

PAKISTAN.

DISCUSSION GUIDE

FUNDAMENTAL.
GENDER JUSTICE. NO EXCEPTIONS.

INTRODUCTION TO THE *FUNDAMENTAL* SERIES

Feminist movements have the power to disrupt the status quo and radically alter the course of history for women and girls—and ALL historically marginalized people and communities globally. **But what does it really look like to be a feminist leader today?**

Fundamental: Gender Justice. No Exceptions. is a series of docu-shorts following activists and community organizers from five different countries who are working on the frontlines of the global fight for gender justice. Each episode runs approximately 15 minutes and features remarkable grassroots leaders working on issues as varied as ending child, early, and forced marriage in Pakistan and pursuing LGBTQ+ liberation in Georgia.

The series is a joint production from Academy Award-winning director Sharmeen Obaid-Chinoy and the non-profit [Global Fund for Women](#). At a time of unprecedented political uprisings around the globe, from Haiti to Chile to Iraq to Sudan to Lebanon and beyond, *Fundamental* introduces global audiences to grassroots movements and community leaders who are standing up for our fundamental human rights and working to hold governments accountable for healthier and more just societies for all.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction to the <i>Fundamental Series</i>	01
About Global Fund for Women	02
Director’s Statement	02
How to Use this Guide	03
Hosting an Impactful Screening	03
Synopsis	04
The Stakes	05
Discussion & Activities	06
Take Action	07
Pairing Multiple Episodes	08

ABOUT GLOBAL FUND FOR WOMEN

Global Fund for Women envisions a world in which movements for gender justice have transformed power and privilege for a few into equity and equality for all. As a feminist fund, we offer flexible support to a diverse group of partners—more than 5,000 groups across 175 countries so far—to create meaningful change that will last beyond our lifetimes. To learn more about our work, visit www.globalfundforwomen.org or follow us on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), or [Instagram](#).

DIRECTOR'S STATEMENT SHARMEEN OBAID-CHINYOY, DIRECTOR

Fundamental takes us into the lives of gender justice activists around the world who are working to create change at the grassroots level. The activists you will meet in the series are on the frontlines of human rights issues, risking everything, yet they are rarely made visible. So often the movements they lead are not widely visible either—and yet they are so critical to protecting human rights. For this reason, they know they have to do this work, for their communities and their countries. They are the only ones who will do it.

Our films provide a better understanding of their struggles and show us an intimate portrait of what it means to be a frontline advocate in today's volatile world. We see that social change is not always linear, that there are violent threats and bitter disappointments. For every one step forward there are three steps back. But we also see that they aren't doing this work alone. Within movements there is great community, and there is solidarity in knowing there are others alongside you—your neighbors in your city as well as those across the globe—who are also fighting for justice.

From Brazil and the United States to Kenya, Pakistan, and Georgia, these inspiring activists refuse to accept the status quo, agitating and organizing to create safe spaces and a safer world for other women. It is my hope that the series will inspire viewers to learn more about these issues, and join the fight for gender justice alongside these incredible activists.



HOW TO USE THIS GUIDE

Thank you for sharing the *Fundamental* series with your community! We hope the films and this guide will provide an opportunity for conversation, education, and action.

HOSTING AN IMPACTFUL SCREENING

- **Preview the film yourself** so that you can speak to the content well before your screening begins.
- **Ensure you test the equipment** you are using prior to the screening. Be sure to check for sound quality.
- **Prior to beginning the screening**, consider offering content warnings or trigger warnings (such as descriptions of abuse or assault) based on your audience and context.
- **Provide time for reflection and discussion** following the screening and ensure that you direct audience members to resources that can help them to continue to process and learn after the screening ends.
- **Remember that as a facilitator**, your role is to guide the discussion and set expectations that allow for diverse voices to be heard.
- **You are not expected to be an expert** in the issues presented, so you might want to involve a subject matter expert from your local community in your screening. We also encourage you to read and reference this full guide.
- Visit www.fundamental-film.com for more resources that may be useful in your post-screening conversations, including learning about other groups globally working on the issues, infographics, and articles that can inform and guide your conversations.
- **If you are a teacher or professor** using this guide in a classroom, we suggest identifying two to three learning objectives that tie the film to your curriculum, syllabus, or readings.





SYNOPSIS

In this episode we meet Rukhshanda Naz, a dynamic human rights attorney and passionate advocate for ending child, early, and forced marriage. Rukhshanda shares how growing up with a mother who experienced early marriage and an elder sister who was forced to marry early informed her own experiences and continues to fuel her activism and professional life today. Rukhshanda and other activists in Pakistan are working together to challenge longstanding cultural norms, push back against religious fundamentalists, and end child, early, and forced marriage in Pakistan.

We also meet Zarmina, who experienced early marriage and safely escaped with support from Noor Education Trust, a grassroots organization that runs shelters for girls while providing legal, medical, and psychosocial services; workshops on gender-based violence and women's rights; educational classes; and more. Zarmina's parents arranged for her marriage at age 13 to an older man. He then physically abused her, until her parents discovered the abuse and helped remove her from the marriage.

THE STAKES

Child, early, and forced marriage is a truly global problem that cuts across countries, cultures, religions, and ethnicities. Girls experience early marriage in every region in the world, from the Middle East to Latin America, South Asia to the US.

One in five girls in the world are said to be married before 18. Over 650 million women alive today were married as children.¹

The legal age of marriage in Pakistan is 16 for women and 18 for men, though it varies across provinces. However, these laws are rarely enforced: 21% of girls in Pakistan are married before the age of 18.²

Child, early, and forced marriage is a deeply entrenched practice due in part to the combination of religious fundamentalism, patriarchy, and cultural and traditional practices. Child, early, and forced marriage robs girls of their freedom, education, and dreams. There is a growing awareness among researchers and activists that control of adolescent girls' sexuality is a driving force behind child, early, and forced marriage and unions. Controlling women's and girls' life choices is how the system of patriarchy is sustained.³

QUESTIONS

- 01.** What are your initial reactions to the film? How did it make you feel?
- 02.** We meet women who live in families dominated by patriarchal structures and cultural traditions. Is this shared in your community? If so, how?
- 03.** Were you aware that child marriage is so prevalent around the world today?
- 04.** In the short film, we see how tradition dictates what young women are allowed to achieve. How can we support young people who have dreams that go against tradition or socially constructed roles?

Questions continue on next page



¹ Girls Not Brides. Child Marriage Around the World. <https://www.girlsnotbrides.org/where-does-it-happen/>

² Girls Not Brides. Child Marriage Atlas. Accessed February 2020. <https://www.girlsnotbrides.org/where-does-it-happen/atlas/pakistan>

³ CEFM and Sexuality Programs Working Group. Tackling the Taboo: Sexuality and gender-transformative programmes to end child, early, and forced marriage and unions. June 2019. <https://www.girlsnotbrides.org/resource-centre/tackling-the-taboo-sexuality-and-gender-transformative-programmes-to-end-child-early-and-forced-marriage-and-unions/>

- 05.** Are there any cultural or familial traditions from your own community that you have challenged in order to lead the life you live today?
- 06.** Have you chosen a different path than the one your parents or family expected?
- 07.** One of the subjects was married when she was 13. Think back to when you were 13. What were you like? What did you do with your friends? What were you excited about?
- 08.** Ending child marriage is not just a matter of putting laws in place, especially when those laws are not enforced. What are some of the additional factors that must be considered? There are a few mentioned in the film. Can you think of others?
- 09.** A patriarchal society is a society controlled and governed by men. How do we see patriarchy affect women and people of all genders in everyday life? Think of school, jobs, pay etc.
- 10.** What is one question this film raised for you that we haven't already asked?

ACTIVITY: DREAMING BIG

What do you think a world free from gender-based discrimination would look like? Here are questions to consider. Share your answers with the group.

- 01.** Imagine political leaders being majority or all feminist. How do you think that would affect the political system?
- 02.** What about women in business?
- 03.** How would financial inequalities shift?
- 04.** What about girls dreaming for their future? What would or wouldn't be in their way?



TAKE ACTION

Thank you for watching the episode and hosting a conversation. If you are interested in supporting rights for women and girls around the world, this next section offers tips and tools for getting involved.

- ➔ **Join Global Fund for Women:** Global Fund for Women works to strengthen gender justice movements to shift power, privilege, and perception and create meaningful change that will last beyond our lifetimes. We envision a world where movements for gender justice have transformed power and privilege for a few into equity and equality for all.

Join us to learn more about our work! You'll receive updates and action opportunities related to the issues in *Fundamental*, as well as other ways to support movements for gender justice around the world.

www.globalfundforwomen.org/join-us/

- ➔ **Make a donation:** Your support will allow Global Fund for Women to fund groups in *Fundamental* and other organizations that are fighting to protect and advance the rights of women, girls, trans, and gender non-conforming people around the globe. [Make a donation.](#)

- ➔ **Follow us on Social:** Follow the *Fundamental* film series on social media and help spread the word about the films and the issues they address.

www.fundamental-film.com



[@FundamentalFilmSeries](#)



[@FundamentalFilmSeries](#)



[@Fundamental_Doc](#)



www.youtube.com/GlobalFundForWomen



PAIRING MULTIPLE EPISODES

Interested in viewing more than one episode?
Here are some suggestions on how to pair them:



RIGHTS NOT ROSES

Ending child, early, and forced marriage in Pakistan

INCLUDES:

- GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE
- GIRLS' RIGHTS

GIRLS AT THE HEART OF IT

Comprehensive sex education and girl's leadership in Kenya

INCLUDES:

- REPRODUCTIVE RIGHTS
- GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE
- GIRLS' RIGHTS

DEFENDERS OF JUSTICE

The battle for women's rights in Brazil

INCLUDES:

- RACE
- REPRODUCTIVE RIGHTS
- INTERSECTIONALITY
- LGBTQ+ RIGHTS
- MOVEMENT BUILDING

LIVING OUT LOUD

LBTQI movement building and resistance in Georgia

INCLUDES:

- LGBTQ+ RIGHTS
- GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE
- MOVEMENT BUILDING

RISING POWER

Building an intersectional justice movement in the United States

INCLUDES:

- RACE
- INTERSECTIONALITY
- LGBTQ+ RIGHTS
- MOVEMENT BUILDING