

# Key messages

- ▶ Eliminating child marriage in the Arab region would have a significant positive impact on economic growth. It is estimated that it could boost the region's economy by approximately 3 per cent per annum, adding a staggering \$3 trillion between 2021 and 2050.

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- ▶ Failure to address the issue of child marriage will result in substantial economic burdens for the Arab region, even with advancements in other socioeconomic, demographic and health measures. If child marriage rates persist, Algeria, Jordan, the State of Palestine, Sudan and Tunisia are projected to experience the highest cumulative GDP losses between 2021 and 2050.

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- ▶ The prevalence of child marriage varies significantly across the region, with rates ranging from 1.5 per cent in Tunisia to 45.3 per cent in Somalia. Additionally, there are variations among provinces within each country. These variations underscore the crucial need for tailored policies and targeted interventions that effectively address and counteract the detrimental consequences of child marriage. Furthermore, Arab countries should strengthen their socioeconomic, population and health policies to mitigate the negative implications of child marriage on women.

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- ▶ Ending child marriage also requires addressing the underlying structural determinants of gender inequality, such as countering discriminatory norms, improving access to quality education, promoting economic participation, providing health-care services, and supporting initiatives to end violence against women and girls. Taking swift action to address these factors will result in greater economic benefits.

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- ▶ Arab countries can avert economic losses by prioritizing key channels, including promoting family planning and maternal and child health care to reduce high fertility and child mortality rates, ensuring access to education for girls both before and after marriage, and creating flexible labour market opportunities that encourage the active participation of women in economic activities.

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