

Improving Children's Lives through Research

Child Research and Practice Forum
Ministry of Women and Social Affairs



Summaries from Presentations at the Monthly Seminar Series
of the *Child Research and Practice Forum* in 2021

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Foreword by H.E. Dr Ergogie Tesfaye,
Minister, Ministry of Women and Social Affairs

Edited by Alula Pankhurst

Addis Ababa

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Contents

Acknowledgments.....	i
Authors and Presenters	ii
Contributing Organizations.....	ii
Foreword.....	iii
H.E. Dr Ergogie Tesfaye, Minister, <u>Ministry of Women and Social Affairs</u>	
Preface	v
Dr Aoubacar Kampo <u>UNICEF Representative in Ethiopia</u>	
“A stranger in all places”: Patterns and experiences of mobility and migration among children, adolescents and young people in Ethiopia	1
Kiros Birhanu, Agazi Tiemelissan and Alula Pankhurst <u>Young Lives Ethiopia</u>	
“The Challenges Made Me Stronger”: What Contributes to Young People’s Resilience in Ethiopia?.....	6
Gina Crivello, Agazi Tiemelissan and Karin Heissier <u>Young Lives Ethiopia</u>	
‘Caring for a baby is a mother’s responsibility’ - Parenting experiences of young mothers and fathers, and children’s health	9
Agazi Tiemelissan, Kiros Birhanu, Alula Pankhurst and Vincenzo Vinci <u>Young Lives Ethiopia</u>	
Child Marriage & Ethiopia’s Productive Safety Net Programme	14
Maja Gavrilovic, Tia Palermo, Elsa Valli, Francesca Viola, Vincenzo Vinci, Karin Heissler, Mathilde Renault, Ana Gabriela Guerrero Serdan and Essa Chanie Mussa <u>UNICEF</u>	
Child labour analysis in Ethiopia	20
Vincenzo Vinci and Martha Kibur <u>UNICEF</u>	
The Ethiopian health extension programme and adolescent wellbeing: A quasi-experimental study	25
William E. Rudgard, Silinganisiwe Dzumbunu, Rachel Yates, Elona Toska, Heidi Stöckl, Mark Orkin, and Lucie Cluver <u>UK Research and Innovation (UKRI) Accelerate Hub</u>	
“A dream come true”? Adolescents’ perspectives on urban relocation and life in condominiums in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia	28

Alula Pankhurst, Mesele Araya, Agazi Tiemelissan and Kiros Birhanu - Young Lives Ethiopia CARE's fight against Early marriage The case of Abdiboru Project	32
Serkadis Admasu - CARE	
The Impact of Climate Change on Adolescents' Access to Education in Ethiopia	36
Workneh Abebe - GAGE	
The Lived Experiences of Risks and Resilience among Sexually Abused Female Street Children in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia	41
Addisalem Adem - Madda Walabu University	
Children's and adults' views about education and migration among the Argobbas in North-Eastern Ethiopia.....	45
Anannia Admassu - CHADET	
Monitoring the Continuity of Essential Maternal Newborn Child Health and EPI Services During COVID-19	
<i>Findings from three rounds of health facility survey in Amhara, Oromia, SNNP and Somali Regions of Ethiopia</i>	50
Agazi Ameha - UNICEF	
Qenja: Child Fostering and Relocation Practices in the Amhara Region, Ethiopia.....	53
Sophia Chanyalew Kassa and Tatek Abebe - Norwegian Centre for Child Research	
Ethiopian adolescents' psychosocial well-being: Evidence from GAGE midline	56
Elizabeth Presler-Marshall, Rebecca Dutton, Nicola Jones, Sarah Baird, Tassew Woldehanna and Workneh Yadete - GAGE	

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The CRPF wishes to thank all partners, organizations and individuals who have shown their support to the Forum through participation in the monthly seminars both as presenters and as participants.

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The CRPF is most grateful for the support of UNICEF and FCDO Ethiopia who have covered the coordination costs for this year's activities. Finally, CRPF extends its appreciation to Young Lives who enabled the production of the summaries of presentations included in this book.

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Contributing Organizations

Young Lives Ethiopia
UNICEF
UK Research and Innovation (UKRI) Accelerate Hub
CARE
GAGE
Madda Walabu University
CHADET
Norwegian Centre for Child Research

Foreword

**H.E. Dr Ergogie Tesfaye, Minister,
Ministry of Women and Social Affairs**

The Child Research and Practice Forum (CRPF) has been hosted by the Ministry of Women, Children and Youth since 2010 and continues to be hosted by the Ministry of Women and Social Affairs. The CRPF has organised monthly seminars for over twelve years and has provided a useful network for discussion and dialogue concerning children and youth in Ethiopia with a view to promoting improvements in policy and practice.

The CRPF provides an important regular opportunity for research findings on children's and adolescents' issues to be presented at our Ministry on a monthly basis to stimulate discussion between our experts, those of other ministries, development partners and non-government and research organisations about issues facing children and young people in our country. The discussions have been contributing to the designing and implementation of better policies, strategies and programmes to improve the lives of women, children and youth.

The CRPF has a mailing list of over 1000 subscribers and produces quarterly newsletters highlighting key findings from presentations at the monthly seminars. The Forum also prepares annual books with summaries of the research presented during each year.

This collection of summaries of presentations made at the Child Research and Practice Forum during 2021 is the eleventh annual summary produced by Young Lives. The earlier summaries (2011 to 2020) are available on the Young Lives Ethiopia web-site (www.younglives-ethiopia.org/child-research-and-practice-forum).

This edition comprises 14 summaries of presentations covering a wide range of issues relevant to children and young people in Ethiopia, many of which are very relevant to the current context, including on child labour, sexual abuse of street children, programmes and strategies to prevent child marriage, the role of social protection, migration and young people's resilience. There are also topics relating to crisis notably on Covid-19 and its impact on maternal and child health and climate change and its impact on education.

Most of the presentations address gender issues either directly or indirectly. This includes child labour, child marriage, parenting, the effects of the health extension programme on children's wellbeing, adolescents access to education, and their psychosocial wellbeing. There are important thematic contributions on the following issues: education, maternal, child and mental health, child and social protection, youth development and their transitions to adulthood.

Our Ministry would like to thank the United Kingdom Foreign and Commonwealth Development Office that has covered the costs of running the CRPF and the production of this collection, Young Lives that has produced this and earlier edited collections, and UNICEF that has sponsored the monthly events.

We look forward to further regular presentations, newsletters and annual summaries from the CRFP and further collaboration with UNICEF, Young Lives and other partners in continuing the important work of the Forum.

Preface

Dr Aboubacar Kampo
UNICEF Representative in Ethiopia

The Child Research and Practice Forum (CRPF) provides a valuable network and a regular venue for research findings on women, children and youth to be discussed on a monthly basis and can contribute to improvements in policy and practice.

UNICEF has been supporting the CRPF since its inception 12 years ago and has collaborated with the Ministry of Women, Children and Youth (MoWCY) and with its successor the Ministry of Women and Social Affairs (MoSA) in the organisation and management of the Forum together with Young Lives.

The CRPF sends the presentations made at the Forum to its members that number over 1000 individuals and organizations. The CRPF has been publishing quarterly newsletters and annual summaries which are printed and distributed through the network and are also posted on the Young Lives Ethiopia website (www.younglives-ethiopia.org).

This annual book includes 14 summaries of presentations held in 2021 which address many important issues. These include six presentations based on UNICEF sponsored research on transitions to adulthood, child labour, child marriage, maternal and child health during the Covid pandemic, and PSNP safety nets. Four of these papers have involved UNICEF Ethiopia authors.

This book also presents reports on policy relevant findings from longitudinal research organisations. From Young Lives there are five presentations on different topics including migration experiences of adolescents, gendered aspects of

parenting, the impact of the Health Extension Programme on children's wellbeing, adolescents' views on urban relocation, and young people's resilience in the face of adversity. There are two presentations from the Gender and Adolescence Global Evidence (GAGE) research on the impact of climate change on adolescents' access to education and on their psychosocial wellbeing.

Three of the presentations are part of Ethiopian students' PhD thesis by Anannia Admassu on education and migration among the Argobba, by Addisalem Adem on sexually-abused female street children in Addis Ababa and by Sophia Chanyalew on child fostering and relocation practices in Amhara region. There is also one presentation by the NGO CARE on the fight against early marriage.

UNICEF has supported the production of earlier books of summaries and continues to support the regular meetings of the CRPF. We are pleased to see this book of summaries with findings that are relevant to current policy and practice published. We look forward to collaborating further with MoWSA and Young Lives in the production, discussion and dissemination of research results through the CRPF meetings and publications.

“A stranger in all places”: Patterns and experiences of mobility and migration among children, adolescents and young people in Ethiopia

**Kiros Birhanu, Agazi Tiemelissan and Alula Pankhurst
Young Lives Ethiopia¹**

Introduction

Ethiopia has a fast-growing population, and it is estimated that 70 per cent are young people under the age of 30 (Central Statistical Agency 2013). Three-quarters of the population live in rural areas, some very remote. Land shortages, poverty, the reduction of livelihood opportunities in rural areas, and increasing urbanisation are driving internal migration among youth. More children, adolescents and young people leave their natal home today than when their parents were young, so this has become a common experience.

In Ethiopia, Young Lives follows 3,000 children from two cohorts (2,000 in the Younger Cohort, born in 2000/1, and other 1,000 in the Older Cohort, born in 1994/95). The study focuses on 20 communities in five regions: Addis Ababa, Amhara, Oromia, Southern Nations, Nationalities and Peoples' Region (SNNPR), and Tigray. Since 2007, there has also been a longitudinal qualitative study of 100 children and their caregivers from five communities in five waves, as well as numerous qualitative policy-relevant sub-studies. This paper is based on the fifth qualitative wave carried out in mid-2019.

¹ Presented by Alula Pankhurst on January 28 2021. It was published on the Young Lives Ethiopia website on April 6 2021 <http://bit.ly/3F1pJ5o>. A policy brief based on the paper was published on April 6 2021 <https://bit.ly/3kOoBv8>

Research questions

- What are the patterns of mobility and migration among adolescents and young people?
- What are the drivers of movement among adolescents and young people?
- What are the mobility and migration experiences of adolescents and young people?
- What are the aspirations of young people for internal and international migration?

Key research findings

- Young people are leaving home for education or work in greater numbers than their parents, due to land shortages, the reduction of livelihood opportunities in rural areas, urbanisation and aspirations to achieve secondary education and above.
- The policy focus is often more on international migration, but internal movement needs more attention from government as it involves greater numbers of young people and their role is a critical for Ethiopia's political and economic transformation.
- Gender plays an influential role in young peoples' decision to migrate. Both girls and boys leave home for education, but it is mainly girls and women who move for family reasons, including marriage. Young men tend to migrate within the country for work while young women work abroad, particularly in the Middle East.
- Young people moving for secondary or tertiary education may find it challenging to adapt to their new environment and it is often difficult to find suitable work near home once they complete their education.
- Some girls are still married against their will or abducted, and some elope with boyfriends. Even those married as adults customarily move away from familiar environments to start a new life. This brings difficulties and

advantages: they miss their families and friends and some find it hard to adjust, while others feel they have more freedom as a couple.

- Increasing numbers of young people move to find work within the country but many face difficulties. For women, there are concerns about sexual and physical violence and abuse. However, some young men in particular are successful in saving and learning skills, which they are able to use productively when returning to their communities.
- International migration is less common and mainly among young women. The reality is often harsh, and migrants face many risks. However, migration gives some young women better choices in marriage and improving their livelihoods.

Policy recommendations

Ethiopia's economy is changing, with greater industrialisation, urbanisation and globalisation. In the coming decade, this is likely to lead to increased movement and migration, particularly from rural areas where more than two-thirds of the population still lives. It is clear from this study and others that policies need to be inclusive and take into account the differing needs of children and young people according to age and gender.

1. Support children's and young people's education, including those who migrate for secondary and higher education. The study shows how children and young people can benefit from migrating for education, but it is also clear that giving greater priority and resources to secondary schools should be part of the Government's plans to increase funding for education and allocation of funds within the education sector budget.
2. Support children, especially girls, who move for secondary school. The study reveals that there is a need to expand access and support. The 2018 Gender Strategy for the Education and Training sector has "including the provision

of stipends, scholarships, and low-cost hostels”, all of which could support girls in these situations.

3. Protect migrant children and young people. Children and young people who leave home must be protected from potential abuse and exploitation. The Government needs to invest in a social welfare/ protection system including developing a planned and resourced para-professional or professional social service workforce capacitated to address the protection issues facing all children, including migrant children and youth. This workforce can support efforts for early detection, prevention and response and ensure child safeguarding, so that children have the information they need to protect themselves and know where to go for help. There is also an important protective role that community members and community institutions such as Community Care Coalitions (CCCs) linked to the Social Protection Policy and Strategy can play. The development of and investment in social and protection services at a local level should be a priority.
4. Support efforts to prevent child marriage, as well as support to those who are married, build young people’s agency and invest in gender transformative efforts, as outlined in the Government’s National Costed Roadmap to End Child Marriage and FGM/C 2020-2024. Current approaches to prevent child marriage and abduction should be given greater support at a local level, along with promoting greater agency of young women and men over marriage decisions, and their access to appropriate information and peer support. Young people, including young couples, should be able to obtain land and access to resources and livelihoods.
5. Provide meaningful work for young people, both in their home areas and if they migrate. There needs to be a focus both on the rural areas from which migrants come, and the urban areas to which they move, as well as learning from experiences of those who have already migrated. In rural areas, this means increasing opportunities for youth employment and investment,

especially non-farm livelihood options. In urban areas, it means ensuring that migrants have better and safer access to housing and services, improved working conditions and better pay – including in the informal sector.

6. Improve training for aspiring young migrants and agreements with receiving countries with further initiatives by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The current efforts by the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs at promoting legal migration should be reinforced through better training for aspiring young migrants and further agreements with receiving countries to promote better jobs, avoid deportations and enhance protection in their work and life abroad in line with the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families.
7. Recognise the important role of returnee migrants in line with the approaches developed by the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs with the support of the International Organisation for Migration. Improved skills development, financial advice, access to credits well as the facilitation of legal remittances can enhance the livelihoods of returnee migrants and their role in stimulating development in their home communities. The investment of income generated through migration for productive ventures should be promoted with a special focus on empowering women returnees.
8. Improve research with young and internal migrants. Most policy focus has been on adult and international migration, so that more emphasis on the experience and aspirations of migrant children and young men and women is needed to better inform policy and programmes.

“The Challenges Made Me Stronger”: What Contributes to Young People’s Resilience in Ethiopia?

**Gina Crivello, Agazi Tiumelissan and Karin Heissier
Young Lives Ethiopia²**

Introduction

This paper uses a gender perspective to explore resilience among a cohort of young people who grew up in poverty in Ethiopia. It asks why some girls and some boys seem to fare well as they transition to adulthood, despite the challenges and obstacles they had faced, while others do less well.

The young women and young men at the heart of this study lived out their childhood and adolescence under the period of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs, 2000-2015) that set out to significantly reduce global poverty and provide ‘education for all’. Their transition to social adulthood coincides with the period of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs, 2015-2030) that aim to tackle gender and other forms of inequality and to reach the most marginalised groups as part of a commitment to ‘leave no one behind’.

During this time, Ethiopia had distinguished itself as one of the fastest-growing economies in the world, even though it remains one of the poorest countries. Young people in the country continue to face precarious circumstances. In 2020, they confronted intersecting crises involving a global coronavirus pandemic, and in some regions, violent political unrest and a locust plague, on top of the myriad ‘ordinary’ shocks that commonly befall households in their communities, such as rises in food prices, drought, unemployment, illness or death. Crises affect social groups differently, and there is growing evidence that the pandemic has exacerbated existing social and economic inequalities among Ethiopian youth.

² Presented by Gina Crivello on February 25 2021. It was published on the Young Lives Ethiopia website on April 28 2021 <http://bit.ly/3ykL2uU>. A policy brief based on the paper was published on April 29 2021 <http://bit.ly/3Lruz01>

Rather than focus on these barriers, this paper highlights the positive triggers and protective factors that help socially and economically marginalised young people to navigate pivotal moments of risk, change and opportunity across the early life course.

Data

The paper uses data from Young Lives, a longitudinal mixed-method study of childhood poverty that began in 2001 and follows the well-being and development outcomes of a cohort of 1,000 children born in 1994 in 20 diverse locations across Ethiopia.

Between 2002 and 2016, Young Lives collected five rounds of child, household and community panel survey data linked to 1,000 girls and boys born in 1994 in 20 rural and urban communities in Ethiopia. In 2020, Young Lives conducted a mobile phone survey (consisting of three calls) with young participants about the impact of COVID-19 on different aspects of their lives and well-being.

Since 2007, there has also been a longitudinal qualitative study of 100 children and their caregivers from five communities in five waves, as well as numerous qualitative policy-relevant sub-studies. This paper is based on the fifth qualitative wave carried out in mid 2019.

Findings

- Children who appeared to be faring well as young adults had counted on a combination of well-timed, mutually reinforcing individual and contextual resources within holistic support systems, rather than on a single factor.
- Enabling environments promoted resilience within children's homes, schools and communities, fostering opportunities for both girls and boys to connect, contribute, learn and earn, all of which underpinned their efforts to change their lives.

- Individual processes were nevertheless essential, as girls and boys brought their knowledge, skills, creativity and competencies to bear on their situations and environments.
- All of the individuals we profiled as exemplar cases had at least one person who had provided support at pivotal moments in their life course.
- Elder siblings – both sisters and brothers – stood out as active protagonists within young people’s social webs of support, advocating on behalf of younger siblings, providing advice, inspiration, financial support, housing and access to jobs and migration.
- Second chances were crucial for many who had experienced failure or felt stuck, and meant that setbacks did not guarantee a bleak future.
- The paper suggests that emphasis on alleviating household poverty and mitigating family and economic instability and shocks should be a top priority.

‘Caring for a baby is a mother’s responsibility’ - Parenting experiences of young mothers and fathers, and children’s health

**Agazi Tiumelissan, Kiros Birhanu, Alula Pankhurst and Vincenzo Vinci
Young Lives Ethiopia³**

Background

The International Labour Organization found that in every region of the world, women spend more time on unpaid care work than men, ‘ranging from 1.7 times more in the Americas, 2.1 times more in Europe and Central Asia, 3.4 more in Africa, 4.1 times more in Asia and the Pacific, to up to 4.7 times more in the Arab states’. This problem is more pronounced in developing countries, where mothers are often dependent on their husbands for financial support and constrained by social and gender norms, even when they are engaged in productive agricultural activities.

The Federal Constitution (FDRE 1995), the Women’s Policy (TGE 1993) and the National Gender Mainstreaming Guidelines (MoW 2010) give equal rights to women and men, including within the family, which should have positive ripple effects for children’s health and well-being. Nevertheless, despite good policy intentions, and some improvement in gender equality, gender inequality is still a huge problem in Ethiopia.

Main research questions

1. How does the gendered division of labour operate for young parents?
2. What are the participants’ experiences of health service access?

³ Presented by Agazi Tiumelissan on February 25 2021. It was published on the Young Lives Ethiopia website on January 6 2021 <http://bit.ly/3ZqRfS0>. A policy brief based on the paper was published on January 6 2021 <http://bit.ly/3SPqW5D>.

Data

The study was conducted in Young Lives sites, which with a pro-poor selection, including equal proportions of girls and boys. These children were selected from 20 sentinel sites in the five major regions of the country – Amhara, Oromia, Tigray, Southern Nations, Nationalities, and Peoples' Region (SNNPR) and the capital city, Addis Ababa.

For this paper based on the fifth qualitative wave, 29 cases of young parents were interviewed in ten study sites. In 15 cases both parents were interviewed, in 10 cases only the mothers, were interviewed and in four cases only the fathers.

Findings

- Because of patriarchal norms that prevail in the communities, all the young mothers had almost exclusive roles in direct childcare. The responsibilities for childcare and household work did not seem to diminish even when the young mothers also had to engage in incomegenerating activities outside the home.
- In cases of divorce, there were single mothers who assumed responsibility both for generating income to support their household and for caring for their children, with no, or only nominal, support from the fathers of their children. When this support existed, it was not regular, and only occurred when the fathers felt like giving it or when they had money to spare, and the fathers did not believe that supporting their children was their obligation.
- There seemed to be agreement between young mothers and fathers that the role of young fathers is mainly to provide income. The lack of direct involvement of fathers in childcare did not appear to concern most young mothers.
- There were a number of cases of exceptionally supportive young fathers, who at times were acting contrary to the widely held norms of their

communities. Some were caring for their wives during their pregnancy and beyond.

- There were also a number of cases of husbands who were completely unsupportive of their wives when it came to childcare, and did not even provide financial support, though most of the young fathers did not admit this, and this information came from their wives.
- The role of the extended family cannot be overstated, as grandparents were highly involved in caring for and supporting their grandchildren and the young parents' family. Grandmothers on each side, depending on proximity and availability, were critically important in socialising the new young mothers. The role of siblings from either family was also found to be essential. The other source of support that is noteworthy is neighbours.
- As in the case of parenting, children's health, starting from home remedies, regular health service follow-ups and care in times of sickness, seemed to be the responsibility of the young mothers.

In all the communities, the young parents mentioned that Health Extension Workers (HEWs) were supporting them with childcare by teaching them about what new parents needed to do, which was found to be helpful, especially with their first children.

Policy issues

Most aspects of children's well-being have been covered in the relevant policy documents; however, implementation mechanisms and processes are often lacking. The National Children's Policy, for instance, emphasises the importance of providing training for parents in how to care for their children as part of its family-strengthening component. However, apart from HEWs conducting awareness-raising on some limited parenting issues, this policy guideline does not seem to have been implemented at the local level in the communities, and there is a need to devise ways of reaching families and supporting them with childcare.

The Constitution and the Women's Policy are clear that women have equal rights to men, and also that there is a need to lighten their workload, especially of rural women. However, childcare responsibilities are shouldered largely by women. There is therefore a need to raise awareness to change norms. Given the extra burden on working women, more emphasis is required on providing affordable day care systems that can give mothers space and time to engage in productive activities. This is especially important in the face of some evidence of declining social and family community ties. Better support for women to engage in income-generating activities can improve their decision-making and agency by enabling them to become more actively involved in the labour force, while safeguarding children's well-being and safety.

Since most of the burden on women stems from patriarchal cultural norms, which exert a formidable influence on existing policy, there is a need to engage not just women but also men about the importance of promoting more equal roles in all aspects of household responsibilities, including childcare, for the betterment of the family and society at large. This could be done through a conscious and sustained attempt to transform social and gender norms, and by implementing economic policies that will promote better livelihoods and security for vulnerable households. Positive examples of young men engaging in various aspects of childcare should be used to provide role models.

Commendable progress has been achieved in terms of health outcomes in the country, especially children's health, following the expansion of the health extension system. One such move that is admired by the members of the communities is the Community-Based Health Insurance (CBHI). However, the concern of some of the young parents – that the free medical treatment is not followed by the provision of essential medication – needs further attention.

Although the Ministry of Women, Children, and Youth produced a National Strategy and Action Plan on Harmful Traditional Practices against Women and Children in 2013, the focus was mainly on child marriage, abduction and female

genital mutilation. The Constitution and the Criminal Code also prohibit Harmful Traditional Practices (HTPs). However, even when they are not frequently raised, unlike early marriage and female genital mutilation, HTPs related to childcare and rearing such as uvula cutting using unsterilised equipment and giving new-born babies butter are still happening in some communities. Therefore, there is a need to work on all forms of HTPs, including those used in childrearing practices.

Child Marriage & Ethiopia's Productive Safety Net Programme

Maja Gavrilovic, Tia Palermo, Elsa Valli, Francesca Viola, Vincenzo Vinci, Karin Heissler, Mathilde Renault, Ana Gabriela Guerrero Serdan and Essa Chanie Mussa

UNICEF⁴

Background

Child marriage is a human rights violation according to the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, and its prevention is covered in the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Ethiopia has made significant progress in recent decades in reducing the prevalence of child marriage: in 2005, 59 per cent of females aged 20–24 years were married or in a cohabiting union by the age of 18; this fell to 40 per cent by 2015. Nonetheless, the burden of child marriage in Ethiopia has not decreased further and remains high today, with approximately 4 in 10 young women first married or in union before their 18th birthday. While the child marriage rate in Ethiopia's Amhara region (43 per cent) is just above the national average (40 per cent), this rate is still more than five times that of the capital city, Addis Ababa (8 per cent). Amhara also has the lowest median age at first marriage in the country, at 15.77 years versus the national average of 17.1 years.

Several initiatives have been implemented in Ethiopia to reduce child marriage, but their efficacy is little understood as few have been rigorously evaluated. Social protection programmes, especially cash transfers, have increasingly been advocated globally as a means to reduce child marriage, however, existing evidence in this regard is both limited and mixed. A study by Hoddinott and Mekasha (2017) found that Ethiopia's Productive Safety Net Program (PSNP), a government social protection programme, successfully delayed the marriage of

⁴ Presented by Maja Gavrilovic (a research analyst at UNICEF Office of Research Innocenti) on March 25 2021. The research was published in December 2020 by UNICEF. <http://bit.ly/3Z15EJl>.

adolescent girls. The pathways of this promising impact are poorly understood, however. The present report, thus aims to elucidate these pathways of impact.

Method

The report uses descriptive quantitative and qualitative data, drawing from the baseline survey and data collection of an on-going impact evaluation among PSNP households in Amhara.

Key findings

Prevalence of child marriage in the study sample:

- Nearly one in three females (32.2 per cent) currently aged 20–24 years and 41.4 per cent of females currently aged 20–29 years were first married as a child. The higher prevalence in the sample containing older females suggests that the prevalence of child marriage is declining. These percentages are lower than those calculated using the 2016 Demographic and Health Survey (DHS) data for the Amhara region. Possible explanations for this discrepancy include the following: First, the study sample is not representative of the Amhara population, as it includes only four *woredas*, whereas the DHS sample is representative of the entire region, and the incidence of child marriage within the region varies substantially due to the presence of 'hot spots' for child marriage. This could partially explain the difference in incidence rates if few or none of these hot spots were present in the four *woredas* studied. Second, the study sample includes only PSNP clients, who are poorer on average than the overall population in Amhara, which could explain the discrepancy were the incidence of child marriage higher among better-off households. Third, the study sample includes a large number of direct support PSNP households, which have labour constraints and may therefore have increased incentives to retain

adolescent girls to perform domestic and productive work. Finally, the lower rates revealed by the study could, in part, result from the effects of PSNP to date on delaying marriage.

- Qualitative findings show that in recent years there has been a decline in child marriage rates due to attitudinal shifts, improvements in school enrolment and attendance rates for girls, and greater community awareness of legal penalties.

Risk and protective factors for child marriage:

- Economic hardship and poverty were described as important drivers of child marriage. In some cases, financial vulnerability and poverty had reportedly led to arranged marriages for young girls, as a way for a household to both accumulate resources (through bride payments) and reduce costs (of caring for an unmarried child). An inability to pay school fees may also force girls to drop out of school, at which point they may be pressured into child marriage.
- Orphans may marry earlier than other children, as child marriage is perceived as a means to help children become financially independent from the original family (as children are often perceived by their families as a financial burden and liability).
- The marriage of girls under 18 years of age is viewed as a means of ensuring their protection (and that of their virginity and family honour). Parents often must consider the trade-off between child marriage and other risks, such as social stigma and alienation, as well as the potential loss of family honour (in the event of premarital pregnancy). Girls who remain unmarried are believed to face greater risk of abduction and rape.

Perceptions of ideal age for marriage and causes of child marriage:

- Attitudes towards marriage are shaped by social and gender norms that emphasize the importance of the future roles and reproductive functions that girls are expected to embody as wives and mothers. Girls were generally described as being ready for marriage once they had begun to show physical signs of puberty. Several parents involved in the qualitative interviews (but few represented in the quantitative data) explained their desire to marry daughters quickly in the context of preventing sexual activity outside of marriage and protecting family honour.
- Respondents reported 16.6 years as the ideal marriage age for a girl, and 60 per cent of respondents thought that girls should be married before the age of 18.
- Numerous factors perpetuate attitudes in support of child marriage, including religious and cultural values that emphasize girls' sexual purity and chastity, and encourage early childbearing and high fertility among girls. Other factors include cultural marital norms that exert substantive influence over parental attitudes and decisions towards marriage, making them difficult to avoid or overcome.
- While some families reported poverty as an important factor driving child marriage, economic incentives and social aspirations related to wealth consolidation and improving one's social status in the community are more common underlying drivers.
- Child marriage is also sustained and reinforced by the limited voice and agency exercised by girls owing to gender inequalities and age-based discrimination. Seventy per cent of respondents believed that girls have no say in marriage decisions. Girls were often pressured and/or convinced to marry by their parents (using means sometimes bordering on coercion or emotional manipulation) and they largely acquiesced even if marriage was

not their choice. Many girls/young women interviewed mentioned that marriage is typically 'forced upon' girls. Respondents perceived boys as having greater agency and control over marriage decisions, including when and whom to marry, and generally expected boys to marry later in life compared with girls.

Role of PSNP in reducing child marriage:

- While child marriage prevention is not an explicit objective of PSNP, the study's overall findings confirm that integrated social protection programming – such as PSNP plus complementary interventions – can reduce child marriage through several pathways.
- First, the cash component of PSNP has been found to be effective in mitigating poverty-related incentives to marry off girls, in increasing their school enrolment, and in inducing changes in household allocation of labour (domestic and productive activities) resulting in increased demands on girls' labour. These outcomes have spill over effects on delaying the marriage of girls as well as on their time use and schooling. In contexts where social norms remain supportive of child marriage, however, income-strengthening effects of PSNP may, in fact, enable poor families with daughters to accumulate the resources needed to cover the costs of a wedding and marriage payments, thus increasing the risk of child marriage for girls.
- Second, by providing income to households, which in turn allows households to send girls to school, PSNP is also indirectly contributing to the creation of an enabling environment where girls have access to the information, life skills and support networks (teachers and peers) necessary to empower them to voice and exercise their choices regarding education and marriage. Teachers were also seen as key in preventing child marriage by promoting the importance of education, both among girls and their parents; educating girls about the negative consequences of early marriage;

and serving as a point of contact for girls to lodge complaints of marriage proposals.

- Third, the complementary components of PSNP have been found to play an important role in shifting parental and girls' attitudes and beliefs around child marriage. Components such as behaviour change communication (BCC) sessions and interaction between PSNP clients and community social workers were effective in promoting the importance of girls' education, encouraging delays in marriage and pregnancy, and fostering commitments towards gender equality and positive gender roles and relations more broadly. It should be noted, however, that other programmes aimed specifically at addressing the issue of child marriage through community mobilization and Behaviour Change Communication (BCC) efforts have been operating in some study areas and may have contributed to these changes. Such programmes include the joint United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) and United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) Global Programme to End Child Marriage.

Child labour analysis in Ethiopia

Vincenzo Vinci and Martha Kibur

UNICEF⁵

Introduction

The 2015 Ethiopia National Child Labour Survey (NCLS) is the most recent survey on child labour in Ethiopia providing detailed information on the extent and characteristics of child labour. However, due to its focus on children living in households—with adults who are legally responsible for them - NCLS omits vulnerable hard-to-reach children not living in traditional households.

The study wants to know why they work, what risks and hazards they face, what makes them vulnerable, what their coping strategies are and what the possible solutions are according to stakeholders. Lastly, it provides a mapping of national policies and programmes related to child labour and youth employment.

Main quantitative findings

- School enrolment and work increase together until children are 11 years old and thereafter enrolment drops.
- The school life expectancy (number of years of education expected) is lower for child laborers and the age-grade distortion is more severe.
- Higher educational attainment of the household head is associated with a lower prevalence of child labor and higher school attendance for children.
- Most parents believe there is a value in education and that going to school is the best option for their children. This does not necessarily mean that their children are in fact attending school.

⁵ Presented by Vincenzo Vinci (Social Policy Specialist at UNICEF Ethiopia) and Martha Kibur (Research and Evaluation Specialist at UNICEF Ethiopia) on April 29 2021. The research was published in 2020 by UNICEF Ethiopia. <https://bit.ly/3YtPUBQ>.

- The autonomy of children increases with age with older children more likely to decide whether to work. Nevertheless, this decision is taken by the family in almost 73% of child labor cases.
- Child labor decreases steadily as households get wealthier (as measured by a wealth index), but the pattern is less clear for household expenditures.
- Households with more land are more likely to have children engaged in child labor.
- On average, boys allocate more time to work, while girls spend more time on household chores. Overall boys spend more time on productive tasks. This gender gap increases as children get older.
- Exposure to hazards in the workplace increases with age.
- Youth tend to combine school and work (40.6%), rather than only go to school (26.2%) or only work (26.3%).
- The vulnerable population of the category of Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEETs) is larger among females (11.3% vs. 3.3% of males) and in urban areas (7.2% vs 6.9% in rural areas).
- Labor underutilization is more prevalent in urban areas (38.7% vs. 25.2%) and for females (32.5% vs. 22.8%).
- Youth workers are mostly employed in low skilled jobs.
- The majority of youth are employed as contributing family workers (90%).
- Agriculture is the main sector of employment (81%), although the service sector dominates in urban areas (63%).
- 57% of youth have some grade of primary school as their highest education. It is more common in rural areas and for females to have no education at all (41%).
- There is a positive correlation between education and youth earnings.

Main qualitative findings

- Poverty is the underlying factor pushing children into child labor.
- Other factors that might worsen the effects of poverty include: costs associated with education, a high number of siblings, orphanhood, parents' inability to work, family disputes or abusive situations in the home causing children to run away, and empty promises of school enrolment from employers making children move to the cities.
- Many children in rural areas view the city as an attractive destination, and this is one of the reasons why they decide to move from their homes to seek employment in the cities.
- The influence of peers returning from the cities is another pull factor, together with aspirations of self-improvement.
- When arriving in the cities, children often face a different reality than expected and are forced to take on exploitative jobs in order to survive.
- Boys often work as shoe shiners, porters or fishermen and girls are more frequently employed as domestic workers or in sex work, making them susceptible to different types of workplace hazards.
- Children with disabilities are reportedly forced to work in begging.
- Working children in urban areas use various strategies to cope with the difficult situations they are facing, such as mutually sharing resources with other children in similar situations.

Policy recommendations

Based on the results from the quantitative and qualitative studies, this section provides policy recommendations and essential steps to take to improve the current policy response and ultimately eliminate child labor.

- Given that poverty is one of the main reasons for children to engage in child labor, one crucial step is to provide support to families to meet their basic needs and thereby reduce the need for children to engage in work.
- A priority among policymakers should be to create social awareness regarding the many negative aspects and consequences of child labor that have been demonstrated in this policy brief. Unless societal attitudes towards child labor change, it will be difficult to realize the full effects of other policies addressing child labor.
- Helping women in households play a more important role in decision making could help reduce child labor. Incorporating female empowerment within other projects has a role to play.
- Several steps should be taken to improve school retention, such as a strong focus on school quality and equal access to education. Children should further be encouraged to start school at the age of 7 in order to reduce the number of dropouts at a later stage. This could be accomplished by making school attendance mandatory between the ages of 7 and 14, as the legal working age in Ethiopia is set at 15.
- A focus on job creation in urban areas could absorb the more educated population of youth and minimize skill mismatches.
- The alleviation of economic shocks experienced by households can be improved by ensuring that social protection programmes are widely available to those who are vulnerable to economic hardship in the face of shocks and may otherwise send children to work as a coping mechanism.
- While the Government of Ethiopia already has many important policies and programmes in place, these do not always translate into the desired results without proper implementation. Therefore, the focus should also be on law enforcement, coordination, integration and capacity building among stakeholders to strengthen the positive effects of the commitments and ensure they reach their full potential.

- Tailored approaches are necessary to ensure the effectiveness of policies, as there are many variations in the circumstances between, for instance, rural and urban areas and males and females.

The Ethiopian health extension programme and adolescent wellbeing: A quasi-experimental study

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UK Research and Innovation (UKRI) Accelerate Hub⁶

Introduction

There is a current youth bulge in Ethiopia, with 23% of the population represented by adolescents aged 10-19. Adolescents are often overlooked in health and social policies, resulting in unmet needs.

Over the Millennium Development Goals (MDG) period Ethiopia saw a number of gains across health indicators in population health, in primary education and in child marriage. A series of multi-sectorial policies, linked to the national growth and transformation plan, are recognised as driving such remarkable progress during this period. A key initiative linked to these policies, was the roll out of the national Health Extension Programme (HEP) in 2003. It is made up of four key components, family health services, disease prevention and control, hygiene and environmental sanitation, and health education and communication.

The expansion of the Health Extension Programme (HEP) was gradual, with the number of Health Extension Workers (HEWs) rising to approx. 30,000 in 2009, and their coverage achieving a stable rate of around 1 HEW per 2,500 households. Since its roll-out there have been several evaluations of the impact of HEP. However, there is a need for evidence on the impact of HEP on adolescents.

Research Aim

Evaluate the potential of HEP to impact across multiple domains of adolescent health and wellbeing.

⁶ Presented by William Rudgard (post-doctoral researcher at the University of Oxford), Silinganisiwe Dzumbunu (Accelerate Hub's Early Career Researcher) and Rachel Yates (Strategic Advocacy Lead at the Accelerate Hub) on April 29 2021. The research was published in June 2021 by UKRI Accelerate Hub. <https://bit.ly/3YsjgYd>.

With this background in mind the research aimed to evaluate the potential of HEP to impact across multiple domains of adolescent health and wellbeing.

Data

- Young Lives Ethiopia data is used.
- Young Lives collects data from 20 sites across five regions: Addis Ababa, Amhara, Oromia, Southern Nations, Nationalities and Peoples' Region (SNNP) and Tigray.
- A cohort of 850 adolescents (46% female) living in Tigray, Amhara, Oromia, and SNNP between 2002 and 2013 is used for this study.

Main Findings

- 64% of adolescents were beneficiaries of HEP at age 15; and most experienced at least quarterly support.
- Household support from HEP was associated with higher probability of education attendance, and additionally in girls, better knowledge about fertility, no child marriage, no early pregnancy, and higher literacy and numeracy.
- There was no evidence that household support from HEP was associated with better self-reported health, nutrition, knowledge about STIs.

Policy Implications

- Community female HEWs appear to effectively impact across multiple dimensions of adolescent wellbeing.
- The positive impact of HEWs on child marriage and girls' education requires further exploration, but could be due to effective dialogue with parents and community leaders, as well as HEW's acting as positive role models.

- Absence of evidence linking HEP to better general health, or sexual and reproductive health (SRH) knowledge suggests a need for more youth-friendly health and SRH services, including research to understand access barriers.

“A dream come true”? Adolescents’ perspectives on urban relocation and life in condominiums in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

**Alula Pankhurst, Mesele Araya, Agazi Tiumelissan and Kiros Birhanu
Young Lives Ethiopia⁷**

Introduction

Until recently urban relocation in Ethiopia had received comparatively little scholarly attention with the focus having been on rural resettlement. However, the drive for urban renewal and consequent clearing of inner city areas and relocation of residents has resulted in several theses and publications. From 2009 to 2015, Addis Ababa city expropriated 392 hectares of inner city land and demolished over 23,000 houses in 23 sites.

From 2006, the Ethiopian government embarked on a programme of urban redevelopment, moving people from inner-city areas to low cost condominium housing in the suburbs. This longitudinal mixed-methods study tracked adolescents before and after the move, with an eight-year interval in between, in three Young Lives sites in the capital city, Addis Ababa.

Methods

In 2020, three years after the relocation these mixed-methods longitudinal study re-interviewed adolescents who were approximately 19 years old and who had been interviewed eight years earlier in 2012 in three sites in Addis Ababa when they were about 11 years old prior to the relocation. The study involved both quantitative surveys and a sample of qualitative interviews.

⁷ Presented by Alula Pankhurst (Young Lives Ethiopia Director), Mesele Araya (Quantitative Research Assistant at Young Lives Ethiopia) and Agazi Tiumelissan (Qualitative Research Assistant at Young Lives Ethiopia) on May 27 2021. It was published on the Young Lives Ethiopia website on March 30 2022 <http://bit.ly/3NxrYQ>. A policy brief based on the paper was published on April 11 2022 <http://bit.ly/3JvFQb1>.

Key Findings

Housing

Condominium housing has enabled poor to middle-income households to transition to owning their own homes. However, richer households sought to build their own houses, some moving first to a condominium, and the poorest were unable to afford the down payment and monthly mortgage payments, some having to sell their apartments, downsize or move to cheaper accommodation to cover the mortgage costs. Those moving to condominiums also had to cover the costs of finishing work on their apartments and spent much more on household improvements than those who were not relocated.

Services: Water, sanitation and electricity

Housing comparisons showed that moving to condominiums resulted in improvements in water and sanitation, with residents having access to running water and flush toilets in apartments in contrast to the shared taps and pit latrines available in compounds. Those who moved to condominiums also experienced fewer water shortages, though in certain areas and for some households living on the upper floors serious shortages still occurred.

Relocation and services

Relocation affected access to and quality of services in different ways. The greatest impact was on education, since the move happened during the school year. Relocated students could not join local schools, and the availability of transport, and the time and cost of commuting to their old schools was challenging so that some stayed with relatives or friends in the old neighbourhood. Most, however, moved to schools in the new area after the first year, though whether they went to private schools or government schools (considered to be of lower quality) depended on parental means. Most adolescents felt that the quality of education and facilities was better in the old neighbourhood. Moreover, the number of adolescents missing school for work and dropping out was higher among those relocated. Adolescents seemed less concerned about health facilities, though

some suggested that health care was not as good in the new areas, and that government health centres had limited equipment and medications; many expressed a preference for the private services but some were unable to afford the costs. Regarding markets and shops in some of the new condominium areas, there was less choice and goods were more expensive so some residents travelled to cheaper markets. However, over time markets and shops developed in the condominium areas, and some adolescents noted with satisfaction that there were also supermarkets.

The adolescents felt that there were fewer opportunities for recreation in the condominium areas, and many travelled into town for leisure activities; they also reported a lack of libraries and sports facilities, and were reluctant to join youth associations, some saying these were politicised. Many adolescents in condominiums spent more time at home watching films, playing video games and on social media, though some worried about fake news and the politicisation of social media.

Social and physical environment

Safety was seen as a greater problem in the old neighbourhoods, including risks from theft, drunken behaviour, addiction and street fighting, with limited police control. While the situation was seen to be worsening in the old neighbourhoods, in the condominiums there were improvements reported.

In comparing the expectations of adolescents prior to the relocation with their subsequent experiences, a large majority felt the change was mainly positive. Some adolescents who had moved even felt that their outlook on life had changed whereas the lives and views of those who remained in the old neighbourhoods had not changed. The problems they faced during the move, including costs and completing the internal finishing of the apartments were more of a challenge than the adolescents had expected.

Social support was seen as more important in the old neighbourhoods, suggesting that social ties were weaker in the new communities. Among the

services available, education, policing and cafés and bars were seen as more important in the condominium areas, whereas health, markets, shops and access to work were more important in the old neighbourhoods.

Regarding the quality of the environment, rubbish in the street and air pollution were seen as the most important problems, and more so in the old neighbourhoods. The qualitative evidence suggested that adolescents were more concerned about leisure activities. Safety was a major worry in the old neighbourhoods, especially regarding substance abuse, fights and drunken behaviour, and in the condominiums, girls were anxious about their safety at night.

Relocation gender and agency

Regarding gender and agency, though most adolescents were still at school, boys were more likely to miss school and drop out, especially in the new areas, and were also more likely to want to migrate abroad, especially among those who were not relocated. Regarding decision-making, boys were more likely to make decisions on their own and disagree with older people, and to discuss matters with siblings and friends, whereas girls were more likely to discuss matters with parents. The major gender differences in activities related to leisure, with boys more involved in sports, clubs and video games, and girls in visiting friends and going to religious institutions. While boys spent more money on games, food and clothes; girls spent more on school equipment, transport and make-up. The qualitative evidence suggests that girls had less freedom since parents imposed more limits on how they used their time and were more concerned with who they were friends. Mobile phones and the internet gave adolescents some freedom over how they spent their leisure time, although since they lived at home and most depended on parents for pocket money their ability to make major decisions was limited.

CARE's fight against Early marriage The case of Abdiboru Project

Serkadis Admasu
CARE⁸

Background

Child marriage is widely acknowledged to be a harmful sociocultural practice that is both a cause and an outcome of human rights violations that lead to poor adolescents' reproductive health. Girls married at an early age are more likely to be subjected to human rights violations; which means it can be a cause for human rights violation. Child marriage leads adolescent girls to have less chance of getting or continuing in education and less autonomy in the household and high chance of economic dependence. Ethiopia is one of the Sub-Saharan countries in which child marriage is practiced widely despite the law strictly forbidding it. According to the 2011 Ethiopian Demographic and Health Survey (EDHS), the median age at which Ethiopian women marry is 16.5 years, and 40% of all women in their early 20s were married before they turned 18 years of age. Men of the same age, on the other hand, were very unlikely to marry as children. Indeed, women are more likely to be married by the age of 18 than men are by the age of 25 years.

A report from a study conducted among women aged 20-24 years in nine major regions of Ethiopia in 2009 to 2010 has shown that 16.5 % the women were married before the age of 15 years. The majority, 89%, of these marriages were arranged and about 71% of the brides met their husbands for the first time on the day of their wedding. Further analysis of the EDHS 2011 data has shown that 59% of women in the age group of 20 to 29 years reported being married before the age of 17 years while 19% were married before the age of 14 years.

⁸ Presented by Serkadis Admasu (Program Manager in CARE Ethiopia) on June 24 2021. The research was published in August 2020. <http://bit.ly/3F7FpEF>.

The Abdiboru Project

The project is a 5-year (2016 – 2020) intervention initiative focusing on girls aged 10-14. The ultimate aim of the project is to establish a cost effective model that can be applied at scale. In order to achieve this goal, the project focuses on ensuring adolescent girls have the agency to control decisions that affect their own lives and influence the local, regional and national development agenda, improving the accountability and support to adolescent girls by the government's local and district health, education and women, youth and children affairs offices, and strengthening social and cultural norms and values that protect and prevent discrimination against adolescent girls.

Methods

The study was conducted in four districts (Chiro, Mesela, Boke and Doba) of West Hararghe zone, Oromia Regional State. Based on the 2007 Census conducted in West Hararghe Zone, women and girls account for 48.8% of the population. The majority of the population resides in the rural areas (91%), livelihood was dependent on agriculture related activities (85%), and Islam is the major religion (88%). The study woredas were selected in consultation with CARE Ethiopia based on programmatic and evaluations needs of the project. The baseline qualitative study employed Focus Groups Discussions (FGDs), In-depth interviews (IDIs) and key informant interviews (KIIs) to collect relevant information to address the purpose of the project from March 20, 2016 to April 02, 2016.

Findings

- Most girls marry even at an early age not to disappoint their friends/peers, and waste their chances and to avoid the prospect of not finding another husband/a second chance.
- Adolescent girls are expected to get married even if it requires them to stop going to school.

- By age 15 years, adolescent girls are expected to accept a marriage proposal and get married.
- Mothers are expected to support/advise their daughter to accept a marriage if she is 15 years of age.
- Mothers are expected to marry their daughters off when there is a marriage proposal if the suitor is capable of taking care of the family.
- If a girl refuses to marry, she would be considered 'lazy', 'foolish' or 'useless'; she would be insulted and disgrace her mother who could not persuade her to accept the marriage proposal.
- If a girl refuses a marriage proposal, she could be forced into marriage by abduction.
- Mothers would be blamed or disgraced by friends, neighbours and the community for not convincing their daughters to marry and for not conforming to the marriage norms and culture of the community.
- Most girls would be psychologically hurt from the criticism and insults from friends/peers and thus could change their decision and accept marriage.
- Girls can refuse a marriage proposal if they are strong in wanting to continue their education and if they could mobilize support from school, notably from their teachers, to convince their parents.

Recommendations

- Relationships between structure and social norms holders are intertwined and require well-thought engagement strategies to strengthen collaboration and cooperation between the parties.
- Integrating and mainstreaming Abdiboru like projects with the government development programs can benefit in achieving project goals at scale.
- Girls need to be provided with comprehensive education, counseling and support to prevent early marriage.

- Agency is beneficial if it includes internally driven motivations that inspire girls positively including establishing core values and future aspirations in order to overcome undue external influences including peers and brokers.
- Empowering girls economically and with essential life skills are critical measures to help them aspire to bigger goals.
- Improving the quality of education is critical for girls' success and independence.
- A holistic cross-sectoral approach of agency, social norms and institutional change is most likely to be effective to tackle early and forced marriage.
- Adolescents who are not supported to develop as independent rational decision-making persons and who are simply liberated from the umbrella of parental protection and guidance may fall victim to early marriages.

The Impact of Climate Change on Adolescents' Access to Education in Ethiopia

Workneh Abebe
GAGE⁹

Background context: climate change and adolescents

Climate-related hazards impact children and adolescents in different ways at different points of their lives. Children under five are more likely to be impacted by poor nutrition and suffer from diarrhoea, whereas adolescents are more likely to be impacted by disruptions to education or income-generation activities. It is therefore important to consider the whole life course of adolescents, focusing on longer-term climate impacts on their development.

The intersection between gender inequality and age vulnerabilities heightens adolescent girls' risks from adverse climate impacts. Women, children and youth are recognised to be most at risk from the impacts of climate-related hazards; however, there are significant gaps within the current data due to a lack of disaggregation and visibility of minority and marginalised groups. Climate-induced displacement and conflict can put girls at increased risk of sexual violence, while household stressors, as a result of climate events such as drought, can increase rates of domestic violence. Additionally, climate-related shocks can amplify girls' risk of dropping out of school and can disrupt access to sexual and reproductive health facilities and services. Although boys also experience climate-related impacts on health and food security, among others the gender-specific impacts on boys are largely absent from the literature.

Adolescent voices are critical in identifying key age specific risks and experiences in relation to climate change, particularly highlighting challenges or providing solutions that adults may overlook. A growing number of analysts

⁹ Presented by Workneh Abebe (Qualitative Research Lead of GAGE) on June 24 2021.

highlight that adolescents' experiences, and their agency to contribute to adaptation methods, must be taken into account when designing policies and programming, whilst recognising the importance of ensuring this is voluntary in order to not place additional burdens on young people.

While the Paris Climate Agreement overview highlights the need to 'change, respect, promote and consider...the rights of indigenous peoples, local communities, migrants, children, persons with disabilities and people in vulnerable situations... as well as gender equality, empowerment of women and intergenerational equity' (United Nations (UN), 2015: 2), age and gender considerations are not present in any of the 29 articles. Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 13 on climate action also highlights the importance of 'focusing on women, youth and local and marginalized communities'; however, its indicators are not disaggregated by gender or age. As a result, the specific needs of adolescents, as well as the gendered implications of climate change, are often invisible to policy makers and programme implementers.

Methodology

Gage has employed a mixed-methods research and impact evaluation design, including:

Quantitative survey

- Surveys with adolescent girls and boys aged 10-12 and 15-17
- Surveys with their female and male caregivers
- Surveys with community leaders and school personnel

Qualitative research

- In-depth interviews with nodal adolescents, their siblings, caregivers and community leaders
- Key informant interviews and historical process tracing

- Policy and legal analysis to understand the politics of policy and programme implementation

Annual participatory research

- Peer research and participatory photography with nodal adolescents and their peer networks to better pinpoint shifts in adolescent capabilities over time
- Social networking analysis to understand the evolving influence of peer groups throughout adolescence

Findings

Direct Impacts

- Climate change is expected to increase rates of drought and locust outbreaks. As Ethiopia is highly reliant on agriculture this has large impacts on poverty and food insecurity.
- Due to drought-induced crop failure, some families have no other choice but to turn to charcoal production as an alternative livelihood source, which can result in further deforestation.
- Changing weather patterns can directly influence water availability; girls are more impacted by this due to gender norms that mean girls are usually responsible for water collection. This has a direct impact on their educational attendance and performance.

Indirect Impacts

Education: Poverty and food insecurity as a result of climate shocks such as drought can lead to school drop-out and impact learning outcomes.

- Droughts can cause high rates of seasonal migration (in Afar) and increase time spent collecting water (mainly impacting girls) due to water scarcity - all of which can impact school attendance.

Conflict and migration: Climate shocks such as drought have resulted in increased migration as a coping strategy, resulting in longer periods of school absenteeism or drop out.

- The study found high rates of migration from Oromia region to Somali region to find alternative work to agriculture, with many reporting that during migration children are out of school due to language differences.
- In Afar migration to more fertile land is common; this can cause conflict between Amhara communities and Afar pastoralist when they migrate to each other's' land; adolescents talked about periods of protracted absenteeism from school as a result.
- Significant ethnic violence has occurred between Somali and Oromia regions of Ethiopia - resource scarcity may have contributed to tensions and conflict in the region as populations clash over access to fertile land and water sources.

Violence: Climate change can put some adolescents (particularly girls) at increased risk of violence, which in turn impacts on their education due to absenteeism and ability to spend time on homework.

- Due to a lack of water, conflict can arise at water sources. Adolescent girls are also put at increased risk of sexual violence when travelling further distances to collect water.

Psychosocial: Strong psychosocial impacts of the changing climate in Afar is affecting future opportunities

- This is due to communities' strong reliance on the climate for their households' livelihoods. Many adolescents were worried and stressed about the impacts of drought on their future livelihoods and in turn their ability to stay in school.

Recommendations

- Ensure that children and young people's unique perspectives and experiences inform climate change adaptation strategies, especially through informing adolescents about climate change risks and mitigation measures in school and encouraging girls' active participation in community dialogues (SDG4, SDG5).
- Scale up access to age- and gender-responsive social protection to support adolescents and their caregivers who are vulnerable to climate-related shocks (SGD1, SDG2, SG4, and SDG 10).
- Strengthen health and WASH facilities to respond to changing disease patterns induced by climate change and ensure psychosocial services are adapted to climate realities (SDG3, SDG4 SDG6).
- Expand potable water points in rural areas to reduce long hours travel and staying at water points, which will have a positive impact on girls' education, and reduce violence.
- Address climate stressors in order to mitigate an important driver of intra-household and community-level violence (SDG5, SDG16).
- Strengthening and expanding the 'Green Legacy' project may be instrumental in mitigating the stressors such as drought, flooding, etc.

The Lived Experiences of Risks and Resilience among Sexually Abused Female Street Children in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

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Introduction

Evidence from police records shows that sexual abuse constitutes the highest percentage of all crimes committed against children in Ethiopia. Child sexual abuse constituted 23% of reported crimes committed against children from July 2005 to December 2006 in Addis Ababa. In addition, an average of 21 cases of rape was reported to police each month in the city. Another report revealed that 64% of all rape survivors in Addis Ababa were children between the ages of 11 and 18. However, the actual figure is higher since in many cases law enforcement or judicial authorities do not receive reports about the incidents of rape. Factors limiting reports are feelings of shame, stigma and discrimination; anxieties of victimizations by perpetrators, and an absence of trust in the legal system.

Street children experience more incidents of sexual abuse than sheltered children considering the fact that they experience deprivation of major and essential resources, such as family care, school systems, medical care, and legal services, and often do not receive researchers' attention.

The few existing studies of sexual abuse among street children in Ethiopia show that rape and coercion of children for the purpose of prostitution are highly prevalent among street girls. A study of street children in eight Ethiopian towns found that 43% of the female street children were sexually abused while working and living on the street. An investigation of the prevalence of sexual abuse among female street adolescents in Addis Ababa reported that 15.6% of those ages 10 to 24 said they had experienced rape within three months recall period. Fully 60% of

¹⁰ Presented by Addisalem Adem (Assistant Professor of Social Work and Social Development) on July 29 2021. The research was published in July 2020. <https://bit.ly/3ZrUqsK>.

the survivors faced repeated rape and 80% did not report the incidents to any legal parties. These figures suggest that the life time exposure of female street children to rape and other forms of sexual abuse is very high.

Thus, the study explores the lived experiences of risks and resilience among sexually abused female street children in Addis Ababa.

Method

The study employs an Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis to understand risks and resilience of 10 purposely selected sexually abused female street children in Merkato area of Addis Ketema Sub city using criterion and snowball sampling techniques. It utilizes semi-structured interviews as a primary tool of data collection. In order to strengthen the data gained from the interviews, observations of physical settings where sexually abused female street children work and sleep were conducted.

Findings

Experiences of Risks

The findings about risks describe various types of sexual abuse, risks that expose female street children to sexual abuse, and risks the children face as a result of sexual abuse. The major types of sexual abuse include forced sexual partnerships with familiar street men, rape by unfamiliar street men, and unprotected and 'abnormal' sexual activities with sex customers. Individual level risks that expose female street children to sexual abuse primarily include being new to the street, consumption of substances, and engagement in sex work. Environmental level risks include the physical and social contexts in which the incidents of sexual abuse occur. Risks associated with the physical environment mainly include the bus station where potential perpetrators pick rural child migrants and unsafe sleeping places on the street. Risks associated with the social environment include the street subculture that normalizes sexual abuse and membership to weak social

networks. Child sex workers are more likely to face different types of sexual abuse as compared to child beggars. The findings further reveal that sexual abuse has negative consequences on the physical and psychosocial well-being of female street children. Child beggars are more likely to experience physical risks, whereas child sex workers are more likely to experience psychosocial risks.

Experiences of Resilience

Child beggars possess abilities to utilize appropriate personal and environmental protective resources to successfully avert sexual abuse. The major personal protective resources include abilities to engage in socially acceptable survival strategies, secure sleeping places, recover from substances, and avoid visibility to potential perpetrators. The environmental protective resources include social support (informational, advice, material, and financial) from social networks and rehabilitation centres. In contrast, child sex workers possess few resilience qualities. They make little effort to recover from sex work and substance use and lack social support from social networks and rehabilitation centres. Resilience is also associated with effective utilization of coping strategies that enhance children's physical and psychosocial well-being. Child sex workers are more resilient in terms of accessing medical services from health institutions to cope with physical risks. In contrast, child beggars are more resilient in terms of overcoming psychosocial risks. Child beggars are more likely to utilize effective coping strategies such as seeking emotional support from intimate friends, normalizing the sexual abuse, engaging in religious practices and leisure time activities, redefining risks, and having a strong sense of the positive future. In contrast, child sex workers are more likely to utilize ineffective coping strategies such as consuming substances, suppressing emotions, and wishful thinking.

Implications for Social Policies

- Policy makers should consult information about risks and resilience in order to design prevention, rehabilitation, and reintegration programs.
- Integrating strengths and assets of female street children and communities is important in solving the problem of sexual abuse, rather than merely fixing their deficits.
- Child-centred approaches are vital in order to protect children from sexual abuse and enhance the resilience of sexually abused female street children.
- Practical actions need to be considered by policy makers in order to formulate, evaluate, and revise social policies that aim at solving the problem of sexual abuse.
- Policy makers should consider proposing triangular partnerships among governmental organizations, non-governmental organizations, and higher institutions in the country.
- Policy makers should initiate the establishment of a professional society working on prevention, protection and rehabilitation of sexually abused children at national and university levels.

Children's and adults' views about education and migration among the Argobbas in North-Eastern Ethiopia

Anannia Admassu
CHADET¹¹

Introduction

The study sought to explore perceptions and practices of childhood, migration and education among the Argobba communities in north-east Ethiopia. The Argobbas are one of the ethnic groups in Ethiopia who live in unique village settlement patterns in the north-eastern part of the Amhara Regional State. Although they were later dispersed into the eastern and south-eastern part of the country, Argobba Woreda and the villages in Shonke and Teleha located in north-east Ethiopia are recognised as places that represent the historical and cultural heritage of the Argobbas.

The author's initial thoughts to undertake this research on the situation of migrant children grew from the observations of many children who were migrating from the rural parts of the Amhara region to the town of Kombolcha where the NGO (Children Aid Ethiopia) CHADET was implementing projects to support vulnerable children. According to the assessments made on the migratory processes of children and young persons in the area, children migrate from nearby and distant locations, including Argobba, to the towns of Kombolcha, Dessie and other urban centres within and out of Debu Wollo Administrative Zone.

Given the remoteness of the location of Argobba, and the value that the people attach to their ethnic identity and cultural distinctiveness, the researcher sought to understand in more detail what motivates children to migrate and the perceptions and practices of children and adults towards migration and education.

¹¹ Presented by Anannia Admassu (Managing Director at CHADET) on August 26 2021. The research was published in October 2019. <https://bit.ly/3JpLrm8>.

Despite the continued recognition of contextual variations and the socially constructed forms of childhoods, and the growth in researching the life worlds of children in the global south, very little is yet known about the ways these social constructions have been constituted and practically experienced among communities who attach high value to maintaining their traditions and ethnic identity, such as the Argobbas.

Hence, this research intended to understand how children and adults perceive the influence of the changing cultural context and globalisation and the extent to which local practices are affected.

Methodology

The study was based on qualitative research adopting a philosophical principle of constructivism, which assumes that knowledge is constructed through interaction being made between participants of the research and the researcher.

The field work took place between July 2017 and May 2018.

Conclusions

Factors that impede children's education in the context of Argobba include:

- 1) Children's work,
- 2) Parental attitudes towards modern education,
- 3) Sociocultural practices and
- 4) Religious education

Drivers behind young people's decisions to migrate include:

- 1) looking for better economic opportunities,
- 2) moving out of the rural way of life
- 3) social and cultural practices (e.g., marriage)

The influence of globalisation, change and transformation:

- ✓ Improvements in transport and communication have paved the way for intensification of the migration of children and young persons in search of job opportunities, particularly to the oil-rich countries and created consciousness among communities in distant locations such as the Argobbas.
- ✓ Improvements in the use of media and technology: interconnectedness of the community with other parts of the world, enhanced consciousness and beliefs about the good life, about the places where the migrants lived and about other cultures, displaying images via smartphones.

Inhospitable climatic conditions and limited opportunities in rural areas

- ✓ Agricultural productivity is very low, meaning that the supply of food aid is a necessity, and scarcity of water is a serious problem (even civil servants lose interest in being assigned to the schools and health posts located in rural villages);
- ✓ Along with the growth in the population shortage of arable land in the relatively flat fields;
- ✓ Giving less value to the rural way of life and using education and migration as a vehicle out of poverty. This is similar to findings of other studies conducted in the global south on children's educational aspirations.

Perspectives of adults

- ✓ Adults imagine about their past as the basis of their identity; e.g. the effort to revive their language,
- ✓ The issue of identity (being an Argobba) is highly valued – especially in government structures
- ✓ Worry about children failing to meet expectations of the traditions of the Argobbas (concern about the impact of globalization, especially the media in influencing the behavior and practice of children and young people that may compromise the maintenance of Argobba culture),

- ✓ Parents recognized that changes are being observed over time (children taking decisions without parental consent)
- ✓ They do not consider education as something that can get children and themselves out of poverty,
- ✓ Competing choices between modern and religious schools (reluctance about modern education and preferences for religious education)
- ✓ Sociocultural and economic challenges influence the educational performance of children (such as marriage)
- ✓ Children have got better access to obtaining information and discover about life out of the context they are living in (influence of globalization).
- ✓ Children and young people have to some extent been influenced by Western culture (movies, games, dressing style, premier league soccer, etc.) that were not common practice in the recent past,
- ✓ The provision of 'self- administration' might have advantages to a limited extent (e.g., serving as an instrument for obtaining access to employment for some members the ethnic group; limitations in budget allocations, etc.) but this made no significant impact on the lives of children and young people over the past years;
- ✓ This has, therefore, changed the author's assumptions and stand point with regard to development programs, and modern education, which cannot result in significant progress through a top-down approach.

Implications for policy and practice

On children's wellbeing

Despite international and regional policy instruments, constitutional provisions, legislations and policy directives, this research found a gap between promises and reality. Hence, the general wellbeing of children and their access to basic services remained limited. Given the complexities of the challenges that children encountered in Argobba, interventions by government are crucial to educate

community leaders to widen the space for children's voices to be heard and their rights protected from violence.

On children's education

Studies conducted by Young Lives in four countries, including Ethiopia, indicate that the poorest children living in rural areas, whose parents are the least educated and belong to ethnic, language or religious minority groups, perform less well in their education than do their peers in urban areas (Boyden et al. 2019). Hence, a supportive environment is necessary for children to succeed in their education.

This research suggests that children's educational aspirations can only be realised through employing an approach that encourages by children engaging adults in a position of power to allow a co-construction that can inform transformational change at individual, organisational and societal levels. Such an approach can encourage dialogue, rather than expecting families and other community members to play a passive role, and can allow them to reflect on the complex issues that underpin the challenges of children's education with the possibility of recalibrating it towards ways from which children can benefit. Moreover, this approach creates an opportunity for communities to explore social and other forms of realities associated with the changing socioeconomic and political landscape. This is particularly useful, as it would bring together policymakers and implementers to help communities explore and deepen their critical awareness and ownership of their realities and to act together by assuming reciprocal duties and responsibilities.

Monitoring the Continuity of Essential Maternal Newborn Child Health and EPI Services During COVID-19

Findings from three rounds of health facility survey in Amhara, Oromia, SNNP and Somali Regions of Ethiopia

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UNICEF¹²

Introduction

UNICEF Ethiopia conducted three rounds of national facility assessments in four regional states (Amhara, Oromia, SNNP, and Somali) on service availability and readiness of key Maternal and Newborn Child health services. The purpose of the assessment was to monitor, in real-time, Expanded Programme on Immunization (EPI) service availability and their readiness and use of the services by newborns, children, and mothers in the context of the impact of the COVID-19 outbreak and to inform actions to maintain continuity of services in the country's health system.

Methodology

- The facility assessment covered public Primary Health Care Units (PHCUs), i.e., primary hospitals, health centers, and health posts in 66 woredas across Amhara, Oromia, SNNP, and Somali regions.
- The assessment covered 248 public health facilities (38 primary hospitals, 130 health centers, and 80 health posts).
- Data were collected in three rounds of assessments. The first-round assessment was conducted from August 23 to September 15, 2020, the second round from November 18 to December 15, 2020, and the third round from February 26 to March 14, 2021.

¹² Presented by Agazi Ameha (Health Specialist, UNICEF Health Section) on September 30 2021. The research was published in October 2021. <http://bit.ly/3ZOrsmz>.

Key Findings

- Impact of COVID-19 pandemic on interruption of essential Maternal and Newborn Child Health (MNCH) primary healthcare services was minimal. Moreover, it has showed a declining trend in subsequent assessments.
- National MNCH service continuity Task Force and less lockdown measures are possible reasons for the minimal disruption.
- The major cause of disruption observed was largely due to complete repurposing of two primary Hospitals in Oromia.
- COVID-19 also negatively affected the demand for health services particularly in April/May to most of coverages but later improved in the subsequent months. Treatment of pneumonia and diarrhoea was relatively most affected.
- HR challenges such as lack of trained service providers continues to affect the provision of Reproductive Maternal, Newborn, Child and Adolescent Health (RMNCAH) services.
- Availability of hand washing facilities for clients and staff at health facilities has declined; also practice of use of face masks was limited despite availability in-stock.
- During the first round, the main factors affecting demand were fear of exposure to COVID-19 at health facilities, fear of being labelled as having contracted COVID-19, and mixed messages.

Recommendations

- Complete repurposing may not be a viable option without clear strategy for alternative use. Ensure alternative modality is in place before designating a primary hospital as a COVID-19 treatment centre.
- Improve the efforts at a national level by strengthening the health system including ensuring uninterrupted supply of essential supplies.

- Improve the coverage of the curative services for under five years of children pneumonia, and further reassess the reason why the care seeking for pneumonia has not improved.
- Strengthen Risk Communication and Community Engagement (RCCE). Informing the community about alternative health facilities through Health Extension Workers (HEWs), Women's Development Armies (WDAs) and other community mobilizers should be given due emphasis.
- There is a need to provide guidelines for HEWs on how much time they should spend on routine health services and pandemic response activities.
- Strengthen monitoring and adherence mechanisms on practice of preventive measures by health workers and clients.

Qenja: Child Fostering and Relocation Practices in the Amhara Region, Ethiopia

Sophia Chanyalew Kassa and Tatek Abebe
Norwegian Centre for Child Research¹³

Introduction

The study discusses temporary relocation and informal labour of children in rural Ethiopia. It responds to the call to understand the wider logic underlying child relocation and non-parental residence among populations experiencing poverty. Drawing on the perspectives of children and families involved in the practice of qenja (meaning ‘teaming’ or ‘forming a coalition’) the study examines how – in contexts of uneven distribution of rural labour – children’s involvement in transient agricultural labour outside the home is a fundamental feature of social reproduction. It also argues that qenja is a social coping strategy that co-exists alongside gendered and generational relations of household production and reproduction. An understanding of the practice as merely transactional and exploitative ignores long-standing community strategies of labour acquisition and redistribution. It as well stresses that child protection campaigns by non-governmental organizations and national legislations that intend to criminalize the practice are not in the interest of children, families, and communities.

Methods

- Qualitative methods including observation, semi-structured key informant interviews, and informal talks
- Semi-structured interviews with 12 children aged 12–15 years, their parents, and members of the community.

¹³ Presented by Sophia Chanyalew Kassa (Childhood Sociologist) on October 28 2021. The research was published in May 2014. <https://bit.ly/3L3sqaA>.

- Data were gathered over two periods of fieldwork for the author's PhD research. The first fieldwork semi-structured interviews were conducted from February - June 2012 and in the second round in-depth narrative interviews and informal talks were conducted in July 2013.

Concluding discussion

The study discussed the complexity of reasons behind the practice of relocating boys to non-natal homes in rural Ethiopia, including socio-economic and cultural imperatives like teaching children the farming skills they need and will use later in life, instilling discipline (especially among female-headed households), improving the child's life chances of earning a decent income or attend formal education. For many boys the real benefit of relocation is the saving they make while living and working in a fostering family which they will use as a start-up capital later on.

Although qenja primarily helps families to alleviate economic problems, in Simalta community it is also seen as a way of shaping the social life and individual personality of children. Among female-headed families, qenja fills in the intra-household gap of transferring farming skills from men to boys, thus facilitating the latter's transition to adulthood. It is a source of labour force to families facing shortage of labour, thereby redistributing community work load and labour power needed to perform it. This is evident as it is not just well-off families that need the labour of children - childless and labour - poor families too require extra child labour for both household and agricultural work.

The empirical data in the study indicate how rural children 'navigate the contexts and positions of their life worlds, fulfilling many economic, social, and cultural expectations, while simultaneously charting individual/collective choices and possibilities for their daily and future lives'.

Child relocation and informal labour of children are intertwined with rural livelihood organization. It is argued that qenja is an integral part of child raising strategy and survival mechanism for families.

Policy Implications

- There is a need to reconsider the role of general beliefs about the values (and valuations) of children and of childhood, and how that explains and is explained by child relocation practices. Recognizing the economic and cultural logics that drive familial and community practices and the complexity of the reasons for fostering is important in explaining child relocation practices in Ethiopia.
- The lived experiences of children within qenja show significant variations. These variations are cross-cut by salient differences in age, location, social ties, and economic and demographic circumstances of the children and families. These socio-economic differences need to be taken into account when evaluating the appropriateness of interventions or operationalizing international conventions on, for example, the elimination of child labour.
- It is important to recognize the unintended yet stigmatizing effects of child protection campaigns against children's valued and valuable contributions in what is otherwise described as marginal livelihood strategies.

Campaigns and legislations may prove to be successful in the short term but hinder the empowering of children and their daily lives. They not only pathologize the material social practices of children and families but also discount the struggle families and communities make to improve their living circumstances and rural futures. The research underscores that the underlying problem behind children's involvement in qenja is inequity, and that children are key resources that are shared in order to lessen the burden of rural poverty and redistribute uneven labour resources. The plan to criminalize qenja in Ethiopia may trigger hidden and counter-productive social transformations, with parents and communities feeling the pressure of mounting advocacy by government and NGO authorities, and aligning themselves only superficially. Furthermore, it facilitates the practice to go underground or take a radically different, more exploitative form, which will not serve the interest of children, families, and communities.

Ethiopian adolescents' psychosocial well-being: Evidence from GAGE midline

Elizabeth Presler-Marshall, Rebecca Dutton, Nicola Jones, Sarah Baird, Tassew Woldehanna and Workneh Yadete

GAGE¹⁴

Introduction

During the past decade, adolescence has been recognised as an 'age of opportunity' when children's trajectories can be meaningfully altered to improve both their current and future outcomes. By capitalising on the physical, emotional and social growth that takes place during adolescence, research has shown that young people can be supported to transition into adulthood better equipped to adopt adult roles and responsibilities - and navigate both opportunities and risks more effectively. Within this broad focus, adolescent mental health has increasingly moved centre stage as awareness has grown that a significant proportion of adult mental ill-health has its roots in adolescence. Alongside this focus on adolescent mental health, there has been growing attention to the broad and complex concept of psychosocial well-being. This moves beyond the absence of mental illness to include the presence of positive feelings such as happiness and satisfaction with life. Yet efforts to combine these research streams and explore what works to support adolescent psychosocial well-being remain nascent - especially in low- and middle-income country (LMIC) contexts such as Ethiopia. Paying careful attention to similarities and differences between groups of adolescents and youth with different characteristics - girls and boys, those living in cities versus those in rural areas, those living in different regions (Afar, Amhara and Oromia), and those who are especially vulnerable due to disability, child

¹⁴ Presented by Workneh Abebe (Qualitative Research Lead of GAGE) on November 25 2021. The research was published in August 2021. <http://bit.ly/3ZxfXAO>.

marriage or displacement - we investigate how young people's personal and social resources interact to support their happiness and satisfaction with life.

Methods

- Mixed-methods research was undertaken in late 2019/early 2020 as part of GAGE's midline data collection in rural and urban sites in three regions of Ethiopia: Afar (Zone 5), Amhara (South Gondar) and Oromia (East Hararghe), and Dire Dawa City Administration.
- The quantitative sample includes 7,526 adolescents in two age cohorts (the older aged 17–19 and the younger aged 12–14).
- The qualitative sample of 388 core adolescents (plus their caregivers, siblings, peers, service providers and community key informants) was selected from the larger quantitative sample.

Key findings

Psychosocial well-being outcomes

- Older adolescents are more likely to be distressed than younger adolescents. In interviews, older adolescents were often aware of how their emotional state had evolved since early adolescence, and many directly attributed higher levels of distress to growing up.
- With the caveat that access to education is associated with significantly better psychosocial outcomes, older adolescents - especially those in urban areas and South Gondar (where secondary education is more common) - often attributed their anxiety and depression to academic stress and exam failure.
- Older adolescents also attributed their distress to unemployment and their (in) ability to achieve economic independence.
- High levels of distress among urban adolescents – especially those in the older cohort – were also driven by concerns about violence.

- Boys are more likely to be distressed than girls in South Gondar and girls are more likely to be distressed than boys in East Hararghe.

Resilience and efficacy

- Gender norms disadvantage girls.
- Education plays a central role in adolescents developing not only resilience and efficacy, but also broader psychosocial well-being.
- Employment is important for adolescents to develop self-efficacy – especially for girls and young women.

Support from family and trusted adults

- One-third (34%) of adolescents do not have a trusted adult in their life.
- Adolescents - especially girls - usually feel less emotionally connected to their fathers than their mothers.
- It was common for adolescents across locations to note that the remittances provided by older siblings were funding schooling and several younger adolescents reported tutoring by older siblings.
- Some adolescents reported adult support networks that extend beyond the family. Teachers, religious leaders, employers and Health Extension Workers featured in young people's narratives.

Peer networks

- In terms of peer networks, most adolescents (66%) said they have a trusted friend, where boys are often off herding by themselves for weeks at a time and girls' mobility and time-use is dictated almost exclusively by household needs.
- Other peer activities are more gendered. For example, while nearly all boys reported playing tag and football with their friends, only a few girls used the word 'play' at all.
- Adolescent girls and boys generally agreed that girls – but not boys – spend time talking with friends about personally meaningful things.

- For girls and boys alike, there is often a fine line between peer support and peer pressure. For boys, peer pressure is most common and most destructive when it leads to substance use (alcohol in South Gondar, khat in East Hararghe, and both in urban areas), violence, and school dropout. For girls, who have far fewer opportunities for agency, let alone rebellion or destructive behaviour, peer pressure is most visible in regard to child marriage.

Interactions in the community

- The survey findings revealed that across locations and cohorts, nearly half (45%) of adolescents belong to a club or group.
- For girls, access to girls' clubs can be transformative.
- Several older girls and young women looked back on their participation in girls' clubs as central to their development.

Policy and programming implications

Key policy and programmatic strategies that would accelerate progress in improving adolescents' psychosocial well-being include the following:

- Create strategies directly focused on improving adolescent psychosocial well-being.
- Provide students, beginning in early adolescence, with iterative classes aimed at helping them understand adolescent development. Courses should move beyond physical development and also cover emotional and cognitive development.
- Scale up access to school-based clubs - ensuring especially that all girls and boys have access to girls' clubs and gender clubs.
- Develop culturally sensitive parent education courses, for mothers and fathers, to improve communication and connection.
- Create community-based opportunities for adolescents to engage in age-appropriate, lightly supervised interactions with one another.

- Expand the capacity of school staff to support the emotional well-being of adolescents.
- Continue (and speed up) rolling out community-based social workers.
- Step up efforts to sensitise health extension workers to the needs of adolescents and their parents.
- Provide interested religious leaders with basic and culturally sensitive training on human development and mental health and help them consider how they might use their position in the community to improve adolescent well-being.

Broader strategies that support adolescent psychosocial well-being

- Expand efforts to get all young people (including married girls and those with disabilities) in school and keep them there.
- Support youth employment - including for girls - through improved access to Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET).
- Continue efforts to eliminate child marriage, working with adolescents, parents, communities and religious leaders to raise awareness - and with community leaders, to step up enforcement.
- Work with men and boys, and the community more broadly, to promote alternative, nonviolent masculinities and improve social cohesion (especially regarding ethnicity).

About the *Child Research and Practice Forum (CRPF)*

The need for a link between research, policy and practice on issues of children and youth in Ethiopia resulted in the establishment of a Forum through which practitioners, policy makers and researchers discuss research findings.

The idea was proposed during a workshop in December 2010 for a study on orphans and vulnerable children undertaken by Young Lives. Participants felt that research on children's lives was not made publicly available. The idea was developed through consultations with Young Lives' partners, leading to the establishment of the Forum.

The overall goal of the Child Research and Practice Forum is to create a stronger connection between research, policy and programmes related to children and youth in Ethiopia by presenting and discussing evidence based research.

The CRPF seminars have taken place over the past twelve years at the Ministry of Women Children and Youth and since 2022 at the Ministry of Women and Social Affairs. The monthly seminar is open to policy makers, researchers, NGOs and interested individuals both as presenters and as participants. The Forum has a mailing list of over 1000 individuals and institutions and produces newsletters and annual presentation summaries.



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Ministry of Women and Social Affairs

