

Global Early Adolescent Study (GEAS)



GEAS Toolkit

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European Dissemination meeting in Ghent.

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Gender norms scale

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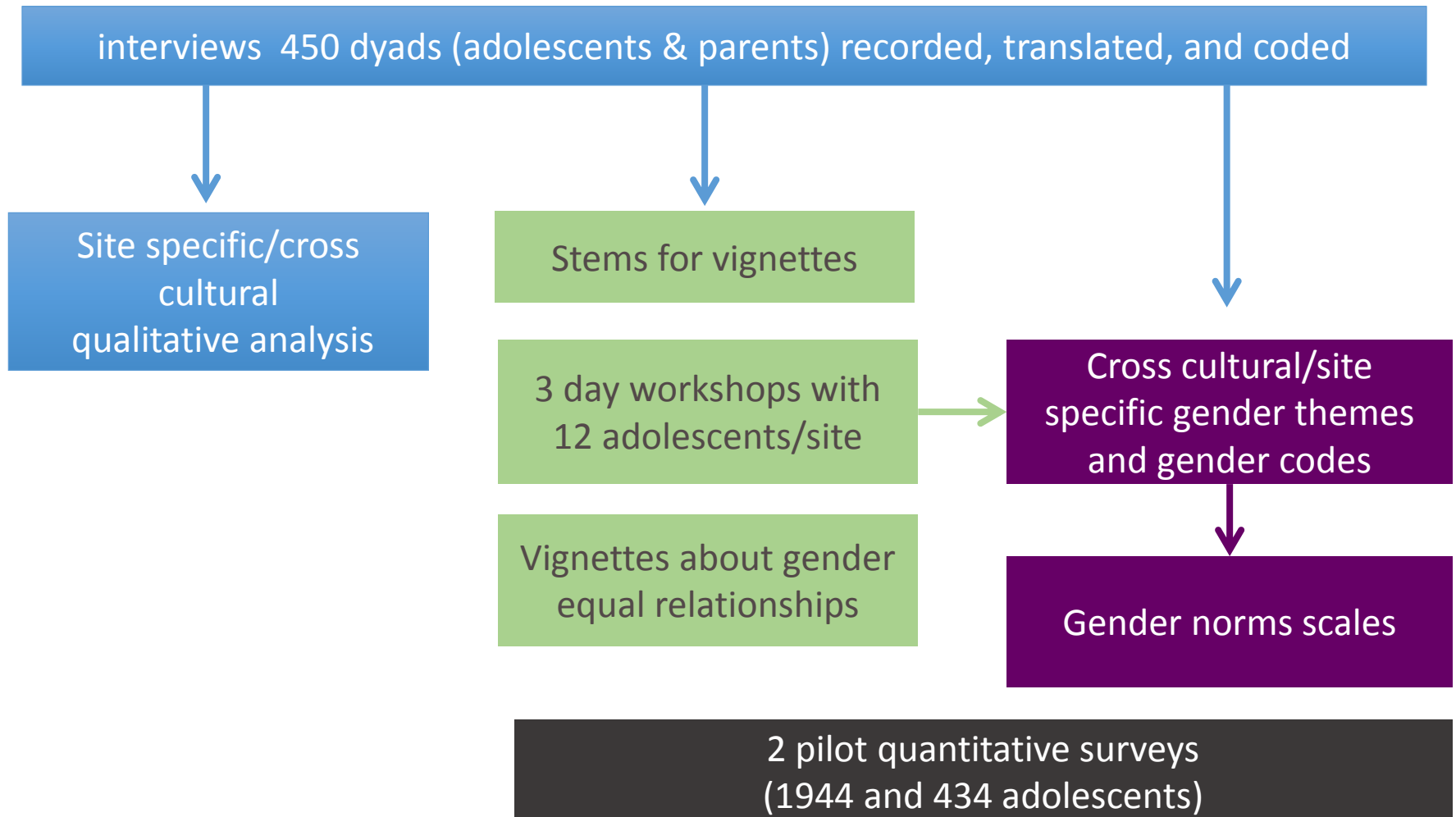
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Development premise

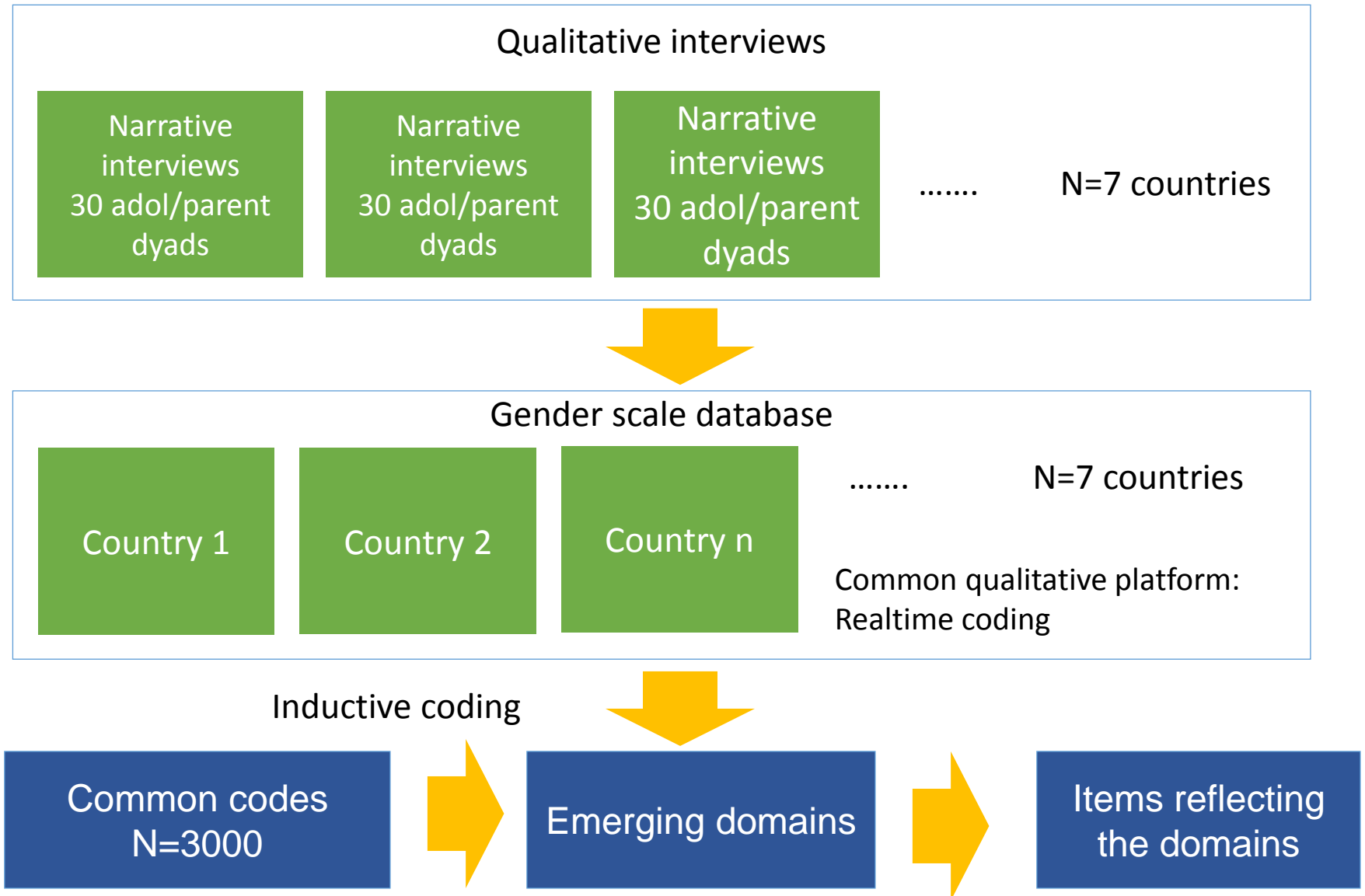
Hypothesis & theoretical perspective

- Gender is a social construct rather than a trait based on biology
- All societies are in one way or another patriarchal
- Gender intensification hypothesis: in early adolescence, gender “opens up” again as part of transition into adulthood

Mixed methods & cascading approach



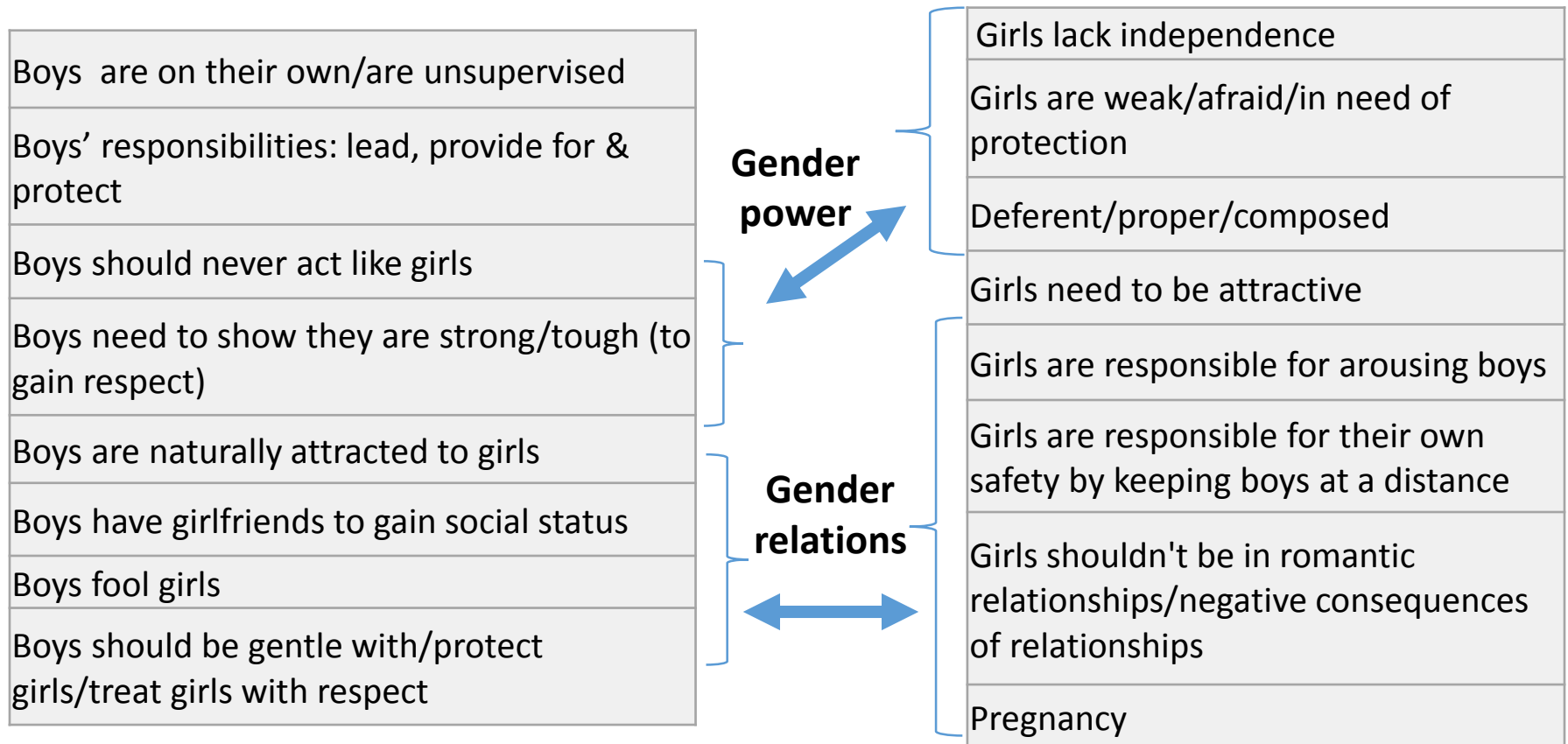
Scale development process



Exploratory data analysis

Exploratory factor analysis:

8 sites (Kinshasa, Assiut, Shanghai, Ouagadougou, Nairobi, Hanoi, Ile-Ife, Blantyre)



Cross cultural scales

- Gender relations in early adolescents
 - Sexual double standard
 - Masculine sexual prowess
 - Normative heterosexual relations
- Gender stereotypical traits in early adolescents
 - Masculine toughness/feminine vulnerability

Sexual double standard

	Total	Assiut	Blantyre	Cuenca	Ghent	Hanoi	Kinshasa
Boys have girlfriends for fun more than love	0.70	0.16	0.69	0.80	0.51	0.41	0.68
Girls who have boyfriends are irresponsible	0.63	0.77	0.86	0.53	0.40	0.54	0.39
Girls are the victims of rumors if they have boyfriends	0.65	0.73	0.33	0.61	0.55	0.49	0.76
Boys tell girls they love them when they don't	0.74	0.48	0.70	0.74	0.78	0.58	0.51
Girls should avoid boys because they trick them into having sex	0.70	0.71	0.80	0.75	0.46	0.45	0.62
Boys have girlfriends to show off to their friends	0.78	0.54	0.75	0.87	0.77	0.39	0.67
Boys feel they should have girlfriends because their friends do	0.62		0.53	0.73	0.38		0.70
Boys lose interest in a girl after they have sex with her	0.76	0.65	0.53	0.83	0.58	0.60	0.66
Boys fool girls into having sex	0.79	0.68	0.60	0.89	0.59	0.39	0.70
Polychoric Cronbach alpha	0.89	0.81*	0.89	0.87	0.70	0.59*	0.85

Sexual double standard scale: distribution

Scale construction: mean score across 9 items, range from 1 to 5.

The higher the score, the higher the endorsement of sexual double standard.

	Boys	Girls
	3.3	3.5
Assiut	3.6	4.3
Blantyre	4.5	3.9
Cuenca	3.3	3.3
Ghent	2.4	2.4
Hanoi	2.7	2.7
Kinshasa	3.7	4.1

Normative heterosexual relations in early adolescence

	Total	Assiut	Blantyre	Cuenca	Ghent	Hanoi	Kinshasa
It is ok for a boy and a together alone	0.6	0.79	0.63	0.66	0.57	0.62	0.45
a boy should be able to have a girlfriend if he wants to	0.73	0.81	0.86	0.71	0.64	0.78	0.56
It's normal for a boy to want a girlfriend	0.77	0.84	0.8	0.74	0.77	0.77	0.75
a girl should be able to have a boyfriend if she wants to	0.71	0.81	0.9	0.77	0.52	0.79	0.38
It's normal for a girl to want a boyfriend	0.73	0.85	0.72	0.67	0.71	0.76	0.61
Polychoric Cronbach alpha	0.84	0.91	0.87	0.8	0.77	0.83	0.68

Normative heterosexual relations in early adolescence

Scale construction: mean score across 5 items, range from 1 to 5.

The higher the score, the higher the endorsement of sexual double standard

	Boys	Girls
	3.3	2.8
Assiut	3.2	3.0
Blantyre	3.4	2.5
Cuenca	3.8	3.7
Ghent	3.5	3.2
Hanoi	3.1	2.8
Kinshasa	2.9	2.7

Correlation with romantic relationships

Has ever had boy-/girlfriend

		Sexual double standard			Normative views about heterosexual relationships		
		Mean score	95% CI		Mean score	95% CI	
Boys	no	3.2	3	3.5	2.6	2.3	2.8
	yes	3.3	3.1	3.5	3.7	3.5	3.9
Girls	no	3.6	3.4	3.8	2.4	2.2	2.6
	yes	3.0	2.7	3.3	3.5	3.2	3.8

➤ Score normative views of heterosexual relationships = more positive views

➤ Score sexual double standard = greater endorsement sexual double standard

Conclusions

There are common social norms regulating gender relations in early adolescence

- Normative expectations consistent within and across sites = strong social norms
- Discordant norms for girls: sexual double standard and normative expectations about romantic relations

Next steps

- How do gender norms evolve over time?
- Longitudinal associations with SRH indicators

Vignettes-based measure of gender equality

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Objective

The objective of the vignettes-based measure is to assess gender equality using stories about typical interpersonal relationships among young adolescents.

Vignettes development process

- Three day focus groups with groups of 10-12 young adolescents in each of 15 sites
- Each group identified common situations that young adolescents find themselves in
- Groups prioritized the topics/situations
- Groups began with general discussion followed by a role play of the situation, first with a girl (or boy) in the lead then with the other sex in the lead
- Researchers took notes on the storyline developed, the questions generated, and possible responses
- Stories were compared across sites and common stories were identified

Prototype themes

1. Romantic interest: boy likes girl
2. *Freedom of movement: girl wants to go out with friends*
3. Gender off-diagonal: girls who act more like boys
4. Puberty: satisfaction and embarrassment
5. *Appropriate clothing for a young adolescent*
6. Pregnancy

Question and response option coding

- Face validity and pilot tested across sites
- Codes developed for response options, often with a range of possible interpretations
- Codes revised based on partner feedback
- Codes for individual questions structured wherever possible to range from low to high (or other directionality)
- Domains identified conceptually

Vignettes measure domains

- Self confidence
- Communication style
- Assertiveness
- Emotional responsiveness
- Parent responsiveness/concern
- Stigma
- Responsibility

P is in 7th grade. He is attracted to A, who is in the same grade, but he doesn't know her and has never spoken with her in person. Most of his friends have girlfriends but he has never had one before. He wants to get her attention, but is not sure how.

What do you think P will do next?

1	Ask if any of the girls are going to the party	<i>Indirect = 1</i>
2	Ask A directly if she is going to the party	<i>Direct = 2</i>
3	Get a friend to ask A if she is going to the party	<i>Indirect = 1</i>
4	Say nothing and hope that someone else will ask A if she is going	<i>Direct = 2</i>
5	Ask A's friend if she knows if A is going to the party	<i>Avoidance = 0</i>

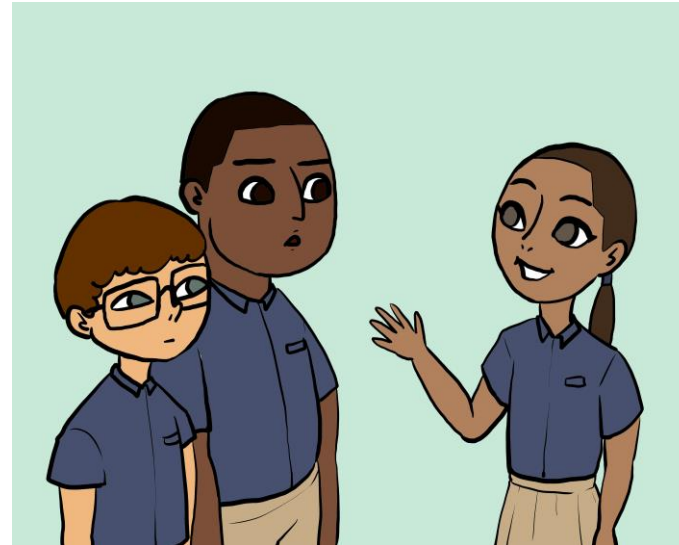
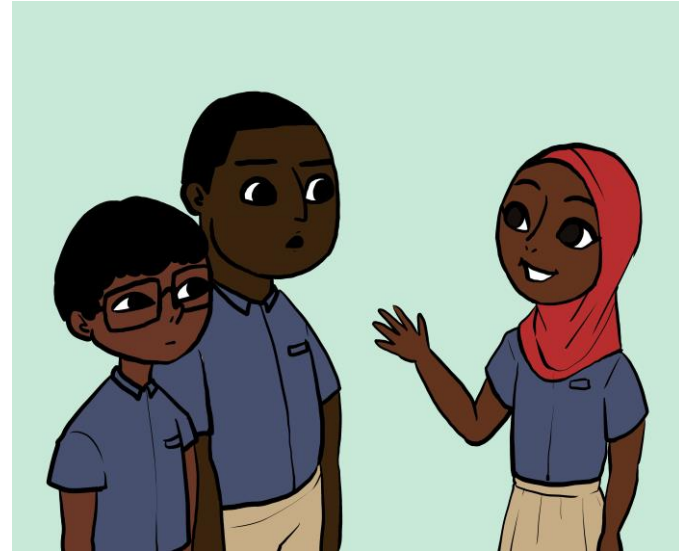
Responses by sex of protagonist and respondent sex

Respondent sex	Male protagonist	Female protagonist
Boy	1.51	1.53
Girl	1.35	1.30

Repilot: 4 vignettes with one flip

1. Romantic interests: boy likes girl
2. Gender off-diagonal: girls who act more like boys
Forced response of taking the other sex perspective
3. Puberty: satisfaction and embarrassment
4. Pregnancy

Culturally appropriate youth-generated images inserted into vignettes



Empowerment scale

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What is empowerment?

No single definition exists.

The process of enhancing an individual's or group's capacity to make effective choices, that is, to make choices and then to transform those choices into desired actions and outcomes.

—The World Bank

Empowerment

- A goal in itself and a means to achieving other health outcomes
- Ability to exercise agency and achieve outcomes also depends on the external environment, including legal, political, and social dimensions
- Universal vs. context-specific

Methodology

Identified 3 domains of empowerment hypothesized to be relevant to adolescents 10-14.

1. Voice: the ability to contribute opinions and feel heard
My parents or guardians ask for my opinion on things
2. Behavioral control & decision making: the ability to make choices about daily and future decisions
What clothes to wear when you are not in school/working
3. Freedom of movement: the ability to move around in the environment with limited supervision or permission
Go to after-school activities (like sports clubs)

Methodology

- Ran confirmatory factor analysis across all items, pooled and country specific
- Identified items that did not load were excluded
 - Behavioral control and decision-making
 - Decision-making about when and whom to marry are a separate scale

Voice

How often are the following statements true for you?

My parents or guardians ask for my opinions on things

My parents or guardians listen when I share my opinion

My friends ask my advice when they have a problem

If I see something wrong in school or the neighborhood I feel I can tell someone and they will listen

I can speak up in class when I have a comment or question

I can speak up when I see someone else being hurt

I can ask adults for help when I need it

Cronbach's alpha .85

Decision-making

How often are you able to make each of the following decisions on your own, without an adult?

What clothes to wear when you are not in school/working

What to do in your free time

What to eat when you are not at home

How much education you will get (eg. [site specific])

Who you can have as friends

Cronbach's alpha .71

Freedom of movement

Can you tell me how often you are allowed to do the following without an adult present:

Go to after-school activities (like sports clubs)

Go to a party with boys and girls

Meet with friends after school

Go to a community center/movies/youth center

Visit a friend of the opposite sex

Cronbach's alpha .74

Results

Alphas for all 3 subscales were generally high across country sites.

	Voice	Decision-making	Freedom of movement
Belgium	.78	.63	.75
Bolivia	.77	.65	.65
Burkina	.72	.72	.82
China	.88	.80	.77
DRC	.72	.56	.62
Egypt	.71	.70	.61
Kenya	.73	.68	.63
Malawi	.77	.52	.59
Nigeria	.76	.63	.78
Vietnam	.70	.61	.76

Conclusion

- Some aspects of empowerment appear to be universal, but there is evidence that context matters
- This is the first evidence that empowerment as a concept can be evaluated among adolescents 10-14
- Further investigation will examine whether empowerment is associated with outcomes
- Additional rounds will also include questions to examine economic empowerment

Health measure

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World Health Organization

GEAS health measure domains

Health outcomes

- Physical Health
- Mental Health
 - Depression
 - Substance abuse
- Gender-based violence
- Healthy sexuality
 - Puberty/body comfort
- Sexual health
 - Romantic relationships
 - Peer sexual norms
 - Sexual knowledge
 - Sexual behaviors
- Empowerment

Ecological influences

- Individual
 - Sociodemographics
- Family
 - Structure
 - Connectedness
 - Monitoring
- Peers
 - Structure
 - Attitudes/beliefs
- School
 - Structure
 - Connectedness
- Neighborhood/media
 - Cohesion
 - Social control

Pilot testing

Face validity study

- 20 adolescents 10-14 years in 15 sites
- Reading and comprehension

Pilot testing

- 120 adolescents 10-14 years in 13 sites

Repilot testing

- 75 adolescents 10-14 years in 6 sites

