ENGAGE
Enabling Girls to Advance Gender Equity

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Overview of ENGAGE

- **Goal**: To empower girls and civil society organizations (CSOs) to shift norms and attitudes around child marriage and increase gender equality, with ultimate goal of reducing child marriage and other harmful practices.

**Empower girls:** train girls to form and lead clubs

**Empower CSOs:** Build CSO capacity to engage with stakeholders
PHALOMBE DISTRICT

TA Chiwalo

1

TA Nazombe

4

THYOLO DISTRICT

TA Mchiramwera

2

TA Changata

3

SOUTHERN MALAWI
Focus of baseline survey

• Quantitative survey with 1492 decision-makers of girls ages 10-17

• Questions focused on:
  • Demographic data
  • Child marriage (norms, attitudes, knowledge of laws)
  • Gender norms
  • Attitudes toward adolescent SRH
  • Girls’ education
  • Harmful traditional practices
  • Decision-making for girls 10-17
## Source of norms measures

CARE’s Social Norms Analysis Plot (SNAP) Framework

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>COMPONENTS OF A NORM</th>
<th>DEFINITION</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Empirical Expectations (EE)</td>
<td>What I think others do</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Normative Expectations (NE)</td>
<td>What I think others expect me to do (what I should do according to others)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sanctions</td>
<td>Anticipated opinion or reaction of others (to the behavior) – specifically others whose opinions matter to me</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Please see CARE’s full paper, Applying Theory to Practice: CARE’s Journey Piloting Social Norms Measures for Gender Programming, here: [link](http://gender.care2share.wikispaces.net/file/view/care-social-norms-paper-web.pdf)
Is child marriage a social norm?

**Empirical expectations** - Almost nine in ten adult decision-makers (89%) agreed that most girls in their community marry before the age of 18.

**Normative expectations** - Adult decision-makers were nearly evenly split on whether they agreed that “Most people in this community expect girls to marry before the age of 18.”

**Sanctions** – Just one in three adult decision-makers (36%) agreed with the statement “If I don’t ensure my daughters and/or nieces are married early, my family will not be respected in the community.”
How do we interpret this finding?

Alternative explanations for child marriage in these communities (**prudential reasons**):

- 87% say may happen because of pregnancy
- 77% say mostly happens because of lack of education and job opportunities
- 57% say sometimes happens for financial reasons
- 44% say may happen to resolve family disputes
How do we interpret this finding?

Attitudes that may indirectly result in child marriage:
• 93% agree that unmarried girls who get pregnant are “naughty”
• 80% agree that giving unmarried girls access to contraceptives makes them promiscuous
• 38% agree that unmarried adolescent girls should have access to contraception
Implications

For programming

• Acknowledge and build upon the existing sensitization and opposition to child marriage
• Increase knowledge of laws as leverage
• Increase emphasis on the portions of the girls’ curriculum that address attitudes towards adolescent sexuality and access to contraception
• Focus the CSO capacity-building interventions on addressing prudential reasons for child marriage
Implications

For measurement and research

• Supplement quantitative research with qualitative vignettes to increase explanatory power
• Always include measures of prudential reasons
• Consider more advanced quantitative techniques for reducing social desirability bias