

Young Lives Ethiopia

Lessons from Longitudinal Research with the Children of the Millennium

Introduction

The Young Lives Ethiopia Country Report presents results from a fifteen-year longitudinal study, which followed two cohorts of children in 20 sites selected from the five main regions of Ethiopia, from 2002 to 2016, as a component of a larger multi-country project. The research followed one cohort as they grew from infancy to adolescence (aged one to 15), and the second as they grew from early childhood to early adulthood (aged 8 to 22). The study relates conditions early in the lives of children to later outcomes, and so improves understanding of the effects of poverty on children's life trajectories. It also provides information on the effects of policies and changes on the lives of children, and offers evidence-based guidance for policies to improve children's chances of developing into integrated and productive members of society.

The report first outlines the Young Lives project and the context in which the Ethiopian study took place, including the engagement between researchers and the Ethiopian government's efforts to improve the lives of its children. It presents key findings and policy implications on four main areas of study: poverty dynamics; child health and nutrition; education and learning; and well-being and child protection. The report concludes with implications of the findings for future policy, and the benefits of continuing the research.

This document is a summary of the Young Lives Ethiopia Country Report *Lessons from Longitudinal Research with the Children of the Millennium*, highlighting the context in which this research was conducted, key findings, and key implications for policy and practice. The full report is available on the Young Lives website, www.younglives.org.uk detailing acknowledgements, photo credits and references.

Highlights

- There have been massive advances in reducing poverty and improving children's well-being and access to public services notably in health and schooling. However, major inequalities based on location, wealth and gender, remain, which need to be addressed for all children to reach their potential.
- Children's poverty is related to a variety of factors, including location, education of caregivers, gender of family head, and number of dependents. The effects of childhood poverty are multi-dimensional, including health, education and well-being. Effective strategies therefore require greater collaboration across sectors.
- Investments in nutrition and education in infancy have been shown to have positive effects as children grow up. There has been a huge expansion of pre-school. Further attention to improving the system and quality of early childhood development particularly in infancy can yield the best returns and reduce inequalities.
- There has been notable progress in reducing undernutrition and food insecurity. However, undernutrition remains pervasive, hindering physical and cognitive development. Attention to nutrition and diet diversity is beneficial at all ages: in the early years, it can promote development; as children grow, good nutrition can result in recovery and prevent faltering; and as girls move into adulthood, nutrition is important for healthy mothering.
- Widespread school enrolment has been achieved. However, learning and grade levels progression have fallen below expectations. Attention needs to focus on quality and improving outcomes, especially for disadvantaged children.
- Policies and systems for addressing harm and violence have been developed. Effective protection of children from hazardous or excessive work and gender-based violence requires holistic attention to their social and economic contexts.
- There have been significant gains in girls' education and protection from harmful practices. However, further progress requires addressing the special challenges girls face throughout childhood, adolescence, and early adulthood.
- There has been massive expansion of education beyond primary school. However, more attention is required to ensure the education system is geared to the demand for jobs and promotes youth enterprise in order to ensure more effective involvement of young men and especially young women in economic development.

Young Lives

Young Lives is a longitudinal comparative research project designed to collect information on children growing up in poverty. The project is co-ordinated from the University of Oxford (UK), and the research was conducted in four low- and middle-income: Ethiopia, India, Peru and Vietnam. In each country, a sample of 2000 children born at the time of the Millennium was surveyed in five rounds from 2002 to 2016, collecting information on the children and their families. The sites included a range of urban and rural types, with a deliberate bias towards poorer areas. The survey data were supplemented by qualitative research on smaller samples of the children, which collected more detailed information about their lives, including information about families, schools and communities. Qualitative research included discussions with children and relevant adults, together with observations and techniques to record the children's views and aspirations, enabling a fuller appreciation of their well-being. The qualitative data provide a fuller picture of how trends indicated in the surveys affected children's lives, and of specific cases that do not follow the trends. Data collected regularly from the same children over time show how events and experiences at early stages in their lives can affect their later lives, and sometimes how they can overcome difficulties. A second sample in each country of 1000 children seven years older than the children born at the Millennium allows a comparison between the lives of the two cohorts at the same age, seven years apart, which indicates the effects of policies and changes, and provides a means to measure progress.

The regular qualitative and quantitative research was complemented by a number of specific thematic studies on topics of interest for policy and intervention, conducted in collaboration with other interested parties. In Ethiopia, these included studies relating to healthcare financing, safety-nets, child labour, early learning, child marriage, violence, and urban relocation.

The Ethiopian context

The study coincided with rapid economic growth in Ethiopia, and with a range of policies and programmes designed to address poverty and to improve the situation of children. The 1990s saw Ethiopia introduce a number of policies to improve the situation of vulnerable women and children. In the first two decades of the new Millennium, there has been increasing institutional awareness of issues concerning children and youth, with the establishment of ministries that include specific mandates to attend to these. In the first decade, national plans and strategies aimed at sustainable development and the reduction of poverty, paying attention to children primarily in the spheres of health and education; the *Growth and Transformation Plans* of the second decade pay broader attention to children and youth, along with women's affairs, as components in the transformation of society. The national *Social Protection Policy* initially focussed on four areas,



all of which affect children: social safety-nets, livelihood and employment support, social insurance and access to health, education and other social services; it subsequently added a fifth area specifically protecting vulnerable groups including children from various forms of violence, abuse and exclusion. Further progress is evident in increasing prominence given to legislation and planning concerning children and youth. Children have received increasing access to public services, including schooling at all levels, health and nutrition, and child protection services. These improvements have culminated in a comprehensive revised *National Children's Policy* approved by Parliament in 2017, focussing on children in a variety of difficult circumstances. A *National Youth Development and Change Strategy* promises attention to continuing transformation.

Findings

Poverty dynamics. The data reveal that from 2002 to 2016, there has been an overall increase in household wealth and reduced poverty measured in a number of dimensions, including household wealth, consumption measures, health and nutrition, education, and access to safe water and sanitation. There has been a significant reduction in numbers of severely poor households, and a smaller reduction of moderately poor households. Improvements have been greater among the poor households and in rural areas, indicating that the poverty gap has been reduced, both within areas and between urban and rural areas. Nevertheless, a significant number of households have remained persistently in poverty, and a few have fallen into poverty during the course of the study. The severely poor households remain concentrated in rural areas. Factors associated with poverty include: larger numbers of household dependents; lower education of household members; socio-economic shocks such as illness, employment loss, or livestock deaths; and female household heads. Factors reducing the likelihood of poverty included: women working outside the home; access to credit and irrigated land; and living in urban areas within households headed by men. In urban sites, boys are less likely to face chronic poverty than girls.

Nutrition, health and cognitive development. During the course of the study, there have been substantial improvements in access to sanitation, clean drinking water, and health services, especially in rural areas. Nutrition remains a matter of concern, particularly since poor nutrition is associated with poorer cognitive development later, measured by language and maths scores and school outcomes.

Household perceptions of food security, together with diversity of foods consumed improved, although the drought of 2015/16 appears to have damaged the security of some households, and many households remain food insecure. Undernutrition, measured by stunting, declined between 2009 and 2016, with the largest decline among the poorest households, and some recovery from stunting was observed, underlining the importance of attending to

nutrition in early childhood. It remains a matter of concern that over a quarter of the sample remained affected at age 15 and about a fifth were persistently stunted up to age 12, with the highest proportion among the poor and less educated households. Short-term undernutrition, measured by thinness, increased between the two cohorts at age 12 (2006 to 2013) due to drought and inflation of food prices, a trend that was reversed three years later. Girls and children in rural sites and from poor families were much more likely to be thin in both cohorts at both times.

Education. Since the 1990s, Ethiopia has paid increasing attention to formal education from primary through to tertiary education, and recently including pre-primary. This attention has resulted in a remarkable expansion of access to primary education: virtually all children now receive some schooling. However, progress through grades is frequently slow and the majority of children are in grades below what is expected for their age. Students' performance in maths and literacy remains generally far below levels appropriate for their grades. The high aspirations of children at age eight drop in the face of failure to achieve goals. The investment in education does not therefore produce the expected or potential results in skilled young adults.

Pre-primary education has expanded radically, from around 5 per cent in 2010-11 to 50 per cent in 2015-16, largely in reception classes attached to schools predominantly in rural areas. The aim of preparing children for school is appreciated by parents. Nevertheless, enrolment remains low in rural areas, and is lower for girls than for boys; moreover quality needs improving to prepare children adequately for school.

Children from the wealthiest households dominate in secondary and tertiary institutions. In spite of the expansion of the educational system, inequities remain; the poorest, those in rural areas, girls in secondary school, and children whose parents have little education are likely to drop behind and drop out of the school system.

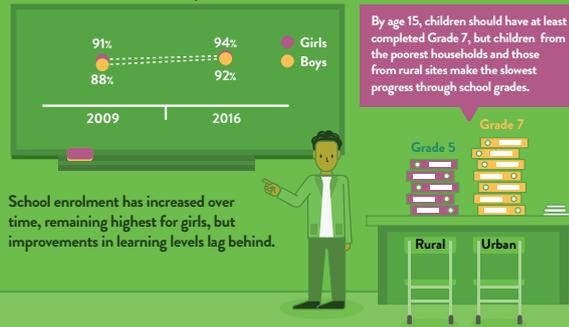
Well-being and protection. Apart from general information on child well-being, the Young Lives project in Ethiopia collected data relating to child protection in six specific areas of interest: social protection, orphans, work and labour, harmful traditional practices, violence, and urban relocation.

Social protection programmes have provided important protection against food insecurity and improved child nutrition. While public works have provided significant community benefits, in some cases they appear to have increased children's work either through direct involvement of children or when children replace work in the home of adults who are engaged in public works. More generally most children undertake some work and poorer children, particularly in response to economic shocks or when parents are earning, often have extended workloads that can interfere with schooling. Work can also bring benefits, including satisfaction in helping families and covering costs of schooling. Child protection policies and interventions, therefore, need to consider the overall situation of the children to be protected.



Education and Learning

School enrolment of 15-year-olds over time



School enrolment has increased over time, remaining highest for girls, but improvements in learning levels lag behind.

Growth and Nutrition

27% of children born in 2001 who were stunted at age 1 experienced growth recovery by 2013.

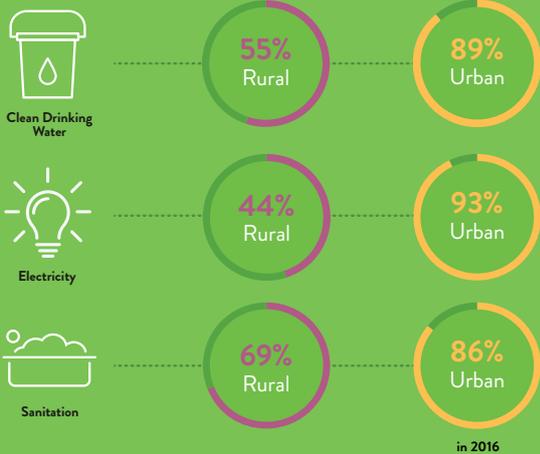
Incidence of stunting by household wealth level



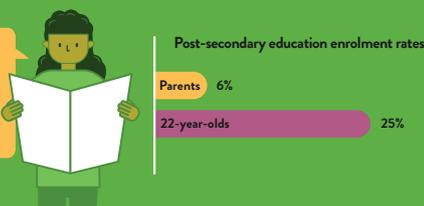
There is a socio-economic gradient for stunting. 13% of 15-year-olds from better-off families were stunted compared to 33% of those from poorer families.

Poverty and Intergenerational Change

Household wealth and access to services (clean drinking water, sanitation, and electricity) is improving over time. However, rural households are still disadvantaged.



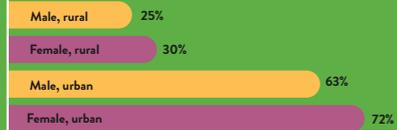
More 22-year-olds are accessing post-secondary education than their parents.



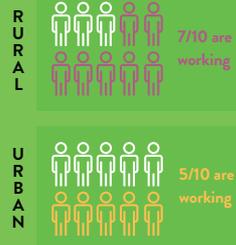
Youth Transitions: Skills, Work and Family Formation

Far fewer 22-year-olds living in rural areas completed lower secondary school than their urban peers.

Lower secondary education completion rates



Of every 10 22-year olds:



"As there is an economic problem in my family, I rather want to work than go to school because I need to earn enough money. I am absent from school at least twice a week."
(Denbel, a boy from Leku)

Few 22-year-olds regularly use digital devices.



Implications for Policy

Consolidate gains from pre-school expansion by improving systems. System improvements including teacher preparation, support, and deployment while resource allocation with community involvement can improve school readiness and ensure that the considerable potential gains from early learning materialise.

Prioritising investment in the early years can yield the best returns. Investments (especially social protection) during infancy and promotion of integrated approaches can dramatically improve outcomes, including child survival, development and wellbeing.

Tackle child poverty in all its forms. Policy and programmes must be implemented effectively and equitably within and across sectors, recognising age- and gender-specific needs, with a focus on the early years, and protecting the poorest and most vulnerable households and children.

Promote safe environments to ensure wellbeing of children and youth. Promote safer environments through social norm change by addressing deep-seated poverty that often exacerbates violence, training and deploying social workers, and expending, enhancing and integrating preventative and remedial services.

Address gender issues. Policies on children and youth, as well as sectoral policies in health and education, should address gender issues, including promotion of girls' enrolment in education.



The importance of social context appears in other areas of protection. Children who have lost a parent are often supported by kin, but are particularly vulnerable in situations of poverty. While progress has been made in reducing FGM/C and child marriage, intervention needs to understand remaining community adherence to these practices, sometimes supported by the girls. In urban relocation, movement to improved housing can disrupt social lives.

Risks of violence against children are widespread in rural and urban settings, and corporal punishment and/or emotional abuse is common in home and school settings, while fighting between boys and their harassment of girls is frequent in community contexts. There are gender and age differences, and certain categories of children are particularly vulnerable to violence, which is exacerbated by poverty.

Policy implications

Achievements of current policies. Young Lives research has shown that much has been achieved through the government policies of the past two decades, including: reduction in poverty, especially among disadvantaged groups; improved nutrition; better access to water and sanitation; widespread access to education; reduction in some harmful traditional practices; and reduced gaps between urban and rural areas, and between rich and poor. These results endorse current *Growth and Transformation Plans* advancing economic growth particularly in rural areas, the *Social Protection Policy* providing social protection, and the *National Children's Policy* promoting the interests and well-being of children.

However, poverty, food insecurity and undernutrition remain endemic, and are passed on across generations; economic and other adversities still damage the chances of many children; outcomes of schooling show limited learning and failure to complete schooling by many in disadvantaged groups; and risks of violence against children continue in a variety of forms. The research data indicate how policy can be more precisely targeted for further improvement.

Remaining inequalities. Social protection policies can be strengthened to target the most disadvantaged. More attention is needed to improve standards of living in rural areas. Since economic shocks are particularly damaging to the chances of children in poverty, more attention is required to dealing with environmental disasters, especially in rural areas, and providing social protection against individual setbacks such as sickness and death in the family. Since such variables as education of care-givers, larger numbers of dependents, and female household heads are also associated with vulnerability to poverty, an collaborative multi-sectoral approach is required.

Nutrition. Although current policies have brought about improvements in nutrition, stunting and thinness remain at unacceptably high levels, and affect cognitive outcomes. However, recovery from early undernutrition is possible, while some children falter into undernutrition after early childhood. To take advantage of the potential of young

people, therefore, nutrition programmes need to be extended beyond infancy, through childhood, and into adolescence and young motherhood, notably through school feeding programmes.

Education. In spite of the rapid expansion of primary and pre-primary education, outcomes are below expectations, and children from disadvantaged groups frequently drop out of the system early, suggesting the need for a number of policy adjustments.

Pre-primary education in rural areas can be made more effective by improving quality through training of teachers and more precise targeting to ensure that children in disadvantaged groups and areas receive adequate preparation for schooling.

Focus should shift from enrolment to quality of education to enable children to reach expected outcomes at their expected ages, paying special attention to children in groups disadvantaged by low household wealth, rural location, low parental education, and gender. Also the system of education should enable children to progress even while attending to competing needs, such as responding to crisis at home or seasonal work.

To capitalise on expansion, education financing reforms might redirect a higher share of resources towards children at the pre-primary and lowest primary levels (perhaps through complementary programs such as feeding). They might also permit greater variation in support so that spending rates are substantially higher in the most disadvantaged areas.

Child protection. Risks of violence against children remain endemic, especially in the form of corporal and emotional punishment, and the harassment of girls by adults and boys. The pressure of household work by girls and work to offset poverty can interfere with progress through school. While work is a component of community life and can impart useful skills, pressure on children in impoverished families can result in excessive and exploitative work. Much violence against children is exacerbated by poverty. Moreover, protection against a hazard in one area can have unintended consequences in others. Child protection programmes should therefore be linked with social protection, and policies should be integrated across sectors. Since cultural norms and values are related to some forms of violence, the involvement of different stakeholders within communities at the local level is essential to protect children from such violence.

Conclusions

While there has been tremendous progress under policies developed to protect children, reduce poverty and promote growth, further progress depends on implementing policies and programmes effectively and equitably within and across sectors, with a focus on the early years, and protecting the poorest and most vulnerable households and children. Apart from social protection for the poor households within communities, this requires further attention to areas lacking



resources and especially to remote and pastoralist areas. Improving equity is especially challenging in the field of education, where apart from providing access, support is needed for children disadvantaged by poverty, by having poorly educated carers, or by geographical environment.

Effective implementation of policies requires recognition of the different needs of children at different ages. In early childhood, undernutrition, childhood diseases and early learning are crucial. In middle childhood, priorities include access to adequate and diverse diets and quality education, and protecting vulnerable households from shocks, and children from excessive or harmful work and violence. In adolescence, post-primary education, training and transitions to the labour market are important, as well as protecting girls from gender-based violence.

To enhance children's well-being, gender issues must be addressed. Girls' chances of pre-primary and post-primary schooling are often curtailed by social norms. In adolescence, girls face risks of greater burdens of work and gender-based violence. And in the transition to adulthood, they face gender-based challenges in access to education and employment after marriage.

The transition to adulthood, with marriage, parenting and a focus on productive work in an environment of limited employment opportunities remains an important challenge, of which the Ethiopian Government is well aware and for which it is developing policies and strategies. These need to be based on evidence, and the Young Lives research is only beginning to collect information on this stage of the life cycle of young people. There is need to continue the research programme in Ethiopia to observe the two cohorts while they make this transition.

Key messages

Tackling child poverty in all its forms should be an urgent priority

Since 2001, Young Lives has demonstrated important improvements in living standards, nutrition, food security and diet diversity, and access to services, notably sanitation, water, education and electricity, with important implications for child wellbeing. This longitudinal research has also shown how formative the early years are, with differences between social groups emerging from early childhood. Despite significant gains, child poverty persists, remains pervasive and is multi-dimensional, with negative impacts on children's life chances and with societal loss of human capital and potential. Moreover, children are over-represented among the poorest people, so that a child focus is an important means to address overall poverty. Policies addressing children's issues have been increasingly developed since 2000, culminating in the *National Children's Policy* in 2017. Further progress requires implementing policies and programmes effectively and equitably within and across sectors, recognising age- and gender- specific needs, with a focus on the early years, and protecting the poorest and most vulnerable households and children.

Building on major gains requires further emphasis on addressing inequalities

Wealth levels have risen over the study period and multidimensional poverty has decreased. Although there have been greater improvements among the poorest and rural households, the gaps based on wealth, location, education and household conditions remain massive, as reflected in differences in undernutrition, food insecurity and lack of access to services. Ethiopia's development plans and policies have been pro-poor and the *Social Protection Policy and Strategy* provides an important basis for addressing the needs of vulnerable households and children. Furthermore, the *National Children's Policy* focuses on children in difficult circumstances, which includes disabled children, orphans, refugee, displaced or migrant children, and domestic child workers and street workers. Further emphasis on rural, remote and pastoralist communities can also reduce inequalities, while a greater investment in the early years can avoid gaps widening.

Improving support to children entails addressing the needs of different age groups

The needs of children and adolescents vary by age from early infancy through to adulthood, often intersecting with gender, poverty, deprivation, ill-health and other household shocks. Young Lives has shown that a life-cycle approach is important to understanding and addressing the different needs of children as they grow up. In early childhood, interventions to address undernutrition, childhood diseases and early learning are crucial. In middle childhood, priorities include ensuring access to adequate and diverse diets and to good quality education, and protecting vulnerable households from shocks and children from excessive or harmful work and violence. In adolescence, promoting post-primary education, training and transitions to the labour market are important, as is protecting girls from gender-based violence. The implementation of sectoral and cross-cutting policies and programmes could be strengthened by improving targeting on the basis of age categories in conjunction with gender and other intersecting inequalities. For example, improving coverage of Early Childhood Development for young children and reducing violence for adolescents would be important age-related priorities.

Enhancing children's wellbeing involves addressing gender issues

Young Lives evidence highlights increasing gender differences as children grow up, often compounded by other inequalities based on wealth, location and education. Girls are less likely to be sent to pre-school, whereas in primary school boys are more at risk of dropping out. Girls face pressure in combining school with work in the home as well as for pay. Girls' chances of post-primary education are often constrained by social norms. In adolescence, gender roles become accentuated and girls face risks of greater work burdens and gender-based violence. In the transition to adulthood, adolescent girls face challenges



and difficult choices in prioritising or combining education, work, marriage and parenting. These patterns of gender disadvantage further constrain women's opportunities in adulthood. Policies on children and youth, as well as sectoral policies in health and education, should address gender issues, which require further support and targeted plans and programmes.

Prioritising investment in the early years can yield the best returns

Young Lives shows how important early life is to later prospects. Early undernutrition has profound and lasting consequences for learning and later health. Children with access to good pre-school education show better later educational achievements. The *National Strategy for Newborn and Child Survival* addresses key health concerns, while the *National Nutrition Program* and the *Early Childhood Care and Education Framework* provide the basis for strengthening integrated interventions. Further prioritisation of investments during infancy and promotion of collaborative approaches can dramatically improve outcomes, including child survival, development and wellbeing. Greater focus on social protection for households with young children and prioritising rural and disadvantaged areas, as well as households and children at risk, can accelerate progress and reduce inequalities.

The potential for nutritional recovery offers a second chance beyond infancy

The first 1,000 days are known to have a crucial impact on children's nutrition and later outcomes. Young Lives has further demonstrated that, as children grow up, they can recover after infancy from early stunting, but also that they can be at risk of becoming stunted, but also that they can be at risk of falling back into undernutrition in later childhood. The *National Nutrition Program* acknowledges the multidimensional factors affecting nutrition, and school feeding programmes have been expanded in recent years partly in response to drought crises. A greater emphasis on nutritional interventions beyond infancy, and institutionalisation of appropriate feeding approaches in day care, pre-school and primary school can ensure recovery and protect vulnerable children from faltering. Promoting adequate nutrition and diet diversity for girls in adolescence before they become mothers can play a vital role in breaking cycles of inter-generational undernutrition.

Consolidating gains from pre-school expansion requires improving the system

Access to pre-primary education has massively increased, notably through the recent expansion of O-Class provision. Young Lives longitudinal evidence suggests that good quality pre-primary education can have an important impact on later educational and cognitive outcomes. However, there are considerable implementation challenges to responding at a national scale to community needs and demand for good quality pre-schooling. The current *Education Sector*

Development Program has prioritised the rapid expansion of pre-primary education. Improvements to the system, including teacher preparation, support and deployment, and resource allocation with community involvement can improve school readiness and ensure that the considerable potential gains from early learning materialise. Promoting enrolment of girls and targeting the poorest households and rural, remote and pastoralist communities can improve equity and redress emerging inequalities.

Progress to universal learning involves further promotion of quality and equity

Young Lives research confirms a remarkable expansion of access and opportunity in primary education. Progress through grades is, however, slow and intermittent. Performance levels and learning outcomes are low by international standards and for the majority of students are much lower than expected in the curriculum. The current *Education Sector Development Program* prioritises addressing quality and reforms are underway. Prioritising investment in pre-primary and early primary grades and implementing system reforms which promote the attainment of minimum learning expectations among all young people can ensure more balanced foundations for later schooling and employment. Targeted and contextualised support for the poorest and most disadvantaged groups from rural, remote and pastoralist communities to ensure they continue in school and learn adequately can increase equity in education gains

Child labour legislation needs to be implemented sensitively to be effective

Young Lives evidence shows that most children do some work from a young age and working is part of children's lives and relationships. Some work can be benign or beneficial, contributing to household livelihoods, the costs of schooling, and skills development, although excessive or hazardous work is harmful and should be prevented. The *National Action Plan on the Elimination of the Worst Forms of Child Labour* and the *National Children's Policy* provide important protection for children that needs to be implemented sensitively, involving parents and communities to have the best effects. Social protection addressing family poverty, and providing insurance against vulnerabilities can reduce the need for children to work and promoting child care provisions can reduce pressure on girls to cover domestic care work. Support with flexible education can ensure that children who need to work are able to access schooling.

Promoting wellbeing in adolescence requires prioritising support for girls

Young Lives evidence shows that in adolescence girls face major challenges and particular risks. They carry a greater burden of work in the home and often for pay, putting pressure on their schooling performance and their wellbeing. Adolescent girls also face greater risks of gender-based violence, notably female genital mutilation/cutting (FGM/C), abduction and child marriage. In



transitioning to adulthood adolescent girls face challenges over access to reproductive health, and constraints in their decision-making regarding education, marriage, work and parenting. Given the rising enrolment of girls, schools and girls clubs can provide important platforms for addressing such issues and service delivery. The *Harmful Traditional Practices Strategy*, the *Adolescent Reproductive Health Strategy* and the *Youth Development and Change Strategy* provide frameworks for enhancing the wellbeing of adolescent girls and ensuring their protection, but they require further support and targeted programmes for their effective implementation.

Benefiting from educational investments involves improving transitions to work

Young Lives evidence shows that there has been considerable progress in access to education, but grade progression, learning levels and completion rates are below expectations. The education policy has implemented reforms and prioritised secondary, technical and tertiary education. However, training, skills development and linkages with the job market and youth unemployment present major challenges. The *Youth Development and Change Strategy* and corresponding *Package* seek to promote job creation and youth entrepreneurship, with attention to urban, rural and pastoralist youth. Further efforts are required to ensure that the benefits from investment in education translate into greater economic

involvement of youth. A focus on the capabilities and specific needs of young women and youth in urban, rural and pastoralist communities can ensure that interventions are tailored to differential needs in order to promote effective youth engagement in economic development.

Ensuring the well-being of children and youth requires promoting safe environments

Young Lives evidence suggests that there are risks of violence in the home, school and community, including corporal punishment, and emotional and gender-based violence, affecting children at different ages, with certain categories of vulnerable children more at risk of abuse. Existing social norms can underpin violence, while new risks have emerged with globalisation and urbanisation. The *National Children's Policy and Strategy*, the *Youth Development and Change Strategy* and the *Social Protection Policy and Strategy* provide safeguards and identify sectoral issues and categories at risk, while the *Strategy on Harmful Traditional Practices* protects girls from gender-based violence. Protective, counselling and remedial measures have been piloted. Ensuring children's protection and well-being requires changing social norms to promote safer environments, including in rapidly urbanising contexts, addressing the deep-seated poverty that often exacerbates violence, training and deploying social workers, and expanding, enhancing and integrating preventative and remedial services.

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