

## Ending Child Marriage in Niger:

**Presenter:** Introduce Zeinabou and ask her to tell her story:

My name is Zeinabou and I am from in the Zinder Region of Niger. When I was 15 my parents forced me to leave school and marry an older man. The marriage would be marked by repeated and escalating violence.

“After the wedding, he wanted to have sexual relations with me, but I refused. “He became increasingly violent. He beat me and choked me.”

I knew of so many girls my age who were married before they were 18 and had no say in whether or not we could use contraceptives. As I fought to leave my husband, the abuse intensified.

I ran away many times. I asked my parents for help. Instead of helping me escape, he beat me and returned me to my husband.

Finally, after a month of relentless violence, I managed to escape, and my husband divorced me.

I moved home and ended up participating in the pilot phase of Action for Adolescent Girls.

Thanks to the programs I became an agent of change in my community.

“Everything you taught me, I want to convey, especially for the poorest girls”. I want to continue my studies and become a teacher.

“As soon as I can, I tell my friends everything I know. I tell them about the physical changes that occur in adolescence, our rights and the consequences of early marriage. They all want to join the programme.”

**Presenter:** Thank you Zeinabou

**(The Presenter may then ask a member to stand up and tell about her wedding and marriage.)**

**Thank you (member’s name).**