

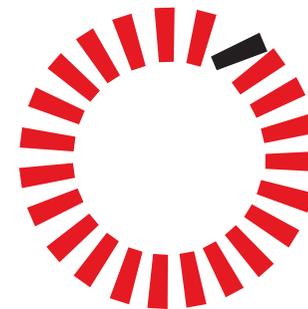


A Toolkit for NGOs/
Community Workers
and Teachers
**Elimination of
Early Marriage**

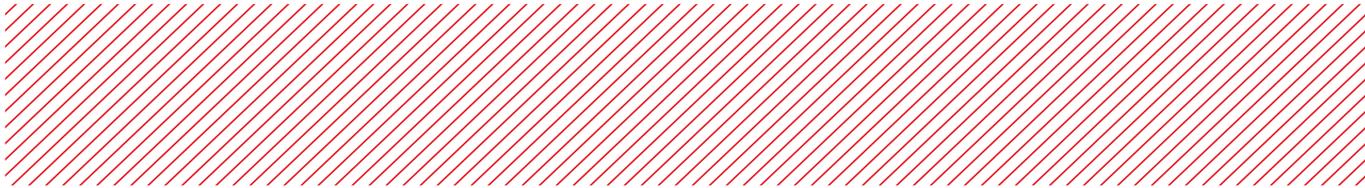


Breakthrough is a global human rights organization seeking to make violence and discrimination against women and girls unacceptable. Working out of centers in India and the U.S., we use the power of arts, media, pop culture, and community mobilization to inspire people to take bold action to build a world in which all people live with dignity, equality, and justice.

We create ground breaking multimedia campaigns that bring human rights issues into the mainstream and make them relevant and urgent to individuals and communities worldwide. These, along with our in-depth training's of young people, government officials, and community groups, have ignited a new Breakthrough Generation of leaders sparking change in the world around them.



breakthrough
human rights start with you



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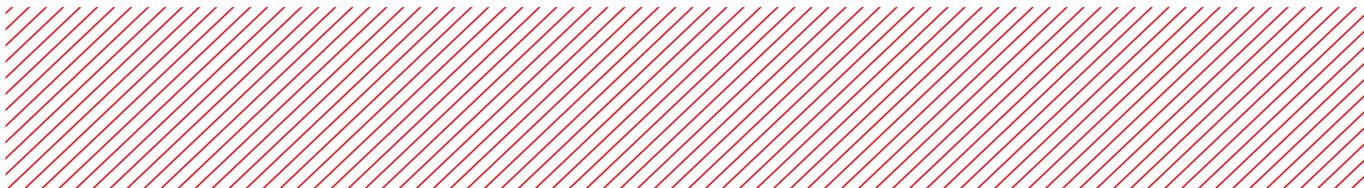
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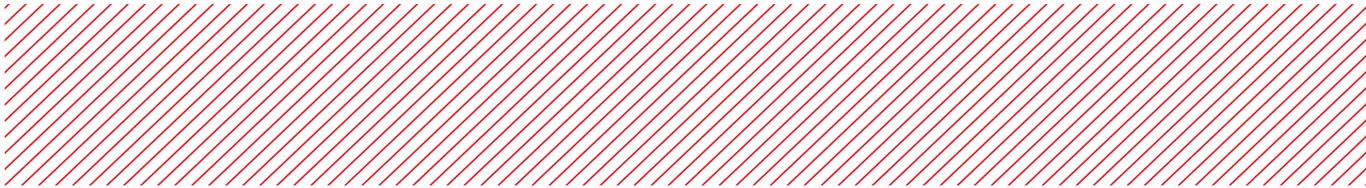
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About the Toolkit

Early marriage is sometimes referred to as child marriage. As per the law any marriage for girls who are below the age of 18 years and boys below the age of 21 years, is illegal. This marriage alliance could be between two minors below the legal age, between a minor girl and an older boy, or between a minor girl and older man.

Marriage in real sense is a formalized, binding partnership between consenting adults, which sanctions sexual relations and gives legitimacy to any offspring. Early marriage, on the other hand, involves either one or both spouses being children and may take place with or without formal registration, and under civil, religious or customary laws. Early marriage is a gross human rights violation that puts young girls at risk and keeps them mired in poverty.

There are several reasons for early marriage like gender inequality, tradition and culture, sexuality, social norms, and economic conditions of parents. The toolkit will help understand the nuances of these factors, the links between these reasons and violence against women. Further, by understanding the impact on young men and women, it will also help to understand why early marriage is a form of violence against women and girls. Through the toolkit we will examine power, patriarchy and the roles the men, women, families and communities can play to bring about norm change, where any form of violence against women and girls are unacceptable including early marriage.

This toolkit has been designed considering easy usage by any facilitator and broadly targets two sets of audiences, the NGO or community-level staff, and workers and teachers.

This is a 2-day module, which caters to but is not exclusive to NGOs and community-level workers.

Since more often than not, the usual time allotted or available to teachers is not more than half a day, only about 4 working hours are available to conduct these workshops. In the interest of time and also to effectively convey the message, some exercises are strongly recommended, particularly for Teachers. This has been indicated simply with a (T) mark, indicating that the exercise be definitely used in sessions with teachers.

Please note that the entire toolkit is recommended, if possible, for NGO workers and young people's groups. However, please understand that the exercises marked for teachers are not to be left out by other groups. The marking has only been made considering the ground realities of teachers' timings and availability in mind, to ensure that the matter is discussed and the points get through in the most effective way, in the time available. NGO workers and youth groups are encouraged to use all the exercises.

The abbreviations EM or EEM used in places stands for Early Marriage and Elimination of Early Marriage, respectively.

A simplified version of the EEM Act has been added to the readings in the last section. Besides reading it before you begin, also keep handouts ready for anyone who is keen to take a copy.

Start the session with a fun-filled ice breaker.

Close the session with a promise from the group to try some of the Action Points they have listed in the last session.

Working with NGO Partners and Frontline workers to address Early Marriage and Domestic Violence

1. Why has this training module been created for Teachers, NGO Partners and Frontline Workers?

Teachers, NGO partners and workers are the closest to communities and the first interveners and agents of social change. Frontline workers are mostly members of the community they work with and teachers are in close touch with students and wield a considerable influence in the girl's life. These stakeholders have the best knowledge about the attitudes and behaviours of their communities and are most vested in changing discriminatory norms, especially around women's human rights. They are critical stakeholders in the process of addressing early marriage. It is therefore very important to engage with them and increase their knowledge on the harmful effects of early marriage. Also, by enhancing their skills on mitigating this complex issue, we will be able to create sustainable solutions to the problem of early marriage. The training module has been created for these teachers, NGO partners and frontline workers and aims to –

- Build a sound understanding on human rights and how it is linked with the issue of early marriage. This understanding will also include ways in which gender roles lead to violations of women's human rights and limit both men and women in achieving their potential.
- Create awareness on the reasons why early marriage is so prevalent.

Participants will be able to analyze the messages we receive from the society on the roles women must play, which is intrinsically linked to why families choose to get their daughter married early. With this understanding, participants will be able to frame their arguments against this prevalent mindset, and therefore work towards addressing early marriage.

- Encourage participants to make clear action plans on how they will intervene with their communities, approach various stakeholders (such as police, religious leaders, and panchayat members) and raise their voices against this harmful practice.

This training module is a part of the larger tool-kit containing training modules for adolescent boys and girls, and risk mitigation modules for stakeholders such as religious leaders, panchayat members, CMPO and police and parents.

2. What factors were considered while creating the training module for teachers, NGOs and frontline workers?

Formative research studies commissioned by Breakthrough and UNICEF were actively referred to establish the issues and capacity building needs of adolescent girls. The synthesis of these reports was substantiated through extensive

discussions with UNICEF and Breakthrough subject matter experts.

The following key issues and capacity building needs related to stakeholders like teachers, NGO's and front line workers were closely considered while creating the modules:

- Adolescent girls aged between 13-18 years face the highest risk in getting married early and face domestic violence coupled with sexual abuse
- They largely belong to, but are not limited to rural and semi-urban communities
- They reside in areas with limited educational facilities and livelihood opportunities
- They have limited decision making abilities and powers in choosing education and livelihood, selecting a life partner, having children, managing household expenses etc.
- They are subjected to age-old customs of early marriage, dowry and gender discrimination
- They are expected to conform to old societal expectations from women as daughters/bride/wife/mother
- They mostly possess little self-value, self-respect and self-confidence
- They largely display insufficient negotiation skills
- The stakeholders though aware about the issue of early marriage and its impact, did not have the tools and

talking points to address this complex issue in the community. They also were unaware of the linkages between patriarchy, early marriage, domestic violence and rights violation.

3. What are the key capacity building needs identified for the training module for teachers, NGOs and frontline workers?

The capacity building needs of teachers, NGO's and front line workers have emerged from formative research findings and experiential learning through program implementation at the field level. The key capacity building needs in addressing early marriage and domestic violence relevant to teachers, NGO's and frontline workers have emerged as under:

- I. Understanding Gender and Gender Discrimination
- II. Tackling Sexual Abuse
- III. Understanding Child Marriage/Early marriage/Forced Marriage
- IV. Valuing the Girl Child
- V. Exploring Decision Making and Negotiation Skills.

The capacity building needs have been scoped and sequenced out as follows:

Session 1	Introduction, Ice Breaker and Ground Rules	20 minutes
Session 2	Understanding Human Rights	90 minutes
Session 3	Understanding Gender and Sex	60 minutes
Session 4	Gender and Choice	45 minutes
Session 5	The Value of a Son and the Value of a Daughter	45 minutes

Session 6	Early Marriage : A Violation of Human Rights	90 minutes
Session 7	Reasons Cited for Early Marriage	60 minutes
Session 8	Perceptions and Reality	60 minutes
Session 9	Impact and Effect	45 minutes
Session 10	Roles We Play	45 minutes
Session 11	Strategy Planning to Address Early Marriage	60 minutes
Session 12	What Can I Do?	60 minutes

The above modules attempt to build an understanding amongst teachers, NGO's and frontline workers on human rights, gender stereotypes and the harmful effects of early marriage. It also builds their skills on effectively addressing this complex problem of early marriage

4. What is the duration and delivery mode of the training module for teachers, NGOs and frontline workers?

The capacity building module has been prepared for a total duration of 11 hours and 20 minutes, spread across 12 sessions. The delivery mode is facilitator-led in an informal classroom setup catering to small groups of learners, preferably 20-25 participants. Participatory training methods have been used in designing the sessions. This includes use of case studies, group discussions and brainstorming, group presentations and role plays etc. several sessions call for the use of AV clips, which have been made from popular media such as TV shows. Although the use of this media will enhance participation and retain interest throughout the module, alternative exercises have been listed in case it is not possible to use AV clips.

The facilitators for these sessions have been envisaged as a group of trainers from local NGO partners or senior teachers who have been trained by Breakthrough and are familiar with the regional social, political and economic issues and have been actively engaged in implementing interventions against early marriage and gender based violence.

5. How can the sessions be conducted under this training module for teachers, NGOs and frontline workers?

These simple steps can be followed to conduct the sessions under this training module:

- Refer to the session plans and pick the session to be conducted. Some sessions work very well with teachers and front line workers (important stakeholders who are the first informants when girls drop out of schools to marry early). However, the sessions can be easily modified or conducted as they appear in the module with other stakeholders as well.
- All sessions have these categories – Use This indicates the material required; all instructions to participants are written in first person; Discuss This indicates discussion questions to probe participants with; and, Provoke Thinking indicates facilitators' notes.
- Read the session plan carefully and make a careful note of materials required and the preparation needed for conducting the session. This will typically include making photocopies of learner handouts (given in the annexure), understanding facilitator notes or updating it with local information and collecting any other materials for group activities.
- Next, read the objectives, methodology/steps, key discussion points and facilitator notes and make sure they are understood well. Remember, this module is just a guideline and can be improvised depending on

- the available time, learner profile and changing training contexts.
- It is highly recommended that a small note containing training steps is prepared which can provide discussion pointers/hints while conducting the session.
- Carry the learner handouts, group activity materials and the small training note to conduct the session with teachers, NGOs and frontline workers' groups.

6. What are the different terms used for Early Marriage?

Often three terms are used inter-changeably in this context – forced marriage, child marriage and early marriage.

Forced marriage is the most straightforward term to define. It relates to Article 16(2) of the United Nations Declaration on Human Rights: "Marriage shall be entered into only with the free and full consent of the intending spouses." Forced marriage, therefore, is a marriage to which one or both of the spouses did not give their free and full consent.

There is no universally accepted definition of the word 'child,' and thus no universally accepted definition of child marriage. The Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) defines a child as a "human being below the age of eighteen years unless under the law applicable to the child, majority is attained earlier." Since in India, majority is attained at the age of 18, marriage before this age can be termed as child marriage.

Early marriage encompasses child marriage but also includes situations that do not

qualify as child marriage, such as marriages in which one or both spouses are below the age of 18 but have attained majority under state laws. 'Early' does not have to refer solely to age, however, and could be read to include other factors that would make a person unready to consent to marriage. Those factors could include the individual's level of physical, emotional, sexual and psychosocial development, educational and other aspirations, and lack of information regarding the person's life options.

"On September 25, 2013, the United Nations Human Rights Council passed an important resolution¹ to strengthen efforts to prevent and eliminate child, early and forced marriage, thereby, recognizing all the three issues collectively which not only violate human rights but also act as violence propagators. It may also be safely inferred that approaches to eliminate child marriage, forced marriage and early marriage can be designed to be very similar in nature.

Since the focus beneficiary group for this program belongs to adolescents (aged ~14 years to ~18 years), the term Early Marriage has been used interchangeably and consistently throughout the tool-kit and other related documents."

1. A/HRC/24/L.34
(http://ap.ohchr.org/documents/dpage_e.aspx?si=A/HRC/24/L.34/Rev.1)

Session 1

20 minutes

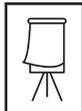
Introductions, Ice Breaker and Ground Rules

At the end of this session, participants will be comfortable and familiar with each other, and be able to examine the roles of teachers, frontline workers and NGOs in reducing the practice of early marriage.

You need to use



Art
Supplies/
Marker
Pens



FlipChart

2. Some ground rules can be no mobile phones, no side conversations, respecting others' points of view, etc.

1 WELCOME AND SEAT EVERYONE COMFORTABLY.

"Please tell us your name, one good quality of yours, and, why you are here."

2 MAKE GROUND RULES

"Let us make a list of ground rules we will all abide by during this workshop"²

Recommended Ground Rules:

- **Respect:** Give undivided attention to the person who has the floor.
- **Confidentiality:** What we share in this group will remain in this group.
- **Openness:** We will be as open and honest as possible, but we won't disclose or discuss with others' (family, neighbors, and friends) personal or private issues or lives. It is okay to discuss situations as general examples, but we won't use names or other identification. For example, we won't say, "My sister did ..."
- **Non-Judgmental Approach:** We can disagree with another person's point of view or behavior without judging or putting him/her down.
- **Sensitivity to Diversity:** We will remember that members in the group may differ in cultural background and/or sexual

orientation. We will be careful about making insensitive or careless remarks.

- **Right to Pass:** It is okay to pass if you are not comfortable sharing.
- **Anonymity:** It is okay to ask a question anonymously (using the suggestion or comment box), and the coordinator will respond to all questions.
- **Acceptance:** It is okay to feel uncomfortable. All of us, young and old, can feel uncomfortable when talking about sensitive and personal topics, including HIV and sexuality.
- **Have a Good Time:** The program is also about coming together as a community and enjoying working with each other.

Session 2

90 min

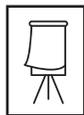
Understanding Human Rights

At the end of this session, participants will have an overview of the basic human rights principles, and be able to establish the link between human rights and early marriage.

You need to use



Art Supplies/Marker Pens



FlipChart



Copies of the Annexure: Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR)

0 DISCUSS IN GROUPS

Make an exhaustive list of all human rights that we require to lead a life with dignity, particularly that of girls and boys”

“Alongside the rights enlisted, make a list of opportunities/facilities required for those human rights”

1 COLLATE RESPONSES

Discuss in your groups and list the opportunities/facilities required for those rights

PROVOKE THINKING

- What is common across all presentations? Are there some rights that are present in all group presentations? What does this commonality tell us about our communities?
- How are these rights connected with each other?
- Which human rights are especially important for women and girls? Do women and girls in our communities have access to these rights?
- Which human rights are violated when a girl and/ or a boy is forced to marry early? Who are the people who are responsible for this violation? Who are the people who

have a duty to protect and prevent girls and boys from getting married early?

DISCUSS THIS:

The three fundamental principles of human rights are the universality, indivisibility and intersectionality of all rights.

All rights are universal and belong to all people. It is applicable to all human beings irrespective of their class, caste, gender, ethnicity, religion, disability, sexual orientation or anything else. We must all be active participants in creating global norms by which we hold governments, communities and ourselves accountable.

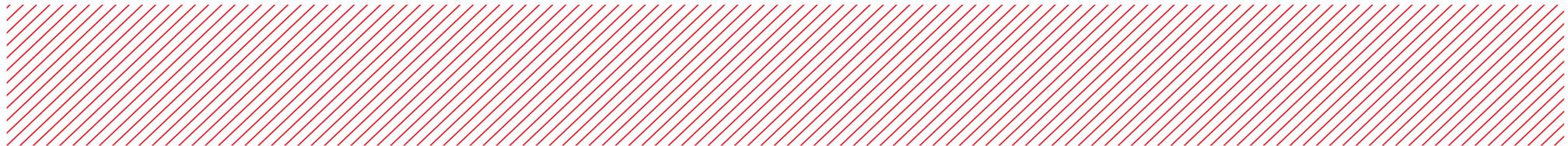
Human rights are indivisible. Access to adequate food, housing and work are as important as political participation, free speech and religious expression. There should not be a hierarchy of rights where any one right is privileged over the other.

Human rights must reflect our diverse and intersectional identities. To understand the similarities and differences in how we experience human rights, we must incorporate factors like gender, race, sexuality, class, geographic location and religion, which make up our identities.

Intersectionality is also a way of understanding how individuals can have power and privilege while simultaneously experiencing a violation of their rights. For example a poor, Dalit man who suffers violations based on his caste and economic class, can still have power and privilege because of his gender. A woman experiencing violence because of her gender can still have power because of her economic class. We must all acknowledge and take responsibility for our privileges and power if we are to become participants in creating a human rights culture.

Human rights is an important concept that is closely linked with our lives. They are not just a theoretical framework and do apply to each person’s life. All the rights in our presentations are evidence of that. Human rights as a system encompasses a wide range of rights, from the right to health, to the right to education and to make choices free of coercion and violence.

Human rights are also interconnected and interdependent with each other. This interdependence also means that if one right is violated, then several other rights get violated too. For example, if women and girls do not have access to the right to information on sexual and reproductive health, they will be unaware of family planning options



and therefore will not make informed decisions around the same. How will they then make informed and healthy decisions on their right to marry and bear children? If a girl is married early, she may bear children early leading to maternal health complications.

The duty-bearers (i.e. the people in “Who is responsible” list) of human rights are diverse and include all of us! We are all stakeholders in the process of the realizing human rights. Duty-bearers include a wide range of actors – family members, communities, institutions such as schools and health centres, and the State.

Early and child marriage is a gross violation of several human rights. Like stated above, if a girl gets married early then several of her human rights get violated – for example, she may not be able to continue with her education; she may bear children earlier leading to ill-health and greater chances of her dying during pregnancy and/ or child-birth; she may not be fully aware or have skills on negotiating a healthy and fulfilling relationship and may thus face domestic violence; and finally, by marrying without giving consent, her right to make choices free of violence and coercion will get violated.



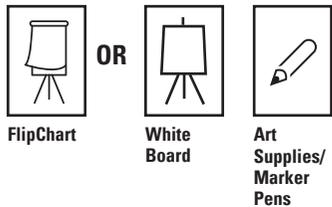
Session 3

60 min

Understanding Gender and Sex

At the end of this session, participants will be able to list the difference between sex and gender, and, demonstrate how their roles as men and women are learned and thus can be challenged, as well as be able to elucidate the link between gender roles, power and rights.

You need to use:



0 PAIR PARTICIPANTS/ VOLUNTEERS. EACH PAIR ACTS WHILE OTHERS OBSERVE

“Depict the common differences between men and women in everyday situations without dialogues. (6-8 small acts)”

“Others please identify who the man and woman are.”

“How did you guess who the man and woman are?”

“Now, write your observations under: “Men are.....” ; and “Women are.....”

1 COLLATE RESPONSES

Write down all observations on a flipchart for everyone to see and reflect upon.

2 PROVOKE THINKING

- Are there any characteristics, which are common to both men and women, or are the characteristics exclusive to a particular sex?
- If there are differences, what are they? For example, is having a beard or bearing a child biologically determined?
- If non-biological qualities can be common to both sexes, then why

does differentiation between the two happen?

- How does the community, family, media, schools, religion etc. shape our thinking on how men and women should behave?
- How does this perception on how men and women are supposed to behave limit our lives and lead to a violation of rights?

Ensure that the following points are made:

SEX	GENDER
Is biological	is socially constructed
You are born with it.	it is learned
Cannot be changed (without surgical intervention)	it can be changed.
Is constant	gender roles vary in different societies, countries, cultures and historical periods.

DISCUSS THIS:

Discrimination, whether subtle or

overt, occurs in all strata of society. One of the reasons why gender discrimination occurs is because people confuse sex and gender. Sex (whether you are male, female or intersex) is biologically determined while gender is a product of socialization. It is one’s socialization that determines feminine and masculine traits that individuals are expected to have in society. Gender inequalities come about because societies expect women to behave “in a certain way” – such as they should not raise their voice, they have to get married by a certain age, they have to serve their husbands and parents-in law and so on. Similarly, men are supposed to protect their family; they have to earn; they should have loud voices and strong bodies and so on. If men and women do not perform these roles, then they face harassment and violence. This is how gender inequality plays out.

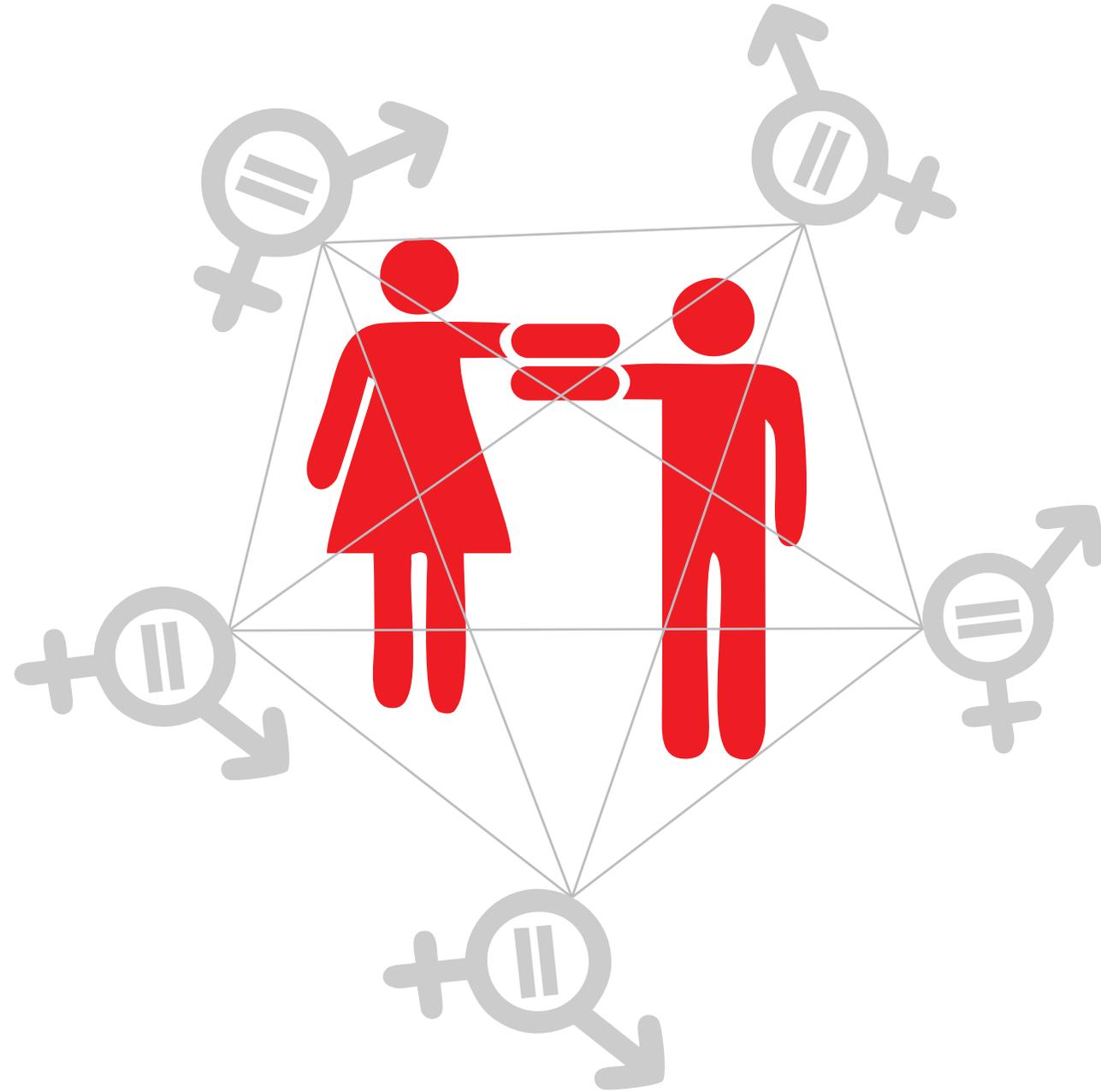
Nature does not determine feminine and masculine traits that people must have. It only dictates whether you are born male or female or intersex.

People of the male and female genders have different, yet tremendous pressure to conform and even succumb to rules and roles around various aspects. Girls are perceived to only occupy roles of a daughter, wife or mother. They are rarely seen as capable of working and earning a livelihood. Boys are seen

and a support for his parents in old age. Because of prevalent dowry practices, girls are seen as a financial burden. They are also seen as bearers of their family's 'honour'. All these perceptions contribute to families wanting to marry girls at an early age and mostly, without their consent. These in turn lead to violation of human rights.

The difference between sex and gender must always be kept in mind. It is useful to be aware of the subtle forms of discrimination as well as the power play that exists in our homes, communities and society.

Enacting certain roles or having certain expectations placed on you because of your gender can affect your enjoyment of rights. For example, in a culture where women are expected not to question the decisions of the men in the family, they may be forced to keep silent if violence occurs, thus jeopardizing their right to live a life free of violence.



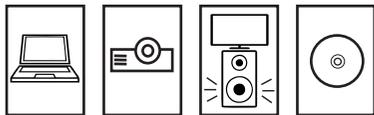
Session 4

45 min

Gender and Choice

At the end of this session, participants will be able to use media as an entry into the discussion around women's ability to make choices.

You need to use



Laptop with internal or external CD player

LCD projector

Screen and Speakers

A copy of the AV – Gender and Choice

Option A:

Screen a clip – Gender and Choice.

Option B:

Ask for three pairs of volunteers. First pair is a girl and her mother; second is a boy and his father; third pair is two young women

“Enact a scene in which you are talking to each other about how much choice you have in the case of marriage.”

! In case of an electricity breakdown, choose Option B.

PROVOKE THINKING

- Can women exercise their rights in the Indian cultural context?
- Are these rights accessible in every socio-economic strata and religion in India?
- Do girls/women have any choice or agency in decision-making or must they accept whatever their parents/husbands/in-laws tells them to do?
- What happens if girls chose not to follow these rules/regulations?
- Does it mean they will remain single or will they be considered “bad women”?
- If they choose to work or not be married, will they be considered bad mothers, daughters or wives?
- If women do not have the right to make choices within their natal as well as marital home, how does this impact their ability to deal with violence?
- How can women have more agency and ability to make choices in their lives?

DISCUSS THIS:

The messages we hear while growing up about how men and women should behave, perpetuates inequalities. Women specifically have a harder time to make choices given that societies have always sent a strong message around women

not having the power to make independent decisions. When women break this rule, they are faced with violence and coercion. And this is true for women from all classes. It is a myth that poor women are more disempowered than rich women.

Regardless of whether women are rich or poor, they do not have much scope to say yes or no in the case of marriage, especially if their parents think a “good match” has come. Our tradition, culture and society sanction that all women are supposed to get married by a certain age. Their husbands' homes are supposed to their “own home”. Marriage is the only option available to girls, even if it comes at the cost of discontinuing their studies, employment or sacrificing their own dreams and aspirations. Women are also seen as their family's *izzat* or honour. Therefore, if they do not marry by a certain age, our society believes that their families' honour will be tarnished. This pressure to marry in order safeguard honour is a major factor behind early marriage.

Men also have tremendous societal pressures and are supposed to conform to the gender norms assigned to them. Since it is not expected from men to be very expressive, they may be unable to voice their opinion in front of their elders, regarding their emotional needs. Even when they are not ready to take the responsibility that

a marriage entails, they may not be able to resist in the fear that they may be putting the family's honour at risk.

Choices are not always easy to make for anyone since other factors come into play. For example, a woman who may not be earning enough and has two children may have to choose to continue in an abusive relationship since the husband/lover/partner helps with the maintenance, education and contributes monetarily towards the household. Similarly, reporting an abuse may not always be easy for some young girls and boys, especially when it is a relative who is abusing, since their parents may be dismissive or disagree to take any action. Added to this, is the component of shame attached to the ‘virginity’ of a girl who might be abused, further forcing her and her parents to remain silent and/or to ignore ‘the matter’. This might even escalate their experience of abuse. Similarly, for some same-sex desiring people, they may choose to marry someone selected by their family to save the ‘family honour’.

Session 5

45 min

The Value of a Son and the Value of a Daughter

At the end of this session, participants will be able to examine what value sons and daughters have in the family and society.

**This session is adapted from CEDPA Manual "Choose a Future".*

You need to use:



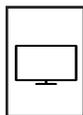
Marker Pens



A4 Sheets for everyone



FlipChart



Video of Introduction to Gender Roles and Socialisation

3. This is an optional activity. If you are not screening this AV, then proceed to discussions.

1 PLACE CHARTPAPER

Put chart papers in two different corners of the room and on one write - "value of a son", and on the other write - "value of a daughter". All participants must write on these chart papers.

"On the respective chart paper, write down at least one reason for which families value sons and daughters."

2 READ ALL RESPONSES ALOUD.

3 SCREEN AV

Screen the AV - Introduction to Gender Roles and Socialization³

PROVOKE THINKING:

- What are the most common reasons for wanting boys and girls?
- Which one was easier to write down, son or daughter?
- Who do you think is valued more and why?
- Has the situation always been the same for all communities? When has it been different and why?
- What is the impact of this discrimination on both boys and girls?

- How do you think we can change the situation and ensure that both boys and girls get equal treatment?

DISCUSS THIS:

It may be observed that the responses are similar to what was discussed in Session 3 on Gender and Sex. Reasons behind why families prefer sons or daughters are directly a product of what they think girls and boys are capable of doing. While growing up, we hear a lot of messages on what roles men and women "should" play in the society. This influences why we may prefer sons or daughters.

Some of the most common reasons why sons are preferred may be – that traditionally sons are supposed to be the support in old age for parents; that they will earn a livelihood and support their family; that they will be the sole inheritors of family property; and, that they will take the family name forward. Similarly, most common reasons why daughters are preferred may be – that they will eventually give birth to the future generation; that they will be the symbols of family honour; and, that they will provide emotional support to their parents. In most cases, families prefer sons to daughters. This mind-set of son preference or rather daughter aversion is most common on many South Asian

societies. The primary reasons are the same that may be cited by participants in this session or the session 3. Families do not perceive their daughters to become financially independent and support their families. Most parents are unable to visualize a future wherein their daughters take care of them in old age. Families do not even consider their daughters their own and some common Indian sayings suggest they are someone else's amanat (or safe-keeping of a thing or property in English). Dowry practices are rampant because of which daughters are seen as a financial burden. With these prevalent mind-sets, it is obvious that women face a lot of discrimination and sons occupy a position of privilege within families.

This prevalent mind-set of son preference has led to some adverse impacts. The decreasing sex ratio in India (which is more disturbing in some states like Haryana and Punjab) is one such example. Despite the fact that in India, detecting sex of a foetus is criminal, hospitals and private practitioners continue to reveal the sex of the foetus during ultra sounds. In many instances, the pregnancy is discontinued only because of it is of female sex.

Son preference also has an impact on early marriage. Since families worry about the dowry they have to give for their daughters' marriage, they choose to marry them off early,

many times before the legal age of 18. By doing so, the common belief is that the sooner the daughter is married, the lesser the dowry will be and parents can be absolved of all responsibilities towards their daughters.

In our work towards making the society more just and equal for people of all genders, we must change this mind-set of son preference. We must bring a change in people's thinking on what men and women are capable to do. We must open up our visions and push people to think beyond the socially prescribed gender norms. Women can earn and take care of their parents! Their only role is not that of a homemaker or custodian of family values.



Session 6

90 min

Early Marriage: A Violation of Human Rights

At the end of this session, the participants will be able to analyse early marriage from a human rights perspective, gain clarity on the rights that are being violated in allowing early marriage and analyse the consequences of early marriage on a girl's life.

You need to use:



Copies of the Annexure 1



Chart Papers



Marker Pens

1 MAKE FOUR SMALL GROUPS

Assign each group a case study from Annexure 1 - Health and Early Marriage, Right to Choice, Decision Making and Early Marriage, Education, employment and Early Marriage, Violence and Early Marriage.

"Discuss the case study in your group for 30 minutes. Answer the following questions:

- What are the rights being violated and how?
- What is the impact of these violations on the girl?

"Write down your group's responses in a chart paper and then present it to the whole group."

PROVOKE THINKING

- What are the rights being violated in each of these case studies?
- How are the case studies connected with each other?
- How are the violations connected with each other?
- What do these case studies tell us about the quality of lives of young girls and boys?
- How do the lives of families get affected?

DISCUSS THIS:

With each case study discussing the impact of early marriage on a specific human rights issue – health, employment, domestic violence, education and right to choice – it is important to deepen understanding on each of these rights. Issues listed in the following table may come up during discussions. It is important to cover all points listed here. Additionally, it is also crucial to make links between each of these rights, like we did in Session 2 on Understanding Human Rights. For example, if girls have to discontinue education, they will not be qualified to find suitable jobs. If girls do not find jobs, they will be financially dependent on their husbands. In case they face domestic violence, this financial dependence may become a barrier to them making a decision to leave the violent household. Similarly, if girls do not receive comprehensive information on contraception, or family planning, they will not be able to make informed decisions on when to have children. This may lead to early pregnancies, thereby putting their lives and health at risk.

EDUCATION AND EARLY MARRIAGE

Rights Violated:

- Right to education

- Right to gainful employment
- Right to reproductive and sexual health choices

Impact:

- Discontinued education
- Poor economic conditions
- Difficulties in taking care of children and family
- Malnutrition of both the girl and her children
- Violence faced by the girl
- Effect of the violence faced by a mother on her children
- Fewer career opportunities due to incomplete education
- Increased helplessness

HEALTH AND EARLY MARRIAGE

Rights Violated:

- Right to education
- Right to choose a partner
- Right to reproductive choices
- Right to nutrition and care
- Right to health and access to treatment and care
- Right to financial security
- Right to work outside home and/or earn money

Impact:

- Gets blamed for HIV despite having been infected by husband
- Poor health condition
- No resource in the hands of the girl
- Loss of shelter on being thrown away from in-law's home and not getting shelter in parental home

VIOLENCE AND EARLY MARRIAGE

Rights Violated:

- Right to education
- Parents' right to provide protection/security of their daughters
- Right to reproductive and sexual health choices
- Right to oppose dowry demands

Impact:

- Physical, spiritual and psychological Sexual exploitation/ harassment.
- If there is coercion, force and no consent between married couples for a sexual relationship, it is called marital rape.

RIGHT TO CHOICE AND EARLY MARRIAGE

Rights Violated:

- Right to education
- Right to values that teach children how to utilize their education
- Right to decision-making, as the girl is being forced to marry a stranger

Impact:

- Discontinued education
- No skill acquired
- Limited access to resources
- Vulnerability to violence
- No control over own body and reproductive health
- Trapped in gendered poverty cycle

The discussion may bring out various issues and debates. For example, we may hear comments on marital rape and the lack of recourse. We may hear stories of how parents do not act as support systems and would rather let their girls suffer as opposed to offering safety and support. You may also hear the blame game on mobile phones and technology as "spoiling" girls and encouraging them to run away or elope. It is important to emphasize that we need to think about the girl whose life is at the centre of all these case studies. The issue is not about the availability of technology but it is more about how we make young people informed and aware and help them in making healthy decisions. It is also important to change attitudes of families who see girls as a burden. If girls are empowered, educated and healthy, they will be able to support their parents as well as have healthy relationships which are equal and respectful. This will be possible also when we are able to bring justice in cases of violence and have zero tolerance for domestic violence.

The fact that there is a tacit sort of acceptance of early marriage is what needs to be discussed. We must challenge the notion that in order to provide safety from rape and sexual abuse, the only option is to get girls married. While no clear law exists in a situation of marital rape, it does exist in cases of all marriages and has an increased prevalence in the case of early marriage. More importantly, we must work towards creating an

environment where girls do not have to face violence just because of their gender.

While the above discussions and debates are important and interesting, we must include the following in our discussions:

- Early marriage is an act to curb one's human rights.
- Early marriage restricts girls' right to education, and right to education is an essential human right mentioned in clause 26 of the UDHR.
- Early marriage curtails girls' right to health, which is also a basic right and has been mentioned in article 25 of the UDHR.
- Article 23, i.e., the right to employment and article 22, i.e., the right to social security of the UDHR are also being hampered by early marriage.
- Article 16 of the UDHR, the right to marry in 'free and full consent' is also being curbed through the activity of early marriage, as an underage girl/boy lacks the maturity to recognise the implications/responsibilities related to marriage.
- As human rights are connected with each other, it is inevitable that early marriage violates not only the above-mentioned rights but also all the other rights of a human being.
- India has voted in the favour of the UDHR in General Assembly on 10th December 1948. Therefore, as Indians we all are entitled to exercise all human rights declared in the UDHR.

Session 7

60 min

Reasons cited for Early Marriage

At the end of this session, participants will be able to analyse the reasons for early marriage, the impact early marriage has on young people and examine strategies to negotiate and communicate with family members.

** Facilitators can choose between this and Session 9, depending on the time you have at hand. This session has several AVs which are important thus; ensure that there is a generator or electricity back-up for the duration of this session.*

You need to use:



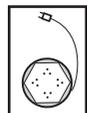
Laptop with internal or external CD player



LCD projector



Screen and Speakers



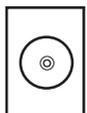
Extension Cord



Marker Pens



White Board



Copies of Films: Early Marriage – Reasons; Early Marriage – Funeral PSA; Irfan Khan makes a case against EM; Stories of Change – Sandhya's story; and A Young Bride Fights Back

1 BEGIN WITH FILM SCREENING

Begin the session by screening the film, Reasons cited for Early Marriage - Reasons.

2 TIME FOR REFLECTION

Give the participants some time to reflect on what they saw.

3 FOLLOW THIS WITH A DISCUSSION ON THE FOLLOWING POINTS:

- What did you feel about the film clip? What happened in this clip?
- How close is it to reality?
- Does this happen in your community?
- What is the average age of marriage in your community?
- What are the reasons given for marriage by our elders?
- Is Anandi or Phuli prepared for marriage? Why or why not?

Ask participants to list out a few impacts that happen because of early marriage.

4 SCREEN SECONDS FILM

Screen the film, Early Marriage – Funeral PSA and discuss in case

there are any clarifications or further information required.

5 SCREEN THIRD FILM

Then screen the film, Irfan Khan Makes a Case against Early Marriage

6 DISCUSSION ON IMPACT OF EARLY MARRIAGE

Follow this with a discussion on the impact that early marriage has on young girls and boys regarding sexual abuse, psychological abuse, violence, economic status, decision-making and negotiation capacities

7 QUESTION

Ask participants to whom and how would they communicate in case they don't want to marry at an early age.

8 SCREEN FOURTH FILM

Screen the film, Stories of Change – Sandhya's story, ask if the participants require any clarifications or more information

9 SCREEN FIFTH FILM

Then screen the film, A Young Bride Fights Back. Ask participants in

case they have questions or require clarifications

10 ROLE-PLAY

Do a role-play with two participants, one of them being the father who wants to marry their daughter off. The daughter has to negotiate with the father to delay their marriage.

11 DISCUSSION ON STRATEGIES

Follow this with a discussion on strategies and ways in which young girls can communicate with their parents and negotiate with their families to delay their marriage

- Whom can you approach to discuss or talk to about delaying your marriage?
- How will you speak to this person; what will you say to this person?
- In case you have a friend of the opposite gender, how can you tell your parents, so that they understand and don't feel upset about your friendship?
- Are there other people whom you can approach for help or intervention?
- In case no one agrees to help or delay your marriage, what else can you do?

12 IF NO ELECTRICITY

If there is no scope of using the film clip due to an electrical breakdown or any such problem, please use the exercise suggested below.

! People have a lot to say about TV serials and clips. It is important to connect to the discussions on human rights with this exercise discussion.

PROVOKE THINKING

- Why does early marriage happen?
- What are the reasons given by the parents and society for marrying off their daughters young?
- Who decides when marriage should take place?
- What are the criteria for marriage?
- What is the impact of early marriage on young people (boy and girl)?
- Which rights get impacted when early marriage happens?

DISCUSS THIS:

This exercise is heavily based on film and TV clips. It is therefore important to remember that participants may have a lot to discuss about the story, characters and situations in these TV shows. Facilitators must be prepared not to digress into such details but keep the focus of discussions on early marriage and how human rights violation are connected with these situations.

This show is an example of what young girls hear in their everyday lives. The belief that girls have no use of education is really entrenched in people's mindsets. Although the show is based in rural settings, the reality is no different for girls in urban areas, especially those who are poor or marginalized. Most families believe

that marrying their daughters early will ensure that they have better lives, free of violence from men. The belief that women are bearers of family honour is another factor behind early marriage – early marriage is seen as a definite way of safeguarding family honour. This notion of honour is very important and is given a lot of priority (like the groom's character quotes – Jaghasayee na karaye apne gaon me; in English it means a girl who does not make a laughing stock of my family in my village. Parents also tend to believe that it is better to marry their daughters early so that they do not fall in love with men and therefore ruin their "family's name". This belief also makes families get their daughters to discontinue education right when they reach puberty. All these notions are entrenched in the roles prescribed for women in our society – such as a woman who keeps the family together and is like "Sita to our Ram".



Session 8

60 min

Perceptions and Reality

At the end of this session, participants will understand the popular perceptions of young people about marriage, be able to list 3 differences between perceptions and reality about marriage, and understand why these differences exist.

You need to use:



FlipChart

OR



White Board



Marker Pens



Copies of the booklet, "Bal Vivah: Aksar Poochhe Janey Valey Prashna"

1 DIVIDE THE GROUP INTO SMALLER GROUPS

"Enact a role play. Choose what character you want to play – mother, sister, father, friend neighbour etc.

"Now you have to give a pre-wedding night talk or marriage advice to the bride and to the groom. This can be two different scenes - one to the boys and the other to the girls."

PROVOKE THINKING

- In the advice given by the elders to the bride and groom, are there any points that are different for girls and boys?
- What do they tell us about the expectations of women and men's roles in marriage?
- Is there any advice on sex or sexual behaviour and sexual expectations given to either side? Is this common?
- Are there any sexual messages and innuendoes in our folk songs and wedding practices; can you think of any? What does this signify to you?
- Are there any sexual messages and innuendoes in our folk songs and wedding practices; can you think of any? What does this signify to you?

DISCUSS THIS:

Messages on sex received by boys and girls are vastly different. For girls, most messages tend to ask them to be submissive in sex, never make the first move, never appear to be "wanting" sex, and never expressing desires. This focus on not displaying affirmative expressions is one of the ways in which the society controls women's desires. On the other hand, boys are the ones supposed to be displaying power and dominate. They are supposed to initiate sex, be aware of all information on sex (even if there may be no sources of receiving comprehensive information!) and never appear to shy away from topics on sex.

Information on sex that is given by family members (as in the case of these role plays) always focuses on sex as a medium to have children. Not much is discussed on how it can be enjoyable or pleasurable. We are also not taught about how it can be painful or uncomfortable the first time. Most people are not ready and aware about sex, when they get married. Talking about sex is taboo that it is often explained in covert, hidden ways by our elders. Innuendoes and analogies are used comparing our bodies to fruits or birds for example. It is important to break this silence and give comprehensive advice and

information to young people, before they begin having sex.

It is equally important to talk about violence within sexual relationships and the importance of saying no. This is especially true in the case of girls, who are never told that if something makes them uncomfortable while having sex, then they have the right to ask their husbands/partners to say stop. It is equally important to focus on the affirmative aspects of sexuality and for women to learn that there is nothing wrong in expressing desire and saying yes!

Men and women receive other messages too, regarding how they are supposed to behave once they are married. Women are expected to respect and obey her parents-in-law and listen to everything their husband says. When faced with any abuse or violence, she is expected to "compromise" and stay put with her husband's family, where she is supposed to live and die. Men are expected to dominate over their wives and set clear terms right at the onset and establish who is "the man of the house". Men who are seen as meek or seen being dominated by their wives, are ridiculed by other men. Such strict gender norms lead to domestic violence and the lack of choice for women to protest or rebel. In most cases, they do not even see returning to their natal houses as an available option.

Perhaps traditional songs and folklore do not in any way at all prohibit or prevent early marriage from happening. What they do however is to promote in a way a rather open and raucous discussion on sex and first night besides even “allowing” or “sanctioning” certain behaviour and relationships, which can be considered abusive – such as the relationship between the new bride and her brother-in-law or the young husband who can be “tutored” by his sisters-in-law. Whilst otherwise there is no question of discussing sex – marriages break these boundaries, even if they are for a short while only.



Session 9

45 min

Impact and Effect

At the end of this session, participants will be able to list the roles and responsibilities young people have to play after marriage and discuss the implications of playing these roles and responsibilities on young men and women's lives.

You need to use:



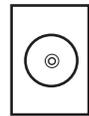
Laptop with internal or external CD player



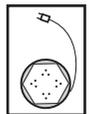
LCD projector



Screen and Speakers



Copies of Breakthrough's Early marriage videos



Extension Cord



Marker Pens



White Board

1 SCREEN BREAKTHROUGH'S EARLY MARRIAGE VIDEO

Two Breakthrough Early Marriage videos - Irrfan Khan PSA followed by the Marriage / Funeral video one by one and discuss the following questions.

- In the Irrfan Khan video, what was the key message?
- Why did he say that if you want your daughter's happiness you will not marry her off early?
- What the impact of early marriage on young girls?
- In the funeral advertisement why did the celebration turn to mourning?
- What is the risk to the young girl post her marriage?
- If a young girl is already married, what can be the steps to reduce her vulnerability?

2 DIVIDE PARTICIPANTS INTO SMALLER GROUPS

Now divide participants into four smaller groups. Assign a category to each group – social, economic, sexual, and, personal.

“Create a list of the roles and responsibilities that are expected of girls and boys before and after marriage, according to the category assigned to your group.”

“What are the roles that young girls and boys will be involved in just after marriage?”

“Make a presentation of your list to the larger group.”

PROVOKE THINKING

- Are there any similarities in the list
- Who is mainly responsible for fulfilling these roles?
- What is required to effectively fulfil some of these roles and responsibilities?
- What do boys and girls need to become ready to take on these roles?
- What are the implications of these roles and responsibilities on young people when they are married early?

DISCUSS THIS:

On the social front, marriage comes with tremendous responsibilities. After getting married, men and women enter a plethora of social relationships and there is tremendous pressure to perform roles such as that of a good daughter-in-law and wife. In the Indian context, several members of the groom's extended family have expectations from a new bride and are often ready with judgments and strong opinions. Girls

take some time to understand these new relationships and therefore are not aware of what the norms are in their husbands' families. Additionally, there is tremendous pressure from the community members and neighbours as well who are watchful of women's behaviour. Given the gender norms in Indian societies, brides are expected to be submissive and shy and not raise their voices or assert themselves. Expectations of dowry can also lead to the girl facing violence in her marital home.

Economically, the pressure of earning and supporting families comes very early on the “couple”. With little or no preparation with skills or preparations for livelihood, families have to deal with additional burden on existing resources. Added to this, in the case of early marriages, girls may have discontinued their education thereby making it difficult to find skilled jobs. For many girls from poor communities, marriage may also mean migrating to a city where their husbands may be working, and this can also add stress on managing this change their lives – understanding the ways of living in cities.

Marriages bring a lot of pressure on men and women's sexual lives. This is especially true for most people who have no comprehensive information on sex. The pressure of performing on something – that is, sex – without any knowledge can

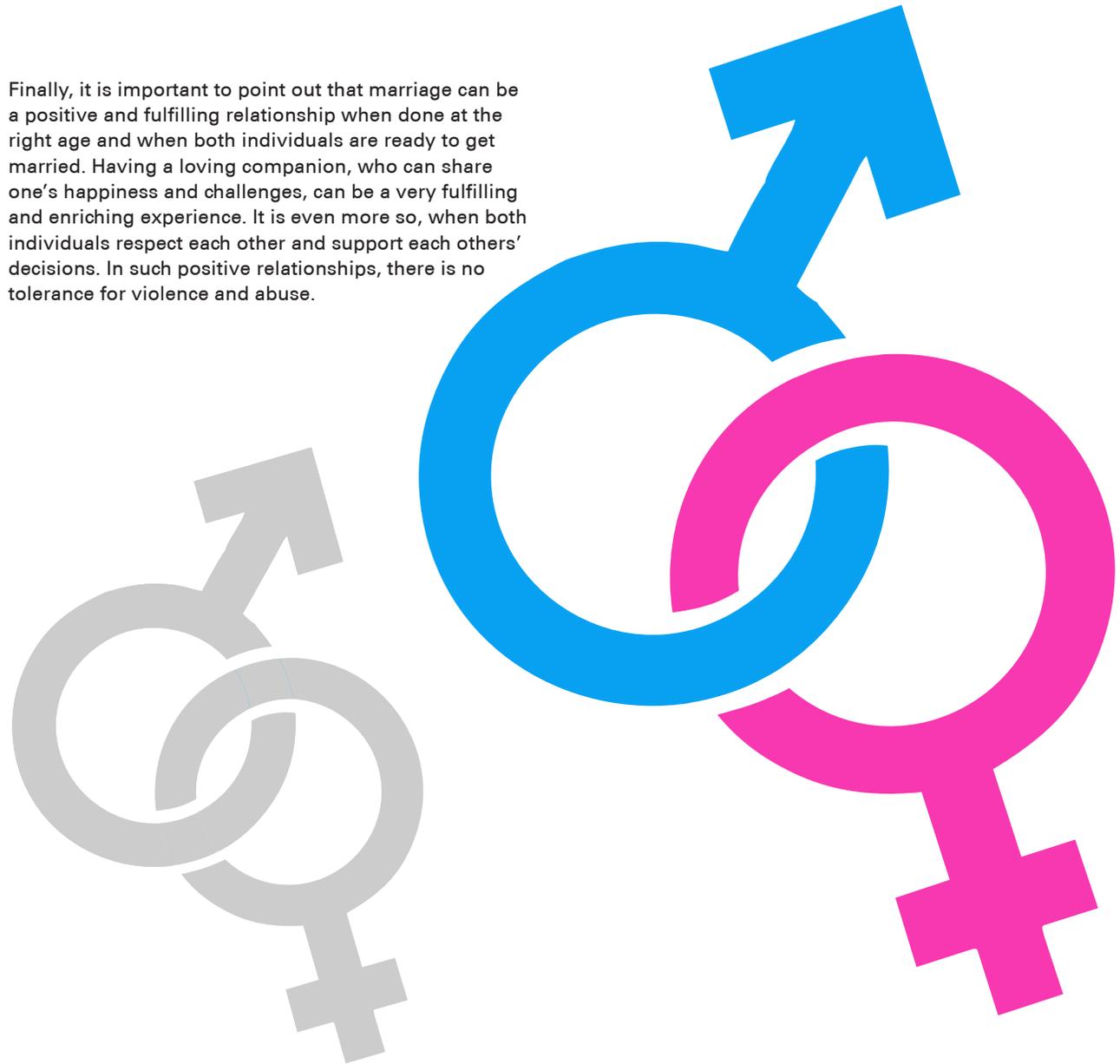
lead to a lot of stress. Being a taboo subject, most people think about sex with fear and pain and therefore do not know what to expect from sexual relationships. Women especially have little awareness on what to do when faced with sexual violence. In cases of arranged marriages, men and women do not get enough time to get to know each other and are expected to have sex on the first night itself. For most women, the thought of having sex creates a lot of anxiety and fear.

All pressures cited above can have a deep negative impact at the personal level. Additionally, since there is no space to talk about one's anxieties and fears and marriage is seen as a celebratory event, young people may feel trapped or having no option. They may not be doing well in negotiating these new relationships – with their husbands, in-laws, extended families, community members etc. – thereby feeling a lot of tension and anxiety. Some young people may not be able to take care of families, and this can become very difficult when there is economic pressure too.

It is important to cover certain aspects of health as well. One, the bodies of young girls below 18 years are not ready for child bearing. With no access to comprehensive sexuality education and having no awareness about growing up and the changes related to their bodies, young people may not be aware of safety from unwanted pregnancies and/or infections. Further, their low awareness leads to very low negotiation for contraceptive choices or safer sex. There is no space between couples for discussing when to have children, on HIV/AIDS, and on understanding how to pleasure each other.

All these aspects make it clear that marriages come with a lot of responsibility and are not easy relationships. Marrying early increase the impacts exponentially and place tremendous burden on young people. The situation is stressful especially for girls where they are suddenly expected to play many roles at a very young age.

Finally, it is important to point out that marriage can be a positive and fulfilling relationship when done at the right age and when both individuals are ready to get married. Having a loving companion, who can share one's happiness and challenges, can be a very fulfilling and enriching experience. It is even more so, when both individuals respect each other and support each others' decisions. In such positive relationships, there is no tolerance for violence and abuse.



Session 10

45 min

Roles We Play

At the end of this session, participants will be able to understand the role of teachers in addressing early marriage and discuss simple strategies that teachers/educationists can use to attend to this issue.

**This exercise has been particularly designed for teachers. However, it serves as an effective exercise for all groups. You can easily adapt this exercise for all groups by just removing the question meant for teachers from the case studies.*

You need to use:



Marker Pens



White Board



Tape



Annexure II: Copy of role-plays

1 DIVIDE THE PARTICIPANTS

Divide the participants into 3 groups. Assign a role-play each

“In 20 minutes, prepare then enact the role-play in front of the larger group. Before enacting, please read out the role-play to the group.”

2 DISCUSS THE ROLE-PLAY

Discuss the role-play and what could have been done differently.

PROVOKE THINKING

- What role do teachers play in addressing early marriages?
- What is unique about teachers' position that gives them an advantage in addressing early marriages?
- How can teachers educate their schools and other institutions on human rights violations related to early marriage?
- What role do teachers play in building a human rights culture in our schools and communities?

DISCUSS THIS:

Teachers enjoy a special status and command tremendous respect in all

societies. They are seen as symbols of knowledge and learning and can use this status to address several human rights issues, including early marriage.

Teachers are also in locations where they may be the first people to know about the occurrence of early marriages. Girls marrying early mostly drop out of schools and teachers get to know this first. This early knowledge can be converted into proactive action by contacting the families concerned and educating them about the harms of early marriages. Their special status in the societies will make parents of girls more willing to listen.

A second strategy is to educate students themselves and increase their awareness on several issues. Teachers can impart knowledge and information on sexuality; support girls and boys as they begin to understand these issues; spread awareness on healthy relationships; make students aware that no violence should be tolerated and everyone has the right to speak out against violence; and, build confidence in boys and girls as they pursue their dreams and aspirations. This in turn, will equip boys and girls with the knowledge and skills to resist early marriage.

Ultimately, teachers also play a crucial role in creating educational institutions that imbibe human

rights principles. By making their colleagues aware of human rights, and by adopting teaching methods that respect the human rights of all, teachers can help in building human rights affirming institutions. Actively addressing gender inequality within education and creating confidence in girls to pursue any kind of employment is one such example.

Session 11

60 min

Strategy Planning to Address Early Marriage

At the end of this session, participants will be able to identify stakeholders who can address early marriage and the challenges in addressing early marriage in the community.

**Teachers, frontline workers and NGO staff can choose between this and the following exercise, depending on the availability of time. If time is short, the following exercise, Session 12, is recommended over this one.*

** In the event that the AV clips cannot be used, the facilitator can proceed to small group exercise.*

You need to use:

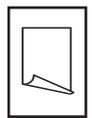


Chart Papers



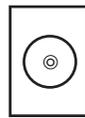
Marker Pens



Tape



LCD Players and Speakers



Early Marriage - Stakeholders, refer - Mitigation strategies for stakeholders.

1 SCREEN THE VIDEO

Screen the video: Early Marriage - Stakeholders

“Who do we think are the key people that must be involved while working to address early marriage? Make a list of key stakeholders and gatekeepers.”

2 DIVIDE PARTICIPANTS INTO SMALLER GROUPS

Divide participants into smaller groups and give them this Table. Assign one or two stakeholder to each group.

Stakeholder	How will we approach the stakeholder?	What are the common arguments we hear from this stakeholder AGAINST addressing the issue of early marriage?
Panchayat members		
Religious leaders – pandits / moulavies		
School teachers		

“Please discuss and fill this table. Be as specific as possible, and to keep the ideas as simple and do-able as possible.”

PROVOKE THINKING

- What roles do each of these stakeholders play in our community?
- Have you tried to reach out any of these stakeholders to address any social issue? How was your experience?

- Why do we need the support of all these stakeholders in trying to eliminate early marriage?

PROVOKE THINKING

Early marriage is a complex problem that demands complex and multi-layered solutions. Therefore, it is important to reach out to, and convince all stakeholders that this problem must end.

For all stakeholders, one may hear a common argument around how women must get married eventually, or that early marriage is a fool proof way of providing them protection from sexual violence. We must be ready with our answers and have evidence on how sexual violence within marriages is high. Also, a focus on how girls are valuable in our societies and have become more than mothers and daughters, may be helpful. Depending on one’s location, having some examples of women achievers from the region may be helpful in demonstrating how these women achiever have made our communities proud.

Panchayat leaders may find information on law handy. Having easy-to-understand hand-outs on the Prohibition of Child Marriage Law in India (2006) will be useful when conversing with them. Also, it is important to make these leaders understand their value and special status in their communities. Like teachers, Panchayat leaders command tremendous respect in the community and can easily exert influence on families to prevent early marriages.

Religious leaders also command respect within their communities. One may hear arguments from religious texts and sources cited as reasons for early marriage. This needs to be challenged and we must be equipped with knowledge on what religious texts tell us about marriage and about the status of women in our societies.

Session 12

60 min

What I Can Do

At the end of this session, participants will be able to list out what they can do to address these issues and design strategies to address this issue with various stakeholders.

You need to use:



Chart Papers



Marker Pens



Tape

1 DIVIDE THE PARTICIPANTS INTO SMALLER GROUPS

Assign one stakeholder each to all groups. You may use the stakeholders' list from Session 11.

"Design a strategy to influence the stakeholder to address the issue of early marriage using any tool of their choice. The action should be simple and do-able. You have 30 minutes to prepare."

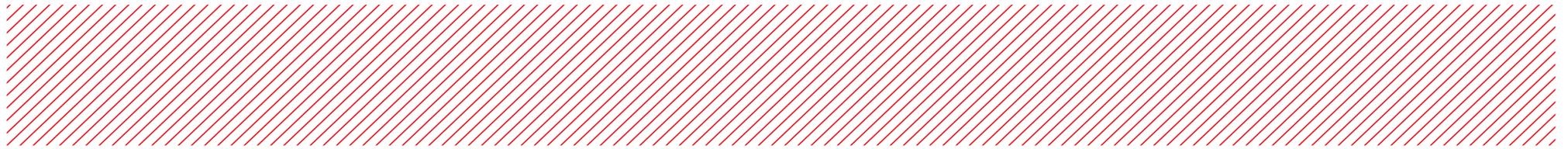
PROVOKE THINKING

- What are some of the strategies that have greater chances of success and why?
- What is common between strategies for all stakeholders?
- What support do we need to make sure our strategies are effective?

DISCUSS THIS:

Since this is the final session in this module, the focus should be on creating action plans that are implementable and effective. The following table suggests some effective steps in working with each stakeholder – most of these may emerge in group presentations and must be covered in this session.

Stakeholder	Action Points
Panchayat	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Explain to the Panchayat about the Act using the Breakthrough flyer, "Kanoon Janiye: Bal Vivah Nishedh Adhiniyam, 2006".• Disseminate information through the Panchayat members to the gram sabha
Police	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Meet the police.• Discuss with the police about the features and problems of early marriage, its consequences, impact, etc.• One incident of stopping early marriage influences other children and families as well – therefore, inform the police how this will affect young people and also families to stop child marriage.• Police should take action to inform the public about the punishments, fines, etc., regarding the provisions in the law/Act (through public meetings, advertisements, etc.)
Family	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Form a committee comprising a CSO member, aanganwadi worker (sahiya), representatives from the elected Panchayat and caste-based Panchayat, police, school teacher from other stakeholder groups. These committees will work with the families in terms of awareness generation and take legal action when early marriage occurs.• Present a case study to the families with the results of early marriage and marriage after attaining age of maturity.• Nukkad natak at the community/village level• Video presentation of the cases• Prabhat pheri, wall painting with messages• Training on issues to the SHGs – information about law and other implications of early marriage• Providing information about schemes for the girl children, such as mukhya-mantri kanyadaan yojna



Stakeholder	Action Points
Religious Leaders	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Bring all religious leaders together on to one platform.• If they are invited to any marriage – the religious leaders should meet and find out about the groom and bride’s age. If they find that any of them is underage, then they will discuss with the community members/village leaders/parents and guardians. They should explain the problems/shortcomings of early marriage to these people.• Engage directly with religious leaders and also engage SHGs to bring religious leaders to these discussions.• The societies that work on health, education, etc., can also help to bring the religious leaders into the fray.
Community	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Form a committee; provide information about the law and the consequences and impact on the groom and bride as well as the children that are born out of early marriage.• Inform the community about the real meaning of childhood. Motivate the community to ensure children’s education and playing time and not to burden girls with household work and managing siblings.• Share the incidents that have taken place in other neighbouring villages – share these stories at a meeting with all stakeholders. These case studies should include both positive as well as negative ones.• Generate awareness through theatre, meetings, rallies, etc.
Schools/ Educational Institutions	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Check for the students’ attendance, drop-outs• Promote capacity building of children to ensure that they can protest against early marriage.• Disseminate age-appropriate information and plan activities related to stopping dropouts and early marriage.• Have sessions in class about the value of girls.• Have sessions/debates and conversations on the impact of early marriage on both boys and girls.• Encourage conversations on decision-making and negotiation.• Teach young people to say No.• Create a cadre of youth to stop early marriage.• Conduct awareness generation and training programmes with teachers.• Use a participatory mode for interactions with students – both sides of the issues of early marriage and elopement.• Provide information about schemes and updated information.• Facilitate youth committees so that they can provide information about early marriage before it occurs.• Create a network with the teachers from other schools in the area.

! Please add more stakeholders that come during the free-listing with the larger group

Annexure I

- **HEALTH AND EARLY MARRIAGE**
- **RIGHT TO CHOICE AND EARLY MARRIAGE**
- **EDUCATION, EMPLOYMENT AND EARLY MARRIAGE**
- **VIOLENCE AND EARLY MARRIAGE**

HEALTH AND EARLY MARRIAGE:

Meena is 15 years old, and lives in a village. She studies in class IX. One day, a neighbour approached her father with a marriage proposal between her and his nephew. The nephew stays in Chattisgarh and as a seasonal brick kiln worker, often migrates to other states. Meena was very reluctant about the marriage, but her father considered it a good opportunity and had her married within a month.

After a year, at the age of 16 years, Meena gave birth to a baby girl. During her pregnancy, she did not get proper food or health care. Most of the times, her husband was away for work. Though he visited home off and on, he did not send her money regularly. She had a very difficult pregnancy and was often very weak and ill. The child was born underweight and malnourished.

In the next few months, she had frequent fever, rashes, was tired often and had swelling around her neck⁴. She went to a doctor who prescribed a blood test; the result showed that she was HIV positive.

When her in-laws found out, they called her a “loose” character and drove her away along with her

daughter. By this time, her daughter was also falling sick frequently. She went to her parents, but they turned her away as well.

In your group discuss:

- **What are the rights being violated and how?**
- **What is the impact of these violations on the girl?**

RIGHT TO CHOICE AND EARLY MARRIAGE

Rama stayed in a village close to an urban area. Every year, she performed fairly well at school. When she was promoted to class IX, her father gifted her a mobile phone although Rama’s mother disapproved of it.

Rama had a few friends with whom she attended an English coaching class. She frequently chatted with her friends especially after getting the new phone. However, her father did not like her being “free” with her friends.

One day, she noticed that her parents had begun looking for a match for her. She told them that she would like to continue her studies instead of marrying. Her father began suspecting that she was in a relationship. He insisted that Rama

must marry the person whom he chose.

The next day, on her way to school, she met her friend Pratim and told him what was happening at home. Both Rama and Pratim missed school that day and spent that time in a park to find a solution to Rama’s problem. When she was returning home with Pratim, she met her father on the way. Her father scolded her and asked her to return home immediately.

Rama did not return home that day.

Rama’s father filed a complaint at the police station that his daughter was kidnapped even though he suspected that that was not true.

The next day he learnt that Rama had married her friend Pratim and was at her in-laws’ house.

He went to Rama’s in-laws’ house with some influential people from his locality and beat up the boy. Her father had hoped that Rama would return after this, but she did not. Instead, she told the police that she had chosen to marry Pratim and that she had not been kidnapped.

In your group discuss:

- **What are the rights being violated and how?**
- **What is the impact of these violations on the girl?**

4. For more information visit <http://www.healthline.com/health-slideshow/early-signs-hiv-infection#3>

EDUCATION, EMPLOYMENT AND EARLY MARRIAGE

Shreya came from a poor family. Since childhood, Shreya was very good at studies. She had two brothers both of whom went to school and also attended tuition classes.

When she reached class IX, at the age of 15 years, her parents arranged her marriage with a person who worked as a tailor.

After her marriage, Shreya wanted to return to her studies, but was not allowed to do so. Within the next three years, she gave birth to two babies. Gradually, her husband's business deteriorated. She was tortured continuously and told repeatedly by her husband that she should earn and feed her children.

She wanted to escape from this situation. She learnt about a vacancy for an Anganwadi worker and applied for it. She did not get the job and was informed that the minimum educational qualification required was class X.

In your group discuss:

- What are the rights being violated and how?
- What is the impact of these violations on the girl?

VIOLENCE AND EARLY MARRIAGE

On a December morning when Radha was returning home from her tuitions, she heard that her close friend Mini had been raped the previous day. Within a week of that incident, Radha's father began looking for a boy to get her married. The groom was 14 years older than her. Radha was 15 years old at that time and wanted to study further. She wanted to become a self-dependent person. She was pursuing a course in Basic Computers. She tried telling her father about this, but he opposed her and said that if something like 'Mini' should happen to her, nobody would touch her, and he would lose his respect in society.

So, Radha had to drop her studies and get married. On the first day, her in-laws asked her to bring another

30,000 rupees from her parents. They said that this was a compensation for her dark complexion.

Gradually, she was asked to do all household chores from the moment she woke up, which was usually at dawn before the other family members awoke. She was only allowed to sleep after everyone had gone to bed at night. She was rarely given enough to eat; she was told that it was a punishment for not bringing any more dowry. She was unable to talk to her husband since he was much older than her. Previously, when she had requested him, she had been refused money for expenses; this added to her apprehension about talking to him about the situation at home. She was also very uncomfortable about her husband having sex with her whenever he wanted to. He rarely seemed to care about what she thought or wanted.

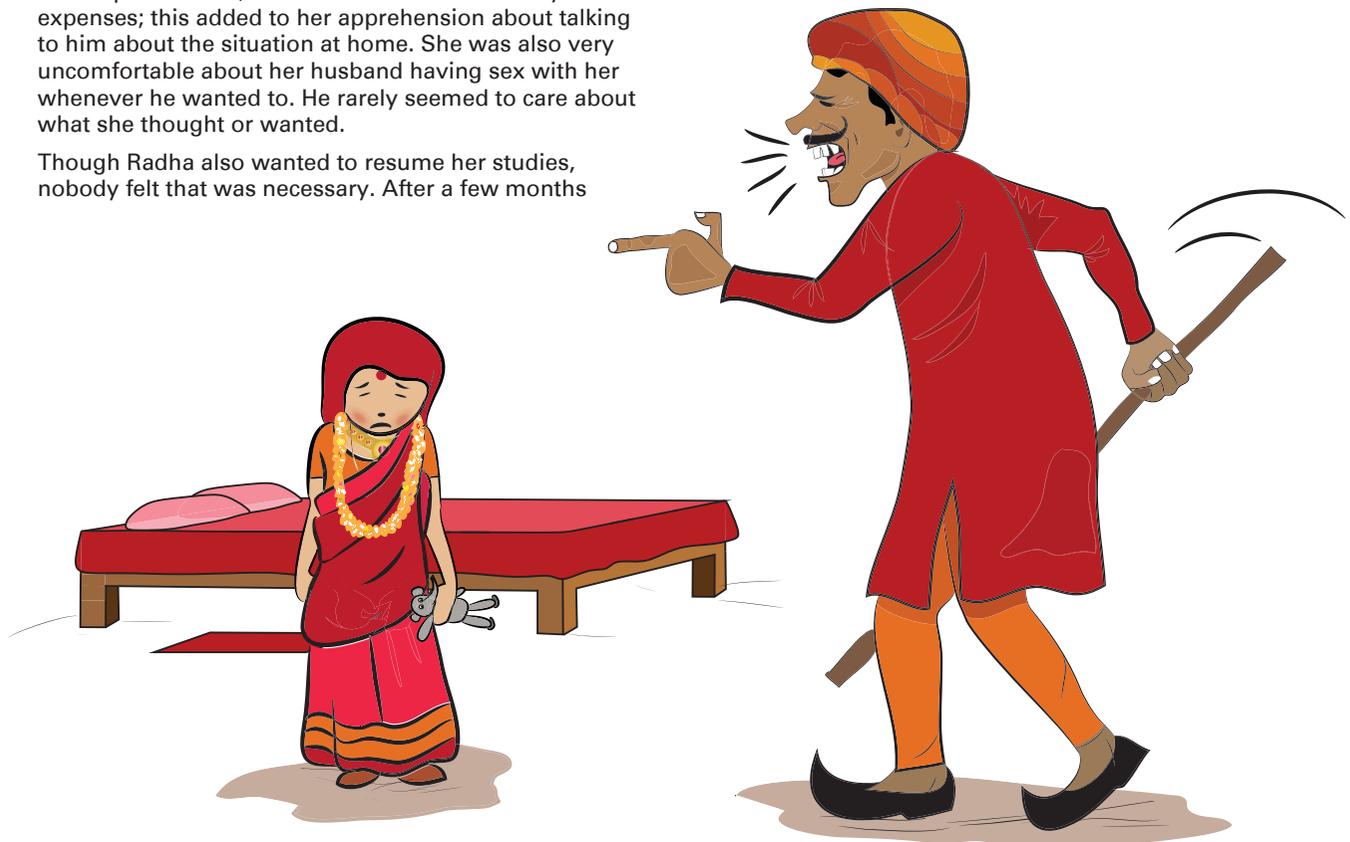
Though Radha also wanted to resume her studies, nobody felt that was necessary. After a few months

Radha learnt that her husband was in another relationship with a colleague at work. She feels that even though he does not beat her, he does not treat her like a human.

In your group discuss:

What are the rights being violated and how?

What is the impact of these violations on the girl?



Annexure II

- **ROLE PLAY – SHAZIA**
- **ROLE PLAY – ANANT**
- **ROLE PLAY – SUNAINA**

ROLE PLAY – SHAZIA

Shazia is 15 years old and a very cheerful girl. She is not exceptional in studies but is quite smart and intelligent and takes part in many completions and activities. Everyone loves to be with Shazia. One day, there is silence in the class; everyone is very quiet. The teacher comments on this but no one says anything. After a while, you look around for Shazia and notice that she is absent. The teacher asks in fun, “Where is the class gramophone today is that why you all are silent?”

Everyone looks glum and then one girl gets up and says, “Sir, Shazia is getting married. Her father said she won’t come to school now onwards”.

Depict the role-play from here on. Show what you think a school teacher should do. It is your choice to depict it the way you like.

ROLE PLAY – ANANT

Anant is 16 and one day he comes to school on a new cycle. Everyone surrounds his new shiny bike, and wants to touch it, ride it. Anant feels very important and jokes with everyone that there are big benefits to being a boy. There is a lot of laughing and teasing. You too compliment him on his new bike but are surprised – Anant’s family can hardly afford a bike like this one and ask him where he got it from. Anant says very cockily, “This is just the beginning sir, just for me agreeing to the relation/rishta. See what happens at my wedding”.

Depict the role-play from here on. Show what you think a school teacher should do. It is your choice to depict it the way you like.

ROLE PLAY – SUNAINA

Sunaina’s parents are very loving and love their daughter. They encourage her to come to school and participate in sports and other activities. One day, they want to take time and meet her teacher. They are very serious and sad. They share with the teacher that the village people and Panchayat leaders are putting tremendous pressure on them to get Sunaina married off – they say that Sunaina should be married off and sent to her marital home, as she is so tall and looks grown up. The leaders feel that because she is so “free”, she is setting wrong examples for other girls in the village who now want to copy her. Sunaina’s parents are now looking towards the teacher for help and say, “Kuch Keejiye”, “Do something”.

Depict the role play from here on. Show what you think a school teacher should do. It is your choice to depict it the way you like.



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