,205	
Cash at bank and in hand		725,396		4,020,855	
Short term investments		8,501,891		-	
			9,388,385	4,202,060	
Liabilities:					
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	12	(356,695)		(510,324)	
Net current assets			9,031,690		3,691,736
Net assets			9,050,777		3,721,959
The funds of the charity:					
Restricted funds	14a		(39,257)		54,046
Unrestricted funds:					
Designated funds		6,438,630		-	
General funds		2,651,404		3,667,913	
Total unrestricted funds			9,090,034		3,667,913
			-		-
Total charity funds			9,050,777		3,721,959

Approved by the trustees on 20 June 2024

and signed on their behalf by

Dr Anne T. Gallagher, AO
Trustee

Statement of cash flows

For the year ended 31 December 2023

	Note	2023		2022	
		£	£	£	£
Cash flows from operating activities					
Net income for the reporting period (as per the statement of financial activities)		5,328,818		710,317	
Depreciation charges	10	26,238		46,328	
Decrease/ (Increase) in debtors	11	20,107		(31,267)	
(Decrease) in creditors	12	(153,630)		(137,179)	
Net cash provided by operating activities		5,221,533		588,199	
Cash flows from investing activities					
Payments for property and equipment		(15,101)		(7,454)	
Net cash used in investing activities		(15,101)		(7,454)	
Change in cash and cash equivalents in the year		5,206,432		580,745	
Cash and cash equivalents at the beginning of the year		4,020,855		3,440,110	
Cash and cash equivalents at the end of the year		9,227,287		4,020,855	
Cash and cash equivalents		725,396		4,020,855	
Short Term Investments		8,501,891		-	
Analysis of cash and cash equivalents and of net debt					
	At 1 January		Other non-	At 31 December	
	2023	Cash flows	cash	2023	
	£	£	changes	£	
Current accounts	982,209	(256,813)	-	725,396	
Deposit accounts	3,038,646	5,463,245	-	8,501,891	
Total cash and cash equivalents	4,020,855	5,206,432	-	9,227,287	

Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 31 December 2023

1 Accounting policies

a) Statutory information

Girls Not Brides is a charitable company limited by guarantee and is incorporated in England and Wales (company number: 8570751; charity number: 1154230).

The registered office address is Seventh Floor, 65 Leadenhall Street, London EC3A 2AD.

b) Basis of preparation

Assets and liabilities are initially recognised at historical cost or transaction value unless otherwise stated in the relevant accounting policy or note.

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland Charities SORP (FRS 102) including update bulletin 2, the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the United Kingdom and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102), the Charities Act 2011 and Companies Act 2016.

c) Public benefit entity

The charity meets the definition of a public benefit entity under FRS 102.

d) Presentational and functional currencies

The accounts are presented in sterling. The functional currencies of the charity are sterling, US dollar and euro. The accounts are presented in sterling since that is the currency in which the charity conducts most of its activities. No amounts have been rounded.

e) Going concern

There are no material uncertainties that cast significant doubt upon the charity's ability to continue as a going concern.

f) Income

Income is included in the Statement of financial activities when the charity is entitled to the income and the amount can be quantified with reasonable accuracy. The following specific policies are applied to particular categories of income:

- Voluntary income is received by way of grants, donations and gifts and is included in full in the Statement of financial activities when receivable. Grants, where entitlement is not conditional on the delivery of a specific performance by the charity, are recognised when the charity becomes unconditionally entitled to the grant.
- Any income received where the donor has specified that it is to be expended in a future accounting period is included within creditors as deferred income.
- Investment income is included when receivable.

g) Fund accounting

Unrestricted funds are available for use at the discretion of the Trustees in furtherance of the general objects of the charity. Restricted funds are only for use of the purposes prescribed by the donors.

Designated funds are unrestricted funds earmarked by the Trustees for particular purposes.

Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 31 December 2023

1 Accounting policies (continued)

h) Expenditure and irrecoverable VAT

Expenditure is recognised on an accruals basis as a liability is incurred. Expenditure includes any VAT that cannot be fully recovered, and is reported as part of the expenditure to which it relates:

- Costs of generating funds comprise the costs associated with attracting donations and grants.
- Charitable expenditure comprises those costs incurred by the charity in the delivery of its activities and services for its beneficiaries. It includes both costs that can be allocated directly to such activities and those costs of an indirect nature necessary to support them. These are split in accordance with the project codes used in the charity's accounting system.
- Support costs consist of the charity's administration budget heading. Support costs are allocated equally between the charity's two charitable activities.
- Governance costs are the costs associated with the governance arrangements of the charity. These costs are associated with constitutional and statutory requirements and include any costs associated with the strategic management of the charity's activities.

i) Operating leases

Rentals payable under operating leases are charged in the income and expenditure account on a straight line basis over the lease term.

j) Tangible fixed assets

Tangible fixed assets are capitalised at cost and are depreciated over their useful economic lives.

Depreciation is provided at rates calculated to write down the cost of each asset to its estimated residual value over its expected useful life. The depreciation rates in use are as follows:

- | | |
|---------------------------|----------------------|
| • Computers and software | over 3 years |
| • Furniture and equipment | over 3 to 5 years |
| • Leasehold improvements | over length of lease |

Fixed assets with a value less than £1,000 are not capitalised.

k) Debtors

Trade and other debtors are recognised at the settlement amount due after any trade discount offered. Prepayments are valued at the amount prepaid net of any trade discounts due.

l) Cash at bank and in hand

Cash and cash equivalents comprise cash in hand and call deposits, and other short-term highly liquid investments that are readily convertible to a known amount of cash and are subject to an insignificant risk of change in value.

m) Creditors and provisions

Trade creditors are obligations to pay for goods or services that have been acquired in the ordinary course of business from suppliers. Accounts payable are classified as current liabilities if the charitable company does not have an unconditional right, at the end of the reporting period, to defer settlement of the creditor for at least 12 months after the reporting date. If there is an unconditional right to defer settlement for at least 12 months after the reporting date, they are presented as non-current liabilities.

Trade creditors are recognised at the transaction price.

Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 31 December 2023

1 Accounting policies (continued)

Provisions are recognised when the company has an obligation at the reporting date as a result of a past event, it is probable that the company will be required to settle that obligation and a reliable estimate can be made of the amount of the obligation.

n) Pensions

The company operates a defined contribution scheme for the benefit of its employees. The costs of contributions are charged to the Statement of financial activities in the year in which they are payable.

o) Foreign currencies

Transactions in foreign currencies are recorded at the rate as at the date of the transaction. Monetary assets and liabilities are re-translated at the rate of exchange ruling at the balance sheet date. Any differences are taken to the Statement of financial activities.

2 Income from donations (grants)

	2023			2022		
	Unrestricted	Restricted	Total	Unrestricted	Restricted	Total
	£	£	£	£	£	£
Government grants	733,488	-	733,488	1,255,497	-	1,255,497
Donations	6,438,630	-	6,438,630	-	-	-
Other grants and donations	1,891,677	306,991	2,198,668	2,359,437	464,873	2,824,311
	<u>9,063,795</u>	<u>306,991</u>	<u>9,370,786</u>	<u>3,614,934</u>	<u>464,873</u>	<u>4,079,807</u>

Donations: In 2023, *Girls Not Brides* received a significant gift from philanthropist MacKenzie Scott via Yield Giving amounting £6,438,630. The Trustees have designated these funds towards a sustainable growth and innovation fund.

Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 31 December 2023

3a Analysis of expenditure (current year)

	Charitable activities					2023 Total £	2022 Total £
	Raising funds £	Human rights £	Relief of poverty £	Governance costs £	Support costs £		
Staff costs (Note 6)	196,819	396,540	396,540	-	474,689	1,464,588	1,457,583
Premises costs (rent, utilities)	-	5,944	5,944	-	168,661	180,549	183,563
Travel and workshops / meetings	67,033	305,919	305,919	14,221	97,141	790,233	184,078
Consultancy	1,861	419,975	419,975	6,050	65,930	913,791	802,151
Grants (Note 4)	-	115,117	115,117	-	-	230,234	405,754
Professional fees	-	-	-	13,440	48,639	62,079	34,149
IT and communications	-	16,152	16,152	-	105,965	138,269	139,039
Office and other	884	105,330	105,330	-	92,732	304,276	168,183
	<u>266,597</u>	<u>1,364,977</u>	<u>1,364,977</u>	<u>33,711</u>	<u>1,053,757</u>	<u>4,084,019</u>	<u>3,374,500</u>
Support costs	63,225	495,266	495,266	-	(1,053,757)	-	-
Governance costs	2,023	15,844	15,844	(33,711)	-	-	-
Total expenditure 2023	<u>331,845</u>	<u>1,876,087</u>	<u>1,876,087</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>4,084,019</u>	<u>3,374,500</u>

Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 31 December 2023

3b Analysis of expenditure (prior year)

	Raising funds £	Charitable activities			Support costs £	2022	Total £
		Human rights £	Relief of poverty £	Governance costs £			
Staff costs (Note 6)	163,986	440,710	440,710	-	412,177	1,457,583	
Premises costs (rent, utilities)	-	4,524	4,524	-	174,514	183,562	
Travel and workshops / meetings	4,284	66,299	66,299	11,621	35,575	184,078	
Consultancy	34,830	326,415	326,415	11,300	103,191	802,151	
Grants (Note 4)	-	202,622	202,622	-	510	405,754	
Professional fees	-	-	-	14,700	19,449	34,149	
IT and communications	-	18,004	18,004	-	103,032	139,040	
Office and other	37	79,347	79,347	1,032	8,420	168,183	
	203,137	1,137,921	1,137,921	38,653	856,868	3,374,500	
Support costs	51,582	402,643	402,643	-	(856,868)	-	
Governance costs	2,327	18,163	18,163	(38,653)	-	-	
Total expenditure 2022	257,046	1,558,727	1,558,727	-	-	3,374,500	

Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 31 December 2023

4 Grant making

	Grants to institutions £	2023 £	2022 £
Cost			
Joy for Children Uganda	-	-	80,000
Asociación Donamor - Guatemala	-	50,000	-
Association for social and human awareness - ASHA- India	-	23,167	-
SongES Niger	-	32,627	58,252
Women Deliver	-	-	41,987
Voix de Femmes, Burkina Faso	-	28,247	35,122
Associação Moçambicana Desenvolvimento da Família, Mozambique	-	-	31,018
Child and Youth Protection Foundation, Nigeria	-	6,660	23,654
Msichana Empowerment Kuria, Kenya	-	28,001	15,739
Children's Dignity Forum, Tanzania	-	12,727	5,677
Other small grants	-	48,806	114,305
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
At the end of the year	-	230,235	405,754
	<hr/> <hr/>	<hr/> <hr/>	<hr/> <hr/>

During the year *Girls Not Brides* agreed to pay a grant to Asociación Donamor - Guatemala totalling £50,000 from restricted funding.

During the year *Girls Not Brides* agreed to pay a grant to Association for social and human awareness - ASHA- India - totalling £23,167 from restricted funding.

During the year *Girls Not Brides* agreed to pay grants to SongES Niger totalling £32,627 from restricted funding.

During the year *Girls Not Brides* agreed to pay grants to Voix De Femmes totalling £28,247 from restricted funding.

During the year *Girls Not Brides* agreed to pay grants to Msichana Empowerment Kuria, Kenya totalling £28,001 from restricted funding.

During the year *Girls Not Brides* paid grants to Children's Dignity Forum, Tanzania totalling £12,727 from restricted funding.

During the year *Girls Not Brides* made a number small grants to member organisations, with an average value of approximately £7,000.

Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 31 December 2023

5 Net income for the year

This is stated after charging:

	2023	2022
	£	£
Depreciation	26,238	46,328
Operating lease rentals payable:		
Property	113,290	109,590
Auditor's remuneration (excluding VAT):		
Audit	11,200	10,000
Other auditing services (EOL project)	4,700	4,400
Foreign exchange gains	42,436	107,355

Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 31 December 2023

6 Analysis of staff costs, Trustee remuneration and expenses, and the cost of key management personnel

Staff costs were as follows:

	2023	2022
	£	£
Salaries and wages	1,175,919	1,178,043
Social security costs	129,104	137,802
Employer's contribution to defined contribution pension schemes	119,745	116,024
Other forms of employee benefits (medical, life and travel insurance)	39,820	25,714
	<u>1,464,588</u>	<u>1,457,583</u>

Girls Not Brides makes contributions to a defined contribution scheme. The amount of contributions due to the scheme at the year ended 31 December 2023 was £nil. (2022: £nil).

During the year 2023, *Girls Not Brides* paid £533,343 (2022, £397,076) to regional contractors for delivering strategic outcomes needed to achieve the strategic targets of *Girls Not Brides* in its global and regional presence.

The number of employees whose remuneration for the year fell within the following bands was:

	2023	2022
	No.	No.
£60,001 - £70,000	-	1
£70,001 - £80,000	2	2
£80,001 - £90,000	-	-
£90,001 - £100,000	-	-
£100,001 - £110,000	-	-
£110,001 - £120,000	-	-
£120,001 - £130,000	1	1

The total employee benefits (including pension contributions and employer's national insurance) of the key management personnel were £334,018 (2022: £364,635). In 2023 the Chief Executive Officer and the two directors were responsible for planning, directing and controlling the activities of the charity. There were two vacant director posts in 2023.

In 2023 *Girls Not Brides* paid £20,270 (2022: £12,751) on behalf of the Trustees for expenses related to travel, accommodation, meals and training. The majority of the cost being £20,270 related to a Board of Trustees retreat in London in December 2022.

Payments to Trustees are permitted by the Charity's Articles of Association.

Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 31 December 2023

7a Staff numbers

The average number of UK employees (head count based on number of staff employed) during the year was 25 (2022: 24).

The average monthly number of employees during the year was:	2023	2022
	No.	No.
	25	24

7b Overseas contractors

The average number of overseas contractors during the year was 22 (2022: 12).

The average monthly number of contractors during the year was:	2023	2022
	No.	No.
	22	12

8 Related party transactions

There are no related party transactions to disclose for 2023 (2022: none).

9 Taxation

The charity is exempt from corporation tax as all its income is charitable and is applied for charitable

10 Tangible fixed assets

	Short leasehold improvements	Computer & software	Furniture & equipment	Total
Cost	£	£	£	£
At the start of the year	106,515	110,618	57,875	275,008
Additions in year	-	15,101	-	15,101
Disposals in year	-	(32,001)	-	(32,001)
At the end of the year	106,515	93,718	57,875	258,108
Depreciation				
At the start of the year	96,228	93,797	54,761	244,786
Charge for the year	10,287	12,837	3,114	26,238
Eliminated on disposal	-	(32,003)	-	(32,003)
At the end of the year	106,515	74,631	57,875	239,021
Net book value				
At the start of the year	10,287	16,821	3,114	30,222
At the end of the year	-	19,087	-	19,087

All of the above assets are used for charitable purposes.

Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 31 December 2023

11 Debtors

	2023	2022
	£	£
Other debtors	88,036	88,508
Prepayments	73,062	92,697
	161,098	181,205

12 Creditors: amounts falling due within one year

	2023	2022
	£	£
Trade creditors	66,035	62,898
Taxation and social security	38,732	41,626
Grants payable	71,263	68,777
Other creditors	180,665	254,365
Deferred income (Note 13)	-	82,659
	356,695	510,324

13 Deferred income

Movements in deferred income during the year are as follows:

	2023	2022
	£	£
Balance at the beginning of the year	82,659	150,277
Amount released to income in the year	(82,659)	(67,619)
Amount deferred in the year	-	-
Balance at the end of the year	-	82,659

No deferred income recognised during 2023

GIRLS NOT BRIDES: THE GLOBAL PARTNERSHIP TO END CHILD MARRIAGE

Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 31 December 2023

14a Analysis of net assets between funds (current year)

	General unrestricted £	Restricted £	Total funds £
Tangible fixed assets	19,087	-	19,087
Net current assets	9,070,947	(39,257)	9,031,690
Net assets at 31 December 2023	9,090,034	(39,257)	9,050,777

14b Analysis of net assets between funds (prior year)

	General unrestricted £	Restricted £	Total funds £
Tangible fixed assets	30,223	-	30,223
Net current assets	3,637,690	54,046	3,691,736
Net assets at 31 December 2022	3,667,913	54,046	3,721,959

15a Movements in funds (current year)

	At 1 January 2023 £	Income & gains £	Expenditure & losses £	Transfers £	At 31 December 2023 £
Restricted funds:					
Education Out Loud	57,422	196,462	(253,884)	-	-
Oak Foundation	-	48,156	(48,156)	-	-
UNFPA	-	28,679	(67,936)	-	(39,257)
UNICEF	(29,162)	33,694	(4,532)	-	-
Packard Foundation	25,786	-	(25,786)	-	-
Total restricted funds	54,046	306,991	(400,294)	-	(39,257)
Unrestricted funds:					
Designated funds:					
<i>Sustainable Growth & Innovation Fund</i>	-	6,438,630	-	-	6,438,630
Total designated funds	-	6,438,630	-	-	6,438,630
Total unrestricted funds	3,667,913	9,105,846	(3,683,725)	-	9,090,034
Total funds	3,721,959	9,412,837	(4,084,019)	-	9,050,777

The narrative to explain the purpose of each fund is given at the foot of the note below.

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Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 31 December 2023

15b Movements in funds (prior year)

	At 1 January 2022 £	Income & gains £	Expenditure & losses £	Transfers £	At 31 December 2022 £
Restricted funds:					
Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation	81,099	-	(81,099)	-	-
Players of People's Postcode Lottery	71,047	-	(71,047)	-	-
Education Out Loud	59,791	301,395	(303,765)	-	57,421
UNFPA	-	75,285	(75,285)	-	-
UNICEF	-	48,427	(77,588)	-	(29,161)
Packard Foundation	-	39,766	(13,980)	-	25,786
Total restricted funds	211,937	464,873	(622,764)	-	54,046
General funds	2,799,705	3,619,944	(2,751,736)	-	3,667,913
Total funds	3,011,642	4,084,817	(3,374,500)	-	3,721,959

Purposes of restricted funds

In 2023, *Girls Not Brides* received grant funding of £196,462 from Education Out Loud for strengthening collective action to end child marriage, keep girls in school and advance gender equality in West Africa. This was in continuation of the funds received in 2021 and 2022. 2023 was the final year of Education Out Loud project. In 2024, a new project phase and continued partnership will commence. A total amount of £253,884 was spend during the year 2023 for project activities.

In 2023 UNFPA awarded *Girls Not Brides* another grant of £28,679 for the Child Marriage Action to Research Network. In the year 2023, a total expense of £67,935 was incurred for implementing activities of this project. The deficit incurred is due to remaining income due from UNFPA of £39,257 which was received in

In 2023, UNICEF paid *Girls Not Brides* remaining grant funds of £33,694 for capacity building in national civil society organisations to analyse and address causes of gender inequality and implemented final activities of £4,532 which resulted all funds being spent for this project.

For 2023, a carried forward balance of £25,786 related to Packard foundation was spent on activities related to our work on amplifying the partnership communications from our regions.

Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 31 December 2023

16 Operating lease commitments payable as a lessee

Total amount payable in respect of non-cancellable operating leases:

	2023	2022
	£	£
Less than one year	74,256	148,932
One to two years	208,913	223,188
Two to five years	148,932	59,981
	432,101	432,101

Accounts



GIRLS NOT BRIDES

The Global Partnership
to End Child Marriage

**GIRLS NOT BRIDES:
THE GLOBAL PARTNERSHIP TO END CHILD MARRIAGE
ACCOUNTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2022**

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Company number: 8570751

Charity number: 1154230

GIRLS NOT BRIDES: THE GLOBAL PARTNERSHIP TO END CHILD MARRIAGE

**TRUSTEES' ANNUAL REPORT
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2022**

REFERENCE AND ADMINISTRATIVE DETAILS

Trustees:	Dr Anne T Gallagher (Chair) Ann Cotton Nick Grono (resigned 30 March 2022) Karin Forseke (Treasurer) (resigned 10 June 2022) Georgia Arnold Emma Puig De La Bellacasa Rita Sarin Zipporah Jean Alaroker Michael Feigelson
Chief Executive Officer:	Dr Faith Mwangi-Powell
Key management personnel:	Dr Faith Mwangi-Powell, Chief Executive Officer Heather Barclay, Director of Policy, Advocacy and Communications (left 30 April 2022) Akila Lingham, Director of Finance and Operations Rita Soares, Director of Partnership, Learning and Impact
Contact address and registered office:	Seventh Floor 65 Leadenhall Street London EC3A 2AD United Kingdom
Auditors:	Sayer Vincent LLP Invicta House 108-114 Golden Lane London EC1Y 0TL
Bankers:	HSBC Bank plc 21 Kings Mall London W6 0QF
Solicitors:	Bates Wells 10 Queen Street Place London EC4R 1BE

INTRODUCTION TO GIRLS NOT BRIDES

The vision of *Girls Not Brides: The Global Partnership to End Child Marriage (Girls Not Brides)* is a world without child marriage where girls and women enjoy equal status with boys and men and are able to achieve their full potential in all aspects of their lives. We support a comprehensive approach to ending child marriage and addressing the underlying economic and social drivers of child marriage, including harmful gender and social norms that deny girls opportunities and their rights. By taking a holistic approach we not only contribute to ending child marriage, but also achieve progress across several global development goals including health, education, and poverty reduction. Our belief is that addressing child marriage in a holistic and comprehensive manner helps create a safer world for girls and leads to benefits far beyond simply delaying the age of marriage.

About child marriage

Every year, child marriage denies 12 million girls their rights to health, education, safety and control over their own lives. This is equivalent to one in five girls around the world.¹ This human rights violation occurs across cultures, countries and religions. Over 650 million women alive today were married as children, and every minute 23 more girls are married. Rooted in gender inequality and discrimination, child marriage disproportionately affects women and girls in terms of both the number of child brides and the life-long impact.

Ahead of the pandemic, we saw a decline in child marriage rates globally, but with the onset of COVID-19 experts are predicting an increase in child marriages as a consequence of a variety of factors including school closures, increased violence and domestic poverty. UNICEF estimates that we will see 10 million more child marriages by 2030² as a direct consequence of COVID-19, in addition to the 12 million girls already married each year.

Child marriage has many implications for both girls and their families and communities. Girls who are married early are at increased risk of dangerous complications in pregnancy and childbirth, and of domestic violence. With little access to education and economic opportunities, they and their families are more likely to live in poverty. Communities and nations also feel the impact of child marriage. Systems that undervalue the contribution and participation of girls and women limit their own possibilities for growth, stability and transformation. The World Bank and International Center for Research on Women estimate that child marriage costs economies around the world [trillions of dollars](#). Girls affected by humanitarian contexts – including conflict, displacement and natural disasters – are more vulnerable to child marriage due to increased insecurity, greater poverty and weaker social networks.

One of the fundamental beliefs of *Girls Not Brides* is that if we address child marriage in a holistic and comprehensive manner, it is possible to empower adolescent girls and transform societies. Ending child marriage is a global commitment enshrined in Target 5.3 of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) to “eliminate all harmful practices, such as child, early and forced

¹ For more information on child marriage prevalence rates in countries and across regions, please consult our [Child Marriage Atlas](#), which is the only source of consolidated data on the issue of child marriage. It also highlights numbers of girls affected, the legal/policy situation in each country, and the distribution of *Girls Not Brides*' members, National Partnerships and civil society coalitions.

² UNICEF, 2021, [COVID-19: A threat to progress against child marriage](#).

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marriage and female genital mutilations". It is also necessary to achieve [almost half of the SDGs](#), including those related to poverty, education, health and inequalities.

Child marriage is a complex issue with no single solution. We must work collectively across sectors – and from the local to global level – to change the perceptions, norms and experiences that shape and hinder girls' lives. In 2014, *Girls Not Brides* worked with 150 members and partners to develop our Theory of Change ([revised in 2023](#)). It identifies four strategies to end child marriage: working directly with girls; mobilising families and communities; providing services (including health, education and child protection); and creating and sustaining an enabling legal and policy framework.

Our members and partners work across the four key strategies outlined in the Theory of Change, and the *Girls Not Brides* secretariat plays a distinctive catalytic role within the movement. We mobilise collective action and support at the national, regional and international levels; support member organisations to build their knowledge, skills and leadership and share their expertise; advocate for financial resources; and synthesise and disseminate learning on ending child marriage. In this role, we create a supportive environment to enable greater change. Currently the *Girls Not Brides* partnership comprises over 1,600 members worldwide. 82% work in communities, and nearly 40% identify as youth-led. Less than 12% identify as international organisations.

In 2022 *Girls Not Brides* launched a new Partnership Strategy (2022-2025)³ and a new Secretariat Strategy (2022-2025)⁴. These ambitious plans will guide and shape our work for the next three years and we are confident that together with our members, we will make huge progress in making a positive impact on girls' lives globally.

Abbreviations

- CEFM – Child early and forced marriage
- FGM/C – Female genital mutilation/cutting
- GEF – Generation Equality Forum
- GTA – Gender-transformative approaches
- INGO – International non-governmental organisation
- LAC – Latin America and the Caribbean
- MoU – Memorandum of Understanding
- The CRANK – Child Marriage Research to Action Network
- UK – United Kingdom
- UN – United Nations
- WACA – West and Central Africa

³ <https://www.girlsnotbrides.org/learning-resources/resource-centre/girls-not-brides-partnership-strategy-2022-2025/>

⁴ <https://www.girlsnotbrides.org/learning-resources/resource-centre/secretariat-strategy-2022-2025/>

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Definitions

Child marriage

We use the term “child marriage” to refer to all forms of child, early, and forced marriage and unions where at least one party is under the age of 18. In this, we include all girls and adolescents affected by the practice – whether in formal or informal unions – and acknowledge the culturally-specific understandings of childhood and development, and the complex relationship between age, consent, and force.

The movement to end child marriage

The movement to end child marriage comprises an informal global network of civil society and grassroots organisations, national and international non-governmental organisations (INGOs), activists, academics, United Nations (UN) agencies, funders, governments, leaders and champions – all working towards a world without child marriage where girls can exercise their rights and reach their full potential.

The *Girls Not Brides* global partnership (the Partnership)

At the end of 2022, the *Girls Not Brides* partnership comprised 1,604 member organisations from 110 countries committed to working together to end child marriage and support married girls. *Girls Not Brides* member organisations work across sectors – including health, education, human rights and humanitarian contexts – and range from small grassroots actors to large international organisations.

The *Girls Not Brides* secretariat

The Partnership is supported by the *Girls Not Brides* secretariat – a diverse team based largely in the United Kingdom with staff in Africa, Asia and Latin America. The secretariat plays three broad roles in civil society: a central support and coordination body for the largest global civil society partnership working to end child marriage; a representative of and advocate for civil society on work to end child marriage (including to influence decision-makers and funders at different levels); and an expert and trusted source and convenor of evidence and shared learning on what works to end child marriage.

National and State Partnerships and coalitions

Many *Girls Not Brides* member organisations have come together to accelerate progress to end child marriage in their countries by forming [National and State Partnerships and coalitions](#).

National and State Partnerships are networks of *Girls Not Brides* member organisations that believe in the power of collective action to end child marriage and ensure girls can reach their full potential. They have signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the *Girls Not Brides* secretariat to align their work with the [Partnership Strategy](#).

Coalitions are networks of civil society organisations committed to addressing child marriage and working together at the national level to spearhead change. They are close allies to *Girls Not Brides* but have not signed an MoU.

GIRLS NOT BRIDES: THE GLOBAL PARTNERSHIP TO END CHILD MARRIAGE

TRUSTEES' ANNUAL REPORT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2022

STRUCTURE, GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT

Girls Not Brides was incorporated as a company in the United Kingdom (UK) on 14 June 2013 and registered as a charity in England and Wales on 17 October 2013. It transferred its assets and activities from what was once an initiative under The Elders Foundation to the independent entity on 10 December 2013.

Objects

The charity's objects are all regarded as exclusively charitable under the laws of England and Wales including, but not limited to:

- (a) The promotion of equality and human rights (as set out in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and Subsequent United Nations Conventions and Declarations) throughout the world including, but not limited to:
 - raising awareness of human rights issues
 - relieving need among the victims of human rights abuse
 - research into and international advocacy of human rights
 - providing technical advice to government and others on human rights matters
 - promoting respect for human rights among individuals and corporations
 - eliminating or preventing infringement of human rights
- (b) The prevention and relief of poverty
- (c) The advancement of health
- (d) The advancement of education, in particular but without limitation, by undertaking research and other educational activities and disseminating the results of that research
- (e) The relief of those in need by reason of youth and/or ill health.

Board of Trustees

Girls Not Brides is currently governed by Board of nine Trustees (the Trustees) who are responsible for overseeing the management of all *Girls Not Brides*' affairs. The Trustees are selected and elected according to procedures set out in the Articles of Association. The Trustees ensure that all activities fall within the charitable objectives. The Trustees' main responsibilities are related to administrative and financial governance, management of reserves and investments as well as guiding and overseeing strategy development and planning. In particular, the Trustees are responsible for ensuring the legal and financial compliance of *Girls Not Brides*, including compliance with the Charity Commission's guiding principles and charity law.

The Trustees meet regularly throughout the year and act on advice and information provided by the Chief Executive Officer and the senior management of the charity. All Trustees are provided with an individual induction covering all aspects of the *Girls Not Brides* organisational structure and roles and responsibilities of the Trustees within the organisation, as well as Charity Commission guidance on governance, and the duties of Trustees in the UK. Trustee-specific trainings are organised to

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TRUSTEES' ANNUAL REPORT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2022

ensure that the Board remains compliant with the Charity Commission and up to date on current trends within the non-governmental sector. The Board of Trustees has two committees, being a Finance and Policy Committee and a Fundraising and Donor Relations Committee:

- The Finance and Policy Committee's overall purpose is to support the Board in its fiduciary duties and make sound recommendations to the Board with regards to the strategic direction of the charity's financial affairs. The Committee also acts, as required, as an Audit Committee, Remuneration Committee, and an Investment Committee.
- The Fundraising and Donor Relations Committee's remit is to support the *Girls Not Brides* secretariat in the development and implementation of a fundraising strategy and related principles, outreach, and sourcing and securing new funding opportunities to finance the secretariat strategic plan for 2022–2025.

In 2022, two Board members stepped down: Nick Grono and Karin Forseke. In December 2022, the Board carried out a skills audit to start the recruitment for two new Board members in 2023. At the same time, the Board carried out a governance review to ensure that the Board is effective in relation to the Charity Code of Governance and to support the delivery of the new strategy. Trustee Essentials training was also offered to all Trustees during the year and was undertaken by the Chair.

Statement of Trustees' responsibilities

The Trustees (who are also directors of *Girls Not Brides* for the purposes of company law) are responsible for preparing the Trustees' annual report and the financial statements in accordance with applicable law and UK Accounting Standards (UK Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

Company law requires the Trustees to prepare financial statements for each financial year, which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the charitable company and of the incoming resources and application of resources, including the income and expenditure, of the charitable company for that period. In preparing these financial statements, the Trustees are required to:

- select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently
- observe the methods and principles in the Charities Statement of Recommended Practice (SORP)
- make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent
- state whether applicable UK Accounting Standards and statements of recommended practice have been followed, subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the financial statements
- prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis, unless it is inappropriate to presume that the charity will continue in operation.

The Trustees are responsible for keeping adequate accounting records that disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the charitable company and enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Companies Act 2006. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the charitable company and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

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In so far as the Trustees are aware:

- There is no relevant audit information of which the charitable company's auditor is unaware.
- The Trustees have taken all steps that they ought to have taken to make themselves aware of any relevant audit information and to establish that the auditor is aware of that information.

The Trustees are responsible for the maintenance and integrity of the corporate and financial information included on the charitable company's website. Legislation in the UK governing the preparation and dissemination of financial statements may differ from legislation in other jurisdictions.

The Trustees have no beneficial interest in the charity.

Disclosure of information to auditors

So far as the Trustees are aware, there is no relevant audit information of which the company's auditors are unaware. The Trustees have taken all the steps that they need to as Trustees in order to make themselves aware of any relevant audit information and to establish that the company's auditors are aware of that information.

Auditors

Sayer Vincent LLP have indicated their willingness to continue in office and in accordance with the provisions of the Companies Act it is proposed that they be re-appointed auditors for the ensuing year.

Members of *Girls Not Brides*

The *Girls Not Brides* secretariat supports the global partnership of member organisations. Membership is open to non-governmental organisations that endorse its mission statement and agree to its membership principles. These organisations are publicly and commonly referred to as "members" (as opposed to the Company Members described above).

Members contribute to the Partnership and engage with one another, as well as with the secretariat, in a variety of ways depending on their interests and capacity. The work and interests of members help define the strategy of *Girls Not Brides*, and the secretariat requests feedback from them on various issues on a regular basis.

Secretariat

Girls Not Brides' day-to-day operations are run by its staff based in its London office, with additional individual team members based in New Delhi (India), Nairobi (Kenya) and Mexico City (Mexico). The secretariat is made up of four directorates (Communications & Influencing; Development & Outreach; Finance & Operations; and Partnership, Learning & Impact), with a Chief Executive Officer overseeing their work. The Chief Executive Officer reports to the Trustees. The Trustees delegate the day-to-day running of the organisation to the Chief Executive Officer.

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Principal risks and uncertainties

The organisation's approach to risk management includes reviewing the organisational risk register, with oversight from the Board of Trustees and input from all senior staff, and updating risk management guidance for staff. *Girls Not Brides* views risk management as a continuous process that must be considered at the forefront of all activities by all staff members.

In December 2022, the Trustees conducted the annual review of the risk register and were satisfied with the controls and procedures the secretariat had put in place. The Trustees were also satisfied with progress in monitoring and mitigating previously identified potential risks, including financial risks related to its ability to raise sufficient funds, the impact of currency fluctuations, inflation, the increased cost of living, and management risks.

The risk register is classified into six categories (external engagement, finance and due diligence, fundraising, governance and leadership, operational and partnership) that are further defined into specific potential risk elements. Within this, significant risks are identified and summarised. This includes the following risks and mitigation strategies:

- Losing donors or failing to raise sufficient funds. This is mitigated by tracking donors' evolving strategies, cultivating strong donor relationships, ensuring accurate forecasting and building up the operational reserve.
- Failure to comply with requirements around grants and sub-granting. This is mitigated by a detailed review of contract provisions, preparing and reviewing contract summaries, tracking expenditure through activity codes and developing the organisational grant-making policy and process.
- Unsuitable human resources and operational policies for international context. This is mitigated by an updated approach to regional working which is ongoing into 2023.
- Safeguarding incidents in the secretariat or Partnership. This is mitigated by the organisation's comprehensive and up-to-date safeguarding policies and processes and frequent highlighting of safeguarding as a key issue in organisational culture, communications, induction, project management, training and documents.
- Loss of (and/or failure to recruit) key staff positions including due to uncompetitive salaries during a period of increased inflation, resulting in reduced ability to operate effectively, as well as failure to recruit staff who reflect the diversity of our members and partners. This was managed with a review of the salary data to ensure competitiveness. A salary benchmarking was also completed using Birches global data from the charity sector and implemented at the beginning of 2022. We have also made improvements to our recruitment and retention processes, training of staff, regionalisation approach and increased the diversity in the workforce. We have been mindful of the impact of increased inflation and the cost of living especially on those on low to mid-range grades and made prudent adjustments where necessary.

Safeguarding and Serious Incidents

During the year, *Girls Not Brides* continued to step up its efforts in ensuring high standards of safeguarding, monitoring and training of all relevant persons across the globe.

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The charity maintains its zero-tolerance policy towards abuse or other forms of serious misconduct and sets clear standards and expectations around members' behaviour in our international Code of Conduct. All employees and other representatives are required to take part in both induction and recurring annual training on safeguarding and associated policies and controls (through webinars, face-to-face discussions, and consultations).

The Trustees are cognisant of their obligations to report the most serious misconduct or abuse to relevant authorities in the UK and other countries of operation, in particular the formal requirements for Serious Incident Reporting to the Charity Commission for England and Wales. This obligation is understood across the broader definitions of Serious Incidents in which the Commission would have an interest. There were no Serious Incident Notifications made to the Commission during the period covered by this report.

Public benefit

The Trustees' report sets out *Girls Not Brides'* charitable activities contributing to ending child marriage, which we have carried out in line with our charitable objects, being the promotion of equality and human rights, the prevention and relief of poverty, the advancement of health, the advancement of education and the relief of those in need by reason of youth and/or ill health. The Board has considered the issue of public benefit and is confident that *Girls Not Brides'* activities comply with the duty in section 17 of the Charities Act 2011 to have due regard to public benefit guidance published by the Charity Commission.

Fundraising

In 2022, *Girls Not Brides* actively fundraised from a small pool of donors, primarily made up of governments and foundations. Activities were led by our Senior Leadership Team and Development and Outreach Team with active support from our Global Champion. We also benefited from the support and expertise of other colleagues and Board Members. Activities included researching prospective government and foundation funding, a variety of communications with existing and prospective donors, and preparing concept notes, proposals and reporting for these donors. *Girls Not Brides'* fundraising activities are guided by the Fundraising and Donor Relations Committee.

During the year under review, *Girls Not Brides* did not use professional fundraisers or commercial participators and did not actively solicit funds from the general public, including vulnerable people, for the secretariat's work. We complied with fundraising regulation and codes in 2022 and we did not receive any complaints.

Remuneration policy

Girls Not Brides applies a Global Pay and Benefits policy, which provided the organisation with a framework and principles for pay and benefits for all employees, including how salaries are set, how pay increases are determined, and other pay related topics.

In line with the values of *Girls Not Brides*, the new policy aims to provide transparency, equity, and fairness to staff following a 'Total Reward Approach', which includes financial and non-financial elements.

Girls Not Brides is guided by the following remuneration principles in line with Project Fair:

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- **Competitiveness:** to attract and retain outstanding individuals, while taking into account market trends in the sector
- **Fairness and equity:** to ensure that the compensation process remains consistent, non-discriminatory and reasonable, and that staff members in comparable positions can afford a similar standard of living in different geographical locations
- **Transparency:** to ensure staff members have a clear understanding of the policies related to remuneration while ensuring that individual salary data remains confidential
- **Value for money:** to ensure that the funds of *Girls Not Brides* are used for their designated purpose, and that salaries reflect the size, complexity and budget of *Girls Not Brides*.

GIRLS NOT BRIDES' 2022 IMPACT REPORT

Message from the Chief Executive Officer

As Girls Not Brides: The Global Partnership to End Child Marriage entered its 11th year of operations in 2022, the countdown towards the Sustainable Development Goals began in earnest. With only eight years left on the clock, no country is on track to achieve these Goals, including Target 5.3: “To eliminate all harmful practices, such as child, early and forced marriage and female genital mutilations.”

Over the past decade, child marriage prevalence has declined by 15%, but progress has been uneven and is not happening fast enough.⁵ With governments, communities and individuals the world over facing the interconnected challenges of climate crisis, conflict, COVID-19 and rising costs, our work to address child marriage is more urgent than ever.

It is in this context that we began implementing our ambitious new [Secretariat Strategy 2022-25](#). Our approach seeks to deliver the long-term systems change needed to address the root causes of child marriage and gender inequality, to ensure girls and women – in all their diversity – can exercise their rights and fulfil their potential. Change at this scale requires a movement of diverse stakeholders with a shared vision and acting together across sectors and at every level to transform gender norms.

Our role as a secretariat is threefold. 1) We are a central support and coordination body for the largest global civil society partnership working to end child marriage; 2) we represent and advocate for civil society on work to end child marriage, bringing girls and adolescents into decision-making spaces, and mobilising and influencing governments, donors and stakeholders at different levels to take gender-transformative action; and 3) we are an expert and trusted source for evidence and shared learning on child marriage, committed to the belief that our collective work will only be effective and sustainable if it is based on accurate evidence and the lived experience of girls and adolescents.

There are many highlights from what has been a busy year for the global Partnership. In French-speaking West Africa, we supported civil society National Partnerships and coalitions in Burkina Faso and Niger to engage across sectors, share learnings and work collectively to address child marriage and girls' education in an integrated way. We also supported young researchers to undertake individual investigations, positioning them as essential partners in generating evidence and understanding on child marriage.

In Uttar Pradesh, India, we worked with the state coalition to offer girls training in the design and implementation of social action projects to raise awareness, foster positive community attitudes, and gather support for girls' education and services. Through this project, 2,100 adolescent girls identified and took collective action, increased their advocacy work, and inspired others in their communities to support them in transforming the gendered beliefs and practices that drive child marriage and limit girls' opportunities.

⁵ [UNICEF \(2021\) Towards ending child marriage: Global trends and profiles of progress.](#)

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In Latin America and the Caribbean, where child marriage prevalence has remained stagnant over the past 25 years,⁶ we undertook research with adolescent girls and member organisations, focusing on the links between care work and child marriage. We supported young representatives to define and bring our collective findings and recommendations into regional advocacy spaces, leading to their inclusion in the intergovernmental [Buenos Aires Commitment](#).

At the global level, we provided technical input and collectively advocated for governments to support a new United Nations (UN) [Resolution](#) on Child, Early and Forced Marriage, which was adopted with broad consensus by 125 co-sponsors. Gains include a greater focus on the intersecting factors that put girls at risk, and progressive language on their sexual and reproductive rights, education and autonomy.

We also increased our outreach and engagement with researchers, practitioners, funders and policymakers through the Child Marriage Research to Action Network, holding our first ever online [global research convening](#). In this, we brought together participants from around the world to explore the latest evidence – including from member organisations leading innovations in the Global South –, contributed to a diversified global evidence base, and strengthened coordination and action to end child marriage.

We also continued to respond to the evolving needs of the Partnership, and particularly civil society collectives working at the national and sub-national level. We streamlined our processes for making financial investments in *Girls Not Brides* National Partnerships and coalitions, and deepened technical support for them to drive change in their countries and communities.

I look forward to continuing this journey with our friends and partners around the world in 2023. Through our collective global efforts, I am confident we will get closer to the vision of ending child marriage in our generation!

Dr Faith Mwangi-Powell, Chief Executive Officer

⁶ [Ibid.](#)

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Reflections from the Chair of the Board of Trustees

As the Chair of the Board of Trustees of *Girls Not Brides*, I am delighted to introduce this comprehensive annual impact report, a document that does much to bring to life the important work that *Girls Not Brides* is doing and the changes that are happening across the world as a direct result of the global movement to end child marriage.

This report marks my first full year in office, and I continue to be struck by the approach that informs how *Girls Not Brides* understands and responds to an issue as complex and multi-layered as child marriage. The *Girls Not Brides* approach places those most affected – and those supporting them – at the centre.

With over 1,600 members in more than 100 countries, it is an approach that values partnership as the principal tool for supporting individuals, engaging communities and building an advocacy coalition to push for the legal changes, policy and financial commitments, and practical support that will make a real difference. It is an approach that has helped to build an effective, dynamic global movement to end child marriage and that will sustain this movement for as long as it is needed.

Our partners are the core business of *Girls Not Brides* and, as this report confirms, much of our work is aimed at leveraging the collective power of everyone – member organisations, National and State Partnerships and coalitions – to accelerate the momentum towards a world without child marriage. Under our new strategy we are moving even closer to *Girls Not Brides* member organisations: listening carefully and seeking to deliver the kind of support they need to effect real and lasting change.

At the same time, *Girls Not Brides* continues its advocacy and learning work: taking every opportunity to learn with, inform and galvanise the global movement to build a shared vision of a world without child marriage and to drive necessary change. Our approach to advocacy is firmly evidence-based and informed by the girls and women closest to the issue, including those who have been most marginalised.

Such work is fundamental to the mission of *Girls Not Brides* because it helps to create understanding around why ending child marriage and supporting married girls is so important; and why it is crucial to the health and wellbeing of millions of girls and their communities. In a world beset by competing demands for attention and resources, strong, evidence-based advocacy ensures that the issue of child marriage stays where it belongs: at the top of international, regional and national agendas.

This report has documented a solid record of impact. But the challenges are great and much remains to be done. Our broader operating environment continues to be unstable and ever-changing, demanding greater responsiveness and increased flexibility. Within *Girls Not Brides*, ongoing efforts to move closer to member organisations have borne fruit but must be accelerated. Our work to unify the movement and embed a culture of listening and learning must continue as new allies in the global movement to end child marriage come on board.

In closing I express my gratitude to Dr Faith Mwangi- Powell, CEO of *Girls Not Brides*, and her hardworking team, as well as to my fellow Trustees, for their support and guidance. The learning journey around an issue as multifaceted and complex as child marriage is an ongoing one for all of

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us. We can and must learn from each other – and of course with and from the girls we seek to support and champion, so they can exercise their rights and reach their full potential.

Dr Anne T. Gallagher AO, Chair of the Board of Trustees

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2022 impact at a glance

We have consolidated our collective engagement, experience and diversity

- 1,604 member organisations
- 17 Coalitions
- 13 National and State Partnerships
- 20+ financial investments in National and State Partnerships, totalling £0.4m
- 110 countries

We have amplified girls' and member organisations' voices and collectively pushed for decision-makers to take action

- 24 stories published
- 125 governments co-sponsoring the UN Resolution to end child, early and forced marriage
- 18 governments showing committed action through tangible commitments towards addressing child marriage
- 780+ downloads of ethical communications guidelines and tools
- 106 participants in learning series on ethical communications
- 520 youth activists participated in advocacy/campaign moments with decision-makers

We have facilitated shared learning, research uptake and evidence-based collective action

- 32 shared learning/capacity enhancement sessions
 - 1,404 participants
- 17 learning products and resources produced and published
- 1 new searchable online research tracker launched
- 20K+ downloads of learning products
- 4 global research meetings
 - 516 participants

We have responded to the needs of the Partnership and promoted investment in grassroots organisations and their networks

- 157 member organisations responding to targeted membership survey of National and State Partnerships
- 722 fundraising opportunities shared with member organisations

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Introduction to the secretariat objectives

In 2022, *Girls Not Brides* began implementing its new Secretariat Strategy 2022-25 to accelerate change to end child marriage. Our work was organised around four objectives:

1. **Movement-building.** Leverage the collective power of the global Partnership of member organisations, National and State Partnerships and coalitions for accelerated action to end child marriage.
2. **Influencing.** Galvanise the wider global end child marriage movement to drive change nationally, regionally and globally.
3. **Learning.** Leverage knowledge, learning and evidence to address child marriage across the movement.
4. **Secretariat at the service of the global Partnership.** Continue to develop as a sustainable and values-based organisation at the service of the global Partnership.

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Progress against our secretariat objectives

Objective 1: Movement-building

Girls Not Brides is the largest partnership working together to end child marriage around the globe. Over 2022, we consolidated our collective engagement, experience and diversity.

Key evidence:

- 1,604 total member organisations⁷
- 32% community-based organisations
- 31% girl- or youth-led organisations
- 22% women-led organisations
- 20% youth-serving organisations
- 4% Indigenous organisations
- 12 National and State Partnerships and coalitions offered strategic accompaniment to drive collective action
- 20+ financial investments in National and State Partnerships, totalling £0.4m

We intentionally focused on growing the movement in Latin America and the Caribbean – a region where progress on child marriage has been slowest – and have increased youth and women's participation and championed their leadership. We worked with member organisations to share learnings, enhance capacity, connect diverse stakeholders, and catalyse collective action at all levels to ensure governments deliver on their commitments.

A new roadmap for our collective work

The collective work of *Girls Not Brides* member organisations is at the forefront of the movement to end child marriage around the world. Over the past decade the global prevalence of child marriage has decreased and millions of girls have enjoyed greater freedoms, opportunities and powers to decide and direct their own lives. However, progress has been uneven, with prevalence declining significantly in some areas and more slowly in others.⁸

Over the past five years, individuals and communities the world over have been severely affected by the COVID-19 pandemic, conflict, climate crisis and rising costs. In this context, we launched our refreshed [Partnership Strategy 2022-25](#) in February 2022. This Strategy is the result of extensive consultation with *Girls Not Brides* member organisations and external stakeholders, and includes insights from over 300 individuals. It builds on the progress, lessons and shifts we have all experienced over the last five years to provide a roadmap for our collective work to 2025.

Partnership Strategy Goals

The Partnership Strategy is organised around six shared goals, designed to focus our work and maximise our impact. They are:

- Communities as the drivers of change, with girls and women at the centre.
- Governments leading effective action and fostering civil society participation.
- The global community championing and supporting initiatives to end child marriage.

⁷ Number/percentage of member organisations in each category is based on how they self-identify in their membership application. Some identify as more than one category.

⁸ [UNICEF \(2021\) *Towards ending child marriage: Global trends and profiles of progress*](#).

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- More sustainable, long-term funding available, particularly for communities.
- Evidence-based work to address child marriage.
- Collective engagement through a diverse global Partnership.

The Partnership Strategy goals – and the overarching themes of gender-transformative approaches, meaningful youth engagement and child marriage as a multi-sectoral issue – guided the development of our renewed Secretariat Strategy, also launched at the beginning of 2022.

While implementing these strategies, we are also committed to continuously listening, learning and adapting to the needs of the Partnership, and to the emerging evidence. We also offer a platform that foregrounds the experiences of the Partnership and promotes shared learning and evidence uptake with diverse stakeholders, to maximise impact. More on this under Strategic Objective 3 on p. 31.

Gender-Transformative Approaches

Gender inequality is the root cause of child marriage. It, and the social norms and practices that it informs, means that girls and women are treated as second-class citizens, denied their human rights, and valued less because of their sex. To be successful and sustainable, work to end child marriage must push for gender-transformative social change that ensures girls and women – in all their diversity – can exercise their rights, and that achieves gender equality.

Supporting gender-transformative collective action at the sub-national and national level

Girls Not Brides National and State Partnerships and coalitions – as networks of organisations bringing together contextually relevant expertise, evidence and connections, and speaking with one voice – are uniquely positioned to influence and advocate for local and national governments to take action. The *Girls Not Brides* secretariat offers tailored technical assistance to these networks, based on their priority work areas and needs as defined by them – and as included in the refreshed Partnership Strategy – and supports them to connect and learn from each other and broader learning in the movement.

Child marriage is rooted in gender inequality and can only be effectively addressed with long-term structural change to rebalance power and promote girls' rights and agency. *Girls Not Brides* is committed to working with member organisations – and particularly community-based organisations and youth activists – to take collective, gender-transformative actions and achieve change at scale.

Over 2022, *Girls Not Brides* and UNICEF worked with [Girls Not Brides Mozambique](#) and the Coalition of Civil Society to End Child Marriage in Nigeria ([Nigeria Coalition](#)) to advance their gender-transformative collective action and organisational practices. Through a series of workshops and using the *Girls Not Brides* self-assessment scorecard, network members critically reviewed their approaches to inclusiveness, youth and women's leadership, engagement with other collectives, human rights framing, and advocacy to address the structural drivers of child marriage. They then positioned themselves on the Gender Integration Continuum, building a shared understanding and mapping collective gender-transformative actions that respond to their context.

As a result, these networks have improved the participation and leadership of women- and youth-led organisations in their collective activities. They have begun implementing their collectively

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agreed gender-transformative actions, in some cases with funding through this project. The Nigeria Coalition is now a member of the national Technical Working Group on Ending Child Marriage, where they can push for girls' and civil society voices to be heard and reflected in national policy, including the next National Strategy on Ending Child Marriage.

Moving forwards, the secretariat will continue to support these networks on their gender-transformative journeys, facilitating peer mentoring, learning sessions and review meetings, sharing opportunities for further training, and documenting models that address the root causes of child marriage at scale.

Also in Africa, we continued to build on our work with [Girls Not Brides Kenya](#) and the Tanzania Ending Child Marriage Network ([TECMN](#)) to address the linked issues of child marriage and female genital mutilation/cutting (FGM/C) in the cross-border Kuria community. As in Mozambique and Nigeria, we employed gender-transformative approaches, youth engagement and collective action – this time community-based – as tools to achieve sustainable change.

This flagship project saw the creation of two youth working groups, with 133 youth activists trained to act as champions in their communities. Young people, together, built trust with different community stakeholders and worked with government structures to organise mentorship sessions in and beyond schools, and to create four child protection committees.

Girls Not Brides member organisations worked together to support ongoing discussions on the role of social norms in defining a community's priorities and practices. They engaged with community religious and cultural leaders to examine the root causes of practices like child marriage and FGM/C, and held dialogues with youth and women's groups to ensure change is inclusive of those who are most marginalised.

The project shows the power of youth and collective action to effect real change in communities, for example through using media to raise awareness of the impacts of child marriage and FGM/C. *Girls Not Brides* continues to work with member organisations to support young people and raise the issue of child marriage and FGM/C with decision-makers and in the Kuria community. In 2023, we will support the Kuria Youth Movement to End Child Marriage to scale up their work addressing child marriage through intercultural and intergenerational dialogues, community activism and budget advocacy.

Gender-transformative collective action is also a priority for our work in South Asia, which is home to nearly half of all girls married before the age of 18. With support from Oxfam GB, we launched a Gender Leadership Programme to build a network of self-aware gender leaders, who can then lead gender-transformative actions with and between their organisations to better address child marriage across India.

The first five-day residential module convened 27 participants from nine states to explore leadership styles and skills, undertake power and gender analyses, and conceptualise action projects through a gender lens. The diversity of participants – whose ages spanned 50 years and who came from three major religions – contributed to the richness of discussion and perspectives.

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The project will continue into 2023, but already participants have expressed an increased understanding and self-awareness around gender dynamics, knowledge of practical tools and a commitment to implementing change in their own lives, communities, organisations and work to end child marriage. Building on this process, *Girls Not Brides* will make seed investments for projects that incorporate learnings and use innovative gender-transformative approaches to end child marriage over the coming year.

Including girls, adolescents and youth in collective action

While the Gender Leadership Programme mostly focused on adults from civil society organisations, engaging adolescent girls in transformative collective action is also essential to our work. In [Uttar Pradesh](#), India, we worked with the state coalition to offer girls training in the design and implementation of social action projects (SAPs) to raise awareness, foster positive community attitudes, and gather support for girls' education and services. Following this training, 2,100 adolescent girl leaders and their peers implemented 100 SAPs, reaching 13,224 community members and local decision-makers in 28 districts.

The SAPs provided a platform for adolescent girls to enhance their leadership, planning, negotiation and implementation skills. They identified and took collective action, increased their advocacy work – and inspired other adolescent girls and youth workers in their communities to learn and advocate for their rights too. In this, the project shows the power of girls – acting together, in public spaces – to express their needs and solutions, and transform gendered beliefs and practices.

Girls Not Brides will continue to support the coalition in Uttar Pradesh to deliver leadership trainings with and for girls, and link them and girls to government services. This work is more important than ever, as girls are pushed out of school as families and communities struggle to cope with the ongoing repercussions of COVID-19 and rising costs in the state.

Another way to engage young people in gender-transformative action is through sports – particularly pertinent in a country like India, which has a long and rich sporting history from which girls and women have often been excluded. This was the context for our collaboration with Pro Sport Development in 2022, through which 61 youth workers from 49 different organisations learned to use sports to initiate dialogues around gender in rural areas of Rajasthan, Jharkhand and Uttar Pradesh.

Through this initiative, young participants strengthened their understanding of diverse gender identities, roles and stereotypes, and their skills in using sports to facilitate impactful dialogues around gender. They have already reported using their new skills to support girls to build relationships and discuss their goals, beyond marriage.

Strengthening the movement in Latin America and the Caribbean

Child marriage is also a persistent and complex issue in Latin America and the Caribbean. In this region it often takes the form of informal unions⁹ and for this reason it is not widely recognised or prioritised for action. In fact, prevalence has remained stagnant over the past 25 years.¹⁰ As

⁹ When speaking about Latin America and the Caribbean, we refer to child, early and forced marriage and unions in full to make these forms visible, in a region where it is often overlooked.

¹⁰ [UNICEF \(2021\) Towards ending child marriage: Global trends and profiles of progress.](#)

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elsewhere, though, the practice is rooted in gender inequality, and the best way to address it is through collective action to advance girls' rights and agency.

In July, we launched the first National Partnership to address child, early and forced marriage and unions in the region – in Guatemala, where 30% of girls and adolescents marry or enter a union before the age of 18. The National Partnership is made up of 21 civil society organisations and four individual girl and adolescent rights activists – all members of the Mesa a Favor de las Niñas y Adolescentes (La Mesa Niña). These organisations have worked together to advance girls' rights for ten years. Formally becoming a National Partnership reinforces their commitment to addressing child, early and forced marriage and unions as part of their work to ensure all girls and adolescents in Guatemala are free to make choices about their lives and bodies.

The launch itself was one step on the movement-building journey in Guatemala. It provided an opportunity to raise the profile of the issue: 26 media representatives attended the press conference and 47 key stakeholders joined the forum to hear directly from civil society organisations, adolescent girls and youth working to address child, early and forced marriage and unions in the country. It also provided a springboard for a meeting with the Embassy of Sweden and an opportunity to discuss funding for the partnership.

Girls Not Brides continues to work with La Mesa Niña on developing a collective workplan to raise awareness of the issue around the presidential elections in 2023. Implementation will also be supported by a financial investment from *Girls Not Brides*.

Movement-building is a long-term project requiring responsiveness and flexibility in approach, as well as time to build consensus and gain momentum. In the Dominican Republic, we continued to offer technical assistance to a group of organisations financed by the [Girls First Fund](#), exploring opportunities and challenges to forming a national coalition to address child, early and forced marriage and unions.

Through two workshops, they recognised the value of collective work, but also the need to define a common goal and approach, and the internal coordination mechanisms needed to deliver on these.

Moving forwards, *Girls Not Brides* will continue to offer broad support to member organisations in the country, and will work with them to monitor the effect of national policy on child, early and forced marriage and unions.

Reconnecting with member organisations after COVID-19 travel restrictions

The impacts of COVID-19 have been felt across the globe with travel restrictions preventing in-person gatherings for many months. In 2022, we began reconnecting with many member organisations, bringing collectives together again to discuss and plan their shared work.

In Nepal, we held a convening of *Girls Not Brides Nepal* to reconnect and re-energise their collective work, share the latest learning and evidence, and discuss strategies to address child marriage in the country. Together, the National Partnership developed an action plan to guide their work and establish a capacity enhancement strategy for its members, leaving the workshop with strengthened connections, a shared vision and a plan to achieve it.

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People aged 16-40 account for 41% of the total population of Nepal,¹¹ but a lack of meaningful youth engagement in the past has limited their participation in vital discussions on topics like child marriage. So, *Girls Not Brides Nepal* – in partnership with Restless Development Nepal – held a National Youth Consultation on youth leadership to ensure they are recognised as active participants in the national movement to end child marriage.

Building on a 2021 scoping study, the National Youth Consultation brought together 30 youth participants from seven provinces to share their lived experiences, analyse the drivers of child marriage in their contexts, discuss solutions and co-design a youth engagement strategy. As a result of this interprovincial, intersectoral and intergenerational dialogue, the group developed a Charter to guide their advocacy. This Charter was supported by national-level guest representatives, and shared with the Ministry of Women, Children and Senior Citizens, and other stakeholders.

Impact in practice: Collective action and joint advocacy on child marriage and education in French-speaking West Africa

Child marriage and a lack of educational opportunities for girls are both rooted in gender inequality. Lack of access to education – or early school leaving – pushes many girls into marriage, as they lack other opportunities. Equally, married girls often leave school due to practical barriers to access, including care responsibilities (see more on care in the Impact in Practice on p. 29).

Keeping girls in school is one of the best ways to prevent child marriage. Education is also a powerful path to gender equality, as it can strengthen girls' skills, knowledge and power to challenge discriminatory norms. This year, *Girls Not Brides* intensified its cross-sectoral work to ensure child marriage and girls' education are addressed in an integrated way. Our work in French-speaking West Africa, discussed below, is one example of this.

Cross-sectoral work to address child marriage and girls' education in West and Central Africa

Despite recent progress, gender inequality in education in West and Central Africa remains the highest in the world, with 28 million girls lacking access to education.¹² The region also has the highest child marriage prevalence in the world – with 37% of girls married before the age of 18.¹³ Successfully addressing these issues means working collectively, across sectors with education coalitions and young people to promote a better understanding of child marriage and how young people can be effective agents of change.

Responding to requests from member organisations in French-speaking West Africa for more targeted support, we began working at scale in the region for the first time in 2022. With financial support from Education Out Loud, we worked with the [Burkina Faso National Partnership](#) (Coalition Nationale Contre le Mariage des Enfants au Burkina Faso) and the [Niger coalition](#) (Plateforme vers la fin du mariage des enfants au Niger) to address the links between child marriage and education in the region.

¹¹ [UNFPA \(2022\) For young people, by young people.](#)

¹² [Gender Equality and Inclusive Education Task Team, 2017, Promoting girls' right to learn in West and Central Africa, Save the Children and the Regional Coordination Group on SDG4 in West and Central Africa](#); referenced in [Girls Not Brides \(2022\) Child marriage and girls' education in West and Central Africa: Literature review.](#)

¹³ [UNICEF \(2022\) Child marriage in West and Central Africa: A statistical overview and reflections on ending the practice.](#)

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We supported the coalitions to share learning and strengthen their collective advocacy for the implementation of laws, policies and programmes which promote gender equality, improve girls' access and retention in quality education, and contribute to ending child marriage.

Enhancing the capacity of civil society collectives

Working together, we created a platform for members of the education and end child marriage coalitions to come together to share their experiences, learn from one another, and form a better understanding of the overlapping ecosystems of change in their respective countries, and beyond.

Through face-to-face and online sessions and bespoke mentoring – on topics including safeguarding, financial management skills, resource mobilisation and budget advocacy – 169 participants received training to ensure they can work effectively as a collective and feel confident providing peer-support to other organisations.

By facilitating effective cross-sector engagement and capacity enhancement, we have contributed to these coalitions' strengthened collaboration; to recognition of the benefits of working together and strategically across the region; and to the co-creation and implementation of joint advocacy plans.

Engaging youth as agents of change

Girls Not Brides is also committed to supporting young people's leadership in the movement to end child marriage in West and Central Africa. Building on the youth activism training carried out in 2021, we launched a youth-led research project this year, supporting young people from Burkina Faso and Niger to draw on their diverse experiences and intimate knowledge of their community contexts to design and carry out their own research.

Through this project, participants developed their research and analysis skills, built a better understanding of the complexities of addressing child marriage, and contributed meaningfully to the local, national, regional and global body of evidence on child marriage and education.

Alongside the partnership and coalition convenings, this project also contributed to young people being increasingly recognised as leading agents of change in the movement to end child marriage in the region, as evidenced by them being nominated to share their experiences.

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Objective 2: Influencing

With the intensifying impacts of climate crises, conflict, COVID-19 and rising costs of living being felt the world over, our work to raise awareness and push for accelerated action to end child marriage and advance girls' rights and agency is more urgent than ever.

Key evidence

- 24 stories of change published, including girl and member voices
- 780+ downloads of ethical communications guidelines and tools
- 106 participants in learning series on ethical communications
- 515 commitments made through national, regional and global campaigns
- 125 governments co-sponsored a new UN Resolution on Child, Early and Forced Marriage

The secretariat plays a key role in amplifying girls' and member organisations' voices, and in mobilising the global Partnership around a clear, unified and practical vision for change. Together, we have pushed for decision-makers to increase and implement their political and financial commitments, with a focus on multi-sectoral responses and gender-transformative structural change.

Bringing girls' and adolescents' voices into advocacy spaces

Years of collective advocacy have moved the dial towards intergenerational solidarity. *Girls Not Brides* has played a powerful part in opening spaces and offering technical and financial support for young people to represent themselves in national, regional and global arena – work we continued in 2022.

In Latin America and the Caribbean, *Girls Not Brides* worked with other youth and feminist organisations to organise a virtual Regional Youth Forum in preparation for the Regional Conference on Population and Development held in June. During the Forum, we supported youth activists to reflect on the issues that affect them most and to prepare a joint statement, which now acts as a tool for collective youth advocacy in the region. The same team came together again in September to organise another youth forum, ahead of the Regional Conference on Women (see more in the Impact in Practice on p. 29).

In July, *Girls Not Brides* partnered with the UNICEF West and Central Africa Regional Office to support representatives from Children's Dignity Forum – including the coordinator of the Tanzania Ending Child Marriage Network – to join more than 350 other youth delegates at the 10th Africa Conference on Sexual Health and Rights. While there, they shared, learned and networked with governments, activists, UN Agencies, donors, religious leaders and changemakers from across the continent. They came away even more [convinced](#) of the need for greater, more sustainable, flexible and participatory funding for youth movements – a theme which was also picked up by young activists speaking at side events of the UN General Assembly (UNGA) in September.

As part of our engagement at UNGA in New York, we worked with the Ford Foundation to organise a side event to discuss transformative change in a fast-paced world. This provided a unique space for young women activists, practitioners and advocates to bring their priorities – including girls' education, sexual and reproductive health and rights, funding for grassroots and youth-led organisations, and for partnerships – in front of diverse stakeholders, including funders and

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government officials. We tied their insights together with the other issues being discussed at UNGA – including through a blog with our [three key takeaways](#) for the movement to end child marriage – keeping youth and member voices at the core of our own ongoing, collective, cross-sectoral advocacy.

Advocating with and for the girls who have been most marginalised

Around UNGA, we also offered technical inputs into the new [Resolution](#) on Child, Early and Forced Marriage, adopted by the UNGA Third Committee with broad support from 125 co-sponsors in November 2022. Key gains include the focus on the multiple and intersecting factors that put girls at risk – particularly adolescent girls and girls from other marginalised groups. The new resolution also uses more progressive language on girls' sexual and reproductive rights, education and autonomy.

Civil society organisations – including *Girls Not Brides* member organisations – played a key role in calling on governments to support the Resolution, and we will continue to work with them to maintain international pressure on Member States to implement their commitments, including through our [template letter](#).

Many factors can intersect to put girls and adolescents at greater risk of child marriage, including their gender, age, race, ethnicity, sexuality and class. In Latin America and the Caribbean, the continuing marginalisation and stigmatisation of Indigenous communities puts girls and adolescents at greater risk, masks the structural causes of child marriage, and makes it difficult to propose solutions beyond prohibitive laws.

In response to this situation, we joined up with the Foro Internacional de Mujeres Indígenas and the Enlace Continental de Mujeres Indígenas de las Américas to organise a side event at the 21st Session of the UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues (UNPFII). This was a first-time partnership with Indigenous women and youth organisations, specifically intended to raise child marriage as an issue that Indigenous communities have solutions to.

Through the event, we supported Indigenous adolescents, youth and women to compile five [recommendations](#) for community-led, urgent action. The president of the UNPFII acknowledged the importance of addressing the issue and supported these recommendations being presented to Member States.

Collective advocacy has tangible impacts at the national level

The impact of many organisations advocating together around a clear, practical vision for change is more powerful than any one organisation can have alone. That is why we base our collective advocacy on the insights and priorities shared by member organisations, building consensus and gaining momentum in the process. In March 2022, the Government of Guatemala began a legal initiative that would have limited girls', women's and LGBTQIA+ people's rights, including their access to sexual and reproductive health – including abortion – and comprehensive sexuality education.

In response, *Girls Not Brides* worked closely with La Mesa Niña to issue a [joint statement](#) calling for that law not to be passed. Through this initiative – the first time *Girls Not Brides* issued a statement on a national human rights issue in the region – we strengthened our solidarity with national and locally-led feminist and human rights organisations, demonstrated our standing on the issues

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related to child marriage and girls' and women's rights, and contributed to the international pressure which ultimately led to the law being vetoed by the President.

We will continue to work with La Mesa Niña to make sure this law is not revived during the 2023 presidential campaign, and to ensure girls' and adolescents' voices are heard. We will also work with La Mesa Niña on a girls and adolescents network, to support young people to bring key policy issues before presidential candidates, and to hold them to account.

An important learning and strategy coming out of partnership and coalition spaces in South Asia centres on creating spaces for dialogue with and between young people: supporting them to identify shared priorities and present these directly to government. One example of this is our collective advocacy around the minimum age of marriage in India, which was set to increase from 18 to 21 years for girls. We supported 95 civil society organisations and 2,500 young people to share their perspectives, and compile and present their joint demands to government.

Young people did not want to focus on the age of marriage, which they saw as a way to criminalise consensual relationships and reduce girls' and adolescents' right to choose – particularly when they cross caste and religious lines. Instead, they were concerned with access to quality education, safe and decent employment, comprehensive sexuality education and the right to participate in the decisions that affect them. Sustained collective advocacy, and submissions to the Parliamentary Committee reviewing the law, has gained global media attention and – so far – kept the law from being changed.

Leading the way in ethical communications

Cutting across all our work to amplify girls' voices is our commitment to communicating responsibly around child marriage. This means following a storytelling process that centres contributor needs and preferences, so they find it to be a source of power. To facilitate this, we launched our newly designed [ethical communications guidelines](#) in September, alongside the 15 practical and printable tools needed to deliver on them. We then focused on embedding these tools in our own practices – with participatory training for the whole secretariat – and promoting shared learning and uptake across the Partnership, and beyond.

The dedicated [learning series](#) session on ethical communications was designed with contributions from *Girls Not Brides* member organisations and a survivor of child marriage - to give an overview of the principles and tools included in the guidelines, and to illustrate the real-life impact the communications process can have for girls, adolescents and young women. The session also included a participatory element, where attendees worked through a scenario tailored to their context.

We also co-led a session at the [Bond](#) Communications Working Group, where we shared experiences with communicators working across the international development and humanitarian sectors, so contributing to broader change towards contributor-led, decolonised storytelling. The guidelines and tools have now been downloaded over 780 times in English, French and Spanish, indicating that they are being widely referenced and implemented.

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Amplifying girls' and member voices for a positive vision of change

This year, we used our digital channels to share the work being done to end child marriage, how it affects girls' lives and what challenges we still face as a movement. In sharing these stories, we have kept member organisations and partners engaged and motivated, and have ensured that decision-makers, governments and donors can see the impact of investing in civil society organisations and partnerships working with girls to build a better future for us all.

Over 2022, we published 24 stories – including girl- and member-led insights, expertise and personal stories – on our website. The website was viewed over 1.2 million times, and stories accounted for almost 16,000 of these. This year, stories focused on gender-transformative approaches, youth activism, intersectionality, humanitarian contexts, and collective action and advocacy to end child marriage.

The most visited story was [I do not: How Nepalese girls are breaking free from child marriage](#), an in-depth story about Kavita,¹⁴ a young woman from rural Nepal who built up her confidence through a children's club organised by the Janaki Women's Awareness Society, and persuaded her parents to turn down an offer of marriage while she was still at school. Other blogs included [Changing the pattern: How tailoring is helping young refugees say "no" to child marriage](#) and [How to support girls and adolescents' power in Latin America and the Caribbean](#).

We also shared information, stories, events and discussions on child marriage, and the work being done to end it, across our social media channels. Through this, we encouraged broad audiences and key stakeholders – including member organisations and donors – to join the conversation and to take action. Over 2022, our social media audience across established channels in English grew by 6.6% to a combined total of over 240,000.

Email remains a core part of our work to reach member organisations and supporters with tailor-made information and opportunities. Our broad offer to member organisations includes a monthly summary of fundraising opportunities, and ad hoc emails sharing new resources, advocacy alerts, and event invites and follow ups synthesising key takeaways. All our channels have engagement rates well above sector benchmarks, indicating that our communications are both well-targeted and engaging, and that the latest evidence is being taken up by our audiences.

We launched a newly-designed [monthly email](#) for supporters in December, which provides a curated snapshot of the latest girl- and member-led stories, evidence, news and opportunities for stakeholders including donors, policymakers, journalists and civil society. By engaging regularly with this group, we have encouraged the integration of child marriage into work beyond our Partnership, building a more holistic, multisectoral approach to girls' rights.

Responsible reporting on child marriage

The media is very important for raising awareness and public pressure to end child marriage at the national, regional and global level. We work with member organisations to proactively pitch stories and respond to media requests that cover the issue in an ethical and solutions-focused way, where those affected can tell their stories safely and in their own words. This builds on our approach of

¹⁴ Kavita is a pseudonym.

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promoting personal stories that illustrate the impact of, and solutions to, child marriage, and avoid sensationalist reporting of the issue.

In 2022, we brokered working relationships between journalists at the BBC World Service and BBC Africa and member organisations, shining a light on the work done by civil society organisations to address child marriage. Womba-Wuta Wanki from Generation Alive in Zambia joined Mabel van Oranje and Mary Robinson for a broadcast in the high-profile BBC World Service [How to Be a Former President](#) series. They shared insights on how to build a movement from the ground up, taking collective action, getting the issue on the international agenda, securing funding and engaging with diverse stakeholders at every level.

Girls Not Brides' Head of Africa Engagement, Nerida Nthamburi, represented the Partnership in an interview with [BBC Africa](#), sharing insights on how to engage with young people and their communities to end child marriage. *Girls Not Brides* CEO, Dr Faith Mwangi Powell, also spoke on the TEDx podcast [Climate Curious](#), where she highlighted the links between child marriage and the deepening crises caused by climate change – an area of focus for our cross-sectoral work.

We also contributed to pieces at [Inside Philanthropy](#), focusing on funding for the movement to end child marriage, and the [Chandler Foundation](#), for a piece on systems change and why complex practices like child marriage cannot be solved by single-issue interventions.

This coverage raised the national and international profile of child marriage, putting pressure on governments to fulfil their commitments to end child marriage and guarantee girls' rights, even as they address the interconnecting crises of climate change, COVID-19, conflict and rising costs. It also presented *Girls Not Brides* member organisations, girls and young women as experts on the issue, adding weight to our advocacy for them to be included in decision-making spaces at every level, and for greater and more flexible funding to be made available to those working in partnership at the grassroots level.

Impact in practice: Evidence-based and member-led advocacy to integrate care and child marriage into the regional agenda in Latin America and the Caribbean

When girls marry or enter a union, they often take on additional domestic responsibilities; this limits their freedom, opportunities and access to education. Understanding these experiences – including caregiving – is a significant factor in ensuring our work engages and responds to the needs of the girls who have been most marginalised, including those who are married or in a union.

This area has been largely overlooked in research and advocacy on child marriage, which is why we focused on this issue in Latin America and the Caribbean this year, undertaking original research with adolescent girls and member organisations, and bringing them into regional advocacy spaces to directly share their experiences and solutions with decision-makers.

Original research on care and child marriage in Latin America and the Caribbean

In Latin America and the Caribbean, 21% of girls marry or enter a union before they turn 18, and 4% before they turn 15.¹⁵ Despite prevalence above the global average, the issue is largely overlooked

¹⁵ [UNICEF \(2022\) Child marriage database](#)

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in the region, as are the gendered norms that drive the practice and impact on the lives of girls and adolescents after they are married or in a union, including the gendered distribution of care work.

In 2022, the *Girls Not Brides* secretariat worked with 60 member organisations in Latin America and the Caribbean to develop and implement a multidimensional strategy to advocate for the integration of care and child, early and forced marriage and unions into regional commitments. To support this, we worked with 20 member organisations and 24 adolescent girls and young women to develop a [brief](#) on the links between care and child, early and forced marriage and unions in the region.

This brief outlines the gender disparity in the distribution of care work in the general population, and highlights another clear pattern: girls and adolescents in marriages or unions take on even greater care responsibilities than their unmarried peers. This limits their access to quality education, while also impacting negatively on their economic independence, physical and mental health, and their ability to participate in social and political life. In the brief, we outline recommendations for governments, UN agencies and civil society organisations to guide their work in addressing this gendered inequality. To effectively support girls who are married or in a union, governments must recognise their role as caregivers and adopt public policies that respond to their needs. This includes access to comprehensive health care, particularly sexual and reproductive health services; quality education that covers comprehensive sexuality education and promotes the continued education of married girls and adolescent mothers; and recreational opportunities.

We supported uptake of this brief and its recommendations with evidence-based [advocacy messages](#), shared over social media, that highlight the voices and experiences of girls and member organisations.

Collective advocacy to integrate care and child marriage into the regional agenda

Engaging with adolescent girls and member organisations to produce the brief on care and child, early and forced marriage and unions put us in a strong position to undertake collective advocacy at the regional level, putting their experiences, needs and solutions at the centre of multistakeholder discussions and government commitments.

To this end, we organised an official [side event](#) at the XV Regional Conference on Women in Latin America and the Caribbean – with an expert panel almost entirely comprised of young women – and sponsored eight member organisations to engage at the conference.

At the side event, we presented the brief, shared information and called for comprehensive responses to child marriage that build on the expertise of adolescent girls and young women. As a result, child, early and forced marriage and unions is now included in the conference's [youth declaration](#), [feminist declaration](#) and the intergovernmental [Buenos Aires Commitment](#), which saw governments commit to implementing comprehensive multi-sectoral measures to address all forms of violence and discrimination against women, including child, early and forced marriage and unions.

This was the first time *Girl Not Brides* promoted an official side event made up almost exclusively of young women in a strategic advocacy space. Co-creating a strong, clear, evidence-based advocacy position with member organisations was key to integrating child, early and forced marriage and

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unions into the regional agenda. This success is even more notable given the historic lack of attention given to the link between care work and child, early and forced marriage and unions.

Moving forwards, we will build on these successes, taking collective action and supporting adolescent girls and young women to engage in regional advocacy spaces to push for action on this issue.

Objective 3: Learning

One of our key roles as a secretariat is to facilitate knowledge exchange amongst member organisations and with practitioners, researchers, policymakers and donors to ensure they can access and use the latest evidence and resources.

Key evidence

- 17 learning products produced and shared
- 32 shared learning/capacity enhancement sessions
- 1,404 participants
- 20K+ downloads of learning products
- 4 global research meetings/convenings
- 516 participants
- 80% of survey respondents said they will use learnings in their own work

This year, we built global understanding of how child marriage links to other human rights issues and what works to end it, promoting evidence-based collective action. As a result, we are in a stronger position to collectively advocate for investment and support that will effectively prevent child marriage and support married girls.

Working with member organisations to generate and share evidence

This year, we facilitated and supported opportunities for members to exchange learning with each other and key stakeholders at the national and regional level. India is home to the largest number of girls and women who are married before the age of 18 in the world: 223 million, with over 1.5 million more girls and adolescents affected every year.¹⁶ Despite their numbers, girls and young women who are already married, separated, divorced or widowed (ever-married girls) are largely neglected by child marriage research, policy and programming. Transforming opportunities for all girls means learning more about their lives after marriage, and making the issues they face more visible.

In 2022, we teamed up with American Jewish World Service (AJWS) and *Girls Not Brides* member [Vikalp Sansthan](#) to organise a first-of-its-kind national convening of 40 grassroots practitioners from seven states of India. The convening was a space for these practitioners to share information around the issues that affect ever-married adolescent girls, share strategies and learnings around what works to engage with them, and identify areas for further exploration.

It also resulted in grassroots organisations recognising the need to work with this demographic, a process which will continue through a newly-formed community of practice. A report of the

¹⁶ [UNFPA-UNICEF Global Programme to End Child Marriage \(2020\) Country profile: India.](#)

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convening's findings will also act as an advocacy tool for those seeking greater attention and funding for work with ever-married girls.

Part of our role as the secretariat of a global Partnership is to bring these national-level findings to regional and global audiences – something we did with Vikalp Sansthan during the CRANK global convening (see Impact in Practice on p. 33).

Building on national-level work in Kenya, Tanzania and Uganda, we convened the East Africa Learning Summit on Ending Child Marriage to strengthen intra-regional learning and coordination among member organisations and partners working to end child marriage and FGM/C. The Summit provided an opportunity for *Girls Not Brides Kenya*, *Girls Not Brides Uganda* and the Tanzania Ending Child Marriage Coalition to come together with experts, leaders and known civil society advocates in person for the first time since the COVID-19 pandemic.

Through the Summit, these collectives tracked progress in advancing girls' rights across the region, identified challenges, and enhanced their joint advocacy and evidence-generation skills. They also explored ways to hold governments accountable for their commitments, by ensuring agreement over clear implementation plans for existing laws and policies. They developed collective country work plans - based on practical, evidence-driven actions, which they will take forwards over the coming years.

In Latin America and the Caribbean, we convened three webinars to address the links between child marriage and three issues prioritised by member organisations in the region: comprehensive sexuality education, girls' and adolescents' bodily autonomy, and transformative community leadership. Each session was co-created with ten member organisations who took the lead in sharing their programmes and recommendations.

Through this initiative, we worked closely with civil society organisations to contextualise global evidence and advocacy to the region and, in turn, strengthen the global evidence base with regional and cross-regional insights - work we will continue into 2023.

Strengthening the global evidence base

We produced and shared 17 [learning resources](#) in multiple languages over 2022, including seven in collaboration with *Girls Not Brides* member organisations and partners. These briefs, case studies, literature reviews, guidelines, trainings and tools summarise the latest data, evidence and learning on specific topics, pairing it with actionable recommendations and practical tools in a format that is accessible and usable for broad audiences. They also reflect the expertise and experiences of member organisations, strengthening the global evidence base and making a case for increased funding for civil society organisations and research on what works to end child marriage.

Resources published this year include briefs on child marriage and [intersectionality; girls' education](#) (updated in September); [CEFMU and care](#) and the [Guatemala](#) national context; case studies and analysis of [gender and sexuality](#) from Latin America and the Caribbean; a [conceptual framework](#) and [donor brief](#) on girls' sexuality; a guide for civil society organisations [using the law](#) to end child marriage in India; newly designed [ethical communications](#) guidelines and tools; and a [youth training module](#) and [storytelling toolkit](#). We registered over 20,000 downloads from our Resource Centre over 2022, a strong indication that evidence is reaching and being taken up by our audiences.

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Taking this evidence off the page and into practice has been a priority for us over 2022, with an approach that combines targeted and broad communications across our digital channels, and online and in-person live learning with diverse stakeholders.

Responding to member organisations' request for live learning spaces, we launched a [learning series](#) on what works to end child marriage in June 2022. The series of five sessions covered topics prioritised by member organisations, including [cash transfers](#), the [latest trends and evidence](#), [supporting married girls](#), [ethical communications](#), and [gender-transformative collective action](#). By convening diverse stakeholders, the series promoted cross-sectoral learning and cross-regional comparison; contributed to a strengthened global evidence base which responds to context; and brought member organisations and their work to the attention of a global audience of donors, researchers, policymakers and other practitioners.

Through the Child Marriage Research to Action Network ([the CRANK](#)) – a joint initiative with the UNFPA-UNICEF Global Programme to End Child Marriage – we continued to provide a unique platform for a better coordinated and harmonised global research agenda on child marriage and to encourage research uptake by policymakers and practitioners. Find out more about the CRANK in the Impact in Practice story on p. 33.

Impact in practice: Coordinating and promoting uptake of global child marriage research and evidence

The CRANK is a core part of our objective to ensure a coordinated and equitable global research agenda, which in turn feeds into accelerated action to end child marriage. This means convening diverse stakeholders, sharing the latest child marriage priority topics and evidence, and facilitating research uptake through tailor-made communications materials.

In 2022, we increased our outreach and engagement with researchers, practitioners, funders and policymakers from around the world. Following targeted promotion, the CRANK membership grew by 66% to 469 individuals, who now receive regular communications sharing events and the latest evidence and learning products. Email engagement is well above sector benchmarks, suggesting that this information is being taken up and used by this diverse audience.

Quarterly research meetings spotlighting latest evidence

We continued with our series of online quarterly research meetings this year, providing a space for researchers, practitioners, funders and policymakers to access and learn from the latest evidence on priority topics. These included [girls' sexuality](#), [preventing child marriage at scale](#), and [supporting the most marginalised girls](#), and were supported by a Research Spotlight on successful [multisectoral and multilevel approaches to address child marriage](#). We have also produced a further Research Spotlight on how to reach the most marginalised girls, due for publication in early 2023.

Over 270 people attended the quarterly research meetings, and 87% of those responding to the feedback survey said they would use the evidence presented in their work. The initiative has improved collaboration and coordination across the field of child marriage evidence, research uptake and funding, and contributed to more targeted policy interventions and improved child marriage programme outcomes.

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Beyond the live event, we also ensured broader reach and uptake by distilling the latest evidence into accessible formats and by sharing meeting resources – including key takeaways, notes, recordings, presentations and reports – across our communications channels.

Strengthening coordination of the global research agenda

This year, we also organised our first online [global research convening](#), bringing together 246 participants from around the world over three days to strengthen coordination and action to end child marriage. The convening was organised around three key topics: [learning from the latest evidence](#), [effective partnership](#), and the [child marriage research funding landscape](#).

As part of our commitment to bringing researchers and practitioners from the Global South into discussions on child marriage research, evidence and funding, each day included space for speakers to share their key takeaways and learnings from their work, so facilitating the uptake of more diverse and contextualised evidence, including from locations and populations who have been largely overlooked in child marriage research to date.

During the global research convening, we launched the new CRANK [online research tracker](#), a central part of our work to support and advance research coordination. Through the tracker, users can search for the latest child marriage research across themes and geographies, with search pages in English, French and Spanish. Since launching the tracker, we have recorded more than twice the usual number of research submissions, demonstrating the usefulness of the tool. We will deepen this use over 2023, ensuring the tracker becomes the go-to place for sharing and accessing the latest child marriage research and evidence.

Objective 4: The secretariat at the service of the global Partnership

As a resource and support to the global movement to end child marriage, the *Girls Not Brides* secretariat is as concerned with *how* we work, as much as with what we do. We are committed to ensuring the secretariat responds to the diversity of member organisations, is effective, and continually learns and evolves.

Key evidence

- 16 member organisations accessed tailored safeguarding reviews and training
- 3 new country bases for *Girls Not Brides* team members

In 2022 – after two years of consultations with *Girls Not Brides* member organisations, National and State Partnerships partners and donors – we launched and began implementing our ambitious Secretariat Strategy 2022-25. Strategic Objectives 1, 2 and 3 (Movement-building, Influencing and Learning) represent the “what” of our ambitions for change. Strategic Objective 4 represents the “how” – outlining a roadmap for organisational redesign to support our work for future years.

Rebalancing power and resources

Our fundamental vision is to rebalance power and resources within our activities and organisational structure, ensuring we are reflective of – and well placed to serve – the global Partnership. This includes increasing the representation and leadership of our teams based in Africa, Asia, and Latin America and the Caribbean, as well as diversifying our Board.

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We increased the proportion of team members based outside of the United Kingdom (UK), recruiting eight team members in Africa and Latin America and the Caribbean. We will continue to rebalance our global presence in 2023, and beyond, as positions become vacant and new roles are created. In addition to our key hubs - Nairobi, Mexico City and New Delhi - we now have team members located in Nigeria, Senegal and Uganda.

Key to our organisational redesign is providing deeper support for national and sub-national change through investing in *Girls Not Brides* National and State Partnerships. We believe supporting civil society coalitions to act and advocate together will accelerate action to end child marriage, and that we are uniquely placed to do this. In 2022, we revised our policies to streamline processes for making financial investments in *Girls Not Brides* National Partnerships and coalitions, and will roll out these investments in 2023.

Upholding good governance

In early 2022, we conducted a review of our Articles of Association and updated these to reflect our growth as an organisation and to streamline Board functions. We launched two Board sub-committees – the Finance and Policy Committee and the Fundraising Donor Relations Committee – to ensure efficiency at the whole Board level, and to create strategic spaces for operational advice and support.

We have a diverse Board with representatives from Africa, Asia, Europe, and Latin America and the Caribbean. In 2022, the Board undertook training to improve their understanding of Trustee responsibilities under the UK Charity Commission. We conducted a governance review to ensure our alignment with the Charity Code of Governance and organisational effectiveness. Two Board members stepped down in 2022 and we have used the opportunity to conduct a skills audit to help identify priorities for new Board recruitment in 2023.

Aligned with our commitment to ensuring equity and fairness in what we do and in how we do it, we began a process of reviewing and streamlining our internal policies. We have adopted a new global pay policy, which makes salary scales more equitable and transparent, with benchmarking against similar organisations. We will continue our work into 2023 to formalise and roll out this process across our global team.

Putting girls at the centre of our safeguarding work

Girls Not Brides is committed to ensuring that the needs, interests and safety of girls are at the centre of our approach and any work we support. In 2022, we continued to offer safeguarding trainings and workshops for member organisations, National and State Partnerships, and team members. We have revised our recruitment and induction processes to ensure safeguarding questions are included in all interviews, and new team members complete a mandatory online safeguarding course and induction training.

We have developed our Safeguarding Standards for member organisations, and 16 member organisations accessed tailored project-based safeguarding reviews and training in 2022. As a result, our membership is better equipped to understand the safeguarding implications specific to initiatives that seek to end child marriage.

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TRUSTEES' ANNUAL REPORT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2022

Embedding our commitment to diversity, inclusion and equity

Diversity, inclusion and equity are central to our core principles and values. These are represented in creating a diverse workforce, leadership and Board. We aim to achieve this by advocating fairness, collaboration, respect and transparency in our organisational decision-making, and by establishing fair policies and procedures that are consistently applied. We respect and value people's differences and we proactively seek to create a culture where people feel comfortable to be themselves, and have a sense of belonging.

In 2021, *Girls Not Brides* formalised a Diversity, Inclusion, Voices and Equity committee (DIVEs), consisting of team members from across the organisation. Our DIVEs committee plays an important role in ensuring that the changes we need to make to achieve this are championed across the organisation, and provide a check-and-balance function to the secretariat, supporting accountability around issues relevant to anti-racism, diversity, inclusion and equity.

In 2022, DIVEs worked closely on recruitment to increase the number of roles based in Africa, Asia and Latin America and the Caribbean; to improve our gender diversity; to introduce targeted positions that attract more team members under the age of 24; and to include more non-native English speakers in the team. DIVEs also conducted an analysis of our workplace diversity to identify key priorities and recommendations for 2023, and beyond.

Our Language Committee continued to examine the interconnected relationship between language and power, working to ensure our organisational language reflects our work, values and relationships, and the diversity of the end child marriage movement. The Language Committee draws on an intersectional approach to promote discussion, learning and awareness across our global team. We continued to share these experiences with organisations beyond the movement to end child marriage – including through the Bond network – to support their work to decolonise their relationships and communications.

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TRUSTEES' ANNUAL REPORT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2022

PLANS FOR THE FUTURE

In 2022, we started the implementation phase of our strategic plan, which was approved in December 2021. The vision for the strategy is to deepen our work and revitalise the secretariat's approach to leveraging the movement we galvanised. The strategy reinforces the leadership and collective power of *Girls Not Brides* member organisations to influence a wide range of actors in the movement at all levels and strengthen our collective learning about what works to end child marriage. Underpinned by three strategic pillars - **movement building, influencing, and learning** - the strategy offers a strong framework for change. 2022 was our transition year and our successes in 2022 have created a great foundation for our work in 2023. With a focus on three regions - **Africa, Asia and Latin America and Caribbean** - our work is driven by these pillars and informs our global advocacy, influencing, communication and learning.

Placing increased emphasis on supporting *Girls Not Brides* National and State Partnerships and coalitions to lead national movements, and growing our presence and leadership at the regional level to deliver our vision, in 2023 and beyond we will continue to accelerate all our efforts for change, across the three regions as follows.

In Africa, our focus is to build the capacity of sub-county, sub-national, and national stakeholders to end child marriage; to unlock the potential of a wide range of partners working to end child marriage and encourage them to increase efforts and collaboration; to demonstrate that accelerated change at scale is possible; and to increase use of evidence-based data for advocacy and impact to end child marriage.

We will continue to focus on two sub-regions: West and Central Africa (WACA) and Eastern and Southern Africa (EASA). Under this framing we will, in 2023-2025, focus on seven priority countries: **Burkina Faso, Niger, Kenya, Tanzania, Mozambique, Nigeria and Uganda**. The choice of these countries is based on different strategic opportunities. For example, Burkina Faso and Niger (Francophone West Africa) are in a region with the highest prevalence and burden rates of child marriage, which is also highly unstable and prone to humanitarian crises, as seen in the last few decades. The latest UNICEF data shows that if efforts are not accelerated in the region, it will become the region with the highest child marriage rates in the world. In Kenya and Tanzania, there is a strategic opportunity given the high prevalence of Female Genital Mutilation (FGM), and its links to child marriage.

Our work in these focus countries will include co-creation of long-term strategies in Uganda, Nigeria, Kenya and Mozambique. Disbursement of financial investments (grants) to coalitions will help to strengthen the national movements to end child marriage, and technical support and funding of the movement will foster strong collective action for change. We will work to transform discriminatory social norms, particularly for underserved populations, informed by better contextual understanding of privilege and power. This includes support for married, separated, widowed and divorced girls, and more work with boys and men, traditional and religious leaders and youth networks. We will support the movement to end child marriage in these countries to adopt multi-sectoral interventions to include ending FGM, education, livelihoods, sexual and reproductive health and rights and employment. These are important areas of focus in building the economic and political agency of girls and catalysing norms change at scale.

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TRUSTEES' ANNUAL REPORT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2022

In Mozambique - one of the countries with the highest prevalence of child marriage, globally - we will, over the next three years, support movement strengthening and funding to scale up collective action to address child marriage. This will be through advocacy and monitoring of the implementation of policies adopted by the government on ending child marriage; and improving sectoral engagement with key areas such as health, sexual and reproductive health and rights, education, and humanitarian sectors. We will also support our members to partner with aid agencies providing emergency relief to populations affected by the climate crisis and support social norms change interventions, including gender equality programming and work with traditional leaders.

One of our strongest national movements is in Uganda, where a 100-member strong partnership of organisations is working to end child marriage. We see a strategic opportunity to strengthen collective action through funding the movement to end child marriage here, increasing and scaling up interventions at the sub-national level, especially in areas with the highest prevalence of child marriage within the country. This includes interventions on social norms change; integrating ending child marriage interventions within the humanitarian sector through partnering with UNHCR Uganda; and advocacy for the adoption of comprehensive sexuality education as part of the national school curriculum. We will also support the movement to leverage opportunities with the government for the implementation of laws and policies, such as the recently developed National Strategy to End Child Marriage and Teenage Pregnancy. We will leverage the power of the movement to increase learning and evidence to accelerate impact on ending child marriage, and support member organisations in Uganda's capacity to influence media narratives and run evidence-based campaigns to influence the public perception on child marriage.

Beyond the support for individual countries, we will also strengthen collective action to end child marriage through movement-building, at both at national and sub-national levels, and by increasing the influence of national civil society organisations through access to decision-makers.

In addition, we will work to strengthen multi-sectoral interventions toward girls' empowerment, particularly the strategic collaboration between coalitions working to end child marriage and coalitions working on education to influence education policies to benefit girls and delay child marriage. This will expand to other countries in the West and Central Africa region including Benin, Togo, Mali, Cote d'Ivoire, Mali, and Senegal. We also continue to support linkages to other sectors, including child marriage and the humanitarian sector.

We will support social norms change that advances learning and amplify social norms interventions that work. This includes supporting member organisations' work with religious and traditional leaders, supporting collective, active participation of young people within decision-making spaces, and supporting interventions on girls' and young women's empowerment.

In Asia, we will focus on India (Rajasthan, Jharkhand, Uttar Pradesh) and Nepal, where we will build and strengthen coalitions and partnerships in 2023, and beyond. This will include disbursement of financial investment (grants) to National and State Partnerships and coalitions; supporting the influencing agenda through regional convenings of members to discuss what works to end child marriage in Asia; and the implementation of a gender leadership programme for senior management team from member organisations. It will also be important to broaden the discourse on child marriage to go beyond legal responses and highlight positive strategies across the Theory of Change to empower girls so that they can exercise choice and agency.

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TRUSTEES' ANNUAL REPORT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2022

In Latin America and Caribbean, our work will focus on positioning child marriage as a matter of social justice and accountability at the regional and national levels. We will strengthen the regional movement to deploy a holistic and progressive approach, showcasing regional youth-led initiatives to acknowledge them as key stakeholders for change, and develop a regional youth engagement strategy. We will also amplify our outreach to Central and South America (South American Coalition Network Summit). We will focus on Guatemala as the first country with a National Partnership and continue the investment in Mexico and the Dominican Republic through specific advocacy moments aimed at creating a collective movement.

Our regional and national work will also inform our global advocacy, influencing and learning agenda. We will continue to engage in global policy spaces such as Human Rights Council and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) summit, and to work with other development sectors and donors on unlocking resources and ensuring policies are in place which create an enabling environment for ending child marriage. We are strengthening our learning through a learning series - the Child Marriage Research to Action Network (the CRANK) - so that we continue to be a 'go to' place for learning on ending child marriage, offering technical information, data and evidence on what is needed to end child marriage.

Organisationally, we will advance a *Girls Not Brides* with a fundamental vision and ambition to build our global leadership with oversight, good governance and authority in Africa, Asia, Latin America and London. This includes a rebalancing of power to best support us in amplifying the regional voices of our global partnership to achieve our strategic outcomes. As a global partnership, it is critical we maintain our global footprint while building our regional presence. To achieve this, we will apply a model to support the ongoing implementation plan and allow us to make choices that will also influence employee behaviour and organisational culture. In 2022, we completed the first phase of this process which entailed defining our change map and developing the operating model that will underpin the change we seek. In 2023 - 2024 we will begin phase two, which will focus on governance, organisational policies and systems to support this shift.

TRUSTEES' ANNUAL REPORT
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2022

FINANCIAL REVIEW

Income

In 2022, *Girls Not Brides'* income was £4,084,817 (2021: £3,430,088), of largely unrestricted income. Funding from private foundations formed the majority of the unrestricted income, with other funding from government grants. Restricted income was 12% of the total income.

In 2022, the work of *Girls Not Brides* was made possible through the generous support of many, including:

- Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida)
- The Kendeda Fund
- Ford Foundation
- Nationale Postcode Loterij
- Education Out Loud (managed by Oxfam IBIS and financed by the Global Partnership for Education)
- Government of Canada
- NoVo Foundation Fund of Tides Foundation
- Private family foundation managed by Greenwood Place
- Wellspring Philanthropic Fund
- The David and Lucile Packard Foundation
- United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA)
- United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF)
- Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation
- The Government of the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg
- Players of People's Postcode Lottery

Expenditure

Expenditure on charitable activities in the year was £3,374,500 (2021: £3,727,893). This was lower than planned, largely due to staff vacancies, as well as the continued disruption from the COVID-19 pandemic on the delivery of *Girls Not Brides'* work. Staff costs were £486,808 lower than in 2021, due to vacancies across a number of teams throughout 2022.

The underspend impacted both restricted and unrestricted funding, and so we are carrying forward £54,046 of restricted funding and £3,667,913 of unrestricted funding into 2023.

Reserves policy

The Board aims to build up a reserve equivalent to six months of committed costs and three months of planned but uncommitted costs as unrestricted free reserves, based on budget projections. The aim of this policy is to ensure that *Girls Not Brides* meets all its obligations and contractual liabilities,

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**TRUSTEES' ANNUAL REPORT
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and continues to operate smoothly, in case of income shortfalls or unexpected expenditures. This target amounts to c.£1.8m at 31 December 2022. Each year the Board reviews the level of reserves and the risks the reserves are held to mitigate against to ensure that the reserves kept are sufficient, but not excessive.

As of 31 December 2022, unrestricted free reserves were £3,637,690 (2021: £2,730,608), which is above our reserves range. We intend to spend down this balance in 2023 to bring us in line with our reserves policy; in 2023 our budgeted expenditure is higher than our budgeted income. At the end of 2023, we are budgeting to hold some unrestricted free reserves in excess of our reserves policy, however these relate to mid-year 2023 to mid-year 2024 grants, planned to be spent in early 2024.

Exemptions from disclosure

This report has been prepared in accordance with the small companies' regime under the Companies Act 2006.

This report was approved by the Board on 8 June 2023 and signed on its behalf by

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Dr Anne T. Gallagher AO, Chair of the Board of Trustees

INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT

TO THE MEMBERS OF GIRLS NOT BRIDES: THE GLOBAL PARTNERSHIP TO END CHILD MARRIAGE

Opinion

We have audited the financial statements of *Girls Not Brides* (the 'charitable company') for the year ended 31 December 2022 which comprise the statement of financial activities, balance sheet, statement of cash flows and notes to the financial statements, including significant accounting policies. The financial reporting framework that has been applied in their preparation is applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards, including FRS 102 The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

In our opinion, the financial statements:

- Give a true and fair view of the state of the charitable company's affairs as at 31 December 2022 and of its incoming resources and application of resources, including its income and expenditure for the year then ended
- Have been properly prepared in accordance with United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice
- Have been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006

Basis for opinion

We conducted our audit in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (UK) (ISAs (UK)) and applicable law. Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements section of our report. We are independent of the charitable company in accordance with the ethical requirements that are relevant to our audit of the financial statements in the UK, including the FRC's Ethical Standard and we have fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with these requirements. We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion.

Conclusions relating to going concern

In auditing the financial statements, we have concluded that the trustees' use of the going concern basis of accounting in the preparation of the financial statements is appropriate.

Based on the work we have performed, we have not identified any material uncertainties relating to events or conditions that, individually or collectively, may cast significant doubt on *Girls Not Brides'* ability to continue as a going concern for a period of at least twelve months from when the financial statements are authorised for issue.

Our responsibilities and the responsibilities of the trustees with respect to going concern are described in the relevant sections of this report.

Other Information

The other information comprises the information included in the trustees' annual report other than the financial statements and our auditor's report thereon. The trustees are responsible for the other information contained within the annual report. Our opinion on the financial statements does not cover the other information and, except to the extent otherwise explicitly stated in our report, we do

INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT

TO THE MEMBERS OF GIRLS NOT BRIDES: THE GLOBAL PARTNERSHIP TO END CHILD MARRIAGE

not express any form of assurance conclusion thereon. Our responsibility is to read the other information and, in doing so, consider whether the other information is materially inconsistent with the financial statements or our knowledge obtained in the course of the audit, or otherwise appears to be materially misstated. If we identify such material inconsistencies or apparent material misstatements, we are required to determine whether this gives rise to a material misstatement in the financial statements themselves. If, based on the work we have performed, we conclude that there is a material misstatement of this other information, we are required to report that fact.

We have nothing to report in this regard.

Opinions on other matters prescribed by the Companies Act 2006

In our opinion, based on the work undertaken in the course of the audit:

- The information given in the trustees' annual report for the financial year for which the financial statements are prepared is consistent with the financial statements; and
- The trustees' annual report has been prepared in accordance with applicable legal requirements.

Matters on which we are required to report by exception

In the light of the knowledge and understanding of the charitable company and its environment obtained in the course of the audit, we have not identified material misstatements in the trustees' annual report. We have nothing to report in respect of the following matters in relation to which the Companies Act 2006 requires us to report to you if, in our opinion:

- Adequate accounting records have not been kept, or returns adequate for our audit have not been received from branches not visited by us; or
- The financial statements are not in agreement with the accounting records and returns; or
- Certain disclosures of trustees' remuneration specified by law are not made; or
- We have not received all the information and explanations we require for our audit; or
- The directors were not entitled to prepare the financial statements in accordance with the small companies regime and take advantage of the small companies' exemptions in preparing the trustees' annual report and from the requirement to prepare a strategic report.

Responsibilities of trustees

As explained more fully in the statement of trustees' responsibilities set out in the trustees' annual report, the trustees (who are also the directors of the charitable company for the purposes of company law) are responsible for the preparation of the financial statements and for being satisfied that they give a true and fair view, and for such internal control as the trustees determine is necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing the financial statements, the trustees are responsible for assessing the charitable company's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going

INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT

TO THE MEMBERS OF GIRLS NOT BRIDES: THE GLOBAL PARTNERSHIP TO END CHILD MARRIAGE

concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless the trustees either intend to liquidate the charitable company or to cease operations, or have no realistic alternative but to do so.

Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements

Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements as a whole are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes our opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with ISAs (UK) will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of these financial statements.

Irregularities, including fraud, are instances of non-compliance with laws and regulations. We design procedures in line with our responsibilities, outlined above, to detect material misstatements in respect of irregularities, including fraud. The extent to which our procedures are capable of detecting irregularities, including fraud are set out below.

Capability of the audit in detecting irregularities

In identifying and assessing risks of material misstatement in respect of irregularities, including fraud and non-compliance with laws and regulations, our procedures included the following:

- We enquired of management, which included obtaining and reviewing supporting documentation, concerning the charity's policies and procedures relating to:
 - Identifying, evaluating, and complying with laws and regulations and whether they were aware of any instances of non-compliance;
 - Detecting and responding to the risks of fraud and whether they have knowledge of any actual, suspected, or alleged fraud;
 - The internal controls established to mitigate risks related to fraud or non-compliance with laws and regulations.
- We inspected the minutes of meetings of those charged with governance.
- We obtained an understanding of the legal and regulatory framework that the charity operates in, focusing on those laws and regulations that had a material effect on the financial statements or that had a fundamental effect on the operations of the charity from our professional and sector experience.
- We communicated applicable laws and regulations throughout the audit team and remained alert to any indications of non-compliance throughout the audit.
- We reviewed any reports made to regulators.
- We reviewed the financial statement disclosures and tested these to supporting documentation to assess compliance with applicable laws and regulations.
- We performed analytical procedures to identify any unusual or unexpected relationships that may indicate risks of material misstatement due to fraud.

INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT

TO THE MEMBERS OF GIRLS NOT BRIDES: THE GLOBAL PARTNERSHIP TO END CHILD MARRIAGE

- In addressing the risk of fraud through management override of controls, we tested the appropriateness of journal entries and other adjustments, assessed whether the judgements made in making accounting estimates are indicative of a potential bias and tested significant transactions that are unusual or those outside the normal course of business.

Because of the inherent limitations of an audit, there is a risk that we will not detect all irregularities, including those leading to a material misstatement in the financial statements or non-compliance with regulation. This risk increases the more that compliance with a law or regulation is removed from the events and transactions reflected in the financial statements, as we will be less likely to become aware of instances of non-compliance. The risk is also greater regarding irregularities occurring due to fraud rather than error, as fraud involves intentional concealment, forgery, collusion, omission or misrepresentation.

A further description of our responsibilities is available on the Financial Reporting Council's website at: www.frc.org.uk/auditorsresponsibilities. This description forms part of our auditor's report.

Use of our report

This report is made solely to the charitable company's members as a body, in accordance with Chapter 3 of Part 16 of the Companies Act 2006. Our audit work has been undertaken so that we might state to the charitable company's members those matters we are required to state to them in an auditor's report and for no other purpose. To the fullest extent permitted by law, we do not accept or assume responsibility to anyone other than the charitable company and the charitable company's members as a body, for our audit work, for this report, or for the opinions we have formed.

Noelia Serrano (Senior statutory auditor)

22 June 2023

for and on behalf of Sayer Vincent LLP, Statutory Auditor
Invicta House, 108-114 Golden Lane, LONDON, EC1Y 0TL

GIRLS NOT BRIDES: THE GLOBAL PARTNERSHIP TO END CHILD MARRIAGE

Statement of financial activities (incorporating an income and expenditure account)

For the year ended 31 December 2022

	Note	Unrestricted £	Restricted £	2022 Total £	Unrestricted £	Restricted £	2021 Total £
Income from:							
Donations (grants)	2	3,614,934	464,873	4,079,807	2,675,965	753,862	3,429,827
Investments		5,010	-	5,010	261	-	261
Total income		3,619,944	464,873	4,084,817	2,676,226	753,862	3,430,088
Expenditure on:							
Raising funds	3a	254,428	2,617	257,045	169,661	5,596	175,257
Charitable activities							
Promotion of equality and human rights	3a	1,248,654	310,074	1,558,728	1,765,249	602,722	2,367,971
Prevention and relief of poverty	3a	1,248,654	310,074	1,558,728	1,016,217	168,448	1,184,665
Total expenditure		2,751,736	622,765	3,374,500	2,951,128	776,765	3,727,893
Net income / (expenditure) for the year	5	868,208	(157,891)	710,317	(274,902)	(22,903)	(297,805)
Total funds brought forward		2,799,705	211,937	3,011,642	3,074,607	234,840	3,309,447
Total funds carried forward		3,667,913	54,046	3,721,959	2,799,705	211,937	3,011,642

All of the above results are derived from continuing activities. There were no other recognised gains or losses other than those stated above. Movements in funds are disclosed in Note 15a to the financial statements.

GIRLS NOT BRIDES: THE GLOBAL PARTNERSHIP TO END CHILD MARRIAGE

Balance sheet

Company no. 8570751

As at 31 December 2022

	Note	£	2022 £	£	2021 £
Fixed assets:					
Tangible assets	10		30,223		69,097
			30,223		69,097
Current assets:					
Debtors	11	181,205		149,938	
Cash at bank and in hand		4,020,855		3,440,110	
		4,202,060		3,590,048	
Liabilities:					
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	12	(510,324)		(647,503)	
Net current assets			3,691,736		2,942,545
Net assets			3,721,959		3,011,642
The funds of the charity:					
Restricted income funds	14a		54,046		211,937
Total unrestricted funds			3,667,913		2,799,705
Total charity funds			3,721,959		3,011,642

Approved by the trustees on 8 June 2023 and signed on their behalf by

Dr Anne T. Gallagher, AO
Trustee

GIRLS NOT BRIDES: THE GLOBAL PARTNERSHIP TO END CHILD MARRIAGE

Statement of cash flows

For the year ended 31 December 2022

	Note	2022		2021	
		£	£	£	£
Cash flows from operating activities					
Net income / (expenditure) for the reporting period (as per the statement of financial activities)		710,317		(297,805)	
Depreciation charges	10	46,328		53,471	
(Increase) / decrease in debtors	11	(31,267)		59,873	
Decrease in creditors	12	(137,179)		(408,206)	
Net cash provided by / (used in) operating activities		588,199		(592,667)	
Cash flows from investing activities					
Payments for property and equipment		(7,454)		(17,170)	
Net cash used in investing activities		(7,454)		(17,170)	
Change in cash and cash equivalents in the year		580,745		(609,837)	
Cash and cash equivalents at the beginning of the year		3,440,110		4,049,947	
Cash and cash equivalents at the end of the year		4,020,855		3,440,110	

Analysis of cash and cash equivalents and of net debt

	At 1 January 2022	Cash flows	Other non- cash changes	At 31 December 2022
	£	£	£	£
Current accounts	856,474	125,735	-	982,209
Deposit accounts	2,583,636	455,010	-	3,038,646
Total cash and cash equivalents	3,440,110	580,745	-	4,020,855

Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 31 December 2022

1 Accounting policies

a) Statutory information

Girls Not Brides is a charitable company limited by guarantee and is incorporated in England and Wales (company number: 8570751; charity number: 1154230).

The registered office address is Seventh Floor, 65 Leadenhall Street, London EC3A 2AD.

b) Basis of preparation

Assets and liabilities are initially recognised at historical cost or transaction value unless otherwise stated in the relevant accounting policy or note.

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland Charities SORP (FRS 102) including update bulletin 2, the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the United Kingdom and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102), the Charities Act 2011 and Companies Act 2016.

c) Public benefit entity

The charity meets the definition of a public benefit entity under FRS 102.

d) Presentational and functional currencies

The accounts are presented in sterling. The functional currencies of the charity are sterling, US dollar and euro. The accounts are presented in sterling since that is the currency in which the charity conducts most of its activities. No amounts have been rounded.

e) Going concern

There are no material uncertainties that cast significant doubt upon the charity's ability to continue as a going concern.

f) Income

Income is included in the Statement of financial activities when the charity is entitled to the income and the amount can be quantified with reasonable accuracy. The following specific policies are applied to particular categories of income:

- Voluntary income is received by way of grants, donations and gifts and is included in full in the Statement of financial activities when receivable. Grants, where entitlement is not conditional on the delivery of a specific performance by the charity, are recognised when the charity becomes unconditionally entitled to the grant.
- Any income received where the donor has specified that it is to be expended in a future accounting period is included within creditors as deferred income.
- Investment income is included when receivable.

g) Fund accounting

Unrestricted funds are available for use at the discretion of the Trustees in furtherance of the general objects of the charity. Restricted funds are only for use of the purposes prescribed by the donors.

Designated funds are unrestricted funds earmarked by the Trustees for particular purposes.

Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 31 December 2022

1 Accounting policies (continued)

h) Expenditure and irrecoverable VAT

Expenditure is recognised on an accruals basis as a liability is incurred. Expenditure includes any VAT that cannot be fully recovered, and is reported as part of the expenditure to which it relates:

- Costs of generating funds comprise the costs associated with attracting donations and grants.
- Charitable expenditure comprises those costs incurred by the charity in the delivery of its activities and services for its beneficiaries. It includes both costs that can be allocated directly to such activities and those costs of an indirect nature necessary to support them. These are split in accordance with the project codes used in the charity's accounting system.
- Support costs consist of the charity's administration budget heading. Support costs are allocated equally between the charity's two charitable activities.
- Governance costs are the costs associated with the governance arrangements of the charity. These costs are associated with constitutional and statutory requirements and include any costs associated with the strategic management of the charity's activities.

i) Operating leases

Rentals payable under operating leases are charged in the income and expenditure account on a straight line basis over the lease term.

j) Tangible fixed assets

Tangible fixed assets are capitalised at cost and are depreciated over their useful economic lives.

Depreciation is provided at rates calculated to write down the cost of each asset to its estimated residual value over its expected useful life. The depreciation rates in use are as follows:

- | | |
|---------------------------|----------------------|
| • Computers and software | over 3 years |
| • Furniture and equipment | over 3 to 5 years |
| • Leasehold improvements | over length of lease |

Fixed assets with a value less than £1,000 are not capitalised.

k) Debtors

Trade and other debtors are recognised at the settlement amount due after any trade discount offered. Prepayments are valued at the amount prepaid net of any trade discounts due.

l) Cash at bank and in hand

Cash and cash equivalents comprise cash in hand and call deposits, and other short-term highly liquid investments that are readily convertible to a known amount of cash and are subject to an insignificant risk of change in value.

m) Creditors and provisions

Trade creditors are obligations to pay for goods or services that have been acquired in the ordinary course of business from suppliers. Accounts payable are classified as current liabilities if the charitable company does not have an unconditional right, at the end of the reporting period, to defer settlement of the creditor for at least 12 months after the reporting date. If there is an unconditional right to defer settlement for at least 12 months after the reporting date, they are presented as non-current liabilities.

Trade creditors are recognised at the transaction price.

Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 31 December 2022

1 Accounting policies (continued)

Provisions are recognised when the company has an obligation at the reporting date as a result of a past event, it is probable that the company will be required to settle that obligation and a reliable estimate can be made of the amount of the obligation.

n) Pensions

The company operates a defined contribution scheme for the benefit of its employees. The costs of contributions are charged to the Statement of financial activities in the year in which they are payable.

o) Foreign currencies

Transactions in foreign currencies are recorded at the rate as at the date of the transaction. Monetary assets and liabilities are re-translated at the rate of exchange ruling at the balance sheet date. Any differences are taken to the Statement of financial activities.

2 Income from donations (grants)

	Unrestricted £	Restricted £	2022 Total £	Unrestricted £	Restricted £	2021 Total £
Government grants	1,255,497	-	1,255,497	1,638,243	-	1,638,243
Other grants and donations	2,359,437	464,873	2,824,311	1,037,722	753,862	1,791,585
	<u>3,614,934</u>	<u>464,873</u>	<u>4,079,807</u>	<u>2,675,965</u>	<u>753,862</u>	<u>3,429,827</u>

GIRLS NOT BRIDES: THE GLOBAL PARTNERSHIP TO END CHILD MARRIAGE

Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 31 December 2022

3a Analysis of expenditure (current year)

	Charitable activities					2022 Total £	2021 Total £
	Raising funds £	Human rights £	Relief of poverty £	Governance costs £	Support costs £		
Staff costs (Note 6)	163,986	440,710	440,710	-	412,177	1,457,583	1,944,391
Premises costs (rent, utilities)	-	4,524	4,524	-	174,514	183,563	138,537
Travel and workshops / meetings	4,284	66,299	66,299	11,621	35,575	184,078	38,019
Consultancy	34,830	326,415	326,415	11,300	103,191	802,151	745,771
Grants (Note 4)	-	202,622	202,622	-	510	405,754	352,642
Professional fees	-	-	-	14,700	19,449	34,149	78,101
IT and communications	-	18,004	18,004	-	103,032	139,039	182,485
Office and other	37	79,347	79,347	1,032	8,420	168,183	247,948
	<u>203,137</u>	<u>1,137,921</u>	<u>1,137,921</u>	<u>38,654</u>	<u>856,868</u>	<u>3,374,500</u>	<u>3,727,893</u>
Support costs	51,581	402,643	402,643	-	(856,868)	-	-
Governance costs	2,327	18,163	18,163	(38,654)	-	-	-
Total expenditure 2022	<u>257,045</u>	<u>1,558,728</u>	<u>1,558,728</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>3,374,500</u>	
Total expenditure 2021	<u>175,257</u>	<u>2,367,971</u>	<u>1,184,665</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>		<u>3,727,893</u>

GIRLS NOT BRIDES: THE GLOBAL PARTNERSHIP TO END CHILD MARRIAGE

Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 31 December 2022

3b Analysis of expenditure (prior year)

	Charitable activities					2021 Total £
	Raising funds £	Human rights £	Relief of poverty £	Governance costs £	Support costs £	
Staff costs (Note 6)	114,689	858,513	374,699	-	596,491	1,944,391
Premises costs (rent, utilities)	-	2,486	2,486	-	133,565	138,537
Travel and workshops / meetings	-	26,223	11,187	576	34	38,019
Consultancy	3,792	490,187	175,721	33,717	42,353	745,771
Grants	-	334,398	18,244	-	-	352,642
Professional fees	-	-	-	13,620	64,481	78,101
IT and communications	-	38,398	27,815	-	116,271	182,485
Office and other	3,509	77,879	34,625	1,041	130,894	247,948
	<u>121,990</u>	<u>1,828,083</u>	<u>644,777</u>	<u>48,954</u>	<u>1,084,089</u>	<u>3,727,893</u>
Support costs	50,966	516,562	516,562	-	(1,084,089)	-
Governance costs	2,301	23,326	23,326	(48,954)	-	-
Total expenditure 2021	<u>175,257</u>	<u>2,367,971</u>	<u>1,184,665</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>3,727,893</u>

GIRLS NOT BRIDES: THE GLOBAL PARTNERSHIP TO END CHILD MARRIAGE

Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 31 December 2022

4 Grant making

	Grants to institutions £	2022 £	2021 £
Cost			
Joy for Children Uganda	80,000	80,000	5,817
SongES Niger	58,252	58,252	29,745
Women Deliver	41,987	41,987	-
Voix de Femmes, Burkina Faso	35,122	35,122	44,243
Associação Moçambicana Desenvolvimento da Família, Mozambique	31,018	31,018	-
Child and Youth Protection Foundation, Nigeria	23,654	23,654	-
Msichana Empowerment Kuria, Kenya	15,739	15,739	50,189
Children's Dignity Forum, Tanzania	5,677	5,677	50,189
Plan International USA	-	-	66,588
Other small grants	114,305	114,305	105,872
At the end of the year	<u>405,754</u>	<u>405,754</u>	<u>352,642</u>

During the year *Girls Not Brides* paid a grant to Joy for Children Uganda totalling £80,000 from unrestricted funding.

During the year *Girls Not Brides* paid grants to SongES Niger totalling £58,252 from restricted funding.

During the year *Girls Not Brides* paid a grant to Women Deliver totalling £41,987 from restricted funding.

During the year *Girls Not Brides* paid grants to Voix De Femmes totalling £35,122 from restricted funding.

During the year *Girls Not Brides* paid a grant to Associação Moçambicana Desenvolvimento da Família totalling £31,018 from restricted funding.

During the year *Girls Not Brides* paid a grant to Child and Youth Protection Foundation totalling £23,654 from restricted funding.

During the year *Girls Not Brides* paid a grant to Msichana Empowerment Kuria totalling £15,739 from restricted funding.

During the year *Girls Not Brides* paid a grant to Children's Dignity Forum totalling £5,677 from restricted funding.

During the year *Girls Not Brides* made a number small grants to member organisations, with an average value of approximately £7,000.

Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 31 December 2022

5 Net income / (expenditure) for the year

This is stated after charging:

	2022	2021
	£	£
Depreciation	46,328	53,471
Operating lease rentals payable:		
Property	109,590	76,241
Auditor's remuneration (excluding VAT):		
Audit	12,000	9,100
Other services	5,280	5,545
Foreign exchange gains	107,355	728

Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 31 December 2022

6 Analysis of staff costs, Trustee remuneration and expenses, and the cost of key management personnel

Staff costs were as follows:

	2022	2021
	£	£
Salaries and wages	1,178,043	1,471,926
Redundancy and termination costs	-	78,185
Social security costs	137,802	186,977
Employer's contribution to defined contribution pension schemes	116,024	156,843
Other forms of employee benefits (medical, life and travel insurance)	25,714	48,711
Relocation	-	1,750
	1,457,583	1,944,391

Girls Not Brides makes contributions to a defined contribution scheme. The amount of contributions due to the scheme at the year ended 31 December was £nil. (2021: £nil).

Retirement benefits were accruing to no Trustees in 2022 (2021: 1). In 2021 retirements benefits were accruing under a money purchase pension scheme, to Mabel van Oranje, Chair of Trustees, however that Trustee left *Girls Not Brides* during 2021.

The number of employees whose remuneration for the year fell within the following bands was:

	2022	2021
	No.	No.
£60,001 - £70,000	1	2
£70,001 - £80,000	2	1
£80,001 - £90,000	-	-
£90,001 - £100,000	-	-
£100,001 - £110,000	-	-
£110,001 - £120,000	-	-
£120,001 - £130,000	1	1

The total employee benefits (including pension contributions and employer's national insurance) of the key management personnel were £364,635 (2021: £389,784). In 2022 the Chief Executive Officer and the three directors were responsible for planning, directing and controlling the activities of the charity.

In 2022, no trustees received remuneration or pension contributions from *Girls Not Brides*. In 2021, Mabel van Oranje, Chair of Trustees until September 2021, received remuneration of £62,126, as permitted by the charitable company's Articles of Association. In 2021, the charitable company also paid pension contributions of £5,810 and reimbursed or paid on her behalf travelling, accommodation and office expenses of £2,487.

In 2022 *Girls Not Brides* paid £12,751 (2021: £2,487) on behalf of the Trustees for expenses related to travel, accommodation, meals and training. The majority of the cost, being £11,724 related to a Board of Trustees retreat in London in December 2022.

Payments to Trustees are permitted by the Charity's Articles of Association.

GIRLS NOT BRIDES: THE GLOBAL PARTNERSHIP TO END CHILD MARRIAGE

Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 31 December 2022

7 Staff numbers

The average number of employees (head count based on number of staff employed) during the year was 24 (2021: 32).

The average monthly number of employees during the year was:

	2022	2021
	No.	No.
The Executive	2	4
Communications Team	4	5
Learning and Partnership Team	8	8
Finance and Operations Team	7	9
Policy and Advocacy Team	2	5
Africa Team	1	1
	24	32

8 Related party transactions

Related party transactions: during the year there were no related party transactions.

9 Taxation

The charity is exempt from corporation tax as all its income is charitable and is applied for charitable purposes.

10 Tangible fixed assets

	Short leasehold improvements	Computer & software	Furniture & equipment	Total
Cost	£	£	£	£
At the start of the year	106,514	119,534	61,256	287,304
Additions in year	-	7,454	-	7,454
Disposals in year	-	(16,367)	(3,381)	(19,748)
At the end of the year	106,514	110,621	57,875	275,010
Depreciation				
At the start of the year	75,770	92,918	49,519	218,207
Charge for the year	20,458	17,247	8,623	46,328
Eliminated on disposal	-	(16,367)	(3,381)	(19,748)
At the end of the year	96,228	93,798	54,761	244,787
Net book value				
At the end of the year	10,286	16,823	3,114	30,223
At the start of the year	30,744	26,616	11,737	69,097

All of the above assets are used for charitable purposes.

Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 31 December 2022

11 Debtors

	2022	2021
	£	£
Other debtors	88,508	81,873
Prepayments	92,697	68,064
	181,205	149,938

12 Creditors: amounts falling due within one year

	2022	2021
	£	£
Trade creditors	62,898	153,326
Taxation and social security	41,626	46,041
Grants payable	68,777	-
Other creditors	254,365	297,859
Deferred income (Note 13)	82,659	150,277
	510,324	647,503

13 Deferred income

Movements in deferred income during the year are as follows:

	2022	2021
	£	£
Balance at the beginning of the year	150,277	250,000
Amount released to income in the year	(67,619)	(250,000)
Amount deferred in the year	-	150,277
Balance at the end of the year	82,659	150,277

Deferred income represents grants received where the donor has specified this is to fund 2023 expenditure. This will be released to income in the 2023 accounts

Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 31 December 2022

14a Analysis of net assets between funds (current year)

	General unrestricted £	Restricted £	Total funds £
Tangible fixed assets	30,223	-	30,223
Net current assets	3,637,690	54,046	3,691,736
Net assets at 31 December 2022	3,667,913	54,046	3,721,959

14b Analysis of net assets between funds (prior year)

	General unrestricted £	Restricted £	Total funds £
Tangible fixed assets	69,097	-	69,097
Net current assets	2,730,608	211,937	2,942,545
Net assets at 31 December 2021	2,799,705	211,937	3,011,642

15a Movements in funds (current year)

	At 1 January 2022 £	Income & gains £	Expenditure & losses £	Transfers £	At 31 December 2022 £
Restricted funds:					
Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation	81,099	-	(81,099)	-	-
Players of People's Postcode Lottery	71,047	-	(71,047)	-	-
Education Out Loud	59,791	301,396	(303,765)	-	57,421.54
UNFPA	-	75,285	(75,285)	-	-
UNICEF	-	48,426	(77,588)	-	(29,162)
Packard Foundation	-	39,766	(13,980)	-	25,786
Total restricted funds	211,937	464,873	(622,765)	-	54,046
General funds	2,799,705	3,619,944	(2,751,736)	-	3,667,913
Total funds	3,011,642	4,084,817	(3,374,500)	-	3,721,959

The narrative to explain the purpose of each fund is given at the foot of the note below.

Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 31 December 2022

15b Movements in funds (prior year)

	At 1 January 2021 £	Income & gains £	Expenditure & losses £	Transfers £	At 31 December 2021 £
Restricted funds:					
Skoll Foundation	7,466	-	(7,466)	-	-
Ignite Philanthropy	-	29,143	(29,143)	-	-
Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation	199,407	144,998	(263,306)	-	81,099
Players of People's Postcode Lottery	16,347	250,000	(195,300)	-	71,047
Education Out Loud	-	274,981	(215,190)	-	59,791
Plan International, Inc	11,620	-	(11,620)	-	-
UNFPA	-	54,741	(54,741)	-	-
Total restricted funds	234,840	753,862	(776,765)	-	211,937
General funds	3,074,607	2,676,226	(2,951,128)	-	2,799,705
Total funds	3,309,447	3,430,088	(3,727,893)	-	3,011,642

Purposes of restricted funds

In 2020, *Girls Not Brides* received a grant of \$499,976 (£389,951) from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation for supporting evidence for advocacy in the child marriage movement. £190,544 was expensed in 2020, and £199,407 was expensed in 2021. In 2021 *Girls Not Brides* received an additional grant of \$199,846 (£144,998) from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation to provide project support to the Adolescent Girls Investment Plan (AGIP). £63,899 was expensed in 2021, and £81,099 was expensed in 2022.

In 2019, *Girls Not Brides* received a grant of £250,000 from the players of the People's Postcode Lottery for accelerating progress to end child marriage in Uganda. £233,653 was expensed in 2020, and £16,347 was expensed in 2021. In 2020 *Girls Not Brides* received a second grant of £250,000 from the players of the People's Postcode Lottery for accelerating progress to end child marriage in Kenya and Tanzania. £178,953 was expensed in 2021 and £71,047 was expensed in 2022.

In 2021, *Girls Not Brides* received a grant of \$378,624 (£274,981) from Education Out Loud for strengthening collective action to end child marriage, keep girls in school and advance gender equality in West Africa. In 2022 a further \$374,646 (£301,396) was received. £215,190 was expensed in 2021 and £303,765 was expensed in 2022. £57,421 is carried forward into 2023.

In 2022 UNFPA awarded *Girls Not Brides* a grant of £75,285 for the Child Marriage Action to Research Network. The grant was fully expensed in 2022.

In 2021, UNICEF awarded *Girls Not Brides* a grant of \$99,960 for capacity building in national civil society organisations to analyse and address causes of gender inequality, to be paid in tranches on receipt of quarterly reports. \$58,266 (£48,426) was received in 2022 and the balance will be paid in 2023. £77,588 was expensed in 2022; this creates a deficit in the donor account due to a difference in accounting for sub-grants between the *Girls Not Brides* statutory accounts and the UNICEF quarterly reports. This deficit will be cleared in 2023 when the grant activities are completed and reported on, and the remaining balance is paid.

In 2022 *Girls Not Brides* received a grant of \$50,000 (£39,766) from the Packard Foundation. £13,980 was expensed in 2022 and the balance of £25,786 is carried forward into 2023.

Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 31 December 2022

16 Operating lease commitments payable as a lessee

Total amount payable in respect of non-cancellable operating leases:

	2022	2021
	£	£
Less than one year	148,932	127,673
One to two years	223,188	148,932
Two to five years	59,981	283,169
	432,101	559,774

Accounts

**GIRLS NOT BRIDES:
THE GLOBAL PARTNERSHIP TO END CHILD MARRIAGE
ACCOUNTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2021**

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GIRLS NOT BRIDES: THE GLOBAL PARTNERSHIP TO END CHILD MARRIAGE

TRUSTEES' ANNUAL REPORT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2021

REFERENCE AND ADMINISTRATIVE DETAILS

Trustees:	Dr Anne T Gallagher (Chair) (appointed 16 September 2021) Mabel van Oranje (Chair) (resigned 30 September 2021) Ann Cotton Nick Grono (resigned 30 March 2022) Karin Forseke (Treasurer) Georgia Arnold Emma Puig De La Bellacasa Rita Sarin Zipporah Jean Alaroker Michael Feigelson (appointed 9 April 2021)
Chief Executive Officer:	Dr Faith Mwangi-Powell
Key management personnel:	Dr Faith Mwangi-Powell, Chief Executive Officer Heather Barclay, Director of Policy, Advocacy and Communications (left 30 April 2022) Akila Lingham, Director of Finance and Operations (appointed 4 August 2021) Eleanor Munif, Director of Operations (left 14 July 2021) Rita Soares, Director of Partnership, Learning and Impact (appointed 17 May 2021)
Contact address and registered office:	Seventh Floor 65 Leadenhall Street London EC3A 2AD United Kingdom
Auditors:	Sayer Vincent LLP Invicta House 108-114 Golden Lane London EC1Y 0TL
Bankers:	HSBC Bank plc 21 Kings Mall London W6 0QF
Solicitors:	Bates Wells 10 Queen Street Place London EC4R 1BE

INTRODUCTION TO GIRLS NOT BRIDES

The vision of *Girls Not Brides: The Global Partnership to End Child Marriage (Girls Not Brides)* is a world without child marriage where girls and women enjoy equal status with boys and men and are able to achieve their full potential in all aspects of their lives. We support a comprehensive approach to ending child marriage and addressing the underlying economic and social drivers of child marriage, including harmful gender and social norms that deny girls opportunities and their rights. By taking a holistic approach we not only contribute to ending child marriage, but also achieve progress across a number of global development goals including health, education and poverty reduction. Our belief is that addressing child marriage in a holistic and comprehensive manner helps create a safer world for girls and leads to benefits far beyond simply delaying the age of marriage.

About child marriage

Every year, child marriage denies 12 million girls their rights to health, education, safety and control over their own lives. This is equivalent to one in five girls around the world.¹ This human rights violation occurs across cultures, countries and religions. Over 650 million women alive today were married as children, and every minute 23 more girls are married. Rooted in gender inequality and discrimination, child marriage disproportionately affects women and girls in terms of both the number of child brides and the life-long impact.

Ahead of the pandemic, we saw a decline in child marriage rates globally, but with the onset of COVID-19 experts are predicting an increase in child marriages as a consequence of a variety of factors including school closures, increased violence and domestic poverty. UNICEF estimates that we will see 10 million more child marriages by 2030² as a direct consequence of COVID-19, in addition to the 12 million girls already married each year.

Child brides face huge challenges. Isolated and with limited freedom, married girls often feel disempowered. They are at increased risk of dangerous complications in pregnancy and childbirth, and of domestic violence. With little access to education and economic opportunities, they and their families are more likely to live in poverty. Communities and nations also feel the impact of child marriage. Systems that undervalue the contribution and participation of girls and women limit their own possibilities for growth, stability and transformation. The World Bank and International Center for Research on Women estimate that child marriage costs economies around the world trillions of dollars. Girls affected by humanitarian contexts – including conflict, displacement and natural disasters – are more vulnerable to child marriage due to increased insecurity, greater poverty and weaker social networks.

One of the fundamental beliefs of *Girls Not Brides* is that if we address child marriage in a holistic and comprehensive manner it is possible to empower adolescent girls and transform societies. Ending child marriage is a global commitment enshrined in Target 5.3 of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) to “eliminate all harmful practices, such as child, early and forced

¹ For more information on child marriage prevalence rates in countries and across regions, please consult our [Child Marriage Atlas](#), which is the only source of consolidated data on the issue of child marriage. It also highlights numbers of girls affected, the legal/policy situation in each country, and the distribution of *Girls Not Brides'* members, National Partnerships and civil society coalitions.

² UNICEF, 2021, [COVID-19: A thread to progress against child marriage](#).

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TRUSTEES' ANNUAL REPORT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2021

marriage and female genital mutilations". It is also necessary to achieve almost half of the SDGs, including those related to poverty, education, health and inequalities.

Child marriage is a complex issue with no single solution. We must work collectively across sectors – and from the local to global level – to change the perceptions, norms and experiences that shape and hinder girls' lives. In 2014, *Girls Not Brides* worked with 150 members and partners to develop our Theory of Change (which was recently refurbished), which identifies four strategies to end child marriage: working directly with girls; mobilising families and communities; providing services (including health, education and child protection); and creating and sustaining an enabling legal and policy framework.

Our members and partners work across the four key strategies outlined in the Theory of Change, and the *Girls Not Brides* secretariat plays a distinctive catalytic role within the movement. We mobilise collective action and support at the national, regional and international levels; support member organisations to build their knowledge, skills and leadership and share their expertise; advocate for financial resources; and synthesise and disseminate learning on ending child marriage. In this role, we create a supportive environment to enable greater change. Currently the *Girls Not Brides* partnership comprises over 1,600 members worldwide. 82% work in communities, and nearly 40% identify as youth led. Less than 12% identify as international organisations.

Definitions

Child marriage

We use the term "child marriage" to refer to all forms of child, early and forced marriage and unions where at least one party is under the age of 18. In this, we include all girls and adolescents affected by the practice – whether in formal or informal unions – and acknowledge the culturally specific understandings of childhood and development, and the complex relationship between age, consent and force.

The *Girls Not Brides* global partnership (the Partnership)

At the end of 2021, the *Girls Not Brides* global partnership comprised 1,602 member organisations from 102 countries committed to working together to end child marriage and support married girls. *Girls Not Brides* member organisations work across sectors – including health, education, human rights and humanitarian contexts – and range from small grassroots actors to large international organisations.

The movement to end child marriage

The informal global network is comprised of civil society and grassroots organisations, national and international non-governmental organisations (INGOs), activists, academics, UN agencies, funders, governments, leaders and champions, all working towards a world without child marriage where girls can exercise their rights and reach their full potential.

The *Girls Not Brides* secretariat

The secretariat coordinates, rallies and supports the work of the Partnership and movement, with staff based in Africa, Asia, Europe and Latin America. We play three broad roles in driving change: a central support and coordination body for the only global civil society partnership to end child

GIRLS NOT BRIDES: THE GLOBAL PARTNERSHIP TO END CHILD MARRIAGE

TRUSTEES' ANNUAL REPORT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2021

marriage; a representative of – and advocate for – civil society work to end child marriage; and a source and convenor of technical expertise and central actor in the global movement to end child marriage.

National and State Partnerships and coalitions

Many *Girls Not Brides* member organisations have come together to accelerate progress to end child marriage in their countries by forming National and State Partnerships and coalitions.

National and State Partnerships are networks of *Girls Not Brides* member organisations that believe in the power of collective action to end child marriage and ensure girls can reach their full potential. They have signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the *Girls Not Brides* secretariat to align their work with the Partnership Strategy.

Coalitions are networks of civil society organisations committed to addressing child marriage and working together at the national level to spearhead change. They are close allies to *Girls Not Brides* but have not signed an MoU.

Abbreviations

- FGM/C – Female genital mutilation/cutting
- GEF – Generation Equality Forum
- GTA – Gender-transformative approaches
- INGO – International non-governmental organisation
- LAC – Latin America and the Caribbean
- MoU – Memorandum of Understanding
- The CRANK – Child Marriage Research to Action Network
- UK – United Kingdom
- UN – United Nations
- WACA – West and Central Africa

GIRLS NOT BRIDES: THE GLOBAL PARTNERSHIP TO END CHILD MARRIAGE

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STRUCTURE, GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT

Girls Not Brides was incorporated as a company in the United Kingdom (UK) on 14 June 2013 and registered as a charity in England and Wales on 17 October 2013. It transferred its assets and activities from what was once an initiative under The Elders Foundation to the independent entity on 10 December 2013.

Objects

The charity's objects are all regarded as exclusively charitable under the laws of England and Wales including, but not limited to:

- (a) The promotion of equality and human rights (as set out in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and Subsequent United Nations Conventions and Declarations) throughout the world including but not limited to:
 - raising awareness of human rights issues
 - relieving need among the victims of human rights abuse
 - research into and international advocacy of human rights
 - providing technical advice to government and others on human rights matters
 - promoting respect for human rights among individuals and corporations
 - eliminating or preventing infringement of human rights
- (b) The prevention and relief of poverty
- (c) The advancement of health
- (d) The advancement of education, in particular but without limitation, by undertaking research and other educational activities and disseminating the results of that research
- (e) The relief of those in need by reason of youth and/or ill health

Board of Trustees

Girls Not Brides is governed by a Board of Trustees (the Trustees) who are responsible for overseeing the management of all *Girls Not Brides*' affairs. The Trustees are selected and elected according to procedures set out in the Articles of Association. The Trustees ensure that all activities fall within the charitable objectives. The Trustees' main responsibilities are related to administrative and financial governance, management of reserves and investments as well as guiding and overseeing strategy development and planning. In particular, the Trustees are responsible for ensuring the legal and financial compliance of *Girls Not Brides*, including compliance with the Charity Commission's guiding principles and charity law.

In September 2021, the Trustees approved a new Chair of the Board of Trustees, Dr Anne T. Gallagher AO, Director-General of the Commonwealth Foundation. *Girls Not Brides* warmly welcomed Anne in the knowledge that her deep experience of and passion for raising the voices of civil society will be critical in steering our global Partnership on our pathway to zero child marriages. Anne replaced Mabel van Oranje, who had been Chair since *Girls Not Brides* was founded. After ten

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years as Chair, Mabel considered that it was appropriate to make space for fresh leadership and she will continue her work as a leader, expert and advocate on ending child marriage in a new role as Global Champion for *Girls Not Brides*. *Girls Not Brides* extends our heartfelt thanks to Mabel for her constant leadership and long service.

The Trustees meet regularly throughout the year and act on advice and information provided by the Chief Executive Officer and the senior management of the charity. All Trustees are provided with an individual induction covering all aspects of the *Girls Not Brides* organisational structure and roles and responsibilities of the Trustees within the organisation, as well as Charity Commission guidance on governance, and the duties of Trustees in the UK. Trustee-specific trainings are organised to ensure that the Board remains compliant with the Charity Commission and up to date on current trends within the non-governmental sector. In 2021, we held a series of induction meetings with our Board as we welcomed a new Chair and additional Board members. Further trainings are planned for in 2022.

In 2021 the Board of Trustees agreed to set up two committees, being a Finance and Policy Committee and a Fundraising and Donor Relations Committee:

- The Finance and Policy Committee's overall purpose is to support the Board in its fiduciary duties and make sound recommendations to the Board with regards to the strategic direction of the charity's financial affairs. The Committee will also act as an Audit Committee, Remuneration Committee, and an Investment Committee.
- The Fundraising and Donor Relations Committee's remit is to support *Girls Not Brides* secretariat in the development of a fundraising strategy and related principles, outreach, and sourcing and securing new funding opportunities to finance the secretariat strategic plan for 2022–2025.

The first meetings of both committees were held in early 2022, and they will continue to meet regularly throughout the year.

Statement of Trustees' responsibilities

The Trustees (who are also directors of *Girls Not Brides* for the purposes of company law) are responsible for preparing the Trustees' annual report and the financial statements in accordance with applicable law and UK Accounting Standards (UK Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

Company law requires the Trustees to prepare financial statements for each financial year, which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the charitable company and of the incoming resources and application of resources, including the income and expenditure, of the charitable company for that period. In preparing these financial statements, the Trustees are required to:

- select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently
- observe the methods and principles in the Charities Statement of Recommended Practice (SORP)
- make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent

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- state whether applicable UK Accounting Standards and statements of recommended practice have been followed, subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the financial statements
- prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the charity will continue in operation.

The Trustees are responsible for keeping adequate accounting records that disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the charitable company and enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Companies Act 2006. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the charitable company and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

In so far as the Trustees are aware:

- There is no relevant audit information of which the charitable company's auditor is unaware.
- The Trustees have taken all steps that they ought to have taken to make themselves aware of any relevant audit information and to establish that the auditor is aware of that information.

The Trustees are responsible for the maintenance and integrity of the corporate and financial information included on the charitable company's website. Legislation in the UK governing the preparation and dissemination of financial statements may differ from legislation in other jurisdictions.

The Trustees have no beneficial interest in the charity.

Disclosure of information to auditors

So far as the Trustees are aware, there is no relevant audit information of which the company's auditors are unaware. The Trustees have taken all the steps that they need to as Trustees in order to make themselves aware of any relevant audit information and to establish that the company's auditors are aware of that information.

Auditors

Sayer Vincent LLP have indicated their willingness to continue in office and in accordance with the provisions of the Companies Act it is proposed that they be re-appointed auditors for the ensuing year.

Company Members

Girls Not Brides is a charitable company and its Company Members have a constitutional role, including legal responsibility to approve the Articles of Association (and any amendments) and to appoint and, if necessary, dismiss the Trustees of *Girls Not Brides*. The term "Member" in this context has a specific legal meaning and should not be confused with the organisations working on child marriage that have joined the *Girls Not Brides* partnership (below).

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At the end of 2021, the Articles of Association were updated and the original Company Members resigned handing over their constitutional role to the existing Board of Trustees of *Girls Not Brides*.

Members of *Girls Not Brides*

The *Girls Not Brides* secretariat supports the global partnership of member organisations. Membership is open to non-governmental organisations that endorse its mission statement and agree to its membership principles. These organisations are publicly and commonly referred to as “members” (as opposed to the Company Members described above).

Members contribute to the Partnership and engage with one another, as well as with the secretariat, in a variety of ways depending on their interests and capacity. The work and interests of members help define the strategy of *Girls Not Brides*, and the secretariat requests feedback from them on various issues on a regular basis.

Secretariat

Girls Not Brides' day-to-day operations are run by its staff based in its London office, with additional individual team members based in New Delhi (India), Nairobi (Kenya) and Mexico City (Mexico). The secretariat is made up of four directorates (Communications & Influencing; Development & Outreach; Finance & Operations; and Partnership, Learning & Impact), with a Chief Executive Officer overseeing their work. The Chief Executive Officer reports to the Trustees. The Trustees delegate the day-to-day running of the organisation to the Chief Executive Officer.

Principal risks and uncertainties

The organisation has developed its approach to risk management. This includes reviewing the organisational risk register, with oversight from the Board of Trustees and input from all senior staff, and updating risk management guidance for staff. *Girls Not Brides* views risk management as a continuous process that must be considered at the forefront of all activities by all staff members.

In December 2021, the Trustees conducted the annual review of the risk register and were satisfied with the controls and procedures the secretariat had put in place. The Trustees were also satisfied with progress in monitoring and mitigating previously identified potential risks, including financial risks related to its ability to raise sufficient funds, impact of currency fluctuations and management risks.

The risk register is classified into six categories (external engagement, finance and due diligence, fundraising, governance and leadership, operational and partnership) that are further defined into specific potential risk elements. Within this, significant risks are identified and summarised. This includes the following risks and mitigation strategies:

- Losing donors or failing to raise sufficient funds, particularly due to the impact of COVID-19. This is mitigated by tracking donors' evolving strategies, cultivating strong donor relationships, ensuring accurate forecasting and building up the operational reserve.
- Failure to comply with requirements around grants and sub-granting. This is mitigated by a detailed review of contract provisions, preparing and reviewing contract summaries, tracking

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expenditure through activity codes and developing the organisational grant-making policy and process.

- Unsuitable human resources and operational policies for international context. This is mitigated by an updated approach to regional working under development in 2021.
- Safeguarding incidents in the secretariat or Partnership. This is mitigated by the organisation's comprehensive and up-to-date safeguarding policies and processes and frequent highlighting of safeguarding as a key issue in organisational culture, communications, induction, project management, training and documents.
- Staff health and wellbeing negatively impacted by COVID-19. This is mitigated by a suite of wellbeing policies, processes and support mechanisms for staff.

Safeguarding and Serious Incidents

During the year, *Girls Not Brides* continued to step up its efforts in ensuring high standards of safeguarding, monitoring and training of all relevant persons across the globe.

The charity maintains its zero-tolerance policy towards abuse or other forms of serious misconduct and sets clear standards and expectations around members' behaviour in our international Code of Conduct. All employees and other representatives are required to take part in both induction and recurring annual training on safeguarding and associated policies and controls (through webinars, face-to-face discussions and consultations).

The Trustees are cognisant to their obligations to report the most serious misconduct or abuse to relevant authorities in the UK and other countries of operation, in particular the formal requirements for Serious Incident Reporting to the Charity Commission for England and Wales. This obligation is understood across the broader definitions of Serious Incidents in which the Commission would have an interest. There were no Serious Incident Notifications made to the Commission during the period covered by this report.

Public benefit

The Trustees' report sets out *Girls Not Brides'* charitable activities contributing to ending child marriage, which we have carried out in line with our charitable objects, being the promotion of equality and human rights, the prevention and relief of poverty, the advancement of health, the advancement of education and the relief of those in need by reason or youth and/or ill health. The Board has considered the issue of public benefit and are confident that *Girls Not Brides'* activities comply with the duty in section 17 of the Charities Act 2011 to have due regard to public benefit guidance published by the Charity Commission.

Fundraising

In 2021, *Girls Not Brides* actively fundraised from a small pool of organisations, primarily made up of governments and foundations. Activities were led by our Senior Leadership Team, Donor Engagement Team and the Chair of the Board of Trustees, drawing on other colleagues' and Board Members' expertise and support as needed. Activities included researching prospective government and foundation funding, a variety of communications with existing and prospective donors, and preparing concept notes, proposals and reporting for these donors. Going forwards from 2022, *Girls Not Brides'* fundraising activities will be guided by the Fundraising and Donor Relations Committee.

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During the year under review, *Girls Not Brides* did not use professional fundraisers or commercial participators and did not actively solicit funds from the general public, including vulnerable people, for the secretariat's work. We complied with fundraising regulation and codes in 2021 and we did not receive any complaints.

Remuneration policy

In December 2021, *Girls Not Brides* introduced a Global Pay and Benefits policy, which provided the organisation with a new framework and principles for pay and benefits for all employees, including how salaries are set, how pay increases are determined, and other pay related topics.

In line with the values of *Girls Not Brides*, the new policy aims to provide transparency, equity, and fairness to staff following a 'Total Reward Approach', which includes financial and non-financial elements.

Girls Not Brides is guided by the following remuneration principles:

- **Competitiveness:** to attract and retain outstanding individuals, while taking into account market trends in the sector.
- **Fairness and equity:** to ensure that the compensation process remains consistent, non-discriminatory and reasonable, and that staff members in comparable positions can afford a similar standard of living in different geographical locations.
- **Transparency:** to ensure staff members have a clear understanding of the policies related to remuneration while ensuring that individual salary data remains confidential.
- **Value for money:** to ensure that the funds of *Girls Not Brides* are used for their designated purpose, and that salaries reflect the size, complexity and budget of *Girls Not Brides*.

A salary benchmarking review took place in October 2021 using market data in the charity sector. In 2022, new salary scales will provide an annual incremental step. Salary bands are approved by the Board of Trustees. The Chief Executive Officer's salary is decided by the Board.

GIRLS NOT BRIDES' 2021 IMPACT REPORT

Message from the Chief Executive Officer

When *Girls Not Brides: The Global Partnership to End Child Marriage* was founded a decade ago, child marriage was barely recognised or spoken about internationally, despite affecting hundreds of millions of girls and women around the world. We set out to build a movement to raise the profile of the issue and ensure it is reflected in global policies and development agendas. Now we are an effective, dynamic and impact-driven organisation supporting a Partnership of over 1,600 member organisations working towards a common goal: a world without child marriage where girls and women enjoy equal status with boys and men, and can reach their full potential.

The COVID-19 pandemic continued to threaten this progress over 2021, but together we kept child marriage on the national and international agenda, holding decision-makers to account for their commitments to girls' rights. Reflecting on what we have learned over the last decade – and on the impact of the pandemic – we focused in on collective action, youth engagement, gender-transformative and intersectional approaches, and converting evidence into action.

In a challenging year, I found inspiration in our work with *Girls Not Brides* National and State Partnerships and coalitions, which spearhead the movement at the national level. Through them we connected with regional youth, feminist and Indigenous movements, building momentum and bringing greater diversity to our collective action. We promoted youth and women's leadership, supporting them to participate in regional and global advocacy spaces, where they directly influenced the international agenda.

On our 10th anniversary, we re-energised the global partnership with the Power to Girls campaign, calling for immediate action to end child marriage at a time when political will and financial support was being diverted to the pandemic response. By year-end we had reached over 100,000 stakeholders on social media and inspired 168 commitments to girls' rights through our website, including from national governments, donors and civil society from Mexico to Pakistan. With member organisations, we encouraged the UN Human Rights Council to include bolder language on girls' rights in their fifth resolution on child, early and forced marriages, building a stronger environment for long-term, sustainable change.

We continued to act as a key source of information and collective learning on child marriage. We worked with member organisations to strengthen the global evidence base, facilitate cross-regional and multi-stakeholder collaboration and shared learning, and promote evidence-based actions that prevent child marriage and support married girls. We contributed to greater coordination of global research and uptake of evidence by co-hosting the Child Marriage Research to Action Network, officially launched in 2021.

Lessons from a decade of collective experience will guide our work for the next four years, as outlined in our refreshed [Partnership Strategy](#) and new Secretariat Strategy. Our collective work is needed now more than ever and, if we accelerate our actions, I believe we can reach our shared vision of a world without child marriage.

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I look forward to continuing this journey with our friends and partners around the world in 2022!

Dr Faith Mwangi-Powell, Chief Executive Officer

Reflections from the Chair of the Board of Trustees

As the incoming Chair of the Board of Trustees for *Girls Not Brides* I have been struck by its approach to addressing an issue as complex and multi-layered as child marriage. The *Girls Not Brides* approach places those most affected – and those supporting them – at the centre. This approach is holistic and collaborative, and it values partnership as the principal tool for supporting individuals, engaging communities, and building an advocacy coalition to push for the legal changes that will make a real difference. It is an approach that has helped to build and sustain an effective, dynamic global movement to end child marriage over the last decade.

As I write this, our global community faces myriad challenges and uncertainties, and priorities for attention and resources will shift in response. In this environment, it is essential to remain steady and to stand firm. Ending child marriage is critical to the health and wellbeing of millions of girls. Our work on the issue is helping to build strong and resilient communities. It is contributing to a more just and equal world.

As *Girls Not Brides* enters its second decade of action, we are determined to lean into the many challenges that lie ahead, working diligently and creatively to make a real difference to the lives of girls everywhere. We have sharpened our tools: we have a new Secretariat Strategy that explicitly supports member organisations learning and acting together. And we have a new Partnership Strategy that will guide that important work. Alongside the Partnership, we will leverage our collective power to keep child marriage on national, regional and international agendas.

Our commitment is to work with, learn from and support those closest to the issue. Our commitment is to amplify the voices and impact of those who are doing the vital work of ensuring that girls and women – in all their diversity – can exercise their rights alongside boys and men.

Dr Anne T. Gallagher AO, Chair of the Board of Trustees

2021 impact at a glance

The Partnership has grown in size, experience and diversity

- 82 new member organisations³
 - 42% in Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC), and West and Central Africa (WACA, where progress to end child marriage is slowest)
 - 51% community-based organisations
 - 38 girl- or youth-led organisations
 - 35 women-led organisations
 - 37 youth-serving organisations
 - 9 Indigenous organisations
- 1 new coalition
- 10 youth-led organisations in National and State Partnership governance structures

We have facilitated shared learning and evidence-based collective action

- 64 shared learning/capacity enhancement sessions
 - 1,124 participants
 - 47% youth⁴
 - 72% women
- 16 learning products produced/published
- 21,188 downloads of learning products
- 4 global research meetings

We have amplified girl and member voices and accelerated engagement by decision-makers

- 25 positive stories of change published
- 1 global Power to Girls campaign launched
- 11 national Power to Girls campaigns offered financial and technical support
- 168 campaign commitments made
- 79 governments supporting child marriage in global spaces
- 18 governments demonstrating committed action

³ Number/percentage of member organisations in each category is based on how they self-identify in their membership application. Some identify as more than one category.

⁴ Percentages based on a sub-set of participants who self-reported age and gender.

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Introduction to the Secretariat Objectives

In 2021, the secretariat supported the movement to end child marriage by working to fulfil six objectives:

1. Catalysing effective civil society collective action at all levels
2. Ensuring the movement to end child marriage has the evidence, information and learning necessary to take effective action
3. Ensuring child marriage is seen as a political and social priority through direct advocacy, amplifying the voices of the Partnership and providing a platform for community-based organisations, women, girls and youth to be heard
4. Advocating for governments and other decision-makers to take action to address child marriage
5. Ensuring the movement to end child marriage has sufficient resources
6. Ensuring the secretariat is functional, effective and able to support the movement to end child marriage.

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Progress against our Secretariat Objectives

Objective 1: Catalysing collective action

Key evidence

- The Partnership has grown in size, experience and diversity
- 1,602 total member organisations in 102 countries
- 82 new member organisations⁵
 - 38 new member organisations in focus regions (LAC and WACA)
 - 42 community-based organisations
 - 38 girl- or youth-led organisations
 - 35 women-led organisations
 - 37 youth-serving organisations
 - 9 Indigenous organisations
- 12 National and State Partnerships and 17 coalitions
 - 10 youth-led organisations in National and State Partnership governance structures
- 13 youth groups/networks/committees established with 254 youth activists⁶

Over 2021, the Partnership has grown in size, experience and diversity. We have intentionally focused on expansion in LAC, and WACA – regions where progress on child marriage has been slowest – and have increased youth and women’s participation. We worked with member organisations to share learnings, enhance capacity, connect diverse stakeholders and catalyse collective action at all levels to ensure governments deliver on commitments.

Supporting collective action at the sub-national and national level

Girls Not Brides National and State Partnerships and coalitions – as networks of organisations bringing together contextually relevant expertise, evidence and connections and speaking with one voice – are uniquely positioned to influence and advocate for local and national governments to take action. The *Girls Not Brides* secretariat provides tailored technical assistance to coalitions based on their priority work areas and needs as defined by them, and it supports them to connect and learn from each other and broader learning in the movement.

When member organisations in the Dominican Republic started working collectively, we brought them together with focal points from Africa and Asia – where there are experienced National and State Partnerships and coalitions – to share examples of successful collective action and ways of working. They used the *Girls Not Brides* Partnering for success toolkit to explore how to conduct collective advocacy in their context, and agreed their mission and goals, which will guide their national-level work.

⁵ Number of member organisations in each category is based on how they self-identify in their membership application. Some identify as more than one category.

⁶ Some youth activists may be counted more than once, if they participate in more than one group.

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One of our priorities is to support the coalitions to be inclusive, diverse and democratically elected to strengthen their ongoing collective work. With our support, *Girls Not Brides Malawi*, *Girls Not Brides Rajasthan* and the Mesa a Favor de las Niñas y Adolescentes (Mesa de la Niña) – a civil society coalition in Guatemala – elected new, more inclusive leaderships. They now have youth- and women-led organisations represented in their decision-making structures.

Building on the strength of their new leadership, *Girls Not Brides Malawi* played a key role in analysing the national budget and urging the Government of Malawi to prioritise funding for girls' education. Following a parliamentary event backed by us in 2020 and ongoing support to engage the media, *Girls Not Brides UK* was a driving force behind Members of Parliament (MPs) voting for a ground-breaking bill to make all forms of child marriage illegal in England and Wales.

In Uttar Pradesh, India, the state coalition – with our technical support – worked with girls to identify barriers to accessing two government schemes – on sexual and reproductive health and rights and cash transfers – that could help prevent child marriage. The coalition responded with easy-reference booklets and training with government officials on the schemes, which girls then replicated with 2,150 peers across the state. Due to this collaboration, thousands of girls are already better able to access government schemes that will reduce their risk of child marriage, and government officials have called for further awareness-raising activities that could reach millions more.

Youth engagement is essential to transforming the gendered social norms that drive child marriage, and working with National and State Partnerships and coalitions is a powerful way to scale up our joint impact. This year, we worked with 116 youth workers from 72 member organisations across four State Partnerships and coalitions in India to use stories and social media to speak with adolescents about gender, sexuality and discrimination.

Youth leaders are now using the curriculum and storytelling toolkit – which they inputted to – in their organisations and communities. They now report greater confidence and understanding to talk about these issues, which are key drivers of child marriage.

Girls Not Brides National and State Partnerships and coalitions bring diverse stakeholders together and have responsibility for the safety of the communities engaged in their projects and activities, particularly the girls, adolescents and adults at risk that they interact with. In 2021, we worked with coalitions in Uttar Pradesh (India) and Nigeria to build a shared understanding of international safeguarding standards. We facilitated training and the co-creation of their own policies so they can align their national and local frameworks to these core principles.

Participants later reported greater collaboration between coalition members, improved knowledge and understanding of safeguarding, and commitment to embedding safeguarding in their work. The Uttar Pradesh coalition is now in a stronger position to consult and feed back on the state government's draft rules for the Prevention of Child Marriage Act 2006.

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Supporting collective action at the regional and global level

Our collective work to promote girls' representation in regional and global advocacy forums also had an impact at the regional and global level this year. Working with Indigenous⁷ women's and youth organisations is a priority for our work in LAC, as girls from Indigenous communities experience intersecting discriminations – relating to their gender, age, ethnicity, education and location – that put them at greater risk of child marriage. This year, we worked closely with Indigenous women's and youth organisations to deepen understanding of child marriage in their communities and to promote Indigenous girls, adolescents and young women as experts in their own cultures and experiences.

To this end, we accompanied representatives from 11 organisations and collectives to organise a side event at the 14th Session of the United Nations Expert Mechanism on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, supporting them to prepare and deliver a joint statement to the session's expert members. Through this process, young Indigenous women – including the adolescent girl who presented the joint statement – spoke about child marriage from their own perspectives, sharing their recommendations on how to address child marriage with their communities.

Impact in practice: Working with youth to transform social norms in Kenya and Tanzania

Child marriage and female genital mutilation/cutting (FGM/C) are both driven by gender norms linked to controlling girls' and women's sexuality, and maintaining social and religious norms. In some contexts – such as the cross-border Kuria community in Kenya and Tanzania – the two practices coexist, and FGM/C is linked to girls' marriageability. Successfully addressing these issues means empowering girls, engaging families and communities, and building effective partnerships.

Building on the collaboration with *Girls Not Brides Uganda* in 2020, we supported *Girls Not Brides Kenya* and the Tanzania coalition (Tanzania End Child Marriage Network) – through member organisations in Migori County, Kenya (Msichana Empowerment Kenya), and Tarime District, Tanzania (Children's Dignity Forum) – to address child marriage and FGM/C with the Kuria community. We prioritised youth engagement, gender-transformative approaches (GTA) and multi-stakeholder action to address gender inequality and reshape the unequal power relations that perpetuate both practices in this context.

Promoting multi-stakeholder action

We established two youth working groups to bring together key stakeholders and opinion leaders to drive collective action, with active leadership from young women. They established community-based structures – including child rights and protection committees – that link with relevant government ministries and respond to cases of child marriage and FGM/C.

Supported by budget advocacy trainings and advocacy meetings, this collaboration led key government officials – including the Tarime District Commissioner – to make public statements on child marriage, ward councillors to incorporate gender-responsive budgeting into their work, and

⁷ We capitalise "Indigenous" to recognise the existence of global, regional and national Indigenous rights movements. However, we also acknowledge that there is significant diversity amongst Indigenous peoples, and that they usually prefer to self-identify with their specific community name. Our aim is not to mask this diversity, but to draw on the strength of this identity to advocate for a differential approach to ending child marriage that takes ethnicity into account.

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local governments to integrate youth-inspired activities into their workplans. Transforming social norms is a long-term project, but collective, multi-stakeholder action is critical for lasting impact.

Engaging youth to transform social norms

We trained 20 young people using the *Girls Not Brides Stand up, speak out!* youth activism toolkit – with an additional module on GTA – who then replicated this training with a further 83 youth activists. The Migori Youth Network was established with them and other young people to foster collective action to end child marriage across the region. We also supported a digital storytelling workshop with 30 youth activists, which explored diverse forms of expression – including art, photography, drama, creative writing and story circles – for them to share and use their own experiences to advocate for an end to child marriage and FGM/C in their communities.

These activists have become a powerful, collective force for change, organising into groups to conduct door-to-door sensitisation forums and advocacy, and offering youth mentorships. They have led intergenerational and youth-focused dialogues in their communities and on local radio stations, challenging discriminatory gender norms and pushing for the long-term transformations that will ensure girls and women can enjoy the same rights as boys and men.

Objective 2: Sharing evidence and learning

Key evidence

- 16 learning products produced/published
- 21,188 downloads of learning products
- 64 shared learning/capacity enhancement sessions with National and State Partnerships and coalitions
 - 1,124 participants
- 4 global research meetings
 - 399 participants

One of our key roles as a secretariat is to facilitate knowledge exchange amongst member organisations and with practitioners, researchers, policymakers and donors to ensure they have access to – and influence over – the latest evidence and resources. This year, we built a global understanding of why and how child marriage happens, its impacts, how it links to other human rights issues, and what works to end it. As a result, we are in a stronger position to collectively advocate for investment and support that will effectively prevent child marriage and support married girls.

Working with member organisations to put evidence into action

This year, we facilitated and supported opportunities for members to exchange learning with each other and key stakeholders. Highlights included a global convening (see impact in practice on p. 21) and a series of online learning sessions for National and State Partnerships and coalitions around the world to build cross-regional relationships and increase peer-to-peer learning.

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In Kenya, we brought member organisations together to share evidence and learning on how to address child marriage and FGM/C together in programming and advocacy. As a result, member organisations developed evidence-based collective messaging to advocate for both issues to be addressed in an integrated way. *Girls Not Brides Kenya* developed a joint advocacy strategy to hold the Kenyan Government to account for its commitments to end child marriage and FGM/C. These outcomes will support ongoing work with the Kuria community in Kenya and Tanzania.

In Burkina Faso, we convened National Partnership members (the Coalition Nationale contre le Mariage des Enfants au Burkina Faso, CONAMEB), traditional and religious leaders and a consultant from Niger to share learning on social norms change in child marriage programming. As a result, leaders committed to being more active in their engagement with other stakeholders. This was the first time CONAMEB and such leaders have agreed to work strategically together.

With the coalition in Niger (the Plateforme vers la Fin du Mariage des Enfants; the Niger Platform) we brought together diverse stakeholders – including humanitarian actors, government officials and representatives from the educational and child marriage sectors – for the first time to plan a collective approach to ensure girls' access to education in humanitarian settings. They formed a working group, which will meet regularly to share workplans, identify areas for collaboration and support collective advocacy.

By facilitating youth engagement at the African Girls' Summit – including through the African Union's pre-Summit youth training – working on collective advocacy with the Niger Platform and organising a parallel event on girls' education, we ensured that girls and member organisations could make powerful demands for decision-makers to take cross-sectoral actions to guarantee girls' rights. As a result, child marriage and education were included in the Summit's outcome statements. This process not only shows the power of collective action, but also served to strengthen it: youth activists have connected with the wider youth movement in Africa, and member organisations formed an alliance for joint advocacy in West Africa, through which they can hold decision-makers to account.

In LAC – where child marriage is not widely recognised though prevalence is high at 22% – we worked with member organisations to host two webinars to deepen understanding of the links between child marriage and two issues that are a priority for civil society in the region: adolescent pregnancy and masculinities. Through the webinars, member organisations – and particularly young women – shone a light on their work, shared learnings and recommendations, and galvanised collective advocacy for integrated responses to child marriage. Bringing community-based and youth-led organisations together with UN Agencies and INGOs also helped to link community work with the global evidence base, highlighting the importance of context and the need for an approach that accounts for the intersecting factors that put girls at risk.

Strengthening the global evidence base

We produced and disseminated 16 learning resources in multiple languages. These case studies, briefs and longer reports summarise the latest data, evidence and learning on specific topics, reflect the expertise and experiences of member organisations, and offer actionable recommendations for policy and programming.

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Resources published this year include briefs and reports on child marriage and girl's education, child protection, adolescent pregnancy and motherhood, FGM/C, cash transfers and modern slavery; case studies on child marriage in humanitarian settings, child marriage and FGM/C and using the media to address FGM/C; and a Research Spotlight on gender-transformative and systems approaches to ending child marriage. An additional brief developed in 2021 on intersectionality, which explores the factors that increase girls' individual risks of child marriage, will be published in 2022.

Coordinating and promoting uptake of global child marriage research and evidence

This year – in partnership with the UNFPA-UNICEF Global Programme to End Child Marriage – we launched a unique mechanism for coordinating the global research agenda and promoting uptake of learning and evidence: the Child Marriage Research to Action Network (the CRANK). By year-end, the CRANK comprised over 300 researchers, practitioners and advocates from diverse organisations – including women- and youth-led organisations, universities and UN Agencies – from around the world.

The CRANK disseminated and encouraged uptake of priority child marriage research through quarterly meetings to discuss the latest evidence on priority issues – including GTAs and child marriage in humanitarian settings – and what it means for research, practice and policy. The CRANK's first and second Research Spotlights summarised key takeaways, resources, tools and case studies with practical solutions for those working to end child marriage. The research tracker also contributed to greater coordination in child marriage research.

We also worked with UNICEF and nine other strategic partners to launch UNICEF's Child Marriage Monitoring Mechanism (CMMM) this year. This collaborative platform will generate analysis and engage national actors to use data in their work. As a member of the Strategic Advisory Group, we will engage and represent the global partnership to ensure the CMMM integrates the perspectives of young people and civil society.

At the regional level, we hosted a workshop to reformulate the Africa Action Group to End Child Marriage to ensure it has the evidence, information and learning necessary to take effective action, and to provide a platform to highlight African research and researchers at the regional and global levels. We initiated a review of existing evidence on child marriage prevalence, drivers, consequences and interventions in Africa, identified research gaps and set priorities with member organisations, UN Agencies, research organisations and academia.

Impact in practice: Driving evidence-based action through shared learning with members and young people

As we marked our 10th anniversary during the pandemic – when travel and face-to-face meetings were still restricted – we moved our series of learning convenings with National and State Partnerships, coalitions and member organisations online. Over four sessions, we discussed and shared practical examples – in four languages – of issues at the core of our work: youth engagement, sexuality and girls' agency, movement-building, and collective action.

The sessions were co-created with member organisations and the youth engagement sessions were designed with adolescent girls and young leaders. Young people moderated and participated in the discussions, providing examples of how they organise and foster networks of girls and young women

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to advocate for their rights in Guatemala, India, Kenya, Mexico and Tanzania. By focusing on shared learning and youth engagement, we built member organisations' and young people's confidence to influence the global evidence base, and strengthened their leadership in the movement to end child marriage.

In all sessions, participants highlighted and shared practical solutions to enhance youth capacity and cultivate safe spaces at the national and regional level where they can share their opinions and recommendations and participate in decision-making. National and State Partnerships and coalitions have already begun making this a reality by including more young people in their governance structures (see examples on p. 17), and member organisations and partners continue to support their leadership journey at the local and national level.

We used our digital channels to share key learnings and resources with participants. We also brought youth activists together to share their thoughts on activism and campaigning to end child marriage in a [blog](#) for broad audiences around International Youth Day, broadcasting a positive vision of change to inspire action by diverse stakeholders.

Objective 3: Amplifying voices

Key evidence

- 25 positive stories of change shared
- 1 global Power to Girls campaign launched
- 11 national Power to Girls campaigns offered financial and technical support
- 168 campaign commitments made through our website
- Over 100,000 reached through the #PowerToGirls campaign tag
- 1 set of guidelines for ethical communications produced

We have made significant progress towards a world without child marriage over the past decade, but 12 million girls still marry every year,⁸ and 10 million more are expected to marry by 2030 because of the broad impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic.⁹ Raising awareness of the issue, its urgency and what is being done to address it – by amplifying girls' and member organisations' voices – is at the core of our work to mobilise the global partnership, build support and accelerate engagement by decision-makers at every level.

A global campaign for Power to Girls

The pandemic – and associated school closures, restrictions to movement, pressure on health services and increasing economic hardship – has put adolescent girls at increased risk of child marriage. At the same time, political will and resources have been diverted away from programming to prevent and respond to such practices.

In this context, we launched the global [Power to Girls](#) campaign calling for immediate action to end child marriage. Through it, we have engaged member organisations and partners around the world

⁸ UNICEF, 2021, *Child marriage database*.

⁹ UNICEF, 2021, *COVID-19: A threat to progress against child marriage*.

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to create spaces for girls to speak out, harness their power and realise their potential. We have also called on decision-makers to make tangible commitments to end child marriage, making the issue a political and financial priority that they can be held to account on. The campaign ran until March 2022.

Together, we have created a global and vocal network calling for action, beginning with an online festival attended by over 400 individuals and leading to the launch of five national campaigns (see impact in practice on p. 25). By year-end, we had received 168 commitments through our website, including from the governments of Mexico and Sweden, with thousands more collected by member organisations through their national campaigns.

The campaign tag #PowerToGirls was seen over 100,000 times in 2021, videos received an average of 4,300 views on social media and email engagement was well above sector benchmarks. In this campaign, we have reached far beyond our own Partnership to raise awareness and inspire action to ensure girls have the power to decide over their lives and bodies.

Amplifying girls' and members' voices for a positive vision of change

This year, we used our digital channels – including our newly refreshed website – to share the work being done to end child marriage, how it affects girls' lives and what challenges we still face as a movement. In sharing these stories, we have kept member organisations and partners engaged and motivated, and we have ensured that decision-makers, governments and donors can see the impact of investing in civil society organisations working with girls to build a better future for us all.

Over 2021, we published 25 positive stories of change – that is, girl- and member-led insights, expertise and personal stories – on our website, which were visited almost 10,000 times. They focused on youth activism, intersectionality, humanitarian contexts and collective action to end child marriage. The most visited story was Celebrating the Day of the African Child, which highlighted progress on child marriage in Africa. Other blogs included the story of an Angolan organisation addressing child marriage through girl power, promoting healthy masculinities in LAC, channelling power from government to girls in India and supporting girls and women in Afghanistan after the Taliban takeover.

We also shared information, stories, events and discussions on child marriage and the work being done to end it across our social media channels. Through this, we encouraged broad audiences and key stakeholders – including member organisations and donors – to join the conversation and to take action. Over 2021, our social media audience across established channels in English grew by 3.1% to a combined total of over 220,000, and engagement increased by 167.7%.

To better support our growing membership in LAC, we launched our official Spanish-language Twitter and Facebook accounts. Through them, we have raised the profile of child marriage and the work of *Girls Not Brides* member organisations in the region, engaging activists, civil society, the media, UN agencies and governments. A Facebook group set up for member organisations now provides a space to share events, tools and experiences, and to build consensus so we can advocate for change, together.

This year, we re-launched our supporter communications through a monthly email, which provides a curated snapshot of girl- and member-led stories, evidence and campaign actions for stakeholders

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including donors, policymakers, journalists and civil society. By engaging regularly with this group we have encouraged commitments to the Power to Girls campaign and the integration of child marriage into work beyond our Partnership, building a more holistic, multi-sectoral approach to girls' rights.

Responsible reporting on child marriage

The media is very important for raising awareness and public pressure to end child marriage at the national, regional and global level. We work with member organisations to proactively pitch stories and respond to media requests that cover the issue in an ethical and solutions-focused way, where those affected can tell their stories safely and in their own words. This builds on our approach of promoting personal stories that illustrate the impact of, and solutions to, child marriage, and avoid sensationalist reporting of the issue.

This year, we worked closely with The Washington Post to source evidence of how COVID-19 is impacting on child marriage in West Africa. We brokered a working relationship between their bureau chief and member organisation Agir Plus and ensured safeguarding measures were in place for a press visit. As a result, The Washington Post published the story of Fatouma, a youth activist who almost married as a child, and who now advocates for girls' education. Reader donations mean Fatouma could go back to school and is working to regain her identity papers.

We worked with the coalition in Zimbabwe (the Zimbabwe National Group to End Child Marriage) to respond to news that a girl had died in childbirth following her marriage, resulting in coverage with first-person accounts by BBC Africa Daily, CNN and on our website. We continue to work closely with the coalition in Zimbabwe to promote their stories and the Southern African Development Community Model Law on Eradicating Child Marriage and Protecting Children Already in Marriage.

Work with *Girls Not Brides UK* led to the landmark Bill to increase the legal age of marriage being covered by The Guardian, Thomson Reuters Foundation, PA Media and the Evening Standard. We also worked with Folha de São Paulo in Brazil, building a reputation as a trusted source of information in the country with the fifth highest absolute number of child marriages in the world.¹⁰

This coverage raises the national and international profile of child marriage, putting pressure on governments to fulfil their commitments – too often laid aside – to end child marriage and guarantee girls' rights. It also presented *Girls Not Brides* member organisations, girls and young women as experts on the issue and led readers to donate to organisations working with and for girls.

Leading the way on ethical communications around child marriage

Cutting across all our work to amplify voices is our commitment to communicating responsibly around child marriage. This year, we worked with 50 member organisation representatives and contributors – including young women who have experienced child marriage – to produce a set of guidelines for ethical communications on the issue.

These guidelines outline – for the first time – ethical principles and good practices specifically tailored to communicating around child marriage, and they include 11 practical tools to deliver on them. In the context of the pandemic and increasing awareness of the power imbalances that can cause harm in the storytelling process, these guidelines support us all to ensure that contributors,

¹⁰ UNICEF, 2021, *Child marriage database*.

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and particularly girls and adolescents, are safe and able to express their experiences and preferences and find the process to be a source of power.

Impact in practice: Collective action for Power to Girls

As part of the Power to Girls campaign, we worked closely with member organisations around the world to adapt messaging to regional contexts and to highlight their work for girls' rights. We also offered funding and technical support for 11 member organisations and National Partnerships, providing funding and technical expertise, to develop their own campaigns and drive national-level action. Four of these campaigns launched in 2021.

In Pakistan, Blue Veins worked with the media and religious leaders, who had not previously been engaged in the issue of child marriage, to catalyse action in favour of girls' rights across Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. Through a workshop with journalists, they raised awareness of girls' rights and the role of the media in preventing child marriage and driving public support, and they set up a media support group to promote collective action.

They also held multi-faith dialogues with religious leaders, resulting in leaders from across the region committing to promoting girls' and women's rights, and to working together to end child marriage for the first time. Their support is key to the future success of a working group and two Provincial Assembly committees developing child marriage legislation.

In India, Pratigya has combined community-level work in urban slums and tribal villages with state-level advocacy to rally political and religious leaders behind girls' rights. They have gathered over 7,000 signatures for their pledge to end child marriage, including those of ministers and government representatives. They have also used pamphlets and talks with decision-makers to raise awareness.

In LAC, member organisations have come together and found strength in collective action through the campaign. They have shared their experiences and prepared joint, contextually relevant messages that drive decision-makers to formally commit to girls' rights. Over 20 Power to Girls commitments have already been made in the region, including by government institutions. Our new Spanish-language social media channels have been key to this engagement (see p. 23).

Objective 4: Advocating to decision-makers

Key evidence

- 79 governments supported child marriage in global spaces
- 18 governments demonstrated committed action
- 11 decision-makers expressed commitments
- 7 advocacy and campaign resources made available online
- 520 youth activists participated in advocacy/campaign moments with decision-makers

As a Partnership, we are stronger when we unite around a clear, practical vision for change. The secretariat works with diverse stakeholders to influence decision-makers to help make this vision a reality. Over 2021, we mobilised youth- and women-led organisations and advocated for their

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concerns – including bodily autonomy, sexual and reproductive rights, and child marriage – to be included on international and national agendas.

The Generation Equality Forum (GEF) – which marked the 25th anniversary of the Beijing Platform for Action (Beijing+25) with events in Mexico and Paris – was a key arena for us to promote youth engagement and drive youth-friendly political and financial commitments to girls' and women's rights at the national and global level.

Our collective advocacy with youth activists and civil society through platforms such as the Adolescent Girls Investment Plan (AGIP) meant the GEF enjoyed significant youth participation and leadership – with prominence given to Indigenous and LGBTQ+ representatives – in its Action Coalitions, Youth Task Force and Core (decision-making) group. Read more on our engagement with the process in the impact in practice on p. 27.

Also on the global stage, we contributed to a strong normative environment on child marriage through the UN Human Rights Council's fifth resolution on child, early and forced marriage. We worked with partners across governments, INGOs and civil society organisations to ensure the needs of girls at risk of child marriage, and those who are or have been married, are prioritised.

The resolution was adopted by consensus with 74 co-sponsors and broad cross-regional engagement. It maintains international pressure on UN Member States to fulfil their commitment to end child marriage within a framework of human rights, and accounting for the COVID-19 pandemic.

Collective action by civil society was instrumental in getting governments to support the resolution and adopt the strongest possible language to protect girls' rights. Thanks to our joint advocacy, the resolution mentions girls' sexual and reproductive health and rights for the first time. It also contains strong language on girls' right to participate in decision-making, an issue previously resisted by some Member States. By strengthening global commitments and language on child marriage, we have built a stronger environment for long-term, sustainable change.

At the national level, Girls Not Brides Uganda built on the financial support and joint work begun in 2020 to develop a parliamentary motion tabled by a champion MP in 2021. Their collective advocacy led MPs to pass a motion urging the Ugandan Government to develop and enforce policies and strategies to protect girls against escalating cases of adolescent pregnancy and child marriage during the pandemic. This case illustrates the power of ongoing collective and multi-stakeholder action, which has resulted in child marriage becoming a political and social priority in Uganda.

We also continued to support *Girls Not Brides* member organisations to advocate for government funding for work to end child marriage. In Cross River State, Nigeria – a region experiencing a humanitarian crisis – we offered financial support for the Girls' Power Initiative to organise a three-day training on budget advocacy with government officials, local media and the Network to Curb Sexual Abuse in Girls and Women. The training resulted in official commitments for a more gender-responsive state budget, to making that budget publicly available, and to including girls and women in House Committee discussions, so that those most affected by child marriage can table issues.

Impact in practice: Adolescents and young women in LAC take to the global stage

Key evidence

- 2 national-level youth summits in Mexico co-led
- 2 regional-level youth summits in LAC supported
- 210 youth activists participated
- Almost 90% of participants young women
- 13 countries in LAC represented

The GEF is a multi-stakeholder space created to celebrate progress and drive commitments and investment in girls' and women's rights. Working closely with partners such as the AGIP, our engagement centred around the inclusion and leadership of diverse young people – particularly adolescent girls, young women and Indigenous-led organisations – in consultations and direct dialogues with decision-makers at the GEF. Their concerns – which reflect the intersecting factors that govern girls' risk of child marriage, including gender, age, ethnicity, sexuality and education – are now on the international agenda with greater legitimacy.

With other civil society organisations and networks – such as the Mexican Youth Syndicate for Beijing+25 and GEF, the Youth Network for Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights (RedLAC), and the Continental Network of Indigenous Women of the Americas (ECMIA) – we convened and supported four youth summits for activists from Mexico and 12 other countries in LAC to compile their recommendations for decision-makers at the GEF. Our involvement meant these recommendations included specific actions to address child marriage alongside the right to bodily autonomy and sexual and reproductive health.

These recommendations were shared with key stakeholders – including representatives from the Mexican Government, UNFPA, UNICEF and UN Women – who pledged to take them to the GEF in Paris and include them in their own commitments. We also co-created youth-friendly social media materials to raise awareness of the GEF, which reached over 58,000 people.

Objective 5: Securing funding for the movement

The COVID-19 pandemic continues to have an impact on the type and amount of funding available for the movement to end child marriage, and for gender equality more broadly. The secretariat plays a central role in keeping the issue on the political agenda and catalysing donor commitment. We work closely with donors, partners and member organisations to inform donors and influence priorities for the funding community, helping to ensure they respond to the needs of the movement, and of girls.

As part of our 10-year anniversary, we organised our latest annual (online) event on child marriage with the Ford Foundation. The trilingual event attracted 273 attendees, including donors, member organisations and partners from across the world. We heard from civil society and young leaders from Guatemala, India, Pakistan and Senegal, and enjoyed reflections from Mary Robinson (The Elders), Darren Walker (Ford Foundation), and Malala Yousafzai. The speakers also made commitments to our Power to Girls campaign, which was launched at the event (find out more about the campaign on p. 22).

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With the pandemic still ongoing, this was an important opportunity to convene diverse members of the community working to end child marriage to celebrate progress, assess ongoing challenges and plot a path forward, together. We continue to work with donors and partners to support their understanding of the complex work being done to end child marriage and the amount and type of funding needed to achieve real impact in girls' lives.

Girls Not Brides member organisations are at the forefront of this work, but many have limited staff bases, budgets and resources. Around 50% operate with an annual budget of less than US\$50,000,¹¹ and the pandemic has further strained their operational capacity. We are committed to promoting investment in member organisations and support them to identify and access more – and sustainable – funding, wherever they are based.

To this end, we curated and shared over 500 funding opportunities with member organisations this year. We also partnered with GivenGain – a non-profit digital fundraising platform – to organise a webinar for member organisations to learn more about peer-to-peer and online fundraising.

The funding landscape is particularly challenging in LAC, where child marriage affects almost one in four girls but is not a recognised issue. With this in mind, we worked with member organisations to assess their fundraising knowledge and experience, then organised a workshop that responded to their needs.

The workshop included tools to identify areas for improvement and to foster creativity in fundraising. The process led to the creation of a manual with practical examples from member organisations in the region. After the workshop, member organisations reported greater capacity to fundraise in their context.

Objective 6: Effective secretariat

Key evidence

- 36 internal capacity enhancement sessions held
- 1 Diversity, Inclusion, Voice and Equity (DIVES) Committee launched
- 1 Language Committee launched

As a support body for the Partnership and movement, we are committed to learning and evolving alongside *Girls Not Brides* member organisations, so we can better serve them in their work to end child marriage. To this end, we have taken actions to ensure we have an inclusive and representative structure that does not perpetuate harmful or discriminatory power dynamics, either between individuals or across borders.

In 2021, we formalised a Diversity, Inclusion, Voice and Equity (DIVES) Committee to draw on our staff's collective expertise and promote greater diversity and inclusion across the secretariat and Partnership. The DIVES Committee draws on an intersectional approach to promote internal learning and action on racial justice, decolonising international development and social justice more

¹¹ Based on a data set of 1,074 member organisations that reported their annual budgets to *Girls Not Brides*.

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broadly. The DIVES Committee has set out an action plan to identify and address unequal power dynamics, reform policies and practices, and ensure we are well placed to serve the Partnership.

This year, we reviewed our recruitment process to ensure increased diversity across the organisation. We also organised a Power and Privilege introductory session with all staff members, focusing on recognising existing power structures and working towards more equitable relationships and shared power.

In the context of growing youth, anti-racist and feminist movements around the world, we also formalised a Language Committee this year. Through it, we review and make recommendations for changes to our organisational language to ensure it accurately reflects our work, values and relationships, and contributes to a vibrant, diverse and inclusive movement to end child marriage.

Despite working remotely during the pandemic, we remain committed to learning together and gaining strength from the expertise of our colleagues, member organisations, partners and supporters. This year, we held eight Reflection Time sessions with external speakers presenting on topics including movement building, cash transfers, storytelling during the pandemic and increasing resources through partnership. Staff reported increased motivation following the sessions and highlighted the value of learning with diverse partners.

PLANS FOR THE FUTURE

In 2021 the Trustees approved a new four-year strategy from 2022–2025. We believe that this strategy – borne out of rich and in-depth conversations with member organisations, leaders, decision-makers, experts and *Girls Not Brides* staff – will revitalise the secretariat's approach and strengthen our future work. It will reinforce the leadership and collective power of *Girls Not Brides* member organisations, influence a wide range of actors in the movement at all levels and strengthen our collective learning about what works to end child marriage.

With increased emphasis on supporting *Girls Not Brides* National and State (or sub-national) Partnerships and coalitions to lead national movements, and growth of our presence and leadership at the regional level to deliver our vision, we will accelerate all our efforts for change.

The *Girls Not Brides* secretariat is in a unique position to support this collective movement at national, regional and global levels. For the last ten years, we have mobilised the largest global collective of stakeholders, working to end child marriage through a global partnership. The Partnership is a great asset for change and must be leveraged to deliver urgent change for girls. The new strategy responds to this urgent need for change.

Entering the second decade of our work, our focus will be to leverage and support – harder and more – this global collective working with our National Partnerships, coalitions, and members so that we can unlock their potential for impact. This agenda builds upon lessons from our members and from Uganda, where we piloted accelerator work in 2020 by providing greater support for the Ugandan National Partnership of over 80 organisations, including part-funding their coordinator and a range of their activities, which had great results. Beyond the global partnership we have also galvanised a global movement that includes other actors interested in ending child marriage at the global level.

We will deepen our relationships with this wider movement, including sectoral leaders, but with a greater focus on education as a key lever for expanding opportunities for girls and ending child marriage. We will accelerate progress by catalysing all actors – governments, leaders, civil society organisations, UN agencies and donors – to use their power to unlock change at the national level. We believe that if all these actors work together at the country level, we will accelerate progress and zero child marriage will become a reality.

In addition to the lessons above, a review of the existing evidence base and consultations with staff, partners, researchers and donors recommended that to respond to the current context and accelerate progress the movement's focus must now deepen in the following areas:

- National and sub-national change and implementation of existing strategies to speed up tangible change in girls' lives.
- Sectoral engagement to ensure that major initiatives in education, sexual and reproductive health, humanitarian, and other sectors integrate, address and measure for change on ending child marriage.
- Coordinated knowledge dissemination and learning that is understood and applied by practitioners.

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- Sustained and increased investment, particularly as donors and partners may have fatigue after ten years of working on this issue.
- Response to the evolving aid landscape, recognising the demands for decolonisation, diversity, equity and inclusion.

However, we recognise that there is no single solution, actor or sector to end child marriage; we must all work together. Our future work will be driven by the three core principles:

1. Change has to be driven locally: we know that there are many different contexts in which child marriage occurs. Local actors are best placed to adapt and deliver change. This will be the most effective route to impacting social norms and to deliver tangible progress in ending child marriage.
2. Civil society is key to driving progress: civil society mobilisation is more effective and impactful when it is undertaken collectively, and the secretariat has a unique role to play in strengthening and supporting National Partnerships and coalitions to be effective advocates for social and political change. It is also important that National Partnerships can engage with and influence the wider ecosystem to ensure that change is multi-sectoral and impactful outside of their existing circles of influence.
3. Collective action at the national level accelerates systemic change: collective action will drive systemic change and greater impact. Through the secretariat's work, including a formal evaluation, we have assessed and so understand the increased impact created by civil society coalitions working together at the national and state level. Strong, sustainable, self-governing national movements led by civil society can:
 - apply pressure for hard-fought-for government commitments to be resourced, implemented and protected
 - ensure that momentum builds and efforts to change social and gender norms are strengthened, and
 - encourage diverse stakeholders – from families to teachers and traditional leaders – to understand the impact of the issue and ultimately guarantee that girls are heard.

These principles are underpinned by our three pillars: movement building, influencing and learning. Core to these pillars is a co-creation process and membership feedback. The ongoing co-creation work led by regional colleagues and a recent membership survey are critical to this successful collaboration process.

The effort to end child marriage does not need one organisation to take the lead; hundreds of leaders from communities all over the world working together towards shared common goals will amplify their impact and deliver change.

Four years from now, we will see that we embody the same values, vision and best practices that we espouse today, but that we are markedly different in how we do our work and deliver change.

We believe the future strategy will accelerate our progress to a world without child marriage. But it doesn't change who we are: a global Partnership standing together to say, "let girls be girls, not brides".

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FINANCIAL REVIEW

Income

In 2021 *Girls Not Brides'* income was £3,430,088 (2020: £3,362,142), of largely unrestricted income. Government grants formed more than half of the unrestricted income, with most other donors being private foundations. Restricted income was 22% of total income.

Due to the long-term nature of much of our funding, we have seen limited impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on our funding. In 2021, we strategically deferred draw-downs from some grants into later years to better reflect our anticipated expenditure phasing.

In 2021, the work of *Girls Not Brides* was made possible through the generous support of many, including:

- Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida)
- Ministry of Foreign Affairs, The Netherlands, Social Development Department
- Nationale Postcode Loterij
- Government of Canada
- Education Out Loud (managed by Oxfam IBIS and financed by the Global Partnership for Education)
- Players of People's Postcode Lottery
- Ford Foundation
- NoVo Foundation Fund of Tides Foundation
- Private family foundation managed by Greenwood Place
- Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation
- The Government of the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg
- The David and Lucile Packard Foundation
- United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA)
- Every Good Thing LLC
- Ignite Philanthropy
- Akamai Foundation
- The Kendeda Fund
- Plan International, Inc

Expenditure

Expenditure on charitable activities in the year was £3,727,893 (2020: £3,514,753). This was an increase on the 2020 expenditure but still lower than planned, due to the ongoing varied and continuously changing impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on *Girls Not Brides'* work. While we included the impact of the pandemic in our budgeting, the sudden changes to restrictions in parts

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of the world meant that, as in 2020, we had to review our planned activities and find new ways to deliver work, or to delay work, and this involved significant savings. This impacted both restricted and unrestricted funding, and so we are carrying forward £211,937 restricted funding and £2,799,705 unrestricted funding into 2022.

Reserves policy

The Board aims to build up a reserve equivalent to six months of committed costs and three months of planned but uncommitted costs as unrestricted free reserves, based on budget projections. The aim of this policy is to ensure that *Girls Not Brides* meets all its obligations and contractual liabilities, and continues to operate smoothly, in case of income shortfalls or unexpected expenditures. This target amounts to £1,680,265 at 31 December 2021. Each year the Board reviews the level of reserves and the risks the reserves are held to mitigate against to ensure that the reserves kept are sufficient but not excessive.

As of 31 December 2021, unrestricted free reserves were £2,730,608 (2020: £2,969,209), which is above our reserves range due to the continued impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on our expenditure in 2021. We intend to spend down this balance over the next two years to bring us in line with our reserves policy.

Funds held as a Custodian Trustee

In 2018, the charity received €2,000,000 to be transferred to Capital for Good USA. The funds are being used to make sub-grants to local community organisations working at a grass roots level to tackle child marriage. This is aligned with the vision of *Girls Not Brides*, and in this way the arrangement advances *Girls Not Brides*' charitable objectives.

Between 2019 and 2021, €2,000,000 (£1,724,473) was transferred to Capital for Good USA. Throughout this period, the funds were held securely in *Girls Not Brides*' euro bank account and tracked through the monthly bank reconciliations. At all times, the balance held as a Custodian Trustee was maintained in the bank account. This arrangement has now come to an end and as at 31 December 2021 no funds were held by *Girls Not Brides* as a Custodian Trustee.

Exemptions from disclosure

This report has been prepared in accordance with the small companies' regime under the Companies Act 2006.

This report was approved by the Board on ~~9 JUNE 2022~~ and signed on its behalf by

.....

Dr Anne T. Gallagher AO, Chair of the Board of Trustees

INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT

TO THE MEMBERS OF GIRLS NOT BRIDES: THE GLOBAL PARTNERSHIP TO END CHILD MARRIAGE

Opinion

We have audited the financial statements of *Girls Not Brides* (the 'charitable company') for the year ended 31 December 2021 which comprise the statement of financial activities, balance sheet, statement of cash flows and notes to the financial statements, including significant accounting policies. The financial reporting framework that has been applied in their preparation is applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards, including FRS 102 The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

In our opinion, the financial statements:

- Give a true and fair view of the state of the charitable company's affairs as at 31 December 2021 and of its incoming resources and application of resources, including its income and expenditure for the year then ended
- Have been properly prepared in accordance with United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice
- Have been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006

Basis for opinion

We conducted our audit in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (UK) (ISAs (UK)) and applicable law. Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements section of our report. We are independent of the charitable company in accordance with the ethical requirements that are relevant to our audit of the financial statements in the UK, including the FRC's Ethical Standard and we have fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with these requirements. We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion.

Conclusions relating to going concern

In auditing the financial statements, we have concluded that the trustees' use of the going concern basis of accounting in the preparation of the financial statements is appropriate.

Based on the work we have performed, we have not identified any material uncertainties relating to events or conditions that, individually or collectively, may cast significant doubt on *Girls Not Brides'* ability to continue as a going concern for a period of at least twelve months from when the financial statements are authorised for issue.

Our responsibilities and the responsibilities of the trustees with respect to going concern are described in the relevant sections of this report.

Other Information

The other information comprises the information included in the trustees' annual report other than the financial statements and our auditor's report thereon. The trustees are responsible for the other information contained within the annual report. Our opinion on the financial statements does not cover the other information and, except to the extent otherwise explicitly stated in our report, we do

INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT

TO THE MEMBERS OF GIRLS NOT BRIDES: THE GLOBAL PARTNERSHIP TO END CHILD MARRIAGE

not express any form of assurance conclusion thereon. Our responsibility is to read the other information and, in doing so, consider whether the other information is materially inconsistent with the financial statements or our knowledge obtained in the course of the audit, or otherwise appears to be materially misstated. If we identify such material inconsistencies or apparent material misstatements, we are required to determine whether this gives rise to a material misstatement in the financial statements themselves. If, based on the work we have performed, we conclude that there is a material misstatement of this other information, we are required to report that fact.

We have nothing to report in this regard.

Opinions on other matters prescribed by the Companies Act 2006

In our opinion, based on the work undertaken in the course of the audit:

- The information given in the trustees' annual report for the financial year for which the financial statements are prepared is consistent with the financial statements; and
- The trustees' annual report has been prepared in accordance with applicable legal requirements.

Matters on which we are required to report by exception

In the light of the knowledge and understanding of the charitable company and its environment obtained in the course of the audit, we have not identified material misstatements in the trustees' annual report. We have nothing to report in respect of the following matters in relation to which the Companies Act 2006 requires us to report to you if, in our opinion:

- Adequate accounting records have not been kept, or returns adequate for our audit have not been received from branches not visited by us; or
- The financial statements are not in agreement with the accounting records and returns; or
- Certain disclosures of trustees' remuneration specified by law are not made; or
- We have not received all the information and explanations we require for our audit; or
- The directors were not entitled to prepare the financial statements in accordance with the small companies regime and take advantage of the small companies' exemptions in preparing the trustees' annual report and from the requirement to prepare a strategic report.

Responsibilities of trustees

As explained more fully in the statement of trustees' responsibilities set out in the trustees' annual report, the trustees (who are also the directors of the charitable company for the purposes of company law) are responsible for the preparation of the financial statements and for being satisfied that they give a true and fair view, and for such internal control as the trustees determine is necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing the financial statements, the trustees are responsible for assessing the charitable company's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going

INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT

TO THE MEMBERS OF GIRLS NOT BRIDES: THE GLOBAL PARTNERSHIP TO END CHILD MARRIAGE

concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless the trustees either intend to liquidate the charitable company or to cease operations, or have no realistic alternative but to do so.

Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements

Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements as a whole are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes our opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with ISAs (UK) will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of these financial statements.

Irregularities, including fraud, are instances of non-compliance with laws and regulations. We design procedures in line with our responsibilities, outlined above, to detect material misstatements in respect of irregularities, including fraud. The extent to which our procedures are capable of detecting irregularities, including fraud are set out below.

Capability of the audit in detecting irregularities

In identifying and assessing risks of material misstatement in respect of irregularities, including fraud and non-compliance with laws and regulations, our procedures included the following:

- We enquired of management, which included obtaining and reviewing supporting documentation, concerning the charity's policies and procedures relating to:
 - Identifying, evaluating, and complying with laws and regulations and whether they were aware of any instances of non-compliance;
 - Detecting and responding to the risks of fraud and whether they have knowledge of any actual, suspected, or alleged fraud;
 - The internal controls established to mitigate risks related to fraud or non-compliance with laws and regulations.
- We inspected the minutes of meetings of those charged with governance.
- We obtained an understanding of the legal and regulatory framework that the charity operates in, focusing on those laws and regulations that had a material effect on the financial statements or that had a fundamental effect on the operations of the charity from our professional and sector experience.
- We communicated applicable laws and regulations throughout the audit team and remained alert to any indications of non-compliance throughout the audit.
- We reviewed any reports made to regulators.
- We reviewed the financial statement disclosures and tested these to supporting documentation to assess compliance with applicable laws and regulations.
- We performed analytical procedures to identify any unusual or unexpected relationships that may indicate risks of material misstatement due to fraud.

INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT

TO THE MEMBERS OF GIRLS NOT BRIDES: THE GLOBAL PARTNERSHIP TO END CHILD MARRIAGE

- In addressing the risk of fraud through management override of controls, we tested the appropriateness of journal entries and other adjustments, assessed whether the judgements made in making accounting estimates are indicative of a potential bias and tested significant transactions that are unusual or those outside the normal course of business.

Because of the inherent limitations of an audit, there is a risk that we will not detect all irregularities, including those leading to a material misstatement in the financial statements or non-compliance with regulation. This risk increases the more that compliance with a law or regulation is removed from the events and transactions reflected in the financial statements, as we will be less likely to become aware of instances of non-compliance. The risk is also greater regarding irregularities occurring due to fraud rather than error, as fraud involves intentional concealment, forgery, collusion, omission, or misrepresentation.

A further description of our responsibilities is available on the Financial Reporting Council's website at: www.frc.org.uk/auditorsresponsibilities. This description forms part of our auditor's report.

Use of our report

This report is made solely to the charitable company's members as a body, in accordance with Chapter 3 of Part 16 of the Companies Act 2006. Our audit work has been undertaken so that we might state to the charitable company's members those matters we are required to state to them in an auditor's report and for no other purpose. To the fullest extent permitted by law, we do not accept or assume responsibility to anyone other than the charitable company and the charitable company's members as a body, for our audit work, for this report, or for the opinions we have formed.

Noelia Serrano (Senior statutory auditor)

30 June 2022

for and on behalf of Sayer Vincent LLP, Statutory Auditor

Invicta House, 108-114 Golden Lane, LONDON, EC1Y 0TL

GIRLS NOT BRIDES: THE GLOBAL PARTNERSHIP TO END CHILD MARRIAGE

Statement of financial activities (incorporating an income and expenditure account)

For the year ended 31 December 2021

		2021		2020			
	Note	Unrestricted £	Restricted £	Total £	Unrestricted £	Restricted £	Total £
Income from:							
Donations (grants)	2	2,675,965	753,862	3,429,827	2,682,251	678,630	3,360,881
Investments		261	-	261	1,260	-	1,260
Total income		2,676,226	753,862	3,430,088	2,683,511	678,630	3,362,141
Expenditure on:							
Raising funds	3a	169,661	5,596	175,257	205,466	-	205,466
Charitable activities							
Promotion of equality and human rights	3a	1,765,249	602,722	2,367,971	1,894,485	384,829	2,279,314
Prevention and relief of poverty	3a	1,016,217	168,448	1,184,665	898,365	131,597	1,029,963
Total expenditure		2,951,128	776,765	3,727,893	2,998,317	516,426	3,514,743
Net (expenditure) for the year	5	(274,902)	(22,903)	(297,805)	(314,806)	162,204	(152,602)
Total funds brought forward		3,074,607	234,840	3,309,447	3,389,412	72,636	3,462,048
Total funds carried forward		2,799,705	211,937	3,011,642	3,074,607	234,840	3,309,447

All of the above results are derived from continuing activities. There were no other recognised gains or losses other than those stated above. Movements in funds are disclosed in Note 15a to the financial statements.

GIRLS NOT BRIDES: THE GLOBAL PARTNERSHIP TO END CHILD MARRIAGE

Balance sheet

Company no. 8570751

As at 31 December 2021

	Note	£	2021 £	£	2020 £
Fixed assets:					
Tangible assets	10		69,097		105,398
			69,097		105,398
Current assets:					
Debtors	11	149,938		209,811	
Cash at bank and in hand		3,440,110		4,049,947	
			3,590,048	4,259,758	
Liabilities:					
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	12	(647,503)		(1,055,709)	
Net current assets			2,942,545		3,204,049
Net assets			3,011,642		3,309,447
The funds of the charity:					
Restricted income funds	14a		211,937		234,840
Total unrestricted funds			2,799,705		3,074,607
Total charity funds			3,011,642		3,309,447

Approved by the trustees on **9 JUNE 2022** and signed on their behalf by

Dr Anne T. Gallagher, AO
Chair of the Board of
Trustees

GIRLS NOT BRIDES: THE GLOBAL PARTNERSHIP TO END CHILD MARRIAGE

Statement of cash flows

For the year ended 31 December 2021

	Note	2021	2020
		£	£
Cash flows from operating activities			
Net (expenditure) for the reporting period (as per the statement of financial activities)		(297,805)	(152,602)
Depreciation charges	10	53,471	62,757
Loss on the disposal of fixed assets		-	136
Decrease in debtors	11	59,873	4,214
Decrease in creditors	12	(408,206)	(864,932)
Net cash provided by operating activities		(592,667)	(950,427)
Cash flows from investing activities			
Payments for property and equipment		(17,170)	(20,885)
Net cash used in investing activities		(17,170)	(20,885)
Change in cash and cash equivalents in the year		(609,837)	(971,312)
Cash and cash equivalents at the beginning of the year		4,049,947	5,021,260
Cash and cash equivalents at the end of the year		3,440,110	4,049,947

Analysis of cash and cash equivalents and of net debt

	At 1 January 2021	Cash flows	Other non- cash changes	At 31 December 2021
	£	£	£	£
Current accounts	1,266,570	(410,096)	-	856,474
Deposit accounts	2,783,377	(199,741)	-	2,583,636
Total cash and cash equivalents	4,049,947	(609,837)	-	3,440,110

Of the cash balances held, £nil (2020: £445,088) is held by the charity as Custodian Trustee and is not available for use by the charity.

Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 31 December 2021

1 Accounting policies

a) Statutory information

Girls Not Brides is a charitable company limited by guarantee and is incorporated in England and Wales (company number: 8570751; charity number: 1154230).

The registered office address is Seventh Floor, 65 Leadenhall Street, London EC3A 2AD.

b) Basis of preparation

Assets and liabilities are initially recognised at historical cost or transaction value unless otherwise stated in the relevant accounting policy or note.

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland Charities SORP (FRS 102) including update bulletin 2, the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the United Kingdom and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102), the Charities Act 2011 and Companies Act 2016.

c) Public benefit entity

The charity meets the definition of a public benefit entity under FRS 102.

d) Presentational and functional currencies

The accounts are presented in sterling. The functional currencies of the charity are sterling, US dollar and euro. The accounts are presented in sterling since that is the currency in which the charity conducts most of its activities. No amounts have been rounded.

e) Going concern

There are no material uncertainties that cast significant doubt upon the charity's ability to continue as a going concern. This assessment includes a consideration of the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on *Girls Not Brides*.

f) Income

Income is included in the Statement of financial activities when the charity is entitled to the income and the amount can be quantified with reasonable accuracy. The following specific policies are applied to particular categories of income:

- Voluntary income is received by way of grants, donations and gifts and is included in full in the Statement of financial activities when receivable. Grants, where entitlement is not conditional on the delivery of a specific performance by the charity, are recognised when the charity becomes unconditionally entitled to the grant.
- Any income received where the donor has specified that it is to be expended in a future accounting period is included within creditors as deferred income.
- Investment income is included when receivable.

Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 31 December 2021

1 Accounting policies (continued)

g) Fund accounting

Unrestricted funds are available for use at the discretion of the Trustees in furtherance of the general Designated funds are unrestricted funds earmarked by the Trustees for particular purposes.

h) Expenditure and irrecoverable VAT

Expenditure is recognised on an accruals basis as a liability is incurred. Expenditure includes any VAT that cannot be fully recovered, and is reported as part of the expenditure to which it relates:

- Costs of generating funds comprise the costs associated with attracting donations and grants.
- Charitable expenditure comprises those costs incurred by the charity in the delivery of its activities and services for its beneficiaries. It includes both costs that can be allocated directly to such activities and those costs of an indirect nature necessary to support them. These are split in accordance with the project codes used in the charity's accounting system.
- Support costs consist of the charity's administration budget heading. Support costs are allocated equally between the charity's two charitable activities.
- Governance costs are the costs associated with the governance arrangements of the charity. These costs are associated with constitutional and statutory requirements and include any costs associated with the strategic management of the charity's activities.

i) Operating leases

Rentals payable under operating leases are charged in the income and expenditure account on a straight line basis over the lease term.

j) Tangible fixed assets

Tangible fixed assets are capitalised at cost and are depreciated over their useful economic lives.

Depreciation is provided at rates calculated to write down the cost of each asset to its estimated residual value over its expected useful life. The depreciation rates in use are as follows:

- | | |
|---------------------------|----------------------|
| • Computers and software | over 3 years |
| • Furniture and equipment | over 3 to 5 years |
| • Leasehold improvements | over length of lease |

Fixed assets with a value less than £1,000 are not capitalised.

k) Debtors

Trade and other debtors are recognised at the settlement amount due after any trade discount offered. Prepayments are valued at the amount prepaid net of any trade discounts due.

l) Cash at bank and in hand

Cash and cash equivalents comprise cash in hand and call deposits, and other short-term highly liquid investments that are readily convertible to a known amount of cash and are subject to an insignificant risk of change in value.

Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 31 December 2021

1 Accounting policies (continued)

m) Creditors and provisions

Trade creditors are obligations to pay for goods or services that have been acquired in the ordinary course of business from suppliers. Accounts payable are classified as current liabilities if the charitable company does not have an unconditional right, at the end of the reporting period, to defer settlement of the creditor for at least 12 months after the reporting date. If there is an unconditional right to defer settlement for at least 12 months after the reporting date, they are presented as non-current liabilities.

Trade creditors are recognised at the transaction price.

Provisions are recognised when the company has an obligation at the reporting date as a result of a past event, it is probable that the company will be required to settle that obligation and a reliable estimate can be made of the amount of the obligation.

n) Pensions

The company operates a defined contribution scheme for the benefit of its employees. The costs of contributions are charged to the Statement of financial activities in the year in which they are payable.

o) Foreign currencies

Transactions in foreign currencies are recorded at the rate as at the date of the transaction. Monetary assets and liabilities are re-translated at the rate of exchange ruling at the balance sheet date. Any differences are taken to the Statement of financial activities.

2 Income from donations (grants)

	2021			2020		
	Unrestricted	Restricted	Total	Unrestricted	Restricted	Total
	£	£	£	£	£	£
Government grants	1,638,243	-	1,638,243	1,332,519	-	1,332,519
Other grants and donations	1,037,722	753,862	1,791,584	1,349,733	678,630	2,028,363
	<u>2,675,965</u>	<u>753,862</u>	<u>3,429,827</u>	<u>2,682,251</u>	<u>678,630</u>	<u>3,360,881</u>

GIRLS NOT BRIDES: THE GLOBAL PARTNERSHIP TO END CHILD MARRIAGE

Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 31 December 2021

3a Analysis of expenditure (current year)

	Charitable activities					2021 Total £	2020	Total £
	Raising funds £	Human rights £	Relief of poverty £	Governance costs £	Support costs £			
Staff costs (Note 6)	114,689	858,513	374,699	-	596,491	1,944,391	1,719,083	
Premises costs (rent, utilities)	-	2,486	2,486	-	133,565	138,537	249,215	
Travel and workshops / meetings	-	26,223	11,187	576	34	38,019	73,302	
Consultancy	3,792	490,187	175,721	33,717	42,353	745,771	659,218	
Grants	-	334,398	18,244	-	-	352,642	367,938	
Professional fees	-	-	-	13,620	64,481	78,101	28,911	
IT and communications	-	38,398	27,815	-	116,271	182,485	206,503	
Office and other	3,509	77,879	34,625	1,041	130,894	247,948	210,573	
	121,990	1,828,083	644,777	48,954	1,084,089	3,727,893	3,514,743	
Support costs	50,966	516,562	516,562	-	(1,084,089)	-	-	
Governance costs	2,301	23,326	23,326	(48,954)	-	-	-	
Total expenditure 2021	175,257	2,367,971	1,184,665	-	-	3,727,893		
Total expenditure 2020	205,466	2,279,314	1,029,963	-	-		3,514,743	

GIRLS NOT BRIDES: THE GLOBAL PARTNERSHIP TO END CHILD MARRIAGE

Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 31 December 2021

3b Analysis of expenditure (prior year)

	Charitable activities					2020 Total £
	Raising funds £	Human rights £	Relief of poverty £	Governance costs £	Support costs £	
Staff costs (Note 6)	140,413	831,777	272,610	-	474,283	1,719,083
Premises costs (rent, utilities)	-	6,907	6,907	-	235,401	249,215
Travel and workshops / meetings	455	57,835	11,152	73	3,785	73,302
Consultancy	-	473,623	134,798	-	50,797	659,218
Grants	-	296,547	20,228	-	51,164	367,938
Professional fees	-	-	-	9,840	19,071	28,911
IT and communications	162	62,436	60,681	-	83,224	206,503
Office and other	1,882	46,440	19,838	1,283	141,130	210,573
	142,913	1,775,565	526,213	11,196	1,058,855	3,514,743
Support costs	61,899	498,478	498,478	-	(1,058,855)	-
Governance costs	655	5,271	5,271	(11,196)	-	-
Total expenditure 2020	205,466	2,279,314	1,029,963	-	-	3,514,743

Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 31 December 2021

4 Grant making

	Grants to institutions £	2021 £	2020 £
Cost			
Plan International USA	66,588	66,588	-
Children's Dignity Forum, Tanzania	50,189	50,189	12,172
Msichana Empowerment Kuria, Kenya	50,189	50,189	-
Voix de Femmes, Burkina Faso	44,243	44,243	-
SongES Niger	29,745	29,745	-
Joy for Children Uganda	5,817	5,817	184,685
VOW for Girls, USA	-	-	51,164
Other small grants	105,872	105,872	119,917
At the end of the year	<u>352,642</u>	<u>352,642</u>	<u>367,938</u>

During the year *Girls Not Brides* paid grants to Plan International USA totalling £66,588 from restricted funding.

During the year *Girls Not Brides* paid grants to Children's Dignity Forum totalling £50,189 from restricted funding.

During the year *Girls Not Brides* paid grants to Msichana Empowerment Kuria totalling £50,189 from restricted funding.

During the year *Girls Not Brides* paid grants to Voix De Femmes totalling £44,243 from restricted funding.

During the year *Girls Not Brides* paid grants to SongES Niger totalling £29,745 from restricted funding.

During the year *Girls Not Brides* paid a grant to Joy for Children Uganda totalling £5,187 from restricted funding.

During the year *Girls Not Brides* made a number small grants to member organisations, with an average value of approximately £5,000.

Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 31 December 2021

5 Net (expenditure) for the year

This is stated after charging:

	2021	2020
	£	£
Depreciation	53,471	62,892
Loss or profit on disposal of fixed assets	-	135
Operating lease rentals payable:		
Property	76,241	210,025
Auditor's remuneration (excluding VAT):		
Audit	9,100	8,700
Other services	5,545	-
Foreign exchange gains or losses	728	4,713

Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 31 December 2021

6 Analysis of staff costs, Trustee remuneration and expenses, and the cost of key management personnel

Staff costs were as follows:

	2021	2020
	£	£
Salaries and wages	1,471,926	1,360,455
Redundancy and termination costs	78,185	-
Social security costs	186,977	157,240
Employer's contribution to defined contribution pension schemes	156,843	134,087
Other forms of employee benefits (medical, life and travel insurance)	48,711	67,301
Relocation	1,750	-
	1,944,391	1,719,083

Girls Not Brides makes contributions to a defined contribution scheme. The amount of contributions due to the scheme at the year ended 31 December was £nil. (2020: £nil).

Retirement benefits were accruing to one Trustee, Mabel van Oranje, Chair of Trustees (2020: 1) under a money purchase pension scheme, however that Trustee left *Girls Not Brides* during 2021.

The number of employees whose remuneration for the year fell within the following bands was:

	2021	2020
	No.	No.
£60,001 - £70,000	2	-
£70,001 - £80,000	1	4
£80,001 - £90,000	-	-
£90,001 - £100,000	-	-
£100,001 - £110,000	-	-
£110,001 - £120,000	-	-
£120,001 - £130,000	1	1

The total employee benefits (including pension contributions and employer's national insurance) of the key management personnel were £389,784 (2020: £423,373). In 2021 the Chief Executive Officer and the three directors were responsible for planning, directing and controlling the activities of the charity.

Mabel van Oranje, Chair of Trustees until September 2021, received remuneration of £62,126 (2020: £75,869) in the year, as permitted by the charitable company's Articles of Association. The charitable company also paid pension contributions of £5,810 (2020: £7,080) and reimbursed or paid on her behalf travelling, accommodation and office expenses of £2,487 (2020: £3,841).

Girls Not Brides paid £nil (2020: £nil) on behalf of other Trustees for expenses related to our activities. Remuneration to the Chair and payments to Trustees are permitted by the Charity's Articles of Association.

Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 31 December 2021

7 Staff numbers

The average number of employees (head count based on number of staff employed) during the year was 32 (2020: 30).

The average monthly number of employees during the year was:

	2021	2020
	No.	No.
The Executive	4	4
Communications Team	5	4
Learning & Partnership Team	8	6
Finance and Operations Team	9	8
Policy and Advocacy Team	5	7
Africa Team	1	1
	32	30

8 Related party transactions

Related party transactions: during the year there were no related party transactions.

9 Taxation

The charity is exempt from corporation tax as all its income is charitable and is applied for charitable purposes.

10 Tangible fixed assets

	Short leasehold improvements	Computer & software	Furniture & equipment	Total
Cost	£	£	£	£
At the start of the year	106,514	124,685	61,256	292,455
Additions in year	-	17,170	-	17,170
Disposals in year	-	(22,321)	-	(22,321)
At the end of the year	106,514	119,534	61,256	287,304
Depreciation				
At the start of the year	55,311	92,833	38,913	187,057
Charge for the year	20,459	22,406	10,606	53,471
Eliminated on disposal	-	(22,321)	-	(22,321)
At the end of the year	75,770	92,918	49,519	218,207
Net book value				
At the end of the year	30,744	26,616	11,737	69,097
At the start of the year	51,203	31,852	22,343	105,398

All of the above assets are used for charitable purposes.

Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 31 December 2021

11 Debtors

	2021	2020
	£	£
Other debtors	81,873	102,918
Prepayments	68,064	106,893
	149,937	209,811

12 Creditors: amounts falling due within one year

	2021	2020
	£	£
Trade creditors	153,326	60,169
Taxation and social security	46,041	43,673
Funds held as agent (see below)	-	445,088
Other creditors	297,859	256,779
Deferred income (Note 13)	150,277	250,000
	647,503	1,055,709

Funds held as agent

In 2018, the charity received €2,000,000 to be transferred to Capital for Good USA. In the year £445,088 (2020: £824,130) was transferred and £nil (2020: £445,088) is included in creditors at the year end. The final transfer was made in June 2021.

13 Deferred income

Movements in deferred income during the year are as follows:

	2021	2020
	£	£
Balance at the beginning of the year	250,000	322,814
Amount released to income in the year	(250,000)	(322,814)
Amount deferred in the year	150,277	250,000
Balance at the end of the year	150,277	250,000

Deferred income represents grants received where the donor has specified this is to fund 2022 expenditure. This will be released to income in the 2022 accounts.

Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 31 December 2021

14a Analysis of net assets between funds (current year)

	General unrestricted £	Restricted £	Total funds £
Tangible fixed assets	69,097	-	69,097
Net current assets	2,730,608	211,937	2,942,545
Net assets at 31 December 2021	2,799,705	211,937	3,011,642

14b Analysis of net assets between funds (prior year)

	General unrestricted £	Restricted £	Total funds £
Tangible fixed assets	105,398	-	105,398
Net current assets	2,969,209	234,840	3,204,049
Net assets at 31 December 2020	3,074,607	234,840	3,309,447

15a Movements in funds (current year)

	At 1 January 2021 £	Income & gains £	Expenditure & losses £	Transfers £	At 31 December 2021 £
Restricted funds:					
Skoll Foundation	7,466	-	(7,466)	-	-
Ignite Philanthropy	-	29,143	(29,143)	-	-
Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation	199,407	144,998	(263,306)	-	81,099
Players of People's Postcode Lottery	16,347	250,000	(195,300)	-	71,047
Education Out Loud	-	274,981	(215,190)	-	59,791
Plan International, Inc	11,620	-	(11,620)	-	-
UNFPA	-	54,741	(54,741)	-	-
Total restricted funds	234,840	753,862	(776,765)	-	211,937
General funds	3,074,607	2,676,226	(2,951,128)	-	2,799,705
Total funds	3,309,447	3,430,088	(3,727,893)	-	3,011,642

The narrative to explain the purpose of each fund is given at the foot of the note below.

Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 31 December 2021

15b Movements in funds (prior year)

	At 1 January 2020 £	Income & gains £	Expenditure & losses £	Transfers £	At 31 December 2020 £
Restricted funds:					
Skoll Foundation	12,384	7,466	(12,384)	-	7,466
VOW for Girls, USA	36,048	-	(36,048)	-	-
Ignite Philanthropy	24,204	(7,350)	(16,854)	-	-
Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation	-	389,951	(190,544)	-	199,407
Players of People's Postcode Lottery	-	250,000	(233,653)	-	16,347
Education Out Loud	-	22,431	(22,431)	-	-
Plan International, Inc	-	16,131	(4,511)	-	11,620
Total restricted funds	72,636	678,630	(516,426)	-	234,840
General funds	3,389,412	2,683,511	(2,998,317)	-	3,074,607
Total funds	3,462,048	3,362,142	(3,514,743)	-	3,309,447

Purposes of restricted funds

In 2020 the Skoll Foundation awarded *Girls Not Brides* a grant of \$10,000 (£7,466) towards supporting victims of Typhoon Vamco, and Hurricanes Iota and Eta. This grant was fully expensed in 2021.

In 2021 *Girls Not Brides* received a grant of \$40,278 (£29,143) from the New Venture Fund through Ignite Philanthropy: Inspiring the End to Violence Against Girls and Boys. The grant was fully expensed in 2021.

In 2020, *Girls Not Brides* received a grant of \$499,976 (£389,951) from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation for supporting evidence for advocacy in the child marriage movement. £190,544 was expensed in 2020, and £199,407 was expensed in 2021. In 2021 *Girls Not Brides* received an additional grant of \$199,846 (£144,998) from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation to provide project support to the Adolescent Girls Investment Plan (AGIP). £63,899 was expensed in 2021, and £81,099 is carried forward into 2022.

In 2019, *Girls Not Brides* received a grant of £250,000 from the players of the People's Postcode Lottery for accelerating progress to end child marriage in Uganda. £233,653 was expensed in 2020, and £16,347 was expensed in 2021. In 2020 *Girls Not Brides* received a second grant of £250,000 from the players of the People's Postcode Lottery for accelerating progress to end child marriage in Kenya and Tanzania. £178,953 was expensed in 2021 and £71,047 is carried forward into 2022.

In 2021, *Girls Not Brides* received a grant of \$378,624 (£274,981) from Education Out Loud for strengthening collective action to end child marriage, keep girls in school and advance gender equality in West Africa. £215,190 was expensed in 2021, and £59,791 is carried forward into 2022.

In 2020, *Girls Not Brides* received a grant of \$20,000 (£16,131) from Plan International, Inc for the purposes of implementing various activities as part the Adolescent Girl Investment Plan (AGIP). £4,511 was expensed in 2020, and £11,620 was expensed 2021.

In 2021 UNFPA awarded *Girls Not Brides* a grant of £54,741 for the Child Marriage Action to Research Network. The grant was fully expensed in 2021.

Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 31 December 2021

16 Operating lease commitments payable as a lessee

Total amount payable in respect of non-cancellable operating leases:

	2021	2020
	£	£
Less than one year	127,673	123,269
One to two years	148,932	1,995
Two to five years	283,169	-
	559,774	125,264

In May 2021 *Girls Not Brides* signed a new operating lease committing to pay £557,781 over a five year period.

Accounts

***GIRLS NOT BRIDES:
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**ACCOUNTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2020**

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Company Registration Number: 8570751

Charity Registration Number: 1154230

**TRUSTEES' REPORT
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2020**

REFERENCE AND ADMINISTRATIVE DETAILS

Trustees:	Mabel van Oranje (Chair) Ann Cotton Nick Grono Karin Forseke Georgia Arnold Emma Puig De La Bellacasa (appointed 1 December 2020) Rita Sarin (appointed 1 December 2020) Zipporah Jean Alaroker (appointed 1 December 2020) Michael Feigelson (appointed 9 April 2021)
Chief Executive Officer:	Dr Faith Mwangi-Powell
Key management personnel:	Dr Faith Mwangi-Powell, Chief Executive Officer Heather Barclay, Director of External Engagement Eleanor Munif, Director of Operations Dr Rachel Yates, Director of Learning and Regional Implementation (left 31 December 2020) Rita Soares, Director of Learning and Impact (appointed 17 May 2021)
Contact address and registered office:	Seventh Floor 65 Leadenhall Street London EC3A 2AD United Kingdom
Auditors:	Sayer Vincent LLP Invicta House 108-114 Golden Lane London EC1Y 0TL
Bankers:	HSBC Bank plc 21 Kings Mall London W6 0QF
Solicitors:	Bates, Wells and Braithwaite London LLP 10 Queen Street Place London EC4R 1BE

INTRODUCTION TO GIRLS NOT BRIDES

The vision of *Girls Not Brides: The Global Partnership to End Child Marriage (Girls Not Brides)* is a world without child marriage where girls and women enjoy equal status with boys and men and are able to achieve their full potential in all aspects of their lives. We support a comprehensive approach to ending child marriage, and addressing the underlying economic and social drivers of child marriage, including harmful gender and social norms that deny girls opportunities and their rights. By taking a holistic approach we not only contribute to ending child marriage, but also achieve progress across a number of global development goals including health, education and poverty reduction. Our belief is that addressing child marriage in a holistic and comprehensive manner helps create a safer world for girls and leads to benefits far beyond simply delaying the age of marriage.

About child marriage

Every year, child marriage denies 12 million girls their rights to health, education, safety and control over their own lives. This is equivalent to one in five girls around the world.¹ This human rights violation occurs across cultures, countries and religions. Over 650 million women alive today were married as children, and every minute 23 more girls are married. Rooted in gender inequality and discrimination, child marriage disproportionately affects women and girls in terms of both the number of child brides and the life-long impact.

From 2011 to 2020 we saw a decline in child marriage rates globally, but with the onset of COVID-19 experts are predicting an increase in child marriages as a consequence of a variety of factors including school closures, increased violence and domestic poverty. United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) estimates that we will see 13 million more child marriages by 2030 as a direct consequence of COVID-19, in addition to the 12 million girls already married each year.

Child brides face huge challenges. Isolated and with limited freedom, married girls often feel disempowered. They are at increased risk of dangerous complications in pregnancy and childbirth, and of domestic violence. With little access to education and economic opportunities, they and their families are more likely to live in poverty. Communities and nations also feel the impact of child marriage. Systems that undervalue the contribution and participation of girls and women limit their own possibilities for growth, stability and transformation. The World Bank and International Centre for Research on Women estimate that child marriage costs economies around the world [trillions of dollars](#). Girls affected by humanitarian contexts - including conflict, displacement and natural disasters - are more vulnerable to child marriage due to increased insecurity, greater poverty and weaker social networks.

One of the fundamental beliefs of *Girls Not Brides* is that if we address child marriage in a holistic and comprehensive manner it is possible to empower adolescent girls and transform societies. Ending child marriage is a global commitment enshrined in Target 5.3 of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) to “eliminate all harmful practices, such as child, early and forced

¹ For more information on child marriage prevalence rates in countries and across regions, please consult our [Child Marriage Atlas](#), which is the only source of consolidated data on the issue of child marriage. It also highlights numbers of girls affected, the legal/policy situation in each country, and the distribution of *Girls Not Brides*' members, National Partnerships and civil society coalitions.

GIRLS NOT BRIDES: THE GLOBAL PARTNERSHIP TO END CHILD MARRIAGE

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marriage and female genital mutilations". It is also necessary to achieve [almost half of the SDGs](#), including those related to poverty, education, health and inequalities.

Child marriage is a complex issue with no single solution. We must work collectively across sectors - and from the local to global level - to change the perceptions, norms and experiences that shape and hinder girls' lives. In 2014, *Girls Not Brides* worked with 150 members and partners to develop our [Theory of Change](#), which identifies four strategies to end child marriage: working directly with girls; mobilising families and communities; providing services (including health, education and child protection); and creating and sustaining an enabling legal and policy framework.

Our members and partners work across the four key strategies outlined in the Theory of Change, and the *Girls Not Brides* secretariat plays a distinctive catalytic role within the movement. We mobilise collective action and support at the national, regional and international levels; support member organisations to build their capacity and share their expertise; advocate for financial resources; and synthesise and disseminate learning on ending child marriage. In this role, we create a supportive environment to enable greater change. Currently the *Girls Not Brides* partnership comprises over 1,500 members worldwide. Nearly 82% work in communities, and 40% identify as youth led. Less than 12% are international organisations.

Note on terminology

In this report, we use 'child marriage' as an umbrella term to encompass all forms of child, early and forced marriage and unions. Understanding the practice in the context of this broader term ensures that all girls affected are included, regardless of whether they are in a formal or informal union, and that all aspects of the issue – including culturally specific understandings of childhood and development, and the relationship between age, consent and force – are recognised and expressed.

The movement to end child marriage

This describes the informal global network of civil society and grassroots organisations, national and international non-governmental organisations, activists, academics, UN agencies, funders, governments, leaders and champions who are all working towards a different world – one without child marriage and where girls are free to decide their future.

The *Girls Not Brides* global partnership

At the end of 2020, the *Girls Not Brides* partnership comprised 1,527 member organisations from 104 countries committed to working together to end child marriage and support married girls. *Girls Not Brides* member organisations work across sectors – including health, education, human rights and humanitarian contexts – and range from small grassroots actors to large international organisations.

The *Girls Not Brides* secretariat

The *Girls Not Brides* secretariat coordinates, rallies and supports the work of the Partnership and movement. We are a small team with staff members based in Africa, Asia, Europe and Latin America. We play three broad roles in driving change: a central support and coordination body for the only global civil society partnership to end child marriage; a representative of and advocate for civil society on efforts to end child marriage; and an expert resource and central actor in the global movement to end child marriage.

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National Partnerships and coalitions

Many *Girls Not Brides* member organisations have come together to accelerate progress to end child marriage in their countries by forming National Partnerships and coalitions.

National Partnerships are networks of *Girls Not Brides* member organisations that believe in the power of collective action to end child marriage and ensure girls can achieve their full potential in all aspects of their lives. They have signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the *Girls Not Brides* secretariat to align their work with the Partnership strategy.

Coalitions are networks of civil society organisations that are committed to addressing child marriage and working together at the national level to spearhead this change. They are close allies to *Girls Not Brides* but have not signed a Memorandum of Understanding.

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GIRLS NOT BRIDES' ACTIVITIES IN 2020

What 2020 has meant for girls and child marriage

COVID-19 is threatening progress made over the last decade towards ending child marriage. School closures and increased economic hardship, early pregnancy, and gender-based and domestic violence mean that 13 million more girls could marry as children over the next decade.² This is in addition to the 12 million girls who already marry every year.³

What this has meant for *Girls Not Brides*

While 2020 was challenging, it was also an opportunity for us to show our resilience. The movement to end child marriage has lost dedicated activists and friends to COVID-19 and faced new challenges and restrictions to collective action, programming, funding and support for girls. Despite these setbacks, girls and communities continue to demand a better future, and the Partnership has risen to the challenge.

Girls Not Brides member organisations adapted and innovated in their programming, from using social media to reach girls, delivering resources to support at-home learning during school closures, and providing essential food, water and hygiene packages to those in need.

At the *Girls Not Brides* secretariat, we listened to our members and adapted our work to best support the Partnership through this global crisis. We facilitated peer-to-peer connection and learning; we advocated for girls to be at the centre of the COVID-19 response and recovery; and we developed and shared the latest learning and evidence on child marriage and COVID-19 so our members have the tools to respond and adapt effectively.

What this means for the future

The challenges of the pandemic will continue long after lockdowns are lifted. We are concerned about the projected increase in child marriage and cuts to official development assistance and private funding for effective responses during current economic contractions. We are disappointed to see how in some contexts lockdowns and public health measures are constraining civil society space and limiting opportunities to hold governments to account.

Donors and decision-makers at every level must rally together to implement an integrated response to the pandemic that takes into account the needs of girls and those at risk of child marriage, in all their diversity.

***Girls Not Brides* secretariat objectives**

In 2020, the secretariat's approach to supporting the movement to end child marriage was underpinned by six objectives:

1. Catalysing and nurturing coordinated effective civil society action at all levels.
2. Fostering the uptake of evidence-based solutions that have gender equality at their heart.

² UNFPA, [New UNFPA projections predict calamitous impact on women's health as COVID-19 pandemic continues](#), 2020.

³ UNICEF, [Child marriage database](#), 2020.

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3. Increasing the diversity of the global movement to address child marriage, amplifying the voices of youth-led, women-led and community-based organisations.
4. Influencing governments and other actors to take effective action to address child marriage.
5. Successfully advocating for more diverse and accessible funding to address child marriage, especially for civil society.
6. Ensuring the secretariat team is empowered and supported, and has the resources and structures to effectively deliver the secretariat's vision and live its values.

Objective 1: Catalysing collective action

The determination and dedication of *Girls Not Brides* has shone throughout 2020. Despite navigating many new challenges and restrictions, member organisations continued to reach girls around the world. They collaborated on joint activities and shared learning and advice with each other, supported by the *Girls Not Brides* secretariat.

The *Girls Not Brides* secretariat facilitated 90 shared-learning and capacity-strengthening sessions in 2020. This included online and in-person working groups and trainings, webinars and peer-to-peer learning sessions.

Member organisations mobilised around the International Day of the Girl

One highlight of the Partnership's work in 2020 was our joint action around the International Day of the Girl on 11 October. Over 250 of our member organisations mobilised around this year's theme of 'My voice, our equal future,' leading activities to support girls and call for action to end child marriage.

To support their advocacy, we designed, produced and disseminated a comprehensive toolkit with information on the 2020 theme, key messages, campaign ideas and practical resources including animated graphics for social media and template advocacy letters.

We also made small grants to seven of our National Partnerships and coalitions to support their collective activities. These ranged from a press conference on ending gender-based violence – including child marriage in Benin to a Girl Leadership Summit and social media campaign with the participation of over 5,000 girls in Uttar Pradesh, India.

Further details on our members' campaigns and activities are featured on the [Girls Not Brides website](#).

National Partnerships and coalitions strengthened their work

In 2020, *Girls Not Brides* National Partnerships and coalitions continued to advocate for – and achieve – meaningful change at the national level. For example, *Girls Not Brides Bangladesh* worked with legal experts to review the effectiveness and impact of the national legal framework to end child marriage and *Girls Not Brides Mozambique* trained 132 people for the effective dissemination and coordination of a newly approved law to address child marriage.

The *Girls Not Brides* secretariat supported and responded to the needs of National Partnerships and coalitions, as identified through capacity self-assessments and ongoing discussions.

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One example of this support is our work with the Working Group to Advance on Girls and Adolescents' Rights (the [Mesa a favor de las niñas y las adolescentes](#), the Mesa de la Niña) in Guatemala, with whom we have collaborated since 2018. In 2020, this coalition of 22 civil society organisations requested our support to strengthen their capacity to work together and grow their technical expertise on child marriage. In response, we organised a series of in-person and virtual workshops covering internal capacity strengthening and strategy development. We also coordinated two webinars on the drivers of child marriage in Latin America, the Caribbean and Guatemala, taking into account factors such as gender inequality, poverty and access to sexual and reproductive healthcare.

The Mesa de la Niña has since identified priorities for its work in 2021. These include improving access to education and sexual and reproductive healthcare, community interventions to address discriminatory gender norms, and social support programmes for pregnant and/or married adolescents. You can find out more about their work in a [guest blog](#) on the *Girls Not Brides* website.

Peer-to-peer learning increased in the context of COVID-19

While *Girls Not Brides* member organisations work in different contexts, they often face similar challenges and have relevant expertise to share. With the suspension of in-person transnational meetings in 2020, the secretariat facilitated a series of seven online peer-to-peer discussions so that National Partnerships and coalitions could share their learnings, best practices, successes and challenges.

Each session was member-led and covered a range of topics from implementing policy and laws to engaging religious leaders and promoting girl-led research and campaigning. The discussions grew in popularity – with a 153% growth in attendance over the series – and member organisations reported strengthened cross-regional relationships and confidence. We will integrate this popular and effective innovation into our work beyond the pandemic, along with several new initiatives for 2021. These include the twinning of established and nascent National Partnerships for mutual support and the establishment of an online hub for shared learnings.

We also organised an online convening of our English-speaking African National Partnerships, coalitions and member organisations from Burundi, Cameroon, Ghana, Kenya, Malawi, Mozambique, Nigeria, Tanzania, Uganda, Zambia and Zimbabwe. Each of the 10 sessions had between 27 and 40 participants, who shared knowledge on issues such as improving economic security for girls, gender transformative approaches to end child marriage and identifying global and regional advocacy opportunities. As a result, each participating coalition identified lessons learned and priority areas to take forward in their national collective work.

Story of change: Unlocking the power of the collective with Girls Not Brides Uganda

Strengthening national movements

Over the last decade, the movement to end child marriage has made great progress and – before the COVID-19 pandemic started – rates of child marriage were decreasing globally. However, child marriage persists in many countries and gender inequality still restricts girls' lives around the world.

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Girls Not Brides has proven that collective civil society action at the national and subnational level drives sustainable change. However, our member organisations need more support and resources to build their work and mobilise all the stakeholders that affect girls' lives.

In 2020, *Girls Not Brides* launched a new multi-year approach to intensify support for national movements across select focus countries, with the greatest initial focus on Uganda, Niger and India. We believe this work will accelerate progress and provide evidence of what works to end child marriage in these contexts and beyond.

In 2020, *Girls Not Brides* launched the Accelerating Progress to End Child Marriage Programme in Uganda with [Girls Not Brides Uganda](#) (led by Joy for Children) – a National Partnership made up of 90 civil society organisations – in a country where 34% of girls marry before the age of 18.⁴ Results include new commitments from government representatives' grassroots advocacy on ending child marriage and increased media coverage of the issue.

Girls Not Brides Uganda led an integrated programme to end child marriage in the country, while the *Girls Not Brides* secretariat provided ongoing technical advice and support on issues identified by them: communications, budget advocacy, and monitoring, evaluation and learning. *Girls Not Brides Uganda* has now developed a communications strategy and established groups to monitor budget development and support media engagement. *Girls Not Brides* partially funded their National Coordinator, who has helped *Girls Not Brides Uganda* maintain and build momentum in their work.

Throughout the year, *Girls Not Brides Uganda* advocated for better implementation of existing laws that protect girls and called for the development of a revised National Strategy on Child Marriage and Teenage Pregnancy. They secured pledges from 15 members of parliament to champion the strategy. They also implemented subnational activities in refugee-hosting districts, deepening our understanding of the causes of child marriage in humanitarian settings, and fostered a relationship with the office of the prime minister of Uganda.

The programme also promoted community change in focus districts and built public support for the movement. *Girls Not Brides Uganda* trained youth activists using the *Girls Not Brides* Stand Up, Speak Out! training manual, with support from district champions. The latter are agents of change who, for example, share messages on radio stations and follow up on cases of child marriage in their communities. *Girls Not Brides Uganda* also contributed to [media coverage](#) and engaged with radio stations, journalists, national TV and social media to build public awareness of child marriage. The Accelerator Approach pilot in Uganda was supported by players of People's Postcode Lottery.

Objective 2: Sharing evidence and learning

To address gaps in the evidence base and avoid the duplication of research and learning on child marriage, *Girls Not Brides* spearheaded a major learning initiative with the UNFPA-UNICEF Global Programme to End Child Marriage in 2020: the Child Marriage Research to Action Network (the CRANK). Other highlights include contributing to broader global learning opportunities and consortia, sharing evidence from the Partnership, disseminating new accessible resources –

⁴ *Girls Not Brides*, [Child Marriage Atlas](#), 2020. The Atlas is based on UNICEF data for 2020. It is updated every two years, with the next review taking place in June 2022.

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including on the impact of COVID-19 – and increasing the understanding of how child marriage intersects with related issues and sectors.

The Child Marriage Research to Action Network (the CRANK)

The [CRANK](#) is a joint initiative by *Girls Not Brides* and the UNFPA-UNICEF Global Programme to End Child Marriage and brings together leading global researchers and organisations working on child marriage to ensure that the research community is aligned, responds to gaps in knowledge and is connected with practitioners so that new evidence can be taken forward in policy and practice. The first meeting in December 2020 brought together 54 participants from civil society, the United Nations (UN), research institutes and *Girls Not Brides* member organisations to discuss the latest evidence and research on the impact of COVID-19 in India and sub-Saharan Africa. In 2021, the CRANK will continue to bring child marriage researchers, practitioners and policy makers together every three months to share and discuss the latest evidence on priority learning topics. It is also a knowledge management mechanism through which we track ongoing and upcoming research by CRANK members, monitor patterns and identify gaps. The CRANK is open to all. Those who sign up can participate in quarterly calls, receive the biannual research digest, and share their work through the CRANK's online research tracker.

We deepened knowledge on how child marriage interacts with other sectors

In 2020, *Girls Not Brides* continued to build relationships with partners working across different sectors, including humanitarian contexts, education, and sexual and reproductive health. One highlight from our cross-sectoral collaboration is our work with the movement to end female genital mutilation/cutting (FGM/C). With funding from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, *Girls Not Brides* worked with member organisations and partners in Kenya to increase the evidence on the shared drivers of – and solutions to – child marriage and FGM/C. We reviewed these links by documenting the work of two member organisations in Kenya (the [Association of Media Women](#) and [Msichana Empowerment Kuria](#)), and carrying out a review of the global evidence to address child marriage and FGM/C. The review of the global evidence found that many approaches work better as part of a comprehensive, multi-pronged strategy, and that poor implementation can often be a challenge; it also found that some approaches known to be effective from the global evidence are not well documented in Kenya. We shared our findings at a webinar co-hosted with Amref Health Africa, attended by 49 Kenyan stakeholders – including government representatives – and at a UNICEF-hosted webinar with a global audience of over 150 researchers, UN agencies and donors.

We promoted gender-transformative approaches

Child marriage happens because girls are perceived as less valuable than boys. In all areas of life, systematic discrimination perpetuates unequal gender norms, which are reinforced by other forms of discrimination. Addressing these harmful gender norms and unequal power relationships is key to ending child marriage.

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In partnership with the Child Marriage and Sexuality Working Group,⁵ which focuses on showing how control over adolescent girls' sexuality is a root cause of child marriage, we documented the positive, lasting impact that gender-transformative interventions can have on girls' lives. This regional work, which focused on Latin America and the Caribbean, adds to our 2019 work in Africa and Asia. The Working Group will expand this work throughout 2021 by developing a framework that provides guidance to strengthen programmes to take a more gender-transformative approach and put girls' agency at the centre of ending child marriage.

We also supported *Girls Not Brides Rajasthan* to host a workshop for 27 young people on gender, sexuality and discrimination, in collaboration with UNICEF. The workshop encouraged youth workers to use storytelling to share their experiences and communicate with other young people. As a result, youth workers created seven stories and reported increased capacity in using social media and storytelling to explore gender and discrimination with the adolescents they work with at the community level.

We produced and disseminated new resources

We produced and disseminated 24 new resources in 2020. This included online resources and toolkits, thematic briefs, position papers, literature reviews and case studies.

This year, *Girls Not Brides* member organisations, partners and stakeholders continued to access the latest evidence and learnings to guide their work, through the *Girls Not Brides* online [resource centre](#). We produced several new and updated resources this year, including a series of thematic briefs on child marriage and [COVID-19, gender equality](#), the [SDGs](#) and [humanitarian contexts](#), and a regional brief on [child marriage in Latin America and the Caribbean](#). This year we expanded the reach of our resources by translating into more languages, including Arabic, Bangla, French, Hindi, Spanish and Portuguese.

Our child marriage and COVID-19 brief

For the movement to respond to COVID-19, we needed to understand its impact on girls and communities around the world. Early in the pandemic, the Girls Not Brides secretariat sent out a survey for member organisations to share their concerns and experiences, adapted our work to respond to their needs, and rapidly published the [COVID-19 and child, early and forced marriage: An agenda for action](#) brief. This document provides insights, recommendations and resources to support girls during and after the crisis. It is one of our most downloaded briefs in 2020, and it has been circulated and quoted by other partners including SheDecides, the World Health Organization and the UNFPA-UNICEF Global Programme to End Child Marriage.

⁵ Members and partners of the Child, Early and Forced Marriage and Unions, and Sexuality Working Group are as follows:

Aahung, American Jewish World Service, CARE, CREA, Firelight Foundation, Global Fund for Women, Girls First Fund, *Girls Not Brides: The Global Partnership to End Child Marriage*, GreeneWorks, International Center for Research on Women, International Women's Health Coalition, The Kendeda Fund, MADRE, Nirantar Trust, Plan International, Population Council, Promundo, The Summit Foundation, UNFPA, UNICEF, and The YP Foundation and Empower.

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We supported girl- and youth-led research in India

In 2020, young members of the *Girls Not Brides* State Partnership in Rajasthan and state coalition in Uttar Pradesh designed and undertook research to understand the impact of COVID-19 on young women and girls. With financial support from *Girls Not Brides*, researchers aged 15 to 25 years gathered data from over 700 young people across the two states to build an accurate picture of how girls have been disproportionately affected by the pandemic. Their findings will be used to inform the Rajasthan and Uttar Pradesh coalitions' advocacy and ensure that the movement to end child marriage represents the voices of young women and girls.

Objective 3: Amplifying voices

Amplifying the voices of under-represented groups is critical to ensuring that the movement to end child marriage not only represents the needs of all girls but also takes into account the expertise of those working at a community level. In 2020, *Girls Not Brides* supported our member organisations, young people and girls to share their experiences and solutions with broad audiences.

We helped girls and members tell their stories

Girls Not Brides member organisation stories featured in a range of global, regional and national media outlets. To ensure their experiences reached a broad audience, the *Girls Not Brides* secretariat secured global coverage for stories from our member organisations, partners and girls themselves. This included features in a range of top-tier media, including the [BBC World Service](#), [the Guardian](#) and [Thomson Reuters](#). We also ensured the work of member organisations in Uganda and the Middle East was covered in regional and national media.

We focused on sharing girls' stories, told in their own voices. We published two long-form multimedia stories on our website, spotlighting the work of two of our member organisations – the [Mariposa DR Foundation in the Dominican Republic](#) and [International Rescue Committee in Lebanon](#). With support from Ignite Philanthropy: Inspiring the End to Violence Against Girls and Boys, we also produced two illustrated stories and accompanying animations, which brought to life the personal experiences of girls who experienced child marriage in [Colombia/Venezuela](#) and [Uganda](#). We also created an animation to accompany a 2019 illustrated story from [India](#).

Social media continued to be an effective way to further amplify the voices of some of the world's most marginalised communities. For example, we collaborated with the Association of Indigenous Lawyers 'Chomija', Ixoqib Miriam, Kinal Antzetik Guerrero, Mano Vuelta and the National Network of Indigenous Lawyers, to reach over 2,000 people with [Facebook Live](#), broadcasting a webinar on sexual violence and child marriage in indigenous communities in Mexico and Guatemala.

We supported young people

Thanks to social media and our connected world, we are seeing more young people than ever engaging with the issue of child marriage around the world. Young women and girls are the group most affected by child marriage, and 40%⁶ of *Girls Not Brides* member organisations are self-identified youth-led organisations. We must support these young people to influence the movement to end child marriage and create meaningful change for girls everywhere.

In 2020, we delivered a range of in-person and online training sessions and workshops to support

⁶ Based on a data set of 1199 members

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young people in taking effective action to end child marriage. We partnered with Restless Development India to train over 50 youth staff of *Girls Not Brides* member organisations, and the feedback from this training also contributed to the development of our youth strategies with young people and civil society leaders in Rajasthan and Jharkhand states. We also trained 17 young activists in Zambia and 12 in Uganda on using our youth activism toolkit, [Stand Up, Speak Out!](#) Participants can now facilitate and support youth-led collective action in their communities.

Story of change: Young women leaders in Latin America and the Caribbean design and deliver a successful campaign

This year we collaborated with Jóvenas Latidas, a collective of youth activists based in 11 countries across Latin America and the Caribbean. We supported the design and delivery of their campaign to highlight the impact of COVID-19 on gender equality – specifically on increasing gender-based violence, including child marriage – and adolescent girls' and young women's rights.

The Jóvenas Latidas campaign messages were co-created and shared through four blogs on the *Girls Not Brides* website – covering the topics of [engaging young activists](#), [child marriage in the region](#), [girls' and adolescents' rights](#) and [the power of collective work – three podcasts](#), numerous illustrations, infographics and videos for [Instagram](#) and [Facebook](#), [five audio clips broadcast on the radio](#), and a [campaign statement](#). The campaign – which was built from the ground up – sparked 195,000 impressions on Facebook and a further 298,000 on Instagram; Jóvenas Latidas were able to reach their target audience of young women aged between 18 and 34.

The campaign was developed by its young leaders, with financial support and technical guidance from *Girls Not Brides* throughout the design and delivery process. This included the production of four toolkits to strengthen the campaign team's skills; technical guidance on how to edit audio and video content for radio and podcasts; the development of key messages and priorities for the campaign; and a suite of original illustrations and animations for their online content.

Jóvenas Latidas will continue their collective action and campaigning into 2021, as they move into new advocacy and activism spaces such as the Argentine Ministry of Health's Advisory Council on Adolescent and Youth Health. United by their strong group identity, Jóvenas Latidas will share their key messages and advocate for governments across the region to put the needs of young women at the centre of their pandemic responses, so they can live free and full lives.

Objective 4: Advocating to decision-makers

With the COVID-19 pandemic and global climate crisis front and centre for many leaders and decision-makers, it is more important than ever that girls are listened to and their needs are integrated into all the policies and programmes that affect them. In 2020, *Girls Not Brides* and partner organisations advocated for – and secured – political commitments and action on ending child marriage at the global, regional and national levels.

Global highlights

Girls Not Brides member organisations advocated to their governments to take action and deliver on their commitments to end child marriage, including the need for governments to implement their SDG promise to “eliminate all harmful practices including child, early and forced marriage” (SDG 5.3).

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As a result of the advocacy of member organisations, the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on girls was recognised by the 114 governments who co-sponsored a new UN General Assembly resolution on child marriage. This resolution was passed by consensus and maintains international pressure on governments to implement their commitment to ending child marriage and ensure that girls are not disproportionately affected by the pandemic.

The Generation Equality Forum (led by UN Women to mobilise governments and civil society to accelerate gender equality and deliver on the commitments of the 1994 Beijing Platform for Action) benefitted from the participation of girls and young people after we worked with partners, including the Adolescent Girls Investment Plan⁷ and the Mexican government, to broker a relationship between the Forum's Action Coalition leaders and over 150 youth and adolescent girls. By establishing an open space where girls and young people were able to speak directly to leaders and provide recommendations based on their expertise and lived experiences, we contributed to their voices being part of the Generation Equality process.

Regional highlights

Child marriage was recognised as one of the priorities on the gender equality agenda for Latin America and the Caribbean, following advocacy by *Girls Not Brides* members and partners. The *Girls Not Brides* secretariat supported member organisations to participate in the Regional Conference of Women 2020 and held collaborative side events with UN agencies and governments to drive interest in – and action on – the issue. Child marriage was acknowledged in commitments to advance gender equality in the region, and SDG 5.3 was formally included in the Gender Equality Observatory of the Economic Commission of Latin America and the Caribbean.

In Africa, *Girls Not Brides* worked with multiple partners and at regional forums to share learning and technical expertise with a number of high-level processes and initiatives. We highlighted the importance of comprehensive sexual education and sexual and reproductive health and rights services in West and Central Africa during discussions with the Economic Community of West African States Regional Child Protection Working Group. We engaged the Southern African Development Community Parliamentary Forum in dialogue around the links between child marriage and education.

We engaged with the Forum for African Women Educationalists, Plan International and the Rozaria Memorial Trust as regional partners in Africa working on girls' education to influence regional bodies, including through an open letter to the African Union, advocacy events and outreach. We also published a joint op-ed with the Global Partnership for Education on the links between child marriage, education and COVID-19. As a result, addressing child marriage was included in the African Union's pandemic response. In addition, we strengthened our engagement with non-traditional regional partners – including the International Centre for the Education of Girls and Women in Africa – to ensure that a cross-sectoral approach to addressing child marriage was included on the regional agenda.

In the Middle East and North Africa, *Girls Not Brides* and regional partners contributed to the UN Regional Accountability Framework of Action on Ending Child Marriage. We contributed to the priorities outlined in the framework and sponsored a representative from Iraqi member the Khairat

⁷ The Adolescent Girls Investment Plan brings together 11 partners to drive the political commitment and evidence-informed investments required to have impact, and to shift outcomes for adolescent girls on a global scale.

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Al-Nahraeen Human Organization to participate and share their experiences and learning from programming in humanitarian contexts at the Regional Accountability Workshop in Amman, Jordan.

National highlights

Across the world, *Girls Not Brides* member organisations have advocated to national governments to implement existing commitments to end child marriage and to secure new ones.

For example, the *Girls Not Brides* secretariat worked with *Girls Not Brides Kenya* and Parliamentarians for Global Action to advocate for the Kenyan government to develop a national plan of action to end child marriage and implement their commitments to the African Union on ending child marriage. In total, 36 members of parliament and civil society and *Girls Not Brides* representatives were present at the virtual meeting, which also included contributions from Ugandan and Zimbabwean parliamentarians on developing national child marriage strategies. This meeting was a valuable opportunity to introduce the work of *Girls Not Brides Kenya* to national legislators and to present key asks, including increased budget allocations to end child marriage, strengthened child protection frameworks, and closer links between addressing child marriage and FGM/C. This is particularly important as we build our work to end child marriage in Kenya in 2021, where we will be working with a range of stakeholders at the national and subnational levels, including with government representatives, civil society organisations, young people and community-based organisations.

Girls Not Brides member organisations in a number of countries advocated to their governments to secure funding for national and subnational work to end child marriage. Following a successful workshop in 2019, the secretariat directly supported six member organisations from Kenya, Mexico, Nigeria, Pakistan and Togo in their advocacy to secure budget lines related to preventing and responding to child marriage. In 2020, we provided follow-up funding for five of those organisations. As a result of the 2019 pilot in Nigeria, the Society for the Improvement of Rural People (SIRP) secured the equivalent of \$6.8 million in the Enugu State 2020 Budget for child and social protection, primary and secondary schooling for girls, and the provision of sanitary products. In 2020, one of SIRP's key areas of focus was to track this budget to ensure the government delivered on their commitments in the context of COVID-19. For example, SIRP's budget monitoring ensured the renovation of classrooms in three schools, in line with original budget commitments. SIRP's achievements – and those of the other five member organisations – provide key learnings for how budget advocacy can increase investment by governments by ensuring that budget lines support girls and address child marriage.

Story of change: Young people and civil society mobilise around changes to the legal age of marriage in India

Laws and policies are only one part of ending child marriage – reaching this goal also means addressing community attitudes, social norms and service provision for girls.

Focusing only on laws and age risks criminalising boys and girls who are already married and driving the practice underground. It also overlooks the social and economic changes needed to ensure girls and their families have alternatives to child marriage and to challenge existing gender norms and promote gender equality.

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In India – the country with the highest absolute number of child brides in the world – laws prohibiting child marriage have been in place since 1929, but the practice continues. In 2020, a government task force proposed increasing the minimum age of marriage for girls from 18 to 21 to delay when girls have their first child. In response, *Girls Not Brides* joined a group of 96 civil society and youth organisations in India to ensure the voices and needs of young people were heard by this task force.

With these organisations, we surveyed 2,500 young people on the potential impact of increasing the legal age of marriage. Young people were concerned that, if other aspects of their realities are not addressed, changing the law could lead to an increase in child marriage and greater gender bias. For example, if parents with limited means are expected to support their daughters for longer, they may marry them off in secret or with forged documents.

The survey responses, formally recorded and published in the [Young Voices National Report](#), highlighted young people's nuanced understanding of marriage. A common thread emerged: young people lack choices and freedom to have aspirations and make decisions on the matters that impact their lives the most – marriage, relationships, education and careers.

As a result of this process, four young women directly addressed the government task force and submitted a series of demands. These included the right to complete their education; employment opportunities that are safe and close to their homes; incentives that enable girls to realise their aspirations; comprehensive sexuality education in schools and communities; and access to sexual and reproductive health and rights. Young people also shared their experiences in regional and national media, and through taking part in Facebook Live sessions reached over 1,000 people. Find out more in our [blog](#) covering this process.

The Young Voices movement in India illustrates the importance of civil-society-led advocacy in challenging governments to move away from protectionist policymaking – which threatens the autonomy and agency of adolescents and young people – towards decision-making that takes into account the experiences and needs of young people and addresses the systemic and complex causes of child marriage.

Objective 5: Securing funding for the movement

The COVID-19 pandemic has threatened the already-limited resources available to the movement to end child marriage, and it continues to have an impact in 2021 and beyond. We are concerned about the impact of cuts to official development assistance and government and foundation funding, particularly on our smaller community-based and national member organisations. From available data, half of our member organisations have reported annual budgets of under \$50,000. It is more important than ever that donors invest in and support civil society organisations, and that *Girls Not Brides* member organisations have the support they need to access these opportunities.

The *Girls Not Brides* secretariat works closely with donors to share information and evidence and discuss funding flows. In partnership with Global Affairs Canada, we convened a meeting of 33 representatives from key donors to discuss the impact of COVID-19 on girls and the movement to end child marriage, and to share recommendations that emerged from conversations with *Girls Not Brides* member organisations. We also worked with the Ford Foundation to host a virtual event, which amplified the experiences of young women and girls working at the community level to end

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child marriage. Participants shared insights and recommendations on how donors can support girl-led, youth-led and community-based organisations working to end child marriage during the pandemic. The event was attended by 133 participants, including donors and civil society organisations.

In 2020, *Girls Not Brides* member organisations accessed funds from diverse sources, including grants and crowdfunding with the GlobalGiving, JustGiving and W4 platforms. Over the year, the *Girls Not Brides* secretariat compiled and sent member organisations eight newsletters sharing relevant funding opportunities. We also organised a webinar and email outreach on digital fundraising with GlobalGiving, which is a popular method of fundraising for our community-based members. In total, 30 member organisations successfully joined the platform, and the projects that were featured on the [Girls Not Brides website](#) secured over \$25,000.

Girls First Fund and VOW for Girls

In 2018, the *Girls Not Brides* secretariat helped to catalyse a new donor collaborative – the [Girls First Fund](#) – to increase funding and support for community-based organisations working to end child marriage. In 2020, we provided expertise as part of the Girls First Fund's Board Committee and connected its work to the latest developments in the global movement to end child marriage. In its first granting year (2019-2020), the Girls First Fund granted funds to 150 community-driven, girl-centred organisations across six countries. The secretariat also collaborated closely with [VOW for Girls](#), an innovative initiative to mobilise the wedding sector to raise money for the Girls First Fund.

Objective 6: Ensuring the secretariat is effective

The collective work of *Girls Not Brides* and the movement to end child marriage is supported by a global secretariat with staff based across Africa, Asia, Europe and Latin America. To best serve the needs of the movement, the secretariat made a number of changes in 2020, including strengthening our systems, structures and policies, and diversifying our governance.

Governance

This year, we expanded our Board of Trustees by appointing three additional board members. These are [Emma Puig De La Bellacasa](#), [Rita Sarin](#) and [Zipporah Jean Alaroker](#), who bring a wealth of experience and expertise from their work in Africa, Asia, Europe, and Latin America.

Member voices

We created a Member Advisory Committee, comprised of 12 individuals from *Girls Not Brides* member organisations across the globe, selected through an open application process. Playing an advisory role, the committee ensures another channel for the knowledge, perspectives and interests of *Girls Not Brides* member organisations to inform relevant decisions and projects by the *Girls Not Brides* secretariat. This is particularly important to our global Partnership Strategy and Theory of Change refresh process, the results of which will be launched in 2021.

Changes at the secretariat

We established an internal diversity, inclusion, voices and equity (DIVES) taskforce to ensure that commitments in these areas are set and translated into action throughout our work. The DIVES taskforce has identified the following priority areas: human resources, policy and recruitment; organisational culture and ways of working; learning and reflection; governance and decision-making; and language and communication.

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To ensure the secretariat can effectively support our growing global partnership, we restructured the now over 40-strong secretariat team into three directorates to streamline decision-making and improve cross-team communication.

We also updated and implemented a robust safeguarding framework focused on ensuring that all children, young people and adults at risk who come into contact with *Girls Not Brides* are safe from harm. The framework comprises a Staff Safeguarding Policy, a Code of Conduct for all secretariat staff and a Safeguarding Standards Policy for all *Girls Not Brides* member organisations.

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PLANS FOR THE FUTURE

At the start of 2020, we made a commitment to deepen our work and redouble our efforts to make a world without child marriage a reality. With the guidance of *Girls Not Brides* member organisations, partners, donors and allies, we reframed our strategy and embarked on a pathway to zero child marriage. However, with the onset of COVID-19, we realised 2020 would not allow for business as usual; it quickly became a time of great uncertainty. But through this uncertainty one thing remained clear – the work of *Girls Not Brides: The Global Partnership to End Child Marriage* is needed now more than ever. The realisation that COVID-19 threatened the gains we have delivered over the last decade fuelled our resolve and led to our actions and achievements this year.

As we move into the future, our ethos remains the same and will continue to guide us in our mission. We believe that:

- **There is power in partnership.** Everyone can make a difference, but we cannot create a critical mass for change unless we work together as a truly global partnership.
- **We are always learning.** We recognise the need to constantly learn from each other – about what works, and what does not – and evaluate and improve our approaches.
- **Collaboration at all levels is key.** As civil society acting alone cannot end child marriage, we need to continue to mobilise and collaborate with all relevant actors – including the UN, governments, religious leaders and donors – and across related sectors.
- **Change happens on the ground.** The pandemic has made it crystal clear that working with girls, their families and their communities is central to progress. Their empowerment is the key to a world without child marriage.

Working under this ethos, our resolve for getting to zero child marriages remains unchanged. We will continue to work closely with our members and partners, across the globe who, although working virtually, have reenergised us and increased our commitment to deepen these collaborations with both old and new allies. We simply cannot get to zero child marriages alone. Our focus in the coming year will be to strengthen our global movement, find new allies and continue our journey to a world where each and every girl is able to live her dreams. Specifically, we will deepen how we work in countries so that we deliver change for girls and demonstrate where change is happening. We will strengthen relationships and be intentional in seeking global partners. We will work with a wider set of actors – through education, humanitarian and HIV sectors – to ensure that those programmes with the biggest potential impact on child marriage are implemented. This will mean greater prioritisation in our advocacy and working in broader coalitions. We will also be persistent in building our position as a thought leader on behalf of the movement. We will support the generation and uptake of evidence on what works to end child marriage throughout the movement. We will be bold in measuring our impact so that we can understand the difference we are making in girls' lives.

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STRUCTURE, GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT

Girls Not Brides was incorporated as a company in the United Kingdom on 14 June 2013 and registered as a charity in England and Wales on 17 October 2013. It transferred its assets and activities from what was once an initiative under The Elders Foundation to the independent entity on 10 December 2013.

Board of Trustees

Girls Not Brides is governed by a Board of Trustees (the Trustees) who are responsible for overseeing the management of all *Girls Not Brides*' affairs. The Trustees are selected and elected according to procedures set out in the Articles of Association. The Trustees ensure that all activities fall within the charitable objectives. The Trustees' main responsibilities are related to administrative and financial governance, management of reserves and investments as well as guiding and overseeing strategy development and planning. In particular, the Trustees are responsible for ensuring the legal and financial compliance of *Girls Not Brides*, including compliance with the Charity Commission's guiding principles and charity law.

The Trustees meet regularly throughout the year and act on advice and information provided by the Chief Executive Officer and the senior management of the charity. All Trustees are provided with an individual induction covering all aspects of the *Girls Not Brides* organisational structure and roles and responsibilities of the Trustees within the organisation, as well as Charity Commission guidance on governance, and the duties of Trustees in the UK. Trustee-specific trainings are organised to ensure that the Board remains compliant with the Charity Commission and up to date on current trends within the non-governmental sector. For example, in 2020, the Trustees received a comprehensive training on all aspects of safeguarding as relevant to *Girls Not Brides*.

Company Members

Girls Not Brides is a charitable company and its Company Members have a constitutional role, including legal responsibility to approve the Articles of Association (and any amendments) and to appoint and, if necessary, dismiss the Trustees of *Girls Not Brides*. The term 'Member' in this context has a specific legal meaning and should not be confused with the organisations working on child marriage that have joined the *Girls Not Brides* partnership (below).

Members of Girls Not Brides

The *Girls Not Brides* secretariat supports the global partnership of member organisations. Membership is open to non-governmental organisations that endorse its mission statement and agree to its membership principles. These organisations are publicly and commonly referred to as 'members' (as opposed to the Company Members described above).

Members contribute to the Partnership and engage with one another, as well as with the secretariat, in a variety of ways depending on their interests and capacity. The work and interests of members help define the strategy of *Girls Not Brides*, and the secretariat requests feedback from them on various issues on a regular basis.

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Secretariat

Girls Not Brides' day-to-day operations are run by its staff based in its London office, with additional individual staff members based in New Delhi (India), Nairobi (Kenya) and Mexico City (Mexico). The secretariat is made up of three directorates, with a Chief Executive Officer overseeing their work. The Chief Executive Officer reports to the Trustees. The Trustees delegate the day-to-day running of the organisation to the Chief Executive Officer.

Risk management

The organisation reviewed and developed its approach to risk management throughout 2020. This included redesigning the organisational risk register, with oversight from the Board of Trustees and input from all senior staff, and updating risk management guidance for staff. *Girls Not Brides* views risk management as a continuous process that must be considered at the forefront of all activities by all staff members.

In December 2020, the Trustees conducted the annual review of the risk register and were satisfied with the controls and procedures the secretariat had put in place. The Trustees were also satisfied with progress in monitoring and mitigating previously identified potential risks, including financial risks related to its ability to raise sufficient funds, impact of currency fluctuations and management risks.

The risk register is classified into six categories (external engagement, finance and due diligence, fundraising, governance and leadership, operational and partnership) that are further defined into specific potential risk elements. Within this, significant risks are identified and summarised. This includes the following risks and mitigation strategies:

- Losing donors or failing to raise sufficient funds, particularly due to the impact of COVID-19. This is mitigated by tracking donors' evolving strategies, cultivating strong donor relationships, ensuring accurate forecasting and building up the operational reserve.
- Failure to comply with requirements around grants and sub-granting. This is mitigated by a detailed review of contract provisions, preparing and reviewing contract summaries, tracking expenditure through activity codes and developing the organisational grant-making policy and process.
- Failure to take convincing policy positions. This is mitigated by scoping current policy trends and developing relevant positions and messaging, self-reflecting and challenging assumptions.
- Unsuitable human resources and operational policies for international context. This is mitigated by an updated approach to regional working under development in 2021.
- Safeguarding incidents in the secretariat or Partnership. This is mitigated by the organisation's comprehensive and up-to-date safeguarding policies and processes and frequent highlighting of safeguarding as a key issue in organisational culture, communications, induction, project management, training and documents.

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- Staff health and wellbeing negatively impacted by COVID-19. This is mitigated by a suite of wellbeing policies, processes and support mechanisms for staff.

Girls Not Brides was the victim of a fraud in 2020. The charity acted promptly to carry out a thorough investigation into the incident with the support of specialist external parties and the misappropriated funds were duly recovered in full. Investigations into the matter have confirmed that the incident did not arise as a result of any staff misconduct, cyber security breaches or IT system failures on the part of *Girls Not Brides*. The charity has worked to adhere to all of its legal and regulatory reporting obligations relating to this matter and has put in place additional controls to further protect the charity against any future incidents of this nature.

Fundraising

In 2020, *Girls Not Brides* actively fundraised from a small pool of organisations, primarily made up of governments and foundations. Activities were led by our Senior Leadership Team, Donor Engagement Team and the Chair of the Board of Trustees, drawing on other colleagues' and Board Members' expertise and support as needed. Activities included researching prospective government and foundation funding, a variety of communications with existing and prospective donors, and preparing concept notes, proposals and reporting for these donors.

During the year under review, *Girls Not Brides* did not use professional fundraisers or commercial participators and did not actively solicit funds from the general public, including vulnerable people, for the secretariat's work. We complied with fundraising regulation and codes in 2020 and we did not receive any complaints.

Remuneration policy

Girls Not Brides is guided by the following remuneration principles:

- **Competitiveness:** to attract and retain outstanding individuals, while taking into account market trends in the sector.
- **Progression:** compensation can increase to reflect increased responsibilities, to help retain high-performing staff members.
- **Fairness and equity:** to ensure that the compensation process remains consistent, non-discriminatory and reasonable, and that staff members in comparable positions can afford a similar standard of living in different geographical locations.
- **Transparency:** to ensure staff members have a clear understanding of the policies related to remuneration while ensuring that individual salary data remains confidential.
- **Value for money:** to ensure that the funds of *Girls Not Brides* are used for their designated purpose, and that salaries reflect the size, complexity and budget of *Girls Not Brides*.

Salary bands are approved by the Board of Trustees. Individual salary decisions are made collaboratively by the Chief Executive Officer, Director of Operations and the individual's manager.

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The Chief Executive Officer's salary is decided by the Board. The directors' salaries are decided by the Chief Executive Officer and the Treasurer or Chair.

Statement of Trustees' responsibilities

The Trustees (who are also directors of *Girls Not Brides* for the purposes of company law) are responsible for preparing the Trustees' annual report and the financial statements in accordance with applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

Company law requires the Trustees to prepare financial statements for each financial year which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the charitable company and of the incoming resources and application of resources, including the income and expenditure, of the charitable company for that period. In preparing these financial statements, the trustees are required to:

- Select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently
- Observe the methods and principles in the Charities SORP
- Make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent
- State whether applicable UK Accounting Standards and statements of recommended practice have been followed, subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the financial statements
- Prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the charity will continue in operation

The Trustees are responsible for keeping adequate accounting records that disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the charitable company and enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Companies Act 2006. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the charitable company and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

In so far as the Trustees are aware:

- There is no relevant audit information of which the charitable company's auditor is unaware
- The Trustees have taken all steps that they ought to have taken to make themselves aware of any relevant audit information and to establish that the auditor is aware of that information.

The Trustees are responsible for the maintenance and integrity of the corporate and financial information included on the charitable company's website. Legislation in the United Kingdom governing the preparation and dissemination of financial statements may differ from legislation in other jurisdictions.

The Trustees have no beneficial interest in the charity.

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Objects

The charity's objects are all regarded as exclusively charitable under the laws of England and Wales including, but not limited to:

- (a) The promotion of equality and human rights (as set out in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and Subsequent United Nations Conventions and Declarations) throughout the world including but not limited to:
- Raising awareness of human rights issues
 - Relieving need among the victims of human rights abuse
 - Research into and international advocacy of human rights
 - Providing technical advice to government and others on human rights matters
 - Promoting respect for human rights among individuals and corporations
 - Eliminating or preventing infringement of human rights
- (b) The prevention and relief of poverty
- (c) The advancement of health
- (d) The advancement of education, in particular but without limitation, by undertaking research and other educational activities and disseminating the results of that research
- (e) The relief of those in need by reason of youth and/or ill health

Public benefit

The Trustees' report sets out *Girls Not Brides'* charitable activities contributing to ending child marriage, which we have carried out in line with our charitable objects, being the promotion of equality and human rights, the prevention and relief of poverty, the advancement of health, the advancement of education and the relief of those in need by reason or youth and/or ill health. The Board has considered the issue of public benefit and are confident that *Girls Not Brides'* activities comply with the duty in section 17 of the Charities Act 2011 to have due regard to public benefit guidance published by the Charity Commission.

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FINANCIAL REVIEW

Income

In 2020 *Girls Not Brides* income was £3,362,142 (2019: £6,651,735), of largely unrestricted income. Government grants formed more than half of the unrestricted income, with most other donors being private foundations. Restricted income was 20% of total income, and saw a small decrease on 2019 in absolute terms – this was largely because *Girls Not Brides*' work on the VOW initiative came to an end in early 2020, and this project represented the majority of the 2019 restricted income.

The majority of 2020 income was agreed in the first quarter, and thus not impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic, however we have strategically deferred draw-downs from some grants into 2021 to better reflect our anticipated expenditure phasing.

In 2020, the work of *Girls Not Brides* was made possible through the generous support of many, including:

- Ministry of Foreign Affairs, The Netherlands
- Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida)
- Nationale Postcode Loterij
- The Kendeda Fund
- Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation
- Department for Foreign Affairs, Trade and Development, Government of Canada
- players of the People's Postcode Lottery
- NoVo Foundation Fund of Tides Foundation
- Ford Foundation
- Every Good Thing LLC
- The Government of the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg
- Private family foundation managed by Greenwood Place
- David and Lucile Packard Foundation
- Skoll Foundation
- Education Out Loud (managed by Oxfam IBIS and financed by the Global Partnership for Education)
- Jeremy Coller Foundation
- Vintner's Daughter
- Ignite Philanthropy: Inspiring the End to Violence Against Girls and Boys – a project of the New Venture Fund

Expenditure

Expenditure on charitable activities in the year was £3,514,753 (2019: £4,886,126). This was

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significantly lower than in 2019 due to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on *Girls Not Brides'* work. As a result of the pandemic, we had to review our planned activities and find new ways to deliver work that would have involved travel, conferences and large meetings. This involved significant savings as activities were moved online or delayed until they are possible in person in 2021. This impacted both restricted and unrestricted funding, and so we are carrying forward £234,840 restricted funding and £3,074,607 unrestricted funding into 2021.

Reserves policy

The Board aims to build up a reserve equivalent to six months of committed costs and three months of planned but uncommitted costs as unrestricted free reserves, based on budget projections. The aim of this policy is to ensure that *Girls Not Brides* meets all its obligations and contractual liabilities, and continues to operate smoothly, in case of income shortfalls or unexpected expenditures. This target amounts to £1,978,834 at 31 December 2020. Each year the Board reviews the level of reserves and the risks the reserves are held to mitigate against to ensure that the reserves kept are sufficient but not excessive.

As of 31 December 2020 unrestricted free reserves were £2,969,209, which is above our reserves range due to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on our expenditure in 2020. We intend to spend down this balance over the next few years to bring us in line with our reserves policy.

Funds held as a Custodian Trustee

In 2018, the charity received €2,000,000 to be transferred to Capital for Good USA. The funds will be used to make sub-grants to local community organisations working at a grass-roots level to tackle child marriage. This is aligned with the vision of *Girls Not Brides*, and in this way the arrangement advances *Girls Not Brides'* charitable objectives.

In 2019 and 2020 €1,500,000 (£1,270,185) was transferred and £445,088 (2019: £1,269,143) is included in creditors at the year-end. These funds were transferred to Capital for Good USA in June 2021. In 2020 the funds were held securely in *Girls Not Brides'* EURO bank account and tracked through the monthly bank reconciliations. At all times, the balance held as a Custodian Trustee was maintained in the bank account.

This report has been prepared in accordance with the small companies' regime under the Companies Act 2006.

This report was approved by the Board on and signed on its behalf by

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Mabel van Oranje (Trustee)

INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT

TO THE MEMBERS OF GIRLS NOT BRIDES: THE GLOBAL PARTNERSHIP TO END CHILD MARRIAGE

Opinion

We have audited the financial statements of Girls Not Brides (the 'charitable company') for the year ended 31 December 2020 which comprise the statement of financial activities, balance sheet, statement of cash flows and notes to the financial statements, including significant accounting policies. The financial reporting framework that has been applied in their preparation is applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards, including FRS 102 The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

In our opinion, the financial statements:

- Give a true and fair view of the state of the charitable company's affairs as at 31 December 2020 and of its incoming resources and application of resources, including its income and expenditure for the year then ended
- Have been properly prepared in accordance with United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice
- Have been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006

Basis for opinion

We conducted our audit in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (UK) (ISAs (UK)) and applicable law. Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements section of our report. We are independent of the charitable company in accordance with the ethical requirements that are relevant to our audit of the financial statements in the UK, including the FRC's Ethical Standard and we have fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with these requirements. We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion.

Conclusions relating to going concern

In auditing the financial statements, we have concluded that the trustees' use of the going concern basis of accounting in the preparation of the financial statements is appropriate.

Based on the work we have performed, we have not identified any material uncertainties relating to events or conditions that, individually or collectively, may cast significant doubt on Girls Not Brides' ability to continue as a going concern for a period of at least twelve months from when the financial statements are authorised for issue.

Our responsibilities and the responsibilities of the trustees with respect to going concern are described in the relevant sections of this report.

Other Information

The other information comprises the information included in the trustees' annual report other than the financial statements and our auditor's report thereon. The trustees are responsible for the other information contained within the annual report. Our opinion on the financial statements does not cover the other information and, except to the extent otherwise explicitly stated in our report, we do

INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT

TO THE MEMBERS OF GIRLS NOT BRIDES: THE GLOBAL PARTNERSHIP TO END CHILD MARRIAGE

not express any form of assurance conclusion thereon. Our responsibility is to read the other information and, in doing so, consider whether the other information is materially inconsistent with the financial statements or our knowledge obtained in the course of the audit, or otherwise appears to be materially misstated. If we identify such material inconsistencies or apparent material misstatements, we are required to determine whether this gives rise to a material misstatement in the financial statements themselves. If, based on the work we have performed, we conclude that there is a material misstatement of this other information, we are required to report that fact.

We have nothing to report in this regard.

Opinions on other matters prescribed by the Companies Act 2006

In our opinion, based on the work undertaken in the course of the audit:

- The information given in the trustees' annual report for the financial year for which the financial statements are prepared is consistent with the financial statements; and
- The trustees' annual report has been prepared in accordance with applicable legal requirements.

Matters on which we are required to report by exception

In the light of the knowledge and understanding of the charitable company and its environment obtained in the course of the audit, we have not identified material misstatements in the trustees' annual report. We have nothing to report in respect of the following matters in relation to which the Companies Act 2006 requires us to report to you if, in our opinion:

- Adequate accounting records have not been kept, or returns adequate for our audit have not been received from branches not visited by us; or
- The financial statements are not in agreement with the accounting records and returns; or
- Certain disclosures of trustees' remuneration specified by law are not made; or
- We have not received all the information and explanations we require for our audit; or
- The directors were not entitled to prepare the financial statements in accordance with the small companies regime and take advantage of the small companies' exemptions in preparing the trustees' annual report and from the requirement to prepare a strategic report.

Responsibilities of trustees

As explained more fully in the statement of trustees' responsibilities set out in the trustees' annual report, the trustees (who are also the directors of the charitable company for the purposes of company law) are responsible for the preparation of the financial statements and for being satisfied that they give a true and fair view, and for such internal control as the trustees determine is necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing the financial statements, the trustees are responsible for assessing the charitable company's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going

INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT

TO THE MEMBERS OF GIRLS NOT BRIDES: THE GLOBAL PARTNERSHIP TO END CHILD MARRIAGE

concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless the trustees either intend to liquidate the charitable company or to cease operations, or have no realistic alternative but to do so.

Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements

Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements as a whole are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes our opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with ISAs (UK) will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of these financial statements.

Irregularities, including fraud, are instances of non-compliance with laws and regulations. We design procedures in line with our responsibilities, outlined above, to detect material misstatements in respect of irregularities, including fraud. The extent to which our procedures are capable of detecting irregularities, including fraud are set out below.

Capability of the audit in detecting irregularities

In identifying and assessing risks of material misstatement in respect of irregularities, including fraud and non-compliance with laws and regulations, our procedures included the following:

- We enquired of management, which included obtaining and reviewing supporting documentation, concerning the charity's policies and procedures relating to:
 - Identifying, evaluating, and complying with laws and regulations and whether they were aware of any instances of non-compliance;
 - Detecting and responding to the risks of fraud and whether they have knowledge of any actual, suspected, or alleged fraud;
 - The internal controls established to mitigate risks related to fraud or non-compliance with laws and regulations.
- We inspected the minutes of meetings of those charged with governance.
- We obtained an understanding of the legal and regulatory framework that the charity operates in, focusing on those laws and regulations that had a material effect on the financial statements or that had a fundamental effect on the operations of the charity from our professional and sector experience.
- We communicated applicable laws and regulations throughout the audit team and remained alert to any indications of non-compliance throughout the audit.
- We reviewed any reports made to regulators.
- We reviewed the financial statement disclosures and tested these to supporting documentation to assess compliance with applicable laws and regulations.
- We performed analytical procedures to identify any unusual or unexpected relationships that may indicate risks of material misstatement due to fraud.

INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT

TO THE MEMBERS OF GIRLS NOT BRIDES: THE GLOBAL PARTNERSHIP TO END CHILD MARRIAGE

- In addressing the risk of fraud through management override of controls, we tested the appropriateness of journal entries and other adjustments, assessed whether the judgements made in making accounting estimates are indicative of a potential bias and tested significant transactions that are unusual or those outside the normal course of business.

Because of the inherent limitations of an audit, there is a risk that we will not detect all irregularities, including those leading to a material misstatement in the financial statements or non-compliance with regulation. This risk increases the more that compliance with a law or regulation is removed from the events and transactions reflected in the financial statements, as we will be less likely to become aware of instances of non-compliance. The risk is also greater regarding irregularities occurring due to fraud rather than error, as fraud involves intentional concealment, forgery, collusion, omission or misrepresentation.

A further description of our responsibilities is available on the Financial Reporting Council's website at: www.frc.org.uk/auditorsresponsibilities. This description forms part of our auditor's report.

Use of our report

This report is made solely to the charitable company's members as a body, in accordance with Chapter 3 of Part 16 of the Companies Act 2006. Our audit work has been undertaken so that we might state to the charitable company's members those matters we are required to state to them in an auditor's report and for no other purpose. To the fullest extent permitted by law, we do not accept or assume responsibility to anyone other than the charitable company and the charitable company's members as a body, for our audit work, for this report, or for the opinions we have formed.

Noelia Serrano (Senior statutory auditor)

23 June 2021

for and on behalf of Sayer Vincent LLP, Statutory Auditor
Invicta House, 108-114 Golden Lane, LONDON, EC1Y 0TL

Statement of financial activities (incorporating an income and expenditure account)

For the year ended 31 December 2020

		2020					2019
	Note	Unrestricted £	Restricted £	Total £	Unrestricted £ Restated	Restricted £	Total £ Restated
Income from:							
Donations (grants)	2	2,682,251	678,630	3,360,881	5,732,035	917,051	6,649,086
Investments		1,260	-	1,260	2,649		2,649
Total income		2,683,511	678,630	3,362,142	5,734,684	917,051	6,651,735
Expenditure on:							
Raising funds	3a	205,466	-	205,466	137,765	-	137,765
Charitable activities							
Promotion of equality and human rights	3a	1,894,485	384,829	2,279,314	2,553,328	733,876	3,287,204
Prevention and relief of poverty	3a	898,365	131,597	1,029,963	1,052,552	408,605	1,461,157
Total expenditure		2,998,317	516,426	3,514,743	3,743,645	1,142,481	4,886,126
Net (expenditure) / income for the year	5	(314,806)	162,204	(152,602)	1,991,038	(225,430)	1,765,608
Total funds brought forward		3,389,412	72,636	3,462,048	1,398,374	298,066	1,696,440
Total funds carried forward		3,074,607	234,840	3,309,447	3,389,412	72,636	3,462,048

All of the above results are derived from continuing activities. There were no other recognised gains or losses other than those stated above. Movements in funds are disclosed in Note 15a to the financial statements.

Girls Not Brides: The Global Partnership to End Child Marriage

Balance sheet

Company no. 8570751

As at 31 December 2020

	Note	£	2020 £	£	2019 £ Restated
Fixed assets:					
Tangible assets	10		105,399		147,405
			105,399		147,405
Current assets:					
Debtors	11	209,811		214,025	
Cash at bank and in hand		4,049,947		5,021,260	
			4,259,758	5,235,285	
Liabilities:					
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	12	(1,055,709)		(1,920,641)	
Net current assets			3,204,049		3,314,644
Net assets			3,309,448		3,462,049
The funds of the charity:	14a				
Restricted income funds			234,840		72,636
Total unrestricted funds			3,074,607		3,389,413
Total charity funds			3,309,447		3,462,049

Approved by the trustees on 17 June 2021 and signed on their behalf by

Mabel van Oranje
Trustee

Statement of cash flows

For the year ended 31 December 2020

	Note	2020		2019	
		£	£	£	£
				Restated	
Cash flows from operating activities					
Net (expenditure) / income for the reporting period (as per the statement of financial activities)		(152,602)		1,765,608	
Depreciation charges	10	62,757		58,272	
Loss on the disposal of fixed assets		136		424	
Decrease / (increase) in debtors	11	4,214		(18,330)	
Decrease in creditors	12	(864,932)		(1,224,497)	
Net cash provided by operating activities		(950,427)		581,478	
Cash flows from investing activities					
Payments for property and equipment		(20,885)		(34,846)	
Net cash used in investing activities		(20,885)		(34,846)	
Change in cash and cash equivalents in the year		(971,312)		546,632	
Cash and cash equivalents at the beginning of the year		5,021,260		4,474,628	
Cash and cash equivalents at the end of the year		4,049,947		5,021,260	
Analysis of cash and cash equivalents and of net debt					
		At 1		Other non-	At 31
		January		cash	December
		2020	Cash flows	changes	2020
		£	£	£	£
Current accounts		3,569,491	(2,302,921)		1,266,570
Deposit accounts		1,451,769	1,331,608		2,783,377
Total cash and cash equivalents		5,021,260	(971,313)		4,049,947

Of the cash balances held, £445,088 (2019: £1,269,143) is held by the charity as custodian trustee and is not available for use by the charity.

Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 31 December 2020

1 Accounting policies

a) Statutory information

Girls Not Brides is a charitable company limited by guarantee and is incorporated in England and Wales.

The registered office address is Seventh Floor, 65 Leadenhall Street, London EC3A 2AD.

b) Basis of preparation

The financial statements have been prepared using the historical cost convention and in accordance with Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) - (Charities SORP (FRS 102)), the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) and the Companies Act 2006. The charity is a public benefit entity.

c) Public benefit entity

The charity meets the definition of a public benefit entity under FRS 102.

d) Presentational and functional currencies

The accounts are presented in sterling. The functional currencies of the charity are sterling, US dollar and euro. The accounts are presented in sterling since that is the currency in which the charity conducts most of its activities. No amounts have been rounded.

e) Going concern

There are no material uncertainties that cast significant doubt upon the charity's ability to continue as a going concern. This assessment includes a consideration of the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on *Girls Not Brides*.

f) Income

Income is included in the Statement of Financial Activities when the charity is entitled to the income and the amount can be quantified with reasonable accuracy. The following specific policies are applied to particular categories of income:

- Voluntary income is received by way of grants, donations and gifts and is included in full in the Statement of Financial Activities when receivable. Grants, where entitlement is not conditional on the delivery of a specific performance by the charity, are recognised when the charity becomes unconditionally entitled to the grant.
- Any income received where the donor has specified that it is to be expended in a future accounting period is included within creditors as deferred income.
- Investment income is included when receivable.

g) Fund accounting

Unrestricted funds are available for use at the discretion of the Trustees in furtherance of the general objects of the charity. Restricted funds are only for use of the purposes prescribed by the donors.

Designated funds are unrestricted funds earmarked by the Trustees for particular purposes.

Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 31 December 2020

1 Accounting policies (continued)

h) Expenditure and irrecoverable VAT

Expenditure is recognised on an accruals basis as a liability is incurred. Expenditure includes any VAT which cannot be fully recovered, and is reported as part of the expenditure to which it relates:

- Costs of generating funds comprise the costs associated with attracting donations and grants.
- Charitable expenditure comprises those costs incurred by the charity in the delivery of its activities and services for its beneficiaries. It includes both costs that can be allocated directly to such activities and those costs of an indirect nature necessary to support them. These are split in accordance with the project codes used in the charity's accounting system. Support costs consist of the charity's administration budget heading. Support costs are allocated equally between the charity's two charitable activities.

i) Operating leases

Rentals payable under operating leases are charged in the income and expenditure account on a straight line basis over the lease term.

j) Tangible fixed assets

Tangible fixed assets are capitalised at cost and are depreciated over their useful economic lives.

Depreciation is provided at rates calculated to write down the cost of each asset to its estimated residual value over its expected useful life. The depreciation rates in use are as follows:

- | | |
|---------------------------|----------------------|
| • Computers and software | over 3 years |
| • Furniture and equipment | over 3 to 5 years |
| • Leasehold improvements | over length of lease |

Fixed assets with a value less than £1,000 are not capitalised.

k) Cash at bank and in hand

Cash and cash equivalents comprise cash on hand and call deposits, and other short-term highly liquid investments that are readily convertible to a known amount of cash and are subject to an insignificant risk of change in value.

l) Creditors and provisions

Trade creditors are obligations to pay for goods or services that have been acquired in the ordinary course of business from suppliers. Accounts payable are classified as current liabilities if the charitable company does not have an unconditional right, at the end of the reporting period, to defer settlement of the creditor for at least twelve months after the reporting date. If there is an unconditional right to defer settlement for at least twelve months after the reporting date, they are presented as non-current liabilities.

Trade creditors are recognised at the transaction price.

Provisions are recognised when the company has an obligation at the reporting date as a result of a past event, it is probable that the company will be required to settle that obligation and a reliable estimate can be made of the amount of the obligation.

Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 31 December 2020

1 Accounting policies (continued)

m) Pensions

The company operates a defined contribution scheme for the benefit of its employees. The costs of contributions are charged to the Statement of Financial Activities in the year in which they are payable.

n) Foreign currencies

Transactions in foreign currencies are recorded at the rate as at the date of the transaction. Monetary assets and liabilities are re-translated at the rate of exchange ruling at the balance sheet date. Any differences are taken to the Statement of Financial Activities.

2 Income from donations (grants)

	2020			2019		
	Unrestricted £	Restricted £	Total £	Unrestricted £ Restated	Restricted £	Total £ Restated
Government grants	1,332,519	-	1,332,519	3,167,745	-	3,167,745
Other grants and donations	1,349,733	678,630	2,028,363	2,564,290	917,051	3,481,341
	<u>2,682,251</u>	<u>678,630</u>	<u>3,360,881</u>	<u>5,732,035</u>	<u>917,051</u>	<u>6,649,086</u>

Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 31 December 2020

3a Analysis of expenditure (current year)

	Charitable activities					2020 Total £	2019 Total £
	Raising funds £	Human Rights £	Relief of Poverty £	Governance costs £	Support costs £		
Staff costs (Note 6)	140,413	831,777	272,610	-	474,283	1,719,083	1,699,783
Premises costs (rent, utilities)	-	6,907	6,907	-	235,401	249,215	202,337
Travel and workshops / meetings	455	57,835	11,152	73	3,785	73,302	697,676
Consultancy	-	473,623	134,798	-	50,797	659,218	1,264,396
Grants	-	296,547	20,228	-	51,164	367,938	253,328
Professional fees	-	-	-	9,840	19,071	28,911	137,996
IT and communications	162	62,436	60,681	-	83,224	206,503	170,901
Office and other	1,882	46,440	19,838	1,283	141,130	210,573	459,710
	142,913	1,775,565	526,213	11,196	1,058,855	3,514,743	4,886,126
Support costs	61,899	498,478	498,478	-	(1,058,855)	-	-
Governance costs	655	5,271	5,271	(11,196)	-	-	-
Total expenditure 2020	205,466	2,279,314	1,029,963	-	-	3,514,743	
Total expenditure 2019	137,765	3,287,204	1,461,157	-	-		4,886,126

Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 31 December 2020

3b Analysis of expenditure (prior year)

	Charitable activities					2019 Total £
	Raising funds £	Human Rights £	Relief of Poverty £	Governance costs £	Support costs £	
Staff costs (Note 6)	100,441	995,765	284,799	-	318,778	1,699,783
Premises costs (rent, utilities)	-	4,506	4,506	-	193,324	202,337
Travel and workshops / meetings	-	561,070	132,350	-	4,256	697,676
Consultancy	-	758,634	317,519	-	188,242	1,264,396
Grants	-	170,694	82,634	-	-	253,328
Professional fees	-	42,822	42,822	11,100	41,252	137,996
IT and communications	-	50,598	8,570	-	111,734	170,901
Office and other	-	175,933	60,774	-	223,003	459,710
	<u>100,441</u>	<u>2,760,022</u>	<u>933,975</u>	<u>11,100</u>	<u>1,080,589</u>	<u>4,886,126</u>
Support costs	36,945	521,822	521,822	-	(1,080,589)	
Governance costs	379	5,360	5,360	(11,100)	-	-
Total expenditure 2019	<u>137,765</u>	<u>3,287,204</u>	<u>1,461,157</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>4,886,126</u>

Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 31 December 2020

4a Grant making (current year)

	Grants to institutions £	2020 £	2019 £
Cost			
Joy for Children Uganda	184,685	184,685	-
VOW for Girls	51,164	51,164	102,740
Other small grants	132,089	132,089	150,588
At the end of the year	<u>367,938</u>	<u>367,938</u>	<u>253,328</u>

During the year *Girls Not Brides* paid grants to Joy for Children Uganda totalling £184,685 from restricted funding.

During the year *Girls Not Brides* paid a grant to VOW totalling \$65,000 (£51,164) from restricted funding received for activities related to VOW.

During the year *Girls Not Brides* made a number small grants to member organisations, with an average value of approximately £5,000.

4b Grant making (prior year)

	Grants to institutions £	2019 £
Cost		
VOW for Girls	102,740	102,740
Other small grants	150,588	150,588
At the end of the year	<u>253,328</u>	<u>253,328</u>

During the year *Girls Not Brides* paid grants to VOW totalling \$130,000 (£102,740) from restricted funding received for activities related to VOW.

During the year *Girls Not Brides* made a number small grants to member organisations, with an average value of approximately £6,000.

Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 31 December 2020

5 Net (expenditure) / income for the year

This is stated after charging / (crediting):

	2020	2019
	£	£
Depreciation	62,892	58,272
Loss or profit on disposal of fixed assets	135	424
Operating lease rentals payable:		
Property	210,025	153,177
Auditor's remuneration (excluding VAT):		
Audit	8,700	9,250
Other services	-	5,218
Foreign exchange gains or losses	4,713	(37,164)

Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 31 December 2020

6 Analysis of staff costs, trustee remuneration and expenses, and the cost of key management personnel

Staff costs were as follows:

	2020 £	2019 £
Salaries and wages	1,360,455	1,312,023
Redundancy and termination costs	-	28,067
Social security costs	157,240	159,529
Employer's contribution to defined contribution pension schemes	134,087	134,759
Other forms of employee benefits (medical, life and travel insurance)	67,301	57,404
Relocation	-	8,000
	1,719,083	1,699,782

Girls Not Brides makes contributions to a defined contribution scheme. The amount of contributions due to the scheme at the year ended 31 December was £nil. (2019: £11,631).

Retirement benefits are accruing to one Trustee (2019: 1) under a money purchase pension scheme.

The number of employees whose remuneration for the year fell within the following bands was:

	2020 No.	2019 No.
£60,001 - £70,000	-	2
£70,001 - £80,000	4	1
£80,001 - £90,000	-	1
£90,001 - £100,000	-	-
£100,001 - £110,000	-	1
£110,001 - £120,000	-	-
£120,001 - £130,000	1	-

The total employee benefits (including pension contributions and employer's national insurance) of the key management personnel were £423,373 (2019: £971,859). In 2020 the Chief Executive Officer and the three Directors were responsible for planning, directing and controlling the activities of the charity.

Mabel van Oranje, Chair of Trustees, received remuneration of £75,868.74 (2019: 102,874) in the year, as permitted by the charitable company's Articles of Association. The charitable company also paid pension contributions of £7,080 (2019: 10,004) and reimbursed or paid on her behalf travelling, accommodation and office expenses of £3,841 (2019: £72,439).

Girls Not Brides paid £nil (2019: £1,691) on behalf of Teresa Shaver for travelling and accommodation expenses related to our activities. Ann Cotton was paid £nil (2019: £227) and Karin Forseke £nil (2019: £697) for travelling expenses reimbursed. Travelling and accommodation expenses incurred in in 2019 were associated with the Trustees attending national and international meetings on behalf of *Girls Not Brides*. In 2020 all Board of Trustee meetings were virtual. Remuneration to the Chair and payments to Trustees are permitted by the Charity's Articles of Association.

Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 31 December 2020

7 Staff numbers

The average number of employees (head count based on number of staff employed) during the year was 30 (2019: 29).

The average monthly number of employees during the year was:	2020	2019
	No.	No.
The Executive	4.0	3.0
Communications Team	4.0	3.0
Learning & Partnership Team	6.0	11.0
Finance and Operations Team	8.0	6.0
Policy and Advocacy Team	7.0	5.0
Africa Team	1.0	1.0
	30.0	29.0

8 Related party transactions

Related party transactions: during the year *Girls Not Brides* paid grants to VOW for Girls (previously known as VOW to end child marriage) totalling £51,164 (2019: £102,740) from restricted funding received for activities related to VOW. Mabel van Oranje is Chair of the VOW Board of Trustees.

9 Taxation

The charity is exempt from corporation tax as all its income is charitable and is applied for charitable purposes.

10 Tangible fixed assets

	Short Leasehold Improvements	Computer & Software	Furniture & Equipment	Total
Cost	£	£	£	£
At the start of the year	106,514	110,356	61,256	278,126
Additions in year	-	20,885	-	20,885
Disposals in year	-	(6,557)	-	(6,557)
At the end of the year	106,514	124,685	61,256	292,455
Depreciation				
At the start of the year	34,008	70,833	25,880	130,721
Charge for the year	21,303	28,421	13,033	62,757
Eliminated on disposal	-	(6,421)	-	(6,421)
At the end of the year	55,311	92,833	38,913	187,057
Net book value				
At the end of the year	51,203	31,852	22,343	105,398
At the start of the year	72,506	39,523	35,376	147,405

All of the above assets are used for charitable purposes.

Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 31 December 2020

11 Debtors

	2020 £	2019 £
Other debtors	102,918	90,512
Prepayments	106,893	123,513
	<u>209,811</u>	<u>214,025</u>

12 Creditors: amounts falling due within one year

	2020 £	2019 £
		Restated
Trade creditors	60,169	51,091
Taxation and social security	43,673	37,248
Unpaid pension contributions	-	11,631
Funds held as agent (see below)	445,088	1,269,143
Other creditors	256,779	228,714
Deferred income (note 13)	250,000	322,814
	<u>1,055,709</u>	<u>1,920,641</u>

Funds held as agent

In 2018, the charity received €2,000,000 to be transferred to 'Capital for Good USA.' In the year £824,130 (2019: £446,130) was transferred and £445,088 (2019: £1,269,143) is included in creditors at the year end. The final transfer was made in June 2021.

13 Deferred income

Movements in deferred income during the year are as follows:

	2020 £	2019 £
		Restated
Balance at the beginning of the year	322,814	968,566
Amount released to income in the year	(322,814)	(895,752)
Amount deferred in the year	250,000	250,000
Balance at the end of the year	<u>250,000</u>	<u>322,814</u>

Deferred income represents grants received where the donor has specified this is to fund 2021 expenditure. This will be released to income in the 2021 accounts.

Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 31 December 2020

14a Analysis of net assets between funds (current year)

	General unrestricted £	Restricted £	Total funds £
Tangible fixed assets	105,398	-	105,398
Net current assets	2,969,209	234,840	3,204,049
Net assets at 31 December 2020	3,074,607	234,840	3,309,447

14b Analysis of net assets between funds (prior year)

	General unrestricted £ Restated	Restricted £ Restated	Total funds £ Restated
Tangible fixed assets	147,405	-	147,405
Net current assets	3,242,007	72,636	3,314,643
Net assets at 31 December 2019	3,389,412	72,636	3,462,048

15a Movements in funds (current year)

	At 1 January 2020 £	Income & gains £	Expenditure & losses £	Transfers £	At 31 December 2020 £
Restricted funds:					
Skoll Foundation	12,384	7,466	(12,384)	-	7,466
VOW	36,048	-	(36,048)	-	-
New Venture Fund	24,204	(7,350)	(16,854)	-	-
Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation	-	389,951	(190,544)	-	199,407
People's Postcode Lottery	-	250,000	(233,653)	-	16,347
Education Out Loud	-	22,431	(22,431)	-	-
Plan International	-	16,131	(4,511)	-	11,620
Total restricted funds	72,636	678,630	(516,426)	-	234,840
General funds	3,389,413	2,683,511	(2,998,317)	-	3,074,607
Total funds	3,462,049	3,362,142	(3,514,743)	-	3,309,447

The narrative to explain the purpose of each fund is given at the foot of the note below.

Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 31 December 2020

15b Movements in funds (prior year)

	At 1 January 2019 £ Restated	Income & gains £ Restated	Expenditure & losses £ Restated	Transfers £	At 31 December 2019 £ Restated
Restricted funds:					
Skoll Foundation	92,766	212,416	(292,798)	-	12,384
VOW	205,300	647,958	(817,210)	-	36,048
New Venture Fund	-	56,677	(32,473)	-	24,204
Total restricted funds	298,066	917,051	(1,142,481)	-	72,636
General funds	1,398,374	5,734,684	(3,743,645)	-	3,389,413
Total funds	1,696,440	6,651,735	(4,886,126)	-	3,462,049

Purposes of restricted funds

In 2018, the Skoll Foundation awarded *Girls Not Brides* a grant of \$500,000 towards supporting and building a movement to end child marriage in Latin America and the Caribbean over two years. In 2020, the remaining £12,384 was expensed. In December 2020 the Skoll Foundation awarded an additional grant of \$10,000 (£7,466) towards Typhoon Vamco, and Hurricanes Iota and Eta. This grant was carried forward into 2021.

In 2019, *Girls Not Brides* received additional grants and donations of \$825,040 (£647,958) from donors, including the Ford Foundation, the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation and the National Philanthropic Trust UK, towards the continuing development and setting up of VOW for Girls as its own standalone entity. £817,210 was expensed in 2019, and the balance of £36,048 of the Ford Foundation Grant was expensed in 2020.

In July 2019 *Girls Not Brides* received a grant of \$69,160 (£56,677) from the New Venture Fund through its Ignite Philanthropy: Inspiring the End to Violence Against Girls and Boys. £32,473 was expensed in 2019, £16,854 was expensed in 2020 and £7,549 of unspent funds was returned to the donor at the end of the grant period.

In 2020, *Girls Not Brides* received a grant of \$499,976 from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation for supporting evidence for advocacy in the child marriage movement. £190,544 was expensed in 2020, and the balance of £199,407 is carried forward into 2021.

In 2019, *Girls Not Brides* received a grant of £250,000 from the players of the People's Postcode Lottery for accelerating progress to end child marriage in Uganda. £233,653 was expensed in 2020, and the balance of £16,347 is carried forward into 2021.

In 2020, *Girls Not Brides* received a grant of \$33,700 (£25,136) from Education Out Loud for £25,136 to develop a final project proposal. £22,431 was expensed in 2020, and the balance of £2,705 is payable to Education Out Loud.

In 2020, *Girls Not Brides* received a grant of \$20,000 (£16,131) from Plan International, Inc for the purposes of implementing various activities as part the Adolescent Girl Investment Plan. £4,511 was expensed in 2020, and the balance of £11,620 is carried forward into 2021.

Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 31 December 2020

16 Operating lease commitments payable as a lessee

Total amount payable in respect of non-cancellable operating leases:

	2020	2019
	£	£
Less than one year	123,269	179,429
One to two years	1,995	140,779
Two to five years	-	-
	<hr/> 125,264 <hr/>	<hr/> 320,208 <hr/>

In May 2021 *Girls Not Brides* signed a new operating lease committing to pay £557,781 over a five year period.

Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 31 December 2020

17 Prior year adjustment

Income from two grants, totalling £1,492,469, was deferred in the 2019 accounts, however this income could have been recognised in 2019. This has been adjusted in the 2020 accounts to increase the income recognised and the carried forward funds for 2019, and to decrease the 2019 year end deferred income.

This resulted in the following adjustments to prior periods in the accounts.

Impact on income 2019	Unrestricted £	Restricted £	Total £
	=====	=====	=====
Income as previously reported	4,242,215	917,051	5,159,266
Grants previously deferred and now recognised as income	1,492,469	-	1,492,469
Income as restated	<u>5,734,684</u>	<u>917,051</u>	<u>6,651,735</u>
Reserves position	Unrestricted £	Restricted £	Total £
Total funds at 31 December 2019 as previously stated	1,896,944	72,636	1,969,580
Adjustment for year to 31 December 2019	1,492,469	-	(1,492,469)
Total funds as at 31 December 2019 as restated	<u>3,389,413</u>	<u>72,636</u>	<u>3,462,049</u>