



**ADVOCACYNET 338**  
**Sunday March 8, 2020**

**International Women's Day**

**Meet Evelyn, Zimbabwe Soap Star**



**The Soap-maker of Chitungwiza**

On the occasion of International Women's Day we are pleased to introduce Evelyn Sachiti, 21, a leader in the fight against child marriage in Africa.

Evelyn is one of two "ambassadors" who are being trained by Women Advocacy Project (WAP) to help girls avoid early marriage in Zimbabwe. About a third of all girls in the country marry before the legal age of 18.

In this [new AP movie](#), Evelyn describes her life in the community of Chitungwiza and works with a team of girls to produce and sell their own brand of all-purpose soap, *Clean Girl*. The idea is to give the girls an incentive not to marry.

Ordinary families in Zimbabwe have been badly hurt by the devastating economic crisis and this leads many parents to give their daughters to an older, richer man. Evelyn's own parents struggle to make ends meet by selling maize snacks known as *maputi*.

But Evelyn is undaunted. She is also a fervent believer in the potential of girls: "Even (as) girls we can be someone in life. You can be a lawyer, you can be a doctor, you can be anything you want in life rather than getting married while still under the age of 18."

At present, each bottle of *Clean Girl* soap only sells for about \$1. But Constance Mugari, the founder of WAP, says this can make a difference. She reports that the girls are starting to earn enough to contribute towards the cost of school.

In addition to being an ambassador, Evelyn is also one of 11 girls to have made squares for the [Zimbabwe Child Marriage Quilt](#). Her square shows a 13-year old girl being forced to marry a much older man, a leader in a local church. As Evelyn explains in the movie, the girl becomes pregnant and has to look after her husband and his three other wives.

Ms Mugari from WAP used the quilt to make the case against early marriage at the UN summit on women and girls (ICPD25) in Nairobi last November.

WAP's soap-making project has been funded by [McLane Harrington](#), a 2019 AP Peace Fellow; by [Rockflower](#); and by [Action for World Solidarity](#).

- [Donate](#) to WAP's soap-making
- Read [stories of early marriage](#) on the WAP quilt
- View [photos of soap-making](#) in Epworth and Chitungwiza.

