

You're here because you want to take action to ask the government to *not* raise the minimum age of marriage to 21 for girls, and that's great!

In the next page, you will find **templates for social media posts** on Twitter, Instagram and Facebook to advocate for this crucial issue! But before that, here's a quick explanation as to why we are opposing this move. If you're familiar with it, **skip to the next page!**

What is the **#EmpowermentNotAge** Campaign about?

The government is considering raising the minimum age of marriage for young women from 18 to 21, ostensibly to delay the age of motherhood, improve nutritional levels among young mothers and decrease maternal mortality rates.

The [#EmpowermentNotAge campaign](#) takes a hard look at ground realities and evidence-backed research in order to examine raising the minimum age of marriage is the best route to delay marriage in young women.

The evidence clearly demonstrates that a focus on improving young women's lives through better education, employment opportunities, safety from violence, and increased agency all directly contribute to delaying marriage. We know that if women have the opportunity to complete their education and earn money, they are less likely to be viewed as financial burdens that need to be married off at an early age. Educated girls have more power to negotiate their marriages with their families.

We also know that early marriage in India is the result of several deep-rooted social norms, such as the belief that early marriage will save a woman from sexual violence, assure a lower dowry, prevent elopement and will protect her honour.

Experts believe that these deep-rooted norms are unlikely to shift because of a policy change. Consequently, the families of [56% of women](#) in India who will likely get married under the age of 21 as per existing evidence, most of whom belong to poor and marginalized communities, will be turned into criminals overnight with this change in policy.

#EmpowermentNotAge is a campaign that demands that the government should focus on creating positive incentives for young women and their families to delay marriage, instead of criminalizing them through this policy change.

Also read: [5 Reasons Changing The Minimum Legal Age Of Marriage Is A Bad Move](#)

Sample Tweets:

[Click here](#) to get a pre-drafted tweet created directly on your Twitter profile, or copy paste one of the options below!

- Raising girls' minimum #AgeOfMarriage to 21 is counterproductive.

It'll drive such marriages underground & criminalise poor families. We must focus on #EmpowermentNotAge to incentivise later marriage, not criminalising early marriage!

Are you listening @PMOIndia @MinistryWCD?

- Why raise #AgeOfMarriage through policy change? Experts say it'll have a negative impact on ending early marriage.

Focus on girls' education, so society views them as empowered individuals who can choose their own age of marriage!

#EmpowermentNotAge @PMOIndia @MinistryWCD

- Research shows that focussing on improving education has a direct impact on organically delaying the #AgeOfMarriage – more so than a policy change!

So why criminalise families instead of helping them empower their daughters instead?
#EmpowermentNotAge @PMOIndia @MinistryWCD

- Investing in girls' higher education has been proven to reduce early marriage.

The median #AgeOfMarriage for women increases from 17.2 yrs with no schooling to 22.7 yrs with 12+ yrs of schooling.

Dear @PMOIndia @MinistryWCD, it's better to focus on #EmpowermentNotAge!

- In 2015-16, 63% of young women were married below 21 yrs. Most of them were from the poorest 20% of the population.

Raising #AgeOfMarriage criminalises these families, drives child marriages underground and harms girls' wellbeing.

#EmpowermentNotAge @PMOIndia @MinistryWCD

Sample Facebook or WhatsApp Post:

The government is considering raising the minimum age of marriage for young women from 18 to 21. While this might look like a positive move on the outside, research shows that it will be [counterproductive](#) to stopping early marriage in India!

Existing research shows that a focus on girls' education automatically reduces rates of early marriage in India. According to NFHS data, the median age of marriage for women increases from 17.2 years with no schooling to 22.7 yrs with 12+ years of schooling.

We also know that early marriage in India is the result of several deep-rooted social norms. Experts say that these deep-rooted norms are unlikely to shift because of a policy change.

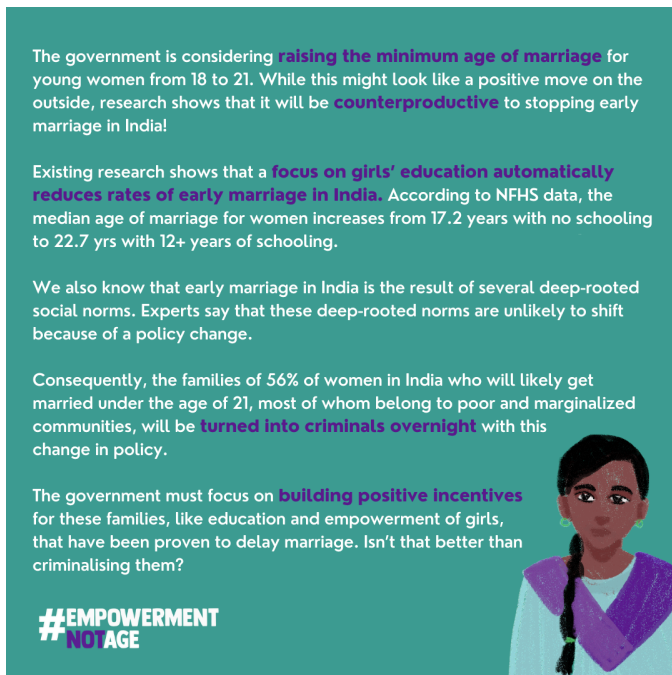
Consequently, the families of 56% of women in India who will likely get married under the age of 21, most of whom belong to poor and marginalized communities, will be turned into criminals overnight with this change in policy.

The government must focus on building positive incentives for these families, like education and empowerment of girls, that have been proven to delay marriage. Isn't that better than criminalising them? #EmpowermentNotAge

Sample Instagram or WhatsApp Post & Story:

Click [here](#) to download the square Instagram post.

Click [here](#) to download the vertical Instagram story.




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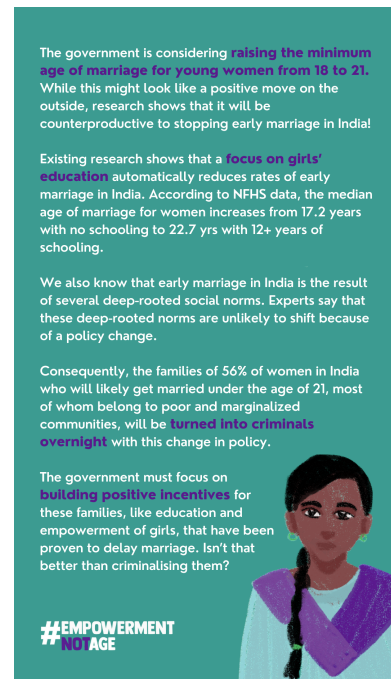
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