



Project Brief

Preventing Early & Forced Marriage (PROJEUNES): Improving adolescents and youth sexual and reproductive health and rights in Benin



The Preventing Early and Forced Marriage (PROJEUNES) project aims to promote sexual and reproductive health and adolescent/youth rights in Benin, particularly for adolescent girls. This includes reducing child, early and forced marriage (CEFM). PROJEUNES is expected to *directly* support **269,334** adolescent boys (age 15-19) and young men (age 20-24), and **308,349** adolescent girls (age 15-19) and young women (age 20-24), as well as **80** families and **10,963** women, **9,545** men (25-49), and **400** community leaders through community dialogues. The project is expected to *indirectly* support **507,938** women and **481,222** men (age 25-49).

Background

Like many countries in sub-Saharan Africa, Benin has a young population with 48% of the population under 15 and 16% between the ages of 15 and 24. This young population has the potential to transform Benin with its energy and talents. At the same time, adolescents and young girls and boys face

major challenges, including discrimination, lack of access to services and limited opportunities. This is particularly true if we look at the sexual and reproductive health of young people in Benin, particularly adolescent girls:

- Women have their first sexual encounter at an earlier age than men: among young women aged 15-19, 12% had already started their sexual life before reaching the age of 15, compared to 6% young men.
- 37% of women are married before the age of 18, compared to 7% of men.
- 20% of 15-19 year-old girls have already started their reproductive life: 15% have had at least one live birth.
- 32% of women aged 15-49 in union have unmet needs for family planning.
- Over 50% of women cannot make decisions about their own health care, including sexual health.
- Almost three in ten women aged 15-49 (27%) have been physically abused since the age of 15.

PREVENTING EARLY AND FORCED MARRIAGE IN BENIN (PROJEUNES) is a \$3 million CAD project to address child and early forced marriage in Benin. PROJEUNES is a partnership between CARE and the Youth Coalition for Sexual and Reproductive Rights and the Government of Benin (Ministries of Health, Social Affairs and Microfinance, and Secondary Education, Technical and Vocational Training). The project is funded by the Government of Canada, and it is a three-year partnership, from April 2018 to March 2021.



1,566,843

CARE aims to reach 816,287 girls & women and 750,556 boys & men in Alibori and Borgou through PROJEUNES, contributing to the reduction of child, early and forced marriage, and adolescent girls birth rate.

Project Outcomes

The **ultimate outcome** of the PROJEUNES project is to improve the health and rights of adolescent girls at risk and survivors of child and early forced marriage (CEFM) in Benin.

The **intermediate outcomes** focus on:

- **Increased access to adolescent sexual and reproductive health services by girls at risk or affected by CEFM in Alibori and Borgou.** For example, the project will improve the skills of health care workers to effectively provide adolescent and youth friendly sexual and reproductive health services. Counselling skills and youth-friendly services at the health facility will be included as part of the training of health workers and included as measures of quality of services during supportive supervision.
- **Enhanced protection of rights of adolescent girls in Alibori and Borgou.** For example, social promotion centers will be provided by a standard operating procedure (SOP) for the psychosocial support to CEFM survivors.
- **Strengthened government and civil society policies and programs that respond to CEFM, gender-based violence, and adolescent sexual reproductive health and rights.** For example, youth-led organizations will be supported to develop and implement advocacy plans to end CEFM.



BY YOUTH FOR YOUTH: Adolescents and youth are their own best advocates. By providing local, youth-led organizations and a local women's rights / SRHR network with the right tools and training, they will be able to advocate with the Government of Benin for what they need to support adolescent SRHR and end CEFM. The Project will support the development of networks of CSOs in Benin to work on SRHR and CEFM along with providing access to global youth-led advocacy networks.

Key Project Interventions & Activities

CARE works in partnership with Youth Coalition for Sexual and Reproductive Rights, an international organization of young people (ages 18-29 years) committed to promoting adolescent and youth sexual and reproductive rights at the national, regional and international levels. CARE also works closely with local partners to engage communities to improve access to, and accountability of, local health systems, with a focus on addressing gender inequality; and to provide comprehensive sexuality education to in-school and out-of-school adolescents.



■ SRHR Education for Adolescent Girls and Boys

- Develop a comprehensive adolescent and youth SRH curriculum.
- Train teachers and peer educators on comprehensive adolescent and youth SRH.
- Create boys and girls youth clubs for in school and out of school adolescents.



■ Sexual Reproductive Health Services

- Train and mentor health care workers to provide adolescent and youth-friendly SRH services.
- Conduct supportive supervision visits to health facility staff.
- Provide monitoring and evaluation tools to improve data quality and analysis.
- Rehabilitate and equip selected health facilities to effectively deliver adolescent and youth-friendly SRH services.



■ Psycho-social Support to CEFM Survivors

- Develop standard operating procedure (SOP) for the psychosocial support to CEFM survivors by the social promotion centers.
- Train and mentor social workers to provide psychosocial support to CEFM survivors.
- Conduct supportive supervision visits to social promotion centers staff.
- Provide monitoring and evaluation tools to improve data quality and analysis.



■ Promotion of Adolescent Girls' Sexual Rights

- Conduct Social Analysis and Action (SAA) dialogues to reflect on gender dynamics around sexual health.
- Conduct community dialogues for adolescents, boys and girls, and young women and men to improve access to sexual and reproductive health information and services.



■ Advocacy and Governance

- Provide evidenced-based recommendations and policy options to the Government of Benin on how to strengthen adolescent SRHR services and protect adolescent girls against CEFM.
- Conduct community scorecard processes bringing together community members (men, women, adolescent boys and girls) and:
 - ⇒ 1) health facility staff, to develop joint action plans to improve health service delivery and accountability;
 - ⇒ 2) social promotion centers staff, to develop joint action plans to improve psychosocial service delivery to CEFM survivors and accountability.
- Develop youth-led advocacy initiatives through training, mentorship and financial support.



The PROJEUNES Project at a glance...

PROJECT NAME:	Preventing Early and Forced Marriage in Benin (PROJEUNES)
PROJECT DONOR:	Government of Canada
PROJECT LIFESPAN:	April 2018 – March 2021
PROJECT PARTNERS:	CARE Youth Coalition for Sexual and Reproductive Rights
GOVERNMENT OF BENIN PARTNERS:	Ministry of Health Ministry of Social Affairs and Microfinance Ministry of Secondary Education, Technical and Vocational Training
PROJECT ULTIMATE OUTCOME:	Improved health and rights of adolescent girls at risk and survivors of child and early forced marriage in Benin.
INTERMEDIATE OUTCOMES:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased access to adolescent sexual and reproductive health services by girls at risk or affected by CEFM in Alibori and Borgou. Enhanced protection of rights of adolescent girls in Alibori and Borgou. Strengthened government and civil society policies and programs that respond to child and early forced marriage and gender-based violence and adolescent sexual reproductive health and rights.
COMMUNITIES TARGETED:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Department of Alibori: Karimama (Kompanti, Kompa, Garbeykoara, Loumbou Loumbou and Pétchinga villages) and Malanville (Kassa, Kouara Tédji, Sendé, Momkassa and Garou-Tédji villages). Department of Borgou: Nikki (Sakabansi, Kali, Boukanere, Danri and Gbaossi villages) and Kalalé (Gando Baka, Boa, Boa Gando Centre, Angaradebou and Bagaria villages).
NUMBER OF BENEFICIARIES:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Directly: 269,334 adolescents boys (15-19) and young men (20-24), 308,349 adolescent girls and young women, 80 families, 10,963 women, 9,545 men (25-49), and 400 community leaders. Indirectly: 507,938 women and 481,222 men (25-49).



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