



**ENDING CHILD MARRIAGES:
How can the law help?**

A Windy Day in Southern Africa

ERADICATING
CHILD MARRIAGES IN
THE SADC REGION
#WAITTOWED

WAIT TO
WED

IT BREAKS MY
HEART. THEY
BECOME LIKE
PROPERTY...

...SOME OF
THEM ARE
SOLD OFF LIKE
POSSESSIONS,
LIKE CATTLE.

AND THEIR HUMAN
RIGHTS TOO!

THEY HAVE A RIGHT
TO EDUCATION AND
PROTECTION FROM
EXPLOITATION
AND ABUSE.

BRRR.

BUT YOU'RE RIGHT. AND
IN THE PROCESS, WE
FORGET THAT VITAL
CONCEPT...

...THE BEST INTERESTS
OF THE CHILD.

AND IMPORTANTLY,
THEY HAVE EVERY
RIGHT TO PROTECT
THEIR SEXUAL
AND REPRODUCTIVE
HEALTH.

...AND TO GET ACCESS
TO SUCH HEALTH
SERVICES.

THAT'S A VERY IMPORTANT POINT, BECAUSE
I KNOW WHAT HAPPENS TO THESE GIRLS.
MY MOTHER WAS A CHILD BRIDE.

SHE HAD ME
AND MY SISTERS
WHEN SHE WAS
BASICALLY STILL A
CHILD HERSELF.

JUST THINK OF
HOW DIFFICULT HER
LIFE WAS, AND ALL
THE OPPORTUNITIES
SHE MISSED!



I HAVE A SCHOOL FRIEND WHO GOT MARRIED OFF. NOW AT MY AGE, AND SHE'S HAD MANY PREGNANCIES ALREADY.

SHO, HER POOR HEALTH!

BUT HER HUSBAND IS NOT GIVING HER ANY SAY IN THE MATTER.

SORRY TO ASK, BUT IS HE VIOLENT TO HER?...

... I MEAN, OFTEN THESE GIRLS FACE A HIGHER RISK OF VIOLENT RELATIONSHIPS.



NOT THAT I KNOW OF. BUT IN THAT HOUSEHOLD, SHE'S GOT VERY LITTLE POWER TO MAKE DECISIONS.

AND I BET YOU HER EDUCATION AND HEALTH SUFFERED BECAUSE SHE HAD TO LEAVE SCHOOL EARLY

SADLY, YES, SO IT'S UNLIKELY SHE'LL BE ABLE TO MAKE A LIVING ALL ON HER OWN.

...WE KNOW THESE GIRLS ARE FAR LESS SECURE IN THEIR MARRIAGES AND LIVING ARRANGEMENTS.

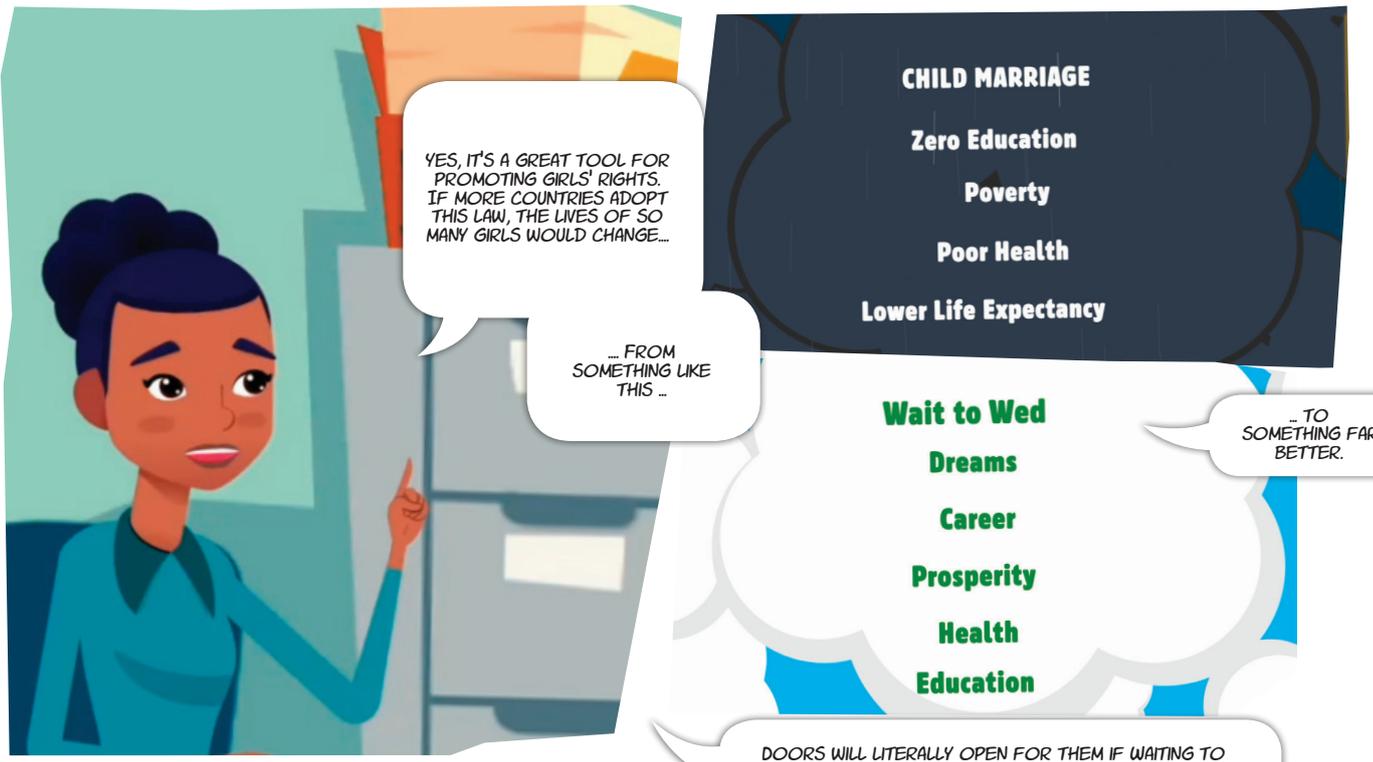
AND WHAT IF HE DECIDES HE'S TIRED OF HER? HE COULD SIMPLY THROW HER OUT...



WELL, THAT MEANS WE'VE GOT OUR WORK CUT OUT FOR US: EDUCATION, HEALTH AND RIGHTS!

YIP. WE MUST CHAMPION THE SADC MODEL LAW ON ERADICATING CHILD MARRIAGE IN EVERY COUNTRY IN THE SADC REGION.

I'VE LOOKED AT IT PROPERLY, AND IT EXPLAINS EXACTLY HOW AND WHY WE NEED LAWS AND POLICIES ON CHILD MARRIAGE.



YES, IT'S A GREAT TOOL FOR PROMOTING GIRLS' RIGHTS. IF MORE COUNTRIES ADOPT THIS LAW, THE LIVES OF SO MANY GIRLS WOULD CHANGE...

... FROM SOMETHING LIKE THIS ...

CHILD MARRIAGE

- Zero Education
- Poverty
- Poor Health
- Lower Life Expectancy

Wait to Wed

- Dreams
- Career
- Prosperity
- Health
- Education

... TO SOMETHING FAR BETTER.

DOORS WILL LITERALLY OPEN FOR THEM IF WAITING TO WED UNTIL LATER IN LIFE BECOMES THE NORM!



BY DELAYING MARRIAGE, INSTEAD OF POVERTY AND INSECURITY, ...

... THEY COULD ENJOY A LIFE OF LEARNING, GOOD HEALTH, AND PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT.



THEY CAN CHOOSE IF THEY MARRY, WHO THEY MARRY, AND WHEN THEY MARRY...

THEY ALSO CAN CHOOSE TO HAVE CHILDREN, AND HOW MANY.

AND HAVE THE CHANCE TO BE EMPLOYED IN A DECENT JOB AND EVEN WORK TOWARDS A SECURE OLD AGE.



HEY, FORGET ABOUT OLD AGE, FANAKA, THINK PRODUCTIVE LIFE!...

... THESE WOMEN WILL TAKE THEIR RIGHTFUL PLACE IN SOCIETY IF CULTURE, LAW AND TRADITION ENSHRINED WAITING TO WED AS THE NORM.

End.

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The Global Partnership to End Child Marriage

