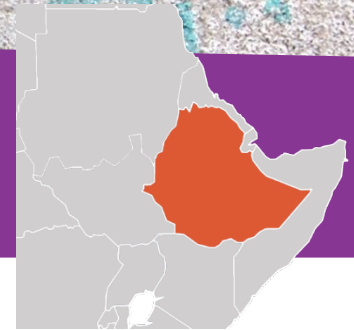




**ACT
WITH**

HER

Forging Panoramic Pathways from Adolescence to a Healthy Adulthood



Background

While birth rates are falling in Ethiopia, over half of all Ethiopians are under the age of 20. Girls in Ethiopia are highly vulnerable to child marriage, female genital mutilation, and sexual or gender-based violence. Their voice and agency are more limited than that of boys, due to social norms that primarily value them as wives and mothers. While Ethiopia has made remarkable progress in equitably expanding primary education over the last two decades, the percent of Ethiopian girls in school drops significantly from 84 percent in primary to only 11 percent for secondary education.

Our Response

Pathfinder International, in collaboration with the Government of Ethiopia, in partnership with CARE International, and with funding from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, is implementing a five-year umbrella program designed to lay the health, education, and social foundations that adolescent girls need to thrive and navigate healthy transitions to adulthood. By 2022, we will reach 50,000 adolescent Ethiopian girls and boys ages 10-17 by scaling up an existing empowerment program while simultaneously assessing the potential value-add of an expanded version. A randomized impact evaluation is being conducted by the UK Department for International Development (DFID)-funded Gender & Adolescence: Global Evidence (GAGE) research consortium.

Her Spaces (originally funded by DFID and implemented by Girl Effect, IPE Global, and Pathfinder International) will be scaled to reach 30,000 young adolescent girls ages 11-14 in Amhara, Oromia, and Tigray with 10 months of weekly curriculum-based, near-peer mentor-led group sessions. Topics covered include a wide range of health, nutrition, education, safety, gender, and economic empowerment themes. The Act With Her model builds directly from the foundation of Her Spaces, similarly serving young adolescent girls ages 10-13 with 10 months of weekly group empowerment sessions. This expanded model also includes: programming aimed at older adolescent girls (15-17); boy peers (ages 10-17); and parents of girl and boy adolescents. In select sites we also partner with local communities to shift inequitable gender norms, and to make key health, education, child protection,



and other services more adolescent-responsive. In a small number of Act With Her sites, girls also receive a small material asset transfer aimed at supporting their menstrual hygiene management and continued education. We will reach 10,000 girls and 10,000 boys through delivery of the Act With Her program model in Amhara, Oromia, and Afar.

Evidence Generation

In the regions of Amhara, Oromia, and Afar, the GAGE consortium will determine to what extent Her Spaces and the variations of Act With Her:

- strengthen individual and collective capabilities among adolescent girls across six domains: physical health, education, bodily integrity, psychosocial well-being, voice and agency, and economic empowerment;
- increase gender equitable attitudes, behaviors, and norms throughout social networks, families, and communities; and
- increase responsiveness and access to high-quality services for adolescents.

Our Unique Strengths

We serve very young adolescents

Early adolescence (ages 10-14 years) is an especially crucial phase that influences a girl's physical, psychological and social development for a lifetime. Yet this phase of life has been largely neglected within global funding, research, and programmatic efforts. Act With Her serves two separate age cohorts, with one specifically designed to reach girls and boys in this early and underserved period of adolescence.

We engage boys and parents

A girl's ability to make positive choices and to have access to key health, education, and economic opportunities is most often linked to how others view her worth, her rights, and her future. Act With Her meaningfully connects with boys and parents to help ensure that adolescent girls have support now and in the future from peers, partners, and their family.

We use a wide-angle lens

Improving adolescents' health knowledge, behaviors, and access to services is critical for their positive development. Yet ensuring a healthy, happy, and productive future also requires simultaneous attention to the diverse set of systems that influence a young person's trajectory. Act With Her uses a panoramic view of adolescents' well-being to holistically empower adolescent girls and enhance the social, health, and education systems that serve them.

PATHFINDER INTERNATIONAL

9 Galen Street, Suite 217
Watertown, MA 02472-4501

Tricia Petruney
Director, Act With Her Project
tpetruney@pathfinder.org

PATHFINDER INTERNATIONAL is driven by the conviction that all people, regardless of where they live, have the right to decide whether and when to have children, to exist free from fear and stigma, and to lead the lives they choose. Since 1957, we have partnered with local governments, communities, and health systems in developing countries to remove barriers to critical sexual and reproductive health services. Together, we expand access to contraception, promote healthy pregnancies, save women's lives, and stop the spread of new HIV infections, wherever the need is most urgent.

Change lives with us. pathfinder.org