

**Improving Adolescent Reproductive Health and Nutrition
through Structural Solutions in West Hararghe Zone, Oromia,
Ethiopia (Abdiboru Project)**

**The Context and Social norms on girls'
marriage, education and nutrition – a
Qualitative Study**

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Background

Adolescents grow through complex web of peer, family, community, and societal influences that affect present and future health and wellbeing. Some of these influences are strongly entrenched in traditional and cultural practices making the influences uneasy for interventions. Recent approaches to understanding and improving the health of adolescents required systematically understanding social patterns and structures that shape health and wellbeing, which are referred as social determinants of health (1). The social determinants of health (SDH), as defined by WHO, are the conditions in which people are born, grow, work, live, and age, and the wider set of forces and systems shaping the conditions of daily life (2). Social norms are among the many social forces and systems that highly influence individual behavior (2).

Social norms are often unspoken rules or expectations of behavior within a specific cultural or social group (3). These norms set social standards of appropriate and inappropriate behavior, governing what is (and is not) acceptable and harmonizing our interactions with others (4). Social norms persist within a society because of individuals' preference to conform, given the expectation that others will also conform, as well as due to sanctions which are related to not conforming (5). Social norms also vary widely from community to community; behaviors acceptable to one social group may not be tolerated in another. A variety of external and internal pressures are thought to maintain social norms (4). Thus, individuals are discouraged from violating norms in fear of social disapproval or penalty and feelings of guilt and shame that result from the internalization of norms. Social norms do not necessarily correspond with an individual's attitudes (positive or negative feelings towards an idea or behavior) and beliefs (perceptions that certain premises are true), on the other hand social norms may influence these attitudes and beliefs if they become internalized (3).

Adolescents' health is strongly influenced by social factors at personal, family, community, and national levels depending on the prevailing social structures and norms. Since health and health behaviors of adults strongly correspond to that during adolescent period, the way social determinants affect adolescent should be taken seriously as the health of the whole population could be affected either positively or

negatively (1). Efforts to address social determinants of health need to understand the social contexts and also the pathways by which social conditions translate into health effects (1, 2).

Among the social structures in which adolescents are highly influenced these days is the school/ education system. Education has significant contributions on adolescent's health in different ways including the delivery of skills and knowledge that is necessary to help adolescents' make healthy choices about their reproductive health and sexual behaviors. However, adolescent girls in many developing country, including Ethiopia, have been given less opportunities of attending formal education and those attended school had less chances of continuing to their education to a higher level (6, 7).

School enrollments for adolescent girls have shown remarkable improvements in Ethiopia in recent years. According to the Ministry of Education of Ethiopia, 8.7 million adolescents between 11 and 14 years of age were enrolled in 2013/2014 academic year, of whom females accounted for 49% of the students (6). While previous reports have depicted that boys have higher chance of being enrolled (7), the trend for school dropout, retention and survival of the primary school recently has shown that girls are more likely to have better chance of survival once they get into school (6). However it should be noted that survival beyond primary education for girls dramatically declines as compared to boys (6, 7). Thus, it is imperative to understand the barriers to attaining higher educational level for girl whilst opportunities are apparently wide open.

Child marriage is widely acknowledged to be a harmful socio cultural practice that is both a cause and an outcome of human rights violations and adolescents' reproductive health. Child marriage leads adolescent girls for less chance of getting or continuous education and less household autonomy and high chance of economic dependence (8). Ethiopia is one of Sub-Saharan country in which child marriage is practiced widely (9) despite the law strictly forbids child marriage. According to the 2011 Ethiopian Demographic and Health Survey (EDHS), the median age at which Ethiopian women marry is 16.5 years, and 40% of all women in their early 20s were married before they turned 18 years of age (9). Men of the same age, on the other hand, were very unlikely

to marry as children. Indeed, women are more likely to be married by the age of 18 than men are by the age of 25 years (9).

Report from a study conducted among women aged 20-24 years in nine major regions of Ethiopia in 2009 to 2010 have shown that 16.5% the women were married before the age of 15 years. Majority, 89%, of these marriages were arranged and about 71% of the brides met their husbands for the first time on the day of their wedding (11). Further analysis of EDHS 2011 data has shown that 59% of women in the age group of 20 to 29 years reported being married before the age of 17 years while 19% were married before the age of 14 years (12).

Nutrition is the another factor that affects the health and welling of adolescents. Ethiopia nutrition trend has shown improvement in the last two EDHS (EDHS 2005 and EDHS 2011) (9). However chronic malnutrition among women in Ethiopia is still relatively high, with 27 percent of women either thin or undernourished (9). Among this, adolescents are the most affected group. Household gender dynamics often mean that girls are more food-insecure than their male counter parts. In Oromia, 58 percent of adolescent girls experience food allocation discrimination (13). A study conducted in Ethiopia among adolescents aged 13-17 have documented adolescent food insecurity as high as 25%. Female adolescents, those living in a household with food insecurity and high dependency ratio are more likely to suffer from food insecurity (14, 15). Food insecure adolescents, especially those living in rural area were found to have higher rate of school absenteeism as compared to food secure adolescents (16). A study in gender analysis conducted in Ethiopia showed that there is a strong cultural practice that put men as a primary decision makers in matters that involve household financial management, early marriage and schooling (17). Lack of agency/autonomy even on matters that serious affect their health and wellbeing has left adolescent girls in Ethiopia in a much compromised situations. The extent of these effects is believed to vary from region to region but what is common in all is that it has not been studied/documentated well in any of the regions, which makes planning appropriate and context relevant interventions an extremely difficult task. This qualitative study was conducted to fill that gap prior to planning an intervention package to improving adolescent girls' reproductive and sexual health in West Hararghe zone of Oromia regional state, Ethiopia. The

intervention project is referred to as “*Abdiboru Project*”, which means hope for the future.

The Abdiboru Project

Improving Adolescent Reproductive Health and Nutrition through Structural Solutions in West Hararghe Zone, Oromia, Ethiopia (Abdiboru Project) is funded by Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation and implemented by CARE/ Ethiopia. The project is a 5-year (2016 – 2020) intervention initiative focusing on girls aged 10-14. The project aims at empowering adolescent girls through applying improved individual level and structural level social interventions that are likely to improve the reproductive health, nutrition and education attainment of adolescent girls. The ultimate aim is to establish a cost effective model that can be applied at scale. In order to achieve this goal, the project focuses on ensuring adolescent girls have the agency to control decisions that affect their own lives and influence the local, regional and national development agenda, improving the accountability and support to adolescent girls of the government's local and district health, education and women affairs institution and strengthen social and cultural norms and values that protect and prevent discrimination against adolescent girls.

Based on the findings of the qualitative formative assessment this project will implement structural intervention at individual level, community level as well as government levels to significantly influence girl empowerment, gender equality and improve adolescent's reproductive health. The interventions will be conducted by CARE Ethiopia and the assessment of the impact of the interventions and the overall monitoring and evaluation of the project will be undertaken by Addis Continental Institute of Public Health (ACIPH). The evaluation of this program has several components: qualitative and quantitative studies at baseline and end line, assessment of the quality of intervention, routine monitoring and process evaluation which includes quarterly documentation of routine activities, costing effectiveness, intensity assessment and quality perception. In addition, annual data on training and capacity assessment, school enrollment and lite qualitative assessment.

This qualitative study is conducted with the objective of understanding the context of the project implementation area and specifically to identify key social norms affecting

adolescent girls' education, marriage and food allocation, the extent of agency adolescent girls have on these three themes, and the extent of influence and role of institutions in these three themes.

Methods

Study setting

The study was conducted in four districts (Chiro, Mesala, Boke and Doba) of WestHarargezone, Oromia Regional State, Ethiopia (Figure

1).Based on the 2007 Census conducted in West Hararge Zone, women and girls account for 48.8% of the population. The majority of the population resides in the rural areas (91%), livelihood was dependent on agriculture related activities (85%), and Islam is the major religion (88%) (18). The study was conducted as a result of consultations with CARE/Ethiopia based on programmatic and evaluation needs of the project.

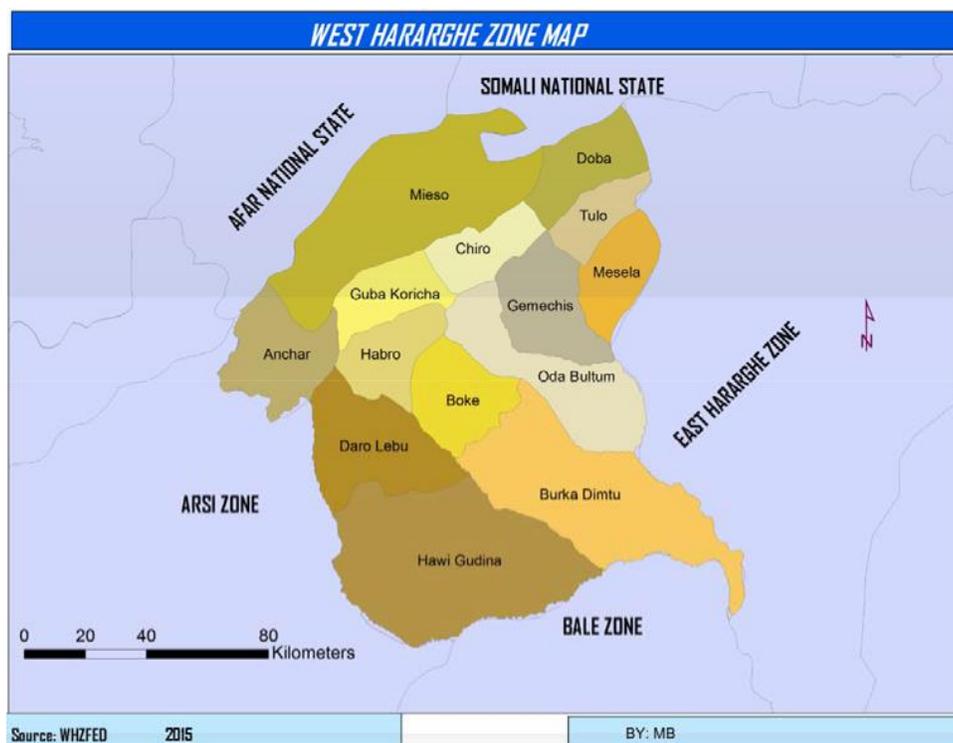


Figure 1. Map of the West Hararge Zone, Oromia Regional State, Ethiopia

Study design

The baseline qualitative study employed Focus Groups Discussions (FGDs), In-depth interviews (IDI) and key informant interviews (KIIs) to collect relevant information to address the purpose of the project between 20 March 20, 2016 to April 02, 2016. Each of the data collection procedures are described below.

Focus group discussion (FGD)

The focused group discussions were conducted with five group of discussants: unmarried adolescent girls, married adolescent girls, adolescent boys, mothers of married adolescent girls, and fathers of married adolescent girls. The main criteria for selection were permanent residence in the study village, knowledgeable about the culture, and willingness to participate in the discussion. Participants were recruited for the study with the help of local informants. Participation in the discussion was voluntary and with consent.

Table 1: Description of participants of the Focus Group Discussion

The FGD participants were eight in number in each group. One group of discussants

Type of method	Type of participants	Number of participants	Number conducted	Total in four woredas
FGD	Unmarried adolescent girls	8	1	20
	Unmarried adolescent boys	8	1	
	Mother of adolescent girl	8	1	
	Father of adolescent girl	8	1	
	Married adolescent girls	8	1	
	Subtotal			

from each study population were interviewed in each of the four study woredas, thus 20 FGDs were conducted in total (Table 1). The participants' gender, age and main characteristics of the group was strictly ensured to make the groups as homogeneous as possible. Unmarried adolescent girls and boys were selected from the schools in the study woredas. Married adolescent girls, and parents of adolescent girls were selected from the community with the help of HEWs and community leaders who were knowledgeable of the community members.

Focused Group Discussion was facilitated using a well prepared Vignettes. Vignettes provide a valuable technique for exploring peoples' perception, opinions, beliefs and meanings from responses to stories depicting scenarios and specific situations. They are also useful for sensitive areas of inquiry that may not be readily assessable through other means. The Vignettes were developed based on the mini assessment result

conducted by Addis continental Institute of Public Health prior to this baseline study and prepared on three themes i.e education, marriage and nutrition. Accordingly, three vignettes on each of the three identified themes were prepared for unmarried adolescent boys and girls, married adolescent girls, and mother and father of adolescent girls (Annex I, II and III).

FGDs were conducted in the compound of the health post as it is closer to the community. Participants were comfortably seated and provided refreshments, Each FGD was conducted by two research assistants who had Master’s level education and trained for five days. The training included orientation about the project, qualitative data collection methods and understanding the research instruments, especially vignettes, including an overview of the social norms concept. One of the research assistants served as moderator and the other as note taker. No one including staff of the health facility was allowed to access the discussion area to ensure the maximum possible privacy. FGD sessions lasted 95 to 120 minutes.

In-depth interviews (IDI)

The in-depth-interview was conducted with four categories of respondents: married adolescent girls, unmarried adolescent girls, husband of adolescent girls and mother-in-law. Two participants from each type of respondent category were interviewed to make up a total of eight IDIs in one woreda. Thus, a total of 32 in-depth interviews (IDIs) were conducted (Table 2). All sessions were tape recorded with the consent of participants.

Table 2: Description of participants of In-depth interview

Type of method	Type of participants	Number conducted	Total in four woredas
IDI	Mother-in-law	2	32
	Married adolescent girls	2	
	Unmarried adolescent girls	2	
	Husband of adolescent girls	2	
	Subtotal	8	

Unmarried adolescent girls were selected from school. Married adolescent girls were selected from the community, in the same approach as for FGDs, with the help of HEWs and community leaders who were knowledgeable of the community members.

Through the married adolescent girls, their husbands and mother-in-laws were tracked and selected from the village. Representativeness of the respondents was not taken into consideration, as the main purpose was to learn about the context from individuals who are more informative. The proposed selection criteria included being a permanent resident (at least 6 months) of the locality, ability to communicate comfortably, and willingness to participate. Representativeness of the respondents was not taken into consideration, as the main purpose was to learn about the context from individuals who are more informative.

A semi-structured interview guides were prepared for the IDIs based on the mini assessment result conducted by Addis continental Institute of Public Health prior to this baseline study. The tools were prepared to reflect on attitude and practice in relation to the three themes identified i.e education, marriage and nutrition. IDI's were conducted in the compound of the health post as it is closer to the community. No one including staff of the health facility were allowed to sit in the IDI to ensure privacy. A trained research assistant conducted the interview and also took notes concurrently. IDI sessions lasted 60 to 80 minutes. In-depth interviews were tape recorded with the consent of the respondents.

Key informant interviews (KII)

The key informant component of the study involved seven categories of respondents: school teachers, woreda education bureau staff, woreda agriculture office staff, woreda health office staff, woreda women's and children's affairs office staff, women's association member, and health extension workers (HEWs). A total of 36 Key informant interviews (KII) were conducted, nine in each of the four woredas. Two school teachers, two HEWs and one from the other categories were interviewed in each woreda (Table 3).

Table 3: Description of participants of the key informant interview

Type of method	Type of participants	Number conducted	Total in four woredas
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KII	School Teacher	2	36
	Education bureau expert	1	
	Health bureau expert	1	
	Agricultural bureau expert	1	
	Women & children affair expert	1	
	Women association member	1	
	Health Extension Workers	2	
	Subtotal	9	

Key informants were selected through woreda offices and from the schools in the woreda. The selection criteria included being a permanent resident (at least 6 months) of the locality, ability to communicate comfortably, and willingness to participate. Thus, most were had official responsibility for the thematic areas of interest in the study areas.

A semi-structured interview guides were prepared for the KIIs based on the mini assessment result conducted by Addis continental Institute of Public Health prior to this baseline study. The tools were prepared to reflect on the institutional perspective in relation to their respective three themes identified; that were education, marriage or nutrition as relevant. KII's were conducted either in the respective government offices or schools as appropriate and respondent feels comfortable. No one, apart from study team, were allowed to sit in the interviews to ensure privacy. A trained research assistant conducted the interview and took notes concurrently to ensure maximum privacy. The KII sessions lasted for 40 to 75 minutes. Interviews were tape recorded with the consent of participants.

[Data collection tools/ study guides](#)

FGD, IDI and KII guides were first prepared in English and reviewed by experts from ACIPH, CARE and BMGF. Then, the tools were translated into the local language 'Oromifa' by research assistants who were competent in both English and Oromifa languages. Translation and back translation were done by two independent experts, who were competent in both languages. All translators had Master's degree in public health and a good understanding of the concepts and issues to be discussed. One of them were also involved in the mini assessment. The research assistants who

conducted the qualitative study were extensively trained for five days and during which time final refinement of the language was made. During the training role plays were conducted and techniques to address sensitive issues were discussed. Research assistants were predominantly male since adequate female research assistants could not be recruited. The security situation during the data collection period, and the requirements for educational level and the language competence precluded recruiting female research assistants. All research assistants were native Afan Oromo speakers, however due to variations in dialects it was necessary to standardize some terms during the training and later during the field work.

Data analysis

All discussion and interview tapes were transcribed word-for-word in the same language (Afan Oromo) by the research assistants who conducted the discussion and interviews. Then, the materials were translated into English for analysis purpose. Field notes were also used as one of the data for analysis of important and common concepts related to the main themes of the study. Data analysis was mainly done based on the interpretative approach that involved extraction of meanings from the collected information. Key findings were extracted based on the five categories of social norms in the FGDs i.e empirical expectation, normative expectation, sanction, sensitivity to sanction and exceptions. “OpenCode” computer program was used for sorting transcribed information, looking for patterns, similarities, differences or contradictions of thoughts, norms and behaviors. Finally, some quotes that best explained the context of respondents were identified and presented in parallel with the interpretative information to give more insight into the perceptions and practices of the community. Differences among respondent categories and among woredas were explored.

Findings of the Study

1. Adolescent girls marriage

1.1 General Context

While most participants were willing and open to share information some members of the community expressed concerns that such kind of conversation could encourage

undesirable sexual behaviors. Moreover, it was mentioned that open discussion on such topics contradict with their religious and social norm principles. Some members also expressed their desire to see children of the village stick to common traditional practices such as marriage, as per the local norm. Apparently, almost everyone encountered appears to know the legal age of marriage in the country, which is 18 years of age. They mentioned that they will face punishment by the local government offices if they marry their girls before the age of 18. While it was generally claimed that early marriage is decreasing in the community, most participants of the study revealed that girls still commonly marry between ages of 12 and 15 years. Some mentioned the age at marriage for girls now a days has increased to 16 -17 years of age. Legal monitoring by local government was mentioned as one of the contributing factor for the change of age of marriage.

According to local perceptions, a 14 or 15 year girl is due to marry. However, the girls marrying below the legal year of age leave their family with no ceremony (in most parts of Ethiopia marriage is an important event in the family and is highly celebrated with sizable party) and any social announcement as early age marriage is punishable-by-law. Families that do not approve the marriage sometimes try to go through the legal system to dissolve the marriage and get back their girls. There is also a clear age difference between girls and boys at first marriage. While girls are expected to marriage earlier the expected age of marriage for boys is at the earliest 18-20 years.

The following sub sections describe marriage related practices and social norms. Although the findings presented are inter related and sometimes difficult to separate, we hope such presentation would useful to better understand the various aspects of social norms.

1.2 Marriage practices

Two main types of marriage arrangements were identified in the area. The first and most common marriage type is known as '**Jala-deemaa**' or 'eloping with the chosen partner'. This form of marriage happens when the girl and the boy choose each other to flee together without notifying their parents or other community members. They later seek the blessing of their parents to maintain their family links. This type of marriage

offers girls and boys a fairly equal saying when and whom to marry. Girls often chose this type of marriage due to social expectation and peer pressure to marry before her 'ideal age' for marriage passes. Girls by themselves decide whom to marry according to Jaala deemaa. So the parents have limited say and the girls decide by themselves. Still, parents usually accept and even support the marriage as they would not want their daughters to miss the opportunity that came at a perceived ideal age.

"The parent do only wish the couple to stay together long" Husband of Adolescent, IDI, Doba,

The second type of marriage is known as "**Chebsa**", which literally means to 'break'. This type of marriage is done with knowledge and approval of parents. Once the boy gets the girl's agreement, he would go with his friends to her parents to ask for their approval. Then her parents would ask the boy to send his father to make a formal marriage proposal. The boy's father is expected to visit the bride's house along with elders to settle the bride price; that is followed by wedding preparations in both the bride's and the groom's families. However, this kind of marriage could allow parents to delay the marriage if the girl is too young.

"...involving parents allows marriage negotiations to be done through the elder people. If the age of the girl is below the age of 18 years of age, parents may interfere to delay the marriage till she is regarded old enough to marry... they may agree that she stays under engagement (promissory marriage)" – Key informant

On the other hand, respondents particularly from Chiro revealed that if parents think that the girl is at the age of marriage or beyond, they could force her to marry.

Boys' marriage decision is somewhat different from girls. Almost all the respondents note that boys decide by themselves and inform their parents/father. Still there are some conditions that push boys to marry early; *"If his father does not have other boys, if he is only one boy; the boy is raised with care and in a good condition and parents want him to marry at early age."* - husband of adolescent, IDI

1.3 Drivers of early Marriage

Among the most common reasons for girls to marry by what is considered the 'ideal' age of marriage for girls is the belief in the community that getting married at early age, for girls, **is a blessing from God**. According to their belief, lucky girls marry early and unlucky ones marry late. There is also the connotation that being **late for marriage would mean not 'beautiful' enough for marriage**. Community believe that marriage for girls is a chance given from God and if **she miss the chance as it presented she may never get the chance again**. Moreover, it is not culturally acceptable to decline God's given chance. A marriage proposal is considered as a confirmation of God's will regardless of the girl's age. This belief was observed across various respondents regardless of age and gender difference.

"For example look at me? I told you about my age... girls of my age can marry. Although marriage is a matter of luck... girls can marry starting at the age of 15 or 16 years." - Unmarried adolescent girl, IDI, Boke

1.3.1 Peer Influence

Peer pressure was reported to play a significant role in adolescents' marriage related decisions in the study communities. Almost all the respondent reported that adolescent girls are highly influenced by their peers on marriage decisions. A few participants mentioned that elders and other highly respected individuals in the village may also influence adolescent girls' marriage related decision. Adolescent girls influence each other's decisions either at school or during wedding ceremonies in the villages. The **married ones particularly tend preach the advantages of marriage as compared to uncertain educational success**. Most girls have little aspirations for the future other than marriage, then child bearing that gives them a social status as a married women.

1.3.2 Role of intermediaries

The group of people referred as 'Dalala' or intermediaries are also influential in adolescent girls marriage related decisions. Evidence from the interviews suggest that these individuals can be among the peers, family members, relatives, neighbors or other community members. The main role of these intermediaries is to identify 'eligible' adolescent girls of 'ideal' age and persuade them to marry. They make tireless

repeatedly efforts until they convince her the person they have negotiated on her behalf. While there is no fixed rate for such facilitation, some of these individuals make business out of adolescent girls' marriage as they receive commission payment in cash, usually from the suitor, and at times from the girl's parents, if they are successful in getting the girl a good husband.

"The intermediaries commonly invite the potential couples to a Chat (khat)¹ chewing ceremony and meet each other. During that time they persuade her to marry early. No one informs the family. They (the couple) go together without family decision. The Khat ceremony reduces fear between them and bring them together." -Mother-in-law, IDI, Chiro

1.3.3 Fear of discrimination

A girl who do not marry at the perceived right age is considered old for marriage and labeled '**Hafttu**' meaning too old and may not be considered for marriage any more. The community insults and sometimes humiliates such girls claiming nobody would marry them. When ideal age for marriage appears to pass, girls rush to marry anyone who proposes without any conditions or criteria. This rushing to marriage, indicate the respondents, does not only spare the girls from social stigma but it also prevent their families from gossip and insult that would follow as a result of having an 'old-to-marriage' girl living with her parents. Girls who do not marry by the expected age may eventually flee from her village to avoid such stigmatization to her and the family.

"...adolescents, boys or girls they all called her (unmarried adolescent) unwanted or 'a house guard'" - Husband of Adolescent, IDI, Boke

"We call them 'Haftuu'... which means unmarriageable women." - Mother-in-law, IDI, Chiro

1.3.4 Lack of role model in Education

¹ *Khat* is a dominant cash crop produced in the place. Both girls and boys are involved in the short term daily laborer job at *khat* fields to generate income. There is a *khat* cutting and packing job at *khat* selling merchants. This condition is supported by the family partly because they share the income. On the other hand, the community criticize this because it is a place for the adolescents to meet and engage in secret love affairs

The other reason that girls succumb to early marriage easily is the lack of role model girls who succeeded due to their education. Most adolescent girls wish to become a fertile mother because they have not seen alternatives for success other than getting husband, give birth and acquire the social prestige. Although almost all girls are enrolled in school, only few go further in their education, girls dropout from school is primarily due to marriage. This trend has enhanced the commonly held perception in the community, which is *'girls are not smart - education does not lead them anywhere'*. Besides the numerous household activities they are expected to carry out every day hinders them from attending school properly and succeed in their education.

"Girls fail to understand what is taught in school, thus don't get promoted, and because of repeated failure they hate education and decide to stop; instead they marry early." - Husband of Adolescent, IDI, Boke

Respondents of the in-depth interviews said that girls perceive marriage as the best alternative to fulfil their life needs.

"Girls struggle to get new cloth, when she gets married her husband buys her many clothes...like five, six, or seven (cloths) so she dresses better; that tempts her friends to get married as well...to get cloth like her." Husband of Adolescent, IDI.

1.3.5 Economic factor

Economic problems that mainly emanates from ever shrinking farm land is contributing to early marriage practices in the study areas. Families want their girls to marry early to reduce their family size and save on meagre resources.

'In past our fathers had fertile land so they used to get good harvest. Now a days because of the degradation our soil its produces very little... family resources are meagre... younger siblings may also think she (adolescent girl) affects them by sharing their budget for cloths and food, so they wish her to go...marry a man' - Husband of Adolescent, IDI, Doba.

1.4 Facilitators to delay marriage

1.4.1 Girls agency in refusing to marriage

Girls who are strong enough to resist the social pressures and insist to stay in school have high chance of escaping the norm of early marriage. These girls aspire to pursue their education and thus bring in support from their school teachers or members of women association/office to convince their parents and win their approval to continue school. While this persistence to decline marriage is not easy, respondents noted that it is not uncommon in all the study woredas to see girls that have stepped out of the norm and turned down the question and pressure to marry.

1.4.2 Academic competence and income generation

Among the conditions that enable girls to delay marriage, being competent in their education is the major one. Overall, the community views an academically competent girl differently and respects her as she has alternative in life even if she does not marry. She is also thought as having the option to marry educated person like her even at a later age. The other enabling condition is if she manages to be involved in an income generating activity such as selling goats and vegetables in petty trade. They see that she is clever enough to generate her own income to live on. If a girl can afford things like good clothing, food and better personal appearance, she can be excused to delay marriage. Generally, if the girl end up in better economic status and has a good job she may escape stigmatization related to missing early chances to marry.

1.4.3 Intervention from local government and NGOs

According to revised Ethiopian family code, article 7, it is illegal for a man or a woman to conclude marriage before the age of eighteen years. Based on this, different government bodies such as the Women and Child Affairs Office work on early marriage, abduction and rape cases. They give education to increase awareness on early marriage and harmful traditional practices. Schools and woreda Education offices were also reported to work towards keeping the girls in school and thereby prevent them from marrying early. NGOs working in the area were also reported to contribute in keeping girls in school and prevent dropout due to marriage. Some NGO's were also mentioned

as providing economic support to women and adolescent girls living in economically under privileged families.

“A girl came to our office in refusal marriage, and she was a child. We have children waiting area and let her to stay there; we informed the police and also called her father to our office. After we counsel the father, agreement was reached for her to continue education. We were successful... now she is attending her education. Her father was detained for few days ...he was properly advised” - Women and child affairs office, KII, Chiro

Among the challenges mentioned by the key informants from different government offices include adolescent girls refusal to testify their actual age (below age 18) in front of the court which makes it difficult for the law to protect them; shortage of adequate budget to the government offices; lack of different supplies like camera, laptop, motorcycle; lack of NGOs that can fund and work together with the offices; and lack of adequate human resource that specialized in child and human rights protection.

1.5 Findings from vignettes on adolescent girls marriage

As mentioned in the methods section we used carefully developed vignettes to assess social norms with FGDs participants which included unmarried adolescent boys, Unmarried adolescent girls, mothers of adolescent girl/s, fathers of adolescent girl/s and married adolescent girls. Accordingly three different vignettes were developed around girls' marriage.

- i. The first vignette was targeted for unmarried adolescent boys and unmarried adolescent girls. It revolved around an adolescent girl story. She was advised by her peer cousin, who is about to be married, that she too must marry soon. But the girl refused to marry.
- ii. The second vignette was designed for married adolescent girls. It was about an adolescent girl who was under intense pressure by her mother and cousin to marry her off. But the adolescent decides not to marry at the age of 16.
- iii. The third vignette was for Fathers and Mothers of adolescent girls. It was a story about neighbors and an intermediary advising a mother to marry her younger

adolescent girl for a man in the village. But the mother respected her adolescent girl's decision not to marry at this age and rejected the marriage proposal.

Below are the findings from these vignette-based focused group discussions. The findings are presented in the way the vignette data were collected to give clear picture of the social norms around marriage in the community.

Empirical expectations: In all FGDs, Majority of the unmarried adolescent girls and boys thought that girls are highly influenced by their peers when it comes to marriage related decisions. Married adolescent girls in the FGDs considered marriage proposal as their good destiny. They have a fear of getting too old to get a husband in the future and perceived that it is an offense to their friends if they refuse a marriage proposal.

“Once you have got the chance, you have to marry. If you refuse to marry, no one will marry you when you get older. This is the right time. Your friends are getting married.” - Unmarried adolescent girl, FGD, Boke

Most mothers thought that most other mothers would allow their daughters to marry at the age of 15 years. Mesala discussants had a different view though, many mothers thought that other mothers would reject a marriage proposal in support of their daughters.

Majority of the discussants in fathers FGDs, expected that most mothers would accept their daughters' decisions to marry at age 15, while some fathers, particularly from Boke, thought that most mothers would refuse to marry off their daughters before age 18 as it can have negative health consequence in the adolescents' health; thus they accept the girl's refusal and would not force her into marriage as it may have a legal consequence.

“If marriage request come for daughter of age 15 or older in this area, most mothers agree and other may even force her (the adolescent) into marriage” – Father of adolescent, FGD, Mesala

Table 4. Summary of Empirical Expectations related to girls marriage[¶]

Unmarried adolescent girls ⁽ⁱ⁾	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Most girls would marry even at an early age not to disappoint their friends/peers, waste their chance and avoid the prospect of not finding another husband/a second chance
Married adolescent girls ⁽ⁱⁱ⁾	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Most girls would marry in compliance to their peers' advice.
Unmarried adolescent boys ⁽ⁱ⁾	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Most girls would be highly influenced by their peers and rush into marriage either due to fear of peer sanctions or fear of losing the opportunity
Mother of adolescent girl ⁽ⁱⁱⁱ⁾	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Most mothers would enforce girls' marriage proposal at the age of 15 (except Mesala) • Most mothers would support their 15-year-old daughter's marriage proposal rejection, if that is her wish (Mesala)
Fathers of adolescent girl ⁽ⁱⁱⁱ⁾	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Most mothers would accept a marriage proposal from delala (intermediaries) if their daughter is 15 years of age or more (except Boke) • Most mothers would refuse their daughters' marriage proposal from intermediaries unless she is 18 years of age or older (Boke)

[†] Vignettes for each discussants are indicated in section 1.5 i, ii and iii

Normative expectations: In all FGDs, majority of the unmarried and married adolescent girls as well as unmarried boys believed that their peers expect them to accept a marriage proposal even if it requires them to drop out of school.

“You know according to this village, marriage has more value than education. So, many girls are easily influenced by such kind of peer pressure” – married adolescent girl, FGD, Boke

“...marriage fortune happens once in a life time, girls do not have the courage to refuse when the chance presented...they immediately go for marriage” – unmarried adolescent girl, FGD, Boke

Only some adolescent boys in Boke and Chiro believed that there is a possibility for married girls in the community to continue their education though it is not common in the community.

“...everybody in the community expect adolescent girls...at the age of 13 to 15 years... to get married; only a few believe that girls have to get the chance for education” – unmarried adolescent boy, FGD, Chiro

Most mothers of adolescent also believed that others expect them to support their daughter’s early marriage and even persuade her if the girl refuses. Some mothers in Boke and Doba however believed that others expect them to refrain from actively supporting early marriage due to the legal implications of early marriage. Moreover some mothers indicated that girls could face possible health complications during labor and delivery if she became pregnant at early age such 15 years.

“If mother refuses her daughter’s early marriage proposal, mother peers may interfere in objection by saying, ‘you are rejecting the proposal for no value, stop voicing your refusal, you are against the interest of your own daughter and the culture of our community, you may think your daughter is not old enough to get married, but she is saying I love him, sooner or later she has to leave the house ...you have to allow this marriage’... we can persuade the mother to change her mind and let the marriage to happen” –mother of adolescent, FGD, Mesala

Majority of fathers, except in Boke, also believe that most mothers would marry off their daughters once they receive a marriage proposal.

Table 5. Summary of Normative Expectations related to girls marriage[¶]

Unmarried adolescent girls ⁽ⁱ⁾	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Adolescent girls are expected to get married even if it requires them to stop going to school.
Married adolescent girls ⁽ⁱⁱ⁾	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Girls are expected to get married by age 15 years.
Unmarried adolescent boys ⁽ⁱ⁾	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> By age 15 years, adolescent girls are expected to accept the marriage proposal and get married.
Mother of adolescent girl ⁽ⁱⁱⁱ⁾	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mothers are expected to support/advise the daughter to accept a marriage if she is 15 years of age.
Father of adolescent girl ⁽ⁱⁱⁱ⁾	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mothers are expected to marry their daughter off when there is a marriage proposal if the suitor is capable of taking care of the family.

[¶] Vignettes for each discussants are indicated in section 1.5 i, ii and iii

Sanction: According to unmarried and married adolescent girls FGD findings, if an adolescent girl refuses marriage, her friends would not want to be with her, consider her as lazy, foolish and useless. They would always insult her as someone who is not needed or unattractive. Thus, due to fear of social disgrace and discrimination, majority of the girls end up getting married even if they want to delay their marriage.

“If a girl is not married at age of 15 years, many adolescent girls in the community would insult her saying ‘haftu, which mean the one who is not needed or unattractive’” – unmarried adolescent boys, FGD, Chiro

Discussions with adolescent boys noted that apart from being unaccepted by her friends, the girl who refuses to marry may be forced into marriage by abduction set up by the suitor and her friends.

“If she refused to marry, it is not acceptable in the society because according to community in our area they support marriage than education” – Married adolescent, FGD, Mesala

Most mothers thought that the *“delala”* (intermediary) would convince most mothers to allow the marriage, by persuading mothers to think the proposal as a chance not to be missed. They (intermediaries) make it look a grave mistake... if a girl spoils her first chance of marriage request, she may not get it again and will be called *“Haftu”*. Mothers would also be disgraced unless they make their daughters accept the marriage proposal.

Findings from FGDs with fathers and mothers revealed that most fathers think a girl of 15 years is mature enough to get married and a marriage proposal should not be missed. Therefore the mother will be blamed for not convincing her daughter to change her decision of marriage refusal.

Table 6. Summary of sanctions related to girls marriage[¶]

Unmarried adolescent girls ⁽ⁱ⁾	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> If a girl refused to marry she would be considered lazy, foolish and useless; and would be insulted and disgrace her mother who could not persuade her to accept the marriage proposal
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Married adolescent girls (ii)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Most girls would be physically or verbally insulted if they refuse to marry
Unmarried adolescent boys ⁽ⁱ⁾	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If a girl refused marriage proposal, she could be forced into marriage by abduction.
Mother of adolescent girl (iii)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mothers will be blamed or disgraced by friends, neighbors and community for not convincing their daughters to marry
Father of adolescent girl (iii)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mothers would be blamed for not convincing their daughters, for not conforming to the marriage norms and culture of the community.

[¶] Vignettes for each discussants are indicated in section 1.5 i, ii and iii

Sensitivity to sanctions: Majority of unmarried and married adolescent girls and unmarried adolescent boys discussants most girls could change their marriage refusal and get married due to prolonged insult, isolation or defame.

Similarly, discussants of the mothers FGD (Chiro, Mesala and Doba) and fathers FGD (Chiro and Boke), reported that most mothers would regret their decision and eventually let the marriage to go ahead.

Table 7. Summary of sensitivity to sanctions related to girls marriage[¶]

Unmarried adolescent girls ⁽ⁱ⁾	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Most girls abandon their marriage refusal idea and get married due to prolonged insult, isolation or defame (Except Doba)
Married adolescent girls ⁽ⁱⁱ⁾	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Most girls would be psychologically hurt from the criticism and insults from friends/peers and thus could change her decision and accept to marry.
Unmarried adolescent boys ⁽ⁱ⁾	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sustained pressure from peers force the girl to abandon her refusal and get married
Mother of adolescent girl (iii)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • mothers of adolescent girls would regret their decision to refuse and allow the marriage to proceed
Father of adolescent girl (iii)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mothers would stop supporting their daughters' refusal to early marriage when the insults continue.

¶ *Vignettes for each discussants are indicated in section 1.5 i, ii and iii*

Condition/Exceptions: Unmarried adolescent girls FGD participants indicated that girls can refuse marriage only if they strong enough to continue their education. A girl refused marriage can still be accepted if she can convince her parents through school teachers. Thus, school teachers can play an important role in preventing early marriage. However, according to most married adolescent girls and adolescent boys discussants such chances are slim as the community values marriage much more than education.

Table 8. Summary of conditions/exceptions related to girls marriage¶

Unmarried adolescent girls ⁽ⁱ⁾	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Girls can refuse marriage proposal if they are strong to continue their education and if they could mobilize support from school to convince their parents
Married adolescent girls ⁽ⁱⁱ⁾	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Girls can refuse marriage if they try to convince their family through their teachers
Unmarried adolescent boys ⁽ⁱ⁾	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Girls can continue their education after contesting the marriage proposal if she is talented and has great interest for education or if she changes her place of residence.
Mother of adolescent girl ⁽ⁱⁱⁱ⁾	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Girls can refuse the marriage and continue their education if they don't like the person who proposed the marriage; mothers are strong enough to stand sustained insults; teachers intervene; or the boy is much older than the girl.
Father of adolescent girl ⁽ⁱⁱⁱ⁾	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Adolescent girls can refuse marriage and continue their education if she does not like the person who proposed; girls' family is supportive; and the boy is much older than the girl

¶ *Vignettes for each discussants are indicated in section 1.5 i, ii and iii*

2. Adolescent girls' education

2.1 General context

These days, school age children are universally enrolled in local schools regardless of their gender as part of the government commitment to universal child education. Local administrators are instructed to encourage community members to send their children to school. However, continuing education to a higher level especially for adolescent girls is determined by the willingness of both parents and the adolescent girls themselves. Girls are restricted from going for further education from the village to a nearby town. Parents complain that sending adolescent girls too far from their sight for education have multiple risks, including engagement in sexual activities and out wedlock pregnancy. In addition, expensive house rent and food cost is not affordable, which means girls opportunities to get education is effectively restricted only up to the level of school grade that can be attended in their village.

Moreover, lack of a role model for girls in education has made further education an illusion for village girls. Educated and professional workers in the village are HEW's, agricultural development agent and school teachers. In addition, there are relatively older girls that neither succeed in school nor married who still live with their families. Such circumstances make decision related to early marriage proposal very difficult for both parents and girls.

2.2 Community's attitude for girls' education

Overall, majority of the community enroll girls as well as boys to school at school age. However, their attitude towards girls' education is less favorable and parents do not anticipate girls to go far in their education as much as boys. They also reflect that there is no point for girls to stay in school as they will eventually dropout and get married. That makes the investment for girls' education a wasted resource.

According to most participants, girls who go further in their education are appreciated and respected. They are considered extra strong and smart for continuing and finishing their education. However, deep-down parents prefer for their daughters to find a husband rather than wasting time in school. If a girl can read and write, according to most participants, it is enough; and no need to go further which would leave the girl in

“complicated” situation. Besides, girls are not believed to have the mental capacity to understand education at higher grades and pass national examinations.

2.3 Reasons for dropout

The reported average highest grade that most girls complete is grade 6. The main reason implicated for lower grade average was marriage. Once married girls are unlikely to continue their education, they would have a lot more responsibility in running their house and child birth fall upon their shoulders.

Peer pressure plays a vital role for girls’ school dropout. Girls get easily influenced by their peers, especially the ones who quitted school for married want others to follow their lead. The promise of a better life in marriage seduces these girls and makes them lose interest in education. The community also indirectly influences girls to go for marriage at early age instead of continuing their education since older unmarried adolescents are mostly labeled “hafftu” (unmarriageable, unlovable) and could remain a burden for the family. That have psychological effects/stress on both for the girls and their parents.

Distant location of secondary school was another reason mentioned by participants as a reason for dropout. Absence of nearby secondary school has two main implications for school dropout. Economic reasons that is girls need money to rent a house, buy food and the like when going to towns where the schools are located, which most families cannot afford. The other reason is the issue of security that is raised when a girl is thought to be sent away to another town. Parents fear for their daughters’ safety as well as possibility of engaging in sexual relationships as result of being away from their sight.

Most adolescent girls are consumed in a number of household chores. When their responsibility becomes too many and the family’s dependency on their help increases, it becomes impossible for the girls to attend school. Therefore, even if they register for school, abstaining school and eventually drop out is common to attend to their families’ needs. In addition to household chores, economic difficulties of their family hold back girls from attending school. According to participants, sending children to school can be quit costly requires different materials such as exercise books, pens, uniforms and

shoes. When parents cannot afford to send all their children to school, boys get the priority. In addition, seeing married girls whose husbands got them variety cloths and jewelry drive them to drop out of school and seek marriage instead.

2.4 Facilitators of girls education

When a girl completes her education and gets employed, she is highly regarded by community as strong and smart. Particularly females who are school teachers and government employees have the respect of the community and are seen as role models. Seeing these women in competent positions with their male counterparts is believed to inspire adolescent girls to go further in their education. These women are able to convince adolescent girls that marriage is not their only fate; and that women are capable of reaching higher places in life if they stay in school and complete their education. They can also serve as proof of evidence to the community that supporting girls to complete their education can be of advantage to the girls themselves as well as their families and the community at large.

Key informants also indicated that making secondary school accessible at a reasonable distance could enable most adolescent girls pursue their education. The government and non-governmental organizations are expected to part-take in this as having school nearby is supposed to enable adolescent girls continue their education.

Supporting girls is another major enabling condition for girls to continue their schooling. If girls get support from their family members, such as their peer brothers, with household chores, they may have adequate time to study and attend their education. Similarly, teachers could help adolescent girls by giving them extra assistance, for instance arrange make up class, to compensate for the classes that girls miss.

2.5 Girls' agency to decide about their education

According to most participants, adolescents girls are portrayed as having a decision making power on their own education. It is reported that parents enroll children to school, including girls, if she is strong enough she can stay in school. The community claims to respect girls' decision if they wish to continue their education. Adolescent girls also claimed to have the liberty to decide on their schooling. However, the enabling circumstances for adolescent girls to enforce their agency is precarious. Lack of

economic resources, direct (peers) or indirect (community) pressure to make girls quit school, and marriage norms/expectations make conditions very difficult, if not impossible, for adolescent girls to continue their education. That being the common practice, there are yet exceptional girls who manage to complete their education and even graduate from higher learning institutions. Those girls are respected later on for being strong and not influenced by peers or social norms.

2.6 Role of government institutions in adolescent girls' education

Government bodies such as woreda Education bureaus follow adolescent girls' education through continuous supervision. Although the government policy indicates the community to enroll all school-age children to school and enables most girls to start school equally with boys, strategies to ensure maintaining school attendance and completion were considered not so strong. Other government agencies such as the women's and children association and women's' affairs office also provide support to girls continuous school enrollment. The one-to-five community organization also aimed to support girls by seeking solutions to adolescent girls' problems together, providing counselling services, and sometimes intervening/mediating with adolescents' parents. School girls' club, environmental club, and Anti AIDS club also encourage girls to participate and be significant members of the student body.

2.7 Findings from vignettes on Adolescent girls education

Vignettes were prepared to assess social norms in relation to girls' education.

- i. The first vignette was targeted for unmarried adolescent boys and unmarried adolescent girls. It was a story about an adolescent girl who was forced to drop out of school by her father after she completed grade 8. The adolescent girl decided to continue school regardless of her family approval.
- ii. The second vignette was designed for married adolescent girls. It was a story about a 7th grade student named **Muna** who got married at age 15. After marriage, Muna decided to continue her education despite the expectation that her primary responsibility is household chores, and her husband's and his families' reaction.

- iii. The third vignette was prepared for fathers and mothers of adolescent girls. It was a story about an adolescent girl who was promoted to grade 9 and wished to continue her education. She registers to continue, but her father wants her to stay home and help the family with household activities and possibly generate additional income from small business.

Below are the findings from these vignette-based discussions. The findings are presented to portray the social norms around education in the community.

Empirical expectation: The majority of unmarried male and female adolescent FGD discussants think that other adolescent girls would respect their parents’ decision and stop going to school if their parents tell them to do so. Similarly, most of the married adolescent girls think that other girls do not continue their education once they are married as they need to help their own family. Majority of mother and father discussants would not support adolescent girls’ education so that they could assist in household chores.

“... girls stop their education and help family with household chores. We girls could not refuse if our parents want us to quit school” – unmarried adolescent girl, FGD, Chiro

Table 9. Summary of Empirical Expectations related to girls education[¶]

Unmarried adolescent girls ⁽ⁱ⁾	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Girls must stop their education if their parents tell them to do so (all wordas)
Married adolescent girls ⁽ⁱⁱ⁾	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Girls would likely stop going to school because of their huge responsibility in household chores.
Unmarried adolescent boys ⁽ⁱ⁾	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Adolescent girls would stop going to school if their parents’ decide so
Mother of adolescent girl ⁽ⁱⁱⁱ⁾	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Most fathers would get angry or yell at their adolescent girls if they don’t accept their fathers’ decision to stop going to school Most fathers may force them out of home if they don’t accept their fathers’ decision to stop going to school
Father of adolescent girl ⁽ⁱⁱⁱ⁾	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Most fathers would make them stop their education and want their adolescent girls to help with household chores

[¶] Vignettes for each discussants are indicated in section 2.7 i, ii and iii

Normative expectation: Most unmarried adolescent girls believe that parents expect them to drop out of school. This is due to parents' desire to marry girls early so as to protect them from pre-marital sexual engagement and expect them to generate income to support the family. Most married girls also believe that their husbands do not approve of their desire to continue education; instead the husbands want their adolescent wives to be engaged in the household chores and support the family. Majority of the unmarried adolescent boys also believe that girls respect their parents' opinion about going to school and seek their fathers' permission to continue school.

“Daughters in the house not only fetch water but they also cook food in the house, hence their parents are happy. This makes the mothers to feel cheerful ... they would be happy with the support their daughter offer in the household than sending them to school” – unmarried adolescent girl, FGD, Boke

“Sometimes, they (parents) don't trust girls that she can behave responsibly...they fear that she may be engaged in sexual relationships and be exposed for many unnecessary risks” – unmarried adolescent girl, FGD, Doba

Majority of the mothers believe that other fathers would let their daughters attend school up to grade four and expect her to accept the fathers' decision to get married. However, some mothers and fathers reported that they believe other fathers support their daughters to continue their education. Fathers in Chiro believe that other fathers allow their daughters to go to school till they reach grade 8, mainly due to the family's economic condition and in order to live with the family in harmony, and then expect them to get married.

“In this community, all fathers think similar to that of Mohammed's behavior (a father who stopped his daughter from going to school)... most allow girls to attend school up to grade four ... this is customary to this area” – mother of adolescent, FGD, Doba

Table 10. Summary of Normative Expectations related to girls education[¶]

Unmarried adolescent girls ⁽ⁱ⁾	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parents expect adolescent girls to stop going to school after primary school (4 to 8th grade)
Married adolescent girls ⁽ⁱⁱ⁾	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • husbands do not want them to continue school and expect them to be fully engaged in household chores
Unmarried adolescent boys ⁽ⁱ⁾	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • adolescent girls accept their parents' decision regarding their education and do what their parents tell them
Mother of adolescent girl ⁽ⁱⁱⁱ⁾	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fathers would not let their daughters to go beyond 4th grade and expect them to get married or be economically independent
Father of adolescent girl ⁽ⁱⁱⁱ⁾	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parents would allow their daughters to continue their education up to certain level(the level varies by woreda).

[¶] Vignettes for each discussants are indicated in section 2.7 i, ii and iii

Sanctions: Majority of the unmarried adolescent girls and boys FGD discussants reported that most parents would insult verbally and/or physically punish the adolescent girl if she refuse to accept the decision to stop going to school. If an adolescent girl decides to continue her education, then there would be serious consequences following her decision to pursue school. She may be blamed, insulted, denied any financial support, physically bitten or even forced to move out from home. Majority of the married adolescent girl discussants reported that most husbands would physically punish or verbally insult their wives who desire to continue their education.

“If she continue education without permission, they may reject her...she is not our daughter...we will see how she will support herself... let her go ahead if she has money and capacity... often adolescents girls have nothing to support themselves... they will face serious problems if they go ahead.” – Unmarried adolescent girl from Boke

“Her father may hit her with stick for she did not respect his order to discontinue education. She will be forced to leave the house ...” – unmarried adolescent boy, FGD, Doba

Most mother FGD discussants in Doba indicated that fathers who listen to and allow their daughters to continue education would be considered as a man with no power over his family and an outcast.

“... they (other fathers) may leave him and stop their relationship with him. They may consider him as if he has no power to manage his family” – mother of adolescent, FGD, Doba

Fathers who accept their daughters’ desire to continue education could also face sanctions themselves, for example some fathers in Chiro district pointed strong sanctions such as terminating his(the father) membership from social support group (such as “idir”). Such fathers would be disgraced and considered as a person who has no control over his family and ruled by his wife and daughters.

However, contrary to these, some mothers and fathers claimed that they would support their children’s education. This shows that the parents are aware of the law and try not to do/say contrary to that openly.

Table 11. Summary of Sanctions related to girls education[¶]

Unmarried adolescent girls ⁽ⁱ⁾	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Most parents stop supporting their daughter’s education financially or force her to drop out of school if the girl decides to continue education against the parents’ will
Married adolescent girls ⁽ⁱⁱ⁾	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Most husbands will not support their wives to continue education and may verbally/physically insult her or even divorce her.
Unmarried adolescent boys ⁽ⁱ⁾	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Most parents would blame, insult or physically punish their daughters if she does not respect their decision-
Mother of adolescent girl ⁽ⁱⁱⁱ⁾	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fathers would be isolated from social activities in the community and not efficient to manage his family
Father of adolescent girl ⁽ⁱⁱⁱ⁾	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Most fathers would be considered as a person who is ruled by his wife and daughter, and a person who has no respect for the community norm.

[¶] *Vignettes for each discussants are indicated in section 2.7 i, ii and iii*

Sensitivity to sanction: There are mixed reactions to this aspect of the discussion; while some mentioned positive and respectful reaction to parents who agree to support

their daughters educational desires others mentioned strong negative reaction for the same behavior.

Table 12. Summary of Sensitivity to sanctions related to girls education[¶]

Unmarried adolescent girls ⁽ⁱ⁾	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Majority of girls would feel anxious if they are avoided by their parents.
Married adolescent girls ⁽ⁱⁱ⁾	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Majority of the girls would respect the husband's Decision to avoid physical and/or verbal abuse
Unmarried adolescent boys ⁽ⁱ⁾	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Girls would lose interest of continuing education, Girls would feel bad due to the punishment
Mother of adolescent girl ⁽ⁱⁱⁱ⁾	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The reaction from the community may lead him to change his decision
Father of adolescent girl ⁽ⁱⁱⁱ⁾	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Father may change his decision to allow the girl to go to school which eventually leads to denying his daughter's desire to continue education.

[¶] *Vignettes for each discussants are indicated in section 2.7 i, ii and iii*

Conditions: There are possibilities for adolescent girls to continue their education above the commonly expected highest level. This could be achieved through teachers' or community leaders' help in convincing parents about the importance of girls' education or if the girls manage to get some financial income from income generating activities.

Table 13. Summary of conditions related to girls education[¶]

Unmarried adolescent girls ⁽ⁱ⁾	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Girls could be allowed to continue their education if parents are convinced by either the strong academic standing of the girl or by influential people such as school teachers and other respected individuals in the community.
Married adolescent girls ⁽ⁱⁱ⁾	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Married girls can only continue their education if the husband allows
Unmarried adolescent boys ⁽ⁱ⁾	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Girls can only continue their education if they have family endorsement or financial independence.
Mother of adolescent girl ⁽ⁱⁱⁱ⁾	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Girls can only continue their education if they convince fathers
Father of adolescent girl ⁽ⁱⁱⁱ⁾	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Girls can only continue their education if they convince fathers

[¶] *Vignettes for each discussants are indicated in section 2.7 i, ii and iii*

3. Role of men and women in relation to food production, purchases and consumption

3.1 Decision on what food to grow/ rear by the household

Intra-household food allocation is an important consideration to ensure adequate nutrition to adolescent girls. In this study, we tried to look decision making from production to actual food consumption in the household. Regarding food production at a household level, decisions to grow/rear are made by consensus between fathers and mothers (couples), though the fathers' (male's) decision matters most in the end due to males' high engagement in farming activities. It has also been mentioned that other family members' opinion, such as the older son's, could be taken into consideration during the decision making process.

3.2 Decision on what food to sell or buy for household consumption

In regards to the decision of what to sell or keep for home consumption from the food produced/reared, mothers usually determine the amount to be sold and the amount needed for home consumption. There is a discussion between the father and mother before making the decision and whose decision matters most depends on the financial implications; men decide on issues that has big financial implications.

The mother often makes the request for the routinely purchased foods that are consumed by the household and the father would provide the money. In most cases, the women decide on details of purchases.

"She takes money from her husband and decide what to buy from the market. Sometimes, she may sell chicken, eggs and butter. With this money, she can also purchase food products from the market"- Unmarried adolescent girl, IDI, Boke

"... It is the men who decide what is for sell, especially things considered big or significant such as cattle. The women may decide on selling small things such as eggs" - Agriculture office, KII

3.3 Food preparation, eating pattern and food taboos in the household

Women are fully responsible for preparing food for the family. According to the interviewees, eating during food preparation is not culturally acceptable; and there are consequences including physical punishment by the husband. Adolescent girls help

their mothers by fetching water, grain milling, assisting them in food preparation and waste disposal. Sometime male children can also help fetching water, if there are no adolescent girls in the house.

Generally, eating patterns are typically the same in the study areas where males are served first with a larger portion, and females are served last with what is left. However, most pregnant women, the sick or the elderly may not have to follow the customary food serving pattern. If a woman eats first before men, she would be considered as selfish, rude, shameless and disrespectful and thus be verbally or physically insulted as that is against the community's social norm. Both men and women abide by this tradition as the opinion of their peers, and neighbors and community matter respectively.

"...a woman eating before serving her husband is considered a bad woman, who does not care about her husband... people would say... she is killing him by providing him inadequate food...they insult her by saying... Do you know any other thing other than filling your stomach?... "- mother-in-law, IDI, Chiro

"The community's food culture is the reverse of what you would expect. First the father eats, then the adolescent boys. The mother together with adolescent girls and children eat last." – Health office, KII

"Neighbors would say 'the woman who eats before her husband is called 'Harmala' – (meaning prostitute). How can she eat before her husband? She must have another person from outside. What is her hope to eat before her husband?'" – Agriculture office, KII, Doba

There are some foods that are not supposed to be eaten by females, for example 'holola' and 'dallu', from beef source such as tongue, stomach and thigh are not eaten by females. In addition, pepper/chili is thought to increase sexual arousal and females have to be cautioned. Porridge is considered food for females. **There is also a belief on not serving the best food to pregnant mothers.** Elderly people and fathers in the community influence such beliefs. However, most of the interviewees and key informants from agriculture and health office do not currently believe that there are foods which should never be eaten by young girls.

“Families refrain from offering pregnant women the best food ... they believe that it may cause the fetus to become big in the womb and cause trouble during child birth” – Health extension worker, KII

3.4 Findings from vignettes on adolescent girls' Nutrition

Vignettes were prepared to assess social norms in relation to women's food production, purchase and consumption.

- i. The first vignette, which was targeted for unmarried adolescent boys and unmarried adolescent girls, was about adolescent girls who prepare food for their parents and want to eat before them because they were hungry. Finally, their parents came into the house and saw them while they were eating before them.
- ii. The second vignette was intended for married adolescent girls. It was about married adolescent who prepare food and wants to eat before her husband because she is hungry. Finally she decides to eat. While she was eating, her husband and his family came to home and see her.
- iii. The third vignette was for fathers and mothers of adolescent girls. It was a story about a mother and adolescent daughter prepare food for the family and want to eat before the male member of the family because they were hungry. Finally the mother decides to eat. While they were eating, the male family members came back home and saw them.

Empirical Expectations: It appears to be a common culture in the community for most women to prepare food and serve men or their husbands first. Unmarried adolescent boys also believe that males should be served food first.

*“In our locality, if female face such condition, (husbands **staying long hours outside of home**) they don't eat, they wait for them, as it not culturally right. Even If they (husbands) stay out for more than a day, a meal prepared specifically for the husband cannot be consumed by the woman... she would rather let it be spoiled than eating it”. - Unmarried adolescent boys, FGD, Mesala*

“Husband not only expect his wife to prepare food but also he expects her to wait till he is back home” – Mother of adolescent, FGD, Mesala

“It is here responsibility to feed males first ...it is our culture. Even though no one may say anything to her, she should respect the culture and wait them” – Father of adolescent, FGD, Chiro

Table 14. Summary of empirical expectations related to household food allocation and girls nutrition[¶]

Unmarried adolescent girls ⁽ⁱ⁾	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Females/women are not supposed to eat before males/men
Married adolescent girls ⁽ⁱⁱ⁾	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Females do not eat before males as per the community culture.
Unmarried adolescent boys ⁽ⁱ⁾	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Girls/women are not supposed to eat before males/men a even if they are hungry.
Mother of adolescent girl ⁽ⁱⁱⁱ⁾	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Women do not eat before serving their husbands
Father of adolescent girl ⁽ⁱⁱⁱ⁾	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Women do not eat before men as per the community norm.

[¶] *Vignettes for each discussants are indicated in section 3.4 i, ii and iii*

Normative Expectations: Most unmarried adolescent girls believe that most parents would not allow females to have their meal before males. From the FGDs, majority of married adolescents believe that most husbands expect wives to wait for them before eating. Majority of unmarried adolescent boys believe that most parents expect females to prepare food and wait for males in the family before eating while few believe some parents may expect females to eat before males arrive home though it is not common in the locality. Most mothers and fathers believe that women should not eat first and wait till the men are home. Some mothers and fathers believe that all members of the family can eat together if all family members are at home.

“In the morning, a woman has to serve her husband first... then she (mother) can then eat with her children” – mother of adolescent, FGD, Chiro

Table 15. Summary of normative expectations related to household food allocation and girls nutrition[¶]

Unmarried adolescent girls ⁽ⁱ⁾	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Most females think others expect them to eat after the male members of the family.
Married adolescent girls ⁽ⁱⁱ⁾	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Most husbands expect their wives to serve them food first.
Unmarried adolescent boys ⁽ⁱ⁾	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Most parents expect females to prepare food and serve their husband before eating themselves.
Mother of adolescent girl ⁽ⁱⁱⁱ⁾	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Most husbands would expect males eat before females
Father of adolescent girl ⁽ⁱⁱⁱ⁾	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Most husbands expect their wives to eat after them.

[¶] Vignettes for each discussants are indicated in section 3.4 i, ii and iii

Sanctions: For women who eat first before men, it is taken as not having respect for men or husbands. If adolescent girls eat before their male siblings, they would be insulted or considered as selfish, not worthy and norm breakers as reported by unmarried girls and boys. The women would be blamed and looked down on by their husbands, friends and neighbors.

“If a woman eats before serving her husband...she would be blamed for not respecting her families and community culture. She will be insulted, accused, and looked down by her friends, neighbors, and communities for not accepting the norms and culture of eating which is accepted by the community” – Unmarried adolescent boys, FGD, Chiro

“Even though husbands do not speak openly in front of us, they never feel good when their wives eat food before serving them. They would say ‘she does not care about me; that is the reason she is eating alone leaving me behind’. He feels bad. Let alone males, even other females would not be happy” -Mother of adolescent, FGD, Mesala

Table 16. Summary of sanctions related to household food allocation and girls nutrition[¶]

Unmarried adolescent girls ⁽ⁱ⁾	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Women/girls who do not respect the food culture could be physically or verbally insulted
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Married adolescent girls (ii)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Most husbands would insult or disgrace wives who eat before them
Unmarried adolescent boys ⁽ⁱ⁾	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Girls/wives who eat before males would be blamed, insulted, considered as selfish, not worthy, stealers and norm breakers
Mother of adolescent girl (iii)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Most husbands would blame and consider their wives as individuals with no shame, respect and non-caring.
Father of adolescent girl (iii)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Most women who eat before men would be blamed by family, neighbors, friends and husbands for not respecting the norm and would be considered as women with no respect and discipline, and ignorant.

† Vignettes for each discussants are indicated in section 3.4 i, ii and iii

Sensitivity to sanction: Majority of unmarried adolescent girls and boys reported that most girls would decide not to eat before males. Most married adolescents mentioned that she would harm herself or may decide to leave her house.

“In our culture, females do not eat before males. If she eats before males, she feels that she has violated or broken the norm in the community. And she will try to be disciplined in the future (not to eat before males)” – unmarried adolescent girl, FGD, Mesala

Majority of mother and father FGD discussants reported that most girls would decide not to eat before males due to the insult and shame. Most wives are worried about their husband’s gossip in relation to their eating practice. They are concerned with what others hear and see as she would be judged non-respectful, non-disciplined and ignorant by the community for not conforming to the community’s culture and her role as a women in the house in relation to feeding.

Unmarried adolescent girls ⁽ⁱ⁾	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Most girls would not eat before male members due to fear of insult
Married adolescent girls ⁽ⁱⁱ⁾	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Most girls would try to harm themselves or flee from home due to severe insults.
Unmarried adolescent boys ⁽ⁱ⁾	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • most girls would not consider eating before males

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • most girls may flee from home as they feel sad and ashamed
Mother of adolescent girl ⁽ⁱⁱⁱ⁾	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Majority reported that most women would decide not to eat before men as they are worried about the insults from husbands and neighbors
Father of adolescent girl ⁽ⁱⁱⁱ⁾	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Most women would feel ashamed and embarrassed when they hear about their food habits from other people and thus would decide not to eat before males.

Table 17. Summary of sensitivity to sanctions related to household food allocation and girls nutrition[¶]

[¶] *Vignettes for each discussants are indicated in section 3.4 i, ii and iii*

Conditions: Majority of discussants in FGDs with unmarried adolescent boys and girls, married adolescent and parents mentioned situations where women can eat first, such as pregnancy, breastfeeding, illness, permission from parents/husbands, keeping a good portion for him and if the men have gone to a far place.

“...if fathers and brothers come late home and women are hungry, they (fathers and brothers) would expect them to eat food” – married adolescent, FGD, Mesala

Table 18. Summary of conditions related to household food allocation and girls nutrition[¶]

Unmarried adolescent girls ⁽ⁱ⁾	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Girls/women can eat before men if male members are known to be very late • Girls/ women can eat before men if they keep a good portion for him
Married adolescent girls ⁽ⁱⁱ⁾	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Girls can eat before males if the husband gives her permission or if he has gone to remote place. • Situations such as pregnancy, child birth and illness may enable girls to eat before.
Unmarried adolescent boys ⁽ⁱ⁾	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Girls can eat first only when they get permission from parents or told not to wait.
Mother of adolescent girl ⁽ⁱⁱⁱ⁾	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Girls can eat before males if they go to school, or ill, pregnant or breastfeeding. • Females can eat before males when the husband declared that he is coming home late or if he is not coming home • If a special food is prepared separately for the husband, then girls can eat before males.
Father of adolescent girl ⁽ⁱⁱⁱ⁾	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • females can eat before males in situations such as pregnancy, illness or breast feeding; or if the husband is known to come home late

[¶] *Vignettes for each discussants are indicated in section i, ii and iii*

4. Effect of Drought on adolescents marriage, education and nutrition

4.1 General context

Drought negatively affects the community day to day life. The burden on women and girls is particularly severe. Girls would be required to travel long distances to fetch water which in turn precludes them from going to school. Families would not have the financial resources to buy school uniforms, shoes and education materials for their children which makes both boys and girls absent from school. However, the customary food eating pattern and order in the community continues. As there would be food scarcity in the household, women and adolescent girls face more limited food intake than men and boys. During times of drought, the community tries to minimize all celebrations that involve preparing food and drinks.

4.2 Effect of drought on marriage

Majority of respondent pointed out that marriage during drought is unlikely as it requires more financial resources. Almost all reported that there would be no marriage during times of food shortage. In some areas, divorce rate for young couples could be high and the girls may return back to her parents due to lack of adequate food. According to most of the fathers and unmarried boys discussants reported that marriage plans would usually be cancelled as the newlyweds would not have adequate food for consumption. Contrary to the most common practice, some fathers from Chiro and unmarried boys from Mesala mentioned that drought these days may provide a good opportunity for mediators to negotiate early marriage.

“If there is no production during drought, there would be no khat production. How can marriage be facilitated? If there is good production, adolescents can be interested for marriage...” – Women and child affairs, KII

“Drought affects marriage and it affects the males more. The reason is, males have higher expenses compared to females during weddings. He has to give cloth, money ... for the bride and her family” – Husband of adolescent, IDI, Boke

4.3 Effect of drought on education

During times of food shortage, girls are forced to drop out of school. Majority of father FGDs discussants reported that girls are needed to go to market to get food for the family. Parents may also need to travel to places far from the village to get food. In addition, majority of mother and married adolescent girl FGD and discussants mentioned that parents would be unable to provide school materials, such as exercise books, pens and school uniforms, to their daughters which holds back adolescent girls from going to school. In all FGDs, almost all unmarried girls and boys reported that school dropout is common among adolescent but more pronounced among girls than boys as family expects them to be highly engaged in household chores such as fetching water and food preparation.

When there is drought, adolescents are not able to go school, as they have to engage in different activities/works to generate money and help their families. The effect of drought especially on adolescent girls' education is significant as it would almost make it unacceptable for a girl to go to school instead of assisting in the bread-winning struggle of the family. Drought means extra burden to adolescent girls since they would have to travel even farther than before to get water. They would have to migrate to the cities to find jobs and make money. They would have to find a better security to themselves and their families by engaging in difficult activities like labor work, farming activities and finding a well-off husband to escape from starvation and death.

“... during drought...extra effort is needed to get Water and food ... water is not available nearby ...so girls have to fetch water and they take this responsibility. They discontinue their education” – Married adolescent, IDI, Boke

4.4 Effect of drought on food and food allocation

Majority of the participants reported that when there is drought, all members of the family would be given small amount of food and as a result family may not consume a balanced diet. Some fathers from Boke reported that girls would suffer more as it is shameful for them (girls) to eat with boys and suffer trying to tolerate their hunger. In all mother FGDs and unmarried adolescent boys and girls, majority reported that females, especially girls, would suffer more as they eat after all male family members are served. Furthermore, mothers from Chiro added, as family members go out to look for any type of work and generate some income, females may face more challenges including rape.

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Annex I: Study guides for mother and father FGD

Education, Marriage and Nutrition Vignettes based Focused Group Discussion For Mother and Father

Moderator: *Now I will tell you a story of a girl named Halima and her father Mohamed. Let's pretend they are from this Village. I don't want you to think about a real Halima and Mohamed who lives here. We could have chosen other names, but for now let's stick to those. I would like you to listen to the story carefully and discuss the questions that follow.*

Vignette 1 (Education): Halima is 15 years old. She was promoted to grade 9 with a satisfactory passing mark of the national examination for grade 8 students. However, her Father, Mohamed, wants her to stay home and help the family with household activities and possibly generate additional income from small business. When the rainy season ended and was time to start new academic year in September, Halima decides to continue with her high school education and registers for school without her father's permission.

- a. How would most other fathers like Mohamed react in this situation in your Village?
- b. What would most other fathers advise Mohamed to do in this situation?

Let's continue with the story. Halima's father is surprised that his daughter has gone behind his back and tried to continue her education. However, after speaking with her and hearing how important it is to her, he decides to support her decision.

- c. What would most other fathers like Mohamed say about him for allowing his daughter to continue school?
 - What would most people say about Halima?
- d. How do you think his friends' reactions would make Mohamed feel?
 - Would their reactions have an effect on him?
 - If so, what would be the effect?
 - If no effect, what makes you think that way?
- e. Are there any circumstances where it would be considered more or less acceptable for Halima to continue with her secondary schooling? [*probe to get answer to both "more" and "less"*]

Moderator: Next I will tell you a story of a Mother named Merima and her daughter Asha. Let's pretend they are from this Village. I don't want you to think about a real Merima and Asha who lives here. We could have chosen other names, but for now let's stick to those. I would like you to listen to the story carefully and discuss the questions that follow.

Vignette 2 (Marriage): Merima is a mother of five. She has three daughters, of whom the eldest [age17] had moved back with her after divorcing her husband of 1 year. They all live in the same compound, including her sons and their wives. One day when all of them plus some mothers in neighborhood were sitting at a coffee ceremony in their compound, an intermediary (*delala*) comes to their house and tells them that Merima's younger daughter Asha [age 15] is being sought by a young man for marriage. Asha firmly announces that she is not interested to marry any time soon.

- a. What would most other mothers like Merima do in this situation?
- b. What would most other mothers advise Merima to do regarding her daughter's refusal to the proposal?

Let's return to the story. Merima listens to Asha and tells her neighbors that she respects her daughter's decision to delay marriage until she's older.

- c. What would most other mothers say about Merima in this situation?
 - What would other people such as the *delala* say about Merima?
- d. Would the opinions and reactions of the other mothers make Merima change her mind about her daughter's marriage?
 - Would their reactions have an effect on her?
 - If so, what would be the effect?

- If no effect, what makes you think that way?
- e. Are there any circumstances where it would be considered more or less acceptable for Asha not to get married at her age?

Moderator: I will tell you a story of a girl named Amira and her Mother Shukria. Let's pretend they are from this Village. I don't want you to think about a real Amira and Shukria who lives here. We could have chosen other names, but for now let's stick to those. I would like you to listen to the story carefully and discuss the questions that follow.

Vignette 3(Nutrition): Shukria is a married woman living with her husband and six children. Amira is her 14 year old daughter who often helps her mother in daily household chores. Shukria and her daughter prepare food for the family every day and serve the male members first, the father and her brothers. Shukria and her daughter eat last on leftovers. One day after long hours of food preparation, Shukria and Amira were very hungry and want to eat, but Shukria doesn't know when her husband and sons will be home.

- a) What would most other women in Shukria's situation do?
- b) What would Shukria's husband expect her to do in this situation?

Now imagine that Shukria decides that she and Amira will eat first before her husband and sons. The husband and the boys walk into their house as they are having their meal.

- c) How would Shukria's husband react in this situation?
 - Whose opinion other than her husband's would matter most to her in this situation?
- d) How do you think her husband's reaction would make Shukria feel?
 - Would Shukria eat before her husband and sons again in the future?
- e) Are there any circumstances where it would be considered acceptable for Shukria and her daughter to eat before her husband and sons?

Before we finish the discussion, is there drought in this area? I would like to know your opinion about the effects of the current drought on the life events of adolescents.

Probe:

- **The effect on Adolescents education, especially for girls.**
- **The effect on Adolescents Marriage, especially for girls.**
- **The effects on Adolescents nutrition, especially for girls.**

Thank you for your time and for providing us useful information pertaining to the health of Adolescents.

Annex II. Study guide for unmarried adolescent girl FGD

Education Vignette based Focused Group Discussion For unmarried adolescent girls

Moderator: I will tell you a story of a young girl named Halima. Let's pretend she is from this woreda. I don't want you to think about a real Halima who lives here. We could have chosen other names, but for now let's stick to this. I would like you to listen to the story carefully and discuss the questions that follow.

Halima [age 15] is a grade 8 student. After completing grade 8, her parents indicate that there is no need for Halima to continue school as she has enough schooling for a girl to lead a life. They say that she must help the family and that she can find some job with her current educational level. Her father orders that she is not going to school any more.

- a. What would most other adolescent girls like Halima do in this situation?
- b. What would Halima's parents expect her to do in this situation?

Halima decides to go against her parents' wishes and continues going to school.

- c. What would Halima's parents' do/say to their daughter in this situation?
 - Would the reaction of the father and the mother be different?
- d. Would Halima continue to go to school if it was not for the reaction of her parents?
- e. Under what conditions would Halima be able to continue school?

Nutrition Vignette based Focused Group Discussion

For unmarried adolescent girls

Moderator: *Now I will tell you another story of a girl I named Momina (that is not her actual name) living in this woreda. I would like you to listen to the story carefully and discuss the questions that follow.*

Momina [16] is an adolescent girl who lives in this woreda. She has 3 sisters and 2 brothers and they all live with their parents. One day, her mother orders her daughters to prepare food for the family and went out with her husband to visit relatives. When they finished preparing food, Momina and her sisters feel very hungry. They really want to eat, but don't know when their parents and brothers would be home.

- a. What would most other adolescent girls do in this situation?
- b. What would most parents like Momin's parents expect their daughters to do?

Now, imagine that Momina and her sisters decide to eat before their parents and brothers. While the girls were having their meal, their parents and brothers walk into the house and see them eating.

- c. How would the parents react in this situation?
 - What would the brothers say/do about their sisters eating before them?
- d. How do you think her parents' and brothers' reactions would make Momina feel? What effects would their reactions have on her?
 - If so, what would be the effect?
 - If no, what makes you think that way?
- e. Are there any circumstances where it would be considered acceptable for Momina and her sisters to eat before their parents and brothers

Marriage Vignette based Focused Group Discussion

For married adolescent girls

Moderator: *I will tell you a story of a girl I named Rehima (that is not her actual name) living in this woreda. I would like you to listen to the story carefully and discuss the questions that follow.*

Rehima is a 16 year old student who lives with her parents. She attends school and helps her mother with household chores. One day Hindiya, Rehima's cousin came over

to visit Rehima's family. They are about the same age. Hindiya announces that she is engaged and getting married in a month's time. She also strongly suggests to Rehima that she should also marry soon as she is getting old for marriage. She reveals she also knows that there is someone from their village who is interested in marrying Rehima.

- a. What would most adolescent girls in Rehima's position do in this situation?
- b. What would Hindiya and most other girls expect Rehima to do in this situation?

But Rehima doesn't want to marry young. She announces that she does not want marry at this age.

- c. What would Hindiya and most other girls say about Rehima's decision?
- d. Would the opinions and reactions of her peers make Rehima change her mind about refusing the marriage?
- e. Are there any circumstances where it would be considered more or less acceptable for Rehima not to get married at her age?

Before we finish the discussion, is there drought in this area? I would like to know your opinion about the effects of the current drought on the life events of adolescents.

Probe:

Probe:

- The effect on adolescent education, especially for girls.
- The effect on adolescent marriage, especially for girls.
- The effect on adolescent nutrition, especially for girls.

Thank you for your time and for providing us useful information pertaining to the health of Adolescent.

Annex III. Study guide for married adolescent girls FGD

Education Vignette based Focused Group Discussion For married adolescent girls

Moderator: *I will tell you a story of a married young couple named Muna and Jemal. Let's pretend they are from this woreda. I don't want you to think about a real Muna and Jemal who live here. We could have chosen other names, but for now let's stick to those. I would like you to listen to the story carefully and discuss the questions that follow.*

Vignette: Muna [age 15] got married to Jemal a year back. She was in grade 7 at the time of her marriage. Muna routinely cooks, cleans and do other household chores. After a while, Muna starts wondering whether to continue school or not.

- f. What would most other adolescent girls like Muna decide with regard to school continuation?
- g. What would Jemal expect Muna to do with regard to her school continuation?

Eventually Muna decides to continue her education and starts going to school. While Muna was at school, Jemal's parents (Muna's in-laws) came to their house to visit and learn that Muna is at school.

- h. What would Jemal say about Muna going back to school?
 - What would Muna's in-laws' opinion be of her in this situation?
- i. Would Muna continue her education regardless of her husband's and in-laws' opinion/reaction?
- j. Under what conditions would Muna be able to continue her education?

Nutrition Vignette based Focused Group Discussion For married adolescent girls

Moderator: *Now I will tell you another story of a girl I named Misra (that is not her actual name) living in this woreda. I would like you to listen to the story carefully and discuss the questions that follow.*

Vignette: Misra [14] is married to Aliye. The two of them plus Aliye's two younger brothers live together. Misra prepares food and serves the three of them when they return home every day. One day Misra gets up early, as usual, fetches water, cleans the house, washes dirty cloths and cooks food for the family. By the time she is done with her household activities, she is tired and hungry. She really wants to eat, but doesn't know when Aliye and his brothers would be home.

- f. What would most other married adolescent girls in Misra's situation do?

- g. What would most husbands like Aliye expect Misra to do?

Now imagine that Misra decides to eat instead of waiting for them. While she is having her meal, the three of them walk into the house and see her eating.

- h. How would Aliye react in this situation?
 - What would Aliye's brothers say about Misra?
 - Whose opinion would matter most to her other than her husband and brothers-in-law?

- i. How do you think Aliye's and his brothers' reactions would make her feel?
 - What effects would their reactions have on her?
 - If so, what would be the effect?
 - If no, what makes you think that way?

- j. Are there any circumstances where it would be considered acceptable for Misra to eat before her husband and brothers-in-law?
[Probe: would Aliye's reaction be different if his brothers were not there?]

Marriage Vignette based Focused Group Discussion

For married adolescent girls

Moderator: *I will tell you a story of a girl I named Rehima (that is not her actual name) living in this woreda. I would like you to listen to the story carefully and discuss the questions that follow.*

Rehima is a 16 year old student who lives with her parents. She attends school and helps her mother with household chores. One day Hindiya, Rehima's cousin comes over to visit Rehima's family. They are about the same age. Hindiya announces that she is engaged and getting married in a month's time. She also strongly suggests to Rehima that she should also marry soon as she is getting old for marriage. Hindiya reveals that she also knows someone from their village who is interested in marrying Rehima.

- f. What would most adolescent girls in Rehima's position do in this situation?
- g. What would Hindiya and most other girls expect Rehima to do in this situation?

But Rehima doesn't want to marry young. She announces that she does not want marry at this age.

- h. What would Hindiya and most other girls say about Rehima's decision?
- i. Would the opinions and reactions of her peers make Rehima change her mind about refusing the marriage?
- j. Are there any circumstances where it would be considered more or less acceptable for Rehima not to get married at her age?

Before we finish the discussion, is there drought in this area? I would like to know your opinion about the effects of the current drought on the life events of adolescents.

Probe:

- The effect on adolescent education, especially for girls.
- The effect on adolescent marriage, especially for girls.
- The effect on adolescent nutrition, especially for girls.

Thank you for your time and for providing us useful information pertaining to the health of Adolescents.