

Applying a Girls' Lens to the Palette of Integrated Empowerment Interventions

A COMPENDIUM OF LEARNING
ON EFFECTIVE PROGRAMMING
TO EMPOWER ADOLESCENT GIRLS



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Catholic Relief Services carries out the commitment of the Bishops of the United States to assist the poor and vulnerable overseas. CRS is motivated by the Gospel of Jesus Christ to cherish, preserve and uphold the sacredness and dignity of all human life, foster charity and justice, and embody Catholic social and moral teaching as it acts to: promote human development by responding to major emergencies, fighting disease and poverty, and nurturing peaceful and just societies; and, serve Catholics in the United States as they live their faith in solidarity with their brothers and sisters around the world.

www.crs.org

The Nike Foundation is a non-profit organization dedicated to investing in adolescent girls as the most powerful force for change in the developing world.

www.nikefoundation.org

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PURPOSE OF THE PUBLICATION

This document is intended to serve as a learning module for those engaged in girls' programming or seeking to insert a 'girls lens' into multi-sectoral programming, be they government institutions, practitioners, or donors. Through this publication, lessons learned are explored from interventions across diverse sectors of the Empowering Adolescent Girls project implemented through Catholic Relief Services (CRS)/Ethiopia. As interventions are many and diverse, each and every one of these interventions could not be profiled in depth in this publication. Therefore selected interventions have been highlighted, however it should be remembered that it is the composite combination of interventions that creates lasting empowerment results in girls' lives.

Acronyms

CRS- Catholic Relief Services

SILC- Saving and Internal Lending Communities

Ethiopian Vocabulary

Aba Geda- traditional leaders of the Oromo people

gebera- the practice of dowry exchange just after a girl's birth, prevalent in the

Chelelka-

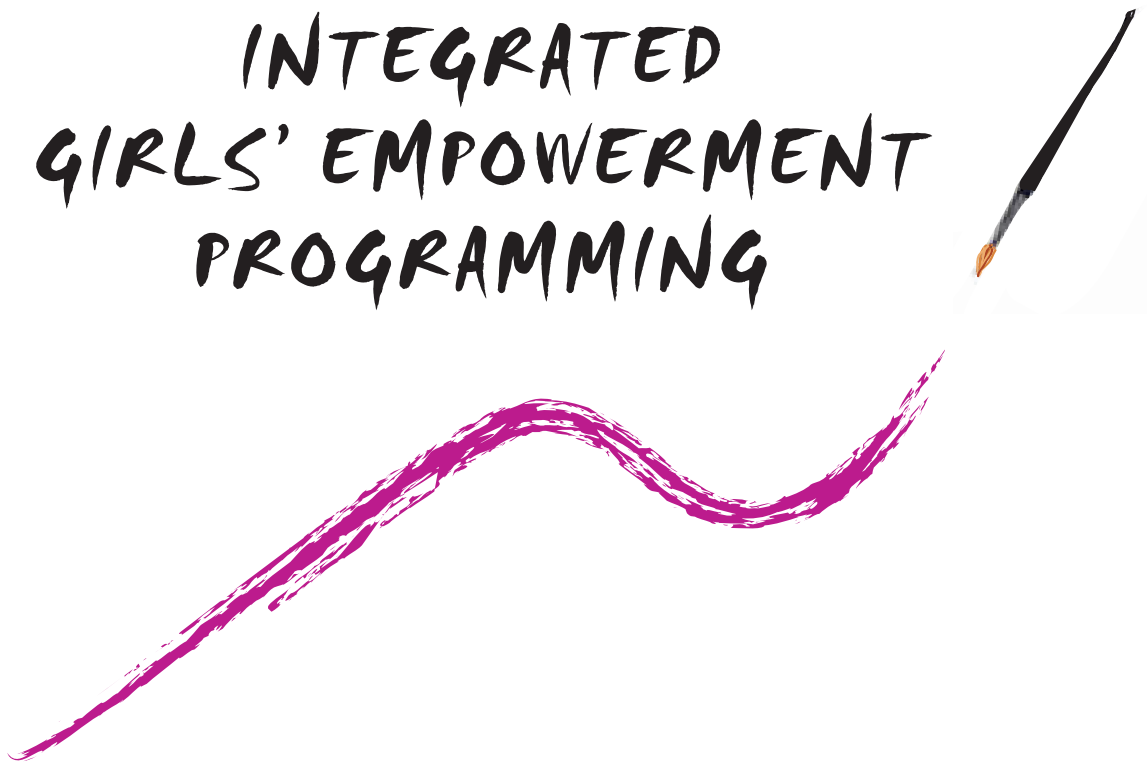
Ellen watershed of Oromia

idir-traditional burial association

kebele-local administrative unit

woreda- district administrative unit

**PART 1:
FRAMEWORK OF
INTEGRATED
GIRLS' EMPOWERMENT
PROGRAMMING**



WHY ADOLESCENT GIRLS MATTER

One of every six people in the world is an adolescent girl, equivalent to 600 million people or about 16 % of the world's population (Girl Effect, 2009).

Global research has shown that empowerment of girls can lead to the following outcomes which exert a broader and far-reaching impact on society.

- Girls and young women have the potential to play crucial roles in their countries, communities, and families.
- Economic growth can occur with a more competitive labor force and lower dependency ratios.
- Improving the condition of girls and women fosters an involved citizenry and stronger governance.
- Better health and education for girls today lead to a healthier, better educated next generation.

(Center for Global Development, 2008)

Faye Shanko, participant in a petty trade kiosk, situated outside of the project's nonformal education centers.



BARRIERS FACED BY GIRLS IN ETHIOPIA

Girls in Ethiopia are faced with a wealth of barriers that prevent them from reaching this broader potential latent within them. In the areas of Ethiopia where CRS is active, the Chelelka-Ellen watersheds in Oromia region, and the Rubachea watershed in Tigray region, girls are limited by the following barriers:

LOW EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT

Girls drop out from school earlier than boys due to: inability to pay for basic materials like uniforms, books and stationary; early marriage; fear of being attacked or abducted en route to school; perception of parents that investing in girls education will be lost when the girl transfers to another household for marriage; heavy domestic workload that limits attendance and ability to study outside of class; absence of gender-segregated toilets in schools; and social norms regarding the roles and expectations of girls. The nearest secondary school is a several hour walk away from girls in some of the target sites.

LACK OF ECONOMIC ASSETS

Girls in Ethiopia possess few economic assets and little means of earning income. With 77.8% of the population living on less than \$2 per day (UNDP, 2007), parents are also living in state of poverty and are not able to adequately economically support their children, regardless of gender. However when scarce resources are apportioned, investment in boys' education and opportunities is often prioritized over girls. Compounding these factors, formal employment opportunities are scarce in rural areas. Girls are engaged in productive labor, but their labor is not paid and they are not able to produce or accumulate assets. In most of the project sites, girls, as well as many women, are landless, and in one of the project sites, traditional laws do not allow girls and women to inherit property.

HEAVY WORKLOAD

The brunt of household workload falls on the shoulders of adolescent girls, with the average adolescent girl's domestic workload beginning at 6:00 am and ending at 9:00 pm. Girls are responsible for fetching water, gathering firewood, tending livestock, and assisting parents in agricultural duties, activities which often require her to travel great distances. Within the home, girls are engaged in preparing meals, cleaning the compound, as well as caring for children, the elderly and the ill. Parents and

Fuel-saving stove contributed by the project in order to help girls spend less time fetching firewood, spend less time cooking, reduce incidence of burn and smoke inhalation, and ultimately have more time to go to school.





*The St. Mary's Group in the kitchen of their restaurant-
- Through the process of establishing their petty trade group, savings and internal lending community, and liaising with the Women's Affairs Office, the girls developed solidarity, not only economically but in their cohesion as a group and their ability to surmount struggles.*

caregivers often not allocate little, if any time for girls to study or engage in personal development activities. Nearly 100% of girls are engaged in these routine household chores for the family without pay.

Boys, on the other hand, are more likely to be engaged in formal employment and to receive monetary

remuneration for their engagement in agriculture.

LACK OF VOICE

Girls are socialized into gender norms that encourage them to be silent and passive, refraining from speaking out or engaging in matters related to their own well-being or of their community. Boys are often preferred for investment in education, and so girls lack the opportunity to develop their skills, knowledge and interests and obtain information. All these factors combined lead to a sense of powerlessness among girls. This sense of powerlessness over their own lives is often internalized and serves to reinforce gender inequalities as girls grow into women. The UNDP Human Development Report found that only 20% of legislators, senior officials and managers are female (UNDP, 2007) and the World Health Organization found that 85% of women in Ethiopia could identify one or more justifiable reasons why women should be beaten (World Health Organization, 2005).

EARLY MARRIAGE

Early marriage is common across Ethiopia, with girls in the target areas being married off as young as 12. Early marriage is accompanied by higher presence of fistula, greater risk in childbirth, early school dropout and social isolation of girls. Many early marriages are contracted during infancy and families receive substantial dowries which are distributed among members of the extended family. In the event of an attempted cancellation years later, the cost of repaying the dowry to the family exponentially increases, and consent and collaboration from all family members who received dowry proceeds is required to pay it back.

HIGH INCIDENCE OF GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE

In the project target areas, adolescent girls are subjected to a number of harmful, but traditionally practiced behaviors, including: abduction, rape, forced marriage after abduction, and forced sex within marriage. It is not uncommon for families to become complicit with local boys in the abduction, rape and then coerced marriage of their own girls. The presence of soldiers in the one of project's watersheds has accentuated the incidence of gender-based violence, as well as resulting in pressure or coercion to enter arranged marriage.

POOR HEALTH AND LIMITED ACCESS TO HEALTH SERVICES

Girls lack access to health facilities, as well as information on health issues, particularly reproductive health. When facilities are operational, girls are challenged by inability to pay for health care and difficulty in securing transport to health stations. These challenges affect both boys and girls, but girls generally have fewer economic resources at hand to engage in health-seeking behavior. Lack of health care and water infrastructure is linked with a higher prevalence of an assortment of health problems, including diarrhea, skin diseases and eye diseases like trachoma. HIV/AIDS disproportionately affects girls in the adolescent age range, and locally used stoves also expose girls to fire hazards, excessive smoke and long hours of labor.

POOR NUTRITION

Families in project target areas experience frequent drought and food shortage. This is exacerbated for girls, who eat after adults and boys, receiving the least nutritional food. This poor nutrition, combined with lack of knowledge of how to balance diets, excessive workload and early pregnancy often results in malnutrition and anemia (Catholic Relief Services/Ethiopia, 2006).

These barriers are often interwoven and mutually reinforcing, with the combined effect of disempowering girls. CRS' engagement with girls has sought to directly address these barriers and open doors for girls to achieve their latent potential and improve their well-being, voice and decision-making role, which impacts their own lives, their families and communities, and in turn, society at a broader level.



Gender Club members who used the school water point to establish an irrigation system and cultivate small vegetables

BACKGROUND ON THE GLOBAL INVESTMENT IN THE GIRL EFFECT

In collaboration with leading experts in the field, the Nike Foundation has invested in articulating thinking around the 'Girl Effect', the powerful social and economic change brought about when girls have the opportunity to participate in society. The Girl Effect has been consolidated into twelve foundational principles for supporting girls (Girl Effect, 2009):

1 Find her.

2 Meet her gatekeepers.

3 Recruit her.

4 Give her space.

5 Give her an ID.

6 She understands her body.

7 She has five friends.

8 She has an older mentor.

9 Her hero is a girl.

10 She stays in school.

11 She stands up for herself.

12 The power of economics.

The Nike Foundation has invested in a broad range of interventions to empower adolescent girls, many of which promote the agenda of distilling and disseminating learning to the wider community. The CRS Empowering Adolescent Girls project is one of these interventions and the learning from this activity is shared in order to broaden and deepen the existing knowledge base on how to effectively empower adolescent girls. (see www.girleffect.org)

PROJECT BACKGROUND

EMPOWERING ADOLESCENT GIRLS PROJECT OVERVIEW

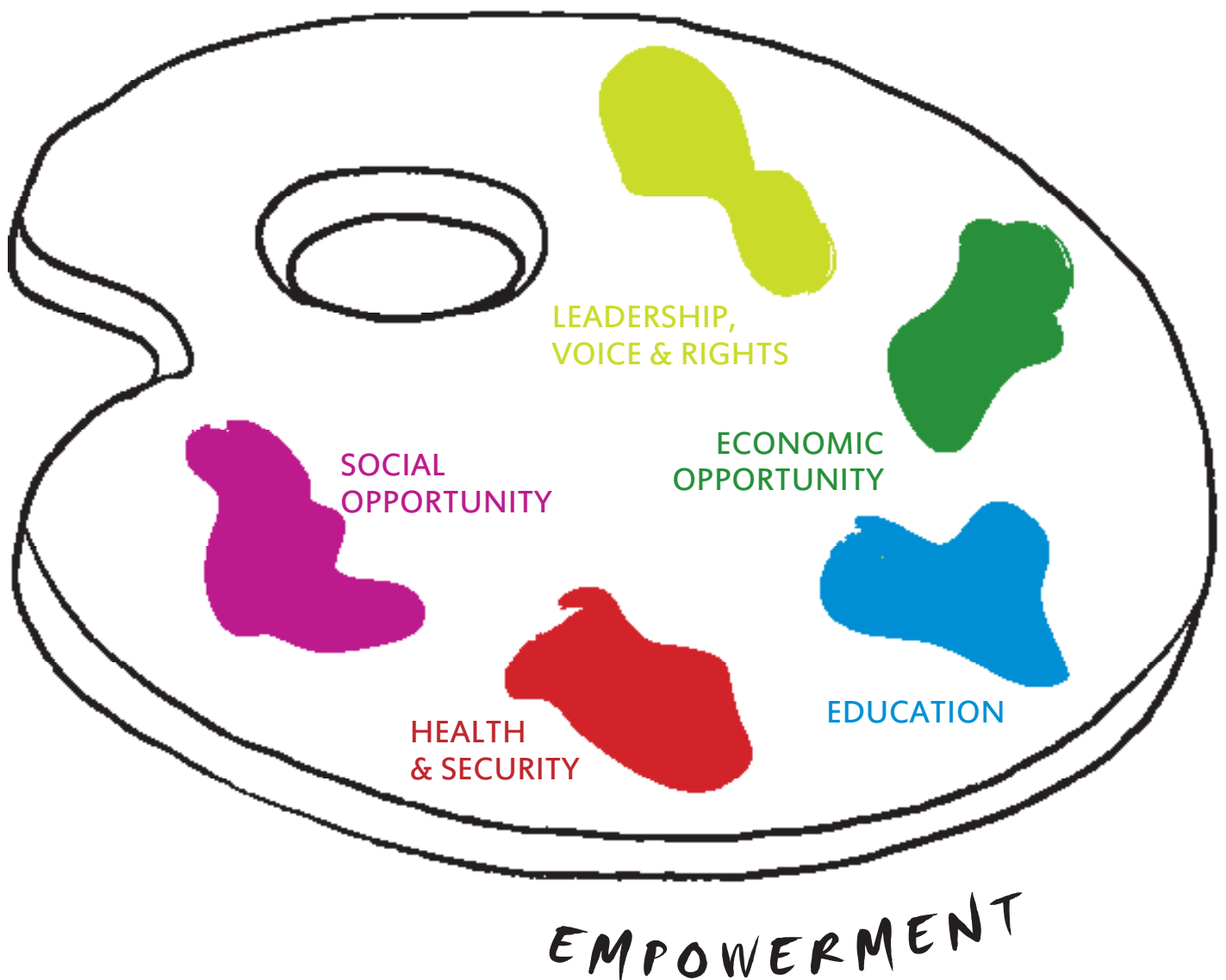
The Empowering Adolescent Girls project is a Nike Foundation-funded activity which operated from June 2006 through August 2009 and was implemented by Catholic Relief Services, through local level partners: the Ethiopian Catholic Church Social and Development Coordinating Offices of Adigrat and Meki as well as the Alem Tena Catholic Church. The project addresses approximately 5500 in-school and out-of-school adolescent girls between ages 10 to 19 residing in the watersheds covered by the Integrated Watershed Management project. The project also targeted stakeholders that impacted girls' lives including: parents, community leaders, district government officials, implementing partners and CRS itself. The project worked to empower girls through five integrated sectors of empowerment: education, economic opportunity, leadership, voice and rights, health/security, and social opportunity. The activities implemented through each of these empowerment sectors are delineated in the following diagram.

RELATIONSHIP WITH THE CRS INTEGRATED WATERSHEDS MANAGEMENT PROJECT

CRS' Integrated Watersheds Management Project has operated since 2002 in the rural Gulomekeda district of Tigray region and Dugda and Bora districts in the Rift Valley area of Oromia. The project's strategies included: market-led agricultural production; agro-enterprise development through farmers groups; development of water resources for household use, livestock and supplemental irrigation; encouragement of communities to organize water-use associations; linkage of clean water supply with sanitation improvements such as toilets, washing basins and household drainage; education in health, nutrition, HIV/AIDS, hygiene, sanitation, and human rights; and empowerment of women-headed households. The Empowering Adolescent Girls project began in 2006, and sought to initiate new independent activities as well as coordinate with the existing Integrated Watershed Management project activities to insert a girls' lens into rural development programming, working with the same households and communities targeted through the larger project. The intent of this integration was to leverage greater will and resources for girls, than a stand-alone project alone could leverage.

CRS ETHIOPIA MODEL OF THE SPECTRUM OF GIRLS' EMPOWERMENT ACROSS INTEGRATED SECTORS

The model presented below delineates five sectoral facets of empowerment addressed through the project's interventions. Many of these interventions are cross-cutting and overlap across sectoral areas, demonstrating the inseparability and integrated nature of empowerment in a girl's life. Through exploration of the model's facets of empowerment, some project implementers came to understand that Leadership, Voice and Rights was a cross-cutting issue that intersected and served as the foundation of each of the other sectoral facets of empowerment, rather than a separate sector in and of itself. The team implemented the project according to the model presented here, but identified the need to refine and polish this model, to enhance and clarify understanding of the framework of empowerment in future programming.



INTERVENTIONS IN EACH SECTOR OF EMPOWERMENT

LEADERSHIP, VOICE AND RIGHTS

Creation of Safe Spaces
Training in Life Skills, Assertiveness and Rights
Engagement of Girls in Formal
Decision Making Processes
Creation of Peer Support Mechanisms

ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY

Formation of Savings and
Internal Lending Communities
Engagement in Market-led Agro-enterprise
Formation of Irrigation Groups
Installment of Irrigation Mechanisms
Facilitation of Girls' Access to Land
Engagement in Petty Trade
Formal Registration of Cooperatives

SOCIAL OPPORTUNITY

Support of Participation in School Clubs
Education and Sensitization of
Stakeholders in Girls' Lives
Interventions to Combat
Harmful Traditional Practices

EDUCATION

Provision of Scholarship Stipends
Supply of School Materials
Establishment of Nonformal Education Centers
Sponsorship of Occupational Training
Awarding Students who Excel
Facilitation of Tutorial Provision
Access to Libraries
Sensitization of Communities
on the Value of Education

HEALTH AND SECURITY

Sanitation and Personal Hygiene Education
Reproductive Health and HIV/AIDS Education
Provision of Sanitary Napkins
Construction of Household Latrines
Construction of Gender-segregated School Latrines
Construction of Water Points in Schools
Promotion of Backyard Gardening
Distribution of Fuel-saving Stoves
Referral Linkages to Health Facilities

PRINCIPLES EMPLOYED BY CRS IN PROGRAMMING TO EMPOWER ADOLESCENT GIRLS

Through the process of implementing the project, the following emerged as useful principles to guide investing in and implementing interventions for girls.

INTEGRATION

Focusing on one or only a handful of the challenges that face girls does not bring solutions or help girls explore the latent potential within them; indeed girls may not even be aware of the latent potential they possess (Catholic Relief Services Ethiopia, 2008). Programming for girls thus requires an integrated, multi-faceted approach. The project implementers defined and actualized integration in diverse ways. On the one hand, integration refers to holistic programming interwoven throughout the various facets of a girl's life. Integration also refers to making the connections between project individual activities so that they do not operate as stand-alone components. In terms of the placement of girls' lens within larger CRS plans of action, interventions for girls liaised with, complemented, and added on to existing interventions of the Integrated Watersheds Management Project, a key strategy of success for the project. And finally, integration comes to play in the larger picture, in the way a large, multi-sectoral project designs interventions, develops work plans, budgets for programming, and manages, staffs and supervise the roll-out of project activities. In terms of program integration, in one example, the project built a nonformal education center. Around this, a water point and gender-segregated latrines were also installed. A Gender Club was initiated and community members used the center for awareness-raising meetings. Nearby, a kiosk for a group of petty trade girls was constructed so that the traffic, and hence the available market around the school improved. This example illustrates how integrated interventions for girls reinforced one another.

ADAPTATION

Each intervention employed by the project has been contextualized to the particular needs of the girls involved and to the differing cultures, traditions and sets of norms in each project implementation site. One intervention may be applied in a completely different manner in another watershed of the project, and all interventions are not equally applicable to each project site. In addition, each year at the project review meeting, field-level implementers modified the project interventions and strategies, according to learning. Interventions thus became flexible, dynamic and diversified. For instance, in Chelelka-Ellen watershed, a variety of types of educational support were delivered to various types of girls. Those who needed uniforms, received uniform support, whereas in places, where uniforms were not required, this input was not supplied. Girls received monthly or quarterly stipends based on their living status. In some areas, girls received fuel-saving stoves or household latrine materials when their families demonstrated role modeling behavior and in other areas, the inputs were supplied to a wider cross-section of girls. In contrast with this multifarious approach, the District Targeting Committee of Rubachea watershed, decided that each girl should only receive one form of education-promoting benefit each, in order to equitably spread the benefits.

FOR GIRLS, BY GIRLS

At the core of the Girl Effect theory, is the idea that girls make change in the world when they themselves become decision makers. The project sought to enable girls to become actively engaged in taking initiative, planning for themselves, and making their own choices. In particular, generation of income sources and opening access to ownership for girls themselves was key. This thrust towards 'For Girls, by Girls' was reinforced and supported by the mentor-like follow-up of field staff, active engagement on behalf of the girls with local government offices and structures, and ongoing oversight and stewardship from the side of project management. Girls were able to develop decision making skills in the fora in which they were active, for instance as members and leaders of HIV/AIDS and Gender Clubs, Irrigation Groups, Petty Trade groups, Savings and Internal Lending Communities, and in some cases, Student Councils.

INVOLVING MEN AND BOYS

CRS sought to involve men and boys in each aspect of girls' programming with the intent that males become advocates for, rather than oppressors of girls. The project worked with male students, fathers, community members, Aba Geda traditional leaders, clergy, traditional burial association leaders and others. For instance, when the Empowering Adolescent Girls project began, the operating lingo in formal schools was 'Girls' Clubs'. CRS took initiative to change the name of these entities to Gender Clubs and to actively engage school boys to become advocates and supporters of girls' issues. Through these clubs, boys and girls were able to collaborate in promotion of gender equality and combating harmful traditional practices, while girls were still able to find a safe space in particular activities targeted primarily to girls. When boys themselves received reproductive health education, they began to tease girls less about menstruation. Boys participated in dramas against abduction, and in one site, where boys and girls formerly walked to school separately with schoolgirls in fear of schoolboys, they began to travel together, increasing protection of girls against abduction from out-of-school boys.

COUPLING INVESTMENTS IN GIRLS WITH BENEFIT FOR THE WIDER COMMUNITY

CRS found that when girls' needs were prioritized by the project, and when project inputs targeted to girls also offered wider benefit for the community, the community gradually began to value the role of girls and their ability to attract investment to the community. Tangible and physical results reinforced change in socio-cultural attitudes and practices toward adolescent girls. For instance, the irrigation groups targeted for girls including a component of digging a shallow well and in some cases installing a water pump and building a fence to prevent livestock from entering the irrigated area. Girls were made to be the owners of the land and the primary 'beneficiaries' of activities, but through the intervention, fathers and mothers received water irrigation equipment and agricultural outputs that benefited broader aspects their own lives. This externally-initiated shift in the structure of power, control and value given to the role of girls was, albeit gradually, internalized by community members. In the voice of a farmer and father to one of the girls at the irrigation group site, "When there is investment in girls, it also benefits us." Over the long term, supporting adolescent girls cycles back to indirectly benefit the household, which reciprocally benefits adolescent girls.

COMMITMENT

None of the project interventions would be possible without the whole-hearted support, willingness to entertain new ideas and commitment to the end goals of the project on the part of project stakeholders, in particular implementing partners, project staff, government line offices, and community participants. This commitment is the cornerstone upon which successful interventions were built.

SUSTAINABILITY

In initiating interventions for girls, CRS took a unique approach. Rather than simply providing 'software' inputs and minimal investment and expecting activities to be sustained, CRS invested heavily in physical inputs (e.g. irrigation devices, fuel-saving stoves, etc.) and combined this with intensive training and staff support, with the aim that participants could sustainably carry on an activity into the future. Project participants were therefore given the materials as well as the know-how to continue after project investment. CRS also sensitized its project staff and participants in the larger Integrated Watershed Management project to follow girls' initiatives and periodically monitor their progress. In one example, CRS helped girls form an irrigation group, delivered training, provided materials and mobilized community to dig a shallow well or rainwater harvesting mechanism. Following the completion of the project life, girls were well-equipped to continue with their agro-enterprise activities.

LEVERAGING

The principle of leveraging advocates that when a project mobilizes resources or actions that target girls, with concerted effort and active initiative, other stakeholders can be motivated to contribute additional or supplementary resources to further the benefit of the activity. In Fasi town in Rubachea watershed, the Empowering Adolescent Girls project organized the girls into a group and provided materials to start up a business. The project approached the kebele to provide land and the Safety Net Project to construct an edifice which could serve as a restaurant for the girls. Mothers of the girls also contributed to the business by providing and/or selling garden vegetables to the girls for use in the restaurant. Active engagement from project staff over a period of two years was needed to securely leverage all these inputs. However, when girls demonstrated their business were successful, mothers voluntarily leveraged contributions from their side.

REPLICATION

From the design stage of the activity, the project actively sought to motivate collaborating stakeholders, be they government offices, donors or community members, to replicate successful interventions targeting girls. At Tswaha Primary School in Tigray, the school benefited from a water point constructed inside the school near gender-segregated latrines, while next door to the school, the project helped girls gain ownership of land, construct an irrigation scheme and use agro-business profits to pay for school costs. The school knew that its water point was constructed for the sake of girls, so the school used its own water point to benefit girls by allocating land for girls in extenuating circumstances to cultivate vegetable gardens. This demonstrates how a school observed the success of an innovative intervention irrigation scheme for girls, chose to implement this within its school walls, extending the benefits of agro-enterprise to a broader cross-section of girls.

PROJECT TOOLS

The project utilized various frameworks to guide the course of its implementation, the main ones being CRS' Integral Human Development Framework, as well as the Girl Effect, developed by a corps of leading thinkers working for adolescent girls. The project drew upon community mobilization and behavior change strategy, namely the Self-esteem, Associative Strengths, Resourcefulness, Action-planning, and Responsibility (SARAR) approach. This approach was adopted by CRS and implemented through the larger Integrated Watershed Management project, along with the Community Action Cycle for Community Mobilization approach (Health Communication

Partnership) for engaging community stakeholders. The project also utilized various training curricula including: We Stop AIDS, an HIV prevention package (Catholic Relief Services); PAPAS- Participatory AIDS Prevention and Support training package (Catholic Relief Services); In-Charge, a participatory learning and action kit for youth (Catholic Relief Services), Youth Action Kit, a life skill and HIV prevention training package for youth age 15 and above (Health Communication Partnership); Sports for Life, a life skill and HIV prevention training package for children and youth ages 12-14 (Health Communication Partnership); Beacon Schools, a life skill and HIV prevention training package for children and youth ages 10-12 (Health Communication Partnership) and other gender, life skills, assertiveness and reproductive health materials developed specifically for the project. The choice of training curricula was selected according to the local contextualities in each project site. (see www.crs.org for further information)



Shallow well near crops cultivated by the Biruh Tesfah Girls Irrigation Group



PART II: EMPOWERMENT ILLUSTRATED

LEARNING MODULES ON GIRLS' EMPOWERMENT, ILLUSTRATED THROUGH PROJECT INTERVENTIONS

The lessons learned from interventions across diverse sectors through the Empowering Adolescent Girls project are explored in this section. The project interventions have been described separately here to detail out learning for the reader, however the interventions operated seamlessly. While the project's interventions are many and diverse, each and every one of these interventions could not be profiled in depth in this publication. Therefore selected interventions have been highlighted, but it should be remembered that it is the composite combination of layered interventions that creates empowerment results in girls' lives. In addition, suggestions are provided on how lessons learned can be incorporated. These lessons learned should be taken up according to context and applied as relevant. There are no "one-size-fits-all" lessons or solutions.

SAFE SPACES

INTERVENTION: Safe Spaces, Gender and HIV/AIDS Club support, Engagement of Girls in Formal Decision Making, Mentoring, Training

TARGET GROUP: All girls participating in all interventions

WHAT'S THE PROBLEM?

Girls in the target project sites experience both physical and socio-emotional lack of safe safety. Transit time is a high-risk period for threat of abduction, be it in traveling from home to school, home to market, or fetching water or searching for firewood. Girls are not afforded private space in the home and must try and deal with menstruation and sanitation secretly. Girls are not given voice or allowed to speak up in public fora and community meetings, and are socialized to act passively, to defer to men, to possess little ambition for leadership and not to engage in discussions or planning on matters important to livelihood, security or own well-being. Of all girls, girls from other areas who married into the community, have the least say. Married girls are not allowed to socialize or consort with peers, and while all adolescent girls carry heavy domestic burden, married girls carry the heaviest burden. Adolescent girls who move to urban areas to attend upper primary school face acute lack of safety since they live outside the protection of family and often must rent rooms in the compounds of other people, and are exposed to individuals, especially young men, who are aware of their vulnerabilities.

HOW DID THE PROJECT INTERVENE?

Safe spaces served as a cross-cutting intervention, laced into each project activity. Through Gender and HIV/AIDS Clubs, girls were provided training in life skills, assertiveness, rights, reproductive health, HIV prevention and other issues through various curriculum packages, including Beacon Schools, Sports for Life, In-Charge and We Stop AIDS. Through the Savings and Internal Lending Community groups, girls supported one another, monitored each others' spending, and discussed how to overcome economic challenges. Irrigation groups served as a safe space for remote rural girls to come together and find solidarity in the face of heavy workload and conservative cultural expectations. Access to school or church libraries afforded girls a safe space where they could study free from parental demands to engage in labor, and free from the distractions of supervising young children and livestock in the compound. Latrines, both school-based and home-based, also served as a safe space, where girls could find privacy for bodily necessities without threat of discovery or abduction and where they could change their sanitary pads, rather than wearing several layers of sweat pants to deal with menstruation and trying to conceal the changing of clothes. Some project implementers even considered the stipend a form of 'safe space', since it protected girls from the dangers awaiting a rural girl living in an urban with no means of economic support. Project staff, such as animators and development agents, served as mentors, trainers, and meeting conveners. They regularly conducted mentoring and training sessions with girls in which they transmitted messages, provided advice, raised issues for discussion and debate, and allowed girls to open up and share their problems, both in a group and one-on-one. Girls also formed their own peer support groups in which they brought up their issues and concerns. Groups of scholarship beneficiaries living in rented houses

met regularly together and animators provided special support to addresses the special needs of this group, regularly following up on the progress of safe spaces.

SO WHAT HAPPENED?

Girls met in schools, in churches, in homes, at health posts, and under trees. Girls supported each other, advised one another, exchanged ideas, and shared how they had overcome challenges. Safe spaces afforded girls the opportunity freely and openly discuss how to respond to and overcome peer pressure. Girls began utilizing the safe space, not only as a physically and socio-emotionally safe environment to discuss challenges; they also used it as a trustworthy mechanism where harmful traditional practices could be reported. Through the process, girls developed assertiveness. They themselves began raise issues for discussion and when animators heard rumors of a violation of a girl's rights, they approached the circles. Girls developed solidarity and started helping each other when someone faced a problem. For instance, when menstruation arrived unexpectedly, they lent their sweaters for the menstruating girl to wear around her waist. Midway through the project, the percentage of girls who felt they had equal opportunity to express their opinions compared with boys, had increased from 50% to 76% (Catholic Relief Services/ Ethiopia, 2008).

WHAT WORKED AND WHY?

Through the creation of multiple types of safe spaces likes SILCs, irrigation groups, and Gender Clubs, girls learned principles of organizing in terms of establishing and managing small-scale associations. Consecutive weekly or bi-weekly meetings over a long period of time helped deepen long-term relationships and develop solidarity among the girls. Through Gender Clubs, sensitive issues could be discussed, and separate girls-only sessions for girls were held to address issues like menstruation or reproductive health matters. Mentoring was particularly useful for girls who lived far from their families. Animators who were from the area were sensitive to local needs and when they themselves had been victims of harmful traditional practices they were much better able to understand girls' predicaments. Reporting on harmful traditional practices placed girls in difficult situation having to risk loyalty to the family, angering others or violating the norms of the community. However, through the safe spaces mechanism, girls were able to obtain accurate and reliable information from trustworthy sources. Girls developed the confidence to report, knowing someone was behind them and would not ignore, conceal, misuse, or exploit the information they brought forward. This, in turn, helped them develop a sense of voice.

While many consider that a safe space is one where girls alone are present, the project derived excellent results from involving boys in safe spaces. Particular safe spaces where menstruation or reproductive health issues were discussed, were designated as girls-only fora. However, the project took a pro-active decision to engage boys in other types of safe spaces. For instance, when boys were engaged in Gender Clubs, they became the protectors and advocates of girls, and even began accompanying girls during school transit time. This protected girls from abuse by out-of-school boys, and also gave young adolescent schoolboys a positive role as advocates for rather than impediments



LEADERSHIP,
VOICE &
RIGHTS

UP CLOSE: SAFE SPACES

In
Alem Tena, the project provided regular mentoring and peer support sessions in the library of the Catholic Church over the life of the project. The mentoring sessions served as a safe space where girls discussed early marriage arrangements, economic constraints, academic challenges, and how to survive living on one's own, outside of family care. The Project Animator who served as a mentor happened to be from the local area and was herself a victim of early marriage arrangements and other harmful traditional practices. Through her first hand familiarity with the conditions girls faced, combined with her ability- to confront the harmful traditional practices placed upon her, complete her education and secure professional employment with the project, the animator served as a role model -- a living example that ruptured previous expectations about what a girl from the local area could achieve with determination and perseverance.



toward
girls. Girls experienced
taunting from boys when they experienced
menstrual leakage onto clothing during school hours. When
boys were engaged along with girls in reproductive health education,
the frequency and severity of taunting greatly decreased.

WHAT CHALLENGES AROSE?

Mentoring requires regular periodic follow-up over the long term and is human resource-intensive. Mentors need to be recruited carefully, in that they must be committed and must possess the quality of being able to form close and intimate relationships with girls. After gradually developing practice in expressing themselves in safe spaces, it took time for girls to develop the articulateness and assertiveness and levels of education necessary for their thoughts and ideas to be heard and respected in community fora and for them to compete on an equal footing with men and boys. However, girls did begin to gain a voice in decisions that impacted their life-- like the choice to consent for marriage, to be circumcised or to continue their schooling.

HOW CAN THESE LESSONS LEARNED BE TAKEN UP BY OTHERS?

Creation of safe spaces is a cheap, low-resource intensive activity that can easily be implemented as a component of a variety of girls-focused activities implemented by practitioners or government offices. The safe space can serve as the fundamental building block for a girls' empowerment activity. While school-based venues seemed to be the natural and sometimes most feasible venue for safe spaces, practitioners should not fear innovating in type or location of safe space. In one project site, girls met regularly at the local health post, and the health workers there began to play a key role in girls' lives. In terms of involvement of girls in decision-making needs time for community, leaders and stakeholders to internalize. Girls also need to be specifically trained and equipped with the assertiveness skills to make this endeavor worthwhile.



GIRLS OWN LAND

INTERVENTION: Acquisition of Land Ownership Rights and Land Use Rights

TARGET GROUP: Differs according to site (i.e. all adolescent girls in the target area eligible to participate in a land lottery or girls with parents who are willing to contribute land)

WHAT'S THE PROBLEM?

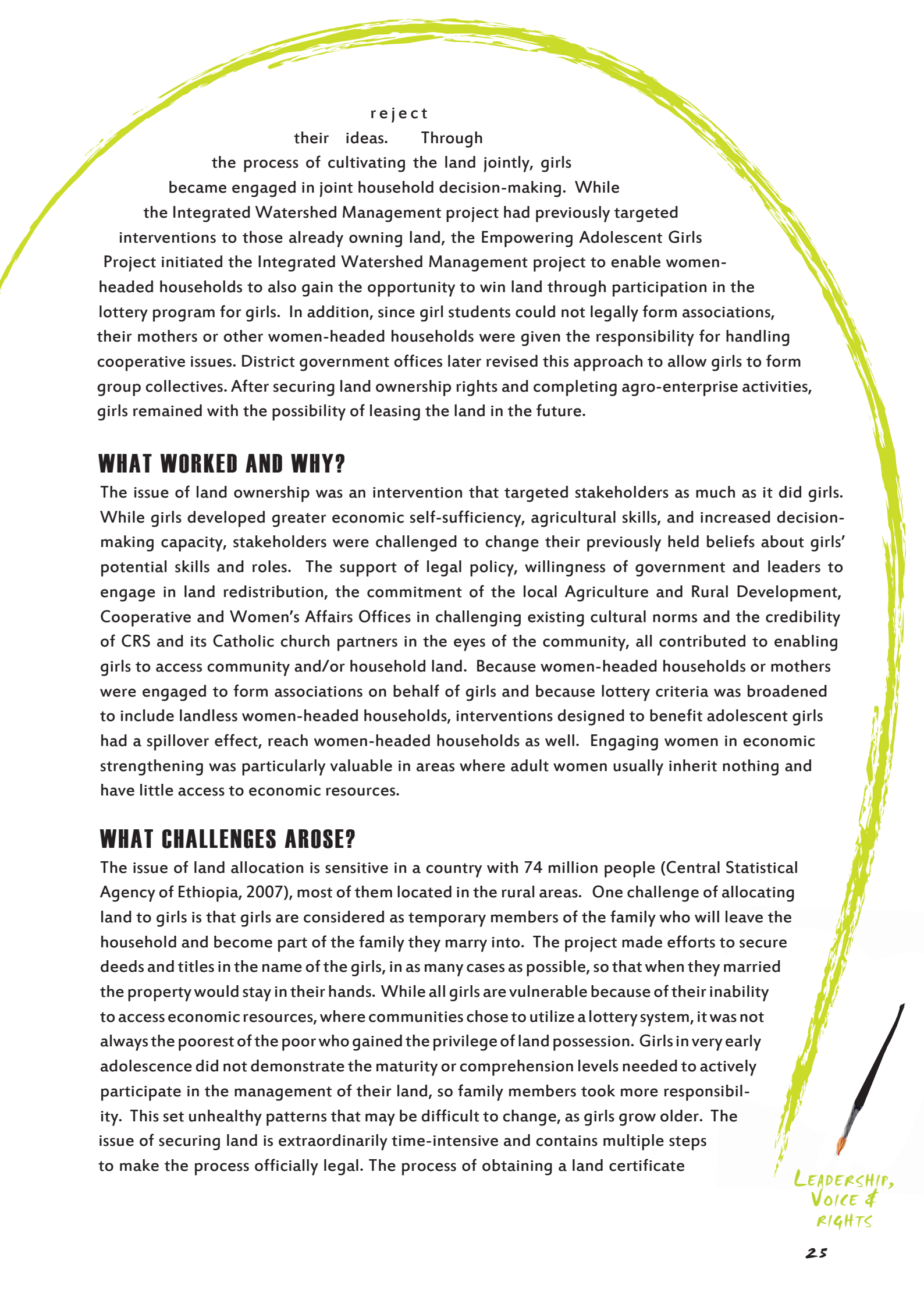
Land in Ethiopia is a scarce commodity and in high demand. Much of the land is non-productive, especially in the north of the country which has undergone centuries of cultivation. Although land needs to be irrigated in order to become agriculturally productive, when it is productive, the income generated can be substantial. Land in Ethiopia is, at present, permanently owned by the government, but is allocated by government offices for household or commercial use and control. Most economic assets, including land, livestock, and tools are “owned” and controlled by men. Since girls are usually engaged into early and arranged marriage and do not stay with the family, families prefer to inherit land to boys. According to local custom in Dugda and Bora woredas of the project, women rarely inherit family assets, and when they divorce, they are not given access to a share of family property. Women are not associated with economic value, but rather with domestic service. While women owning land is rare, girls owning land is almost unheard of. To own land, an individual must be above the age of 18. Only formal registered and legal entities can register to take out loans from the government to acquire the capital resources needed to cultivate land. However, in order to form a cooperative, an individual must be above the age of 14 and the government does not allow students to form cooperatives.

HOW DID THE PROJECT INTERVENE?

The project sought to enable girls to obtain access to highly valuable assets and influence dynamics at the local level through securing land title and land usage rights for girls. The project first investigated the availability of land and the appropriate mechanisms for securing land. Because land allocation is a sensitive process, it was highly contextualized. Several types of land allocation were explored through the project: 1) securing land ownership by petitioning the kebele local government, traditional leaders or community (in the case of communally owned land) 2) obtaining land use rights on parents’ land, and 3) formal schools granting girls access to land use rights for small-scale agriculture (as opposed to permanent land ownership). The project initiated discussions on the process of land transfer with government, parents, and community elders, as appropriate. Securing land was seen as an intervention in and of itself, as well as a preparation for initiation of girls’ agro-enterprise. After obtaining access to the land, girls had the choice to form irrigation groups or to lease the land to others for cultivation.

SO WHAT HAPPENED?

Land ownership efforts enabled girls to gain a greater share in household or community resources. Fathers began to place high value on the role of their daughters, especially when daughters attracted irrigation investment in previously non-arable land. Parents learned to respect the decisions of the girl; since she was technically the owner of the land, if they tried to coerce her, she had the ability to



reject
their ideas. Through
the process of cultivating the land jointly, girls
became engaged in joint household decision-making. While
the Integrated Watershed Management project had previously targeted
interventions to those already owning land, the Empowering Adolescent Girls
Project initiated the Integrated Watershed Management project to enable women-
headed households to also gain the opportunity to win land through participation in the
lottery program for girls. In addition, since girl students could not legally form associations,
their mothers or other women-headed households were given the responsibility for handling
cooperative issues. District government offices later revised this approach to allow girls to form
group collectives. After securing land ownership rights and completing agro-enterprise activities,
girls remained with the possibility of leasing the land in the future.

WHAT WORKED AND WHY?

The issue of land ownership was an intervention that targeted stakeholders as much as it did girls. While girls developed greater economic self-sufficiency, agricultural skills, and increased decision-making capacity, stakeholders were challenged to change their previously held beliefs about girls' potential skills and roles. The support of legal policy, willingness of government and leaders to engage in land redistribution, the commitment of the local Agriculture and Rural Development, Cooperative and Women's Affairs Offices in challenging existing cultural norms and the credibility of CRS and its Catholic church partners in the eyes of the community, all contributed to enabling girls to access community and/or household land. Because women-headed households or mothers were engaged to form associations on behalf of girls and because lottery criteria was broadened to include landless women-headed households, interventions designed to benefit adolescent girls had a spillover effect, reach women-headed households as well. Engaging women in economic strengthening was particularly valuable in areas where adult women usually inherit nothing and have little access to economic resources.

WHAT CHALLENGES AROSE?

The issue of land allocation is sensitive in a country with 74 million people (Central Statistical Agency of Ethiopia, 2007), most of them located in the rural areas. One challenge of allocating land to girls is that girls are considered as temporary members of the family who will leave the household and become part of the family they marry into. The project made efforts to secure deeds and titles in the name of the girls, in as many cases as possible, so that when they married the property would stay in their hands. While all girls are vulnerable because of their inability to access economic resources, where communities chose to utilize a lottery system, it was not always the poorest of the poor who gained the privilege of land possession. Girls in very early adolescence did not demonstrate the maturity or comprehension levels needed to actively participate in the management of their land, so family members took more responsibility. This set unhealthy patterns that may be difficult to change, as girls grow older. The issue of securing land is extraordinarily time-intensive and contains multiple steps to make the process officially legal. The process of obtaining a land certificate



LEADERSHIP,
VOICE &
RIGHTS

UP CLOSE: GIRLS OWN LAND

Radiet

Sose is the Chairperson of the Sera Wekele Irrigation Group and a teenage land owner. She has received the deed to her land, joined the irrigation group and Savings and Internal Lending Community, and has been able to engage in cultivation through collaboration with her father and other family members, while she simultaneously attended school. Her group has made joint decisions about hiring a guard for the irrigation motor pump, distributing profit and has saved 3000 birr through their local Savings and Internal Lending Community. After engaging in the land ownership and irrigation intervention, Radiet is able to easily demonstrate leadership and coherently articulate her thoughts in group meetings, even in front of male community members and project staff.



in each girl's name, in some cases, took a large portion of the project life to complete.

HOW CAN THESE LESSONS LEARNED BE TAKEN UP BY OTHERS?

Securing entitlement to land ownership and land use rights requires **practitioners** to cultivate long-term relationship building and sensitization to girls' needs with key stakeholders who have a say in land allocation, e.g., government offices, traditional leaders and parents. The process and criteria for allocating land to girls, needs to be discussed openly and transparently in a public forum, with extensive discussion and explanation of why girls, rather than parents, should become owners of the land. The project actively challenged assumptions and customs which necessitated diplomacy skills on the part of project implementers. Creativity and perseverance on the part of project field staff were also required to find the most suitable approach to securing land in each local context, fulfilling the criteria required by local administrative offices or other bodies. Land interventions for girls were found to be more successful when multi-sectoral **government offices**, such as the Kebele Administration, Women's Affairs, Cooperatives Offices and others were engaged. In some areas, so much time was involving in securing land that girls did not get a chance to make the land productive until midway through the life of the project. It is recommended that future projects focus on land acquisition as an intervention in and of itself, and plan to institute agro-business activities where land can be viably accessed by girls independent of or even if the land acquisition process has not fully terminated. In terms of sustainability, active project intervention is necessary to ensure that resources stay in the hands of girls after the project life, accomplished either through designing the project from the outset with plans to provide ongoing technical oversight beyond the project life or by integrating girls' interventions into larger umbrella programming, where staffing is assigned to monitor longevity and long-term success of land interventions.



LEADERSHIP,
VOICE &
RIGHTS

AGRO-ENTERPRISE THROUGH GIRLS' IRRIGATION GROUPS

INTERVENTION: Irrigation Groups, Formation of Savings and Lending Communities, Market-led Agricultural Production

TARGET GROUP: In-school and out-of-school girls

WHAT'S THE PROBLEM?

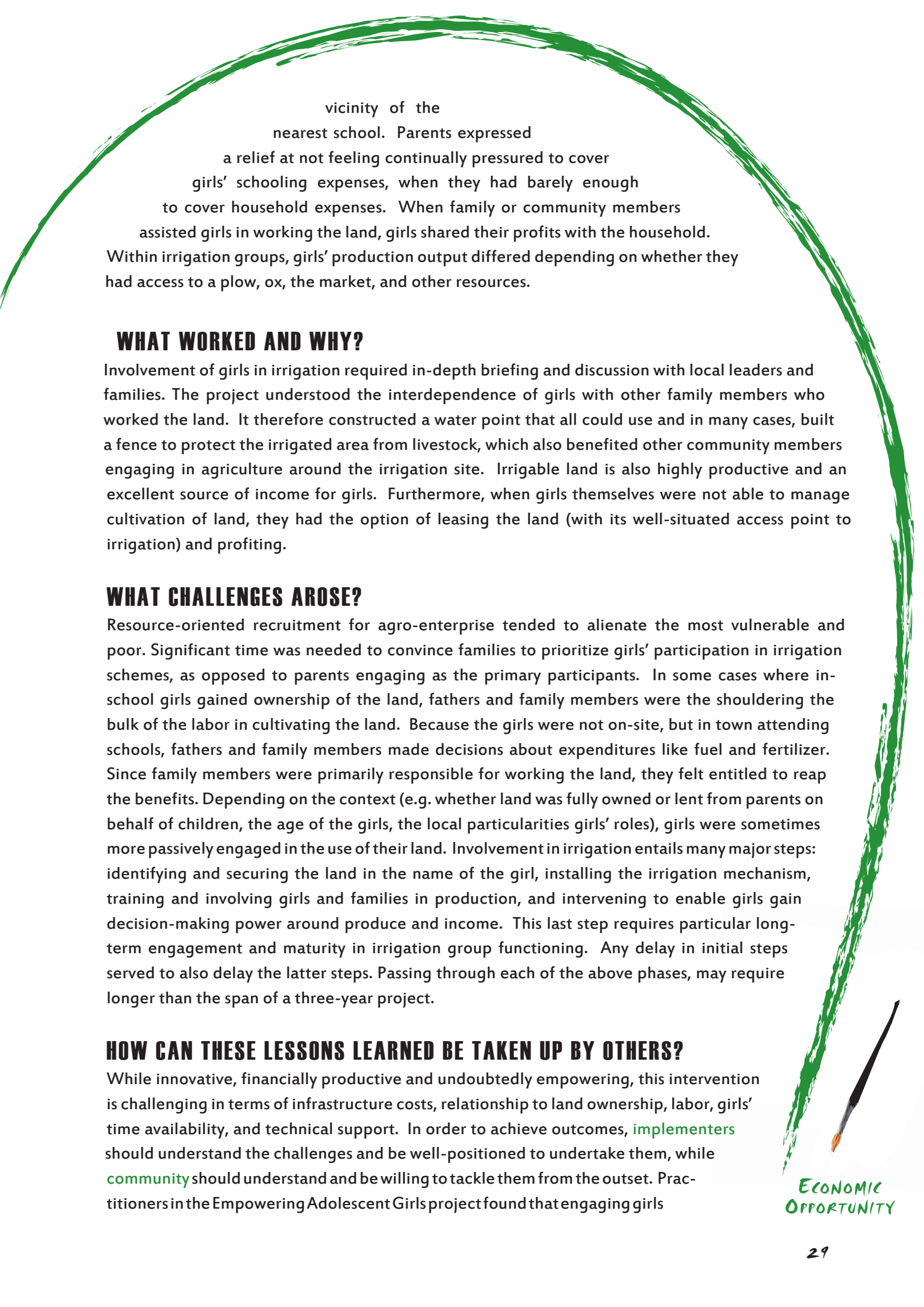
83% of Ethiopia's population lives in rural area (Central Statistical Agency, 2007), and agriculture is the mainstay of the country's economy. Land in many of the sites covered by the project is subject to frequent drought and needs irrigation to become productive. However, irrigation requires significant financial and physical investment, and families have little free capital to invest in irrigation. In addition, priority in access to or ownership of resources is usually given to men and boys. Girls and women are afforded little access to scarce commodities, such as land or irrigation equipment. To compound girls' income generation options, scarce opportunities for formal employment exist in rural areas.

HOW DID THE PROJECT INTERVENE?

The project provided the capital and technical assistance needed to install an irrigation system, such as a shallow well or rainwater harvesting apparatus. Community members provided labor needed to dig canals and wells or install the irrigation mechanism. The project then provided: a motorized surface pump and accessories, agricultural tools, and seeds. The pump was filled with fuel once, and girls and families involved were expected to cover the costs of fuel and work out a system to regulate water and fuel usage thereafter. The project collaborated with the larger Integrated Watershed Management project to conduct market chain analyses to identify market opportunities and, in some cases, to construct a fence around the irrigation area. The project also provided technical training to girls and their families on agronomy, land management, income generation, and marketing. Girls learned how to plant vegetables that were less susceptible to pests and more likely to earn a profit. Girls were then organized into formal irrigation groups, and each girl was apportioned a plot of land to cultivate near the irrigation point and was responsible for managing her plot of land. In most cases, girls collaborated with family members to farm and manage the plots. The intervention was, in most cases, coupled with efforts to secure land ownership rights for girls, though it was possible to implement independent of land ownership efforts.

SO WHAT HAPPENED?

The girls formed their own cooperatives, opened their own bank accounts and earned income from the sale of agricultural products like tomatoes, chili peppers, soy beans, cabbage and corn. By the mid-term evaluation, the percentage of girls involved in community agro-enterprise had increased from 0% to 14%, girls consuming protein had increased from 56% to 92% and girls consuming vitamin A had increased from 61% to 100% (Catholic Relief Services/Ethiopia, 2008). With this new source of income, girls were better able to support the costs of schooling and living on their own in the



vicinity of the nearest school. Parents expressed a relief at not feeling continually pressured to cover girls' schooling expenses, when they had barely enough to cover household expenses. When family or community members assisted girls in working the land, girls shared their profits with the household. Within irrigation groups, girls' production output differed depending on whether they had access to a plow, ox, the market, and other resources.

WHAT WORKED AND WHY?

Involvement of girls in irrigation required in-depth briefing and discussion with local leaders and families. The project understood the interdependence of girls with other family members who worked the land. It therefore constructed a water point that all could use and in many cases, built a fence to protect the irrigated area from livestock, which also benefited other community members engaging in agriculture around the irrigation site. Irrigable land is also highly productive and an excellent source of income for girls. Furthermore, when girls themselves were not able to manage cultivation of land, they had the option of leasing the land (with its well-situated access point to irrigation) and profiting.

WHAT CHALLENGES AROSE?

Resource-oriented recruitment for agro-enterprise tended to alienate the most vulnerable and poor. Significant time was needed to convince families to prioritize girls' participation in irrigation schemes, as opposed to parents engaging as the primary participants. In some cases where in-school girls gained ownership of the land, fathers and family members were the shouldering the bulk of the labor in cultivating the land. Because the girls were not on-site, but in town attending schools, fathers and family members made decisions about expenditures like fuel and fertilizer. Since family members were primarily responsible for working the land, they felt entitled to reap the benefits. Depending on the context (e.g. whether land was fully owned or lent from parents on behalf of children, the age of the girls, the local particularities girls' roles), girls were sometimes more passively engaged in the use of their land. Involvement in irrigation entails many major steps: identifying and securing the land in the name of the girl, installing the irrigation mechanism, training and involving girls and families in production, and intervening to enable girls gain decision-making power around produce and income. This last step requires particular long-term engagement and maturity in irrigation group functioning. Any delay in initial steps served to also delay the latter steps. Passing through each of the above phases, may require longer than the span of a three-year project.

HOW CAN THESE LESSONS LEARNED BE TAKEN UP BY OTHERS?

While innovative, financially productive and undoubtedly empowering, this intervention is challenging in terms of infrastructure costs, relationship to land ownership, labor, girls' time availability, and technical support. In order to achieve outcomes, **implementers** should understand the challenges and be well-positioned to undertake them, while **community** should understand and be willing to tackle them from the outset. Practitioners in the Empowering Adolescent Girls project found that engaging girls




ECONOMIC
OPPORTUNITY

UP CLOSE: AGRO-ENTERPRISE THROUGH GIRLS' IRRIGATION GROUPS

Sitting on the edge of their shallow well, the Biruh Tesfa Group has able to prosper in small-scale agro-enterprise in extremely dry and drought-prone region of Tigray region. Parents have been mobilized to support girls by allocating a small portion of their own land for girls' ownership and irrigation. The girls have planted high-yield crops that draw a greater profit on the market. Parents who farm in surrounding areas without irrigation testify to how the harvest results are remarkable, yielding three times than unirrigated land. Girls have been able to use the profit to pay for their own school expenses, develop leadership capacities, and practice financial management skills through savings and irrigation group activities.





in the rearing
of small ruminants was sometimes a
more manageable (albeit less profitable) mechanism
to enable girls to raise funds for schooling.

If irrigation groups are to be successfully undertaken, basic inputs need to be available: land, water, and labor. Irrigation is an intensive activity that needs regular follow-up on behalf of project technical staff to ensure the success of agro-enterprise. Irrigation activities were deemed to be more sustainable when girls were organized into groups. These irrigation groups need clear criteria and policies to organize themselves, especially when girls do not have experience in agriculture or acting as members of associations. While engagement in irrigation was profitable, the endeavor was sometimes beyond the management capacity of girls. Because of the time, labor, and skills involved, irrigation groups may be more suitable to out-of-school girls or married girls. However the intervention can also support family endeavors to earn enough to keep their daughters in school.

Integrating girl-targeted projects with investments that also bring benefit to community members influences the value with which community members assign to girls. Success of the irrigation system is often dependent on the good will of the parents and **family**; unless relations between parents and children are close, this mutual interdependency will not function well. Since the whole household is investing human and material resources in girls' irrigation groups, careful discussion is needed from the outset to clearly identify how benefits will be distributed, how much is set aside for girls' education and why this distribution prioritizing girls is important. **Field staff** need to advocate for gradual involvement of girls in decision making, particular in terms of expenditures and income distribution. In terms of **donors**, irrigation is labor-intensive, needs large start-up capital, and entails running costs. To reach very poor girls and their families, donors need to cover the initial costs of start-up. After girls are active in production, some of the proceeds may be applied to start up other groups.

ORGANIZING FOR ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT THRU SMALL INTERNAL LENDING COMMUNITIES

INTERVENTION: Formation of Savings and Lending Communities, Provision of Ruminants, Start-Up Assistance in Petty Trade, Backyard Gardening

TARGET GROUP: In-school and out-of-school girls

WHAT'S THE PROBLEM?

Ethiopia's average year salary (gross domestic product per capita) is \$157 (UNDP, 2007). Living in extreme poverty, in rural settings with scarce opportunities for formal employment, girls need to develop their own talents, creativity and adaptive mechanisms to cope with this extent of economic adversity. A small amount of money makes a great difference in girls' lives; small-scale investments in trade and livestock are able to leverage returns that can keep girls in school. In order to reap this return, girls need entrepreneurial and savings skills, yet they have few available means of learning these skills. Exposure to economic control, marketing, decision-making and knowledge of production and marketing among adolescent girls is limited. In addition, Ethiopia lacks diversity of formal lending institutions; only government institutions lend money, and this money is lent only to legally registered groups or individuals above the age of 18 who demonstrate sufficient collateral.

HOW DID THE PROJECT INTERVENE?

The project utilized CRS' globally tested strategy of Savings and Internal Lending Communities (SILCs), in which a small-scale group of members organizes to save and lend money. The project established SILCs with: girls engaged in petty trade, girls who received stipend or scholarship support, girls in irrigation groups, and ruminant recipients. These groups contained both in-school girls, out-of-school girls and mixed groups. Girls in SILC groups received training in financial literacy, operational procedures of the group, storage of income, recordkeeping, and lending procedures. When SILCs were established by girls who had formed their own cooperatives, the project endeavored to facilitate official registration with local government. Through the mechanism of the SILC, girls regularly save and, many times, engaging in lending off the capital built through savings. After completing one financial cycle of the SILC, groups have the choice of either dissolving or beginning another lending cycle. CRS did not inject seed capital into SILCs; however, it did provide resources for economic opportunities. The project supplied ruminants for vulnerable in and out-of-school girls and gave girls the tools and training to set up backyard gardens. For girls engaging in petty trade, the project supplied basic inputs (e.g registration book, money box, calculator, and first set of inventory). It also helped build kiosks or leveraged inputs from groups like the Safety Net project to engage in construction of shops. In a few select cases, the project covered the costs of occupational training as a means of economic empowerment.

SO WHAT HAPPENED?

All SILCs formed through the Empowering Adolescent Girls project engaged in saving, and many commenced lending as well. By the midline assessment of the project, the percentage of girls in the project with savings had increased from 14% to 34% and those having a source of income had increased from 21 to 31% (Catholic Relief Services/Ethiopia, 2008). Girls developed savings habits, and many girls opened bank accounts, in the cases where they had organized into cooperatives. Some irrigation groups were able to accumulate up to 3000 and even 6000 birr (\$300 and \$600). SILCs helped girls develop skills in savings, income generation, and administration of small-scale associations, as well as aiding them in better management of the capital they earned and money received from scholarship stipends. Girls who received scholarships invested in small livestock and poultry and were able to breed their animals to double or triple their profits. In some cases, they took out loans to lease land for cultivation. Girls were also able to practice the mechanics of forming associations and start petty trade enterprises. Many girls saved the income rather than investing or circulating it, and later used it on for educational expenses like stationary, books and uniforms or, for girls who had to migrate to a town to attend secondary school, on rent, cooking utensils, local stove and other household items. The savings accumulated were used during school registration periods, dry seasons, just before the harvest and at other periods when economic tension was experienced at the household level. Beyond economic dividends, engagement in economic empowerment activities gave girls an opportunity to actualize their potential, develop creativity, build skills, practice decision making and learn how to professionally collaborate with other girls. The SILCs also operated as a 'safe space' where girls had the opportunity to discuss, establish solidarity and develop peer support in the face of many challenges.

WHAT WORKED AND WHY?

CRS has implemented SILCs in projects around the world; it brought its rich experience in operating SILCs to bear on the Empowering Adolescent Girls project's groups. The Integrated Watershed Management project provided a dedicated officer who contributed time and oversight to girls' SILCs and lessons learned from SILC operations with other populations. Whereas the purpose of CRS' adult SILCs was to increase investment by circulating money through loans, the purpose of adolescent girls' SILCs was to save money for schooling costs to prevent school-dropout during stress periods. While the money saved through SILCs seems small by international standards, the value of that money is not to be underestimated; it enabled girls to sustain themselves and avoid school drop-out. SILC groups for girls were successful because they established a mechanism which prompted girls to take their own initiative and the pressure of the group obligated girls to save regularly. SILCs also worked because girls were known to one another, had established bonds of trust and culturally, when they established their own by-laws, they respected those by laws. Operating SILCs also gave girls practice in fair and open elections of committee members, development of transparent by-laws, skills in conducting formal meetings, simple bookkeeping, self-reliance and conflict resolution (Catholic Relief Services/Ethiopia, 2006). Because they require little investment, girls could easily replicate SILCs beyond the project life.

UP CLOSE: ORGANIZING FOR ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT THRU SMALL INTERNAL LENDING COMMUNITIES

Members of the Sebea petty trade group prepare coffee in the kitchen of their café in a remote, dry area of northern Tigray. Project stakeholders collaborated to chose girls among the poorest of the poor. The local government's Cooperative Office assisted the group with training and ongoing technical support, while the project helped with group formation and provided the basic inputs needed like cooking utensils and stools. The petty trade group formed their own Savings and Lending Community and the local government has recognized the girls as a legal entity owning the cafe.



WHAT CHALLENGES AROSE?

Since the group is essentially collecting and handling individuals' money, the system can be misused and create long-lasting repercussions at the community level, unless properly introduced.

Because girls had little initial capital or assets, CRS found that SILCs needed to 'ignite' some sort of income such as income from ruminants, scholarships, petty trade or irrigation. However, instead of injecting huge amounts of money, the project found it advisable to supply moderate resources or capital, while gradually introducing savings and lending behavior. While saving was a useful exercise in that it allowed girls to pass through stress periods without dropping out of school, some groups accumulated very large sums of money that could have grown in value if circulated. In-school girls in particular did not have available time to invest in developing business activities that could grow their capital. Despite best efforts, girls' economic ventures were affected by the wider context; drought decimated beehive populations and sheep disease slashed girls' accumulation of ruminant resources.

HOW CAN THESE LESSONS LEARNED BE TAKEN UP BY OTHERS?

SILCs are a comparatively inexpensive intervention in terms of capital investment, but do require technical support from implementers. SILCs need professional follow-up at start-up and through the first initial running cycle. Mistakes made, for instance, in recordkeeping, need to be corrected immediately. After completion of the first cycle, SILCs are more capable of running relatively independently. When operating SILCs, not only the management capacity of the girls needs to be addressed, but market capacity as well. Older girls demonstrated greater maturity in participating in SILCs, and out-of-schools girls excelled, due to having time available to invest in business activities. However, contrary to the assumptions of many, in-school girls were able to actively engage in SILCs. Other girls' scholarship projects may learn from the success of combining scholarship inputs with economic empowerment interventions. For donors, more important than giving girls money, is a strategy to motivate girls to save, lend and initiate businesses, thereby avoiding donor dependency. Government authorities would also be well-advised to amend policies to enable adolescent girls to establish bank accounts, before reaching age 18.

SUPPORT TO EDUCATIONAL ENROLLMENT AND ACHIEVEMENT

INTERVENTION: Provision of School Supplies, Provision of Small Game, Provision of Fuel-saving Stoves, Scholarship Stipends, Awarding Girls who Excel, Facilitation of Tutorials

TARGET GROUP: In-school girls; Economic support: targeting orphans, disabled girls, the very poor, and girls living away from their families

WHAT'S THE PROBLEM?

Over the last decade, girls' enrollment in the early grades has greatly increased across Ethiopia. Despite this, dropout rates of girls soar as girls move past the first few grades of primary school into early adolescence, with girls' completion rate of grade 5 at 56% and dropping to 33% for completion of grade 8 (Ministry of Education, 2008). This drop is due to societal expectations around gender norms, inequitable labor in the household, gender violence, low value given to girls' education, and inability to pay for basic materials like uniforms, books and stationary. Secondary schools in Ethiopia are usually located in larger urban settings. Girls born in rural areas or small towns must leave their home towns and move to a more urban area, if they wish to pursue their education, with the nearest high school a multi-hour walk away for some girls in the target sites. Leaving home at such a young age, means that girls are responsible to financially support themselves, rent a house, and handle their own medical expenses and domestic responsibilities. When girls do live with extended family members in towns, they are often expected to do all the household labor, including cooking, cleaning, and caring for children. Many girls are forced to seek work as live-in servants in someone's home, one of the few accepted forms of income generation for a young girl. All of these responsibilities and demands culminate in girls having less time to study, less time to complete homework and irregular school attendance. Many girls drop out or, in search of income, fall into activities that jeopardize their reproductive health.

HOW DID THE PROJECT INTERVENE?

The project provided an assortment of forms of educational support. Two types of scholarship stipends were provided: girls living alone around the secondary school received monthly support, while girls who were impoverished but lived with their families received quarterly support. The project also provided vaccinated ruminants to in-school girls, such as sheep, goats or chickens. In forested areas conducive to honey farming, the project invested in beehives for girls. Because girls are the ones who bear the brunt of responsibility for domestic responsibilities, especially cooking, the project provided fuel-saving stoves. The project also rewarded high-performing girls and prompted schools to facilitate tutorial sessions for girls. For provision of supports to education, the project set status-based as well as merit-based criteria. Orphans, disabled girls, the very poor, and girls living away from their families were targeted because of their living status. Merit-wise, the project tried to reward role modeling behavior, for instance, girls who ranked high in their class, families who sent girls to school, and families who annulled early marriage contracts by returning the dowry they had received. The project's aim in supporting girls to continue their education, was

not just to help
a select number of girls, but rather
to create role models who could inspire other girls to
persevere in pursuit of education.

SO WHAT HAPPENED?

School enrollment increased, while school drop-out decreased. Midway through the project, the percentage of project girls enrolled in school had increased from 72% to 85% (Catholic Relief Services/Ethiopia, 2008). Girls used scholarship stipends to purchase exercise books, pens, dictionaries, reference materials, room rent, food, and household utensils. Girls receiving scholarships were able to remain enrolled and also invested their savings in, for example, buying and selling grain at a higher price, leasing land, or growing from sheep to cow investments. The percentage of girls owning small ruminants increased from 35 to 45% (Catholic Relief Services/Ethiopia, 2008). Through raising ruminants, girls gained the power to make decisions over their assets. The project found that the first income generated was used for clothing; girls from rural areas experienced a sense of shame and inferiority complex in wearing older, torn, patched clothing in front of their urban peers. The number of girls using fuel-efficient stoves had increased from 11% to 47% (Catholic Relief Services/Ethiopia, 2008). Use of fuel-saving stoves greatly reduced firewood collection and cooking time, freeing up girls' time for study. The stoves also minimized fire hazards and smoke inhalation cause by traditional stoves.

WHAT WORKED AND WHY?

In one study, girls reported that the most important of the project's contributions to girls' reduced dropout was economic support, particularly the financial support and the fuel-saving stove (Catholic Relief Services/Ethiopia, 2007). Fuel-saving stoves provided advantages to girls on several fronts. The amount of firewood collected by a girl for one meal on a local stove could be used to cook 2-3 meals on a fuel-saving stove, leaving more time for study. Reduced need for fuel minimized the time that girls spent traveling alone over long distances in search of firewood, a time at which abduction and rape was most likely to occur. In addition, toddlers and young children in the hut were much less likely to harm themselves, while girls were less likely to experience exhaustion and health impairments associated with smoke inhalation. In terms of small ruminants, when households were responsible to look after livestock while girls were attending schooling in rural towns, written memoranda of understanding were signed between girls, households, and the local administration to ensure that the proceeds from sale of livestock would be applied towards girls' education. Penalties were imposed upon parents who appropriated girls' assets. When married girls transferred to another household, their animal assets remained in their possession, in contrast with most other assets that remained under the decision-making hand of the father or the husband. While, overall, school enrollment increased and drop-out decreased, causality must also take into account the wider context, in which government institutions and formal school have been mobilized to support Millennium Development Goals. This dovetailing of priorities and agendas mutually enhanced interventions initiated by the project as well as those initiated by the formal education system.

UP CLOSE: SUPPORT TO EDUCATIONAL ENROLLMENT AND ACHIEVEMENT

Chalto Abo

is a married girl who is the recipient of a fuel-saving stove.

Cooking on the fuel saving stove takes one third of the time needed for an open flame stove, and the apparatus allows her to cook both stew and injera flat bread at the same time. Because of the stove's fuel efficiency, Chalto also spends less time searching for firewood. Chalto is also the recipient of chickens which have bred and multiplied, as well as an ecologically sound pit latrine. While Chalto is only in the fourth grade, this combination of interventions has built her assets, freed up her time from domestic work leaving her with more of her time to participate in formal schooling as well as in extra-curricular empowerment activities like rights and assertiveness training.



WHAT CHALLENGES AROSE?

Because the types of support provided are of high value, targeting is an issue, and “who gets what” can become controversial. The project organized a committee at the district level to determine what types of girls should receive which types of inputs. In one watershed, multiple forms of support were provided to the most vulnerable girls, whereas in other areas, local stakeholders chose to allow a girl to receive one input alone, in order to more broadly disperse benefits. It was necessary to clearly and transparently disclose to all why some girls received, for instance, monthly support (girls living alone), while others received only quarterly support (poor girls residing in a family environment). In terms of dispensing benefits, non-exorbitant amounts of money were provided through scholarships in order to prevent misuse. The project’s guiding philosophy was that it was not necessary to cover all expenses of girls’ education; families also needed to maintain responsibility and ownership in contributing to girls’ education. In terms of sustainability, after distributing the fuel-saving stove, the project found it necessary to encourage replication of the stove using locally available materials, in order to meet high demand.

HOW CAN THESE LESSONS LEARNED BE TAKEN UP BY OTHERS?

Ruminants were found to be a more easily managed investment for in-school girls, compared to irrigation or agricultural activities. They also rapidly increased in value through breeding. CRS was cognizant that there was no need to continue the intervention to promote girls’ enrollment for the next twenty years; once parents understood the value of education, greater social capital could be mobilized to support education. The project also strengthened the capacity of related **sectoral offices**, like the District Education and Women’s Affairs Offices, so that these entities would be capable of carrying on additional interventions to support girls. **Project implementers** recommended focus in the future on working through **community-based organizations**, such as idirs (Ethiopian traditional burial associations) to build the organizational capacity of these local institutions to channel support educationally (e.g. tutorial, follow up on attendance), economically (in-kind as well as resource transfer) and psycho-socially (e.g. counseling, mentoring) to orphans and vulnerable girls.

SUPPORT TO NONFORMAL EDUCATION

INTERVENTION: Construction and Operation of Nonformal Alternative Basic Education Centers

TARGET GROUP: All girls and boys without formal school access up to the age of 14; focus on out-of-school girls

WHAT'S THE PROBLEM?

The combined gross enrolment ratio for primary, secondary and tertiary education in Ethiopia is 41% (UNDP, 2007) while net enrollment in primary education is 82% (Ministry of Education, 2008). In many communities in the target areas, formal schools do not exist. Parents do not allow their girls to walk long distances to the nearest formal school in fear of abduction and abuse, and returning from afternoon sessions as dark nears, becomes even less safe. The need for child labor for agriculture has prevented many girls from enrolling in formal school at the age when children are supposed to enter grade 1. Furthermore, the heavy domestic responsibilities of rural girls do not always allow them to attend school at 8:00 am when most formal schools commence. In response to these barriers, the alternative basic education movement has blossomed over the last decade in remote rural locations across Ethiopia.

HOW DID THE PROJECT INTERVENE?

Local government administrations, together with implementing partners, identified areas that lacked formal schools in remote rural areas. The project then constructed five alternative basic centers. While the project provided materials not available locally, such as roofing, cement and nails, the community contributed: land for the school, land around the school to engage in income generation through agriculture, labor to construct the school, and locally available materials like wood or stone. Alternative basic education centers were established, serving levels 1, 2, and 3 (the equivalent of formal school grades 1-5). The project paid for teacher salaries, teaching and learning materials, while collaborating with the government for training, technical inputs and center supervision. Several centers became para-formal schools, with the first shift following formal education approaches, such as standard academic hours and government-assigned teachers, while the second shift of the center was run with a non-formal approach, where the project assigned teachers, made special provision for out-of-school children and managed the provision of education.

SO WHAT HAPPENED?

Girls who had never attended started their education enrolled, and many girls who had dropped out continued their education. Not only adolescent girls, but also boys and younger girl children, benefited from the alternative basic education centers. Academic performance improved because students were spending less time traveling to school each day. The centers tried to actively enroll out-of-school married students and, in some case, the project was also able to indirectly reach out-of-school girls since married girls during their regular visits to water points at school. Community contributed to constructing additional classrooms so that students could continue their education into higher grades. The school was also used as an information channel to the community and a center of information exchange where other 'software' interventions could be implemented, including community

outreach and education on harmful traditional practices. The establishment of clubs at the centers also provided a venue through which girls' interventions could be implemented. Since the school was located near the village, community members were able to provide greater oversight and protection which reduced the risk of abduction.

WHAT WORKED AND WHY?

Nonformal education was successful because girls themselves chose the days and timing of class. For instance, early morning and market days were not selected as appropriate times for class. The alternative basic education centers were also successful because the active engagement of communities was mobilized, which was possible because the activity fell in line with the priorities of the communities. Without community contribution, particularly land, the intervention would not have been successful. Once the community witnessed tangible results in the education of their children, they were further motivated to contribute. Collaboration with the government's education sector also helped ensure that a system was established to sustain alternative basic education, falling in line with government priorities of educational access as well as with the Millennium Development Goals. Alternative basic education centers were constructed and operated according to required standards, which would enable them to more easily transition into the hands of government management as they matured. CRS also collaborated with the formal system by paying for the costs of training the facilitators, while the government provided education experts.

WHAT CHALLENGES AROSE?

The project encountered challenges in identifying and enrolling girls who had migrated into the area through early marriage arrangements. Once these individuals were identified, the project sensitized them, registered them, and convinced them to enroll in nonformal education. However, many dropped out, finding it difficult to attend school due to heavy domestic workload, child care responsibilities and a sense of shame or embarrassment in front of other students. Another challenge faced in addressing out-of-school married girls, was that the government policy only permits children under the age of 14 to be admitted into alternative basic education. In addition, many unmarried girls who had joined the school, dropped out after their early marriage was officialized. In terms of implementation, the project's mid-term evaluation identified a lack of clarity around the nonformal education intervention that limited its effectiveness. For instance, standards and guidelines across Ethiopia have been developed delineating how attendance of levels 1, 2, and 3 of alternative basic education should allow a student to enter the formal system at grade 5. However, some of the formal school teachers in the project target areas considered nonformal education to be "preparatory" education before students would enter grade 1. While not within the sphere of control of project implementers, frequent turnover from government offices inhibited long-term collaboration. In addition, when partners did not have prior experience or capacity in implementing alternative basic education, this impacted the quality of the intervention.

UP CLOSE: SUPPORT TO NONFORMAL EDUCATION

CRS

helped construct this school outside Meki, install a water point and latrine, train teachers, cover teacher salaries, and enroll out-of-school children in nonformal education. The school serves both boys and girls, but the proportion of the student body is comprised of a much greater percentage of girls who started first grade during adolescence. Many of the girls enrolled have been able to continue their education with less interruption due to the receipt of sanitary napkins. Nonformal education facilitators note that, while many adolescent girls who enrolled in school were already pledged into early marriage, parents around the school have begun to decrease the number of new early marriages they contract for their girl children.



HOW CAN THESE LESSONS LEARNED BE TAKEN UP BY OTHERS?

If married girls are going to be encouraged to attend nonformal education, specific steps need to be undertaken by project implementers, both at the recruitment stage, in terms of 'visibilizing' the invisible, and at the attendance stage, in terms of making provisions for the care of young children and accomplishment of domestic responsibilities. While nonformal education is an extremely effective intervention for providing catch-up for girls who missed out on the formal system, project implementers recommended that a preventative approach may be more effective, namely preventing early marriage from the outset, rather than grappling with maintaining enrollment once girls were already married. The proximity to the village and sense of ownership of alternative basic education centers makes them excellent venues for implementing wider outreach with various segments of the community, including women, youth, farmers, etc. For instance, when parents are engaged in learning, they are more likely to send their children to school, highlighting the value of pairing adult literacy and numeracy provision with accompanying nonformal education for children and youth. Active collaboration between civil society and government rendered alternative basic education demonstrably more successful, making it more creative and relevant through the involvement of civil society, while building on the knowledge and expertise gained by the formal system. Close engagement with the sectoral government office at each and every step is necessary to ensure that nonformal education receives government buy-in and later government ownership. Linkages with the formal system should be clear, especially the transition of children from nonformal education into formal education. Because provision of nonformal education is an intensive endeavor, akin in complexity to operating a formal school, it may be advisable for practitioners to partner with civil society organization or government provider that specializes or has experience in this area, if experience is not already existing.

PROVISION OF SANITARY NAPKINS AND HEALTH & HYGIENE EDUCATION

INTERVENTION: Provision of Sanitary Napkins and Health & Hygiene Education

TARGET GROUP: Sanitary Napkins: In-school girls and out-of-school girls above age 12

Health & Hygiene Education: In-school girls and boys; out-of-school girls

WHAT'S THE PROBLEM?

Baseline survey results showed that girls had little knowledge of reproductive health and HIV/AIDS and were not accustomed to testing for HIV before marriage. Because of cultural taboos, girls suffered from lack of information about sanitation, about their own bodies, and how to prevent HIV/AIDS or understand pregnancy. In many cases, girls and mothers do not use sanitary napkin materials. They stay at home during the period of menstruation and were embarrassed to move around in the home in front of fathers and brothers. A girl who experiences the onset of menarche during class may drop out of school permanently, due to the sense of shame she experiences. Girls also miss school at regular monthly intervals causing them to miss exams and fall behind on coursework. When girls are menstruating they may wear extra sets of sweat pants under their clothing and are hesitant to engage in physical education at school. Menstruating girls also often wait until all other students have left the class before they stand up from their seat, in fear of leakage and the sense of shame that accompanies it.

HOW DID THE PROJECT INTERVENE?

To address these challenges, the project utilized existing curriculum geared toward life skills and HIV/AIDS prevention such as the Youth Action Kit, In-Charge, We Stop AIDS, Beacon Schools, and Sportsfor Life, chosen according to local, contextual needs. The project supplemented these curricula with a more intensive and systematically presented reproductive health education component, covering physiology and anatomy, sex and sexuality, prevention of infectious diseases, natural family planning methods, and pregnancy. The project also provided training in personal hygiene, environmental sanitation, nutrition, and concurrently promoted backyard gardening for household consumption for girls with land available around their huts. For in-school girls, the project trained teachers as trainers, while health extension workers and animators were capacitated to provide training for out-of-school girls. According to the context, training on HIV/AIDS education was concurrently provided to older community members through the Integrated Watershed Management project. In terms of sanitary napkins, the project sought to introduce the use of sanitary materials to girls, rather than sustain their usage over the long haul. The project provided sanitary napkins and underwear for all participating girls, including in-school girls and out-of-school girls engaged in business. The project experimented with different types of pads, seeking an affordable and reusable model. In Adigrat, Tigray, a local manufacturer innovated a low-cost design for girls. In Oromia, project implementers tried various models, incorporating feedback from the girls, and finally settling on a rectangular piece of cloth, made of sweat suit material. This was then folded various times to resemble the shape of a pad, and could be washed and reused for a whole year. Girls were trained how to recognize a menstrual cycle when it appeared, how to keep personal hygiene during menstua-

tion and how to wash the reusable pads.

SO WHAT HAPPENED?

Girls using sanitary napkins increased from 10 to 18% by the mid-term evaluation of the project (Catholic Relief Services/Ethiopia, 2008). After the provision of sanitary napkins, girls demonstrated less shame around menstruation and less frequent absence from school, resulting in higher performance that enabled them to more easily advance from one grade to the next. Health education resulted in less shame around menstruation and reproductive health and greater knowledge and confidence in being able to protect oneself from sexually related risks. When this health education involved boys, boys began to engage in less teasing and harassment of girls. By the mid-term evaluation, protein consumption had increased from 56% to 92%, vitamin A intake from 61% to 100%, and communication with peers and family on HIV/AIDS from 60 % to 74.5% (Catholic Relief Services Ethiopia, 2008).

WHAT WORKED AND WHY?

Providing health education to girls opened a safe space in which girls could discuss sensitive subjects. Through mid-project reevaluation of approach, the project learned that providing more focused, in-depth education to a few girls is more valuable than sporadic, less systematic information to many. In the case of this project, government health extension workers proved to be a valuable resource for this in-depth training. In addition, sanitary napkins are a tiny cost that reaps huge educational returns. The intervention worked because it addressed a sensitive subject that was taboo in community discussions, and found a direct remedy. Sanitary napkins should be designed with ecological and economic considerations in mind from the outset. Reusable homemade materials were deemed by girls to be more effective than factory designed napkins. While models of sanitary pads differed in each site, in one of the watersheds, the project covered the cost of a packet of 6 sanitary pads at 20-25 birr (valued at approximately \$2.30), which would last the girls for one year. The cost of these pads is a sizeable expenditure in a rural context where one fourth of the population earns less than \$1 per day (UNDP, 2007).

WHAT CHALLENGES AROSE?

By reshiftng health education to more intensive training, the demands on teachers, health extension workers and animators became more time and labor-intensive. In trying to empower girls, this intensive use of time, simultaneously strained and overburdened female animators. Scarce project resources could quickly be expended, if the project attempted to sustain the demand for sanitary napkin usage on an ongoing basis. Therefore, experimentation with sanitary napkin models, both locally available and factory-made models, was necessary in order to find a workable, appropriate solution. In addition, sanitary napkins will be needed throughout the course of a woman's reproductive years; expectations need to be made clear from the outset that project input is only to stimulate use of sanitary pad materials, not to sustain their provision indefinitely.



HEALTH &
SECURITY

UP CLOSE: PROVISION OF SANITARY NAPKINS AND HEALTH & HYGIENE EDUCATION

Participants in training in health education in Alem Tena have learned about personal sanitation, menstruation, malaria prevention, HIV/AIDS and many other topics. Many of the girls have also been recipients of ecologically sound household pit latrine materials. After the project intervention, almost all girls report an increase in health seeking behavior and a transition from open air defecation to the use of pit latrines. Girls who had simply worn extra layers of clothing during menstruation and “used to say they were sick” began attending school on a regular basis with out missing classes and learning how to properly wash and thoroughly dry menstruation materials to prevent infection.



HOW CAN THESE LESSONS LEARNED BE TAKEN UP BY OTHERS?

Some girl-focused projects try to maintain girls' attendance and perpetuation in school through educational inputs alone. However, CRS' baseline survey and project implementation experience demonstrated that health inputs were needed in order for education outputs to be fully realized. One main challenge of sanitary napkin provision is targeting. Almost all girls need sanitary napkin materials; provision must therefore be linked with larger, overarching outcomes that a project seeks to effect. When providing sanitary napkins, **practitioners** need to explore models that are affordable and locally available, so that after initial provision, girls can find a way to sustain use of sanitary napkins, rather than becoming dependent on outside assistance. Project implementers recommended that, since **government** is seeking to engage teachers in extra-curricular activities, female teachers could play a key role if they were trained how to make sanitary pads from locally available materials and could then go on to train girls how to make their own sanitary napkins. In such a multi-faceted project covering health, agriculture, water installation, and social mobilization, human resources recruitment must select out individuals with the ability to comprehend inter-related issues and who demonstrate willingness to grapple with project components that are often implemented by separate sectoral specialists in other more stove-piped projects. Individuals need to be selected who are talented and dedicated from the recruitment stage, and project activities are more successful if these individuals are diploma holders. Provision of health education also demonstrated that local level animators or development agents need to be female in order to dialogue on sensitive issues. When a project is integrated with existing projects, it may be expected to use existing resources. However, adequate human resources should be allocated for extended health education activities in order to prevent over-burdening of staff and resulting lessening of quality. When providing multi-faceted interventions, projects can benefit from integration and linkages with health-focused partners.

GIRL-FRIENDLY LATRINES & SCHOOL WATER POINTS

INTERVENTION: Construction of Water Points in Schools, Construction of Gender-Segregated Latrines, Connection of Water Sanitation Facilities inside School Latrines, Assistance in Household Latrine Construction

TARGET GROUP: In-school girls and boys (latrines); all girls (household latrines)

WHAT'S THE PROBLEM?

Many girls spend significant time fetching water at locations distant from home and/or school. This often results in tardiness, inconsistent school attendance, and lack of time to complete homework, in comparison with their male peers. In many communities, girls lack toilets, both at home and at school. This lack of private space to use the restroom means that they must hide the signs of menstruation, both from brothers and fathers at home, as well as at school. Because they have no place to clean themselves or change their sanitary napkin, many girls fear embarrassment by peers, when they experience leakage or soiling of clothing during school hours. Girls who experience leakage and are ridiculed by other school children have been known to leave school and never return. In the schools where one gender-shared latrine exists, girls also experienced harassment and ridicule by boys who found a drop of blood or other signs of menstruation in shared school toilets, and these girls felt hesitant to use bathrooms shared with boys. Girls also refrained from using non-segregated toilets with non-functioning door locks, fearing that boys may trick them and try to sexually harass them while in a vulnerable position.

HOW DID THE PROJECT INTERVENE?

In order to address these problems, the project intervened by constructing water points in schools, by constructing gender-segregated latrines in schools and in some cases, connecting school water facilities with the latrines, and supplying concrete slabs for household latrines when families had not already constructed latrines. The project was able to bring water into schools by a) construction of shallow wells, b) connecting the school to a community pipeline, or c) digging boreholes in areas of high water scarcity. In a few cases, the project installed water hand pumps or electric submersible water pumps, in order to bring water into the school toilet. While the project supplied materials, community members that contributed labor, especially in locations where trenches were dug. In cases where girls' households did not already have latrines, the project supported use of ecologically-sensitive household latrines, by distributing concrete slabs and providing education on how to maintain the latrine, with the family was responsible for digging 20 cm by 30 cm pits, constructing shading around the toilet, and relocating the latrine periodically.

SO WHAT HAPPENED?

Some children who had walked 2-3 km during school breaks to drink water could now easily access water at school without being late to class. Girls reported an increase in comfort at school during periods of menstruation, which translated into more consistent enrollment and increased performance.

E n c l o s e d

bathrooms also served as a 'safe space', both in the home environment and at school, in which girls could change their pads, take care of personal hygiene and maintain their sense of dignity, especially since in most huts all families members share one common living space. Ridicule from shared bathroom use decreased, an effect which was enhanced by coupling the intervention with reproductive health education for both boys and girls. Added benefits were that the environment surrounding the school became much cleaner and less polluted when open air defecation was reduced.

WHAT WORKED AND WHY?

Water in schools brings benefits to all, not just to girls. In schools where there are no toilets, separate blocks for girls and boys were constructed in order not to discriminate against boys. In areas where only one latrine block existed, an additional separate block was constructed for girls. This created conducive environment for both boys and girls to use their toilets independently, and made boys feel included, rather than excluded by girl-friendly interventions. When resources are given because of girls, schools and other stakeholders valued those girls. In one case, a school that received a water pump took initiative to allow vulnerable girls who were members of the Gender Club, to use the water pump to irrigate and cultivate garden vegetables on small plots of land within the school compound. The girls were able to sell and use the profits to support their school costs and subsistence expenses. The intervention was successful in that the project piggybacked a larger project for expensive, infrastructure-intensive interventions and the skills, know-how and resources to construct water and sanitation facilities. In addition, it linked two inputs to mutually enhance one another; having water in the school was important in being able to keep toilets clean. Beyond these outputs, water points served as an excellent point of congregation, facilitating community education. Youth Action Kit festivals and other community outreach events were organized around water collection schedules. This opened a mechanism for consistently reaching 'invisible girls', that is, girls who were married and out-of-school, spending most of their time in domestic labor.

WHAT CHALLENGES AROSE?

In some areas, while constructing a latrine helped girls, it did not fully solve the problem. Girls still did not feel comfortable to change their pads at school because they did not have a place to put the soiled reusable pad. In areas where the Integrated Water Management project had already helped to construct water points in the nearby community, the value of the school-based water point had less impact than in areas where there was no water source at all available. Project implementers learned that linking water to latrines is often expensive, especially when transformers are needed to extend pipelines into schools. Water sources that use a generator, or require fuel are less viable for rural schools, where as hand pumps are more cost-effective and viable. In several sites, when a water point was constructed at the school, the presence of community members in the school compound disturbed classes, or school guards did not want to take responsibility for the potential theft that could occur, and community was therefore not allowed to enter. Because of integration into the larger CRS Integrated Watershed Project, in each of the sites, a community

UP CLOSE: GIRL-FRIENDLY LATRINES & SCHOOL WATER POINTS

A t

Tsahwa Primary School

in Tigray, the Empowering Adolescent

Girls Project installed a water pump on the

school grounds. The school learned

lessons from the success of the

nearby irrigation group for

girls and decided to replicate

girl-targeted irrigation within

the school compound. The most

economically vulnerable members

of the Girls' Club were given

access to use water from the pump

to irrigate thin plots of land. The girls

grew water-intensive vegetables that were

able to draw higher profit margins, and then used the proceeds to support

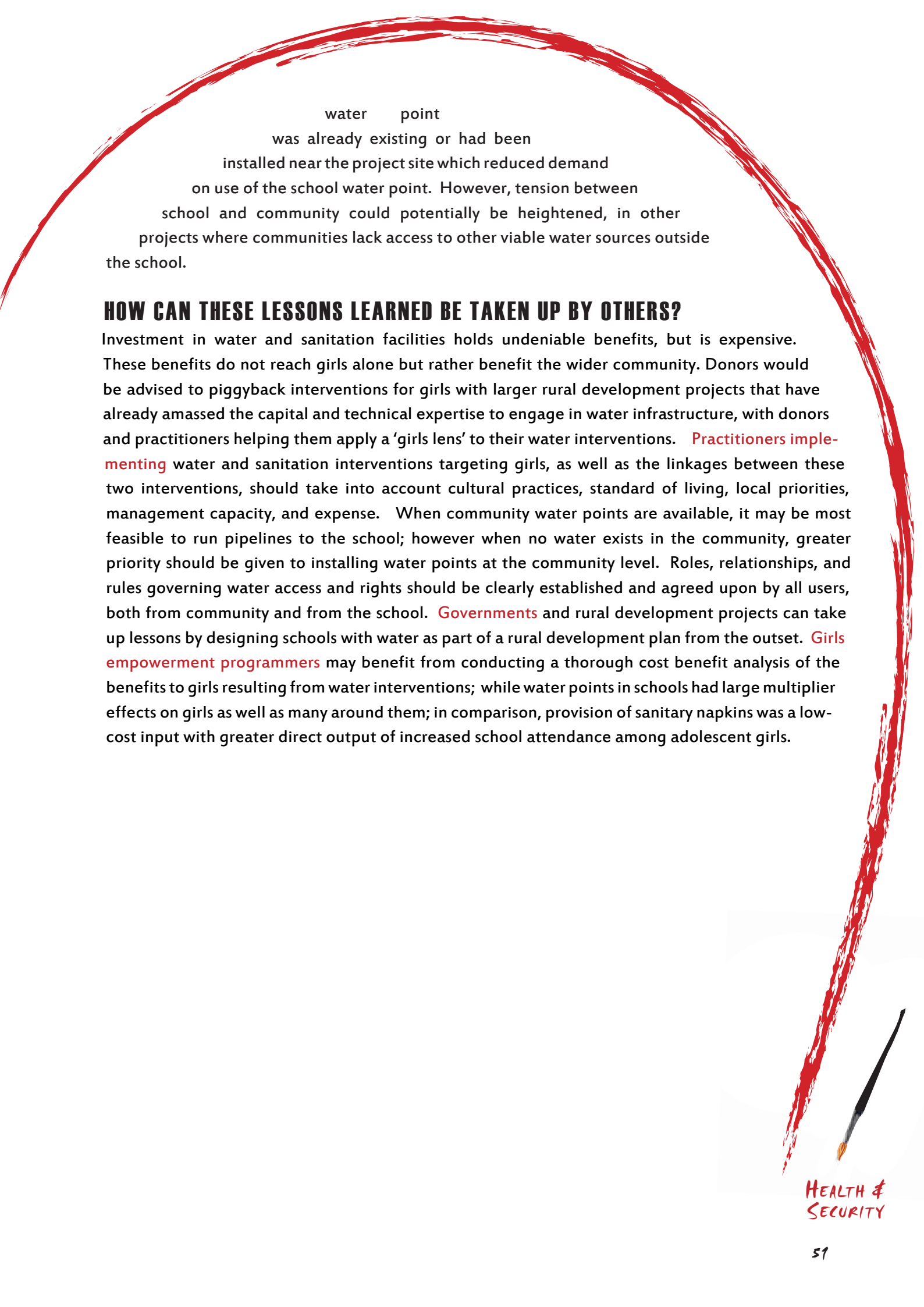
schooling costs like stationary, pencils, pen, etc. In this case, the

school demonstrated how it could target access to an investment in

physical infrastructure to hone in on specifically contributing

to girls' education.





water point
was already existing or had been
installed near the project site which reduced demand
on use of the school water point. However, tension between
school and community could potentially be heightened, in other
projects where communities lack access to other viable water sources outside
the school.

HOW CAN THESE LESSONS LEARNED BE TAKEN UP BY OTHERS?

Investment in water and sanitation facilities holds undeniable benefits, but is expensive. These benefits do not reach girls alone but rather benefit the wider community. Donors would be advised to piggyback interventions for girls with larger rural development projects that have already amassed the capital and technical expertise to engage in water infrastructure, with donors and practitioners helping them apply a 'girls lens' to their water interventions. **Practitioners implementing** water and sanitation interventions targeting girls, as well as the linkages between these two interventions, should take into account cultural practices, standard of living, local priorities, management capacity, and expense. When community water points are available, it may be most feasible to run pipelines to the school; however when no water exists in the community, greater priority should be given to installing water points at the community level. Roles, relationships, and rules governing water access and rights should be clearly established and agreed upon by all users, both from community and from the school. **Governments** and rural development projects can take up lessons by designing schools with water as part of a rural development plan from the outset. **Girls empowerment programmers** may benefit from conducting a thorough cost benefit analysis of the benefits to girls resulting from water interventions; while water points in schools had large multiplier effects on girls as well as many around them; in comparison, provision of sanitary napkins was a low-cost input with greater direct output of increased school attendance among adolescent girls.

FIGHTING HARMFUL TRADITIONAL PRACTICES

INTERVENTION: Club support, Community Awareness Events, Training

TARGET GROUPS: All girls participating in any other intervention of the project, school staff, parents, community, traditional leaders, government line offices

WHAT'S THE PROBLEM?

Girls in the project's operational areas face a range of harmful traditional practices, such as: early marriage, abduction, rape, female genital cutting, widow inheritance, marriage of younger girls as secondary wives, excessive workload, and, among the most prevalent, early marriage. Cultural practices between the Tigray and Oromia sites differed markedly. For instance, in the Chelelka-Ellen watershed, girls are many times contracted into early marriage just after a girl's birth. The family of the boy presents the gebera, a dowry consisting of cattle or other valuable possessions to the family of the girl. Girls remain living in their family of origin until early adolescence. When the boy requests that the girl be circumcised (e.g. female genital cutting), this is a sign that he is readying to marry and complete the gebera. If a girl has not been asked for marriage by age 14 or 15, parents begin to worry about her future and prepare her for *urgesa*, or sudden marriage. To carry out *urgesa*, the parents first circumcise the girl. When others hear that she has been circumcised, adolescent boys come and sit at the gate of the house, refusing to leave until she is given to them in marriage. Girls facing these circumstances do not have the information on where or from whom to seek assistance when ever they face challenges like early and arranged marriage or female genital mutilation. Girls who attend upper primary and secondary schools in towns face particular risks. Living alone, they are at greater risk of rape or coercion into sex by men around them.

HOW DID THE PROJECT INTERVENE?

The project sought to directly engage gatekeepers-- individuals who control access, knowledge, and assets related to girls-- into enablers-- those advocate for, defend and open opportunities for girls. The project engaged in mass awareness raising, training, Community Conversations, and stimulation of debate on widow inheritance, abduction, rape, early marriage, and other topics. The project implemented training in a progressive manner, focusing on gender and child rights during the first year of the project, then moving into harmful traditional practices, gender, and girls' workload. The project targeted Parent Teacher Associations, School Directors, and government officers, teachers, school gender focal persons, and school counselors. The project also brought together traditional, community and government leaders for joint solution development, including Aba Geda, government leaders, traditional birth attendants, traditional healers, religious leaders, association leaders and girls themselves utilizing the Community Conversations approach. The project also formed Anti-Harmful Traditional Practice Eradication Committees at the local level. Each intervention for girls was implemented in close collaboration with government structures, including the Woreda Education Office, Women's Affairs Office, Cooperative Officer, as well as the Ethiopian Women's Lawyer Association and with the Zonal Office of Culture and Tourism. In addition to working with local stakeholders, the project also participated in the Brain Trust, a sister Nike Foundation project,

the aim of which
is to highlight best practice and
sharing learning in girls' empowerment activities.

SO WHAT HAPPENED?

Large crowds attended the awareness raising events and developed knowledge and consciousness of harmful traditional practices. By the half of the project's life, the number of girls who understood the national laws about who has a right to choose whom a girl marries, had increased from 19% to 58% (Catholic Relief Services/Ethiopia, 2008). As girls gained greater awareness, they began to advocate to their own parents to curb harmful traditional practices and they themselves became the ones to reject early marriage. They reported early marriage and female genital cutting to animators as well as directly to Women's Affairs Offices. Whereas previously, community members did not believe that children knew anything or could speak out on social problems, and communities would ostracize a boy who spoke out against a harmful traditional practice, after the project interventions, community members realized they could learn from their own children. They developed greater respect for their girls' capacity. When individuals took a stand against harmful traditional practices and engaged in exemplary behavior, the project rewarded these outstanding role models, including girls, mothers and fathers. In one case, a very outspoken and active member of the Gender Club visited her relatives in Arsi zone. While there, she was abducted. She contacted her Gender Club members and she, with their help, was able to escape. While a study would be needed to determine the quantitative indicators of decrease in harmful traditional practices, project field staff qualitatively noted a great decline in the prevalence of harmful traditional practices. A much greater number of cases were reported openly, including female genital cutting, abduction, and early marriage.

WHAT WORKED AND WHY?

Initiating empowerment of girls alone is not successful, if it does not embrace those who are responsible for empowering or disempowering girls, not just through one, but through multiple entry points. CRS had earned trust and respect the community, because of long-term solidarity through drought periods, and this facilitated community relationships. The project used the strategy of recognizing and promoting role models; initiating return of the gebera payment has set an example to other families who are reluctant to engage in new dowry setting when they see the cost of revoking a dowry. The project focused on Aba Geda traditional leaders as a solution to harmful traditional practices because their rulings exerted such sway on the community behavior. Instead of prescribing answers, the project asked traditional leaders themselves to list which traditional practices are detrimental and which are beneficial. Feedback learned from the community was used to sharpen its outreach strategy. The project thinking fell in line with government priorities and initiatives, and governmental and traditional leaders were positive and willing to collaborate with the project on the issue of girls' empowerment. In addition, local government also fully engaged itself and demonstrated a sense of ownership in facilitating the process of by-law revision by Aba Geda.

UP CLOSE: FIGHTING HARMFUL TRADITIONAL PRACTICES

The Welda Hafa School's club was previously called a Girls' Club but changed to a Gender Club through the intervention of the project. The club is composed of both girls and boys who work together to combat harmful traditional practices. Club members have become trained facilitators of Community Conversations and have engaged communities in three step processes to identify traditional practices, distinguish what is harmful and beneficial and adopt community by-laws to halt harmful traditional practices. The club also presents dramas, celebrates holiday and engages in mass awareness-raising.



WHAT CHALLENGES AROSE?

The project was greatly challenged by the frequent turnover of school staff and project staff. After significant investment in training, the project needed to repeat training and provide additional orientation and coaching to help newcomers get up to speed. While prevalence is decreasing, some harmful traditional practices have gone underground. People practice female genital cutting in the night hours or take girls to neighboring areas where they are not known and will not be discovered. The most vulnerable of girls were those just beginning the legal process, meaning that they had openly reported the incident, but the incident had not yet been verified by authorities. If they had fled their families or persecutors, they sometimes came to seek refuge in the church, but they did not have a right to recourse to official support until their case was verified. The project responded by channeling support to these girls through the Women's Affairs Office.

HOW CAN THESE LESSONS LEARNED BE TAKEN UP BY OTHERS?

When initiating programs, **donors** and **program designers** need to understand that girls' empowerment will be not be attained only through economics, unless and until social barriers are removed. Families must let girls go to school. Early marriage must be cancelled. When addressing harmful traditional practices, **practitioners** need to start with the local context to understand the particularities of how harmful traditional practices were implemented in each site. Baseline investigations should look not only at the status of girls themselves, but also at the intensity of harmful traditional practices among the community, and the perception of leaders. Practitioners may also do well focus on ensuring that all girls have registered birth certificates, so that girls have legal recourse and legal backing to prove they are under age 18, when parents try to force them into early marriage. **Government offices** also need support in addressing harmful traditional practices since they experience shortage of resources and human-power. **Donors** may do well to employ flexibility in budget planning and activity revision, since it is through the course of project implementation, that contextual factors and budget constraints become more easily understood in interventions related to increasing girls' social opportunity.

TRANSFORMING STAKEHOLDERS FROM GATEKEEPERS TO ENABLERS

INTERVENTION: Training, Community Conversations, Awareness-raising

TARGET GROUP: government offices, parents, community members, traditional leaders

WHAT'S THE PROBLEM?

Fathers are holders of power at the household level. Fathers, as well as mothers, are often the ones responsible for girls' entry into situations that disempower them (e.g. through inequitable distribution of labor, contracting of early marriage, reluctance to allow girls to join school, etc.) One of the two project watershed sites falls within the jurisdiction of the Aba Geda, who serve as the traditional leaders of the Oromo people. This structure governs the by-laws of the Oromo people and have great sway over community practice, including the harmful traditional practices that affect girls' lives. Each community has its own local leadership structure that reports to a regional structure. Many community members had been educated by the project regarding the harms of certain traditional practices, but would passively wait to enact local by-laws until these were endorsed by higher levels of the Aba Geda. While government offices clearly embraced the concept of attaching greater value to the girl, sometimes specific mobilization is needed to help sectoral line offices understand the specific needs of adolescent girls, particularly in the areas of cooperative formation, land entitlement, etc.

HOW DID THE PROJECT INTERVENE?

The project sought to directly engage gatekeepers-- individuals who control access, knowledge, and assets related to girls-- into enablers-- those advocate for, defend and open opportunities for girls. The project engaged in mass awareness raising, training, Community Conversations, and stimulation of debate on widow inheritance, abduction, rape, early marriage, and other topics. The project implemented training in a progressive manner, focusing on gender and child rights during the first year of the project, then moving into harmful traditional practices, gender, and girls' workload. The project targeted Parent Teacher Associations, School Directors, and government officers, teachers, school gender focal persons, and school counselors. The project also brought together traditional, community and government leaders for joint solution development, including Aba Geda, government leaders, traditional birth attendants, traditional healers, religious leaders, association leaders and girls themselves utilizing the Community Conversations approach. The project also formed Anti-Harmful Traditional Practice Eradication Committees at the local level. Each intervention for girls was implemented in close collaboration with government structures, including the Woreda Education Office, Women's Affairs Office, Cooperative Officer, as well as the Ethiopian Women's Lawyer Association and with the Zonal Office of Culture and Tourism. In addition to working with local stakeholders, the project also participated in the Brain Trust, a sister Nike Foundation project, the aim of which is to highlight best practice and sharing learning in girls' empowerment activities.

SO WHAT HAPPENED?

Since families have great say on how girls spend their time and who is engaged in household labor, one significant accomplishment is that, midway through the project, the percentage of girls engaged in more than four hours of housework per day, had decreased from 100% to 39%. The percent of families who had asked their daughters about their opinions on decisions to be made regarding the girls' lives increased from 39% to 47%. (Catholic Relief Services/Ethiopia, 2008). Anti-Harmful Traditional Practice Eradication Committees convened meetings, transmitted messages, and mobilized local community into action. The project succeeded in prompting many local Aba Gedas to revise legal code. As sanctions for violations, many communities chose to exclude violators from the local burial association. While the project continued to see girls enter into early marriage, project implementers witnessed a decrease in new contracts of early marriage, as well as an increase in cancellations of early marriage. In various project sites, some individuals became exemplary role models: fathers who returned the dowry for their daughters, parents who chose to send all girl children to school, and fathers who allocated a portion of their land for their daughter's ownership. When parents participated in SILCs through the larger Integrated Watersheds Management project, many began saving money for education on behalf of their daughters. Government officers, fathers, and leaders became active and involved in the girls of putting land title deeds in the name of girls, and fathers and families actively contributed their labor to make girls' irrigation groups become successful.

WHAT WORKED AND WHY?

Initiating empowerment of girls alone is not successful, if it does not embrace those who are responsible for empowering or disempowering girls, not just through one, but through multiple entry points. CRS had earned trust and respect the community, because of long-term solidarity through drought periods, and this facilitated community relationships. The project used the strategy of recognizing and promoting role models; initiating return of the gebera payment has set an example to other families who are reluctant to engage in new dowry setting when they see the cost of revoking a dowry. The project focused on Aba Geda traditional leaders as a solution to harmful traditional practices because their rulings exerted such sway on the community behavior. Instead of prescribing answers, the project asked traditional leaders themselves to list which traditional practices are detrimental and which are beneficial. Feedback learned from the community was used to sharpen its outreach strategy. The project thinking fell in line with government priorities and initiatives, and governmental and traditional leaders were positive and willing to collaborate with the project on the issue of girls' empowerment. In addition, local government also fully engaged itself and demonstrated a sense of ownership in facilitating the process of by-law revision by Aba Geda.

WHAT CHALLENGES AROSE?

During times of drought, it was challenging to get community members to devote time to engage in successive training sessions and discussion, when their main focus and use of time was dedicated to basic survival pursuits. Because the cost of cattle greatly increased in the last decade and because dowries are distributed



SOCIAL
OPPORTUNITY

UP CLOSE: TRANSFORMING STAKEHOLDERS FROM GATEKEEPERS TO ENABLERS

Abushu

Gudeta, with his two wives, is the father of 16 children, 11 of them girls. In the Oromo culture, almost all girls are engaged into early marriage from infancy. When his daughter, Gelego, came of age, her suitor demanded that she be circumcised, a cultural practice in preparation for marriage. Gelego notified the Women's Affairs Office and both families were served with notice to stop the marriage. Her father took a courageous decision and made the financial sacrifice to pay back the dowry for his daughter, Gelego and allow her to continue her education. When his next daughter, Milku came of age and he again decided to pay back the dowry and send her to school. Abushu's actions have become a role model in his community, breaking ground in the way they have motivated other parents to make brave choices and financial sacrifices.



a m o n g
extended family, the decision
to return the dowry requires the blessing and
cooperation of the entire extended family, not just a girl or
her parents. This translates into extensive awareness-raising, in order
to successfully cancel an early marriage. While revision of legal by-laws by
local Aba Geda was useful, this needed to be endorsed at the higher authority level of
regional Aba Geda to become officialized, and project implementers planned to take the
issue of outlawing harmful traditional practices to the formal transfer of power session that
would occur just after the completion of the project. This demonstrates how the process of
carrying by-laws up through the ranks of the Aba Geda requires time, patience and persistence.
Interventions to reach stakeholders were constrained by high turnover of civil servants, including
teachers, school directors, and line bureau officers which requires training and re-training at the
same institutions. In addition, the project found that it was not enough to transform gatekeepers
in one community. Harmful traditional practitioners could easily move to adjacent communities to
engage in illegal behaviors and visitors from other communities who had not been sensitized could
also easily violate girls. Therefore, the project recommends widespread outreach education among
gatekeepers across an area, rather than in one village or community alone.

HOW CAN THESE LESSONS LEARNED BE TAKEN UP BY OTHERS?

Those directly responsible for disempowering girls need to be directly addressed. When new laws are endorsed, these need support not only through community sanctions, as well as through official law enforcement institutions, like the Aba Geda. Despite the persistent dedication of practitioners, the wholehearted support of **government offices** and the willing engagement of **community leaders**, practices that are hundreds of years old do not change overnight; they are deeply engrained in culture and history. Step-by-step gradual approaches need to allow time for new ideas to sink into community thinking and later translate into behavioral change.

PART III:
TYING IT ALL
TOGETHER



CROSSCUTTING HURDLES

TARGETING

Challenges in targeting differed according to the local culture and context. For instance, the term used to refer to an 'adolescent girl', when translated into various local languages, often referred to a girl who had entered puberty, in terms of physical development, but who was either unmarried or not sexually active. In Tigray's Rubachea watershed, community members and civil servants demonstrated more interest in interventions targeting in-school girls, as opposed to those who had already dropped out. In another case, project implementers detected traces of a challenge that needs further investigation to ascertain its veracity; some staff came to realize that some community members had their own 'invisible criteria' for identifying girls to participate in each type of intervention. In certain instances, community members readily volunteered information on girls born to the families in the area. However, community members did not readily offer up information or promote involvement of adolescent girls from distant areas who had been contracted into early marriage and had migrated to the area. This needs further investigation to ascertain the actual undercurrents and practices occurring around this issue. What these cases demonstrate is that, during the onset of a project, specific detailing of the criteria and terms used is necessary to make clear that the intended target 'beneficiaries' are all girls between ages 10-19, married or unmarried, pre or post-sexual debut, and in-school or out-of-school. Additionally, while preventative measures early on are certainly most effective in changing girls' destinies, concerted attention must be addressed to reaching girls who have already dropped out of school, migrated, or entered into early marriage, to prevent them from becoming an 'invisible' population below the radar screen of girl-targeted interventions.

STAFFING

When activities are disparate and integrated, some problems cannot be solved on the spot and need different types of experts. Staffing needs must be well-planned and budgeted in order to preventing overstretching. In addition, turnover is a phenomena which has a huge impact on the progress of project activities. Each time a project staff departs, two to three months are required to recruit, orient, and train the new staff person, with the individual still lacking the replete understanding of the project. Practitioners may curb this rate of turnover by paying staff at competitive salaries, communicating to donors the reason for this approach, and developing organizational polices to promote retention. Turnover in Ethiopia government offices is endemic and continual. This is not a factor within the control of practitioners, but government offices may benefit from understanding the project delays resulting from continuous transfer of civil servants, and taking this into consideration in decision-making.

TIMING

Changing worldviews and practices that are centuries old takes time. While a project works against a plan, a target period and deliverables, collaborating with community sometimes requires patience and perseverance. Interventions that involve modifying local structures and hierarchies or working through bureaucracies, are particularly time-intensive, e.g. involving girls informal decision making structures, securing land titles in the name of girls, or securing endorsement of new laws to protect girls from traditional leadership. Consistent, multi-year activities are necessary to effect lasting change. It is recommended that projects understand the time needed from the outset and budget this time accordingly. Other interventions should also be designed so that they can operate independently rather than be crippled by time delays in one intervention area.

PROJECT RESULTS

Through the combined effect of project interventions, mid-way through the project, girls cited some dramatic changes.

<i>% OF GIRLS WHO...</i>	<i>BASELINE</i>	<i>MIDLINE</i>
Enrolled in school	72	85
Had access to reproductive health education	45	50
Used a sanitary pad during menstruation	10	18
Engaged in community agro-enterprise	0	14
Consumed protein in their diet	56	92
Consumed Vitamin A	61	100
Used fuel-efficient stoves	11	47
Performed household work for more than 4 hours per day	100	39
Had a source of income	21	31
Had personal savings	14	34
Understand laws around who is entitled to make marriage decisions for a girl	19	58
Families who had asked girls opinions on decisions to be made regarding girls lives	39	47
Felt they had equal chance to express their opinions with boys	50	76
Participated in community forums and plans	2	7

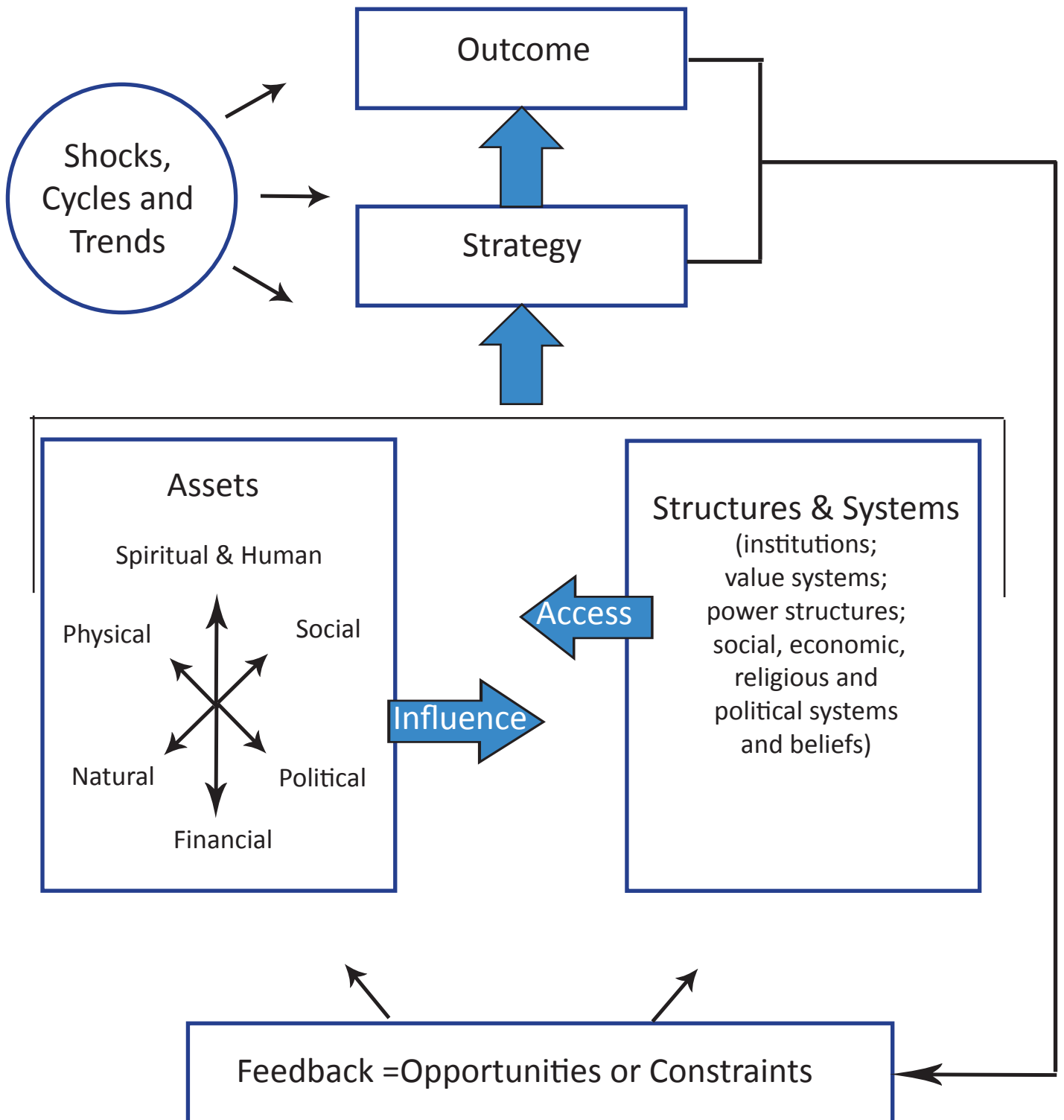
In addition to these indicators, some of the outcomes cited by implementers as most important, e.g. development of self-awareness, assertiveness, and ability to articulate as well as creation of safe spaces and support systems, are not related to one intervention alone but rather the sum impact of multi-layered interventions. With such a diverse array of interventions, one may wonder all how all of these activities were tied together. CRS was able to accomplish this by a) by integrating activities into larger Integrated Watershed management activities that already had momentum and b) contextualizing the application of each intervention to local particularities and c) engaging committed staff who went above and beyond the call of duty and allow themselves to stretch their minds around a range of activities that differed from the sectoral specialties.



A grandmother who benefits from the use of the irrigation apparatus installed because of the Biruh Tesfah girls' irrigation group

CRS AND THE INTEGRAL HUMAN DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK

CRS has developed an integral human development framework to guide its interventions across cross-cutting community interventions in a number of sectors. This framework has been tested and explored across various countries and within numerous projects (Catholic Relief Services, 2008).



MAINSTREAMING A GIRLS' LENS ACROSS ACTIVITIES

The Empowering Adolescent Girls project has placed a 'girls' lens' on development activities, exploring how conceptual approaches, project strategies, and methodologies change when the adolescent girls is placed in center stage. The following diagram explores how the CRS Framework of Integral Human Development is elaborated, when a girls lens is applied. This model encapsulates the information presented in Parts I and Part II and demonstrates how application of a girls' lens can significantly shape the way projects targeting adolescent girls are designed and conceptualized. The Empowering Adolescent Girls project sought to integrate a girls lens' integrated into the existing tested CRS Integral Human Development Framework.

Mainstreaming gender, specifically concerns and challenges related to adolescent girls', needs to be interwoven across project interventions. While girls-focused projects are vital and are indeed preferable when funds are available, piggybacking on larger interventions in which stakeholders in girls' lives are already invested is a key strategy for success. Inserting a girls' lens into a development package may be more effective and cost-efficient than stand-alone girls program. However, project learning showed that this girls' lens needs to be inserted at the beginning so that it is incorporated in project design, budgeting, staff development and resource allocation (Catholic Relief Services/ Ethiopia, 2007). A girls' lens must also be inserted into the evaluation of overarching projects so that change can be measured and benchmarked. While inserting a girls lens' into programming can begin to change the way larger, broader projects operate, this needs time in order to influence structures and become institutionalized. Concerted attention is needed from leadership to allow the girls' lens to flow upward and downward to become institutionalized at all layers of organizational functioning.

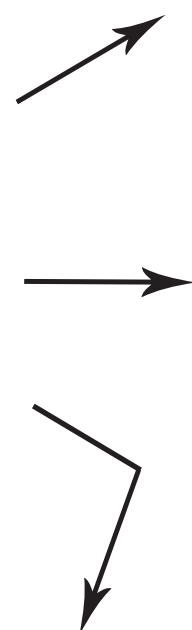
The benefit of long years of experience in human development combined with application of a girls lens, leveraged years of expertise and focused CRS learning specifically on the girl population. In a parallel fashion, girls' empowerment interventions achieved more when objectives and themes coincided and aligned with national policies and ongoing government initiatives. The end result of these combined interventions is 'a sum which is greater than its parts', meaning that while each intervention impacted a specific aspect of a girl's life, more important for girls was the increased voice, the increased value of their role allocated by community members, and the greater decision-making and opportunities opened at the local level, that resulted from implementing cross-cutting interventions across all facets of the palette of girls' empowerment.

When a girls' lens is successfully applied, it builds on momentum already generated, transforms the worldview and consciousness of those may be not be 'girl specialists', and raises the panoply of opportunities available to girls through development pursuits. This learning holds value, both for CRS country programming as well as for a host of entities wishing to embark on programming for adolescent girls around the globe.

A GIRLS' LENS ON THE INTEGRAL HUMAN DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK

VULNERABILITIES: SHOCKS, CYCLES AND TRENDS

Loss of one or both parents
 Disability
 Arranged and early marriage
 Abduction and rape
 School drop-out
 Extreme poverty
 Lack of access to basic infrastructure (health , education, water, etc.)
 Cultural framework that marginalizes girls and women
 Cultural practices that exclude girls from decision making and resource ownership
 Lack of access of information on health, rights, etc.



ASSETS

SPIRITUAL AND HUMAN
 Ability to explore own potential
 Belief in their own capacity
 Religious and cultural beliefs

PHYSICAL

Physical health
 Ability to engage in labor
 Land
 Livestock

NATURAL

Conducive Environment for
 Agriculture
 Conducive Environment for
 Raising Livestock



FINANCIAL

Cash
 Scholarship

SOCIAL

Solidarity among Girls
 Consciousness of Girls' Concerns
 Collaboration between
 Stakeholders
 Parental Support
 Community & Institutional
 Support

POLITICAL

Constitutional Rights
 Political Will to Address
 Girls' Issues



OUTCOMES

- Increase in school enrollment
- Increase in academic performance
- Growth in value of economic assets
- Sharpened skill in income generation and financial management
- Increase in health seeking behavior
- Increase in use of sanitation facilities
- Improved confidence and assertiveness
- Increased interdependence in use of household resources
- Increase in advocates and enablers for girls' causes



STRATEGIES

- Material assistance to enhance girls' enrollment and academic performance
- Provision of workload-reducing devices
- Provision of start-up economic assets
- Growth of economic assets
- Development of income generation skills
- Education in life skills and health issues
- Increased access to water points and sanitation facilities
- Creation of educational opportunities for those who missed out on educational system
- Acquisition of assets like land
- Engagement of girls in formal decision making
- Creation of safe spaces for girls
- Education and support to transform gatekeepers into enablers



STRUCTURES AND SYSTEMS

- Traditional leadership
- Local government
- Formal schools
- Clubs and safe spaces
- Legal framework (esp for reporting harmful traditional practices, education, land ownership)
- Affirmative action measures by government (tutorials, girl cooperative registration, etc.)



FEEDBACK = OPPORTUNITIES OR CONSTRAINTS



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