

# Save the Date

## A multi-pronged intervention to address child marriage in Nepal

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PACE

# PACE: Professional and Community Engagement

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- University Initiative for students and staff to engage with local and international university partners
- Restless Development – long standing partner of Macquarie University that hosts students to assist in youth advocacy projects in India and Nepal
- Project on child marriage in Nepal needed summative evaluation, for submission to funder and project partners

# Background of child marriage in Nepal

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- 10% of girls in Nepal get married before they turn 15
- 37% of girls in Nepal get married before they turn 18
- For some castes and in some remote areas 85% of girls get married before they reach 15.



# Consequences of early marriage for girls

- Disrupts girls' educational aspirations and chances of becoming economically self-sufficient
- Diminishes their autonomy to make decisions on their own body and reproductive health
- Increases their vulnerability to gender and domestic violence
- Child marriage fuels the cycle of poverty and perpetuates gender discrimination, violence and power imbalance between genders.



# Why is child marriage so prominent in Nepal?

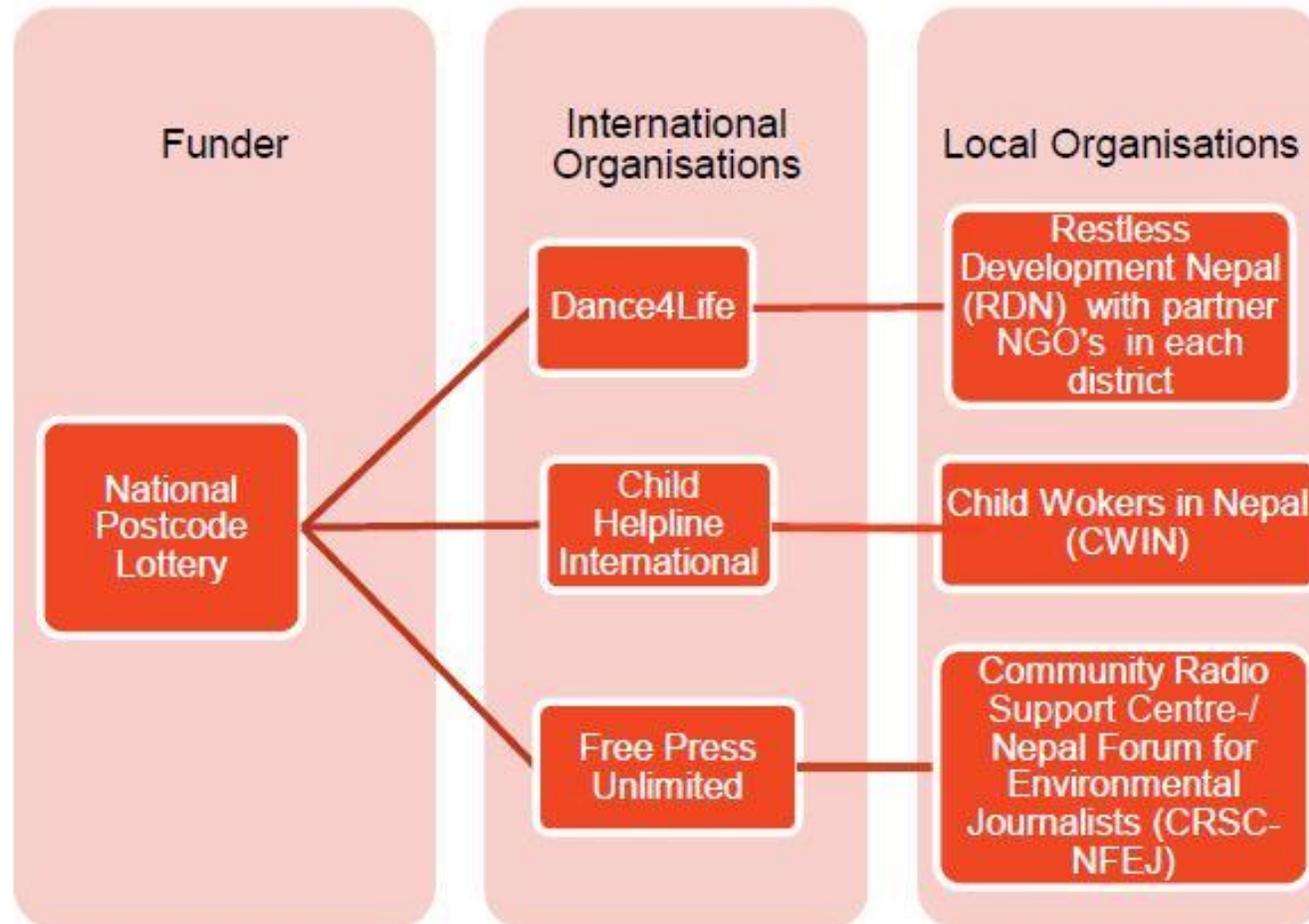
## CONTEXTUAL FACTORS

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- Centrality of marriage in Nepalese culture
- Poverty
- Dowry system
- Family honour
- Intra-caste bride exchange obligations
- Bias towards investing more in boys than girls



# Save the Date's program funder and implementers



# Program's goal and expected outcomes :

BY END OF 2018 GIRLS AND BOYS IN SELECTED DISTRICTS GET MARRIED ACCORDING TO NEPALESE LAW (AFTER TURNING 20)

- Outcome 1:  
Girls and boys from targeted schools have greater capacity to make safe and informed decisions regarding their sexual and reproductive health, with emphasis on delaying marriage
- Outcome 2:  
Girls and boys in targeted areas have a supportive environment to prevent early marriage



## A MULTI-PRONGED APPROACH



- Timeline: April 2015 to June 2018
- Beneficiaries:

#### DANCE4Life

- 90,000 students in over 250 schools and their communities in 7 districts of Nepal
- 342 healthcare providers trained on youth friendly health services
- 557 teachers trained on SRHR education and advocacy for youth
- 463 community leaders participated in information sessions

#### Community Radio Support Centre

- *Mitini* radio drama broadcasted by 57 radio stations covering 85% of the Nepalese Territory

#### CWIN

- Close to 400 child marriage cases handled over the phone between 2015 and 2018

#### Mitini Broadcast Stations



56 Broadcast partner stations

# The Dance4Life Model



Inspire

Educate

Activate

Celebrate



# Evaluation of the program

## 1) Quantitative studies (baseline and endline surveys)

- 150 structured questions
- 15 schools in 3 districts
- 600 year 5-9 students
- .Both student samples considered ratios of female/male and marginalized/non-marginalized students in these schools
  - Indicators measured:
    - Understanding of, and attitude towards early marriage
    - Understanding of sexual and reproductive health
    - Life skills development (communication, self-management, critical thinking)

## 2) Qualitative studies upon program completion to gather insights from students (42), parents (22), teachers (18), health workers (6) and NGO stakeholders (23)

- Focus group discussions
- In-depth interviews
- Most significant change technique



# Overview of Evaluation Results

## QUANTITATIVE FINDINGS

Baseline	Indicator	Endline
2.7	Average rate of drop out of students due to child marriage per school	0.3
38%	% of students who have good knowledge on SRH and rights	73%
67%	% of students with good risk perception of early marriage consequences	92%
74%	% of students with positive attitude against child marriage	92%
79%	% of girls and boys who have good life skills (interpersonal communication, self-management and critical thinking) to promote pro-social behaviour and act against harmful social norms	93%
22%	% of students who have discussed SRHR and child marriage issues with their family, friends, teachers, etc.	38%
71%	% of students that disagree that a child should get married early to pay less dowry	83%
77%	% of students not willing to get married before the legal age	97%
62%	% of students who will advocate to their family and community not to take dowry	80%
65%	% of students who will initiate awareness programs on harmful implications of dowry	82%
70%	% of students who will initiate awareness programs on harmful implications of child marriage	88%
<30 in 2016	No. of calls relating to child marriage in the helpline	>200 in 2018

# Snapshot of quantitative results

## IMPACT OF CULTURAL AND ECONOMIC DETERMINANTS

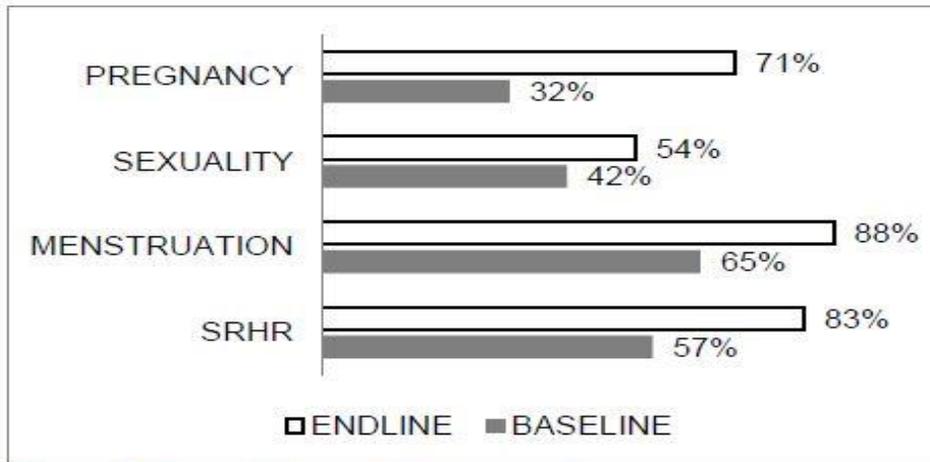


Figure 8 Changes in knowledge per topic

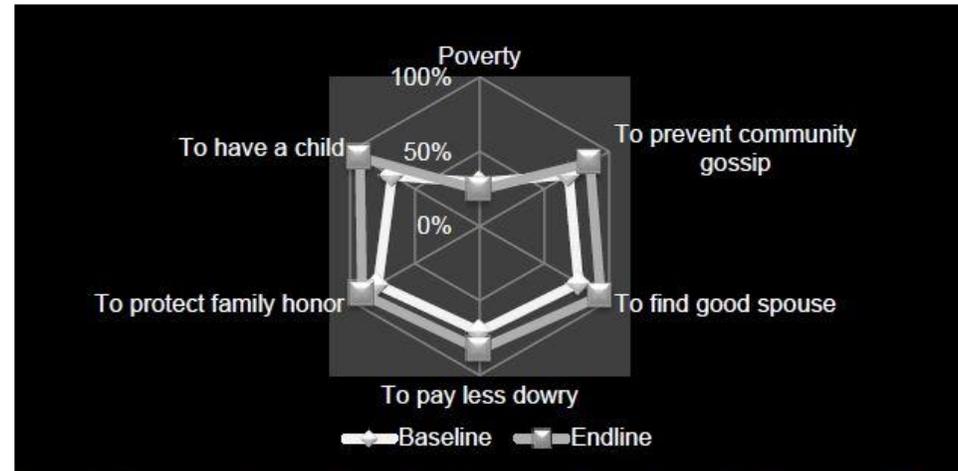


Figure 4 Percentage of respondents who disagree early marriage should be determined by each of the factors

District		BASELINE			ENDLINE		
		YOURSELF	PARENTS	DON'T KNOW	YOURSELF	PARENTS	DON'T KNOW
Bardiya	Male	26.6%	60.5%	12.1%	54.3%	42.9%	2.9%
	Female	24.6%	63.9%	11.5%	44.2%	55.8%	0.0%
	Overall	25.6%	62.2%	11.8%	48.7%	50.0%	1.3%
Kathmandu/Lalitpur	Male	43.8%	47.2%	9.0%	52.5%	45.0%	2.5%
	Female	29.2%	56.2%	14.6%	43.8%	51.7%	4.5%
	Overall	36.5%	51.7%	11.8%	47.9%	48.5%	3.6%
Sunsari	Male	39.6%	45.5%	13.9%	64.6%	35.4%	0.0%
	Female	38.3%	46.7%	15.0%	36.2%	58.6%	5.2%
	Overall	38.9%	46.2%	14.5%	49.1%	48.1%	2.8%
OVERALL		33%	54%	13%	48.5%	49.0%	2.6%

Table 3 Percentage of responses on who should decide when to get married

# Overview of Evaluation results

## QUALITATIVE FINDINGS: STUDENTS

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*'Early marriage can result in early and unsafe pregnancies because the couple doesn't have knowledge regarding contraceptive or family planning.'* (Female, GR8, Kathmandu /Lalitpur)

*'After marriage the dowry money is spent very fast because the husband's family has many debts. They become even poorer.'* (Male, GR7-8, Sunsari)

*'It is parents who make decisions on behalf of their children, so I try to share all the information regarding child marriage.'* (Female, YR9-10, Sunsari)

*I think the kind of engagement young people like us experienced in the program was the best part of the program. For example, working as part of a team to organise street drama and other events* (Male, GR9-10 Bardiya)



# Overview of Evaluation results

## QUALITATIVE FINDINGS TEACHERS, PARENTS, COMMUNITY LEADERS

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*We didn't know what is the right age to get married, and we didn't know the consequences of marrying late or early. But now we can see slogans and information around our communities and this has impacted upon us. Now we know it is illegal and we know about the consequences” (Father, Bardiya)*

*‘We as guardians are still not very open-minded about SRHR...We realise it is our duty to initiate these conversations with our children and create the environment for this. At least we have become aware this is a problem (Mother, Bardiya)*

*Students are more open about sharing knowledge about SHR and menstruation, and they see students share sanitary pads, and students come to the teachers themselves to talk about the issues (Male, Teacher, Sunsari)*

*Before we were health providers, now we are activist, we are sharing the information about policies, consequences of child marriage, and consequences of delaying marriage.’ (Health Worker, Sunsari)*



# Contextual challenges

## CHALLENGES TO SUSTAINABILITY OF RESULTS

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- ❑ Change in age of legal marriage from 18 to 20
- ❑ Decentralisation policies in Nepal created uncertainty and confusion around law enforcement and community development support from local government.
- ❑ Engrained cultural practices and beliefs around marriage and women
- ❑ Ongoing poverty and limited economic development opportunities, especially for women
- ❑ Elope marriage and social media

# Areas for improvement

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- Length of program
- Peer educator support
- Women's empowerment
- Economic development
- Support and engagement from local government
- Clarity around legal age of marriage and law enforcement
- Better coordination between consortium partners



# Thank you

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