



CHILD MARRIAGE

KNOWLEDGE, ATTITUDES AND PERCEPTIONS
AMONG AFFECTED COMMUNITIES IN ALBANIA

CHILD MARRIAGE

THE FORMAL MARRIAGE OR
INFORMAL UNION OF ANY PERSON
UNDER THE AGE OF

18

IS A VIOLATION OF HUMAN
RIGHTS AND THE RIGHTS
OF THE CHILD



WHO ARE THE MARRIED CHILDREN?

- ROMA AND EGYPTIAN
- POOR
- RURAL AND REMOTE
- COMMUNITIES

CHILD MARRIAGE IS A HARMFUL
PRACTICE THAT AFFECTS MAINLY
GIRLS



CHILD MARRIAGE:

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THE STUDY AIMS TO EXPLORE WHETHER CHILD MARRIAGE IS DRIVEN/REINFORCED BY SOCIAL NORMS IN ALBANIA.

This qualitative study provides analysis that explore in-depth the phenomenon of child marriage in Albania, and will better guide mainstreaming of child marriage issues into the country strategies and programmes of government and non-governmental stakeholders, as well as UN agencies. Importantly, the study covers both Roma and non-Roma from four regions across the country.

PEOPLE, ESPECIALLY ROMA AND EGYPTIAN, HAVE PREFERENCE FOR CHILD MARRIAGE, AS A RESULT OF:

SOCIAL EXPECTATIONS

- ● *"If she gets married, and the husband finds out she is not a virgin, not only do they send her back to her family, they also make the family give them money for all the wedding expenses."*
[KII – Roma community social worker]

PERSONAL BELIEFS

- ● *"They'd better have their own children. We won't take care of them our entire life."*
[FGD – Roma mothers/caregivers living in integrated communities]

REALITIES OF LIVING IN POVERTY

- ● *"... [parents] cannot afford to send them [girls] to school, they don't have good enough living conditions because of the economy so they marry them off."*
[FGD – non-Roma young women living in rural communities]

In order to address child marriage, it is necessary to undertake strong policy measures at the central and local level, determining the interventions, related budgets as well as roles and responsibilities of various public entities.

policy measures

economic empowerment

central and local government determine the interventions

girls' empowerment

Prevention

Roma

value of the child **benefits of education** the rights of victims

budget **social inclusion**

public entities
birth registration

Discouraging child marriage

Egyptian

sexual and reproductive health

gender equality

Support

Government

rural development

education and vocational training

'RECOMMENDED APPROACHES'

1.

Sensitising and educating

- Invest in changes in attitudes and behaviours
- Empower girls
- Engage boys and men to speak out against child marriage
- Offer interventions that combine curriculum-based sexuality education with contraceptive promotion to adolescents
- Challenge forced and early marriage myths and beliefs around 'honour' and virginity



2.

Creating alternatives for children other than marriage;

- Invest to lessen the economic burden of adolescents on the family
- Promote access to education for children, especially for girls

3.

Prevention and support for children affected by child marriage

- Make available effective reporting mechanisms
- Improve the capacity of frontline service providers to recognise and combat child marriage through an inter-sectorial approach
- Encourage frontline service providers to support young couples who have become parents to develop life and parenting skills
- Make available and accessible sexual and reproductive health services
- Support affected children and young people to make use of second chance classes
- Prioritise assistance to young couples to find a job and house.