

Over the past five years, the More Than Brides Alliance (MTBA) has leveraged lobby and advocacy efforts to push for girls' sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR).

1305 examples of community-led collective action and engagement to end child marriage (CM) and support adolescents' SRHR documented

7522 community conversations on risks of child marriage and early childbearing took place

2022 influential actors and role models expressed positive views on SRHR and against child marriage during MTBA events or on platforms.

IMPACT: MTBA has successfully influenced policies and policy-making processes at various levels.

83 laws, guidelines and policies were changed improving SRHR and CM

113 alternative policy approaches on SRHR and child marriage were suggested by MTBA to key actors (incl. governmental duty bearers and influencers, global multilateral actors and the private sector). These efforts resulted in

420 cases where important actors endorsed the alternative policy approaches presented by MTBA partners

1371 law enforcement officers, judicial officers and legal aid lawyers were trained on child marriage laws and gender sensitivity – as a way to support awareness-raising and improve the implementation of existing policies and laws

12986 (social)media lobby and advocacy activities took place to raise awareness

INDIVIDUAL AND INTERPERSONAL

INDIA: facilitated the formation of Girls' Federations to enable collectivizing adolescent girls' groups. Girls' Federations undertook advocacy actions to fulfil their demands for SRHR.



MALAWI: MTBA organised an event around the 2018 Day of the African Girl Child, that focused on 'Leave No Child Behind for Africa's Development'. During the event, MTBA provided platforms for girls to voice their issues, influence policy and engage with the audience. Girls directly lobbied officials from the Ministries of Gender, Education, Youth and Health.



MALI: MTBA used peer education as an important tool for life skills education and awareness-raising of young people. MTBA identified and trained peer educators, including girls, on adolescent SRHR issues and communication techniques, and they cascaded their knowledge to youth and held intergenerational dialogues.

COMMUNITY

INDIA: MTBA partners' efforts have led to "child marriage free villages." This initiative grew out of a community-based monitoring tool that MTBA partner VHAI developed and introduced with village health and sanitation committees in Odisha State. The tool includes the indicator, "how many child marriages are being conducted in your village in the last month and action taken." 36 villages managed to achieve no cases of child marriage, after two years of monitoring, and they were declared 'child marriage free.'

MALI: MTBA uses the Gender Action Learning System, a community-led approach aimed at gender transformation and linking change from individual, household, community to macro levels. Girls and young women used GALS tools to develop a vision to improve their lives, analyse their relationships and strengthen their negotiation skills. They then use the tools to engage key family and community members to change power relations that stand in the way of achieving their vision.

NIGER: In 2018, the programme identified and trained ten religious leaders who support ending child marriages and improving adolescent health and education. The Chief of Canton in Maradi and ten village chiefs signed a public engagement not to accept marriages of girls under 18 years of age. MTBA partners in Tillabéri supported eight communes to integrate gender-based violence and girls' education into their community development plans. MTBA partner, ANBEF, supported religious leader to develop Friday sermons on marriage, family planning and the importance of girls' education.

DISTRICT AND STATE

INDIA: MTBA partners Bihar Voluntary Health Association and Voluntary Health Association of India developed a community-based monitoring tool on social accountability in consultation with Village Health Sanitation and Nutrition Committees. Key outcomes were summarised in a brief and presented to district and state-level authorities, which led to authorities committing to drive change (e.g., putting in place monthly health counselling sessions for adolescents).

PAKISTAN: MTBA partner IRC engaged in a lengthy advocacy process with various government education actors, ultimately resulting in approval of a life skills-based education (LSBE) curriculum by the Government of Sindh for use in mainstream education curricula at the district-level in 2018. This enabled the project team to train 120 teachers who provided LSBE sessions in 48 schools in Shikarpur and Larkana.

MALI: A regional workshop in Ségou was organized with 30 community leaders and 30 religious leaders on the conventions and new laws on child marriage in force in Mali. The workshop provided a framework for inter-religious dialogue on the theme of marriage in relation to religious texts. As a result, the community and religious leaders of the seven communes and three circles where MTBA works in Ségou publicly committed to no longer celebrate child marriages.

NIGER: The first National Forum on Child Marriage was organized in June 2019 jointly by MTBA with the National Ombudsman. The Forum brought together girls from Maradi and Tillabéri, customary and religious leaders, civil society, youth and international organisations as well as state representatives to discuss child marriage, the taboos around it, the reasons for the stagnation of progress on key girl-related indicators. As a result of the Forum, the Ombudsman wrote a letter to the President, and a roadmap was agreed upon.

NATIONAL

INDIA: During the MTBA Alliance week in November 2017, MTBA members spoke to girls, religious leaders, community members and other stakeholders and organised a joint-session on advocacy.

MALAWI: MTBA contributed to develop and pass the National Strategy on Ending Child Marriages, which was launched in March 2018. The strategy focuses on changing social and cultural practices, improving girls' access to education and their economic and livelihood empowerment, improving boys and girls' access to SRHR information and services, enforcing policies and laws to end child marriage, and developing strong coordination mechanisms. Following the approval, MTBA has trained law enforcers about the implications of the legal changes.



PAKISTAN: MTBA successfully lobbied then leading party, Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf, to strengthen the country's stance on child protection. This led to the party improving its vision on child protection policies and including new provisions in its manifesto, such as on children's social welfare. It also enabled MTBA to influence key provincial and district level political leaders, by holding them accountable for their election policies and their implementation of child protection policies in Punjab.

NETHERLANDS: Via Simavi, a member of the SRHR Advocacy Group, MTBA was able to advocate for keeping ending child marriage on the agenda of the SRHR community in the Netherlands. E.g., the group drafted a document and call to action to lobby the Dutch parliament. In 2019, as a member of Girls Not Brides The Netherlands, MTBA co-organised a mid-term review event in The Hague to present its results (along with Her Choice and Yes I Do Alliances), with the engagement of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Girls Not Brides International.

(SUB-) REGIONAL

MALI: In the run-up to the 2017 High-Level Meeting in Dakar, Senegal, MTBA influenced the agenda and visit of the AU Special Rapporteur on Child Marriage to Mali. This visit increased the attention for child marriage as an issue of concern and contributed to the drafting of a multi-sectoral National Strategy for the Abandonment of the Practice of Child Marriage. In 2018, MTBA organised workshops on the monitoring and reporting of national recommendations following the visit of the AU's Special Rapporteur.



INTERNATIONAL

MTBA: Throughout MTBA's duration, Alliance members organised conference sessions and panels at international political events, providing opportunities for capacity-strengthening and exchange of relevant knowledge. Online campaigns were also organised during key international days on human rights and sustainable development.



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