



**CYW-RPF**

**Children, Youth and Women  
Research and Practice Forum**

**CYW-RPF  
Quarterly  
Newsletter  
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## Editor's Note

Dear readers,

We are excited to share the December 2024 edition of the CYW-RPF Quarterly Newsletter. This issue features summaries of two impactful research papers presented during our recent seminars: *The Impacts of the Northern Ethiopia Conflict on Adolescents in Tigray* by GAGE and *Exploring Intra-Household Decision-Making and Best Practice Adoption Outcomes of Women-Targeted Digital Extension* by Laterite.

Additionally, we highlight an update from Young Lives Ethiopia as it prepares for the sixth wave of its qualitative longitudinal research. This includes a podcast episode featuring Dr. Alula Pankhurst, Young Lives Ethiopia Country Director, discussing the significance and potential impact of this research.

We welcome your feedback and contributions. For more information, contact us at [crpf.ethiopia@gmail.com](mailto:crpf.ethiopia@gmail.com) or +251 11 154 0121.

## Young Lives Ethiopia Prepares to Launch Sixth Wave of Qualitative Longitudinal Research

Young Lives Ethiopia is set to embark on its sixth wave of qualitative longitudinal research, aimed at exploring how overlapping crises; COVID-19, conflicts, climate change, severe drought, and rising inflation, are reshaping the lives of young Ethiopians and their children. This research will provide critical insights into how these challenges impact their health and well-being.

Scheduled to begin early next year, the study will involve in-depth interviews with young people from five regions: Addis Ababa, Amhara, Oromia, Sidama, and Tigray. Participants will include two cohorts: the younger group, aged 23–24, and the older group, aged 30–31. These interviews build on five previous waves conducted between 2007 and 2019.

Supported by the UK Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office and Irish Aid, this wave focuses on maternal and child health, mental health, sexual and reproductive health, and disability. Researchers aim to identify what drives resilience among youth; whether through family support, peer networks, or community resources, and provide recommendations to shape youth-centered policies.

Learn more in the latest podcast episode, where Country Director Dr. Alula Pankhurst discusses the significance of this research and its potential impact.

Listen here: - <https://bit.ly/4f9P9xb>

## Research Summaries from CYW-RPF presentations

### The Impacts of the Northern Ethiopia Conflict on Adolescents in Tigray

Workneh Yadete

#### Introduction

The civil war in northern Ethiopia (November 2020 to November 2022) caused devastating impacts in the Tigray region, with an estimated 300,000 to 800,000 deaths and the displacement of over 1.6 million people. Adolescents, comprising 34.6% of Ethiopia's population, faced unique challenges during and after the conflict, but their experiences remain underexplored. This research aims to address this gap by analyzing the conflict's effects on livelihoods, food security, bodily integrity, psychosocial well-being, education, and health among adolescents in Tigray. Conducted in early 2024, the mixed-methods study involved 753 adolescents and 375 caregivers from three districts: Atsbi Wemberta, Tsimbela, and Samre. This summary details the methods, findings, and actionable recommendations.



#### Methods

The research utilized a mixed-methods approach, combining quantitative and qualitative data collection. Surveys were administered to 753 adolescents (382 girls and 371 boys, aged 10–19, with an average age of 15.3 years) and 375 caregivers. Qualitative data were gathered through interviews with 144 adolescents, 72 parents, and 22 community leaders and officials. Survey modules covered themes such as education, livelihoods, food security, health, and psychosocial well-being, while qualitative interviews explored the conflict's deeper impacts and ongoing recovery efforts. The selected districts experienced varying patterns of violence, providing a comprehensive understanding of the conflict's multifaceted effects.



#### Findings

##### 1. Livelihoods and Food Security:

- ▶ **Displacement and Asset Loss:** The conflict displaced 82% of households, with nearly half losing productive assets and 41% facing hunger. Farming disruptions, including destroyed crops and restricted access to fertilizers, worsened food insecurity.
- ▶ **Social Protection Challenges:** While 99% of households received emergency aid, coverage was inconsistent, and support from the Productive Safety Net Programme (PSNP) was limited, leaving many families vulnerable.
- ▶ **Youth Migration:** Economic devastation has driven many adolescents to migrate, with increasing numbers seeking work in urban areas or abroad.

##### 2. Education:

- ▶ **Enrollment Declines:** Before the conflict, 98% of adolescents were enrolled in school. Currently, only 62% remain enrolled, with boys disproportionately dropping out due to economic pressures and trauma.
- ▶ **Barriers to Recovery:** Schools were destroyed, materials looted, and teachers killed or displaced. Efforts like accelerated learning programs have been insufficient in addressing the gap left by three years of interrupted education.

##### 3. Psychosocial Well-being:

- ▶ **Trauma and Fear:** Nearly 39% of adolescents witnessed violence, and 23% were injured. Persistent fear and mistrust in the peace process hinder recovery.
- ▶ **Limited Support:** Only 19% accessed psychosocial services, despite widespread trauma. Adolescents reported ongoing distress, exacerbated by the lack of formal mental health services.

##### 4. Bodily Integrity and Gender-Based Violence:

- ▶ **Sexual Violence and Child Marriage:** While only 4% of girls reported sexual violence in surveys, qualitative data revealed higher prevalence due to stigma. Child marriage increased as families sought to protect daughters from sexual violence.

- ▶ **FGM Resurgence:** Female genital mutilation (FGM) has re-emerged in some areas, reversing progress made prior to the conflict.



##### 5. Health:

- ▶ **Service Disruption:** Health services, including maternity care and HIV treatment, were severely disrupted, with only 15% reporting full recovery. Adolescents requiring specialized care, such as war veterans with injuries, were often neglected.
- ▶ **Reproductive Health Challenges:** Access to contraception and antenatal care was significantly reduced, with long-term implications for adolescent girls' health.

#### Conclusions and Implications for Policy and Programming

The study highlights the profound and interrelated impacts of the conflict on adolescents in Tigray. Addressing their needs is critical to ensuring a sustainable recovery and fostering long-term peace. Key recommendations include:

##### 1. Livelihoods and Food Security:

- ▶ Expand PSNP coverage and prioritize support for households with newly acquired disabilities.
- ▶ Provide skill-building programs and access to credit for youth to foster economic recovery.
- ▶ Sustain food aid and cash transfers to rebuild productive assets and reduce hunger.

**2. Education:**

- ▶ Rebuild schools, restore materials, and address teacher shortages.
- ▶ Implement tailored recovery programs, including psychosocial support and remedial education.
- ▶ Encourage re-enrollment by subsidizing education costs and targeting outreach to displaced students.



**3. Health:**

- ▶ Rebuild health infrastructure, focusing on maternal and reproductive health services.
- ▶ Expand adolescent-friendly services and address gaps in HIV care.

**4. Psychosocial Well-being:**

- ▶ Train teachers and health workers in trauma-informed care and establish school-based counseling services.
- ▶ Develop community-based psychosocial programs to support adolescents and their families.

**5. Bodily Integrity:**

- ▶ Strengthen anti-FGM and anti-child marriage initiatives through awareness campaigns and legal enforcement.
- ▶ Empower girls through gender-focused programming and re-establish protective community structures.



Research Summaries from CYW-RPF presentations

Exploring Intra-Household Decision-Making and Best Practice Adoption Outcomes of Women-Targeted Digital Extension

Fitsum Dagmawi and Samuel Tesfaye

**Introduction**

The Impacting Gender and Nutrition through Innovative Technical Exchange in Agriculture (IGNITE) project, in collaboration with Digital Green's Digital Agricultural Advisory Services (DAAS), aims to address gender disparities in agricultural extension services. Women in Ethiopia, particularly in wheat farming, face multiple barriers such as limited access to information, extension services, and agricultural inputs. In 2021, DAAS introduced women-only farmer training groups, hypothesizing that this modality

could mitigate these barriers, enhance knowledge of best practices, increase adoption rates, and improve women's decision-making power in agriculture. This research compares the outcomes of women trained in women-only groups, mixed-sex groups, and households where only male members attended training.

**Methodology**

The study utilized a mixed-methods approach consisting of:

- 1. **Qualitative Research:** Focus group discussions, in-depth interviews, and

video observation sessions in seven kebeles in Oromia.

- 2. **Quantitative Surveys:** Conducted in two rounds with 1,740 farmers (895 women and 845 men) from 27 kebeles in the Amhara region. The surveys included household interviews and plot observations.

The research faced sampling challenges, particularly in recruiting women from mixed-sex groups, and adjusted the methodology to ensure representativeness. Inverse probability weights were applied to control for socio-demographic differences across groups.



**Findings**

**1. Knowledge of Best Practices (BPs):**

- ▶ Women in both women-only and mixed-sex groups demonstrated increased knowledge compared to untrained women. However, there were no consistent differences between women-only and mixed-sex groups.
- ▶ Men generally exhibited higher knowledge scores, particularly in traditionally male-dominated activities such as weeding and crop protection. Women-only groups performed slightly better in female-associated tasks like weeding.

**2. Decision-Making Power:**

- ▶ Women trained in either group type reported greater involvement in decision-making compared to untrained women.
- ▶ Joint decision-making increased for trained women, particularly in pest management and income utilization.
- ▶ Women in mixed-sex groups were more likely to independently decide on wheat sales, while women in women-only groups favored joint decision-making.

**3. Adoption of Best Practices:**

- ▶ Training attendance correlated with higher adoption of certain practices, such as correct fertilizer use. However, inconsistencies arose in harvesting practices, where trained women adopted fewer best practices.
- ▶ No significant differences in adoption rates were found between women-only and mixed-sex groups.

**4. Perceptions of Women-Only Groups:**

- ▶ Women-only groups were valued for providing a safe environment conducive to learning, enabling participants to ask questions freely and overcome cultural barriers.
- ▶ Scheduling flexibility and gender-sensitive content further enhanced accessibility for women.



**Recommendations**

**1. Expand Women-Only Training Groups:**

- ▶ These groups attract more women who might otherwise be excluded from extension programs. Their inclusive environment encourages participation and learning.

**2. Enhance Training Content and Modalities:**

- ▶ Tailor content to address specific knowledge gaps, such as harvesting and post-harvest practices.
- ▶ Incorporate more interactive and engaging delivery methods to complement video-mediated training.

**3. Increase Female Representation Among Development Agents (DAs):**

- ▶ Women farmers often prefer training from female agents. Recruiting and training more female DAs can improve program efficacy.

**4. Encourage Joint Participation:**

- ▶ Promoting joint training for couples may help address intra-household information asymmetry and foster equitable decision-making.

**5. Monitor and Address Adoption Barriers:**

- ▶ Investigate and address the reasons behind lower adoption rates of some best practices, particularly those requiring significant labor or inputs.

**6. Strengthen Data Collection and Analysis:**

- ▶ Address discrepancies in attendance reporting and refine sampling strategies to ensure robust, actionable insights.



**Conclusion**

This study highlights the potential of women-targeted digital extension models to improve knowledge, decision-making, and adoption of best practices in Ethiopian wheat farming. While women-only groups provide an inclusive platform for marginalized women, outcomes are similar to mixed-sex groups in terms of knowledge and adoption. Expanding women’s access to training in any modality is crucial for achieving gender-equitable agricultural development.



**Interested to Know about CYW-RPF?**

The Child Research and Practice Forum (CRPF) was recently renamed Children, Youth and Women Research and Practice Forum (CYW-RPF) in order to expand the mandate of the Forum at the request of stakeholders and after holding a survey poll of the mailing list members.

CRPF was established in 2010 to promote work on child research, policy and practice. CWY-RPF makes use of monthly seminars, quarterly newsletters and annual publications as a means to achieve its objectives. The publications are also available on the Young Lives Ethiopia website (<https://www.younglives-ethiopia.org/>). CYW-RPF is organized by Young Lives with the Ministry of Women and Social Affairs and UNICEF.

If you want to know more, please contact us via [crpf.ethiopia@gmail.com](mailto:crpf.ethiopia@gmail.com)