

A close-up photograph of two hands, likely belonging to a woman, adorned with multiple gold bangles and a ring. The hands are positioned in a way that suggests a traditional or cultural gesture. The background is slightly blurred, showing hints of colorful clothing.

Report

Child marriage in Ethiopia

A review of the evidence and an analysis of the prevalence of child marriage in hotspot districts

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1. Introduction

The practice of child marriage in Ethiopia has shown significant decline in recent years. According to the most recent Demographic and Health Survey data from 2011, the median age at which Ethiopian women marry is 16.5 years¹ and 40% of all women in their early 20's were married before they turned 18. However, only 8% of the youngest group of women (those aged 15-19) were married before their 15th birthdays. Recognizing the array of consequences that stem from child marriage and childbearing, ranging from interrupted schooling to maternal death to intergenerational poverty, the Ethiopian government has undertaken a range of legal, institutional and strategic measures. Most recently, the government has committed to ending child marriage and FGM/C by 2025 and has helped establish the National Alliance to End Child Marriage and FGM/C.

Part of the Alliance's efforts includes a national mapping study in 2014-2015 to better understand the patterning and trends of child marriage in the country, and in turn inform future programming efforts. Preparatory to this national mapping, this review summarises the current

state of the evidence base in regard to a) the incidence and patterning of child marriage across Ethiopia, b) the impacts of child marriage, c) the national drivers of child marriage, and d) current practices aimed at the abandonment of child marriage. In order to contextualise our findings on child marriage we begin with a brief overview of the progress that has been made to date and challenges still facing adolescent girls in Ethiopia. Given that child marriage is shaped by a range of social, cultural, legal and economic factors this background is important to contextualise the existing evidence base on child marriage. We then move to a review of available evidence on child marriage in the country, before presenting an analysis of the latest national census data (from 2007), which provides a woreda-level picture of the prevalence of child marriage for girls aged 10-17 years and 10-14 years and allows us to identify local "hotspots" for child marriage. This is the first time the census data has been used for this purpose and is especially valuable for informing programming efforts as DHS data is only available on a regional level.

1 While females who are 16.5 years old are undeniably girls and not women, using DHS data we cannot say that girls marry at an average age of 16.5 years because this average reflects the answers of ALL women aged 15-49 and is not specifically referring to the most recent generation of girls.

2. National context with regard to adolescent girls

Ethiopia has achieved strong economic growth over the past decade—averaging nearly 11% a year (Africa Economic Outlook, 2015), more than twice the regional average (World Bank, 2015). The Ethiopian government has also made notable and accelerating progress on a number of Human Development Index (HDI) indicators, and has ‘outperformed many sub-Saharan African (and some non-African) countries regarding poverty reduction’ (IMF, 2013: 4).

The overall poverty level is estimated to have declined from 29.6 percent in 2010/11 to 26 percent in 2012/13 according to MoFED (2014). In the same period, food poverty is estimated to have declined from 33.6 percent in 2010/11 to 31.8 in 2012/13.

Still, despite the considerable progress of the past decade, many Ethiopians remain highly vulnerable. The country had a per capita income of US\$550 in 2014,² roughly one-third the regional average of US\$1,720 per capita.

Agriculture and services dominate the Ethiopian economy, with each accounting for about 45% of gross domestic product (GDP), leaving about 10% for industry. Currently, agriculture is the leading sector in terms of contribution to development, supplying food for domestic consumption and raw materials for the domestic manufacturing industries as well as primary export commodities that make up as much as 86% of total foreign exchange earnings. The national economy is therefore highly correlated with the performance of the agriculture sector, with an important reliance on subsistence agriculture.³

2.1 Human development improvements

According to the 2014 UNECA report, Ethiopia has made considerable strides in achieving the human development indicators promoted through the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) albeit from a very low baseline. Specifically, Ethiopia is less than 5 percentage points away from achieving a number of its MDG targets, including those

related to gender equality (Goals 2, 3, 5) (UNECA, 2014, p.15-16).

2.1.1 Education

At the national level, Ethiopia has seen positive progress on school enrolment and attainment at all levels for both girls and boys. Progress in primary education has been particularly significant for girls, with net primary enrolment going from 80.5% in 2010 to 84.1% in 2013 and primary completion at Grade 8 from 44.5% to 52.2%. The gross secondary enrolment rate for girls moved from 34.7% to 36.9% between 2009 and 2013 (compared with 43.5% and 39.9% for boys during the same period), lower than the target set for the 2012/13 school year (MoE, 2013). As Table 1 illustrates, gender parity ratios in education for the different levels, as published by the Ethiopian Ministry

Table 1: Gender parity ratios in education

| | Base year (2009-2010) | Status (2012-2013) |
|---------------------|--------------------------|-----------------------|
| Primary (1-4) | 0.90 | 0.92 |
| Primary (5-8) | 0.96 | 0.98 |
| Secondary (9-10) | 0.80 | 0.92 |
| Preparatory (11-12) | 0.56 | 0.81 |

Source: MoE (2013)

of Education (MoE), indicate a positive trend, with room for more progress on girls’ enrolment, particularly at the secondary and preparatory levels.

Progress in education at the national level needs to be seen in a context of geographical disparities. Of schooled girls, those in rural areas started school at an average age of 9.6 years and left at an average age of 14.6 years (comparable figures for rural boys are 10.4 years and 15.4 years, respectively) (Erulkar et al., 2010b). Indeed, mean years of completed schooling ranges from .9 years in Afar

2 Gross national income per capita, Atlas Method; World Development Indicators. <http://data.worldbank.org/indicator/NY.GNP.PCAP.CD/countries/ET?display=graph>

3 <http://www.ethiopia.gov.et/web/Pages/Economy>

to 4.2 years in Southern Nations, Nationalities and Peoples (SNNP) region (compared with 1.7 years and 5.6 years, respectively, for boys) (ibid.). As such, a greater push to eliminate school dropout and promote transition through school grades and levels is required for both boys and girls.

Historically poor access to schools is rapidly improving, although parents are nonetheless disinclined to send girls to school once they have entered puberty because of threats of sexual violence and rape (Save the Children Denmark and MoWA, 2008).

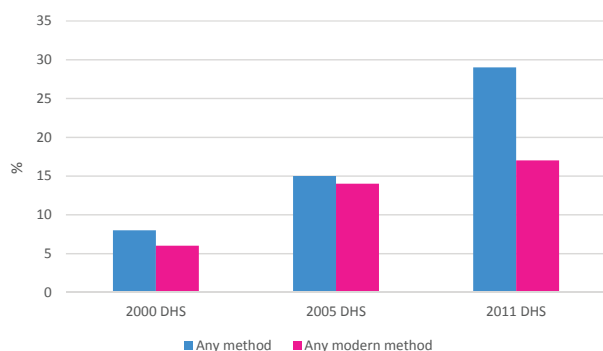
2.1.2 Maternal and reproductive health

Ethiopia has seen positive progress on important aspects of maternal and reproductive health. According to data from the 2011 Demographic and Health Survey (DHS), 5.1% of births were to girls under the age of 18 (CSA and ICF International, 2012: 117)--compared with 6.3% reported six years earlier in the 2005 (ibid.: 109). This is important, since adolescent pregnancy is risky for both mothers and infants. In terms of reproductive health and fertility choices, Figure 1 shows positive progress on married women's use of contraceptives between 2000 (8%) and 2011 (29%)--although there is still room for improvement, particularly as 25.3% of married women indicated an unmet need for family planning in 2011 (CSA and ICF International, 2012: 101). Further analysis of DHS data indicates that contraceptive use is positively correlated with other dimensions of women's empowerment such as rejecting domestic violence, an equal say in household decision-making and awareness of rights (Tadesse et al., 2013).

The total fertility rate (TFR) declined between 2000 and 2011--from a national average of 5.5 children per woman to 4.8 (CSA and ICF International, 2012: 69). Rural women, on average, have twice as many children as urban women.

Women's access to antenatal care (ANC) has improved in the past six years. According to national-level data from the 2011 DHS, 34% of pregnant mothers who gave birth in the five years preceding the survey received ANC

Figure 1: Trends in current use of contraceptives in currently married women 2000-2011



from a skilled provider (a doctor, nurse or midwife). This compares with only 28% in 2005. This improvement is significant, particularly as there was little movement on this between 2000 and 2005. However, Ethiopian women continue to have one of the lowest rates of attended births in the world--10%--which contributes to high maternal mortality rates. The maternal mortality ratio was 676 maternal deaths per 100,000 live births for the seven-year period preceding the 2011 DHS survey. This ratio is not significantly different from those reported in the 2005 DHS and the 2000 DHS (CSA and ICF International, 2012: 267).

2.1.3 Gender-based violence

The incidence of gender-based violence and its social acceptance also require attention. While there are no nationally representative data sources on the prevalence of gender-based violence⁴, Ethiopia's 2011 DHS found that when presented with five reasons that a man might be justified in beating his wife, 68% of women surveyed (and 45% of men) agreed with at least one (CSA and ICF International, 2012). Nonetheless, the DHS figures still show a positive trend in social norms around gender-based violence, with a lower share of women responding that husbands were justified in beating wives in 2011 than in 2005 (81%).

2.1.4 Employment and ownership of land and assets

The 2011 DHS indicates that 57% of currently married women aged 15-49 years, compared with 99% of men in the same age group, were employed in the 12 months preceding the survey. The data also show that 11% of women own a house alone and 45% jointly. Sole ownership of a house or land increases with age and decreases with education and wealth. Rural women are more likely to own assets than urban women: 66% of rural women own a house alone or jointly compared with 30% of urban women. Similarly, 60% of rural women own land alone or jointly versus 18% of urban women.

2.1.5 Adolescence as a time of particular challenges for girls

As much of the data above suggest, and as Erulkar et al. (2010a: 1) note, the 'disadvantage and vulnerability of women frequently has roots during adolescence'. Low educational attainment, with its long-term consequences for employment possibilities, is consolidated by child marriage, a phenomenon faced almost exclusively by girls (63% of women in Ethiopia are married by age 18 compared with 14% of men, according to the 2011 DHS; CSA and ICF International, 2012). Girls are also disadvantaged by the risks of FGM/C and the fact that, married or not, they are responsible for more domestic labour and are twice as likely as boys to report feeling socially isolated (nearly one girl in five reported having

4 The World Health Organization (WHO, 2005) study on domestic violence was based on a limited sample in SNNPR only and therefore cannot be said to present a picture of the incidence of domestic violence more broadly across the country.

no friends at all). Girls are also more likely than boys to be living away from their parents. Of children aged 12-14 years, for example, 12.5% of boys but 17.2% of girls are living with neither parent—reflecting not only the greater likelihood of girls' marriage but also their higher migration rates, often for domestic work opportunities (ibid.). Reflecting a lack of access to assets and rural employment, girls with no education are especially likely to migrate. Of those aged 12-24 years, 30% have migrated compared with less than 11% of boys (ibid.).

2.2 Policy and legal frameworks/infrastructure

Ethiopia has seen significant progress with regard to legislation and policy to promote girls and women's wellbeing and empowerment. Gender equality and women's empowerment have been on the agenda of the Federal Government of Ethiopia since it came to power in the early 1990s. Two major initiatives of relevance to our focus on child marriage were the incorporation of women's rights and child protection issues in the 1994 Constitution of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia and the development of the 1993 Ethiopian Women's Policy. The Constitution served as the umbrella for all laws and policies in Ethiopia, whereas the central aim of the Ethiopian Women's Policy was to streamline gender into all government sectors, with women given special emphasis in health, education and social welfare. This section highlights the most prominent provisions in the Constitution with regard to gender equality and women's empowerment, in particular vis-à-vis age and type of marriage.

Article 35(4) of the Ethiopian Constitution, which discusses the elimination of harmful customs, provides women with rights and protections equal to those of men and also goes into more specific rights, including the rights to equality in marriage; to maternity leave with full pay; to full consultation in national development policies; to acquire, administer, control, use and transfer property, with an emphasis on land and inheritance issues; and to equal employment, pay and promotion. In 2000, the Land Use Rights Proclamation was revised to state that men and women have an equal right to use land, and it empowered women by mandating joint titling. In addition, the Federal Rural Land Administration Law states that women have equal rights to use and control the land as well as rights to transfer and bequeath holding rights (UNECA, 2009).

The Family Code was revised in 2000 and the Criminal Code in 2005 to ensure marriage and divorce procedures reflect equality, to make FGM/C illegal and to address domestic violence to some degree.

The revised Family Code sets the minimum age of marriage at 18 years for both sexes (Art. 7) and does away with betrothal. It also covers other issues, including divorce and custody.

Article 648 of the Criminal Code criminalises child marriage, stating that 'Whoever concludes marriage with a minor apart from circumstances permitted by relevant Family

Code is punishable with: a) rigorous imprisonment not exceeding three years, where the age of the victim is thirteen years or above; or b) rigorous imprisonment not exceeding seven years, where the age of the victim is below thirteen years.'

The Criminal Code also criminalises a number of harmful traditional practices (HTPs), including abduction (Art. 586), female genital circumcision, infibulations or other harmful practices (Arts 565, 566, 564), early and forced marriage (Art. 648) and widow inheritance and polygamy (Art. 650). Domestic violence—framed as an HTP in the Ethiopian context—has also been criminalised.

Legislation passed in 2005 to outlaw FGM/C has had positive impacts on incidence, although its illegality may mean the practice is now underreported during surveys. Some reports suggest strong legal enforcement is gradually succeeding in shifting values and attitudes (Boyden et al., 2014), although the practice is still common.

In September 2013, Ethiopia launched a National Alliance to End Child Marriage and FGM/C and in August 2013 launched the National Strategy and Action Plan on HTPs against Women and Children in Ethiopia (MoWCYA, 2013). The strategy defines HTPs as, 'traditional practices which violate and negatively affect the physical, sexual or psychological well-being, human rights and socio-economic participation of women and children'. The overall objective of the strategy is to institutionalise national, regional and grassroots mechanisms by creating an enabling environment for the prevention and abandonment of all forms of HTPs, and to ensure multi-sectoral mechanisms are available to support women and children through prevention, protection and responsive services. To realise these multi-sectoral mechanisms and to ensure effective coordination and collaboration between and among the different development partners involved in the fight against HTPs, a national platform on prevention and elimination of HTPs was launched by the Deputy Prime Minister at the National Girls Summit held on June 25th 2015. Launched under the auspices of the Ministry of Women, Children and Youth Affairs (MoWCYA) this comprised representatives drawn from relevant stakeholders (line ministries, multilateral and bilateral donors, civil society, women and youth associations and national federations, faith-based organisations and national associations).

These favourable legislative and policy changes have enabled many of the improvements in women and girls' development highlighted by the indicators in education, health and wellbeing above and set the stage for continuing improvements as laws and policies are taken up into local policies and practice.

3. Forms of child marriage

‘Child marriage’, rather than ‘early marriage’, is the preferred term for marriages that take place under the age of 18 (UNICEF, 2014)⁵. However, given rapid physical, cognitive and emotional growth that takes place during adolescence, it is often important to distinguish between younger child brides and older child brides.⁶

In Ethiopia, publicly available data on marriage does not make these distinctions. The Demographic Health Surveys (DHS), the most widely used mechanism around the world for health data collection, reports whether women were married before the age of 15 or before the age of 18—and generates the median age at first marriage—but does not have a separate reporting category for the earliest marriages. Moreover, given the lack of birth registration and low rates of literacy in some areas of Ethiopia, many women, particularly older women, do not know the age at which they were married.

Other than the 2007 census which we discuss in more detail below, the only large survey that distinguishes between child marriage, early adolescent marriage, middle adolescent marriage and later adolescent marriage is the Population Council’s Young Adult Survey, which was completed in 2009 (Erulkar et al. 2010b). This survey was undertaken in 7 out of 9 regions nationwide (Gambela and Somali regions were not included) with a total sample size of 10,080 adolescent boys and girls, equally distributed across regions, with three to six districts selected per region. While important in terms of depth of issues included (from adolescent health and development to gender-based violence, women’s empowerment and FGM/C), it lacks the breadth of coverage that the census provides.

Complementing existing survey data is ethnographic literature which contains a wide variety of ways to classify Ethiopian marriage types (for example, see Tafer and Camfield, 2009; Mekonnen and Aspen, 2009; Guadie, 2010; Lindstrom et al, 2009; NCTPE, 2001; Alemu and Asnake, 2008). Even accounting for the fact that the country is ethnically and religiously diverse, the main *types* of child marriage can be categorized as: arranged, via abduction or free-choice.

Arranged marriages: Most parents continue to arrange their daughters’ marriages (Erulkar and Muthengi, 2009; Erulkar et al., 2010b). This can be done at any time during childhood. Indeed, in the case of promissory marriages, matrimony can be arranged even before birth to cement the ties between families (or within families in the case of the Afari custom of *absuma*, in which girls marry their maternal cousins). While arranged marriages have, in the past few years, become less common (Jones et al., 2014a), in a national sample of married girls aged 12-24 years, 70% were in arranged marriages (Erulkar et al., 2010b). Nearly all of the girls married before the age of 15 had had their husbands selected by their parents (*ibid*). Rates of arranged marriage vary regionally and with religion. In Amhara, for example, nearly 95% of married girls were in arranged marriages and Orthodox girls were more likely than their Muslim peers to have their marriages arranged (81% versus 62%) (Erulkar et al., 2010b; see also Muthengi-Karei and Erulkar, 2012).

Marriage via abduction: This practice is not uncommon in Ethiopia, and most researchers report that abduction is more common in the southern parts of the country, which have traditionally had bride price arrangements wherein young men and their families give cattle or money to the family of the bride. Young men who do not have the money to marry occasionally work with their friends and family to abduct a woman and then rape her (Boyden et al., 2013), in the hopes that her natal family will then allow him to marry her. Erulkar et al. (2010b) found that nearly 13% of their sample of married 12-24 year old girls in SNNPR had been abducted and Boyden et al. (2013) report that over 10% of girls in their Young Lives sample in Oromia had been abducted. This is compared to abduction rates of 2.4% in Amhara and 1.4% in Tigray (*ibid.*).

Marriage by choice: In contexts where marriage takes places in late adolescence or early adulthood, especially in more urban areas, free will marriage is becoming more common (Tafer and Camfield, 2009)—as is the incidence of marriage that is arranged at the request of the participants (Jones et al., 2014a). In some areas,

5 Where the phrase “early marriage” is used in this paper it is because it is discussing research or programming that uses that phrase. It does not imply that the marriage of girls under the age of 18 is anything other than child marriage, it merely attempts to maintain as much accuracy in reporting as possible.

6 Dixon-Muller (2008), reviewing a variety of legal and international standards, as well as data on physiological and cognitive readiness, suggests differentiating between early adolescence, ages 10-11 and 12-14, middle adolescence, aged 15-17 and late adolescence, ages 18-19. She concludes that early adolescents are never ready for marriage, middle adolescents are sometimes ready for marriage and older adolescents are probably “old enough”. However, while extremely useful in terms of understanding the risks that child marriage entails, these categories do not neatly map onto the Ethiopian experience, which includes infant marriage. They also do not account for variations in the way marital responsibilities, including work-loads and sex, line up, or fail to line up, with age at marriage.

partners are eloping to circumvent the arrangements of their parents—though in Oromia, Young Lives respondents believe that this is undesirable as it circumvents tradition and leaves girls more vulnerable to divorce (Boyden, et al., 2013).

Almost certainly growing out of the considerable cultural differences evident across Ethiopia, there is also little consensus in the literature regarding the relationship between child marriage and the nature of post-marriage living arrangements. Some studies have found, for example, that young girls live with their parents and visit their in-laws. Others have found that they live with their in-laws, growing up with their husbands filling the role of an older brother, and visit their parents. Even in a single location — rural Amhara — Erulkar et al. (2004) found that both can be true. They found that the age of 10 was often the tipping-point in regard to where girls lived. She explains, ‘Among those married below age 10, 58 percent remained with their parents; 15 percent went to live with their husbands or in-laws, and 26 percent alternated between their natal home and their marital home. Among girls married on or after the age of 10, they are far more likely to relocate to the marital home’ (p.18). While Pathfinder (2006) has raised concerns about the care that girls receive when they live with their in-laws — with some expected to work long hours with poor food — Jones et al. (2014a) found that in Gojjam married girls were often treated by their mothers-in-law as if they were their own daughters.

Furthermore, while some authors have found that the youngest girls are protected from sexual relations — with

their in-laws understanding that they can be ‘split’ if intercourse is initiated too early and contractually agreeing to protect their virginity — the statistical evidence suggests child marital rape is common (Mekonnen and Aspen, 2009), especially given the nearly seven-year average age gap between girls and their husbands (CSA and ICF International, 2012). Of the married girls aged 12-24 in Erulkar et al.’s Young Adult Survey (2010b), nearly 22% had not wanted sex the first time they had it, nearly 18% were physically forced into their first sexual experience and nearly one-third had their sexual debut before menarche. Of young women who were married before the age of 15, 50% did not want their first sex, over 32% were forced and over 60% had their first sex before their first periods (Erulkar et al., 2010a; see also Erulkar and Muthengi-Karei, 2012).

It is important, however, to note that in some communities contractual arrangements are in place that are designed to prevent early pregnancy and associated risks. Jones et al. (2014) found that the practice of ‘*gaido*’, a contract (previously oral but increasingly written) agreed between the two families that states the groom will not have intercourse with his bride until she is matured (usually around 15/16) is relatively widespread in East Gojjam. If a man breaks the *gaido*, he will be punished or fined by elders. After the *gaido* is fulfilled, a couple can move out of their parents’ home and into their own.

4. Incidence and patterning of child marriage

An understanding of the incidence and patterning of child marriage in Ethiopia requires three distinct quantitative pictures. The first addresses the issue of who tends to be married during childhood. That is, out of the population of girls, which sub-groups are the most vulnerable? Second, of married girls, what picture can we paint in regard to their lives and the threats they face? Third, how is the incidence and patterning of child marriage changing over time?

The Demographic and Health Surveys (DHS), fielded by the Government of Ethiopia and ICF International, are large, nationally representative and conducted approximately every five years. They are, however, limited in their usefulness to understanding the phenomenon of child marriage as they do not disaggregate marriages that take place before the age of 15. Moreover, aggregate indicators are reported for all women of reproductive age, without any breakdown by age. While this makes them powerful tools for examining population health, it effectively hides emergent differences between cohorts and limits our ability to measure Ethiopia's recent and accelerating progress towards the abandonment of child marriage. DHS data, limited to regional breakdowns, also does not allow for sufficient geographical disaggregation. This also is an important gap given Ethiopia's ethnic and religious diversity—and the differences in child marriage it engenders – within regions.

The Ethiopian census is a powerful tool for looking at the incidence and patterns of child marriage. It allows for geographical disaggregation down to the *woreda* or district level—vital for ascertaining drivers and initiating cost-effective programming. However, because the census was last conducted in 2007 it misses much of the recent progress at which the aggregate figures of the most recent (2011) DHS hint. Furthermore, because the census is designed as an official count, aimed exclusively at providing a quantitative snapshot, it can tell us, for example, that in 2007 there were 316 married girls between the ages of 10 and 14 in Beyeda *woreda* in North Gondar Zone, Ahamara, but it cannot tell us how old they were when they were married, whether their marriages were arranged or whether they have been forced to have sex with their husbands.

In order to flesh out the picture of child marriage as much as possible we have woven together data from the 2005 and 2011 DHS surveys, the 2007 Census—and

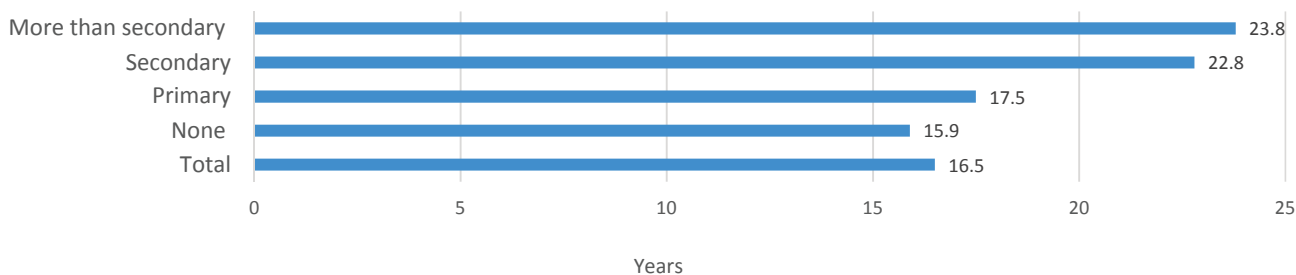
a wide array of data collected by academic and NGO researchers. This data is rarely nationally representative, and is primarily sourced in Amhara (see Presler-Marshall et al., 2015), but the studies were purposively aimed at child marriage, so the data includes information that would not otherwise be available. While we acknowledge that this approach is not ideal, especially in light of Ethiopia's recent progress, it provides the clearest picture available.

4.1 Who marries in childhood

According to the Ethiopia Demographic and Health Survey (2011), which collected parallel waves of data in 2000 and 2005, in 2011 the median age at first marriage for Ethiopian women aged 25-49 was 16.5 years. Nearly 30% of women in that age bracket were married by the age of 15 and nearly two-thirds by the age of 18. 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 (CSA and ICF International, 2012).

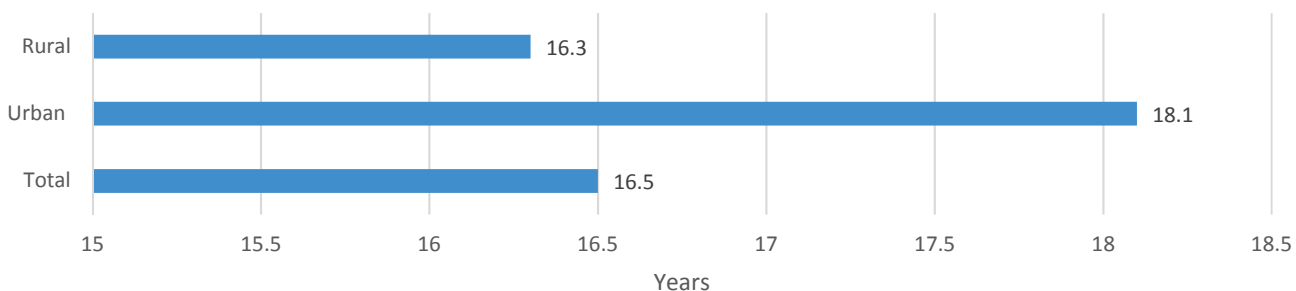
Girls who are urban, educated and well-off tend to marry significantly later than their peers who are uneducated, rural and poor (CSA and ICF International, 2012; see also Erulkar et al., 2010a). Figure 2 shows the relationship between education and child marriage. Women with no education married at a median age of 15.9 years—compared to nearly two years later for those with a primary education (17.5 years) and nearly 7 years later for those with a secondary education (22.8 years). As shown in Figure 3, women aged 25-49 who live in urban areas married at a median age of 18.1 years, compared to 16.3 years for rural women. Interestingly, wealth quintile (Figure 4) has no significant impact on marriage age until one reaches the top quintile. Women in the bottom 80% married at approximately the same age, slightly after age 16; the wealthiest women, on the other hand, married at a median age of 17.9 years. This may reflect Ethiopia's extremely flat income structure (Jones et al., 2014b), or it may also reflect the fact that national level statistics tend to render local differences in the social drivers of child marriage invisible, effectively “canceling them out” via aggregation. Geographically, the lowest median age at first marriage, 14.7 years, can be found in the Amhara region

Figure 2: Median age at first marriage, by education, for women aged 25-49



Source: CSA and ICF International, 2012

Figure 3: Median age at first marriage, by residence, for women aged 25-49



Source: CSA and ICF International, 2012

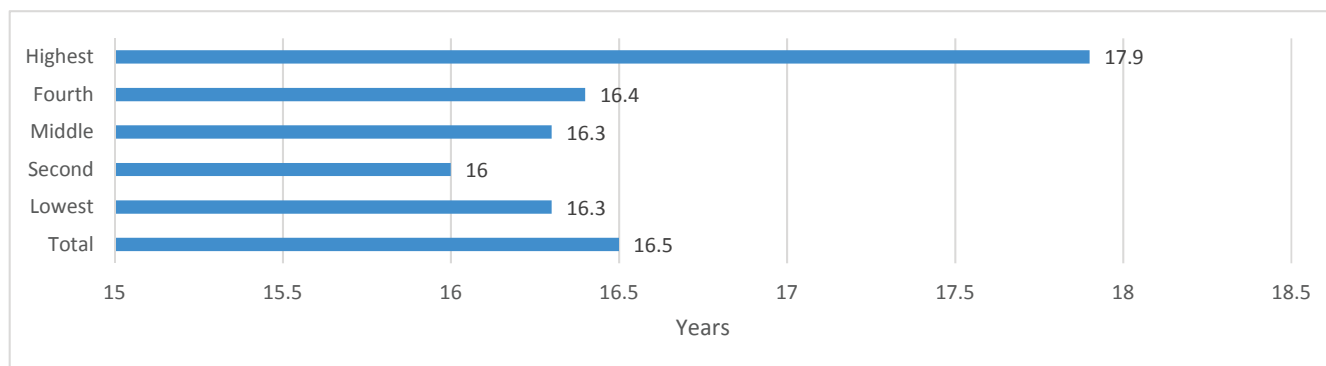
and the highest, 21.4 years, can be found in Addis Ababa (Figure 4, see also Figure 14).

Given the tight relationship between age at first sex and age at marriage in Ethiopia, another way in which the DHS data allow us to examine child marriage is through the percentage of girls and young women in each region who had had their first sex by age 15. As can be seen in Figure 6, 22% of girls in Gambela and 20% of girls in Amhara were sexually initiated in early adolescence. This is in contrast

not only to cities, but to regions such as SNNP and Somali, where only four and six percent has been so initiated.

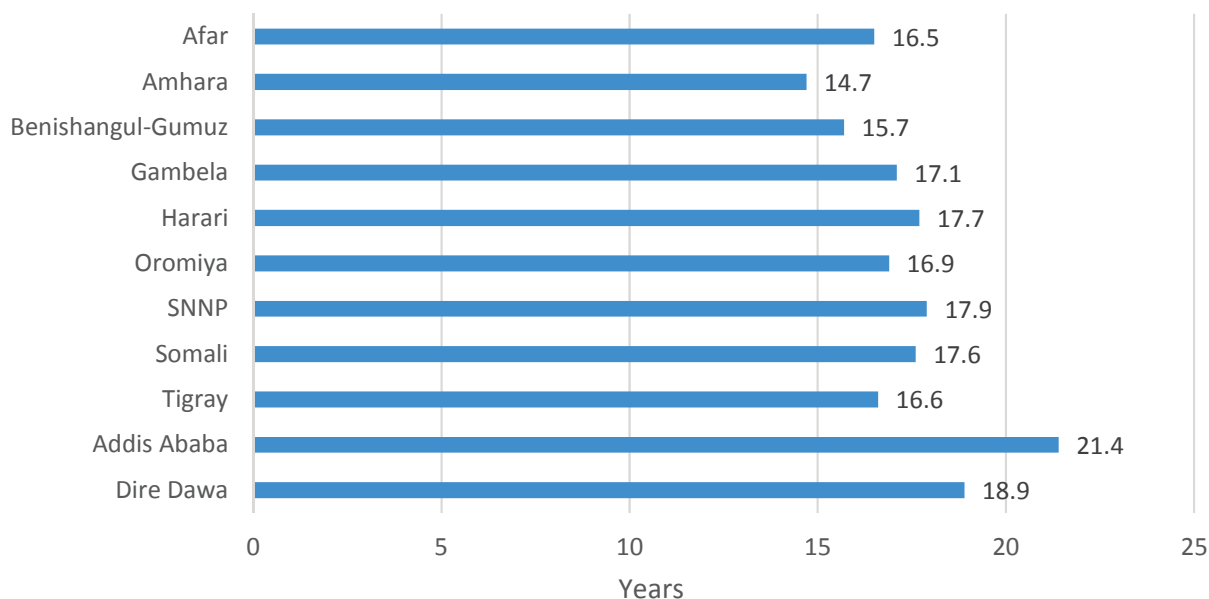
Unfortunately, as mentioned above, DHS data, while highlighting regional disparities, do not allow for disaggregation at the woreda level that are necessary in order to determine “hot spots”. Research by Pathfinder (2006) suggests that local variation can be quite significant. Within the rural Awi zone of Amhara, for example, the average age at first marriage in the Fagita woreda was 10.1

Figure 4: Median age at first marriage, by wealth quintile, for women aged 25-49



Source: CSA and ICF International, 2012

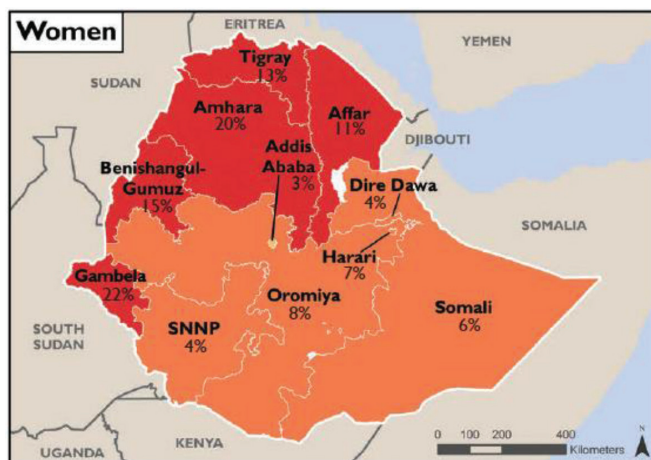
Figure 5: Median age at first marriage, by region, for women aged 25-49



Source: CSA and ICF International, 2012

years while in the Dangila woreda it was 11.9 years. While the effective difference between the ages of 10.1 and 11.9 is minimal in terms of impacts on girls' lives, the age gap points to different customs that may be important in terms of programming. Similarly, the Population Council's Gender and Young Adult Surveys (Erulkar et al., 2010a, b), while large, representative and well targeted at explicating child marriage, do not include a sufficient variety of woredas⁷.

Figure 6: Percentage of women currently aged 15-24 who had sexual intercourse by age 15



(ICF International, 2012)

4.2 Child brides

Looking at the experiences of child brides, adds texture to our understanding of married girls' lives. As can be seen in Figure 7 below, of the married girls aged 12-24 years in the Young Adult Survey, nearly 7% had been married before they were 10 years old and nearly 27% married between the ages of 11 and 14.

Of women aged 20-24 who were married before the age of 15:

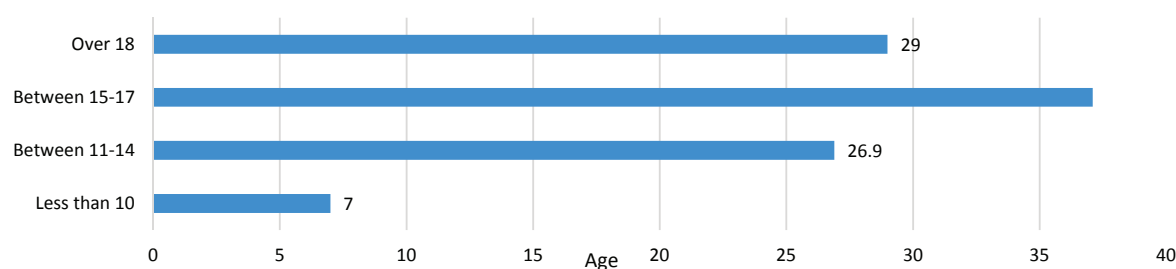
- 4 in 5 were from rural areas
- 4 in 5 had never been to school
- Less than 1 in 3 were told in advance that they were to be married
- 7 in 10 met their husbands for the first time at the wedding

Source: Erulkar et al., 2010a

Ethiopian girls marry much younger than their male counterparts. Indeed, adolescent boys in Ethiopia rarely marry. While on average girls marry men who are seven years their senior, the age difference between partners is the largest for the youngest girls (Erulkar, 2013). Nearly 15% of all married girls — and 22% of rural married girls — are more than 10 years younger than their husbands (Figure 8).

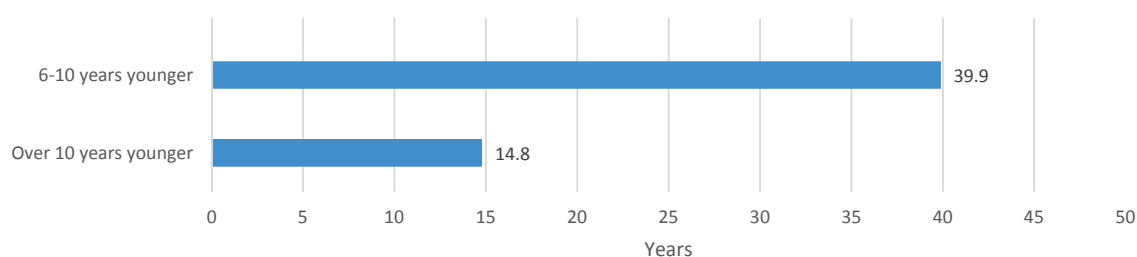
⁷ For the Young Adult Survey, only 3-6 woredas were selected per region.

Figure 7: Age at marriage for married girls 12-24



Source: Erulkar et al., 2010b

Figure 8: Age gap between married girls aged 12-24 and their husbands



Source: Erulkar et al., 2010b

DHS data allows us to examine the age gap between spouses by region. While this data is not available by cohort, and indeed only includes men and women over the age of 25 (and up to 49 in the case of women and 59 in the case of men), it allows us to see that girls in Afar and Tigray are likely to be especially young compared to their husbands (see Figure 9).

4.3 Recent progress

Aggregate statistics, because they fail to account for the variation between older women and their younger peers, hide Ethiopia's recent progress towards the abandonment of child marriage, which appears to be accelerating considerably. According to the 2011 DHS, on a national level only 8% of the youngest group of women (those aged 15-19) were married before their 15th birthdays (see Figure 10). On the other hand, nearly 40% of the oldest group (those aged 45-49) were married by age 15. Similarly, while over 40% of women aged 20-24 were married before adulthood, this figure represents significant progress given that nearly three-quarters of women aged 45-49 were married as children⁸.

While, as can be seen in Figure 10, it is clear that younger women are far less likely to be married as children than older women, it is not possible—using DHS data—to accurately examine the effects of education, wealth, geography, etc. over time. That said, by comparing median age of first marriage for different groups of women across waves of the DHS, it is possible to at least note emerging trends.

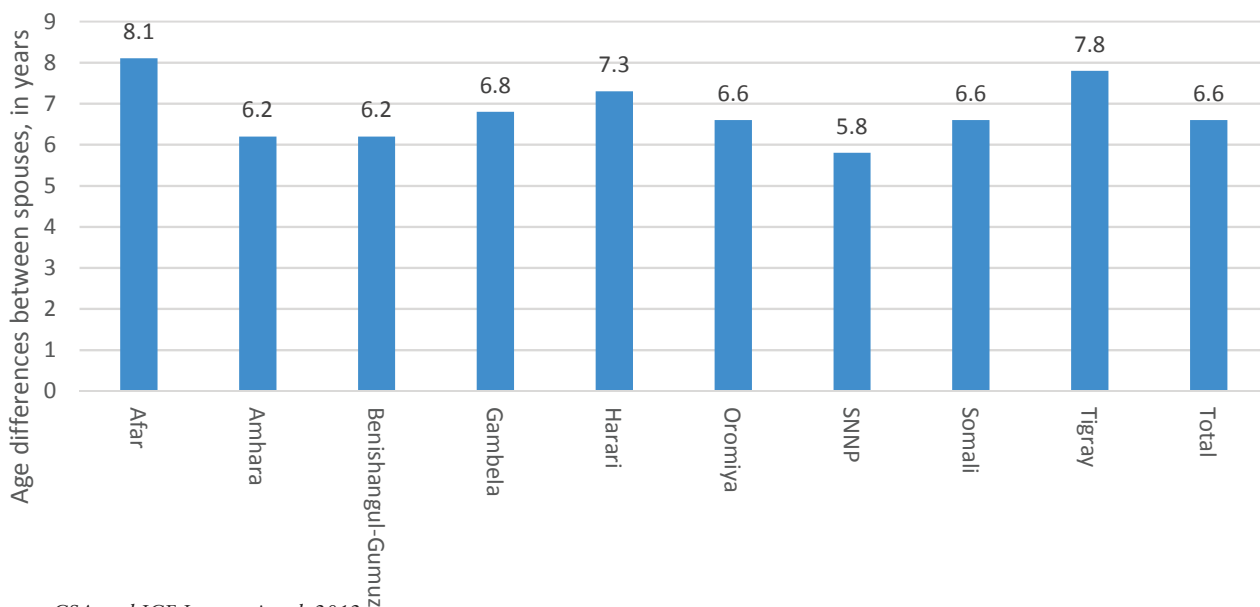
The impact of education, for example, appears to be growing over time (Figure 11). For women with no schooling, the median age at first marriage hovers at—or just below—16 years of age, regardless of whether one looks at the population of women aged 20-49 or the population of women aged 25-49 and regardless of whether one uses 2005 or 2011 DHS data (see Annex 1). For women with a primary school education, on the other hand, the median age of first marriage increased substantially between 2005 and 2011 (from 16.5 to 17.5 years in the case of women aged 25-49⁹). Impacts of secondary education are larger still. For the same group of women, between 2005 and 2011 the median age of first marriage rose from 21.2 to 22.8 years¹⁰. These trends highlight the critical nature

8 The percentage of girls aged 15-19 who were married by age 18 is not reportable because most girls in that age range have not yet turned 18.

9 It is necessary to use women 25-49 rather than women 20-49 for this comparison because of the way DHS reports results.

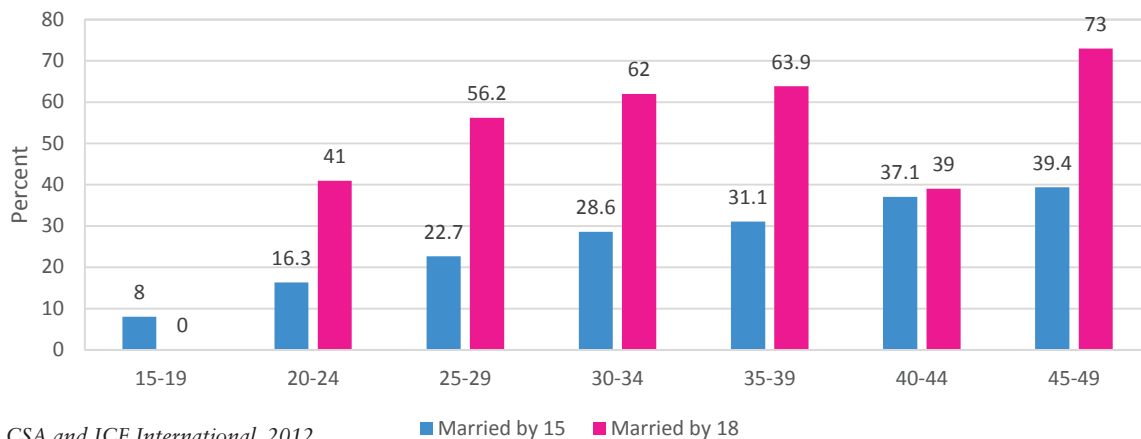
10 Note that in 2005 the “secondary” category included those with more than a secondary education. This is not the case in 2011, meaning that real changes are likely slightly larger than reported.

Figure 9: Average age gap between spouses, in years



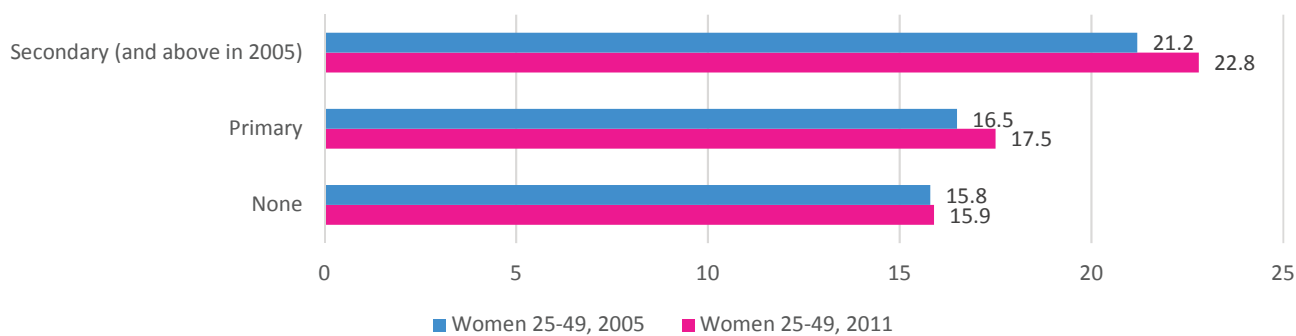
Source: CSA and ICF International, 2012

Figure 10: Percent of women married by age 15 and by age 18. 2011



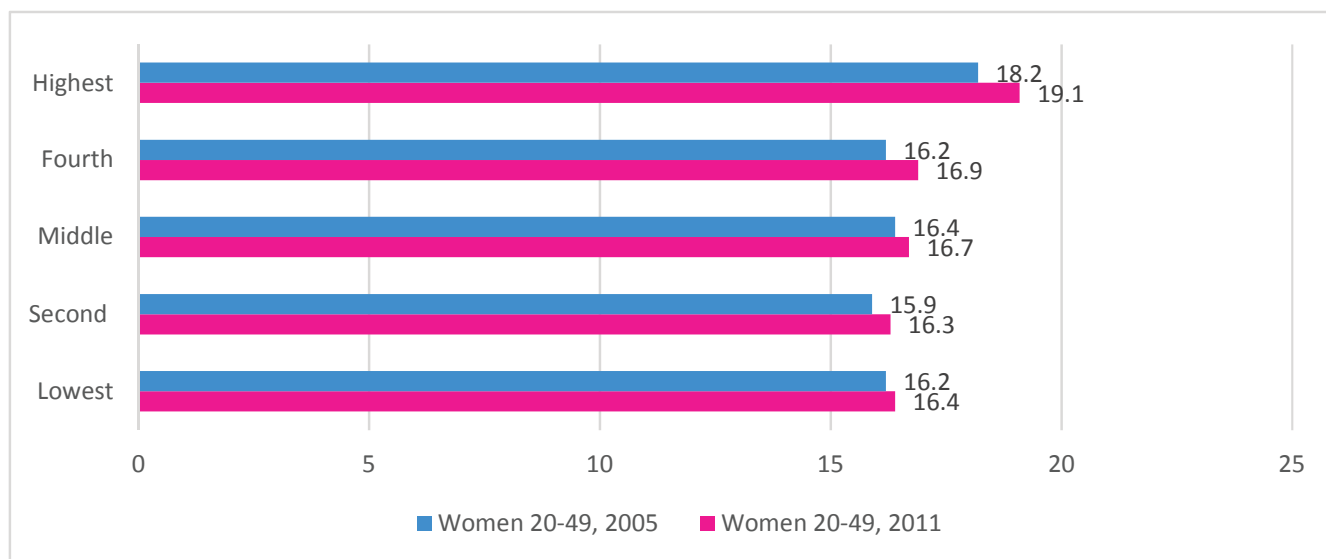
Source: CSA and ICF International, 2012

Figure 11: Median age at first marriage by education level



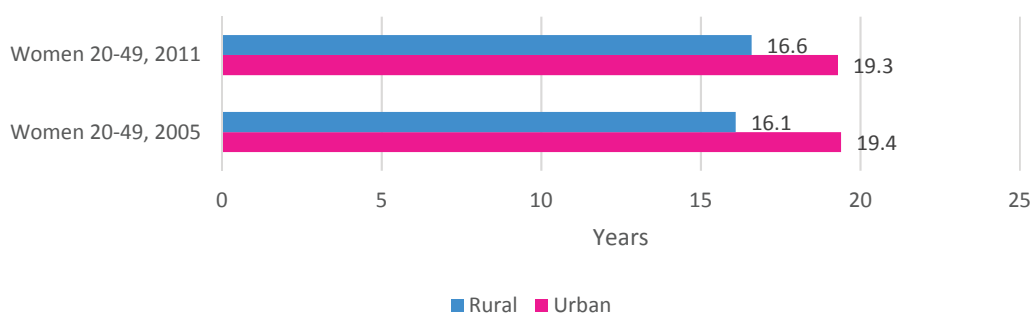
Source: CSA and ORC Macro, 2006; CSA and ICF International, 2012

Figure 12: Median age at first marriage by wealth quintile



Source: CSA and ORC Macro, 2006; CSA and ICF International, 2012

Figure 13: Median age at first marriage by residence location



Source: CSA and ORC Macro, 2006; CSA and ICF International, 2012

of girls' education and point to both a conclusion and an entry point. Specifically, given that girls' enrolment is already increasing, Ethiopia should expect a concomitant reduction in child marriage—and should redouble its efforts to get all girls in school and keep them there for as long as possible.

Patterning of wealth impacts is similar, with the fastest progress towards the abandonment of child marriage taking place in the wealthiest quintile (Figure 12). For the poorest women aged 20-49, the median age at first marriage rose from 16.2 years in 2005 to 16.4 years in 2011. For the middle wealth quintile, the median age increased from 16.4 years to 16.7 years. For the wealthiest women, on the other hand, the median jumped from 18.2 years to 19.1 years—almost an entire year's worth of difference.

Another bright spot emerges when we compare change in rural and urban areas (Figure 13). Specifically, across the last two waves of DHS data, it appears that rural areas

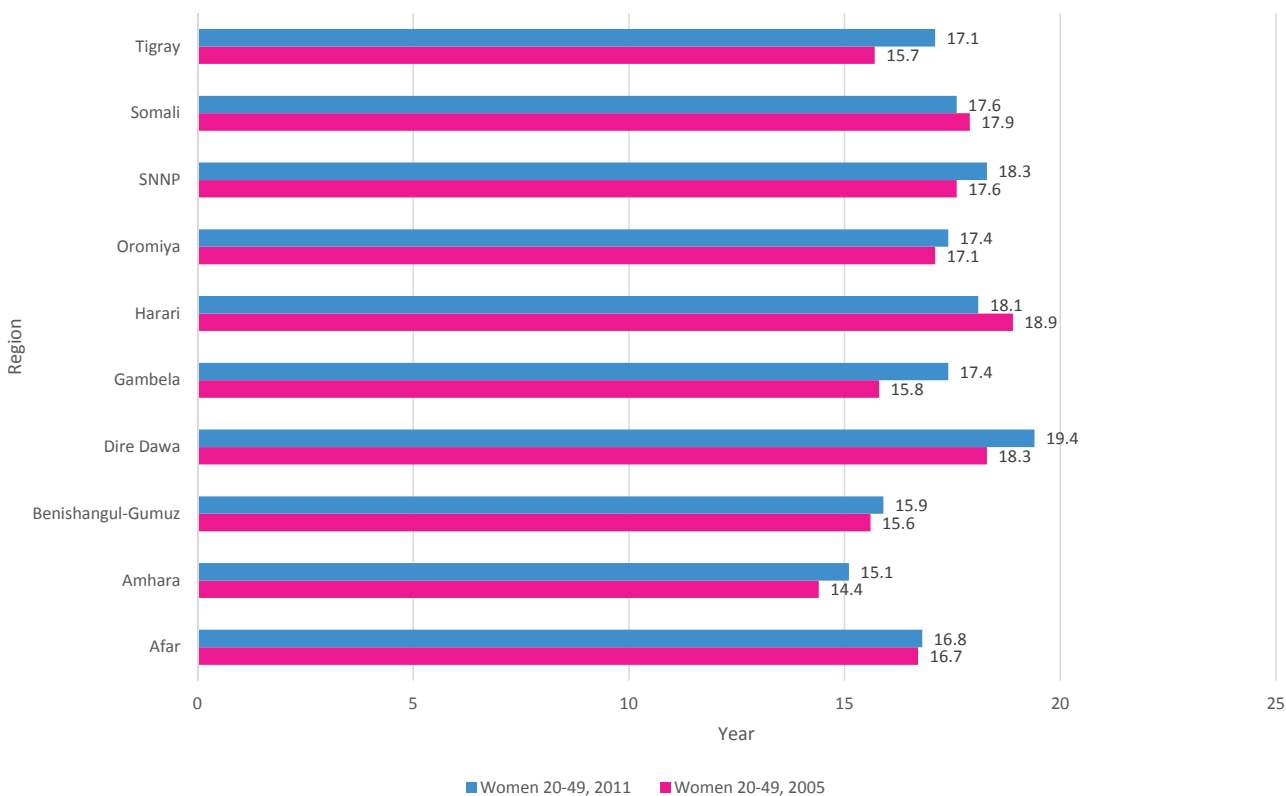
are beginning to close the gap with the urban ones in terms of reducing child marriage. Between 2005 and 2011, for women aged 20-49, the median age at first marriage for urban women remained almost stagnant (19.4 to 19.3 years), while for rural women, it increased from 16.1 years to 16.6 years. While rural women remain substantially more likely than their urban peers to marry early, an increase of half a year in only six years (between 2005 and 2011), especially given that recent changes are effectively hidden in data that covers several generations of women (those aged 20-49), not just the youngest, is extremely significant. Recent rural progress was also noted by Boyden et al. (2013), who observe that it reverses the pattern which emerged between the 2000 and 2005 DHS waves, when urban areas were pulling further ahead.

These somewhat paradoxical findings from the national level data — that the least educated and poorest are being left behind, while rural areas are catching up — almost certainly point to the existence of a great deal of local variation in determining which girls remain the most

vulnerable to child marriage. Indeed, as can be seen in Figures 14 and 15 below, while most regions are making substantial progress towards reducing child marriage, other regions—particularly those where dowry is common – are not. For example, among women aged 20-49, the median

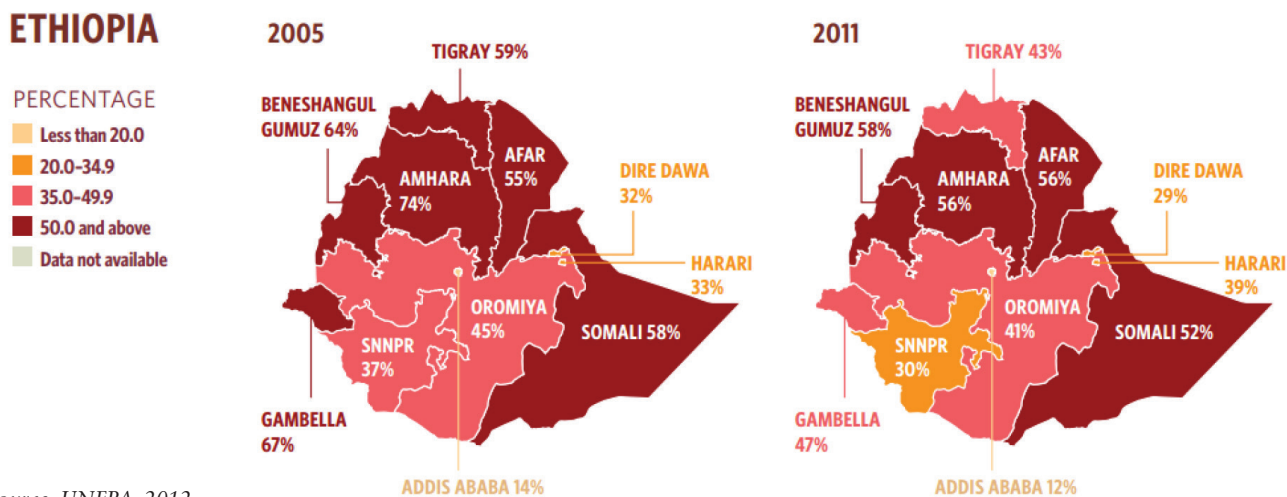
age at first marriage in Tigray has increased from 15.7 years in 2005 to 17.1 years in 2011. Similarly, in Amhara, it has increased from 14.4 years to 15.1 years. On the other hand, in Afar it has remained largely unchanged (16.7 years versus 16.8 years) and in Harari and Somali

Figure 14: Median age at first marriage, by region



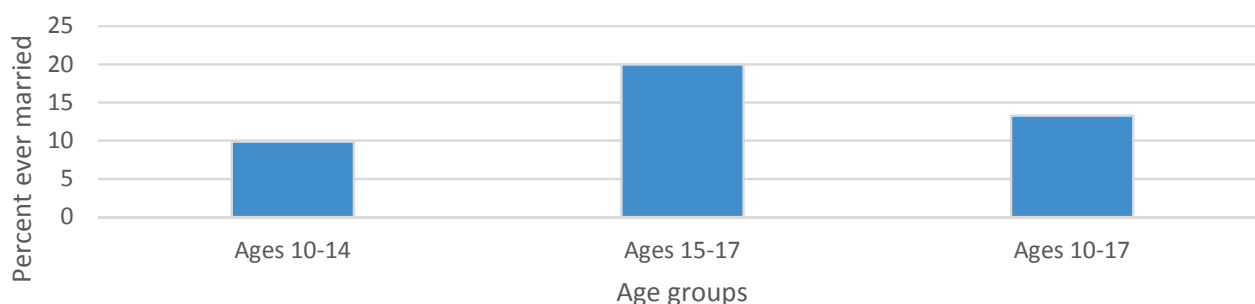
Source: CSA and ORC Macro, 2006; CSA and ICF International, 2012

Figure 15: Percentage of women 20-24 who were married or in union by age 18



Source: UNFPA, 2012

Figure 16: Percent of girls ever married, by age group



Source: 2007 census

it has *dropped* from 18.9 to 18.1 years and 17.9 years to 17.6 years, respectively.

4.4 Local variation

Census data, which captures the most local variation in patterns of child marriage, is key to explicating many of the conundrums and trends identified by the coarser grain surveys mentioned above. It is not, however, a panacea. First, as noted, it is comparatively dated. Although it was completed in 2007, according to DHS data, Ethiopia's most significant progress towards the abandonment of child marriage has taken place since then.¹¹ Second, there were a number of quality control issues with census data, including significantly undercounting older adolescent girls.¹²

These caveats notwithstanding, rates of child marriage by region and age group can be seen in Figure 16. By disaggregating, it is possible to see that the populations of vulnerable girls vary differently by age groups across regions. On the one hand, Amhara stands out. More than one quarter of all girls between the ages of 15 and 17 had ever been married, compared to only 16% of similarly aged girls in Somali and only 11% of similarly aged girls in

Afar. On the other hand, the youngest girls are most at risk in Gambela. Over 16% of girls between the ages of 10 and 14 had ever been married in that region, compared to not quite 10% in Amhara and only 5.5% in Afar.

Within regions, there is considerable variation in the prevalence of child marriage across zones. In Amhara, for example, nearly 40% of girls between the ages of 15 and 17 in East Gojam Zone have ever married—compared to less than 15% for similarly aged girls in the North Shewa Zone. Similarly, in Somali, nearly 16% of girls between the ages of 10 and 14 in Shinile Zone had ever married, compared to about 11% for those in Fik Zone. See Annex 3A-C for more details.

Variation at the woreda level is extremely notable—and proves the existence of child marriage 'micro-climates'. For girls aged 10-14, rates of marriage range from a high of nearly 44% in the Jikawo woreda of Gambela to a low of 1.7% in the Saya Deberna Waya woreda in *Amhara* (see Table 1 for the top 50 hotspots). For girls between the ages of 15 and 17, rates range from a high of 57% in the Jawi woreda of Amhara to a low of 3.2% in Fiche town in Oromiya (see Table 2 for the top 50 hotspots). (Annex 4 has the top 50 top spots for all girls between the ages of 10 and 17).

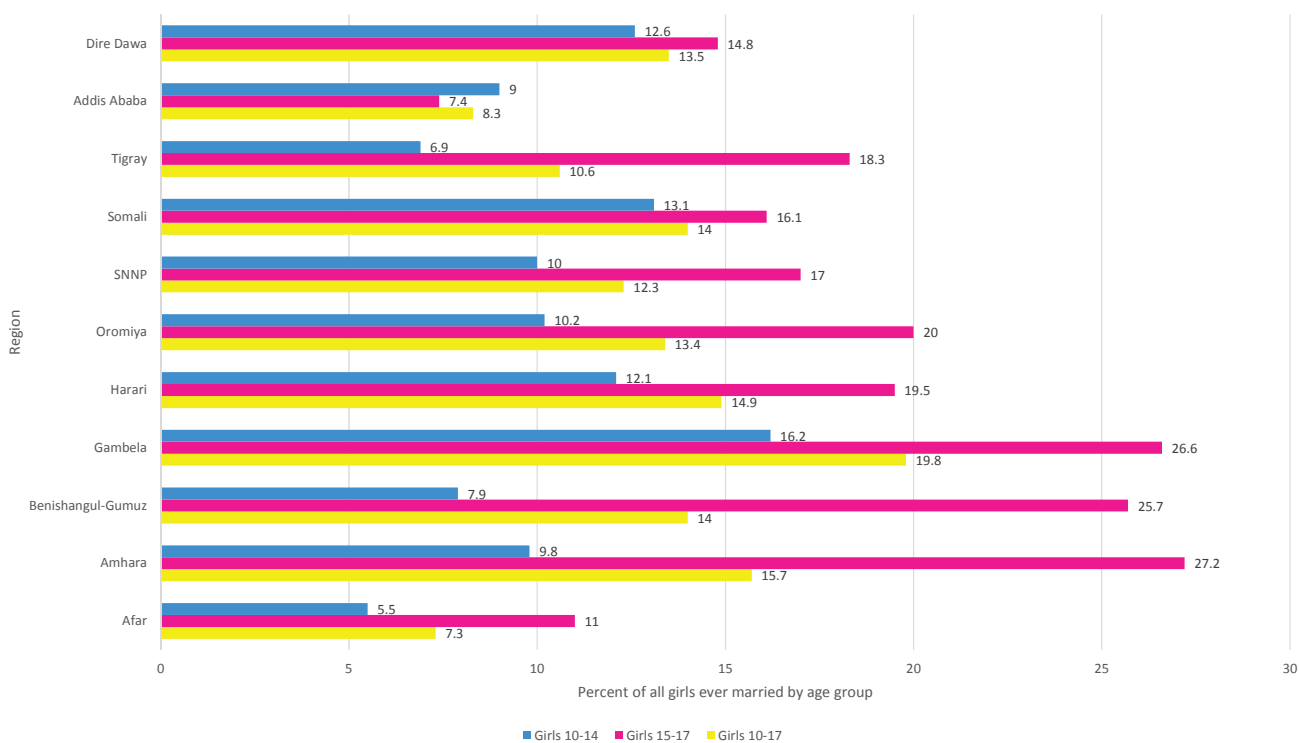
11 Given these caveats, census data do provide a window into child marriage that is not otherwise available, albeit with a different metric, which makes direct comparison between the DHS and the census impossible. The DHS looks only at women over the age of 15 and reports most thoroughly by median age at marriage. It also asks married women whether they were married by the exact age of 15—or the exact age of 18. It reports these statistics not by actual age, but by five year age categories (see Figure 10). The census data available to us, on the other hand, targets girls aged 10 to 17 and identifies only whether they have ever married. It reports across one five-year age grouping, 10-14 years old, and one three-year age grouping, 15-17 years old. It allows us to identify the percentage of each age category ever married (as of 2007). This is not, however, the same as knowing the percentage of women married by the age of 18. According to the 2011 DHS (see Figure 10), 41% of all women aged 20-24 had been married by the age of 18. According to the 2007 census (see Figure 16), on the other hand, only 20% of all girls aged 15-17 had ever been married. This difference can be explained by imagining the following simplified scenario. If a population includes 100 girls aged 15, 100 girls aged 16 and 100 girls aged 17—and all 17 year old girls get married immediately before their 18th birthday, then 100% of girls will have been married by the time they turned 18, but only one-third of all girls aged 15-17 will be married.

12 Given that the age range 15-17 covers three years while the age range 10-14 covers five years, one would expect the number of 15-17 year old girls to be roughly 60% of the number of 10-14 year old girls. This is not the case. On a national level, the ratio of older girls to younger girls is not even 0.5—meaning that far more older girls are missing than could possibly be explained by demographic change or international migration. Furthermore, in some regions there appear to be far more boys (or fewer girls) than can be explained. In Afar, for example, there are 144 boys aged 10-14 for every 100 girls aged 10-14. Even China, with its one-child policy and a cultural preference for boys, has not reached this ratio.

Interesting, though perhaps not surprisingly given the efforts that have gone into reducing child marriage, Amhara does not stand out in terms of hotspots for the youngest girls. Indeed, of the top 10 spots, only two are held by that region—a number that places it on equal footing with Somali. Oromiya, on the other hand, contains

four of the top ten hotspots. On the other hand, in terms of the marriage of older girls, Amhara holds six of the top ten hotspots—followed by Oromiya and Benishangul Gumz, both of which hold two.

Figure 17: Percent of girls ever married, by region and age



(2007 census)

Table 2: Top 50 hotspots for child marriage, by woredas, girls aged 10-14 (2007 Census)

| Region | Wereda | % ever married, girls 10-14 |
|----------------|------------------------|-----------------------------|
| GAMBELA-REGION | JIKAWO-WEREDA | 43.8% |
| SOMALI-REGION | KELAFO-WEREDA | 29.8% |
| OROMIYA-REGION | GIRJA-WEREDA | 27.1% |
| OROMIYA-REGION | CHINAKSEN-WEREDA | 23.5% |
| AMHARA-REGION | ALEFA-WEREDA | 23.5% |
| OROMIYA-REGION | BEDESA/TOWN/-WEREDA | 23.4% |
| S.N.N.P REGION | DILA/TOWN/-WEREDA | 22.6% |
| SOMALI-REGION | AYISHA-WEREDA | 22.3% |
| OROMIYA-REGION | FEDIS-WEREDA | 21.9% |
| AMHARA-REGION | QUARIT-WEREDA | 21.8% |
| OROMIYA-REGION | HAROMAYA-WEREDA | 21.6% |
| OROMIYA-REGION | KOMBOLCHA-WEREDA | 21.2% |
| GAMBELA-REGION | WANTAWO-WEREDA | 20.6% |
| OROMIYA-REGION | QERCHA-WEREDA | 20.5% |
| SOMALI-REGION | SEGEG-WEREDA | 20.4% |
| SOMALI-REGION | DEGEHAMEDO-WEREDA | 20.2% |
| AMHARA-REGION | JABI TEHINAN-WEREDA | 19.9% |
| AMHARA-REGION | SEMEN ACHEFER-WEREDA | 19.9% |
| S.N.N.P REGION | GORCHE-WEREDA | 19.9% |
| AMHARA-REGION | ANEDED-WEREDA | 19.5% |
| OROMIYA-REGION | DIRE-WEREDA | 19.4% |
| AMHARA-REGION | QUARA-WEREDA | 19.4% |
| AMHARA-REGION | SINAN WEREDA | 19.3% |
| OROMIYA-REGION | LIBEN-WEREDA | 19.2% |
| OROMIYA-REGION | GOLE ODA-WEREDA | 19.2% |
| AMHARA-REGION | TAKUSA-WEREDA | 18.8% |
| S.N.N.P REGION | SODO/TOWN/-WEREDA | 18.8% |
| S.N.N.P REGION | ABESHEGE-WEREDA | 18.7% |
| OROMIYA-REGION | BABILE-WEREDA | 18.7% |
| S.N.N.P REGION | WENAGO-WEREDA | 18.1% |
| OROMIYA-REGION | TELTELE-WEREDA | 18.0% |
| S.N.N.P REGION | SODO ZURIYA-WEREDA | 17.8% |
| OROMIYA-REGION | MERTI-WEREDA | 17.7% |
| OROMIYA-REGION | MELKA BELO-WEREDA | 17.7% |
| AMHARA-REGION | SEKELA-WEREDA | 17.7% |
| OROMIYA-REGION | SHASHEMENE/TOWN/WEREDA | 17.5% |
| SOMALI-REGION | GODE-WEREDA | 17.5% |
| SOMALI-REGION | AFDEM-WEREDA | 17.3% |
| AMHARA-REGION | JAWI-WEREDA | 17.2% |
| AMHARA-REGION | AWABEL-WEREDA | 17.2% |

Table 1: Top 50 hotspots for child marriage, by woredas, girls aged 10-14 (2007 Census) (continued)

| Region | Wereda | % ever married, girls 10-14 |
|----------------|----------------------|-----------------------------|
| GAMBELA-REGION | JOR-WEREDA | 17.1% |
| GAMBELA-REGION | LARE-WEREDA | 17.0% |
| OROMIYA-REGION | CHIRO/TOWN/-WEREDA | 16.9% |
| SOMALI-REGION | SHINILE-WEREDA | 16.8% |
| SOMALI-REGION | GASHAMO-WEREDA | 16.7% |
| OROMIYA-REGION | DAWE QACHEN-WEREDA | 16.6% |
| S.N.N.P REGION | WELKITE/TOWN/-WEREDA | 16.5% |
| S.N.N.P REGION | DARA-WEREDA | 16.4% |

Table 3: Top 50 hotspots for child marriage, by woredas, girls aged 15-17 (2007 Census)

| Region | Wereda | % ever married, girls 15-17 |
|------------------|--------------------------|-----------------------------|
| AMHARA-REGION | JAWI-WEREDA | 57.0% |
| OROMIYA-REGION | CHEWAQA-WEREDA | 56.3% |
| BENISHANGUL GUMZ | BELOJIGANFO-WEREDA | 54.1% |
| OROMIYA-REGION | FEDIS-WEREDA | 53.1% |
| AMHARA-REGION | QUARA-WEREDA | 53.0% |
| AMHARA-REGION | ALEFA-WEREDA | 52.1% |
| AMHARA-REGION | QUARIT-WEREDA | 51.6% |
| BENISHANGUL GUMZ | SIRBA ABAY-WEREDA | 50.1% |
| AMHARA-REGION | ANEDED-WEREDA | 50.0% |
| AMHARA-REGION | MIRAB ARMACHIHO WEREDA | 48.7% |
| OROMIYA-REGION | ABE DENGORO-WEREDA | 48.7% |
| OROMIYA-REGION | GIRJA-WEREDA | 47.8% |
| AMHARA-REGION | BASO LIBEN-WEREDA | 47.6% |
| AMHARA-REGION | MIRAB BELESA-WEREDA | 45.7% |
| AMHARA-REGION | SEKELA-WEREDA | 45.5% |
| OROMIYA-REGION | ARENA BULUQ-WEREDA | 45.5% |
| TIGRAY | TAHTAY ADIYABO-WEREDA | 45.4% |
| AMHARA-REGION | TAKUSA-WEREDA | 44.8% |
| AMHARA-REGION | SHEBEL BERENTA-WEREDA | 44.6% |
| AMHARA-REGION | AWABEL-WEREDA | 44.4% |
| GAMBELA-REGION | JIKAWO-WEREDA | 44.1% |
| S.N.N.P REGION | GURAFERDA-WEREDA | 44.0% |
| AMHARA-REGION | ENARJ ENAWGA-WEREDA | 43.8% |
| AMHARA-REGION | DEBAY TILATGIN-WEREDA | 43.7% |
| AMHARA-REGION | GOZAMIN-WEREDA | 43.7% |
| BENISHANGUL GUMZ | DANGUR-WEREDA | 43.3% |
| TIGRAY | WELKAYIT-WEREDA | 42.9% |
| AMHARA-REGION | SINAN WEREDA | 42.6% |
| AMHARA-REGION | SEMEN ACHEFER-WEREDA | 42.6% |
| TIGRAY | TSELEMTI-WEREDA | 42.5% |
| OROMIYA-REGION | GOLE ODA-WEREDA | 42.3% |
| OROMIYA-REGION | QERCHA-WEREDA | 41.8% |
| AMHARA-REGION | JABI TEHINAN-WEREDA | 41.8% |
| OROMIYA-REGION | BABILE-WEREDA | 41.7% |
| AMHARA-REGION | BAHIR DAR ZURIYA-WEREDA | 41.7% |
| AMHARA-REGION | ENEBSE SAR MIDIR-WEREDA | 41.6% |
| GAMBELA-REGION | DIMA-WEREDA | 41.5% |
| OROMIYA-REGION | MEYU MULEKE-WEREDA | 41.0% |
| AMHARA-REGION | MISRAK BELESA-WEREDA | 40.9% |
| AMHARA-REGION | GONCHA SISO ENESE WEREDA | 40.8% |

Table 2: Top 50 hotspots for child marriage, by woredas, girls aged 15-17 (2007 Census) (continued)

| Region | Wereda | % ever married, girls 15-17 |
|------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------------|
| BENISHANGUL GUMZ | YASO-WEREDA | 40.8% |
| BENISHANGUL GUMZ | MANDURA-WEREDA | 40.5% |
| S.N.N.P REGION | CHERE-WEREDA | 40.1% |
| TIGRAY | TSEGEDE-WEREDA | 39.9% |
| AMHARA-REGION | TEGEDE-WEREDA | 38.6% |
| AMHARA-REGION | ARGOBA SPECIAL-WEREDA | 38.4% |
| AMHARA-REGION | ARGOBA SPECIAL-WEREDA | 38.4% |
| OROMIYA-REGION | HAROMAYA-WEREDA | 38.3% |

5. Impacts of child marriage on girls' wellbeing

While the majority of research on the consequences of child marriage is aimed at quantifying public health risks, in order to focus government and donor support, larger “(i)nternational concerns about early marriage centre on the patriarchal and gerontocratic values pervading this custom” (Boyden et al., 2012, p. 512). In addition to a long established stream of research that has documented child brides' greater vulnerability to sexually transmitted disease and higher rates of lifetime fertility rate and maternal mortality, recent campaigns, including that of the African Union, have moved beyond these public health concerns to treat the practice as a violation of girls' basic human rights. **Maternal health outcomes:** In terms of maternal health outcomes, girls under 15 are five times more likely to die of pregnancy-related causes than adult women (Murphy and Carr, 2007; Nour, 2006). Indeed, throughout the developing world, pregnancy and childbirth are a leading cause of death for girls aged 15-19 (UNFPA, 2012; Brown, 2012). Girls are also at increased risk of

non-fatal complications, including fistula, which leads to stigma, social isolation and poverty that lasts a lifetime. In Ethiopia, the confluence of high rates of FGM/C (see Box 1) and low rates of skilled delivery has contributed to a situation in which nearly 70% of adolescent mothers between the ages of 15 and 19 report at least one adverse delivery complication at the birth of their first child (Gage 2009), including very high prevalence of obstetric fistula (Adler et al., 2013; NCTPE, 2003).

Vulnerability to sexually transmitted diseases: Child brides are also significantly more likely to be exposed to sexually transmitted diseases, including HIV. This is because not only are they vastly more likely than their male peers to be married, but they are most often married to older men with whom they are more likely than their unmarried counterparts to have unprotected sex. The end result is that married girls—compared to their unmarried but sexually active peers—are 50% more likely to have a sexually transmitted disease (Erulkar et al., 2010a).

Box 1: Female genital mutilation/cutting

While the incidence of FGM/C is dropping in Ethiopia, the practice remains common, but as might be predicted given the country's ethnic and religious diversity, highly variable. Nationwide, at least 58% of girls between the ages of 12 and 24 have been cut (a further 13% reported they did not know if they had been cut) (Erulkar et al., 2010a). This includes over 66% of young women aged 21-24 but slightly less than 56% of girls aged 15-17. In some regions, including Somali, Afar and Dire Dawa, nearly all girls have been cut (28toomany, 2013). As is the case for child marriage, girls who have never been schooled are the most at risk.

The types and significance of FGM/C differ by regions as well. Nationally, clitoridectomy is the most common procedure. In Somali, on the other hand, infibulation is very common. In the northern regions of the country, girls are cut soon after birth, and while the procedure is often viewed as obligatory, it is not imbued with great social significance. In the south, it tends to be done at puberty and is publicly celebrated.

FGM/C is neither a cause nor a consequence of child marriage; rather, both are aimed at preserving purity by preventing pre-marital sexual activity and are “expressions of male-dominated society and traditions linked to contexts of poverty and vulnerability in which parents seek to protect their daughters from social and economic risks” (Pankhurst, 2014; see also WorldVision, 2014; Boyden et al., 2013). Because both practices share many of the same drivers, however, it is important to note local norms. Addressing one without the other may, as WorldVision (2014) notes, have unintended consequences on the other. It is also important to note that not all girls are opposed to FGM/C. Stating that tradition and custom demand it, more than 40% of girls in the Young Adult Survey supported their own cutting (Erulkar et al., 2010b).

Mental health risks: Child marriage also risks jeopardizing girls' mental health. Gage (2009; 2013a) found that Ethiopian girls who were married or knew they were likely to get married in the near future were more likely to have depressive symptoms and to have considered suicide than those for whom marriage was not yet planned. Indeed, the risk of suicidal ideation was over 1.8 times higher for ever-married girls and over two times higher for "promised" girls. "These girls," notes Gage (2009), "were significantly more likely than never married girls to have worry-affected sleep, to feel constantly under strain, to think of themselves as a worthless person, and to lose self-confidence" (p. 116).

Child health risks: The children of adolescent mothers are also at increased risk for adverse health outcomes, including low birth weight and malnutrition (Santhya, 2011;), which in turn compromises their cognitive abilities (Alhassan, 2013). In Ethiopia, the 2011 DHS found that the neonatal mortality rate for children born to mothers younger than 20 years old is nearly 50% higher than that of infants born to mothers in their 20s.

Effects on education: The harmful effects of child marriage on girls—and their future families—do not end with health impacts. Child brides have their educations terminated, their economic futures curtailed, and are less likely to evidence personal "empowerment" on a wide variety of fronts. Because of the way vulnerability and risk replicate across generations, with women's decision-making directly tied to investments children's human capital, child marriage is a cornerstone of intergenerational poverty (Alhassan, 2011).

As is noted in Box 2, the relationship between child marriage and education, like the relationship between child marriage and FGM/C, is complicated. Few Ethiopian child brides are removed from school in order to marry for the simple reason that few are still enrolled at the time of their

marriage. Families who marry their girls as children are only rarely families that support girls' education—at least beyond the first few grades. That said, Gage (2009) found that of girls in Amhara who were enrolled in school at the time of their marriage, only 27% were still enrolled one year later. Vogelstein (2013) observes that this has knock-on implications for years, as it "not only ends a girl's education, thereby limiting her economic potential, but also precludes her from participating in the marketplace for years" (p.17).

Effects on voice and decision-making: Child marriage also limits girls' — and women's — access to voice and decision-making, with impacts on mobility, fertility, and gender-based violence. As Erulkar et al. (2010a) note, "those married before the age of 18 — and especially before the age of 15 — are less likely to have discussed how many children to have, HIV/AIDS, MCH services, being faithful in marriage". For example, of those married before the age of 15, less than 35% had ever discussed HIV with their husbands, compared to 56% of those married at 18 or 19 years of age. Because of workloads and restrictions on their mobility, young brides are also more likely to be socially isolated; over 30% reported having no friends at all (Erulkar et al., 2010b). Furthermore, because they are not only young, but also more likely to be especially young compared to their husbands, child brides are also more vulnerable to gender based violence. Compared to girls married at 18 or 19, Erulkar et al. (2010a) found those married before 15 to be far more at risk of forced first sex (32.1% versus 8.2%) and more likely to have been recently hit or beaten (7.1% versus 3.1%).

Even if the right to divorce is generally considered an important step forward for women, divorce itself can have a negative impact on the economic futures of women and their children. In Ethiopia, marital dissolution is not

Box 2: Child marriage and girls' education

The last several years have seen tremendous progress in terms of girls' school enrolment. The government has built thousands of schools in rural areas and programming that provides girls with school supplies or scholarships is helping families offset the costs of educating their daughters. Overall, the gender parity index for primary education climbed nearly 30% between 1990 and 2013 (from .66 in 1990 to .92 at lower primary level and 0.98 at upper secondary level in 2013) (GoE, 2013; see also Table 1).

Rates of child marriage have dropped in tandem with increases in girls' school enrolment (Boyden et al., 2013). Not only does enrolment socially situate girls as children, which offers them some protection from marriage, but parents are beginning to recognise, that educating girls has economic benefits. It is also becoming more common for girls to continue their educations after marriage (Jones et al., 2014a), a phenomenon that is extremely rare in other regions, such as Latin America. The importance of continued increases in girls' school enrolment cannot be overemphasized, because until recently, most Ethiopian girls who have married as children were not enrolled in school at the time of their marriage (Erulkar et al., 2010a). The married girls in Erulkar and Muthengi-Karei's (2012) sample in rural Amhara were four times more likely than their non-married peers to have never been schooled, and others leave when they reach puberty. Removal of girls from school occurs because parents are concerned about older girls' safety, vis-à-vis rape, and their reputation, vis-à-vis the coeducational school environment, because damage to either would ultimately jeopardise their "reproductive and economic futures" (Tafere and Camfield, 2009, p. 18; see also Girl Hub, 2013).

especially stigmatised, with women having higher rates of divorce or separation than men (7.5% compared to 2.5% among the 15-49 years age cohort). While overall rates are relatively low, girls and women who had been married at the youngest ages—and with the least free choice regarding marriage partners—are the most likely to

divorce. Erulkar and Muthengi-Karei's (2012) findings in Awi Zone, Amhara, found that half of ever-married girls in their sample in Awi Zone, Amhara had already divorced or separated, with those in arranged marriages far more likely to have done so than in marriages that were freely chosen (56% versus 35%).

Box 3: Child marriage and migration

Often girls' only recourse to avoid child marriage is to run away. Some migrate internally, and of those who do, most migrate alone. Others, however, migrate with family members—often at the behest of their parents, who were simultaneously unwilling to arrange a child marriage and unable to withstand the social pressure to do so (Erulkar, 2006; Gage, 2009).

Other girls avoid child marriage by migrating internationally. Jones et al. (2014b) found that girls who migrated to the Middle East to work often did so because of community focus on their sexuality. After puberty, unmarried girls were assumed to be behaving in inappropriate ways and many girls, unable to withstand the stigma, particularly given that they were *not* behaving inappropriately, chose to migrate.

While marriage-avoidant migration represents a way for girls to reclaim some measure of self-determination in an environment which leaves them little space for agency (Jones et al., 2014b), it also leaves them vulnerable to a host of other threats. Erulkar (2006) notes in regard to domestic migration, “girls who migrated to escape marriage were more often in low status jobs, earned less money, were less likely to report many friends, and less likely to have someone from whom they could borrow money in an emergency” (p.370). Girls who migrated to the Middle East were also at grave risk. Many experienced horrific physical and sexual abuse worthy of tabloid headlines (Jones et al., 2014b).

6. Drivers

On the one hand, discussions regarding the drivers of child marriage are usefully simplified by framing them as a dichotomy and discussing them as if they can be neatly sorted into economic versus socio-cultural categories. This framing is especially useful as it lends itself to particular sets of policy and programming solutions. On the other hand, because real life is messy, it is important to recognise that the dichotomy is problematic and that its pretence may obscure some of the links necessary to ending the practice. It is also important to recognise that in a country as diverse as Ethiopia, there can never be one reason that girls marry as children—or even one reason that girls marry at the age of ten as opposed to the age of fifteen. The real world rarely maps neatly onto theoretical explanations.

6.1 Economics

There is little doubt that “Economic considerations are fundamental to the practice of child marriage” (Vogelstein, 2013, p.7; see also Tafere and Camfield, 2009; Nayak, 2013; Rogers, 2012). Given the larger context of economic uncertainty, child marriage offers an opportunity to extend the social networks on which families depend during times of need and consolidate “collective and individual interests” (Boyden et al., 2012, p.515; see also Lindstrom et al., 2009; Nayak, 2013; Muthengi-Karei and Erulkar, 2010). Parents view marriage as a way of optimising the futures of their daughters, their future grandchildren, and themselves (Pankhurst, 2014). That said, however, the economic patterning of child marriage is more complicated than poverty narratives alone can explain (Boyden et al., 2013; Jones et al., 2014a). In the case of poor families, it is not difficult to imagine why child marriage might be viewed favourably, especially in areas with few educational and economic opportunities open to girls (Jones et al., 2014a). Boyden et al. (2012) observe that in the Young Lives sample girls are aware that their futures most often depend on male breadwinners and Vogelstein (2013) notes that because capturing the “best” breadwinner may entail marrying young, the economics of early marriage may involve complicated trade-offs that girls are willing to make. Child marriage also represents a way to bring labour into labour constrained, usually female-headed, households— which given divorce rates are not uncommon (Boyden et al., 2012; Erulkar and Muthengi-Karei, 2012;

There is significant regional variation in how poverty drives child marriage. In some regions the practice of dowry encourages the custom, because the youngest girls

typically require the smallest dowries (Vogelstein, 2013). In other regions, such as Oromia, where bride wealth is common, poverty may incentivise parents to effectively exchange their daughters for cash (Boyden et al., 2012; see also Erulkar and Muthengi, 2009). Indeed, Gibson and Girmu (2011) note that in some cases the pastoralists of Arsi Oromo may marry their daughters as children in order to bring in bride wealth that can then be used to arrange higher status marriages for their older brothers. Poverty is not, however, the only economic driver of child marriage. In some cases, especially in Gojjam zone in Amhara, it is girls from “relatively better-off families” who are especially likely “to marry at an early age,” often as a way to allow families to keep or expand their land holdings (Jones et al. 2014a: v; see also Boyden et al., 2013). While this trend has moderated in the last two decades (Boyden et al., 2013), a recent study in the North Gondar zone of Amhara found that the average age at first marriage for girls remains related to family wealth—with the wealthiest girls married well before adolescence and the poorest girls marrying as adults (Guadie, 2010).

Bride wealth is money, livestock or other property paid by the groom and his family to the family of the bride.

Dowry is the wealth or property given by the bride’s family to the groom’s family.

Specifically, the study found that the wealthiest girls married at a mean age of 10.4 years and girls in the middle group married at a mean age of 11.3 years; girls from the low and lowest groupings, on the other hand, married at 15.2 and 18.7 years (ibid.). Guadie (2010) suggests that this may be because families who are better off now recognize that they may not be better off in the future and prefer to arrange advantageous matches for their daughters while they still have the chance.

6.2 Gender norms

The variable relationship between wealth status and child marriage suggests that while marriage may be an economic transaction, it is one that is highly contextualized and needs to be interpreted in light of broader social norms that see girls more as property than as agents

(Vogelstein, 2013; Rogers, 2012). In Tigray, for example, Tafere and Camfield (2009) found that parents saw early marriage and motherhood as the route through which their daughters could become ‘enlightened’ and ‘flower’. In Amhara, Alemu (2008) reports that “the strongest reason for early marriage is the desire or need to maintain the family’s good name and social standing. For men in particular, a daughter’s success rests in her making a good marriage” (p.5).

Indeed, with few exceptions girls are valued primarily for their reproductive capacities (Boyden et al, 2013; Rogers, 2012). Seen as future wives and future mothers from their earliest years, girls’ sexuality—i.e., their virginity—is closely guarded from not only rape, which is sufficiently stigmatizing to leave girls nearly worthless (Vogelstein, 2013; Rogers, 2012) but from their own use. Instead, they are married young, while their virginity is essentially ensured (Guadie, 2010;) and while they are more easily controlled by their marital families (Gaffney-Rhys, 2011).). Shame for “failed” daughters can especially attach to their fathers (Erulkar and Muthengi, 2009; who should, in the eyes of the larger community, arrange a timely marriage in order to prevent ‘reputational damage, unwanted pregnancy, social stigmatization and exclusion from the family or clan’ (Boyden et al., 2013, p. 17).

As noted above in regard to economic realities, it is important to bear in mind that because girls feel these

social norms as acutely as do their parents, many marry quite willingly. For example, Jones et al. (2014b) found that in Amhara some girls considered it “sinful” to remain unmarried past menstruation. Others reported that they were exhausted by rampant community speculation regarding their virginity. Similarly, Boyden et al. (2012) found that for Young Lives girls, child marriage is not only a way to prevent “social stigma and rebuke by peers” but also a way to claim adult status (p.521).

Despite national and international focus on child marriage as a harmful traditional practice (HTP) that reduces girls to property and deprives them of their human rights, many Ethiopians, especially those in rural areas, continue to see the custom not as a threat, but as something essential to girls’ well-being (see also Mekonnen and Aspen, 2009; Tafere and Camfield, 2009; Muthengi-Karei and Erulkar, 2010; Jones et al., 2014). In a world where ostensibly free schooling is associated with a range of direct and indirect costs and where women’s access to both decent employment and assets is extremely limited and where the physical safety of girls and women can depend on a male protector, marriage continues to ensure both girls’ “financial security and status in society” (Muthengi-Karei and Erulkar, 2010: 7). Understanding the drivers of child marriage—and appropriately targeting interventions—requires recognition of this complicated calculus.

7. Existent forces aimed at reducing child marriage

7.1.1 Legal and policy frameworks

Recent reductions in child marriage are the result of myriad forces working in tandem. First, as discussed in Section 2, Ethiopia has built “enabling legal and policy frameworks” to prevent the marriage of children. The Constitution, the Family Code and the Criminal Code all set 18 as the legal minimum age for marriage. Moreover, the 2011 Growth and Transformation Plan targets a 50% reduction in child marriage in only five years and the National Alliance to End Child Marriage, a 2014 initiative led by the Ministry of Women, Children and Youth Affairs, aims to support the abandonment of the practice entirely by 2025. Research suggests that these legal frameworks are translating into on-the-ground effects. School officials report arranged marriages and parents whose daughters are under-aged are fined up to 200 birr (£7) (Mekonnen and Aspen 2009). While some studies have concluded that legal changes have had more impact in urban areas, where other forces of modernity encourage uptake (Boyden et al., 2013), other authors have found evidence that legal change is encouraging rural areas to close the gap (Pankhurst, 2014; Jones et al., 2014). As discussed above, recent statistical evidence supports the latter.

Second, the country is also a signatory to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, under which the government is obligated to protect the rights of those under the age of 18 and the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child, which specifically prohibits both the marriage and betrothal of all children under the age of 18.

7.1.2 Awareness-raising initiatives

Legal frameworks and international conventions are not, however, a panacea. They are only as effective as the awareness-raising and education campaigns that accompany them. Therefore, the Ethiopian government, the UN, donors and NGOs have worked particularly hard to establish programming aimed at encouraging the abandonment of child marriage—especially in the northern regions, where rates of child marriage have traditionally been the highest. Interventions have included media campaigns aimed at improving whole communities’ knowledge of the law, norm-shifting community dialogues aimed at parents and potential husbands, empowerment approaches aimed at girls and economic incentives

including the provision of school supplies and tutorial support. Evidence suggests that integrated approaches that utilize multiple channels and a social influence perspective are often best (Gage, 2013b; Rushdy, 2010).

Media campaigns have proven crucial to not only introducing the law, but also educating parents and community members, including the young men most likely to marry adolescent girls, about the risks associated with child marriage (such as fistula) and the benefits of waiting (such as lower risk of poverty). Communication interventions have included radio serial dramas, public plays and printed literature. In Amhara, Gage (2009; 2013b) found that 65% of caretakers and over 75% of adolescents and youth had been exposed to at least one early-marriage-prevention message via non-print media (more successful given low literacy rates). Young men were particularly likely to have been exposed to messages (83%, *ibid.*)—and were more likely than women to have heard those messages on the radio (Jones et al., 2014a).

Evidence of a positive impact is plentiful. While variable, knowledge of the laws appears to have improved — while the average respondent in Gage’s (2009, 2013b) research believed that girls over the age of 15 were old enough to marry (see also Guadie, 2010), by 2014, Jones et al. found that in Amhara knowledge about the marriage law was quite good—primarily due to the extensive reach of the Ethiopian government, which extends all the way into village life, providing substantial opportunities for communication down to the grassroots. More importantly, not only are early arranged marriages becoming less common, but as parents increasingly believe that men prefer more educated wives to help them cope with the evolving difficulties of today’s economy, the discourses regarding the value of girls’ education and their place in their communities are changing (Jones et al., 2014a).

There is some concern, however, that when enforcement becomes punitive it may encourage under-reporting, drive child marriage underground or force girls into other dangerous situations (Gaffney-Rhys, 2011; Pankhurst, 2014; Boyden et al., 2013; Jones et al., 2014a; Muthengi-Karei and Erulkar, 2010). Camfield and Tafere (2011), for example, found that parents referred to under-aged marriages as engagements rather than marriages and Muthengi-Karei and Erulkar (2010) found that marriages

Box 4: Berhane Hewan

Berhane Hewan, an intervention to reduce child marriage piloted in Amhara between 2004 and 2006, is widely considered to be an international best practice. The programme was, according to Rushdy (2010), “successful beyond its expectations,” but evolved so significantly over its lifespan that it “has more elements than currently documented” and “is not sustainable or scalable” (p. iv). Programme elements included both financial support for in-school girls and the provision of non-formal education and livelihoods training for out-of-school girls; mentoring and Girls’ Club activities focused on empowerment, social support and reproductive health; and community conversations directed at collective problem solving and child marriage. Initial families were also incentivised with a goat if their daughters remained unmarried throughout the programme, and towards the end of the programme cycle there were activities for husbands, so that they were aware of what their wives were learning. There was also more attention from kebele leaders to other community priorities, such as access to water (Rushdy, 2010).

A rigorous evaluation found that the programme was very successful at keeping girls in school and delaying marriage. Specifically, girls enrolled in the programme were three times more likely to be in school and only one-tenth as likely to be married before the age of 15—though they were more likely to marry between the ages of 15 and 17 than non-enrolled girls, suggesting that participation delayed, rather than prevented, child marriage (Erulkar and Muthengi, 2009). Enrolled girls were also more likely to use contraception (*ibid.*).

A follow-up evaluation found that all programming elements were important, but for different reasons. For example, adults reported that the community conversations had been critical to delaying marriage (Mekbib and Molla, 2010). They indicated that the conversations had reached nearly everyone in the village, with early attenders bringing other villagers along over time—slowly increasing local resolve to abandon both child marriage and female genital mutilation. The provision of school supplies, worth only \$4 per year, was found to be critical to improving girls’ school attendance. Girls, on the other hand, reported particular satisfaction with the mentor-led clubs. They felt that participation improved their school attendance, helped delay their marriages and taught them about contraception.

Other evaluations have arrived at slightly different conclusions. Rushdy (2010), for example, found that girls’ clubs may have been critical to initial sensitisation, but that they were unlikely to play a critical role in ending child marriage. Similarly, economic incentives were important early on, but lost import once dialogs began to shift. As they and others conclude, ascertaining which programme elements are critical to success—and what the proper sequencing must look like—remains unclear.

began to be secret or take place at night. Similarly, punitive laws also fail to provide girls and their families with positive options—leaving many to simply replace the dangers of child marriage with the dangers of early work. Jones et al. (2014a), for example, found that when girls are not forced into child marriage many are forced into domestic service—which, as noted earlier, carries its own significant risks for their well-being.

7.1.3 Broader social norm change programming

Programming aimed at shifting the gender norms of parents, (potential) husbands and community members has also been relatively widely distributed and broadly successful, particularly when it is led by “trend-setting” religious and community leaders (Gage, 2009, 2013b; Jones et al., 2014a; Boyden et al., 2013; Pankhurst, 2014). Adults in *Berhane Hewan* (see Box 4), for example, rated its “community dialogs” as the most important intervention (Mekbib and Molla, 2011; Rushdy, 2010). Similarly, Gage (2009; 2013b) found that religious authorities are not only refusing to marry under-aged girls, but are the number one source of anti-child marriage messages in many communities in Amhara (see also Jones et al., 2014a).

Teachers and members of women’s associations are also engaging with parents and caretakers to shift the narratives surrounding child marriage (Pathfinder, 2006; Gage, 2009, 2013b; Boyden et al, 2013; Pankhurst, 2014). Ethiopia’s Community-Based Reproductive Health agents go to households, community gatherings, marketplaces, and schools to educate and mobilize people about key health and reproductive health issues.¹³

There are also a wide variety of programmes, such as the Population Council’s *Biruh Tesfa* and Plan International’s *Because I Am a Girl*, aimed at educating girls and young women about their rights to an education and to say ‘no’ to a child marriage, thus empowering them to make their own choices regarding the future (Pathfinder, 2006b; Pankhurst, 2014; Jones et al., 2014a). They also inspire girls with role models, provide them with social support critical to helping them resist an unwanted marriage, and teach them about sexual and reproductive health, often not discussed at home and crucial to minimizing the health risks of adolescent pregnancy (Jones et al., 2014a). Largely formed around girls’ clubs, and most often in school, they are critical venues of support, but they can miss the most vulnerable out-of-school girls (Erulkar, 2013). Gage (2009,

13 See http://www.moh.gov.et/en_GB/hsep for an overview of the Health Extension programme.

2013b) found that among female adolescents surveyed, club members had the highest prevalence of stopped marriages. In fact, after religious leaders, girls reported that peer educators and girls' Clubs were the most important tools for stopping unwanted marriages — with 53% of club members reporting having talked to someone about stopping a planned marriage.

While child-marriage related programming in Ethiopia reflects a diversity of approaches, albeit largely within the geographic confines of Amhara (see Annex 2), and while statistical evidence indicates that the incidence of child marriage is dropping in tandem with the advent of programming, with very few exceptions, it remains difficult to assess the precise impact of any given intervention on observed outcomes. Indeed, even in the case of Berhane Hewan, by far the country's most rigorously evaluated programme, there remains confusion over which elements are ultimately critical to reductions in child marriage. Most other programmes lack not only evaluation—but, quite often, also any way to even ascertain scope. In the case of

girls' clubs, for example, it is unclear how many girls are regularly served. Given that some are drop-in clubs and that girls' school enrolment does not accurately reflect regular attendance, it is unclear how accurate head-counts would even be calculated. Similarly, because programmes have tended to grow organically to meet the needs of the girls they serve, it is often impossible to ascertain what programmes are doing at any point in time. In the end, the success or failure of most interventions is captured only anecdotally—and often on out-of-date websites.

7.1.4 Change brought about by modernization processes and demographic shifts

Without in any way diminishing the importance of Ethiopia's recent policy and programming initiatives, it is worth noting that broader structural forces — land fragmentation, inflationary pressure and modernization — have also reduced the value of the large families engendered by child marriage.

Knowledge gaps

While girls today are at significantly less risk of child marriage than not only their mothers and grandmothers, but also their older sisters, few other aspects of child marriage in Ethiopia are clear. Given that the most recent data does not allow for district-level disaggregation — and that the data that does allow for local disaggregation is at this point eight years old — even identifying where girls are at the most risk is a challenge. Similarly, given patterns in the relationship between child marriage and education, residence, and wealth — all of which are shifting — it is unclear how national-level data not only understates the magnitude of risk that some girls face, but also hides the differences in drivers and impacts that are necessary to adequate programme targeting. For example, while quantitative evidence indicates that overall the most well off girls are at the least risk of child marriage, qualitative evidence suggests that in other cases it is girls from landed families who are the most vulnerable. Furthermore, while quantitative research finds that the majority of child marriages are arranged by parents, qualitative research indicates that parents' reasons for marrying their daughters

vary not only by ethnicity, religion and region, amongst other things, but depend on complex interactions stemming from very local — and highly varied — norms. Woreda level census data, which show that Amhara simultaneously has the highest and lowest rates of child marriage show just how varied these micro-climates can be. Finally, given that a majority of research on child marriage has been centered on the Amharan experience (see Annex 2), there is little evidence to guide our understanding of local variation in other regions, which account for almost 80 percent of the country's total population.

Evidence on programming impacts is particularly scarce. As mentioned above, not only are the vast majority of interventions located in Amhara, and therefore not necessarily portable to other regions that have very different traditions, but few programmes report either scope or evaluation results. This makes it difficult to ascertain which are the most appropriate interventions for scale up and whether their impacts are even distinguishable from the progress driven by larger forces such as population pressure and modernisation.

Conclusions

Child marriage remains common in Ethiopia. Recognizing the health and social costs of child marriage, the Government of Ethiopia and the international community have directed and are continuing to direct considerable resources towards the abandonment of the practice. However, despite a strong policy environment which includes improvements in education as well as a legal code which makes marriage before the age of 18 illegal, child marriage continues to be seen by many as the best way to preserve girls’—and therefore families’—honour and place in the community. Given that the broader culture continues to see marriage as not only the highest and best “use” of a girl, but the only way to ensure her longer-term protection, parents, and even some girls, are unwilling to risk jeopardizing marriageability by delaying marriage until adulthood (Boyden, 2013).

While evaluations have been limited, evidence from Ethiopia and around the world suggests that the most effective way to tackle discriminatory gender norms

such as child marriage, and to avoid simply driving them underground, is to engage whole communities in different ways of thinking about gender and the worth of girls. This involves not only rights-based education, schooling, training and employment options for girls themselves, but working with community and religious leaders, parents and potential husbands to educate them about the ways in which traditional practices can harm girls and engaging them in imagining what different options might look like. Solutions need to be contextualised for local realities, taking into account the ethnic, religious and other cultural differences that effectively produce micro-climates, and be aimed at addressing the web of disadvantage in which girls are entangled. Working with the 2007 census and district level disaggregated data as this report has presented is a critical first step in this journey, as are the findings of the broader 2014-2015 national mapping study initiated by the National Alliance to End Child Marriage (see Jones et al. 2016a and b forthcoming).

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Annex

Annex 1: Median age at first marriage for women by background characteristics, in years, by age group and DHS wave

| Category | | Median age (2005) (women aged 20-49) | Median age (2005) (women aged 25-49) | Median age (2011) (women aged 20-49) | Median age (2011) (women aged 25-49) |
|-----------------|----------------------------------|--|---|--|--|
| Total | | 16.5 | 16.1 | 17.1 | 16.5 |
| Residence | Urban | 19.4 | 18.2 | 19.3 | 18.1 |
| | Rural | 16.1 | 15.9 | 16.6 | 16.3 |
| Education | None | 15.9 | 15.8 | 16 | 15.9 |
| | Primary | 17.4 | 16.5 | 18.1 | 17.5 |
| | Secondary (and above in 2005) | na | 21.2 | na | 22.8 |
| | More than secondary | na | na | na | 23.8 |
| Wealth quintile | Lowest | 16.2 | 16.1 | 16.4 | 16.3 |
| | Second | 15.9 | 15.7 | 16.3 | 16.0 |
| | Middle | 16.4 | 16.1 | 16.7 | 16.3 |
| | Fourth | 16.2 | 15.9 | 16.9 | 16.4 |
| | Highest | 18.2 | 17 | 19.1 | 17.9 |
| Region | Tigray | 15.7 | 15.6 | 17.1 | 16.6 |
| | Afar | 16.7 | 16.4 | 16.8 | 16.5 |
| | Amhara | 14.4 | 14.2 | 15.1 | 14.7 |
| | Oromiya | 17.1 | 16.7 | 17.4 | 16.9 |
| | Somali | 17.9 | 18 | 17.6 | 17.6 |
| | Benishangul-Gumuz | 15.6 | 15.3 | 15.9 | 15.7 |
| | SNNP | 17.6 | 17.2 | 18.3 | 17.9 |
| | Gambela | 15.8 | 15.7 | 17.4 | 17.1 |
| | Harari | 18.9 | 18.6 | 18.1 | 17.7 |
| | Addis Ababa | na | 21.9 | na | 21.4 |
| Dire Dawa | 18.3 | 17.8 | 19.4 | 18.9 | |

Source: CSA and ORC Macro, 2006; CSA and ICF International, 2012

Annex 2: Geographical distribution of research/literature

Studies that address child marriage that are NOT centred in Amhara:

1. The Population Council's Gender Survey was undertaken in Amhara but also in Addis Ababa; Afar; Beneshangul Gumuz; Oromiya; Southern Nations Nationalities, and People's Region (SNNPR); and Tigray (Erulkar et al., 2010a; Erulkar, 2013).
2. The Population Council's Young Adult Survey was undertaken in Amhara but also in Addis Ababa; Afar; Beneshangul Gumuz; Oromiya; Southern Nations Nationalities, and People's Region (SNNPR); and Tigray (Erulkar et al., 2010b).
3. Young Lives Research is being carried out in Amhara—but also Addis Ababa, Oromia, Tigray and SNNPR (Boyden et al., 2012, 2013; Camfield and Tafere, 2011; Pankhurst, 2014; Tafere and Camfield, 2009).
4. Pathfinder's research includes Amhara—but also Tigray, Oromia and SNNRP (Alemu and Asnake, 2007).
5. UNICEF's 3 region study on HTP's took place in Afar, Benishangul Gumuz and SNNPR. It also included Addis Ababa (UNICEF, 2012).
6. World Vision's research on HTPs had two sites in Oromia and one in Amhara (WorldVision, 2014).

Studies that address child marriage that ARE centred in Amhara:

1. Larger and/or quantitative studies
 - a. The Early Marriage Evaluation Study (EMES) (Gage, 2009, 2013a, 2013b).
 - b. Save the Children Norway ran a baseline survey in North Gondar Zone (Save the Children, 2011).
 - c. Pathfinder's did a mixed-methods study on the causes and consequences of child marriage in Amhara (Pathfinder, 2006).
 - d. Population Council's study on adolescence in Amhara (Erulkar et al., 2004).
 - e. Population Council's baseline study in Aw Zone of Amhara (Erulkar and Muthen-Karei, 2012).
2. Smaller and/or qualitative studies
 - a. ODI's research in Kobo and Kelala (Tefera and Pereznieta, 2013).
 - b. ODI's research in Gojjam, South Wollo and North Gondar (Jones et al., 2014a).
 - c. Theses/dissertations
 1. Emirie (2005) in Mecha woreda in West Gojjam.
 2. Guadie (2010) in Dembia woreda in North Gondar.
 3. Ewentu (2010) in Fogera woreda in South Gondar.
3. Research specifically on interventions:
 - a. On Berhane Hewan and preventing child marriage (Erulkar and Muthengi, 2009; Mekbib and Molla, 2010; Rushdy, 2010; Erulkar and Muthengi-Karei, 2012).
 - b. On more recent programmes aimed at already married girls.
 1. On TESFA (Edmeades et al., 2014).
 2. On Meseret Hiwott (Erulkar and Tamrat, 2014).

Annex 3A: Ranking of zones with-in, by prevalence of marriage for girls 10-14

| Region | Zone | % ever married, girls 10-14 |
|------------------|----------------------------|-----------------------------|
| AFAR | ZONE 3 | 8.4% |
| AFAR | ZONE 4 | 6.4% |
| AFAR | ZONE 1 | 5.7% |
| AFAR | ZONE 5 | 4.3% |
| AFAR | ZONE 2 | 3.8% |
| AMHARA-REGION | WEST GOJAM-ZONE | 14.2% |
| AMHARA-REGION | BAHIR DAR SPECIAL-ZONE | 13.2% |
| AMHARA-REGION | EAST GOJAM ZONE | 12.8% |
| AMHARA-REGION | AWI-ZONE | 10.3% |
| AMHARA-REGION | NORTH GONDAR-ZONE | 10.3% |
| AMHARA-REGION | SOUTH GONDAR-ZONE | 9.8% |
| AMHARA-REGION | OROMIYA-ZONE | 9.2% |
| AMHARA-REGION | SOUTH WELLO-ZONE | 8.1% |
| AMHARA-REGION | WAG HIMRA-ZONE | 7.3% |
| AMHARA-REGION | NORTH WELLO-ZONE | 7.2% |
| AMHARA-REGION | NORTH SHEWA-ZONE | 5.0% |
| BENISHANGUL GUMZ | KAMASHI-ZONE | 10.5% |
| BENISHANGUL GUMZ | BE BENISHANGUL GUMZ-REGION | 8.7% |
| BENISHANGUL GUMZ | ASOSA-ZONE | 7.3% |
| GAMBELA-REGION | NUWER-ZONE | 24.2% |
| GAMBELA-REGION | AGNEWAK-ZONE | 11.1% |
| GAMBELA-REGION | MEJENGER-ZONE | 8.1% |
| OROMIYA-REGION | EAST HARARGE-ZONE | 15.2% |
| OROMIYA-REGION | GUJI-ZONE | 14.3% |
| OROMIYA-REGION | BORENA ZONE | 12.6% |
| OROMIYA-REGION | ADAMA SPECIAL-ZONE | 12.6% |
| OROMIYA-REGION | WEST HARARGE-ZONE | 12.3% |
| OROMIYA-REGION | JIMMA -ZONE | 11.6% |
| OROMIYA-REGION | JIMMA TOWN SPECIAL-ZONE | 11.5% |
| OROMIYA-REGION | WEST ARSI-ZONE | 10.9% |
| OROMIYA-REGION | EAST WELLEGA-ZONE | 10.0% |
| OROMIYA-REGION | BURAYU SPECIAL-ZONE | 9.7% |
| OROMIYA-REGION | EAST SHEWA-ZONE | 9.3% |
| OROMIYA-REGION | HORO GUDRU WELLEGA-ZONE | 9.1% |
| OROMIYA-REGION | KELEM WELLEGA ZONE | 9.0% |
| OROMIYA-REGION | ILU ABA BORA-ZONE | 8.6% |

Region (continued)

| Region | Zone | % ever married, girls 10-14 |
|----------------|--------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| OROMIYA-REGION | ARSI-ZONE | 8.5% |
| OROMIYA-REGION | WEST WELLEGA-ZONE | 8.5% |
| OROMIYA-REGION | SOUTH WEST SHEWA ZONE | 7.9% |
| OROMIYA-REGION | WEST SHEWA-ZONE | 7.7% |
| OROMIYA-REGION | NORTH SHEWA-ZONE | 6.9% |
| OROMIYA-REGION | BALE-ZONE | 6.2% |
| S.N.N.P REGION | HAWASSA CITY ADMINISTRATI Zone | 15.8% |
| S.N.N.P REGION | GEDEO-ZONE | 13.1% |
| S.N.N.P REGION | SIDAMA-ZONE | 12.6% |
| S.N.N.P REGION | SOUTH OMO-ZONE | 10.6% |
| S.N.N.P REGION | AMARO SPECIAL-WEREDA Zone | 10.4% |
| S.N.N.P REGION | GURAGE-ZONE | 9.8% |
| S.N.N.P REGION | WOLAYITA-ZONE | 9.6% |
| S.N.N.P REGION | KEFA-ZONE | 9.4% |
| S.N.N.P REGION | KEMBATA TIBARO-ZONE | 9.1% |
| S.N.N.P REGION | BENCH MAJI-ZONE | 9.1% |
| S.N.N.P REGION | GAMO GOFA ZONE | 8.8% |
| S.N.N.P REGION | DAWURO-ZONE | 8.6% |
| S.N.N.P REGION | HADIYA-ZONE | 8.5% |
| S.N.N.P REGION | BASKETO SPECIAL-WEREDA | 7.7% |
| S.N.N.P REGION | SILTIE-ZONE | 7.6% |
| S.N.N.P REGION | SHEKA-ZONE | 7.0% |
| S.N.N.P REGION | KONTA SPECIAL-WEREDA | 7.0% |
| S.N.N.P REGION | DERASHE SPECIAL-WEREDA Zone | 6.6% |
| S.N.N.P REGION | YEM SPECIAL Zone | 5.3% |
| S.N.N.P REGION | KONSO SPECIAL-WEREDA Zone | 4.3% |
| S.N.N.P REGION | BURJI SPECIAL-WEREDA Zone | 4.0% |
| SOMALI-REGION | SHINILE-ZONE | 15.9% |
| SOMALI-REGION | GODE-ZONE | 15.8% |
| SOMALI-REGION | DEGEHABUR-ZONE | 13.9% |
| SOMALI-REGION | KORAHE-ZONE | 13.1% |
| SOMALI-REGION | WARDER-ZONE | 12.7% |
| SOMALI-REGION | LIBEN-ZONE | 12.7% |
| SOMALI-REGION | AFDER-ZONE | 12.0% |
| SOMALI-REGION | JJIGA-ZONE | 11.4% |
| SOMALI-REGION | FIK-ZONE | 11.2% |
| TIGRAY | WESTERN TIGRAY-ZONE | 10.6% |

Region (continued)

| Region | Zone | % ever married, girls 10-14 |
|---------------|------------------------|------------------------------------|
| TIGRAY | NORTH WEST TIGRAY-ZONE | 8.2% |
| TIGRAY | WESTERN TIGRAY-ZONE | 8.0% |
| TIGRAY | SOUTHERN TIGRAY-ZONE | 6.6% |
| TIGRAY | CENTRAL TIGRAY-ZONE | 6.6% |
| TIGRAY | EASTERN TIGRAY ZONE | 5.0% |

Annex 3B: Ranking of zones with-in, by prevalence of marriage for girls 15-17

| Region | Zone | % ever married, girls 15-17 |
|------------------|----------------------------|-----------------------------|
| AFAR | ZONE 4 | 13.7% |
| AFAR | ZONE 3 | 13.2% |
| AFAR | ZONE 1 | 11.2% |
| AFAR | ZONE 2 | 10.5% |
| AFAR | ZONE 5 | 6.3% |
| AMHARA-REGION | EAST GOJAM ZONE | 37.4% |
| AMHARA-REGION | WEST GOJAM-ZONE | 35.6% |
| AMHARA-REGION | AWI-ZONE | 31.4% |
| AMHARA-REGION | NORTH GONDAR-ZONE | 30.5% |
| AMHARA-REGION | SOUTH GONDAR-ZONE | 29.4% |
| AMHARA-REGION | NORTH WELLO-ZONE | 23.0% |
| AMHARA-REGION | OROMIYA-ZONE | 22.6% |
| AMHARA-REGION | WAG HIMRA-ZONE | 21.2% |
| AMHARA-REGION | BAHIR DAR SPECIAL-ZONE | 18.0% |
| AMHARA-REGION | SOUTH WELLO-ZONE | 16.7% |
| AMHARA-REGION | NORTH SHEWA-ZONE | 14.4% |
| BENISHANGUL GUMZ | KAMASHI-ZONE | 41.4% |
| BENISHANGUL GUMZ | BE BENISHANGUL GUMZ-REGION | 31.0% |
| BENISHANGUL GUMZ | ASOSA-ZONE | 19.0% |
| GAMBELA-REGION | NUWER-ZONE | 27.0% |
| GAMBELA-REGION | AGNEWAK-ZONE | 26.4% |
| GAMBELA-REGION | MEJENGER-ZONE | 24.6% |
| OROMIYA-REGION | EAST HARARGE-ZONE | 32.3% |
| OROMIYA-REGION | GUJI-ZONE | 30.0% |
| OROMIYA-REGION | WEST HARARGE-ZONE | 29.5% |
| OROMIYA-REGION | BORENA ZONE | 24.8% |
| OROMIYA-REGION | JIMMA -ZONE | 22.1% |
| OROMIYA-REGION | BALE-ZONE | 21.3% |
| OROMIYA-REGION | ILU ABA BORA-ZONE | 20.4% |
| OROMIYA-REGION | WEST ARSI-ZONE | 18.8% |
| OROMIYA-REGION | EAST SHEWA-ZONE | 18.1% |
| OROMIYA-REGION | EAST WELLEGA-ZONE | 17.5% |
| OROMIYA-REGION | KELEM WELLEGA ZONE | 16.9% |
| OROMIYA-REGION | ARSI-ZONE | 16.2% |
| OROMIYA-REGION | NORTH SHEWA-ZONE | 16.1% |
| OROMIYA-REGION | SOUTH WEST SHEWA ZONE | 15.2% |

(continued)

| Region | Zone | % ever married, girls 15-17 |
|----------------|--------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| OROMIYA-REGION | HORO GUDRU WELLEGA-ZONE | 15.1% |
| OROMIYA-REGION | WEST SHEWA-ZONE | 13.2% |
| OROMIYA-REGION | WEST WELLEGA-ZONE | 12.4% |
| OROMIYA-REGION | JIMMA TOWN SPECIAL-ZONE | 11.5% |
| OROMIYA-REGION | BURAYU SPECIAL-ZONE | 11.2% |
| OROMIYA-REGION | ADAMA SPECIAL-ZONE | 11.1% |
| S.N.N.P REGION | SOUTH OMO-ZONE | 25.3% |
| S.N.N.P REGION | SIDAMA-ZONE | 24.8% |
| S.N.N.P REGION | KONTA SPECIAL-WEREDA | 24.4% |
| S.N.N.P REGION | BENCH MAJI-ZONE | 24.1% |
| S.N.N.P REGION | GEDEO-ZONE | 23.9% |
| S.N.N.P REGION | SHEKA-ZONE | 22.7% |
| S.N.N.P REGION | KEFA-ZONE | 22.7% |
| S.N.N.P REGION | DAWURO-ZONE | 18.2% |
| S.N.N.P REGION | BURJI SPECIAL-WEREDA Zone | 16.4% |
| S.N.N.P REGION | BASKETO SPECIAL-WEREDA | 16.2% |
| S.N.N.P REGION | GAMO GOFA ZONE | 16.2% |
| S.N.N.P REGION | AMARO SPECIAL-WEREDA Zone | 15.8% |
| S.N.N.P REGION | WOLAYITA-ZONE | 14.3% |
| S.N.N.P REGION | HAWASSA CITY ADMINISTRATI Zone | 14.2% |
| S.N.N.P REGION | SILTIE-ZONE | 12.6% |
| S.N.N.P REGION | KONSO SPECIAL-WEREDA Zone | 12.2% |
| S.N.N.P REGION | YEM SPECIAL Zone | 11.3% |
| S.N.N.P REGION | KEMBATA TIBARO-ZONE | 11.1% |
| S.N.N.P REGION | DERASHE SPECIAL-WEREDA Zone | 10.5% |
| S.N.N.P REGION | GURAGE-ZONE | 10.1% |
| S.N.N.P REGION | HADIYA-ZONE | 9.2% |
| SOMALI-REGION | GODE-ZONE | 18.4% |
| SOMALI-REGION | SHINILE-ZONE | 17.8% |
| SOMALI-REGION | AFDER-ZONE | 17.8% |
| SOMALI-REGION | DEGEHABUR-ZONE | 16.0% |
| SOMALI-REGION | LIBEN-ZONE | 15.8% |
| SOMALI-REGION | JJIGA-ZONE | 15.6% |
| SOMALI-REGION | FIK-ZONE | 14.5% |
| SOMALI-REGION | KORAHE-ZONE | 14.2% |
| SOMALI-REGION | WARDER-ZONE | 13.2% |
| TIGRAY | WESTERN TIGRAY-ZONE | 37.8% |

(continued)

| Region | Zone | % ever married, girls 15-17 |
|--------|------------------------|-----------------------------|
| TIGRAY | NORTH WEST TIGRAY-ZONE | 31.2% |
| TIGRAY | SOUTHERN TIGRAY-ZONE | 16.3% |
| TIGRAY | CENTRAL TIGRAY-ZONE | 16.2% |
| TIGRAY | WESTERN TIGRAY-ZONE | 9.2% |
| TIGRAY | EASTERN TIGRAY ZONE | 9.0% |

Annex 3C: Ranking of zones with-in, by prevalence of marriage for girls 10-17

| Region | Zone | % ever married, girls 10-17 |
|------------------|----------------------------|-----------------------------|
| AFAR | ZONE 3 | 10.1% |
| AFAR | ZONE 4 | 8.7% |
| AFAR | ZONE 1 | 7.5% |
| AFAR | ZONE 2 | 5.9% |
| AFAR | ZONE 5 | 5.0% |
| AMHARA-REGION | WEST GOJAM-ZONE | 21.6% |
| AMHARA-REGION | EAST GOJAM ZONE | 20.8% |
| AMHARA-REGION | NORTH GONDAR-ZONE | 17.5% |
| AMHARA-REGION | AWI-ZONE | 17.3% |
| AMHARA-REGION | SOUTH GONDAR-ZONE | 16.2% |
| AMHARA-REGION | BAHIR DAR SPECIAL-ZONE | 15.4% |
| AMHARA-REGION | OROMIYA-ZONE | 13.6% |
| AMHARA-REGION | NORTH WELLO-ZONE | 12.2% |
| AMHARA-REGION | WAG HIMRA-ZONE | 11.8% |
| AMHARA-REGION | SOUTH WELLO-ZONE | 10.8% |
| AMHARA-REGION | NORTH SHEWA-ZONE | 8.2% |
| BENISHANGUL GUMZ | KAMASHI-ZONE | 20.7% |
| BENISHANGUL GUMZ | BE BENISHANGUL GUMZ-REGION | 16.5% |
| BENISHANGUL GUMZ | ASOSA-ZONE | 11.1% |
| GAMBELA-REGION | 25.1% | 25.1% |
| GAMBELA-REGION | AGNEWAK-ZONE | 16.8% |
| GAMBELA-REGION | MEJENGER-ZONE | 13.7% |
| OROMIYA-REGION | EAST HARARGE-ZONE | 20.6% |
| OROMIYA-REGION | GUJI-ZONE | 18.8% |
| OROMIYA-REGION | WEST HARARGE-ZONE | 17.4% |
| OROMIYA-REGION | BORENA ZONE | 16.5% |
| OROMIYA-REGION | JIMMA -ZONE | 14.9% |
| OROMIYA-REGION | WEST ARSI-ZONE | 13.5% |
| OROMIYA-REGION | EAST WELLEGA-ZONE | 12.6% |
| OROMIYA-REGION | EAST SHEWA-ZONE | 12.4% |
| OROMIYA-REGION | ILU ABA BORA-ZONE | 12.3% |
| OROMIYA-REGION | ADAMA SPECIAL-ZONE | 11.9% |
| OROMIYA-REGION | KELEM WELLEGA ZONE | 11.7% |
| OROMIYA-REGION | JIMMA TOWN SPECIAL-ZONE | 11.5% |
| OROMIYA-REGION | HORO GUDRU WELLEGA-ZONE | 11.2% |
| OROMIYA-REGION | ARSII-ZONE | 11.1% |
| OROMIYA-REGION | BALE-ZONE | 11.0% |

(continued)

| Region | Zone | % ever married, girls 10-17 |
|----------------|--------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| OROMIYA-REGION | SOUTH WEST SHEWA ZONE | 10.4% |
| OROMIYA-REGION | BURAYU SPECIAL -ZONE | 10.3% |
| OROMIYA-REGION | NORTH SHEWA-ZONE | 10.1% |
| OROMIYA-REGION | WEST WELLEGA-ZONE | 9.8% |
| OROMIYA-REGION | WEST SHEWA-ZONE | 9.5% |
| S.N.N.P REGION | SIDAMA-ZONE | 16.1% |
| S.N.N.P REGION | GEDEO-ZONE | 16.0% |
| S.N.N.P REGION | HAWASSA CITY ADMINISTRATI Zone | 15.2% |
| S.N.N.P REGION | SOUTH OMO-ZONE | 15.1% |
| S.N.N.P REGION | BENCH MAJI-ZONE | 13.6% |
| S.N.N.P REGION | KEFA-ZONE | 13.6% |
| S.N.N.P REGION | KONTA SPECIAL -WEREDA | 12.7% |
| S.N.N.P REGION | SHEKA-ZONE | 12.3% |
| S.N.N.P REGION | AMARO SPECIAL-WEREDA Zone | 12.2% |
| S.N.N.P REGION | DAWURO-ZONE | 11.6% |
| S.N.N.P REGION | GAMO GOFA ZONE | 11.3% |
| S.N.N.P REGION | WOLAYITA-ZONE | 11.2% |
| S.N.N.P REGION | BASKETO SPECIAL-WEREDA | 10.1% |
| S.N.N.P REGION | GURAGE-ZONE | 9.9% |
| S.N.N.P REGION | KEMBATA TIBARO-ZONE | 9.8% |
| S.N.N.P REGION | SILTIE-ZONE | 9.3% |
| S.N.N.P REGION | HADIYA-ZONE | 8.7% |
| S.N.N.P REGION | DERASHE SPECIAL-WEREDA Zone | 7.9% |
| S.N.N.P REGION | BURJI SPECIAL-WEREDA Zone | 7.8% |
| S.N.N.P REGION | YEM SPECIAL Zone | 7.4% |
| S.N.N.P REGION | KONSO SPECIAL -WEREDA Zone | 6.9% |
| SOMALI-REGION | GODE-ZONE | 16.6% |
| SOMALI-REGION | SHINILE-ZONE | 16.5% |
| SOMALI-REGION | DEGEHABUR-ZONE | 14.6% |
| SOMALI-REGION | AFDER-ZONE | 13.7% |
| SOMALI-REGION | LIBEN-ZONE | 13.5% |
| SOMALI-REGION | KORAHE-ZONE | 13.4% |
| SOMALI-REGION | WARDER-ZONE | 12.9% |
| SOMALI-REGION | JJIGA-ZONE | 12.7% |
| SOMALI-REGION | FIK-ZONE | 12.3% |
| TIGRAY | WESTERN TIGRAY-ZONE | 19.5% |
| TIGRAY | NORTH WEST TIGRAY-ZONE | 15.3% |
| TIGRAY | SOUTHERN TIGRAY-ZONE | 9.7% |

(continued)

| Region | Zone | % ever married, girls 10-17 |
|---------------|---------------------|------------------------------------|
| TIGRAY | CENTRAL TIGRAY-ZONE | 9.6% |
| TIGRAY | WESTERN TIGRAY-ZONE | 8.5% |
| TIGRAY | EASTERN TIGRAY ZONE | 6.3% |

Annex 3D: Top 50 hotspots for child marriage, all girls between 10 and 17

| Region | Wereda | % ever married, girls 10-17 |
|------------------|--------------------------|-----------------------------|
| GAMBELA-REGION | JIKAWO-WEREDA | 43.9% |
| AMHARA-REGION | ALEFA-WEREDA | 33.4% |
| OROMIYA-REGION | GIRJA-WEREDA | 33.0% |
| AMHARA-REGION | QUARIT-WEREDA | 32.1% |
| AMHARA-REGION | JAWI-WEREDA | 31.5% |
| OROMIYA-REGION | FEDIS-WEREDA | 31.2% |
| AMHARA-REGION | QUARA-WEREDA | 30.8% |
| SOMALI-REGION | KELAFO-WEREDA | 29.8% |
| AMHARA-REGION | ANEDED-WEREDA | 28.8% |
| AMHARA-REGION | TAKUSA-WEREDA | 28.2% |
| AMHARA-REGION | JABI TEHINAN-WEREDA | 27.9% |
| AMHARA-REGION | SEMEN ACHEFER-WEREDA | 27.9% |
| GAMBELA-REGION | DIMA-WEREDA | 27.7% |
| OROMIYA-REGION | HAROMAYA-WEREDA | 27.2% |
| OROMIYA-REGION | CHINAKSEN-WEREDA | 26.9% |
| AMHARA-REGION | SEKELA-WEREDA | 26.9% |
| AMHARA-REGION | SINAN WEREDA | 26.6% |
| AMHARA-REGION | MIRAB ARMACHIHO-WEREDA | 26.6% |
| OROMIYA-REGION | BABILE-WEREDA | 26.3% |
| OROMIYA-REGION | QERCHA-WEREDA | 26.3% |
| AMHARA-REGION | AWABEL -WEREDA | 26.2% |
| BENISHANGUL GUMZ | BELOJIGANFO-WEREDA | 26.2% |
| OROMIYA-REGION | GOLE ODA-WEREDA | 26.1% |
| OROMIYA-REGION | KOMBOLCHA-WEREDA | 25.5% |
| AMHARA-REGION | BASO LIBEN-WEREDA | 25.1% |
| BENISHANGUL GUMZ | SIRBA ABAY-WEREDA | 24.9% |
| AMHARA-REGION | MIRAB BELESA-WEREDA | 24.8% |
| GAMBELA-REGION | WANTAWO-WEREDA | 24.3% |
| AMHARA-REGION | ENEBSE SAR MIDIR-WEREDA | 24.1% |
| OROMIYA-REGION | BEDESA/TOWN/-WEREDA | 24.0% |
| AMHARA-REGION | GOZAMIN-WEREDA | 23.9% |
| BENISHANGUL GUMZ | DANGUR-WEREDA | 23.6% |
| AMHARA-REGION | BAHIR DAR ZURIYA-WEREDA | 23.5% |
| AMHARA-REGION | SHEBEL BERENTA-WEREDA | 23.5% |
| S.N.N.P REGION | GORCHE-WEREDA | 23.3% |
| AMHARA-REGION | ENARJ ENAWGA-WEREDA | 22.7% |
| OROMIYA-REGION | ABE DENGORO-WEREDA | 22.7% |
| S.N.N.P REGION | GURAFERDA-WEREDA | 22.6% |
| AMHARA-REGION | DEBAY TILATGIN-WEREDA | 22.4% |
| AMHARA-REGION | GONCHA SISO ENESE-WEREDA | 22.3% |

Region (continued)

| Region | Wereda | % ever married, girls 10-17 |
|----------------|--------------------|------------------------------------|
| OROMIYA-REGION | MELKA BELO-WEREDA | 21.9% |
| OROMIYA-REGION | CHEWAQA-WEREDA | 21.8% |
| SOMALI-REGION | DEGEHAMEDO-WEREDA | 21.7% |
| OROMIYA-REGION | MEYU MULEKE-WEREDA | 21.6% |
| OROMIYA-REGION | URAGA-WEREDA | 21.5% |
| OROMIYA-REGION | DOBA-WEREDA | 21.3% |
| SOMALI-REGION | AYISHA-WEREDA | 21.2% |
| OROMIYA-REGION | LIBEN-WEREDA | 21.2% |

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