



**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  
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## 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.<sup>1</sup> 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 2030<sup>2</sup> 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](#).

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<sup>1</sup> 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.

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

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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)<sup>3</sup> and a new Secretariat Strategy (2022-2025)<sup>4</sup>. 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

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

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

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- 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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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



## TRUSTEES' AUDITOR REPORT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2023

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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**

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## 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.<sup>5</sup>

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

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<sup>5</sup> 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 pre-disposes 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.<sup>6</sup>

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.<sup>7</sup> 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.<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>6</sup> 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.

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

<sup>8</sup> 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:<sup>9</sup>

- **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:<sup>10</sup>

- **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

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<sup>9</sup> Source: *Girls Not Brides* Learning Evaluation, 2024.

<sup>10</sup> 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.

## 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.

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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.

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## 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 Leaderships 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.

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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**

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As of 31 December 2023, totals 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

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



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## 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

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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.

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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.

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

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<br>£        | 2022<br>£ |
|--|------|------------------|------------------|-----------|
| <b>Fixed assets:</b>                           |      |                  |                  |           |
| Tangible assets                                | 10   |                  | <b>19,087</b>    | 30,223    |
|  |      |                  | <b>19,087</b>    | 30,223    |
| <b>Current assets:</b>                         |      |                  |                  |           |
| Debtors  | 11   | <b>161,098</b>   | 181,205          |           |
| Cash at bank and in hand                       |      | <b>725,396</b>   | 4,020,855        |           |
| Short term investments                         |      | <b>8,501,891</b> | -                |           |
|  |      | <b>9,388,385</b> | 4,202,060        |           |
| <b>Liabilities:</b>                            |      |                  |                  |           |
| Creditors: amounts falling due within one year | 12   | <b>(356,695)</b> | (510,324)        |           |
| <b>Net current assets</b>                      |      |                  | <b>9,031,690</b> | 3,691,736 |
| <b>Net assets</b>                              |      |                  | <b>9,050,777</b> | 3,721,959 |
| <b>The funds of the charity:</b>               | 14a  |                  |                  |           |
| Restricted funds                               |      |                  | <b>(39,257)</b>  | 54,046    |
| Unrestricted funds:                            |      |                  |                  |           |
| Designated funds                               |      | <b>6,438,630</b> | -                |           |
| General funds                                  |      | <b>2,651,404</b> | 3,667,913        |           |
| Total unrestricted funds                       |      |                  | <b>9,090,034</b> | 3,667,913 |
|  |      |                  | -                | -         |
| <b>Total charity funds</b>                     |      |                  | <b>9,050,777</b> | 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<br>£        | £                                  | 2022<br>£                           | £ |
|---|---------------------------|------------------|------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|---|
| <b>Cash flows from operating activities</b>   |                           |                  |                                    |                                     |   |
| Net income for the reporting period<br>(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)                           |   |
|   |                           |                  |                                    |                                     |   |
| <b>Net cash provided by operating activities</b>                                      |                           | <b>5,221,533</b> |                                    | <b>588,199</b>                      |   |
| <b>Cash flows from investing activities</b>   |                           |                  |                                    |                                     |   |
| Payments for property and equipment   |                           | (15,101)         |                                    | (7,454)                             |   |
|   |                           |                  |                                    |                                     |   |
| <b>Net cash used in investing activities</b>  |                           | <b>(15,101)</b>  |                                    | <b>(7,454)</b>                      |   |
|   |                           |                  |                                    |                                     |   |
| <b>Change in cash and cash equivalents in the year</b>                                |                           | <b>5,206,432</b> |                                    | <b>580,745</b>                      |   |
| Cash and cash equivalents at the beginning of the year                                |                           | 4,020,855        |                                    | 3,440,110                           |   |
|   |                           |                  |                                    |                                     |   |
| <b>Cash and cash equivalents at the end of the year</b>                               |                           | <b>9,227,287</b> |                                    | <b>4,020,855</b>                    |   |
| <b>Cash and cash equivalents</b>  |                           | <b>725,396</b>   |                                    | <b>4,020,855</b>                    |   |
| <b>Short Term Investments</b>   |                           | <b>8,501,891</b> |                                    | <b>-</b>                            |   |
| <b>Analysis of cash and cash equivalents and of net debt</b>                          |                           |                  |                                    |                                     |   |
|   | At 1 January<br>2023<br>£ | Cash flows<br>£  | Other non-<br>cash<br>changes<br>£ | <b>At 31 December<br/>2023</b><br>£ |   |
| Current accounts  | 982,209                   | (256,813)        | -                                  | <b>725,396</b>                      |   |
| Deposit accounts  | 3,038,646                 | 5,463,245        | -                                  | <b>8,501,891</b>                    |   |
|   |                           |                  |                                    |                                     |   |
| <b>Total cash and cash equivalents</b>  | <b>4,020,855</b>          | <b>5,206,432</b> | <b>-</b>                           | <b>9,227,287</b>                    |   |

## Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 31 December 2023

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### 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**

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**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)**

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

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

## Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 31 December 2023

## 3b Analysis of expenditure (prior year)

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

## Notes to the financial statements

## For the year ended 31 December 2023

## 4 Grant making

|   | Grants to<br>institutions<br>£ | 2023<br>£ | 2022<br>£ |
|---|--------------------------------|-----------|-----------|
| <b>Cost</b>   |                                |           |           |
| 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   |
|   |                                |           |           |
| At the end of the year  | -                              | 230,235   | 405,754   |

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:

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

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

*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:

|                     | <b>2023</b> | 2022 |
|---------------------|-------------|------|
|                     | <b>No.</b>  | No.  |
| £60,001 - £70,000   | -           | 1    |
| £70,001 - £80,000   | <b>2</b>    | 2    |
| £80,001 - £90,000   | -           | -    |
| £90,001 - £100,000  | -           | -    |
| £100,001 - £110,000 | -           | -    |
| £110,001 - £120,000 | -           | -    |
| £120,001 - £130,000 | <b>1</b>    | 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).

|  | 2023<br>No. | 2022<br>No. |
|--|-------------|-------------|
| The average monthly number of employees during the year was: | <u>25</u>   | <u>24</u>   |

**7b Overseas contractors**

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

|  | 2023<br>No. | 2022<br>No. |
|--|-------------|-------------|
| The average monthly number of contractors during the year was: | <u>22</u>   | <u>12</u>   |

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

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<br>£      | 2022<br>£      |
|---------------|----------------|----------------|
| Other debtors | 88,036         | 88,508         |
| Prepayments   | 73,062         | 92,697         |
|               | <u>161,098</u> | <u>181,205</u> |

**12 Creditors: amounts falling due within one year**

|                              | 2023<br>£      | 2022<br>£      |
|------------------------------|----------------|----------------|
| 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         |
|                              | <u>356,695</u> | <u>510,324</u> |

**13 Deferred income**

Movements in deferred income during the year are as follows:

|                                       | 2023<br>£ | 2022<br>£     |
|---------------------------------------|-----------|---------------|
| 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           | -         | -             |
| <b>Balance at the end of the year</b> | <u>-</u>  | <u>82,659</u> |

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

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

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

### 15a Movements in funds (current year)

|   | At 1 January<br>2023<br>£ | Income &<br>gains<br>£ | Expenditure<br>& losses<br>£ | Transfers<br>£ | At 31<br>December<br>2023<br>£ |
|---|---------------------------|------------------------|------------------------------|----------------|--------------------------------|
| <b>Restricted funds:</b>                        |                           |                        |                              |                |                                |
| 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)                     | -              | -                              |
| <b>Total restricted funds</b>                   | <b>54,046</b>             | <b>306,991</b>         | <b>(400,294)</b>             | <b>-</b>       | <b>(39,257)</b>                |
| <b>Unrestricted funds:</b>                      |                           |                        |                              |                |                                |
| Designated funds:                               |                           |                        |                              |                |                                |
| <i>Sustainable Growth &amp; Innovation Fund</i> | -                         | 6,438,630              | -                            | -              | 6,438,630                      |
| Total designated funds                          | -                         | 6,438,630              | -                            | -              | 6,438,630                      |
| <b>Total unrestricted funds</b>                 | <b>3,667,913</b>          | <b>9,105,846</b>       | <b>(3,683,725)</b>           | <b>-</b>       | <b>9,090,034</b>               |
| <b>Total funds</b>                              | <b>3,721,959</b>          | <b>9,412,837</b>       | <b>(4,084,019)</b>           | <b>-</b>       | <b>9,050,777</b>               |

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

# GIRLS NOT BRIDES: THE GLOBAL PARTNERSHIP TO END CHILD MARRIAGE

## Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 31 December 2023

### 15b Movements in funds (prior year)

|                                      | At 1 January<br>2022<br>£ | Income &<br>gains<br>£ | Expenditure<br>& losses<br>£ | Transfers<br>£ | At 31<br>December<br>2022<br>£ |
|--------------------------------------|---------------------------|------------------------|------------------------------|----------------|--------------------------------|
| <b>Restricted funds:</b>             |                           |                        |                              |                |                                |
| 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)                    | -              | <b>57,421</b>                  |
| UNFPA                                | -                         | 75,285                 | (75,285)                     | -              | -                              |
| UNICEF                               | -                         | 48,427                 | (77,588)                     | -              | <b>(29,161)</b>                |
| Packard Foundation                   | -                         | 39,766                 | (13,980)                     | -              | <b>25,786</b>                  |
| <b>Total restricted funds</b>        | <b>211,937</b>            | <b>464,873</b>         | <b>(622,764)</b>             | <b>-</b>       | <b>54,046</b>                  |
| <b>General funds</b>                 | <b>2,799,705</b>          | <b>3,619,944</b>       | <b>(2,751,736)</b>           | <b>-</b>       | <b>3,667,913</b>               |
| <b>Total funds</b>                   | <b>3,011,642</b>          | <b>4,084,817</b>       | <b>(3,374,500)</b>           | <b>-</b>       | <b>3,721,959</b>               |

#### 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

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16 Operating lease commitments payable as a lessee

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

|                    | 2023<br>£      | 2022<br>£      |
|--------------------|----------------|----------------|
| Less than one year | 74,256         | 148,932        |
| One to two years   | 208,913        | 223,188        |
| Two to five years  | 148,932        | 59,981         |
|                    | <u>432,101</u> | <u>432,101</u> |