

# Educational choices in Ethiopia: What determines whether poor children go to school?

## INTRODUCTION

Ethiopia has one of the lowest primary school enrolment rates and one of the highest illiteracy rates in the world. In 2002 Ethiopia's adult literacy rate was 41.5 per cent and its gross primary enrolment rate was 66 per cent, significantly worse than the average for low income countries of 63.9 per cent and 98.6 per cent respectively.<sup>1</sup>

Government efforts have focused on expanding access to primary education, particularly in rural areas, but as a consequence, insufficient resources have been allocated to improving the quality of education.<sup>2</sup> Recent education reforms have resulted in progress towards access-related targets: the net rate of primary school enrolment increased from 35 per cent in 1997-1998 to approximately 57.4 per cent in 2003-2004. The Ministry of Education itself acknowledges that the need to allocate resources to expand coverage has diverted resources away from investment in quality-related improvements – teacher to student ratio, curricula reform, textbook to student ratio<sup>1</sup> – so the quality of schooling is likely to decrease. Completion rates in primary school remain much lower than enrolment rates.

Table 1

REGION	MALE	FEMALE	TOTAL
Addis Ababa	90.3	97.6	94.0
Harari	91.7	72.9	82.5
Benishangul-Gumuz	86.3	65.2	76.0
Gambella	89.6	54.2	72.5
Tigray	63.6	68.7	66.1
SNNP	74.2	52.6	63.5
Oromia	70.7	52.4	61.6
Dire Dawa	67.6	52.8	60.4
Amhara	54.6	53.1	53.9
Somale	14.8	7.8	11.6
Afar	12.6	9.0	11.0
Average	65.1	53.3	59.4

Net Enrolment Rate (NER) at Primary (1–8) Level by Region  
Ministry of Education, 2003/2004

Another key problem in Ethiopia is the presence of regional, urban/rural and gender disparities. Figures set out in Table 1 show a great variation in enrolment ratios between regions, with a particular contrast between urban regions like Addis Ababa and Harari – with a 94 per cent enrolment rate – and rural regions such as the Southern Nations, Nationalities, and Peoples Region (SNNP) trailing by nearly 30 percentage points. The nationwide gap between boys and girls is high but is generally even wider in rural areas. Regional disparities are largely explainable by distance to school: according to statistics from the Ministry of Education, a quarter of the population lives four or more kilometres away from primary schools – implying a very high cost in terms of time, transport, energy and safety for children to attend school on a regular basis.

There are conflicting opinions as to whether Ethiopia will achieve Millennium Development Goal Number 2 – universal primary education (UPE) – by 2015. Based on an analysis of existing trends, Ethiopia's enrolment rate would need to grow at an annual rate of 3.8 per cent in order to achieve UPE. A recent estimate by UNDP suggests Ethiopia has considerable potential to achieve the goal even before 2015.<sup>4</sup> However, there is concern that persistent problems within the formal education system, as well as external factors that affect household decisions on schooling, could prevent the goal from being met. It should be noted that the projection that Ethiopia is on track is based on the country's average enrolment rate. It conceals the fact that the goal is not likely to be met in the country as a whole as rural enrolment rates would need to increase at an improbably rapid rate – given the paucity of currently available resources.

There is an additional dimension that needs to be tackled in order to improve schooling indicators. While the general focus has been on supply of educational services, not much attention has been paid to out-of-school factors that influence the demand for schooling. This is a concern which the Young Lives Project (YL) – a 15-year longitudinal policy-research project in four countries (Ethiopia, India (Andhra Pradesh), Peru and Vietnam) which aims to reveal the links between international and national policies and children's day-to-day lives, with the objective of influencing national policies to improve the wellbeing of children living in poverty – seeks to emphasise.

Achieving UPE will necessitate not only sustaining and improving current policies in the education sector but also identifying complementary policy interventions to address the range of external causes for insufficient school enrolment.

## II. SUPPLY-SIDE POLICIES IN THE EDUCATION SECTOR

Recognising the fundamental role of education in social development and poverty reduction, the first multi-year Education Sector Development Plan (ESDP I) in 1997 initiated a range of programmes related to the provision of educational services (generally dubbed 'supply side' programmes) that have continued to be supported. These include:

- increasing the number of, and upgrading, school buildings
- expanding teacher training programmes
- allowing children to progress between grades one and three without being held back on account of inadequate performance
- using local languages in the classroom
- developing context-appropriate primary school syllabi and textbooks
- eliminating school fees
- developing quality assessment mechanisms.

However, the mid-term review of ESDP I shows that while there has been progress in expanding enrolment and improving some inequalities, the quality of education has deteriorated. This is reflected in shortages of qualified primary school teachers and textbooks, increasing class sizes and an inadequate curriculum. It is hoped that ESDP II will build on the achievements of the first phase and overcome its shortcomings.

Financing concerns in the education sector hinder efforts to address Ethiopia's educational crisis. The sector is heavily dependent on external assistance, making it vulnerable to changes in donor policy. Although the government officially allocates 13.4 per cent of its total expenditure to education, as a result of delays in transfer of funds and failure to fulfil commitments, it has only been able to cover 64 per cent of the total education budget for the period 2002-05.

Given that universal primary education for all by 2015 is one of the eight Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) to which the international donor community pledged in 2000, it is essential that donors work closely with the Ethiopian government in order to achieve this goal. In practice, however, in 2003 aid to Ethiopia was just US \$21.50 per capita per year.<sup>5</sup> Government and donor estimates for Ethiopia suggest that it will take US \$122 billion to meet the 2015 MDG deadline, including the allocation of US \$33.4 billion for rural development and food security, and US \$13.1 billion for health. This translates into approximately US \$125 per capita per year. Assuming that the Government can mobilise domestic resources for half this amount, nearly US \$62 per capita per year in aid, it would still be insufficient. In order to tackle poverty reduction effectively, it will be important to not only increase overseas development assistance (ODA) but also its allocation to core sectors. In recent years 31% of total ODA has been allocated to humanitarian assistance while the agriculture, education and health sectors received only seven per cent of total allocations, which is well below these sectors' financial needs. Ultimately, the long-term sustainability of sectoral policies should be aimed at reducing dependence on external finance, but this necessitates a transition to more adequate and efficient levels of public spending in the social sector. Efforts to maximise resources, particularly in education, require increased fiscal and expenditure efficiency, including better management, targeting and use of resources to ensure that national programmes have increased ownership and stability.

### III. FACTORS AFFECTING THE DEMAND FOR SCHOOL <sup>6</sup>

In addition to education sector shortcomings, it is also necessary to explore another set of causes that result in the persistent problem of low enrolment and reduced demand for education services.<sup>7</sup>

YL quantitative findings are based on descriptive and multivariate analyses of data designed to explore correlations between children’s enrolment in school and factors outside the school system that affect enrolment.<sup>8</sup> The variables in the analysis included: household wealth index; parental education; structural social capital (defined as citizens’ participation in community groups); school accessibility (proxied by distance); household size; child work; economic shocks and ownership of land.<sup>9</sup> The multivariate analysis robustly indicated that the following factors had a significant impact on child enrolment:

- a) **Household Wealth:** The decision to send a child to school depends to a large extent on the direct and indirect costs to the household and their capacity to afford them. Direct costs include clothing, books, transport, and school fees. Indirect costs include loss of children’s wages if schooling competes with paid work, or the loss of children’s unpaid labour on the family farm or doing household chores. Given that rural households are more sensitive to schooling costs, even small charges can have an impact on rural households and lead to higher drop-out rates than similar charges in urban areas. YL research confirmed previous findings that children who combine school with work are considerably more likely not to enrol in school or to drop out before the end of the school cycle.

There is evidence in the literature<sup>10</sup> that the type and amount of child work will depend on the relative wealth of poor households. Ownership of labour-intensive productive assets (like land and livestock) can have a positive effect on schooling if they generate enough wealth for households to afford the cost of hiring outside labour, and hence free children from working for the family. However, asset ownership can also have the opposite effect on schooling given that owners of land and livestock may engage their children in tending livestock or cultivating land instead of sending them to school. Lack of access to credit is also a constraining factor since additional resources obtained through credit could be used by landowners to employ labourers instead of using their children.<sup>11</sup>

Table 2

RELATIVE IMPACT	FACTORS WITH NEGATIVE IMPACT ON CHILD ENROLMENT	FACTORS WITH POSITIVE IMPACT ON CHILD ENROLMENT
1	The number of household members over the age of 15 years	Household wealth
2	Ownership of livestock	Maximum level of education attained by female adults in the household
3	The number of events/shocks that decrease household welfare	Ownership or rental of land
4	Distance to primary school	Maximum level of education obtained by male adults
5	Structural social capital	Structural social capital
6	The number of children between 5 and 15 years in the household	
7	Hours spent on chores, household work or childcare	
8	The involvement of the child in paid work	

- b) **Parental education:** Parental education, and particularly mothers’ education, is frequently presented in the literature as a strong predictor of children’s educational achievement. It is assumed that educated parents are more able to recognise the long-term benefits of education and thus provide their children with a better education - which often means entry into more lucrative non-farm occupations. Additionally, educated parents may derive more satisfaction from educated children than illiterate parents. YL analysis confirmed that higher parental education does indeed have a significantly positive effect on the probability of Ethiopian children being in school.
- c) **Distance to school:** Distance to school was found to be one of the most common explanatory factors for non-attendance. This is due to the higher opportunity (time) and direct (transport) costs, as well as the potential risks for children of travelling long distances on their own.

- d) **Household composition:** The size and composition of the family is another factor that can affect children's schooling. In the Ethiopian context, it has been argued that, other factors remaining constant, the greater the number of children within a family, the greater the probability of their enrolment,<sup>12</sup> reflecting the greater availability of labour in the household for agricultural and domestic work. This is closely related to the birth order effect, which means that children with older siblings are less likely to drop out of school, as labour burdens are shared among older family members. In addition, it has been argued that children are more likely to be enrolled in school in female-headed households. There are two probable explanations. Women have stronger beliefs that educated children are less likely to become poor adults and that their enhanced earning capacity will make them more likely to help to reduce their own old-age poverty.

*The following quotes from recent YL qualitative research on attitudes towards education in Ethiopia are useful to illustrate some of the main causes for low enrolment:<sup>13</sup>*

#### **Parental education**

*"If there is a power cut, my mother gets gas [used for lighting] if there isn't any at home. She borrows gas from the neighbours so that I can see and study. She has a saying: "A meal is good for today but not for tomorrow" and the same goes for schooling, she says I have to study today as there will be nothing else that I can carry over to tomorrow. She tells me to use my head and study".*

*A child from Kirkos, a YL site in Addis Ababa*

#### **Household wealth**

*"I have no money to pay for the expenses of her education. One of my children is attending school. Another one was also in school but quit due to our financial problems. The rest could not get an opportunity because of lack of money".*

*YL parent from Bilbala, a YL site in Amhara Region*

#### **Gender barriers**

*"Traditionally there has been an overriding attitude that there is nothing to be gained from sending girls to school. So there has been this tendency to prefer them for their services at home... Besides, it is believed that sending girls to school means spoiling them culturally. Also, there have been no success stories of educated girls".*

*School teacher in rural Bilbala, a YL site in Amhara Region*

## IV. POLICY IMPLICATIONS

Given that there are multiple factors that influence children's decisions to enrol and stay in school, policies must be multi-sectoral. Policy recommendations derived from YL's findings can be grouped into three broad categories: education sector reforms, financing reforms and cross-sectoral reforms:

### Education sector reforms

#### ❖ Recognising the importance of investing in female education

YL research confirmed the strong association between higher levels of adult female education and child enrolment. Investment in girls' education should be prioritised, not only because it would show Ethiopia's commitment to fulfil the right of girls to attend school, but because there is evidence showing that educated mothers are more likely to encourage their own children to enrol in school, to promote child health and children's nutritional wellbeing.<sup>14</sup>

The government has expressed commitment to female education – in its Education and Training Policy, the Sustainable Development and Poverty Reduction Paper (SDPRP),<sup>15</sup> and Population Policy and Social Welfare Policy. However, a pro-active collaborative approach is required to move beyond rhetoric. Possible measures could include:

- development of female-specific adult literacy programmes, particularly in rural areas
- subsidised community childcare arrangements or pre-school services in order to prevent children (mostly girls) shouldering their mother's childcare burden if they become more involved in the workforce
- empowerment programmes for women, such as targeted income-generating opportunities (which in several developing countries have taken the form of micro-credit schemes). These could have knock-on impacts on aggregate household wealth and children's educational attainment
- improved toilet facilities in schools, particularly separate toilets for girls.

#### ❖ Development of lower cost alternative education programmes

YL data findings add to mounting evidence on the negative correlation between school distance and enrolment, particularly in rural areas. We found this effect to be greater with girls, largely because parents are concerned about daughters travelling further where they could be exposed to risks of rape and abduction. Policy initiatives are needed to improve the accessibility to schools. While the most obvious policy option would seem to call for the construction of more schools and development of a standard for equitable distribution of schools in every region or woreda, cost constraints are a significant obstacle. A more feasible alternative (with spill-over economic benefits) would be to invest in roads, public lighting and community transport.

Another more realistic option for building, staffing and maintaining new schools is to develop lower cost alternative education programmes in under-provisioned areas. Following successful pilots by NGOs in several regions, such programmes are now being rolled out by the Ministry of Education. These alternative education programmes not only address shortcomings in educational infrastructure, but also help children achieve a balance between work demands (paid or unpaid) and school, by having flexible schedules. Those children whose labour is required for herding may thus attend evening classes. The school calendar can be adjusted to the harvest season, with holidays scheduled around the times when children are needed to work on family farms.

While the ESDP and the SDPRP have recognised non-formal education programmes as a policy priority, budget commitments remain low. There are exceptions in the Amhara and Oromia regions where such programmes have been introduced with reasonable coverage.

### ❖ Enhancing educational aspirations among conservative community groups

Fostering social capital is often cited as a mechanism to promote education by involving the broader community and using networks to disseminate the value of educational attainment.<sup>16</sup> The initial YL finding, however is that in the case of Ethiopia, the main local organisations to which carers belong - funeral societies, religious and community groups - currently have a negative impact on schooling and serve to reinforce conservative social ties, beliefs and values. YL findings do not support the assumption that absolute structural social capital necessarily facilitates information exchange among members. It could be argued that such groups lack the necessary information and awareness about educational services and the benefits of schooling. There is scope for interventions to spread information to the large number of Ethiopians who are members of such organisations. Pro-education information could be conveyed by community radio, civil society organisations and government-citizen meetings at woreda level.

### ❖ Secondary Education

In the medium to long term, resources from the government and international donors are being focused on improving primary schooling – both because it is a building block for other stages of education and employment and also to help Ethiopia meet international goals like the MDGs. However, investment in secondary education must not be neglected. Without access to secondary schooling children who complete primary school will face difficulties. Their education will be insufficient to obtain significantly better income-earning opportunities and they will have few chances to move on to the next level of education, thus failing to benefit from completion of primary education. Therefore, policy-makers in Ethiopia must devise mechanisms to prevent children from falling into this trap.<sup>17</sup>

## Financing reforms

### ❖ Sustainable and predictable international aid

A recent Save the Children study drew attention to the impact of conditionality on education provision,<sup>18</sup> arguing that Ethiopia will need a sustained and predictable increase in external grant aid while the government of Ethiopia works to increase expenditure in productive investments and on income-generating sectors. Priority should be given to the education sector in allocation of aid resources to complement current government efforts in the sector to ensure satisfactory outcomes for children.

### ❖ Effective mobilisation of budgetary resources

In addition to more and better international aid, it is essential to improve effectiveness of internal resource mobilisation to the sector. Useful for this purpose are recent institutional changes such as the devolution of power to sub-national governments and the rural transformation agenda, which is part of Ethiopia's Agricultural Development Lead Industrialisation (ADLI) and a core part of its poverty reduction strategy. ADLI aims to generate a structural transformation of the economy in which rapid growth of the agricultural sector will have a spill-over impact on industrial development and social services expansion both in terms of output and employment. These policy strategies should contribute to improved delivery of social services and poverty reduction through broad-based growth.

### ❖ Cash or in-kind transfers as incentives for children to remain in school

A different approach to promoting education is compensating households for income lost as a result of school attendance. Cash and/or in-kind transfers to poor households can be conditional on school attendance. Donors and the government have recently launched a safety net initiative in food insecure areas which provides food or cash transfers as long as children are sent to school. The key will be to ensure national coverage and effective implementation.

## Cross-sectoral reforms

### ❖ Government support and financing of multi-dimensional strategies

It is critical that the Ethiopian government not only ensures sustainable funding of ongoing educational reforms but also addresses a range of non-budgetary constraints to generate effective educational outcomes. These could include improving basic transport infrastructure to shorten the time and reduce dangers for children travelling to school; tackling household heads' apathy towards their children's schooling through effective information and incentive campaigns, or alleviating falling farming incomes that push rural children to work on family farms by promoting fairer trading conditions for farmers, among others. This multi-dimensional approach needs to be recognised in national and sub-national policy documents, including the next PRSP.

### ❖ Policies to increase household income have to be effectively designed to avoid pushing children into work

YL data corroborated reports that children from wealthier households have a better chance of going to school than children from income-poor or asset-poor households. However, this does not imply that policies that promote income-generating opportunities for poor households, particularly in rural areas and for poor women, necessarily improve schooling. One of our findings is that if such strategies do not incorporate a child-sensitive design, they can inadvertently propel children into labour. There is evidence that income-generating opportunities for women that are not accompanied by community childcare systems, cause older children to shoulder their mother's childcare burden, thus reducing their available time for school attendance and study.

### ❖ New agricultural technologies must be promoted to enable children to attend school

Labour-intensive activities promoted to increase the incomes and assets of poor households should explicitly consider their impact on child wellbeing. YL analysis has found that Ethiopia's ADLI,<sup>19</sup> based on the strengthening of labour-intensive agricultural activities, has indirectly contributed to an increased demand for child labour. We recognise that the strategy has the potential to contribute to the country's progress towards poverty reduction by supporting a sector in which Ethiopia has comparative advantage, but its design should be modified to incorporate child-sensitive measures.

YL data shows that ownership of livestock in Ethiopia is negatively associated with child enrolment since children's labour is usually used for herding cattle. Simply increasing opportunities for households to generate income without changing agricultural technologies or increasing the capacity to use hired adult labour, increases the likelihood of children's direct involvement. It should be possible to reduce this probability without reducing livestock revenue through the introduction of more time-efficient methods of keeping animals. These include:

- Preparing packages with readily-available feed for livestock to reduce children's daily burden of taking animals to grazing areas
- maintaining a school shift system so children can balance school and work
- reducing the number of cattle kept by households and encouraging a shift in focus from quantity to quality
- providing enclosures for common grazing land where either pooled community labour (as already practised in Guraghe in southern Ethiopia) or hired adult labour could be used to keep animals from different households, thus freeing children to go to school.

### ❖ Combating gender inequality and discrimination in rural Ethiopia

Evidence from national statistics shows clear gender disparities in education in Ethiopia, mostly found in rural areas. Many parents are still less likely to be supportive of the education of their daughters. One of the main reasons why this still occurs – despite official commitment to promote gender equality in education – is deep-rooted cultural beliefs assigning less value to female education.<sup>20</sup> This is compounded by discriminatory practices that hinder girls' development – such as early marriage, tolerance of abduction<sup>21</sup> and domestic violence as well as the belief that it is not economic to invest in girls as any benefits will accrue to the household she joins on marriage.

In this case, YL recommends:

- grassroots-focused efforts to challenge anti-girl child attitudes
- encouraging stricter enforcement of the Family Law which prohibits marriage of under 18 year-olds
- encouraging community initiatives – involving not only women but males, community leaders, religious leaders and other opinion-shapers – to address cultural barriers that contravene the human rights of children, girls and women.

### ❖ Multi-sectoral programmes to improve community infrastructure and reduce children's work burden

YL research has identified that children are involved in activities such as collecting firewood and fetching water.<sup>22</sup> Investment in wells and piped water sources as well as development of alternative energy sources would reduce the distance to water and wood sources and thus the time children dedicate to fetching these vital household inputs.

### ❖ Programmes that build household resilience to shocks

The greater the number of shocks a household faces, the lower the probability that the household will send its children to school. YL data showed that this impact is more pronounced for rural areas and for male children. This is perhaps because boys are more likely to be called upon to assist households in crisis and because shocks are more prevalent in rural areas.

To reduce the incidence of shocks that might lead to children being taken out of school we urge the Ethiopian government and donors to:

- increase financial support
- implement strategies that build household resilience to crop failure, food shortages and livestock losses – thus allowing them to diversify to reduce vulnerability and dependence on rain or a single source of income
- increase provision of credit to allow farmers to develop a new crop or to engage in a non-agricultural income-earning activity
- ensure that safety net programmes, as well as improved access to markets and roads are in place so as to mitigate the risk of shocks

In conclusion, YL endorses a multi-sector approach to improve the situation of school enrolment in Ethiopia, recognising that factors that affect the demand for educational services need to be addressed in parallel with those targeted to its supply in order to encourage children to attend, and remain in school.



- <sup>1</sup> “Low income countries” as defined in The World Bank, *World Development Indicators 2005*.
- <sup>2</sup> The perceived usefulness of school is generally associated with earnings. Most debates on education policy only include the ‘quantity’ of schooling (in terms of years of schooling), ignoring the substantial variations in the ‘quality’. However, if quality is ignored when calculating returns to schooling, estimated earnings could be miscalculated. If parents view education as an investment in the betterment of children’s lives – and indirectly their own – through the skills and knowledge that children accumulate, then better quality education is more likely to encourage children to remain in school.
- <sup>3</sup> Ministry of Finance and Economic Development (MOFED 2002), *Ethiopia: Sustainable Development and Poverty Reduction Strategy*.
- <sup>4</sup> The Ministry of Finance and Economic Development of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia and the United Nations Country Team, March 2004 *Millennium Development Goals Report: Challenges and prospects for Ethiopia, Volume 1*.
- <sup>5</sup> Selijeflot, K and Tirana, A (2005) *Linking the National Poverty Reduction Strategy to the MDGs: a case study of Ethiopia*, UNDP Report, p. 16
- <sup>6</sup> ‘Demand’ in the policy brief is being taken as a proxy of enrolment.
- <sup>7</sup> There are two additional variables that are critical to understanding the situation of the education sector: attainment (drop out) and achievement. Forthcoming policy briefs will look at these two variables in Ethiopia.
- <sup>8</sup> The results draw on data from the 2002 survey of eight-year-old children in the Young Lives study in 20 sentinel sites in five regions in Ethiopia: Addis Ababa, Oromia, SNNP, Amhara and Tigray. Within these regions, sentinel sites targeted poor areas based on the government’s food insecurity designation. Three out of four sentinel sites in each region are in high food deficit woredas (districts) and one is from a lower food deficit woreda. Consequently, the survey over-sampled the poor in sentinel sites but included a degree of variation of poverty levels for comparative purposes.
- <sup>9</sup> Other variables that were included in the regression but were not significant will not be analysed
- <sup>10</sup> Bhalotra, S and Heady, C (2003) ‘Child farm labour: The wealth paradox’, *World Bank Economic Review*, 17: 197-227.
- <sup>11</sup> Ranjan, P (2001) *Credit constraints and the phenomenon of child labour*, *Journal of Development Economics*, 64: 81-102.
- <sup>12</sup> Mulat, D (1997) *Demand for education and returns to investment in Ethiopia*, *Proceedings from the second annual Conference on Ethiopian Economy on Human Resource Development, 28-30 November, Nazareth, Ethiopia*.
- <sup>13</sup> From Woldehanna, T, Jones, N and Tefera, B (2005) *Children’s educational completion rates and achievement: implications for Ethiopia’s second Poverty Reduction Strategy (2006-10)*, *Young Lives Working Paper 18*.
- <sup>14</sup> Heward, C and Bunwaree S (eds.) (1999) *Gender, education and development: beyond access to empowerment*, Zed Books.

- <sup>15</sup> Ethiopia's first Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP) was called the Sustainable Development and Poverty Reduction Strategy (SDPRP)
- <sup>16</sup> Deshmukh, J (2004) *Women's self help groups in Andhra Pradesh – participatory poverty alleviation in action: a case study for reducing poverty, sustaining growth* presented at World Bank Conference, Scaling Up Poverty Reduction, A Global Learning Process, May 2004, p. 10.
- <sup>17</sup> See Marcus, R (2004) *Promoting disadvantaged young people's employment – what can be done?*, CHIP Policy Briefing 6.
- <sup>18</sup> Ndaruhutse, S and Latham, M (forthcoming); *The impact of IMF Conditionality on education provision: case study Ethiopia*, draft report on desk-based consultancy undertaken for Save the Children, UK in July 2005
- <sup>19</sup> ADLI is one of the pillars of Ethiopia's PRSP, the Sustainable Development and Poverty Reduction Programme (SDPRP).
- <sup>20</sup> Hyde, K, Belay, D, Beyene, A, Biazen, A and Kedir, N (2004) *Taking stock of girls' education in Ethiopia: preparing for ESDP III*, UNICEF, UNESCO and Save the Children, Addis Ababa.
- <sup>21</sup> In some areas of the country, marriage by abduction is practised, especially with the purpose of circumventing dowry-type marriage payments.
- <sup>22</sup> Woldehanna, T, Tefera, B, Jones, N and Bayrau, A (2005) *Child labour, gender inequality and rural/urban disparities: How can Ethiopia's National Development Strategies be revised to address negative spill-over impacts on child education and wellbeing?*, Young Lives Working Paper No. 20.

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This briefing was written by Paola Pereznieto with Nicola Jones.

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The Young Lives Project is an innovative longitudinal study of childhood poverty in Ethiopia, India (Andhra Pradesh State), Peru and Vietnam. Between 2002 and 2015, some 2000 children in each country are being tracked and surveyed at 3-4 year intervals from when they are 1 until 14 years of age. Also, 1000 older children in each country are being followed from when they are aged 8 years.

Young Lives is a joint research and policy initiative aiming to reduce childhood poverty. It is co-ordinated by an academic consortium (composed of the University of Oxford, the University of Reading, the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine, London South Bank University and the South African Medical Research Council) and Save the Children UK, incorporating both inter-disciplinary and North-South collaboration.



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