

# Maturity Model Desk Review, Assessment and Action Planning

COUNTRY: NEPAL

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Development of maturity model and assessment  
tools for harmful practices policies

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# Acknowledgment

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For more information about the tool, please contact Joseph Mabirizi(jmabirizi@unicef.org)

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# List of acronyms

FGM/C	Female Genital Mutilation/ Cutting
GPECM	Global Programme on the Elimination of Child Marriage
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund

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# I. Background

Nepal has one of the highest rates of child marriage in Asia, for both girls and boys. According to the DHS (2019), 13 per cent of women aged 25-49 were married by the age of 15, while only 3 per cent of men married that young. 52 per cent of women were married by age 18, compared with just 19 per cent of men. 71 per cent of women aged 25-49 were married by age 20, far higher than the 38 per cent of men who were married by that age.

While child marriage is still common, cases are rarely reported. Growing evidence points to a developing type of child marriage, which is self-initiated marriage, or elopement. The Civil (Code) Act, 2074 (2017) outlines that parties must be 20 years of age to solemnize a marriage and eliminates the clause that enabled girls to marry younger if their parents consented.

Girls who experience child marriage are often from lower socioeconomic groups, uneducated, from families that practice dowry, and live in rural areas. Child marriage is closely linked to the practice of dowry, which increases with girls' age and education. Child marriage has been associated with lower educational attainment, economic opportunities, and health outcomes among young girls. The practice and its consequences violate human rights and are a barrier to sustainable development.

The Government of Nepal has demonstrated its commitment to women's and children's rights through progressive international treaties and agreements and has updated legal provisions to address child marriage. Any person involved in solemnizing a child marriage can be punished by law, with more severe sentencing and fines the younger the child.

However, challenges with enforcement and addressing deeply rooted social norms remain, signalling that legislation against child marriage is not enough to curb the practice.

## Purpose

This report aims to accelerate progress towards the SDG target of eliminating harmful practices. A draft maturity model, or framework, for harmful practices, with articulated benchmarks, was developed for review and feedback from country-level stakeholders. The model provides an integrated strategy for measuring processes, systems, services and information, based on a public policy management (PPM) approach.<sup>1</sup> It is intended to complement and augment the Global Partnership Framework on Elimination of Child Marriage (GPECM) and the Joint Partnership on the Abandonment of Female Genital Mutilation (JPFGM).

Based on the draft maturity model and assessment tools, rapid assessments were conducted in 12 countries<sup>2</sup> to measure the level of maturity of their processes, systems and services to eliminate harmful practices. Draft action plans were developed based on identified actions (short, medium and long-term), to inform existing national action plans and advocacy strategies.

Subsequently, a desk review was conducted and the draft maturity model was completed and prototyped. This report presents the draft findings. This reflects the inception stage of sensitizing country level stakeholders on the potential utility of a comparable maturity model to accelerate action for change across 12 countries.



## II. Methodology

The desk review comprises core documents shared by the country including various documents such as laws, policies, strategies, guidance and standards, monitoring and evaluation reports which touch on the topic of harmful practices. Furthermore, competency frameworks from other countries are included to provide insight into the format, methodology and content of harmful practices frameworks that have been developed in other contexts. The findings of the review will be included in an Appendix to complement the findings of this desk review and will help to inform the strengths and gaps in harmful practices programming.

The desk review was completed by using several key questions or 'lenses' defined by the six operational/ functions areas and sub-domains of the draft maturity model on harmful practices. The questions posed to answer these goals include the following:

- 1. What is the effectiveness of government structures, including coordination across government departments, between centralization levels, and between formal and informal actors?
- 2. What is the effectiveness of the legal and regulatory framework, as well as specific policies related to prevention and elimination of harmful practices?
- 3. What is the extent to which key stakeholders, including children and women, are involved in planning interventions for the prevention and response to harmful practices?
- 4. What are the sources, adequacy and availability of funds and human resources to support elimination of harmful practices?
- 5. What is the availability and access to prevention and response services for women and children most-at-risk of harmful practices?
- 6. What is the effectiveness of data collection and monitoring and evaluation systems, whether it is being done nationally into the situation for children and women at risk of harmful practices, and into programmes addressing their needs?

## III. Key findings

The key findings of the desk review and the review of the draft completed maturity model are organized according to the above six areas, which relate to the model's intermediate outcome areas. Where information was limited or gaps were identified, this is mentioned. Each of the six

areas comprises a number of sub-domains. For example, the governance and coordination structures area includes three sub-domains: political commitment, coordination structures, and national action plans. Each one is rated in the maturity model from 1 to 4.

**1. Weak - Building**    **2. Average - Enhancing**    **3. Good - Integrating**    **4. Excellent - Mature**





## Governance and coordination structures

**Measurement standard for mature rating: The country has a strong political commitment to eliminate harmful practices, with a high-level declaration that spells out its commitments. There are national multisectoral coordination structures in place, with an institutionally mandated lead, which meets routinely. A plan of action sets clearly defined targets aligned to national statistics frameworks.**

A1. Political commitment: There is strong political commitment to eliminate harmful practices. During the 2014 London Girls Summit, the Minister of Women, Children and Senior Citizens made a commitment to end child marriage in Nepal by 2030. This commitment was later reflected in key government policy documents and led to the formulation of the National Strategy on Ending Child Marriage. However, the coverage of the commitment is inconsistent across provincial governments. As a result, more awareness-raising and engagement is needed at provincial levels. Government leaders routinely chair meetings on ending child marriage in some provinces. However, these meetings are ad hoc, not systematically organized, and minutes are not routinely taken. Budget allocations for harmful practices interventions are made at a national level, but more needs to be done at a decentralized level.

A.2 Coordination structures: The Ministry of Women, Children and Senior Citizens is responsible for the delivery of harmful practices services at central level. However, this Ministry is not well resourced either in terms of human or financial resources. The National Strategy for the Elimination of Child Marriages (2015) outlined coordination and implementation mechanisms, but these are not functioning well and are ad hoc. The frequency of meetings is not consistent across provinces and national level. The meetings are chaired by the Ministry of Women, Children and Senior Citizens at the federal level and by the Ministry of Social Development at the provincial level, as mandated by the strategy.

A.3 National action plans: The National Strategy for the Elimination of Child Marriage (2015) mentions that child marriage is a violation of human rights but is weak in advocating for the promotion and protection of human rights. A costed action plan was developed, containing a monitoring and evaluation (M&E) framework along with a timeline and clear indications of responsibility across ministries and departments. However, the plan has not been widely disseminated as it was never endorsed by the Government. It also fails to spell out funding sources. National targets and related indicators are included in the national statistics framework but are not routinely monitored.

Name of Country	Overall Score	Sub-Domains	Specific Score
Governance & Coordination	2,7	A1: Political commitment	3
		A2: Coordination structures	2,5
		A3: National Action Plans	2,6

## Policy and legislative framework

**Measurement standard for mature rating: Laws and policies exist to specifically protect women and girls, including the most-at-risk, from harmful practices. These are implemented and enforced at national and sub-national levels, and routine monitoring and review mechanisms are in place to ensure that laws are in line with international human rights standards.**

B1. Legislation, policies and implementation mechanisms for harmful practices: The Government of Nepal has demonstrated its commitment to women's and children's rights through progressive international treaties and agreements, and has updated legal provisions to address child marriage. The Children's Regulation 2022 aims to protect women and girls from harmful practices. Other relevant legislation includes the Act Relating to Children 2018, the National Civil (Code) Act 2017, and National Criminal (Code) Act 2017.

The Civil (Code) Act, 2074 (2017) outlines that parties must be 20 years of age to solemnize a marriage, and eliminates the clause that enabled girls to marry younger if their parents consented. Any person involved in solemnizing a child marriage can be punished by law, with more severe sentencing and fines the younger the child. In addition, the Constitution of Nepal explicitly prohibits child marriage, calling it a punishable offence, and establishes victims' right to compensation for violations from perpetrators. There have been ongoing reviews of laws resulting in changes to the Act Relating to Children 2018 and the National Penal (Code) Act 2017, which criminalizes child marriage.

Challenges remain, with marriage laws not being appropriately enforced due to deeply rooted social norms. There is also a lack of consistent registration of marriages, which makes the issue harder to tackle.

Name of Country	Overall Score	Sub-Domains	Specific Score
Policy and Legislation	3,5	B1: Legislation, policies and implementation mechanisms for harmful practices	3,5

## Engagement and participation

### Measurement standard for mature rating:

**An independent complaints mechanism accepts complaints by or on behalf of women refused or receiving harmful practices services, and replies within a stipulated timeframe. Civil society organizations are extensively engaged in strengthening political commitment, planning and budgeting processes, and monitoring and reporting on harmful practices. Further support comes from government-supported engagement forums for women, youth and children and community-based protection mechanisms that engage with women and children. The effectiveness of these mechanisms is monitored through fully functional accountability mechanisms.**

C1. Independent complaint mechanism: The Human Rights Commission has a Gender and Social Inclusion Division, which accepts complaints on behalf of women and children.

C2. Civil Society engagement, including women and children: Overall, participation of key stakeholders is fair to good. There has not been a recent national meeting of stakeholders to formally discuss the situation of children and women at risk from harmful practices. There is engagement of civil society organizations (CSOs) in issues relating to elimination of harmful practices with vibrant women groups, and CSOs are included in the planning and budgeting processes. However, the role of women's groups is limited in monitoring and reporting, and coverage is limited at decentralized levels. There is provision for child representation and participation in health and school management committees. However, these provisions are mostly on paper, and there is a lack of proper engagement with service providers. Provisions also exist for child participation in local government planning process, but it is unclear whether these are implemented and, if so, how effective they are.

C.3 Community-based mechanisms for harmful practices prevention: Community-based mechanisms are in place to support the elimination of harmful practices, mainly led and supported by CSOs. A journalist code of conduct regulates reporting on vulnerable children, but its use and application by media sources seems to be limited.

Name of Country	Overall Score	Sub-Domains	Specific Score
Engagement and participation	2,5	C1: Independent complaint mechanism exists for children and women	3
		C2: Civil society engagement, including women and children	2,6
		C3: Community-based mechanisms for harmful practices prevention	2

## Financing and human resources

**Measurement standard for mature rating: Adequate financial resources have been allocated by the Government and its partners, with the Government meeting the majority of the costs. The funding is provided on time and is accessible to the relevant sectoral ministries, and regular reviews of allocation take place. Routine capacity building is provided to key stakeholders with supportive supervision services on harmful practices with significant sustained coverage.**

D1. Financing of harmful practices services: There are limited budgetary commitments for the elimination of harmful practices, and these are mainly provided by development partners and CSOs. There is no specific government budget allocation for eliminating harmful practices, although the Government does allocate finances to the social sector, which covers various protection aspects, including harmful practices to some extent. The action plan, which has not been endorsed by the Government, does not specify resource allocation.

D2. National budget establishment: There is no specific budget line for the elimination of harmful practices, and no guidelines on costing, budgeting or applied ceilings.

D3. National budget execution: While there is no specific budget for harmful practices, there is a government budget for protection issues, but there are no details available. It is unclear whether or not the funding is readily available to the allocated ministry.

D4. National budget amount: There is no allocation for harmful practices services, and no information is available on the amount allocated for broader protection services.

D.5 National budget monitoring and review: There are no efforts under way to track or analyse harmful practices budgets. Systematic analysis of public financing is weak.

D6 Human resources: Formal training has been provided on preventing and responding to risk factors, but there are no details on the target audience or coverage.

Name of Country	Overall Score	Sub-Domains	Specific Score
Financing & HR	1,7	D1: Financing of harmful practices services	1,4
		D2: National budget establishment	1,8
		D3: National budget execution	2
		D4: National budget amount	1
		D5: National budget monitoring and review	2,5
		D6: Human resources	2,7

Access to services

**Measurement standard for mature rating: Clearly defined and gender-responsive standard operating procedures (SOPs) or protocols for the elimination of harmful practices are regularly reviewed and revised to adapt to the emerging situation. There is an excellent awareness of harmful practices among policymakers. Government-led and funded prevention and response services, including integrated case management and referral services, are accessible at national and sub-national level, and are user-friendly and gender-responsive.**

E1: Availability of standard operating procedures and/or protocols for harmful practices services: There are SOPs in place, but implementation is ad hoc at best, often constrained by a lack of human or financial resources. There are also key gaps in knowledge regarding referrals due to frequent staff changes.

E.2 Understanding and articulation of harmful practices systems: There are formal awareness-raising and education programmes about harmful practices, but coverage remains a key challenge. To address this, media is increasingly being used to reach remote populations. Deeply rooted social norms encourage child marriage, and significant behaviour change communication is needed to raise awareness of the negative impacts of child marriage.

E3: Modelling, testing and scaling of harmful practices services: The Government is increasing investments in harmful practices services in various parts of the country, which are mainly government-funded.

E4: Availability of harmful practices services, case management and referral systems: A Child Protection Information Management System (CPIMS+) is currently being rolled out. A child bench and child psychologist are provided for children in conflict with the law. The coverage of prevention services is not widespread, and there are issues of quality and child- and gender-sensitivity.

Data collection, monitoring and evaluation

**Measurement standard for mature rating: Administrative data systems exist as part of a broader national statistics system, which regularly generates gender- and age-disaggregated data on harmful practices. This includes information on hard-to-reach populations. Data are regularly used for policy, planning and monitoring of programmes. Data security and governance mechanisms, such as legislation, ensure confidentiality. Harmful practices issues are routinely captured through population, longitudinal and/or cross-sectional surveys, which inform the design of prevention and response service interventions. Data is centrally coordinated by the national statistics offices with relevant ministries and agencies.**

F1: Administrative data systems and monitoring to routinely generate data on harmful practices: The DHS (2016) remains the most authoritative tool for collecting information on child marriage. Apart from this, there are few standardized tools, and data is collected in an ad hoc manner. The civil registration system can disaggregate by most categories but is weak on age disaggregation as it only considers below five and above five years for children. Legal services collect administrative data, including some on harmful practices.

F2: Data security and governance: The Children's Regulation (2078) of 2021 includes information on data governance which legislates for data collection, transfer of data, quality recordkeeping and roles and responsibilities.

F3: Research and surveys: Data relating to child marriage is captured in the Demographic Health Survey (2016) and the Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey (2019). There is also a national census (2021).

Name of Country	Overall Score	Sub-Domains	Specific Score
Access to Services	2,7	E1: Availability of Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs)and/or protocols for harmful practices services	2
		E2: Understanding and articulation of harmful practices system	3
		E3: Modelling testing and scaling of harmful practices services	3
		E4: Availability of harmful practices services, case management and referral systems	2,8

Name of Country	Overall Score	Sub-Domains	Specific Score
Data collection, monitoring and evaluation	3,2	F1: Administrative data systems and monitoring to routinely generate data on harmful practices	2
		F2: Data security and governance	4
		F3: Research and surveys	3



## IV. Prioritization of actions for Nepal

### Governance & Coordination

#### A1 Political commitment.

Rating: 3

- Short Term (1-2 yrs)**
- Increase awareness-raising in some of the less prevalent areas on HPs.
  - Additional funds are required. Utilization of funds at decentralized level should be improved

- Medium Term (2-5 yrs)**
- Support development of a coordination framework for harmful practices

#### A2 Coordination structures.

Rating: 2.5

- Short Term (1-2 yrs)**
- Advocate to strengthen links with other national/sub-national bodies with added responsibility and budget for addressing harmful practices
  - Advocate for the Government to strengthen coordination mechanisms
  - Advocate for federal and provincial governments to develop SOPs for coordination
  - Advocate for federal and provincial governments to systemize

- Medium Term (2-5 yrs)**
- Develop SOP/regulations

#### A3 National Action Plans.

Rating: 2.6

- Short Term (1-2 yrs)**
- Need for significant change to include elements of federal priorities in the action plan as a result of devolution
  - Advocate for the Government to update the draft action plan with clarity on sources of funding
  - Support the Government in revision of monitoring the indicators

- Medium Term (2-5 yrs)**
- Advocate for the Government to develop, endorse and widely disseminate the action plan
  - Continue to influence the Government to advocate for the promotion and protection of human rights

### Policy and Legislation

#### B1 Legislation, policies and implementation mechanisms for harmful practices.

Rating: 1

- Short Term (1-2 yrs)**
- Continue advocacy for increased resource allocation
  - Increase awareness at provincial and local government level about the national safeguarding policy

- Medium Term (2-5 yrs)**
- Advocate for increased funding and better intra government coordination on the enforcement of laws

### Engagement and participation

#### C1 Independent complaint mechanism exists for children and women.

Rating: 3

- Short Term (1-2 yrs)**
- Increase community awareness about the independent complaints procedures

#### C2 Civil society engagement, including women and children.

Rating: 2.6

- Short Term (1-2 yrs)**
- Advocate for the Ministry of Women, Children, and Senior Citizens (which has the convening power) to systematically call for meetings
  - Continue to engage with CSO groups
  - Advocate for the inclusion of CSOs in the reporting process
  - Continue to support the strengthening of monitoring tools used by the Government
  - Advocate for and support the Government to convene a national stakeholder meeting on child marriage

- Medium Term (2-5 yrs)**
- Systemization/harmonization of messaging targeting top leaders
  - Systematize inclusion of CSO data in the reporting process
  - Strengthen existing mechanisms to ensure children's and women's views are effectively communicated to the Government at national/sub-national/local level.

- Long Term (5+ yrs)**
- Create/ formalize a CSO and stakeholders forum

#### C3 Community-based mechanisms for harmful practices prevention.

Rating: 2

- Short Term (1-2 yrs)**
- Dissemination of the journalist code of conduct among media practitioners

- Medium Term (2-5 yrs)**
- Engage the national media association to self-regulate use of the guidelines
  - Advocate for government recognition of existing community-based mechanisms

## Financing & HR

### D1 Financing of harmful practices services.

Rating: 1.4

- Short Term (1-2 yrs)**
- Continue to advocate for increased government funding of prevention and response to harmful practices services

### D2 National budget establishment.

Rating: 1.8

- Short Term (1-2 yrs)**
- Provide technical assistance to the Government in budgeting for harmful practices prevention and response programmes
  - Encourage the Government to widen participation in the budgeting process
  - Provide technical assistance to the Government on the budgeting process for harmful practices services
  - Induct new government authorities in their role in implementing the national action plan

### D3 National budget execution.

Rating: 2

- Short Term (1-2 yrs)**
- Provide technical assistance on the budgeting process

### D4 National budget amount.

Rating: 1

- Short Term (1-2 yrs)**
- Provide technical assistance on the budgeting process

### D5 National budget monitoring and review.

Rating: 2.5

- Short Term (1-2 yrs)**
- Provide technical assistance on the budgeting process

### D6 Human resources.

Rating: 2.7

- Short Term (1-2 yrs)**
- Follow up on training provided and organize new training for newly recruited staff
  - Provide training for newly recruited local government staff

## Access to Services

### E1 Availability of Standard Operating Procedures and/or protocols for harmful practices services.

Rating: 2

- Short Term (1-2 yrs)**
- Advocate for increased funding for case management implementation.

### E2 Understanding and articulation of harmful practices system.

Rating: 3

- Short Term (1-2 yrs)**
- Advocate for increased funds to be allocated for awareness-raising
  - Advocate for increased government funding and provision of dedicated human resources for prevention and response programming

### E3 Modelling testing and scaling of harmful practices services.

Rating: 3

- Short Term (1-2 yrs)**
- Continue advocating for and providing technical assistance to government monitoring and reporting of progress

### E4 Availability of harmful practices services, case management and referral systems.

Rating: 2.8

- Short Term (1-2 yrs)**
- Advocate for increased coverage of children's courts
  - Advocate for increased coverage of harmful practices services

## Data collection, M&E

### F1 Administrative data systems and monitoring to routinely generate data on harmful practices.

Rating: 2.5

- Short Term (1-2 yrs)**
- Strengthen the government data collection and management system on harmful practices
  - Strengthen government capacity to systematize data sources on harmful practices

### F2 Data security and governance.

Rating: 4

-

### F3 Research and surveys.

Rating: 3

-



## Appendix A: Desk review

### No. 1 Literature review

#### Name of document:

United Nations, Literature review on Harmful Practices in Nepal, 2021, <https://nepal.unfpa.org/en/publications/literature-review-harmful-practices-nepal>

The review is published by the United Nations (UN) Harmful Practices Working Group, Nepal, chaired by UN Women and the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), with technical support of colleagues from the United Nations Resident Coordinator's Office.

It acts as a resource across sectors to better understand five harmful practices and their impact, namely:

- caste-based discrimination
- menstrual restrictions, including chhaupadi
- child marriage
- dowry and dowry-related violence
- witchcraft accusations and persecution

#### Child marriage:

While the prevalence of child marriage in Nepal is on a declining path, according to 2014 data, of women aged 20–49 years, 18 per cent were married before the age of 15 and 48.5 per cent were married before their eighteenth birthday. Dowry has been linked to perpetuating the practice

of child marriage in Nepal. Younger girls require lower dowries, which incentivizes early marriage.

While child marriage is still common, cases are rarely reported. Growing evidence points to a developing type of child marriage: self-initiated marriage, or elopement. The Civil (Code) Act, 2074 (2017) outlines that parties must be 20 years of age to solemnize a marriage and eliminates the clause that enabled girls to marry younger if their parents consented.

Any person involved in solemnizing a child marriage can be punished by law, with more severe sentencing and fines the younger the child. Those who experience child marriage are often girls from lower socioeconomic groups, uneducated, from families that practice dowry, Madheshi or low caste, follow Hindu or Muslim religions, live in rural areas, and are concentrated in the western mountains, mid-western hills, or central Tarai.

Child marriage is closely linked to the practice of dowry, the amount of which increases with girls' age and education. Child marriage has been associated with lower educational attainment, economic opportunities, and health outcomes among young girls. The practice and its consequences violate human rights and are a barrier to sustainable development.

#### Snapshot of the issues

Legal status	Marriage below the age of 20 for both boys and girls is illegal under civil code 2074 (2017) (implemented in 2018) is a punishable offense[108]
Prevalence of child marriage among women aged 20-49 years (2014 data)	18 percent were married before age 15 48.5 percent were married before age 18[8]
Median age of marriage in Nepal	17.9 years[109]
Cases of child marriage reported to police (1996-2018)	400 cases[93][110]
Percentage of child marriage cases that are self-initiated (i.e. elopement)	Unknown

The Government of Nepal has demonstrated its commitment to women's and children's rights through progressive international treaties and agreements, and has updated legal provisions to address child marriage. However, challenges with enforcement and addressing deeply rooted social norms prevail, signalling that legislation against child marriage is not enough to curb the practice.

The Constitution of Nepal explicitly prohibits child marriage, calling it a punishable offence and establishes victims' right to compensation for violations from perpetrators.

Marriage laws are not appropriately enforced, which is likely due to the overarching belief that marriage is a family matter, rather than a matter of the state. There is also a lack of consistent registration of marriages, which makes the issue harder to tackle.

### No. 2 National strategy

#### Name of document:

Ministry of Women, Children and Social Welfare, Government of Nepal, National Strategy for Ending Child Marriage 2015.

- Objectives
- Strategic directions
- Implementation, coordination and monitoring and evaluation

The strategy includes 13 chapters:

- Background
- International and regional commitments
- National legal provision and policy
- Current scenario
- Process of formulation of the strategy and findings of the study
- Rationale for formulation of national strategy
- Principles of the national strategy
- Vision
- Mission
- Goal

#### Impact of child marriage:

Child marriage deprives children, both boys and girls, not only of their fundamental rights but also of the right to choose their destiny. Particularly with reference to girls and women, child marriage not only violates a specific right, but it also creates conditions for ensnaring them in the vicious cycle of further violence by creating a series of rights violations. Child marriage is responsible for short duration of marital life; conceiving while still biologically immature gives rise to various health-related problems; and girls and women become further victimized due to added violence such as gender violence, sexual violence, child labour, trafficking and so on. Over a period of time, child marriage, by undermining the role and participation of women in social development processes, becomes an impediment to building a civilized, cultured and equitable society.

#### Legal safeguards:

The Government of Nepal (GoN) reinforced its commitment to act against child marriage by co-sponsoring the Human Rights Council Resolution on Child, Early and Forced Marriage in 2013. Similarly, at the high-level summit against child, early and forced marriage and female genital

mutilation, held in England on 22 July, 2014, the GoN expressed its commitment to work to end child marriage in Nepal by 2020.

The Nepal Constitution, through Article 39, Sub-article (5), has guaranteed child rights by prohibiting child marriage, trafficking and abduction or hostage-taking. These acts have been prohibited by making them punishable offences under federal law, and the right of child victims to receive compensation from the perpetrator has been guaranteed.

**Key strategic directions to eliminate child marriage include:**

- Empowerment of girl children and adolescent girls

- Ensuring quality education for girl children and adolescent girls
- Participation of boys, adolescent boys and men
- Mobilization of family and community
- Service delivery
- Strengthening and implementation of laws and policies

**No. 3 Information brochure**

**Name of document:**

UNFPA/UNICEF, Ending Child Marriage in Nepal, 2017, [www.unicef.org/nepal/media/401/file/Ending%20Child%20Marriage%20in%20Nepal.pdf](http://www.unicef.org/nepal/media/401/file/Ending%20Child%20Marriage%20in%20Nepal.pdf)

Nepal has one of the highest rates of child marriage in Asia – for both girls and boys. Although the legal age of unions for both sexes is 20, more than a third of young women aged 20-24 report that they were married by the age of 18, and just over one in ten were married by the age of 15. Nepali boys are among the most likely in the world to be child grooms. More than one in ten is married before they reach the age of 18.

**Among Nepali Women and Men aged 20-24**



**10,4%**  
married by 15



**36,6%**  
married by 18



**11%**  
married by 18

**The 8th**  
highest figure in the world

**No. 4 Cluster survey**

**Name of document:**

Central Bureau of Statistics [Nepal] and UNICEF Nepal, Nepal Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey 2019: Final Report, 2020, [www.unicef.org/nepal/reports/multiple-indicator-cluster-survey-final-report-2019](http://www.unicef.org/nepal/reports/multiple-indicator-cluster-survey-final-report-2019)

16.2 per cent of women aged 18-49 years were first married or entered into a marital union before their fifteenth birthday and 48.6 per cent before their eighteenth birthday (page 394)

**No. 5 Household survey**

**Name of document:**

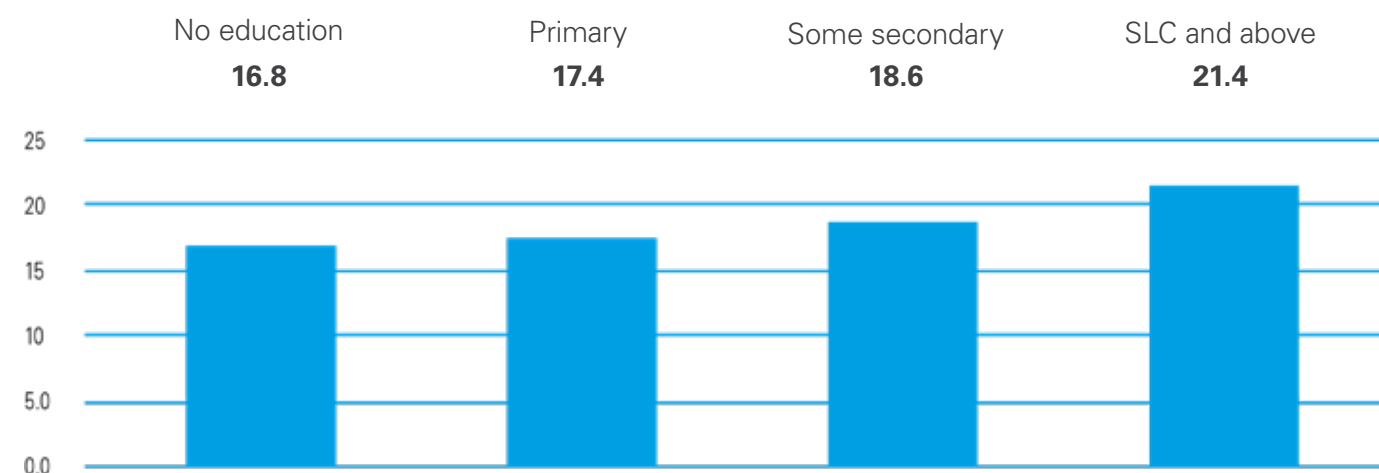
Ministry of Health, Demographic Health Survey, 2016, <https://dhsprogram.com/pubs/pdf/FR336/FR336.pdf>

19 per cent of men. 71 per cent of women age 25-49 were married by age 20, far higher than the 38 per cent of men who were married by that age. There is evidence of a trend away from very early marriage among women. For example, the proportion of women who were married by age 15 was 16 per cent among those age 45-49 but only 4 per cent among those age 15-19. The proportion of women age 15-19 who were married by age 15 declined by 10 percentage points from 1996 (14 per cent) to 2016 (4 per cent).

Among women age 25-49, 13 per cent were married by age 15, while only 3 per cent of men married that young. 52 per cent of women were married by age 18, compared with

**Women's median age at first marriage by education**

Median age at first marriage among women age 25-49





## No. 6 Assessment report

### Name of document:

GPECM, Joint Assessment of adaptations to the UNFPA-UNICEF Global Programme to end child marriage in light of COVID-19, 2021, <https://www.unicef.org/media/111236/file/Child-marriage-COVID-19-assessment.pdf>

The assessment was conducted from April 2021 to July 2021 and included all 12 programme countries and all implementation levels (global, regional, national and community). The assessment analyses the global programme response, mitigation and protection measures adopted during the COVID-19 pandemic, and the extent to which interventions were continued as planned, adjusted or postponed. Opportunities and challenges related to programme adjustments were considered in the analysis and recommendations. The assessment questions were organized around three criteria: relevance, effectiveness and coherence.

### Findings included:

- Relevance: COVID-19 has reconfirmed the validity of the Phase II theory of change (ToC): no needs outside the scope of the global ToC were identified and the drivers of child marriage were still relevant, although some had increased in relevance.
- Effectiveness: Most country offices endeavoured to maintain contact with the adolescent girls targeted under the global programme through digital platforms or mass media and through community-based partners, committees, volunteers and networks. However, the adoption of virtual technologies raised concerns regarding the quality of these approaches and their ability to influence adolescent girls' agency or gender and social norms. Several learnings from the adjustments to the pandemic have the potential to shape future programming. These include i) the use of virtual methods, allowing larger reach (with some caveats); ii) the need for multi-pronged approaches in programmes aimed at changing gender norms or developing skills; and iii) flexibility in adjusting programming and reallocating budgets.

- Coherence: Overall, the process of adjusting the global programme to COVID-19 restrictions was coherent both internally, within agencies, and externally, between agencies.

### Key recommendations include:

- The global programme should advocate for governments to continue developing aligned multisectoral policies, legal instruments and budgeted strategies to end child marriage, with a focus on addressing the various drivers of child marriage at national, sub-national and local levels, and seeking improved harmonization between sectors. The global programme should reinforce its efforts to reach the most vulnerable and marginalized adolescent girls, boys and their families through policy advocacy and programming that targets them specifically.
- The global programme should continue to develop complementary multichannel approaches to reach target populations based on country specifics and context. The global programme should continue advocacy and systems strengthening with governments with a view to maintaining access to essential services for adolescent girls and boys in contexts of heightened vulnerability, including in humanitarian crises.
- The global programme should articulate further its strategy to leverage social cash transfer programmes and other forms of income-generation opportunities for adolescent girls and their families, since these are a key tool to prevent child marriage.
- While the theory of change remains valid, the global programme should adjust its results framework and indicators, as well as further support country offices for monitoring, data generation and analysis, in order to reinforce evidence-based programming.

## No. 7 Evaluation report

### Name of document:

UNFPA-UNICEF, Global Programme to Accelerate Action to End Child Marriage, 2019, [www.unicef.org/sites/default/files/2019-06/GP-2019-Evaluation.pdf](http://www.unicef.org/sites/default/files/2019-06/GP-2019-Evaluation.pdf)

The report presents the findings of the evaluation of the first phase of the UNFPA-UNICEF Global Programme to Accelerate Action to End Child Marriage (GPECM). The programme is jointly managed by the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) and UNICEF. It is implemented in 12 countries in four regions with multiple partners and stakeholders at the national, regional and global levels.

### Some of the key findings and conclusions include:

- The programme is well aligned with global and regional frameworks and commitments to end child marriage
- The application of the GPECM has been responsive to local contexts and has been adapted in each country, although only a few countries have formally adapted the theory of change
- The widespread acknowledgement that child marriage impinges on children's rights and welfare provides a strong foundation and rationale for the ending child marriage agenda
- Despite efforts to target high-prevalence areas and reach the most vulnerable people, interventions have not yet reached the most remote areas in many instances, including many of those that are furthest behind
- Outcome 1 – The GPECM is increasingly able to reach adolescent girls with activities. It reached nearly 5.5 million girls by mid-2018, far exceeding the programme's objective to reach 2.5 million girls by the end of 2019 Outcome 2 – Country offices have significantly expanded community outreach, reaching approximately 11.5 million individuals with information related to ending child marriage in the first half of 2018, significantly more than in 2016 and 2017 combined

- Outcome 3 – Country offices have increased targets for girls' access to health and protection services every year of the GPECM and have collectively exceeded targets each year
- Outcome 4 – UNFPA and UNICEF have worked collaboratively at the highest levels to support governments to develop and implement national/state action plans to end child marriage
- Outcome 5 – GPECM investments in research and data have contributed to building a stronger evidence base on child marriage, although tracking has not offered an indication of data quality and usability to date

### Some of the key recommendations include:

- Prioritize normative leadership
- Expand framework for country contextualization (theory of change)
- Consolidate and strengthen the evidence base and knowledge management
- Define and monitor jointness, convergence and complementarity
- Strengthen and contextualize monitoring and reporting systems
- Invest in human resources
- Strengthen the programme
- Find funds

## No. 8 Assessment Tool

### Name of document:

UNICEF. Child Protection Systems Strengthening: Approaches, benchmarks and interventions, 2021, <https://www.unicef.org/documents/child-protection-systems-strengthening> .

The Child Protection System Strengthening Maturity model developed by UNICEF elaborates on the priorities, processes, and results to be achieved in each phase of child protection system strengthening. It also provides comprehensive benchmarks to effectively manage investments and results in systems strengthening. The benchmarks are defined by the intermediate outcomes, and defined by benchmarks or “sub-domains”. This assessment tool was completed by 155 UNICEF country offices, including Namibia, in December 2021. It serves to measure the level of maturity of child protection systems strengthening. UNICEF has developed detailed and summary guides on the benchmarking tool, which will be adapted for the Namibian context.

This tool will be used as the primary framework to benchmark the level of maturity of the Namibian Child Protection System, and to identify priority actions for improvement. The intermediate outcomes identified in the tool include:

- Legal and policy framework
- Governance and coordination structures
- A continuum of services
- Minimum standards and oversight mechanisms
- Human, financial and infrastructure resources
- Mechanisms for child participation and community engagement
- Data collection and monitoring systems

## No. 9 Global policy document

### Name of document:

OECD, Building Blocks for Policy Coherence for Development, 2009, <https://www.oecd.org/gov/pcsd/44704030.pdf>

To meet the challenge of building strong child protection systems while building a global partnership for development, governments need to ensure that their policies are supportive of, or at least do not undermine, their development policies. In other words, there needs to be policy coherence for development (PCD), which exploits positive synergies and spillovers across public policies

to foster development. The document states that PCD “entails the systematic application of mutually reinforcing policies and integration of development concerns across government departments to achieve development goals along with national policy objectives”.<sup>3</sup>

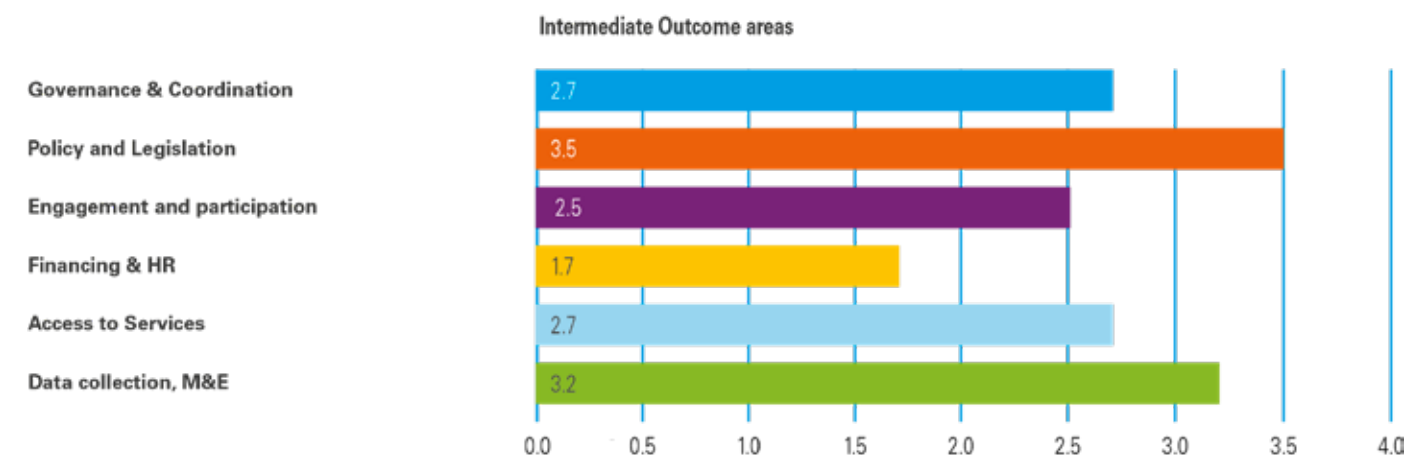
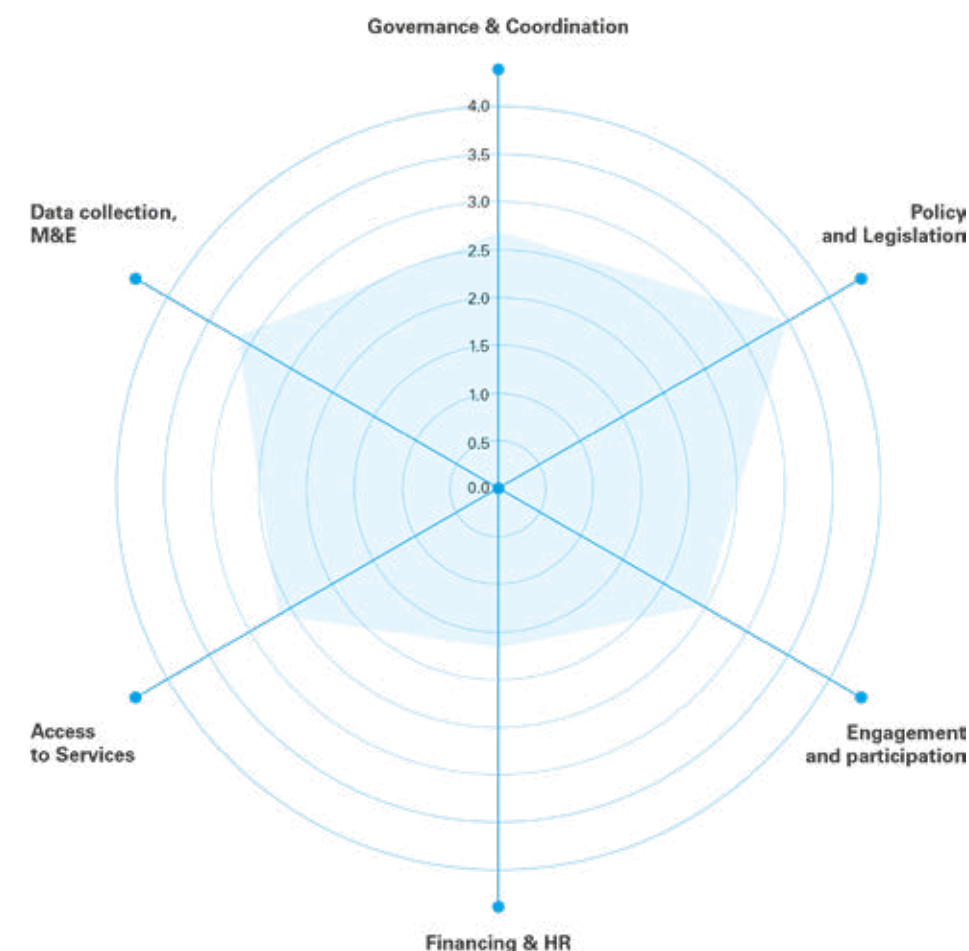
Progress towards policy coherence is understood as a three-phase cycle: i) setting and prioritizing objectives; ii) coordinating policy and its implementation; and iii) monitoring, analysis and reporting. These three phases are also known as critical building blocks. The document presents nine lessons from the three phases of the cycle to promote PCD.



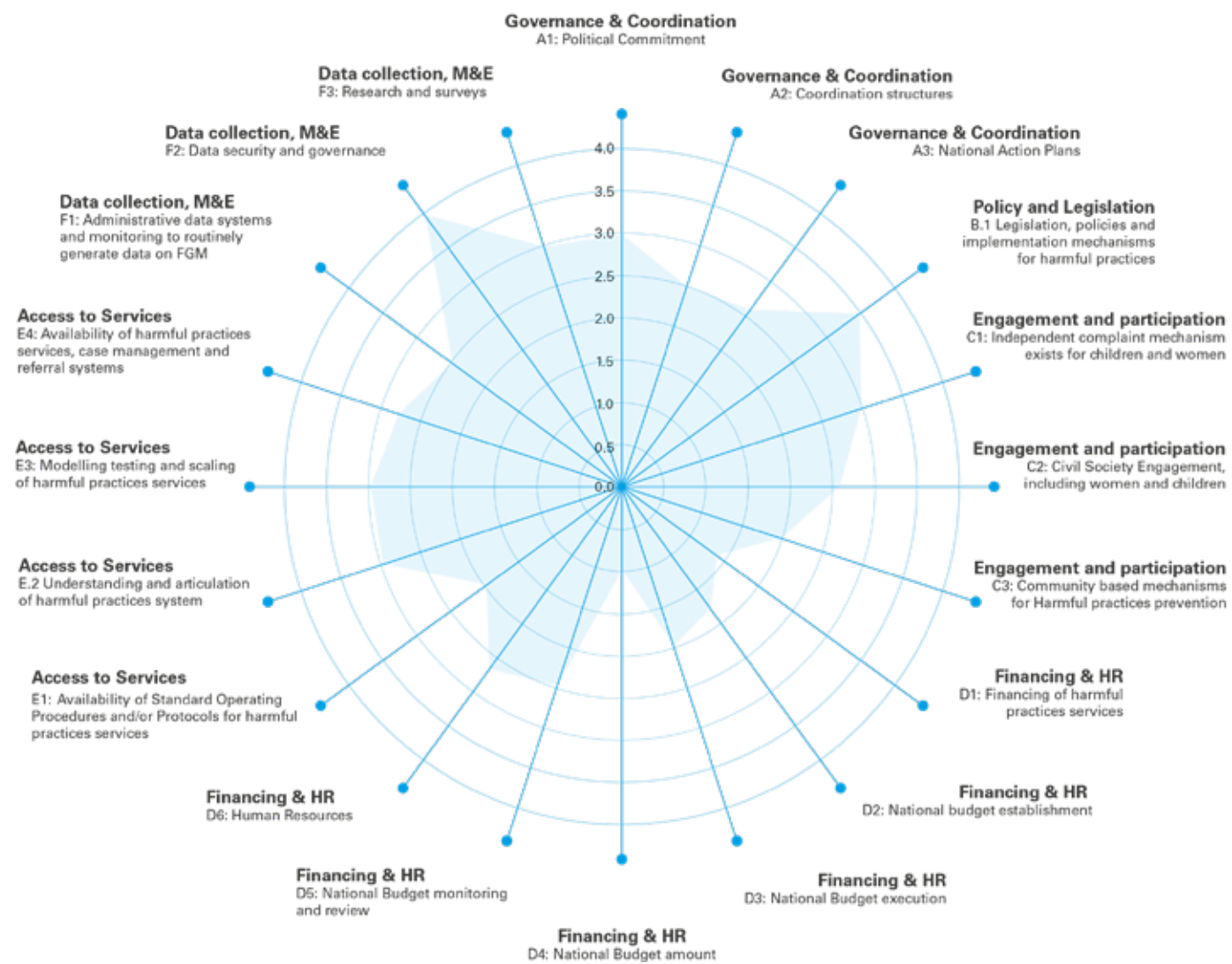
### Appendix B: Country data visualization Nepal

Name of Country	Overall Score	Sub-Domains	Specific Score
Governance & Coordination	2,7	A1: Political commitment	3
		A2: Coordination structures	2,5
		A3: National Action Plans	2,6
Policy and Legislation	3,5	B1: Legislation, policies and implementation mechanisms for harmful practices	3,5
Engagement and participation	2,5	C1: Independent complaint mechanism exists for children and women	3
		C2: Civil society engagement, including women and children	2,6
		C3: Community-based mechanisms for harmful practices prevention	2
Financing & HR	1,7	D1: Financing of harmful practices services	1,4
		D2: National budget establishment	1,8
		D3: National budget execution	2
		D4: National budget amount	1
		D5: National budget monitoring and review	2,5
		D6: Human resources	2,7
Access to Services	2,7	E1: Availability of Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs)and/or protocols for harmful practices services	2
		E2: Understanding and articulation of harmful practices system	3
		E3: Modelling testing and scaling of harmful practices services	3
		E4: Availability of harmful practices services, case management and referral systems	2,8
Data collection, monitoring and evaluation	3,2	F1: Administrative data systems and monitoring to routinely generate data on harmful practices	2,5
		F2: Data security and governance	4
		F3: Research and surveys	3

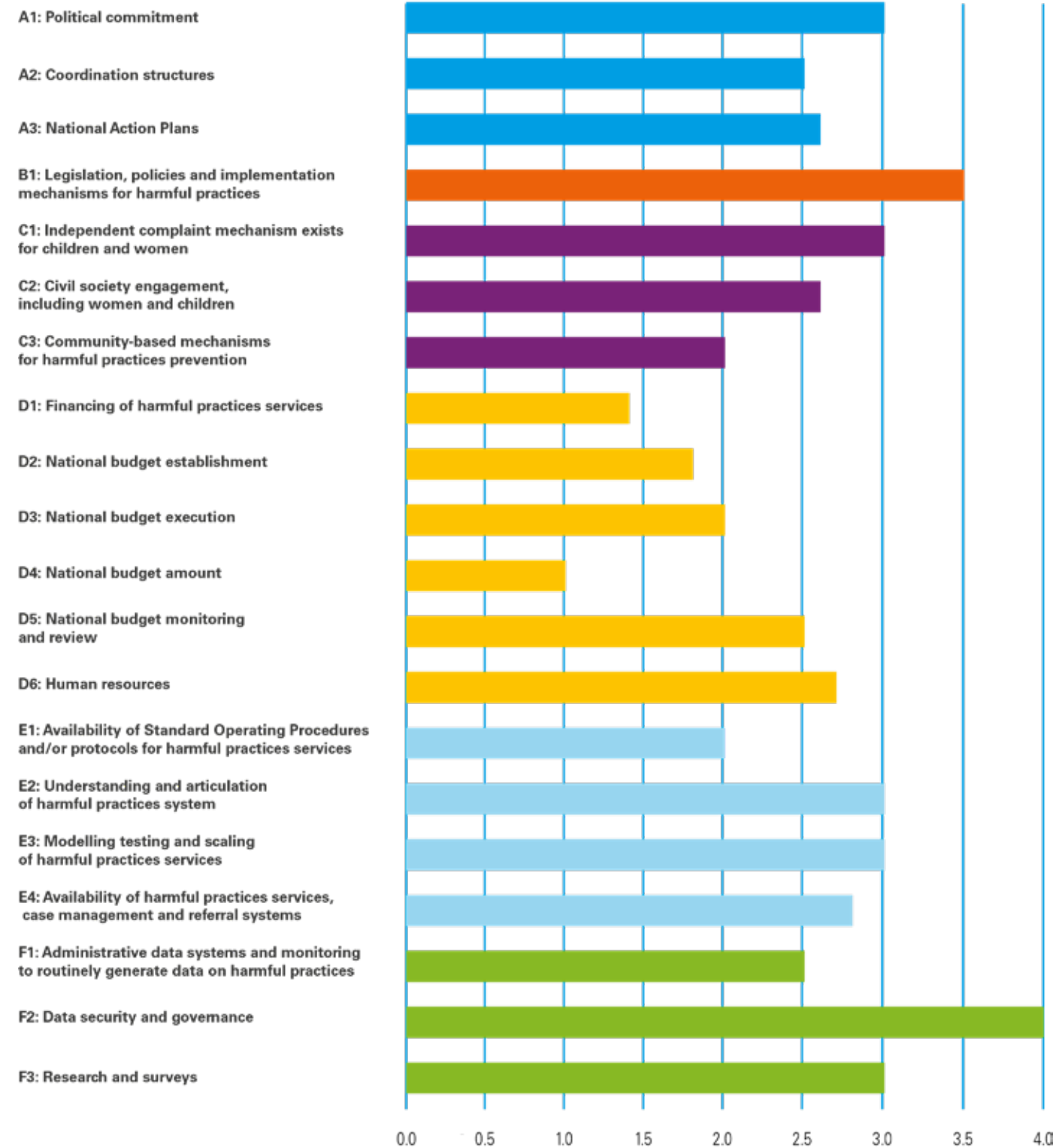
### Intermediate Outcomes Summary



### Sub-Domains Summary



Intermediate Outcome areas





# Endnotes

- 1 The PPM approach formulates and influences public policy through a policy cycle which consists of five major stages: agenda setting; formulating and legitimization of goals and programmes; programme implementation; evaluation and implementation; and decision about the future of the policy and programme. Source: Ripley, Randall B., 'Stages of the policy process' in Daniel C McCool, Public Policy Theories, Models, and Concepts: an anthology, Prentice Hall, 1995, [https://perguntasapo.files.wordpress.com/2012/02/rypley\\_19851995\\_stages-of-the-policy-process.pdf](https://perguntasapo.files.wordpress.com/2012/02/rypley_19851995_stages-of-the-policy-process.pdf)
- 2 These include Bangladesh, Burkina Faso, Ethiopia, Ghana, India, Lebanon, Mozambique, Nepal, Niger, Sierra Leone, Uganda and Zambia.
- 3 OECD, Policy Framework for Policy Coherence for Development, 2012 Working paper 1

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# Maturity Model Desk Review, Assessment and Action Planning

COUNTRY: NEPAL

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Development of maturity model and assessment  
tools for harmful practices policies