



Intervention: Community Reflective Dialogues Inspiring Married Adolescent Girls to Imagine New Empowered Futures (IMAGINE)

ABOUT IMAGINE

With support from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, CARE is **testing a package of interventions that hold promise for delaying the timing of first birth among married adolescents in Niger and Bangladesh**. IMAGINE takes a holistic approach to build married girls' capacity and agency to make decisions about their life courses, to address social and structural barriers that prevent delaying, and to present alternative economic opportunities for girls so that early motherhood is not their only option. We aim to **document and share learning** from this initiative to build the evidence base on the issue of adolescent childbearing globally.

Community Reflective Dialogues

In Niger, using our Social Analysis and Action (SAA) approach, CARE leads community stakeholders through a process of critical self-reflection and action planning to **challenge social norms that encourage early birth** and to **build norms encouraging nulliparous married adolescents' access to essential health services, including family planning and pursuit of alternative pathways**. These mixed-gender groups are comprised of key community stakeholders from a single village who impact couples' ability to delay first birth, such as community leaders, mothers-in-law, religious leaders, and health care workers.

Participants follow an **eight-session, participatory curriculum** facilitated by trained local facilitators with support from elected male and female co-leaders. Sessions, which are adapted from CARE's standard SAA curriculum, explore beliefs around gender roles, reproductive health, and other topics that underpin early childbearing. As part of Community Management Committees, SAA groups also work in partnership with the local Fadas (men's groups) and Girls' Collectives to create an enabling environment for first birth through **action plan development and implementation**. Key action plans to date have included awareness raising activities around the timing of first pregnancy and marriage, use of family planning, and budgeting.

Upon completion of the sessions, groups will transition towards a community co-leadership model of facilitation. By engaging peer leaders, the project aims to facilitate sustainability and ownership of the groups while providing opportunities for community members to build their leadership skills.

Key **social analysis and action materials** include:

- Community SAA curriculum (French only)
- Management Committee Orientation Package

Upon finalization, all project tools will be accessible at:

<https://www.care.org/our-work/health/adolescent-health/imagine/>



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Implementation timeframe: January 2019
– May 2021

Donors: Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation

Participants: The project will reach married and unmarried adolescent girls ages 15-19, their husbands, families and communities, as well as health workers in Kurigram District, Bangladesh and Zinder Region, Niger.

Community groups by the numbers:

- 1256 community members across 41 groups in Niger

Key project Components:

- Girls' Collectives
- Health Worker Transformation
- Livelihoods Training
- Fada Groups (Niger only)
- Community reflective dialogues (Niger only)
- Couples Counseling and Couples Events (Bangladesh only)

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