

This is the pre-publication version of an article submitted to ***Social Indicators Research***.

Published as:

Camfield, Laura (2010) "'Even if she learns, she doesn't understand properly'. Children's understanding of illbeing and poverty in five Ethiopian communities", ***Social Indicators Research*** 96: 85-112 .

The final publication is available at Springer via <http://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/s11205-009-9468-z#page-1> (DOI 10.1007/s11205-009-9468-z.)

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“Even if she learns, she doesn’t understand properly”. Children’s understandings of illbeing and poverty in five Ethiopian communities

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Abstract

The paper argues on the basis of data from *Young Lives* and an extensive review of child-centred poverty studies that experiences of relative poverty and social exclusion are as common and corrosive in contemporary Ethiopia as North America and Europe. If taken seriously, this insight could broaden the focus of child poverty reduction from nutrition and education to include the psychosocial costs of lacking the culturally-specific resources required for full participation in society. The paper makes a number of methodological points of value to researchers undertaking similar studies: firstly, poverty can be explored by asking about illbeing; secondly, children's conceptions of poverty are profoundly social and context-specific; and thirdly, young children are just as able to address these themes as older ones.

1. INTRODUCTION

Many researchers argue that in developing country contexts poverty and illbeing are distinct, but related concepts, and this is supported by a body of qualitative research using group and individual methods (Narayan et al., 2000; Tiwari, 2009). Poverty and illbeing can be conceptualized as either end of a continuum that stretches from ‘income poverty’ (unidimensional, economic, e.g. one dollar-a-day indicator) to ‘human poverty’ (plural dimensions, some non-economic, e.g. the Human Development and Human Poverty indices) to ‘multidimensional poverty’ (many dimensions, not all currently collected, see Alkire, 2007), and finally to ‘illbeing’ (holistic, contextual, person-centred, primarily explored through qualitative methods [Camfield et al., 2009a]). Participatory research into how adults living in material poverty define and experience poverty is increasingly common in developed and developing countries (but c.f. Cornwall and Fujita, 2007 who challenge the accuracy of this label), highlighting the importance of experiential aspects such as being respected and able to preserve one's dignity, and having meaningful choices (e.g. Brock, 1999). The extent to which these findings can be generalized to children remains to be seen. While qualitative research on perceptions of poverty and inequality has been carried out with children in North America and Europe (reviewed in Attree 2006 and Redmond 2008), there are fewer studies in developing countries, perhaps because asking poor children in the global South about poverty is felt to be ethically precarious (Bennet and Roberts, 2004). Boyden et al.’s (2003) study of children’s experiences in five developing and transition economies note the “absence of children’s voices in the literature on child poverty” which means that “there is still far too little understanding of how children experience poverty, what

impoverishment means to them, or how their perceptions and priorities interact with those of local communities and the agendas of international agencies” (ibid, p21).

The paper reports data from a study that used concepts of living well and badly as a vehicle for a qualitative exploration of Ethiopian children’s understandings of poverty. It reviews qualitative literature on children’s understandings of poverty¹, mainly from Europe and USA, and explores whether their predominant conception of poverty as comprising social exclusion, inequality, and stigmatisation is equally applicable in an Ethiopian context. The paper discusses two overarching questions – firstly, the salience of research on the psychosocial effects of ‘relative poverty’ in a context of ‘absolute poverty’, and secondly, whether material deprivation can still be described as the defining feature of poverty. It does this by addressing three specific research questions: firstly, how do understandings of ill-being differ between different types of community and children of different ages and genders within those communities? Secondly, what is the place of material poverty in children’s understandings of ill-being? And thirdly, are there statistically significant differences in outcomes for the child poverty indicators identified by the respondents between children from households whose expenditure per person is in the top or bottom 20 percent of the sample (top and bottom expenditure quintiles)?

The questions are addressed using qualitative and quantitative data from children aged 5 to 6 and 11 to 13 who are participating in *Young Lives*, a 15 year, four-country longitudinal study of child poverty. The quantitative data is drawn from the second round of *Young Lives* survey, which was conducted across 20 sentinel sites in Ethiopia in 2006 (Child Questionnaire only, $n=979$), and the qualitative from group activities with children from five communities in the five main regions of Ethiopia (two urban, three rural, $n=100$). In addition to a rich discussion about what it means to live well or badly, which is reported in the paper, the groups generated and in some cases ranked a set of child poverty indicators. These indicators are then applied to *Young Lives* survey data and the outcomes of children from the top and bottom expenditure quintiles of the survey sample are compared. Independent samples *t*-tests are used to test the significance of between-group differences (Mann–Whitney U for non-normal subscales) and significant differences are reported when levels of confidence are higher than 95% (Fisher’s criteria).

The first section of the paper reviews qualitative literature on children’s understandings of poverty, focusing on studies that highlight the social costs of poverty. The second section briefly describes the quantitative and qualitative methodologies, including sites, sampling, and ethical considerations. Qualitative and quantitative results are presented in the third section, and discussed in the fourth and final section.

¹ While there are a few studies in the UK and internationally that use similar methods to those used in the paper to identify children’s priorities in relation to poverty (reviewed in Camfield et al., 2009b), the outputs typically report the indicators rather than the discussion which gives no sense of the research or social contexts in which they were constructed. For this reason the review focuses on in-depth studies that give a sense of the meanings behind the indicators.

LITERATURE REVIEW

In her child-centred study of children living in poverty in the UK, Ridge (2003) emphasises that while her respondents were “active social agents” (p9) and used a range of strategies to enhance their participation, “they were also engaged in an intense social and personal endeavor to maintain social acceptance and social inclusion within the accepted cultural demands of childhood – a struggle that was defined and circumscribed by the material and social realities of their lives” (ibid). She characterizes this as “the relational impact of poverty” (ibid, p7); a phenomenon also noted by Redmond (2008) who observes that “what concerns children is not lack of resources per se, but exclusion from activities that other children appear to take for granted, and embarrassment and shame at not being able to participate on equal terms with other children” (p1). For children in Europe and the UK this involves inability to participate fully in education (Wikely et al., 2007; Taylor and Nelms, 2006) or recreation (Daly and Leonard, 1997; Roker, 1998; Bentley et al., 1999) and fear of exclusion through not having the right signifiers (Middleton et al., 1994; Daly and Leonard, 2002; Ridge, 2002; Attree, 2004; Tekola, 2008) – what Ridge (2002a) calls ‘fitting in’ and ‘joining in’ (p59-84). Willow (2001) describes the “subtle badges of poverty [that] cast poor children and young people aside from their peers” (p7) and although these tokens are different in Ethiopia, awareness of them is equally sharp. For example, a recurrent theme of Tekola’s (2009) study of children living in poverty in Addis Ababa is the importance of being able “to stand equal with other children” and have the appropriate resources for participation, which meant that children who were unable to get pocket money or earn wages tended to be permanently excluded. For example, one of her respondents, Endale describes how sad he becomes when local children exclude him from their football matches because he only has a ball made from discarded plastic bags: “they play with their own ball - the big one - and when they refuse to let me in I say to them ‘didn’t I allow you to play with my plastic ball’ and they would say that my plastic bag ball did not compare with their big ball and would refuse to let me in” (p76). Endale’s experiences demonstrate that the way poverty undermines children’s social interactions and relationships with others can be far more important to them than material deprivation. Boyden and Cooper (2006) illustrate this with an example from rural Bolivia where “despite knowing full well that chronic shortages of water have a significant effect on livelihoods and on the survival and health of humans and livestock, children highlighted above all the humiliation of being unable to wash and therefore being labeled smelly, dirty, and poor” (p9).

Stigma and shame emerge as important themes in all the studies – according to Attree (2004, p59) “the constraints on social participation associated with poverty mean that children begin to understand the reality of being ‘different’ at an early age” (Roker, 1998; Ridge, 2002) and Boyden et al. (2003) also notes that “the fact that children are so sensitive to the pressures and opinions of their peers helps to explain why they experience the humiliation of poverty far more deeply than adults generally assume” (Weinger, 2000; Witter and Bukohe, 2004). This can lead to children blaming their parents or themselves for their poverty (Willow,

2001) and internalizing negative stereotypes that increase their sense of isolation (Weinger, 2000; Fortier, 2006).

The studies also report worrying examples of lowered expectations, what Attree (2006, p54) describes as “a gradual narrowing of their horizons, both socially and economically [...which] can lead to the perception that economic and social limitations are ‘natural’ and normal, thus impacting on children’s life expectations” (p54). Children apparently try to protect their parents from finding out how poverty affects their lives, and are acutely sensitive to their parents’ financial pressures, for example, by moderating their demands for things they need or want and excluding themselves from activities they know their parents will not be able to afford (Roker, 1998; Ridge, 2002; Van der Hoek, 2005). Middleton et al. (1994) describe the psychological costs of this strategy as while children limit their demands on parents when they know they cannot fulfill them “they continue to want the same things [...] what is clear is that many poorer children experience daily frustration of their economic aspirations” (p150).

In addition to examples of self-exclusion, the studies report experiences of discrimination (e.g. being chased out of local officials’ offices, Witter and Bukohe, 2004, p650-1) and visible inequalities which were “as much about processes of interaction, choice, trust, acceptance, autonomy and interdependence as they were about material possessions” (Backett-Milburn et al., 2003, p618). Nonetheless, material inequalities were important; these were primarily in relation to quality of schooling (Giese et al., 2002; Crowley and Vulliamy, 2005; Harpham et al., 2005; Taylor and Nelms 2006; Sutton et al., 2007), however, one respondent in Fortier’s (2006) study feared they might extend to the life beyond: ““I wonder if I pass away . . . it’ll be . . . like a poor heaven?”” (p122).

Before reporting the findings of our study, I will briefly outline three distinguishing characteristics of children’s understandings of poverty noted by child-focused studies conducted in other developing countries (e.g. Bonn et al., 1999; Giese et al., 2002; Harpham et al, 2005; Johnson, 2006). The first is the subtlety of children’s understandings, for example, according to Boyden et al. (2003) researchers in Bolivia were struck by the level of detail used by children in discussing poverty and their sensitivity to the various degrees and gradations of impoverishment. This insight is supported by Harpham et al.’s (2005) participatory child poverty assessment in Vietnam where children distinguished those who eat rice with salt and sesame from those who eat it with fish or meat. Children in these studies also identify ways in which ‘rich’ children can be poor (Witter and Bukohe, 2004; Tekola, 2009), for example, in the quality of their relationships (their parents may work long hours in the formal sector), or because of intra-household discrimination (as an orphan or foster-child they may not have the same access to household resources).

The precision of children's accounts relates to the second distinguishing characteristic which is their grounded and context-specific nature. The studies reviewed suggest that children's understandings of poverty are relative and embedded and informed predominantly by their own experiences and those of their social circle (Backett-Milburn et al., 2003). For example, Boyden et al. (2003) notes children's focus on ways poverty affects them on an immediate or daily basis and reduces their abilities and freedoms (for example, Maasai children's unhappiness at making a long trip to school in 'firestones' - sandals made from discarded Firestone rubber tires, p31). While the "personal effects of alcoholism, family separation, ill health and so on, are far more immediate and dramatic than, say, structural adjustment programs" (ibid, p77), this does not mean that children are not aware of the social and political factors underpinning individual misfortune. See for example, the historical sensitivity shown by children in Bonn et al.'s (1999) study of attitudes towards poverty and inequality in South Africa: "it is because our forefathers used to be servants to the whites and were paid only with food and so they did not have money to educate their children, so we have poor people, because they did not have the chance to go to school" (p602-3).

Despite the grounded nature of children's accounts, their third distinguishing characteristic was their thematic breadth, spanning personal, emotional, spiritual, family, and historical factors, and this is especially evident in studies where the same methods were used with adults (Witter and Bukohe, 2004; Harpham et al., 2005; Camfield and Tafere, 2009). I return to this taxonomy at the end of Section 3 to see whether it's supported by our data; the following section introduces and reflects upon the methodology used for data collection.

2. METHODOLOGY

This section introduces *Young Lives* and describes the two main data collection methods for the data analysed in this paper: the qualitative group activities (subsection 2.1), which were used with older and younger children, and the quantitative child questionnaire, which was only answered by older children (subsection 2.2). The subsection on the qualitative research provides additional information on the five qualitative sites and sampling within those sites (2.1.1); methods, specifically the well-being exercise used in the group activities (2.1.2); and ethics (2.1.3), for example, the implications of asking children living in contexts of poverty about illbeing.

Young Lives is a major international project on child poverty (2000-2015) funded by the UK Department for International Development (DfID). It was initiated as a 'millennium study' and recruited 8,000 children born at the turn of the millennium (2000/1), along with 4,000 children who were eight years old at the time (born 1994/5) from Ethiopia, Andhra Pradesh (India), Peru and Vietnam. Together they comprise the two study 'cohorts' who, along with their caregivers, are participating every few years in a data-gathering survey that collects information on diverse aspects of their lives and livelihoods. The first survey round took place in

2002 and provided baseline information about *Young Lives* children, their households and communities. Separate survey instruments are administered to older cohort children, their caregivers and community members. The completion of the second round of data collection in 2006-7 and subsequent rounds scheduled every few years through to 2015 will track changes in children's circumstances and enable longitudinal analyses. The qualitative component was introduced in 2007 as an integrated sub-study, using qualitative research methods to explore in greater depth the lives of 204 *Young Lives* children across the four study countries over the remainder of the project.

2.1. Qualitative data

The process of selecting the five qualitative sites and sampling equal numbers of boys and girls from the younger and older cohort ($n=100$, 60 case study children and 40 reserves) is described below.

2.1.1 Site selection and sampling

Five sites were selected from the five regions sampled by the survey following consultation with the *Young Lives* quantitative team and analysis of survey data from Round 1 covering perceptions of poverty, household utilities and services, educational participation, child work, parental education and ethnicity. The sites comprised two urban communities (*Debre*, Addis Ababa and *Yoboki*, Awassa) and three rural, two of which were relatively remote (*Bale*, Oromia, *Angar*, Tigray, and *Aksum*, Amhara). The communities are described below - pseudonyms have been used throughout to protect the identities of children and their communities.

Debre is a densely populated community in the national capital (14,066 inhabitants) which is ethnically and religiously diverse, albeit with a predominance of the Amhara ethnic group and Ethiopian Orthodox Christians. While indicators of absolute poverty were low, respondents nonetheless perceived themselves as poor relative to others in the community, suggesting the presence of material inequalities. *Debre* is located next to the city's fruit and vegetable market, which provides economic opportunities for adults and children (e.g. street vending or carrying goods for cash), but is dirty due to rotting fruit and vegetables. Young girls also reported harassment in the public spaces, and caregivers were concerned that children were exposed to prostitution, gambling, and the consumption of home brewed alcohol and drugs.

Bale is a comparatively small (2,835) and ethnically homogenous community (predominately Oromiffa speaking Orthodox Christians, with a few Muslim families). It has good natural resources (for example, irrigated fields for vegetable growing) and a temperate climate, but is nonetheless materially poor. The community has poor access to formal healthcare and educational participation is low, partly because

education only goes up to grade 6 of primary school, although some children stay with relatives in a nearby town in order to study further.

Angar is a similar size to *Bale* and also ethnically homogenous (exclusively Tigrinya-speaking Orthodox Christians). However, it is more remote as the nearest town is two to three hours on foot and the road is only usable in the 'dry season'. Respondents were materially poor, participated in government 'safety net programmes' such as the Food for Work scheme, and had limited access to electricity and piped water. Male educational participation was low, as boys were needed to herd cattle. While almost every neighbourhood has a primary school covering grades one to four, there is only one 'second cycle' primary school (grades five to eight) and depending on location children can travel up to 1.5 hours to attend it, often across difficult and isolated terrain (the nearest secondary school is in the town).

Aksum is situated in the middle of the central Amhara plains on the outskirts of a small town. The town has begun to influence life in the village, in tandem with the construction of an asphalt road and preparations for electrification. The population of 9,107 is predominately composed of Amhara Orthodox Christians whose livelihood depends on farming. While there are local primary schools and a secondary school in the adjacent town, there are no kindergartens, and the government health centre is described as ineffective.

Yoboki is the oldest neighborhood of Awassa, the capital of Southern Ethiopian Nationalities, Nations and People's region (SNNP). Its population is estimated at 23,000 and is predominantly Wolayta and Sidama Christians. The area is densely populated due to high in-migration from rural areas with as many 15 to 20 people occupying dilapidated Kebele houses, which date from Imperial times. Most adults and children are engaged in petty trade, daily labor, street vending, or driving a cart, although there is some regular employment from the expansion of further and higher education in the region. It has an excellent range of government, public and private educational institutes within easy reach.

After the sites had been selected, sampling of case study children took place using survey data from Rounds 1 and 2. Age and gender were the main criteria (equal numbers of children from the older and younger cohorts, and within each cohort of boys and girls), but access to schooling and indicators of vulnerability such as orphanhood were also used.

2.1.2. Methods

The methods used in the qualitative research aim to be child-focused and participatory, multi-actor, flexible and reflexive, mixed- and multi-method, and responsive to ethical issues. It comprises a toolkit of methods that have been developed for application in diverse cultural contexts, including methods based on conversation, drawing (e.g. the 'well-being exercise' reported in section 3.1 where children are asked to

think about and draw 'a girl or a boy of their age in the community and living a good or bad life'), writing (e.g. a daily activity diary), and other activity-based techniques (e.g. creating a timeline of significant events in the child's life). The individual methods form part of a broader methodology that was inspired by several recent strands of research developing child-focused participatory techniques (see Crivello et al., 2009). The data analysed in 3.1 come from a 'well-being exercise' conducted separately with ten boys and ten girls in each site, split into one group of older boys, one of older girls, and a mixed group of younger children (15 groups in total).

2.1.3 Ethical aspects

Building a rapport

The qualitative research team comprised equal numbers of men and women who spoke a mix of languages (Amharic [the language of official communication], Oromiffa, Tigrinya), enabling respondents to speak in the language with which they felt most comfortable. The researchers were able to build on the long relationship developed by the survey teams who have been visiting the communities since 2000, and the lead researcher ensured that one researcher who had previously done fieldwork in that community accompanied the team on the initial visit to facilitate introductions. Researchers took pictures of children with their families, which were distributed during fieldwork to remind respondents of the earlier visit. During the fieldwork, group activities were scheduled before individual interviews so that children and caregivers would feel more familiar with the researchers, and researchers tried to participate in children's daily lives as much as the three-week fieldwork period allowed - for example, playing games with them, visiting their houses and in some instances eating together.

Obtaining informed consent

Although the survey team had obtained formal consent from participants and the project had received approval from University ethics committees and equivalent bodies in the UK and Ethiopia, the researchers needed to establish the willingness of local authorities and participants to enter into a new level of engagement. Instead of the common practice of obtaining a signed consent form before the interview, the team opted for a longer but less bureaucratic process of obtaining consent through regularly checking participants' willingness to participate and reminding them of their right to disengage whenever they wanted to. This right was exercised on several occasions. For example, in the urban site some adults and children declined to participate in the interviews, and in the remote rural site two children asked to leave in the middle of the group activities and were taken home by their caregivers. In fact, problems relating to participation mainly involved caregivers' feeling that their children had been excluded because of the small size of the qualitative sample, and some refused to return home, despite being assured that their participation wasn't required (Morrow, 2009).

Asking children about illbeing and poverty

Asking about poverty, however obliquely, presents specific methodological and ethical problems (Weinger, 2000; Willow, 2001; Ridge, 2002b; Attree, 2006; Sutton, 2007). Sime (2008) warns about the danger of assuming that “for people living in deprivation poverty is the first frame of reference” (p66) as “many children [in the study] saw their family as ‘resourceful’ in terms of social and cultural capital, although they talked about their families having limited finances to access other, more expensive services” (ibid). Johnson (2006) similarly notes in the context of group activities with children in Peru that privileging economic indicators narrows the lens of observation. During piloting of an exercise exploring children’s understandings of poverty in Andhra Pradesh (autumn, 2008) I observed that it generated only material indicators and subsequent discussion with researchers suggested that this was because children were ‘primed’ by their social studies textbooks and from their mothers’ participation in regional participatory poverty assessments to identify households below the poverty line.

A further question is whether asking about wellbeing is appropriate in situations of severe deprivation (Bevan, 2007). The holistic and subjective focus of wellbeing approaches could be perceived as intrusive and fieldworkers may not be prepared for people to respond with experiences of depression and abuse. Abstract concepts such as illbeing and poverty and creative methods in general may be difficult for children with little experience of schooling. For example, in *Bale* there was a noticeable difference between two participants who had been going to school for three and five years respectively, and were also physically dominating, and the other three who needed assistance in writing and drawing. The researcher described how “some of them seem very shy, tense, reluctant in responding and easily lose their attention to any of the external activities here” and noted a big difference between “those who have the exposure to schooling [who] are free, easily communicating and responding [more] quickly than those who joined [schooling] later”. Although the exercise continued and generated some interesting data, it may not have been enjoyable for the children who could not express themselves through drawing and “responded slowly with great fear and frustration”.

There was a similar situation in *Yoboki* where the researcher noted that one of the older girls who was petite and had only just started school, despite being the same age as the others, was “slow in thinking [and] has difficulty writing indicators and in drawing”, although in this case the facilitator was able to help her. A more difficult situation occurred among the older boys in *Yoboki* where “one of the children had been observed explaining his own life experiences in ranking for well being criteria. And it has also been observed that three of them are relatively from good family and have good livelihood compared to Tefere as they attended the session wearing relatively better clothes than him”. Fortunately in this case participants were observed “explaining and communicating to each other about each topic without fear and being relaxed”. In *Angar*, however, one of participants seemed “very shy and looked worried”. This was because she is “the only one

who is still in grade one and is not able to read and write [so] she was isolated and [felt] less important than the rest of the group and she was repeating what the others said". Although the facilitator tried to make her feel comfortable "there was a tendency that when the girls were asked to think about a girl of their age who is not doing well, they were all turning their face and staring at her, which worsened the situation of the girl, and they were openly discussing about her not going to school. Similarly, when they were asked to think about a girl of their age who is doing well, they were looking at one of the girls who look good, well dressed and clean".

On one occasion the exercise didn't work at all: it was in the researchers' first field site, a remote community in Tigray (*Angar*), where there are no preschools and young children rarely meet children outside their household. Consequently, the children were shy and the researcher described how "some of them cried when they were told to draw and another boy also cried so that two of them were sent to their mothers". When they were asked to 'think about a girl or a boy of their age in the community living a good or bad life' they did not respond, even when the question was asked in many different ways. The notetaker observes that "the facilitator asked if they could draw pictures, but they could not draw them. Then the facilitator told them that she will draw pictures for them and she asked them to choose the kind of picture to be drawn; still there was no response. Then, the facilitator directly asked them how they would explain good life; she asked them by explaining the question in many ways; there was no response after this. The other facilitator started to ask them in a different way, just by asking them specific questions like what do they like to eat..." For this reason the younger cohort data from *Angar* (not reported here) tells us that a good life involves "locally made bread, biscuits, oranges, banana, and carrots" and that "dogs are kind".

2.2. Quantitative data

Young Lives administered questionnaires to 12,000 children and their caregivers in 2002 and 2006 (3,000 per country). The paper uses older cohort data from the 2006 Ethiopian survey (n=979²) as this addresses aspirations and expectations directly and was collected one year before the qualitative research. The Child Questionnaire focuses on children's activities, experiences, and relationships, and covers i) school and activities, ii) health, iii) social networks, iv) feelings and attitudes, v) relationships with parents, and vi) perceptions of the household's economic status and future aspirations. The majority of the data analysed in section 3.2 comes from sections iv) and v) of the Child Questionnaire.

3. RESULTS

3.1. Qualitative data on illbeing³

² The sample comprised 495 boys and 484 girls, 583 of whom came from rural areas and 396 from urban.

³ All data is taken from the fieldworkers' notes, which were written immediately after the activity and supplemented by listening to the audio-recording and noting verbatim quotes.

The section below reports indicators generated by the older and younger cohorts and ranks them according to how frequently they were mentioned⁴. Tentative comparisons are made between and within cohorts by location and gender, bearing in mind that the data for the younger cohort was generated by only four groups. This is followed by a discussion of the content of the highly ranked indicators, which relates the thought processes behind them (for example, clothing is important because it enables participation in economic activity) to the themes from the literature.

Younger Cohort

The most important indicator of poverty for younger children related to housing (Table 1b, for example, where families live in an old house or “they prepare food in the house as they have no kitchen”. This was followed by appearance, which is explored further below, particularly relating to whether the child was clean and had neat, well-oiled hair. Being able to sleep on a bed rather than a bench was important (this was not mentioned by the older cohort), as was having clean clothes and shoes. Two other aspects that were only mentioned by the younger cohort were i) working, for example, having responsibility for siblings (“a younger brother in the compound”) or going to the lowlands to herd goats and not getting back until dark, and ii) not having friends because they are quarrelsome or disobedient.

Being an orphan was only mentioned in the urban sites, reflecting a greater prevalence of orphans in urban areas. This was also the case for ‘psychosocial illbeing’, which comprised not having friends and crying all the time. Family follow-up, including educational materials, and healthcare were only mentioned in the rural site, as was livestock.

Table 1a: Indicators of illbeing from older cohort boys and girls in 5 communities (10 groups), ranked by frequency

Table 1b: Indicators of illbeing from younger cohort boys and girls in 4 communities (4 groups), ranked by frequency

⁴ The older cohort also ranked the indicators within each community and we have noted where these rankings differ from the picture given by a simple count of frequencies.

Older Cohort		
Indicator	No: of communities mentioned	Rank for indicator
Food	7	1 st
Education	6	2 nd
Clothing	6	
Housing	5	3 rd
Appearance	4	4 th
Behaviour	4	
Orphanage	3	5 th
Livestock	3	
Basic needs	2	6 th
Family follow-up	2	
Footwear	2	
Educational materials	1	7 th
Govt. school	1	
Land	1	
Psychosocial wellbeing	1	

Source for tables: *Young Lives* Qual-1 data, author's tabulation

Younger Cohort		
Indicator	No: of communities mentioned	Rank for indicator
Housing	4	1 st
Appearance	3	2 nd
Bed	3	
Clothing	3	
Education	3	
Food	3	
Footwear	3	
Work	3	
Psychosocial wellbeing	3	
Behaviour	2	
Cattle	1	4 th
Educational materials	1	
Family follow-up	1	
Healthcare	1	
Orphan	1	

Older Cohort

The main poverty indicators proposed by the older cohort were Food, for example, going to school without breakfast and having stomach pains caused by hunger, Clothing, and Education. Housing was also important – one group described living badly as having “a damaged house which is about to fall down [with] dung mixed with dirt in front of her house”- as were Appearance and Behaviour, for example, being “in peace” with family and neighbours and not pestering parents to provide more than they are able to. The rankings by older children within communities (Table 4, Appendix) presented a similar picture with a few subtle differences, for example, education ranked joint first with food in five communities, and while orphanage was only mentioned in three communities, it ranked first in two of those.

Three indicators were mentioned only by the older cohort (Govt. schooling, Land, Basic needs), possibly reflecting differences in age. For example, as most of the younger cohort had not started school, the differences in quality between government, public and private schools may not have become apparent. Similarly, although similar aspects were mentioned (e.g. food, education), it's possible that the younger cohort were not familiar with the term ‘basic needs’, which may have become common among older children through government or NGO discourses.

Aspects mentioned in urban areas, but not in rural included going to a government rather than a public or private school, and having family follow-up, including educational materials. In rural sites livestock and land

were mentioned, and indicators relating to presentation, for example, clothing, footwear and appearance were given higher priority. Food shortages were mentioned in one of the two urban sites and in all the rural ones. While in general boys and girls highlighted similar areas, only boys mentioned land and livestock and these were ranked highly.

Main poverty indicators for both groups

The five most frequently mentioned indicators for both the younger and older cohort were Appearance, Clothing, Education, Food, and Housing. Extracts from the discussions around three of these indicators – Education, Clothing, and Appearance – are reported below.

In *Debre* older girls described how a child living badly would either have no access to education or access only to a government school, or without school materials. Boys explained the consequences of not having a 'proper education' – he would disturb other children at school, wouldn't continue his learning and might end up a thief. Older girls in *Yoboki* gave a detailed account of the experiences of girls whose parents either couldn't send them to school or couldn't afford to support them while they were there - "her parent registered her at school (registration cost is not burden for them) but after that they have no capacity to fulfill what she need [...] Thus she does not have any opportunities. Unable to get what her friends have, even if she learns, she doesn't understand properly". Consequently she feels she is falling behind her friends because she is unable to learn attentively - "when she is learning rather she thinks about her life. She faces different problems and her mind become full of tension". The result of this is that she becomes pregnant at an early age and "watches when other children are going to and from school", "too fearful" to approach them. Boys in *Yoboki* whose parents couldn't afford a 'good' school would be taught at "a school with no chairs and not well made; it is a government school with no water for drinking, no books, and no place for studying". Younger children in *Yoboki* described how the absence of schooling or what they perceived as poor quality schooling (for example, religious schools) reduce children's ambition and encourage them to "spend their time with badly behaved children". In *Bale* and *Aksum* boys described having to herd cattle rather than go to school, and observed that if they went to school it would be "wearing only a shirt on top" (*Aksum*) as their parents couldn't afford to send them to school and clothe them.

The twin themes of clothing and appearance were important to both boys and girls, albeit for different reasons: for example, in *Bale* older boys observed that children 'couldn't work without clothes'. In *Angar* four of the top five indicators for girls related to appearance – being thin, having hair that hadn't been oiled and dressed, wearing torn, old clothes, and having a dirty body because the household couldn't afford soap. Boys also mentioned having sandals rather than shoes, worn-out clothes, and dirty hair. Physical stature was a recurrent theme, reflecting the high prevalence of stunting and wasting in rural Ethiopia, for example, older boys with "thin, spindly legs" and girls who "look hungry" in *Aksum*. Among younger children dirtiness

was associated with ugliness (see also Johnson, 2006) and not having any friends because of their appearance (*Debre*) or because they don't "fit in" (*Aksum*), for example, boys not having trousers and wearing "something weird on top".

On a methodological level the data supports the proposition introduced in the literature review that children's understandings of poverty are subtle, grounded, and impressively broad. It also confirms the emergent themes of exclusion from valued activities and social exclusion more broadly, shame, inequality and discrimination. Lowered expectations are also a theme, but only when the respondents talk about their imagined 'others', implying in some cases that (other) children living in poverty have brought their misfortune upon themselves: "he has no ambitions and doesn't think about the future, preferring to spend his time gambling" (*Yoboki*, older boys). In the following subsection we apply the child poverty indicators to *Young Lives* survey data and explore differences in outcomes by socio-economic status.

3.2. Applying the 'child illbeing indicators' to *Young Lives* survey data

The most highly ranked of the ill-being indicators generated by younger and older children were food, education, clothing, housing, and appearance. Woven through the discussion that surrounded these indicators was the importance of relationships, for example, having parents and receiving love and attention from them, and the effects of material and social deprivation on children's psychosocial wellbeing. The author found data with *Young Lives* Round 2 survey to represent the following areas:

- Educational participation (enrollment, missed more than one week of school)
- Orphanhood (one or more parent dead)
- Sufficient and varied diet (number of meals and different food groups eaten in the last 24 hours)
- Whether the house has a modern (iron) or traditional roof
- Social support and friendship (someone to turn to, number of friends, included in games by peers)
- Love and attention from parents (time and attention, always feel loved)
- Positive attitude towards the future (the gap between present and future position on the 'ladder of life' measure) and oneself (self-esteem index)
- Feeling respected by others (perception of respect index)
- Feeling able to change things (self-efficacy index⁵)

The outcomes for the indicators are reported below:

⁵ Dercon and Krishnan, 2009 describes the validation of these indices.

Table 2: Outcomes for selected child poverty indicators for children in the top and bottom expenditure quintiles (*Young Lives* Child Questionnaire, sub-sample $n=392$)

Indicator	Bottom expenditure quintile (poor)	Top expenditure quintile (non-poor)
Households without a roof made of iron	54.6%	17.8%
I receive lots of time and attention from my parents (agree or strongly agree)	82.5%	84.4%
I always feel loved by my parents (agree or strongly agree)	92.9%	95.4%
Self efficacy index (score 1-4)	1.23*	1.14*
Self esteem index (score 1-4)	2.56	2.57
Perceptions of respect index (score 1-4)	2.77	2.82
Position on ladder in 4 yrs time (score 1-9)	5.53**	6.34**
Others include me in their games	58.3%	53.6%
Someone can help me if I had a problem	98%	96.9
No: of food groups eaten in last 24 hrs	3.97**	5.59**
No: of times eaten in last 24 hrs	3.67**	3.92**
Missed more than 1 wk of school in last yr	14.6%	16.4%
Mean grade	3.86**	4.82**
School enrolment	97.8%	95.8%
Lost one or more parents	17.9%	20.1%
Lost both parents	1.5%	6.6%

Source: Child questionnaire, *Young Lives* Round 2 Survey data, author's calculations

** $p < 0.001$ * $p < 0.05$

There were highly statistically significant differences on the variables indicating a sense of optimism about the future, food sufficiency, dietary diversity, and current school grade, although not school attendance, which suggests that the measures used currently may not be capturing this important dimension. Although the amount of food consumed was similar, the range of foods eaten by children from the bottom quintile was limited – as one child in *Aksum* describes, it's “potato stew without injera [bread], or injera without wot [sauce]”, never both. They were also a full school grade (> 1 year) behind children in the top expenditure quintile and perhaps for this reason felt slightly less positive about their future lives. However, children in the lowest quintile were significantly more likely to feel self-efficacious, which supports the conclusion of studies in other countries that the daily challenges of living in poverty can have positive developmental effects (Feeny and Boyden, 2003).

The exercise indicates that while some of the indicators generated by the children map directly to differences in income, other valued areas such as respect and friendship are not affected. Additionally, one of the most important indicators identified by the children – not being an orphan – runs in the opposite direction to what might be expected, perhaps because within the *Young Lives* sample children who have lost both parents are typically lodged in smaller and wealthier households (Himaz and Camfield, 2009). While the more specific indicators proposed by the children could not be mapped to this data set (e.g.

quality of clothing), it is reassuring to note that conventional indicators such as malnutrition continue to have value, albeit not for the reasons the developers intended.

4. DISCUSSION

Qualitative research with adults and more recently with children living in contexts of poverty draws out the experiential and relational aspects of poverty. For example, being able to make choices such as going to school, while knowing that your family has the resources to support these in the long-term. The centrality of relationships is also highlighted by qualitative child poverty research from Europe and North America, for example, Ridge (2002a) favors the term 'social exclusion' over poverty as having "potentially much greater power to reveal the multidimensional nature of poverty and disadvantage in childhood than the narrower definition of poverty" (p143). The conceptual advantage of social exclusion is that it is a relative concept - people are excluded from a particular society at a particular place and time. It is also dynamic and agentive - people are excluded and can exclude themselves by internalizing others' stereotypes. Social exclusion, and the resources to ameliorate it, can be included in consensual definitions of relative poverty through lists of 'socially perceived necessities', following the approach taken by Mack and Lansley (1985) in the 'Breadline Britain' survey (e.g. Wright, 2008 in South Africa). Middleton et al. (1997) take an even stronger position, claiming that while "a child who goes without food is said to be more seriously deprived than the child who is unable to participate in the world around them [...] the long-term effect of being deprived of food for a short period during childhood could be less serious than the effect of being denied access to the means of development and participation throughout childhood" (p53). Boyden et al. (2003) similarly contrast the effects of absolute but shared poverty in Bolivia with relative poverty in Belarus which "affect[s] children's social world directly, since in Belarus certain material items, such as clothing, computers and music, are markers of status and are used by young people to exclude those who cannot afford them" (p12) (see also Ridge, 2002; Van der Hoek, 2005).

The data reported here demonstrates a subtle understanding of poverty from children as young as five who know what it means to be appropriately dressed and feel ashamed when they cannot meet these standards. Appearance and clothing are important themes, linking to Adam Smith's famous reflections on the linen shirt (Smith, 1776, Book 5, Chapter 2) and more recently Townsend's (1979) focus on having the resources to participate fully in society ("the activities, customs and diets commonly approved by society", *ibid*, p88). Children also reported stigma from being labeled as poor because their parents were daily labourers, they received support from NGOs, or even because they participate in *Young Lives*. The theme of dependency continually recurred: depending on others for support, depending on daily labour, renting a house rather than owning one, etc. Children alluded to the effects of chronic poverty, for example, the sense of the fragility attached to any benefit (c.f. the title of this paper) and the tension caused by never having more money than they need to survive and being continually distracted by the things that they lack. Children also

described the complex calculations required to engage in any activity – for example, you are enrolled in school, but can you be spared from work to go? You go to school, but do you any have school materials, and if so, are they as good as your friends? Is your school government or private? If it is private, do you have the time and extra resources to take advantage of this? (for example, by going on school trips), or do you actually feel much worse because you are visibly poorer than the other students? Another emergent theme was the moral dimension to poverty, for example, the persistent belief in a ‘culture of poverty’ (not fully explored here), which includes aspects such as not knowing how to plan and save or not having a positive attitude towards education and work.

The complexities outlined above present particular problems when it comes to measurement (Frijters and Mujic, 2008). While the continuum from income poverty to illbeing set out in the first paragraph was not intended to be teleological, as monetary measures of poverty such the dollar-a-day measure can be analytically and rhetorically powerful, the paper argues for the operationalisation of a broader and more person-centred definition of poverty that captures people’s diverse experiences. Wellbeing approaches have been criticized for encouraging individualization and potentially depoliticisation by stripping out context and macro-level influences in their focus on subjective experience (White, 2009). This may reinforce a voluntaristic focus on the individual already evident within policy circles where “attention is diverted away from the state and other actors with the power and moral responsibility to intervene and bring about change, with populations living in poverty being charged with using their own resources to support themselves through crisis” (Boyden and Cooper, 2006). Nonetheless, wellbeing approaches are not inevitably politically naïve (McGregor et al., 2008) as local understandings of illbeing recognize the influence of dynamics within the household, community, and nation, etc. They also enable exploration of the *social* construction of values, standards, and norms that affect how people experience and evaluate their lives, which are particularly evident in the group activities reported in this paper (Deneulin and McGregor, 2009). Data generated by reflective group activities can increase understanding of people’s values and experiences and enable the use of this information to construct more sensitive indicators, or prioritize within existing indicator sets through processes of ‘social deliberation’ (Crocker, 2003; Alkire, 2006).

Acknowledgements

The author thanks *Young Lives* participants and researchers, and Virginia Morrow and Gina Crivello who provided invaluable comments on an earlier draft. *Young Lives* is funded by the UK Department for International Development (DFID) and based on a collaborative partnership between the University of Oxford, Save the Children UK, The Open University, UK, and a series of prominent national research and policy institutes in the four study countries.

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APPENDICES

Table 1: Indicators of Illbeing generated by the older children

OC	Indicator	Notes
Debre, Urban	Girls	
	<p><i>First</i> Inadequate food No educational materials No shelter No access to education</p> <p><i>Second</i> Attending govt. school Being an orphan</p>	<p>All</p> <p>1 of 5 respondents</p>
	<i>What would help her live better?</i>	<p>Having access to education and learning Working as hard as she can, for example, as a housemaid (“she may carry a baby or wash clothes or clean the house”) to generate income for her family, but not working beyond her capacity Getting support from others</p>
	Boys	
	<p><i>First</i> Being an orphan/losing parents No proper follow up from family No proper education</p> <p>Bad behaviour</p>	<p>All</p> <p>Disturbs other school children, can’t continue learning, may behave badly or become a thief</p>
	<i>What would help him live better?</i>	<p>Good advice (“let him know what he needs to know and help him to differentiate good and bad things”) and good company (“get him far away from bad boys”) Studying hard and being disciplined, especially in school; going to a “good” school Getting care and support from his family, or “if there is no family he needs to work hard by himself and improve his behaviour” (e.g. by taking well-behaved children as role models) While his family need to “work hard and move him from poverty”, he also has to assist his family after school Being “in peace” with his neighbours and his family (e.g. obeying his parents and not disagreeing with them, not “nagging [them] to provide things that are beyond their capacity”)</p>
Bale, nr rural	Girls	
	<p>1. Shortage of food</p> <p>2. Thatched, grass house</p> <p>3. Few, old clothes</p>	<p>No survival without food</p> <p>Leaks & causes disease</p>

	<p>4. No livestock 5. No separate kitchen</p>	
	<p><i>What would help her live better?</i></p>	<p>Working at a daily labourer (10 ETB per day) to save money and buy educational materials and clothes, with the help of her parents Completing education to get job and be independent Receiving money from other people in the Kebele, for example, after an accident</p>
	<p>Boys</p>	
	<p>1. No land 2. No livestock 3. No house or clothing</p>	<p>“land means everything, without it there is no life” Can’t get money in an emergency, even by borrowing Can’t live without a house or work without clothes</p>
	<p><i>What would help him live better?</i></p>	<p>Family members need to work hard as daily labourers and save money to buy a boat for fishing and livestock to generate more income and improve their livelihood. They should also save money for medical expenses “since having health means having everything” The family should meet children’s needs and buy clothes, exercise books, shoes and food, however, some families help each other by sharing food crops, etc.</p>
<p>Angar, remote rural</p>	<p>Girls</p>	
	<p>1. Insufficient food, thin 2. Dirty, dry, neglected hair 3. Torn, old clothes 4. Dirty body 5. Goes to school without breakfast</p>	<p>Parents can’t afford more so she can’t wash them Can’t afford soap</p>
	<p><i>What would help her live better?</i></p>	<p>Her family should meet her needs by providing sufficient food, clothing, and shoes, and poor families should be supported by neighbours and “well-to-do” relatives The community should provide food and school materials for poor children, but currently this doesn’t happen – “it is the responsibility of the family to fulfill all the needs of their children”</p>
	<p>Boys</p>	
	<p><i>Ranked equally:</i> No school No family Fights with others, foolish Begs, steals No shoes, only sandals</p>	

	<p>Worn-out clothes No livestock, herds others cattle Dirty, untidy hair Hungry Unhealthy</p>	
	<p><i>What would help him live better?</i></p>	<p>Children's own efforts, for example, being obedient, working hard and supporting their family (for example, by herding cattle for richer families at 5 ETB per day) so the family reciprocates by "provid[ing] him with necessary things". Children also need to be disciplined and avoid fighting with others or "making trouble" and can benefit from advice from their friends</p> <p>Clean environment and water supply to improve his health</p> <p>Better food, provided by rich neighbours, and assistance from teachers in following his education ("rich neighbors and teachers are responsible to protect children more than others")</p>
Aksum, near rural	Girls	
	<p><i>Ranked equally:</i> Dirty and dilapidated house with flies everywhere</p> <p>Clothes that are dirty, old, and torn She is very slim and physically weak, looks hungry She has a dirty body and flies all over her face Her hair is dry and badly dressed without any hair oil</p> <p><i>Other indicators (not ranked):</i> Her family are poor and she doesn't have enough to eat, which makes her stomach hurt She doesn't have any shoes She doesn't have a good character</p>	<p>"She lives in a damaged house which is about to fall down [with] dung mixed with dirt in front of her house"</p> <p>"She has a tired looking face"</p> <p>"There is no oil for her hair"</p>
	<p><i>What would help her live better?</i></p>	<p>She and her parents can work hard and "properly manage" their harvest They can get government/ NGO support (e.g. through food-for-work) and credit</p>
	Boys	
	<p><i>Ranked equally:</i> He is thin with spindly legs as he doesn't have a balanced diet Doesn't go to school Wears old and torn clothes</p> <p>Feels bad, physically and emotionally His family live in a hut and do not have any assets</p>	<p>"His clothes are dirty and mended here and there"</p> <p>"He doesn't feel good about his living condition"</p>

	<p><i>Other indicators (not ranked):</i> He is dirty and covered in flies, his body has many sores His family do not have any cattle so he digs potatoes He eats only bread and potatoes Their toilet is dirty and full of flies and they don't have clean water The weather is bad as the area is deforested "He has no time for playing, unlike his friends"</p>	<p>"He labours every day and lives hand to mouth with no saving of food or assets"</p>
	<p><i>What would help him live better?</i></p>	<p>"Rich people" or the government can provide food and healthcare if he gets sick ("food aid from the government may help him to survive and get a breathing space to develop assets")</p>
<p>Yoboki, urban</p>	<p>Girls</p>	
	<p>1. No access to schooling due her parents' poverty</p> <p>2. No love or care from family, community or government</p> <p>3. Poverty, basic needs unfulfilled</p> <p>4. Malnutrition and poor sanitation lead to illness, no access to health care due to lack of money</p> <p><i>Other indicators (not ranked):</i> Feels worry, fear and sadness, which affects her ability to make friends; often cries Cannot learn "attentively" and feels that she has fallen behind her friends</p> <p>Lives on the street and is exposed to theft, rape, pregnancy, and "even losing her life" Lives in an old house with a grass roof and few household materials She doesn't have any good clothes or shoes Parents are daily labourers and she will have to become one too because "she can't survive without having something to eat"</p>	<p>"Her parent registered her at school (registration cost is not burden for them) but after that they have no capacity to fulfill what she need [...] Thus she does not have any opportunities"</p> <p>"Unable to get what her friends have, even if she learns, she doesn't understand properly"</p> <p>"When she is learning rather she thinks about her life. She faces different problems, and her mind become full of tension" "She become a smoker, pregnant and she was watching when other children were going to and from school"</p> <p>This makes her "fearful" when she meets other children</p>
	<p><i>What would help her live better?</i></p>	<p>She can attend school by doing income generating activities after school ("she can learn at the evening program and work during day time and she can use the money for educational fees") and also give money to her family – "if she is learning she can develop a mechanism to change their life situation" She can get support from her neighbours in the</p>

		<p>form of cash or educational materials</p> <p>She can care for her health by keeping their compound clean and neat, not drinking water from the well (or boiling it first) to avoid water-borne diseases, and getting medical treatment if she gets sick</p>
	Boys	
	<p>1. Family or child cannot fulfill basic needs such as food and housing</p> <p>2. Gambling</p> <p>3. Lack of schooling (one respondent)</p> <p><i>Other indicators (not ranked):</i> No family follow-up Poor attitude towards others from the child and his family Lives in a bad neighbourhood and spends time in “bad places”, plays on the street Dirty, unhealthy and thin; parents don’t take him to the health post when he is sick Weak in his education and has no friends at school, spends his time with badly behaved children Children in the household don’t go to school, or if they do no-one buys them school materials He cannot join a “good”/ private school Lives in a dilapidated traditional house with plants growing through the floor Parents are old, poor and have many children, father is a beggar who uses a wheelchair Six family members sleep in a single bed and eat at one table, they have no other household materials He has only one set of clothes</p>	<p>Causes bad behaviour, including theft</p> <p>Even if he has money to fulfill his needs he wastes it gambling He has no ambitions and doesn’t think about the future, preferring to spend his time gambling</p> <p>“A school with no chairs and not well made; it is a government school with no water for drinking, no books, and no place for studying”</p>
	<i>What would help him live better?</i>	<p>His family should fulfill his needs, or failing that his neighbours and friends Local families need to be taught “to send their children to school and care for them properly” The severe housing problem should be solved</p>

Table 2: Indicators of Illbeing generated by younger children

YC	Indicator	Notes
Debre, Urban	Mixed	
	<p>Dirty/ wornout/ ugly clothes & wornout shoes (or no shoes/ only one shoe), ugly or dirty face/ hair/ body</p> <p>No friends, insults other people</p> <p>Doesn't go to school or goes to school without lunch</p> <p>Badly behaved with their parents, e.g. nags her mother to buy things she cannot afford, steals from her, hits her & orders her around, tears her clothes or dirties the clothes her sister sends her from abroad, doesn't listen to his mother's advice. Her parents beat her</p> <p>Does not help his family doing household chores</p> <p>She lives on the street</p> <p>Lives in a dirty house or a kitchen</p>	<p>'she does not have a friend because she is ugly'/ 'his/ her bad behaviour'/ 'they don't want her anymore'/ 'he fights with them'</p> <p>'she got kicked out of school because she is not a good girl'/ 'his bad behaviour', 'his mother does not have any money'</p> <p>'she always asks her mother to buy her star' or biscuits & soft drinks ('she steals when she wants to buy biscuits')</p> <p>'she does not go to school because she lives on the street'; 'she began eating rotten oranges and became sick & eventually died'</p> <p>'Her house is dirty because she doesn't clean it'</p>
	<i>What would help him/her live better?</i>	<p>Going to a good school/ getting good education/ being a good student/ being tutored at home so they understand what they learn</p> <p>Having good clothes and keeping them clean</p> <p>Obedying & listening to their parents; not being hit ('they are not donkeys') but being advised & counseled by their parents; not nagging their mother to buy them gum and biscuits</p>
Bale, nr rural	Mixed	
	<p>No cattle</p> <p>House made from grass, no kitchen, no bed</p> <p>Old clothes, no shoes, short hair (girls)</p> <p>No school materials, can't go to school</p> <p>Underweight, cannot afford to go to the health centre when they are ill</p> <p>Responsible for their younger siblings (girls) or for herding the cattle (boys) 'even if they don't want to'</p>	<p>'they prepare food in the house as they have no kitchen'</p> <p>An illbeing girl is 'collecting firewood & carrying it on her head' and has 'a younger brother in the compound'</p>
Angar, remote rural	Mixed [difficult to communicate purpose of exercise, little response even to simple & leading questions]	
Aksum, near rural	Mixed	

	<p>Eats a small amount of food (e.g. potato stew without injera or injera without stew - injera firfir) & 'makes trouble because they get hungry'</p> <p>Has 'no hair' (girls), dirty face (boys), 'dirty clothes and worn-out shoes' (girls), no trousers and 'something weird on top' (boys)</p> <p>Lives in an old house or hut without a kitchen, sleeps on a bench</p> <p>Looked after by their sisters because their parents stay away from the home for a long time for 'weeding and other activities'</p> <p>Works hard & goes to the lowlands to keep goats, only coming back when it gets dark; they play with friends, but only in the fields where they keep their animals</p>	'he goes to school wearing only a shirt on top'
	<i>What would help him/her live better?</i>	Washing with clean water to help them be healthy; cleaning their house
Yoboki, urban	Mixed	
	<p>Her hair and face aren't 'nice' (e.g. her hair is dirty & this has caused a sore on her head); her clothes are dirty & she has old or no shoes</p> <p>She doesn't go to school or learns in 'Berhu Tesfa'/ religious school</p> <p>She behaves badly, for ex. playing with her friends</p> <p>She disagrees with her mother and runs away from home</p> <p>She works</p> <p>She is an orphan, supported by her neighbours, and always cries</p> <p>Her friends died in a car accident</p> <p>She has a small house, with a small bed (alho her parents have a big one); the house has no household goods</p>	<p>'she has no dress'/ 'an old dress', 'short hair' (which she cuts & is not styled properly), 'her parents cannot buy shoes because they are poor'</p> <p>'she doesn't like to learn'</p> <p>'she takes money from her friends for rent'</p>
	<i>What would help him/her live better?</i>	<p>Food ('she eats cake, bread, snabusa, etc.), clothes and shoes</p> <p>Good manners and no 'deviant behaviour', e.g. going to video houses</p> <p>Access to education, 'uniform, exercise book, pencil, marker and bag'</p> <p>Able to study, play and work</p> <p>'he is not happy but he does not need anything'</p>

Table 3: Summary of indicators of Illbeing generated by younger children (not ranked)

Mixed				
Debre	Bale	Angar	Aksum	Yoboki
Clothing Footwear Appearance Behaviour Education Food Housing	Livestock Housing Bed Education Educational materials Food Healthcare Work	- (exercise not successful)	Food Appearance Clothing Footwear Housing Family follow-up Work Bed	Appearance Clothing Footwear Education Behaviour Orphan Psychosocial wellbeing Housing Work Bed

Table 4: Summary of indicators of Illbeing generated by older children

Rank	Girls					Boys				
	Debre	Bale	Angar	Aksum	Yoboki	Debre	Bale	Angar	Aksum	Yoboki
1 st	Food Education Educationa l materials Housing	Food	Food	Appearance Clothes Food Housing	Education	Behaviour Education Family follow-up Orphanage	Land	Appearance Behaviour Clothing Education Food Footwear Livestock Orphanage	Clothing Education Food	Basic needs
2 nd	Govt. school Orphanage	Housing	Appearance	Food Behaviour Footwear	Family follow-up	-	Livestock	-	Housing Psychosocial wellbeing	Behaviour
3 rd	-	Clothing	Clothing	-	Basic needs	-	Clothing Housing	-	Appearance Livestock	Education