

# Child Marriage in Namibia

## A case study from the Kavango East and Zambezi regions

Since 2017 OYO has been working on the issue of child marriage with communities around the Omega and Chetto areas (Kavango East and Zambezi). It has resulted in the production of the DVD 'Kukuri' and the creation of dance pieces such as 'Maria' and 'I have a choice'.

OYO aims at ending child marriage in Namibia. Thanks to a grant from the Canada Fund for Local Initiatives (CFLI), OYO could return to the area and work with 9 schools and 5 surrounding communities. 116 learners and 36 community members answered a questionnaire after seeing the OYO dance troupe perform.

Since female learners would be forced to marry male community members, this is clearly a problem they are also more likely to acknowledge.



Once a girl is married, 68% of the learners and 58% of the community members said that she is not coming back to school.

This is confirmed by reports from school principals who mentioned that one cause of school drop out in their area is child marriage.

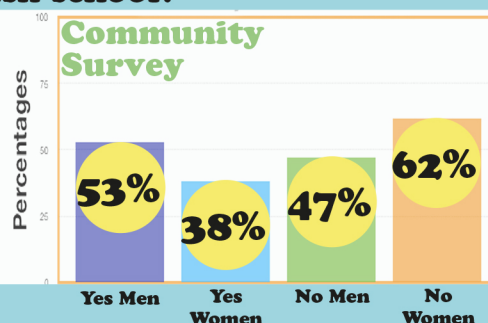
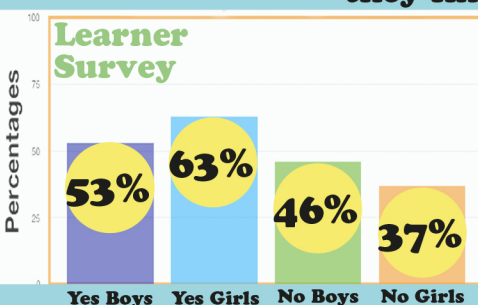
**OVER 60%**  
of all respondents  
said that the girl child  
will drop out of school.

58% of learners and 44% of community members acknowledged that some girls get married before they finish their schools in their community.

It is interesting to look at the results per gender: female learners (63%) and male community members (53%) are more likely to have answered yes to the question than male learners (53%) and female community members (38%).

9% of learners and 6% of community members believe learners should be forced by their parents to get married. Males are more likely to think so, both in schools and in the community.

### In your community, do you think girls get married before they finish school?



**12%**  
of boys

believe it is right for parents to force their daughters to marry.

It is worrisome that 12% of male learners believe girls should get married by their parents and this result alone calls for urgent action. Education and sensitisation campaigns should not only target girls but also boys.

This finding is made worse by the fact that 6% of learners think it is OK for parents to abuse their children, with another 12% not knowing if parents can or cannot abuse their children. Much still needs to be done in the area in terms of child right education.

**6%**  
of learners  
Think that it's ok for  
their parents to abuse them

The work done in the Omega and Chetto areas confirms the existence of child marriage and confirms the fact it is a tradition that is deeply embedded in people's mind, with 12% of boys/men believing it is right for parents to force their daughters to marry. It calls for urgent action by all stakeholders active in the area and for the implementation of targeted interventions aiming at ending child marriage in Namibia.

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