

# **CHILD MARRIAGE IN NORTH GONDAR ZONE OF AMHARA REGIONAL STATE, ETHIOPIA**

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**A baseline study conducted in six Woredas of North Gondar Zone**

**September 2011**



**Save the Children**  
Norway

**A study Conducted with financial support from  
Save the Children Australia**

## **Save the Children Norway- Ethiopia Programme (SCN-E)**

Save the Children Norway is a non-governmental organization, founded in 1946, and with a vision ‘a world in which every child attains the right to survival, protection, development and participation’. The organization has a mission to inspire breakthroughs in the way the world treats children, and to achieve immediate and lasting change in their lives with values of accountability, ambition, collaboration, creativity and integrity.

Save the Children Norway began its operation in Ethiopia in 1969. Currently SCN-E is working through partnership with 23 governmental, three international and 12 local non-governmental organizations, implementing over 40 projects. The organization has broad intervention programs in the areas of education; child rights governance; emergency response and disaster prevention and preparedness; child protection; HIV and AIDS; and newborn and child survival and maternal health.

For the past decade, SCN-E has been implementing intervention programs for the prevention of harmful traditional practices affecting children and women in Ethiopia. SCN-E has recently launched an intensified and more focused preventive program of action to combat child marriage in the North Gondar Zone of Amahara Region, using a multi-level approach to working with partners at village level with Faith and Community Based Organizations, schools and government offices. The project has an overall goal of contributing to the attainment of girl children to education and protection.

This baseline study, thus, has been conducted to serve as a benchmark to measure post intervention status of the problem and progress of the intervention program in bringing out the desired change and achievement of results.

Baseline study conducted by Save the Children Norway–  
Ethiopia programme, within the framework of the project  
“Combating Child Marriage in North Gondar Zone of Amhara  
Region, Ethiopia”

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## Acronyms

AIDS	Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome
ANOVA	Analysis of Variance
BCC	Behaviour Change Communication
CBO	Community Based Organization
CRC	Convention on the Right of the Child
CSA	Central Statistical Agency
DHS	Demographic and Health Survey
EGLDAM	<i>Ye Ethiopia Goji Limadawi Dirigitoch Aswogaj Mahiber</i>
FBO	Faith Based Organizations
FGD	Focus Group Discussion
FGM	Female Genital Mutilation
HIV	Human immunodeficiency virus
HTP	Harmful Traditional Practice
IEC	Information Education Communication
KAP	Knowledge Attitude and Practice
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
SCN-E	Save the Children Norway – Ethiopia Programme
SNNPR	Sothern Nations Nationalities and Peoples’ Regional State
SPSS	Statistical Package for Social Scientists
SRH	Sexual Reproductive Health
TV	Television
UN	United Nations
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
UNICEF	United Nations Children Fund
USAID	United States Agency for International Development

## NOTES ON TERMINOLOGY

The term child, as defined by the Ethiopian law refers to any person who has not attained the full age of 18 years. Thus, in this study the term *child marriage* refers to marriage concluded between female and male in which case one or both have not attained the full age of 18 years.

There are terms frequently used in the report namely Region, Zone, Woreda and Kebele. Ethiopia follows the federal system and is divided into two chartered cities and nine ethnically based administrative regions, one of which is the Amhara Region. *Zone* is a clustered government administrative system within each Region. Within Zones there are *Woredas*. *Woreda* represent district level government administration structure within a Zone. *Kebele*: these are village level government administrative structures, within Woredas.

## ORGANIZATION OF THE REPORT

This study report is organized into five sections. The first section is the introduction section in which the conceptual background consisting of a brief review of relevant literatures and objectives of the study are presented. The methodological details are presented in the second section. The findings and analysis of the study is presented in detail in section three of the report. The final section presents the conclusion and recommendations for future interventions.



## **Executive Summary**

This baseline survey is conducted in six adjacent Woredas<sup>1</sup> of North Gonder Zone namely, Wegera, Dabat, Debark, Adi-Arkay, Tach-Armachiho, and Metema. The objective of the study was to understand the prevalence and underlining causes of child marriage practices in the studied communities. Added to informing programming, the study was intended to serve as a benchmark to measure post intervention status of the problem and progress of the intervention in bringing out the desired change and achievements of the project objectives and expected results.

The specific objectives of the survey were:

- Assess the current status of Knowledge, Attitude and Practice, and the underlying causes of child marriage in the target Woredas
- Understand the vulnerability to and child protection concerns of the practice on girls and boys in the target Woredas
- Identify the measures taken by different sectors and community initiatives as a response for the problem, and understand existing resources and opportunities in the intervention areas
- Point out challenges for interventions; and provide recommendation for practical intervention to sustainably abandon the practice from the intervention areas

## **Methods**

This study was a cross-sectional design that combined both quantitative and qualitative research methods. Household survey was used as a major source of baseline data. Parents (men and women), adolescent girls aged 10-18, and male youth aged 15-24

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<sup>1</sup> Woreda is a district level government administration structure

were the targets of the household survey. Three Kebeles<sup>2</sup>, one urban and two rural, were selected for the study from each Woreda using purposive sampling method.

The qualitative information was collected through Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) and in-depth interviews with key informants (KII). The in-depth interviews were conducted with heads of the Woredas Women, Youth and Children Affairs Offices, school teachers, religious leaders, community members, health extension workers, Woreda Justice Office heads, Woreda Youth Association leaders, Education Office heads, and Police officers. Focus group discussions were conducted with men, women, adolescent girls and boys.

A total of 24 focus group discussions having eight to twelve participants in each group, and 50 key informant interviews were conducted. And a total of 1,623 people from 716 households participated through the survey questionnaire, of which 1,189 were parents (688 mothers) and 434 were adolescents (248 girls). Review of relevant literature was also used for supporting the findings.

## **Key Findings**

- The study found out that of the total 3,416 people in the surveyed households, 57% of members of the households above 18 years of age were illiterate. Females' illiteracy was much higher than the males' (46.4 % of males against 68 % females). Illiteracy among household members within the age bracket of 7-18 was 15.6 %, while the illiteracy rate was higher in Tach-Armachiho Woreda as compared to the other Woredas.

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<sup>2</sup>Kebele is a village level government administrative structures, within Woredas (districts)

- 80.6 % of women and 25.5 % of men who married before 1991 were married before they reach age 18; after 2002, the prevalence of men marrying before 18 years of age has reduced to 3.6 %, while the prevalence of women who married under 18 years of age was 53.8 % showing only a slight improvement.
- It was only 53.6 % of the respondents who heard information on child marriage related issues. Comparatively, Parents were less informed than their children; and adolescent girls were found relatively less informed than the boys.
- The major source of information for the majority of the population were non-printed media than printed-media, such as schools/teachers, education events at health facilities, community meetings/gatherings, radio and television were among the most common sources of information on child marriage.
- The result indicated that of the total respondents 42.6 % of men, 38.7 % of women, and 56.0 % of male youth respondents reported that they were aware of the existence of a legal minimum age for marriage. Of those who expressed knowing the minimum legal age, only half of them were able to state age 18 as the legal minimum age of marriage for girls. And the average perceived appropriate age of marriage for girls, by respondents, was 14 years while it was 18 years for boys
- It was only 44.2 % of men and 34.4 % of women who were expressed that they know the existence of the Criminal Code against child marriage. Among those who expressed knowing the Criminal Law most lack the details of what it contained, what they know was the mere existence of the law alone. Variations exist between men and women and among the studied Woredas, in which respondents in Tach-Armachiho were less informed (14.4%) about the Criminal Code followed by Debark as compared to other Woredas.
- The study revealed major gap on the enforcement of the law. It was only 30 % of men and 27% of women who come across with at least one community member

who was punished due to arranging child marriage, or cancelled arranged child marriage due to interference by the government and other community initiatives.

- More than two-third of the adolescents and 80 % of the parents, with similar figures among the male and female respondents, still have in their mind that child marriage has some advantages/benefits for girls and the family in general.
- Socio-cultural values, sexual reproductive health (SRH) concerns, and lack of knowledge on the Harmful Consequences of child marriage, were the major reasons for parents to give their girl children for marriage at young age.
- The findings of the study revealed that child marriage was one of the major causes for school drop-out of girls in the studied Woredas
- The study results revealed that in one from ten households there was a female member suffering from pregnancy and birth related health complications, which were identified as ‘suspected fistula’ by the respondents. Absence of effective and timely medical treatment for suspected fistula cases and other teenage pregnancy and birth related complications at the Woreda level made girls more vulnerable to further health complications, which remained as one of the major child protection concerns in the studied Woredas.
- The study finding underlined inadequate services, and lack of coordination among service providing sectors among the major gaps of response. The study also identified community based initiatives in curbing the practice of child marriage, mainly by government sector offices, schools, community based groups, and churches in the studied Woredas, which can be explored further and built up.

## Recommendations

- Designing culturally appropriate strategies towards bringing out informed decision for practice change among parents and other community leaders is fundamental. Intensive community conversations and dialogues, visual and audio education materials and radio programs that discuss the dangers associated with child marriage and the benefits of delaying marriage could be strategic.
- Support intervention programs that promote coordinated efforts and support the mandated government sectors in insuring the enforcement of the law for the protection of girls against the dangers of child marriage could be strategic. Along with this interventions for increased community awareness on the specific laws pertaining to child marriage is fundamental
- Involving male community leaders and educators in an effort to transmit messages against child marriage can be an effective mechanism to change the way men and women perceived child marriage, and help community members to take these messages as a supporting justification to delay marriage
- Homogeneity of the population in the studied Woredas in terms of religion and ethnicity gives an opportunity for using religious leaders as change agents for changing the social norms among parents pertaining to child marriage practice.
- Families in the intervention areas who stood against the child marriage practice and delayed marriage for their children, and those girls who refused for child marriage should be rewarded in some form, as way of formal recognition and to point them out as role models in their communities.
- Research suggests that access to school for girls is crucial to delaying marriage, enabling them control their own destinies and effect change in their communities. Designing programs that supports girls to enrol and retained in school is

fundamental; as well parents and the general public need to be sensitized to support girls' education.

- Providing economic opportunities for girls after they finish school, in the form of skills trainings and micro credit and saving services, can help in changing the beliefs among communities as well girls themselves whereby they consider marriage as their only option for survival.
- Response intervention programmes for those victims of child marriage including those girls with pregnancy and delivery related health complications, those married girls, and support programs for reintegrating those girls running away from child marriage should be designed.
- Intervention programs should include strategies designed specifically to build up on existing resources through capacity building, in supporting coordination, monitoring and follow up of progresses, and scaling up successful interventions.
- Advocacy work to key higher level government sectors is fundamental, magnifying the multifaceted dangers associated with child marriage, to have child marriage as part of their programs and budget, to strengthening the policy framework and enforcement of laws

### Map of Amhara Region

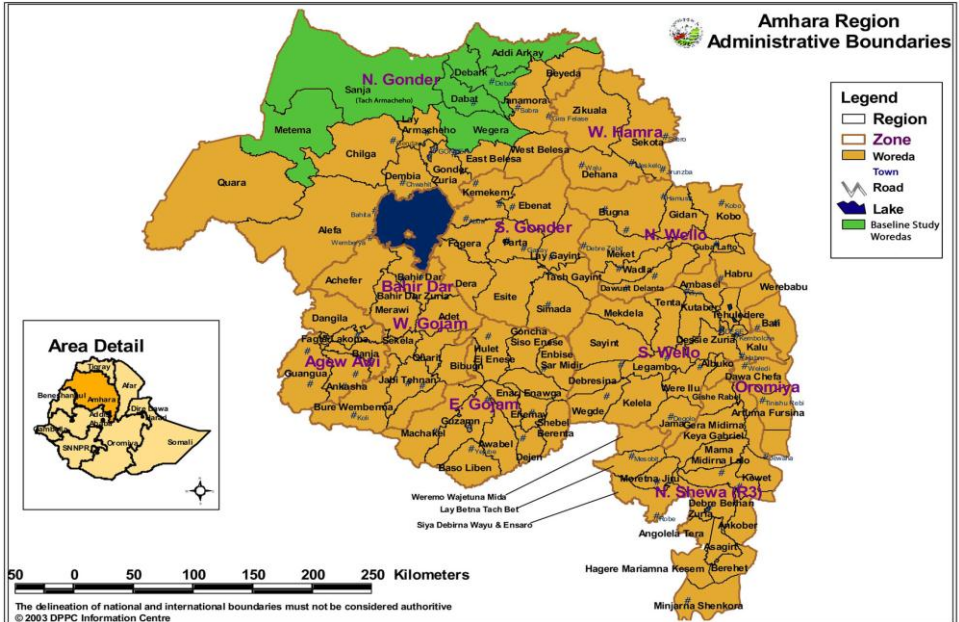


Figure 1-1: Map of Study Woredas

## INTRODUCTION

“Giving a child for marriage is like harvesting crop at the flowering stage”

A community leader and advocate against the practice of child marriage

Marriage is a social institution that unites a couple in a special form of mutual dependence for the purpose of founding and maintaining a family. As this social institution looked through the public religious or traditional ceremony, it reflects the purposes, character, and customs of the society in which it is found. In many societies, there are acceptable age limits for males and females, for marriage, but in some cases the age limit does not take into consideration the developmental readiness of the person. In Ethiopia, marriage marks an important point in a woman’s life as childbearing is highly valued by the society, resulting high social pressure on girls and young women.

### **Child Marriage in Ethiopia: An Overview**

#### ***Prevalence of Child Marriage Practices in Ethiopia***

The 2008 Follow-up National Survey on the Harmful Traditional practices in Ethiopia revealed that the prevalence of child marriage in Ethiopia has decreased at national level to 21.4% from 33.3 percent of the 1997 baseline survey. The survey report also indicated that the child marriage practice was among the highest in the Amhara region of Ethiopia, counting close to 45%, followed by that of Tigray Region which counts 34 % (EGLDAM, 2008). A recent study in seven regions conducted by Population Council



on Ethiopia gender survey also reported that the highest rates of child marriage occurred in the Amhara region, 52 % of respondents being married by age 15 (Population Council, 2010).

### ***Child Marriage - a Human Rights Violation***

Child marriage constitutes violation of basic human rights as being identified as the most harmful traditional practice affecting the wellbeing and development of young girls. Child marriage reduces girls' attainment of education, undermines women's status, and reduces women's prospects for economic and social advancement. Most girls are given for marriage without their free and full consent. Child marriage is closely associated with no or low levels of schooling for girls. These girls are denied the benefits of education, which further results in poor health, higher fertility, and lower economic productivity. In Ethiopia, 80 % of married girls as a child have received no education, and 81 % cannot read at all. It was only 3 % of married girls aged 15–19 have got access to in school, compared to 34 % of unmarried girls (CSA, 2006).

Women who marry young are more likely to be married to older men. A study conducted by Pathfinder International (2006) on the causes and consequences of child marriage in Amhara region found that more than half of child marriages were arranged with a man who was at least 10 years older than the girl. A wide age gap between spouses may be associated with unequal power in the relationship, which may reduce the ability of a young women or a girl to negotiate sex and on use of contraception. Older husbands, on the other hand, have on the average more sexual experience, a greater number of life time sexual partners, and a greater lifetime risk of sexually transmitted infections, including HIV and AIDS, which increases the girl's vulnerability to these infectious diseases.

Child marriage also has health risk implications for girls as it most likely result with having sexual intercourse and childbearing as a child. First birth, in particular for young women below the age of 19, carries special risks for both the mother and her child. The foremost risk first births carry is prolonged or obstructed labour, which can result in obstetric fistulas in settings where access to care is limited. Studies indicated that vesicovaginal fistula and cephalopelvic disproportion commonly occurs when first pregnancy occurs before the growth of the pelvis is complete.

The 2005 Ethiopia DHS revealed that, in Amhara Region, 0.5 % of women reported having ever experienced an obstetric fistula and among those who had ever heard of obstetric fistula, 1.6 % lived in a household where someone else had experienced obstetric fistula. The risk of vesicovaginal fistula is highest among teenage girls who have their first pregnancy before age 16 than among older women. Women below the age of 19 are more likely than older women to suffer from other complications related to pregnancy and delivery, including hypertensive disorders of pregnancy, haemorrhage, toxæmia of pregnancy, and anaemia. Teenage women are also twice as likely as older women to die due to complications during pregnancy and childbirth. Infants born from teenage mothers are more likely to suffer from low birth weight, and are in higher risk of dying in its first year by 60% compared with infants of mothers in their twenties (Nour, 2006; UNICEF2009).

### ***Underlying Causes of Child Marriage Practice***

There are several reasons behind the practice of child marriage in Ethiopia, which differ based on the socio-cultural context of the different ethnicities, the living environment and family condition. In the Amhara region the deep-rooted traditions and socio-cultural concerns are among the major factors behind the practice of child marriage. There is an old traditional belief that a girl will become over aged for marriage if waited till she gets

older, which would cause embarrassment to the family and thus represent a failure on the part of her parents. For reasons of such social concerns and to ensure that the girl secures a husband, families agree to a marriage request to their daughter even when they might not consider the girl old enough. Wish to see grandchildren, creating a family bond with the bridegroom's family, and ensuring the girl's virginity intact are among the other reasons for giving girls for marriage in their young age. Girls are also given for marriage as a child as way of 'protecting' the girls from pre-marital sex and pregnancy. Interests for economic gains in the form of dowry as bridal price and/or material gains during the marriage ceremony are among the other factors behind child marriage in the Amhara Region of Ethiopia (Pathfinder International, 2006; EGLDAM, 2008).

### ***Government's Legislative and Policy Response against Child Marriage***

Ethiopia has ratified international legal documents, including the United Nations Convention on The Rights of the Child (UN-CRC), and the regional instrument - the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child (ACRWC), in 1992 and 1999 respectively. Both instruments prohibit child marriage and promote marriage with full consent by both spouses. The African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child (1990), which Ethiopia is a signatory clearly states in Article 21 that, "*Child marriage and betrothal of girls and boys shall be prohibited and effective action including legislation shall be taken to specify the minimum age of marriage to be 18 years.*"

The FDRE Constitution and the Revised Family Law that incorporated the issue of children in harmony with the UN-CRC and the ACRWC are major national policy documents for insuring the rights and welfare of children. In specific to child marriage, it is clearly stipulated in the Constitution that spouses have equal rights upon entering marriage, during the marriage and in the dissolution of marriage. According to Article 7

of Ethiopia's Revised Family Code of 2000, no marriage may be concluded between a man and a woman who have not attained the full age of 18. The consent parameters of the Revised Family Code also consider marriage to be valid only if spouses give free and full consent to the conclusion of the marriage.

The new Criminal Code of the country that came into force as of May 2005 contains specific provisions with regard to the violation of marriage laws. Regarding child marriage, Article 648 of the Criminal Code specifies *“Whosoever gets married to a minor in contravention of the provisions prescribed specified by the relevant family law shall be punishable with rigorous imprisonment not exceeding three years where the victim is thirteen years old or above; or shall be punishable with rigorous imprisonment of not less than seven years where the victim is less than thirteen years old. The new Criminal Code further states that “Even a person who was present during conclusion of the marriage as a family member to give his consent thereto or one who appeared in the capacity of a witness is also liable to similar punishment”.*

In recognition of such facts about child marriages, SCN-E has recently launched an intensified and more focused preventive program of action to combat child marriage in the North Gondar Zone of Amahara Region, using a multi-level approach to working with partners at village level with Faith and Community Based Organizations, schools and government offices. This baseline study, thus, has been conducted to serve as a benchmark to measure post intervention status of the problem and progress of the intervention program in bringing out the desired change and achievement of results. The study is intended to generate both quantitative and qualitative information, to critically examine the status and underlying causes of child marriage in the six target Woredas (districts) of North Gonder Zone of the Amhara Region.

The Specific objectives of the study were to:

- Assess the current status of Knowledge, Attitude and Practice (KAP), and the underlying causes of child marriage in the target Woredas;
- Understand the vulnerability to and child protection concerns of the practice on girls and boys in the target Woredas;
- Identify the measures taken by different sectors and community initiatives as response to the problem, and understand existing resources and opportunities in the intervention areas; and
- Point out challenges for interventions, and provide recommendation for practical intervention and policy implications to sustainably abandon the practice from the intervention areas.

## METHODS

### 2.1 The Overall Research Design

This study was a cross-sectional design that combined both quantitative and qualitative research methods. Household survey was used as a major source of baseline data. Parents (men and women), female adolescent aged 10-18, and male youth aged 15-24 were the targets of the household survey. Six Woredas in North Gonder: Wegera, Dabat, Debark, Adi-Arkay, Metema, and Tach-Armachiho were selected for the baseline study. Multistage cluster sampling was applied. Three Kebeles, one urban and two rural, were selected at the initial stage; villages/clusters within each rural Kebele were selected at the second stage; finally, all households in the randomly selected clusters/villages were included for the study.

The qualitative information was collected through Focus Group Discussions (FGDs), and in-depth interviews with key informants. Review of relevant literature and field observations in the selected Woreda were used for elaborating the findings.

A presentation on the findings of the study was made at a validation workshop conducted for partners and key stakeholders from the studied Woredas. This final report has included comments and suggestions gained from the validation workshop.

### 2.2 Sampling Methods

Sample size was calculated to optimally determine the number of households which were the major source of the baseline data. Sample size of the household survey was calculated applying the following formula (UN, 2005)<sup>3</sup>.

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<sup>3</sup>UN, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Statistics Division. (2005) Designing Household Survey Samples: Practical Guideline, P 44

$$n = \frac{z^2 (r)(1-r)(f)(k)}{(p)(h)(e^2)}, \text{ Where:}$$

<i>n</i>	is the parameter to be calculated and is the sample size in terms of number of households to be selected;	
<i>z</i>	is the statistic that defines the level of confidence desired (90% confidence);	1.64
<i>r</i>	is an estimate of a key indicator to be measured by the study; the prevalence of child marriage in Amhara Region which was about 45% (Estimated by the 2008 Follow-up National Study on the Harmful Traditional practices in Ethiopia)	0.45
<i>f</i>	is the sample design effect, deff, taken from similar study	1.25
<i>k</i>	is a multiplier to account for the anticipated rate of non-response;	10%
<i>p</i>	is the proportion of the total population accounted for by the target population and upon which the parameter, <i>r</i> , is based (the population at risk of child marriage is the population under age 18, that accounts 24.7% , the 2007 Population and Housing Census result for Amhara region)	24.7%
<i>h</i>	is the average household size (number of persons per household) 2007 Population and Housing Census national average	4.7
<i>e</i>	is the margin of error to be attained	1%

Applying the above formula, the sample size was estimated to be 717 households. The estimated sample size was distributed to the six Woredas proportional to the total population size of the respective Woredas as per the 2007 Population and Housing Census (Table 2-1). Three representative Kebeles (one urban and two rural) were selected from each Woreda based on discussion with Women, Children and Youth Affairs Office.

Rural samples were divided between the two randomly selected rural Kebeles. Clusters (villages) were listed in each rural Kebeles, and households in the randomly selected clusters were interviewed. Urban households were selected with the application of systematic random sampling. From the six studied Woredas a total of 716 households were selected and 1,623 individual respondents were interviewed, constituting 501 men,

688 women who are heads of households, and 248 female adolescents aged 10-18, and 186 male youth aged 15-24 living within the households

**Table 2-1: Planned and Studied Number of Households for the Baseline Study**

Number of Households and Samples Selected by Woreda, North Gondar, February 2011

Woredas	Planned number of households	No of households interviewed	Men (%)	Women (%)	Female adolescents (%)	Male youth (%)	Total (%)
Wegera	195	195	31.5	27.6	39.1	43.0	32.3
Dabat	128	128	20.0	18.3	19.4	19.9	19.2
Debark	141	140	20.2	19.8	13.7	15.6	18.5
Adi-Arkay	78	78	12.0	10.6	7.7	4.3	9.9
Metema	97	97	9.8	13.7	14.1	8.6	12.0
Tach-Armachiho	78	78	6.6	10.0	6.0	8.6	8.2
All Woredas (N)	717	716	501	688	248	186	1,623

Attempt was made in the qualitative study to collect representative data by selecting one rural Kebele from the two selected rural Kebeles for the quantitative study in each Woreda. Thus, the qualitative information was collected from 6 rural Kebeles in the six Woredas. The selected Kebeles were the following: Sakdeber (Wegera), Miligebisa (Debark), Tilik-Mesk (Dabat), Zuwa (Adi-Arkay), Sefi-Bahir (Tach-Armachiho), and Shinfa (Metemma). In each of these Kebeles, four FGDs (20 in total) were conducted having 8 to 12 participants in each group. The FGDs were administered with parents (men and women separately) and female adolescents and male youth separately.

The key informants' interviews were carried out with heads/representatives of social affairs at Woreda and community levels, schoolteachers, religious leaders, community leaders, and community health workers. The key informant interviews were carried out



to gather in-depth information from knowledgeable individuals to support or substantiate findings obtained through other data collection instruments. A total of 50 key informants' interviews were conducted (See Annex II).

### **2.3 Data Collection Instruments**

Initially, an extensive review of relevant documents and literature was undertaken, first to place the study in a demographic, social and health context, and secondly to gather information for the development of the study instruments. Based on the review of literature, three types of instruments were developed to collect qualitative and quantitative information. These included a structured household and individual interview schedule, key informant interview guides, and FGD guides.

#### ***Interview Schedule***

The household and individual interview schedules were important tools used to collect quantitative information. The household interview schedule was used to collect information on the socio-demographic characteristics of the selected households. The interview schedule was used to collect data on respondents' socio-economic and demographic characteristics, issues relating to the knowledge, attitude and practice on child marriage; causes and consequences of child marriage; and other related information from parents (men and women), female adolescents and male youth. The interview schedules were administered to a representative sample of 716 households and 1623 individual respondents.

The tools were pre-tested to detect both content and structural errors in the interview schedule, allowing for necessary corrections before undertaking the actual exercise. The pre-test was conducted following the training sessions for data collectors. During the pre-test, in addition to technical scrutiny, interviewers were instructed to carefully

identify ambiguous and inappropriate questions that were not clear or were offending to respondents. Valuable inputs were obtained during the operation, which was used to modify the way interviewers ask questions.

### ***Key Informant Interview Guide***

A semi-structured interview guide was administered to key informants, including community leaders, women associations and police, structured according to the following main themes: the status of child marriage practices in the respective Woredas, underlying causes of child marriage practice, view on the problems associated with child marriage, existing programs or interventions, policies, laws, and action plans against child marriage, the associated sexual and reproductive health (SRH) interventions, and gaps and challenges faced for interventions and their recommendations for future actions.

### ***Focus Group Discussion Guide***

A FGD guide was developed to elicit information on the study themes. The FGD guide was used to administer FGDs with four groups of informants: married men, married women, male and female adolescents, and male youth. The main themes included in the FGD were: the prevalence of child marriage practices in respective Woredas as perceived by participants; the associated reproductive health, physiological, psychological, and socio-economic problems; existing laws, intervention programs, policy and advocacy and other enabling and supportive environments against child marriage. In addition to these, the FGD guide attempted to address factors that impact positively as well as negatively on child marriage practices, parental attitudes, and suggestions for intervention strategies.

## **2.4 Data Collection Process**

Three field researchers (two of the core researchers and a field supervisor) were deployed to coordinate the field data collection at the target Woredas. The field researchers were specifically briefed on sampling procedures and on the contents of the guidelines for conducting qualitative data. A total of 34 interviewers with previous experience in data collection and familiar with the study sites were recruited 60 to 70 % of them were females. Recruitment of the interviewers was facilitated by Woreda Women, Children and Youth Affairs Office. Interviewers were trained in each studied Woredas for one day on key issues related to procedures and techniques of data collection.

Data collection lasted for about two weeks from February 22 - March 5, 2011. Both quantitative and qualitative data were collected during this period. Initial steps in data collection involved identification of respondents for each study and the administration of the various study instruments. Field researchers checked filled-in interview schedules and made on-the-spot checking to see whether interviewers performed interviews adequately and recorded appropriate data as envisaged. In addition to coordinating the overall data collection activities, field researchers were also responsible to ensure correct implementation of the sampling technique. Respondents were asked for oral consent prior to participating in the study. The data collection team worked together in a given Kebele which enabled the field researcher/supervisors to successfully monitor data collection and to provide timely assistance to interviewers.

Interviewers were strictly instructed to fill in interview schedules in accordance with the guidelines provided to minimize irregularities. Experience has shown that interviewers occasionally overlook some of the items in the interview schedule. Therefore, field researchers conducted review on the collected data through the interview schedules and

identify incorrect and inconsistent responses and make appropriate corrections immediately.

## 2.5 Data Analysis

All completed interview schedules were submitted to the consultant's office for editing, coding and data entry. Data entry clerks were recruited and trained on the basics of the interview schedule; their roles being office editing, coding of open-ended questions, data entry, and random verification of the entered data. The quantitative data were entered using statistical package for social scientists (SPSS) Version 14, and the data entry clerks were supervised throughout the process. Data analysis was conducted using SPSS Version 14. Basic analysis tools such as univariate and bivariate tables were produced. For most results %age analysis was used and different tables and graphs were prepared to display the baseline situation. Multivariate analysis was used to examine differentials in knowledge and attitude of respondents towards child marriage. Qualitative data were analysed thematically and the integration of the data findings was mapped out. Pertinent documents were also reviewed and used during the analysis of primary data to support the findings.

## 2.6 Ethical Procedures

*Sensitivity of research topic:* Study covered sensitive and stigmatized issues such as sexual experience, marriage cancellation, and the like. Care was taken to ensure that all questions were asked in a supportive and non-judgmental manner. This was achieved through the careful selection and training of interviewers as well as in the design of the interview schedule. Interviewers were trained on the sensitivity of the study topic and possible effects that the questions could have on the respondent and, if necessary, to terminate the interview if the effect seemed too negative.

***Consent provisions:*** All potential respondents were made aware at the outset that their participation was voluntary and did not affect their rights in any way. At the start of all interviews, participants were informed orally of the purpose and nature of the study, and its expected benefits. Verbal consent was obtained from all the participants. As part of the consent procedure, respondents were informed about the confidentiality of the collected data. Respondents were made aware at the outset that the study included questions on personal and sensitive topics; the respondent was free to terminate the interview at any point, and to skip any questions that he/she did not wish to respond to.

## **2.7 Limitations**

This study is conducted only in the Six Woredas, North Gondar Zone of Amhara Region, and the report mainly based on views and attitudes of respondents to serve as baseline information. And the information gathered cannot be generalized to the larger group of people in the Amhara Region. Despite the efforts made, less number of adolescents was interviewed than the initial plan due to difficulty to get them during the data collection period. Thus, information was mainly collected from parents (men and women).

## FINDINGS AND ANALYSIS

### 3.1 Background Characteristics of the Studied Households and Individual Respondents

The background information on socioeconomic and demographic characteristics of the studied households and individual respondents is essential for the interpretation of findings and understanding of results later in the report. This section of the report provides the profiles of studied households and the interviewed individual respondents. The study covered a total sample of 716 households in the six Woredas. Total population in the surveyed households was 3,416. The general background information was gathered for all members of the household, while in-depth thematic interview was conducted with a total of 1,623 individual respondents, among which 1,189 were parents (men and women) and 434 were female adolescents and male youth. Background characteristics of the population in the studied households and the individual respondents are presented separately in section 3.1.1 and section 3.1.2 respectively.

#### 3.1.1 *Socio-Demographic Characteristics of the Studied Households*

Average household size was found to be 4.8, with females slightly outnumbering males (sex ratio of 98.7). Household size for North Gonder Zone was 4.7 for rural and 3.5 for urban households during the 2007 census (CSA, 2007). The studied Woredas have a pyramidal age structure, broader at the base due to the large number of children below 15 years of age (Figure 3-1). Children under 18 years of age account for 50 % of the population, a typical feature of populations with high fertility levels.

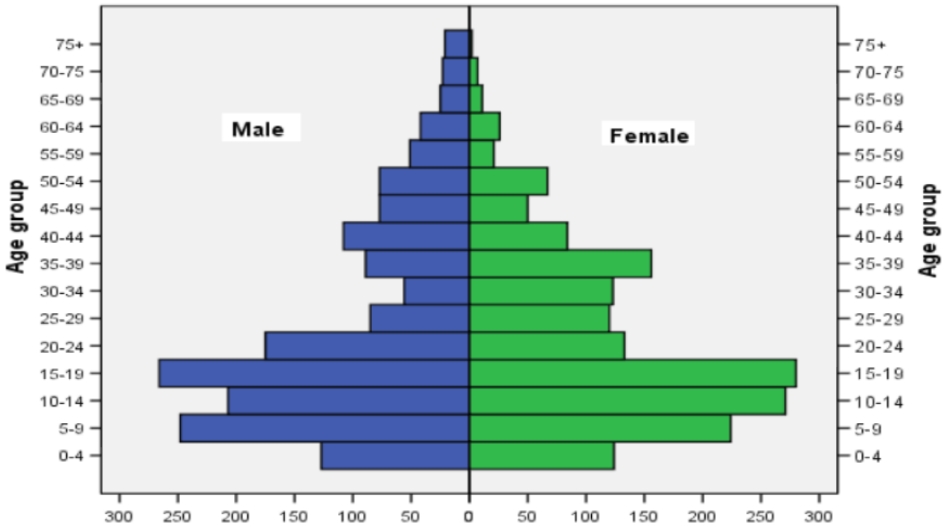


Figure 3-1: Population Pyramid of the Population in the Studied Households, North Gonder Zone

Ethnic and religious distribution of the studied population showed that the population were predominantly from the Amhara (98.6 %) ethnic group, and the greater majority of them were members of the Orthodox Christian Church (89.9 %).

Education is one of the major socioeconomic factors that influence a person's behaviour and attitude. The study results showed that 57 % of the household members aged above 18 years of age were illiterate. Females' illiteracy was much higher than males (46.4 % of males against 68 % females). Illiteracy among household members within the age bracket of 7-18 was only 15.6 % (Table 3-1). The illiteracy rate was higher in Tach-Armachiho as compared to other Woredas (Annex VI). Of those school-aged children living in the studied households, 71 % of boys and 78.8 % of girls under age of 18 years were attending schools.

Table 3-1: Educational level of members of the studied households by age and sex, North Gonder Zone, Amhara Region, February, 2011

Attained educational level	7-18 years of age			Above 18 years of age		
	Male	Female	Both Sex	Male	Female	Both Sex
Illiterate	19.3	12.3	15.6	46.4	68.0	57.0
Read & write	6.9	3.2	5.0	23.3	12.4	18.0
Grads 1-4	40.5	33.9	37.0	9.0	3.9	6.5
5-8	23.4	36.8	30.4	10.2	5.9	8.1
9-10	7.7	10.5	9.2	6.8	6.9	6.8
11-12	1.4	2.3	1.9	2.5	1.3	1.9
Technical/Vocational	0.8	0.9	0.8	1.3	1.4	1.3
Degree and above	0.2	0.0	0.1	0.6	0.1	0.4
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
N	509	560	1069	798	766	1564

Looking at the gender distribution of the heads of the households (Table 3-2) it was found that 78.3 % of the heads were males while 21.7 % were females. More than half of the female heads were either widowed or divorced, and the remaining were single mothers.

Table 3-2: Marital status of participants

Marital status	Male	Female	Total
Single	3.7	3.9	3.8
Married	94.3	44.9	83.6
Divorced	0.9	23.6	5.8
Widowed	1.1	27.6	6.8
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0
N	457	127	584
	(78.3%)	(21.7%)	(100.0%)



As it is shown in Annex V, child marriage mainly arranged for girls in the studied Woredas than boys. The overall mean age at first marriage for girls was 14.5 years as compared to 20.9 years for boys. There exists variation among Woredas: the lowest for girls observed in Tach-Armachiho 12.4 years and highest at Metema 15.7 years (Figure 3-2). The mean difference in age at first marriage between male and female ranges between 5.3 years at Wegera to 7.1 years at Metema, the mean age difference being 6.4 years.

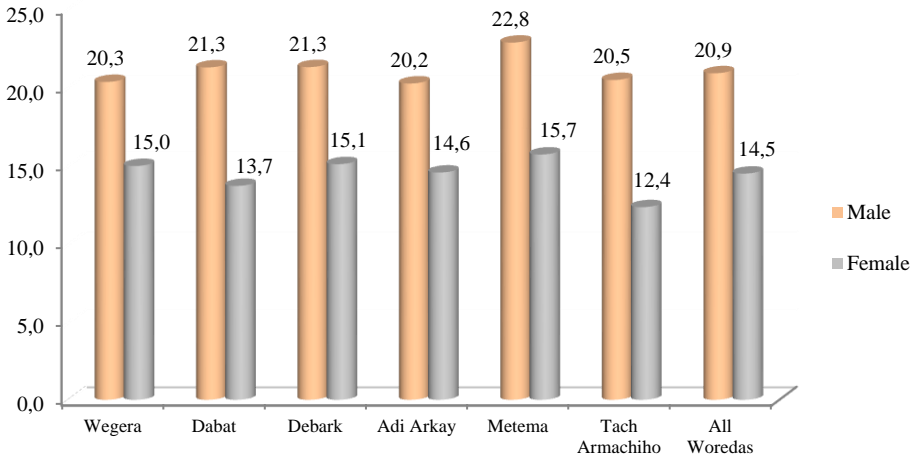


Figure 3-2: Mean Age at First Marriage of the Ever Married Male and Female participants in the Studied Households by Woreda and Sex,

Difference in mean age at first marriage of the female population in the studied Woredas was further examined by constructing analysis of variance (ANOVA) table of the ever married women respondents. A total of 575 cases (84.2 % of all ever married

female respondents) were included for analysis

Woreda	Mean	N	Std. Deviation
Wegera	15.0	167	3.404
Dabat	13.7	121	3.906
Debark	15.1	95	2.710
AdiArkay	14.6	68	3.330
Metema	15.7	65	4.167
Tach-Armachiho	12.4	59	3.134
All Woredas	14.5	575	3.586

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	513.065	5	102.613	8.50	0.000
Within Groups	6868.664	569	12.071		

The analysis show that there exist significant difference (at  $\alpha=0.001$ ) in mean age at first marriage of female respondents across Woredas.

Occupationally, the greater majority of the household heads, 79.8 % (86.3 % of male household heads and 50.4 % of female household heads) were engaged in farming/agriculture. The remaining heads of households were engaged in trading, government employment, day labour, and obtain livelihood from other sources such as remittance.

### 3.1.2 Background Characteristics of Individual Respondents Interviewed

From a total of 716 households surveyed for this study a total of 1,623 individual respondents were interviewed, of them 1,189 were parents (men and women) and 434 were female adolescents (aged 14-18) and male youth (aged 15-24). About 32.3 % were from Wegera, 19.2 % from Dabat, 18.5 % from Debark, 12.0 % from Metema, 9.9 % from Adi-Arkay, and 8.2 % were from Tach-Armachiho.

In terms of the residence of respondents, about 87.2 % were rural residents and the remaining 12.3 % were urban residents. Regarding the sex distribution of respondents

the majority of the respondents were females (57.7 %) and the remaining 42.3 % were males.

Three fourth of the women respondents, 57.7 % of men respondents, 15.7 % of female adolescent respondents and 9.2 % of male youth respondents were illiterate [For detailed characteristics of the individual respondents please refer Annex VII].

## **3.2 Knowledge, Attitude and Practice on Child Marriage**

### **3.2.1 Knowledge on Child Marriage**

#### ***Exposure to child marriage related information***

Studies show that information and education motivate positive behaviour change among listeners. All the individual respondents in this study were asked whether they heard any message on child marriage from any sources in the last 12 months. As a result, 53.6 % of the respondents i.e. 51.9 % of parents (48.6 % women and 55.1 % men) and 55.3 % of children (52.8 % of female adolescents and 57.8 % of male youth) heard messages on child marriage related issues. Relatively speaking parents were less informed than their children were, and females were found relatively less informed than males.

In relation to this the 2008 follow-up study on harmful traditional practice (HTP) revealed that over 70 % of the studied population have received information on HTPs including child marriage, and it was revealed that in the Amhara region about 80.7 % of respondents received information on child marriage (EGLDAM, 2008). As compared to the aforementioned studies, the result of this study showed that the studied population was less informed about child marriage related issues. It also revealed that females in general were disadvantaged in terms of access to information.

Respondents who received message on child marriage from different sources were

asked the sources of information they had access to. It appeared that almost all groups of respondents had higher levels of exposure to child marriage information from non-print media than print-media, may be resulting from the high illiteracy level of the studied population. In this regard, schools/teachers (13.4 %), health facilities (11.9 %), community meetings/gatherings (11.6 %), radio (10.9 %), and television (TV) (9.8 %) were found as the common sources of information (Table 3-3).

Table 3-3: Sources of Information on Child Marriage

Sources of information	Parents		Female adolescent	Male youth	Total
	Men	Women			
Television	15.3	14.8	4.6	4.6	9.8
Radio	3.4	2.3	18.9	18.9	10.9
Newspaper/magazines	1.8	2.3	4.3	4.3	3.2
Posters	0.8	0.7	0.2	0.2	0.5
Leaflets/brochures	0.6	0.6	0.4	0.4	0.5
Satellite dish/film show/video	1.4	0.7	1.1	1.1	1.1
Community meetings	12.9	13.9	9.8	9.8	11.6
Coffee ceremony	9.0	7.6	5.9	5.9	7.1
Priests/religious leaders	8.8	10.9	8.9	8.9	9.4
Teachers/school	9.1	9.9	17.1	17.1	13.3
Women's association	8.9	7.6	9.3	9.3	8.8
Health Facilities (health workers)	13.0	13.2	10.6	10.6	11.9
Health Extension Workers (HEW)	9.7	10.9	7.2	7.2	8.8
Neighbours/friends/relatives	4.6	4.1	1.7	1.7	3.0
Other sources	0.6	0.4	0.0	0.0	0.3
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

While for parents (men and women) TV, health facilities and community meetings were

the three most common sources of information; TV, schools/teachers, and health facilities were the three most common sources of information for female adolescent and male youth. The study result suggested that using non-print media would be more advantageous than print media, mainly using community meetings/gatherings, health facilities and schools as entry points for transmission of child marriage related information. Other studies also revealed similar result that most of the people in Amhara Region received information on harmful traditional practices (HTPs) from health facilities, public meetings, and mass media (EGLDAM, 2008; USAID, 2007).

To further assess the current knowledge of the studied population on child marriage, respondents were asked questions on the negative consequences of child marriage as perceived by the respondents and on their knowledge on the law provisions against child marriage.

### ***Knowledge on the negative consequences of child marriage***

In this study parents were asked to indicate the negative consequences of child marriage practice in general and on girls in particular. The study result revealed that in the studied areas the negative consequences of child marriage is still not well recognized by the majority, on its diverse, complex, and interrelated socio-economic, psychological, and physiological (reproductive health) problems on girls.

Table 3-4: Knowledge of Parents on the Negative Consequences of Child Marriage

Negative consequence of child marriage	Men	Women		
		Married before 18 <sup>th</sup> year of age	Married at 18 <sup>th</sup> year and older	All women
More obstetric Labour	14.7	17.2	15.4	16.6
Less opportunity for girl's to education	14.8	12.9	13.4	12.9
Low women's and girl's status	14.3	11.9	12.2	12.3

Increased poverty	11.7	12.0	12.7	12.5
Higher maternal mortality	10.4	9.7	11.8	9.9
Increased vulnerability to HIV/AIDS	8.7	9.2	12.0	9.8
High obstetric fistula and other health complication	8.5	7.6	9.4	8.1
Increased child/teenage pregnancies	6.3	6.1	5.3	6.0
Increased infant mortality	5.3	5.8	6.2	5.4
No response	5.2	7.7	1.6	6.6
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

[% distribution of ever married men and women respondents who identified negative consequences of child marriage]

Results in Table 3-4 shows that more obstetric labour, less opportunity for girl's education, low women's and girl's status, and increased poverty were the top four negative consequences that men and women respondents identified, followed by higher maternal mortality, increased vulnerability to HIV/AIDS, and high obstetric fistula and other health problems. Knowledge of the specific negative consequences of child marriage was found to be slightly higher among women who married late (after 18 years of age) as compared with those who married at earlier ages.

In general both the quantitative and qualitative data showed that the knowledge of the studied population on the harmful consequences of child marriage is very low. Women were found to be less informed in this regard than men, which might have resulted from high illiteracy among women and less access to information related to child marriage. The result of the study implies the need for continuous and intensive awareness raising interventions for the larger community towards bringing out the desired change of behaviour.

***Knowledge on marriage related laws***

Respondents (men, women and male youth) were asked if they are aware of the minimum legal age for marriage according to the Ethiopian law. A total of 488 men, 675 women and 175 male youth responded to this question. Of these 42.6 % of men, 38.7 % of women, and 56.0 % of male youth respondents reported that they were aware of the existence of a legal minimum age for marriage. Of those who expressed knowing the minimum legal age, only half of them (51.5 % of men and 57.2 % of women) were able to state age 18 as the legal minimum age of marriage for girls, while about 80 % of the youth males were able to state the exact minimum legal age for marriage.

***Knowledge on the criminal law against child marriage***

The new Criminal Code, which came into force as of May 2005, contains specific provisions with regard to the violation of marriage laws. Regarding child marriage, Article 648 of the new Criminal Code specifies as follows:

*Whosoever gets married to a minor in contravention of the provisions prescribed specified by the relevant family law shall be punishable with rigorous imprisonment not exceeding three years where the victim is thirteen years old or above; or shall be punishable with rigorous imprisonment of not less than seven years where the victim is less than thirteen years old.*

In this study parents (men and women) were asked whether they ever heard about the new Criminal Code. In this regard, it was found that only 44.2 % of men and 34.4 % of women were aware of the new Criminal Code. Variations exist between men and women and among the studied Woredas; in which respondents in Tach-Armachiho seem less informed about the new Criminal Code followed by Debark as compared to other

Woredas (Table 3-4). Here, respondents' awareness about the new Criminal Code doesn't mean that they exactly know what the law infers, but heard that the law was in place and punishes those who violate provisions related to marriage. This was also confirmed during FGD with men and women who pointed out that they simply heard the existence of law called "*wonjelengna Mekcha*", meaning the criminal code, but that they didn't know what really the law states or provides.

Table 3-5: Knowledge on Law Provision against Child Marriage, and its Enforcement

Woreda	Men			Women		
	Ever Heard about the New Criminal Code	Knew Community Members Punished	Knew Girls Marriage Cancelled	Ever Heard about the New Criminal Code	Knew Community Members Punished	Knew Girls Marriage Cancelled
Wegera	66.7	45.5	41.6	63.3	46.5	37.8
Dabat	42.3	19.4	16.3	36.3	23.4	19.8
Debark	27.4	20.4	32.0	26.2	16.7	34.4
Adi-Arkay	36.2	22.4	32.8	13.7	6.8	16.9
Metema	41.7	44.9	51.1	22.3	40.4	24.5
Tach-Armachiho	9.4	0.0	0.0	4.5	1.5	4.4
Total	44.2	29.5	31.6	34.3	27.0	26.4

% of men and women respondents who were aware of the presence of Criminal Code, those knew community members punished due to the violation of the law, and those knew arranged child marriages cancelled

Respondents were asked whether they knew community members punished due to the violation of the laws against child marriage. It was found that only 29.5 % of men and 27.0 % of women knew community members who were punished due to child marriage practice. In response to the question whether they knew cancellation of arranged child marriage, it was found that 31.6 % of men and 26.4 % of women knew cases of



cancelled arranged marriage. As it is shown in Table 3-5 variations existed among men and women, and also among the studied Woredas.

### *Determinants of Knowledge on Child Marriage*

Linear regression model was developed to understand determinants of knowledge on child marriage related issues. Binary logistic model is constructed to further examine the difference within each factor. The analysis in this part is believed to assist in identifying strategic intervention areas for awareness creation. In this model respondents' status of having seen or heard message on child marriage was a dependent variable. Socio-demographic characteristics such as Woreda, age, residence location (as urban or rural), level of education, occupational background and sex of the respondent were taken as explanatory variables.

### ANOVA

Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression	16.720	6	2.787	11.890	.000(a)
Residual	224.998	960	.234		
Total	241.719	966			

### Coefficients

	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta	t	
(Constant)	3.802	.145		26.279	.000
Woreda	-.051	.010	-.163	-5.118	.000
Residence	-.113	.047	-.078	-2.434	.015
Age	-.001	.001	-.018	-.531	.595
Level of Education	.087	.016	.184	5.596	.000
Occupation	.007	.009	.027	.807	.420
Sex	-.049	.036	-.049	-1.352	.177

Predictors: (Constant), Sex, Residence, Woreda, Level of Education, Occupation, Age

Dependent Variable: Access to information during the last few months, the effects of and law provisions against child marriage

The result in the regression model indicated that Woreda, residence location (as urban and rural), and educational level were the three significant factors behind the level of awareness of the respondents on the issue of child marriage. In this model age, occupation and sex were not significant factors in determining awareness of the respondents on child marriage.

Logistic regression model was developed to further study the differentials within each determinant factors. The result in Table 3-7 revealed that there was significant difference in level of awareness on child marriage between Woredas, between urban and rural residents, and between literate and illiterate respondents.

Compared with Wegera (reference category) awareness level in other Woredas was significantly lower. Urban residents were found to have a significantly higher level of awareness on child marriage related information; and literate respondents were more than twice more likely in accessing information on child marriage practice as compared with the illiterate ones.

Table 3-6: Differentials of Awareness on Child Marriage Related issues

		N	B	S.E.	Wald	Sig.	Exp(B)
Woreda	Wegera	242	RC				1.000
	Dabat	211	-1.291	.262	24.373	.000	.275
	Debark	188	-.787	.266	8.749	.003	.455
	Adi-Arkay	117	-.628	.271	5.386	.020	.534
	Metema	117	-1.250	.297	17.735	.000	.286
	Tach-Armachiho	83	-.497	.290	2.943	.086	.608
Residence	Urban	129	RC				1.000
	Rural	829	-.384	.193	3.942	.047	.681
Literacy	Illiterate	642	RC				1.000
	Literate	316	.750	.139	28.900	.000	2.116

Binary logistic regression model on the awareness of child marriage related issues

### 3.2.2 Attitude on Child Marriage

#### *Perception of Parents on Harmfulness of Child Marriage Practice*

As shown in Table 3-4, overall it is only 54.5 % of respondents (58.8 % of men and 51.4 % of women) considered child marriage practice as harmful. It means that, 45.5 % of parents (41.2 % of men and 48.6 % of women) did not perceive child marriage as harmful practice. The level of knowledge and perception of respondents on the harmful nature of child marriage in this study was much lower than what has been reported by the 2008 follow-up study on HTPs (EGLDAM, 2008) for the Amhara Region.

Table 3-7: Proportion of parents who perceived child marriage as harmful practice

Woreda	Men		Women		Both Parents	
	%	N	%	N	%	N
Wegera	76.1	155	71.4	185	73.5	340
Dabat	51.5	97	52.9	121	52.3	218
Debark	46.9	96	38.5	130	42.0	226
Adi-Arkay	67.9	56	54.3	70	60.3	126
Metema	59.6	47	51.6	93	54.3	140
Tach-Armachiho	13.3	30	14.9	67	14.4	97
All Woredas	58.8	481	51.4	666	54.5	1147

% distribution of respondents, who perceived the practice of child marriage as harmful, by Woreda,

There exist variations in the perception on the harmfulness of child marriage across Woredas. The lowest level of awareness was recorded in Tach-Armachiho where only 14.4 % of the respondents perceived the practice of child marriage as harmful.

The qualitative data also supports the quantitative result. Many of the adult men and women FGD participants pointed out that child marriage is not a harmful practice.

Child marriage is not harmful because it has been practiced since time immemorial. It is the custom, culture and the tradition of our community. In this community, girls are married at the age of 10 or 12, and they lead their usual life. If this is the reality, what makes the practice harmful?

*A 75-year old priest*

The harmful and shameful practice for the girl, for her parents and relatives is getting pregnant and giving birth without marriage. While getting married for a girl, even before age 15 is a pride for the girl herself, for parents and relatives.

*Woman FGD participant*

Getting married before the age of 18 is not harmful, what is harmful and shameful for us is the girls staying unmarried “kumoker”. In this community, if a girl is not married between 12 or 15, she is considered by the community as undesirable for marriage, considered as a shame for the family, herself and relatives. To avoid this social stigma and ensure that the girl gets a husband, families agree to marriage requests even before the age of 10, let alone by 12 or 15 years.

*Woman FGD participant*

When I got married, I was 11 years old and in the same year I became pregnant and gave birth. Now I am a mother of four children. I faced no problem. Now my children are helping us by fetching water, collecting firewood and they are herding cattle, sheep and goats. They are indispensable for the family. Then what is the problem that makes the practice harmful?

*20-year woman community member*

### ***Perceived Benefits of child marriage***

The result here showed that only one-fifth of the parents (men and women) and a little more than a third of the children (38.2 % of male youth and 35.0 % of female

adolescents) perceived that child marriage has no benefit. In other words, more than two-third of the adolescents and 80 % of the parents still have in their mind that child marriage has advantages/benefits.

Table 3-8: Perceived benefits of child marriage

Perceived benefits	Men	Women	Female adolescents	Male youth
Strengthen ties between families	13.5	13.5	12.4	11.3
Parents see grandchildren before parents die	9.4	10.8	7.4	12.6
Parents can see children married before parents die	14.3	13.2	11.9	12.9
Avoid social stigma	5.7	5.6	0.0	0.0
Get service of future son-in-law	7.5	8.5	0.0	0.0
Avoid Abduction	8.0	6.0	0.0	0.0
Avoid premarital sex	7.2	6.7	17.1	13.3
Ensure virginity at marriage	8.5	8.0	0.0	0.0
Reduce vulnerability to HIV/AIDS	4.3	4.5	7.4	8.1
Other benefits	0.2	0.4	1.7	2.3
No advantages/benefits	19.5	19.9	38.2	35.0
Don't know	1.8	2.7	3.7	4.5
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

% distribution of perceived benefits of child marriage by respondents

The deeply rooted socio-cultural factors were the major factors triggering child marriage practice in the studied areas, followed by sexual reproductive health (SRH) concerns. Interest for economic benefits is expressed to some extent in form of getting support from son-in-law. Parents' desire to see children married before their death, strengthening a relationship with the bridegroom's family, avoiding premarital sex and ensuring virginity at marriage were the major benefits the respondents cited for practicing child marriage.

### *Future Intention of Abandoning Child Marriage Practice*

The future intention of parents in abandoning child marriage practice was solicited by

asking them on their opinion /future intention of abandoning child marriage practice. Overall 71.6 % (75.6 % men and 68.7 % women) have expressed their intention to abandon child marriage practice in the future (Table 3-10), which is yet lower than the national figure (83.2 %) (EGLDAM, 2008)

Table 3-9: Respondents with intention to abandon child marriage practice

Woreda	Men		Women		Total	
	%	N	%	N	%	N
Wegera	94.9	148	94.7	177	94.8	325
Dabat	79.4	77	74.4	93	76.6	170
Debark	63.3	62	47.3	62	54.1	124
Adi-Arkay	63.8	37	60.3	44	61.8	81
Metema	83.7	41	84.9	79	84.5	120
Tach-Armachiho	18.2	6	15.9	11	16.7	17
All Woredas	75.6	371	68.7	466	71.6	837

% of men and women respondents with the intention to abandon child marriage practice

Variation exists among the studied Woredas on the future intention of child marriage practice. In Tach-Armachiho only 16.7 % of the respondents have the intention to abandon the practice as compared to 94.8 % in Wegera.

When we look to the perceived appropriate age for females and males for marriage, the majority of the respondents do not consider marriage of girls after the age of 14 years as child marriage. Means that the average age for girls considered as appropriate for marriage is 14 years.

***Perceived Appropriate Age for Marriage for Females and Males***

For all groups of respondents the age cut-off for defining child marriage was lower for

females than for males (Table 3-10). For women respondents the average appropriate age for marriage of girls was 14.4 years as compared to 18.2 years for boys, and for men respondents the appropriate age of marriage for girls was 14.7 years as compared to 18.2 years for boys. Female adolescents considered the appropriate age to be 16.2 years for girls and about 19 years for boys (*for details see Annex VIII*).

Table 3-10: Perceived Appropriate Age for Marriage for Girls

Number of cases included 1162 (97.7%) Parents' perceived minimum age of marriage for a girl child				Number of cases included 156 (83.9%) Male youths' perceived minimum age of marriage for a girl child			
Woreda	Mean	N	Std. Deviation	Woreda	Mean	N	Std. Deviation
Wegera	14.7	334	3.680	Wegera	16.2	66	3.177
Dabat	14.9	222	3.147	Dabat	17.3	31	1.591
Debark	14.0	230	3.516	Debark	16.0	22	2.911
Adi-Arkay	14.0	133	3.512	Adi-Arkay	16.1	8	2.232
Metema	16.4	142	2.217	Metema	17.9	13	.277
Tach-Armachiho	12.7	101	3.124	Tach-Armachiho	15.4	16	3.032
Total	14.6	1162	3.452	Total	16.5	156	2.732

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	1008.1	5	201.6	18.2	.000
Within Groups	12825.5	1156	11.1		
Total	13833.7	1161			

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	73.0	5	14.6	2.0	.079
Within Groups	1083.8	150	7.2		
Total	1156.8	155			

Perceived minimum age of marriage for girls according to parents and male youth by Woreda

Added to this, unlike the quantitative data, in the qualitative findings of the focus group discussion and key informant interviews, the future intention of the community was well

pronounced in which most discussants expressed different reasons for the need to continue the practice of child marriage.

A girl should get marriage as early as possible as it is the only option she has within the community. A girls should get married before 15 years, if not she may not get married at all. It is a long lived tradition in our community ... getting married as early as possible is the only available option for a girl to lead better life in her future.

*Woman FGD participant*

Abandoning child marriage practice is breaking the promise we made to our ancestors. It is a recent phenomenon for us to hear that child marriage is forbidden and illegal... We know girls who are married and leading normal life without any problem, but the government is shouting on us not to give our children for marriage. Why is that? It is a matter of keeping the promise we have had from our ancestors and transfer the practice to the next generation.

*Community leader (elder)*

Asking the community to abandon child marriage practice is disrespect to our religion values [*the Orthodox Christian Religion*]. In our religion priests should marry a virgin girl. To get a virgin girl in this community, the marriage should be done when she is 8 or 10, if she is beyond that it is unlikely to find a virgin girl. Let alone by 18 years, it is very difficult to get a virgin girl even by 13-15 years of age. So how can our religion values will be fulfilled...

*A priest and community leader*

... If a female child did not get married the earliest possible, in her 10<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> years, the community points finger on her, and her families will stigmatize her as well. If she refused to get married, she will be forced to leave her family's home for the fear of stigma, her fate will be to migrate to urban areas looking for employment as a domestic worker; her final destination could also be becoming a prostitute. Let alone parents, the girls also prefer to bet married in young age than leading such life...

*15-year old female adolescent FGD participant*

After finishing their high school, it is difficult for girls to find any job, let alone joining colleges/universities. They return to their parent's home and they become burden. They stay with their parents for some time and then they escape to towns and engaged in prostitution, since they do not have the chance of being married within their community. Abandoning child marriage in this community, thus, means forcing our female children to engage in prostitution and lead difficult life..., which further expose them to HIV/AIDS and other health risks.

*A male FGD participant*



*Determinants of Intentions on Abandoning Child Marriage Practice*

In-depth understanding on the determinants of the attitudes towards the deep rooted traditional practice of child marriage is fundamental to designing strategies for sustainably abandon the practice through informed decisions of parents and the general public.

Linear regression model was developed separately for women and men to show determinants of the attitude toward the child marriage practice. Based on the determining factors binary logistic model is constructed to further examine the difference within each factor. The analysis in this part is believed to assist in identifying strategic intervention areas for programming. In this model respondents' attitude towards abandoning the practice of child marriage was a dependent variable. Socio-demographic characteristics such as Woreda, age, residence, education, occupation and sex of the respondent were taken as explanatory variables.

*(i) Women's attitude towards abandoning child marriage practice*

The following linear regression model on the attitude of women towards abandoning child marriage practice revealed that Woreda, educational level, occupation and age at first marriage were the three significant factors determining women's attitude of respondents on abandoning child marriage.

**ANOVA**

Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression	20.816	6	3.469	21.889	.000(a)
Residual	67.837	428	.158		
Total	88.653	434			

**Coefficients**

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta	t	
(Constant)	3.256	.174		18.679	.000
Woreda	.114	.012	.424	9.848	.000
Residence	.061	.057	.047	1.068	.286
Age	.000	.002	.008	.180	.857
Educational level	-.052	.022	-.115	-2.411	.016
Occupation	-.015	.009	-.077	-1.808	.071
Age at first marriage	-.020	.006	-.161	-3.595	.000

Dependent Variable: Attitude towards abandoning child marriage practice

Predictors: (Constant), Age at first marriage, Occupation, Woreda, Residence, Age, Educational level

Logistic regression model was developed to further study the differentials within each determinant factor. The result in Table (3-11A) revealed that there was significant difference in attitude of women towards abandoning the practice by Woredas, age at first marriage and literacy.

Table 3-11A: Differentials of Attitude on Abandoning Child Marriage Practice

		n	B	S.E.	Sig.	Exp(B)
Woreda	Wegera	102				
	Dabat	95	4.914	0.648	0.000	136.119
	Debark	75	3.876	0.572	0.000	48.236
	AdiArkay	57	2.447	0.546	0.000	11.551
	Metema	59	2.357	0.563	0.000	10.559
	TachArmachiho	47	3.844	0.648	0.000	46.707
Occupation	Farming	262				
	Other occupations	173	-0.002	0.298	0.995	0.998
Age at first marriage	Less than 18	341				
	18+	94	-0.640	0.363	0.078	0.527
Literacy	Illiterate	329				
	Literate	106	-1.251	0.372	0.001	0.286

Binary logistic regression model on the attitude of women on abandoning child marriage practice,

Results in Table 3-11A revealed that women’s attitude to continue the child marriage practice increases significantly in the peripheral lowland Woredas. Women who married at older age and literate women were found more likely to support abandoning the practice.

*(ii) Men’s attitude towards abandoning child marriage practice*

Regression model on the attitude of men towards abandoning child marriage practice revealed that Woreda, educational level, and age at first marriage were the three significant factors determining the attitude of men towards abandoning child marriage.

**ANOVA**

Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression	14.047	6	2.341	17.962	.000(a)
Residual	48.486	372	.130		
Total	62.533	378			

**Coefficients**

	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
(Constant)	3.116	.182		17.081	.000
Woreda	.117	.012	.461	9.825	.000
Residence	.072	.060	.056	1.200	.231
Age	.000	.001	.009	.200	.842
Educational level	-.062	.019	-.151	-3.181	.002
Occupation	.018	.018	.047	1.005	.316
Age at first marriage	-.015	.005	-.147	-3.181	.002

Dependent Variable: Attitude towards abandoning child marriage practice

Predictors: (Constant), Age at first marriage, Occupation, Woreda, Residence, Age, Educational level

Logistic regression model was developed to further study the differentials within each determinant factor. The result in Table 3-11B revealed that there was significant difference in attitude of men towards abandoning the child marriage practice by Woredas, age at first marriage and literacy.

Results in Table 3-11B revealed that men’s attitude to continue the child marriage practice increases significantly in the peripheral lowland Woredas similar to the case for women. Men who married older were found more likely to support abandoning the practice.

Although the attitude of literate women was found to be a significant in supporting abandoning of child marriage practice, there is no significant difference in attitude of men towards abandoning the practice in terms of literacy. The result here indicates that women and girls’ education is one strategic area of intervention on child marriage prevention programs.

Table 3-11B: Differentials of Attitude on Abandoning Child Marriage Practice

		n	B	S.E.	Wald	Sig.	Exp(B)
Woreda	Wegera	118					
	Dabat	86	5.629	0.856	43.264	0.000	278.433
	Debark	67	3.307	0.556	35.414	0.000	27.309
	AdiArkay	49	2.314	0.531	18.991	0.000	10.113
	Metema	33	2.076	0.556	13.922	0.000	7.973
	TachArmachiho	31	4.240	0.868	23.878	0.000	69.412
Age at first marriage	Less than 18	44					
	18+	340	-0.768	0.455	2.854	0.091	0.464
Literacy	Illiterate	217					
	Literate	167	-0.416	0.310	1.799	0.180	0.660

In depth analysis of the quantitative data revealed that access to information on child marriage varies across Woredas, between urban and rural communities, and between the

literate and the illiterate people. Result of multivariate analysis also revealed that the significantly high numbers of adult people in the studied Woredas are in support of the practice, with high intention of perusing it in the future. Looking at the gender dimension of the attitude to pursue child marriage practice women has higher preference to continue the practice in the future as compared with men. This could be due to the related socio-cultural concerns and benefits associated to child marriage, such as to avoid social stigma associated with unwed girl living with parents and labelled as “*kumoker*”, low level of access for education for girls, resulted economic dependency, and reproductive health concerns for girls.

Pre-marital pregnancy is a serious taboo and greater shame for families in the study Woredas. It is also believed by parents in target communities that child marriage will protect their girl children from HIV/AIDS infections, by protecting her from pre-marital sexual practices, though no one could not find the right justification if child marriage could give assurance for not being infected with HIV. The finding, in this regard, could be an implication for intervention programs on adolescent reproductive health to address concerns of parents on premarital pregnancy and other reproductive health concerns.

### **3.2.3 Child Marriage Practice**

In this study, respondents (men and women) were asked their age at first marriage, and the year they were married. The study result presented in Table 3-12 shows that the prevalence of child marriage has significantly reduced in the current decade as compared with the past two decades. For instance, 80.6 % of women and 25.5 % of men who married before 1991 were married before they reach age 18; of these 51.6 % of the women and 3.2 % of the men were married before 15 years of age.

After 2002, the number of men who got married before 18 years of age has reduced to 3.6 %, while the number of women who got married before 18 years of age in this study

was 53.8 % showing only a slight decrease from the number before 1991. The findings of the national study also indicated the overall prevalence of child marriage in Amhara Region to be 44.8 %, and among the rural communities it was 53% (EGLDAM, 2008; Pathfinder International, 2006)

Table 3-12 Age at First Marriage

		Before 1991	1992-2001	After 2002
% of ever married men and women whose first marriage was before their 18 years of age	Men	25.5	17.4	3.6
	Women	80.6	74.3	53.8
% of ever married men and women whose first marriage was before their 15 years of age	Men	3.2	2.9	0.0
	Women	51.6	38.1	12.8
Mean age of marriage at first marriage for men and women	Men	19.7	20.2	21.9
	Women	14.4	15.9	16.9
N	Men	188	69	25
	Women	248	105	39

% of ever married men and women respondents, whose first marriage was before their 18 year of age, and mean age at first marriage of the ever married men and women,

Similarly, mean age at first marriage has shown improvement for males (19.7 before 1991; 20.2 in between 1992-2001, and 21.9 after 2002); there is also improvement in the mean age at first marriage for females (14.4 before 1991; 15.9 in between 1992-2001, and 16.9 after 2002).

The qualitative data collected from parents participated in the FGD and the key informants from Justice, Women, Children and Youth Affairs and the Police Office in all Woredas mentioned that the prevalence and magnitude of the practice of child marriage is declining within the last two decades. They argued that this is mainly because of relatively better awareness of the community on the consequence of child

marriage, fear of penalty on arranged child marriage, and its subsequent cancellation. Despite little improvement, the historic data presented in Figure 3-3 affirm that age at first marriage of girls is still being conducted before their 18 years of age.

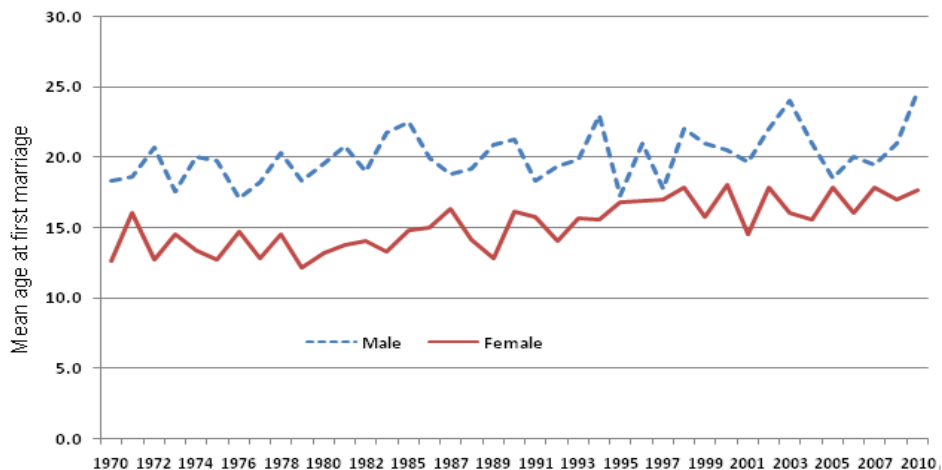


Figure 3-3: Trend in Age at First Marriage (1970-2010) for Men and Women Respondents

The historic data of age at first marriage collected from ever-married men and women who were married in the period of 1970-2010 showed that age at first marriage for boys has long been around 20 years. The trend in Figure 3-4 shows that age at first marriage of females has shown gradual increase over decades. Age at first marriage for those who married before the 1990s was consistently below 15 years of age and the mean age rose to above 15 after 1993, but it still remained under 18 years of age.

Looking into the relationship between illiteracy and mean age of girls at first marriage it was found that there exist strong negative correlation between illiteracy and mean age of girls’ marriage. For instance, the highest illiteracy rate among adult population (18+)

was reported at Tach-Armachiho (72.3 %) followed by Dabat (66 %) and Adi-Arkay (63 %). Accordingly, the lowest mean age of girls at first marriage was reported at Tach-Armachiho (12.4 years) followed by Dabat (13.7 years) and Adi-Arkay (14.6 years).

	% illiterate	Mean age at first marriage	
Wegera	55.4	15.0	r = -0.95868
Dabat	66.0	13.7	
Debark	59.3	15.1	
Adi-Arkay	63.0	14.6	
Metema	55.6	15.7	
Tach-Armachiho	72.3	12.4	

Child marriage is a well-accepted and common phenomenon in the studied communities. Many of the adults (parents) adolescent girls and the male youth FGD participants expressed their opinion towards the need for continuing the practice of child marriage, though there were some with the opinion in favour of abandoning it. The reasons for women and girls to supporting the continuation of the practice are mainly related with their low educational and economic status and lack of awareness on the negative consequence of child marriage on the health and overall development of girls.

Key informants also confirmed that child marriage is still widely practiced in the studied areas. For instance, the head of Wegera Woreda Justice Office pointed out that only in the months of January and February 2011, a total of 132 child marriage cases were reported to their office. Secondary source from Wegera Woreda Education Office also showed that in the 2010/11 academic year 115 girls (between the ages of 8-15) dropped out from school due to marriage related reasons.



### *Partner Choice and Decision-Making Ability*

Partner choice and free decision-making ability on marriage are basic human rights. Respondents' were requested to explain the current practice of decision making for marriage of children and their partner choice for marriage. The study result revealed that parents (both men and women) were the main decision makers regarding child marriage; more than three fourth of men and women respondents confirmed that the decision maker regarding marriage in the household were both parents with equal role of mothers and fathers. And about 14 % of parents reported men as sole decision makers regarding marriage for children. The result here is a clear indicator that children were totally excluded from decision making regarding their own marriage and their partner choice.

The assessment result from the FGD participants and key informants also revealed that predominantly parents decide marriage for their girl child without consulting the girls. However, as was mentioned by youth male during the focus group discussion in Tach-Armachiho and Adi-Arkay Woredas many parents consult male children on marriage issues though parents make the final decision.

## **3.3 Causes and Negative Consequences of Child Marriage**

### *3.3.1 Causes of Child Marriage*

To determine the underlying causes triggering child marriage practices in the studied areas, data was collected using both quantitative and qualitative methods. One fifth of the parents and three fifth of the children believed that child marriage has no benefit while the four fifth of parents and three fifth of the children perceive some form of benefit of child marriage. The findings of this study signified that the underlying factors for the practice of child marriage were mainly socio-cultural and sexual and reproductive health concerns on the side of parents.

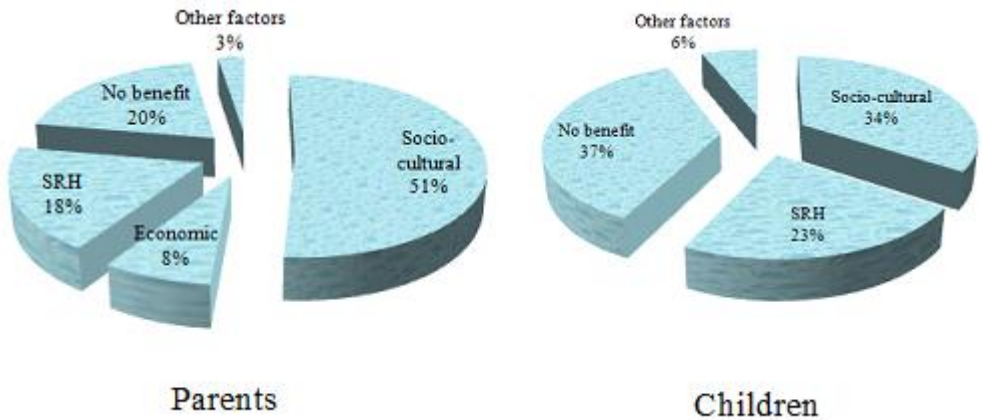


Figure 3-4: Perceived Benefits of Child Marriage among Parents and Children,

### ***Socio Cultural Factors***

Socio-cultural factors were the leading causes of child marriage as reported by all categories of respondents (Figure 3-4). Built in cultural values of strengthening family ties through marriage, parents aspiring to see their children's "manhood" and "womanhood", a fear that the girl might become unwanted for marriage later in life and the need to ensure virginity of girls at the time of marriage were the driving causes for child marriage practices (see Table 3-8 for statistical details). In most of the studied Kebeles, older unmarried daughter would be considered as disgrace to her family, prompting community rejection of the family and victimization of the girl through verbal attacks and gossip that the family simply cannot afford to risk. The community members seem to realize the practice as intergenerational issue, for which they feel responsible to maintain the practice and transfer it to the next generation, which was strongly reflected by parents (men and women) in the FGDs and individual interviews.

### ***Sexual and Reproductive Health Concerns***

The prevailing incidence of pre-marital sex and pregnancy among the adolescents is among the second major reasons indicated by participants of the study, as a reason for practicing child marriage in the studied areas (*Table 3-8*). With the quantitative findings, a fifth of the parents and about a quarter of the children (adolescent girls and male youth) mentioned child marriage as a mechanism to avoid premarital sexual practice and to reduce vulnerability to HIV/AIDS. The key informant interview respondents and FGD participants also pointed out that unwanted pregnancy is increasing among unmarried girls, which is regarded as a disgrace to the families the girls themselves. It was further indicated that premarital sex and unwanted pregnancy has become a common phenomenon among unmarried girls.

### ***Lack of Knowledge on the Harmful Consequences and the Laws against Child Marriage***

The study findings revealed that the majority lack knowledge on the negative consequences and human rights implication of child marriage upon girls. Findings from key informants as well demonstrated lack of knowledge about the negative consequences of the practice as one major reason. Poor enforcement of laws may also be among the reasons for the practice to sustain despite the legal provisions. For instance, less than half of the respondents were aware of the negative consequence of child marriage (*Table 3-6*); and more than two third of the respondents (especially women) were not aware of the new Criminal Code, only about one fourth knew someone in the community punished due to arranging and conducting child marriage, or knew cancelled arranged marriage (*Table 3-5*).

The majority key informants, and women/men FGD participants pointed out that child marriage is a common practice in their communities, though most people knew a

number of young women and girls who are victims of fistula and with other pregnancy and delivery related health problems. Some pointed out, that they knew persons whose daughters died of problems related to complicated labour, yet most continue arranging child marriage with ignorance.

### *Economic Reasons*

The analysis of the qualitative data revealed that, for some, child marriage is considered as a way to improve the economic status of the family, arguing that poverty forces families to wed their daughters at a young age. Economic benefits to gain from marriage through establishing ties between families, and the desire to get dowry (in the form of money, land and cattle) were mentioned among some of the economic motive for the practice. This finding, however, was not well supported by the quantitative findings where only about 8% of men and women mentioned economic reasons behind the practice of child marriage.

### **3.3.2 Child Marriage and Related Protection Concerns**

Studies and literature on the negative consequences of child marriage in Ethiopia revealed that the practice causes diverse, complex, and interrelated socio-economic, psychological, and physiological problems on girls. Findings of this study in this regard revealed negative consequence of child marriage related to the health, education, and social wellbeing of the girl child.

## Case of Genzebe

Genzebe Mengistu is a 17 years old girl who lives in a small village called Chewber Add-Arkey Woreda of North Gonder Zone. She has lost her mother when she was a little girl. Her marriage to Nega was arranged 9 years ago, while she was only 8 years of age. Gezebe said that the marriage was arranged by her father without her knowledge. Since she was too young at the time of her marriage, there was agreement between her father and her husband's family in which they have agreed that there would be no sexual intercourse between her and her husband Nega until she reaches 11 years of age. "Therefore" Genzebe said, "I used to sleep with my mother in-law till I got matured".

She used to frequently run away from her husband's family after she got married to Nega. And her father used to force her to go back. "In those days" Genzeb explained, "it was a tradition in the community that the girl is expected to live most of the months of the year with the husband's family and only a few months with own family. Accordingly I was allowed only for one month to come to my family, of every four months. The rest of the year I am expected to stay with my husband's family. But I hated my husband as well his family. My father was angry with me and he used to kick me many times because of my refusal to go to my husband's family. Later on, I got used to the situation and started living with my husband ..."

"I was forced to start sexual intercourse at the age of 11 years, with no interest, and I got pregnant at the age of 15. I had longer labor and got serious problem during delivery, and was referred to Gondar Hospital. It was unfortunate that I gave a still birth in the hospital. The prolonged labor caused me further health complication and I ended up with fistula problem... I never forget the suffering I had faced as a result... my husband left me three years ago because of the fistula problem. I am now attending medical care on every 6 months base. Now I am in better shape, recovering from my illness"

Due to her economic problem and rejection in her village and family because of the fistula problem, Genzebe was forced to sell her only cow that she owned for Ethiopian Birr 1200 [equivalent to 70 USD] and left her village. Now she lives alone in a small town called Chewber (25km from Adi- Arakay Town) and leads her own life. She lives in a rental house with two rooms, and she started attending school at grade three. She makes a living by selling local local Drinks (Tella) and Bake 'injera' [local food] for teachers. She earns about 85 Ethiopian Birr [equivalent to 5 USD] per month.

Genzebe said "I value my education and will commit everything I have for that"

Finally, Genezebe remarked "I believed that in my village the practice of child marriage is common. I heard that my aunt's daughter has been married this year at the age of 7 years... I advise every girl to escape child marriage by all means. I do also believe that parents should be responsible for arranging marriage for their young girls and should be penalized. I strongly argue that even my father should be penalized for the marriage he had arranged for me 9 years ago."

### *Health Related Problems*

As discussed in Table 3-4 participants of the study identified some of the health related problems of child marriage. The major health related consequences identified by the respondents include obstetric labour leading to obstetric fistula and maternal mortality, vulnerability to HIV/AIDS, and infant death. Adolescent girl respondents were asked if they know someone in their neighbourhood who suffer from obstetric fistula. Out of 199 adolescent girls responding to this question 18 of them reported that they know girls who suffered from obstetric fistula in their neighbourhood.

Results of the FGD, KII and the case studies also showed that the problem of suspected fistula health complications is foremost among the health impacts of child marriage in the studied communities. As to key informants prolonged and obstructed labour in most cases results in obstetric fistula. Almost half of the participants in the FGDs mentioned that they know at least one case in their neighbourhood. Some of the discussants and informants also pointed out that despite the fact that obstetric fistula is a common problem it is generally kept secret and rarely communicated among community members.

Married adolescent female respondents were asked their age when they heard that they were promised for marriage, the engagement plan and the age they did the first sexual intercourse.

	Age when the adolescent girl first heard that she was promised in marriage	Age when the adolescent girl first heard her first formal engagement was being planned	Age when the adolescent girl had sexual intercourse for the first time
N	30	14	32
Mean	11.6	14.1	15.2
Median	12.5	13.5	15.0
Std. Deviation	4.6	4.1	2.6

The mean/median age at which these girls begin sexual intercourse is about 15 years, indicating that there are also many adolescent girls below the median/mean age. In this study, married adolescent girls were also asked if the first sexual intercourse was done with consent or not. While a little more than half of them mentioned that it was with consent 40 % of them reported that it was forced sex, and about 4 % reported that they do not remember how it happened.

A female is physiologically more prone to contracting HIV than a male, as her vagina is not well lined with protective cells and her cervix may be penetrated easily. Young women are more likely than young men to contract the disease through heterosexual contact as they are married to older male who are likely to have prior sexual experience and may engage in unprotected sexual relations with other partners. Married adolescent girls' inability to negotiate safer sex and other social pressures represent a critical channel of vulnerability to HIV and other sexually transmitted infections.

### ***Deny girls their rights to education***

The qualitative findings revealed that child marriage was one of the major causes for school drop-out of girls in the studied Woredas, which further affects women's social, political, psychological and economic status. In support of this, for instance, a key informant in Wegera Woreda Education Office pointed out that within six months of 2010/2011 academic year 115 girls were dropped out of school due to marriage related reasons. Data presented in Table 3-4 revealed that half of men respondents and more than one third of women identified lack of access to education and school drop-outs among the major negative consequence of child marriage on girls. About three fourth of adolescent girls believe that marriage before the age of 18 years cause lack of access to school or school dropouts for girls.

### *Adolescent pregnancy and large family size*

Child marriage increases the span of a woman's reproductive period, and those who marry earlier are more likely to have large number of children than those who marry late. The FGD participants and key informants pointed out that teenage pregnancy was common in the studied Woredas. As studies indicated in Ethiopia due to economic dependency, lack of education, socio-cultural and other factors, women do not exercise their sexual and reproductive rights; and hence they have less ability to make decisions on matters related to reproductive health, such as the use of contraceptives and rights over sexuality. In this study ever married adolescent girls were asked their feelings during their first pregnancy, whether it was in their interest or not. While 42.4 % of the girl adolescents reported that the first pregnancy was in their interest, 57.6 % of the respondents reported that it was not of their interest.

### **3.5 Measures Taken so far by Different Actors**

To have a general insight on existing services for the prevention of child marriage, and support for those affected by the practice, key informants interview was conducted with different government offices, community and religious leaders. The government offices interviewed include the respective Woredas Women, Children and Youth Affairs, Justice, Police, Education and Health offices. The community level key informants include Health Extension Workers, Kebele Administrators, religious leaders and community police personnel. The results of the qualitative data are presented below.



Table 3-13: Summary of Measures Taken by Woreda Sector Offices for the Prevention of Child Marriage; North Gondar Zone, February 2011

Existing services/Activities	Wegera	Dabat	Debank	Adi-Arkay	Tach-Armachiho	Metema
Community awareness raising activities on new family Law and criminal Code, CRC, and the constitution in relation to child marriage by Woreda Justice office in collaboration with Women, children and Youth Office	X	X	X	X	X	X
Parish Churches establish a committee and teach the community on prevention of child marriage at Kebele level.		X				
Identification of suspected fistula cases and referrals for medical supports		X				
Educating the community member on the consequences of child marriage at all levels, through grass roots government structures.	X	X	X	X	X	X
Establishment of Youth Clubs at schools who report cases of child marriage to teachers	X		X			X
Woreda Women, Children and Youth Affairs Office provide training on Harmful Traditional practice to religious leaders and women activists at Kebeles level.				X		
Woreda Education Office aware each primary school to organize and trace cases of child marriage and report to the Woreda education office which in later cases reported to Woreda Justice and Women, Children and Youth Affairs Offices.					X	
Establishment of Female students counseling committee in schools, which counsel, follow up and report cases of child marriage.	X		X		X	
Child marriage case management at Woreda Justice office				X	X	
Establish income generating activities for girls completing	X					

Existing services/Activities	Wegera	Dabat	Debark	Adi-Arkay	Tach-Armachiho	Metema
secondary education						
Preparation of manual for awareness of basic laws pertaining to child marriage			X			
Establishment of child marriage prevention committee at Kebele level consisting of police, elders, HEWs, religious leaders, Kebele administrators, and school directors		X		X		

### 3.6 Opportunities and Challenges to Combat Child Marriage

#### 3.6.1 Opportunities

The existing opportunities and resources to efforts of combating child marriage practice in the study Woredas was assessed using the key informant’s interview with different government offices: Woreda, Women, Children and Youth Affairs Office, the Justice, Police, Education and community level structures like Kebele Administration, Community Police, health workers and the Religious Leaders. Summary of the resources identified by Woreda are presented in the following matrix.

Table 3-14: Summary of existing resources for prevention of child marriage practice at the study Woredas; North Gonder Zone, February 2011

Existing Opportunities/ Resurces	Wegera	Dabat	Debark	Adi-Arkay	Tach-Armachiho	Metema
Establishment of a committee that works on violence against women at Kebele level consisting of members at the Kebele level	X					
Establishment of school counseling committee in primary schools that follow up and report cases of child marriage at	X					

Existing Opportunities/ Resources	Wegera	Dabat	Debank	A di-Arkay	Tach-Armachihlo	Metema
Kebele level						
Existence of suitable government structures at Kebele level	X	X	X	X	X	X
Assigning of gender activists at government level to follow up cases of child marriage and report to Woreda concerned sector offices		X		X		
Establishment of youth clubs at school level by Woreda education office that follow up and report cases of child marriage at Kebele level						X
Expansion of primary schools at Kebele level which enrollment of girls increase, supporting the girls empowerment	X	X	X	X	X	X
Existence of better awareness on consequence of child marriage by students, which help to promotes prevention of child marriage.			X		X	
Existence of Kebele level Women’s League, Women’s, Federation, and Women Activists which are suitable to combat child marriage	X	X	X	X	X	X

### 3.6.2 Challenges / Gaps to Combat Child Marriage

The challenges which the different actors encountered in combating child marriage in the assessment Woredas was assessed through the key informant’s interview at the different government offices. The sector offices interviewed include: Woreda, Women, Children and Youth Affairs Office, Justice, Police, Education Office and community level structures like Kebele Administration, Community Police, health workers and the religious leaders.

***Deeply embedded nature of the practice in the culture of the society***

Child marriage is a deeply embedded in cultural tradition among the people in target communities which makes it difficult to change. Deep rooted cultural values for child marriage practice among community members, supported with the low commitment of respective government sectors for the prevention of child marriage and the enforcement of the law is among the major challenges identified by the respondents. According to respondents people in the studied Woredas are resistant to change, and use different strategies to give their girl children for marriage, such as changing places and reporting a falsified age for the girl in cases if it is reported. In some communities, there are reports of life threatening attack on families for cancelling promise for giving away girl child for marriage.

***Service gap and poor coordination***

The fight against the harmful traditional practice of child marriage requires coordinated and holistic response, addressing both the prevention and rehabilitation of those victimized. The lack services such as temporary shelter for runaway girls in fear of child marriage, and lack of timely medical services at the Woreda level for those with fistula and other pregnancy and delivery related health complications are among the major service gaps identified by respondents of the study.

Poor coordination of efforts among the mandated government offices, including the Woreda Women, Children and Youth Affairs Offices, Education Offices, Police Offices and Justice Offices is among the major gaps of services identified by the study. There is no joint planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of interventions among the sectors, and needs to be addressed. The key informants also pointed out that some government officials considered efforts towards mitigating child marriage as sole responsibility of only one or two offices.

There is also capacity gap and lack of system among the Woreda government offices to plan, implement monitor and evaluate projects. There is also lack of knowledge among service providers on child marriage related issues, and on programming.

### ***Resource Limitation***

All key informants indicated that the government has limited human and financial resources available to implement intervention programs on child marriage. The response from Woreda Women, Children and Youth Affairs Offices, Justice Offices and Police Officers stated that there was no budget allotted at all by the government to their respective office, to plan and implement child marriage related intervention programs. This indicates the low attention or priority given for the problem by the government. One of the informants from Woreda Women, Children and Youth Affairs Offices stated that

*So far, there was no budget allocated for the implementation of interventions on child marriage. We hope that we will get the budget from SCN-E and other NGOs working in the Woreda. The responsibility of the office is very wide, and also the magnitude of gender based violence, mainly child marriage practice, but the available staff as well the budget is limited. We have the budget only for staff salary.*

The following summary matrix presents the challenges in combating child marriage practice as presented by the informants.

Table 3-15: Summary of challenges for prevention of child marriage at the study Woredas; North Gonder Zone, February 2011

Challenges / gaps	Wegera	Dabat	Debank	Adi-Arkay	Tach-Armachiho	Metema
Deep rooted cultural values for child marriage practice among community members, and lack of knowledge on its negative consequences among the public	X	X	X	X	X	X
Low knowledge parents and other adult community members on legislatives against child marriage				X	X	
Life threatening attack on families for cancelling promises for giving away girl child for marriage			X		X	
Low commitment of law enforcement bodies on prevention and treatment of child marriage					X	
Poor coordination among different sectors for interventions	X	X	X	X	X	X
Non-existence of community based bylaws against child marriage	X	X	X	X	X	X
The established community committee against Harmful Traditional Practice are not well organized and active						X
Lack of statistical data on child marriage and weak reporting system			X	X		
Low commitment of the religious leaders on prevention of child marriage, and in some cases they argue in favor of child marriage			X		X	X
Difficult topography and lack transportation systems for monitoring and follow up of interventions	X				X	X
Lack of budget	X	X	X	X	X	X

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## CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

### 5.1 Conclusion

This study has shown that child marriage is a well-accepted and a deep rooted cultural practice in the studied Woredas. Despite the country's legal provisions against child marriage, it is widely practiced in the studied areas violating the basic human rights of girls. In the study, child marriage practice was found less likely or non-existent for boys in all studied Woredas; it targets girls as young as 10 - 12 years of age.

Child marriage is deeply embedded cultural practice among the people in target communities which makes it difficult to change. There are also implications whereby the child marriage practice associated with religious values and requirements, in particular to the Orthodox Christian religion. Existing interventions for responding the problem are not adequate enough, as well lacks coordination.

The effects of child marriage are plainly evident within communities of the studied Woredas where the practice is common. The basic rights of girls are violated – as they are denied to access education, in family decision making, in having their own income, their health is threatened, and lack access to services. They are also denied to decide their own marriage partner and when to get married and start a family.

The multifaceted problem associated with child marriage calls for particular attention and collaborative action. The findings of this study only gave the situation at the surface of the problems. There are several areas of particular concern where extensive research and intervention programs at different level might be required.

## 5.2 Recommendations

- The study result showed that the awareness and knowledge of the communities on negative consequences of child marriage is significantly low, which calls the need for designing culturally appropriate strategies towards bringing out informed decision for practice change among parents and other community leaders. Intensive community conversations and dialogues, visual and audio education materials and radio programs that discuss the dangers associated with child marriage and the benefits of delaying marriage could be used.
- There are national policies and legislations supporting efforts for combating child marriage, including the Federal Constitution, the Criminal Code, the Family Law, and the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child that the country ratified. However, the study revealed that people in the studied Woredas lack knowledge on legislations against child marriage. Most of those who felt knowing the legislations were found lacking the details of what it contained. What they know was the mere existence of the law alone. This calls for intensive community awareness interventions on the specific laws pertaining to child marriage, along with ensuring the enforcement laws.
- The study revealed major gap on the enforcement of the law, which is also manifested through the high prevalence of the practice. Informants also pointed out that in some cases there is ignorance among the law enforcement bodies in taking timely actions against reported child marriage cases, which requires attention. Intervention programs that promote coordinated efforts and support the mandated government sectors in insuring the enforcement of the law for the protection of girls against the dangers of child marriage
- Programmes on training local resources including schools, teachers, community groups, and volunteers, and supporting them to conduct community



based initiatives could contribute in bringing out a transformation of the beliefs around child marriage. Involving male community educators in an effort to transmit messages tailored to males could be an effective mechanism to change the way men and women perceived child marriage, and help community members to take these messages as a supporting justification to delay marriage.

- The findings revealed that in studied areas religious leaders and elders has high acceptance and considerable influence on the community. Homogeneity of the population in the studied Woredas in terms of religion and ethnicity gives an opportunity for using religious leaders as change agents for changing the social norms among parents pertaining to child marriage practice.
- Families in the intervention areas who stood against the child marriage practice and delayed marriage for their children, and those girls who refused for child marriage should be rewarded in some form, as way of formal recognition and to point them out as role models in their communities.
- Research suggests that access to school for girls is crucial to delaying marriage, to enabling them control their own destinies and effect change in their communities. Designing programs that supports girls to enrol and retained in school is fundamental; as well parents and the general public need to be sensitized to support girls' education. Schools can also be strategic points for empowering girls through education, provision of life skills trainings, to educate them on reproductive health rights, and to empower girls to negotiate key life decisions.
- Ensuring settled life and economic security of girls is among the major reasons for parents to wed off their young female children. Providing economic opportunities for girls after they finish school, in the form of skills trainings and micro credit and saving services, can help in changing the beliefs among

communities as well girls themselves whereby they consider marriage as their only option for survival.

- Most interventions in the studied areas mainly targeted prevention activities against child marriage. Response intervention programmes for those victims of child marriage including those girls with pregnancy and delivery related health complications, those married girls, and support programs for reintegrating those girls running away from child marriage should be designed. Establishing a centre for rehabilitation of victims mainly to those with the worst consequence of child marriage, such as obstetric fistula could be one area for response. Assisting local health centres technically and with the necessary supplies to screening suspected fistula cases and strengthening referral linkages is fundamental.
- This study highlighted existing resources at local communities for support of efforts towards curbing the practice of child marriage. Kebele level government structures, community groups, schools, women associations and gender activists are among the actors. Intervention programs should include strategies designed specifically to build up on such existing resources through capacity building, in supporting coordination, monitoring and follow up of progresses, and scaling up successful interventions.
- The findings of the study indicated lack of attention and budgeting by the government for prevention of child marriage. High level of advocacy work to key higher level government sectors is fundamental, magnifying the multifaceted dangers associated with child marriage to have child marriage as part of their programs and budget, to strengthening the policy framework and enforcement of laws

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## ANNEXES

## Annex I: List of the Base Line Study Woredas and Kebeles

No	Woreda	Kebele	Remark
1	Wegera	Sakdeber Kebele	Survey, FGD, KII
2	Wegera	Senbetgaie	Survey
3	Wegera	Urban	Survey & KII
4	Debark	Miligebisa	Survey, FGD, KII
5	Debark	Kono	Survey
6	Debark	Urban	Survey & KII
7	Dabat	TilikMesk	Survey, FGD, KII
8	Dabat	Charibita	Survey
9	Dabat	Urban	Survey & KII
10	Adi-Arkay	Zuwa	Survey, FGD, KII
11	Adi -Arkay	Bermariam	Survey
12	Adi -Arkay	Urban	Survey & KII
13	TachArmacho	SefiBahir	Survey, FGD, KII
14	TachArmacho	Kisha	Survey
15	TachArmacho	Urban	Survey & KII
16	Metema	Shinfa	Survey, FGD, KII
17	Metema	Kokit	Survey
18	Metema	Urban	Survey & KII

## Annex II: List of Key Informants

No	Name of informant	Woreda	Sector/office	position
1.	YewoinshetAyalew	Wegera	Women, youth and children Affairs Office	Head
2.	AlmazKassahun	Wegera	Women, youth and children Affairs Office	Deputy Head
3.	ChilotTamirie	Wegera	Senbetege	Manager

No	Name of informant	Woreda	Sector/office	position
			Kebele	
4.	OusmanHassen	Wegera	Senbetege Kebele	Community Police Officer
5.	Tiruwork Abera	Wegera	School teacher	
6.	Haile Wondemagegne	Wegera	Religious leader	
7.	SisayZegeye	Wegera	Community member	
8.	GashawTenifie	Wegera	Community member (youth)	
9.	YezinaSisay	Wegera	Community member (youth)	
10.	TseganeshMelese	Wegera	Sakdeber Kebele	Manager
11.	KeburMisganaw	Wegera	Sakdeber Kebele	Community police Officer
12.	Enanu Abate	Wegera	Health Extension Worker (HEW)	
13.	DeresseZelelaw	Wegera	Wogera Woreda Justice Office	Head
14.	Getachew Melaku	Wegera	Wogera Woreda Youth Association	Member
15.	Ahmed Ibrahim	Wegera	Wogera Woreda Education Office	Head
16.	AsseffaBaye	Wegera	Wogera Woreda Police Office	Head
17.	Abeba Genet	Wegera	Save the Children Norway	Grass root community worker
18.	EtehunaSisay	Wegera	Save the Children	Social Worker

No	Name of informant	Woreda	Sector/office	position
			Norway,	
19.	Yesisit Assefa	Debark	Police office	Child protection officer
20.	Tinaye	Debark	Education	Teacher
21.	MigibDerb	Denmark	Health	Health extension worker
22.	AbebeTeshale	Debark	-	Kebele leader
23.	SeferMulate	Debark	Women, children and youth affairs	head
24.	TewodrosTesera	Debark	Justice	Process owner
25.	Melaku Baye	Adi-Arkay	Education	Vice head
26.	Estifano Mamo	AdiArkay	Education	Teacher
27.	Girma Aleminew	Adi-Arkay	-	Kebele manager
28.	KirosTsehay	AdiArkay	Health	Health extension worker
29.	Toyba Mohammed	Adi-Arkay	Women, children and youth Affairs	head
30.	SeferTamene	AdiArkay	Police	Gender & child protection officer
31.	MeleseAbebaw	AdiArkay	Justice	Process owner
32.	Bisrat Abera	TachArmacho	Justice	Head
33.	TekelemariamEshete	TachArmacho	-	Priest
34.	WoldieNigus	TachArmacho	Police	Community police officer
35.	AlmazAlemu	TachArmacho	Health	Health Extension worker
36.	AlayuAbebe	TachArmacho	Education	School principal
37.	Workie Kebede	TachArmacho	Women, children, youth Affairs	head
38.	WasuTebeje	TachArmacho	Police	Communication officer
39.	Kenawmelese	TachArmacho	Education	Vice head
40.	EmebetZerihun	Dabat	Education	Teacher

No	Name of informant	Woreda	Sector/office	position
41.	ZufanTekilu	Dabat	Health	Health Extension worker
42.	GashawBirhan	Dabat	Police	Head of prison
43.	Mihret Mitiku	Dabat	Justice	Head
44.	Fente Teshome	Dabat	-	Priest
45.	EtiyeMelesewAbebe	Dabat	Women children and Youth	head
46.	GirmachewHailesilasie	Dabat	Youth Association	Chairman
47.	YezabworkAdugna	Metema	Education	Teacher
48.	Dr.AdugnaBurju	Metema	Women children and youth	Head
49.	MengistAbebe	Metema	Youth and sport office	Youth and sport chairman
50.	AlemituTeshahun	Metema	Police	Child protection officer

### Annex III: Socio-Demographic Characteristics of the Sample Households

Background characteristics of the study population by sex, religion, ethnicity, and education, North Gonder Zone, Amhara Region, February, 2011

	Wegera	Dabat	Debark	Adi-Arkay	Metema	Tach-Armachiho	All Woredas
<b>Sex</b>							
Male	49.9	51.4	50.5	49.7	51.4	45.2	49.9
Female	50.1	48.6	49.5	50.3	48.6	54.8	50.1
N	900	628	661	348	451	418	3406
<b>Residence</b>							
Urban	8.7	9.6	13.6	15.8	26.2	16.5	13.8
Rural	91.3	90.4	86.4	84.2	73.8	83.5	86.2
Total	905	628	664	349	451	419	3416

	Wegera	Dabat	Debark	Adi- Arkay	Metema	Tach- Armachiho	All Woredas
<b>Religion</b>							
Orthodox	98.4	99.8	98.8	97.7	98.4	100.0	98.9
Other religion	1.6	0.2	1.2	2.3	1.6	0.0	1.1
N	902	628	664	349	451	419	3413
<b>Ethnicity</b>							
Amhara	100.0	99.8	99.8	97.7	91.8	100.0	98.6
Other ethnic groups	0.0	0.2	0.2	2.3	8.2	0.0	1.4
N	902	628	664	349	450	419	3412
<b>Attained educational level (household members aged 7 years and above)</b>							
Illiterate	40.8	41.1	40.9	36.4	34.2	47.0	40.2
Read & write	19.6	9.9	13.3	13.3	8.3	7.5	12.7
1-4	19.1	20.5	18.8	16.7	17.9	19.1	18.9
5-8	12.3	16.2	15.7	21.8	26.5	15.0	17.1
9-10	7.1	7.0	8.1	6.5	9.9	8.5	7.8
11-12	0.8	3.0	1.6	3.1	1.6	1.9	1.9
TVET	0.2	1.7	1.6	2.0	0.8	0.9	1.1
Degree and above	0.0	0.6	0.0	0.3	0.8	0.0	0.3
N	617	526	504	294	374	319	2634
<b>Marital status (household members aged 10 years and above)</b>							
Single	43.8	39.9	42.4	42.6	42.3	47.4	42.9
Engaged	1.0	2.9	1.2	0.4	0.7	0.3	1.2
Married	51.9	50.4	52.5	52.5	48.5	43.8	50.4
Divorced	1.6	2.1	0.7	2.7	4.3	4.5	2.3
Separated	0.6	0.4	0.2	0.4	0.7	0.6	0.5
Widowed	1.2	4.2	3.0	1.5	3.6	3.2	2.7
N	692.0	476.0	432.0	263	305	308	2476



	Wegera	Dabat	Debark	Adi- Arkay	Metema	Tach- Armachiho	All Woredas
Mean age at first marriage							
Male	17.6	21.0	21.1	17.5	22.2	19.2	19.5
Female	13.4	13.7	14.9	13.7	16.2	12.7	14.0
Occupation of heads of household							
Government employee	1.2	2.4	0.7	2.6	4.7	0.0	1.8
Private org. employee	1.2	0.8	0.0	2.6	2.3	0.0	1.1
Farming	89.2	71.2	81.9	80.8	59.3	92.8	79.8
Trading	3.6	2.4	7.2	5.1	8.1	7.2	5.3
Day laborer	1.2	2.4	3.6	2.6	3.5	0.0	2.3
Student	1.2	0.0	1.4	2.6	0.0	0.0	0.9
Job seeker	0.0	0.8	3.6	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.9
Other source	2.4	20.0	1.4	3.8	22.1	0.0	8.0
N	167	125	138	78	86	69	663

#### Annex IV: Background Characteristics of Individual Respondents

Respondents by category, Woreda, residence, sex, age, marital status, occupation and education, North Gonder Zone, February, 2011

Characteristics	Parents				Female adolescent		Male youth		Total	
	Men		Women		N	%	N	%	N	%
	N	%	N	%						
<b>Sex</b>										
Male	501	100.00	-	-	-	-	186	100.0	687	42.30
Female	-	-	688	100.00	248	100.00	-	-	936	57.70
Total	501	100.00	688	100.00	248	100.00	186	100.0	<b>1623</b>	<b>100.00</b>
<b>Residence</b>										
Urban	58	11.60	96	14.00	30	12.10	24	12.9	208	12.80

Characteristics	Parents				Female adolescent		Male youth		Total	
	Men		Women		N	%	N	%	N	%
	N	%	N	%						
Rural	443	88.40	592	86.00	218	87.90	162	87.1	1415	87.20
Total	501	100.00	688	100.00	248	100.00	186	100.0	1623	100.00
<b>Marital status</b>										
Single	-	-	-	-	186	83.40	152	87.9	388	24.70
Married	466	94.50	570	83.80	32	14.30	20	11.6	1088	69.30
Divorced	5	1.00	35	5.10	4	1.80	1	0.6	45	2.90
Widowed	6	1.20	41	6.00	1	0.40	0	0.0	48	3.10
Total	493	100.00	680	100.00	223	100.00	173	100.0	1569	100.00
<b>Woreda</b>										
Wegera	158	31.50	190	27.60	97	39.10	80	43.0	525	32.30
Dabat	100	20.00	126	18.30	48	19.40	37	19.9	311	19.20
Debank	101	20.20	136	19.80	34	13.70	29	15.6	300	18.50
Adi-Arkay	60	12.00	73	10.60	19	7.70	8	4.3	160	9.90
Metema	49	9.80	94	13.70	35	14.10	16	8.6	194	12.00
Tach-Armachiho	33	6.60	69	10.00	15	6.00	16	8.6	133	8.20
Total	501	100.00	688	100.00	248	100.00	186	100.0	1623	100.00
<b>Age group</b>										
14-18	-	-	1	0.10	98	39.50	-	-	103	6.30
15-19	-	-	24	3.50	150	60.50	104	55.9	274	16.90
20-24	9	1.80	59	8.60	-	0.00	82	44.1	150	9.20
25-29	40	8.00	99	14.40	-	0.00	-	-	139	8.60
30-34	35	7.00	113	16.40	-	0.00	-	-	148	9.10
35-39	65	13.00	147	21.40	-	0.00	-	-	212	13.10
40-44	92	18.40	79	11.50	-	0.00	-	-	171	10.50
45-49	55	11.00	50	7.30	-	0.00	-	-	105	6.50
50-54	67	13.40	61	8.90	-	0.00	-	-	128	7.90
55-59	40	8.00	20	2.90	-	0.00	-	-	60	3.70

Characteristics	Parents				Female adolescent		Male youth		Total	
	Men		Women		N	%	N	%	N	%
	N	%	N	%						
60-64	40	8.00	20	2.90	-	0.00	-	-	60	3.70
65-69	24	4.80	9	1.30	-	0.00	-	-	33	2.00
70-74	17	3.40	5	0.70	-	0.00	-	-	22	1.40
75+	17	3.40	1	0.10	-	0.00	-	-	18	1.10
<b>Total</b>	<b>501</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>688</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>248</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>186</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>1623</b>	<b>100.00</b>
<b>Education</b>										
Illiterate	270	57.70	473	74.80	21	9.20	26	15.3	790	52.70
Read & write	132	28.20	84	13.30	6	2.60	17	10.0	239	16.00
Grade 1-4	27	5.80	26	4.10	50	21.90	42	24.7	145	9.70
Grade 5-8	29	6.20	30	4.70	95	41.70	46	27.1	200	13.40
Grade 9-10	6	1.30	16	2.50	46	20.20	29	17.1	97	6.50
Grade 11-12	2	0.40	2	0.30	5	2.20	6	3.5	15	1.00
TVET	2	0.40	1	0.20	5	2.20	4	2.4	12	0.80
<b>Total</b>	<b>468</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>632</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>228</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>170</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>1498</b>	<b>100.00</b>
<b>Occupation</b>										
Gov. Employee	10	2.00	7	1.20	-	-	-	-	17	1.20
Priv. Employee	6	1.20	3	0.50	-	-	3	1.7	12	0.80
Farming	430	87.90	360	61.10	18	7.90	41	23.7	849	57.40
Trading	17	3.50	24	4.10	-	-	5	2.9	46	3.10
Day laborer	6	1.20	14	2.40	1	0.40	2	1.2	23	1.60
Student	1	0.20	10	1.70	177	78.00	108	62.4	296	20.00
Job seeker	4	0.80	20	3.40	12	5.30	7	4.0	43	2.90
Others	15	3.10	151	25.60	19	8.40	7	4.0	192	13.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>489</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>589</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>227</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>173</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>1478</b>	<b>100.00</b>

**Annex V: Perceived Minimum Age of Marriage for Boys and Girls**

Perceived minimum age of marriage for girls and boys according to men, women and female adolescents, North Gonder Zone, Amhara Region, February, 2011

Woreda	Men's perceived minimum age of marriage for		Women's perceived minimum age of marriage for		Adolescent female's perceived minimum age of marriage for	
	Girls	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls	Boys
Wegera	14.8	18.2	14.7	17.7	15.4	19.1
Dabat	15.2	18.9	14.8	19.1	16.7	19.1
Debark	14.3	17.9	13.7	17.7	16.5	18.8
Adi-Arkay	14.0	17.9	13.9	18.1	17.3	19.2
Metema	16.2	18.1	16.5	19.3	16.9	18.9
Tach-Armachiho	13.4	18.0	12.4	18.0	14.9	18.1
All Woredas	14.7	18.2	14.4	18.2	16.2	19.0



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