



# THE CHILD MARRIAGE MONITORING MECHANISM

## WHO WE ARE

The Child Marriage Monitoring Mechanism (CMMM) is guided by a Strategic Advisory Group consisting of key stakeholders from diverse backgrounds with the expertise, insight and networks to drive action, collaboration and investment. Given its role as custodian agency within the monitoring infrastructure on child marriage (SDG 5.3), UNICEF serves as the CMMM's technical lead and secretariat.

# STRATEGIC ADVISORY GROUP



**MANAL AL-AYAD**

**Senior Policy Adviser on Harmful Practices,  
Global Affairs Canada**

Manal Al-Ayad joined the Canadian Foreign Service in 2015 where she has gained significant experience in a variety of foreign policy, multilateral diplomacy, security, human rights, humanitarian, and international assistance issues. In her current assignment, she is the department lead on the biennial United Nations General Assembly resolution on child, early and forced marriage, which Canada co-leads with Zambia. Prior to this, she worked as an Adviser for Canada's Permanent Mission to the United Nations at the Economic and Financial Committee (Second Committee) of the United Nations General Assembly at its seventy-sixth session. From 2017 to 2022, she helped shape Canada's broader engagement in sub-Saharan Africa, covering a range of development issues and trends in the region, with a focus on women's empowerment and gender equality, climate change, digitalization, youth and education. She holds an undergraduate degree in peace & conflict studies from the University of Toronto and a graduate degree in international affairs from Carleton University in Ottawa, Canada.



**SATVIKA CHALASANI**

**Technical Specialist, Adolescents and Youth,  
United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA)**

Satvika Chalasani works to promote sexual and reproductive health and rights of adolescents and youth, and gender equality, at UNFPA, where she is the lead on ending child marriage. Previously, she worked at the Population Council, conducting research on adolescents. She is trained as a demographer, economist and sociologist.



**RINCHEN CHOPHEL**

**Director General of the South Asia Initiative to End Violence  
Against Children (SAIEVAC)**

Rinchen Chopel serves on the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child. He also leads SAIEVAC, an organization he helped found, and that now has chapters in all eight countries of South Asia. Among his many roles at SAIEVAC, he was the architect and convener of the National Action and Coordination Group to End Violence against Children, a platform that works with civil society organizations to advance the agenda in the region. In February 2021, he was appointed as an ambassador for RENEW (Respect, Educate, Nurture and Empower Women), a prominent non-profit organization in Bhutan that focuses on gender-based violence. Beyond his pioneering work to promote and protect the rights of women and children in that country, he has long championed the rights of children regionally and globally through numerous projects and initiatives.



**LARA VAN KOUTERIK**

**Head of Learning and Partnership Development,  
Girls Not Brides**

Lara van Kouterik has been working on women’s and girls’ rights since 2005. At Girls Not Brides, she provides leadership and strategic oversight to leverage knowledge, learning, data and evidence to address child marriage across the movement. She works with Girls Not Brides member organizations to document, collate and share information and evidence on what works to end child marriage, supporting effective action and results within the global partnership and broader movement. Lara holds a MSc in cultural anthropology and international development studies from the Radboud University in the Netherlands. Prior to joining the Girls Not Brides team, she worked in different roles at sexual and reproductive rights organizations and at a feminist women’s fund based in Amsterdam.



**NANKALI MAKSUD**

**Senior Adviser on Harmful Practices,  
Child Protection Section, UNICEF**

Nankali Maksud advises on the prevention of harmful practices – including female genital mutilation (FGM) and child marriage – for UNICEF. She came to her current position after nearly two decades of managing child protection programmes in Eastern and Southern Africa for UNICEF. As a child rights advocate, she helped improve protection of children affected by HIV and AIDS, among other vulnerable groups. And she has played a leading role in coordinating UNICEF’s engagement with governments and other partners in the protection and care of vulnerable children in Eastern and Southern Africa. A national of the United Republic of Tanzania, she holds a master’s degree in international law from the United Kingdom.



**THOAI NGO**

**Vice President of Social and Behavioural Science  
Research and Founding Director of the  
Girl Innovation, Research, and Learning (GIRL)  
Centre at the Population Council**

Thoai Ngo is an epidemiologist based in New York City whose research focuses on the intersection of gender, health and poverty. He is passionate about using data and science to advance social justice, health equity and gender equality. As an adviser on research and policy, he helps set agendas on health and development issues among governments, donors, academia and United Nations agencies. Chair of the board for Ibis Reproductive Health, he is recognized as a dynamic young leader in the field of global reproductive health.



### **RAPHAËLLE RAFIN**

**Programme Specialist, Ending Violence against Women and Girls, UN Women**

Raphaëlle Rafin is a programme specialist on data and research in the area of violence against women (VAW). She implements a joint programme with the World Health Organization that aims to strengthen methodologies and measurement and to build national capacities for VAW data, to ensure the availability of quality data on different forms of violence. Prior to that, Raphaëlle worked for UN Women in Morocco and Maghreb, as a justice and human rights officer for the French Embassy in Morocco and as a legal researcher on public international law and international human rights law cases before the United Nations Human Rights Council, the International Criminal Court and the European Court of Human Rights. Raphaëlle holds an LL.M in public international law from the University of Leiden and a master's degree in international relations from Sciences-po Lille.



### **HILDE RØREN**

**Senior Adviser, Gender Equality, Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation (Norad)**

Hilde Røren specializes in gender equality, empowerment of marginalized groups, and the eradication of harmful practices. In her current position, she coordinates Norad's partnership with the UNFPA-UNICEF Global Programme to End Child Marriage, as well as several partnerships with civil society working on eradicating child marriage and other harmful practices. Through working with Norad, UN organizations and civil society, she has supported the development of gender transformative approaches and has particularly helped build capacity to integrate such work with transforming patriarchal masculinities.



### **NENA THUNDU**

**Child Marriage Campaign Coordinator and Harmful Practices Focal Person, African Union Commission**

Nena Thundu has two decades of experience in child rights and protection, including the past 13 years of service with the African Union Commission. There, she coordinates the organization's Harmful Practices Project, which includes Ending Child Marriage, the Saleema Initiative on Ending FGM, and Online Sexual Exploitation of Children. She has expertise on the policy aspects behind social change, including advocacy, capacity building, monitoring and evaluation, and accountability. She has a master's degree in poverty reduction and development from the University of Birmingham, UK.

# SECRETARIAT



**NONTOBEKO TSHABALALA**  
Communications Lead, Youth Division,  
African Union Commission

Nontobeko Tshabalala remains passionate about finding innovative ways to engage with targeted audiences in shifting media landscapes in support of the basic rights of all people. She began her career as a journalist in 2011, and her work in digital media has evolved as the communications landscape has changed. For the past two years she has worked in development communications in the Youth Division of the African Union as a youth and gender advocate, where she continues to champion the rights of women. She is gratified that her work requires communicating with young people, who make up 60 per cent of Africa's population.



**CLAUDIA CAPPA**  
Senior Adviser, Data and Analytics, UNICEF

Claudia Cappa is the focal point for data collection, data analysis and methodological work on early childhood development, child disability and child protection from violence, exploitation and abuse at UNICEF. Support for these activities includes developing survey questionnaires and data collection tools, estimations, methodologies, indicators, tools and normative guidelines. She is also engaged in capacity building, data analysis, and production of reports, as well as delivery and dissemination of final results. In this capacity, she has led the preparation of a number of data-driven publications and is responsible for inter-agency collaborations and partnerships. Prior to joining UNICEF, she worked at the University of Geneva and at the International Labour Organization's Institute for Social Studies. She holds both a master's degree and a doctorate in development studies from the Graduate Institute of International and Development Studies, Switzerland.



**COLLEEN MURRAY**  
Statistics Specialist, Data and Analytics, UNICEF

Colleen Murray is a statistics specialist responsible for data analysis and global monitoring of harmful practices. Her work focuses on analysing levels, trends and disparities in child marriage and FGM, including for global reporting on progress towards international targets such as the elimination of harmful practices, as set out in the Sustainable Development Goals. She has been working on UNICEF's mandate to monitor the well-being of children for over 10 years. She holds a master's degree in international health and development.



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ENDING CHILD MARRIAGE  
CHARTING BRIGHTER FUTURES

For more information on the monitoring mechanism, please contact:  
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