Adolescent Girls and Drop-Out

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FIGURE 2: Telescoping the Pathway from Education to Adolescent Transitions to Development

- **Immediate Outputs**
  - Equal access to quality, relevant education
  - Information
  - Training
  - Exposure to peers, mentors, services, opportunities
  - Financial returns
  - Social returns

- **Proximate Outcomes**
  - Literacy
  - Numeracy
  - Skills
  - Social capital
  - Normative change
  - Increased support for girls' education and opportunities

- **Intermediate Outcomes**
  - Equipped and empowered for transitions to work, citizenship, marriage and parenthood
  - Prepared and willing to support girls' gradual transitions to adulthood

- **Ultimate Outcomes**
  - Inclusive Economic Growth
  - Reduced Fertility
  - Improved Health
  - Gender Equity
  - Political Participation
  - Human Rights

Global View of Adolescent Girls’ Drop-Out

- 65 million adolescents (12-15) out of school in 2013
  - Roughly equal boys and girls globally
  - Sub-Saharan Africa: girls 55% of all out-of-school children and 52% of all out-of-school adolescents. 56% of out-of-school girls in the region will never enter a classroom (compared to 41% of out-of-school boys).
  - South and West Asia: 80% of out-of-school girls in the region are unlikely to start school compared to 16% of out-of-school boys.

UNESCO Institute for Statistics and the Education for All Global Monitoring Report, “A growing number of children and adolescents are out of school as aid fails to hit the mark,” July 2015
Determinants of Girls’ Drop-Out?

- Poverty
- Poor school performance
- Violence
- Marriage
- Pregnancy
- Gender norms and discrimination

Photo credit: David Snyder
Schooling and Girls’ Sexual and Reproductive Health

• Evidence of role of pregnancy in dropout mixed
  – Cross-sectional data
  – Geographic variation
  – Determinants are likely shared across outcomes

• Role of gender norms / expectations
  – Influence at community, household and individual levels
ICRW Study of Adolescent Girls’ Drop-Out in West Nile, Uganda

- West Nile sub-region
  - Affected by recent conflict and central gov’t neglect
  - Only 6 girls for every 10 boys in secondary school*
  - Adolescent fertility high- 19.7% of 15-19 yr olds have had a child*
- Research in Adjumani and Arua districts
- Cross-sectional mixed-method design
  - Quantitative Survey (n=805 girls)
  - Qualitative Research (n=110)
  - Formative (Jul. 2013); main data collection (Dec. 2013–Apr. 2014)

*Uganda DHS, 2011
Descriptive Findings

On Dropout:
- 31% of girls ages 14-18 were no longer in school (n=248)
- Average age of dropout was 15.3
- Among dropouts, 84% dropped out in primary school

On SRH:
- 10.4% reported ever having been pregnant
- 23.5% reported ever having sex
- 45% knew how to prevent a pregnancy
  - Source: family (10%);
  - teacher (26%)
- 39% know where to access family planning

Main reported reason for dropout (%)

- Marriage: 2.8%
- Pregnancy: 13.1%
- Financial reasons: 22.0%
- Death or illness: 11.7%
- All other: 50.5%

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Significant Determinants of <strong>Dropout</strong> in multivariate analysis</th>
<th>Significant Determinants of <strong>Pregnancy</strong> in multivariate analysis</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td>Age</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>District</td>
<td>District</td>
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<tr>
<td>Conflict</td>
<td>Conflict</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Mother’s Education</strong></td>
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<td>Father’s Education</td>
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<tr>
<td>Household Wealth</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Self-rated School Performance</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Mother Paid School Fees</td>
<td>Mother Paid School Fees</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Started school after age 9</td>
<td>Started school after age 9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Inequitable Gender Beliefs</strong></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low Perceived Parental support of school</td>
<td>Low Perceived Parental support of school</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of Romantic Relationships</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

In Summary

• Pregnancy does lead to dropout, but is also a consequence
  – Eliminating schoolgirl pregnancy would not eliminate teenage pregnancy in this setting

• Role of gender norms prominent
  – Girls’ own internalized expectations
  – Parent’s influence on girls’ schooling through domestic chores, late start, low moral and financial support
“I wish my [mother and brother] were alive to pay for my school fees. I would have gone to school and studied and fulfilled my future dreams…. I have dropped out of school. So now I know that I will get married, give birth to children whom I cannot send to school because I will be poor. This is not what I wanted.”

- 14 year old, out of school orphan, Adjumani
Girls’ Education is Highly Valued

- Parents and girls alike placed a very high value on education.
- 84% of dropouts said they had wanted to continue school when they left.
- 81% indicated if given a chance they would return to school now.

What are your worries for the future?
The fact that I have got less education yet it is very vital in Uganda today. Education helps one get a good job and be respected in community. - 18 year old dropout, Arua

In future if [my daughter] finishes school and becomes successful, she will help to also educate her siblings. I think the kind of man who will marry her will also be a decent one. So she may not dig and work hard like me. - uneducated mother, Adjumani

If [my daughter] studies and finishes, tomorrow I will enjoy the benefits. If she marries, the husband will enjoy the benefits. - Mother, Arua
To fulfill their hopes…

• Address unequal gender norms through multiple channels.

• Provide adolescent girls and boys with information and services related to sexuality and reproductive health.

• Schooling needs to be safe, gender-equitable, relevant and connected to opportunities.
## Characteristics of Respondents, ages 14-18

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Household Gendered Characteristics</th>
<th>In school</th>
<th>Drop-out</th>
<th><strong>p</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Domestic burden affected schooling a lot at age 12</td>
<td>9.7</td>
<td>27.9</td>
<td>***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Felt parent’s did not support her being in school at all at age 12</td>
<td>3.1</td>
<td>11.9</td>
<td>***</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## School-related Characteristics

<table>
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<th>In school</th>
<th>Drop-out</th>
<th><strong>p</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Self-rated performance at school below average/poor</td>
<td>5.0</td>
<td>14.1</td>
<td>***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paid own school fees in most recent term attended</td>
<td>4.5</td>
<td>13.2</td>
<td>***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Started school after age 9</td>
<td>25.2</td>
<td>37.7</td>
<td>***</td>
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## Gender Inequitable Beliefs (Percent who agreed with below)

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<th>Drop-out</th>
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<tr>
<td>Boys should be more educated than girls</td>
<td>30.7</td>
<td>47.9</td>
<td>***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>If a girl stops schooling, the best thing for her is marriage</td>
<td>25.5</td>
<td>51.4</td>
<td>***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Women sometimes deserve to be beaten</td>
<td>24.9</td>
<td>38.8</td>
<td>***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Men should have the final say in family matters</td>
<td>58.9</td>
<td>70.6</td>
<td>**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A girl must get married to a boy if she spent the night with him</td>
<td>32.6</td>
<td>51.2</td>
<td>***</td>
</tr>
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</table>

* p<.05  **p<.01  ***p<.001