

Editor's Note

Dear readers,

We are pleased to welcome you to the January 2017 CRPF quarterly newsletter. This edition brings to you the summary of a new working paper on early marriage and summaries of research pieces presented at the Ministry of Women & Children's Affairs CRPF monthly seminars on girls' education, pre-primary education, and social cash transfer programs. We look forward to your comments, suggestions, and contributions. For more information, please contact us via crpf.ethiopia@gmail.com or 011-1-54-01-05/21.



New Working Paper

The Interplay between Community, Household and Child-Level Influences on Trajectories to Early Marriage in Ethiopia

Alula Pankhurst, Agazi Tiemelissan and Nardos Chuta

Child marriage is a global concern and a priority issue for the African Union; the Ethiopian government has devised a strategy to eliminate the practice by 2025.

This paper analyses Young Lives survey and qualitative data from girls aged 19 to understand pathways to early marriage, which the authors argue can best be explained by a combination of interacting factors at community, household and individual levels.

Key findings:

- ◆ The findings confirm that child marriage is primarily a female, rural phenomenon, with regional and local differences related to cultural norms.
- ◆ Household characteristics are also important; parental education, especially that of the father, reduces the likelihood of child marriage. Parental death and absence was highlighted in the qualitative case material.
- ◆ The gender imbalance is stark, with 13 per cent of teenage girls married compared to less than 1 per cent of boys.

Girls continuing with schooling were less likely to get married, but most left school first due to family poverty and problems.

- ◆ Paid work at 15 was found to be statistically significant as a predictor of early marriage, while case material suggests that some girls chose marriage over jobs involving hard labor.
- ◆ In considering intergenerational relations in marital decision-making and the agency of girls the evidence suggests that younger teenage girls had less say in choosing a partner and that girls who had known their partner longer were more likely to have made the choice themselves.
- ◆ Although the survey data suggest that parental imposition is still strong in particular among younger girls, the case material suggests that girls have more agency in marriage than tends to be assumed. ■

Access the full paper here at: <http://www.younglives.org.uk/node/8296>.



Research Summaries

Assessment of the Status of O-Class in Four Regional States of Ethiopia

Tirussew Tefera and Belay Hagos [World Bank]

Purpose

The objective of the assessment is to profile O-Classes in four regional states of Ethiopia, identify gaps and opportunities, and suggest short-term interventions including the training of O-Class facilitators.

Methodology

The assessment used a qualitative research design. The study was limited to thirty six O-Classes in four regional states (Amhara, Tigray, SNNP and Benishangul-Gumuz) because of time and financial constraints.

Data were collected from three woredas in each of the regions, a total of 12 woredas. Heads of education offices in these woredas were interviewed. Nine government primary schools having O-Classes were sampled from each woreda; with a total of 36 schools. In each school, four data sources were included in the research: School principals (interviews), facilitators (interviews), parents of O-Class children (FGDs), and observation of O-Classes.

Findings

Children's Profile

- ◆ The age of the children varies widely from school to school with the majority being within the age range of 5 to 6 years in all four regions.
- ◆ There appears to be a comparable trend in gender proportion only in the Amhara region.
- ◆ National figures show that the participation rate of children with special needs is generally insignificant.
- ◆ Absenteeism and dropout in O-Classes seemed to be minimal mainly because there are good school practices of closely following up the children when they show trends of absenteeism and try to get them back to school.
- ◆ Children's family background is more or less similar across regions - most children come from low-income families with parents who are not able to read and write.

Facilitators' Profile

- ◆ All the O- Class facilitators were females and their ages ranged from 20 – 59 years.
- ◆ All of the facilitators have completed secondary education (10th grade in the new or 12th grade in the old system) without further education or with diploma, certificate-level training or training that ranges from two to three days orientation to tailor-made short-term training given for three consecutive summers.
- ◆ Facilitators' background is quite heterogeneous in terms of work experience. Some had no work experience at all; others served as primary school facilitators, volunteers, librarians, facilitators of adult education and one facilitator had a military background without any relevant training.
- ◆ According to the data obtained from the O-Class facilitators, woreda education office representatives and school principals, most of them were recruited and selected by the education offices.
- ◆ Facilitators have different working hours and some undertake additional paid activities with their free time.
- ◆ Data obtained from the facilitators indicate that although the salary is not attractive, all of them have an interest to work as O- Class facilitators.



- ◆ While many of the facilitators liked their job as an O-Class facilitator, almost all of them complained about their salary.

Materials and Physical Conditions

- ◆ It was observed that all of the O-Classes are found in the premises of the primary schools either sharing almost all the resources of the school including facilitators or with a fenced compound of its own and separate resources, or a combination of the two - partially separated and partially combined.

Nature of Interaction in the Classroom

- ◆ Large class size, lack of child-engaging resources, and row-based seating arrangements seem to limit child-centered interaction and set out facilitator-centered O-Classes.

Child's Typical Day

- ◆ Days of the children or school time, activities, and duration are not uniform; but greatly differ from school to school.

Parental Involvement

- ◆ Parents indicated that they visit the school when invited, usually for annual or biannual parent meetings.

Support to O-Class

- ◆ Woreda education offices, school principals, O- Class facilitators and parents have reported that support to O-classes have been provided by various stakeholders.

Conclusion and Recommendations

O-Class in the study sites were found to have some strengths, opportunities, and contributions. As expected, this has contributed a lot in terms of accessing early years' education by a large number of children entitled for the service.

The government needs to show a renewed interest and commitment to establish O-Class as a program, service, and system of its own.

Professionally, there is a need to empower teacher education colleges so that they would provide quality early childhood care and education. ■

Research Summaries

Local Economy and Social Capital Impacts of the Social Cash Transfer Program in Tigray, Ethiopia: A Local Economy-wide Cost-benefit Analysis

J. Edward Taylor [UNICEF]



Introduction

The Social Cash Transfer Pilot Programme in the Tigray Region (SCTPP) transfers cash to households with vulnerable children, elderly members, and persons with disabilities. It was introduced in 2011 in two *woredas* (Hintalo Wajirat and Abi Adi) by the regional government of Tigray with the support of the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), Irish Aid and HelpAge International.

Purpose

A key goal of the Tigray region SCTPP is to increase social capital in the beneficiary households.

Methodology

To identify impacts of the SCTPP on social capital, the authors followed the propensity score matching (PSM) technique used by an FAO evaluation. They also used the baseline data to estimate the impact of social capital on household income while controlling for other key income determinants, following household versions of the Mincer earnings model.

Findings

- ◆ The SCTPP has an immediate impact on income in beneficiary households; beneficiaries' income increases initially by the amount of the transfer.
- ◆ The econometric analysis shows that the SCTPP significantly increased the social capital of beneficiary households. Social capital, in turn, has a significant and positive impact on beneficiaries' income in addition to the amount of cash received. Households' spending patterns also changed after the SCTPP was implemented.
- ◆ The local-economy simulations reveal that the direct-plus-social-capital impact of the SCTPP on poor households' income generates significant positive income spillovers in both Hintalo Wajirat and Abi Adi, including income gains for non-beneficiary households.

- ◆ The potential benefits of SCTs are complex, encompassing income gains to beneficiary households, income spillovers to non-beneficiary households, as well as other impacts to which it is difficult to assign economic values (e.g., optimism about the future and happiness).
- ◆ The SCTPP increases beneficiaries' social capital, which in turn is associated with higher income. The indirect effect of the SCTPP via social capital adds to the direct impacts of cash transfers on beneficiaries' income, while creating larger local income spillovers.

Conclusions

The main objective of SCTPP is to improve the living standards of poor and vulnerable households, reduce malnutrition, improve health status, and increase school enrolment.

The impacts of the SCTPP on social capital in beneficiary households increases the program's future flow of economic benefits, for eligible as well as for ineligible households.

The benefits documented in this study are in addition to other benefits of SCT programs, including meeting basic needs and achieving human development, particularly among children.

Both the transfers themselves and the social capital they create in treated households generate income spillovers that add to the multiplier effect of the SCTPP in local economies.

Complementary support programs that enhance growth in social capital or its positive impact on local income multipliers could increase the benefits of social cash transfers, both on beneficiaries and non-beneficiaries. ■



Research Summaries

From Early Marriage, Risky Migration, Domestic Work and Street Life to Transformative Education

Ruth Desta [CHADET]

Introduction

The Girls' Education Challenge (GEC) Project sought to get 17,503 girls aged 6-19 and marginalised by early marriage, risky child migration, street-life and domestic labour into primary and lower secondary education, keep them there, and make sure they learn.

Purpose

The Project aimed to focus on girls at three levels: Individual, school and family and community.

At **individual girl level**, the project focused on delivering individualized academic and life skills to all 17,503 girls reached (for example books and uniforms, and mathematics, English, Amharic and Afan-Oromo tutorials).

At **school level**, it focused on creating safer, stimulating and less discriminatory environments (for example training teachers, supporting girls with disability (GWDs), placing letter-link boxes for children to report abuse, building toilets, establishing girls' reading corners and clubs for girls and boys).

At **family and community level**, the focus was increasing knowledge and skills to support marginalized girls' education (for example conducting community conversations, providing income grants to families and supporting stakeholders' committees to better coordinate girl's education and child protection issues).

Methodology

A quasi-experimental design was used for comparing the results between treatment and control groups to evaluate the impact of the program implementation at end-line. Difference in differences (DiD) analysis was then conducted to assess the causal effect of the program.

Findings

♦ **Literacy findings:** The Project has not had a statistically significant impact on literacy outcomes for the girls involved in both treatment and control groups. However, there were improvements in Connected Text Oral Reading Fluency (CTORF) scores that were statistically significant.

♦ **Numeracy findings:** The Project can be seen to have had a significant impact on numeracy outcomes for the girls involved. Numeracy outcomes improved in both groups but the improvement was greater in the treatment group (statistically significant).

♦ **Attendance rates findings:** The Project has had an impact on attendance rates for the girls involved.

♦ **Self-efficacy and self-esteem findings:** The Project has achieved significant improvements on self-efficacy and self-esteem rates for the girls involved. Self-efficacy and self-esteem outcomes improved in both groups but for each outcome the improvement was greater in the treatment group.

Recommendations

♦ **CHADET and ChildHope should think about supporting girls in their transitions:** Increase a focus on supporting girls to transition from upper primary to lower secondary, from lower secondary to upper secondary, from primary into vocational education, from education into work, from childhood into adulthood. An increase in focus on transitions will enable the project to solidify its catalytic credentials.

♦ **CHADET and ChildHope should deepen efforts around building girls' self-efficacy:** Girls should be supported to make decisions to succeed. It is critical to the achievement of learning and the transition into higher education or work.

♦ **CHADET and ChildHope should consider re-thinking the role of boys in girls' education:** Significant numbers of boys are creating difficult conditions for girls in school. They resent the restricted targeting of benefits to only girls. ■



Photo credit: © Antonio Fiorente

Young Lives' Global Website: www.younglives.org.uk