



2023 – 2024 REPORT

AGREE was founded by a group of concerned activists, who believed that it was possible to change the fate of disadvantaged and abuse children. Although its prime concern has been with the abuse of girls, its founders recognize that boys are exploited too and that their success in changing attitudes and actions will benefit all children.

All of the components that make up AGREE are important aspects for any successful programs which the charity develops and supports:

ACKNOWLEDGE: Unless a community recognizes that children are being exploited there is no hope that changes can be brought about in that society. Examples include early marriage and child workers. When and where such practices are accepted as normal, no innovative program can hope to have long-term success. Consequently, AGREE is committed to educating stakeholders and communities about the consequences of practices, which may have been accepted for many generations; but ultimately have an adverse impact on that society. It is only when either influencers or the masses realise that there is a problem that there is fertile ground in which to sow new concepts and build hope for the disadvantaged.

GIRLS: The charity was founded with the specific intention of addressing problems of abuse experienced by girls and young women. Trafficking, domestic abuse, acid attacks, forced conversion, rape and sexploitation are issues which affect girls and young women across the world. AGREE acknowledges that these issues also affect boys and young men and it hopes that its work in these fields will benefit them as well. The philosophy behind the work done by AGREE is to define an issue, develop a program to address it and then to measure objectively its effect. For these reasons it has elected to undertake small well-defined projects, which can act as exemplars for larger national initiatives. It is this philosophy which determined its

decision to work predominantly with girls and young women.

RIGHT; AGREE is a rights-based organization. It subscribes to the rights identified in both the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the Charter of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation. Agree will both initiate and support legal action to ensure that these rights are respected and implemented.

END: AGREE acknowledges that this is an aspiration. There will always be people who abuse others. AGREE seeks to limit their activities through a combination of education, training, intervention and legal action. In addition to specific projects, AGREE realizes that publicity is important and has chosen to achieve this through a combination of academic publications and an active presence in the social media through short videos.

EXPLOITATION: This can take many forms and varies one country to another and from one community to another. It can range from the employment of very young girls as labourers in the brick kiln industry to the production of abusive videos, combining real pictures with pornographic images produced through the use of Artificial Intelligence. AGREE is determined to spread the message that exploitation can occur regardless of a girl's poverty or wealth, whether she lacks education or is at university. In order to achieve its objectives, AGREE uses different approaches in these different settings. The fact that it is guided by a small group of trustees and an international advisory group of volunteers from many different backgrounds means that it is flexible, ready to respond to changes in society and is always guided by the need to measure its success or failure in any project objectively. With such an approach, it has been able to identify effective models for change which can be implemented by others on a wider scale.

What is AGREE?

A Registered Charity:

AGREE is a registered charity in England and Wales. Its number is 1205364. Its website is:

<https://www.agree-charity.org.uk/>

It has produced the following books with an ISBN issued by Nielsen UK.

Early marriage: An Islamic viewpoint

and

Abduction, Early and Forced Marriage and Sexual Exploitation. A Guide for Practitioners

It has produced 6 short videos, which can be viewed free of charge at its website at:

<https://www.youtube.com/@AGREE-Charity>

These videos deal with issues such as grooming, child abuse and relevant news, such as the landmark decision in the Lahore High Court that an age of 16 for girls to marry was unconstitutional and was struck down.

Who are we?

From its inception, the founders of AGREE chose to keep a low profile and rather to promote the charity itself. In addition, it was considered appropriate that the international body of advisors should remain confidential so as to offer them security and protection. For this reason, none of the names of the trustees or of the advisors appear on AGREE's website. However, the identity of the trustees is available at the website of the Charity Commission at:

<https://register-of-charities.charitycommission.gov.uk/charity-search/-/charity-details/5218826>

The 4 unpaid trustees are:

Dr Affifa Farrukh

Affifa is the CEO of AGREE. Her background is that she qualified as a doctor in Pakistan, and trained as a gastroenterologist in the United Kingdom and was called to the Bar at Lincoln's Inn. She is also a qualified arbitrator. She has a long-standing commitment to equality and human rights.

Professor John Mayberry

John is the Secretary of AGREE. He qualified as a doctor in Wales and became Professor of Gastroenterology in Leicester. Following his call to the Bar at Lincoln's Inn, he practices as a criminal barrister in England and Wales. He has a long-standing interest in discrimination and the application of research techniques to social problems.

Professor Janusz Jankowski

Janusz is the Provost at Dubai Medical College for Girls. He has previously held a number of other senior academic posts in the United Kingdom, United Arab Emirates and the South Pacific. He is an expert in Social and Healthcare Policy, Academic Management and Global Research and Education Network. He has a distinguished record of academic publications.

Arifa Ramtoola

Arifa is a chartered accountant in the United Kingdom. She has experience working with schools and charities as well as in the finance industry.

International Voluntary Advisors

There are 14 international voluntary advisors who come from Australia, Asia, Europe and the Americas. They are drawn from a range of backgrounds including academia, the law, medicine, education, the media and social work.

What we do:

AGREE is a small charity, which does not seek external funding. It selects projects which will address specific and significant issues. The purpose is to develop effective approaches, which will act as exemplars for others to follow and enlarge the initial success. As a charity based in England, one of the criteria which it takes into consideration, when developing its annual program, is how the outcomes could be of public benefit to the people of the United Kingdom.

During 2023 to 2024, AGREE chose to concentrate its activities on issues affecting the South Asian Diaspora in the UK and so also those still living in the South Asian countries of Pakistan, India, Bangladesh and Sri Lanka. The Diaspora is to be found worldwide but there are significant populations in mainland Europe, the United Kingdom, Canada, the USA, Australia and New Zealand. As a result of colonialism there are also significant populations in the Caribbean and Fiji.

Examples of projects undertaken and started by AGREE in 2023 and 2024 include:

Initiating, developing and supporting the petition to clarify the law in relation to early marriage in Punjab, Pakistan, including its consequences for British citizens illegally entering such marriages:

The approach adopted by AGREE was innovative. Following careful consideration of methods of addressing the issue related to the age of marriage for girls as being 16 years, AGREE decided that clarification of the law related to contract in general would be the most effective technique. AGREE brought together a small group of barristers to work on the submission. It was successful and resulted in a positive decision by Mr Shahid Karim in:

Azka Wahid v Province of Punjab and others 2024 LHC 1392

As a result, the clause related to the age of marriage of girls in the revised version of The Child Marriage Restraint Act, 1929 was struck down and the government of Punjab required to make the necessary changes.

This is an example of AGREE's approach of defining a clear task with a clear objective and reaching its goal. In this case, the methodology adopted by AGREE can be reproduced in other provinces of Punjab and also in other countries where early marriage of girls continues to be an issue.

Education about grooming:

Grooming is an issue throughout the world and leads to sexual abuse, trafficking and prostitution. Although its legal definition and criminalisation varies from country to country, there is an urgent need to educate both children and parents about this risk. AGREE has started a free education program with its first free videos available at:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DnwzHUYoAOE>

This was deliberately produced as a silent video, so that it could have worldwide impact and relevance.

In addition, two videos, in Urdu, are available at:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=x35CAoxN6vs&t=43s>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BV0PRXv64vU>

As part of the campaign, these videos were offered to schools with a predominantly Urdu speaking background in Leicester. Based on the results driven approach adopted by AGREE it is hard to assess the impact of these videos. Although the number of views can be noted this is no indication as to whether they have truly informed people as to the risks of grooming. Similarly, working with one of its two Ambassadors AGREE has

In addition, AGREE is working with *My Body is My Body* to produce culturally sensitive programs about grooming for use in the UK and in Pakistan, India and Bangladesh. This has included the translation of culturally appropriate songs in Urdu.

Police and Judicial Education:

Together with the Police Department in Dera Ghazi Khan, AGREE has organised a training program for police officers and the local judiciary on issues related to early marriage, grooming and undue influence. This included face-to-face training supported by video presentations from the UK.

This program is on-going and its effectiveness will be measured through its impact on the outcomes of *First Information Reports (FIR)* related to under age and forced marriages, abduction, grooming and the effects of undue influence. When a family reports such a crime, the police prepare an *FIR*, which details the circumstances and allegations. The girl will then be asked to make a Section 164 Statement in front of a magistrate. The Investigating Officer can wrongly dispose of the case under Cancel “C” Class and submit such a report to the Judicial Magistrate, who can either accept or refuse it. It will now be possible to assess the impact of the training program developed by AGREE, together with

Capt.(R) Sajjad Hassan Manj, the RPO in Dera Ghazi Khan, by comparing FIR's and their outcomes from the period prior to the training program to that afterwards. The baseline data prior to the training program has already been collected by the RPO for Dera Ghazi Khan, Capt. (R) Sajjad Hassan Manj.

Awareness training in the UK:

Trustees from AGREE met with the First Secretary of the High Commission of Pakistan in London on behalf of the Ambassador to discuss the need to raise awareness amongst the Pakistani Diaspora in the United Kingdom about the change in law in England and Wales. This change in law means that any citizen with dual nationality who marries a girl aged between 16 and 18 in Pakistan will have committed a criminal offence in England and Wales; as with any citizen who facilitated such a marriage. Through these discussions, the trustees were able to make the High Commission aware that this law applied to marriages conducted anywhere in the world and not just to unregistered *nikahs* in the United Kingdom. The High Commission took on the responsibility for educating citizens with dual nationality in the United Kingdom about this change in the law.

Fun Schools:

Following on from research on children working in brick kilns, AGREE is developing the concept of Fun Schools. Their purpose will be to provide meals, healthcare and entertainment for disadvantaged street children. A pilot project will be run in Dera Ghazi Khan to check out its effectiveness. Concepts are in their early phase but support has come from local RPO, the police and educationists in the area. In addition, Dr Patch Adams, the founder of Clown Therapy, has been encouraging and given his active support.

It is intended that the program should run for 6 months with at least a once weekly session. Those children who appear to have particular potential would go on to be offered further education in the long-term hope that they would return to help their community. The initial assessment will focus on whether children attend regularly and a specific set of objective measures will be developed to reflect its benefits or otherwise.

Academic outcomes:

Although the purpose of AGREE is to achieve practical changes on the ground, it is important that these issues and outcomes are publicized through rigorously

assessed academic publications. The following publications in academic journals have been associated with the work of AGREE:

1. Mayberry JF & Farrukh (2024)
The brick kiln child workers of Pakistan.
Medico Legal Journal (In Press)
2. Farrukh A & Mayberry JF (2024)
Does the failure to provide equitable access to treatment lead to action by NHS organisations: the case of biologics for South Asians with inflammatory bowel disease.
Journal of Law and Medicine (In Press)
3. Mayberry JF (2024)
A critical analysis of the impact of early marriage on girls based on published autobiographies and a contemporary scholarly text - *Īdāh al-bayān fī nikāḥ al-ṣibyān*
Medico Legal Journal (In Press)
4. Farrukh A, Buttar H & Mayberry JF (2024)
The legal and medical consequences of child marriage.
Medico Legal Journal **92**: 82 – 85
5. Mayberry JF (2023)
Dual nationality & early marriage
New Law Journal **173**: 8 September 2023 15

International Conferences:

ISPCAN

Two presentations were made at the ISPCAN conference in Uppsala, Sweden in August 2024. The one concerned the success of the Petition to change the age of marriage in Punjab. The other was concerned with discrimination in the delivery of care to children with inflammatory bowel disease in the UK. They were:

Farrukh A, Hamza B & Mayberry JF

A possible legal remedy for child marriage in Pakistan

Farrukh A & Mayberry J

Discrimination in the delivery of health care: Inflammatory bowel disease as an exemplar

The presenters funded their attendance at the Conference. AGREE made no financial contribution

13th National Child Rights Conference, Pakistan

This conference took place in the autumn in Peshawar, Pakistan. The presentation concerned the very high levels of sexual abuse of children in Pakistan

Farrukh A

Child exploitation and abuse in Pakistan

Dr Farrukh was invited to speak at the conference. AGREE made no financial contribution.

AGREE, 81, Downing Drive, Evington, Leicester, LE5 6LL 2 September 2024



Section A

Independent Examiner's Report

Report to the trustees/
members of

AGREE (Acknowledge Girls Right To End Exploitation)

On accounts for the year
ended

31 October 2024

Charity no
(if any)

1205364

Set out on pages

1 to 2

I report to the trustees on my examination of the accounts of the above charity ("the Trust") for the year ended **31 / 10 / 2024**.

**Responsibilities and
basis of report**

As the charity trustees of the Trust, you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the requirements of the Charities Act 2011 ("the Act").

I report in respect of my examination of the Trust's accounts carried out under section 145 of the 2011 Act and in carrying out my examination, I have followed the applicable Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the Act.

**Independent
examiner's statement**

I have completed my examination. I confirm that no material matters have come to my attention (other than that disclosed below *) in connection with the examination which gives me cause to believe that in, any material respect:

- accounting records were not kept in accordance with section 130 of the Act or
- the accounts do not accord with the accounting records

I have no concerns and have come across no other matters in connection with the examination to which attention should be drawn in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

** Please delete the words in the brackets if they do not apply.*

Signed:

Date:

04/04/2025

Name:

Yusuf Patas

**Relevant professional
qualification(s) or body
(if any):**

Fellow Chartered Accountant - FCA
Fellow of the Institute of Chartered Accountants in England and Wales

Address:

Hawthorne House

17a Hawthorne Drive, Leicester, LE5 6DL

Only complete if the examiner needs to highlight matters of concern (see CC32, Independent examination of charity accounts: directions and guidance for examiners).

Give here brief details of any items that the examiner wishes to disclose.