



**Achieving a Political and Financial  
Commitment to End Child Marriage by  
International Day of the Girl: Social media,  
NGO based advocacy, and letter writing  
toolkit**

**Campaign Timeline:**

**August 13, 2012 - October 11, 2012**

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>Twitter Toolkit</b> .....	<b>3</b>
<b>Facebook Toolkit</b> .....	<b>6</b>
<b>Grassroots Letter Writing Toolkit</b> .....	<b>8</b>
Sample Grassroots Letter Template.....	10
<b>NGO Based Advocacy Toolkit</b> .....	<b>11</b>
<b>Letter Writing by Influential People or “Grasstops” Toolkit</b> .....	<b>14</b>
Sample Grasstops Letter Template .....	15



## Girls Not Brides: US Partnership to End Child Marriage

### Twitter Toolkit

**Purpose:** To demonstrate a high level of U.S. constituency support for a strong financial and political commitment by the Administration to end child marriage.

**Timeline:** August 13 – October 11 (leading up to September 15 will be key timeframe to influence any potential financial commitment for International Day of the Girl Child)

#### Solutions Focused Themes for Twitter:

- Increased political and financial investments in girls are needed to end child marriage and support married adolescents– the time is now;
- Ending child marriage is fundamental to achieving other development goals (link issue with other development sectors); and
- Congress has demonstrated its bipartisan commitment to address the issue, now it is time for the Administration to take action.

#### Constituent-based Twitter Strategy and Recommended Actions:

- Engage US constituency in coordinated and targeted tweeting to the State Department using this twitter handle: @StateDept
- Utilize the **#unite4girls** universal campaign hashtag in every tweet throughout the entire campaign leading up to October 11
  - Additional hashtags to incorporate into your tweets (in addition to #unite4girls):
    - #DearHillary
    - #girlsnotbrides
    - #endchildmarriage
- Link the tweets back to a page on your organization’s website or another resource on child marriage, including the recent [Washington Post OpEd](#), video of Senate [floor speech by Senator Durbin](#), or other advocacy materials (see NGO based advocacy toolkit for additional resources).
- Utilize a Twibbon image for Twitter users to change their profile on 10/11/12<sup>1</sup>
- On International Day of the Girl use the hash tag #dayofthegirl in addition to #unite4girls

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<sup>1</sup> An updated toolkit will go out before October 11<sup>th</sup>, which will include a Twibbon image for Twitter users (organizations and grassroots) to change their Twitter image on 10/11/12.

**Sample Messages – please adapt for your organization as needed:**

- We saw bipartisan support in the Senate. Now we’re counting on you, @StateDept to #unite4girls to #endchildmarriage!
- #DearHillary, if we want to see a real change in the lives of girls around the world we must #unite4girls to #endchildmarriage, @StateDept.
- .@StateDept, every day 25K girls in developing countries are forced to marry. It’s time to #unite4girls and #endchildmarriage.
- Passing the bill to #endchildmarriage showed the Senate will #unite4girls. Now it’s your turn, @StateDept.
- Join the movement and #unite4girls! Together, @StateDept we can #endchildmarriage.
- #DearHillary, G-8 world leaders recognize child marriage is a human rights violation. It’s time for @StateDept to #unite4girls.

**Timeline (launch date of August 13):**

- Whenever possible, all tweets should be sent during key tweet hours of 11am-3pm EST. You can choose from the suggested tweets or craft your own, always using #unite4girls in addition to any other hashtags you choose to incorporate.
- The primary goal is to get your followers and constituents to retweet or send the same tweet during the timeframe.
- Please send at least one tweet to @StateDept during each date range and between 11am – 3pm EST. Each week, 2-3 dates are provided in the calendar below as recommended dates for tweeting to maximize collective impact and to create a consistent drumbeat throughout to try and influence any potential State Department decisions. Tweets will continue up until 10/11/12.

This calendar is a list of suggested dates, if these dates don’t work for you or your organization, please tweet whenever possible.

**August:**

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13 TWEET	14 TWEET	15 TWEET	16	17	18
19	20	21	22 TWEET	23 TWEET	24 TWEET	25
26	27 TWEET	28 TWEET	29	30	31	

**September:**

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13 TWEET	14 TWEET	15
16	17	18	19 TWEET	20 TWEET	21	22
23	24	25 TWEET	26 TWEET	27	28	29
30						

**October:**

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	1	2	3	4 TWEET	5 TWEET	6
7	8	9	10 TWEET	11 TWEET AND TWIBBON IMAGE		



## Girls Not Brides: US Partnership to End Child Marriage

### Facebook Toolkit

**Purpose:** To demonstrate a high level of U.S. constituency support for a strong financial and political commitment by the U.S. Administration to end child marriage.

**Timeline:** August 13 – October 11 (leading up to September 15 will be key timeframe to influence any potential financial commitment for International Day of the Girl Child)

#### Solutions Focused Themes for Facebook:

- Increased political and financial investments in girls are needed to end child marriage and support married adolescents– the time is now;
- Ending child marriage is fundamental to achieving other development goals (link issue with other development sectors); and
- Congress has demonstrated its bipartisan commitment to address the issue, now it is time for the Administration to take action.

#### Facebook Strategy and Recommended Actions:

- Utilize photos, videos and messaging that followers can “share” or “like” to demonstrate support for the issue and spread awareness.
- Tag the State Department’s Facebook page (@USDOS) in posts about child marriage.
- Post a personal message on President Obama’s Facebook page (@BarackObama) to demonstrate popular desire for action on child marriage.
- Utilize Facebook ads to bring awareness to child marriage (Contact Heather Faison for more information on this tactic if interested: [hfaison@unfoundation.org](mailto:hfaison@unfoundation.org))
- Utilize the universal cover photo for Facebook users (grassroots and organizations) and change profile photo on International Day of the Girl, 10/11/12<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> An updated toolkit will go out before October 11<sup>th</sup>, which will include a profile picture for organizations and grassroots to change their Facebook profile photo on 10/11/12.

**Sample Messages – please customize for your organization as needed:**

- 1 in 7 girls will be forced to marry by age 15, robbing her of a chance to get an education and escape poverty. Girls around the world deserve better. Now is the time to end child marriage! <LINK><sup>3</sup>
- G-8 world leaders, the U.S. Senate agree that child marriage is a violation of human rights. Let's make sure girls around the world have the chance for a better future. <LINK>
- ALL girls deserve a chance at a better future. Help girls around the world get that opportunity by asking [@USDOS (State Dept Facebook page)] to help END child marriage!
- From the U.S. Senate to the G8 to local communities around the world – all of them believe in the importance of ending child marriage. Join the movement, invest in girls! <LINK>
- The U.S. Senate took a stand. G8 leaders took a stand. Now it's time for YOU to take a stand. Join us in the movement to end child marriage!

**Share child marriage specific photo on Facebook – see sample message below**

- I believe that every girl should have the opportunity to fulfill her potential. Share this photo with your friends and let everyone know that you want to see a world without child marriage!
- If you would like ideas for photos you can “share” through Facebook, please contact Erin Kennedy: [ekennedy@care.org](mailto:ekennedy@care.org)

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<sup>3</sup> Link to organization or partner website that contains information on child marriage.



## Girls Not Brides: US Partnership to End Child Marriage

### Grassroots Letter Writing Toolkit

**Purpose:** To demonstrate a high level of support by U.S. constituents for a strong financial and political commitment by the U.S. Administration to end child marriage.

**Timeline:** August 13 – October 11 (leading up to September 15 will be key timeframe to influence any potential financial commitment for International Day of the Girl Child)

#### **Why are we asking Secretary Clinton to prioritize child marriage?**

Child marriage is a human rights violation. It prevents more than 10 million girls a year from being able to reach their full potential and makes it harder for families, communities, and countries to escape poverty. Child brides are more likely to drop out of school, contract HIV, experience domestic violence and die in child birth. We need action and investment from the U.S. government so we can reach vulnerable girls in developing countries as quickly as possible. With help from Secretary of State Hillary Clinton, we can work together to end child marriage!

#### **What can constituents do to help?**

In honor of the first International Day of the Girl Child on Oct. 11, constituents can write a personal letter to Sec. Clinton asking her to prioritize child marriage. Handwritten letters are one of the most effective ways to influence government officials and make an impact. Have constituents send their letter to the Girl Up offices by Sept. 24 to add their voice to our efforts. The letters will be delivered—along with other letters from across the country—to Sec. Clinton before the International Day of the Girl Child in coordination with organizations that participated in the grassroots letter writing campaign.

#### **How can constituents get started?**

Sec. Clinton gets hundreds of letters every day – but every one of them counts. Read the tips below to help the letters stand out and make an impact. Please encourage constituents to follow the template at the end of this guide:

- **Introduce Yourself.** List your “credentials” (name, address) and specify that you are a U.S. constituent. As you introduce yourself, don’t forget to include why you feel strongly about helping adolescent girls around the world.
- **Personalize it.** Sending a personalized letter will generate more attention than an impersonal form letter. Be creative – officials want to hear your stories, not just facts and figures.
- **Be concise.** Get to the point... quickly. Your letter can be as short as a paragraph but should be no longer than one page. The more concise, the better. There are so many important things to say, but letters that are too long risk not being fully read. Use the talking points at the end of this guide to help you be brief.



- **Make an “ask.”** Be sure your letter includes a clear call-to-action. Ask Sec. Clinton for political and financial support to end child marriage. For emphasis, restate your “ask” at the end of the letter.
- **Be polite.** Manners do go a long way. Advocates should be passionate, not pushy. Use the headings provided in the template when you address the letter. Most importantly, remember to thank Sec. Clinton for her leadership on women and girls’ issues.

**How can constituents make an even bigger impact?**

Host a letter writing party! Impact can be doubled or tripled by constituents hosting a letter writing party. Encourage them to invite a few friends over and plan a letter writing party at their home. At the beginning of the party they should give a brief overview of the issue and the “ask”—with time for people to ask questions! Providing supplies for everyone to write their own personal letters, as well as copies of the letter template is recommended. Constituents can make it a true party by providing food like cupcakes or pizza.

Please let Jennifer Redner: [jennifer.redner@goodworksgroup.net](mailto:jennifer.redner@goodworksgroup.net) know if your organization is planning to engage your grassroots in this letter writing campaign.

**Don't forget to have constituents  
mail letters to Girl Up by **Sept. 24!****

**Girl Up c/o Julie Willig  
1800 Massachusetts Ave.  
Suite 400  
Washington, DC 20036**

## ***Sample Grassroots Letter Template***

The Honorable Secretary of State Hillary Clinton  
U.S. Department of State  
2201 C Street NW  
Washington, D.C. 20520

Dear Secretary Clinton,

### ***Paragraph 1: Introduction***

Introduce yourself by stating your name and hometown. Include a brief, 1-sentence summary of why you are writing the letter.

### ***Paragraph 2: Child Marriage – Making the case***

In this paragraph, you should be addressing *why* child marriage matters to you. Provide 2-3 sentences about why you think child marriage is an important issue to address and why you are passionate about helping adolescent girls around the world. Be sure to include some facts or a story of a girl that you find shocking. For example, 1 in 7 girls in developing countries will be married before the age of 15. For more facts and information on child marriage: [LINK TO CHILD MARRIAGE INFORMATION RESOURCE OF YOUR ORGANIZATION](#).

### ***Paragraph 3: Making the “ask”***

In this paragraph, you should address *how* Sec. Clinton can help. Ask for increased political and financial commitments so that we can work to end child marriage. The time to tackle this issue is now! You can also mention that addressing child marriage will help achieve other developmental goals because it is linked with so many other global issues (e.g. education, poverty, health, safety). The Senate demonstrated a bipartisan commitment to the issue by passing the Protecting Girls by Preventing Child Marriage Act; now we need to see our government take action. Make sure you say “please”!

### ***Paragraph 4: Personal touch***

Here is where you can really be creative! Why as a U.S. citizen is ending child marriage important to you? How did you react when you heard about child marriage? How did you feel when the Senate passed the International Protecting Girls by Preventing Child Marriage Act? Is there a particular story you’ve heard about a girl being married at a young age that has affected you? Is there an article or book you read on child marriage that shocked you? Make this paragraph unique to why you care about this issue.

### ***Paragraph 5: Conclusion and thank you***

Wrap up your letter by reiterating your “ask” (be sure to include “please”) and briefly stating the importance of addressing the issue of child marriage. Be sure to thank Sec. Clinton for her time and her leadership on empowering girls and women around the world.

Sincerely,  
[Signature]  
[Your First & Last Name]  
[Address]  
[Phone Number]



## Girls Not Brides: US Partnership to End Child Marriage

### NGO Based Advocacy Toolkit

**Purpose:** To demonstrate a high level of support by NGOs, grassroots, celebrities, and other high level supporters for a strong financial and political commitment by the U.S. Administration to end child marriage.

**Timeline:** August 13 – October 11 (leading up to September 15 will be key timeframe to influence any potential financial commitment for International Day of the Girl Child)

#### Recommended Actions by NGOs (non-grassroots dependant):

##### 1. Social media:

- *Girls Not Brides* members and high-profile supporters, including grassroots, celebrities, and thought leaders can share child marriage messages on social media. Please see the Twitter one-page toolkit for recommended actions, sample messages and hashtags.
- Please see the Facebook one-page toolkit for recommended actions and sample messages.
- *Girls Not Brides* will host an online training session for global members on how to maximize social media. If any *Girls Not Brides USA* members would like to participate or assist with lessons learned from their own work, please inform [Laura Dickinson](#), Communications Officer at *Girls Not Brides*. The aim is to encourage members to consider how social media could boost their outreach work and to participate in global social media messaging on International Day of the Girl.

##### 2. Blogs:

- *Girls Not Brides* members and high-profile supporters, including grassroots, celebrities, and thought leaders can write blogs on the issue utilizing solutions based and action-oriented messaging. Please see the one-page letter writing campaign toolkit as well as the sample messages for Facebook and Twitter actions for some messaging ideas beyond the key themes included below.
- Sample websites we encourage you to consider targeting for blogs include but are not limited to: Huffington Post, Washington Post, Financial Times, NY Times, Foreign Policy Magazine, World Pulse, Daily Beast, Slate XX Factor, IRIN News, Guardian Development website
- Please let Jennifer Redner know if you need any assistance:  
[Jennifer.redner@goodworksgroup.net](mailto:Jennifer.redner@goodworksgroup.net).

##### ○ Key messages for blogs:

- Increased political and financial investments in girls are needed to end child marriage and support married adolescents– the time is now;
- Ending child marriage is fundamental to achieving other development goals (link issue with other development sectors); and
- Congress has demonstrated its bipartisan commitment to address the issue, now it is time for the Administration to take action.

### 3. Letter Writing by High Profile Supporters:

- Girls Not Brides members have access to a range of high level individuals who may be willing to write a personal letter to Secretary Clinton urging action on the issue of child marriage.
- Please see the one-page letter writing campaign toolkit for some messaging ideas. Please let Jennifer Redner know if you need assistance: [Jennifer.redner@goodworksgroup.net](mailto:Jennifer.redner@goodworksgroup.net).

#### Content available for use by members:

*Girls Not Brides* is currently compiling additional communications materials for members to use on International Day of the Girl, including case studies, photos and data visualisations. Please contact [Laura Dickinson](#), Communications Officer at *Girls Not Brides* with any questions regarding availability of communications materials for members to use on International Day of the Girl.

In the meantime, we encourage Girls Not Brides USA members to use the following resources:

- the *Girls Not Brides* introductory video featuring Graça Machel, Mary Robinson and Desmond Tutu of The Elders who call on people around the world to action: to end child marriage in a single generation. Link to embed the video on your website: <http://youtu.be/l4v3vq5-z8Y>
- Link to Washington Post OpEd: [http://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/child-marriage-robbs-girls-of-their-opportunities/2012/07/31/gJQAud7kNX\\_story.html?hpid=z7](http://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/child-marriage-robbs-girls-of-their-opportunities/2012/07/31/gJQAud7kNX_story.html?hpid=z7)
- Link to Senator Durbin's Senate floor speech: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KpJa25a7mwQ&feature=youtu.be>
- Link to Stephanie Sinclair's National Geographic article: <http://ngm.nationalgeographic.com/2011/06/child-brides/gorney-text>
- Link to Stephanie Sinclair's "Too Young Too Wed" <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qYleXcpbzKY>
- Link to Christiane Amanpour CNN interview of Stephanie Sinclair <http://amanpour.blogs.cnn.com/2012/08/05/11-year-old-girl-married-to-40-year-old-man/>
- Link to G-8 Statement of the Foreign Ministers <http://www.state.gov/r/pa/prs/ps/2012/04/187815.htm>
- Link to Nike Foundation's Girl Effect Infograph [http://media-cache-ec4.pinterest.com/upload/286189751291379269\\_v1HGIFr0.jpg](http://media-cache-ec4.pinterest.com/upload/286189751291379269_v1HGIFr0.jpg)
- Ford Foundation Mapping of Child Marriage Relevant Information by Country <http://www.fordfoundation.org/2011-annual/youth-sexuality-and-rights/>

#### *Girls Not Brides'* current plans around Day of the Girl include:

1. On Day of the Girl, *Girls Not Brides* and its members will call for international action on child marriage through a series of high-level and grassroots events. These events will be linked through online and traditional communications activities and will highlight the increasing global momentum for action on child marriage.

2. A potential high-level event in the USA on child marriage. The details for this event are still being determined. Communications activities around the event may include live-streaming and social media messages and will be shared with all members as they are developed.
  
3. An online discussion on child marriage
  - This will involve around five participants, including high-profile people committed to ending child marriage, *Girls Not Brides* members working on the ground, and girls affected by child marriage.
  - The discussion will be streamed online, and will involve questions and interaction from viewers – *Girls Not Brides USA* members will be welcome to stream the event on their own websites, to encourage their supporters to send their own questions, etc.
  - The online event will be preceded by a series of blog debates modelled on [The Elders and Youngers debates on Rio+20](#). *Girls Not Brides USA* members will be invited to contribute blogs in the run-up to the online discussion.
  - Discussion will be solutions focused, and explore the potential for further engagement between civil society, government, UN agencies and social business on child marriage.
  - *Girls Not Brides* is currently exploring options with media partners to host and publicise this discussion.
  - Please let Laura Dickinson know if you have any questions regarding this opportunity: [laura.dickinson@girlsnotbrides.org](mailto:laura.dickinson@girlsnotbrides.org)
  
4. Local activities across many of the 32 countries where there are *Girls Not Brides* members and national partnerships.
  - These activities will be organised in-country according to what best suits the local context. Members will be encouraged to share the outcomes and content from their events with other members to increase each other's content and resources on child marriage.
  - Please let Laura Dickinson know if you have any questions regarding this opportunity: [laura.dickinson@girlsnotbrides.org](mailto:laura.dickinson@girlsnotbrides.org).



## **Girls Not Brides: US Partnership to End Child Marriage**

### **Letter Writing by Influential People or “Grasstops” Toolkit**

**Purpose:** To demonstrate a high level of support by influential individuals for a strong financial and political commitment by the U.S. Administration to end child marriage.

**Timeline:** August 13 – October 11 (leading up to September 15 will be key timeframe to influence any potential financial commitment for International Day of the Girl Child)

#### **Why are we asking Secretary Clinton to prioritize child marriage?**

Child marriage is a human rights violation. It prevents more than 10 million girls a year from being able to reach their full potential and makes it harder for families, communities, and countries to escape poverty. Child brides are more likely to drop out of school, contract HIV, experience domestic violence and die in child birth. We need action and investment from the U.S. government so we can reach vulnerable girls in developing countries as quickly as possible. With help from Secretary of State Hillary Clinton, we can work together to end child marriage!

#### **What can influential individuals do to help?**

In honor of the first International Day of the Girl Child on Oct. 11, high level supporters can write a personal letter to Sec. Clinton asking her to prioritize child marriage. Handwritten letters are one of the most effective ways to influence government officials and make an impact. Letters by high level supporters should be sent directly to Secretary Clinton as soon as possible for maximum impact.

Please let Jennifer Redner: [jennifer.redner@goodworksgroup.net](mailto:jennifer.redner@goodworksgroup.net) know if your organization is planning to engage high-level individuals to write letters.

## ***Sample Grasstops Letter Template***

The Honorable Secretary of State Hillary Clinton  
U.S. Department of State  
2201 C Street NW  
Washington, D.C. 20520

Dear Secretary Clinton,

### ***Paragraph 1: Introduction***

Introduce yourself by stating your name and hometown. Include a brief, 1-sentence summary of why you are writing the letter.

### ***Paragraph 2: Child Marriage – Making the case***

In this paragraph, you should be addressing *why* child marriage matters to you. Provide 2-3 sentences about why you think child marriage is an important issue to address and why you are passionate about helping adolescent girls around the world.

### ***Paragraph 3: Making the “ask”***

In this paragraph, you should address *how* Sec. Clinton can help. Ask for increased political and financial commitments so that we can work to end child marriage. The time to tackle this issue is now. You can also mention that addressing child marriage will help achieve other developmental goals because it is linked with so many other global issues (e.g. education, poverty, health, safety). The Senate demonstrated a bipartisan commitment to the issue by passing the Protecting Girls by Preventing Child Marriage Act; now we need to see our government take action.

### ***Paragraph 4: Personal touch***

Please discuss why as a U.S. citizen ending child marriage important to you? How did you react when you heard about child marriage? How did you feel when the Senate passed the International Protecting Girls by Preventing Child Marriage Act? Is there a particular story you’ve heard about a girl being married at a young age that has affected you? Is there an article or story you read about the issue that shocked you? Make this paragraph unique to why you care about this issue.

### ***Paragraph 5: Conclusion and thank you***

Wrap up your letter by reiterating your “ask” and briefly stating the importance of addressing the issue of child marriage. Please make sure you thank Sec. Clinton for her time and her leadership on empowering girls and women around the world.

Sincerely,

[Signature]

[Your First & Last Name]

[Address]

[Phone Number]