

Directory of Programs for Rural Girls in Ethiopia



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Compiled By:

Elshaday Kifle, Mekuria Yilma & Emil Parker

The Population Council is an international, nonprofit, nongovernmental organization that seeks to improve the well-being and reproductive health of current and future generations around the world and to help achieve a humane, equitable, and sustainable balance between people and resources. The Council conducts biomedical, social science, and public health research and helps build research capacities in developing countries. Established in 1952, the Council is governed by an international board of trustees. Its New York headquarters supports a global network of regional and country offices.

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This directory of programs for rural girls in Ethiopia is part of the Brain Trust of Practitioners in Rural Ethiopia project, funded by the Nike Foundation. The goal of the Ethiopia Brain Trust project is to expand and improve programs for rural girls in Ethiopia. We would like to acknowledge the Brain Trust members for their contributions to the directory in particular and for their willingness and commitment to rural girls in particular. The Brain Trust currently consists of eighteen organizations, eight of which are international and ten local Ethiopian organizations. Interest in the Ethiopian Brain Trust continues to grow.

Action for Development
BBC World Service Trust
Catholic Relief Services (CRS)
Pact Ethiopia
Millennium Village Project (MVP)
Women Support Association (WSA)
Save the Children USA

Adult & Non-formal Education Assoc. in Ethiopia (ANFEAE)
Professional Alliance for Development in Ethiopia (PADET)
Women, Youth and Children Development Program (RATSON)
Ye Ethiopia Goji Limadawi Dirigitoch Aswogaj Mahiber (EGLDAM)
Kulich Youth Reproductive Health and Development Organization (KYRHDO)

Gender Focus Ethiopia Association (GFE)
German Foundation for World Population (DSW)
Hiwot Ethiopia
Rural Reach Ethiopia (RRE)
Pathfinder International Ethiopia (PI/E)

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Photo credits: Annabel Erulkar

Forward

Rural girls in Ethiopia face significant challenges on a host of issues including health, education, civic participation, and access to services. Ethiopian girls are less likely than boys to attend school, attaining lower levels of education when they do attend. Rural Ethiopian girls are frequently given in arranged marriages during childhood or early adolescence, marriages which frequently result in early childbearing and heightened risk of poor birth outcomes, including fistula and maternal death. In order to avoid unwanted marriages, many girls migrate to towns and cities, effectively becoming runaways and forced to support themselves by whatever means necessary. Beyond traditional female roles of wife and mother, the livelihood options open to girls and women are narrow. Girls and women devote significant time to unpaid work within the family. Girls typically have fewer friends, thinner support networks, and lesser access to services than do their male counterparts, which compounds their vulnerability. Despite these and other difficulties, there are few programs specifically targeted to rural girls in Ethiopia.

The goal of the Ethiopia 'Brain Trust' project, funded by the Nike Foundation, is to expand and improve programs for rural girls in Ethiopia. The challenges involved in programming for rural girls are multi-dimensional and complex. Physical access is a fundamental challenge, with many areas of this vast country being hard-to-reach and inaccessible. There are longstanding cultural practices that affect girls, including female genital cutting, early marriage, and marriage by abduction. As well, there are complex social expectations of what a girl should, and should not, do. However, these challenges are not insurmountable.

Under the 'Brain Trust; a team of committed girls' program practitioners convenes to explore best practices in reaching and supporting rural girls in Ethiopia. Currently, 18 organizations are represented in the 'Brain Trust.' In addition, the 'Brain Trust' seeks to improve networking and information sharing among programmers working with rural girls in Ethiopia. This directory is a step in promoting collaboration and coordination among those working with rural girls. It also provides programmatic examples for organizations intending to work with rural girls. Entries in this directory include a range of programs addressing early marriage, abduction, female genital mutilation/cutting, gender relations, sexual and gender-based violence, access to education, livelihoods, and access to reproductive health information and services, among others. The range and depth of programs reflects the real needs of rural girls in the country as well as the impressive programmatic experience devoted to this vulnerable group, thus far.

The Population Council gratefully acknowledges the partnership with the 18 organizations in the 'Brain Trust.' We thank the Nike Foundation for increasing the visibility of the most vulnerable girls, worldwide, and for supporting work in this area. Finally, we acknowledge the energy, vibrancy and power of Ethiopian girls, to whom this work is dedicated.

Annabel S. Erulkar MSc PhD
Country Director, Population Council
Addis Ababa, June 2009

Acknowledgements

We would like to extend our sincere gratitude for all the organizations that agreed to share with us the information on their work. We wish to acknowledge the research assistant, Tsedey Wubshet who made site visits to the organizations. We would also like to thank Mike Vosika for editing the volume. Finally, we gratefully acknowledge the continuing support of the Nike Foundation for development of this directory and, more broadly, for Population Council's efforts on behalf of adolescent girls in Ethiopia.

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Abebech Gobena Yehetsanat Kebekabena Limat Mahiber (AGOHELMA)

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Abebech Gobena Yehetsanat Kebekabena Limat Mahiber is a local nongovernmental organization established in 1980. Ato Tesfaye T/haimanot, Deputy Manager and Head of Programs, was interviewed.

The mission of AGOHELMA is to make children productive and responsible citizens by satisfying their needs and protecting their rights. The organization seeks to provide poor children with basic needs, reunite orphans with relatives, help older orphans and destitute women and young people to become self-supporting by providing them with various types of skills training, and undertake integrated urban and rural development programs to alleviate some basic problems of the society.

Intervention areas of the organization are in Addis Ababa—Arada, Gulele and Addis Ketema subcities and in the Oromia regional government—in West Shoa: Ambo, Dendi, Toke Kutye, and Welmera, and in North Shoa: Wuchale, Jida, Deber Libanos, Degem, and Grajarso.

The organization operates four major programs that support rural girls: skills training, reproductive health, capacity building, and nonformal education. The skills-training program includes masonry, carpentry, and life-skill training. The reproductive health program includes providing information about family planning, referral linkage, and training of trainers for selected young people. The capacity-building program organizes women, with assistance of Pact Ethiopia, for training on savings schemes and small businesses. The nonformal education includes construction of nonformal schools and provision of nonformal instruction.

AGOHELMA's major successes include finding job opportunities for girls trained in masonry and carpentry. The majority of girls in the project areas now have access to education near their villages. Many women who participated in the program have changed their lives by starting their own business, and reproductive health coverage has increased in all intervention woredas. The keys to the organization's success include partnership with the community for each project; participation of stakeholders, including the government, in the operation of the project; program integration; and organizational capacity in terms of skilled labor and availability of branch offices. The major problems the organization faces are the difficulty of meeting the multiple demands of rural girls resulting from their poverty, the expectation of direct aid in the form of material and financial support, and time constraints imbedded in the program agreement with donors, which is usually a year in duration and which hinders AGOHELMA's ability to make long-term plans.

Aberash Memorial Development Organization (AMDO)

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Aberash Memorial Development Organization is a local nongovernmental organization established in 1995 and registered as an NGO in 1998. The organization has its head office in Addis Ababa. The Acting Executive Director, Ato Fekadu Belay, was interviewed.

AMDO designs and implements integrated development programs in urban and rural areas with the mission of enabling impoverished and marginalized groups to improve their well-being. The organization has five professional, nine support, and six volunteer staff members.

AMDO currently operates four major programs: education, health, improved agricultural extension and environmental development, and family self-reliance. The education program places a special emphasis on rural girls. The goal of the education program is to increase primary-school enrollment and nonformal education enrollment of school-aged children and adults. AMDO's major source of funding is Canadian Feed the Children (CFTC) and the embassies of Japan and France.

The major successes of AMDO are increasing girls' enrollment, decreasing the prevalence of early marriage due to girls' participation in education, and decreasing the prevalence of abduction and rape resulting from the construction of a new school near to the girls' homes. The keys to AMDO's success are construction of a school near the girls' kebeles, integration of the organization's activities and programs, and the material support for girls who attend school. The major obstacles the organization faces are girls' dropping out of school because of their household responsibilities and inadequate funding for expanding the programs. In the next five years, AMDO plans to strengthen the nonformal education program with respect to coverage and intensity, to include nonformal education in the Gurage zone project, and to start a new nonformal education program for girls and facilitate referrals from nonformal education to primary school.

Action for Development (AFD)

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Action for Development is a local nongovernmental organization established in 1998. Its head office is in Addis Ababa, with branch offices in Jinka, SNPPR, and in Yabelo, Arero, Hageremariam, and Dubluk, Oromia Region. The Development and Fundraising Department Head, Ato Habtamu Zeleke, was interviewed.

AFD's mission is to complement the initiatives of pastoral and other marginalized rural communities in the dry lands of Ethiopia to attain an improved quality of life on a sustainable basis. The organization's overall goal is to promote the attainment of food security and sustainable livelihoods at the grassroots level. In line with this goal, the organization strives to: secure rural/pastoral livelihoods; build capacity for disaster-risk reduction; build capacity for accountable governance; and empower women, pastoralists, and marginalized groups. The organization employs 63 professional and 44 support staff.

AFD operates a girls' empowerment and scholarship program that provides services for rural girls, including training on reproductive health and family planning issues, HIV/AIDS, early marriage, women's rights, and water and sanitation. It provides material support for girls, establishing schoolgirls' clubs and tutorial support. The program is funded by Pact Ethiopia (Nike, Girls' Empowerment and Management project).

The major successes of the organization are the reduction in the number of girls who drop out of school and an increase in girls' awareness and empowerment. The keys to AFD's successes are stakeholders' genuine participation and commitment, identification of the real problems of girls and the designing of programs to alleviate these problems, and provision of financial support for girls. The major challenges AFD faces are increasing demands from the community and increasing financial constraints to expanding the project.

Addis Development Vision (ADV)

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Addis Development Vision is a local nongovernmental organization established in 1993. The organization has its head office in Addis Ababa, with project offices in Awassa, Lalibela, and Siltie. The program coordinator, Haimanot Desalegn, was interviewed.

ADV has a mission to empower vulnerable groups to attain equal and full participation in society and to improve their lives through access to basic health care, education, and livelihood opportunities. ADV has 53 professional staff, 18 support staff, and 20 volunteers. The organization undertakes three major programs that provide services to rural girls, namely reproductive health (RH), women's empowerment, and disability prevention, rehabilitation, and integration. The major sources of funding are the European Commission, Pact/SIDA, CBM, the David and Lucile Packard Foundation, the Embassy of Finland, and Ethiopia Aid.

The reproductive health program conducts a variety of activities, including house-to-house education provided by community-based agents; youth-friendly services; girls' clubs; provision of contraceptives; creation of awareness regarding HIV/AIDS, RH, and harmful traditional practices; and training girls as peer educators. The women's empowerment program carries out numerous activities, including organizing girls and women in order to promote different aspects of development; arranging community discussions on girls' and women's rights; creating awareness regarding girls' and women's civic and political rights; building the capacities of various associations and girls' clubs; providing life-skills and vocational training; and providing educational materials, nonformal education, and community sensitization. The disability-prevention, rehabilitation, and integration program includes vocational training, educational support, provision of home- and community-based care, and medical rehabilitation.

The major successes of ADV are that women and girls are becoming more knowledgeable and assertive about their rights that the prevalence of harmful traditional practices is decreasing; girls' school enrollment is increasing, as is their awareness of HIV/AIDS. The keys to ADV's success are good partnership and networking with donors and local administrators and good understanding and participation of communities in the project. The organization's challenges are resource limitations, staff turnover at local government offices, financial constraints, bureaucratic delay by some local government units in granting licenses and implementing projects, communities' dependency syndromes, and lack of well-trained staff.

Adult and Non-formal Education Association in Ethiopia (ANFEAE)

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(Project Coordinator)

ANFEAE is a national nongovernmental organization established in 1997. The head office is in Addis Ababa, with branch offices in Gambella, Benishangul Gumuz, Amhara, and Oromia regions. The executive director, Ato Alemayehu Hailu Gebre, was interviewed.

ANFEAE's mission is to advocate for, facilitate, and directly provide life-enhancing basic education and life skills to children, young people, and adults to help them realize their full potential and improve their critical thinking. The organization runs four core programs for rural girls aged 12–20: Ambassador's Girls' Scholarship, Enhancing Girls' Education, Y-CHOICES (HIV/AIDS), and rural empowerment programs. In its head office and branch offices ANFEAE has 16 professional and 7 support staff members.

The Ambassador's Girls' Scholarship program, which began in 2005, helps poor girls attend secondary school by assisting them with educational materials, stipends, and tutorial and mentoring services. To date, 206 girls have benefited from this program, and 41 rural girls have been assisted to complete grade 12 and enroll in colleges and universities. The Enhancing Girls' Education Program was started in 2003 and helped to establish rural girls' clubs in primary schools; it provides training about HIV/AIDS and in assertiveness skills and supplies girls with reading materials. More than 4,620 students have participated in the program. The Y-CHOICES program was started in 2005, and more than 5,200 girls have received messages about abstinence and faithfulness. The program aims to raise the awareness of girls regarding sexual fidelity and other safe sexual behaviors to combat HIV. Thousands of young people have been reached through presentations in theaters about the effect of stigma and discrimination on people living with HIV/AIDS. The rural women's empowerment program helps women to organize into groups and engages them in income-generating activities by creating links with microfinance institutions. Since it started in 2005, 1,500 women have participated in this program. The major sources of funding for ANFEAE are USAID via the Academy for Educational Development, USAID via Pact, the Royal Netherlands Embassy, and SIDA via Pact Ethiopia.

ANFEAE has succeeded with its literacy-plus program in Oromia Region, Bereh Aleltu District, and won the 2008 literacy award from UNESCO. These groups of rural poor women became self-reliant through income-generating activities and were able to manage and save more than ETB 64,000 (approximately US\$7,040). Many of these women have begun to take active roles as decisionmakers within their families; girls' school enrollment in Berch Aleletu project areas has increased from 29 percent in the base year (2000) to 48 percent in 2007.

The keys to the organization's success are clear objectives and committed staff members, good working relationships with government offices at various levels and with grassroots communities, and experiences gained locally and abroad. The major obstacles observed are the extensive dependency syndrome that prevails in rural areas, donors' imposition of their interests and priorities, and donors' resistance to innovative and appropriate projects. Because ANFEAE strongly believes that education is the only weapon for overcoming poverty, inequality, and other social problems, it plans to work vigorously for the enhancement of girls' and women's schooling.

African Development Aid Association (ADAA)

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The African Development Aid Association is a local nongovernmental organization established in 1988. The head office is in Addis Ababa, with a coordination office in Oromia Region in Shashemene. The executive director, Ato Berhanu Tufa, was interviewed

As its general mission, ADAA seeks to develop the capacity of the poor communities to enable them to be self-reliant and to upgrade their living standards through an integrated community-development approach. Toward this end, it aims to improve the quality and accessibility of education and health services, food security, environmental conservation, women's and children's rights, and good governance and capacity building of its own and partner organizations. In its head office and branch offices ADAA has 12 professional and 18 support staff members to carry out its program activities. ADAA's major sources of funding are Pathfinder International, Norwegian Church Aid, Pact Ethiopia, SKN (a Netherlands-based NGO), the Interchurch Organisation for Development Cooperation (ICCO), Dan Church Aid, and Basic Education Association in Ethiopia (BEAE).

The organization has designed the following three programs for rural girls: reproductive health (RH) and family planning (FP), nonformal education, and fighting harmful traditional practices. The RH and FP program takes an active role in advocacy for in-school and out-of-school young people, and for provision of contraceptives, FP counseling, and support for school clubs that educate students about HIV/AIDS. The nonformal education program provides nonformal instruction and has also constructed schools. ADAA's activities to fight harmful traditional practices include advocacy and awareness training for various groups, such as traditional circumcisers, members of girls' clubs, religious leaders, and community leaders.

The major successes of ADAA include increased educational access for girls, transformation of 25 ADAA nonformal schools into formal governmental schools, 42 nonformal education options made available in the target area; increased awareness of RH and FP issues and services and increased awareness of gender-based violence and harmful traditional practices. The keys to the program's successes are community participation and government involvement. The major challenges to the organization are inadequate budget allocations and logistical problems arising from the remoteness of the target areas.

BBC World Service Trust

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BBC World Service Trust is the British Broadcasting Corporation's international development charity. It works with broadcasters worldwide to support the delivery of development objectives through the innovative use of the media. In Ethiopia, the Trust is a registered nongovernmental, not-for-profit international organization that began to operate in Ethiopia in 2001. The head office is in Addis Ababa. The Deputy Country Director, Hanna Woldemeskel, was interviewed.

The main objective of the current project is to contribute to the improved sexual and reproductive health of young people in Ethiopia, with a particular focus on young women and girls, through the production of high-quality, BBC-standard radio programs in the Amharic and Afan-Oromo languages in collaboration with Radio Ethiopia. Additional objectives include increasing the number of young people using sexual and reproductive health services and implementing a capacity-building scheme for Radio Ethiopia in order to build sustainable capacity within the station to produce high-quality programs addressing sexual and reproductive health issues over the long term.

The principal program is a sexual and reproductive health media campaign that began in March 2006. The program includes four major activities: weekly radio programs, a spot-message campaign, administration of approximately 150 young people's listening groups, and a monthly newsletter to support the radio output. A listening group is a gathering of 15 to 20 young people who listen to the programs every week and discuss with and provide feedback to the production team through a regular mechanism. The groups are established in collaboration with partners, mainly the Ethiopian Youth Network (EYN) and Family Guidance Association Ethiopia (FGAE) in Amharic- and Affan Oromo-speaking regions. The Trust has 16 professional and 6 support staff and about 150 volunteers as listening-group facilitators. The major sources of funding for the current program are the European Union and the HIV/AIDS Prevention and Control Office (HAPCO).

The major successes of BBCWST are the radio programs that continue to provoke positive comment from media professionals and audiences. The listening groups also report a high degree of satisfaction with the programs and are taking the initiative to expand the media-outreach activity. The keys to the success of the organization are: the production of research-based programs, the interactive nature of the programs, a strong and continuous link with audiences, and the responsiveness of program producers to feedback from listeners.

The major problems the organization faces are the government registration process; the limited reach of Radio Ethiopia in some regions; the negative reaction of some listeners to the programs, which are open and provocative and may be controversial; limited in-country experience in interactive reproductive health programming for young people; the inclination of young audiences to listen to regional radio and FM stations rather than Radio Ethiopia; and the overwhelming volume of letters

from audiences. The project does not have sufficient staff to answer all the letters. However, BBCWST has plans to partner with broadcast agencies (GM stations, regional radio stations, the Educational Mass Media Agency, and school minimedias) and other actors to strengthen and widen media outputs and audience research and to design new projects in the area of pastoralist health and maternal and child health.

Canadian Physicians for Aid and Relief (CPAR)

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Canadian Physicians for Aid and Relief is a nongovernmental international organization established in 1985. The organization has its head office in Addis Ababa with program areas in Debate and Were Jarso woredas of Benishangul Gumuz National Regional State and Oromia Region.

The organization's mission is to work in partnership with vulnerable communities and diverse organizations to overcome poverty and build healthy communities in Ethiopia. CPAR employs 24 professional and 21 support staff members. The major sources of funding are the Canadian Embassy/Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA).

The organization operates a program that supports rural girls and women's empowerment in their communities through integrated alternative basic education interventions in Debate woreda. The program includes six major services and activities: training on gender issues and harmful traditional practices; provision of educational materials; community mobilization to increase girls' school enrollment; community forums on the importance of girls' education and girls' empowerment; alternative basic education support; and rewarding role models, including parents who send two or more girls to school.

The major successes of the organization are increased participation of women in alternative education programs and a reduced number of cases of harmful traditional practices. The reasons for these successes are the importance placed on developing a sense of ownership within the community, the introduction of a learning process characterized by active learning, whereby the pupil is at the center of the process, and high-quality on-the-job training in which facilitators played a major role. The challenges CPAR faces are the remoteness of the project sites with respect to supervision; accessibility for the staff and expansion of the project area; and increasing enrollment, especially of girls in the adult basic education program. Enrollment is difficult because of the prevalence of abduction and early marriage in the woreda, lack of family support, and other cultural factors that discourage girls' education; the mobility of the Gumuz people; females' heavy workload at home and on the farm; schools' distance from villages; a low level of awareness regarding the benefits of education; the high demand for child labor for agricultural jobs; and poor infrastructure, transportation, and communication services.

Catholic Relief Services Ethiopia (CRS)

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Catholic Relief Service is nonprofit, nongovernmental international organization that has been working in Ethiopia since 1958. The Country Representative, Lane Bunkers, was interviewed.

CRS' mission is to carry 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 in promoting human development by responding to major emergencies, fighting disease and poverty, and nurturing peaceful and just societies, and in serving Catholics in the US as they live their faith in solidarity with their brothers and sisters around the world. As part of the universal mission of the Catholic Church, CRS works with local, national, and international Catholic institutions and structures, as well as other organizations, to assist people on the basis of need rather than creed, race, or nationality.

The Empowering Adolescent Girls program, funded by the Nike Foundation, was initiated in June 2006 as a component of the integrated watershed-management approach. CRS operates programs for rural girls in Tigray Region in Gulomekeda Woreda and in Oromia Region in East Showa in Bora and Dugda woredas.

CRS provides five major services for rural girls aged 10–19. The first is educational support: construction of nonformal schools; equipping schools with separate toilets for girls and providing water to schools, promoting energy-conserving stoves to reduce the workload of girls; promoting the use of reusable sanitary napkins to improve personal sanitation and school attendance; organizing tutorial classes and incentives for attendance and better performance at school; providing scholarships for the very poor living far from home in rented accommodations; and creating community awareness of the benefits of girls' education. The second service is economic interventions: organizing agribusiness and petty-trade groups for girls and providing associated training and materials; assisting girls in gaining access to household and community land for agricultural activities; and organizing girls' savings and internal lending communities (SILC) that help them build financial assets and provide them with the knowledge to handle money. The third support concerns health: the provision of life-skill training about HIV/AIDS and reproductive health for self-protection; community education and action planning concerning harmful traditional practices to reduce health and security risks; and help in improving nutrition through vegetable gardening in backyards. The fourth support concerns leadership, voice, and rights: organizing assertiveness trainings to in- and out-of-school girls to promote their self-confidence; assistance in organizing social and annual community events to help girls express their concerns to

community members; and organization of education sessions for community leaders, teachers, and girls on topics of reproductive health, gender-based violence, and girls' education. The fifth support service concerns social opportunity: enhancing the development of in- and out-of school gender/girls' clubs and encouraging girls' group development in agricultural business, petty trade, or SILC groups to create safe space for group interactions.

The major successes of CRS related to adolescent girls' support include: the campaign against harmful traditional practices encouraged cancellation of early and arranged marriages; girls are able to resist female genital cutting, and the practice is being challenged. Girls' school attendance and performance has improved. Girls are entitled to communal land, generating income from the household's land, and are able to support their own education. This development is a clear success in communities where girls' labor is considered to be a free household asset. The promotion of the use of reusable sanitary napkins, coupled with increased community awareness of the advantages of girls' education has decreased girls' school-dropout rate and improved their school attendance. Promoting girls' organization into groups (SILC, agricultural business, in-school and out-of-school clubs, and the like) has provided a safe space for them to discuss their problems and challenges, particularly for out-of-school girls for whom there was no forum for learning and for sharing views. Above all, the project shows how issues concerning adolescent girls can be mainstreamed in development programs in the future and illustrates the advantages of a sectored, institutional, or community support system for the common good of girls.

The keys to CRS's successes are the close working relationships the organization has with the government line offices and important stakeholders. CRS Ethiopia and its partners have been working with communities in various food-security projects and have won credibility and community support for the project's objectives. The project is part of the wider food-security program that is implemented in an integrated way, and most of the program activities are a replication of the larger integrated watershed-management project that communities are familiar with. Financial and in-kind support for relatively poor girls enables them to continue their education gained the support of the community. The major challenges the program faces are the high turnover of staff in partner NGOs and government line offices, which affects the community-awareness program and the workload of field staff. In the next five years, CRS plans to use its experience gained in these efforts for future integrated watershed-management projects that address the adolescent girls' issues. The extent of these future activities will depend on need, partner organizations' interest, and availability of resources.

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Contact people: Ato Ananiya Admassu (Executive Director), Ato Girma Amentie (Program Officer)

Children Aid Ethiopia is a local, nongovernmental organization established in 1995. The head office is in Addis Ababa, with branch offices in Amhara and Oromia regions in Kombolcha, Assela and Wolliso. Ato Girma Amente, Program Officer, and Ato Getachew Kindu, Project Coordinator, were interviewed.

CHAD-ET's mission is to promote the rights of the child and to create access to basic services for vulnerable children. With a total of 34 professional and 85 support staff and 251 volunteers, the organization operates three major programs for rural girls younger than 18: prevention of child abuse, neglect, and sexual exploitation; PC3 (Positive Change: Child and Community Care); and reproductive health programs. The major sources of funding are Comic Relief, Pact Ethiopia, the OAK Foundation, Save the Children Denmark, and Save the Children USA.

The program for prevention of child abuse, neglect, and sexual exploitation was established in 1998 in the former Woreda 7 of Addis Ababa City Administration. In 2006, CHAD-ET expanded its programs to rural parts of the country in the north. Four projects that are designed to address the problems of children exposed to sexual exploitation are currently implemented, of which two are in Addis Ababa; the other two are in South Wello and South Gondar. Initially, CHAD-ET implemented this program only in Addis Ababa, but in response to the magnitude of the problem the organization created rural-urban linkage; most of the girls supported by the program in Addis Ababa are migrant children from rural Ethiopia. The major activities of this program are creating awareness in the community of the causes and impact of girls' migration; training of community facilitators; provision of information, education, and communication and behavior-change communication materials to girls' clubs; establishment and support (material and technical) for girls' clubs; training for girls' clubs on the relationship between migration and sexual exploitation; tutorial support; preventing violence against women and girls through sensitization of the community; group and individual counseling services for both in-school and out-of-school young people; organization of separate workshops for teachers, school directors, guidance and counseling officers on trafficking, girls' migration, and children's/girls' sexual exploitation and abuse; and creating awareness of reproductive health rights, harmful traditional practices, family planning, and HIV/AIDS. In addition, CHAD-ET makes referrals to police, health-care centers, and other government entities and has established drop-in centers to rehabilitate children and girls before they are reunified with their families. Other activities include training of peer educators and operating training-of-trainers programs in trafficking migration and sexual exploitation; setting up children's/girls' rights committees at the grassroots level; organizing community conversations on harmful traditional practices, domestic workloads, and their implications; establishing a network with various

government entities and NGOs, including women's associations, in order to prevent migration and sexual exploitation of girls; teaching school communities about migration and sexual exploitation of girls, and carrying out public education concerning the sexual exploitation of children.

The third program is PC3 (Positive Change: Child and Community Care), which focuses on psychosocial support, including counseling, reproductive health support through a system of referrals to health-care centers, sponsorship activities, provision of educational materials, creating awareness in the community regarding care and support of orphans and other vulnerable children, and legal and livelihood support through organizing community self-support groups. In the reproductive health program, the major activities are establishing and supporting anti-AIDS and girls' clubs; provision of information, education, and communication and behavior-change communication materials; provision of youth-friendly services; organizing community conversations and coffee ceremonies; and creating awareness of reproductive health rights, harmful traditional practices, and HIV/AIDS for the community and for out-of-school and in-school young people.

Recently, CHAD-ET started a sponsorship program through which approximately 600 children are supported with educational materials, medical support, and creating community awareness.

As a result of CHAD-ET's interventions in South Wello, in 2007, 258 trafficked girls were reunited with their families, 15 abduction and 40 rape attempts were prevented and the cases forwarded to the court, 157 planned marriages of girls younger than 18 were suspended or prevented, 60 members of girls' clubs received training-of-trainers on sexual exploitation, and 960 vulnerable girls benefited from the PC3 program. CHAD-ET's programs are found to be successful in building community awareness of girls' migration and sexual abuse. Moreover, girls who were vulnerable to sexual exploitation have been reunited with their families, girls' in the project areas have become more aware of their reproductive health rights, and communities' perception of orphans and other vulnerable children has changed for the better. Good partnership with stakeholders, especially with the community and local governments, and use of strategies that are participatory and that help build a sense of ownership of the program in the community, and the strong commitment of government, community, staff, and facilitators are the keys to CHAD-ET's success. Logistical problems, the inaccessibility of some project areas, and resource limitations are among the challenges that CHAD-ET is facing.

Ye Ethiopia Goji Limadawi Dirigitoch Aswogaj Mahiber (EGLDAM; Committee on Traditional Practices)

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Ye Ethiopia Goji Limadawi Dirigitoch Aswogaj Mahiber is an indigenous nongovernmental, not-for-profit organization established in 1987 and registered as an NGO in 1993. The organization has its head office in Addis Ababa and branch offices in selected regions of Ethiopia. The former Executive Director, Abebe Kebede, was interviewed.

EGLDAM's mission is the promotion of beneficial traditional practices and eradication of harmful traditional practices (HTPs). Its ultimate goal is to contribute to improvements in health status and quality of life by increasing public awareness of the effects of HTPs. EGLDAM strives to achieve its mission through information and education campaigns about practices that violate people's basic human rights and those of women and children in particular.

The organization operates two major programs for rural girls: Reproductive Health (RH) and Community and Social Mobilization—Advocacy. The RH program, which began in 2003, undertakes such activities as facilitating referral linkages for fistula patients; rehabilitation (psychological, financial, and social) for fistula patients; organizing workshops and seminars to create awareness of RH and other related rights and of practices that violate the rights of women and children; creating awareness of adolescent reproductive health (ARH); and establishing girls' clubs and youth-friendly centers. The Community and Social Mobilization program was started in 1987; it works to create awareness in the community, including among girls, concerning early marriage, female genital cutting (FGC), and abduction. These programs are carried out by 7 professional and 9 support staff members, and by 65 volunteers. The program's major sources of funding are Pathfinder International/USAID, the David and Lucile Packard Foundation, Norwegian Church AID, Save the Children Norway, Care International/USAID, the Oak Foundation and the Haurralde Foundation.

The major successes of the organization are initiating public discussion about female genital cutting (before the establishment of EGLDAM the topic was taboo). Harmful traditional practices, including female genital cutting, have become the concern of the public and the government and are now discussed everywhere. Moreover, EGLDAM has played a major role in defining the practice of cutting as a criminal act in the revised Ethiopian penal code and in the inclusion of the issue of HTP in the school curriculum. EGLDAM conducted a baseline survey on HTP in Ethiopia in 1997–98. The results of the survey were distributed to all concerned parties, including government officials, NGOs, UN agencies, embassies, and the media. The keys to the success of the program are the organization's ability to work with religious and tribal leaders who now condemn the practices of FGC and abduction publicly and integrating the FGC program into work of central government and regional ministries, which enhanced the program's sustainability. The highlights of the documented evaluation results also show that the prevalence of FGC decreased from 90 percent in 1990 to 73 percent in 1997.

EGLDAM's challenges include weak organizational capacity in terms of human power, funding, and resources needed for reaching the community at the grassroots level and for integrating the programs in a more effective way; lack of reliable internal, domestic funding sources; excessive workload for volunteers; and high turnover of committee members and their cultural diversity; and the deep historical roots of the harmful traditional practices of the nearly 80 ethnic groups in the country.

Recently (2007), EGLDAM undertook to follow up the National Survey on Harmful Traditional Practices in Ethiopia funded by the Norwegian Government/Save the Children Norway. A report was produced and is being widely distributed to relevant government and nongovernmental organizations. EGLDAM believes that the report is useful for policy and program formulation and as a reference for researchers. EGLDAM is also the coordinating body for the network of 40 organizations that have programs on FGM.

Ethiopian Women Lawyers' Association (EWLA)

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Contact person: Maheder Paulos (Executive Director)

EWLA is a local nongovernmental organization established in 1995. The organization's head office is located in Addis Ababa, with branch offices in Assosa, Bahir Dar, Awassa, Dire Dawa, Nazareth, and Gambella. These branch offices are further supported by 56 centers at the woreda and zone levels. Together, they provide a legal network reaching women throughout Ethiopia. The Executive Director, Mahder Paulos, was interviewed.

The Ethiopian Women Lawyers' Association's mission is to promote the economic, political, social, and legal rights of women. To that end, EWLA assists women to secure the full protection of their rights under the Constitution of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia and various international human rights conventions. The organization is composed of 33 professional, 29 support, and 311 volunteer staff members whose activities include legal aid. EWLA works toward its goals with grants provided by a consortium of donors. Currently the organization has three major programs that support women and girls in urban and rural areas: Public Education and Capacity Building, Research and Advocacy, and Legal Aid.

The Public Education and Capacity Building program raises awareness through education sessions that target community groups, including schoolgirls, teachers, the police, community-based organizations, professional organizations, and government and nongovernmental employees. EWLA's educational programs include workshops and training sessions focusing on topics such as gender-based violence (including harmful traditional practices) and its legal implications; women's rights as contained in the Constitution; the revised family law; the revised Penal Code; reproductive health rights and STDs, including HIV/AIDS; and ways of enhancing gender equality through building the assertiveness and confidence of girls in schools and workplaces. The program provides material and technical assistance to girls' clubs and women's associations that produce short dramas on violence against girls and women. At its branch-office level, the program offers paralegal training for community members who voluntarily provide legal advice to girls and women. This training helps individuals build their capacity to make use of laws that are relevant to the immediate needs of community members.

The Research and Advocacy program identifies and conducts research on legal issues and is heavily involved in lobbying. EWLA's research aims to identify gaps in laws and their implementation. The research findings are used to support advocacy and lobbying efforts for legal reform and better implementation strategies designed to uphold women's rights as enshrined in the Constitution. EWLA has conducted research on topics such as domestic violence, girls' and women's awareness of their rights, the impact of harmful traditional practices, the scope of damage that sexual harassment has on a woman's

development, and the need for strong policy and guidelines concerning sexual harassment. Other advocacy and lobbying activities include meeting with government officials, parliamentarians, and community leaders to advocate on behalf of women and girls; working on repealing and changing discriminatory and unconstitutional laws; working to aid the enforcement of family laws and criminal codes; and working to prevent violence against women and girls generally. The program also runs a documentation center where it provides access to its research findings as well as other relevant materials on women's rights. The center is open to the public.

The Legal Aid Program provides legal services free of charge. EWLA provides the service in all subcities of Addis Ababa, its six regional offices, and 56 centers at the lowest administrative level. Among the program's major activities are providing legal advice; writing court briefs, affidavits, and memoranda of appeals to courts, which include representing clients in court; and providing referral services to police and other institutions or agencies. EWLA has had clear successes with referrals. The Legal Aid department works closely with the police to protect girls and women from violence. It has established police departments focal persons who communicate with EWLA's head office and branch offices to combat gender-based violence more effectively. The Legal Aid Program also collects outstanding cases and publishes them in case books. Recently, EWLA has begun to provide legal aid services through a toll-free (940) hotline. This hotline service increases women's and girls' access to legal action by means of prompt legal advice and information.

EWLA uses the print media and radio and television to further inform and educate the public. It publishes a quarterly magazine, *Dimtsachen*, in Amharic and English and an annual journal, *Berchi*. Both publications disseminate EWLA's research findings. Moreover, it publishes relevant information, education, and communication materials such as flyers, stickers, and posters as well. EWLA also uses radio and television dramas to increase public awareness via the National Radio Station. Regional issues are addressed using FM radio stations.

Family Guidance Association of Ethiopia (FGAE)

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Contact person: Desta Kebede (Program Director)

The Family Guidance Association of Ethiopia is an autonomous, not-for-profit, nonpartisan, and nondiscriminatory national NGO that was established in 1966. The organization has its head office in Addis Ababa. The Program Director, Desta Kebede, was interviewed.

FGAE is committed to playing a leadership and catalytic role in increasing access to high-quality and youth-friendly sexual and reproductive health (SRH) services with a specific emphasis on the prevention and management of STIs, HIV/AIDS, unwanted pregnancies, and unsafe abortion; increasing access to high-quality family planning (FP) information and services; advocating for safe motherhood and the elimination of harmful traditional practices (HTP) and gender-based violence (GBV); working in partnership with volunteers, local communities, the government and sexual and reproductive health rights (SRHR) agencies to provide and sustain SRHR programs nationwide; and providing a center of excellence in evidence-based SRHR information and service provision, capacity building, and documentation and dissemination of best practices. The Association is internationally affiliated with the International Planned Parenthood Federation (IPPF), and is a founding member of the Consortium of Reproductive Health Agencies (CORHA) and a member of the Christian Relief and Development Association (CRDA).

FGAE has 340 professional and 196 support staff and more than 5,000 program and policy volunteers to carry out its projects. Its major sources of funding are IPPF, Irish Aid, the Royal Netherlands Embassy, and the David and Lucile Packard Foundation.

FGAE has two major programs that include services for rural girls, one for meeting the SRH needs of young people, which started in 1989, and a multiagency action to address child marriage in Ethiopia, which started in 2006 to help rural girls aged 10–24. The first program operates a variety of activities and services that include providing information and education about adolescent SRH, family planning services, and training (in family relations, assertiveness, club management, leadership, and life skills); advocacy workshops on rural adolescent SRH; awareness-raising workshops; community dialogue and youth dialogue; review meetings with various clubs and committees; and building capacity to monitor access to health services at peasant associations. Best practices are identified and documented and support provided to youth clubs and associations. The multiagency action to address child marriage undertakes activities that include dissemination of information and education about child marriage, organizing advocacy workshops on child marriage and documenting of best practices and piloting microcredit schemes and income-generating activities to facilitate a sustainable movement to end child marriage in the selected intervention sites.

In one year, through FGAE services, 2,312,684 women obtained information on RH, 116,598 women received SRH (non-FP) services, 48,434 women received maternal and child health care, 19,178 girls obtained access to specialized counseling on RH, 96,808 women obtained access to general counseling, 119,177 women obtained access to FP services for the first time, and 391,833 women obtained access to FP revisits by means of the interventions listed above.

The major successes of the organization are the increased number of rural young people who are better informed and empowered regarding their sexual and reproductive health rights; women's increased access to adolescent SRH information and services; young people's participation in program activities; and enhancement of governance and advocacy activities. The program director mentioned five reasons for the programs' successes. First, the organization of youth volunteer clubs attracts young people to the centers and disseminates SRH messages to young people; second, the involvement of young recipients of SRH services in all activities of the youth centers, thereby making them beneficiaries and owners of the services and project; third, the active involvement of staff in planning, which increases their institutional commitment and productivity; fourth, the strong working relationships of FBAE with health institutions that allow for the sharing of experiences, increase service volume through referrals, and provide mutual support; and fifth, the integration of activities as a strategy to motivate young people to participate in SRH services. In order to identify its strengths and weaknesses, FGAE collects data on FP users, STI-infected persons, persons contacted through awareness-raising and sensitization programs, data on rural girls at risk of early marriage, and data on school enrollment for its programs for rural girls. In the next five years the organization plans to advocate for SRHR, safe motherhood, and the elimination of harmful traditional practices and gender-based violence; contribute to mitigating the problem of HTP and its associated ill effects, including HIV/AIDS; and maintain a leading role in programs for youth and adolescents and provide a valuable model for other programs. The major challenges facing FGAE are duplication of efforts at the intervention sites, the difficulty of sustaining free services, and a shortage of contraceptive supplies.

Addis Ababa Fistula Hospital

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Addis Ababa Fistula Hospital is a nongovernmental international organization that began operation in Ethiopia in 1974. The head office is in Addis Ababa, with branch offices in Bahir Dar, Mekele Yirgalem, and Harar. The Public Relations Assistant, Betel Amanuel, was interviewed.

The hospital's mission is a commitment to help women with childbirth injuries. The hospital carries out three major programs to help rural girls: aiding in prevention of fistula, curing fistula victims, and rehabilitating fistula patients who cannot be cured. The organization has 49 professional and 90 support staff and 66 nurse's aides. Its major sources of funding are foreign donors, including World Vision, USAID, DSW (the German Foundation for World Population), Johnson & Johnson, and partner charitable trusts in eight countries.

The hospital's services include creating public awareness of the causes and impact of fistula, the establishment of a midwife college to train midwives, and a rehabilitation center for those who cannot be cured completely. It trains doctors to perform surgery to cure fistula and related problems and conducts research on fistula and related conditions occurring in rural Ethiopia, including the preparation of documentary information; provision of Bible studies and literacy programs for victims at the rehabilitation center; referral of patients to other hospitals for services that are not available at the hospital; vocational training for girls/patients at the rehabilitation center; provision of training at the rehabilitation center concerning the civic, social, and economic rights of patients/girls; and delivery a nationwide message regarding fistula and related issues on radio Fana[(national radio broadcast). In one year, 4,000 fistula patients receive treatment, as many as 20 nurse-midwives are trained, and 50 ex-patients are trained in income-generating skills when they have finished their treatment and rehabilitation period.

The major successes of the hospital are that thousands of girls have been cured of fistula, that to some extent, Ethiopian society has a greater awareness of the causes and effects of fistula than it has had in the past, that girls/patients have become empowered through literacy programs, and that many girls have been rehabilitated at the center. The keys to the hospital's success are strong support from the national and regional governments, good partnership with stakeholders, and the strong commitment of staff. The major obstacles that the organization faces are lack of awareness of fistula, shortage of health-care facilities for pregnant women in rural areas, infrequent health-seeking behavior of rural people, particularly girls, and the lack of professionals and clinicians who are committed to working in outreach efforts or in remote areas.

Gender Focus Ethiopia Association (GFE)

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Gender Focus Ethiopia is an indigenous, nongovernmental, not-for-profit, secular developmental organization established in June 2003. The organization has its head office in Addis Ababa, with a branch office in Oromia Region in Shashemene Town. The Executive Director, Ato Dube Tusse, was interviewed.

GFE's mission is to change in the status of women to boost economic and social change in the country and to reach out to marginalized groups to ensure gender equity and equality. GFE was established by a professional interdisciplinary group with extensive experience in developmental activities that worked at the grassroots level with vulnerable communities. The group recognized the needs of destitute girls who were denied educational opportunity by parents who did not understand the value of educating girls.

GFE provides four major services for rural girls: sponsorship and material support, recognition of high-achieving schoolgirls, creating awareness of HIV/AIDS and reproductive health services for schoolgirls, and training of peer educators. GFE provides basic education to girls in the kebeles who may not have had the opportunity to attend school. Fifty girls have benefited each year since 2003 from the program. GFE's major sources of funding are private individuals, the Network of Ethiopian Women's Association, the Basic Education Association of Ethiopia, and the Netherland Development Cooperation and facilitators for change. In its head office and its branch office in Shashemene Town, GFE has 4 professional, 14 support, and 20 volunteer staff members.

GFE's challenges are the shortage of financial and human resources and the absence of long-term funding. However, girls' motivation to obtain an education, GFE's strong partnerships with the community and with donors, the development of feelings of program ownership among all partners, and the clear identification of the needs of the community have been the keys to GFE's success. In the next five years, the organization plans to expand its services to other project areas, to organize quarterly gender forums in all regions, and to scale up the existing program.

German Foundation for World Population (DSW)

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The German Foundation for World Population is a nongovernmental international organization that began operating in Ethiopia in 1993. Established as the first Country Office, DSW Ethiopia was officially registered as an international NGO in May 2000. The Program Manager, Tirsit Girshaw, was interviewed.

DSW is committed to promoting the youth-to-youth (Y2Y) program for sexual and reproductive health throughout Ethiopia. DSW's mission is to bring about changes in attitudes and behavior to promote a healthy sex life among young people aged 10–24 by empowering self-help initiatives. Fundamental to this is the belief that the young are actors and not beneficiaries and, as such, can help find solutions to their problems.

A training center for young people's sexual and reproductive health complements the Y2Y program in Ethiopia. Established in late 2004, the training center contributes to intensifying and streamlining the Y2Y program training of core facilitators and trainers in the areas of reproductive health, leadership training, advocacy, networking, and small-business management.

DSW operates two core programs for rural girls: Fighting Fistula, which started in September 2006, and Creating Space for Girls, which started in October 2006. DSW country office and the training center have 10 professional and 21 support staff members and more than 700 volunteers. The major sources of funding are BMZ (German Foreign and Finance Minister's Offices), the Catholic Women's Foundation in Germany, and the David and Lucile Packard Foundation. The national affiliates are the Consortium of Reproductive Health Agencies (COHRA), the Christian Relief and Development Association (CRDA), Amhara Development Association, Organization for Social Services for AIDS (OSSA), Woreda Health Center/Bureau, and the Family Guidance Association of Ethiopia.

Fighting Fistula is a program designed to educate and empower women. It provides services to help prevent fistula by creating community awareness and care and support for victims, and by educating elders and community leaders about the causes and consequences of fistula. It arranges referrals to services for fistula victims and creates mass awareness-raising programs.

The Creating Space for Girls program includes life-skills training; provision of information, education, and communication and behavior-change communication materials; and training for peer educators. It conducts community conversations and public awareness-raising programs, arranges referrals and advocacy and panel discussions, and helps to empower girls by aiding them in developing their assertiveness. It provides youth-to-youth education on reproductive health and HIV/AIDS, income-generating activities and entrepreneurship training, and capacity building for girls' and youth clubs. Twenty thousand girls have benefited from these programs during the past year. In the next five years, DSW plans to expand its programs to additional rural areas.

Among the major successes of DSW is that rural girls in project areas have become more assertive. In the Fight Fistula project, girls have learned how to express their feelings to their parents without fear, and young women and girls are making responsible choices and are educating other girls in the rural community about reproductive health issues. Girls' participation in community-development meetings has become significant. More than 134 young mothers have received fistula treatment in the past project period. Girls have benefited from reproductive health and HIV/AIDS services, and some traditional harmful practices such as early marriage have been decreased in some project areas. Large numbers of girls have been become more secure economically.

In the Safe Space for Girls project, girls have been able to increase their understanding of personal finance and have participated in important trainings in advocacy skills, leadership, basic business skills, and peer counseling.

The keys to the successes of these programs are commitment of DSW staff members, the availability of proper inputs to the programs, and the continuous support of local government agencies. DSW's main challenge is the low level of community awareness of issues pertaining to reproductive health.

Guraghe People's Self-help Development Organization (GPSDO)

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The Guraghe People's Self-help Development Organization (GPSDO) is an indigenous nongovernmental organization that was transformed from its predecessor, the Guraghe Road Construction Organization (GRCO), in 1988 to cope with new demands and expectations. The Head of Administration and Finance, Ato Keab Mohamed, was interviewed.

GPSDO's mission is to organize, coordinate, support and mobilize the efforts and resources of the community and governmental and nongovernmental organizations toward the socioeconomic development of the Guraghe society. GPSDO operates in Guraghe Zone particularly in Cheha, Getta, Endegagn, Enor and Ener, Gomare, Ezha, Moher and Aklil, Abeshighe, and Kebena woredas. GPSDO is an umbrella organization of eight Area Development Committees (ADCs). Each ADC is coordinated and guided by the mother NGO, which also organizes and implements construction and maintenance of governmental and other local social service institutions through their local communities.

GPSDO has paid particular attention to supporting rural schoolgirls by providing educational materials, including schoolbags, exercise books, pens, and the like. The tutorial program enhanced girls' performance in school and helped to make them more competitive by rewarding them for good results. These efforts contributed to reducing the dropout rates among girls in the project areas. Moreover, GPSDO, in collaborating with the PACT/SIDA program, formed 12 girls' clubs in 12 primary and secondary schools that increased girls' reproductive health knowledge and their awareness of HIV/AIDS, STDs, and harmful traditional practices. Club members were trained in club management and participated in the tutorial programs. The program also increased general awareness of the importance of girls' education. Girls and women were provided with life-skills training in income-generating activities, including vegetable gardening, bee keeping, sewing and tailoring, and basic computer operation, and these interventions improved their lives. Pact Ethiopia, the Basic Education Association in Ethiopia (BEA-E), OXFAM Canada, and Save the Children USA contributed funding to establish nonformal basic education centers and women's literacy programs.

At present, GPSDP is implementing a community-based reproductive health program in nine woredas of the zone in partnership with the David and Lucile Packard Foundation. Through this program, girls and women exercise their basic rights at all levels and increase their awareness of adolescent reproductive health, maternal and child health, harmful traditional practices, HIV/AIDS, and family planning. GPSDO also conducts girls' and housemaids' education.

GPSDO achieved success with its girls' and women's empowerment program as a result of its strong

participation with communities, teachers, and students in identifying the problems, planning, and implementing the program. The major challenges facing GPSDO include a persistent lack of assertiveness among girls and women due to cultural obligations, high staff turnover, and shortage of resources.

Hiwot Ethiopia

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Hiwot Ethiopia is a local nongovernmental organization established in 1995 and registered in 2001 under the Ministry of Justice. Hiwot Ethiopia has program for rural girls in Northern Shewa Zone of Amhara regional State

The mission of Hiwot Ethiopia is to improve young people's sexual and reproductive health and social and economical well being through intervening in information and behavioral change communication, youth friendly service, capacity building of grass root youth initiatives and environmental friendly livelihood programs. . The organization has 15 professional, 15 support staff and more than 900 volunteers. Its major sources of funding are the David and Lucile Packard Foundation, the Oak Foundation, Save the Children Sweden, German Foundation for World Population, Engender Health, Interact World Wide and VSO- Ethiopia

The organization operates three major programs: Child Development and Youth livelihood and Sexual and Reproductive Health and HIV/AIDS. The Child Development program strives for the realization of child protection from sexual abuse and exploitation and for the creation of Safe and child friendly school environment. The youth livelihood program includes capacity building trainings and income generating activities. The SRH and HIV/AIDS program addresses the needs of adolescents with special emphasis to adolescent girls and young women. The program undertakes such activities as advocacy, community mobilization/campaigns, community dialogue, peer education, house to house education and capacity building.

Hope for Rural Children and Orphans (HORCO)—Ethiopia

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Contact person: Getachew Yemaneh (Executive Director)

Hope for Rural Children and Orphans (HORCO)—Ethiopia is a local nongovernmental organization established in 1995. The organization has its head office in Addis Ababa, with branch offices in Amhara Region in Desse and in Oromia Region in Hollota and Cheffe Donsa. The Executive Director, Ato Getachew Yemane, was interviewed.

HORCO endeavors to ensure sustainable improvement in the quality of life of marginalized people, particularly in rural communities, through rights-based, participatory, and integrated community-development approaches. HORCO operates programs that provide services for rural girls, including a livelihoods program, HIV/AIDS project, and education. It employs 10 professional and 16 support staff and 10 volunteers. Its major sources of funding are the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA), the Embassy of Japan, and the British Embassy.

The livelihoods program provides material assistance and capacity-building aid for irrigation (for horticulture), and training in sheep raising and petty trade. The HIV/AIDS project includes creating awareness by using behavior-change communication, providing training of trainers for girls, an anti-HIV/AIDS club and education concerning the prevention of HIV/AIDS transmission and harmful traditional practices, and by arranging community conversations. The education program increases community awareness concerning the importance of girls' education, provides educational materials, helps girls who have dropped out to return to school, and operates a sponsorship program for orphans and other vulnerable girls. It also conducts formal and nonformal education.

The major successes of HORCO are reducing the school-dropout rate among girls, reducing the prevalence of harmful traditional practices, increasing the assertiveness and participation of girls in the project areas in decision making, helping girls improve their livelihood skills, and raising awareness regarding HIV/AIDS. The keys to the organization's success are good planning and strategies, identifying cross-cutting issues and major problems, good coordination and relations with stakeholders, and obtaining strong support from local governments. The major obstacles the organization faces include limited financial and human resources and the community's dependency syndrome.

III Women and Children Integrated Development Association (IWCIDA)

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III Women and Children Integrated Development Association is a local nongovernmental organization established in 2004. The organization has its head office in Addis Ababa and implements programs in Illibabur Zone in Oromia Region. The Project Officer, Ato Seleshi Legass, was interviewed.

IWCIDA's mission is to assist women and girls through projects and programs aimed at raising their educational, social, health, and economic standards, thereby enabling them to play their rightful roles in the country's development. IWCIDA was founded to contribute to a process of restoring hope and improving the quality of people's lives. The organization has 6 professional, 15 semiprofessional, and 4 support staff members and 15 volunteers.

IWCIDA operates three programs that provide support for rural girls: promotion of women's and girls' rights and the fight against female genital cutting (FGC); promotion of basic education for disadvantaged children; and promotion of adolescent reproductive and sexual health (ARSH), for both boys and girls. The major sources of funding are the Network of Women's Associations/SIDA, the Edukans Foundation, the United States Embassy, Kindernothilfe (KNH), and the Embassy of Canada.

The program for promotion of women's and girls' rights and the fight against FGC and the promotion of adolescent reproductive and sexual health undertake numerous activities, including training of trainers for community conversation facilitators; empowering girls by creating awareness regarding adolescent reproductive and sexual health rights; conducting community conversations and dialogues with young people about harmful traditional practices and HIV/AIDS; refresher training for community-based reproductive health agents; establishing, empowering, and supporting children's and girls' clubs; conducting panel discussions and advocacy workshops regarding children's (and especially girls') rights; training girls as peer educators; and establishing youth centers that provide resource centers, cafeterias, indoor games, and income-generating activities.

The program for promoting basic education for disadvantaged rural children implements activities such as constructing alternative basic education centers, providing opportunities for basic education, establishing girls' clubs and providing training in club management, providing educational materials, teaching girls about adolescent reproductive and sexual health, offering life-skills training and income-generating activities, and providing training on HIV/AIDS prevention and employment opportunities for girls as paraprofessional teachers and facilitators.

The major successes of the organization include decreased incidence of harmful traditional practices such as FGM, abduction, and early marriage; the creation of employment opportunities for girls as paraprofessional teachers and facilitators; and increased access to schooling for girls. The keys to the organization's success are the close relationship and collaboration among stakeholders, including the program's beneficiaries; community involvement in all activities of the projects; and IWCIDA's smooth relationship with local government. The major problems IWCIDA faces are the remoteness of the project areas and resource and financial limitations to its ability to respond to the ever-increasing demands of the community.

Impact Association for Social Services & Development (IMPACT)

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IMPACT is a local nongovernmental organization established in 2001. The organization has its head office in Addis Ababa, with branch offices in Oromia and SNNPR regions in Zeway, Meki, Debre Zeit, and Kokir. The Managing Director, Ato Kebede Mammo, was interviewed.

IMPACT's mission is to enhance the capacity of communities and local institutions engaged in addressing pressing socioeconomic issues and problems, by providing need-based training and technical assistance. The organization has been running an adolescent sexual and reproductive health (ASRH) program since 2001, fistula and prolapse cases since 2001, and young women's and girls' empowerment programs for rural girls aged 12–24. IMPACT employs 13 professional and 5 support staff and 183 volunteer community workers, including adolescent peer educators. Its major sources of funding are Action Aid Ethiopia, Pathfinder International, and CRDA/Packard Foundation. The national affiliates are the Christian Relief and Development Association (CRDA), the Consortium of Reproductive Health Agencies (CORHA), and the National HIV/AIDS Forum.

The ASRH program focuses mainly on creating awareness of STIs including HIV/AIDS, on adolescent sex practices and their consequences, on harmful traditional practices, on gender roles, and on issues relating to equality. It organizes trainings in life skills and assertiveness and holds girls' discussion forums. Girls with fistula and girls and women with prolapse are helped to obtain treatment and rehabilitation. In the young women's and girls' empowerment project, the major component is providing income-generating activities, which include training in basic business skills and provision of start-up capital.

Each year, 66 young married girls suffering from fistula and prolapse are treated and rehabilitated. Thirty-six girls have been trained as adolescent peer educators, and ASRH training was provided to 1,400 girls in 2005, 2,250 girls in 2006, and 894 girls in 2007.

The major successes of IMPACT are significant economic changes and other improvements in the lives of fistula and prolapse patients as a result of income-generating activities. Girls are found to be more assertive as a result of the life-skills training in ASRH and information, education, and communication and behavior-change communication activities. Incidence of early marriage and female genital cutting has decreased as a result of ASRH program activities and increased school attendance. The keys to IMPACT's success are the active engagement of local government and community structures, including woreda sector offices and kebele administration, and community members. Budget limitation is the major challenge IMPACT is facing in addressing ASRH issues in its project catchment areas. In the next

five years, IMPACT plans to link gender, rights, and reproductive health at the center of program design and implementation, to scale up ASRH interventions, promote and support girls' education, and enhance focus on vocational training and self-help schemes, especially for young women and girls.

Kind Heart Aid Development Organization (KCADO)

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Kind Heart Aid Development Organization is a local nongovernmental organization established in 1995. The organization's head office is in Addis Ababa, with branch offices in Oromia Region in Shshemene and Sebeta. The Executive Director, Ato Wondemagegnew Mecha Mellka, was interviewed.

KCADO's mission is to bring about sustainable development, particularly by changing the livelihoods of children, young people, women, and the community at large in rural and urban areas of Ethiopia through the promotion of integrated and livelihood-related community-development programs and poverty-reduction strategies with the maximum participation of local communities. KCADO's 25 professional, 66 support, and 23 volunteer staff members implement its female students' promotion program, alternative basic education programs, and life-skills training and advocacy regarding the Child Rights Convention (CRC), women's and girls' rights, and harmful traditional practices. The major sources of funding are DED (the German Embassy), the Christian Relief and Development Association (CRDA), Ipas, PACT Ethiopia, Save the Children USA, DFID (the British Embassy), and the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA).

For the female students promotion program, the organization implements such activities as creating girl-friendly school environments (for example, improving the availability of water and toilet facilities); establishing girls' clubs, including capacity building and material support; providing information, education, and communication and behavior-change communication materials; creating networks among girls' clubs; organizing and conducting experience sharing; giving awards and incentives to exemplary girls and parents; promotion of tutorial classes; preparation and celebration of girls' education weeks; and establishing a sponsorship program for needy girls. The alternative basic education (ABE) program is engaged in constructing a new center for marginalized rural areas, community sensitization concerning the importance of girls' education, linking ABE with formal schools; developing a local curriculum that fits the girls in the project areas; and introducing flexible school schedules for girls and tutorial support for academically weak girls. The life-skills training provides technical and vocational training and material support to help metal and woodwork trainees start income-generating activities and organizes young people for these activities. The other program, advocacy concerning CRC, women's and girls' rights and harmful traditional practices, organizes ways of creating awareness regarding the importance of girls' education; contributes to community sensitization about the importance of girls' education, family planning, and HIV/AIDS-prevention education by promoting Abstinence and faithfulness (A and B schemes); and girls' rights and reproductive health. It has established reproductive health and HIV/AIDS clubs and provided them with material and technical support; it provides information, education, and communication and behavior-change communication materials for clubs;

teaches capacity building for club leaders and peer educators; and refers girls who are the victims of violence to the woreda office and police. KCADO campaigns against harmful traditional practices and other violations of girls' and women's rights.

The major successes of the organization are that girls in the project areas have become more aware of their reproductive health rights and family planning. Some sustainable projects were handed over to the community and local government to operate. The project has covered areas not served by other NGOs. Girls in the project areas have become more assertive, job opportunities have been created, the school-dropout rate for girls has been reduced, and the prevalence and magnitude of violence against girls and women has been reduced. To address the problems of the needy, KCADO has formed close partnership with communities, local governments, and donors and encouraged a high level of community participation, maintaining transparency of the organization, which helps manage the expectations of beneficiaries. The documented evaluation result shows that the organization has achieved success, according to its original plan and objectives. The major problems the organization faces are resource limitations, including the shortage of materials and human resources, staff turnover, absence of sustainable funding, fluctuation of donors' interest in programs, and the dependency syndrome of the community. Political conflicts delay and adversely affect program activities in some project areas, and the lack of female teachers negatively affects the classroom environment.

Kulich Youth Reproductive Health and Development (KYRHDO)

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Contact person: S/r. Wubitu Hailu (Managing Director)

KYRHDO is a local nongovernmental organization established in 2003. The organization has two offices in Addis Ababa: a coordinating office located in Kirkos Subcity and the Addis Ababa project office located in Lideta Subcity. The managing director, Wubitu Hailu, was interviewed.

KYRHDO's mission focuses on assisting young people in the prevention of harmful traditional practices and behavior related to sex and sexuality. The goal of the organization is to enable the young to avoid harmful practices and to stay healthy and free from sexually transmitted infections (STIs), including HIV/AIDS and other dangers. It seeks to prevent the spread of HIV/AIDS and STIs; to provide sustained information, education, and communication materials and reproductive health services to adolescents in their communities and workplaces; and to promote behavioral change.

KYRHDO's major partners are World Learning Washington, DSW (the German Foundation for World Population), Pact Ethiopia, the French Embassy, the Stephen Lewis Foundation, the David and Lucile Packard Foundation, the Institute of International Education, the Addis Continental Institute of Public Health, the Population Council, the Ethiopian Horticulture Producers and Exporters Association, UNAIDS, and UNICEF.

KYRHDO's interventions for rural girls began in January 2006 in Almegena Woreda Tefki 04, Tefki Surrounding, and at the Dimma Guranda Peasant Association. The program is aimed at decreasing the incidence of gender-based violence, particularly rape, abduction, female genital cutting, and wife inheritance. The program is funded by Pact Ethiopia, which has enhanced community awareness concerning reproductive health and gender-based violence in the target area. This community intervention paved the way to increase information about RH and HIV/AIDS at local flower plantation farms. Educational and awareness-raising programs are being conducted by means of peer educators, house-to-house visits, and coffee ceremony and club activities.

The workplace RH/HIV/AIDS intervention program started in late 2006 with financial aid from UNAIDS. A pilot project was conducted in six flower farms in Alemgena Woreda. The project continued at three plantation farms in Wolmera Woreda with DSW funding. Currently, with the support from World Learning and DSW, KYRHDO is working to enhance awareness among workers concerning RH/HIV/AIDS at 40 flower farms. In most of the interventional areas, rural girls are engaged in various earning activities. Some of them are hired as daily laborers by the flower plantations. Ninety percent of the workers are young, and more than 75 percent of them are girls, many of whom are migrants who have moved from

their rural residences to find work. In its workplace program, KYRHDO conducts interventions in collaboration with DSW and World Learning Washington. Its major activities are peer education, the coffee ceremony, mass education, minimedia presentations, and condom distribution.

KYRHDO has succeeded in reaching about 50,000 young flower-farm workers, that is, about 75 percent of the young girls who are exposed to different RH and gender-related problems within and outside of the workplace in five Oromia woredas: Lome, Batu, Ada, Wolmera, and Alemgena. In addition, the community members who are living in the target area have begun to intercede with those who are conducting harmful traditional practices by establishing community by-laws. KYRHDO improved the economic status of 30 caretakers of orphans and other vulnerable children by engaging them in income-generating activities and improved the lives of those in 150 female-headed households with an improved agricultural scheme.

Major obstacles that KYRHDO faces are the turnover of the local government staff; the nature of the intervention workplace that focuses on profit maximization and gives less intention to the threat of HIV/AIDS and related issues; and the turnover of trained peer educators. Consequently, KYRHDO is focusing more on flower-plantation management to create a healthy and productive workforce.

Millennium Village Project (MVP)

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Millennium Villages Project is a nongovernmental international organization that began operation in Ethiopia in 2006. The head office is in Addis Ababa, with a branch office in Tigray Region, Hauzien Woreda. The Gender Advisor, Asmeret G/Hiwot, was interviewed.

MVP's mission is to assist the community in Kororo to reduce poverty and achieve the Millennium Development Goals in five years. MVP takes a comprehensive approach to addressing extreme poverty. By combining scientific and local knowledge, it focuses on hunger, disease, inadequate education, lack of safe drinking water, and the absence of essential infrastructure to assist communities on their way to sustainable development.

MVP operates an empowering program for women and adolescent girls that started in 2007. This program provides training in life skills, reproductive health, and HIV/AIDS; arranges discussion forums for parents and communities to reduce girls' housework burden; establishes and strengthens girls' clubs; establishes girls' scholarships; provides tutorial class and reference materials; distributes sanitary materials such as pads and underpants, arranges focus-group discussions on reproductive health and HIV/AIDS; builds separate latrines for schoolgirls; improves community awareness of girls' rights; and provides information, education, and communication and behavior-change communication materials. In the past two years, 18,000 girls benefited from the MVP education program, and 1,600 girls received services. The project employs 17 professional and 18 support staff. The major sources of funding are Millennium Promise, Blaustein, Nike, Moira, and Freema Kelly Foundations.

Among the major successes of the MVP gender projects are that the girls in the project area have become more assertive, girls' school-dropout rate has decreased, girls' school enrollment has increased, and girls' health and sanitation has improved. The challenges the project faces are poor infrastructure, especially roads, a high illiteracy rate, and deep-rooted poverty.

Oromia Region Women's Association (ORWA)

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The Oromia Region Women's Association is a local nongovernmental organization established in 2001. The organization has its head office in Addis Ababa and implements programs in Oromia Region in 262 woredas. The Executive Director, Aynalem Regassa, was interviewed.

ORWA's mission is to bring about fundamental changes in the political, social, economic, and cultural status of the rural and urban women in the region. ORWA has a Women and Girls' Empowerment program that is comprehensive and that integrates various projects. The program provides information, education, and communication and behavior-change communication materials for girls' clubs; establishes and supports (materially and technically) girls' clubs, girls' scholarships, training in income-generating activities, advocacy for the enforcement of family laws and other criminal codes, ways to prevent violence against women and girls by creating awareness in the community regarding gender-based violence, reproductive health rights, harmful traditional practices, family planning and HIV/AIDS. It provides legal counsel and training in assertiveness and empowerment and works with the regional education bureau to establish a forum for female students; provides referral services to police, health centers, and other government entities and legal aid for girls who are victims of gender-based violence; mobilizes communities regarding the importance of girls' education; organizes community conversations on harmful traditional practices; establishes savings and credit associations for girls and women; presents awards for woredas and zones that achieve the best performance in girls' education, and training of trainers (TOT); and provides peer education.

ORWA operates via three executive bodies at the regional level who are full-time workers. Its staff includes 17 heads of branch offices at the zonal level and 12 heads of the association in 12 large cities, including Adama, Jimma, Naqamtee, and Sabata. They are supported by a staff of 31 from region to zone. A major source of funds is the contribution fees of members of the association. Other partners in funding the Association are Oromia Regional Government, HAPCO, and Pathfinder International.

Among the organization's major successes are that girls in the program have become more assertive, the number of girls enrolled in school has increased, and the community has become more aware of harmful traditional practices and works with ORWA to prevent them. The keys to ORWA's success are the use of proper strategies in the project areas, good partnerships with government entities, and the supportive nature of the Ethiopian Constitution regarding the empowerment of girls and women. The principal problems that ORWA faces are budget constraints and human and material resource limitations.

Pact Ethiopia

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Pact Ethiopia is a nongovernmental international organization that began operating in Ethiopia in 2006. The head office is in Addis Ababa, with suboffices in Gambella and Jinka. The organization employs 35 professional and 56 support staff. The Girls' Empowerment Program Manager, Bilen Tena, was interviewed.

Pact Ethiopia's mission is to enhance the capacity of development partners to ensure the attainment of social justice, improved economic opportunities, and a peaceful coexistence. It has two programs that serve rural girls: the Girls' Empowerment and Management Project (GEM), which started in March 2006, and Girls' Empowerment through Sexual Exploitation Termination (GET-SET), which started in October 2007. Both programs offer services to girls aged 14–22. They are funded by the Nike Foundation and the Oak Foundation, respectively. Both projects work in 15 secondary schools in Amhara, Gambella, and SNNPR regions and their vicinities.

The Girls' Empowerment and Management Project provides financial assistance and educational support (tutorial classes and provision of school uniforms, textbooks, and other materials) as well as mentoring, guidance services, and training in financial management, leadership, and life-skills development. The project also establishes and supports the school-based Girls' Empowerment Advisory Committees and school clubs to better support adolescent girls in areas of life skills, leadership, mentoring, and counseling. Moreover, the project publishes a biannual newsletter that focuses on the lives and challenges of adolescent girls and organizes experience-sharing sessions with female role models, exposure visits, and community-sensitization events. The direct beneficiaries of the project are 500 secondary-school girls, 90 Girls' Empowerment Advisory Committee members, 75 school clubs, more than 500 school-club members, and more than 3000 community members, including school staff, parents, and other family members.

The Girls' Empowerment through Sexual Exploitation and Termination Project provides training and other capacity-building activities that enable institutions surrounding the GEM-project-supported 15 secondary schools to help prevent and respond to gender-based violence. To this end, it provides training in verbal and self-defense skills, strengthens the guidance and counseling units in the schools, creates linkage with government entities such as health institutions, police, and the courts and has undertaken a study on the resilience of girls. The direct beneficiaries are 500 secondary-school girls. Schools, school-club members, police, prosecutors, and community members benefit indirectly from the project's capacity-building activities.

The major successes of the organization are the reduction in girls' school-dropout rate, increased class attendance, improved academic performance, the reduction in harmful traditional practices, including early marriage, a decrease in child labor, girls' economic empowerment and participation in savings schemes, information flow (to the girls), and girls' increased assertiveness and more frequent exercise of leadership. Moreover, the girls in the project serve as role models for other students. The keys to the programs' success are regular monitoring of project implementation, implementing projects in accordance with the context and nature of the project areas, and the commitment of empowerment workers and most of the school committee members. The major challenges Pact Ethiopia faces in implementing its projects are selecting appropriate beneficiaries; communication barriers (that is, infrastructural barriers to communication); lack of commitment from some school committee members; constraints on girls' time, making their participation in training sessions difficult; external factors (census, election, conflicts, late start of school); dropouts from the program; poor academic performance due to lack of adequate and high-quality education in the past; students' absenteeism; and the high turnover of school staff.

Pathfinder International Ethiopia (PI/E)

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Pathfinder International Ethiopia (PI/E)–Integrated Family Health Program is a nongovernmental international organization that began operating in Ethiopia in 1995. PI/E–Integrated Family Health Program works with numerous local partner organizations and supports programs in four major regions of Ethiopia (Amhara, Oromia, Tigray, and Southern Nations, Nationality and Peoples’ Region) and to a limited extent in Addis Ababa and the Benishangul city administrations.

The organization’s focus is on family planning and maternal, newborn, and child health. Accordingly, it undertakes activities focused on gender-based violence (GBV) and harmful traditional practices to empower women and girls. It works to improve the social, religious, and economic climate in order to enable women and girls to have access to health information and services.

PI/E’s women’s and girl’s empowerment project commenced in 2003 with financial support from the David and Lucile Packard Foundation, targeting rural girls aged 10–24. The project’s activities include scholarship support for victims of early marriage and girls from resource-poor families; establishment of girls’ clubs; training in small-scale-business management; and provision of financial support to establish income-generating activities. It also trains young girls in leadership, assertiveness, and livelihood skills; establishes youth-friendly services for adolescent reproductive health; and educates young people concerning reproductive health. It functions as a member of the Girls’ Education Advisory Board (chaired by the Ministry of Education), promoting girls’ education, the establishment of early marriage cancellation, and anti-GBV committees; it supports the mentoring of young rural girls by professional women as role models, and supports community education and sensitization regarding gender-based violence and harmful traditional practices. The major sources of funding for these activities are USAID, the David and Lucile Packard Foundation, and the Swedish International Development Agency (SIDA).

Through these programs, information about the harmful consequences of female genital cutting, early marriage, GBV, and other harmful traditional practices is now widespread. The prevalence of forced marriages, abduction, and female genital cutting has decreased. As a result of the promotion of gender sensitivity throughout project areas, a heightened level of community awareness exists regarding the importance of improving women’s status and well-being.

Deep-rooted harmful traditional practices coupled with the low status of women are major obstacles to women’s and girls’ empowerment. The integrated efforts of PI/E and its partners have accelerated a change toward gender equality and the abandonment of harmful traditional practices. Pathfinder’s success has been possible because of the support it received from local governments and communities.

Population Council Ethiopia

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The Population Council is a nongovernmental nonprofit international organization established in 1952. It began operating in Ethiopia in 1993 and registered as an NGO in 2007. The head office is in Addis Ababa, with a branch office in Amhara, in Bahir Dar. The Program Consultant, Emil Parker, was interviewed.

The Population Council's mission is to improve the well-being and reproductive health of current and future generations around the world and to help achieve a humane, equitable, and sustainable balance between people and resources. The Council operates two major programs for rural girls: Berhane Hewan ("Light for Eve") and the Safer Marriage Project. These programs are carried out by 13 professional and 4 support staff members. The programs' major sources of funding are USAID, UNFPA, and the Nike Foundation.

The Berhane Hewan program supports girls' formal education; girls' clubs; nonformal education for married and unmarried girls; life-skills training, including reproductive health education through the girls' clubs; community conversations on such topics as HIV/AIDS and harmful traditional practices (early marriage and female genital cutting); income-generating activities, such as distribution of seeds for gardening and chickens for poultry farming; economic incentives (for example, a goat) given to families that allow their daughters or wives to participate in Berhane Hewan. For the family of an unmarried girl to receive the goat, the girl may not marry within two years of her entry into the program. The program's other projects include additional economic incentives, such as newly-drilled wells, offered to parents to persuade them to allow their daughters to participate in Berhane Hewan; providing home-improvements, such as fuel-saving stoves; and strengthening of reproductive health services in cooperation with local health centers.

The Safer Marriage Project undertakes activities in support of vulnerable adolescent girls in Amhara Region, including training of religious leaders and VCT promoters, and formation of married girls groups. 'Days of Dialogue' are two day meetings for religious leaders conducted by Population Council partners, Ethiopian Orthodox Church and Ethiopian Muslim Development Agency. Days of Dialogue' include discussion on early marriage and education on HIV, VCT, PMTCT, Migration, Alcohol and Gender-Based Violence, information which, in turn, is passed to congregations throughout Amhara. Moreover, the project mobilizes married girls into clubs to give them venues through which they can receive information, advice, and social support. Female mentors are trained on HIV, and other activities that are of interest to girls including non-formal education, skills building and livelihoods. Mentors facilitate weekly girls' meetings and include HIV education, awareness-raising on migration, life skills and other livelihoods activities. The clubs are managed by the Amhara Regional Youth Bureau.

The Council's major successes include girls' increased school attendance in the project area, especially among girls aged 10–14. These girls are much more likely to attend school than are their counterparts in a comparable nearby village. Early marriage of girls aged 10–14 has been virtually eliminated in the Berhane Hewan Project area. Reproductive health knowledge and use of family planning methods are much higher among girls in the project area. As religious leaders have considerable influence over communities, the approach has been extremely effective in reaching large numbers of community members and influencing behaviors. More than 300 child-marriage ceremonies were cancelled by trained clergy and imams, and the demand for VCT has increased in the Safer Marriage Project areas. The keys to these successes are the use of older, more educated mentors rather than peer educators, to run the girls' clubs; door-to-door recruitment of married girls (who are otherwise hard to reach); close collaboration with partners, particularly the Ministry of Youth and Sports, EOC-DICAC, and EMDA; the commitment of Population Council staff and mentors; the mobilization of religious leaders, who wield considerable influence over their communities; and the enthusiasm of Safer Marriage Project clergy and imams.

The organization's documented program-evaluation results show that girls in the Berhane Hewan project area are three times more likely to attend school than the girls in a comparable nearby village; girls aged 10–14 in the project area are four times more likely to attend school and are 95 percent less likely to be married than girls in the comparison village; and girls in the project area have significantly expanded their social networks, relative to baseline levels (for example, they were more likely to have made friends in the past year, to play sports, and to have socialized with friends in the past week). Moreover, the Population Council collects data concerning girls' school attendance, marital status, social networks (for example, friendships with non-family members and contact with friends in a typical week); knowledge of reproductive health issues, including STDs; use of family planning methods; participation in girls' clubs; referrals for VCT and other reproductive health services; and child marriages that were cancelled.

The main challenges to the work of the Population Council are resistance from husbands to their wives' participation in Berhane Hewan and financial constraints. In the next five years, the Population Council plans to build on results achieved to date by doubling the number of married girls' clubs, educating more religious leaders about HIV/AIDS, VCT, prevention of mother-to-child transmission of HIV/AIDS, and prevention of early marriage, among other topics, by means of the "Days of Dialogue," by training more VCT promoters (including religious leaders, mentors, and other community leaders), by establishing husbands' clubs and using marketplace agents to reach husbands with HIV education and prevention services, by adding information about female genital cutting and new income-generating activities, and safe motherhood to the topics discussed in the Berhane Hewan girls' clubs.

Professional Alliance for Development in Ethiopia (PADET)

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Professional Alliance for Development in Ethiopia is a local nongovernmental organization established in 1999. The organization has its head office in Addis Ababa, with branch offices in Amhara Region in Debrebirhan and Woldia. The Program Coordinator, Ato Binyam Fekadu, was interviewed.

PADET's mission is to support women, young people, and children in their efforts to improve their livelihoods, through the promotion of participatory and sustainable development programs focusing on reproductive health intervention, food security, and good governance. PADET envisions a society where women and the young are empowered to enjoy their rights. Currently, the organization operates five core programs that support rural girls: rural youth/adolescent sexual and reproductive health promotion, promotion of child rights, prevention of harmful traditional practices (HTP), prevention of gender-based violence, and safe motherhood. These programs are carried out by 22 professional, 21 support, and 591 volunteer staff members. The major sources of the programs' funding are Action Aid Ethiopia, German Foundation for World Population (DSW), Norwegian Church Aid, Pact Ethiopia, Plan Ethiopia, and Save the Children Denmark.

The rural youth/adolescent sexual and reproductive health (ASRH) promotion program disseminates information about ASRH; builds capacity of youth clubs, sector offices, and community-based organizations; provides youth-friendly services; and engages in advocacy activities. The program's activities under the Promotion of Child Rights Program include promotion of the Convention on Children's Rights; strengthening of kebele- and woreda-level child-rights-protection committees and law-enforcement bodies; promotion of girls' education; prevention of sexual exploitation; and advocacy. The prevention of harmful traditional practices and prevention of gender-based violence programs disseminate information on HTP, organize HTP practitioners and offer income-generating activities for the group, and reward model parents. The safe-motherhood program provides family planning services, clean home-based-delivery referral service for fistula treatment, services for the prevention of malaria among pregnant and lactating women, iron supplementation, postabortion care, and encourages prevention of early marriage.

The major successes of PADET include the reporting system it has put in place for child-rights violations such as early marriage. Girls' school enrollment in target woredas has improved, and their dropout rate has decreased, delaying pregnancy and motherhood. A large number of premature deliveries are now assisted by trained traditional birth attendants. Girls' participation in youth-club activities has increased. The protection of girls from various violations of their rights (by boys) has improved, and

life-skills training has been provided to a large number of adolescent girls. The keys to the programs' successes are the encouragement received from donor partners, youth clubs, and project offices; a series of training and exposure visits; community participation; recognition of positive changes observed in one target area and building capacity of community-level organizations and government-sector offices. The major challenges the organization faces are parental dominance, girls' workload of household chores, harmful traditional practices and the incidence of gender-based violence, the lack of resources needed in order to help more children, and a number of logistical obstacles to maintaining the quality of the programs.

Pro-Poor

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Contact person: Ato G/Eyesus G/Michael (Executive Director)

Pro-poor is a local nongovernmental nonprofit organization established in 2003. Its head office is in Addis Ababa, with branch offices in Benishangul and Oromia regions in Metekel and Wolleta. The Executive Director, Ato G/Eyesus G/Michael, was interviewed.

Pro-Poor's mission is to reduce the vulnerability of disadvantaged groups in the community by empowering them to make use of the personal, social, economic, and natural resources of the community. It works in collaboration with governmental, private-sector, and community-based structures. The organization has an educational support program that provides service to rural girls. The services provided in this program include building schools, mobilizing communities regarding the importance of girls' education, and promoting community conversations on harmful traditional practices and their impact on girls. Pro-Poor has 7 professional, 6 support, and 36 volunteer staff members. The major sources of program funding are Friends for Children (a UK-based NGO), Ipas, World Food Programme, and Alliance for Development.

The organization's major success is increasing girls' school enrollment. The documented program evaluation demonstrates that more girls attend school in project areas. Budget constraints and the dependency syndrome of the community are the major challenges to Pro-Poor's work. A close relationship with local government and good collaboration among donors have been the keys to Pro-Poor's successes.

Remember the Poorest Community (RPC)

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Remember the Poorest Community is a local nongovernmental nonprofit organization established in 2004. The organization has its head office in Addis Ababa, with a branch office in Oromia Region in Adama. Through its Women's Empowerment and Self-Help Group Programs, RPC operates in Adama, Awash-Melkassa, Wolenchiti, Mojo, Wonji-woredas, and Addis Ababa Cherkos area. The Executive Director, Ato Samuel Assefa, was interviewed.

RPC exists as an advocate for the poorest communities working to release community members from their economic, psychological, emotional, and moral poverty and to enable them to become responsible, fulfilled human beings with the capacity to develop and use sustainable, holistic, and integrated development programs. RPC supports a Women's Empowerment and Self-Help Group (SHG) program that started operating in 2006. RPC has 7 professional, 25 support, and 144 volunteer staff members. The major sources of funding are the Swedish Philadelphia Church Mission and the Mennonite Mission in Ethiopia.

RPC provides various services for rural girls, including education concerning reproductive health rights, STDs, and HIV/AIDS; training in assertiveness and empowerment; income-generating activities; nonformal education; provision of educational materials; wealth creation; and vocational training. In addition, RPC is organizing women and girls so that they will be able to use local resources, such as land, appropriately.

The major successes of RPC are the reduction in girls' school-dropout rate and girls' improved academic performance and increased self-esteem and self-confidence. The strong commitment of staff members is the key factor in the success of RPC; the major organizational challenges arise from staff turnover and the dependency syndrome of communities.

Rural Reach Ethiopia (RRE)

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Rural Reach Ethiopia is a local nongovernmental organization registered in 2004 that began providing service in July 2005. The organization has its head office in Addis Ababa and works in different parts of Oromia Region. The Managing Director, Ato Tesfaye Shigu, was interviewed.

RRE's foremost mission is to provide information and services to rural young people and women in order to change unfavorable conditions affecting their reproductive rights and health. RRE works to empower young people by raising their awareness and education concerning sexual and reproductive health, through community-led actions, and with coordinated partnerships. RRE operates a number of programs that support rural girls, including reaching underserved rural youth and improving the status of rural young women; raising community awareness regarding postabortion care; improving reproductive health rights and services for Guliso youth; and reaching the underserved women of Tullo woreda. RRE has 10 professional, 5 support, and 268 volunteer staff members. Its major sources of funding are CRDA/Packard Foundation, Pact Ethiopia, CARE, and Ipas Ethiopia. The national affiliates are the Christian Relief and Development Association (CRDA) and the Consortium of Reproductive Health Agencies (CORHA).

The program for reaching underserved rural youth was started in 2005 and seeks to improve the sexual and reproductive health status by creating awareness of reproductive health rights, providing family planning services, and supporting young people through income-generating activities, building the capacity of local stakeholders, identifying and facilitating treatment for fistula cases, and establishing youth centers. The program for improving the status of rural young women was started in 2006 and is engaged in enhancing their assertiveness and decisionmaking power, providing family planning information and services through peer promoters, helping women generate income, building the capacity of local stakeholders, supporting girls' clubs in schools, advocating for victims of gender-based violence and identifying and facilitating treatment for women suffering from fistula. Since its establishment in 2006, the program for raising community awareness regarding postabortion care has been engaged in advocacy, creating awareness, training in life skills, and establishing referral linkages for abortions and postabortion care. RRE started its program for improving reproductive health rights and services for Guliso youth in 2005 to strengthen the area's HIV/AIDS prevention and control activities; supply modern contraceptives; distribute condoms; raise awareness of reproductive health rights; provide family planning services; train peer promoters; establish youth centers; and address harmful traditional practices. The organization's efforts to reach the underserved women of Tullo Woreda began in 2007 and provides sustainable reproductive health information and services; refreshes training of health agents and, for other development partners, trains and deploys community-based reproductive

health agents (CBRHAs) and peer promoters; provides income-generating activities; addresses harmful traditional practices and prevention and control of HIV/AIDS; and provides care and support for persons living with HIV/AIDS.

RRE's major successes include training and deployment of 148 peer educators, 58 community-based reproductive health agents, 42 club leaders and 24 circumcisers. Girls' and women's health-seeking behavior has changed; more than 10,000 cases were referred to health-care facilities; 152 rural women susceptible to unhealthy sexual relations were organized into cooperatives and supported with income-generating schemes; 102 of the cooperative members were provided with skills training and business and cooperative management training to improve their livelihoods and to reduce their vulnerability to reproductive health problems; and access to reproductive health services and awareness of reproductive health rights increased. The number of family planning users has steadily increased: 2,880 new users were recruited in Tullo alone. Male involvement in reproductive health, including use of family planning, has also increased. As a result of these changes, the rates of unwanted pregnancies and unsafe abortions have started to decline. The prevalence of several harmful traditional practices (HTPs), previously very high in all RRE operation areas, has started to decline as a result of RRE's intensive information, education, and communication and behavior-change communication and advocacy activities. Communities have started to take action using laws developed to fight HTPs. In some places, offenders (that is, violators of HTP laws) have been taken to court and penalized. RRE has also educated girls and women about their basic human rights and reproductive health rights, and about national laws against HTP, and organized them into 15 clubs to enable them to demand their reproductive rights. In one year, 52 women who were suffering from fistula were treated and returned to their families.

The keys to the successes of the programs are community involvement, programs that focus on hard-to-reach areas, local administration of the projects, and programs' benefits for target groups and the volunteers for the organization.

The major challenges facing RRE are donors' expectations that RRE will work only on specific projects that they are interested in when they give support; inadequate funding to expand the program(s); sociocultural influences on the girls and women who participate in the programs; frequent changes in the local government and high turnover of local officials, which necessitates reorientation; transportation and distance barriers; reluctance of law-enforcement entities to respond to violence against women and girls; stigma against uncircumcised girls; and high staff turnover due to recent increases in the cost of living and inability of RRE's salaries to keep pace. RRE plans in the next five years to start a new "Camp Campaign" to address reproductive health rights. RRE will use this approach for a few days in the rural kebeles to conduct advocacy programs regarding reproductive health rights and strengthen all the existing programs in terms of coverage and intensity. It may reduce its focus on income-generating programs in order to enhance its other programs.

Save the Children–USA

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Contact person: Margaret Schuler (Country Director); Saudik Hassen (Education Unit Head)

Save the Children–USA is a nongovernmental nonprofit international organization that began operations in Ethiopia in 1984. The head office is in Addis Ababa. The Education Unit Head, Feleketch Baharu, was interviewed.

Save the Children–USA's mission is to create lasting positive change in the lives of children in need. In Ethiopia, it creates sustainable change for children by pursuing four mutually enforcing strategies: evidence-based replicable solutions, advocacy, scale-up, and working with Alliance and other partners. As a result, the organization creates stronger community-based solutions coupled with advocacy on a national level. Specifically, SC/US focuses on education, health, food security, HIV/AIDS prevention/education, and saving the lives of newborns.

The organization operates a girls' education program that supports rural girls and integrates various activities, including addressing problems of access, quality, and equity of basic education; creating awareness concerning harmful traditional practices; mobilizing communities regarding the importance of girls' education; providing educational materials; sponsoring girls; establishing community campaigns regarding girls' education; supporting back-to-school efforts directed at girls who have dropped out; creating girls' clubs and girls' advisory committees; training to develop girls' assertiveness regarding decisionmaking, speaking, and human rights; offering summer and tutorial classes; and forming parent-teacher associations. The sources of funding for programs are individual donors, sponsorship, Save the Children–Italy, and USAID.

The major successes of the organization are the establishment and institutionalization of girls' clubs, changes in government policy regarding school leadership, and increased girls' school enrollment and reduced dropout rate. The key to these successes is involving the community in school management and the commitment of hard-working staff members.

Siiqqee Women's Development Association (SWDA)

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Contact person: Zertihun Tefera (Executive Director)

Siiqqee Women's Development Association is a local nongovernmental nonprofit organization established in 1997. The organization has its head office in Addis Ababa, with branch offices in Sebeta, Wolliso, and Nekemte in Oromia Region. The Executive Director, Zertihun Tefera, was interviewed.

SWDA's mission is to enable poor women to gain access to and control over resources, to assist socioeconomically marginalized women in their self-help efforts by providing supportive services, and to create an enabling environment for women to learn about and exercise their human rights. Currently SWDA has a girls' education program (operating since 2006) and an adolescent girls' support scholarship program (started in 2007). These programs are implemented by 10 professional and 18 support staff members and one volunteer. The major sources of funding are the American Jewish World Service, the Nike Foundation through the American Jewish World Service, Life Uplifted by Change in Africa (LUCIA) and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP).

The girls' education program focuses on activities such as community awareness-raising regarding the importance of girls' education; the construction of separate latrines for schoolgirls; the establishment and strengthening of girls' clubs; tutorial classes; provision of reference books; organizing of community conversations on harmful traditional practices (HTP); provision of information, education, and communication and behavior-change communication materials for girls' clubs; and peer education and training of trainers (TOT) on RH, HIV/AIDS, and HTP. The scholarship program for adolescent girls targets outstanding female students and provides them with economic and social support, making accessible gender-related education and training on women's and human rights, and providing sanitary pads, experience sharing, awareness programs on HIV/AIDS, RH and HTP, tutorial classes, and counseling service.

The major successes of SWDA are observed in the increased assertiveness of girls in project areas, the positive change in community awareness regarding girls' education, increased girls' school enrollment, a decrease in number of girls dropping out of school, and positive changes in the class performance of schoolgirls. SWDA's success is attributed to its dedication, the attention it gives to identifying real problems, and staff commitment. Program challenges include budget constraints, material and human resources limitations, staff turnover, and lengthy bureaucratic government processes and deep-rooted cultural barriers that undermine women's and girls' well-being. For example, the regions' patriarchal social structure has been a major barrier to action.

Welfare for the Street Mothers and Children Organization (WeSMCO)

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Contact person: Ato Eshetu Mengistu (Director General)

WeSMCO is an indigenous nongovernmental nonprofit humanitarian organization established in 1997. The Program Department Head, Getachew Mekonnen, was interviewed.

WeSMCO's mission is to create an environment in which the rights of destitute mothers and children are protected, respected, and fulfilled. With a goal of reducing poverty and ensuring sustainable development, WeSMCO is striving to implement an integrated holistic approach in its programs in three regions of Ethiopia; Addis Ababa City Administration, Amhara National Regional State, and Benishangul Gumuz National Regional State. It has developed five major programs: the home- and community-based child care program (including one-to-one sponsorship, support for disabled children, provision of education, direct material support to children, and promotion of children's rights); skills training (including youth integration, establishment of a youth center, metal and wood work activities, embroidery, tailoring, and computer application courses); a health program (including provision of health services and facilities, integrated RH/FP service provision, HIV/AIDS prevention and control, and prevention of harmful traditional practices, malaria prevention, sanitation, hygiene and nutrition, and provision of potable water); a women's empowerment program (including gender mainstreaming and equity, education and mobilization of the community to prevent and halt gender-based violence and harmful traditional practices, and self-help group development); and an agriculture and environmental protection program (promoting urban agriculture, vegetable growing, bee keeping, poultry keeping, afforestation, and waste management and recycling).

To date, WeSMCO has implemented 63 projects; 53 were completed successfully and the remaining 10 are ongoing or near to completion. The major donors for these projects are; USAID/Pathfinder International–Ethiopia, the British Embassy, CIDA/Canada, CRDA, ESRDF, CORD AID/The Netherlands, the Norwegian Embassy, SAHA, CRS, Ipas, BOLSA UNICEF, the Japan Embassy, Goal Ethiopia, Belgian Technical Cooperation, GTZ, SKN/The Netherlands, Irish Aid, World Bank/FOAA, WFP, ERIS, DAI/ECI Africa, the German Ethiopian Association, the Methodist Relief and Development Fund, Dan Church Aid, and others. WeSMCO is an active member of CRDA, CORHA, and NEWA, which are prominent umbrella and networking organizations.

In recognition of its outstanding achievements, WeSMCO has received many awards, certificates, letters of appreciation from government, nongovernment, and donor organizations. These include the USAID/ECI Africa recognition award and Addis Ababa City Administration Green Award Program, 2006. WeSMCO is administered by a management board consisting of five members who report to the General Assembly, the governing body. The management team is led by the Director General and controls the activities of the organization, which has four branch offices, 38 permanent staff members, and more than 250 volunteers.

Women and Children Development Organization (WCDO)

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Contact people: Ato Melaku Hailu (Executive Director), Messay Taddesse (SNNPR Assistant Project Coordinator)

Women and Children Development Organization is an indigenous nongovernmental nonprofit humanitarian organization established in 1995. The organization has its head office in Addis Ababa and a branch office in SNNPR Region in Hawassa. The Assistant Program Officer, Eden Kinfе, was interviewed.

WCDO's mission is to bring about sustainable development, particularly by improving the livelihoods of women, children, and the community in general in Addis Ababa and SNNPR in urban, rural, and pastoral areas, through integrated community-development programs and poverty-reduction strategies with the maximum participation of stakeholders. The program areas of interest are education, health, income-generating activities, environmental sanitation and hygiene, water development, alternative energy supply (that is, biogas development), care and direct support of orphans and other vulnerable children, infrastructural development, and dry-land agriculture. WCDO has 14 professional and 6 support staff members.

The major achievements of WCDO are making loans to 300 poor women who are organized to perform income-generating activities, providing educational support for 5,000 poor schoolchildren, establishing an income-generating bakery project for poor women, providing marketable-skills training for more than 200 young people, building and installing a public library with a capacity of 70 seats, and constructing and establishing two alternative basic education centers for 480 primary-school-aged children. WCDO is also involved in organizing 5,000 young people into HIV/AIDS working groups; conducting training workshops and organizing experience-sharing sessions on good governance and democratization for woreda-level government officials, court officials, women's representatives, youth groups, traditional leaders, and representatives of faith-based organizations, community-based organization, and civil-society organizations; and making a three-year project agreement with the Bureau of Finance and Economic Development and other pertinent line bureaus of the SNNPR. The major organizational challenges are the development of partners' limited budgets and the logistics of organizing intensive capacity-building trainings and strategic exposure visits.

Women Support Association (WSA)

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Contact person: Martha Nemera (Executive Director)

Women Support Association is a local nongovernmental nonprofit organization established in 1995. The organization has its head office in Addis Ababa and branch offices in Amhara Region in Dessie, Merssa, and Shoa Robit. The Executive Director, Martha Nemera, and the Assistant Program Officer, Mohammed Hussien, were interviewed.

WSA's mission is to assist targeted marginalized groups to bring about sustainable development through their active participation. WSA operates eight major programs for rural girls: community-based prevention of female genital cutting (FGC), adolescent reproductive health, promotion of family planning and women's reproductive rights among adolescents, sexual and gender-based violence, legal and medical support for victims of sexual and gender-based violence, TEACH—Transferring Education to Adults and Children Living in the Hinterland, WORTH, SHG (Self-Help Group), and reaching the underserved women and youth of Dessie Zureia Woreda with sustainable reproductive health information and services. The association has 64 professional, 11 support, and 145 volunteer staff members. The major sources of program funding are GTZ, Pact Ethiopia, Danish Church Aid (DCA), Ipas-Ethiopia, and CONCERN.

The community-based project for the prevention of female genital cutting started in 2003 to contribute to improvement in the reproductive health status of girls and women and to reduce the prevalence of FGC. The program activities include organizing training sessions on harmful traditional practices for community members; training peer educators; organizing community-wide campaigns and house-to-house education through peer educators; establishing girls' clubs; producing information, education, and communication materials; and renovating RH clubs' offices and centers.

The adolescent reproductive health project seeks to improve the skills of young people in the areas of sexual negotiation, helping others to delay early initiation of sex, and promoting condom and contraceptive use. The project was started in 2004. The major program components are formation of reproductive health and girls' clubs; training peer educators; organizing community-wide campaigns and house-to-house education through peer educators; enhancing the capacity of reproductive health and girls' clubs through training, sharing of experiences, and provision of musical instruments; supplying contraceptives; increasing awareness of reproductive health rights, family planning, HIV/AIDS; organizing various types of training for community members; producing information, education, and communication materials; assisting reproductive health and girls' clubs in organizing coffee ceremonies; hosting family dialogues; and organizing training sessions, workshops, and seminars. The project for promoting family planning and women's reproductive rights among adolescents

started in 2006. Its objective was to contribute to improving the reproductive health of adolescents and to increase awareness of women's rights. The major services provided by this program are organizing training sessions, workshops, and seminars; training peer educators; facilitating parent-child discussions; organizing community-wide campaigns and house-to-house education through peer educators; providing basic information about sexuality, harmful traditional practices, women's reproductive rights, family planning, safe abortion, and postabortion care; and producing information, education, and communication materials and hosting family dialogues.

The project to reduce the incidence of sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV) started in 2006 with the objective of creating awareness and bringing about change in attitudes concerning SGBV. The activities undertaken in this program include organizing training sessions, workshops, and seminars on SGBV and organizing community marriage-approval committees. These committees have many duties and responsibilities, such as reducing the prevalence of early marriage (for example, by determining the ages of prospective brides prior to their marriage ceremonies) and lobbying to make voluntary counseling and testing before marriage mandatory, organizing community-wide campaigns and house-to-house education through peer educators, providing support for SGBV victims, hosting family dialogues, and forming youth clubs.

WSA began to provide legal and medical support for victims of sexual and gender-based violence in 2006. Its objective is to improve the institutional capacity and social networks sufficiently so that they are able to care for and protect SGBV victims. The services provided in this program are support for SGBV victims, referrals for additional services, and organization of SGBV monitoring committee/groups.

The TEACH program was started in 2005 with the objective of creating educational opportunities for children and adults who do not have access to formal primary education by teaching them in their localities. WSA has provided such services as construction of alternative basic education (ABE) centers, conducting ABE, organizing training for center-management committees and center facilitators, formation of reproductive and girls' clubs, raising awareness of potential adult students and of parents who could send their children to ABE centers, and encouraging female teachers to provide guidance to schoolgirls.

The objectives of the WORTH program, started in 2006, is to enable poor women to identify, develop, and successfully manage opportunities to improve their livelihoods, and to help them acquire literacy and numeric skills. Program activities include forming WORTH groups, conducting literacy classes for the women in the groups, organizing training for literacy volunteers and women in the groups, and providing education on women's reproductive rights and SGBV.

The SHG program was started in 2002 with the objective of empowering women economically, socially, and politically. The services provided by this program include forming women's self-help groups, forming cluster-level associations whereby eight to ten SHGs can form one cluster, organizing training on various issues for women in the self-help groups, providing education about women's reproductive rights and SGBV, and conducting gender-related family dialogue for the members of SHGs and their families.

The program for reaching underserved women and children of Dessie Zureia Woreda with sustainable reproductive health information and services was started in January 2008 with the objective of reducing the incidence of GBV in Ethiopia through institutional and behavioral change. The activities undertaken for this program are forming SHGs, raising community awareness and mobilization, organizing community conversations, improving safety for schoolgirls by designating a volunteer guardian (a female teacher) in each school, organizing and strengthening boys' and girls' clubs in terms of awareness of gender and gender-related problems, and building the capacity of stakeholders.

The major successes of WSA are that open discussion and dialogue within households is becoming part of the culture and women are able to have as much say in property and household affairs as their husbands do. All SHGs have incorporated the prevention of HTP into their by-laws. The alternative basic education classes in the villages address not only literacy among girls but also abduction and other forms of harassment they face on their way to school. Springs and water pods were developed to help prevent harassment of rural girls walking long distances to fetch water and reduce the time they need to fetch it, so that they have time to spend on other activities. The prevalence of various HTPs has declined as a result of peer education, community-wide campaigns, and information, education, and communication and behavior-change communication activities. Three reproductive health associations have been organized and are operating actively; they are equipped with necessary materials including minimedia components and musical instruments. Forty-eight peer health educators have been trained and are working in their communities, and more than 31,200 rural girls have received information regarding HIV/AIDS, HTPs, reproductive health, women's rights, and related issues through adolescent reproductive health projects.

Most of the Women Support Association project sites are remote and inaccessible, which makes frequent supervision difficult. Other challenges to the organization's work include negative cultural and religious influences on the girls residing in the project areas and inadequate budgets for each project.

Women, Youth and Children Development Program (RATSON)

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RATSON is a local nongovernmental and nonprofit organization established in 1996. Its head office is in Debre Zeit town, and it works in East Shoa in Ada'a and Liben woredas. The Executive Director, Ato Moges Gorfe, was interviewed.

RATSON's mission is to ameliorate the deep-rooted development problems of target populations, especially women, young people, and children, by promoting their participation and that of all stakeholders in community-based rural and urban development programs. The organization runs five major programs for rural girls: school-based prevention of child sexual abuse, women's empowerment through provision of information, a village mini-media program, community conversation, and a sponsorship program. These programs are operated by 40 professional, 20 support, and 160 volunteer staff members. The major sources of the program's funding are the Christian Children's Fund (CCF) Canada, Oxfam Canada, Oxfam UK, Save the Children USA, the Japanese Embassy, Pact Ethiopia, the Norwegian Church, and the Christian Relief and Development Association (CRDA).

The school-based prevention of sexual abuse of children was launched in 2004 and provides four major services: recurrent training on the Child Rights Convention provided to rural girls and boys; training on gender issues, leadership, and decisionmaking; training for rural girls and boys as health and law scouts; and establishment of girls' clubs in schools. The women's empowerment program established girls' clubs and has provided an adult literacy program for adolescent girls and income-generating schemes since 2005. The major activity of the village minimedia program, launched in 2007, is creating access to media for rural young people. In the community-conversation program, community participants have been raising awareness of various problems since 2007. Girls in the empowerment program have become active community-conversation participants; some are even serving as facilitators of the conversation. The sponsorship program has been operating since 2000; it provides financial support to girls for house rent and school fees.

The major successes of the organization are a 75-percent reduction in the practice of female genital cutting in the project areas; a 50-percent reduction in the prevalence of abduction, rape, and early marriage; significant improvement in the rate of contraceptive use; enhanced awareness of the rights of women and children; increased girls' participation in social affairs and enhanced capacity and awareness of rural girls. Sexually abused girls were given counseling by paraprofessional counselors in rural schools. Women are advocating for their rights in their home localities. Exposure to modern technology has also given girls the chance to be assertive. Moreover, a program evaluation highlighted that sexual abuse has been significantly reduced in the intervention areas. RATSON is collecting data

on sexual abuse cases, on the number of court verdicts in cases of abuse, and on the number of terminated cases and the reasons for these terminations.

RATSON's major program challenges include the high prevalence of early marriage in the intervention areas. Girls who refuse to be married are forced from their homes by their parents or guardians. Moreover, funding is inadequate for expanding the program. RATSON provides recurrent training for girls and boys in rural schools on the Child Rights Convention, however, so as to prevent the sexual abuse of children. Rural girls and boys are also trained as health and law scouts to teach the community about harmful traditional practices (HTP), violations of children's rights (particularly sexual abuse), and the relationship between HIV/AIDS and reproductive health. In this regard, the girls in the target schools have become the main actors in tackling HTP and violations of children's rights and women's rights. Demonstrations against sexual abuse in rural schools are initiated and organized mainly by girls' club members in rural communities. Rural girls' clubs organized under the women's empowerment program are provided with televisions, compact-disc players, video decks, satellite dishes, radios, wireless telephones, and Internet access. This modern technology allows rural girls to be informed about current events. The minimedia (village radio) installed in the villages is operated by rural girls and a few rural boys. A large number of girls and a few boys received intensive training on media use and are leading the media program at all project sites. Minimedia materials (that is, compact-disc and cassette players) were also given to children's rights clubs in 32 rural schools, in order to disseminate information that is directly related to children's rights. Girls take the dominant role in dissemination of information from these sources. Through the women's empowerment project, rural girls are organized into clubs, trained in income-generating schemes, and are engaged in income-generating activities such as handicraft product sales, video film shows, and rural telephone service (Rural Tele-center). RATSON plans to establish community radio in Ada'a and Liben woredas in the next five years, so that rural girls can play a major role in promoting programs related to girls and women. The organization aims to focus attention on the issues of unwanted pregnancy and HIV/AIDS, particularly for rural girls in high school and college. It also seeks to make recreation centers and libraries more accessible to rural girls.

Zema Setoch Lefitih Mahiber (The Previous Progynist)

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Zema Setoch Lefitih Mahiber (ZemaSef) is a local nongovernmental organization established in 1997. Its head office is in Addis Ababa, with branch offices in Emdibir, Wolkite, and Butajira towns of SNNPR. The Monitoring and Evaluation Officer, Tilahun Gesesse, was interviewed

The organization's mission is to contribute to the formation of a society of equal opportunity for women and men. The organization has four major programs for rural girls: gender and advocacy; health; water, hygiene, and sanitation (Health & WaSH); and education for orphans and other vulnerable children. Zema Setoch Lefitih Mahiber has 27 professional, 97 support and more than 81 volunteer staff members. Some of the major sources of funding are Save the Children Finland, Save the Children Sweden, Embassy of Finland, Concern Ethiopia, the European Union, Miserior, and the Global fund for Women.

The gender and advocacy program started in 1997 and promotes women's rights by creating awareness and providing role models for the younger generation by documenting the great works and achievements of women in the regions. It provides legal advice and psychosocial and counseling services and creates hope for female victims of violence by dedicating hotlines through which they can get advice and support. Since 1997, through its health program, the organization has provided safe waste-disposal schemes, traditional pit latrines, safe wastewater drainage, a safe water supply, basic health services, family planning, reproductive health services, and awareness-creation and prevention programs concerning HIV/AIDS. The major activities in the education program, started in 1997, are organizing and providing flexible education and training programs for underprivileged children (mainly girls) through the alternative basic education (ABE) strategy, building the capacity of major institutions and stakeholders to respect the rights of vulnerable children (mainly girls), and organizing tutorials (extra learning sessions) for girls to help them progress through school.

The orphans and other vulnerable children program, operating since 2006, mainly dealt with conducting training for community-based organizations (working on OVC issues) on how to provide care and support for OVC and their families, conducted conferences on children's rights and child labor, and provided educational, psychosocial, medical and legal protection services.

Within a year, 219 women were trained in gender and advocacy, more than 2,966 girls benefited from the health and water, hygiene, and sanitation programs, 309 girls benefited from the OVC program, and 935 girls obtained educational support.

Some of the major successes of Zema Setoch Lefitih Mahiber include mobilizing women to organize

under “Gender Justice Groups” in all woredas in Gurage Zone, raising awareness and decreasing gender-based violence. Many children (especially girls) have enrolled in the alternative basic education program, and children have started to demand their rights. Two health institutions (in Enate and Abeshge kebeles) of the Gurage Zone were opened, and high-school students are assisted in being tested regularly for HIV/AIDS and other sexually transmitted diseases. The newly constructed water, hygiene, and sanitation facilities are accessible to the disabled and to people living with HIV/AIDS. The capacity of community-based organizations to care for orphans and other vulnerable children has increased significantly. In order to determine its strengths and weaknesses, the organization is collecting current data on school enrollment; student retention and dropout rates; number of participants in training and other activities; funds provided for snacks, uniforms, and educational materials provided to orphans and other vulnerable children; and the number of girls who are receiving legal support and psychosocial and related services.

Delays in the release of budgeted funds, reluctance of the community to accept new ideas, and frequent government restructuring and turnover of officials are the major challenges facing Zema Setoch Lefitih Mahiber. Continuous support from stakeholders, effective problem-solving strategies, major efforts to mobilize the community, and coordination of various resources has been the keys to the organization’s success. In the next five years, it plans to expand its target area to four zones of Oromia as well as Silti Zone of SNNPR and hopes to increase the number of projects that benefit women and girls.

