



Prevention of Child Marriages Among Seasonal Migratory Agricultural Worker Families

# **Rights-Based Service Provision and Community-Based Interventions Guide**



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Prevention of Child Marriages Among Seasonal Migratory Agricultural Worker Families

# **Rights-Based Service Provision and Community-Based Interventions Guide**



## UÇURTMA

Birinci sınıftaymış  
"Okuma-yazma öğreneceksin" dediniz  
"Öğrendim. Okula gitmeyeceğim" diyor  
Annesi ter içinde bir şeyler anlatıyor  
Oğlan al yeşil mavi bir hayal topu  
Bir gözü ipi kopmuş bir uçurtma  
Bir gözü babanın bulanık suları  
Bağlara doğru koşmaya başlıyor

Anne, kirpiklerinden yanan  
Bir gaz lambası pencerenin önünde  
Akşamın tanrısına  
Yoksulluğun bütün dualarını okuyor

Şükrü Erbaş, 2022



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## Preface

Development Workshop has carried out numerous activities in different regions of Turkey to investigate the working and living conditions of seasonal migratory agricultural worker families and their children, to improve these conditions and to combat the worst forms of child labor, especially in crop production processes.

During the field studies carried out by the Development Workshop within the scope of these activities, the issue of child marriage has always been on the agenda, field research data has confirmed this phenomenon, but there has been no research or intervention regarding identification, referral and service provision solely on this problem. It is also known that child marriage is a common problem among seasonal migratory agricultural worker families, the focus of Development Workshop's activities for many years.

With the financial support provided by the Embassy of Canada, for the first time in Turkey, a project that prioritizes child marriage among seasonal migratory agricultural workers and envisages development of rights-based service provision and community-based interventions for the prevention of child marriages among seasonal migratory agricultural worker families has been initiated. We would like to thank the Embassy of Canada for their contribution.

Within the scope of this project, two guides on identification and referral and rights-based service provision were developed for those working on the prevention of child marriages among seasonal migratory agricultural worker families.

We would like to thank the seasonal migratory agricultural worker families who shared their views on child marriages with us during the fieldwork and the representatives of the institutions that contributed to the development of the guides. We hope that the guides will contribute to the prevention of child marriages and we would like to confirm that we will continue to work for an environment where children can enjoy their rights to the fullest.

Development Workshop  
December 2023, Ankara

## Purpose of the Guide

The purpose of this guide is to provide a methodological tool for those working to combat child marriages, a commonly encountered problem among seasonal migratory agricultural workers.

The purpose of this guide is to provide a tool for individuals and organizations working in the area of prevention of child marriages among seasonal migratory agricultural workers on providing rights-based services and developing and implementing community-based interventions.

**“Seasonal migratory agricultural labour”** refers to labor performed by citizens of a country or foreign migrants who migrate from their place of permanent residence to another settlement in order to work at any stage of plant production including sowing, planting, cultivation, maintenance, spraying and harvesting in someone else's field or garden in return for wages or payment in kind.

Preventing child marriages among families engaged in seasonal migratory agricultural work aims to improve child rights and human rights. However, the fact that the aim is improvement does not make all activities for this purpose legitimate and meaningful. First and foremost, such activities must not cause harm. Therefore, those who will work in this field should have a comprehensive knowledge of issues such as child marriage, the living conditions of seasonal migratory agricultural worker families and child marriage in these families. At the same time, it is also very important to be familiar with the basic principles and ethical rules for the activities to be conducted in this field.

The following instruments together with the existing literature on child marriages and the living and working conditions of seasonal migratory agricultural families were used as reference documents regarding rights-based service provision in development of this guide that aims to empower field workers in this context:

- Independent Advocacy Principles and Standards<sup>1</sup> developed by the Scottish Independent Advocacy Alliance<sup>2</sup> to ensure that independent advocacy is delivered consistently and is of the highest possible standard.

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<sup>1</sup> Scottish Independent Advocacy Alliance (2019) “Independent Advocacy: Principles, Standards and Code of Best Practice”

<sup>2</sup> [www.siaa.org.uk](http://www.siaa.org.uk)



- “Human Rights Tools for a Changing World”<sup>3</sup> developed by the Advocates for Human Rights<sup>4</sup> for individuals and community groups wanting to use human rights monitoring, documentation, and advocacy in their work to change policy and improve human rights conditions.
- The Core Humanitarian Standard on Quality and Accountability<sup>5</sup> developed by the CHS Alliance<sup>6</sup>, Sphere Project<sup>7</sup> and Groupe URD<sup>8</sup> that sets out commitments that organizations and individuals involved in humanitarian response can use to improve the quality and effectiveness of the assistance they provide.
- “Advocacy Strategy: Monitoring Fair Working Conditions in Business to Prevent Child Labour”<sup>9</sup> developed by the Development Workshop<sup>10</sup> as a strategy and methodology proposal for child rights advocacy.

This guide has been prepared in consideration of the studies carried out at international and national levels on the prevention of child marriages, existing legislation and the findings of the field study conducted by the experts of Development Workshop Cooperative on 24-30 September 2023 in Seyhan, Karataş, Yüreğir, Yumurtalık districts of Adana and Tarsus district of Mersin on the causes of child marriages among seasonal migratory agricultural worker families, the perceptions and approaches of families and children on this issue, and the identification, referral and intervention services offered and need to be offered in this field.

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<sup>3</sup> The Advocates for Human Rights (2015) “Human Rights Tools for a Changing World”

<sup>4</sup> [www.theadvocatesforhumanrights.org](http://www.theadvocatesforhumanrights.org)

<sup>5</sup> CHS Alliance, Sphere Project and Groupe URD (2014) “Core Humanitarian Standard”

<sup>6</sup> [www.chsalliance.org](http://www.chsalliance.org)

<sup>7</sup> [www.spherestandards.org](http://www.spherestandards.org)

<sup>8</sup> [www.urd.org](http://www.urd.org)

<sup>9</sup> Development Workshop (2021) “Advocacy Strategy: Monitoring Fair Working Conditions in Business to Prevent Child Labour”

<sup>10</sup> [www.ka.org.tr](http://www.ka.org.tr)

# 1

## Child Marriage and Child Marriages Among Seasonal Migratory Agricultural Worker Families

### 1.1

#### Child Marriage<sup>11</sup>

*“Child marriage”* refers to official and unofficial marriages where at least one of the parties is under the age of 18.<sup>12</sup>

In Turkey, one in every five women in the 20-49 age group was married before the age of 18, i.e. as a child.<sup>13</sup> According to available data, 52,444 girls and 6,460 boys aged 16-19 were officially married in 2022.<sup>14</sup> The difference between the number of girls and boys married as children is striking. Only 4 percent of married girls are married to boys of similar age to themselves.<sup>15</sup>

Child marriage is an even more widespread problem, affecting one in every two girls in Syrian temporary refugee families.<sup>16</sup>

Child marriages are more common in rural areas, with Southeastern Anatolia, Central Anatolia and the Mediterranean regions taking the first three places in the regional distribution.

The majority of girls who are married off are introduced to the man they will marry through their families or relatives and the decision to marry is made by their families.<sup>17</sup> 14 percent of girls married before the age of 18 and 23 percent of girls married before the age of 15 were married off without their consent.

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<sup>11</sup> Resource(s) used in this section:

- UNFPA (2020) “Child, Early and Forced Marriage in Turkey: Data Analysis of Turkey Demographic and Health Surveys 1993-2018”

<sup>12</sup> In studies in this field, the problems of “child marriage”, “early marriage” and “forced marriage” are often addressed together. “Early marriage” refers to marriages where parties are not yet at the necessary developmental level to assume the responsibilities of marriage; with this definition, “early marriage” includes child marriages and marriages of persons who, even if they are over the age of 18, are not equipped to give consent due their physical, emotional, sexual and psychological level of development and their lack of knowledge on individuals’ life choices. “Forced marriage” refers to marriages in which one and/or both parties have not personally expressed their full and free consent to the union.

Following resources can be useful for definitions:

- ECPAT (2016) “Terminology Guidelines for the Protection of Children from Sexual Exploitation and Sexual Abuse”  
- UNFPA (2021) “Legal Information Guide on Prevention of Child, Early and Forced Marriages”

<sup>13</sup> According to 2018-TDHS data, 19.9 percent of women in the 20-49 age group were married before the age of 18, and 3.6 percent were married before the age of 15. For women in the 20-24 age group, these rates are 14.7 percent and 2.0 percent, respectively.

<sup>14</sup> Turkish Statistical Institute, Gender Statistics, 2022

<sup>15</sup> According to 2018-TDHS data, 16 percent of women in the 20-24 age group who were married before the age of 18 were married to men 10+ years older than themselves, 50 percent were married to men 5-9 years older than themselves, 30 percent were married to men 1-4 years older than themselves, 3 percent were married to men the same age as themselves and 1 percent were married to men younger than themselves.

<sup>16</sup> In a study conducted with a sample of Syrian migrant women within the context of 2018-TDHS, it was reported that 40.0 percent of women in the 20-49 age group and 44.8 percent of women in the 20-24 age group were married under the age of 18.

<sup>17</sup> According to 2018-TDHS data, 46 percent of women in the 20-24 age group and 59.6 percent of women in the 20-49 age group who were married before the age of 18 were married by the decision of their families.

## 1.2

### Child Marriage among Seasonal Migratory Agricultural Worker Families

As stated in the report prepared by the TBMM (Turkish Grand National Assembly) Research Commission on the problems of seasonal agricultural workers,<sup>18</sup> according to official records, nearly 500 thousand people participate in the seasonal migratory agricultural labor force in Turkey. Considering that the majority of the migratory agricultural labor force work or live in agricultural areas with their family members, the total population of seasonal migratory agricultural worker families is estimated to exceed 1 million.

Although there is no comprehensive research on the prevalence of child marriage among seasonal migratory agricultural worker families, several studies conducted in this field give an idea about the seriousness of the problem:

- In a survey conducted with 1,353 participants in 11 provinces where seasonal migratory agricultural workers are concentrated, it was found that 63 percent of women were married as children (23 percent at the age of 13-15, 40 percent at the age of 16-17).<sup>19</sup>
- In a survey conducted with 1,200 seasonal migratory agricultural workers in Adıyaman and Şanlıurfa, half of the women aged 15-24 at the time of the survey reported that they were married at the age of 17.5 or younger, and 41 percent of married women reported becoming mothers before the age of 18.<sup>20</sup>
- In a survey conducted with 300 women who came to Şanlıurfa as seasonal migratory agricultural workers, it was observed that the age of first marriage for 77 percent of women and the age of first pregnancy for 61 percent of women were under the age of 20.<sup>21</sup>
- In another study conducted with 714 seasonal migratory agricultural workers in Adana, the average age at first marriage was 15.4 for women and 23.0 for men. This study also compared the average age at first marriage with the average age in Turkey and highlighted that the average age at first marriage in seasonal agricultural workers' families was significantly lower than in Turkey on average (8.1 years lower for women and 3.7 years lower for men).<sup>22</sup>

<sup>18</sup> Turkish Grand National Assembly (2015) "Report of the Parliamentary Research Committee Established to Investigate the Problems of Seasonal Agricultural Workers and to Identify Necessary Measures"

<sup>19</sup> Support to Life Association (2015) "Seasonal Agricultural Work in Turkey Survey Report"

<sup>20</sup> Şimşek, Z. (2012) "Mevsimlik Tarım İşçilerinin ve Ailelerinin İhtiyaçlarının Belirlenmesi Araştırması"

<sup>21</sup> Bucak, F.K., Kahraman, S., Kartal, M. (2018) "Mevsimlik Tarım İşçisi Kadınların Bebek Yapma Hakkında Düşünceleri ve Aile Planlaması Kullanma Durumları" Sağlık Akademisyenleri Dergisi (5)3, 178-183

<sup>22</sup> Sevinç, M.R. (2015) Adana İlinde Mevsimlik Tarım İşçiliğinin Sosyo-Ekonomik Yapısı ve Geleceği (PhD Thesis, Çukurova University, Institute of Natural and Applied Sciences, Agricultural Economics)

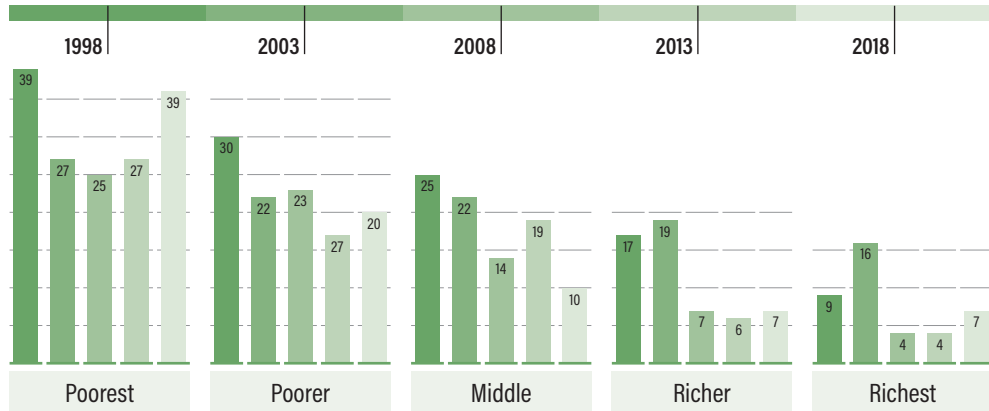
- In a study conducted with seasonal migratory agricultural worker families in Eskişehir, 26.8 percent of women said they were married between the ages of 13-15 and 32.8 percent said they were married between the ages of 16-17. These rates were 6.1 percent and 16.6 percent for men.<sup>23</sup>

## 1.3 Main Reasons Behind Child Marriage<sup>24</sup>

### ↳ Poverty

Poverty is one of the most important reasons behind child marriages. Studies show that there is an inverse relationship between child marriages and the welfare level of the family; as the welfare level decreases, the number of child marriages increases (Graph-1). In Turkey, 56 percent of women living in households with the lowest and low wealth indexes were married before the age of 18.<sup>25</sup> As the welfare level increases, the rate of child marriages decreases but is not eliminated. This shows that poverty alone is not enough to explain this problem.

**Graph 1. Prevalence of Child Marriages by Wealth Index (%)**



Source: UNFPA (2020) "Child, Early and Forced Marriage in Turkey: Data Analysis of Turkey Demographic and Health Surveys 1993-2018"

<sup>23</sup> Kaleci, H. (2007) Mevsimlik Tarım İşçilerinin Sosyolojik Analizi: Eskişehir Örneği (Master's Thesis, Anadolu University Social Sciences Institute, Sociology)

<sup>24</sup> Resource(s) used in this section::

- UNFPA (2021) "Child, Early and Forced Marriages – Key Information Guide"
- UNFPA (2020) "Child, Early and Forced Marriage in Turkey: Data Analysis of Turkey Demographic and Health Surveys 1993-2018"
- UNFPA (2020) "A Multi-Sector Approach to Health Risks and Consequences of Child, Early and Forced Marriage"
- UN Women (2021) "Perception of Men on Child, Early and Forced Marriages"

<sup>25</sup> According to 2018-TDHS data, the percentages of women in the 20-24 age group who married before the age of 18 according to the wealth index levels were 35.6 percent for the poorest, 20.3 percent for the poor, 9.5 percent for the middle, 6.5 percent for the richer and 7.5 percent for the richest.



The relationship between child marriage and poverty is based on the fact that families tend to see girls as an economic burden and consider early marriage as a way to alleviate this economic burden, and on the other hand, as an economic gain with financial returns such as bride price and milk money. In Turkey, 4 out of every 10 girls who are married off before the age of 18 report that their families received bride price.<sup>26</sup>

Another reason behind is that since children can contribute to the family's economic income after a certain age, having as many children as possible as early as possible can be seen as a way of coping with economic difficulties.

### ➤ Gender inequality, cultural norms and the need to protect girls

Gender roles assigned and taught to women and related cultural norms are also among the important factors that pave the way for child marriages.

It is stated that an important reason for child marriages is that children entering adolescence get curious about sexuality and families consent to their children's marriages to protect them from the danger of any sexual experience outside of marriage.

However, this is much of a serious concern for girls and marriage can be seen as a way of "protecting" girls. Thus, it is thought that by marrying off girls when they reach puberty, they can be prevented from getting close to a person whom the family does not approve of, from voluntarily or forcibly engaging in premarital sexual intercourse, and thus the honor of the family would be protected.

False beliefs that a child entering puberty is ready for marriage, that children who marry at a young age and "grow up" together will be more compatible, or that girls who marry at a young age will more easily adapt to the culture and habits of the family they marry into, are also among other pushing factors for child marriages. The fact that the main roles assigned to married girls are child-bearing and housework, and that these roles do not require education or skills, further facilitates child marriage.

### ➤ Prevalence of traditional childhood perception

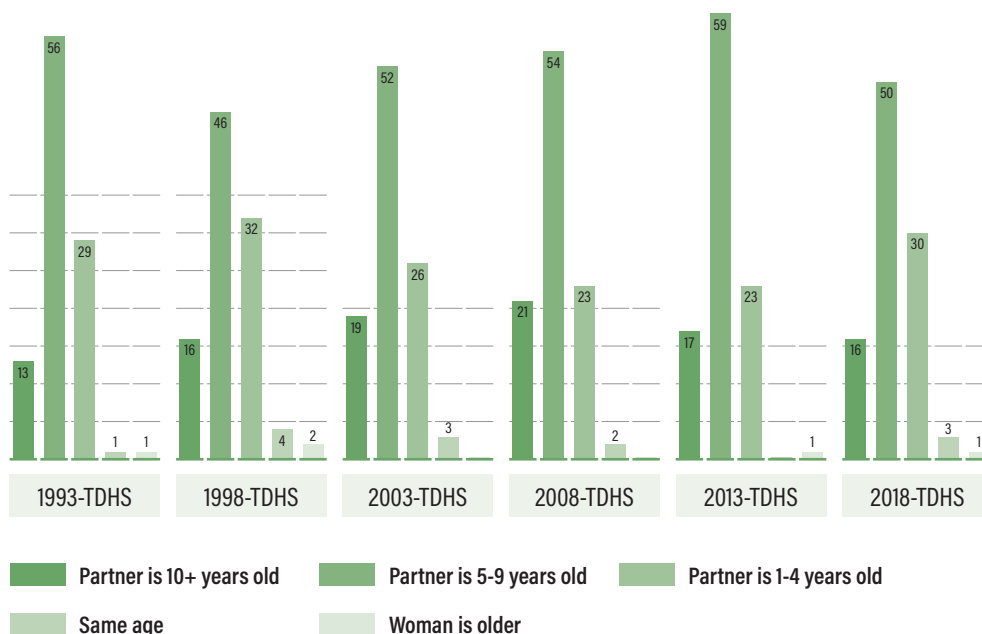
The most important problem regarding the childhood perception in child marriages is the adults' perception of children as spouses or sexual partners. Considering that the majority of girls who are married off are married off to a man

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<sup>26</sup> According to 2018-TDHS data, 38.2 percent of women in the 20-24 age group, who were married before the age of 18 received bride money for their families.

who is at least 5 years older than them<sup>27</sup> (Graph-2), it is understood that what is considered as sexual abuse of children in the doctrine is socially accepted when it comes to marriage. This shows that the traditional perception on childhood still persists. Therefore, it is necessary to see the impact of this perception on child marriages and to combat with it.

**Graph 2.** Age Difference Between Partners Among 20-24 Age Group Who Married Before Age 18 (%)



Source: UNFPA (2020) "Child, Early and Forced Marriage in Turkey: Data Analysis of Turkey Demographic and Health Surveys 1993-2018"

Studies in the field of childhood and children's rights, while describing the changes in childhood according to historical and cultural factors, emphasize that one of the main differences between the traditional approach and the modern understanding of childhood is the limitation imposed on participation in adult life. With industrialization, urbanization and the establishment of nation states, changes begin to occur in the perception of childhood and in the lives of children. First of all, children were removed from the adult world, in which they had carried out many activities together, such as land work, animal care,

<sup>27</sup> According to 2018-TDHS data, 16 percent of women in the 20-24 age group who were married before the age of 18 were married to men 10+ years older than themselves, 50 percent were married to men 5-9 years older than themselves, 30 percent were married to men 1-4 years older than themselves, 3 percent were married to men the same age as themselves and 1 percent were married to men younger than themselves.

cooking, sewing, entertainment and worship, and were sent to school.<sup>28</sup> This was necessary to protect children from the risks created by the changing living conditions in the modern age, when compared to the traditional times where children participated in adult life on their own. This was mainly due to the fact that not only children lost the protection of the extended family with urbanization and industrialization, but also they needed to acquire certain skills in order to survive in the new social order. With the formation of nation states, it became a responsibility of the States to ensure that children acquire adequate skills and secure their development until they are able to live without the need for parental supervision. The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child adopted this approach and assigned to States the duty to protect children from all forms of neglect and abuse.

Considering child marriages and even marriages between children and adults acceptable exposes children to all kinds of risks and abuse, especially sexual abuse. Therefore, changing the traditional perception of childhood plays an important role in preventing child marriages.

### ↘ Lack of access to quality education

Marriage is seen as the most important reason for adolescent girls to drop out of school. While nearly half of girls with no education marry under the age of 18, this rate drops to 1 percent among university graduates.<sup>29</sup>

Child marriages are also directly related to the low level of education of the family. As the education level of the family decreases, the rate of marrying off their children increases. In Turkey, almost all of the parents of girls who are married off before the age of 18 are at most primary school graduates, and the rate of mothers who have no education or have not completed primary school is as high as 63 percent.<sup>30</sup>

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<sup>28</sup> Franklin, Bob. (1986). *The Rights of Children*.

<sup>29</sup> Turkish Statistical Institute, Turkish Family Structure Survey, 2021

<sup>30</sup> According to 2018-TDHS data, regarding the education level of mothers of women in the 20-24 age group who were married before the age of 18, 63.3 percent had no education or had not completed primary school, 33.6 percent had primary school education, and 3.1 percent had secondary school education or higher. For fathers, these rates were 29.6 percent, 58.0 percent and 12.4 percent, respectively.

## 1.4 Consequences of Child Marriage<sup>31</sup>

Child marriage violates many of the fundamental rights of children recognized in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, including the right to health, protection from all kinds of neglect-abuse and exploitation, the right to rest, play, participate in cultural life and not to be separated from their parents. Among the consequences of child marriage that lead to these violations of rights are the following:

### ↳ Dropping out of school

Children married at a young age, and especially girls, drop out of education system due to the burden of housework, restriction of freedom of movement, pregnancy and childbearing, and legal obstacles to the attendance of married girls in school in some countries, including Turkey<sup>32</sup>.

### ↳ Unemployment, dependency and impoverishment

Children's dropping out of education system makes it difficult for them to acquire a profession, reduces their participation in labour life, impoverishes them and increases their dependency on other people as they have no income of their own.

### ↳ Exposure to domestic and non-domestic violence

Women who marry at an early age are exposed to physical and emotional violence in their marriages more than women in other age groups.

### ↳ Persistence of gender inequality

With marriage, many obstacles arise especially for girls' participation in social life, their participation in decision-making processes both within the family and in the public sphere becomes more difficult, and the marital problems cause them to become even more disempowered. All these problems affect not only girls, young girls and women but also their children and result in the persistence of gender inequality.

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<sup>31</sup> Resource(s) used in this section:

- UNFPA (2021) "Child, Early and Forced Marriages – Key Information Guide"
- UNFPA (2020) "A Multi-Sector Approach to Health Risks and Consequences of Child, Early and Forced Marriage"

<sup>32</sup> According to Article 21/4 of the Ministry of National Education Secondary Education Institutions Regulation titled "registration conditions", "married students are not registered, those who get married while they are students are dismissed from school and their records are sent to open education high school, vocational open education high school or open education religious high school via e-School."



### ➤ Child pregnancy

Child marriages lead to child pregnancies and child pregnancies result in increased health risks including maternal and infant mortality, miscarriage, premature birth, difficult birth, growth retardation during pregnancy, low birth weight, severe bleeding, lacerations, sexually transmitted infections and postnatal problems.

### ➤ Unprepared parenting

Becoming a parent before being physically or mentally ready for parenthood is a very heavy responsibility and poses significant risks for the health and development of both parents and their children.

### ➤ Psychological and mental problems

Child marriage prevents children from completing their adolescence in a healthy manner and negatively affects their identity development and mental health. Because these effects take time to appear or be noticed, and children have difficulty asking for help at an early age, these problems increase over time and can cause many problems, including major depression.

### ➤ General health and reproductive health problems

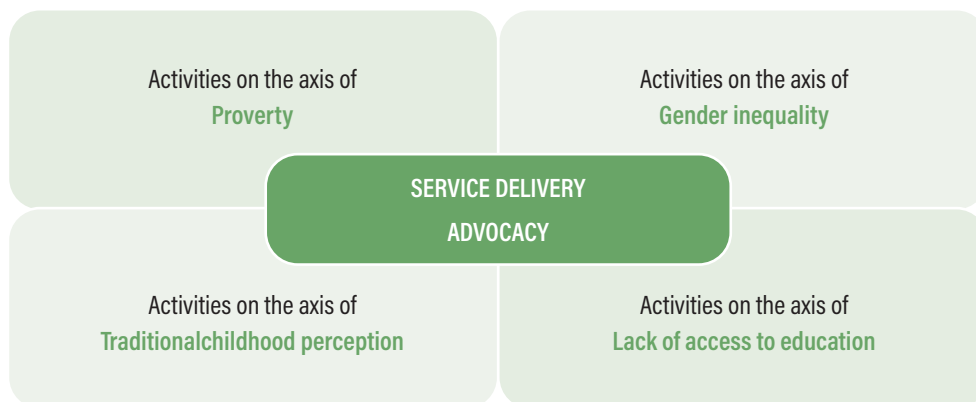
Child marriages increase the risk of acute or chronic general and reproductive health problems such as musculoskeletal diseases in children, infection, anemia, cystitis, migraine, hypertension, sexually transmitted diseases, and have very serious consequences that can lead to a decrease in expected healthy life expectancy and early death.

## 2

## A Strategy Recommendation for the Prevention of Child Marriage in Seasonal Migratory Agricultural Worker Families

As detailed in the previous section, there are many root causes behind child marriages, poverty being at the forefront. Research and studies conducted on seasonal migratory agricultural worker families in different regions for different crops and the findings of the fieldwork carried out during the preparation of this guide show that the root causes of child marriage are largely prevalent among seasonal migratory agricultural worker families. Therefore, in order to prevent child marriages among seasonal migratory agricultural worker families, it is necessary to take into account these key factors and focus on what can be done to change them. This section presents recommendations for *service delivery* and *advocacy* efforts that can be carried out to prevent child marriages in seasonal migratory agricultural worker families, taking into account these key factors (Figure-1).

**Figure 1.** Efforts to Prevent Child Marriages Among Seasonal Migratory Agricultural Worker Families



While preparing these recommendations, it has been tried to draw attention to the fact that each of the four headings under which the main causes of child marriages presents a scale of complexity with different levels within itself. While poverty, lack of access to education, traditional childhood perception and gender inequality are common reasons for early marriage of children among seasonal agricultural worker families, the difficulties encountered vary by region, tent area and even families in the same tent area (Figure-2).

The level of complexity among different root causes do not always run in parallel. For example, if the adults in the family of an agricultural intermediary who

has a house in the city and is relatively less poor do not attach any importance to education and send their children to school months after the schools open, children may drop out of school and this family may choose to marry their child off early. Thus, each factor and the different levels under each with different combinations amongst present different characteristics. How to approach a parent who is less mobile and has enough income to send his/her child to school but does not care about the child's schooling should be different from working with a parent who wants to send his/her child to school despite all the challenges but cannot find a school close to the tent area. For example, in an area where people are ready but unable to send their daughters to school due to lack of school facilities, and children have no choice but to marry early and become an agricultural worker like their parents, advocacy efforts to ensure quality education services are available in the area would be more effective than awareness raising among families.

The aim of this chapter is to introduce the specific characteristics of the main reasons behind child marriages in seasonal migratory agricultural worker families together with the different scales of complexity within them and the patterns emerging from their relations with each other in order to ensure that these unique situations are paid attention to in the activities planned to be implemented in this field.

**Figure 2.** Scales of Complexity for Main Reasons Behind Child Marriages Among Seasonal Migratory Agricultural Worker Families

#### Poverty

Worker/tent				Agricultural intermediary / house in the city
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#### Gender inequality

Doesn't matter what she feels				She should stand on her own feet
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#### Traditional childhood perception

He/she should take the burden off my shoulders				He/she should live a better life than me
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#### Lack of access to education

Not important/ no school				Attending school
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## 2.1 Activities to be Conducted on the Axis of “Poverty”

### Poverty

Worker/tent				Agricultural intermediary / house in the city
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There are multiple levels of poverty among seasonal migratory agricultural workers. A family of four consisting of a mother, father and two babies, where only one person can work in order to take care of their children in rotation and thus trying to survive on a daily wage, is at the bottom of this scale. At the other extreme is a family of an agricultural intermediary who receives commissions for the work of 50-60 workers, whose three children also work as sergeants or laborers, and who has a house in the district or province in addition to their tents in the tent area.

Poverty in seasonal migratory agricultural worker families is a working poverty. Almost all seasonal mobile agricultural workers work unregistered and/or without a contract, and the income earned by families remains far below the poverty line, even if both parents work 30 days a month without any vacation or leave. In cases where there is only one working parent in the family, or when it is not possible to work every day due to weather conditions, illness, etc., the income earned falls even below the hunger threshold. Long and tiring working hours also negatively affect the capacity of parents to care for their children. On the other hand, the children of agricultural worker families are also vulnerable to factors that negatively affect their development, such as growing up in an unhealthy environment, exposure to harmful agricultural chemicals and lack of adequate nutrition.

It is observed that it is still a common practice for the majority of seasonal migratory agricultural worker families to receive bride price for their daughters. In the fieldwork conducted during the preparation of this guide, it was stated that the bride price paid as of September 2023 could reach up to 400 thousand TL (approximately 14,250 USD). This indicates that the traditional practices persist and marrying off girls may be seen as a strategy to overcome poverty.

As in all segments of the population, poverty increases the risk of child marriage among seasonal migratory agricultural worker families. Therefore, efforts aimed at combating child marriages among seasonal migratory agricultural worker families should also have the goal of combating poverty, and this goal should be included in both *advocacy* and *service delivery efforts*. Recommended activities to be carried out within this framework can be seen in Table-1.



**Table 1.** Recommended Activities to be Conducted on the Axis of “Poverty” to Prevent Child Marriages among Seasonal Migratory Agricultural Worker Families

SERVICE DELIVERY	ADVOCACY
<p>In order to support parents among seasonal migratory agricultural workers in their fight against poverty;</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Nursery and day care support</li> <li>2) Newborn baby sets to support the needs of parents with newborn babies</li> <li>3) Nutrition support for children</li> <li>4) Mother/father/caregiver trainings</li> <li>5) Children's play groups</li> <li>6) Establishing child-friendly spaces in working and living environments</li> <li>7) Educational support activities for school-age children <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Etudes etc. to support academic success</li> <li>- Activities to develop personal skills (sports, games, hobbies, etc.)</li> <li>- Recreational activities (cinema, theater, games, etc.)</li> </ul> </li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Advocacy to ensure that seasonal migratory agricultural workers are paid wages at a level that will provide them and their families with a dignified life, in accordance with the criteria set by international standards<sup>33</sup></li> <li>2) Advocacy to rearrange the wage conditions and working hours of seasonal migratory agricultural workers in a way that will prevent them from negatively affecting the parents' capacity to care for their children.</li> <li>3) Advocacy to ensure decent living environments</li> <li>4) Advocacy regarding legal regulations for the registration of workers</li> <li>5) Advocacy for the protection of workers' social security rights.</li> </ol>

## 2.2 Activities to be Conducted on the Axis of “Gender Inequality”

The impact of the gender perspective, which is an important determinant of child marriages, increases even more when combined with the special conditions of seasonal migratory agricultural workers. Especially in cases where a community from the same social and cultural environment, village or poor urban neighborhoods live in the same tent area and agricultural activities continue throughout the year, the relationship of seasonal agricultural worker families with the outside world weakens considerably.

The majority of seasonal migratory agricultural workers settle in remote areas in the countryside, where agricultural lands are dense and settlements are sparse, and they have almost no social relations with local people. Their working hours and earnings do not provide them with access to a social space outside the fields, gardens and tent settlements where they reside. Especially women and girls have limited social relations outside their own tents, even in their tent settlements. Even very young girls are expected to fulfill responsibilities such as housework and taking care of young children in the family.

Over the years, it is observed that the structure of tent settlements has also

<sup>33</sup> Universal Declaration of Human Rights article 23; European Social Charter article 4; International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights article 7.

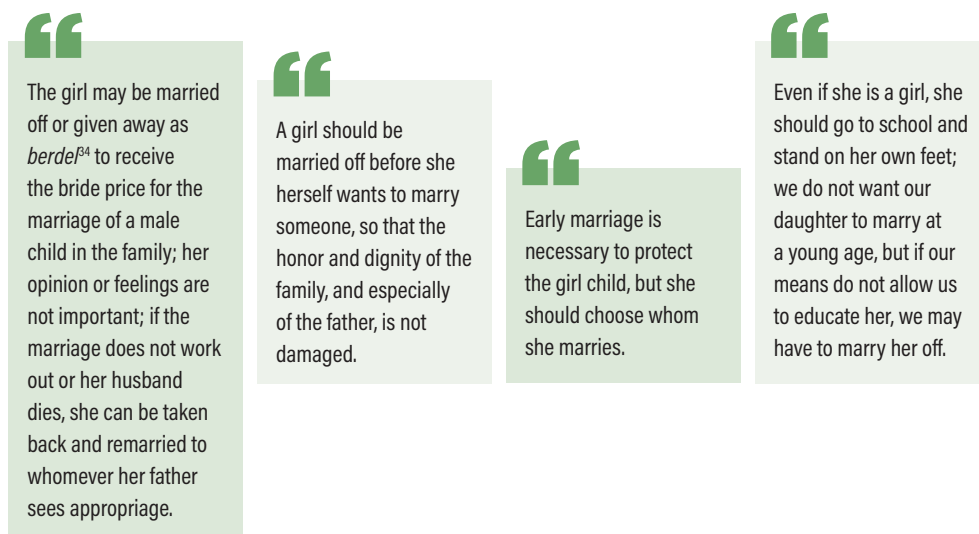
changed with the increasing number of foreign migrant labor, especially Syrians, in seasonal agriculture. While the areas around the family tents were used to be open and the tents were visible from outside, it is now observed that in some tent settlements, each tent is surrounded with plastic tarpaulin so that it cannot be seen from the outside. The structure of the tent settlement also gives an idea about the living conditions of women. In this way, it is possible to come across very radical forms of gender perspectives in very small and isolated tent settlements.

### Gender inequality

Doesn't matter what she feels				She should stand on her own feet
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The impact of gender roles varies according to the demographic structure of the population in each tent settlement. As can be seen in Figure-3, there are very different views among families. While there are those who say that a girl should be married off before she is old enough to decide whom she will marry and that her father should decide whether or whom she should marry since the girl's thoughts or feelings are not important, there are also those who say that their daughters should study and stand on their own feet like their sons. Therefore, it is not possible to talk about a uniform approach when providing services on the axis of gender perspective for the prevention of child marriages in seasonal migratory agricultural worker families.

**Figure 3.** Different Views on Early Marriage of Girls



<sup>34</sup> Berdel marriage or sibling swapping is a type of marriage wherein a bride or bridegroom is exchanged with a bride or bridegroom of another family.

Awareness and advocacy efforts on gender roles can be more easily carried out in communities where gender stereotypes are not so rigid. In these groups, there may be girls who have been educated or people who have educated their children or relatives. Advocacy work can be organized to support these people and enable them to take part in the work as resource persons.

Since groups with stricter gender role stereotypes generally live isolated from the outside world, advocacy or general awareness-raising activities for these groups will be difficult and ineffective unless they are supported by other services. In terms of advocacy, these groups can only be advocated for intervention activities such as the planned execution of public intervention for child protection as a requirement of child safety.

In terms of service provision, services that strengthen the roles of girls for all groups, enable boys to adopt an egalitarian and respectful perspective, support early childhood and strengthen social relations for communities can be considered. Another note to consider would be that girls and women can only participate in activities outside their tents if they are engaged in income-generating skills, a common concern shared during the fieldwork.

**Table 2.** Recommended Activities to be Conducted on the Axis of "Gender Inequality" to Prevent Child Marriages among Seasonal Migratory Agricultural Worker Families

SERVICE DELIVERY	ADVOCACY
<p>For the empowerment of girls;</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Newborn baby set to support the needs of parents with newborn babies</li> <li>2) Nutrition support for children</li> <li>3) Mother/father/caregiver trainings</li> <li>4) Children's play groups</li> <li>5) Establishing child-friendly spaces in working and living environments</li> <li>6) Educational support activities for school-age children               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Etudes etc. to support academic success</li> <li>- Activities to develop personal skills (sports, games, hobbies, etc.)</li> <li>- Recreational activities (cinema, theater, games, etc.)</li> </ul> </li> <li>7) Vocational skills trainings for adolescents</li> <li>8) Informing adolescents about the institutions and services where they can receive support</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Awareness raising activities for more open communities on the harms of early marriages and the potential of girls</li> <li>2) Public advocacy on child safety and protection in closer communities</li> <li>3) A study to compare the social and cultural values adopted and used by seasonal agricultural worker groups in tent settlements with the social and cultural values of these groups in their original settlements</li> </ol>

In addition, in order to shed light on studies on gender roles and the perception of children, the relationship and differences between the existing social norms

of seasonal migratory agricultural worker families and the social norms in their hometowns can be examined. The differences between the social norms of groups who migrated years ago to work as agricultural laborers and lived together in tent settlements since, and the social norms of their relatives in their city of origins would give an idea about the principles on which future efforts in this field should be built upon.

## 2.3 Activities to be Conducted on the Axis of “Traditional Childhood Perception”

It is known that childhood varies according to cultures and time in history. It is also possible to observe different perceptions of childhood in the same period of time within the borders of the same country. Likewise in Turkey, seasonal migratory agricultural worker families have very different perceptions of childhood. While some families care about their children's schooling and arrange their living conditions accordingly, such as leaving their children with a relative in town or sending them to a boarding school or returning back to town when schools open, it is observed that the common understanding is more of a traditional one in which the child is seen as a potential labor force who can contribute to the economic development of the family.

In the field study carried out during the preparation phase of this guide, it was stated that the ideal marriage age that seasonal migratory agricultural worker families envisage for their children varies between 17-18 years of age for girls and 20-22 years of age for boys. However, both statistics on the age of marriage<sup>35</sup> and observations in the field show that girls can be seen as the wives or sexual partners of adult men much older than themselves, which stands out as an important problem of social perspective that paves the way for child marriages.

Depending on the needs of the family, especially the need for labor force and income, children can participate in working life, get married and have children when they are able to do so. For this reason, it is possible for boys as well as girls to be married off among seasonal migratory agricultural worker families. For example, it is possible to come across a father in seasonal migratory agricultural worker families who had his first child when he was 14 years old and who had 4 children at the age of 21 in 2023. A 22-23 year old young man, who started working as an agricultural worker at a very young age, may express that he is very tired and needs his young children to help him by doing some work. This is an example of how the reasons behind child marriage, combined with the specific conditions of seasonal migratory agricultural work, increase and complicate the risk.

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<sup>35</sup> According to 2018-TDHS data, 16 percent of women in the 20-24 age group who were married before the age of 18 were married to men 10+ years older than themselves, 50 percent were married to men 5-9 years older than themselves, 30 percent were married to men 1-4 years older than themselves, 3 percent were married to men the same age as themselves and 1 percent were married to men younger than themselves.



## Traditional childhood perception

He/she should take  
the burden off my shoulders

He/she should live a  
better life than me

However, there are different levels regarding the perception of childhood, as is true for other main reasons. While there are representatives of the traditional approach who think that their children should participate in adult life from the moment they become physically capable, there are also families who think that their children should not have to bear the same living conditions, should go to school and stay away from adult life (working, getting married, etc.) until they become adults and try to make this happen for their children (for example, renting a house in the city so that their children can go to school, or sending them to live with relatives or to boarding schools). When a study is to be conducted in this field, it will be very instructive to determine the perception of childhood in the area or among the people to work with before determining the goals and activities. While there may be no need to work on changing the childhood perceptions among people with a more modern understanding, the perspectives of people with strict traditional perspective, on the other hand, may not change simply through awareness raising.

Therefore, there is a need to carry out advocacy work on the protective environment for children, childhood status and the differences between childhood and adulthood, as well as trainings to change the perspective of both parents and all social actors on this issue (Table-3). One issue to consider in this regard would be the need to organize the trainings and/or awareness-raising activities such as parent trainings not in groups but with visits to each tent, as most of the women stated during the fieldwork that they already know motherhood and that they cannot participate in a training outside the tent due to their workload and social constraints in the tent.

**Table 3.** Recommended Activities to be Conducted on the Axis of “Traditional Childhood Perception” to Prevent Child Marriages among Seasonal Migratory Agricultural Worker Families

SERVICE DELIVERY	ADVOCACY
<p>In order to change the traditional childhood perception;</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Parent trainings</li> <li>2) Training for local communities and other members of the wider society</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Advocacy for all social actors and the public regarding childhood status, characteristics and differences</li> <li>2) Advocacy on the scope and establishment of a protected environment for children</li> <li>3) Advocacy to raise awareness about the harms of child marriages for girls and boys and the babies born from these marriages</li> </ol>

## 2.4 Activities to be Conducted on the Axis of “Lack of Access to Education”

Children migrating with their families engaged in seasonal agricultural work may not attend school regularly due to reasons such as the necessity to travel, low levels of cognitive development and academic achievement due to the conditions they are exposed to, lack of adult supervision, especially girls having other responsibilities such as taking care of siblings or doing housework, low expectations from education or family opposition to girls’ education, and long-term absenteeism may lead to disengagement from the education process.

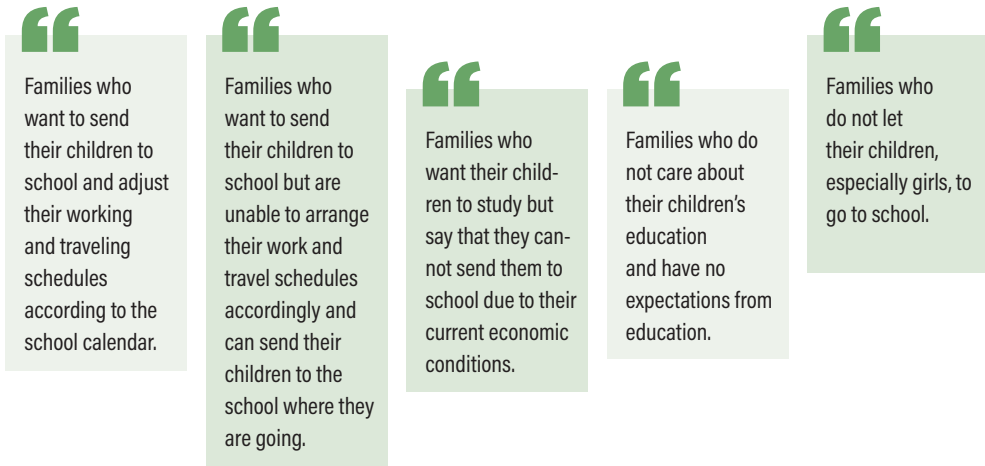
The places where seasonal migratory agricultural worker families reside are not only far from the cities, but also at least 2-3 km outside the village settlements in rural areas. In some places, there is no school near the tent areas where families live, and in some places, even if there is a school, there is no teacher or the school cannot be opened even when the school year starts due to lack of assignments. Resident villagers generally do not establish social relations with seasonal migratory agricultural worker families and do not want the children of these families to attend the schools in the village. Even if there is a school nearby, it is only for primary school or at most secondary school, and there is no opportunity to attend high school and beyond. This constitutes a significant obstacle for girls in particular, because in order to attend secondary or high school, children need to leave their families to live with a relative or enroll in a boarding school, which are not considered as viable options for girls.

### Lack of access to education



Since barriers to access to education are among the most important root causes of child labor and child marriages, it is necessary to identify the barriers specific to the communities prior to planning and conducting activities to prevent child marriages among seasonal migratory agricultural worker families. Another issue to be considered in this regard is that families’ attitudes towards education may be quite different from each other. As can be seen in Figure-4, there may be families who care about their children’s schooling and can adjust their living conditions accordingly, families who want their children to go to school but whose conditions do not allow them to do so, or families who do not care about their children’s education or are even obstructive in this regard.

**Figure 4.** Çocukların Eğitime Devamı Konusunda Ailelerin Farklı Görüşleri



In this framework, Table-4 presents recommended activities to change the reasons behind limited access to education, which should be planned by taking into account the different views of families regarding their children's schooling.

**Table 4.** Recommended Activities to be Conducted on the Axis of "Lack of Access to Education" to Prevent Child Marriages among Seasonal Migratory Agricultural Worker Families

SERVICE DELIVERY	ADVOCACY
<p>In order to increase children's access to education;</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Ensure that schools are open full time</li> <li>2) Programs to ensure inclusion and cohesion in schools</li> <li>3) Services to improve the physical and educational conditions of the school</li> <li>4) Educational support activities for school-age children <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Etudes etc. to support academic success</li> <li>- Activities to develop personal skills (sports, games, hobbies, etc.)</li> <li>- Recreational activities (cinema, theater, games, etc.)</li> </ul> </li> <li>5) Supportive services such as scholarships, school meals, etc. to encourage school attendance</li> <li>6) Quality boarding education opportunity</li> <li>7) Directing to vocational training</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Advocacy on the importance of social cohesion</li> <li>2) Advocacy on the importance of children's participation in education</li> <li>3) Advocacy to recognize and address the need for schools, teachers and programs</li> <li>4) Advocacy on ways to ensure accessibility and inclusion in education</li> <li>5) Advocacy to ensure that schools are designed to serve as a center for social support activities</li> </ol>

## *Social welfare support*

- + Vocational courses with personal development support
- + Directing to vocational training
- + Opportunities to participate in advocacy activities
- + Peer-to-peer programmes
- + Child-friendly spaces

## *Early childhood support*

- + Nursery /day care support
- + Nutrition support for children
- + Children play groups
- + Parenting trainings

## *Newborn support*

- + Newborn baby sets
- + Parenting trainings



## *Basic education support*

- + School adaptation programmes
- + Support for nutrition, school needs and scholarship
- + Social activities in schools and using schools as centers for social support
- + Parenting trainings
- + School based programmes for prevention of discriminatory attitudes and peer bullying



Advocacy with teachers, district and provincial directorates of education to ensure that schools have inclusive programmes and attitudes

Advocacy with local and central governments regarding organization and delivery of services

Advocacy with local communities to support children's admission into schools

Advocacy with district and provincial coordination committees and the minimum wage commission on living wage, working and living conditions

# 3

## Basic Principles to Follow in Efforts to Prevent Child Marriages among Seasonal Migratory Agricultural Worker Families

### 3.1

#### 3.1. Basic Principles of Service Delivery

Table-5 summarizes the services that can be provided to prevent child marriages among seasonal migratory agricultural worker families in the context of combating poverty, gender inequality, traditional perception of childhood and lack of access to education, as justified in Section-2.

**Table 5.** Services to be Provided to Prevent Child Marriages among Seasonal Agricultural Migratory Worker Families

POVERTY
<p>In order to support parents among seasonal migratory agricultural workers in their fight against poverty;</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1) Nursery and day care support</li><li>2) Newborn baby set to support the needs of parents with newborn babies</li><li>3) Nutrition support for children</li><li>4) Mother/father/caregiver trainings</li><li>5) Children's play groups</li><li>6) Establishing child-friendly spaces in working and living environments</li><li>7) Educational support activities for school-age children<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Etudes etc. to support academic success</li><li>- Activities to develop personal skills (sports, games, hobbies, etc.</li><li>- Recreational activities (cinema, theater, games, etc.)</li></ul></li></ol>
GENDER INEQUALITY
<p>For the empowerment of girls;</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1) Newborn baby set to support the needs of parents with newborn babies</li><li>2) Nutrition support for children</li><li>3) Mother/father/caregiver trainings</li><li>4) Children's play groups</li><li>5) Establishing child-friendly spaces in working and living environments</li><li>6) Educational support activities for school-age children</li></ol>

- Etudes etc. to support academic success
  - Activities to develop personal skills (sports, games, hobbies, etc.)
  - Recreational activities (cinema, theater, games, etc.)
- 7) Vocational skills trainings for adolescents
  - 8) Informing adolescents about the institutions and services where they can receive support

#### TRADITIONAL CHILDHOOD PERCEPTION

In order to change the traditional childhood perception;

- 1) Parent trainings
- 2) Training for local communities and other members of the wider society

#### LACK OF ACCESS TO EDUCATION

In order to increase children's access to education;

- 1) Ensure that schools are open full time
- 2) Programs to ensure inclusion and cohesion in schools
- 3) Services to improve the physical and educational conditions of the school
- 4) Educational support activities for school-age children
  - Etudes etc. to support academic success
  - Activities to develop personal skills (sports, games, hobbies, etc.)
  - Recreational activities (cinema, theater, games, etc.)
- 5) Supportive services such as scholarships, school meals, etc. to encourage school attendance
- 6) Quality boarding education opportunity
- 7) Directing to vocational training

In order to effectively contribute to the prevention of child marriages among seasonal migratory agricultural worker families, these services need to be planned in accordance with the needs, tested through pilot implementations, disseminated and sustained through monitoring and evaluation. The origins and prevalence of the problem require long-term systematic efforts. Therefore, determining the principles to be followed in the provision of these services is as important as determining the services to be provided.

This section presents the basic principles to be followed in the service provision for the prevention of child marriages among seasonal migratory agricultural worker families (Figure-5), prepared on the basis of the “Core Humanitarian Standard on Quality and Accountability” and the nine commitments within the scope of this standard, which have been prepared to guide the efforts in areas related to human rights and aim to improve the quality and effectiveness of the services delivered.



**Figure 5.** Basic Principles to Follow in Service Provision to Prevent Child Marriages among Seasonal Migratory Agricultural Worker Families



### ➤ Principle 1

#### Efforts to Prevent Child Marriages among Seasonal Migratory Agricultural Worker Families Should Be Appropriate and Relevant

The first principle to follow in activities for prevention of child marriage among seasonal migratory agricultural worker families should be to plan the services with due consideration for the conditions that lead to child marriage. Regarding this principle of appropriateness and relevance and relevance, it is recommended to consider the following:

- It should be taken into account that each tent settlement and the families living together there have a different attitude towards child marriage, and a preliminary study should be conducted to understand the reasons for the existing attitudes in the respective area to work in.
- Activities should be targeted and relevant to bring about change on the causes of child marriage and factors specific to seasonal migratory agricultural worker families (see Chapter 2). Lack of information or awareness is not the only factor behind child marriages, and therefore an activity that only aims to inform or raise awareness would not be in line with the principle of relevance and appropriateness.
- When planning the services to be provided, it is necessary to take into account the opportunities available to the seasonal migratory agricultural worker families. In this context, especially the following should be taken into consideration:
  - Girls among seasonal migratory agricultural worker families generally do not have mobile phones. They are mostly able to have a mobile phone only after marriage.
  - Some girls can use their mothers' mobile phones. However, women do not always have smartphones or may not always have internet access.
  - Illiteracy or low literacy is common, especially among women.
  - Some of the families in tent settlements do not speak Turkish, and languages such as Kurdish, Zazaki and Arabic are also spoken.

## Principle 2

### Efforts to Prevent Child Marriages among Seasonal Migratory Agricultural Worker Families Should Be Effective and Timely

Since child marriage is an issue of child abuse, it is an important ethical responsibility to carry out effective and timely work in this field. In this respect;

- The direct or indirect impact of planned services on preventing child marriage should be realistically assessed. Although all kinds of activities that enable children to have a good time and learn something have a benefit, it should be carefully analyzed whether this benefit has an effect on preventing child marriage.
- While carrying out activities to prevent child marriages, it should be ensured that the violations encountered (children who are about to be married or

have already been married) should be reported and that communication, cooperation and prior planning should be ensured with the institutions responsible for child protection.

### ➤ Principle 3

#### Efforts to Prevent Child Marriages among Seasonal Migratory Agricultural Worker Families Should Strengthen Local Capacities and Avoid Negative Effects

One of the most significant risks of working to prevent child marriage is jeopardizing the safety of girls and women. For this reason;

- A community-wide impact should be targeted, and care should be taken to avoid negative consequences such as weakening family ties as a result of impacting only one group or targeting girls more.
- It should be ensured that the work to be carried out has an impact that is not based on the service to be provided from outside, and it should be ensured that the children in the area do not face the risk of returning to back to the old conditions at the end of the project.

### ➤ Principle 4

#### Efforts to Prevent Child Marriages among Seasonal Migratory Agricultural Worker Families Should Be Based on Communication, Participation and Feedback

Ensuring that efforts to prevent child marriages are based on communication, participation and feedback would serve as a guarantee for realization of all other principles, and is particularly important for the third principle of strengthening local capacity. In this context, while planning services;

- Everyone in the tent settlement area should be met and informed about the activities to be carried out.
- A preliminary study should be carried out to identify possible activities and their purposes, but the list of activities should be finalized together with the families living in the respective tent area.
- A consultation mechanism should be established to ensure regular feedback on the work carried out and its impact, and the community should be regularly informed about the work carried out and its results.

## ↘ Principle 5

### Complaints Should Be Welcomed and Addressed During Efforts to Prevent Child Marriages among Seasonal Migratory Agricultural Worker Families

Within the scope of the work to be carried out, the establishment of a complaint mechanism should be envisaged for the safety of both the people who will carry out the work and the beneficiaries. For this purpose;

- When planning services, a point of contact should be identified where problems encountered during the provision of these services can be reported.
- The grievance mechanism should be accessible by families of seasonal migratory agricultural workers by phone without encountering any obstacles such as language barriers and families should be informed about this mechanism.
- Complaints must be recorded and responded to.

The complaint center should be a place where seasonal migratory agricultural worker families can access by phone and receive service without encountering obstacles such as language problems, and it should be introduced to them.

## ↘ Principle 6

### Efforts to Prevent Child Marriages among Seasonal Migratory Agricultural Worker Families Should Be Coordinated and Complementary

Efforts to alter both the reasons behind of child marriages and the conditions specific to seasonal migratory agricultural worker families are effective and ethically appropriate when carried out in coordination between organizations working in the field and planned in a complementary manner. For this reason;

- When planning a study to prevent child marriages among seasonal migratory agricultural worker families, first of all, the organizations working in this field in the same region should be identified.
- Information should be obtained about the work carried out by other organizations working in this field and planning should be made to avoid duplication and conflict.
- When it is observed that more than one organization provides services in the same area, a mechanism should be established to ensure coordination between

en these organizations regarding for instance the activities and impact assessments.

- Communication and cooperation with the authorities responsible for child protection (e.g. gendarmerie and provincial directorate of family and social services) should be ensured in order to operate the notification mechanism and ensure effective and timely intervention, especially when a child in need of protection is encountered in the field.

## ➤ Principle 7

### Those Working to Prevent Child Marriages among Seasonal Migratory Agricultural Worker Families Should Continuously Learn and Improve

One of the common risks encountered when working with children and with different vulnerable groups is that people who will work in this field think that their knowledge of the field, which is also the basis for their sensitivity on the issue, is sufficient for working in this area. However, while planning and conducting such studies, there is a need to acquire a lot of theoretical knowledge about the field and to update this knowledge regularly.

In this framework, it should be taken into account that no generalizations can be made about the characteristics of seasonal migratory agricultural workers such as their habits, social norms, or working and living conditions. There are many variables related to the factors listed in Figure-6 and those who will work with this group should have knowledge on all these issues.<sup>36</sup>

<sup>36</sup> For more information on the subject, please refer to the following resources by Development Workshop:

- Development Workshop (2020) "Unseen Lives on Migration Roots"
- Development Workshop (2019) "Poverty, Migration and Child Labor: The Socio-Economic Profile of Seasonal Agricultural Worker Households"
- Development Workshop (2018) "Wage Payment Types and the Outlook of Child Labour in Turkey's Agricultural Production"
- Development Workshop (2016) "Fertile Lands, Bitter Lives: The Situation Analysis Report on Syrian Seasonal Agricultural Workers in the Adana Plain"
- Development Workshop (2014) "Fındık Hasadının Oyuncuları - Batı Karadeniz İllerinde Fındık Hasadında Yer Alan Mevsimlik Gezici Tarım İşçileri, Tarım İşçilerinin Çocukları, Tarım Araçları ve Bahçe Sahipleri Temel Araştırması"

**Figure 6.** Factors Determining Working and Living Conditions of Seasonal Migratory Agricultural Worker Families

Duration and format of work	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Seasonal</li> <li>• Full-time migratory</li> <li>• Migrant</li> <li>• Non-migrant</li> </ul>
Type of accommodation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In tent for 12 months</li> <li>• In tent and in the city house simultaneously or seasonally</li> <li>• In tent and in the province, district or village of origin</li> </ul>
Working area	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• On a specific crop</li> <li>• On different crops</li> </ul>
Demographic structure of the tent area	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All families are from Turkey and from same province.</li> <li>• Families are from different provinces of Turkey</li> <li>• Some of the families are from Turkey, some are from Syria</li> <li>• All families are Syrian</li> </ul>
Type of remuneration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Daily wage (wages in return for day-long work)</li> <li>• Lump-sum wage (wages calculated according to the output produced)</li> <li>• Partnership/sharecropping (wages calculated by dividing the total amount of product produced between the landowner and the workers at the end of the year)</li> </ul>

When working in this field, it is necessary to have knowledge of the studies carried out in this field as well as information specific to the group to work with. In this context, it is especially important to have knowledge about the following:

- Causes and consequences of seasonal migratory agricultural labor.
- Causes and consequences of child marriage.
- Legal regulations and their implementation.
- Available support services.
- Principles of human rights advocacy and humanitarian action.
- Rights-based approach.



## ↘ Principle 8

Those Working to Prevent Child Marriages among Seasonal Migratory Agricultural Worker Families Should Be Supported to do Their Job Effectively, and are Treated Fairly and Equitably

Organizations working on the prevention of child marriage among seasonal migratory agricultural worker families are expected to ensure that their staff perform their work effectively and treat them fairly and equally, as is the case for organizations working in all other fields. This is a guarantee for not only the sustainability of the work carried out but also for the realization of the next principle regarding responsible use of resources. In this context;

- Staff with adequate knowledge of the subject should be employed to work in the field and the work performance should be supported through on-the-job trainings and clear and understandable job descriptions.
- Social security benefits and wages provided to staff must be equal and fair.
- The responsibilities of staff should be clearly defined, and a monitoring and supervision system should be established to ensure that work is carried out effectively.

## ↘ Principle 9

Resources Should Be Managed and Used Responsibly for Their Intended Purpose in Efforts to Prevent Child Marriages among Seasonal Migratory Agricultural Worker Families

Projects or activities in this area are usually carried out with resources allocated by societies or governments to improve the conditions of people they consider to be in need of assistance. These resources reach the target group indirectly when they are used for human resources, operational expenditures, materials and equipment that enable the implementation of projects. For this reason;

- Attention should be paid to ensure that adequate resources are allocated for service delivery that reaches the target group directly.
- In order for indirect resources to reach the target group effectively, it should be ensured that tasks are carried out with a high sense of responsibility.
- There should be an effective audit system.
- Resource utilization should be transparent and shared with the public.

## 3.2 Basic Principles of Advocacy

Advocacy efforts to prevent child marriage among seasonal migratory agricultural worker families should be conducive to creating change on the causes of the problem. Therefore, there is a need to develop an advocacy plan that covers all causes and pushing factors. Table-6 shows the activities that need to be carried out within the scope of advocacy work, as justified in the previous section (Chapter 2). Some of these activities are related to wider problems of seasonal migratory agricultural worker families and their children; however, this is inevitable, as these wider problems are also among the root causes of child marriages.

**Table 6.** Advocacy Activities to be Conducted to Prevent Child Marriages among Seasonal Agricultural Migratory Worker Families

POVERTY
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1 Advocacy to ensure that seasonal migratory agricultural workers are paid wages at a level that will provide them and their families with a dignified life, in accordance with the criteria set by international standards</li> <li>2 Advocacy to rearrange the wage conditions and working hours of seasonal migratory agricultural workers in a way that will prevent them from negatively affecting the parents' capacity to care for their children.</li> <li>3 Advocacy to ensure decent living environments</li> <li>4 Advocacy regarding legal regulations for the registration of workers</li> <li>5 Advocacy for the protection of workers' social security rights.</li> </ol>
GENDER INEQUALITY
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1 Awareness raising activities for more open communities on the harms of early marriages and the potential of girls</li> <li>2 Public advocacy on child safety and protection in closer communities</li> <li>3 A study to compare the social and cultural values adopted and used by seasonal agricultural worker groups in tent settlements with the social and cultural values of these groups in their original settlements</li> </ol>
TRADITIONAL CHILDHOOD PERCEPTION
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1 Advocacy for all social actors and the public regarding childhood status, characteristics and differences</li> <li>2 Advocacy on the scope and establishment of a protected environment for children</li> <li>3 Advocacy to raise awareness about the harms of child marriages for girls and boys and the babies born from these marriages</li> </ol>

## LACK OF ACCESS TO EDUCATION

- 1 Advocacy on the importance of social cohesion
- 2 Advocacy on the importance of children's participation in education
- 3 Advocacy to recognize and address the need for schools, teachers and programs
- 4 Advocacy on ways to ensure accessibility and inclusion in education
- 5 Advocacy to ensure that schools are designed to serve as a center for social support activities

Resources designed to guide advocacy work in the field of human rights<sup>37</sup> also provide guidance for advocacy work to prevent child marriages among seasonal migratory agricultural workers. The principles that should be followed in this context correspond to the core beliefs of independent advocacy and are the main starting points that should guide all the work of advocates and advocacy organizations:

*The principle of indivisibility refers to* the unity of human rights. This principle underpins the need for an advocacy plan that encompasses the full range of rights, from fair income security to the harms of child marriage.

*The principle of dependence and interdependence* draws attention to the fact that the protection of each right depends on the protection of others. It should be recognized that different rights of the child, such as the right to be protected from abuse and the right to an adequate education and standard of living, are interrelated.

*The principle of equality and non-discrimination* requires avoiding any discourse that consolidate prejudices leading to discriminatory behaviour and standing against prejudices that may be confronted with during advocacy work. This principle relates to the language that should be used and the attitude that should be adopted in advocacy efforts. The language of advocacy work should not be discriminatory and it should be ensured that all children are covered in advocacy activities as right-holders without discrimination.

*The principle of participation and inclusiveness* requires that advocacy activities are carried out in a way that ensures the participation of the beneficiary group and that their voices are directly heard. Ensuring that seasonal mobile agricultural worker families and their children are directly involved in the design and execution of advocacy activities to be carried out is both a requirement of

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<sup>37</sup> Resource(s) used in this section:

- Scottish Independent Advocacy Alliance (2019) "Independent Advocacy: Principles, Standards and Code of Best Practice"
- The Advocates for Human Rights (2015) "Human Rights Tools for a Changing World"
- Development Workshop (2021) "Advocacy Strategy: Monitoring Fair Working Conditions in Business to Prevent Child Labour"

the principle of participation and inclusiveness and also serves as an effective method to strengthen the roles of children.

*The principle of accountability and the rule of law* requires sharing of methods and resources of advocacy activities with the target group, partners, staff and society, and establishment of a mechanism to monitor their effectiveness. At the same time, advocacy efforts should be carried out by taking into account the legal regulations specific to this field.

This section presents nine standards and their indicators to be followed during human rights related advocacy efforts that can also help ensuring that the above mentioned principles are realized in advocacy activities conducted in the field of prevention of child marriages among seasonal migratory worker families. The first five of the nine standards in Table-7 are related to the design and methodology of advocacy work, while the others are related to their operationalization. At the end of the chapter, a checklist is provided for advocates who want to ensure that their advocacy work is in line with these strategies and indicators (Table-8).

Standards are the details outlining what needs to be done to meet the above principles. Indicators are the means to monitor whether standards are being met and are a requirement for accountability in advocacy work. Therefore, standards and indicators need to be considered alongside the principles of advocacy.

**Table 7.** Standards and Indicators for Advocacy Activities to be Conducted to Prevent Child Marriages among Seasonal Agricultural Migratory Worker Families



### Standard 1

Independent advocacy in human rights related issues seeks to ensure the protection of human rights.

The human rights that need to be protected in advocacy efforts to prevent child marriage among seasonal migratory agricultural worker families are as follows:

- The right of the child to an adequate standard of living (Convention on the Rights of the Child article 27)
- The right of the child to be protected by his or her parents and the right of the child's parents to be supported in this respect (Convention on the Rights of the Child article 18)
- Right to protection from neglect and abuse (Convention on the Rights of the Child article 19 and the Constitution article 41)
- The right to marry full and free consent<sup>38</sup> (UN Convention on Consent to Marriage, Minimum Age for Marriage and Registration of Marriage article 1 and 2)

<sup>38</sup> UNFPA (2021) "Legal Information Guide on Prevention of Child, Early and Forced Marriages" p. 42-46

## Indicators

### **1.1 Advocates are knowledgeable about national and supranational legislation<sup>39</sup> on child marriage to meet standard 1.**

In this context, it is necessary to have knowledge of legislation in the following areas:

- Regulations on human rights to be protected
- Age of marriage and capacity to marry (Turkish Civil Code article 124)
- Right to protection and protective procedure (Constitution article 41 and Child Protection Law)
- Crimes committed in cases of child marriage (Turkish Penal Code articles 80, 97, 98, 103, 104, 106, 107, 112, 232, 233)
- Notification and complaint rules and procedures (Social Services Law article 21, Child Protection Law article 6, Criminal Procedure Code article 158)

### **1.2 Advocates work to disseminate information concerning related legislation and policies.**

In particular, the following legislation should be covered:

- The right to fair wages<sup>40</sup> (Universal Declaration of Human Rights article 23, European Social Charter article 4, International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights article 7)
- Age of marriage and capacity to marry (Turkish Civil Code article 124)
- Right to protection and protective procedure (Constitution article 41 and Child Protection Law)

## Standard 2

Independent advocacy in human rights related issues is shaped in line with the rights, needs, fields of interest, opinions and demands of ultimate beneficiaries.

In order to design advocacy activities taking into account the rights (Standard 1), needs and demands of girls and boys, who are the ultimate beneficiaries of the advocacy activities to be carried out within the scope of efforts to prevent child marriages among seasonal migratory agricultural worker families, they will first need to be informed in a manner appropriate to their ability to form opinions. Only when they have sufficient knowledge will they be able to raise their demands, interests and needs.

## Indicators

### **2.1 Advocates represent not their ideas or interests of others but the demands and opinions of the target group.**

Factors such as the fact that the beneficiaries are children or families being uncooperative due to their desire to marry off their children cause the studies to be carried out for children to be designed independently of their wishes and opinions. However, children may have important ideas about the risks to themselves and ways to protect themselves from these risks. Thus, mechanisms should be established to enable children to express their demands and opinions in advocacy work.

<sup>39</sup> UNFPA (2021) "Legal Information Guide on Prevention of Child, Early and Forced Marriages" p. 42-53

<sup>40</sup> Development Workshop (2018) "Analysis of Legislative Gaps and Recommendations in the Context of Preventing Child Labour in Agriculture" p. 13

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## 2.2 Advocates are clear about their role.

Advocates should be aware that their primary role is one of representation and should therefore ensure that their ideas do not override those of rights holders.

This indicator says that advocates should start their work by determining the area in which they want to make an impact, but they should act according to the needs and demands of the final beneficiaries when determining the demands and expressing these demands.

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### » Standard 3

Independent advocacy in human rights related issues helps people to have control over their own lives and to fully participate to decisions affecting their life.

Participation is among the most important standards of both humanitarian aid and human rights advocacy work. It is expected that the advocacy activities to be carried out will ensure that the children of seasonal migratory agricultural worker families have control over their own lives and participate in decisions that concern them, including getting married. In order to ensure the participation of seasonal migratory agricultural worker families in efforts to prevent their children from marrying, it is necessary to start from the field in which they are ready to work. Therefore, this indicator needs to be adapted for the short, medium and long term.

### ⚙ Indicators

#### 3.1 Advocates try to help children at risk of marriage and advocacy partners obtain as much information as possible about available opportunities.

This indicator requires that children, who are the ultimate beneficiaries, and the advocacy partners who will carry out this work, are informed about all possible activities and have the opportunity to choose among them. This indicator calls on advocacy workers to be fair and transparent.

#### 3.2 Advocates seek to help advocacy partners make informed decisions and choices.

There are multiple potential subjects for advocacy in the field of preventing child marriages among seasonal migratory agricultural worker families (See Table-6). When choosing between them, children need to learn to evaluate the available opportunities with criteria such as effectiveness and feasibility. In accordance with this indicator, within the scope of advocacy activities, children will need to be informed about the options and they will need to be guided so that they can make informed decisions.

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### » Standard 4

Independent advocacy in human rights related issues is responsible and should be accountable to those whose rights it aims to protect or affected populations.

It is expected that information about all activities carried out and resources used will be accessible to both the ultimate beneficiaries, including the families and children of seasonal migratory agricultural workers, as well as civil society organizations, public institutions and all other relevant parties, which will be among the target groups of advocacy work.

### ⚙ Indicators

#### 4.1 Advocates are accountable to the group they represent, the target group and the organization they are affiliated with.

This indicator envisages advocates taking responsibility for their activities. This means taking responsibility and learning from mistakes in the language or implementation of advocacy work.

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**4.2 Advocates share their activities, resources, and results with the public in an understandable, open and accessible manner.**

This indicator also envisages that all kinds of information including financial information related to activities to prevent child marriage among seasonal migratory agricultural worker families should be accessible.

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**» Standard 5** Independent advocacy in human rights related issues is accountable under the law.

When deciding on the content and methods of advocacy activities, legal regulations should be taken into account to ensure the protection of both staff and beneficiaries.

**⚙ Indicators**

**5.1 Advocates are aware of laws and act in accordance.**

In particular, advocates should be aware of and act in accordance with the legal regulations on freedom of expression and on situations in which advocacy activities may violate the law.

**5.2 Advocates ensure that the target group they represent is aware of law and do not help in any act of law breaking. This principle cannot be interpreted to exclude civil disobedience.**

It should be ensured that children and their families are also aware of the legal regulations under 5.1 as they are also expected to participate in advocacy activities. (Standard 3)

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**» Standard 6** Independent advocacy in human rights related issues must be managed effectively.

In order to achieve the target and meet the expectations of children, the final beneficiaries, an advocacy strategy targeting the prevention of marriage of children among seasonal migratory agricultural worker families should be identified and the activities should be managed effectively. In this context;

- Time and resources must be used with care,
- Time schedules must be respected,
- Ethical rules must be followed,
- Necessary revisions and improvements should be made taking into account the results of monitoring and evaluation.

**⚙ Indicators**

**6.1 Advocates operate within the principles and standards of the advocacy strategy.**

Those who will take part in advocacy work are expected to have knowledge of the standards and principles of advocacy and the ability to comply with them.

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**6.2 Advocates are knowledgeable about effective resource use and use resources effectively.**

In order to increase the sustainability and impact of advocacy work, it is also important to mobilize local resources. It is also essential that the resources allocated for advocacy work are used in the most effective way. For this purpose, it is important to have rules on resource utilization and monitoring.

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## » Standard 7

Independent advocacy in human rights related issues cannot be controlled by its funders.

This standard should be considered when seeking funding for advocacy work and when identifying and contracting with funding agencies.

### ⚙ Indicators

#### 7.1 The actions of the advocates are not affected by the opinions of the funders.

The first indicator of not being controlled by resource providers is to ensure that the content of advocacy is not influenced by the views of the resource provider. The main issue here is to preserve the opportunity for the final beneficiaries to express their demands.

#### 7.2 The institutions of which the advocates are members have independent management structures. Funders are not directly associated with the management of the institution engaged in advocacy work.

The second indicator also envisages structural independence.

#### 7.3 Advocates have a clear strategy to follow when resource providers interfere with their work.

When planning advocacy work, the procedure to be followed in cases where the funding institution interferes with the content should be planned and this should be included in the contract with the funding institution.

## » Standard 8

Independent advocacy in human rights related issues is aware of possible conflicts of interest and minimizes this possibility.

It should be recognized that advocacy activities are about helping a group to be heard and contacts established with the group as part of this role may provide some personal secondary benefits (prestige, etc.) which should be prevented to become a motivation for advocacy.

### ⚙ Indicators

#### 8.1 Advocates are aware of anything that could jeopardize their role.

This indicator envisages the awareness of the risks given below, examples of which may cause the objective of prevention of child marriages among seasonal migratory agricultural worker families to remain secondary during the advocacy efforts:

- Disregarding the demands of the final beneficiaries
- Lack of awareness of the final beneficiaries' demands
- Not being aware of or not being interested in the impact of the ongoing activity

#### 8.2 Advocates are aware of the limitations of the relationships they establish in the advocate role.

The most important limitation is that the advocate is always tasked with articulating the demands of the final beneficiary. His/her relationships with the target group should not be in a way to prevent him/her from fulfilling this task in the most effective way (e.g. by withdrawing so as not to harm a member of the target group or his/her relationship with him/her).

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### 8.3 Advocates have policies and procedures they can follow to deal with potential conflicts of interest.

How to deal with conflicts of interest should also be foreseen in the planning of advocacy activities and included in staff contracts.

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#### » Standard 9

Independent advocacy in human rights related issues tries to reach the widest mass possible regardless of their merits or living conditions.

This standard stipulates that when planning advocacy activities, those who will work in the field should correctly assess their own capacities. This is because, when advocacy is undertaken, expectations will be raised among final beneficiaries and resources will be used. In order to avoid a negative impact, it is necessary to make a realistic assessment at the outset and assess whether the advocacy can reach the target audience as broadly as possible.

#### ⚙ Indicators

##### 9.1 Advocates avoid discriminatory behaviour / favouritism towards their target group.

The first capacity limiting factor to be taken into account for this standard may be the potential relationship of interest between some of the target groups and the advocates and the possibility of leaving certain groups out of the advocacy efforts due to either favouritism towards or conflict with them. For example, in advocacy efforts to prevent child marriage among seasonal migratory agricultural worker families, advocacy should be carried out with local governments to ensure that services supporting education are provided in the settlement areas. The political preferences of the advocate should not in any way affect the work to be carried out with local governments in this context.

##### 9.2 Advocates try to reach people who may benefit from their advocacy role.

The second indicator of this standard draws attention to dissemination capacity. Advocates should have the capacity to reach all those who have an interest in and jurisdiction over the outcome they seek to achieve.

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**Table 8.** Checklist for Compliance with Standards for Those Conducting Advocacy Work on the Prevention of Child Marriages among Seasonal Migratory Agricultural Worker Families

Checklist for Advocates	Yes	No
Is he/she informed about policies related to equal opportunities and non-discrimination?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Is he/she aware of what is considered as discriminatory behaviour/favouritism in relation to the target group and competent in avoiding such behaviour?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Does he/she try to reach people who may benefit from advocacy work?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Is he/she aware of risks that may jeopardize his/her roles?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Is he/she aware of limitations to his/her role of advocacy?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Does he/she know the policies and procedures that he/she can apply in case of possible conflicts of interest?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Does he/she know the principles and standards of advocacy strategy?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Is he/she informed and diligent about efficient resource utilization?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Is he/she informed about the legislation regarding advocacy work?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Does he/she comply with the legislation that must be followed in advocacy work?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Does he/she feel a sense of responsibility towards the group he/she represents, the target group and the organization she is affiliated with?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Is he/she informed about the past, present and future aspirations of the target group he/she represents and does he/she takes these into account in advocacy work?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Can he/she discern the demands and opinions of the target group from his/her own opinions or interests of others?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Can he/she perform advocacy work by focusing exclusively on the demands and opinions of the target group?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Is he/she informed about national and supranational legislation relating to their field of work?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Does he/she try to disseminate information about related legislation and policies?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Does he/she share with the society the activities being carried out, the resources used and the results achieved in an understandable way, in an open and accessible manner?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Does he/she take measures to ensure that his/her actions are not influenced by funders?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Is he/she sure that institutions he/she is attached to have their independent management structure (absence of any direct connection between funders and management of advocacy institution)?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Does he/she have a clear strategy to guide him/her in case funders interfere with his/her work?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>





DEVELOPMENT  
WORKSHOP

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